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## **Addendum to *Riverwood Estate Renewal Connecting with Country Framework 2022*, to address Revised RTS Stage 1 project**

**Report prepared for NSW Land and Housing Corporation**

25 September 2023

### Introduction

NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) is seeking to renew the Riverwood Estate to increase housing supply, facilitate the redevelopment of ageing social housing stock and provide fit for purpose social and private housing within an integrated community.

In June 2022, LAHC engaged Artefact Heritage to develop a Connecting with Country (CwC) Framework to explore the deep Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the wider Riverwood Estate precinct, and recommend design principles to translate and embed the values into the design and lifecycle of the Riverwood Estate Renewal project. In September 2023, LAHC engaged Artefact to prepare an Addendum to the CwC Framework to address a revised study area for the project Revised RTS Stage 1.

### Project background

The CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022) provides a full background description of the Riverwood Estate Renewal project, which is as follows:

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*The renewal will allow the Riverwood Estate to reach its full potential and deliver public benefit through high quality new open spaces, public domain, community facilities, exemplary sustainability outcomes and local retail that supports the needs of the future community whilst also improving accessibility and connectivity across the precinct.*

*The first stage of redevelopment at Riverwood was completed in 2018 and delivered 150 new social housing dwellings mixed with private housing at Washington Park. The remaining 30 hectares of the Riverwood Estate renewal project was announced as a State Significant Precinct (SSP) in 2016. In 2017, Architectus developed an initial Master Plan of the estate. Artefact Heritage was engaged by Architectus to produce a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) in support of the SSP proposal and Master Plan.*

*In November 2019, SSP for the site was discontinued and the rezoning was handed back to Canterbury Bankstown Council. In October 2020 the NSW Government Delivery & Performance Committee (DAPCO) supported the*

*reinstatement of the site as SSP, Study Requirements were issued in December 2020 and the SSP status was confirmed by the NSW Government in March 2021.*

*In June 2021, LAHC submitted a draft planning proposal for review against the Study Requirements. Feedback from this process was received in August 2021. LAHC lodged an updated draft planning proposal for formal assessment in April 2022 and the proposal was placed on Public Exhibition from 12 August 2022 to 25 September 2022.*

*The draft planning proposal will provide nearly 5 hectares of outdoor space and 3,900 homes, resulting in an additional 2,800 homes to address the growing and changing housing needs in the area.*

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## Proposed change and justification

The project has been affected by recent market changes primarily because of significant increases in construction costs impacting on the overall viability of the project.

LAHC has implemented a revised strategy that will now focus on the delivery of Stage 1 of the project, which will deliver approximately 420 new dwellings with less impact on existing local infrastructure. This will enable the wider masterplan to be considered in the future to ensure it meets the aspirations of the local community and allow identified local infrastructure to be delivered in tandem.

Rezoning of an exemplar first stage will build on the previous renewal work at Washington Park noting that the land and proposed redevelopment in this stage mirrors the 2022 exhibited planning proposal. As the proposed first stage sits within the exhibited proposal, this means the land needed for future infrastructure such as road widening will be unaffected.

The following drawings illustrate the revised study area.

Figure 1: Exhibited Riverwood Estate Master Plan with revised study area markup (Source: Architectus)



Figure 2: Updated Master Plan with revised study area boundary (Source: Architectus)

Stage 1 - Revised Boundary



## Scope of planning changes

To support the first stage of renewal, amendments to the proposed planning controls are required, including:

- Revised maximum building heights, up to 29m (8 storeys) and 42m (12 storeys). This is 1m taller for the 12 storey building element only, whilst the height of proposed 8 storey buildings remains the same.
- Apply a reduced blanket FSR of 2.2:1 across the site, where previously this was split between part 2.2:1 and part 2.4:1.
- Maintain APU No. 26 proposed to this area, which seeks to include:
  - a) Neighbourhood shop with a maximum gross floor area of 250 square metres.
  - b) Neighbourhood supermarket with a maximum gross floor area 1,000 square metres.
  - c) Food and drink premises, including cafes and restaurants.

The above provisions now related to the revised site area only. It is noted that a number of provisions previously proposed, including changes to land zoning, APUs 25 and 27, minimum lot size, active frontages, solar access, infrastructure provision, design excellence and Inclusion of the Riverwood Estate on the SSD sites map are no longer required to enable delivery of the revised scope and no longer form part of the proposal.

The above list includes all provisions included within the exhibited Explanation of Intended Effects (EIE). There are no other provisions which require amending to support the revised scope.

## Scope of this report

This Addendum CwC Framework builds on consultation undertaken with Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and key Aboriginal stakeholders from the Riverwood area as part of the wider Riverwood Estate Renewal project. It provides a vision and design principles to embed Country into the development of the revised RTS Stage 1 study area, identify Country narratives and interpretive themes for the development, and provide best-practice framework for designing with Country.

The CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022) prepared for the wider Riverwood Estate Renewal was informed by the Government Architects NSW *Draft Connecting with Country* guidelines, 2020. It is noted that while these guidelines were since finalised in July 2023, this Addendum refers to the draft guidelines to ensure consistency of approach and methodology between the two reports.

### GANSW Draft Connecting with Country Framework

The Government Architect NSW draft *Connecting with Country* (2020) provides a framework for developing connections with Country that can inform the planning, design, and delivery of built environment projects in NSW.<sup>1</sup>

The Connecting with Country framework:

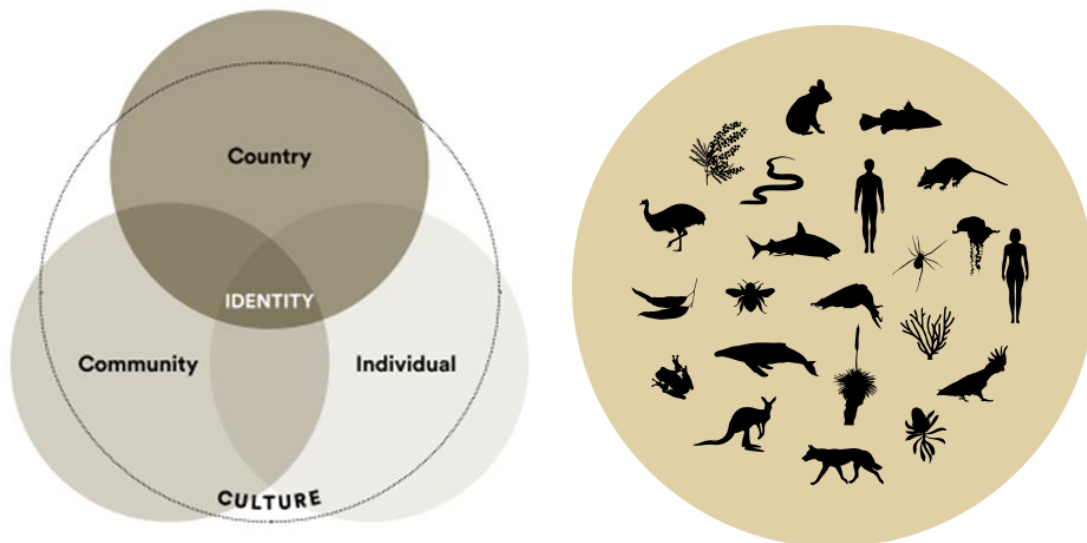
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<sup>1</sup> GANSW, 2020a.

- Articulates the principle of committing to helping support the health and wellbeing of Country by valuing, respecting, and being guided by Aboriginal people, who know that if we care for Country – it will care for us.
- Has three long-term strategic goals:
  - Value and respect Aboriginal cultural knowledge with Aboriginal people co-leading design and development of all NSW infrastructure projects.
  - Reduce the impacts of natural events such as fire, drought, and flooding through sustainable land and water use practices.
  - Ensure Country is cared for appropriately and sensitive sites are protected by Aboriginal people having access to their homelands to continue their cultural practices.
- Aspires for all of us – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people – to work together collectively, respectfully, and with open minds to unite our complementary knowledge.

The GANSW Connecting with Country framework outlines seven Statements of Commitment to assist project teams in fulfilling their obligations to connection to Country. These are provided within this addendum, together with project specific recommendations.

**Figure 3: Interrelationships and Country-centred conceptualisation. Source: Connecting with Country Framework<sup>2</sup>**



## Site location and setting

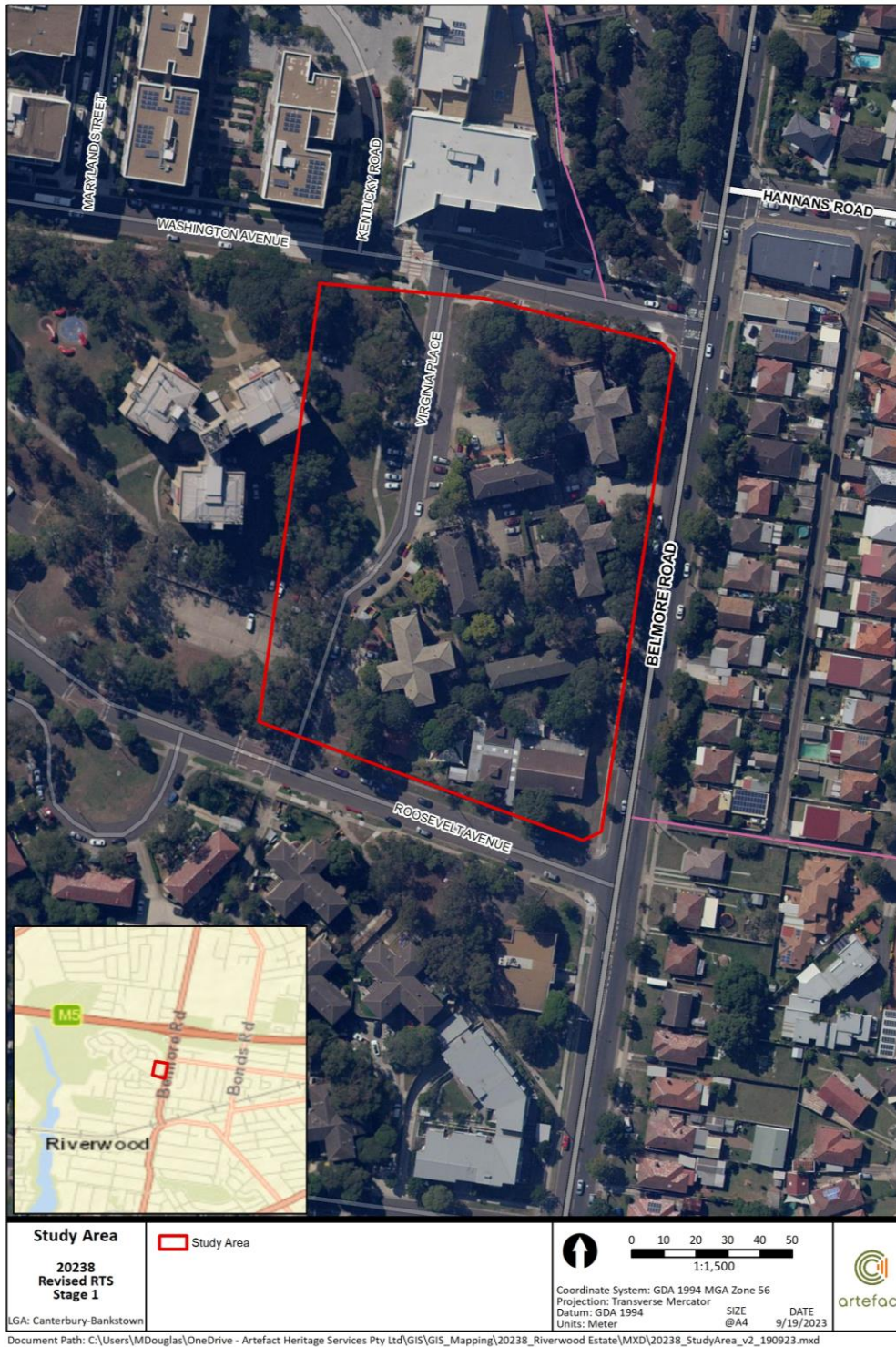
The revised RTS Stage 1 study area comprises an area of 16,265m<sup>2</sup> (1.6 hectares). The site contains social housing dwellings of varying sizes along with land owned by the City of Canterbury Bankstown Council. The study area is located within the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Government Area (LGA) and is on the border of the Georges River LGA. The study area is bound by Washington Avenue to the north, Belmore Road to the east, Roosevelt Avenue to the south, and Virginia Place to the west.

<sup>2</sup> GANSW 2020a: 17. Diagram adapted from Lehmann, 2019: 4.

Within the wider context, the site is located near the M5 Motorway to the north, and Salt Pan Creek Reserve and Salt Pan Creek to the west.

The location of the study area is shown in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 4: Study area map**



## Considering Country

This section has been adapted from the CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022) and provides an overview of Aboriginal understanding of Country and how the consideration of and connection to Country can influence and inform design.

### What is Country?

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*“All our cultures are spiritually founded. We all have ontologies that are the same, they’re Dreamings. When the world was featureless, a long time ago, and our spirit ancestors moved across that featureless environment they created all these stories. They created us too...our spirit ancestors left us in their wake as they moved across and created our Countries during the Dreaming. They give us our social systems, our languages and everything. So everything is spiritually founded and imbued. Everything you can see and hear... they all have spirits for us. Spirit ancestors give us everything.”<sup>3</sup>*

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The concept of Country does not have a corresponding concept in Western culture but is a deeply personal yet universal worldview fundamental to Aboriginal people. Individual relationships with and definitions of ‘Country’ are deeply nuanced, and can vary depending on a person’s life experience, place, and personal beliefs. It is key, therefore, to deeply listen to the perspectives of Aboriginal people and remove Western biases when thinking about Country.

**Figure 5: The mangrove-lined waters of Salt Pan Creek**



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<sup>3</sup> Dr Shayne Williams (Burruga Foundation). Project workshop, September 2022.

A definition of country as 'land' may be the initial association made by a Western person, but this is far too simplistic; instead, the idea of Country is an all-encompassing continuum of past, present and future, connecting tangible things like ecosystems, water, and people, as well as intangible concepts like story, identity, and home.

Country and identity are deeply linked for Aboriginal people, and an understanding of Country is key to understanding both themselves and their community. The concept of Country is not hierarchical – all elements are regarded equally, 'from the cosmic to the molecular and everything in between'.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, a person's identity and personal value cannot be separated from Country and is connected to all elements around them. A person's actions can positively or negatively affect all aspects of Country, including themselves.

Country, just like people, can be healthy or sick, and requires care and respect. A network of mutual care between the land, animals, plants and people stretches into deep time, and must be constantly protected and nurtured to ensure the health of Country. Knowledge of how to maintain this network of mutual care is expressed through Aboriginal language, stories, and cultural practices and provides the bedrock of Aboriginal cultures. The network is interconnected and interdependent; changes in language, for example, affects all other elements.

Country is both spiritual and physical. Country is something that can be experienced, and that physical experience is key to the mutual health of Aboriginal people and Country itself. Walking on Country, feeling the touch of the air, sun, and wind, speaking to and listening to Country, and hunting on Country are ways of practicing culture that have been passed down for many generations. The act of being on Country and feeling the connection with place is deeply significant for Aboriginal communities and a way of ensuring that individuals and families can thrive.

**Figure 6: Sketch of Country and songlines drawn at Walk on Country session, Shayne Williams**



<sup>4</sup> GANSW, 2020a: 14.



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*“With songlines I could take you across Dharawal Country, you see. Tell you the Dreaming stories. And all the way along here I might tell you about little events that might have happened here and here, you see. That’s what songlines is. But I can’t go any further you see...because I’m off Country, different ontology, different Dreaming. So if you want to go any further with songlines, you have to get someone from this culture, and they’ll take you across there and tell you their story, and tell you about events here and here that happened during the Dreaming.*

*... That’s songlines...songlines criss-cross right across the country, like a big web.”<sup>5</sup>*

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Cultural practices (also called cultural law or protocols) and the languages used to refer to Country are deeply diverse, reflecting the development of hundreds of communities across Australia over millennia. All practices, however, are rooted in the idea of responsibility towards Country.

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*“We’ve always been multicultural, before multiculturalism was even a thing. We were always able to adapt to different clans and cultures.”<sup>6</sup>*

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Country has been significantly disturbed by the colonisation of Australia. Delicate physical and spiritual ecosystems that have been nourished and maintained since deep time have been damaged by deforestation, loss of biodiversity, dislocation of community, and general development. The Western systems of thinking and land-use cannot maintain or nourish Country.

The resilience of Aboriginal people across Australia and the strength of cultural practices, however, has allowed much cultural knowledge and law to survive colonisation. The knowledge of Aboriginal people of how to care for Country is diverse, and includes practices of agriculture, health, spirituality, and sustainability. This deep knowledge, based on the idea of mutual responsibility, should play an essential part in future placemaking and planning.

Designs that echo traditional forms and stories and their contemporary interpretations are increasingly being integrated within new developments, sending strong, respectful messages about the timeless links between Aboriginal peoples and the landscape, and allowing for reflection and connection to Country. Traditional knowledge, when embedded meaningfully into development, has positive outcomes for communities and the environment. The significance of such design integration does not just lie in its aesthetics, but in the empowerment that public statements of value bring and the value of sustainable future development.

The involvement and authority of Aboriginal knowledge holders and Aboriginal architects, designers, and artists is paramount in developing future projects that connect meaningfully with Country and promote, sustain, and nurture the health of Country.

## Aboriginal cultural significance of the area

This section provides an overview of the rich Aboriginal history of the Riverwood area and the lifeways that have nurtured Country for tens of thousands of years. A detailed Aboriginal histories of the area and discussion of cultural values is found in the CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022).

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<sup>5</sup> Dr Shayne Williams (Burruga Foundation). Project workshop, September 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Rowena Welsh-Jarrett (Metropolitan LALC). Project workshop, October 2022.

## Aboriginal histories of the area

Aboriginal people have cared for the land and waterways on which the Riverwood Estate lies for thousands of years. The area is located within Bediagal / Bidjigal / Bidgeegal Country. Traditionally a woodland people, Bediagal territory extends from Botany Bay along the Georges River and Salt Pan Creek and west as far as Prospect.

Prior to colonisation, the land on which the Riverwood Estate is located would have been covered in a tall open Turpentine-Ironbark forest. The rich vegetative form of this forest landscape, which provided habitat for a wide variety of animals, was complimented by the riverine and mangrove vegetative species associated with nearby Salt Pan Creek. A tributary of the Georges River, Salt Pan Creek once flowed far closer to the Riverwood Estate. The mangroves and waterways sustained an abundance of fish, crabs, oysters and yams. Salt Pan Creek also provided an important means of transport within the wider landscape.

European colonisation had a devastating impact on the Aboriginal population of the Sydney region. In the early days of the colony, Aboriginal people were disenfranchised from their land as the British claimed areas for settlement. The devastation of Aboriginal culture came about through disease, invasion and massacres at the hands of British military and armed civilians. One of the best-known Bediagal figures is Pemulwuy, who from 1788 to 1802 led a resistance against the British colonisers on Bediagal Country. In the early 1800s, Pemulwuy's son Tedbury also engaged in frequent resistance against the British colonists at Salt Pan Creek, fiercely defending Bediagal Country from encroachment.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the waterways of the Georges River continued to be a place of resilience as Aboriginal people living in the area adapted to changing post-contact circumstances. Important local figures included prominent Dharawal Elder Bidy Giles, who lived on the western bank of Mill Creek in the Georges River area, and expert fisherman and Dharawal man William Rowley who purchased a block of land alongside Salt Pan Creek near what is now Charm Place, Peakhurst. In 1935, Rowley was noted as living at Salt Pan Creek with his wife.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Salt Pan Creek became a centre of the Aboriginal civil rights movement. On the eastern bank of Salt Pan Creek, a block of land next to Rowley's landholding was purchased by prominent Aboriginal activist Pastor Hugh Anderson and his wife Ellen Anderson, and later their son Joe Anderson. Numerous buildings were erected on the property, which became an important refuge and camping ground for dispossessed Aboriginal families escaping the brutal regime of the Aboriginal Protection Board and an incubator for Aboriginal resistance and agency.

Whilst at Salt Pan Creek, Ellen and Hugh Anderson liaised with the Aborigines Inland Mission and met with founders of the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association. Numerous Aboriginal families from elsewhere in Sydney and across the state spent time at the Salt Pan Creek camp. In the fight for civil rights, the area became the focus of political activism and knowledge sharing.

Joe Anderson, son of Hugh and Ellen, grew up at Salt Pan Creek and emerged as a prominent local Aboriginal leader. Joe became known as 'King Burruga'. In 1933, Joe made a poignant appeal from the banks of Salt Pan Creek to King George to extend Parliamentary representation rights to Aboriginal people. The speech was innovatively filmed using Cinesound, and is transcribed below:

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*"Before the white man set foot in Australia, my ancestors had kings in their own right, and I, Aboriginal King Burruga, am a direct descendant of the royal line..."*

*The Black man sticks to his brothers and always keeps their rules, which were laid down before the white man set foot upon these shores. One of the greatest laws among the Aborigines was to love one another, and he always kept to this*

*law. Where will you find a white man or a white woman today that will say I love my neighbour? It quite amuses me to hear people say they don't like the Black man ... but he's damn glad to live in a Black man's country all the same!*

*I am calling a corroboree of all the Natives in New South Wales to send a petition to the King, in an endeavour to improve our conditions. All the Black man wants is representation in Federal Parliament. There is also plenty fish in the river for us all, and land to grow all we want.*

*One hundred and fifty years ago, the Aboriginal owned Australia, and today, he demands more than the white man's charity. He wants the right to live!"*

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Joe's speech is likely the first appeal for Aboriginal equality by an Aboriginal person to be recorded on film. Many other important Aboriginal leaders and activists spent time at the Salt Pan Creek camp, including Jack Patten, Bill Onus, Bert Groves, Jacko Campbell and Pearl Gibbs, along with Tom Williams (Jnr) and Ellen James - both grandchildren of Ellen Anderson. The site remains an important symbol of the continued struggle for Aboriginal equality.

Land along Salt Pan Creek survived as open camping grounds for Aboriginal people into the 1930s. Further upstream near the project location in an area that was known as 'Doctor's Bush', Aboriginal families lived in camps and huts until the late 1930s. Despite the Salt Pan Creek settlement being reported as 'clean, tidy, and well kept' in a local newspaper, it was dissolved by the Hurstville Council in 1936. Many of the Aboriginal people who found their home on the Anderson's property moved further upstream along Salt Pan Creek and settled on the floodplains near the Riverwood Estate. Other families moved on to La Perouse.

Following the Second World War, the Herne Bay housing estate took in numbers of local Aboriginal people along with the wider Australian homeless community. To date, the current Riverwood Estate continues to have dedicated housing for Aboriginal Australians. The work of Joe Anderson is continued today through the work of the Burruga Foundation.

### Previous Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report

Artefact Heritage prepared an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) for the Riverwood Estate SSP in 2022. This report provided an appraisal of existing information and heritage investigations, and data on known Aboriginal sites from the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS). The ACHAR included a site survey and contained recommendations and draft controls for management of Aboriginal heritage values. The findings of this report have been integrated in the recommendations and design principles in this addendum.

### Registered Aboriginal sites in the area

**The locations and details of Aboriginal sites are considered culturally sensitive information. It is recommended that this information, including the AHIMS data and GIS imagery, is removed from this report if it is to enter the public domain.**

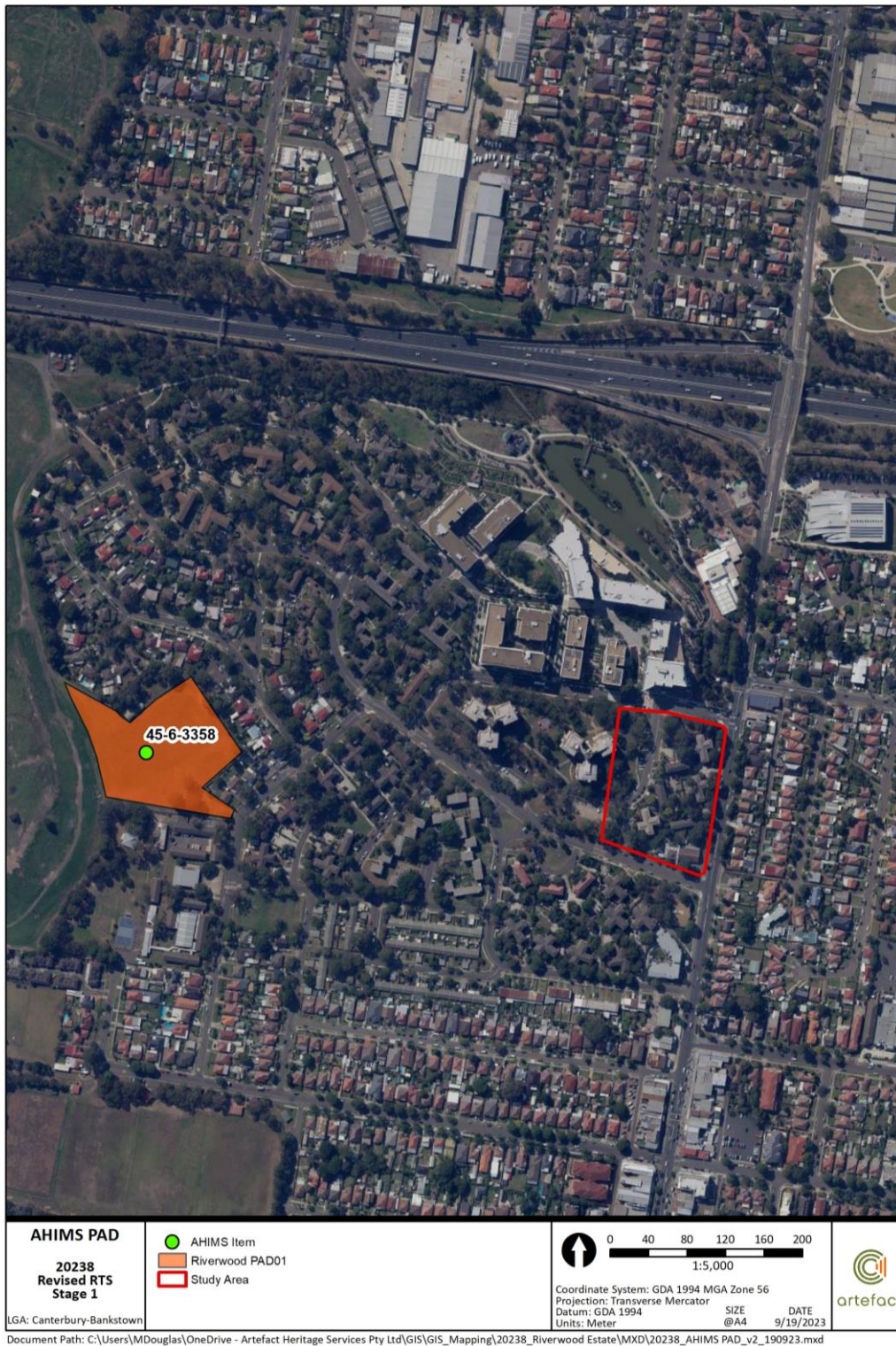
An extensive search of the AHIMS database was carried out by Michael Lever (Heritage Consultant, Artefact Heritage) on 18 October 2022. This included a one-kilometre buffer around the study area. The purpose of the AHIMS search was to identify whether any registered Aboriginal sites are located within or near the study area. The results of the search are listed below.

There are no registered Aboriginal sites within the study area. There is one registered Aboriginal site in the vicinity of the study area, a potential archaeological deposit (PAD) – Riverwood PAD01.

Table 1: Recorded site types

AHIMS #	AHIMS name	Site Type	Longitude (GDA 94)	Latitude (GDA 94)
45-6-3358	Riverwood PAD01	PAD	151.0466940	-33.945953140

Figure 7: Location of AHIMS item near study area



## Consultation and engagement

An understanding of the importance of the Aboriginal cultural landscape is key to sensitive cultural design development aligning with the Connecting with Country principles. This understanding provides opportunities to explore Aboriginal peoples' unity with the natural environment and their traditional knowledge of spirit, places, land uses and ecology. These understandings are best developed through authentic and sustained consultation with Aboriginal knowledge holders and professionals.

### Consultation overview

To facilitate consultation for the CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022) for the Riverwood Estate Renewal, several Aboriginal groups and individual knowledge holders with connections to Country around Riverwood were identified. Consultation was carried out through a Walk on Country site visit and several workshop sessions, and via phone and email. The stakeholders are listed below in Table 2.

**Table 2. Recommended stakeholders for the Riverwood Estate SSP**

Stakeholder	Organisation
Rowena Welsh-Jarrett, Cultural Heritage Officer	Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), <a href="https://metrolalc.org.au/">https://metrolalc.org.au/</a>
Dr Shayne Williams, Chairman	Burruga Foundation, <a href="https://www.burruga.org/about">https://www.burruga.org/about</a>
Harry Allie, Lyn Martin, John Dickson, Leona Oliver, and other Reference Group members	City of Canterbury Bankstown's Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, <a href="https://www.cbccity.nsw.gov.au/community/cultural-services/aboriginal-torres-strait-islanders/">https://www.cbccity.nsw.gov.au/community/cultural-services/aboriginal-torres-strait-islanders/</a>

The detailed consultation process with the above stakeholder groups and knowledge holders, and outcomes from consultation, are provided in the CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022), and have been integrated into this Addendum report, including the following statements of commitment, principles for action and key design principles found in the sections that follow.

## Statements of Commitment and Principles for Action

The GANSW Connecting with Country Framework provides seven statements of commitment to assist project teams in fulfilling their obligations to Connection to Country. Each statement of commitment has been crafted to effectively support project teams in maintaining the health of Country during and after the project timeline.

Each statement of commitment has associated principles for action, which suggest practical ways of meaningfully implementing the commitment in collaboration with Aboriginal knowledge holders and communities. The statements of commitment, and how these should be implemented during the Riverwood Estate renewal project, are explored below. In general, these ideas should be integrated in the planning framework for the revised RTS Stage 1 study area, and implemented in subsequent phases of the project including concept design and in development applications).

The Statements of Commitment from the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework are as follows:

1. We will respect the rights of Aboriginal peoples to Indigenous cultural intellectual property, and we will support the right of Country to be cared for.
2. We will prioritise Aboriginal people's relationship to Country, and their cultural protocols, through education and enterprise by and for Aboriginal people.
3. We will prioritise financial and economic benefits to the Country where we are working, and by extension to the Traditional Custodians of that Country.
4. We will share tangible and intangible benefits with the Country where we are working, and by extension the Traditional Custodians of that Country, including current and future generations.
5. We will respect the diversity of Aboriginal cultures, but we will prioritise the local, place-specific cultural identity of the Country we're working on. Aboriginal people will determine the representation of their cultural materials, customs, and knowledge.
6. We will prioritise recognition and responsibility of Aboriginal people, supporting capacity building across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and across government project teams.
7. We will support Aboriginal people to continue their practices of managing land, water, and air through their ongoing reciprocal relationships with Country. We will create opportunities for traditional first cultures to flourish

### Statement of Commitment 1

**'We will respect the rights of Aboriginal peoples to Indigenous cultural intellectual property, and we will support the right of Country to be cared for.'** (*GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 1*)

From the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework:

Principles for action:

- Connect with Country through first languages in collaboration with local community groups and their recognised Aboriginal knowledge-holders.
- Incorporate shared histories of cultural landscapes into project design principles.

Considerations and challenges:

- Work with Traditional Custodians and draw upon available research to understand the connections between the ways of relating and recording knowledge.
- How are you building relationships with the Aboriginal community – both the Traditional Custodians and community members from off-Country?

To address Commitment 1, the project team should consider the following:

Stakeholders' comments:

Acknowledge that Riverwood always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.

- Stakeholders identified the importance of acknowledging that the Riverwood Estate lies on land that always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.
- Consider opportunities to integrate an Acknowledgement of Country in the design of the project. Consult with Metropolitan LALC and the City of Canterbury Bankstown's Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Group about the wording of an Acknowledgement of Country.

Acknowledge the Bediagal as the Traditional Custodians of the subject site and the Riverwood area.

- Undertake consultations with key local stakeholders and Bediagal stakeholders at major steps of the project, including concept DA and subsequent DAs.
- Acknowledge totems of the Bediagal peoples. Stakeholders identified the whale, crane, starfish and koala as being totems from a Dharawal Dreaming Story.
- If artefacts are found during excavations at the site, involve Aboriginal stakeholders in their recovery, interpretation and ongoing care/or reburial.

Work with local language holders and Aboriginal-led organisations to integrate Aboriginal language into the future development.

- All stakeholders highlighted the importance of integrating Aboriginal language into Riverwood Estate. This includes use of language in project documentation, and in signage, interpretive elements, artworks and building forms as part of the design. Stakeholders noted the importance of using audio devices, so that language is spoken and heard on Country.
- The Metropolitan LALC and the Burruga Foundation nominate Dharawal as the local Aboriginal language of the Riverwood area/Salt Pan Creek. City of Canterbury Bankstown's Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Group nominated Dharug as the local Aboriginal language of the area. Ongoing consultation should be carried out with these stakeholders around the use of language in the design and development of the project. Internal consultation around the use of language should be carried out between the Metropolitan LALC and City of Canterbury Bankstown.
- The Gujaga Foundation was nominated as a contact for integrating the Dharawal language into future developments.

Respect and empower Aboriginal knowledge holders and community members throughout the lifetime of the development, including Aboriginal consultation, welcoming and storytelling protocols.

- Stakeholders noted the following ways that LAHC and the wider project team should work with them:
  - In the earliest stages of the project, and before 'soil has been turned'.
  - Throughout the lifecycle of the project.
  - In a way that they feel valued.

## Statement of Commitment 2

***'We will prioritise Aboriginal people's relationship to Country, and their cultural protocols, through education and enterprise by and for Aboriginal people.'* (GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 2)**

From the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework:

Principles for action

- Connect with Country by engaging with, and responding to, cultural practices led by community groups and their recognised Aboriginal knowledge-holders with spiritual links to Country.

Considerations and challenges

- How will the project help Traditional Custodians to continue their practices on Country?
- What are the opportunities for education and enterprise for Aboriginal community groups from the earliest stages through to maintenance?

To address Commitment 2, the project team should consider the following:

Stakeholders' comments

Explore ways to integrate native plantings into the study area and increase biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stakeholders highlighted the benefits of including native plantings in landscaping. Stakeholders identified the importance of selecting plant species that are specifically native to the Riverwood area, to strengthen understanding of and connection with Country.</li> <li>• Stakeholders noted the importance of maintaining the existing tree canopy within the study area, which provides habitat to wildlife and encourages biodiversity.</li> <li>• Include interpretive panels with plantings to provide information about medical and food resources. Information on signage should also be written in the local Aboriginal language.</li> <li>• Stakeholders identified the importance of encouraging knowledge of the seasons according to Country, noting opportunities for cultural and seasonal events around any native gardens and bushtucker gardens included in the design of the project.</li> </ul>
Work with Aboriginal knowledge holders to integrate traditional land management processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake consultations with Aboriginal stakeholders around traditional land management processes.</li> <li>• Advice can be sought from Metropolitan LALC, who have connections with local land management businesses.</li> </ul>
Engage Aboriginal-led organisations connected with the local community for landscaping, land management, ongoing maintenance and construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with local Aboriginal owned and operated businesses that specialise in native gardens within the area. Metropolitan LALC have nominated Wildflower and IndigiGrow as Aboriginal-led organisations that specialise in landscaping and land management.</li> </ul>
Work with local schools and Aboriginal education/training initiatives in future interpretation/artwork/storytelling projects for the study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with the Burruga Foundation, who have schools' education programs, expanding these programs to include visits to the new development, if it is designed to include community/bushtucker gardens, public art installations and interpretation media.</li> <li>• Consult with members of the City of Canterbury Bankstown's Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, who have connections with local schools.</li> <li>• Consult with Metropolitan LALC, who have a Cultural Education Officer.</li> </ul>



To address Commitment 2, the project team should consider the following:

Stakeholders' comments

Explore the role of digital technology in future interpretation, artwork and storytelling projects for the study area.

- Stakeholders highlighted the important role of digital technology in preserving and sharing Aboriginal cultural heritage with a wider audience, noting affordability and adaptability as being key benefits of using technology for educational and cultural purposes. This included consideration of the role of websites, apps and QR codes for interpretive and educational purposes.
- Consider exploring the link between the early use of Cinesound to carry Aboriginal messages and the use of contemporary digital resources for Aboriginal storytelling.
- Consult with the Burruga Foundation, who have developed digital information and education resources through the creation of websites and apps, including Storylines, and the Dharawal Language and Culture App that was developed in collaboration with the Gujaga Foundation.

Ensure the future development is a culturally safe space to Aboriginal users by consulting over interpretation of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

- Ensure interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Riverwood area and Salt Pan Creek is developed and designed through the development of a consultation plan and ongoing consultation with Bediagal and other local knowledge holders.
- Consider the use of organic shapes/curves, textures and colours that reflect Country in the designs of landscaping, parks, and building forms.
- Engage Bediagal artists and designers if appropriate, and Aboriginal artists from other cultural groups that have connections with the area. The Bankstown Arts Centre is a cultural centre that has connections with local artists, as is Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative.
- Check with Aboriginal stakeholders about interpretation of sacred spaces and landforms near the study area.

### Statement of Commitment 3

***'We will prioritise financial and economic benefits to the Country where we are working, and by extension to the Traditional Custodians of that Country.'* (GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 3)**

From the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework:

Principles for action

- Include impacts to Country and culture when evaluating economic, environmental, and social benefits and disadvantages of the project.

Considerations and challenges

- Create a clear framework for identifying the group of people that will benefit from/influence/guide the project – be clear about how views will be considered and how contested ideas will be resolved.
- Be clear about how financial benefits of the project (not just engagement fees) will be shared with community.

To address Commitment 3, the project team should consider the following:	Stakeholders' comments
Continue to engage with local Aboriginal knowledge holders, Aboriginal-led organisations and the community throughout the lifetime of the development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue consultation workshops at key stages in the design development.</li> <li>• Engage stakeholders to provide Cultural Awareness training to the project team and subcontractors at key milestones of the project.</li> </ul>
Prioritise provision of designated Aboriginal housing throughout the planning and development of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stakeholders emphasised the importance of providing increased Aboriginal housing as part of the project. Without commitment to providing designated Aboriginal housing, the project's social and cultural objectives are just 'dreams'.</li> <li>• Stakeholders highlighted the role of Salt Pan Creek as a 'refuge place'. The project should acknowledge and continue this role for Aboriginal communities today.</li> </ul>
Work with Aboriginal knowledge holders and community members to identify and integrate benefits (physical, spiritual, educational, economic) to the community throughout the lifetime of the development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stakeholders identified ways to benefit the community through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use of Aboriginal owned and operated businesses, including use of digital resources like Supply Nation. Supply Nation is Australia's leading database of verified Aboriginal businesses.</li> <li>○ Employment of Aboriginal workers during construction.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Involve Aboriginal stakeholders early in the project planning process so that their recommendations and work can be accommodated for in the project budget and design scope.</li> </ul>

#### Statement of Commitment 4

***'We will share tangible and intangible benefits with the Country where we are working, and by extension the Traditional Custodians of that Country, including current and future generations.'* (GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 4)**

<p>From the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework:</p> <p>Principles for action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop indicators to measure impacts to Country and culture during project formation.</li> </ul> <p>Considerations and challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree on what success looks like for the project in terms of the health and wellbeing of Country.</li> </ul>
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To address Commitment 4, the project team should consider the following:	Stakeholders' comments
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Engage with the local Aboriginal community to improve the health of Country throughout the lifetime of the development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage with Bediagal stakeholders and other knowledge holders throughout the life of the project.</li> <li>• Engage with local Aboriginal owned and operated businesses that specialise in native landscaping in the South Sydney area. Metropolitan LALC nominated Wildflower and IndigiGrow as suitable local businesses.</li> <li>• Stakeholders identified the importance of caring for the mangrove environment along Salt Pan Creek. Bush regeneration programs to maintain the health of Salt Pan Creek should be explored and implemented by City of Canterbury Bankstown Council.</li> </ul>
Prioritise environmentally friendly and sustainable development options to avoid ongoing harm of Country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use sustainable materials during the design and construction of the project. Where feasible, this could include locally sourced materials like sandstone and timber.</li> </ul>
Ensure ongoing opportunity for the local Aboriginal community to maintain the health of Country following the conclusion of the development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with local Aboriginal owned and operated businesses that specialise in native gardens and bush regeneration within the area. Metropolitan LALC have nominated Wildflower and IndigiGrow as Aboriginal-led organisations that specialise in landscaping and land management.</li> </ul>

### Statement of Commitment 5

***'We will respect the diversity of Aboriginal cultures, but we will prioritise the local, place-specific cultural identity of the Country we're working on. Aboriginal people will determine the representation of their cultural materials, customs and knowledge.'* (GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 5)**

From the GA NSW Connecting with Country Framework:	
Principles for action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build relationships with local Aboriginal communities and incorporate enterprise opportunities for Aboriginal businesses (local and beyond, existing and emerging) at all stages through the project life cycle, including future opportunities.</li> </ul>	
Considerations and challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish (or learn about) protocols for Aboriginal consultants from off-Country – local government authorities often have information relating to this.</li> <li>• Consider how people are given space to participate. Avoid exploitative processes and allow sufficient budget and time.</li> </ul>	

To address Commitment 5, the project team should consider the following:

#### Stakeholders' comments

Acknowledge the cultural authority of the Bediagal as the traditional custodians of the study area and the Riverwood area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to meet with and consult key knowledge holders throughout the life of the project.</li> <li>• Acknowledge totems of the Bediagal peoples. Stakeholders identified the whale, crane, koala and eel as being totems of the Bediagal.</li> </ul>
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Acknowledge and pay respect to the diverse Aboriginal communities of Riverwood and South Sydney areas, many of whom have deep connections with the site and Salt Pan Creek.

- Respect the diversity of Aboriginal peoples in the Riverwood and South Sydney areas, acknowledging the historical role of Salt Pan Creek as a meeting and gathering place for Aboriginal people from across Sydney and beyond.
- Ensure any interpretation or artworks are sensitively and respectfully developed through a co-design process. Metropolitan LALC noted the importance of acknowledging and reflecting the range of family histories connected to Salt Pan Creek.

## Statement of Commitment 6

***‘We will prioritise recognition and responsibility of Aboriginal people, supporting capacity building across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and across government project teams.’(GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 6)***

From the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework:

Principles for action

- Partner with Aboriginal-owned and run businesses and professional services, from project formation through to delivery and maintenance, to help guide design and engagement processes.

Considerations and challenges

- What are the opportunities for education and enterprise for Aboriginal community groups from the earliest stages through to maintenance?

**To address Commitment 6, the project team should consider the following:**

**Stakeholders’ comments**

Explore employing Aboriginal-led organisations with ties to the local community throughout the lifetime of the development.

- Engage local Aboriginal organisations in relation to all aspects of the project - including construction work, landscaping, artworks, design, language experts, etc.
- Refer to Supply Nation, which is a leading national database of verified Aboriginal businesses.
- Consult with Metropolitan LALC and the City of Canterbury Bankstown’s Aboriginal Reference Group, who have connections to local Aboriginal owned and operated companies and organisations.

Engage with local schools and Aboriginal education/training initiatives and exploring opportunities for partnerships.

- All stakeholders highlighted the importance of education in promoting understanding and healing.
- Consult with the Burruga Foundation, who have schools’ education programmes, expanding these programs to include visits to the Riverwood Estate, if it is designed to include community/bushtucker gardens, public art installations and interpretation media.
- Consult with members of the City of Canterbury Bankstown’s Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, who have connections with local schools.

## Statement of Commitment 7

***‘We will support Aboriginal people to continue their practices of managing land, water and air through their ongoing reciprocal relationships with Country. We will create opportunities for traditional first cultures to flourish.’ (GANSW Connecting with Country Commitment 7)***

From the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework:

Principles for action

- Identify and nurture immediate and longer-term opportunities to support cultural practice on Country – through the development and delivery of the project as well as future use.

Considerations and challenges

- How will the project help Traditional Custodians continue their practices on Country?

To address Commitment 7, the project team should consider the following:

### Stakeholders’ comments

Increase cultural awareness for designers and contractors throughout the lifetime of the development.

- At key milestones of the project, contact the stakeholder organisations to provide cultural awareness training for members of the project team, including designers, planners and project managers.
- Burruga Foundation aim to provide cultural immersion programs and tours of the local area commencing early 2023, which would provide appropriate cultural awareness training for members of the project team.

Work with Aboriginal knowledge-holders and Aboriginal-led organisations to integrate interpretation of Aboriginal cultural values into the study area.

- Consult Aboriginal stakeholders during preparation of reports and documents that interpret the cultural values of the study area, including the Heritage Interpretation Strategy, Heritage Interpretation Plan, and Public Art Strategy. Ensure that consultation findings are integrated into the reports/strategies.
- Continue to consult with Aboriginal stakeholders during subsequent phases of the project.

Consult with Aboriginal knowledge-holders on the most appropriate and effective ways to support the community at all stages of the development.

- Ensure there is ongoing consultation with key stakeholders and organisations.

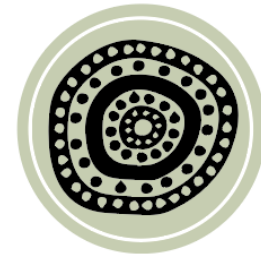
## Key Design Principles

This section introduces design principles as outlined for the wider Riverwood Estate precinct in the CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022), that equally apply to the revised RTS Stage 1 study area. They were identified during the consultation process with Aboriginal knowledge holders. These principles should be integrated into the future development of the project by all branches of the project team.

### 'Always was, always will be'

Provide acknowledgement, interpretation and learning opportunities about Country through such devices as artworks, installations, architectural design, engravings in pathways, lighting installations, interpretive panels, public programs, native gardens and landscaping.

Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bediagal people, along with other cultural groups that maintain deep ties with the place and nearby Salt Pan Creek.



### Using language

Use local Aboriginal language throughout the project, including use in documentation and discussions, and integrated into the built form, in places and spaces, and as part of interpretive installations. Wayfinding and interpretive signage should include Aboriginal text with English translations; consider audio devices in interpretive media, so language is spoken and heard on Country.

Enhance the Connection to Country through naming of parks, public spaces, and new streets using Aboriginal words for aspects of Country (including flora and fauna) or prominent individuals associated with the history of the area. Recognise the imbalance of the current site naming, which primarily relates to the short-term American occupation of the site during World War Two.



### A place for learning

Recognise the significance of Salt Pan Creek as a meeting and learning place, where members of the Aboriginal community gathered, shared knowledge and instigated change and political activism.

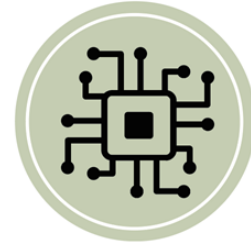
Use education as a means of understanding and reconciliation. Contribute to healing by acknowledging and sharing the history of the place, and the ongoing injustices faced by the Aboriginal community.



### Enabling technology

Acknowledge the historic role of technology in Aboriginal agency at Salt Pan Creek through the innovative use of film technology by Joe Anderson (also known as King Burruga) to champion civil rights in 1933.

Use modern technology to enhance and share Aboriginal cultural knowledge, and connect site users and local communities with the Aboriginal history and significance of the place.



### Healing Country

Protect and care for Country. Consult Aboriginal stakeholders about ways to care for Country throughout the design, construction and lifecycle of the project.

Caring for Country can be through activities like Aboriginal stakeholder input into the design of the project, use of sustainable materials in construction, engagement of local Aboriginal companies, employment of local Aboriginal Land Management teams and ongoing land management. This includes the nearby mangrove environment of Salt Pan Creek, which is an important part of Country.



### Connecting to Country

Enhance connection to Country, acknowledging the stories, peoples and language of the place. Reconnect site users and local communities to Country through inclusion of endemic native plantings, bushtucker plants and community gardens within the project landscaping, accompanied by interpretive signage where needed. Explore the seasons according to Country.

Incorporate shapes, textures and colours that reflect Country in the project's design and built forms. Strengthen understanding and interpretation of the connection between the Riverwood Estate and nearby Salt Pan Creek.



### Roofs over heads

Recognise that Aboriginal people and their families have been repeatedly removed from Country and from their communities, and that the increased provision of designated Aboriginal housing should be prioritised in the planning of the Riverwood Estate renewal.



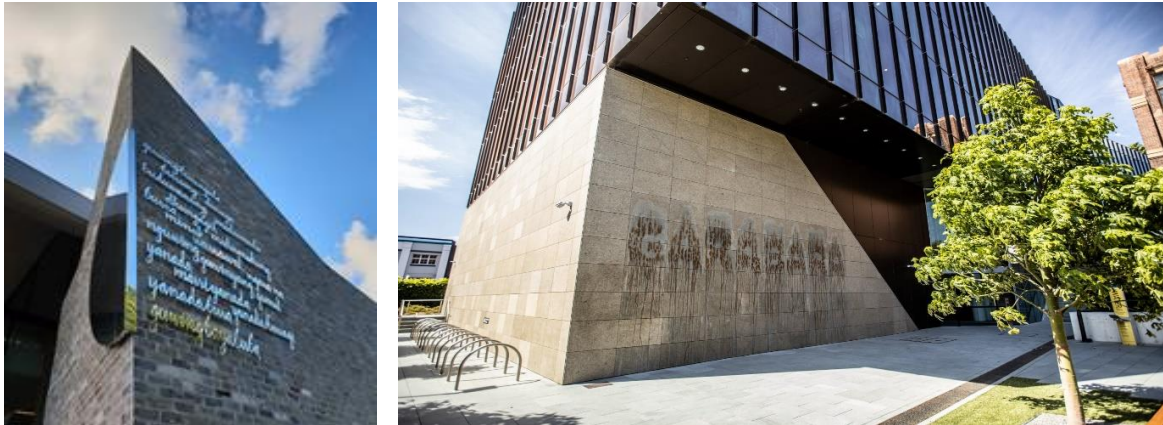
## Examples of realisations

The following sections provide examples of connecting with Country design opportunities and outcomes that have been realised in other projects.

### Acknowledgement of Country

Examples of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country are provided below.

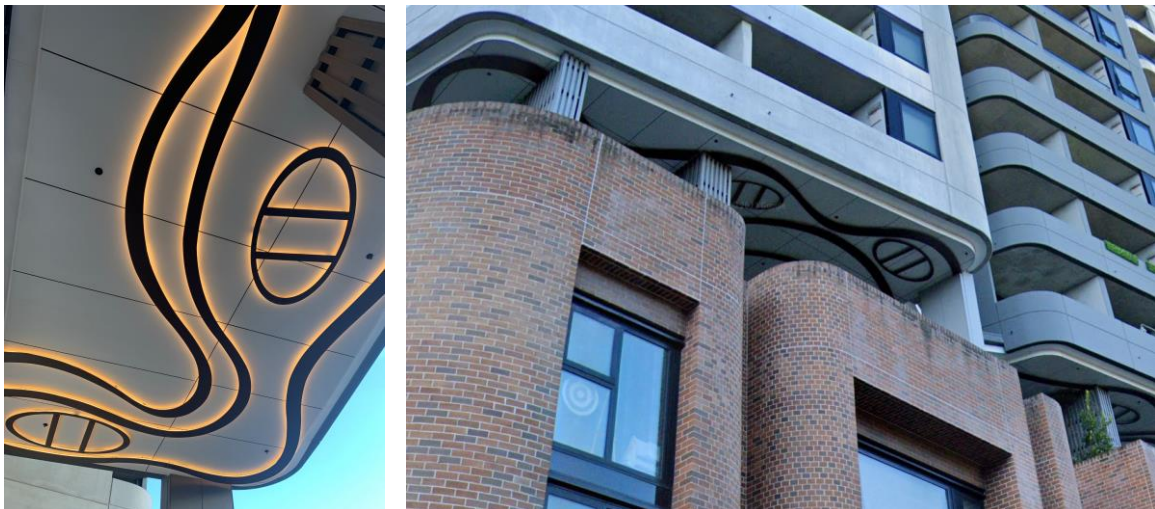
**Figure 8: Left - Marrickville Library Acknowledgement of Country. Right - University of Sydney Acknowledgement of Country**



### Architectural design

Examples of interpretive architectural design integration are provided below.

**Figure 9: 'The Way Home' artwork designs by Murrawarri artist Joe Hurst, Redfern**





**Figure 10: Interpretive art display on the Newcastle Light Rail Interchange by Illuminart and Doma Group, in consultation with Elders of the Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Group**



**Figure 11: Yagan Square, Perth – a civic place incorporating narratives gifted by local Aboriginal knowledge holders**



### Public art

Examples of public artwork are provided below.

**Figure 12: Left - Interpretive wall graphics mural. Right - 'West to East' by Badger Bates, located at the Bankstown Arts Centre**



Figure 13: Left: *The Touchstones* by Jane Cavanough, Bankstown Arts Centre Sydney. Right: *Mudinga* by Nicole Monks



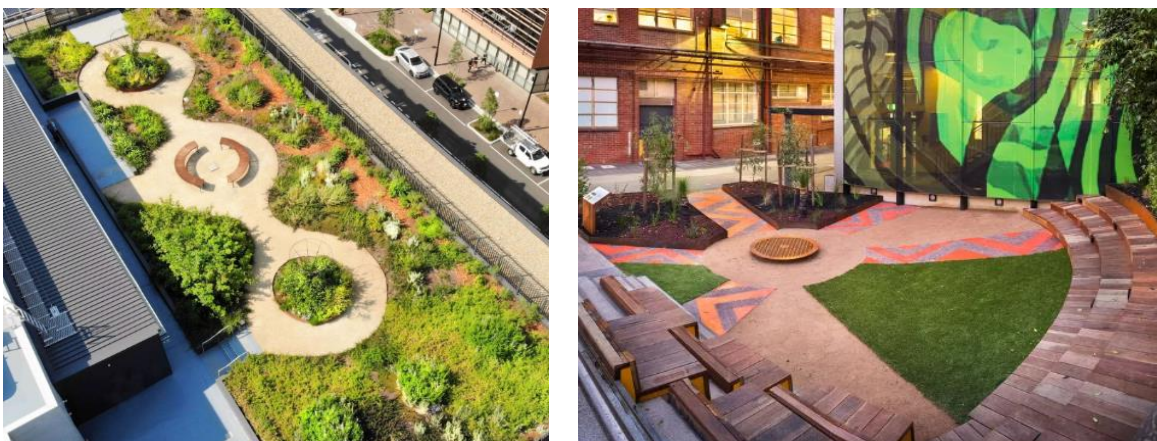
Figure 14: *Caring for Country* by Maddie Gibbs



### Native plantings

Examples of Indigenous landscape design and native plantings are provided below.

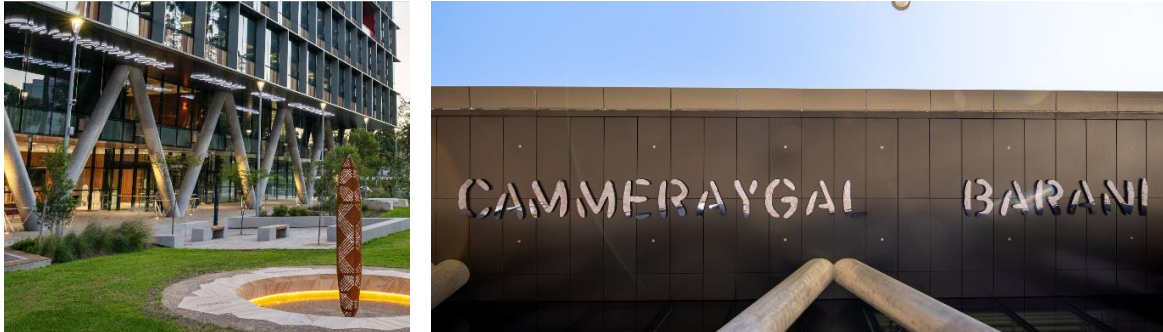
Figure 15: Left: *Community Native Garden, Redfern (Yerrabingin)*. Right: *Ngarara Place, Melbourne University (Charles Solomon and Greenaway Architects)*



## Use of language

Examples of the ways in which language can be used are provided below.

**Figure 16: Use of Aboriginal language integrated into the soffits of the St Leonards Health Organisation, *Connection to Country* by Nicole Monks**



**Figure 17: Left: Awabakal language sculpture, Newcastle; Right: Darumbal language stairs, Yeppoon**



## Conclusion

This Addendum CwC report for the revised RTS Stage 1 project has been prepared to align with the principles and guidelines of the GANSW draft Connecting with Country Framework (2020) and associated best practice documents. It builds on the CwC Framework (Artefact Heritage, 2022) developed for the wider Riverwood Estate, which was prepared in consultation with key Aboriginal stakeholders from the Riverwood area. The report provides a vision and accompanying design principles to embed Country into the future development of the site.

The preparation of the CwC Framework marks a strong commitment by LAHC to meaningfully engage with local Aboriginal stakeholders on this project, and provides a benchmark for future projects aligned with the Connecting with Country principles.

It is recommended that LAHC consider key elements from this Addendum CwC report within the future planning for the Riverwood Revised RTS Stage 1 project including:

- Consideration of the Design Principles within the early and ongoing design stages for the project.

- Facilitating ongoing Aboriginal consultation workshops with the stakeholders during subsequent key development stages of the project.
- Integrating meaningful, co-designed interpretation/artwork/landscape elements within the design development stages of this project that reflect and honour Country, through the development of a Heritage Interpretation Strategy (completed) and a Heritage Interpretation and Public Art Plan. This will require ongoing consultation with key stakeholders.
- Considering engagement of local Aboriginal run businesses through different phases of the project's development.
- Arranging Cultural Awareness Training for project team members at key milestones of the project.
- Updating Aboriginal stakeholders on the progress of the project.

LAHC and Artefact Heritage would like to thank all stakeholders for their generosity in sharing their cultural knowledge during this project.

This Addendum CwC report has been prepared by Charlotte Simons (Senior Associate, Artefact Heritage), with input and review by Carolyn MacLulich (Principal, Artefact Heritage).