

An architectural sketch of a large, modern building complex with multiple levels and green roofs. The building is surrounded by lush greenery, including trees and grass. In the foreground, there is a wide pedestrian walkway with many people walking. A large, stylized 'M' logo is visible on the right side of the walkway. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Sydney Olympic Park

Master Plan

2030

(Interim Metro Review)

SydneyOlympicPark 

ANNEXURE 1: CONNECTING WITH
COUNTRY

The background image shows a two-story brick building with a red-tiled roof and several chimneys. To the left of the building is a dense wall of green foliage, including palm trees and other tropical plants. In the foreground, there is a concrete railing and some low-lying green plants. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

bangawarra

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY

MASTER PLAN THEMES

Sydney Olympic Park

August 4, 2021

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CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

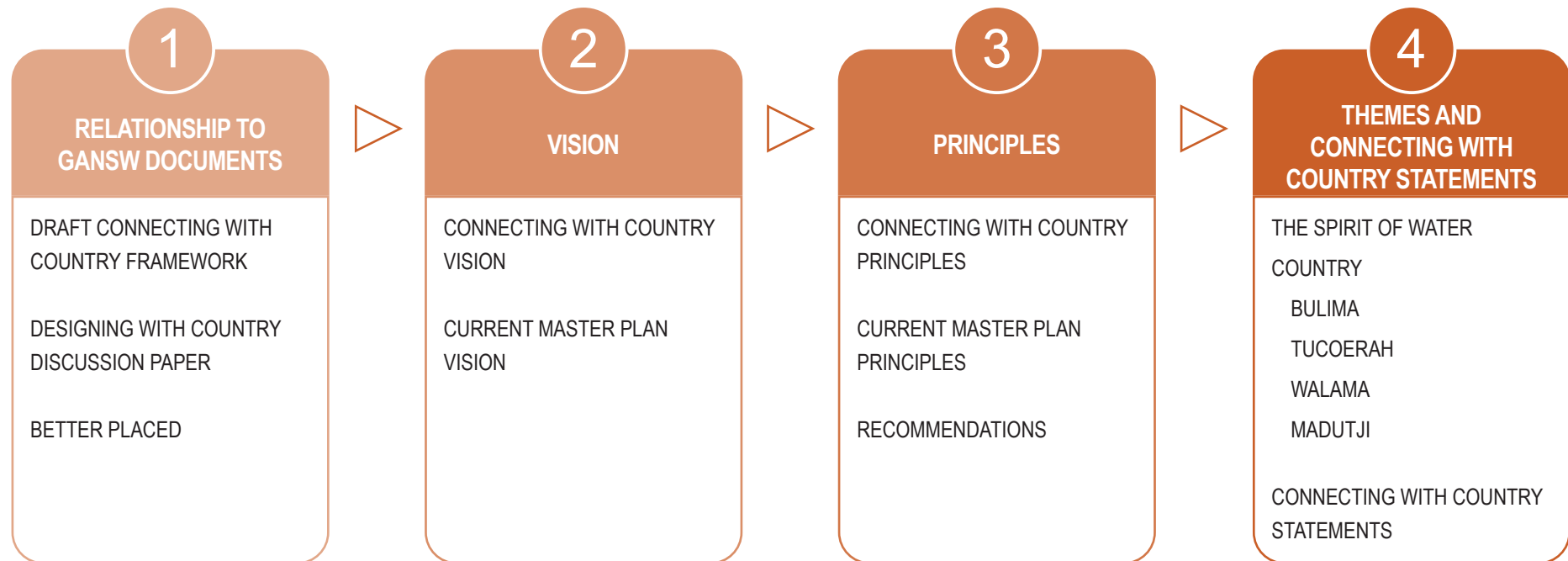


Holding culture on Country

In connecting with local Aboriginal Knowledges it is imperative that we respect the cultural and intellectual property rights (IP) Aboriginal people hold within their Knowledge systems. The knowledges shared across this document belong to the D'harawal people of the Sydney region who are some of the people known as iyora/eora here. These stories may not be shared, duplicated or used without the express permission of Sydney D'harawal Elders or Knowledge Keepers. If permission is granted to share some of the knowledge here, it is also essential that it is credited appropriately. This not only gives publicity, but also acknowledges the parts of Country from which this knowledge arises and honours its ancient connections to the people who hold and care for it.

These stories are only the beginning. Not only are they an introduction to the D'harawal knowledges of this place but they also feed into many more layers and many more stories. These knowledges not only inform D'harawal ways of being, but also intersect across the complex kinship systems that tie all local Aboriginal peoples of this place together. As such, when connecting with this Country it is important to understand that there are many ways of knowing the place we now call 'Sydney Olympic Park' and it is essential to acknowledge that all local Aboriginal peoples - including the D'harawal, Dharug, Eora, Gai-maragal and Gundungarra, among many others, hold living and ancient Ancestral stories of this Country.

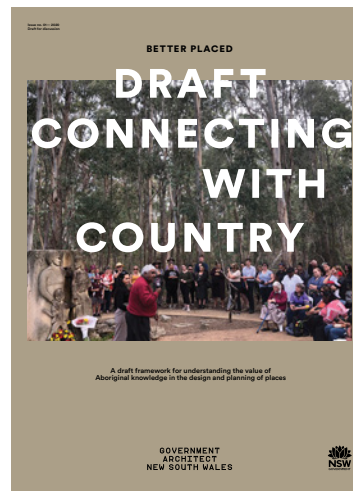
DOCUMENT STRUCTURE



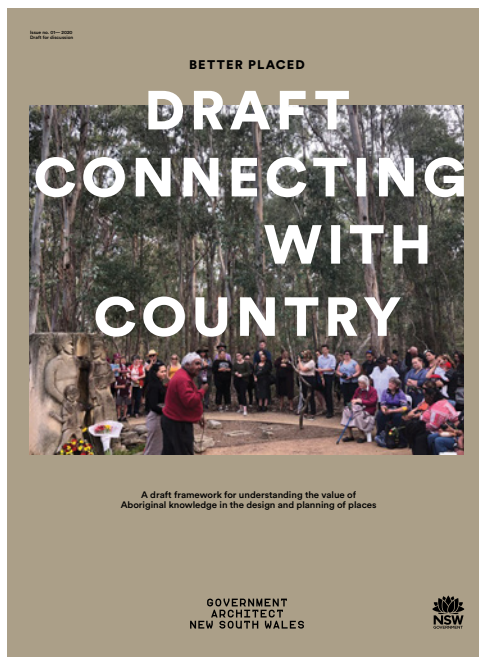
RELATIONSHIP TO GANSW DOCUMENTS

The Government Architect NSW (GANSW) has released strategic frameworks, discussion papers and design policies to ensure the informed and enriched design of buildings, places or spaces. This Connecting with Country Master Plan Themes document for Sydney Olympic Park has considered and expands from related points, strategies, and ideas expressed by particular documents released by the GANSW. The documents are as follows:

- DRAFT CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY FRAMEWORK (GANSW)
- DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY DISCUSSION PAPER (GANSW)
- BETTER PLACED (GANSW)



RELATIONSHIP TO GANSW DOCUMENTS



- Connect to all the peoples of this Country, and never just one or two. Consult broadly within the complex kinship system of families and communities including the D'harawal, Dharug, Eora, Gaimaragal, Gundangara and Guringai peoples who hold local stories.
- Avoid extractive relationships with Aboriginal peoples. Pay Aboriginal people for their contributions to projects, reports, design processes and acknowledge their contribution.
- Across the board, do not refer to Aboriginal people and cultures in the past tense. Culture has always and continues to be enacted.



- Designing with Country can only be achieved by an active engagement with and by the guidance of Aboriginal peoples and recognised knowledge holders.
- When working on Country, we must respect and protect sensitive sites in order to strengthen and protect culture for future generations.
- The natural systems that are encompassed by Country, including people, animals, resources and plants should be considered equally during design and planning processes to ensure a more sustainable future.



- The design of spaces must aim to create inclusive, welcoming and equitable environments to confront the growing economic and social disparities and inequities that affect our communities.
- Embrace the local community and individuals that characterise the precinct when designing buildings, places or spaces.
- Establish sustainable links with the surrounding environment to allow visitors and residents to feel connected and move freely.
- Ensure that design acknowledges, supports and responds to people's living patterns and provides physical and emotional ease to promote well-being.



Overarching branches of the mangrove trees forming a canopy over a pathway at Bicentennial Park

Connecting with Country Vision

Sydney Olympic Park holds cultural significance for all of the Aboriginal peoples of the region as a place to come together to care for Country and culture. The contemporary Park nurtures the thriving mangrove and threatened ecological systems of Country amongst the emerging built environment.

The future of this place celebrates a unique and ecologically-rich centre, unique to Sydney, that draws knowledges of Country and viable, connected ecosystems through the Master Plan.

A ceremonial heart of the precinct echoes the enduring spirit of Country, as the place people come together peacefully to enact culture and share the benefits of caring for all aspects of Country.

Current Master Plan Vision

Central Precinct is generous at the human scale, supporting every day public life, and genuinely welcoming all types of people into its spaces – including parks, streets and laneways.

People's experiences of the Precinct range from cosmopolitan-excitement, transport-convenience, to simply, rest. In fact, "just spending time" is a common practice - and is supported by important urban qualities such as safety, comfort and passive enjoyment.

At its heart, walkability and tree canopy are key characteristics, creating a connected and highly inviting neighbourhood. These everyday elements welcome people to stay after events of all scales.

PRINCIPLES

1

Current Master Plan Principle

Respect the spirit of Country.

Connecting with Country Principle

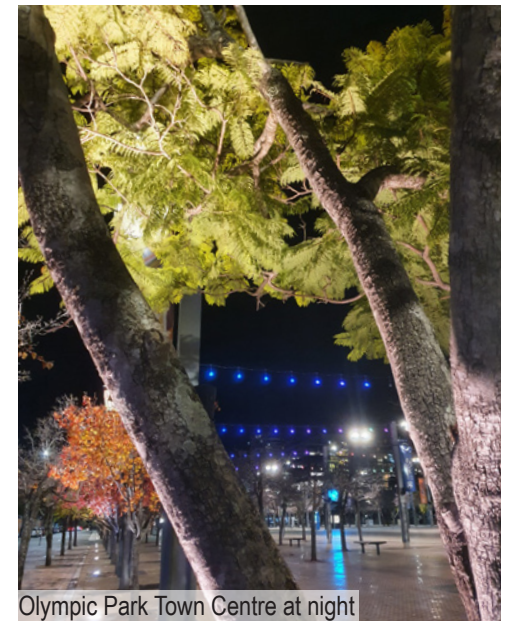
All things in Country are connected by equitable access to a range of places and experiences.

Connecting with Country Opportunities

- a. Honour Aboriginal knowledges of Country so people can develop deep connection to this place, fostering in turn a desire to care for it more holistically.
- b. Share the connected knowledges and ecologies of Country in the built environment, such as the D'harawal story of Bulima, the Gai-mariagal story of ceremony and the shared cultural importance of the mangroves.



Looking across the Badu mangrove forest at Bicentennial Park



Olympic Park Town Centre at night

PRINCIPLES

2

Current Master Plan Principle

People focused with pedestrian priority, humanscale, and best-practice public domain design.

Connecting with Country Principle

People are connected to all parts of Country throughout the precinct, walking on the land, with visual connection to Sky Country and key cultural and historical locations. Provide view lines to connected ceremonial sites, like that of the Elders' ceremony site of Top Ryde.

Connecting with Country Opportunities

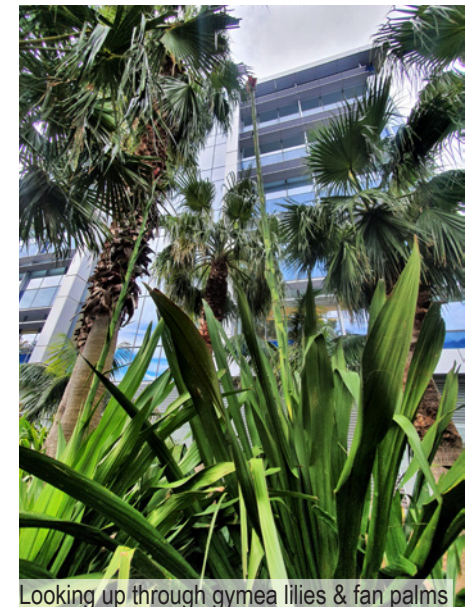
- a. Create spaces in the public domain where ritual, ceremony and culture can be performed by all, from ancient storytelling to contemporary live music performances
- b. Celebrate the Ancestral stories of all the Aboriginal peoples of the kinship system who know this place



Sky Country image taken from the Treillage Tower at Bicentennial Park (north-west facing side)



Flowering gynea lily at Olympic Park



Looking up through gynea lilies & fan palms

PRINCIPLES

3

Current Master Plan Principle

Appreciation of legacy, history and heritage.

4

Current Master Plan Principle

Enhance greenery and embody nature.

Connecting with Country Principle

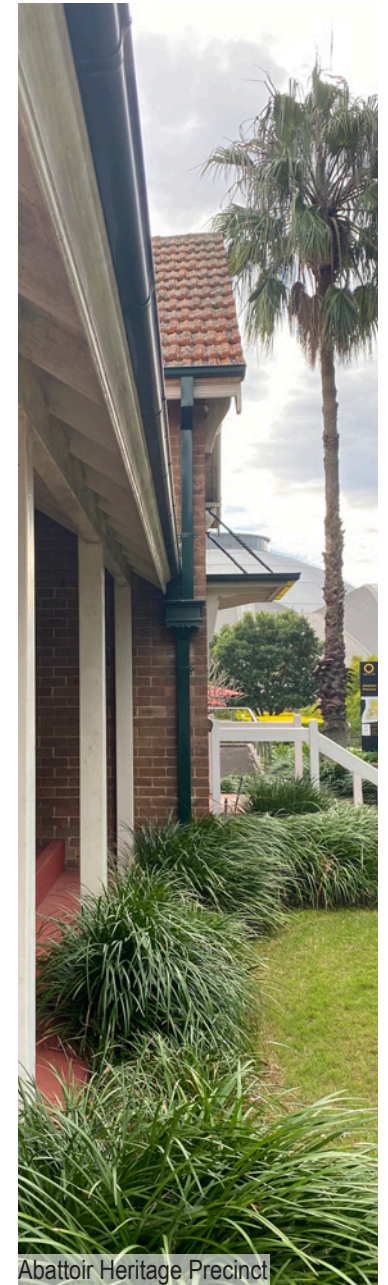
A ceremonial heart of the precinct echoes the enduring spirit of Country, as the place people come together peacefully to enact their culture and share the benefits of caring for Country.

Connecting with Country Opportunities

- a. Protect the 'non-living' elements of Country (such as air and water) and reflect the geological qualities of Country in the treatment of paving and ground treatment throughout the shared and pedestrian areas
- b. Provide diverse, accessible and adaptable modes of interaction across the public domain and embrace the contradictions and intersections they present.
- c. A Master Plan that is responsive to, and activates, the diverse times, density of uses and events that occur across the precinct



Olympic Park Towers from Bicentennial Park



Abattoir Heritage Precinct

PRINCIPLES

5

Current Master Plan Principle

Emphasise community and a new urban heart.

Connecting with Country Principle

The spirit of Country is at the heart of community, culture and place, with proper consideration Country can be allowed to flourish through intergated considerations of people, ecologies and urbanity.

Connecting with Country Opportunities

- Design with complete and interconnected ecologies and ecosystems of Country, caring for all non-human species and their habitats
- Protect visual and physical pathways to connect the Master Plan to Sky Country and ceremonial sites.
- Create diverse pathways of movement/interaction for people, plants and ecologies of Country



Material textures of Country



Country provides for all

THEMES



BULIMA

CONNECT TO COUNTRY

Bulima is Spirit Country and the stories of local Lore that explain the importance of connecting to and respecting the spirit of Country.



TUCOERAH

GATHER

Tucoerah describes many diverse elements gathering and coming together to create a cohesive and productive environment that nurtures new life and ideas.



WALAMA

ADAPT

Walama is a change in direction and the sophisticated and reflexive adaptations that are required for survival in constantly changing and evolving environments.



MADUTJI

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

Madutji explains connections, unions and the concept that all things are interrelated, no one thing exists on its own but instead, all things rely on each other for survival and protection.

The Country now known as Sydney Olympic Park has been known for millennia as a place where two waters and many different ecologies meet. Garigalo (saltwater) washes in on the tides from the ocean and meets Nattaigalo (freshwater) that falls from the mountains and rises from springs under the earth. Where these two waters meet, Biddigalo (sourwater) is created which is characterised by mudflats, swamps and mangroves, where all life begins, nurtured within the nutrient rich mud and protected by the complex structures and shallow estuaries of the mangrove environment.

Each of the themes in this document arise from understanding this kind of Country and how it thrives. Drawing these knowledges of Country into the precinct empowers us to design a place that will also thrive - for the people who live, work and transit here, but also for the creatures, the plants, the air and water, the special sense of place that can not be duplicated anywhere else in Sydney.



New shoots and roots covered beneath mangrove forest

Connecting with Country Master Plan Themes - Sydney Olympic Park

GARIGALO / SALTWATER

WASHES IN ON THE TIDES FROM THE OCEAN.

BIDDIGALO / SOURWATER

WHERE FRESHWATER AND SALTWATER MEET, CHARACTERISED BY MUDFLATS, SWAMPS AND MANGROVES.

NATTAIGALO / FRESHWATER

FALLS FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND RISES FROM SPRINGS UNDER THE EARTH.

To know Country means to honour her enduring spirit. The spirit of this Country has been carried through countless generations, and survives today in the ways we use this place - as a place of enacting ritual and ceremony together, closely connected to the many paths of movement across Sydney. Country spans the millennia-old dreaming of our Ancestors - connecting it to us in the present and to our descendants far into the future

It is vital that we design with Country, in ways that respect and care for the well-being and health of Country, and all that she entails. To connect and design with Country means to acknowledge the many and diverse stories and knowledges of this place, as well as all of the peoples for whom this is a sacred site, including the D'harawal and the Dharug, but also the Gaimariagal, Gundungara and people who identify as Eora (meaning of this place), and their kinship systems.

The D'harawal songline of Bulima (the long necked turtle) is one such story held within this Country that teaches the people the importance of respecting Country and her Law/Lores. Bulima warns us of the consequences of disobeying the laws of the Spirit world and the processes of life, death and renewal. Beyond land, skies and water, Country is a spiritual entity that sustains all living and non-living beings that exist through her and Bulima reminds us that Country's spirit is always around us, no matter what, and that through caring for her we too are cared for.

By connecting to Country and understanding that through all things Country is sustained this Master Plan can begin to return to place the complex ecologies and associations that have always existed here on Country. By respecting what is, was and will always be, the Master Plan may begin to interweave

Connecting with Country Master Plan Themes - Sydney Olympic Park

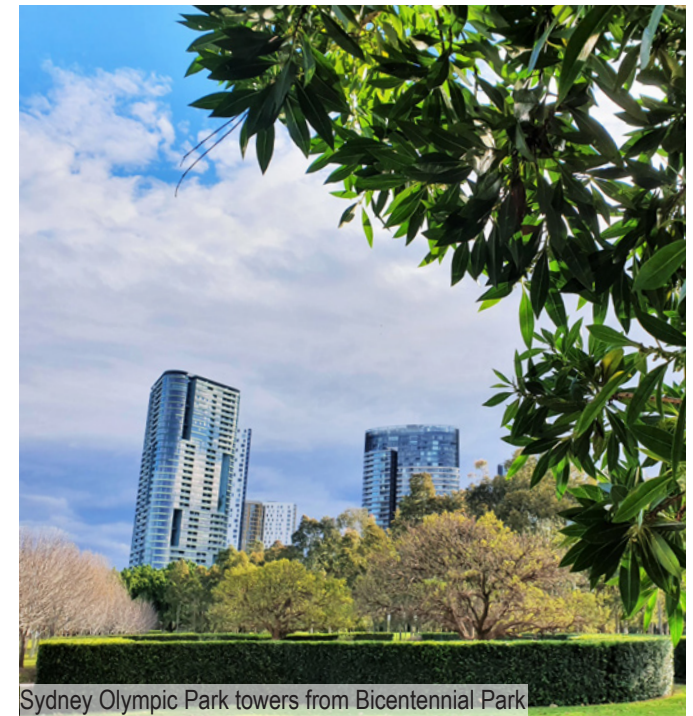
ancient knowledges of Country with the contemporary uses and technologies of place into a precinct that respects and acknowledges all of the histories of Country in all the many and varied forms her spirit manifests.



Boomerang on Country



People sitting on the grass at Bicentennial Park



Sydney Olympic Park towers from Bicentennial Park

Tucoerah is the term for a place where two waters and many different ecologies meet. The biddigalo (sourwater) occurs in a tucoerah environment, where Garigalo (saltwater) washes in on the tides from the ocean and meets Nattaigalo (freshwater). Tucoerah is literally an assemblage of diverse ecosystems, but Tucoerah can also be thought of as a place of gathering together an abundant range of people, systems or resources that nurture, protect and regenerate. For the communities of people connected to this place since the beginning of time, this Tucoerah Country has also been an important ceremonial gathering space, bringing people together from vast areas for trade, ceremony and kin responsibilities. The D'harawal, Dharug and Gaimariagal peoples of this region all hold stories of ceremonial gatherings and connection to the area now known as Sydney Olympic Park.

Fortunately, areas of the distinctive Tucoerah environment still survive today in the Badu Mangrove forest, providing a unique opportunity to engage with the knowledges and stories embedded in the natural elements of Country. The Town Centre sits at the edge of the ancient floodplain that Sydney Olympic Park is built upon. The topography is that of a vast mudflat that ends at the rise that is now the site of the new urban centre. It is on these highpoints that people have always gathered and it is here that there is a direct view to a significant ceremonial ground across the river on the high Country now known as Top Ryde.

Today this remains a gathering place, bringing together diverse communities for recreation, work, entertainment, health, education and a unique place to live and connect to the wider Sydney region. As a conceptual strategy, the idea of Tucoerah can motivate and form the basis for a thriving and beautiful spatial outcome. Through the understanding that Tucoerah refers to the

coming together of numerous diverse and complex elements, the Master Plan for Sydney Olympic Park presents an opportunity to translate this theme as the coming together of different modes that work in harmony to create multiple experiences across a range of agendas.



Olympic Park Town Centre. Tree-lined boulevard at night.



Close-up view of new mangrove shoots and emerging roots.

Walama is a change in direction and refers to the sophisticated, reflexive adaptations that are required for survival in constantly changing and evolving environments, both natural and built.

This Country has adapted in specific and unique ways to survive in the hostile and changeable environments of the saltwater, intertidal zone. In water Country, aquatic species are specifically adapted to survive the underwater environment whilst on dry earth, terrestrial species are adapted for life with comparatively little water. The species on Biddigalo Country have evolved even more uniquely to survive in both aquatic and terrestrial conditions; an existence which is rare and increasingly more endangered.

The concept of the intertidal zone and responding to low and high tides can be translated spatially as modes of operation that can not only adapt and accommodate high and low densities of people and events but also speak to the “intertidal zone” of the precinct. As the Metro will become a new transportation hub for visitors to Sydney Olympic Park, the precinct must be equipped to negotiate the ebbs and flows of a multifunctional urban centre. Activating the “intertidal zone”, the space between high and low densities, is key to engaging meaningfully with Country as an adaptable, reflexive and responsive environment. The ephemeral nature of the site requires spatial exchanges to accommodate for different needs. The precinct can perform as a thriving cultural hub with a layered exchange of conditions, giving rise to distinct events without inhibiting its overall performance.



Abattoir Heritage Precinct



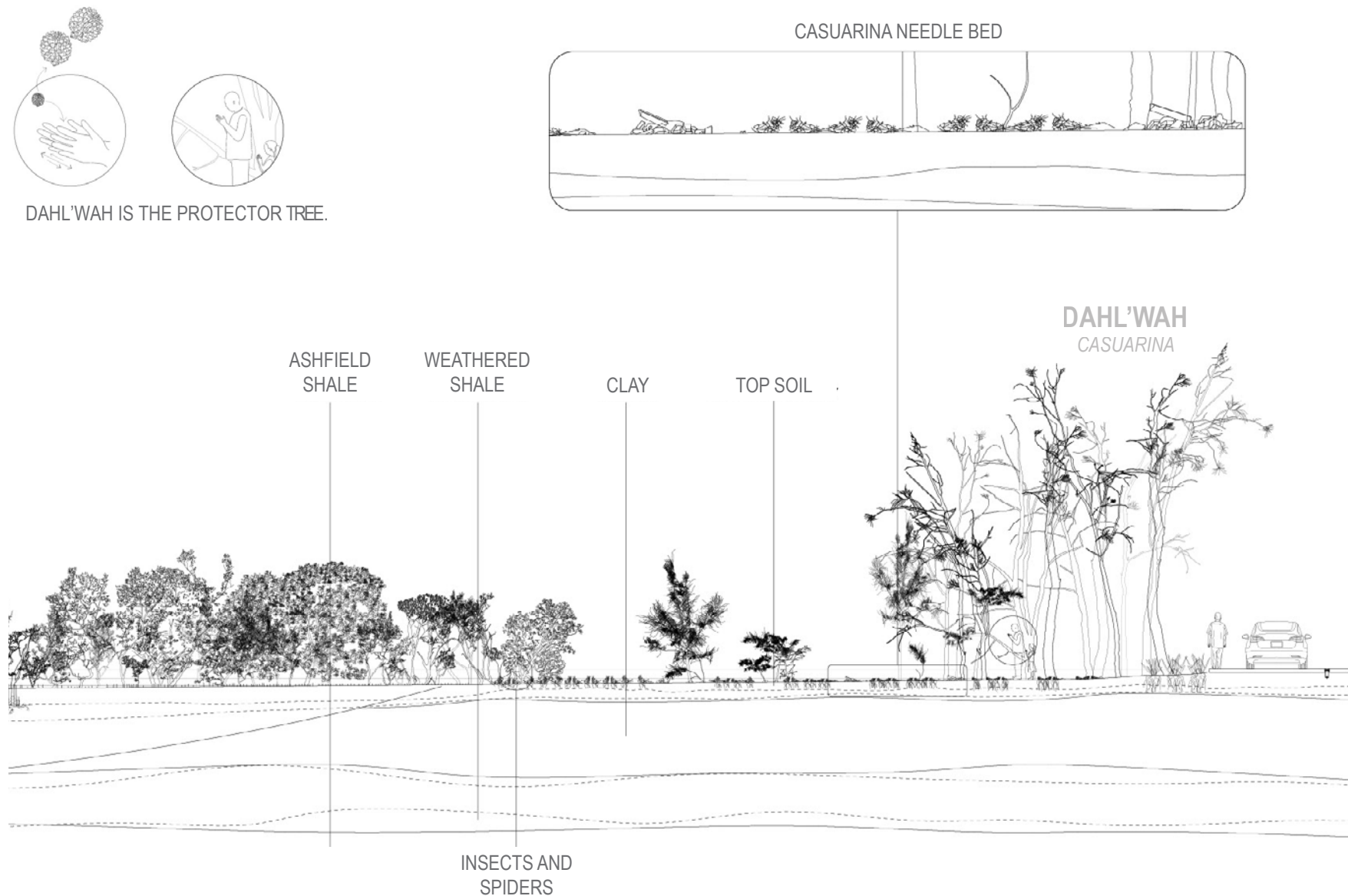
Badu mangrove forest



Salt marsh

Walama Adapting to the ever changing Intertidal Zone





Madutji means connection, and as a theme, expresses the concept that all things are interrelated. In the vast interconnectedness of the ecologies and knowledges of Country, we learn and experience Madutji. No one thing can exist on its own, but instead relies on its network of connections to all other things for survival and protection. We are always connected to Country and it is our obligation to care for the interconnected nature of Country, as it has been cared for since the beginning of time

Beyond this broader definition of interconnectedness, Madutji is a concept specifically rooted to the place we now know as Sydney Olympic Park. Also meaning elbow, for Sydney Aboriginal peoples, Madjuti is the elbow of mangrove wood that is used to make boomerangs, making it a key resource sustaining life, ceremony and culture. The mangroves at Sydney Olympic Park have been a source for this boomerang wood for local Aboriginal families until recent years.

Madutji is the joint that has always brought things together, connecting people to saltwater ecologies, to the freshwater and to the bitter water systems. We are always on Country and when we design here, the things we make and plan for become part of the interconnected whole that is Country. As a conceptual theme Madutji, then, can inform the Master Plan for Sydney Olympic Park as a place to recentre the complex interconnectedness of Country through tangible and intangible frameworks. Possible across macro- and micro- scales Madutji underpins all aspects of designing with Country to bridge the space between all things.

As a strategy, Madutji can create space for site specific, tangible, spatial interconnections between water, land, plants, animals, peoples and buildings. Madutji insists on connected-up, healthy

Connecting with Country Master Plan Themes - Sydney Olympic Park

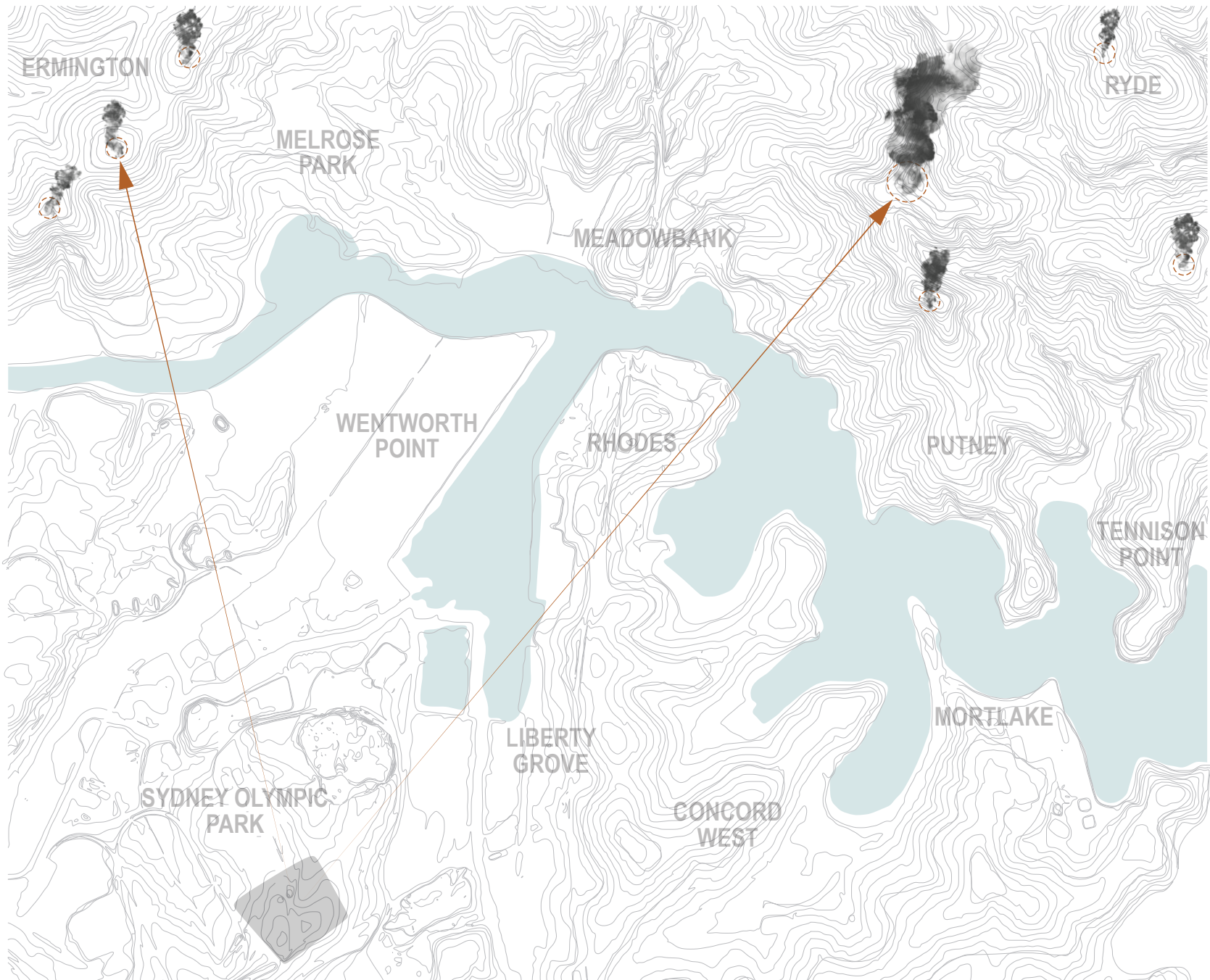
natural systems. Further still, as low-lying Country the site has vast potential to connect to its high Country surrounds (such as Top Ryde) and recognise the ancient Ancestral ceremonial sites that have always interlaced all areas of this wider Country together. Through Madutji these intangible experiences can be re-given place within the Master Plan through well considered vistas and connections to the vast open plane that is sky Country.

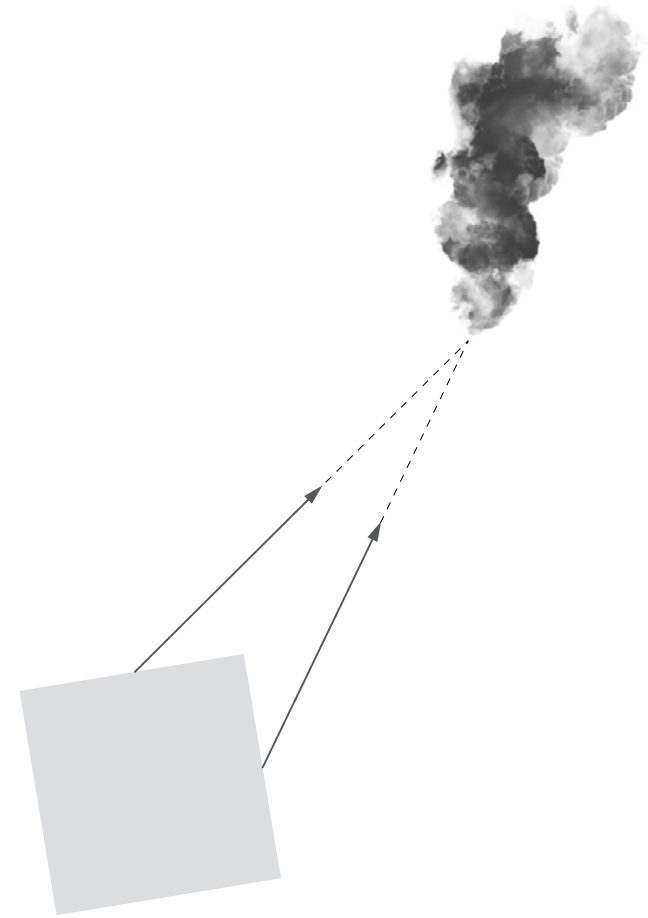
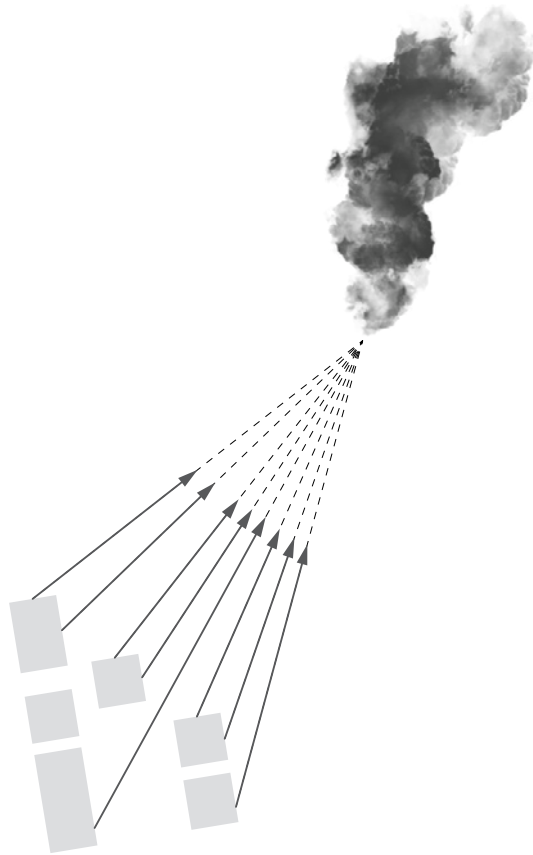
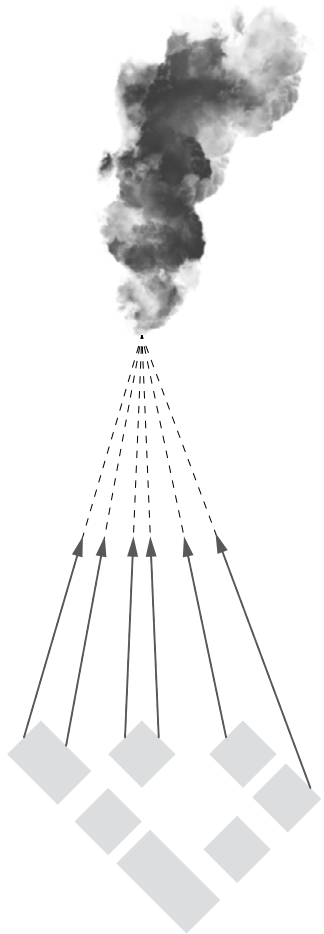


Looking towards Top Ryde from the Treillage Tower



Muru Nanga Mai Dreaming Track





CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

The Precinct (Central Precinct Metro Core)

The central precinct metro core will:

- Create opportunities for all people to connect with, respect and ultimately protect Country;
- Draw people into and beyond the boundaries of this precinct through Country, as a connection point that links all green spaces of Country to this urban heart/core;
- Provide connected landscaping that honours the ancient associations that plants have developed with each other throughout Country over countless generations;
- Provide buildings and public/urban domains that respond to Country and allow for ceremony, ritual and storytelling; and
- Create a Master Plan that is permeable to Country not only across Sydney Olympic Park, but creates connections through public space, and rooftops to high Country and ceremonial sites across the broader Country that is now known as 'Sydney'



Flowering gynea lily at the Abattoir Heritage Precinct

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Places (Central Urban Park)

Leveraging the lower heights and densities afforded by the heritage character of the abattoir and the new metro, the central urban park will emphasise protecting and connecting to Sky Country by:

- Providing a genuine connection to Sky Country whilst also giving an open experience contrasting to the dense urban fabric of the rest of the Master Plan, diversifying spatial experiences from tall buildings to open space;
- Allowing Country to breathe and be appreciated by visitors and residents during both the day and night;
- Provide opportunities for people to relax, dream, listen to and watch Country; and
- Creating complex associations between upper, middle and lower canopies that can sustain other local forms of life including birds and insects (“No tree left behind”)



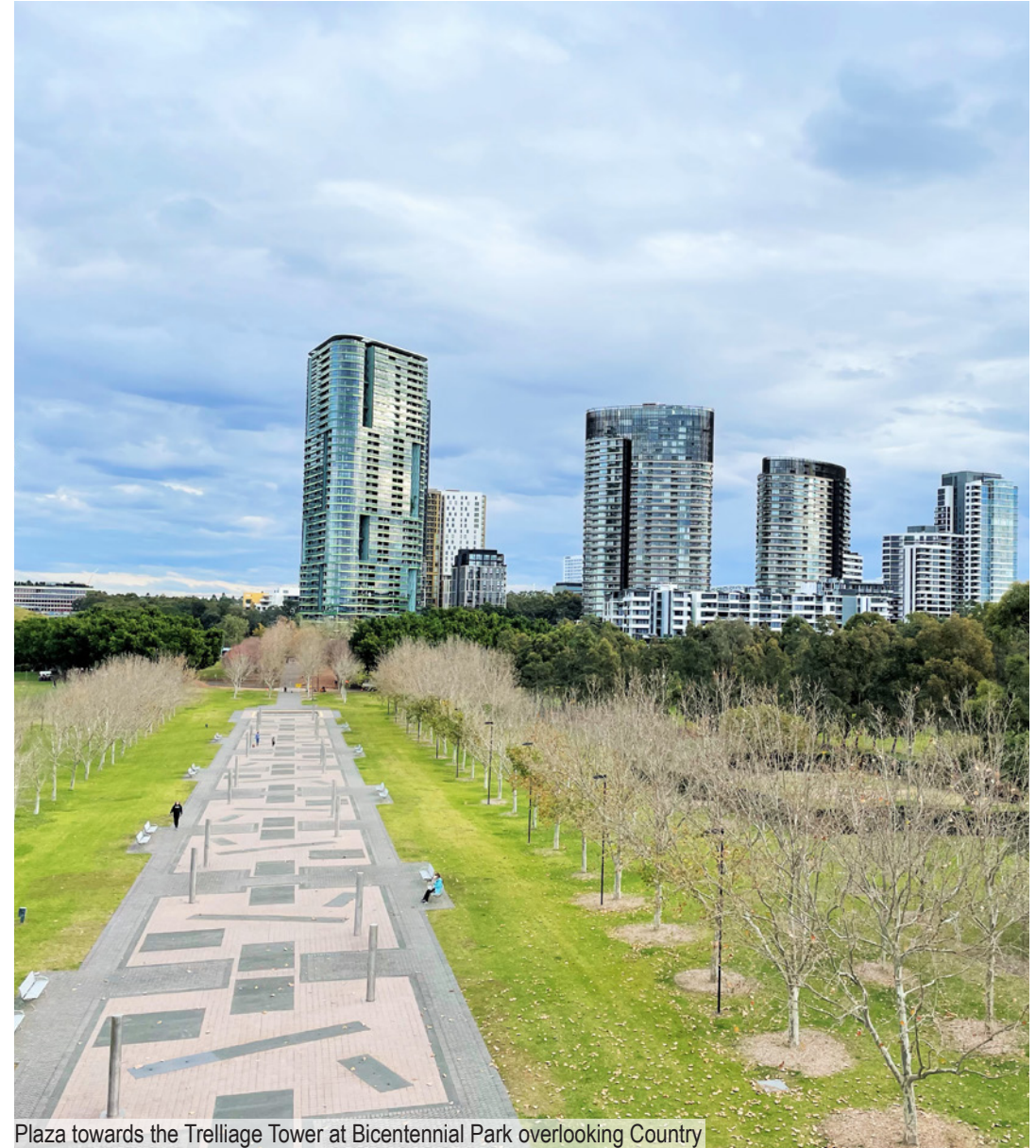
Green open plains at Bicentennial Park

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Places (Miluni East/The Plaza)

Miluni East is the heart of Country for this precinct and is an interstitial space. Situated at the intersection of multiple urban typologies, Miluni East is the most concealed/protected place across the larger plaza, allowing you to be drawn into the stories of Country. Miluni East will be a place that acknowledges the complex interconnectedness of Country by:

- Creating gathering spaces to connect, share, listen and learn from all Traditional Custodians and their stories of Country;
- Providing safe spaces for cultural enactments to take place and be appreciated;
- Establishing meeting places of different scales that break away from the dense pedestrian pathway and allow space for more intimate cultural experiences, respite and relief; and
- Allows space for Country to breathe and draw in all other parts of this Master Plan, especially Sky Country around the central urban park.



Plaza towards the Trellage Tower at Bicentennial Park overlooking Country

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Places (Miluni Transit)

As the arrival destination for thousands of guests to Sydney Olympic Park, Miluni Transit is intended to create a unique environment that asserts Country, sovereignty and storytelling. Building upon the idea that Country extends far beyond the 'natural' environment to include what is built here and what we add to it, Miluni Transit will:

- Leverage the architecture of the underground and the terrestrial, the ground and the canopy to powerfully express Country;
- Include a 'Welcome to Country' point
- Bring awareness to the mangrove environments surrounding the urban core by expressing the water stories and ecologies of 'Sydney Olympic Park', and invite people to explore beyond the urban centre; and
- Create multiple thresholds to draw people into adjacent spaces of Country, including Miluni East, Miluni West and the extended urban realm.



CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Places (Miluni West End)

Where Miluni East pulls people into the stories of Country, Miluni West End will be designed to open up the Master Plan to the wide expanse of Country that exists at this precinct's peripheries. As such Miluni West End will:

- Provide pockets of landscaped Country that give relief from urban heat and wind conditions, with upper and lower canopies always existing together. ("No Tree left behind");
- Include a 'Welcome to Country' point
- Much like the tidal changes of the mangroves, Miluni West End will be responsive to the pedestrian ebbs and flows, whilst simultaneously respecting and protecting the 'natural' pockets of Country that will be dispersed across this area;
- Use diverse ground treatments, such as paving/sandstone, dirt, sand, mud and water to provide buffer zones between heavy traffic areas and landscape to enable tactile opportunities to learn from and experience Country across all ages and abilities;
- Create interest and draw people into the precinct to listen and learn stories of Country in contemporary ways; and
- Capitalise on its location on the peripheries of the core, as an interface with Olympic Boulevard and the wider Sydney Olympic Park area.



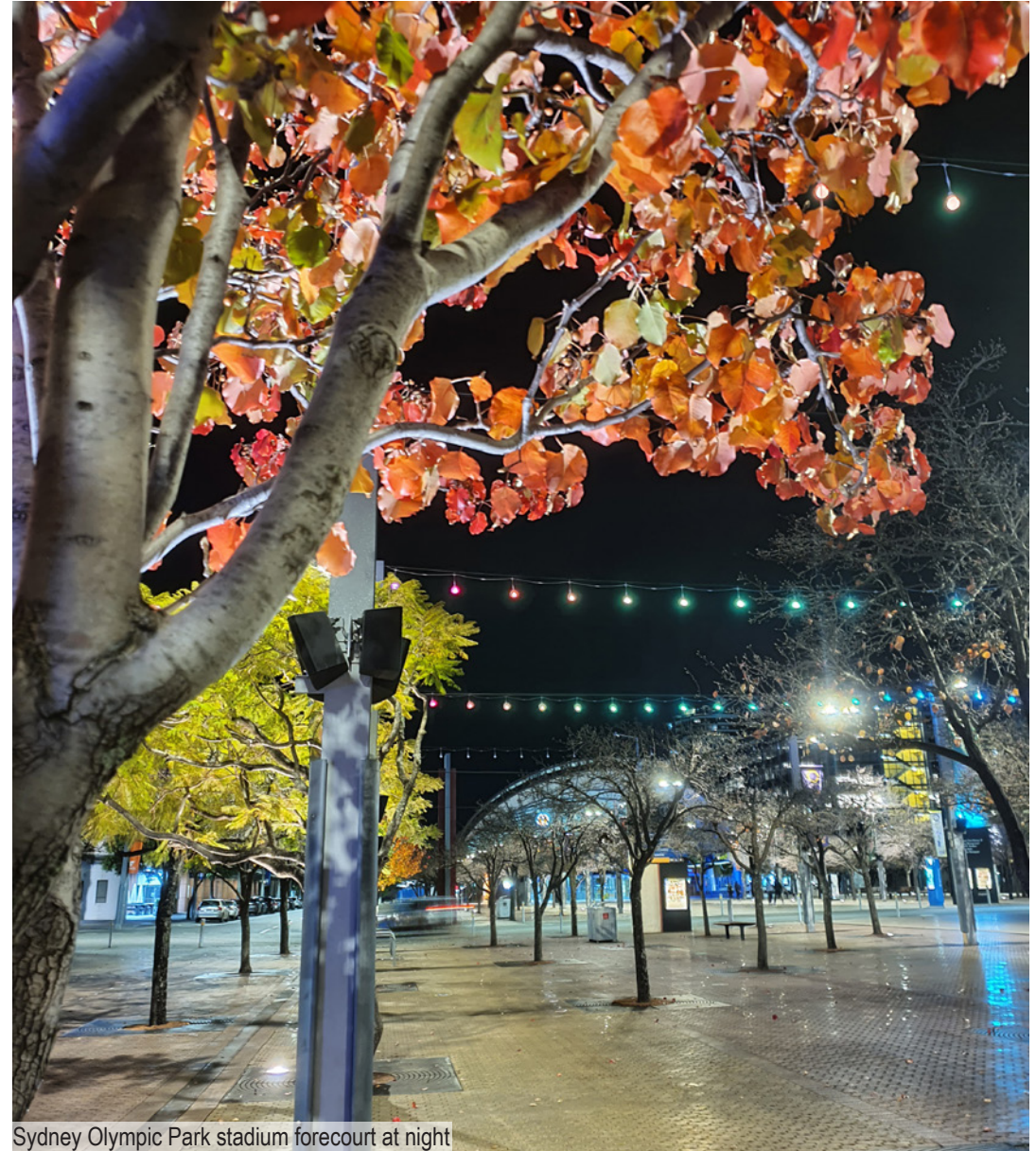
Muru Nanga Mai Dreaming Track that runs through the mangroves

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Streets (Shared Street)

Shared streets facilitate transient experiences of Country that are appreciated through different modes and speeds of transport. Shared streets will:

- Provide opportunities to connect with Country at human/micro scales by allowing a connection to be drawn to the knowledges of locally endemic plant and animal associations;
- Establish association planting through upper, middle and lower canopies that do not suffocate trees with a bed of concrete and paving (“No tree left behind”);
- Create equal and dignified access to Country for all to experience;
- Privilege slower movement so that Country can be safely enjoyed and celebrated at a human scale, or slower pace; and
- Name streets by shared local languages of this Country.



Sydney Olympic Park stadium forecourt at night

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Streets (Pedestrian Laneway)

Pedestrian laneways will focus on providing more intimate experiences of Country that:

- Demonstrate material connections to Country on street frontages and setbacks;
- Provide cultural and art installations across the urban/public realm that allow stories of the interconnectedness of Country to be told across the Master Plan; and
- Implement ground surface conditions and landscaping that reflect and connect to Country that exists beyond the boundaries of this precinct.



Enactments of culture through burning

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Streets (Pedestrian Only Zones)

Pedestrian only zones will include all of the connecting with Country ideals of a Pedestrian Laneway, but are also intended to provide active experiences and insightful relationships with Country by:

- Providing opportunities for roadways, building footprints and tower separations to create vistas and connections to High Country ceremonial sites and Sky Country, and by opening up rooftops to public use to create these same connections to ancient sacred Country;
- Using varying ground treatments and materials that reflect the geological and ecological conditions of Country, including the mangrove ecosystems and sandstone through soft (dirt, mud, sand, water) and hard (stone/paving) finishes; and
- Providing pockets of Country that can be experienced at a leisurely pace, and enable active participation in the learning of Country and local Ancestral stories that have always existed across this place.



Abattoir centre surrounded by palm trees, gynea lilies and Sky Country

CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY
PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURES

