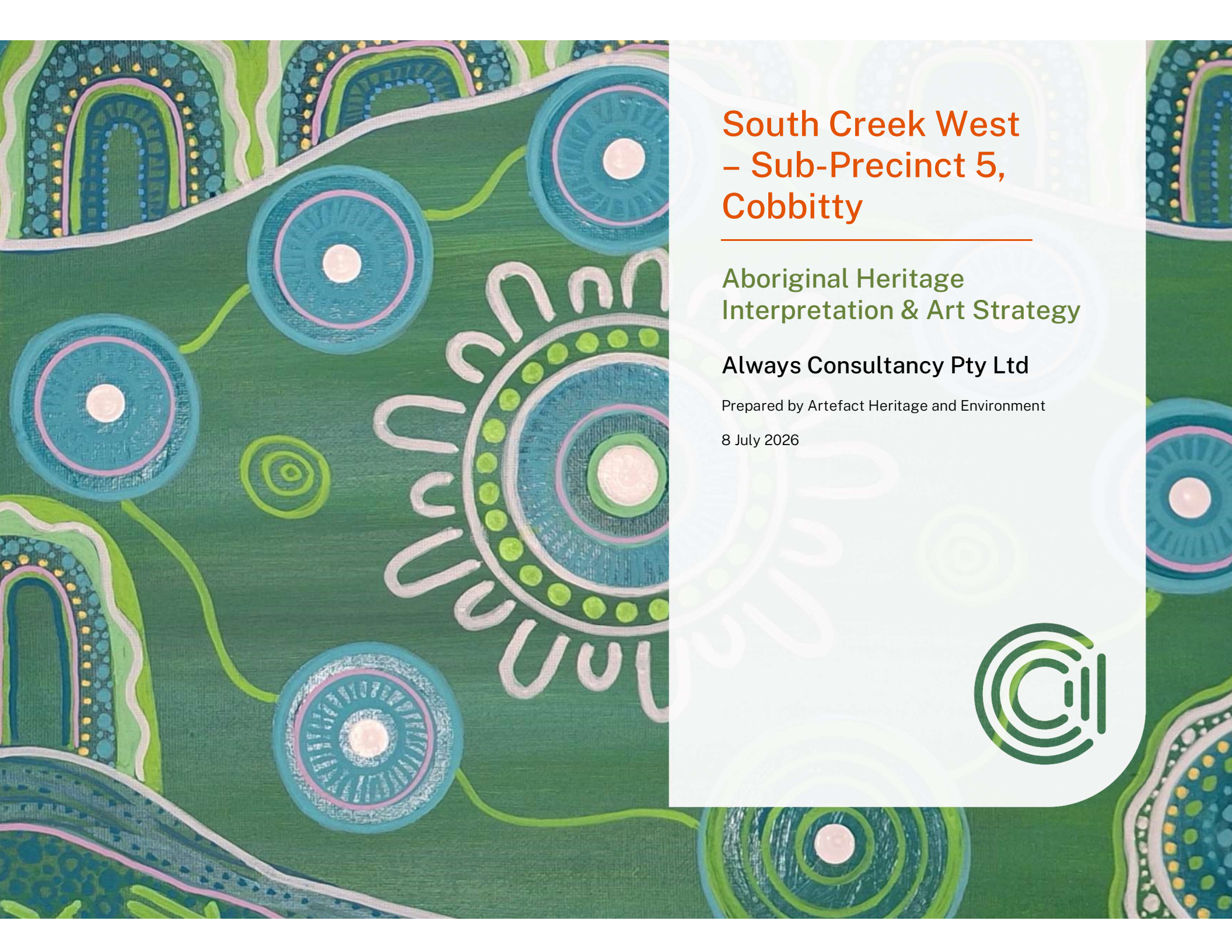




South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

Aboriginal Heritage
Interpretation & Art Strategy

Always Consultancy Pty Ltd

Prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment

8 July 2026



Artefact acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waters of Australia.

We acknowledge the Gadigal and Wangal of Pirrama (Pyrmont) where our Sydney office is located, the Awabakal, Worimi and Wonnarua of the Hunter Region where our Mulubinba (Newcastle) office is located and the Wiradyuri 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 Dharawal, Dharug and Gandangara 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: *Walk on Country Cobbitty and Bringelly*

© Kayelene Slater (2024)

Reproduced with permission

“My artwork represents a journey with connections to Country on the green pastures of land and waterways surrounding of Dharawal Nation with beautiful views of Country, and to continue to care for the land and waterways from now and beyond” Kayelene Slater

Document History

Revision	Date Issued	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved	Review type
1	25 October 2024	Carolyn MacLulich, Artefact	Carolyn MacLulich, Artefact	28 October 2024	Internal
2	29 October 2024	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd., with minor amendments	4 November 2024	Draft 1
3	8 November 2024	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	18 November 2024	Draft 2
4	4 December 2024	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	4 December 2024	Final
5	27 October 2025	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	27 October 2025	Final 2
6	2 December 2025	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	2 December 2025	Final 3
7	20 May 2026	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	20 May 2026	Final 4
8	8 July 2026	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd	8 July 2026	Final Redacted

Document Status

Last Saved	8 July 2026
File Name	AHAIS_Cobbitty Bringelly Precinct 5 South Creek West_300925
Author	Katherine Chalmers (Heritage Consultant), Sabrina Roesner (Senior Heritage Consultant)
Project Manager	Sabrina Roesner
Name of Organisation	Always Consultancy Pty Ltd
Name of Project	South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty AHIAS
Document Version	Final Redacted

© Artefact 2026

This document is and shall remain the property of Artefact Heritage and Environment. This document may only be used for the purposes for which it was commissioned and in accordance with the Terms of the Engagement for the commission. Unauthorised use of this document in any form whatsoever is prohibited. Cover image:

Disclaimer: Artefact Heritage and Environment has completed this document in accordance with the relevant federal, state and local legislation and current industry best practice. The company accepts no liability for any damages or loss incurred as a result of reliance placed upon the document content or for any purpose other than that for which it was intended.

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

CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1		
1.1 Background.....	2		
1.2 Scope of report	2		
1.3 Reference documents	2		
1.3.1 NSW Heritage Office, Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Policy and Guidelines, 2005	3		
1.3.2 Australian ICOMOS, Burra Charter (2013) and Interpreting Practice Notes (2013)	4		
1.3.3 ICOMOS, Ename Charter	4		
1.3.4 GANSW Connecting with Country	4		
1.4 Authorship and acknowledgements.....	5		
1.5 Cultural warning	5		
1.6 Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property	5		
1.7 Terminology	5		
2. Site context.....	6		
2.1 Introduction.....	7		
2.2 Site location and setting.....	7		
2.3 Proposed development	7		
3. Values and Significance.....	9		
3.1 Introduction.....	10		
3.2 Aboriginal heritage significance	10		
3.2.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report	10		
3.2.2 Archaeological Technical Report and Site survey, 2 and 3 February 2023	11		
4. Interpretive approach	13		
4.1 Introduction.....	14		
4.2 Interpretive principles.....	14		
4.3 Audience identification	14		
4.4 Consultation.....	15		
4.4.1 Consultation with Aboriginal Stakeholders.....	15		
		4.4.2 Walk on Country, 28 August 2024.....	15
		4.4.3 Cultural Storytelling Workshops	19
	4.5	Key themes.....	23
5. Interpretive options.....	25		
5.1 Introduction.....	26		
5.2 Interpretive Options.....	26		
5.3 Acknowledgement of/ Welcome to Country.....	27		
5.3.1 Key themes.....	27		
5.3.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5.....	27		
5.3.3 Examples	27		
5.4 Integration of Aboriginal designs and forms into built environment.....	28		
5.4.1 Key themes.....	28		
5.4.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5.....	28		
5.4.3 Examples	28		
5.5 Road naming and wayfinding.....	29		
5.5.1 Key themes.....	29		
5.5.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5.....	29		
5.5.3 Examples	30		
5.6 Public green spaces, interpretive landscaping and restoration with gathering places and seating.....	31		
5.6.1 Landscape design.....	31		
5.6.2 Environmental restoration.....	31		
5.6.3 Bush tucker plantings.....	32		
5.6.4 Interpretive landscaping	33		
5.6.5 Gathering spaces and seating.....	33		
5.6.6 Key themes.....	34		
5.6.7 Opportunities for Precinct 5.....	34		
5.7 Public artworks	34		
5.7.1 Key Themes.....	35		
5.7.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5.....	35		
5.7.3 Examples	36		

5.7.4	Artist Selection Process.....	36
5.8	Play spaces.....	38
5.8.1	Key themes.....	38
5.8.2	Opportunities for Precinct.....	38
5.8.3	Examples.....	39
5.9	Interpretive Panels.....	39
5.9.1	Key themes.....	39
5.9.2	Opportunities for Precinct 5.....	40
5.9.3	Examples.....	40
5.10	Websites.....	41
5.10.1	Key themes.....	41
5.10.2	Examples.....	41
5.11	Indicative locations for interpretative elements.....	42
5.12	Additional considerations.....	43
5.12.1	Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders.....	43
5.12.2	Coordination with other relevant plans.....	43
5.12.3	Reproducing images.....	43
5.12.4	Maintenance.....	43
6.	Conclusions.....	44
6.1	Recommendations.....	45
6.2	Next steps.....	45
7.	References.....	46
8.	Appendix A: Consultation Log.....	49
9.	Appendix B: Aboriginal Histories.....	52

FIGURES

Figure 1: Draft indicative layout plan (source: Always Consultancy, 2025)	8
Figure 2: AHIMS extensive search results. (Artefact, 24 February 2024)	12
Figure 3: View across to ridgeline, 28 August 2024.....	16
Figure 4: Landform Analysis Plan. (source: Design & Planning)	17
Figure 5: Bull cave as photographed in the early 1980s. (source: Campbelltown Library)	18
Figure 6: Acknowledgement of Country artwork at Parliament House by Simon Reece, Rowena Welsh-Jarret, and Alison Page at Parliament House.	20
Figure 7: Paperbark Playground. (Source: Parramatta Park Trust).....	20
Figure 8: Njirgangga dharidhamayi Dharawal nguradha - You are standing on Dharawal Country. Entry Sign at Campbelltown Billabong developed by Aboriginal Stakeholders and artist Danielle Mate.	22
Figure 9: Sightlines to ridges across Country, 28 August 2024 (Source: Artefact).24	
Figure 10: Lartelare Aboriginal Heritage Park, Port Adelaide, South Australia by T.L.C.	26
Figure 11: Left - Monero-Ngarigo Welcome to Country sign. Right - Acknowledgment of Country artwork by Alison Page, Rowena Welsh-Jarrett and Simon Reece.....	27
Figure 12: Welcome to Country with [REDACTED]. Campbelltown Council.....	27
Figure 13: Budj Bim Cultural Landscape Aboriginal design.....	28
Figure 14: Top - Biripi Aboriginal Clinic, Purfleet. Bottom – Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service allied health services hub in Newman.....	29
Figure 15: Top and bottom - Wilpena Pound Entry Precinct concept plans by Nguluway Design Inc.	29
Figure 16: Place naming: Kurranulla – Place of Pink Shells place sign. Sutherland Shire Council.	30
Figure 17: Yananurula – Walking Country Harbour Walk wayfinding signage. City of Sydney.....	30
Figure 18: Sydney’s Accor Stadium grandstand named in honour of sporting legend Cathy Freeman OAM.....	30
Figure 19: Circular motifs of the living calendar at TAFE Bendigo representing the six seasons of the Dja Dja Wurrung.....	31

Figure 20: Barangaroo Reserve, planting involved 84 different species that were native to the Sydney region at the time of European settlement. (Source: Janna Schreier Garden Design)	32
Figure 21: Creating micro habitats: Native Rooftop Farm Everleigh	32
Figure 22: South Eveleigh Native Rooftop Farm, South Eveleigh, Sydney, by Yerrabingin.	32
Figure 23: Yagan Square interpretive landscaping using Kangaroo Paws.....	33
Figure 24: Bilya Marlee houses the School of Indigenous Studies, Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health, and the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health in Perth.	33
Figure 25: Left - UQ Reconciliation Garden Multhana. Right: Seating with shells Yerrabingen House South Everleigh.....	34
Figure 26: Public art integrated within landscaping: ‘Interconnection’ arch by Jen Mallinson, in collaboration with Indigenous illustrative artist Richard Campbell. ...	36
Figure 27: Public art integrated into functional elements - screen artwork by Susan Cadby ‘Their Story’, The Hub, Ropes Crossing.....	36
Figure 28: Yagan Square ground plane water feature referencing the former wetland system that was an important meeting and food-gathering place for Aboriginal people. (Source: Peter Bennetts)	36
Figure 29: Walk on Country Cobbitty and Bringelly artwork created by Kayelene Slater, 2024.....	37
Figure 30: Yirran muru (Many pathways) - Dharawal Interpretive Play Space, Shellharbour Civic Centre	39
Figure 31: A Dharawal language wheel at Dharawal Interpretive Play Space Photo: Shellharbour City Council.....	39
Figure 32: Interpretive signage for Hume Grasslands created for the Hume City Council.....	40
Figure 33: Left -Cotter Dam Discovery Trail. Right -Bushland Reserves interpretive signage by Heine Jones.....	40
Figure 34: Left -Interpretive panels for native plants at Murray Avenue, Sydney Olympic Park by Artefact. Right - QR code on Interpretive panel, Rapid City Parks.....	40
Figure 35: Parramatta’s Aboriginal history webpage. City of Parramatta.	41
Figure 36: Camden Council webpage: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communiti.....	41
Figure 37: Fishing hooks crafted by Aboriginal communities living around Sydney Harbour, John White, 1790.	53

Figure 38: Carving of Echidna in Ku-ring-gai National Park. (Image: Stuart Humphreys © Australian Museum)	54
Figure 39: Page from notebook of Sydney language words compiled by Patyegarang and William Dawes (source: The Notebooks of William Dawes)	57
Figure 40: Detail of New South Wales sketch of the settlements 20th August 1796, Governor John Hunter showing Cowpastures (source: State Library NSW)	58
Figure 41: Joseph Lycett, Aborigines hunting kangaroos, 1820 (Source: National Library of Australia)	59
Figure 42: Joseph Lycett, View upon the Nepean River at the Cow Pastures, New South Wales, 1825 (source: National Library of Australia)	60
Figure 43: William Govett, notes and sketches, 1830-1835 [Govett was at Berrima and in the southern region in 1832], (source: State Library of New South Wales, MS A330 (Safe 1 / 404), images 15-17)	64
Figure 44: Still image from Joe Anderson's 1933 speech, Australian Screen, 1983. "Lousy Little Sixpence, 1933." (Source: ANDB)	66
Figure 45: Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony, picture: Robert Pozo (source: The Daily Telegraph)	67
Figure 46: Bayala Dharug Dhalang publication by Jasmine Seymour, Corina Norman and Denise Angelo	68
Figure 47:: Gundungura man, David King, conducting a smoking ceremony on Gandangara Country	68

TABLES

Table 1: The Ingredients for Best Practice, NSW Heritage Office	3
Table 2: List of Register Aboriginal Parties for the Cobbitty Bringelly Project	10
Table 3: Overview of next steps	45

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy (AHIAS) has been prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment (Artefact) on behalf of JJ Cobbitty Development Pty Ltd, (the proponent), in support of a Planning Proposal for the site located on The Northern Road, forming part of Cobbitty Sub-Precinct 5 in the South Creek West Land Release Area. The site is referred to as 'Precinct 5'.

Artefact has prepared this AHIAS, alongside an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) and Connecting with Country Report (CwC). The AHIAS and CwC were developed concurrently and align with their recommendations on stakeholder engagement, considerations for design outcomes and interpretation recommendations.

This report is a redacted version for public exhibition.

1.2 Scope of report

An AHIAS is a tool that outlines a high-level strategy for transmitting messages about Aboriginal cultural heritage values of a place to users and other audiences through interpretive media and public art. It is intended to inform and guide planning for heritage interpretation and public art by identifying relevant historical themes and outlining strategies for presenting these through a variety of interpretive and artistic media.

The AHIAS, which was developed in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders includes:

- A summary of the Aboriginal history of the project site, based on existing reports.
- Aboriginal cultural values and consultation outcomes from engagement with key Aboriginal stakeholders as identified in the CwC framework and ACHAR concurrently.

- Themes and cultural stories relevant to the precinct and surrounding area, identified during a Walk on Country and Cultural Storytelling workshops.
- Outline of an interpretive approach and recommendations for interpretive media suitable for the landscape and built environment of South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty.
- Opportunities for design features and colour schemes within artwork and design elements throughout the site that reflect connection to Country and the significance of the area.

The AHIAS is a high-level strategic report which presents a range of possible interpretive and public art elements. Following approval of the AHIAS and as the project develops, a more detailed Heritage Interpretation Plan would be developed during the DA stage to identify a final selection of interpretive elements and their locations, provide artists' briefs and engagement processes, and provide final content and design for the chosen public art and interpretive media.

1.3 Reference documents

This AHIAS has been prepared in reference to the following reports specific to South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty, in addition to current best practice guidelines for heritage interpretation planning.

Documents relevant to South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

- Cobbitty ILP, Designed with Country, 16 February 2024
- Artefact, Archaeological Technical Report, 2024
- Artefact, Cobbitty-Bringelly Connecting with Country Framework, 2024
- Department of Planning and Environment, A Guide to the South West Growth Area, December 2022

- Urbis, South Creek West Cobbitty Sub-Precinct 5 Landscape Masterplan, March 2024

Best-practice guidelines for heritage interpretation planning

- NSW Heritage Office, Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Guidelines, 2005
- NSW Heritage Office, Heritage Interpretation Policy, 2005
- Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter), 2013
- Government Architect NSW, Connecting with Country, 2023.

1.3.1 NSW Heritage Office, Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Policy and Guidelines, 2005

The NSW Heritage Office, Heritage Interpretation Policy states that:

The interpretation of New South Wales' heritage connects the communities of New South Wales with their heritage and is a means of protecting and sustaining heritage values. Heritage interpretation is an integral part of the conservation and management of heritage items, and is relevant to other aspects of environmental and cultural management and policy. Heritage interpretation incorporates and provides broad access to historical research and analysis. Heritage interpretation provides opportunities to stimulate ideas and debate about Australian life and values, and the meaning of our history, culture and the environment.¹

The NSW Heritage Office provides 'The Ingredients for Best Practice' as shown below.

Table 1: The Ingredients for Best Practice, NSW Heritage Office

Ingredient	Outline
1: Interpretation, people and culture	Respect for the special connections between people and items.
2: Heritage significance and site analysis	Understand the item and convey its significance.
3: Records and research	Use existing records of the item, research additional information, and make these publicly available (subject to security and cultural protocols).
4: Audiences	Explore, respect and respond to the identified audience.
5: Themes	Make reasoned choices about themes, stories and strategies.
6: Engaging the audience	Stimulate thought and dialogue, provoke response and enhance understanding.
7: Context	Research the physical, historical, spiritual and contemporary context of the item, including related items, and respect local amenity and culture.
8: Authenticity, ambience and sustainability	Develop interpretation methods and media which sustain the significance of the items, its character and authenticity.
9: Conservation planning and works	Integrate interpretation in conservation planning, and in all stages of a conservation project.
10: Maintenance, evaluation and review	Include interpretation in the ongoing management of an item; provide for regular maintenance, evaluation and review.
11: Skills and knowledge	Involve people with relevant skills, knowledge and experience.
12: Collaboration	Collaborate with organisations and the local community.

¹ NSW Heritage Office, Heritage Information Series: Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Guidelines, 2005. <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Heritage/interpreting-heritage-places-and-items-guidelines.pdf>

1.3.2 Australian ICOMOS, Burra Charter (2013) and Interpreting Practice Notes (2013)

The Burra Charter, 2013, defines interpretation as ‘all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place’, which may be achieved through a combination of the treatment of heritage fabric, the use of the place, or activities undertaken at the place, and the introduction of material explaining this history (Article 1.17). Interpretation should provide and enhance understanding of the history, significance and meaning, as well as respect and be appropriate to the cultural significance of a place (Article 25).²

To aid in the development of effective interpretive material, Australia ICOMOS developed seven key principles to guide approaches to the interpretation of places, closely linked with those of the Ename Charter:

- Facilitate understanding and appreciation
- Communicate
- Safeguard the tangible and intangible values
- Respect authenticity
- Contribute to sustainable conservation
- Encourage inclusiveness
- Develop technical and professional guidelines.

1.3.3 ICOMOS, Ename Charter

The ICOMOS Ename Charter for Interpretation of Cultural Heritage Sites recognises that interpretation and presentation are part of the overall

process of cultural heritage conservation, this Charter has established seven cardinal principles upon which interpretation should be based:³

- Principle 1: Access and understanding
- Principle 2: Information sources
- Principle 3: Attention to setting and context
- Principle 4: Preservation of authenticity
- Principle 5: Planning for suitability
- Principle 6: Concern for inclusiveness
- Principle 7: Importance of research, training and evaluation.

1.3.4 GANSW Connecting with Country

The Connecting with Country Framework 2023, prepared by the Government Architects NSW Office, seeks to assist design project teams to integrate Aboriginal culture into development projects. The predominant message of the framework is that the current design approach mentality needs to shift from Human Centric to Country Centric, to create a healthy Country with culturally diverse and safe spaces that simultaneously address the growing environmental problems that society face today. It advocates for an integrated approach, guided by the Aboriginal community, that combines Aboriginal knowledge and western science and recognises and appreciates the interconnectedness of all elements of society and the environment.

² Australia ICOMOS, *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013

³ International Council on Monuments and Sites, *Ename Charter: ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites*, 2008.

1.4 Authorship and acknowledgements

This AHIAS has been prepared by Katherine Chalmers (Heritage Consultant), Katrina Eckford (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer) and Sabrina Roesner (Senior Heritage Consultant) with input and review by Carolyn MacLulich (Principal) from Artefact.

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

1.5 Cultural warning

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

1.6 Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property

Artefact have prepared this AHIAS report for the South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty 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 Intellectual Property (ICIP) must be protected at all times.

1.7 Terminology

Due to the huge disruption of colonisation and the challenges of translating Aboriginal language into written English, there are a variety of ways of referring to the Aboriginal peoples and languages of the Camden 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: Dharug, Darug, Dharawal, D'harawal, Tharawal, Thurawal. Gandangara, Gundungara, and Gandangara. For the purpose of this report the following spelling will be used: Dharawal, Dharug and Gandangara. The report may contain words and terms in quotations from works written by non-Indigenous people in the past that may be confronting and considered inappropriate today. Artefact does not endorse these views or the use of these terms. These historical sources have been included because they provide information on the lives of Aboriginal people in the region.

2. SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the site's context and proposed development. For a summary of the Aboriginal histories of the site, see Appendix B.

2.2 Site location and setting

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty consists of land within Lot 500 DP 1231858, Lot 2 and 4 DP1216380 and Lot 4 DP1273487. It is situated within a semi-rural landscape in the suburb of Cobbitty and the Local Government Area (LGA) of Camden. It is located within the County of Cumberland and the Parish of Cook. The study area falls within the boundaries of the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). Precinct 5 is located in the south-west portion of the South Creek West Land Release Area.

2.3 Proposed development

The Planning Proposal is seeking amend the State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts – Western Parkland City) 2021 (Parkland City SEPP) and rezone 172.68ha of land that forms 57% of Precinct 5. The remainder of Precinct 5 (130.41ha, 43%) is owned by a separate landowner.

The Planning Proposal will accommodate up to approximately 2,650 dwellings and a population of approximately [9,684] people. It builds on the NSW Government's vision and aspirations under the Western Sydney Growth Areas program.

To ensure planned infrastructure and services can service the entire Precinct, this report has considered Precinct 5 in its entirety, where relevant.

The intended outcome of this Planning Proposal is to amend the Parkland City SEPP as follows:

- Incorporate the site on the 'Land Application Map' for the Parkland City SEPP
- Rezone the land to part:
 - MU1 Mixed Use
 - C2 Environmental Conservation
 - C4 Environmental Living
 - R2 Low Density Residential
 - R3 Medium Density Residential
 - RE1 Public Recreation
 - SP2 Infrastructure
- Introduce building heights as follows:
 - 9 metres for low-density residential uses, allowing for developments of up to two storeys in height.
 - 12 metres for medium-density residential uses, allowing for development of up to three storeys in height.
- Introduce dwelling density controls (a range of minimum – maximum dwellings per hectare) which correspond with the land use zones and Indicative Layout Plan, as follows:
 - Maximum 10 dwelling per hectare for the E4 Zone
 - 20-25 dwellings per hectare for the R2 Zone
 - Part 25-35 dwellings per hectare for the R3 Zone
- Introduce a minimum lot size of 1,000sqm only for the C4 Zoned Land.
- Map the riparian corridor on the site under the Riparian Protection Area and Native Vegetation Protection Map.
- Map land for a public purpose under the Land Reservation Acquisition Map.

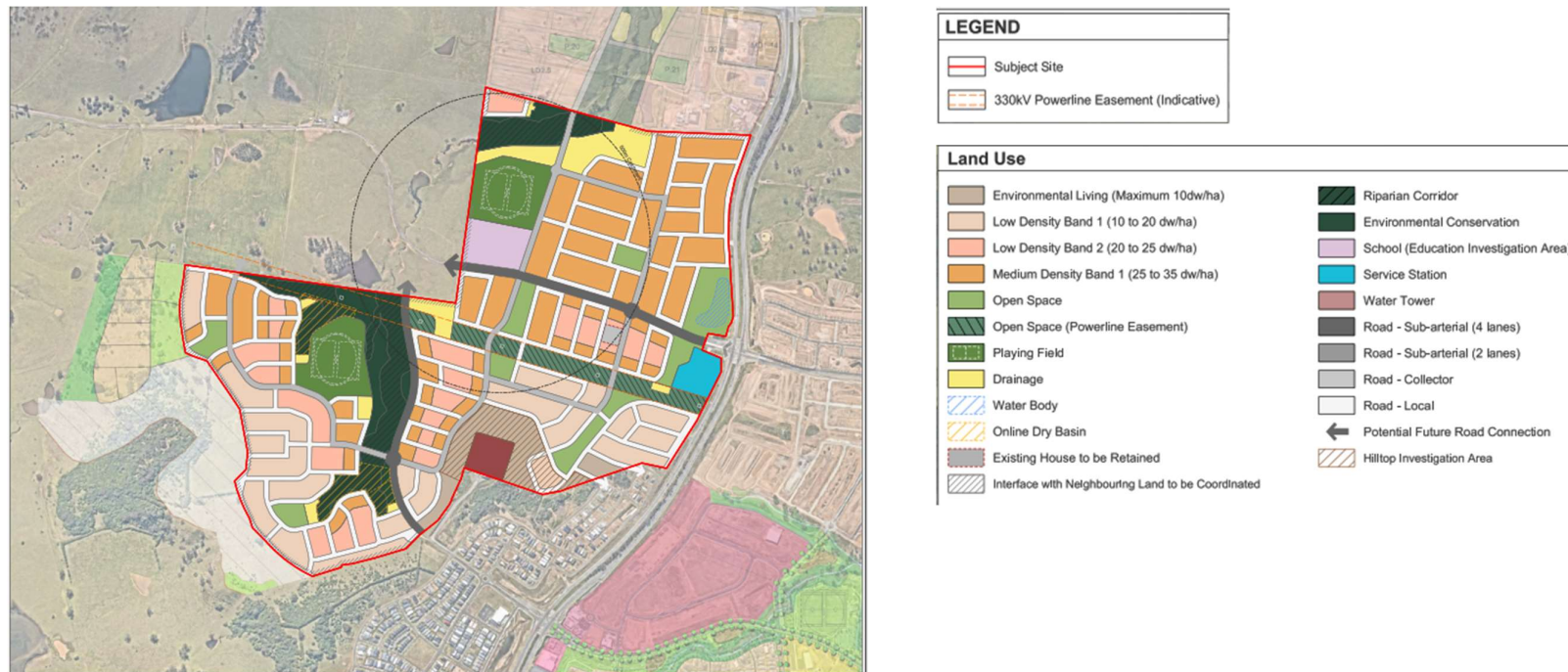


Figure 1: Draft indicative layout plan revision F (source: Always Consultancy, 2026)

3. VALUES AND SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the precinct, identified through previous reports and consultation as well as project specific consultation, to inform the planning of appropriate interpretive media and public art.

3.2 Aboriginal heritage significance

3.2.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report

JJ Cobbitty Development commissioned Artefact to prepare an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) to address Council’s requirements for a rezoning application of Precinct 5.

Through the ACHAR process twenty-seven groups, individuals and organisations responded as Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs).

Table 2: List of Register Aboriginal Parties for the Cobbitty Bringelly Project – Redacted

Organisation	RAP contact person

Organisation	RAP contact person

3.2.1.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values from ACHAR

The following cultural heritage values were expressed by RAPs in their registrations:

[REDACTED]

3.2.2 Archaeological Technical Report and Site survey, 2 and 3 February 2023

Artefact has also prepared an Archaeological Technical Report (ATR) to support the ACHAR. As part of this report an Aboriginal and archaeological survey of the study area was conducted over 2 and 3 February 2023 by Artefact personnel, with three RAP representatives.

3.2.2.1 Registered Aboriginal sites

Note: The location of Aboriginal sites is considered culturally sensitive information. It is advised that this information, including the Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIMS) data appearing on Figure 2 to be removed from this report if it is to enter the public domain.

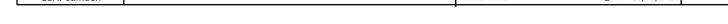
An extensive AHIMS search was undertaken on 26 March 2024 which includes sites identified by Artefact during the Archaeological Survey on 2 February 2024. The search identified 46 registered sites within the wider search area, which included the study area and the surrounding land. Most of the sites identified are [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



4. INTERPRETIVE APPROACH

4.1 Introduction

This section outlines the approach that is recommended for the interpretation at South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty incorporating the Aboriginal cultural heritage values, themes and key stories of the site into a comprehensive suite of interpretive media.

4.2 Interpretive principles

The following principles will guide the development of heritage interpretation and public art at Precinct 5.

- Present the site as part of the distinct cultural landscape with tangible and intangible heritage significance and a strong focus on the natural environment.
- Incorporate documentary research, oral histories and graphic materials to illustrate the significance of songlines of the area in a clear and engaging manner.
- Collaborate with Aboriginal stakeholders to ensure interpretation strategies adhere to the cultural heritage significance of the area.
- Ensure that interpretive media are physically and conceptually accessible, designed to engage and stimulate interest and are particularly targeted to the employees at the warehouse facility.
- Ensure that interpretive media are designed in a way that complements the facility of the site and the natural and historic characteristics of the setting.

4.3 Audience identification

Heritage interpretation is most effective when potential audiences are identified and specifically targeted. It is important to define audience categories to ensure that the design, content and location of interpretive media provide engaging and informative experiences relevant to those audiences.

The indicative layout for the precinct as part of the rezoning proposal supports 2,650 dwellings and therefore an estimated a population of 7,000 people. The following section presents an overview of Camden City's current population demographics, offering insights into the expected demographics for the precinct.⁴

The Camden Council area, located in Sydney's southwestern suburbs about 60 kilometres from the CBD, has an estimated resident population of 134,811 in 2023, with a population density of 668.8 persons per square kilometres. The median age is 33, with females making up 50.9% (60,735) and males 49.1% (58,587) of the population. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community accounts for 3.2% (3,875), while Australian citizens represent 90.2% (107,662) of the population. Employment is high, with 96.5% (59,480) of the population employed. Camden is culturally diverse, with 74.1% (88,465) born in Australia, followed by residents born in India (2.4%), England (2.3%), New Zealand (1.5%), the Philippines (1.3%), and Iraq (1.1%).

It is anticipated that key audiences for Precinct 5 will be:

- Dharawal, Gandangara and Dharug traditional custodians and knowledge holders and Aboriginal people with connections to the area.
- New precinct residents and their visitors.

⁴ Australian Bureau for Statistics, Camden 2021 Census. Accessed online via <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA11450> on 03 October 2024.

- Residents of nearby suburbs of Camden, Campbelltown and surrounds.

4.4 Consultation

When designing interpretive media and public art for a site, consultation with stakeholders should be undertaken to ensure that interpretation is appropriate, engaging and relevant for the site itself and those who will use it. Consultation with Aboriginal knowledge holders is a fundamental aspect of the heritage interpretation process. As the traditional owners of the land, the local community maintains a dynamic connection to Country which informs their identity, culture, language and ways of living. The depth of this connection requires that appropriate, effective consultation with relevant community members must take place for any interpretive, archaeological or heritage works occurring on their traditional lands.

Under the Burra Charter:

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.⁵

4.4.1 Consultation with Aboriginal Stakeholders

Following from the ACHAR and ATR consultation processes, Artefact prepared a Connecting with Country Report (CwC) for which additional consultation with Dharug, Gandangara and Dharawal traditional custodians was undertaken, and which summarised Aboriginal cultural values from previous consultation and project related reports. The CwC report process involved a Walk on Country at the site on 28 August 2024, followed by a detailed outline of cultural heritage values identified for the site. During the Walk on Country future interpretation opportunities were also identified by

participants and discussed with the Artefact team. Following this a Cultural Storytelling workshop was facilitated by Artefact’s Interpretation team, to identify relevant and appropriate themes and stories for interpretation as well as indicative locations for interpretive media at the site. A summary of the Walk on County and Cultural Storytelling Workshop is provided in the following sections.

4.4.2 Walk on Country, 28 August 2024

The Walk on Country was conducted on 28 August 2024.

4.4.2.1 Attendees - redacted

[Redacted text block containing names of attendees]

⁵ Australia ICOMOS, 2013. Burra Charter, p.3

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- Kelly Barton, Sabrina Roesner and Alex Gaffikin, Artefact
- Nicole Aiken, Leslie Kuisma, Namika Parajuli and Murray Wilson, Camden Council
- Paul Hourigan and Xudai Sun, Always Consultancy
- Mark Santangelo, Distinctive
- Simon Wilkes, Urbis
- Nigel McAndrew, Design + Planning



Figure 3: View across to ridgeline, 28 August 2024

4.4.2.2 Cultural heritage values and ideas

Cultural heritage values relevant for interpretation shared during the Walk on Country has been summarised below:

Connection to Country

The group talked about their connections to the area. [REDACTED] recounted how they lived in the Campbelltown area since the 1970s, witnessing children growing up in the area. They related past experience to the continuity of their connection to the area.

Songlines

The area is along travel songlines and pathways that Aboriginal people would have taken to travel between the Blue Mountains and what is now Campbelltown. [REDACTED] spoke about the connection of Aboriginal people to Country with reference to the role of the Dreaming to their culture. She expressed how songlines are significant as a navigational aid.

Waterways

A seasonal creek runs through the site. North of the site, the creek runs through various dams before running into Lowes Creek, which itself runs into Wianamatta (South Creek). The project team noted that the creek had been impacted by farming but could be rejuvenated with native plantings. Rejuvenation of the creek would encourage native habitats, plants and animals, provide shade, and could be a relaxing area for residents of the suburb. [REDACTED] recommended the retention of waterways and watercourses where possible as dams would be nice places for walks and would be “popular with families.”

Native plants & animals

The project team discussed the considerable number of non-native weeds in the area and the importance of removing the invasive species and replanting native plantings in the area. The creek in particular needed rehabilitation following years of farming.

The project team talked about the retention of habitats for local animals. [REDACTED] expressed her concern with the displacement of kangaroos from western Sydney around Penrith. [REDACTED] said the kangaroos

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

are particularly affected because the developments are located on their paths of transit, and as a result, they run into traffic.

Local heritage and artefacts

██████████ said that many artefacts have been found in a broad area all the way to Wollongong, and that the artefacts are significant to the Aboriginal people of this land. ██████████ mentioned that there are artefacts currently stored ██████████, and hence are testament to the significance of this area and its material culture to Aboriginal people. ██████████ mentioned how some artefacts and scarred trees have been found and are located at Wianamatta (South Creek).

Language and naming

Naming areas and streets was discussed. ██████████ mentioned for example that some streets in some suburbs have botanical names. The streets in the new development could be named after native plant species.

View lines

The project team discussed the importance of view lines across the site to the ridges. ██████████ noted the surrounding landscape and ridges and highlighted their strategic value as vantage points due to their elevation above the surrounding area.

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

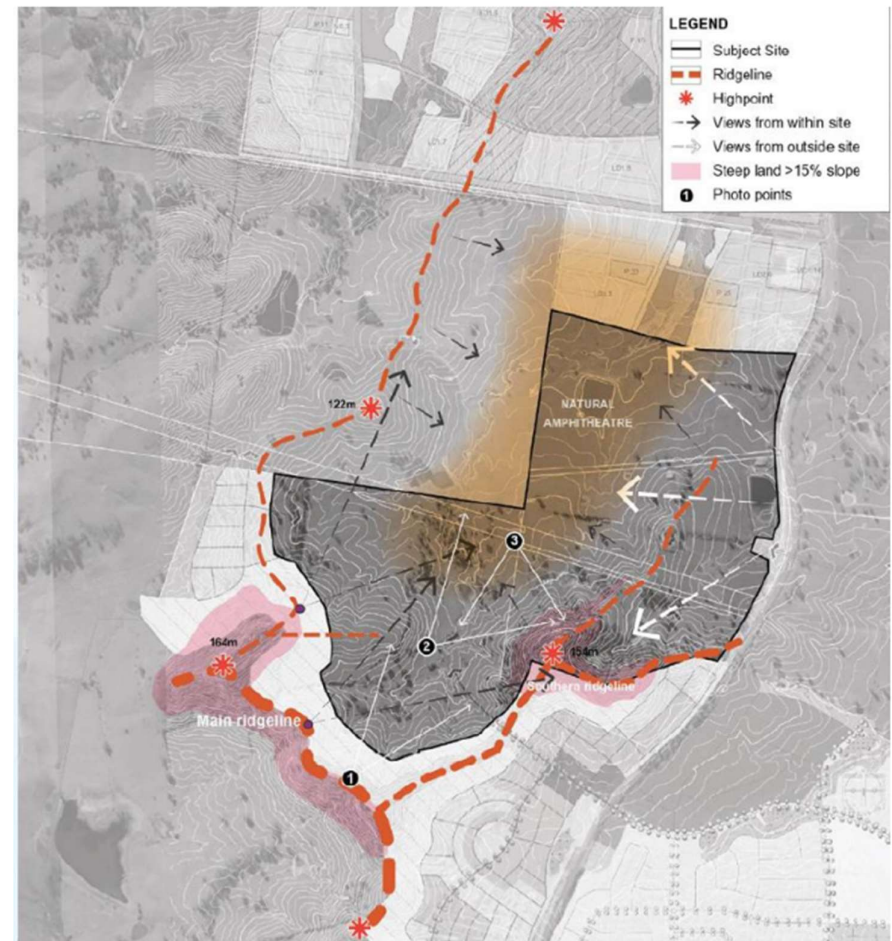


Figure 4: Landform Analysis Plan. (source: Design & Planning)

4.4.2.3 Interpretation and public art opportunities

██████████ spoke about possibilities for heritage interpretation at the site. They discussed the following interpretation opportunities:

- Weed removal, restoration and planting of native and endemic species that would have been present prior to colonisation throughout the precinct.
- Create a seating area on a high point at the site that offers views to both the south and north. This space could also serve as a sensory and tactile environment that reconnects visitors with nature. Users could immerse themselves in the sounds of birds and wind, experience different textures through diverse plantings and landscape features like rock surfaces, grasses, and moss, and enjoy the natural scents of eucalyptus, tea tree, and lemon myrtle.
- Themes and key stories for interpretation could include: The land between the waters – the study area is located between the Nepean River, Bringelly Creek and Wianamatta (South Creek).
- Street naming and wayfinding signage incorporating local place names and language throughout the new precinct.
- Tell the story of the Bunya Pine, which grows all the way from the Blue Mountains to the ocean and was traditionally used as a landscape feature for navigation.
- Tell the story of Bull Cave: The legend of the Cowpastures which describes how early European settlers discovered the fertile farmland of the region. In July 1788, just six months after the Europeans arrived, two bulls and four cows brought over on the First Fleet went missing. Nearly two years later, the cattle were spotted in the Menangle area.

The local Aboriginal people, curious about the unfamiliar animals, depicted them on the walls of a sandstone shelter along the Georges River, in a cave now known as 'Bull Cave' in Kentlyn.⁶

- Public art by locally connected Aboriginal artists should be integrated throughout the precinct into placemaking of public areas including functional elements such as seating, fencing, screens and wayfinding. The new water tank owned by Sydney Water was also pointed out as a possible canvas.
- Footprints of native animals could be incorporated into ground plane elements such as footpaths and cycleways.
- Create green corridors with native and endemic plantings between residential and commercial components of the new precinct.



Figure 5: Bull cave as photographed in the early 1980s. (source: Campbelltown Library)

⁶ Campbelltown City Council – The Bull Cave. Available at [Bull Cave - Campbelltown City Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au/council/council-meetings-and-agendas/2024/2024-09-03-council-meeting). Accessed 3 September 2024.

4.4.3 Cultural Storytelling Workshops

Artefact arranged three Cultural Storytelling Workshops with traditional custodians to identify themes and cultural stories relevant to the precinct, the surrounding area, and to discuss possible media and locations for interpretation at the site.

Summaries of the workshops have been provided below.

4.4.3.1 Workshop 1, 14 October 2024 - redacted

Attendees

[REDACTED]

- Sabrina Roesner and Katherine Chalmers, Artefact

The following items were discussed during the workshop:

Cultural values and stories

- View lines in the area are very important particularly from the hill with existing olive trees. It is important for the development to keep the views across the landscape and particularly up into the mountains.
- The waterways in the area are very important and the development should honour these.
- The precinct should acknowledge to the people living and working here that they are on shared Country. Any Welcome/Acknowledgement of Country needs to educate people about the three language groups that share the area: Dharug, Dharawal and Gandangara.
- The precinct can educate people about the importance of the creek lines to Aboriginal people in terms of food sources and transport. People don't see creeks as important, so it is important to restore, clean and look after the creeks to remind people.

- The creek lines also acted as connectors, connecting the traditional language groups. Creek lines should be integrated into public art motifs where possible.
- The views, the mountains, the Bunya Pines and the Koori highways through Country are important stories to share.
- Sky Country needs to be acknowledged. The site's view lines not only connect to the land but also to Sky Country.

Interpretive opportunities

- There is an opportunity to put a seating area elevated areas as a lookout feature to take in all of the views. There could be multiple viewing spots.
- Lookouts and public meeting and seating areas could have interpretive panels and QR codes which could provide people with information about Country including the songlines of the Bunya Pines and the Koori highway.
- Traditional language should be featured on signage and wayfinding
- Wayfinding and interpretive panels could be located along the proposed pathways and nature trails.
- The landscape design should use curved lines, circles and flow with the landscape, using natural shapes and clusters of planning.
- Landscaping could include Lomdandra (used for weaving), Kangaroo paw, Grass Trees, Paperbark trees and Eucalypts.
- There is an opportunity to develop Aboriginal art design within shading and screening elements which feature laser-cut patterns from the landscape such as Kangaroo paw shapes. Kangaroo paws could be planted into landscaping nearby to complement the screens.
- Ground plane elements could include animal tracks such as paw prints which is a good way to engage kids.

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

- Welcome/ Acknowledgement of Country signage or art installations should feature natural materials and should be surrounded by greenery.



Figure 6: Acknowledgement of Country artwork at Parliament House by Simon Reece, Rowena Welsh-Jarret, and Alison Page at Parliament House.

- Landscaping and seating should be provided and afford people a variety of places to sit and connect with Country, whether they choose to sit on the grass, or in the shade or in the sun.
- The bush tucker gardens are a good feature but the design should take into account that Aboriginal communities wouldn't have had a garden with clusters of plants, and rather have found bush tucker scattered throughout the landscape. The landscaping should have the bush tucker arranged as it would have been found in naturally.
- Interpretation and representation of Aboriginal culture should be simple and subtle.

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

- Any trees or materials taken from site should be recycled or reused on site to create creative interpretive features.
- It would be a good to have a play space featuring timbers, sandstone and water play areas. A good example is Burrumatta Park in Parramatta Park where the kids can round up sticks to build huts and play a sound machine to hear the sounds of animals from the area.



Figure 7: Paperbark Playground. (Source: Parramatta Park Trust)

4.4.3.2 Workshop 2, 14 October 2024 – redacted

Attendees

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- Sabrina Roesner and Katherine Chalmers, Artefact

The following items were discussed during the workshop:

Naming and language

Dual naming is a good idea but needs to consider that there are three Countries, and three languages associated with this area – [REDACTED]

Integrating names of plants and animals from the Cumberland Plain into wayfinding would be positive, but would require a lot of consultation – [REDACTED]

The proposed sporting fields could have traditional Aboriginal names, for example Emu Oval, or have the names of well-known local Aboriginal sports people such as Kevin and Kenny McGuinness – [REDACTED]

Cultural values

The view lines to the hill tops and waterways including to South Creek and the Nepean River are important – [REDACTED]

To understand and evaluate the cultural values associated with an area, site visits shouldn't be rushed, and all parts of the site should be visited to see all the high points, which would provide a better understanding of how water moves from the hill to the creek and the dam below – [REDACTED]

This area is rich in intangible and tangible Aboriginal culture with strong connections to the land and the waterways, and the use of this land is shown in the large number of artefacts and scar trees in the area, as well as a modified tree near Appin which was used as a marker or map [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

This area is part of a very important songline associated with the Bunya Pines – [REDACTED]

The land between the two rivers – the Nepean and the Georges – is full of stories and values which should be explored – [REDACTED]

Waterways are very important with creek lines from the Georges River connecting with those of the Nepean River all through this area. In these areas communities would come together and traded – [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The presence of Aboriginal people, artefacts from thousands of years and landscape elements such as the Bunya Pines tells of our story as hunter-gatherers on Country – [REDACTED]

Bull Cave is important as it records the arrival of the first fleet, which carried bulls that had had their horns cut off – [REDACTED]

Kangaroos a key part of this Country, having also used this area as a travelling stock route – [REDACTED]

Interpretive options:

There is a good opportunity to put seating within elevated areas to provide a view across all of Country – [REDACTED]

The water tank could feature a mural, particularly as it is the main view from Northern Road. The mural could focus on the waterways in the areas including the Nepean and its tributaries [REDACTED]

The water tank mural could focus on the land between the two rivers – [REDACTED]

Signage and artwork are good forms of interpretation – [REDACTED]

Metal silhouette sculptures of Kangaroos could be installed to pay homage to the fact that this is Kangaroo Country – [REDACTED]

It would be good if the play spaces featured shelters and natural material such as sandstone and timber – [REDACTED]

The play spaces should be multisensory – featuring elements to touch, hear and smell as well as see, and need to be accessible for people of all abilities [REDACTED]

Seating places could feature sandstone and timber seats, in the form of a yarning circle or shaped like boomerangs.

The landscaping at the top of the hill could feature natives to emphasise Aboriginal culture and their influence in the project – [REDACTED]

Wayfinding could feature imagery as well as information about Country.

Wayfinding could be included throughout the development including around the sports field.

Artwork is an important form of communication for Aboriginal communities, nowadays as much as it was thousands of years ago, particularly as there were over 500 Aboriginal languages – [REDACTED]

4.4.3.3 Workshop 3, 17 October 2024 - redacted

Attendees

- Sabrina Roesner and Katrina Eckford, Artefact

Interpretive options

Boomerang shaped seating is preferred rather than yarning circles as they are being over-utilised, and the new school in the precinct school will most likely incorporate one.

It is important we try and work the interpretive options into the natural vegetation.

The school will have their own Acknowledgement of Country.

The billabong at Campbelltown could be referred to for inspiration: regarding use of language. [REDACTED]



Figure 8: Njirangga dharidhamayi Dharawal nguradha - You are standing on Dharawal Country. Entry Sign at Campbelltown Billabong developed by Aboriginal Stakeholders and artist Danielle Mate.

- It is important to have endemic species planted. Avoid non-endemic species as they attract feral birds in which dislocate other birds.
- On the Cumberland Plain there are many old trees, some 300-400 years old. These “pockets of education” should be contained.
- Public art and design integration within the precinct is a good idea but it needs to be considered carefully to be in harmony with the surrounding area.

Stories and Cultural Values

- The Bunya Pine doesn't belong here naturally, it was planted by Aboriginal People and used as a food source
- The area became known as the 'Cow pastures' due to a story linked to four dehorned cows and two bulls, which arrived with the first fleet. They escaped and headed towards the Nepean, where the herd continued to grow. As the growing herd of animals were an important source for meat, it was declared that no one was allowed to travel south of the Nepean River to kill them.
- Since 1982 the Australian Museum are holding material and artefacts from the bull cave. Talks were had about repatriating these items before Covid but it did not eventuate.
- To the south of the reservoir, the property has heritage curtilage as well as aboriginal heritage including scare trees and artefacts.
- The creek line contains artefacts and on either side of the road in Merrylands artefacts were identified.

Naming and language

██████████ discussed how important it is to put language back on the country. ██████████ could be contacted as someone who works closely Dharawal and Dharug language.

4.5 Key themes

Based on consultation outcomes and information shared during the Cultural Storytelling Workshops the following four key themes have been identified for South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5:

The land between the two rivers: this is Dharawal, Dharug, and Gandangara Country

The land between the two rivers, encompassing Dharawal, Dharug and Gandangara Country, is a significant cultural and geographical area. Here, creek lines flowing from the Georges into the Nepean River meet, weaving together a rich tapestry of waterways that have sustained life for thousands of years. This region was a central meeting place for Aboriginal people, where communities would gather to trade goods, share in important rituals, and pass on cultural knowledge.

Song lines of Country: following the Bunya Pine

The Songline of the Bunya Pine traces an ancient pathway stretching from the Blue Mountains through Campbelltown and further towards the coast, known as the Koori Highway. This pathway, marked by Bunya Pines, held immense significance for Aboriginal people, as it served as a vital route for travel, trade, and cultural exchange. The Bunya Pine Songline not only connected landscapes but also the stories, traditions, and people of these regions, forming a living cultural map that has been passed down through generations.

Living Landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West

The living landscapes of the precinct and South Creek West (Wianamatta Creek), are home to the critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland and River-Flat Eucalypt Forest, representing a fragile yet vital ecological community. The grassy understorey and scattered eucalypts which thrive along creek lines and floodplains, are remnants of traditional ecosystems that once flourished across the region. These landscapes provide potential

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

habitat for numerous threatened flora and fauna species, and would have provided abundant resources including food and natural materials for Aboriginal People.

Sky Country

The high points along the southern ridgeline of this site offer expansive views, not only of the surrounding landscape but also of the vast Sky Country above. These significant vantage points create a profound sense of connection between the earth and the sky, reflecting the deep spiritual and cultural ties that Aboriginal people hold with the land and heavens. Sky Country is more than just the physical expanse of the sky; it represents a realm of ancestral stories, guidance, and knowledge.

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty



Figure 9: Sightlines to ridges across Country, 28 August 2024 (Source: Artefact)

5. INTERPRETIVE OPTIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section outlines a range of interpretive and public art options to communicate the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the Precinct. Interpretive options.

5.2 Interpretive Options

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty requires effective, culturally sensitive and easily accessible interpretive media, including public art, that conveys key messages about its Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

Opportunities for suitable interpretive media to be explored for Precinct 5 include:

- Acknowledgement of/Welcome to Country
- Integration of Aboriginal designs and forms into built environment
- Street and sport field naming in traditional language
- Public green spaces, interpretive landscaping and restoration with gathering places and seating
- Public artwork and functional elements
- Play spaces
- Interpretive panels
- Websites

A Heritage Interpretation and Public Art strategy is a high-level strategic report which presents a range of possible interpretation media, suitable for Precinct 5, and a broad overview of opportunities for integration within the site. It is not intended that all the interpretive elements outlined in the

strategy necessarily be developed, but that the most appropriate in terms of project design and scope be integrated into the project planning.

As the project progresses through its various design stages, a Heritage Interpretation Plan should be developed to provide more detailed information on the final selection of interpretive media and public art as well as their locations, content and materials.



Figure 10: Lartelare Aboriginal Heritage Park, Port Adelaide, South Australia by T.L.C.

5.3 Acknowledgement of/ Welcome to Country

A keyway of signalling the importance of Country to audiences at a site is through the provision of a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country message. A Welcome to Country is given by the traditional custodians/knowledge holders of the area, welcoming people to their land, while an Acknowledgement of Country is a sign of respect to the traditional owners of the land stated by the asset holder.

5.3.1 Key themes

The key theme explored through this interpretive medium is:

- The land between the two rivers: this is Dharug, Gandangara and Dharawal Country

5.3.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty opportunities exist to:

- Establish 'Welcome to Country' features, such as signage or sculptural displays, at key precinct gateways, possibly integrated into landscaping, see Figure 37.
- A Welcome to Country would be provided by local Dharug, Gandangara, and Dharawal traditional custodians and Elders with connections to the site.
- Include an Acknowledgement of Country on the project's website. This could be in the form of a landing page, or a dedicated static Acknowledgement of Country page.

5.3.3 Examples



Figure 11: Left - Monero-Ngarigo Welcome to Country sign. Right - Acknowledgment of Country artwork by Alison Page, Rowena Welsh-Jarrett and Simon Reece

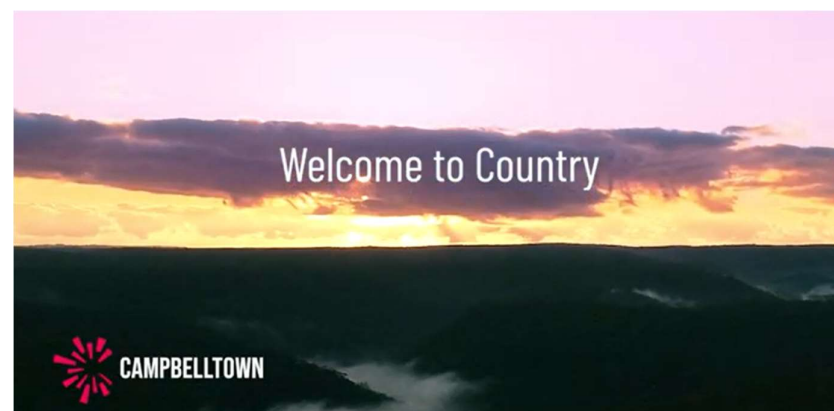


Figure 12: Welcome to Country [REDACTED] Campbelltown Council

5.4 Integration of Aboriginal designs and forms into built environment

Creative practices in place-making and architectural design serve as powerful tools for incorporating and reflecting the Aboriginal heritage values and stories of a site within new developments. These embedded cultural values can be expressed through innovative design solutions, offering a visual narrative of Country. This can be achieved through the design of new buildings, integrated features, and the shaping of the surrounding landscape.

This interpretive approach is particularly effective for integrating Aboriginal cultural values into the built environment. Designs that draw inspiration from traditional forms, spaces, and narratives – along with their contemporary interpretations – are increasingly being incorporated into developments worldwide. These designs convey a strong, respectful message about the enduring connection between Aboriginal people and the land, while also allowing for reflections on contemporary relationships with Country. Heritage values embedded within the public infrastructure and public domain of South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty can be expressed through design responses for new public infrastructure such as the town and community centre and proposed school, providing a visual exploration of the cultural values of the area.

5.4.1 Key themes

The key themes explored through this interpretive medium is:

- The land between the two rivers: this is Dharug, Gandangara and Dharawal Country
- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West
- Sky Country

5.4.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty opportunities exist to:

- Consult with traditional custodians on opportunities to integrate Aboriginal designs into public infrastructure. This could include integration of Aboriginal shapes, pattern, colours and design work into areas within the public domain and street scapes, for example within the town centre/ community centre and school as indicated in the Draft Indicative Layout Plan, see Figure 1.
- Design elements could incorporate natural shapes, patterns, and colours inspired by native flora like Paperbarks, Kangaroo Paws, Xanthorrhoeas, and Eucalypts, as well as geometric designs referencing creek lines and waterways

5.4.3 Examples



Figure 13: Budj Bim Cultural Landscape Aboriginal design.



Figure 14: Top - Biripi Aboriginal Clinic, Purfleet. Bottom – Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service allied health services hub in Newman.



Figure 15: Top and bottom - Wilpena Pound Entry Precinct concept plans by Nguluway Design Inc.

5.5 Road naming and wayfinding

For Aboriginal people, connection with Country is intrinsically connected to identity through language, cultural practices and long held relationship between people and the land. Using Aboriginal words or phrases to name key features in new developments and using language and dual naming for streets and public spaces is an interpretive option that recognises Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

In New South Wales, the Geographical Names Board (GNB) is responsible for naming features like mountains, bays, rivers, suburbs, railway stations, and other locations. Once the GNB assigns a name, it becomes the officially recognised place name, appearing on maps and available for community use. Local councils manage the naming of infrastructure such as roads, streets and bridges.

Integrating Aboriginal designs and motifs into wayfinding and providing cultural knowledge in small bites of information enhances audience's understanding of place.

5.5.1 Key themes

The key themes explored through this interpretive medium is:

- The land between the two rivers: this is Dharug, Gandangara and Dharawal Country
- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West

5.5.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty the following opportunities could be considered:

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

- Explore opportunities for road naming and wayfinding using Dharug, Gandangara and Dharawal language.
- Use of language in naming of public infrastructure such as sports fields, local parks and open spaces. See 4.4.3
- Street names could be themed using words that reflect the local flora, fauna, nearby waterways, creeks, and cultural landmarks. Any naming process must be carried out in close collaboration with Traditional Custodians, the Geographical Names Board, and Camden Council.

5.5.3 Examples



Figure 16: Place naming: Kurranulla – Place of Pink Shells place sign. Sutherland Shire Council.

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty



Figure 17: Yananurala – Walking Country Harbour Walk wayfinding signage. City of Sydney.



Figure 18: Sydney's Accor Stadium grandstand named in honour of sporting legend Cathy Freeman OAM

5.6 Public green spaces, interpretive landscaping and restoration with gathering places and seating

5.6.1 Landscape design

Landscaping devices, including use of turf and hardstand, landscape geometry and shapes, use of water and planting certain species, can create an immersive space for users that gives a feeling of being surrounded by and connected to Country. Landscape design and vegetation restoration at Precinct 5 can serve as key interpretive elements to restore and showcase the site's traditional vegetation. These efforts will also create immersive landscape experiences, fostering a deeper connection to nature for future residents. The following section outlines various interpretive landscaping recommendations and strategies that could be applied within the precinct.

5.6.1.1 Landscape geometry and plantings

Plantings of species that were in the area prior to European arrival, and therefore part of the Indigenous landscape experienced by the local Aboriginal community, is a powerful interpretive approach for landscaping. Planting patterns, where trees and understory plants were clumped rather than planted in lines or squares, are preferred to enhance the naturalistic feel and to echo Country.

The landscape design should feature curving forms and lines rather than harsh straight geometric lines associated with European landscape design to ensure that the landscape flows with Country.



Figure 19: Circular motifs of the living calendar at TAFE Bendigo representing the six seasons of the Dja Dja Wurrung.

5.6.2 Environmental restoration

Restoring Country should be facilitated in landscape design and could include the restoration of native vegetation, riparian corridors and habitat at the project site to support thriving ecosystems.

Landscaping could be designed around existing water bodies and creeks, considering how it moves through the landscape and project site and how water quality can be improved within the site before it moves into the broader receiving environment, in particular South West Creek.

Providing refuge and habitat for 'non-human' residents and visitors is equally important. Considering local ecosystems and how landscaping can support and restore them is a crucial part of caring for Country. Landscaping should aim to create micro-habitats that foster biodiversity and support the ecological health of the area.



Figure 20: Barangaroo Reserve, planting involved 84 different species that were native to the Sydney region at the time of European settlement. (Source: Janna Schreier Garden Design)



Figure 21: Creating micro habitats: Native Rooftop Farm Everleigh

5.6.3 Bush tucker plantings

Incorporating bush tucker into broader landscape designs and public green spaces promotes sustainability while offering educational opportunities about Aboriginal cultural heritage and native flora. Bush tucker plants provide unique flavours, nutritional benefits, and are well-suited to local climates. These native plants create visually appealing, low-maintenance green spaces that support local wildlife and celebrate Indigenous culture. Small, interpretive signage placed throughout could provide information about the traditional names and uses of bushtucker plants.

The design of the bush tucker plantings should take into account that bush tucker would not have been planted together in gardens, as is the case with Western garden designs, and the Aboriginal community would have had to forage through the landscape to source the foods.



Figure 22: South Eveleigh Native Rooftop Farm, South Eveleigh, Sydney, by Yerrabingin.

5.6.4 Interpretive landscaping

Drawing together the abovementioned elements, interpretive landscaping within public parks of the precinct presents a valuable opportunity to highlight the diverse Aboriginal heritage of the area. By thoughtfully integrating native plants and bush tucker and using pre-colonial and natural designs, the landscape can reflect the traditional knowledge of the Dharug, Gandangara, and Dharawal people. Signage within plantings can be used to share stories, cultural practices, and the significance of native flora, offering educational experiences for residents and visitors. Pathways, and gathering spaces designed to reflect Aboriginal cultural motifs, e.g. concentric circles, can further enrich these parks, creating a deeper connection to the land's history. Incorporating such interpretive elements into the landscape design of local parks will help create a meaningful, living tribute to the Aboriginal history of South Creek West. Plants suggested during consultation included Kangaroo Paws, Grass Trees and Paperbarks.



Figure 23: Yagan Square interpretive landscaping using Kangaroo Paws.



Figure 24: Bilya Marlee houses the School of Indigenous Studies, Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health, and the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health in Perth.

5.6.5 Gathering spaces and seating

New precinct developments offer opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal designs into public spaces by creating gathering areas and seating that reflect Aboriginal cultural heritage connected to the site. Functional elements like stairways, seating, tables, shelters, and yarning circles can be enriched with Aboriginal designs transforming these everyday items into canvases for cultural expression. By embedding interpretive heritage elements into seating and shade structures, these spaces become meaningful points for engagement and conversation. Strategically placed patterns, text, or image-based inserts encourage visitors to pause, reflect, and absorb the stories and messages tied to the site. Similarly, using overhead elements such as canopies, roofs, and awnings to display Aboriginal designs offers a distinctive way to showcase a destination's heritage.

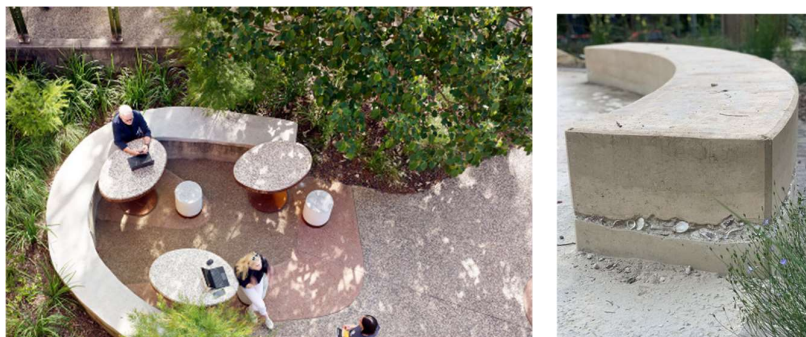


Figure 25: Left - UQ Reconciliation Garden Multhana. Right: Seating with shells Yerrabingen House South Everleigh.

5.6.6 Key themes

The key theme explored through this interpretive medium is:

- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West

5.6.7 Opportunities for Precinct 5

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty, opportunities could be explored to enrich the planned public green spaces with:

- Traditional landscape designs, geometry and native plantings.
- Create environmental restoration and conservation areas to restore Country.
- Create visual links to nature and green spaces.

- interpretive landscaping e.g. in the form of bushtucker plantings and signage into ‘parklets’, nature trails and green spaces throughout the precinct.
- Create public gathering and seating areas throughout the precinct within nature, community and play areas. Incorporate Aboriginal designs into gathering spaces where possible.

Camden Council’s Public Domain Design Manuals⁷ should be consulted for seating design, material choices and maintenance requirements.

5.7 Public artworks

Public artworks can be an evocative and successful tool in interpreting the heritage significance of a site while also enhancing its aesthetic and cultural character. This type of interpretive media creates a visual statement about the cultural heritage of an area and is important in place-making for the public domain. Public art may work in tandem with other interpretive elements, such as lighting, functional or ground plane elements.

Public art can be an engaging medium for carrying heritage interpretation messaging, if based on Aboriginal heritage interpretation themes, thus creating a further connection through an exciting visual form to the heritage of a site.

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty opportunities exist to integrate Gandangara, Dharug and Dharawal cultural motifs into artworks and to engage locally connected Aboriginal artists. Possible motifs and storylines for consideration in artwork designs were explored during the Cultural Storytelling workshops - see 4.4.3.

⁷ Camden Council Public Domain Design Manuals, online via: [Public Domain Design Manuals » Camden Council](#)

5.7.1 Key Themes

Themes explored through public artworks could be:

- The land between the two rivers: this is Dharug, Gandangara and Dharawal Country
- Song lines of Country: Following the Bunya Pine
- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West
- Sky Country

5.7.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty opportunities exist to:

- Consider installation of public artwork(s) by locally connected Aboriginal artist(s) within the public domain. Artwork motifs could include:
 - The waterbodies and creek lines of the precinct including the seasonal creek.
 - Kangaroo Paws shapes or silhouettes etched into metal or glass screens and shading devices, creating shadow play. Nearby landscaping could feature Kangaroo Paw plantings.
 - Cultural mapping of the site - see artwork by Kayelene Slater, for reference only,

Figure 29.

- Local flora and fauna in artwork designs including Kangaroo Paws, animal shapes such as lizards, fish and kangaroos.
- Sky Country
- Integrate Aboriginal artwork design into functional and ground plane elements within the public domain and civic spaces including seating, shading, screens and public transport infrastructure such as bus shelters.
- Integrate an Acknowledgement of Country within a public artwork near the precinct gateway area.
- Establish an artist selection process and criteria for locally connected Aboriginal artists.
- Allocate sufficient funding for public art within the precinct and deliver public art projects in line with Camden Council's Public Art Policy and Procedure and Cultural Activation Strategy.⁸⁹
- Public art should be thoughtfully integrated into public and civic spaces, enhancing and responding to the surrounding environment. Landscaping that complements the artworks should also be considered. Public artworks can stand alone or be incorporated into functional elements.

Public art commissions need to consider factors like appropriate scale, public safety and maintenance limitations, suitable for a development such as Precinct 5.

⁸ Draft_Cultural_Activation_Strategy_2022-2026.pdf (hdp-au-prod-app-cam-matters-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com)

⁹ Camden Public Art Policy and Procedure, available online via: <https://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/assets/Uploads/Public-Art-Policy3.pdf>

5.7.3 Examples



Figure 26: Public art integrated within landscaping: 'Interconnection' arch by Jen Mallinson, in collaboration with Indigenous illustrative artist Richard Campbell.



Figure 27: Public art integrated into functional elements - screen artwork by Susan Cadby 'Their Story', The Hub, Ropes Crossing.

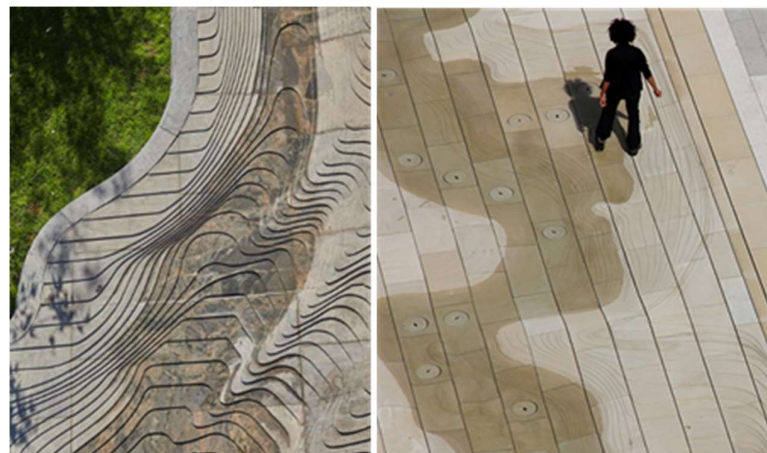


Figure 28: Yagan Square ground plane water feature referencing the former wetland system that was an important meeting and food-gathering place for Aboriginal people. (Source: Peter Bennetts)

5.7.4 Artist Selection Process

The process for commissioning Aboriginal artists for Precinct 5 could include the following steps:

- Review Camden Council's Public Art Strategy and Procedure as well as the Cultural Activation Strategy¹⁰, 2021 and connect with Council officers about potential artwork commissions for the precinct.
- Develop an artists' brief, in consultation with Camden Council and the precinct development team, which outlines the approach and specifications for the proposed artwork. Dedicate a project coordinator for the commission of public art to manage the selection and implementation process. The artist brief should contain information about the artwork location, desired materials and scale, design

¹⁰ Camden council Public Art Strategy: [Camden Council Public Art » Camden Council](#)

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

- specification and a list of artwork motifs/themes for the artists to respond to.
- Liaise with project RAPs, project stakeholders who were previously consulted on this project, key arts groups and local organisations, such as Tharawal LALC and Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative about Aboriginal artists with connection to the area who are experienced in producing public artworks, and request EOLs/portfolios from interested artists.
- EOLs and portfolios from artists to be reviewed and 2-3 artists to be selected to produce concept designs for a fee.
- Following review, one artist to be engaged through a contract or licensing agreement to produce a public artwork for the project.
- The artwork development process would involve the artist undertaking consultation with key Aboriginal stakeholders and traditional owners, and ongoing liaison with the project team about the design, fabrication and installation of their artwork.

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

Artwork : Connecting to Country Cobbitty and Bringelly Precinct

My Artwork represents a journey with connections to Country on the green pastures of land and waterways surrounding of Dharawal Nation with beautiful views of Country and to continue to care for the land and waterways from now and beyond.

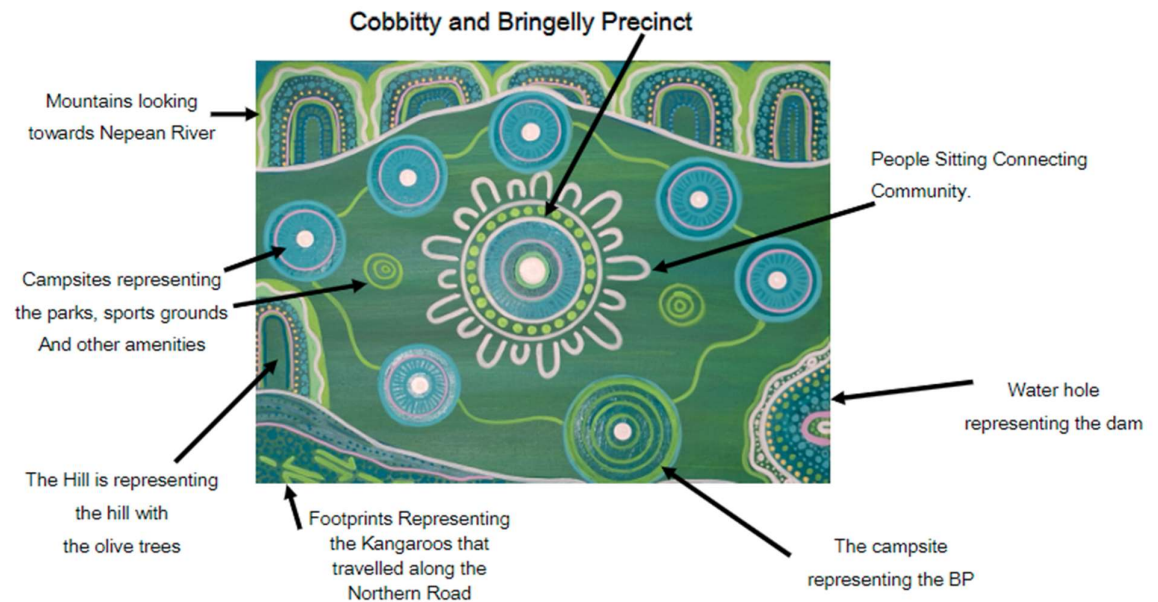


Figure 29: Walk on Country Cobbitty and Bringelly artwork created by Kayelene Slater, 2024.

5.8 Play spaces

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

Drawing inspiration from the traditional landscape that once existed in what is now Precinct 5, wild play areas and play spaces can foster a deep connection to Country. By incorporating sensory and tactile experiences with endemic plants, bush tucker gardens, local materials, and natural forms, these spaces evoke a meaningful link to the land's heritage. Visual/tactile design features and simple text and signage could be incorporated into the play space to support play-based learning.

These play areas provide opportunities to integrate educational, creative and tactile young people can immerse themselves and learn about intimate connections between First Nations Peoples and the environment, building knowledge of local cultural wisdom.

5.8.1 Key themes

The key themes explored through play spaces are:

- The land between the waters: this is Dharug, Gundungurra and Dharawal Country
- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West

5.8.2 Opportunities for Precinct

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty opportunities exist to:

- Develop play spaces that offer creative and educational experiences, emphasising the continued connection of the Dharug, Dharawal, and Gundungurra peoples to the area.
- Incorporate traditional language from each language group into the play equipment, along with Aboriginal designs and natural forms.
- Incorporate natural materials from the area into the design of play spaces, drawing inspiration from the rich woodlands of the Cumberland Plain, for example Forest Red Gum, Grey Box and Ironbark.
- The play spaces could be multisensory featuring elements for children to touch, smell and hear, such as sound machines featuring language or the sounds of local fauna.

Camden Council's *Vision for Playgrounds* states:

Playgrounds in the Camden LGA are inclusive, community-focused places that allow and encourage people of all ages and abilities to be healthy and active in a fun, safe way. Camden's playgrounds provide opportunities for cognitive, physical and social development while also electrifying the imagination

5.8.3 Examples



Figure 30: Yirran muru (Many pathways) - Dharawal Interpretive Play Space, Shellharbour Civic Centre



Figure 31: A Dharawal language wheel at Dharawal Interpretive Play Space
Photo: Shellharbour City Council.

5.9 Interpretive Panels

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

Panel text can encourage visitors to look more closely at their surroundings or text can pose questions to stimulate conversations. They should be located in spaces which allow for a longer dwell time or in natural pause points such as public squares, parks or seating areas. When used across a site, panels should have a consistent 'look and feel' so audiences know they are encountering heritage information.

5.9.1 Key themes

The key themes and stories associated with interpretive panels for South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty were developed during the Cultural Storytelling workshops with Traditional Custodians and included:

- The land between the two rivers: this is Dharug, Gundungurra and Dharawal Country
- Song lines of Country: following the Bunya Pine
- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West

5.9.2 Opportunities for Precinct 5

For South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty opportunities exist to:

- Consider the installation of interpretive panels featuring information about the three Aboriginal language groups connected to the area.
- Consider the use of QR codes, linking to online platforms with more detailed information and content. For example, a Welcome to Country video by traditional custodians that talk about the cultural significance of the area.
- Use panels to enhance interpretive landscaping and provide information about traditional uses of native and bushtucker plantings (see 5.6.3).

5.9.3 Examples



Figure 32: Interpretive signage for Hume Grasslands created for the Hume City Council.



Figure 33: Left -Cotter Dam Discovery Trail. Right -Bushland Reserves interpretive signage by Heine Jones.



Figure 34: Left -Interpretive panels for native plants at Murray Avenue, Sydney Olympic Park by Artefact. Right - QR code on Interpretive panel, Rapid City Parks.

5.10 Websites

Digital interpretation options such as websites could be explored for South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty.

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

A link from onsite media such as public art and interpretive panels via QR codes to a website can mean that a wealth of information is accessible to interested audiences with no additional investment.

An option for the new precinct could be a dedicated website that focuses on Aboriginal histories connected to the area, cultural stories, and significant sites within the Camden LGA. The website could feature multiple well-researched historical pages, an interactive location reference map, oral history recordings and a resource section for further reading by academics and community Elders.

5.10.1 Key themes

The key themes for digital interpretation are:

- The land between the two rivers: this is Dharug, Gundungurra and Dharawal Country
- Song lines of Country: Following the Bunya Pine
- Living landscapes: flora and fauna of South Creek West

5.10.2 Examples

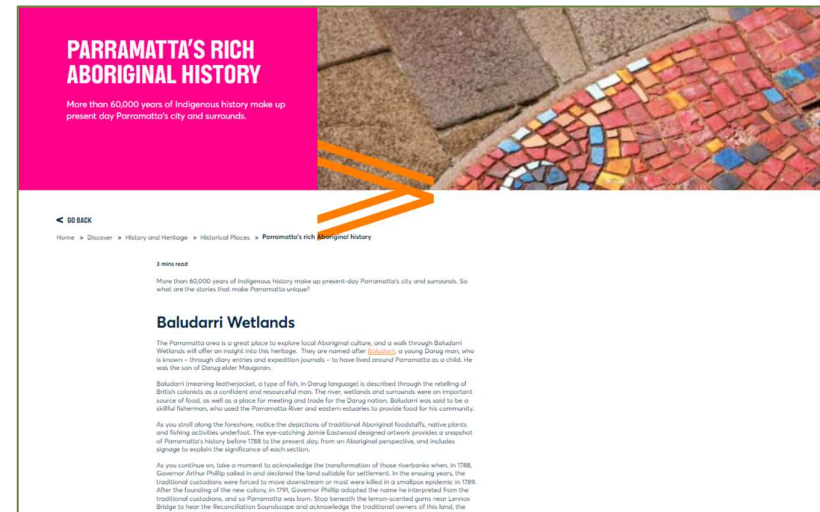


Figure 35: Parramatta's Aboriginal history webpage. City of Parramatta.



Figure 36: Camden Council webpage: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

5.11 Indicative locations for interpretative elements

Indicative locations within Precinct 5 for interpretation opportunities have been outlined below. These locations are preliminary only and require further assessment to determine exact locations for final interpretive elements as part of a detailed Heritage Interpretation Plan.

The following indicative locations have been identified for the interpretive elements outlined in Section 5:

- Establish environmental restoration and conservation areas, nature reserves and biodiversity areas.
- Consider Traditional naming for main open space links and community and sports parks.
- Consider Aboriginal public art and functional elements within the public domain and education investigation are).
- Consider Aboriginal design approaches for public infrastructure.
- Investigate Aboriginal design, language and natural materials for play areas where appropriate within local parks.
- Investigate a precinct gateway landscape feature and Acknowledgement of Country artwork in the gateway park.
- Explore opportunities for interpretive signage integrated within nature reserves and nature trails.
- Consider traditional plantings and landscaping and, where appropriate, seating areas within local parks.

5.12 Additional considerations

5.12.1 Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders

Ongoing consultation with key Aboriginal stakeholders and knowledge holders is an important component of developing the detailed designs for Precinct 5. Genuine collaborations with the Aboriginal communities connected to this area should be established and maintained, through ongoing consultations and conversations.

5.12.2 Coordination with other relevant plans

It is important that this AHIA, and the subsequent detailed Heritage Interpretation Plan (HIP) are developed with reference to the project's Connecting with Country report (Artefact, 2024), the Indicative Layout Plan - Cobbitty (Design & Planning, 2024), The South Creek West Cobbitty Sub - Precinct 5 Landscape Master Plan (Urbis, 2024), Camden Council's Public Domain Design Manuals, Public Art Policy and Cultural Activation Strategy (Camden Council, 2021). Other strategic plans with relevance to the Precinct rezoning proposal and development include the SEPP - Precincts - Western Parklands City, Chapter 3: Sydney Region Growth Centres - Appendix 5 Camden Growth Centres, and Camden Growth Centres Development Control Plan - Schedule 8: Sub-Precinct 5 (Cobbitty-Bringelly).

5.12.3 Reproducing images

All images (photographs, maps, illustrations, etc.) in this report are of a low quality. For the detailed master planning process and following design stages associated with the HIP preparation, high-resolution images will need to be purchased.

Generally, copyright is in place up until 70 years from the end of the year in which the creator of an image died or 70 years from the end of the year in which the image was first published. Images that are within copyright require permission to reproduce from the copyright holder and may incur a copyright fee and sourcing fee, as well as copyright acknowledgement as specified by the image holder. All images more than 70 years old require permission to reproduce from the image holder and an acknowledgment as specified by the image holder.

Any images of identifiable deceased Aboriginal people should not be shown without permission from known relatives or Traditional owners, and the image should be captioned with '*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are advised that this panel/artwork/etc contains images of people who are deceased*'.

5.12.4 Maintenance

All of the interpretive elements and public art may require on-going maintenance such as regular cleaning and periodic remedial work. The work should be coordinated with the normal day-to-day site cleaning duties at Precinct 5. It is recommended that a 6-monthly condition check be undertaken by maintenance staff on all interpretive elements.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Recommendations

This Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Strategy for South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty has provided a broad approach for communicating key stories of the site’s Aboriginal cultural significance through practical and accessible interpretive media. It has been prepared in accordance with the GANSW *Connecting with Country Framework*, NSW Heritage Office’s *Heritage Interpretation Policy, Interpreting Heritage Places and Items* guidelines, and the ICOMOS *Burra Charter*.

The selection of interpretive media opportunities for South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty precinct, as part of the current planning proposal, were developed in conjunction with a Connecting with Country Report and in close consultation with the traditional custodians of the area.

Opportunities for interpretive media at Precinct 5 include:

- Acknowledgement of/Welcome to Country
- Integration of Aboriginal designs and forms into built environment
- Street and sport field naming in traditional language
- Public green spaces, interpretive landscaping and restoration with gathering places and seating
- Public artwork and functional elements
- Play spaces
- Interpretive panels
- Websites

Following approval of the AHIAS, the next step in the interpretive process is the preparation of a detailed Heritage Interpretation Plan (HIP) at DA stage which would include the final selection of interpretive media

locations, content, and design, followed by the production of the interpretive elements at South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty.

6.2 Next steps

The next steps in the heritage interpretation process are outlined in the table below:

Table 3: Overview of next steps

Stage	Action	Responsibility	Timing
Stage 1 (this report)	Submission of draft AHIAS	Artefact	29 October 2024
	Feedback on draft AHIAS	JJ Cobbitty Development/ Always Consultancy	4 November 2024
	Circulate draft AHIAS to project stakeholders	Artefact	18 - 29 November 2024
	Submission of final AHIAS	Artefact	4 December
	Revised final AHIAS	Artefact	27 October 2025
Stage 2 (out of scope of this report)	Develop a detailed Heritage Interpretation Plan (HIP), with a final selection of interpretive media, locations, content and design of chosen/approved interpretive elements, artists brief and concept designs.	TBA	TBA
	Production and installation of interpretive elements		

7. REFERENCES

- Aboriginal Heritage Office, (2015). Filling a void: a review of the historical context for the use of the word 'Guringai', North Sydney, Aboriginal Heritage Office.
- Artefact (2024) Draft ACHAR South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty
- Artefact (2024) Draft CwC South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty
- Attenbrow, V.(2010) Sydney's Aboriginal Past. Investigating the archaeological and historical records, UNSW Press, Sydney,
- Attenbrow, V. (2012), 'Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal life in Sydney', *Dictionary of Sydney*, accessed September 2024, https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/archaeological_evidence_of_aboriginal_life_in_sydney
- Australian Bureau for Statistics, (2021), Camden 2021 Census. Accessed 03 October 2024 via <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA11450>
- Australia ICOMOS, (2013), *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*
- Banks, J. 1770 [2005]. 'The Endeavour Journal of Sir Joseph Banks,' Project Gutenberg webpage. Accessed 15 Feb 2022 via <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks05/0501141h.html>
- Belshaw, J.D, Nickel. S, & Horton C. (2020), *Histories of Indigenous Peoples and Canada*, Thompson Rivers University, Canada. <https://histindigenouspeoples.pressbooks.tru.ca/>
- Birch, G. (2007). 'A short geological and environmental history of the Sydney estuary, Australia' in G.Birch (ed.), *Water wind art and debate — how environmental concerns impact on disciplinary research*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, pp 214–242.
- Bladen, F.M. (ed.) (1897). *Historical records of New South Wales* (HRNSW). Vol. 5. 'Captain Waterhouse to Captain MacArthur, 12 March 1804,' Sydney, Government Printer, pp 35 –360.
- Brook, J. and Kohen, J.L. (1991). *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town: a history*. Sydney, New South Wales University Press.
- 'Blanket Returns', SRNSW 4/2479.1
- Brook, J. and Kohen, J. (1991) *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town*, New South Wales University Press, Sydney
- Camden Council, Public Domain Design Manuals, online via: Public Domain Design Manuals » Camden Council
- Camden Council Public Art Strategy, online via: Camden Council Public Art » Camden Council
- Campbelltown City Council, *The Bull Cave*. Accessed 3 September 2024 via Bull Cave - Campbelltown City Council (nsw.gov.au).
- Collins, D. ([1798], 2nd edition 1804), *An account of the English colony in New South Wales from its first settlement in January 1788, to August 1801*, T Cadell and W Davies, London.
- Currie, J. (2008). *Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go yesterday today tomorrow an Aboriginal history of Willoughby*. Willoughby City Council in association with the Aboriginal Heritage Office Northern Sydney Region
- Daniel, S. (2018). "'Walking in their tracks": How Sydney's Aboriginal paths shaped the city,' *ABC Curious* webpage, Sydney. Accessed 15 Feb 2023 via <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-17/curious-sydney-aboriginal-pathways/9676076/>
- Dawes, W. (1791). *Notebooks on the Aboriginal language of Sydney*, DTAC, Sydney, (facs. 2009)
- Flynn, M. (1997) 'Holroyd history and the silent boundary project', Report to Holroyd Council,
- Fowlie, T.(1918), 'History of Granville' ML MSS 1492, SLNSW

Gammage, B. (2011) *The Biggest Estate on Earth. How Aborigines made Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest,

Gapps, S.(2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield. A history of a multicultural city*, Fairfield Council, Fairfield,

Gapps, S. (2018) *The Sydney Wars – Conflict in the early colony 1788-1817*, New South, Sydney,

Goodall, H. and Cadzow, A., (2009) *Rivers and Resilience; Aboriginal people on Sydney's Georges River*, UNSW Press, Sydney,

Government Architect NSW (2023). *Connecting with Country Framework*

Goward, T. (2011). 'Aboriginal glass artefacts of the Sydney region'. Honours Thesis, University of Sydney.

Griffith B. (2018), *Deep Time Dreaming; Uncovering Ancient Australia*, Schwarz, Carlton, VIC,

Hill, R. and Thornton, G. (1892) *Notes on the Aborigines of New South Wales with personal reminiscences of the tribes formerly living in the neighbourhood of Sydney and the surrounding districts*, Government Printer, Sydney,

Hunter, J. (1796) 'Map of the County of Cumberland', ML M2 811.1/1796/1, SLNSW

International Council on Monuments and Sites (2008), *Enane Charter: ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites*

Irish, P. (2017), *Hidden in Plain View. The Aboriginal People of Coastal Sydney*, New South Publishing, Sydney.

Johnson, D.D. (2003). *Aunty Joan Cooper, through the front door: a Dharug and Gandangara story*. Lawson, Mountains Outreach Community Service.

Karskens, G. et al. (2017) *Traces in a lost landscape*

Karskens, G. (2009). *The colony: A history of early Sydney*, Allen & Unwin, 2009

Karskens, G, Burnett, G & Ross, S (2019) 'Traces in a lost landscape: Aboriginal archaeological sites, Dyarubbin/Nepean River and contiguous areas, NSW, Australia (Data Paper)', *Internet Archaeology*, 52. <https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.52.8>

Kohen, J. (1980) 'The Aborigines of Liverpool', Liverpool and District Historical Society,

Kohen, J.L. (2009). *Dharuganora: Dharug Country – the place and the people. Part 2: Dharug Genealogy*. Blacktown, Dharug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation.

Liston, C. (2011) 'The Dharawal and Gandangara in colonial Campbelltown, NSW, 1788-1830', *Aboriginal History*, Volume 12,

Mahroot, 'Minutes of evidence', Votes and proceedings of the Legislative Council, New South Wales, 1845 ML SLNSW

Mathews, R.H. (1908) [2003]. *Some mythology and folklore of the Gandangara Tribe*. Wentworth Falls, J. Smith (ed.).

Matthews, R.H. and Everitt, M.M. (1900). 'The organisation, language and initiation ceremonies of the Aborigines of the south east coast of N.S.W.', *Journal & proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, No. 34, pp 262–281.

McDonald, J. (2007). *Dreamtime Superhighway. An analysis of the Sydney basin rock art*. Canberra, ANU Press.

McDonald, J. (2005) *Cultural Heritage Management, 'Heritage Conservation Strategy for Aboriginal sites in the lands owned by Valad Funds Management Ltd and Sargents P/L, in the Eastern Creek Business Park (Stage 3) Precinct Plan, Blacktown, NSW'*.

Meredith, J. (1989). *The Last Kooradgie: Moyengully, chief man of the Gandangara people*. Sydney, Kangaroo Press.

Mulvaney, J. and Kamminga, J. (1999). *Prehistory of Australia*. Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution Press.

Nanson, G.C. Young, R.W., and Stockton, E.D. (1987). 'Chronology and palaeoenvironment of the Cranebrook Terrace (near Sydney) containing artefacts more than 40,000 years old,' *Archaeology in Oceania* Vol. 22 No. 2, pp 72–78.

McDonald, J. (2005) 'Heritage Conservation Strategy', Report,

Muir, (2013) 'Aboriginal people of the Cooks River valley', *Dictionary of Sydney*, (online)

Nanson et al. (1987) 'Chronology and Palaeoenvironment of the Cranebrook Terrace'

Na. 'Aboriginal Relics Liverpool', Sydney Morning Herald, 13 February 1934, p. 10

NSW Heritage Office, (2005) 'Heritage Information Series: Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Guidelines'. Accessed 5.10.2024 via:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Heritage/interpreting-heritage-places-and-items-guidelines.pdf>

Nunn, P.D. and Reid, N.J. (2016). 'Aboriginal Memories of Inundation of the Australian Coast dating from more than 7000 years ago', *Australian geographer*, Vol. 47 No.1, pp 11–47.

Phelps, PHF. (1840) 'The Cabramatta Tribe', c., SLNSW (online)

Rowley, J. (1878) 'Language of the Aborigines of the George's River, Cowpastures and Appin', *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*,

Smith, J. and Jennings, P. (2011). 'The petroglyphs of Gandangara Country', *Rock art research* Vol. 28 No. 2, pp 241–249.

Stanner, W.E.H. (1965). 'Aboriginal Territorial Organization: Estate, Range, Domain and Regime', *Oceania* Vol. 36 No. 1, pp 1–26.

Steele, J. (2008) 'The Aboriginal language of Sydney', MA thesis, Macquarie University

Tench, W. (1793), *A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson, in New South Wales, including an accurate description of the colony; of the natives; and of its natural productions*, G Nicol and J Sewell, London.

Troy, J. (1994). *The Sydney Language*. Canberra, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

Waterhouse, Henry, 12 March 1804, HRNSW, Volume 5, p. 359

White, J. 1790 [2003]. 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales', Project Gutenberg webpage. Accessed 15 Feb 2022 via
<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0301531h.html>

Wilderness Australia, 30 July, 2019. *Gungungurra people reject Government Cultural Assessment on Warragamba Dam Raising*.

https://www.wildernessaustralia.org.au/Gandangara_people_reject_government_cultural_assessment_on_warragamba_dam_raising

Williams, A.N. Burrow, A. Toms, P.S. Brown, O., Richards, M. and Bryant, T. (2017). 'The Cranebrook Terrace revisited: recent excavations of an early Holocene alluvial deposit on the banks of the Nepean River, NSW, and their implications for future work in the region,' *Australian archaeology* Vol. 83 No. 3, pp 100–109.

Williams, A.N. Mitchell, P. Wright, R.V.S. and Toms, P.S. (2012). 'A terminal Pleistocene open site on the Hawkesbury River, Pitt Town, New South Wales,' *Australian archaeology* Vol. 74, pp 85–97.

8. APPENDIX A: CONSULTATION LOG

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic

9. APPENDIX B: ABORIGINAL HISTORIES

9.1 Early history

Many Aboriginal people, like other Indigenous or First Nations people around the world, state that they have been living on Country for ‘time immemorial’ – that 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.¹¹

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

¹²

¹¹ 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.

¹² 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’. Williams et al., 2012, ‘A terminal Pleistocene open site on the Hawkesbury River’. Karskens, Burnett & Ross (2017) ‘Traces in a Lost Landscape’, p. 4).

¹³ 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.

More ancient sites lie off the coast and in river valleys, now deep under water. Before the major sea level rise event at the end of the last ice age around 17,000 years ago, Aboriginal people living along the Parramatta River could have walked downstream along the riverbanks to the sea about 30 kilometres beyond the current day coastline. Over generations they would have watched and told stories about the gradual change as the sea rose to fill the ‘drowned river valley’ of what is now Sydney Harbour until it reached present levels around 6,000 years ago.¹³

Given the devastating impact of violent dispossession and disease upon Aboriginal people in the Sydney region during colonisation, the precise identification of language groups and historical traditional lands or Country for a given area is often difficult today. Early colonial observer Watkin Tench believed there was at the least coastal and inland dialects of the same language and, while this is challenged by some historians who prefer less distinction between what were all ‘canoe cultures’ around Sydney’s coast and waterways, there seems to have been an alignment with inland economies of the rivers, creeks and open forests of the Cumberland Plain, and coastal ‘saltwater’ focused groups.¹⁴

Prior to colonisation, Aboriginal people in the relatively resource rich Sydney region lived in extended family groups estimated at around 30 to 50 people. These groups were associated with certain territories or places that gave clan members particular social and economic rights and

¹⁴ This historical overview does not seek to contest traditional or current definitions of affiliation with Country and acknowledges that multiple interpretations of such identity may exist. A frequently used indication of Country is language identity. However, far more complex factors are known to have often taken precedence over language in determining Aboriginal people’s definition of Country. See Aboriginal Heritage Office, 2015, *Filling a void: a review of the historical context for the use of the word ‘Guringai’*; Stanner, 1965, ‘Aboriginal Territorial Organization’, pp 1-26. There is debate on the extent and name for the language itself, some preferring to use ‘The Sydney Language.’ Watkin Tench observed that though the coastal and inland men he met conversed and understood each other, many words for common things bore no similarity while other words were only slightly different (1793 [2004], *A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson*, p. 122).

obligations. Each of the estimated 30 clans in the Sydney region had a name often associated with a place or resource such as the Cabro (Gabra) gal (people) at modern day Cabramatta. Clan groups moved around a defined area in response to changing seasons and the availability of food and other resources. European observers mistakenly took this as a nomadic lifestyle, when in fact they moved around a 'limited and deeply known' area. There were also forms of more sedentary agriculture and aquaculture, and villages such as those described by early colonial diarists at Kamay-Botany Bay and later accounts of '70 huts' at Bent's Basin on the Nepean River west of Sydney.¹⁵

Some areas had shared boundaries or reciprocal rights with bordering and neighbouring groups. With appropriate permission and protocols, people could travel through and hunt on other groups' lands. On special occasions such as feasts associated with the beaching of a whale; a kangaroo hunt on the open forests of southwestern Sydney; trading or exchanging stone, tools and other items, as well as ceremonial occasions, people would often travel long distances around and from outside the Sydney region.¹⁶

With several rivers and estuarine coastal areas, the Sydney region sustained a comparatively large population, unlike more arid inland areas. Fish and shellfish were a major part of Saltwater peoples' diets. The *nawi* (tied-bark canoe) was a common sight both day and night in rivers and creeks. There are many accounts by early colonists of Aboriginal people in canoes fishing and cooking their catch on small fires on hearth stones within the vessels. Women were the primary fishers from *nawi* (men usually fished with spears). Women were highly skilled with shell hooks and twine fishing lines and thus played an important economic role in Sydney. They

were noted as cradling their children while fishing, as their songs floated across the waters of Sydney Harbour.¹⁷



Figure 37: Fishing hooks crafted by Aboriginal communities living around Sydney Harbour, John White, 1790.¹⁸

People living inland across the Cumberland Plain focused on hunting small animals, gathering plants and catching freshwater fish and eels. Banksia flowers, wild honey, varieties of yam and burrawang nuts (macrozamia - a cycad palm with poisonous seeds that require processing to remove

¹⁵ Gapps, S. (2010), *Cabrogal to Fairfield City*, pp 26-60; Attenbrow, (2010), *Sydney's Aboriginal past*, p. 78; Karskens, (2009), *The Colony*, p. 36; Gammage, B. (2012), *The biggest estate on earth*, pp. 281-304.

¹⁶ Gammage, (2012), *The biggest estate on earth*. As Paul Irish (2017, *Hidden in plain view*, pp 22-27).

¹⁷ Banks, 1770 [2005], 'The Endeavour Journal'; Attenbrow, 2010, *Sydney's Aboriginal past*, 38. Collins' estimates of the population of the Sydney region as a whole vary between 3,000 and 20,000 (1789, *An account of the English colony*, p. 557).

¹⁸ John White, (1790), *Journal of a voyage to New South Wales with sixty-five plates of non-descript animals, birds, lizards, serpents, curious cones or trees and other natural products*, State Library of NSW, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/74VKJ3NqBBQd/Nwr2GDdJzvE8g>

toxins) were recorded as important food sources. Xanthorrhoea, also known as the grass tree, had many uses - the nectar was eaten, the stalk used as a spear and the resin as a glue. Small animals such as bandicoots and wallabies were hunted with traps and snares. Watkin Tench noted the skill in cutting toeholds in trees to swiftly climb to hunt possums.¹⁹

The landscape and environment before Europeans arrived was a finely managed one. In 1790 John Hunter observed people 'burning the grass on the north shore opposite to Sydney, in order to catch rats and other animals'. In 1804 Henry Waterhouse described the land around Cowpastures as 'a beautiful park, totally divested of underwood, interspersed with rich, luxuriant grass ... except where recently burnt'. These forests that had been managed by many generations of Aboriginal people through such methods as what is known as 'firestick farming'. Fire was an important tool and also used to open up tracks, to 'clean country', drive animals into the paths of hunters, cooking, warmth, treating wood, cracking open stones and for a place to gather, dance and share stories and knowledge.²⁰

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, 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. Over time, many Aboriginal pathways were taken up by the colonists and made into roads, some still on the same routes today.

¹⁹ Tench, 1793 [2004], A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson, p. 82, 230; Kohen, 1985, Aborigines in the west, p. 9; Attenbrow, 2010, Sydney's Aboriginal past, p. 41.

²⁰ Hunter, An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, (1787-1792, 1793), p. 312; Waterhouse quoted in Historical records of New South Wales Vol. 5, p. 359; White, 1790 [2003], 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales', p. 163; Gammage, 2012, The biggest estate on earth, pp 163-185; Griffith, 2018, Deep time dreaming, p. 240.

'Kangaroo grounds' became colonial estates, fishing creeks became drains, hills and peaks used for communication became signalling stations and lookouts, and shell middens became the limestone for the bricks and mortar of early colonial buildings.²¹



Figure 38: Carving of Echidna in Ku-ring-gai National Park. (Image: Stuart Humphreys © Australian Museum)²²

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,

²¹ Griffith, B (2018), Deep time dreaming, p. 241; Gammage, (2012), The biggest estate on earth, p. xix; Attenbrow, (2012), Sydney's Aboriginal past.

²² Australian Museum, Carving of Echidna (2012) <https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/atsi-collection/australian-archaeology/indigenous-rock-engraving-of-an-echidna/>

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.²³

9.2 First Encounters

The first encounters between the British colonists and the Sydney people were initially based in curiosity, with both sides attempting to comprehend each other. However, misunderstandings or transgressions of Aboriginal law and protocol soon escalated into violence and retribution. Unarmed convicts outside the encampment at Sydney Cove were increasingly targeted during 1788. However, in April 1789, what Sydney Aboriginal people called *galgala* or smallpox broke out and more than half - possibly even 80 percent - of the population around Sydney Harbour were dead within a month. Captain John Hunter wrote that 'it was truly shocking to go round the coves of this harbour [seeing] men, women and children, lying dead'. David Collins wrote that those who witnessed the Sydney man Arabanoo's grief and agony could never forget either – on being taken on a boat around the harbour Arabanoo 'lifted up his hands and eyes in silent agony [and exclaimed] 'All dead! All dead!''²⁴

²³ Karskens, G. (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*.

²⁴ Gapps, S. (2019), "They have attack'd almost every person who has met with them" – Re-reading William Bradley; Karskens, 2009, *The Colony*, p. 50. Evidence of smallpox, including dead and sick people, was also found well away from Sydney. See Gapps, 2018, *The Sydney Wars*, pp 55-56.

Despite such massive death and disruption to Aboriginal lives across Sydney, in 1794 resistance warfare against the colonisers began in earnest along the new settlements on the Dyarubbin (Hawkesbury) River and was to carry on through the 1790s, largely under the leadership of the famous warrior Pemulwuy. This 'constant sort of war' as one colonist described it, continued until Governor Macquarie ordered the now infamous military campaign across the Sydney region that ended in the Appin Massacre of April 17th, 1816.²⁵

Sydney Aboriginal society was not static and did not cease after contact with Europeans. Both material and cultural traditions of Aboriginal Sydney continued after the devastation to Aboriginal society, sometimes for example, by incorporating non-Aboriginal materials in traditional elements such as using glass and ceramics to make spear points and other tools. Twenty-nine engraved and pigment art sites have been dated to the period after European arrival. Some creation and other stories told to R. H. Mathews by Gandangara (Gandangara) people in 1901 were carried on for generations and survive today.²⁶

9.3 1800s Sydney

As the Cumberland Plain became more closely settled during the 1800s, Aboriginal people continued to live near their traditional Country where they could. Some managed to live in the centre of the growing city of Sydney such as a group of families who caught and sold fish at Circular Quay and Rose Bay, while other families continued to live on the outskirts of populated areas such as at La Perouse and at Salt Pan Creek on the

²⁵ Gapps, S. (2018), *The Sydney Wars*, pp 125-155, 226-255.

²⁶ Irish & Gowan, (2013), 'Where's the evidence? The archaeology of Sydney's Aboriginal history', p. 61. Artefact Heritage, 2022, 'Aspect Industrial Estate', p. 18. See also Goward, 2011, 'Aboriginal glass artefacts of the Sydney region'; Meredith, 1989, *The Last Kooradgie*. According to Smith & Jennings, a site near the Wollondilly River has 'post-contact creation or restoration of a traditional subject by Traditional owners' (2011, 'The petroglyphs of Gandangara Country', p. 241).

Georges River. From the 1880s, others moved to or were forced on to reserves such as Sackville in the northwest. Families including the descendants of Lucy Leane, continued to live in Liverpool. All carried knowledge of their ancestors and their Country down to this day. During the 1800s many Aboriginal women married European men. Some families knew of their heritage but often kept it hidden. Others only found out much later through family history work from the 1980s.²⁷

Much language spoken across the Sydney region was in effect stolen from Aboriginal people who were forced to learn English and not speak traditional languages at school or in public under threat of their children being taken away. Still, a number of early colonial word lists such as those given by Sydney woman Patyegarang to William Dawes, form the basis of language revival today. Some Sydney words became widespread across Australia such as corroboree, dingo, cooee, waratah and woomera. In many suburbs across Sydney, Aboriginal placenames were incorporated into suburbs or street names such as Maroubra, Bondi, Turramurra, Cabramatta and Bunnerong to name a few.²⁸

Many of Sydney's roads and streets today follow the original tracks and pathways that had been used for millennia by Aboriginal people. 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'. As Sydney language expert Jakelin Troy notes, it often made sense that the colonists would use established pathways particularly in avoiding dense forest areas and rugged terrain. Troy has noted how these pathways were used for 'visiting family, collecting food or conducting ceremonies'. According to 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.

²⁹

9.4 Dharug, Dharawal and Gandangara Countries

As the British colony expanded out from Sydney Cove across the Cumberland Plain during the 1790s and early 1800s, Aboriginal people along the Nepean River and around its headwaters to the southwest of Sydney had been relatively immune from closer settlement as had occurred near Parramatta and Windsor.

From 1798 to 1804, the colonists sent parties to the south of Sydney to find wandering cattle, escaped convicts and a way across the rugged fringes of the Sydney Basin. They all began at Prospect Hill and followed what was to become the Cowpastures Road. In 1802 Ensign Barrallier was guided by a man from 'Liverpool or the Cowpastures' named Kogi (Cogey) who took him along this route which almost certainly connected the southern Gandangara and Dharawal people to the Warmuli clan of Dharug around Prospect. Modern day Cabramatta Road was another Aboriginal pathway. At present day Carne's Hill at the junction of Cowpastures and Bringelly roads, in 1804 the botanist George Caley (who was informed by his guide 'Daniel' Moowattin) described a 'native pathway'.³⁰

²⁷ Johnson, (2003), *Aunt Joan Cooper. Kohen*, 2009, *Dharuganora: Dharug Country*. As Goodall & Cadzow (2009), *Rivers and resilience*, p. 41).

²⁸ Dawes, W. (1791), *Notebooks on the Aboriginal language of Sydney*, pp v-vii; Troy, 1992, *The Sydney Language*; Karskens, 2009, *The Colony*, p. 33.

²⁹ White, 1790 [2003], 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales', 30 May 1788; Daniel, 2018, 'Walking in their tracks'.

³⁰ Flynn, (1997) 'Holroyd history and the silent boundary project', p. 17; Gapps, (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, p. 87-8

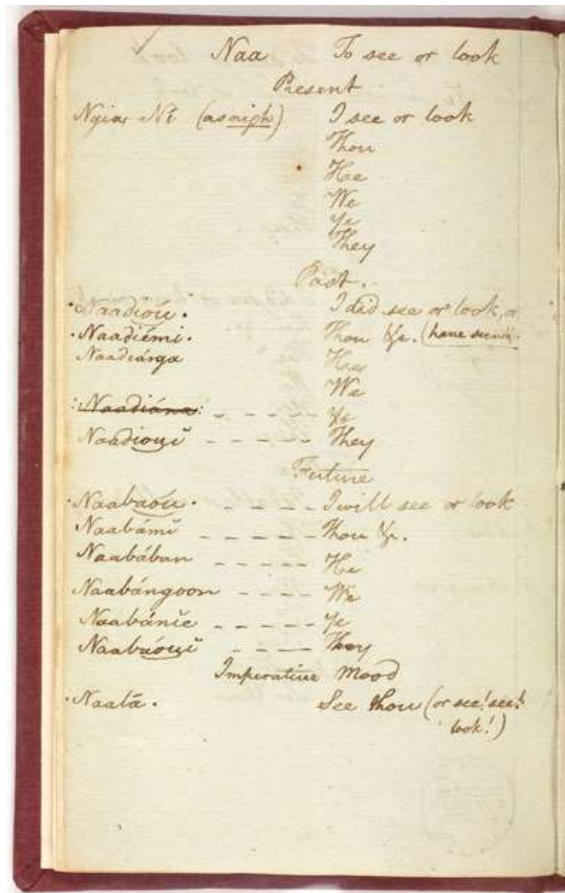


Figure 39: Page from notebook of Sydney language words compiled by Patyegarang and William Dawes (source: *The Notebooks of William Dawes*)

As linguist Jeremy Steele has noted, it is difficult to be precise about traditional language 'boundaries' in the Sydney region today. To the south and east of the large northern loop of the Georges River, the Norongerragal group of the Dharawal language group bordered the Cabrogal across the river. Resource rich areas such as the upper reaches of the Georges River – where the tidal influence reaches nearly 30 kilometres inland – may have been shared boundaries, or boundaries with accepted access rights. Indeed, the ease with which Aboriginal people moved in *nawi* (tied-bark canoes) along the waterways of the Sydney basin suggests hard boundary distinctions should be limited.³¹

After several reports from returned convict 'bolters', as well as a report of an Aboriginal dance that included what appeared to be the action of a charging bull – Governor Hunter decided in 1795 to investigate the southern area where it seemed the cattle that went missing in 1788 might be. Hunter and his party found 'a fine herd of cattle' and the governor decided not to bring them in but to exclude people from the area so they would be a productive source for the government in future. He called the area 'Cow Pasture Plains'. The cattle were not only the subject of an Aboriginal dance but were depicted in art at what is now known as the Bull Cave near Campbelltown.³²

Up to 1810, Aboriginal people living around present day southwestern Sydney were largely only visited by travellers, land seekers and surveyors. In 1803 the botanist George Caley led an expedition that passed through the Mulgoa Valley, Badgerys Creek, Bringelly and South Creek. Caley was guided by the Aboriginal man 'Daniel' Moowattin. Moowattin was born near Parramatta and from the age of 14 he assisted Caley by acting as his interpreter, guide, 'plant getter' and hunter on Caley's botanizing expeditions around Sydney.

³¹ Steele (1892), 'The Aboriginal language of Sydney', p. 8. Hill and Thornton, Notes on the Aborigines of New South Wales etc., Sydney., Goodall and Cadzow, (2009), *Rivers and resilience*, esp. chapters 1 and 2.

³² Gapps, Cabrogal to Fairfield, (2010) p. 83. See also McDonald 'Rock art and cross-cultural interaction in Sydney' esp. p. 7 and Dreamtime Superhighway, pp. 4-5

In 1802 the Engineer Francis Barrallier witnessed a *patagorang* (kangaroo) hunt near Menangle Swamp. This was obviously a combined group hunt with large numbers of people involved. Barrallier was impressed at how the hunters were spaced '30 paces [apart] and formed a circle which contained an area of 1 or 2 miles'.³³

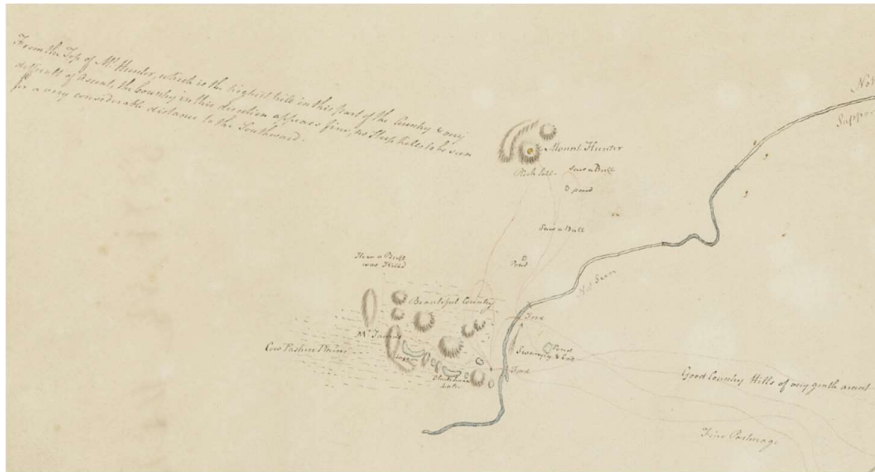


Figure 40: Detail of New South Wales sketch of the settlements 20th August 1796, Governor John Hunter showing Cowpastures (source: State Library NSW)

In 1805 and 1806, acting-surveyor James Meehan undertook a survey of South Creek to determine the suitability of the region for land grants, with the earliest grants in the region at Bringelly in 1805.

In 1807 Caley travelled south again, this time looking for a koala specimen. In appreciation of Moowattin's skills, and obviously with Moowattin's knowledge of Country, they passed a river and series of waterfalls and Caley recorded it as the 'Cataract of Carrung-Gurring' and called the river

³³ Barrallier, (1802), Journal of the expedition etc., p. 3

³⁴ Smith, (2005) Moowattin, Daniel (1791-1816)', ADB online,

'Moowattin Creek'. These names appeared in Matthew Flinders 1814 Atlas of Terra Australia but were later changed to the Cataract River and Appin Falls.³⁴

Then, in late 1810, after a tour of the entire fringe of the Sydney Basin, Governor Macquarie declared the districts of Minto, Airds and Appin to the south of Liverpool, open for settlement. The southern frontier of the colony around Sydney now moved further into Dharawal land.³⁵

Broughton's farm was at the centre of a gently undulating plateau that stretched to the southwest of where the township of Appin had been designated. The edges of the land grants were defined by sharp creeks, rivers and rocky terrain that had been cut away by the Carrung-gurring (Cataract) and Upper Nepean Rivers. The group of farms around Broughton's were on the edge of the colony in the Sydney region, connected to it by a single road to the north. To the south, rugged terrain limited colonial expansion. But this terrain also seems to have provided an area where Aboriginal people could engage with the Europeans - a labyrinth of sandstone overhangs along such areas as the Rocky Ponds Creek provided shelters for family groups who could continue to camp with access to water, a safe route back away from the settled areas, as well as access to the farms around Appin. Of the early colonists at Appin, Broughton, Kennedy and Hume in particular actively sought to establish good relations with Dharawal. Governor Macquarie visited their farms in 1815 and was impressed with the clearing of land and the flourishing wheat crops - which had been done with the help of local Aboriginal people. The governor noted that 'those Natives [at Appin] live in a state of

³⁵ Perry, 'Meehan, James (1774-1826) ADB online; Irving, 'Blaxland, John (1769-1845)' ADB, online; Sales, The History of Luddenham Methodist Church, p.3. See Gapps, The Sydney Wars, esp. pp. 196-201

perfect peace, friendliness, and sociality with the settlers, and even shew a willingness to assist them occasionally in their labours'.³⁶



Figure 41: Joseph Lycett, *Aborigines hunting kangaroos, 1820* (Source: National Library of Australia)

9.5 Resistance warfare and conflict 1814-1816

The summers of 1812 and 1813 had been dry, and by early 1814 the entire greater Sydney region was in a period of drought. In May 1814 the Gazette reported 'violences between the natives and ourselves, which from the tranquillity and good understanding that for the last 5 or 6 years' it had

hoped 'were not again likely to occur.' But in February and May there were attacks at George Cox's farm at Mulgoa and at Governor Macquarie's private secretary John Thomas Campbell's farm near Wallacia.³⁷

With settlers clamouring for action, Macquarie immediately requested more troops and arms from Britain, continued earlier efforts to expand the constabulary and encouraged the formation of civilian paramilitary 'Associations'.³⁸ Macquarie's hopes were soon dashed. In June, there were apparently 'hordes of natives' near the 'Cow Pasture Settlement' creating 'considerable alarms among the Settlers' many of whom were fleeing like war refugees; 'wives and children have forsaken their dwellings, and sought shelter in securer places'. In what was a remarkable and alarming report if true, the Gazette newspaper continued:

'The natives of Jarvis's Bay are reported on good authority to have coalesced with the mountain tribes [and] ... have declared a determination, that when the Moon shall become as large as the Sun, they will commence a work of desolation, and kill all the whites before them'.

It seemed that what was in effect a declaration of war had been made.³⁹

³⁶ Whittaker, *Appin The Story of A Macquarie Town*, pp 5-10. *Macquarie Journals of His Tours*, 113-27

³⁷ Macquarie to Castlereagh 30 April 1810 HRA VIII, 258; *Gazette* 16 November 1811; Suttro to Banks 12 November 1812 Banks Papers ML CY 3681, 397-400; Macquarie to Bathurst 19 January 1814 HRA VIII, 121. Perry, *Australia's First Frontier*, 30; Turbet *The First Frontier*, 194-98; Inquest into the death of William Reardon SARNSW 6021 4/1819, 539-46.; *Gazette* 7, 14 May;

Connor *The Australian Frontier Wars*, 46; R. F. Holder. 'Campbell, John Thomas (1770-1830)' ADB

³⁸ Montague 'The Men of the NSW Corps' JRAHS, 219 Macquarie to Bathurst 28 April 1814 HRA I, VIII, 148. Macquarie to Bathurst 24 March 1815 HRA I, VIII, 465; Macquarie to Bathurst 7 May 1814, HRA I, VIII, 250-1; *Gazette* June 14

³⁹ *Gazette* 4 June 1814.



Figure 42: Joseph Lycett, *View upon the Nepean River at the Cow Pastures, New South Wales, 1825* (source: National Library of Australia)

In December 1815 conflict escalated once more and some settlers at the 'distant farms' in the southwest either abandoned their properties or had them destroyed by fire. In early March 1816 Aboriginal warriors killed five men at Bringelly and attacked and plundered other farms in the area. At the Lewis farm on the Nepean a woman and convict worker were, according to the Gazette 'cruelly murdered'. 'Depredations' were reported on farms as close to Sydney as Lane Cove. The Gazette urged travellers to go in company on the roads between settlements.

Macquarie's response to the attacks was to station small detachments of soldiers around the southwest region at Bringelly, at present day Elderslie and Kirkham, (John Oxley's farms) and a detachment of 'a non-

commissioned Officer and six soldiers' were sent to the aid of the Macarthurs at Camden.

Attacks and raids continued through March of 1816. Across the region settlers and shepherds were 'leaving their flocks behind to the mercy of the storm.' Macquarie later noted that 'many of the Settlers have entirely Abandoned their Farms in Consequence of the late Alarming Outrages'. For the traditional owners in the southwest of Sydney, this was a tactical victory in limiting colonial expansion into their homelands. The response from Governor Macquarie was to commence the largest military campaign the colony had yet seen and would ever witness.⁴⁰

On 18 March Governor Macquarie wrote to Lord Bathurst in London informing him that 'the Native Blacks of this Country, Inhabiting the distant Interior parts, have lately broke out in Open Hostility against the British Settlers residing on the Banks of the River Nepean near the Cow Pastures, and have Committed most daring Acts of Violence on their Persons and Depredations on their Property' and that 'no less than five White Men have been lately Killed by the Natives'. The governor's response was to send a military detachment 'so as to Strike them with Terror against Committing Similar Acts of Violence in future.' He wanted to 'drive the Hostile Natives across the mountains' and clear 'the Country of them entirely'⁴¹.

The situation grew tense for those Aboriginal people living in and around the settlements to the south of Sydney. Throsby said Gogy, Budbury, Young Bundle, Nighgingull and their families were at his farm seeking safe haven and identified others from near Bringelly as the 'troublemakers'.

A group of Aboriginal people at Throsby's Glenfield farm, were surprised by a visit from the 'bush constables' John Warby and John Jackson. They were looking for Gogy, who wasn't there at the time, and they spoke with Budbury and others. Whatever was discussed, the people at Throsby's

⁴⁰ Hassall Family Correspondence ML A1677/3, 619-22, 627-30

⁴¹ Macquarie to Bathurst 18 March 1816 HRA I, IX, 53-54; 10 April 1816 LEMA; Gazette 30 March, 4 May 1814.

farm were put into a 'state of fear'. There may well have been some threat made, as within a week Budbury and Bundle were enlisted as guides for Macquarie's campaigns.⁴²

In what has been described as 'one of the most elaborate operations ever carried out by the British Army on the Australian frontier' on 9 April Macquarie issued Captain Schaw of the 46th Regiment a detailed set of instructions. While there was no formal declaration, Macquarie's instructions had all the hallmarks of a campaign during wartime:

On any occasion of seeing or falling in with the Natives ... they are to be called on, by your friendly Native Guides, to surrender themselves to you as Prisoners of War.

If they refused to surrender, Schaw was ordered 'to fire upon and compell them to surrender'. After destroying their weapons, any dead were to be 'hanged up on trees in conspicuous situations, to strike the Survivors with the greater terror'.

Initially, the campaign was to be a sweep around the edges of the Cumberland Plain by a large force under Captain Schaw, moving from the north and west towards a smaller force under Lieutenant Dawe to the south, meeting at the Cow Pastures. But in a postscript to Macquarie's orders another detachment was ordered as well. On 8 April reports had arrived of large groups of people in the Airds and Appin districts 'committing all sorts of outrages and depredations'. A third detachment

was formed under Captain Wallis and ordered to the district, 'where the Hostile Natives have recently assembled in considerable Force'.⁴³

Captain Wallis marched on the 10th of April to Liverpool, and then with the guides Warby, Budbury and Bundle, headed south to clear Airds and Appin of any hostile warriors, and then link up with Schaw at the Cowpastures.⁴⁴

While Schaw and Dawe covered terrain along the Nepean River to the north, Captain Wallis operated in the Appin district with the strongest force of thirty-three soldiers, Lieutenant George Adamson Parker and two sergeants. At Liverpool on the 10th of April they learned of a large group of people including Gogy on the farm of Andrew Cunningham, near modern day Bankstown Airport. John Warby said that apart from Gogy, the rest of the people were 'friendly', so Wallis decided against moving on them, afraid word of the soldiers' presence would spread to the 'more hostile tribes' and the element of surprise would be lost.⁴⁵

The Aboriginal guides with Wallis - Budbury and Bundle - were reluctant to go with the expedition and Wallis ordered a close eye kept on them. At the Woodhouse farm just north of Gilead however, they made off, and Wallis suggested Warby - whose long experience in the bush appears to have led to some sympathy toward the Sydney people - had 'winked at the escape of Bundle and Budbury'.

One of the Hume brothers, young sons of settler Andrew Hamilton Hume and familiar with the bush, had informed Wallis that 'all the worst characters' were at Lachlan Vale at Appin. On the 12th Wallis marched his men there. At Kennedy's farm, Wallis was informed by Kennedy that there

⁴² D'arcy Wentworth correspondence ML A752, CY699, 183-6; Turbet The First Frontier, 212.

⁴³ Macquarie quoted in *Historical Record of the Forty-Sixth*, 41, 49-50. Instructions for Capt. W. G. B. Schaw, 9 April 1816, SARNSW Reel 6045, 4/1734, 149-68; Instructions for Captain Wallis, 9 April 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 7-13; Instructions for Lt. Charles Dawe 9 April 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 1-6. Instructions for Lt. Charles Dawe 9 April 1816 SARNSW Reel 6045, 4/1735, 1-6; Macquarie to Bathurst 25 May 1816, HRA IX, 139 and note 36, 854

⁴⁴ Instructions for Lt. Charles Dawe 9 April 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 1-6; SARNSW 6004, 4/3494, 448; Connor, *Frontier Wars*, 49; Turbet, *The First Frontier*, 288

⁴⁵ *Gazette* 11 May 1816. Report of Captain Schaw to Governor Macquarie, 8 May 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 33-41; Report of Captain James Wallis of the 46th Regiment to Governor Macquarie, 9 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 50-59; Report of Lt. Parker of the 46th Regiment 8 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 60-62; Report of Lt. Dawe of the 46th Regiment to Governor Macquarie 8 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 29-32; SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 50-59.

was no one but ‘some inoffensive natives on his farm’. On interviewing them, Wallis found two to be on Macquarie’s list – ‘Yallaman and Battagalie’ – but Kennedy assured Wallis ‘they were harmless, innocent men’ who ‘protected his and Mr Broughton’s farm’ and that if Wallis took them, Kennedy ‘must abandon the country’.

9.6 The Appin Massacre

The military expedition pressed on as two reports came in of ‘large bands’ of Aboriginal people, one near Minto and the other at ‘Lachlan Vale’, Appin. Wallis headed toward the Minto farm of William Redfern but there were no warriors to be seen. On the 16th of April, Wallis continued the search and that night received news that a band of Aboriginal people with ‘seven murderers among them’ were camped near Broughton’s ‘Lachlan Vale’ farm. One of them was apparently the famed warrior Cannabaygal.⁴⁶

At ‘a little after one o’clock’ in the morning of the 17th of April, Thomas Noble, a convict servant of William Sykes, led Wallis and his soldiers through the darkness to the place he had seen an encampment. Wallis later reported that when they arrived there, ‘the fires were burning but deserted’. In what was a common tactic to reduce the element of surprise, the group were in fact sleeping a short way away from their decoy campfires.

Wallis was about to leave when the soldiers heard a child crying nearby. He quickly ‘formed line ranks, entered and pushed on through a thick brush towards the precipitous banks of a deep rocky creek’. Wallis provided only a short description of what occurred next;

‘...the dogs gave the alarm and the natives fled over the cliffs, a smart firing now ensued – it was moonlight the grey dawn of morn appearing so dark as to be able only to discern their figures bounding from rock to rock ...’

Wallis later reported that he had made it clear to his troops before they set out that they were to ‘take as many prisoners as possible, and to be careful in sparing and saving the women and children’. Whether this is embellishment after the fact or not, when the firing began he said his ‘principal efforts’ were directed in sparing women and children, but he regretted ‘some had been shot and others met their fate by rushing in despair over the precipice’.

Wallis’s words have resonated ever since. Historians have suggested people ‘threw themselves in terror over the cliffs’. Yet a careful reading of Wallis’s report suggests they may have been trying to escape down through the rocks, some perhaps falling to their deaths as they did so under fire in a terrified haste in the breaking dawn, with others being shot by soldiers firing down at them. It is difficult to imagine the warrior and leader Cannabaygal not attempting to save his people by escaping, or perhaps even by attempting to defend them while they escaped. Apparently, he was found with five bullets in his dead body.⁴⁷

Wallis noted that his mission was partly successful in taking ‘two women and three children’ alive; ‘they were all that remained, to whom death would not be a blessing’. Wallis suggested there were some terribly wounded people that he could or would not do anything for. He counted fourteen dead, among whom were ‘Dunelle’ (Durelle) and Cannabaygal, but there could well have been more.

⁴⁶ SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 1-13; 20-21; 29-41; 44-62; Turbet *The First Frontier*, 241; Connor *Frontier Wars*, 51

⁴⁷ SARNSW, 6065, 4/1798, p. 45; SARNSW, 6045, 4/1735 p.51. For some of the most florid accounts of the Appin Massacre see Elder *Blood on the Wattle*, 16; Smith *King Bungaree*, 84 and for a more considered response, Harman *Aboriginal Convicts*, 22.. Macquarie letters 4,5

June 1816, LEMA; Proclamation against the Natives’ 4 May 1816 SARNSW NRS 13696, 24-36; Gazette 4 May 1816. Macquarie to Bathurst 8 June 1816 HRA I, IX, 139-145.

Following Macquarie's orders, Wallis had the bodies of these two men who were the only known wanted 'hostile' warriors among the dead, hung on trees on a prominent hill nearby. Many years later William Byrne said the bodies were taken to 'McGee's Hill', just north of today's Wilton Road near Appin. Byrne recalled that after the bodies were strung up, 'they ... cut off the heads and brought them to Sydney.'⁴⁸

The Appin Massacre was the most significant massacre event in the history of the Sydney region and a turning point in the occupation of the Cumberland Plain and its surrounds. As it was conducted by the military as part of a broad campaign ordered by Governor Macquarie, rather than by armed colonists on the frontier, it was also the most documented massacre in Sydney's history, and one of the most documented in Australian history.⁴⁹

9.7 Surviving in the southwest - 1820s-1880s

After the end of the Sydney Wars in 1816, many Aboriginal people in the southern Sydney region found work on farms or in guiding and tracking. Bundle, from the 'Cowpastures Tribe' was recommended to become a constable at Minto. Other families camped and worked on farms – some at the Macarthurs' 'Camden Park' and 'Denham', where the Macarthurs allotted an area of land for Aboriginal people to live on, and this became a meeting place for people travelling, with corroborees noted as being held with hundreds of people for many years at least through the 1820s. Others such as James Tegg worked on Charles Throbsy's 'Glenfield' estate. Some women such as Lucy Leane and Maria Lock married British men. A few children from the district who had been in the Orphan School near

Liverpool were sent to the reopened Native Institute at Blacktown in 1826, and when this ultimately failed, several were sent to the care of Reverend Robert Cartwright at Liverpool and then on to the mission at Wellington in central west NSW.⁵⁰

What was called the 'Liverpool Tribe' was reported by missionary William Walker in 1821 to be 'not more than 15 to 20 people' under their 'Chief' named 'Cogie' (Kogi, Gogy). In 1826 the so-called 'Liverpool Tribe' were, along with the 'Illawarra districts' reported to be in 'hostilities' with the 'Cowpastures Tribe' – suggesting traditional disputes were still being settled. In 1827 a 'Corroborree' at 'Denbeigh' near Camden had 'over 400 people' in attendance. According to the Hoy family, 'Hoy's Hill' on the Liverpool road (Hume Highway) was a 'nightly stopping place inward and outward' on the 'Illawarra and Cowpastures tribes' annual visits to the feast at Parramatta. Even in 1836, James Hassall reported a 'large corroborree' at the Cowpastures as well as a traditional fight.⁵¹

During the 19th century Aboriginal people moved around and in and out of the southwest Sydney region. They regrouped under the pressures of colonisation and made new families and alliances. Sometimes their movement was based on traditional connections across long distances such as those recounted by William Russell or Werriberrie. Described in 1914 as 'chief of the Gun-dun-gorra aboriginals of the Burragorang Valley', Russell's mother 'Wonduck' was from 'near Richlands' and his uncle 'My-an-garlie' from 'Connor's Plain, near Bathurst'. According to Russell, Myangarlie 'became principal man of our tribe' in the mid-nineteenth century and his 'chief camping ground' was the Burragorang Valley. Russell ended up with his family at Oaks Creek 'nine miles from Camden'

⁴⁸ Karskens *The Colony*, 508. Report of Lt. Dawe of the 46th Regiment to Governor Macquarie 8 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 29-32; *Sydney Gazette*, 11 May 1816; Report of Sergeant Broadfoot SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 72-3

⁴⁹ Macquarie to Bathurst 4 April 1817 HRA, I, IX, 358; 'Military Department Victualled' Enclosure No. 15 Macquarie to Bathurst HRA I, IX, 375. See Mark Dunn 'A Valley in a Valley',

188-234. Gapps, S. (2021) *Gudyarra – the First Wiradyuri War of Resistance. The Bathurst War 1822-1824*, 2021. Gapps S., 'Rifle slits and gun loops', www.thesydneywars.com; Byrne 'Old Memories', *Old Times*, 105.

⁵⁰ Gapps, Cabrogal to Fairfield, p. 148-149. Three boys 'Billy, Johnny and Wallace' were recorded being moved to the school.

⁵¹ Gapps, S. (2010) Cabrogal to Fairfield, p. 150

Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation & Art Strategy

and recalled 'many convict men, as well as aboriginals, used to help reap the crop and do bush work' for the Reilly family and on John Wild's property 'Vanderville'.

Russell recalled 'Mr. William Antill, of Abbotsford, Picton' and that Aboriginal people 'were never interfered with on any property of the Antill family, which included all the Picton Valley'. He described 'the old aboriginals about Camden' as from 'a different tribe to those of Burragorang (Gandangara) and that 'Old Bundle' was their chief and 'Gurgur' their language.⁵²

By the 1860s most Aboriginal people in the expanding southern suburbs of Sydney had either moved, or were moved, to other areas. However, a handful continued to work and live within the growing non-Indigenous population. At Liverpool in the late 1800s, 'Black Tommy' was reported by local newspapers as 'the last full blood man of the Georges River'. In the 1888 celebrations for the centenary of the colony, Tommy rode a white horse at the head of the parade down the main street of Liverpool. Another woman who lived in Liverpool in the late 1800s, also described as 'the last Aborigine in the area' was known as 'Black Eliza'.⁵³

But Tommy and Eliza were not the last Aboriginal people in the district. During the 1890s, Aboriginal children were removed from the families and brought to the 'Children's Home' at Liverpool. And on the Georges River, an Aboriginal woman named Lucy Leane was struggling with the Aborigines Protection Board. Lucy had married 'an Englishman' and lived on an orchard farm by the river. In 1893 she petitioned the Board for a boat 'for the purpose of carrying on a trade on the George River'. Her petition was supported by respectable citizens who described her as 'a most deserving woman', as well as 'the only surviving Native woman of the Georges River and Liverpool district'. The petition failed and Lucy died in 1895 and her grave headstone is now in the 'Liverpool Pioneers Memorial Park'. Lucy had

⁵² 'Bush Memories', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 11 August 1914, p. 44; Russell, 'My Recollections' pp. 9-13

South Creek West – Sub-Precinct 5, Cobbitty

13 children and her descendants are still in the area today – Cathy Leane remarked in 2011 that it was 'quite amusing' that a 'blackfella is buried in a pioneer park'.⁵⁴



Figure 43: William Govett, notes and sketches, 1830-1835 [Govett was at Berrima and in the southern region in 1832], (source: State Library of New South Wales, MS A330 (Safe 1 / 404), images 15-17)

Along the Georges River throughout the late 19th century Aboriginal families were attempting to hold on to portions of their own land, in different ways. They also kept up a broader community and wider family networks by moving around Country, in similar ways to how they had done pre-invasion. One of the most recorded was Biddy Giles, who in the 1860s and 70s with her non-Aboriginal husband Billy often took people on fishing

⁵³ Gapps, S. (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, pp. 218-219

⁵⁴ Gapps, S. (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, pp. 227-228

and hunting excursions from Mill Creek down the Georges River and into Kamay-Botany Bay. In the 1910s, William Rowley and his family moved upriver from Towra Point on Kamay-Botany Bay to the community at Salt Pan Creek.⁵⁵

While this ‘east-west’ movement along the Georges River was important for Aboriginal people in southern Sydney, by the turn of the twentieth century there was another movement – of people from outside Sydney into these communities. Some came from as far as Brungle in southern NSW, the Castlereagh area and even Western Australia. Many were drawn by work opportunities and all could stay in the camps such as Salt Pan Creek, outside but still close to the city.

The impact of the Aborigines Protection Board from the 1880s cannot be overstated. While some people managed to in effect ‘hide’ along the reaches of the Georges River, others were moved to agreed places such as La Perouse where they could be under the surveillance of the Board. Some were removed far from Sydney to missions and reserves such as Cummeragunja on the Murray River.⁵⁶

9.8 Agitation and Activism – 1900 to today

In the early twentieth century, the riverbanks in the Fairfield, Liverpool and Georges River areas were being scoured by amateur historians and others for Aboriginal stone artefacts. Thomas Fowlie in his history of Granville and surrounding districts recalled in 1918 that he and several other people had ‘found several of their [Aboriginal people] axes along the riverbanks, as well as recalling still noticeable stone ‘axe-marks’ in older trees. In 1931, a Fairfield resident dug several mogos or hand-axes from their garden in East Parade and donated them to the Australian Museum. So too in 1934, a Mr C. Giles ‘while ploughing along the George’s River near the Quarries

[near Liverpool] ... unearthed a stone axe and part of a spear and boomerang’. A Mr. R. Tapping, ‘an old resident of the town, recalled that the Georges River tribe had a camp there, and that the aborigines made frequent hunting trips in the country between George’s River and the Nepean’.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, further down the river, Aboriginal families had managed to purchase several blocks of land at Salt Pan Creek and continued to allow other families to camp there and in the bush nearby. They used the river to fish and sell their catch, but also had a supply of bush tucker at their doorstep. A growing interest in Aboriginal souvenirs from non-Indigenous people during the 20th century meant boomerang making and other cultural works were in demand and could be sold to growing numbers of day-tripping Sydney-siders and tourists who were visiting La Perouse.⁵⁸

During the 1920s the Australian Aborigines Progress Association (AAPA) had been formed and political activism found its way to Salt Pan Creek. A young boy Jacko Campbell had fled from the Burnt Bridge Aboriginal Station at Kempsey when the Protection Board threatened he would be taken from his parents, and he found refuge at Salt Pan Creek. Jacko recalled the discussions and ‘unfolding activism’ at the camp. By this time, Aboriginal people had increasing numbers of allies in trade unions and political movements.

In 1933, the Dharawal man Joe Anderson famously appeared in a Cinesound newsreel that screened in cinemas around the country. He was standing on the banks of Salt Pan Creek. In a profound speech arguing for Aboriginal rights, he said at one point;

⁵⁵ Goodall and Cadzow, (2009) *Rivers and Resilience*, pp. 71-72, 92-100

⁵⁶ Goodall and Cadzow, (2009) *Rivers and Resilience*, pp. 107-8, 113

⁵⁷ Fowlie, T., ‘History of Granville’, 1918, ML, SLNSW, p. 10; Gapps, *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, p. 29; ‘Aboriginal Relics Liverpool’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 February 1934, p. 10

⁵⁸ Goodall and Cadzow, *Rivers and Resilience*, pp. 118-120

There is plenty of fish in the river for us all, and land to grow all we want ... The black man owned Australia, and now he demands more than charity. He wants the right to live!

Anderson was also making a plea for the families that had been living along the Georges River and were now facing eviction from Salt Pan Creek due to the growing pressure of suburban Sydney. By the late 1930s, local white residents were complaining that the Salt Pan Creek camp was ‘spoiling’ the area. By 1939, the remaining people had been forcibly removed to La Perouse.⁵⁹

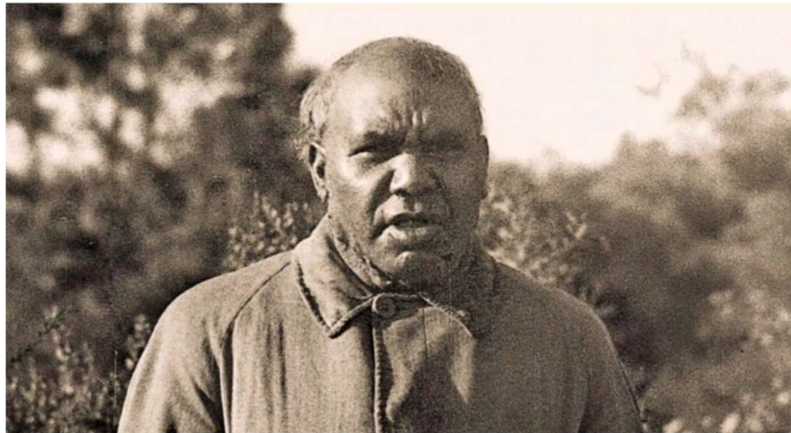


Figure 44: Still image from Joe Anderson's 1933 speech, *Australian Screen*, 1983. "Lousy Little Sixpence, 1933." (Source: ANDB)

In the 1950s and 1960s Aboriginal people lived in and around the Fairfield and Liverpool districts. Some seem to have been trying to avoid the Aboriginal Welfare Board and were ‘camped’ in the hills behind Cecil Park. Some were working and sending their children to school – where people recalled they won ‘all the athletics races’, but also that they were directed

‘not to speak their language’. Some families ended up at the Hargraves Park ex-army camp awaiting public housing.⁶⁰

From the 1960s, the Aboriginal population in the area and right across Sydney began to grow. With changing government policies on restricting Aboriginal families and movement, many chose to move to the city for work. While many went to the Aboriginal ‘hub’ at Redfern, some moved into assisted housing in south and western Sydney. New attachments to the rivers, creeks and remaining bushland in the Liverpool, Fairfield and Georges River areas were formed.⁶¹

To the south of the lower Georges River a huge swathe of bushland had been occupied by the Holsworthy military reserve since 1912. The area had been largely undisturbed ever since and when an airport was proposed there, a thorough investigation of Aboriginal sites revealed an amazing array of rock engravings in particular. The Cubbitch Barta area was included in the Register of the National Estate in 1998.

9.9 Dharawal communities today

The Appin massacre continues to be remembered to this day at the annual Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony, held on the Sunday nearest to the date of the massacre of April 17th. The ceremony takes place at the Cataract Dam Picnic Area. There have been calls for protection for the site of the massacre with a 2011 petition by Dharawal and Gandangara family groups to protect the site from development and prevent further trauma to the community. The ancestral remains of Cannabaygal and two other Dharawal people taken as skulls to the University of Edinburgh were returned to Australia in 1991 and 2000. There have been extensive calls from community for the remains to be repatriated and buried on Country,

⁵⁹ Goodall and Cadzow, (2009) *Rivers and Resilience*, pp. 154-160

⁶⁰ Gapps, S. (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, pp. 336-339

⁶¹ In the early 1990s, Jim Kohen estimated that there were 20,000 descendants of Sydney Aboriginal people in the wider Sydney region and beyond. Kohen, *Dharuganora*, p. 2

having been held in safekeeping at the National Museum of Australia since their return to Australia.⁶²



Figure 45: Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony, picture: Robert Pozo (source: *The Daily Telegraph*)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise approximately 5% of South Western Sydney's population. The suburb of Airds has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of approximately 13%. Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation is based in Airds and provides health, housing, and social programs. The area's Aboriginal community is represented by Tharawal LALC which was established in 1983 under the Aboriginal Lands Rights Act NSW 1983. Tharawal LALC provides cultural heritage site assessments as well as a number of cultural education programs. The logos for both Tharawal LALC and Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation include the lyrebird, one of the totems for the Tharawal People.

⁶² Bertola, V. (no date) Ancestors to rest in peace in their homeland of appin, *The Daily Telegraph*. Available at: <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/macarthur/ancestors-to-rest-in-peace-in-their-homeland-of-appin/news-story/70c8ce93fc1928d41d63312821a001d4> (Accessed: 26 June 2024).

9.10 Dharug communities today

During the twentieth century, Dharug people continued to live and work in the area. Today they are reclaiming and asserting their heritage. People such as Aunty Edna Watson are creating sculptures and other artwork that responds to the histories of the landscape and inform the community of the Country that they are on.

Dharug knowledge-holders, artists and educators such as Leanne Watson have helped to form organisations such as the Dharug Custodian Aboriginal Group, which provide assistance with educational programs that focus on culture, language and culturally sensitivity to help connect the wider community to Dharug Culture.⁶³

A key part of asserting and reclaiming their heritage has been the revival of Dharug language, which is now being taught by different groups and organisations. The Bayala website, for example, aims to foster a vibrant community of Dharug Dhalang (mother language) learners and speakers. The Bayala team includes: Corina Norman, Jasmine Seymour, Leanne Watson Redpath, Aunty Edna Watson, Leanne King, Vanessa Possum, Rhiannon Wright, Richard Torning, Lani Barnes, Debbie Smith, Elizabeth Coplin, Samantha Smith and Tammy Baart. They aim to teach Dharug to all ages and share Dharug language, culture and history with the broader community.

⁶³ Dharug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation, n.d. *About Us*, accessed September 2024, <https://dharugcorporation.com.au/about/>

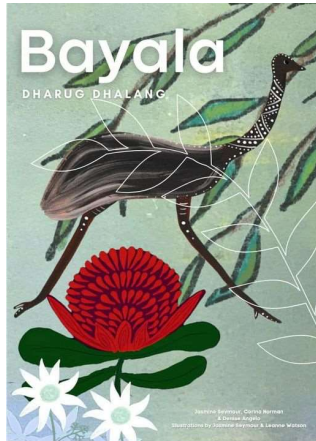


Figure 46: *Bayala Dharug Dhalang* publication by Jasmine Seymour, Corina Norman and Denise Angelo

9.11 Gandangara communities today

Today the Gandangara people continue to live and work on Country, with Gandangara community organisations, such as the Gandangara Aboriginal Heritage Association Incorporated, taking an active role in healing Country, educating the wider community about their culture and advocating for and conserving the environment of the Blue Mountains to the west of the site. For example, in 2019 the Gandangara people launched a campaign against the NSW Government against the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall, citing the immense impacts the project “on the hearts of our people and culture, [by] flooding hundreds of cultural sites including waterholes, cave

⁶⁴ Wilderness Australia, 30 July, 2019. *Gungungurra people reject Government Cultural Assessment on Warragamba Dam Raising*. https://www.wildernessaustralia.org.au/Gandangara_people_reject_government_cultural_assessment_on_warragamba_dam_raising

⁶⁵ Whaler, Jess. 4 September 2024. David King Shares a Brief History of the Gully – “Katoomba supported people, no matter who you were”. National Indigenous Times. <https://nit.com.au/04-09-2023/7364/> e

paintings, scar trees and ceremonial sites”.⁶⁴ Gandangara individuals, such as David King, conducts accessible cultural tours throughout the Blue Mountains, and particularly focuses on educating younger generations about Gandangara culture and country.⁶⁵

In addition, work is being done by community, linguists and authors to revive the language of the Gandangara community, for example, Gunai writer Kirli Saunders has written a children’s book, *Bindi*, in both English and Gandangara verse, to introduce the Gandangara language to the younger generations whilst educating them about the climate, bush fires and healing Country.⁶⁶



Figure 47: Gungungurra man, David King, conducting a smoking ceremony on Gandangara Country.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Pitt, Helen. 26 November 2020. So you can say ‘boujour’ – but how about hello in a local Indigenous Language?, *The Sydney Morning Herald*. <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/books/welcome-back-the-recovery-of-australia-s-indigenous-languages-20201120-p56gfp.html>

⁶⁷ Miller, Julie. 10 March 2023. Welcome to Gandangara Country. Blue Mountains. <https://www.visitbluemountains.com.au/travel/entry/welcome-to-Gandangara-country>



Artefact Heritage and Environment
ABN 73 144 973 526

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