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Research by Sian Hromek (Yuin), WSP. Sian specialises in variety of fields relating to Aboriginal Country and landscape design, including Cultural Land Management Practices such as cultural burning, and how these practices might inform built outcomes and inform engagement strategies.

Please note:
In order to highlight the use of Aboriginal Design Principles, this document may contain examples from other Aboriginal Countries.

Warning:
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this document may contain reference to or images of deceased persons.

Front page image: Broughton's Pass on the Nepean, Henry Grant Lloyd, Dixon Library, State Library of New South Wales

*This document acknowledges the elders, past and present, of the **Dharawal People** as the traditional custodians of the land and its knowledge.*

Bereewagal, naa niya.

Yura ngura dyi ngurang gurugal.

***People who come from afar, I see all of you.
Aboriginal people camped here, at this place,
long ago.***

*Ngoon dyalgala niya,
ngoon bamaraadbanga ni.*

***We embrace all of you; we open the door to
all of you.***

*Ngoon – mari ngurang – niya
mudang yura ngurra.*

***We lend this place to all of you to live while
we sleep.***

Dyi nga ni nura.

Here I see my country.

Dharawal Welcome to Country.

Aboriginal Design Principles

Indigenous design statement

Indigenous peoples and the built environment have had a problematic relationship as settlements, roads, and railways often cut through and disrupt the connection between people and Country.

Our projects change the environment in significant, and often positive ways, yet Aboriginal people often ask the following question::

“How are you going to leave my Country better than what it was before?”

How can we reconnect the relationship between Country and people? Projects offer an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the Aboriginal Country, Culture and people of the land on where the project is located.

Through the project's design elements and our place-based landscape interventions (architecture, infrastructure, art and the like), **we can acknowledge Country** and reveal the site's latent Aboriginal history.

This document describes the principles we use as a starting point to engage with the Dharawal people and Country. While more consultation and permission must be sought from local Elders, the ideas set out in this document should be seen as an introduction to the engagement process.

Aboriginal design principles

Aboriginal led/ Aboriginal people (designers, elder and community members) should be leading or co-leading the Indigenous design elements.

Community involvement/ The local Aboriginal communities to be engaged in this process; can we use their patterns? Can they design patterns for the project?

Appropriate use of Aboriginal design/ All Aboriginal design elements must be approved by consulted Indigenous elders and community members. If approval is not given, the knowledge will not be used on individual projects.

Design approach

Image - Signage/surface treatment/ walls/art/ Signage tells the Country and its people's story. Surface treatments use local Aboriginal design knowledge, commissioned from artists, or urban designers who engage with community for approval.

Space - Indigenous space/ landscaping/ Aboriginal Space. A space or landscape where Aboriginal culture can be celebrated, including cultural land-management practices, firestick farming, daisy yam propagation, and the like

Language - Using language in the built environment to use it and keep it alive.

Country focused design

Overall, Aboriginal Australia has a simple but quite different hierarchy when it comes to their connection to nature.

How might this shift or enhance current practices?

**Country, over
Community, over
Individual**



Country focused design

Dharawal Country and People

Over thirty separate Aboriginal language groups populated the wider Sydney area in 1788, each with their own Country, practices, diets, dress, and dialects. We now know of these groups as 'clans' and each identified with broader cultural-linguistic groups known as 'tribes'. These groups include smaller clans from the language groups of Dharawal (Tharawal, Darug, Darkinjung, Gundungarra, Coastal Darug and Awabakal.¹

Dharawal Country

The area of Wilton is located at the intersection of the traditional lands of the Dharawal, Darug and Gundungurra linguistic groups. The traditional borders were not clearly identified to settlers however it is thought that the Wilton area sits within the northern section of Dharawal.²

The traditional area of Dharawal is from Botany Bay in the north and Campbelltown in the west, south through the Nepean, Wollondilly, Georges River and Cataract River water catchments down to the Shoalhaven River and Jervis Bay.² Dharawal people moved between the areas now known as Campbelltown, Liverpool, Camden and Picton, and occasionally as far as Parramatta.³

Alternative spelling: Darawal, Turuwal, Thurawal, Thur'awal.

Dharawal Language

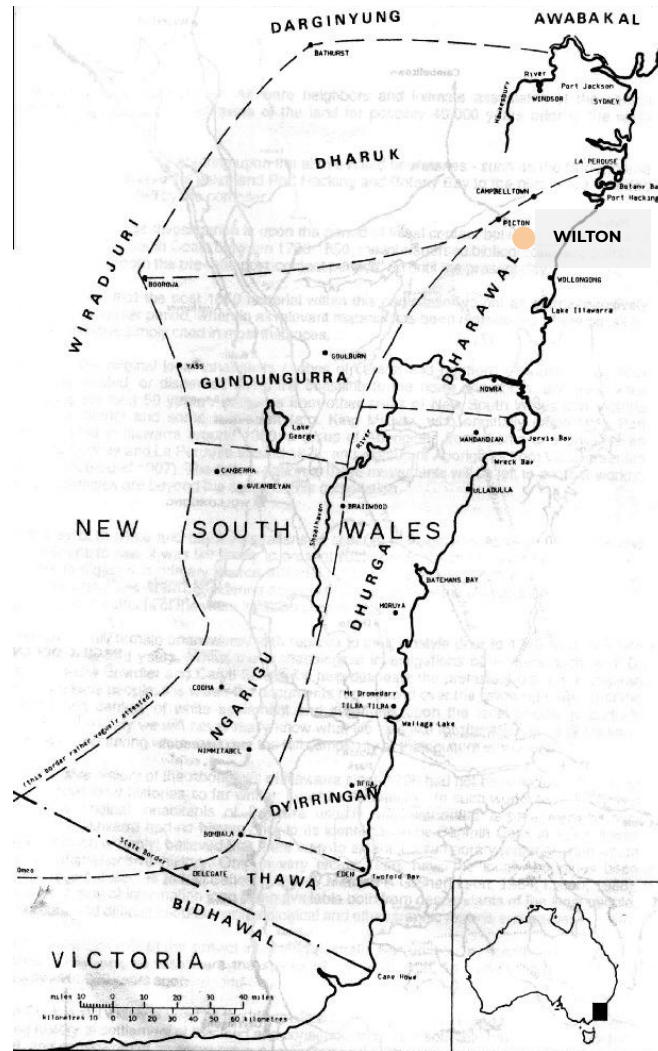
The traditional language of the area is Dharawal which is the local word for the cabbage palm. The Camayragal, Dhargarigal, Gweagal, Goonamattagal, Goorungurragal, Murro-ore-dial, Noron-Geragal, Oaree, Ory-ang-ora, Tagarigal, Threawal, Wandeandegall and Wodi Wodi clans spoke Dharawal as their first language.⁴

Wodi Wodi People

The study area is recognised as being within the clan group of the Wodi Wodi, who are a part of the Dharawal language group. The traditional Wodi Wodi boundary extends from around Stanwell Park to the Shoalhaven River, and as far inland as Picton, Moss Vale and Marulan.⁴

Wodi Wodi Totems

Totems of the Wodi Wodi include the magpie, lyrebird, pelican, satin bowerbird, the red-bellied blacksnake, and the lace monitor, and these form the heart of culture, and how the people relate to, care for and manage the land.⁵



Dharawal Country

Social Organisation

Dharawal people are often subdivided into several smaller categories referred to as freshwater, bitter water or saltwater people depending on whether they occupied the coastal regions, the swamps or the plateaus and inland river valleys. The area around Wilton is a freshwater place so the people from this area are freshwater people.²

Dharawal society was made up from distinct family groups and extended families. All members had specific responsibilities, based on age and gender. Clan boundaries were well defined and each clan was responsible for ensuring the well-being of their lands.³

Lieutenant Collins described how, at a tribal meeting 1824 'the men from the Cowpastures were the most remarkable. They were rather short, stocky, strong and superbly built. The painting on their bodies, resembling some kinds of coats of mail, added even more to their martial attitude...' ⁶

Caring for Country

Dharawal people incorporated many different land management techniques, including the burning off of areas to clear the understory vegetation and promote growth of grasses suited for macropods.³ They used fire to open paths and to clean country; to drive animals into the paths of hunters and then to cook the kill; to keep warm at night and to carry as a torch the next day; to treat wood, melt resin and crack stone for tools; to gather around and dance and share stories.¹

Dharawal people see themselves as part of the land, not separate from it. Every aspect of traditional Aboriginal society was governed by strict law.³

Traditional Resources

The people of this area harvested yams and other seasonal fruits and vegetables from river banks, caught eels, fish, and shellfish from creeks and lagoons, and hunted kangaroos, possums and waterbirds on the plains.¹

As a meeting point between three cultural linguistic groups, we can also assume that the Darug, Dharawal and Gandangara people would have met to feast, conduct business and perform ceremonies.¹



Top: Dharawal National Park.
Bottom: Welcome sign for Dharawal Country

Peace and Massacre

Peaceful First Contact

Historical records describe colonial encounters with Dharawal people which began around 1795, as peaceful. Some European settlers had close associations with them. Charles Throsby of Glenfield was accompanied by Dharawal men when he explored the southern highlands area. Throsby was a persistent critic of European treatment of Aboriginal people.⁷

Whereas the "mountain natives" (probably Gandangara) had a reputation of being hostile in defence of their people and their land, the Dharawal people were peaceful and had no history of aggression. Unfortunately few settlers could distinguish between the two groups.⁷

When Governor Macquarie and his wife visited the Cowpastures in 1810, they were welcomed by "two or three small parties of the Cowpastures natives" with "an extraordinary sort of dance". In 1814, Macquarie issued an order in the Sydney Gazette, admonishing settlers in the Appin and Cowpastures area. *"Any person who may be found to have treated them [natives] with inhumanity or cruelty, will be punished?."* Yet within a few short years, orders issued by Macquarie would result in the deaths of many Dharawal people including an atrocity when an Aboriginal woman and her children were murdered at Appin.⁷

The Appin Massacre

The Appin massacre occurred in the early hours of the morning of 17 April 1816, the outcome of a military reprisal raid against Aboriginal people ordered by Governor Lachlan Macquarie. At least 14 Aboriginal men, women and children were killed when soldiers under the command of Captain James Wallis shot at and drove a group of Aboriginal people over the gorge of the Cataract River.⁶

The massacre inflamed the situation between colonisers and local people, and fierce Aboriginal attacks on settlers continued. In response, local magistrate William Cox devised and organised a relentless campaign of raids on Aboriginal people of Dyarubbin (the Hawkesbury-Nepean area) over the next eight months, and possible longer.⁶

Together with Macquarie's policy of banishment, these raids and killings finally resulted in Macquarie's proclamation in November 1816 that hostilities had ceased. Since 2000 the Appin massacre has been commemorated annually at a memorial service at Cataract Dam.⁶



View of the Government Hut at Cowpastures 1804, unknown artist, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

Dharawal Culture

Dharawal Dreaming

The Dreamtime is sometimes represented as referring to past events or pure mythology, however it is a continuous phenomenon and therefore more appropriate to refer to it as 'the dreaming'. Dharawal people call their dreaming the Alcheringa. The main creator spirit is Biamie from which is derived the word Kiama.⁸

Biamie sent his two sons to the earth, one was Duramulun, the law-giver, who, during the dreaming, taught the local people traditional laws and customs related to kinship, totems, religion and social observances.⁸

Dreaming stories relating to all aspects of the local culture have survived, including those on the creation of the landscape, and other aspects of the environment such as the night sky and the weather.⁸

Understanding Country

All the elements of the natural world, the earth, the sea and the sky are aspects of the unique relationship that all Aboriginal people have with the world. These parts all make up the idea of 'Country'.⁹

Aboriginal people believe that the Spirits that created the world as it is now, all descend from spirits who once lived in the sky. Every aspect of the world we see now was created in response to the needs of those spirits. All features of the natural earth represent parts of the spirit dreaming and are repeated in the dreamings of the people who now inhabit the earth.⁹

Just as rocks, trees, rivers, soil, the ocean have a connection to that dreaming so each also has a connection to the totems of the people. Each animal, snake, fish lizard or insect has its totem and they also have a direct connection to their ancestral origins in the sky. Those spirits live on in the 'Country' right now.⁹



Hand stencils in a rock shelter in the Cabbage Tree basin catchment. Photo: R.J. West

Dharawal Design

We know from the vast array of art that has been found within the Dharawal area that there were four main techniques used over their years of occupation of this area.⁹

They are– Paintings, Engravings, Drawings and Stencils. Along with songs and ceremonies, these techniques pass on important events or messages from one generation to another, just as Europeans use writing to pass on stories and ideas.⁹

We can trace the movement of people by the paintings and engravings they left behind as each clan had its own particular style. So for example we know that there were three styles of kangaroo, the oldest being stick ears , next came the pointy ears , and finally the round ears.⁹

Paintings and Drawings – Outline and Infill This is when the outline of the subject matter was first drawn, usually in charcoal, and then filled in or as we would now say 'coloured or painted in'. Most of these can be found in rock shelters or overhangs protected from the weather. They would be bi-chrome (two colours) or multi-chrome (many colours).⁹

Stencils- were made by mixing clay and water together to make a slurry. They would put it in their mouth, then putting their hand on a rock surface they would purse their lips very tight and in a short, sharp spitting action spray the clay around their fingers, leaving an outline of their hand on the wall.⁹

Engraving – Pecked and Abraded, used for rock carvings. The men would first choose the rock because of the significance of the location, for example a rock carving of an orca (killer whale) overlooks the perfect location to sight the orcas as they come into the entrance of the river. Using rocks sharpened into a point, the men would pick (peck) out holes to create the outline, then abrade or rub lines between the pecks to create a deep grooved outline about 25 mm deep. The concept is not dissimilar to our dot-to-dot drawing.⁹

Geometric Designs- These are the most mysterious of all the graphic material found around Sydney. We know that designs of geometric type done as tree carvings were well known as individual and tribal markings, but there is a large body of circles, squares and elliptical shapes in stone carvings that remain unexplained.⁹

Engraving in Dharawal state conservation area.



Charcoal drawings of kangaroos in rock shelter along Myuna Creek, Heathcote National Park.

Areas with Specific Cultural Value

The following areas and map with specific cultural values were identified by members of the Aboriginal community during consultation for the "Greater Macarthur Investigation Area Aboriginal and Historic Heritage - Gap Analysis and Future Direction" by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.¹

1. Rocky Pond Creek massacre/burial – an area southwest of Appin, east of Douglas Park Drive near Cataract River was the site of an historical massacre. The site is also documented on the AHIMS database.

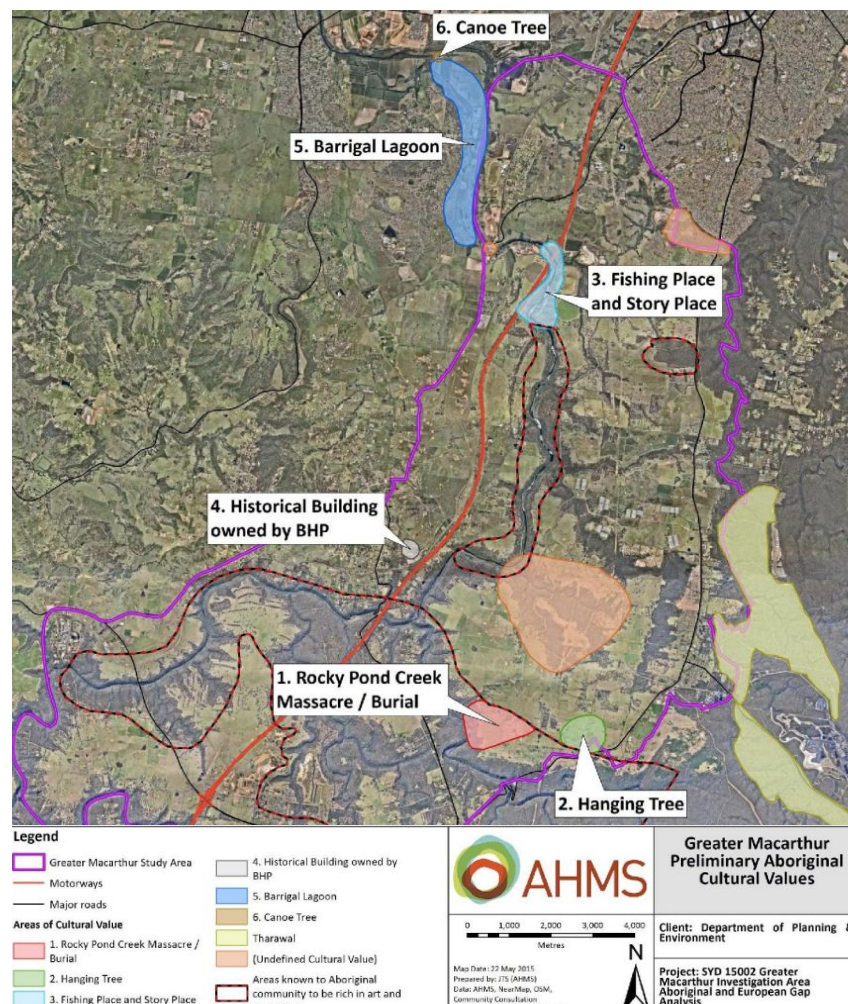
2. Hanging tree associated with the massacre site at an area to the east, at which Aboriginal people were hanging in association with the massacre event.

3. Fishing and story place – a stretch of the Nepean River, east of Menangle near Birdseye corner, known to have good fish and eels, to have been extensively used by Aboriginal people in the recent past, and that continues to be used today. Within this stretch is an important Story Place that the informant did not want more precisely identified in a public document.

4. Historic building owned by BHP – a structure just north of Douglas Park, which is known to contain holes in the walls through which Aboriginal people were shot in the past.

5. Barrigal lagoon – a stretch of the Nepean River, west of Menangle Park, that was known to have good fish and eels, and to have been extensively used by Aboriginal people in the recent past (although participants commented that the lagoons depended on seasonal floods and there had been no significant flood events since the 1980s). Activities nearby also included meetings and dancing, along with day-to-day subsistence.

6. Canoe tree – a tree with large culturally created scar is known in the northern quadrant of Barrigal Lagoon.



Walk on Country

On the 22nd July 2022, The design team did a Walk on Country with Traditional Owner, Auntie Glenda Chalker. Aunt is a Traditional Owner of the Dharawal Area and has lived in the area since she was born. She has travelled through the country traditionally and learnt a lot about the environment, it's totems and the culture of the area.

On the 22nd July Glenda lead a walk on country for the Wilton Project team on a cultural journey across the project area.

The walk started off with a Welcome to Country by Aunt, below are key points expressed during the walk on country:

- The Local Clan name is Cubbitch Clan meaning white Clay.
- The non-Indigenous people called the Cubbitch clan Cowpasture people.
- There are old burial grounds along the riverbank as the river area has open and soft sandy spaces.
- At one stage the Cubbitch people were isolated from trading with other nations and clans.
- White box Tree is the most common scar tree within the Dharawal area. Aunt found a large scar tree on the site
- The ridgelines were very significant to the Cubbitch Clan as they had 360 views of there area and could see if different tribes were approaching.
- The lyrebird is an important totem in this area
- The Cubbitch people maintained the area through cultural burning techniques which reduces the amount of fires and allowed the area to rejuvenate.



Yarn with Aunty Rebecca Chalker

On the 9th of May 2023, The design team met with Aunty Rebecca Chalker for an online yarn and update on how the project is going and gather any feedback. The following are minutes from the meeting and key takeaways:

General comments / Key takeaways:

- Aunty was happy with how the team described the project, starting some basic principles, including Aboriginal Connection to Country and heritage.
- Aunty was happy with how the project is proceeding and was looking forward to seeing more development of Aboriginal themes in the future
- Aunty is happy to be involved as a consultant for future stages of the project, such as providing further Traditional Owner feedback, or linking the team with local Aboriginal artists, landscape specialists etc.

Comments on heritage:

- Nearby rock art can provide inspiration for colour theming, and use of design vernacular for wayfinding (ie depictions of rock art in signage, language etc)
-

Comments on Art:

- Aunty endorsed an idea where some iconic signage near Hume Highway can be a Welcome to Country moment going north

Comments on water

- Filtering water to the Nepean is important for her, and was excited to see how swale drainage / basins can be key landscape features with nearby art, seating and places to look over Country

Truth telling:

- Aunty will have further thought about if the project should acknowledge the nearby massacres that occurred in the past.

Key Issues

Ground disturbance

For Aboriginal people the ground plane is important and should not be disturbed too much or else you change the ecosystem.

Any construction should have as minimal disturbance to the ground as possible.



Important viewpoints

Elevated spaces provide a good place to look at Country.

How might the design cater for any important views points of Dharawal Country?



Celebrate Country

The project has the potential to celebrate Dharawal Country and culture.

Can individual projects provide a space to celebrate this important Country?



Tell our stories.

How might we tell the stories of this Country and it's first peoples?

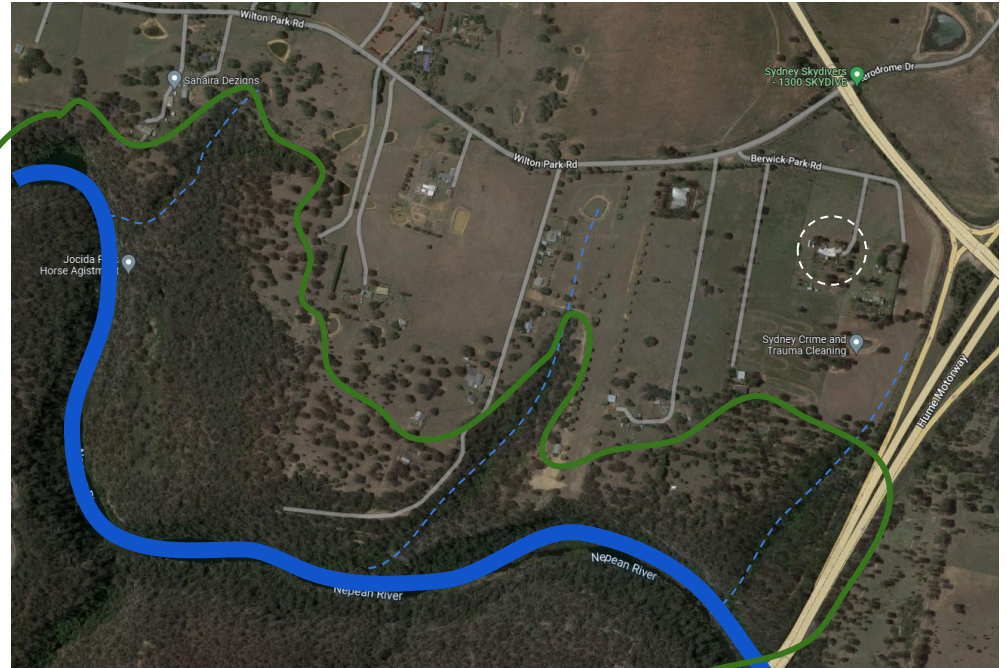


Aboriginal Planning Principles



Key Themes

- **The Earth.** The earth is often referred to as Mother and everything about it is held in great reverence. The type of rock determines vegetation, tools and trade, and minerals set the prosperity of a Country as trade was sure to follow. The soil has been compressed and eroded due to impacts from livestock, how might we reverse this damage?
- **The Sky.** The Father and Grandfather are often associated with the sky and sun and is where we came from and go too in the afterlife.
- **Water:** Water sets the structure of Country in the way it interacts with Earth. It carves Country up and sets the rhythm and flow of how humans experience it. It also determines where people plants and animals live by providing rich resource areas in rivers, billabongs, wetlands and riparian zones.
- **Vegetation,** determined by the above, provide the resource, tools and fuel for people to live well.
- **People.** We take the Above four points and make art, culture, civilisations etc. Understanding these 4 points about Country but in a highly localised context starts to get the idea of what Country is for Aboriginal people.
- **Language**



Aboriginal Planning Principles

Understanding Country.

An Aboriginal person's connection to Country is personal and highly contextual to region or place. Each person is a custodian for where they live, to ensure it is always abundant in resources, but also to ensure its honour, spirit and integrity is kept intact. Understanding Country begins with:

- **The Earth.** The earth is often referred to as Mother and everything about it is held in great reverence. The type of rock determines vegetation, tools and trade, and minerals set the prosperity of a Country as trade was sure to follow. The soil has been compressed and eroded due to impacts from livestock, how might we reverse this damage?
- **The Sky.** The Father and Grandfather are often associated with the sky and sun and is where we came from and go too in the afterlife.
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- **Vegetation,** determined by the above, provide the resource, tools and fuel for people to live well.
- **People.** We take the Above four points and make art, culture, civilisations etc. Understanding these 4 points about Country but in a highly localised context starts to get the idea of what Country is for Aboriginal people.

Hills and high places hold spiritual and practical significance including important places for stone and other alpine resources, such as moths, plants, medicines etc.



Open forest a cool place important for giving cover to people and animals as well as resources and food providing a diverse range of habitats that support many species.



Plains / Park lands are important hunting grounds which are kept open using cultural fire management to provide easy access for animals and people.



Wetlands are important as they filter the water before entering rivers and provide the structure and resources for an abundance of food, ecological niches and resources.



Rivers / Water are perhaps the most significant practically and spiritually, as water sustains and promotes life.



Aboriginal Planning Principles

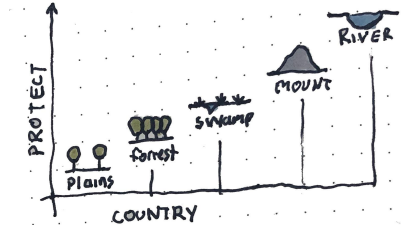
The aim of Aboriginal Planning Principles is to ensure Country is cared for. As custodians of Country we have a responsibility to keep it's best interests at heart. This includes ensuring it has an intact 'sense of place', history and spirit when we pass it onto the next generation. The following are a collection of principles in caring for Country:

Aboriginal Led. All aspects that relate to Country should be led or co-led by Aboriginal people including traditional owners, elders, artists etc.

Community Involvement: The Aboriginal people should have early and often involvement in the decisions that will affect their Country.

Appropriately Designed: Any potential outcomes that come from the project should be appropriately designed to ensure an authentic representation of traditional and contemporary Gomeri identity. They should not be tokenistic, too simple, obvious etc.

Value Hierarchy. All Country is important, yet some hold more spiritual and practical significance for Aboriginal people, the most important being River, Mountains and Swamp lands.



Share the Country. Keep the important places open for all to use and benefit from, this includes the hills, high places, and mountain tops as well as rivers, waterways of well systems. Don't build too close to the river, or too high on the hilltop. These places become opportunities for parks and recreation places.

Orientation and high points. The old folk knew where the prevailing winds would come, and where the sun would go over the sky and thus plan for this in the placement of their settlement areas, cultivation areas and other engineering projects such as fish traps and aquaculture.

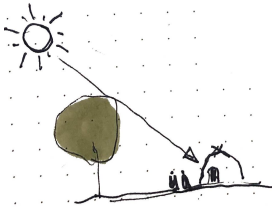


Promote biodiversity. Country, before the hard hooves of cow and sheep, was a richly soiled Country with a diverse range of plants, fruits, nuts, yams, berries, grains etc. Land was designed and cultivated to promote the difference and ensure a large range of produce / resources were available at all times of the year.

Let Country be what it wants to be. Often we fight against Country when building civilisation and make many mistakes when placing buildings towns and cities. Let the low areas be wet, the high areas be forested, the plains be wide and open. High value areas should be planned from the central point out in all future land use schemes.

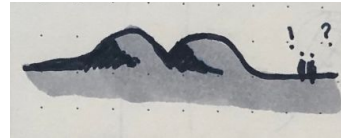
Aboriginal Planning Principles

Solar Control. Using vegetation, orientation and placement of buildings, optimum solar efficiency can be achieved depending on the season



Promote Culture. The way we design Country can enhance our sense of culture, of our diverse and rich differences, but also our commonalities. We can plant weaving materials or healing gardens, or reflect design through the landscape and building design. We design our environments, then in turn they design us.

Topographical features are important wayfinding and teaching areas. They provide identity and distinction to a place, we need to design considering these features.



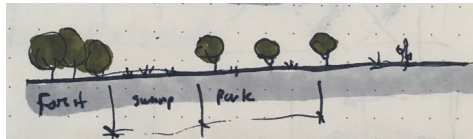
Area rotation. Resource use and harvesting of resources need to be managed and timed to allow Country to recover. A deep understanding of the cycles of Country, and how seasons impact upon animals and vegetation is necessary for appropriate management.



High View Points are important to establish and understanding of Country and your place in it. Maintaining the integrity and quality of high points is important.



Diverse Vegetation. Country was kept rich in biodiversity through rigid Cultural Land Management Practices (CLMP) yet subsequent farming with hooved animals has threatened it. As such how might we heal Country using CLMP techniques?



Recommendations

- **Implement Aboriginal Land Management Practices** within i) the whole site, ii) the Conservation land, iii) the Riparian areas and iv) other heritage sites such as scar trees, artifact scatters etc.
 - **Determine a long term Cultural Land Management Plan** with reference group for the including Conservation land. Form a long term plan for how the land should be used, how it can be cared for as custodians. (ie bush fire hazard reduction, cultural planting etc)
- **Designate conservation areas to be not developed** - areas to be kept aside and protected from / or earmarked for special development. Final sites will be determined in conjunction with community.
 - **Engage the broader Aboriginal community** through employment, design, educational or tourism . through Aboriginal participation plans, Reconciliation Action Plan, green teams and traditional land management practices.
- **Plan infrastructure** (roads, paths, parks, buildings, facilities etc) for the appreciation of sites within the area and for future use as recreation and to maintain culturally significant areas.
 - **Consider design** and how it can influence the theming of these locations through cultural heritage, land use and design.

Aboriginal Planning Recommendations

Parks and public zones should be the riparian areas and high areas

As all waterways are so significant to people in the maintenance of their ongoing cultural connection to Country we recommend that wet areas ie creeks, billabongs and wetlands within the site be maintained, enhanced and restored.

Creation of public open space, parks, walking tracks and recreation areas along waterways is highly desirable using Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles and guidelines such as permeable pathways, native reed beds and settlement ponds for water runoff.



Wetlands are important resource collection areas and habitat for plants and animals.

Areas for resource gathering

The revival of traditional weaving and tool making in Aboriginal communities has highlighted the need for resource and gathering areas for Aboriginal people to access materials. The enhancing of billabongs, wetlands and riparian zones can allow weavers and artists to sustainably collect materials in landscapes that have been highly modified since colonisation.



Weaving materials are often found in and near waterways and wetlands

Roads - avoid creeklines and ridge tops

Ridgelines and waterways are places that traditionally were used for resource gathering and habitation. By placing roads and other heavy infrastructure in alternative places where possible allows for these cultural landscape features to be protected from disturbance and available for all to enjoy.

High points are rare in the floodplains, maintaining views and sightlines can enhance a sense of place and allows for sightseeing and tourism opportunities.

Caring for habitat areas

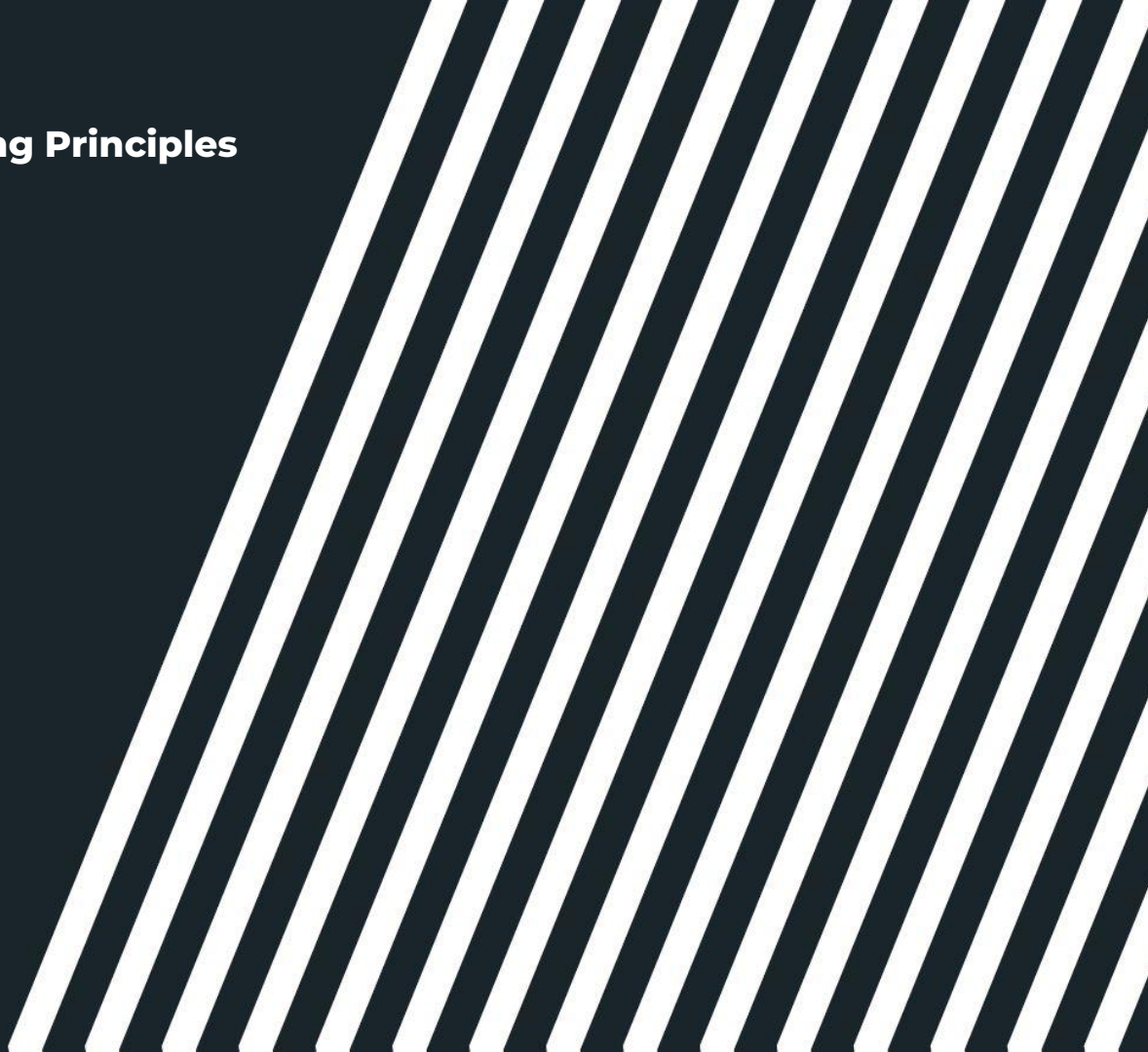
Using Water Sensitive Urban Design within the project area can provide opportunities for a range of plants, insects and aquatic animals to make use of the habitat and water resources.

Design spaces that allow water to percolate back into the water table or move through a variety of ponds with reeds and rushes to slow and filter the fine particulates out of the water body. This provides filtering, nutrient recycling and increased water quality.

Many reeds and rushes are used for weaving and other cultural purposes such as bush tucker collection. Providing opportunities for these activities helps to continue cultural practices for Aboriginal people.



Application of Aboriginal Planning Principles



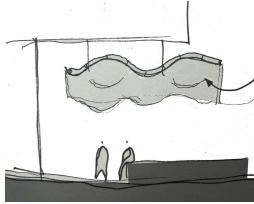
Potential use of Aboriginal design

Aims of the project:

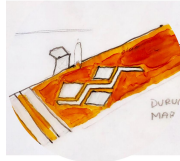
- Tell the story of the Wilton area, and of the Dharawal People.
- Incorporate native and endemic plant species through the space.
- Create opportunities for the installation of Aboriginal Art through the space.



1. Entry statement,
significant site marker
sculpture referencing
Dharawal Design.



2. An iconic sculpture /
element to mark
important gateway or
zone.



3. The ground plane.
Landscaping and
Pathways with local
Aboriginal patterns in
coloured asphalt.



4. Sculptural,
message sticks,
landscape
communicating
stories and design.



5. Wall treatment,
anti throw screens,
abutments, noise
walls etc



6. Resting / yarning
place Dharawal
design treatment in
pavement, seating,
landscape art.



7. Language and
naming
Can the building
represent Dharawal
culture through
appropriate language
shared through
consultation?

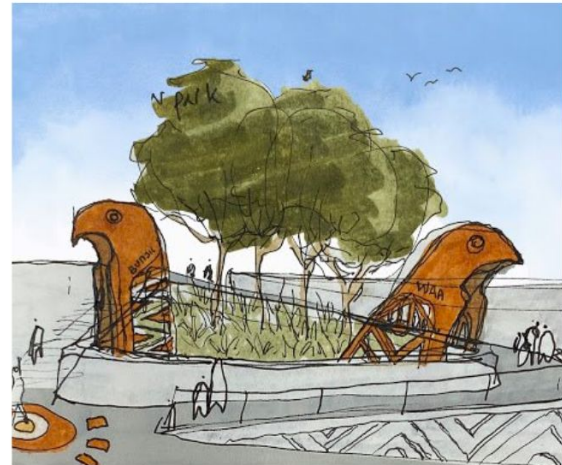
Sense of Arrival

Observation

Entry to the Wilton property can be a welcoming experience by providing users of the place a sense of arrival when entering the site.

Recommendation- Create a sense of arrival by:

- Providing Acknowledgement of Country signage at entry points on the site.
- Engage or commission a local Aboriginal artist to design / co-design an information point. This can create a sense of arrival and providing legibility and wayfinding of the site
- The information point may also provide interesting cultural information about this place, some of the cultural heritage features, the history of land use in this region..
- Explore the possibility of creating a cultural gathering space. This could be a rest area, a place to eat, relax and share a meal, or other type of space that people can use at all times of the day.

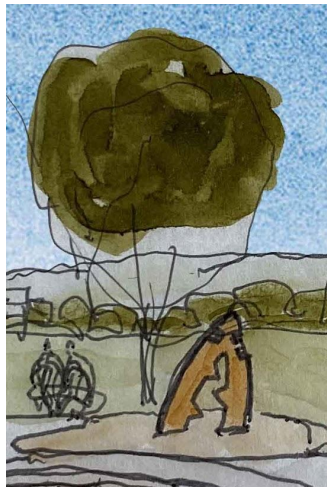


Sense of Arrival

Sculptural and mural elements can be combined



Tell a story at important thresholds



Storytelling and wayfinding devices help connect people and orientate them to Dharawal Country and the stories and history that came before.



A space to celebrate culture, such as a viewing, yarnning or sitting place with references to local design.



The Pedestrian Experience

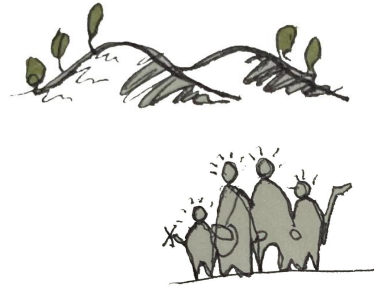
A space to celebrate Country, such as a viewing, yarning or sitting place with references to local design and stories allowing leaders to tell the story.



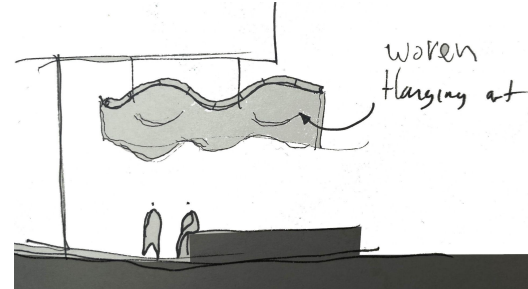
Integrated street art with Dharawal themes. Example below is of Reid Highway WA upgrade with Noongar design translated by artist Drew Straker through a community led co-design process.



Storytelling and wayfinding devices help connect people and orientate them to Dharawal Country and the stories and history that came before. Signage, surface etching, sandblasting of language etc.



Undercroft spaces, abutments and substructures can be activated with bright and meaningful Dharawal design either through direct application, moulding / relief or light installation. This serves the benefit of beautifying otherwise dull features and providing engaging, fun, safe and accessible areas.



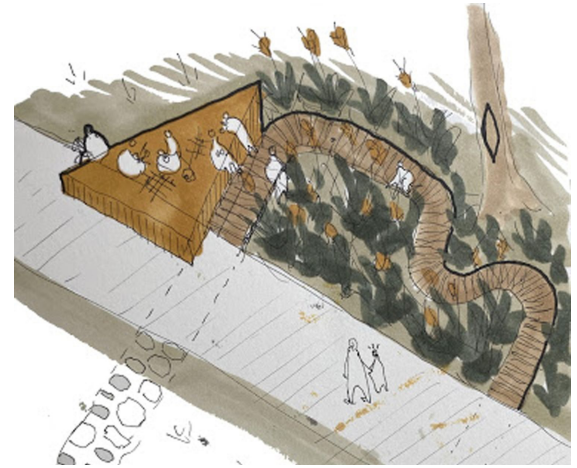
Roads and Pathways

Observation

Roads and pathways across the site will connect nodes and hubs allowing for easy wayfinding for users.

Recommendations.

- Create a system of roads and pathways to increase legibility for users walking or driving across the area.
- Ensure that the legibility is enhanced through clever design elements.
- Use wayfinding devices to improve legibility. This may include the use of colours to create a local identity for each section of the property. Other design elements may include the use of traditional patterns (with permission and endorsement of the Aboriginal consultants) of Dharawal Country which feature in the pathways and at nodes points.
- Create a hierarchy for roads and pathways. Reduce water runoff from hard surfaces by including crushed sandstone or another locally sourced products for secondary paths increasing the area of permeable surfaces.

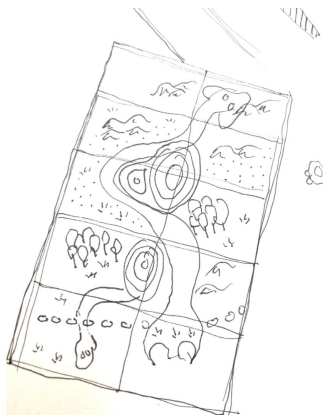


Ground plane

Thresholds can be celebrated with bold pavement design referencing Aboriginal language, colour and patterns.



A cultural Mapping of the site, revealing cultural flows and pressures on this site through high quality materials and design.



Pavement treatment

The pathways and paving patterns can reflect colours and elements of Dharawal Country.



Use of endemic species will attract and enhance the biodiversity of this place. Curating planted areas into groves creates places of difference and diversity.



Landscapes are resource collection points for First People. We can all learn from these places about how First People lived and thrived in this place. How can we design this site with these values?

Shared places

Shared places can celebrate Dharawal culture while catering for multiple users including pedestrians, cyclists, road users and 'more than humans' ie plants, animals, waterways and ecology.

By using permeable surfaces for secondary pathways, local endemic plant species in gardens and verges, and adopting water sensitive urban design principles places can benefit all users.



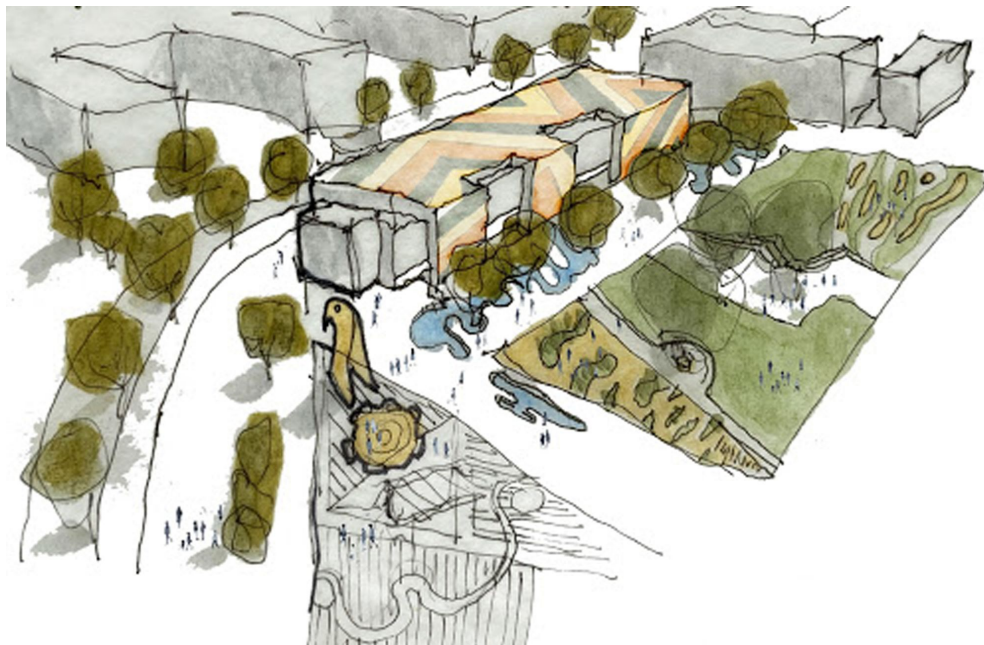
Celebrate Country

Observation

The Wilton project is located in a rural area that has a lot of natural features, and is adjacent to the Nepean River. How can this development sit comfortably in this environment?

Recommendations

- Retain the natural landform as much as possible, limiting the amount of fill and excavation to the minimum needed to achieve results.
- Maintain and protect natural features such as the creeks and drainage lines leading to the Nepean River.
- Enhance biodiversity by planting endemic flora that connects with existing native vegetation, improving faunal pathways.
- Re-establish riparian vegetation to provide cover and habitat along waterways.
- Remove invasive introduced species such as blackberry and other weed species.
- Include Dharawal patterns and design vernacular within the building facades, in consultation through engagement with Knowledge Holders.
- Design buildings to have a 'light touch' on the landscape and character of the place as much as possible. This may be achieved by using locally sourced materials, restricting building heights to sit in the landscape comfortably, allowing for permeability through the site, employing local people during construction.



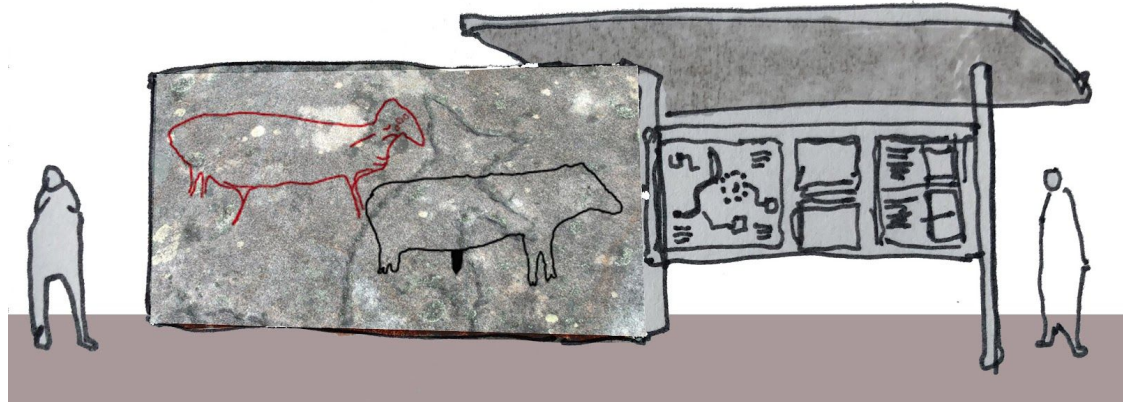
Signage

Observation

This site is large. Having good signage to help people orient themselves will enhance the users experience and allow for efficient movement across the site..

Recommendation

- Identify areas where signage will benefit the users.
- Consult with Dharawal Knowledge Holders and include their inputs into the information provided when relating to cultural elements in the signage.
- Use design elements such as colours and patterns to create a sense of place and identity to each section of the property.



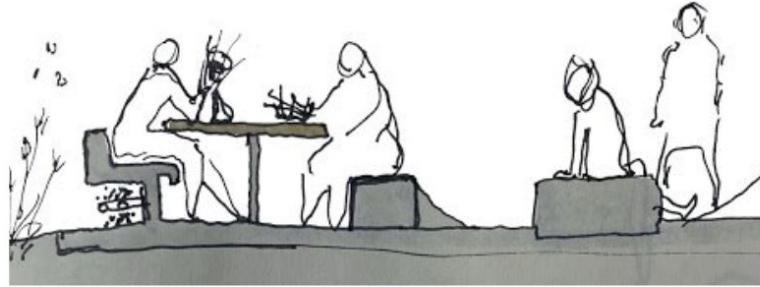
Gathering areas

Observation

There are areas within the site that would be conducive to relax and enjoy the atmosphere and scenery.

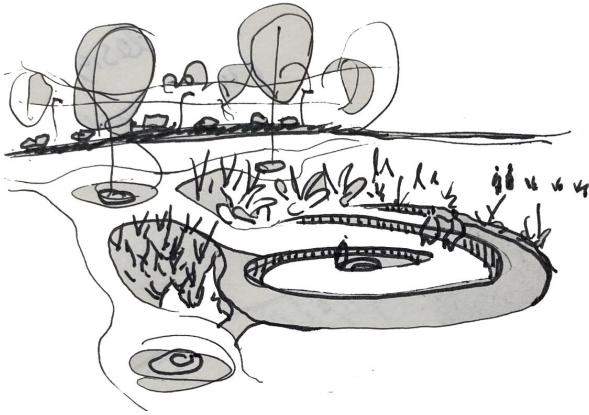
Recommendation

- The user experience across the site can be enhanced by providing dwell spots, formal and informal seating areas, gathering areas, viewing locations.
- Informal seating can include sandstone blocks placed in small clusters along pathways as well as off pathways creating a small nook or node to rest and relax.
- More formal areas such as lunch shelters and outdoor meeting areas can provide a destination and activation for users.
- Cluster facilities according to existing infrastructure such as amenities, pathways and natural view points.

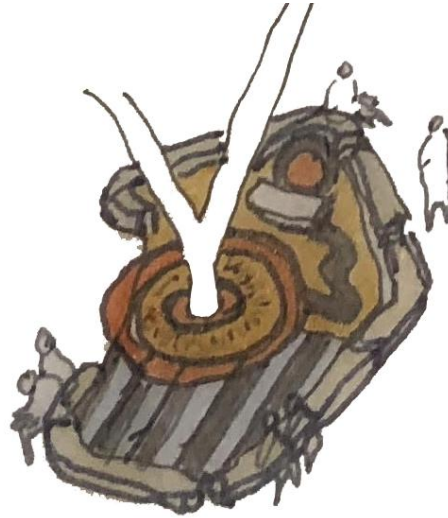


Resting / Yarning places

The landscape can facilitate in cultural practices
such as weaving or healing gardens, or spaces
specific for Aboriginal people to celebrate their
culture.



A physical space to celebrate design and culture
- could be an accessible site to enhance certain
cultural practices, such as healing or weaving
gardens, a yarning circle etc.



Retain Grandparent Trees

Observation

The site contains several significant large trees which we refer to as grandparent trees, that are integral and belong to this place.

Recommendation

- Retain as many of these large 'grandparent' trees as is possible, it will help to maintain the integrity of the place.
- These trees provide valuable habitat to arboreal species.
- They also provide ecosystem services such as soil health and stabilisation, filtration of air, sequestration of carbon, improved biodiversity etc
- Shade provided by these trees will improve the user experience and can become a feature in the landscape as a place to sit, rest and gather.



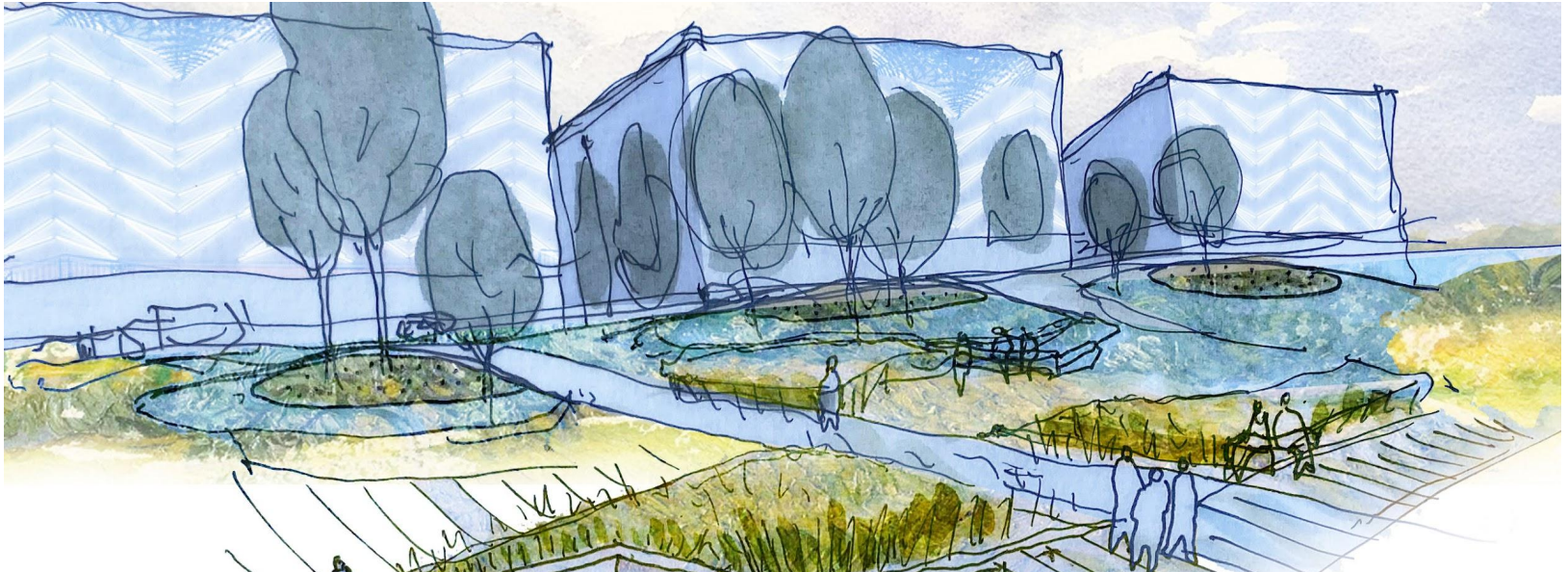
Suggested area to retain grandparent trees

Cultural Land Management

Cultural Land Management Aboriginal people have been looking after this Country for millennium. Consider opportunities for cultural land management of remnant bushland areas and creeks and waterways.

Cultural fire practises provide a safe way to enhance ecological resilience using cool burning techniques. Fuel loads are decreased while biodiversity is increased through the right application of fire for the ecosystem. Engaging cultural fire practitioners to help manage these parts of the property will also create opportunities for Aboriginal people to care for their Country.

Bring Country back to the site. Consider connecting with organisations which are dedicated to bringing Country back, such as nearby Aboriginal nurseries, wetland projects etc. Bush tucker plantings engage the community while educating them about traditional food and culture.



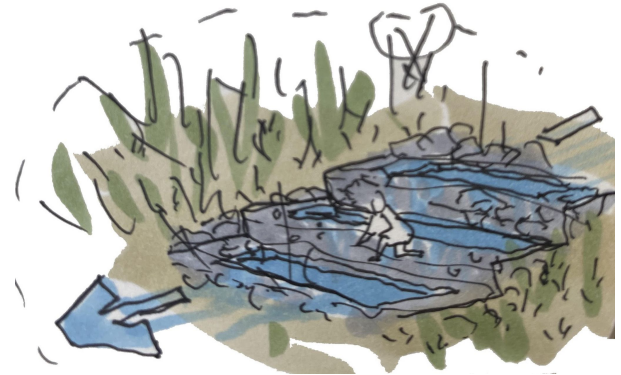
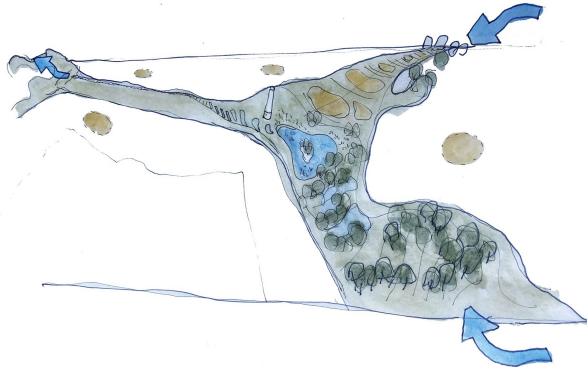
Cultural Water Management

Observation

This site sits above the Nepean River and any stormwater runoff can either negatively or positively effect the river system. Clever use of design will help to have a positive effect.

Recommendation- Embrace Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD).

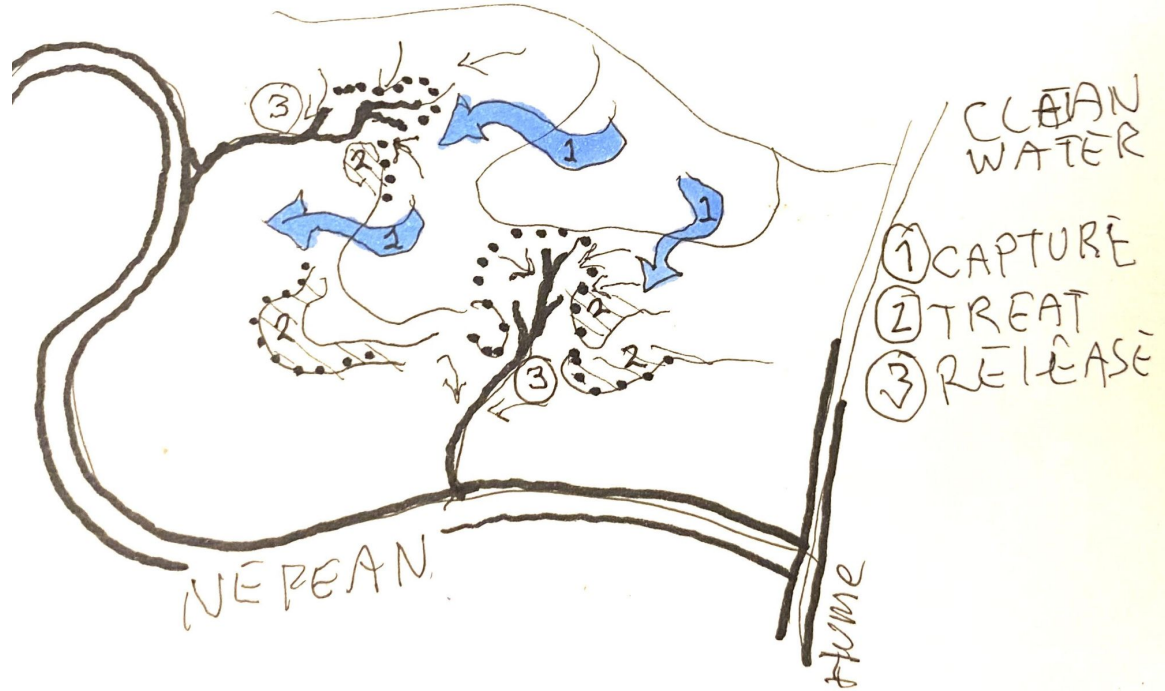
- Ensure that stormwater runoff is filtered and cleaned using WSUD elements and techniques which include use of endemic plants in gardens.
- Create rain gardens to collect and filter water as it moves across the site.
- Create swales and sand traps to slow the water down allowing for filtration of fine particles from the water body before it joins creeks and rivers below.
- Direct the stormwater to pass through reed beds and small water bodies creating a 'pool and riffle' system where appropriate to allow for UV sterilisation of the water.



Cultural Water Management

Find ways to clean stormwater runoff before it enters the river system using ecological processes.

1. Capture stormwater
2. Treat water using: macrophytes and settlement ponds, UV sunlight treatment, pool and riffle sequences etc.
3. Release water back into the river system after the water quality has been improved.



Keep the development low in the sky

Building heights can have a negative impact on important cultural views.

It is recommended that the buildings are kept low so as to have no visual impact from this key viewpoint.



Master Plan

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Rezoning Boundary
- Proposed Buildings
- Basins / WSUD
- Edge Trail / Pedestrian and Cycle Links
- Cafe / Amenity Areas / Breakout Spaces

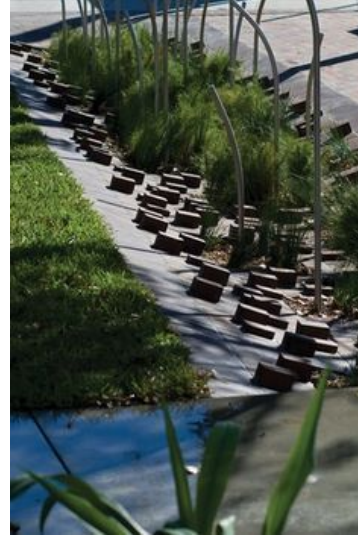
Scale 1:8000

0m 80 160 240 320 400m

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Landscaping Inspiration



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