



Connecting with Ngura (Country)

Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport

November 2021

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the deep time connection to this place as a pathway and place of journey. This part of Country on the Cumberland Plain has always been a place of movement for the Dharug people and surrounding neighbours Dharawal, Gundungurra and Darkinjung people. Beyond the neighbouring groups this place would have connected, and still connects people from the broader landscape.

We are deeply grateful for the generous involvement of Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport Connecting with Country Working Group, who have shared knowledge and collaborated on this document. We seek to empower their voices and create opportunities for their stories to be shared within the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport project. They would like to acknowledge their Elders from past generations for the pathways they walked with strength and resilience for them to follow.

We acknowledge our past and our need to heal.

We look forward to a future where Dharug stories of Country are acknowledged and celebrated, and Dharug yura (people) and Custodians from neighbouring Country are honoured and healing and feel culturally safe.



Contributors and acknowledgements

This Connecting with Country document has been informed by a series of workshops with Dharug and Dharawal Traditional Custodians who make up the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport Connecting with Country Working Group. We express our deep gratitude to the following individuals and organisations who have contributed to this Connecting with Country document:

Connecting with Country Working Group

- Cindy Laws, Dharug & Darkinjung (Boorooberongal)
- Erin Wilkins, Dharug
- Glenda Chalker, Dharawal
- Julie Jones Webb, Sovereign Dharug Fresh and Saltwater Knowledge Keeper
- Leanne Watson, Dharug
- Venessa Possum, Dharug (Muringong clan)

We also acknowledge Corina Norman (Dharug and Dharawal) for her contributions to the Working Group.

Aboriginal consultants and advisors

- Zion Engagement and Planning
- Michael Mossman (MMs)

Other consultants

- GHD

NSW Government

- Sydney Metro
- Government Architect NSW



GHD's Reconciliation Action Plan brand artwork and Zion Engagement and Planning branding have been applied throughout this document.

GHD and Zion both engaged Tyrown Waigana to design this artwork. Tyrown is a Noongar man from South Western Sydney and his family is connected to Saibai Island in Torres Strait. This document has been designed by Aboriginal graphic designers from both GHD and Zion consultant teams. Jade Holland is a Gomeroi and Wiradjuri woman. She is a designer with Zion Engagement and Planning and assisted the Working Group to depict these visual themes of Country under Traditional Custodian instruction.



Disclaimer about language

We acknowledge that language is wide and diverse in pronunciation and spelling. Both Dharug and Dharawal words in language have been included. The Working Group note that the words that are used in this document are acceptable for the Country on which the project takes place. For example, Ngura can be spelled and pronounced a number of different ways e.g. Ngura / Ngurra / Nura. For this document, the Working Group have decided to refer to Country as Ngura.



The invitation

‘We listen to Country and respond to what we hear’.

This is how we engage with the Draft Connecting with Country Framework. This is an intricate process given historically Aboriginal voices have been silenced or ignored. Collaborating with Aboriginal communities to build trusting relationships is paramount to the Framework. We are grateful for the opportunity to engage in this process with the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport Connecting with Country Working Group to collaboratively produce this document.

This document is given to you as an invitation to inform your thinking, as individuals and professionals. These are words and images to engage with you and change the way you see the landscape and connect with Country. This document informs an approach to planning, architecture and design that connects with Country – past, present and future.

The extent of proposed development for the Western Parkland City will significantly alter Country. It is our responsibility to pioneer new ways to care for Country through this process. Led by the voices of Country, their deep time knowledge and connection to place informs our design thinking and shapes a new process and placemaking paradigm.

We challenge participants in this tender process to commit to this call to action. This document embodies the voices of Country and provides a foundation to inspire and direct tenderers that will be further unpacked through collaboration with the Working Group, Sydney Metro and contractors.

Message from Sydney Metro

Sydney Metro is excited to be part of the pilot project for Government Architect NSW’s Draft Connecting with Ngura (Country) Framework.

The purpose of this document is to provide a thematic framework to inspire design and generate responses which acknowledge and are respectful and meaningful to the Traditional Custodians and knowledge holders of this Country and its broader Aboriginal communities. The responses to Country arising from this document might find expression in architecture, landscape, public art, sustainability, materials, colour, public events, heritage interpretation, engineering or other activities.

Sydney Metro supports and anticipates ongoing collaboration between our delivery partners, the Working Group, Aboriginal people and knowledge holders.





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01 Introduction

Photo Caption: Country at Sunset

Source – Leanne Watson

This document provides a guide to respond to Country through the design of Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport project. The document has been informed by a Working Group of Aboriginal knowledge holders that was established as part of Sydney Metro's pilot project under Government Architect NSW's Draft Connecting with Country Framework. This section provides an overview of the Draft Framework, the Working Group, and an outline of how the document was prepared.

1.1 Connecting with Country Framework

The Draft Connecting with Country Framework innovatively informs the planning, design and delivery of built environment projects in NSW. The Draft Framework outlines strategies to design for the health and wellbeing of Country by valuing, respecting and being guided by Aboriginal people.

The Draft Connecting with Country Framework encourages a distinctly place-based way of approaching project planning and delivery:

- **Sensing: Start with Country (project formation)** – Actively seek the sense of Country and understanding how Country feels. Country is everywhere.
- **Imagining: Listen to Country (project design and conceptualisation)** – Listen to Country with the guidance of Aboriginal knowledge holders is a critical part of engaging with Country and with community. Listening invites responsibility to get the story (information) right while understanding the story changes over time.
- **Shaping: Design with Country (project delivery)** – Both living and non-living ecosystems exist across Country. Making from and on Country respects and allows the relationships of Country to continue.
- **Caring for Country: Maintaining Country (project maintenance)** – Once built on Country, all projects then belong to and are in a relationship with Country including buildings, roads and parks. Everything is connected.

The Draft Connecting with Country Framework is being tested through a collaborative process with NSW Government delivery agencies including Sydney Metro. Facilitating Aboriginal perspectives through project design and development will deeply embed Aboriginal cultural values throughout all phases of the project delivery. Proponents, consultants and contractors are encouraged to reflect on this draft Framework and this guideline document in their responses.

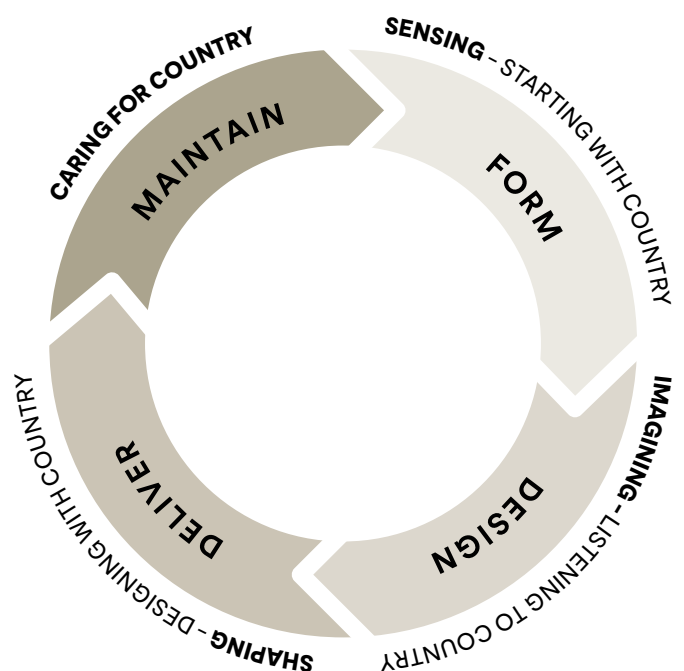
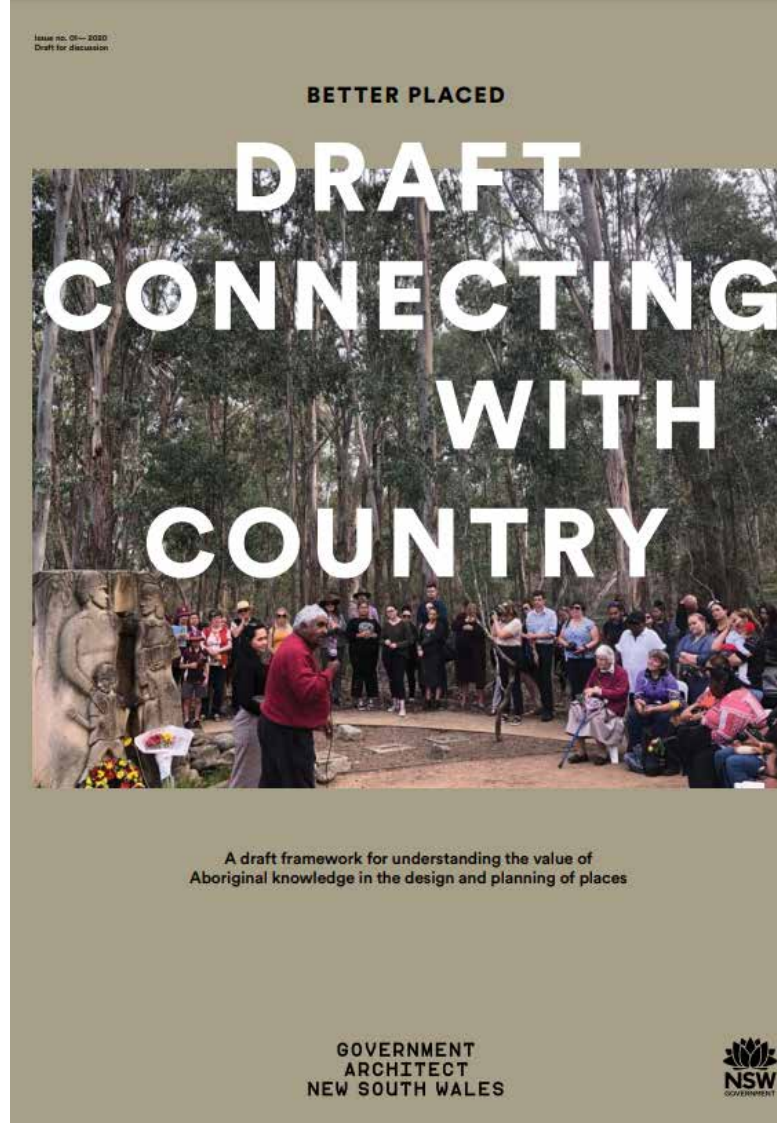


Figure: Place-based approach


Source – Government Architect NSW (2020). *Draft Connecting with Country Framework*

1.2 Connecting with Country Working Group

To facilitate the process of sensing and listening to Country for Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport, Sydney Metro engaged GHD/Zion Engagement and Planning/Michael Mossman to establish a Working Group of knowledge holders. In June and July 2021, GHD/Zion/MM ran an Expression of Interest process to identify Aboriginal people in Western Sydney who could help the project team listen to Country.

This process resulted in the establishment of the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport Connecting with Country Working Group. The Working Group is composed of Dharug and Dharawal Traditional Custodians, and was facilitated by GHD/Zion/MM.

The Working Group engaged with Sydney Metro through a series of workshops and focused on building relationships, storytelling, deep listening and sustained engagement, that has resulted in the production of this document.

 **The Working Group will continue to work with Sydney Metro and the nominated proponent through the delivery of this project.**

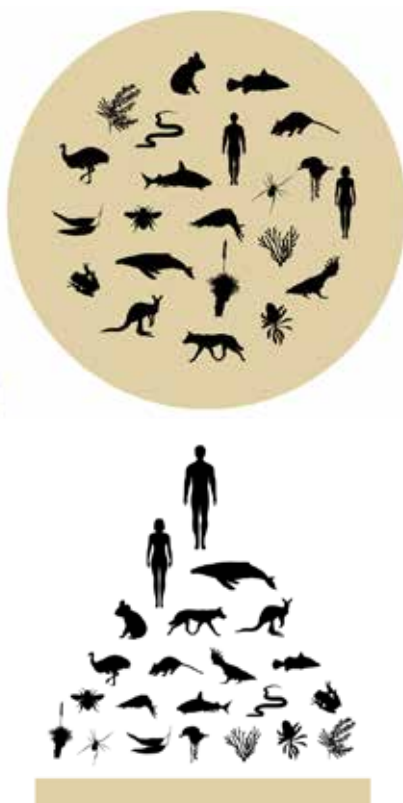


Figure: Country-centred vs Human-centred

Source – Government Architect NSW (2020). *Draft Connecting with Country Framework*

1.3 Purpose of this document

This document provides guidance for delivery partners, to inform their response to Connecting with Country for Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport. It has been prepared by GHD/Zion/MMs in collaboration with the Working Group and contains culturally sensitive information that has been generously shared with us for the purpose of this design process. Guidance on the structure of this document and how it should be used is provided below:

- **Section one:** provides an introduction to the document and the Draft Connecting with Country Framework.
- **Section two:** informs tenderers about the Country they will be working with and on for the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport project.
- **Section three:** outlines the themes identified by the Working Group for the rail line, and at each station. This section provides guidance on how these themes can be interpreted through design, the importance of each theme to the area, and a mood board to provide examples.
- **Section four:** sets the protocols for adherence by tenderers when reading, understanding and applying this document to their designs.
- **Section five:** identifies the next steps for tenderers in using and applying this document, including protocols for future engagement with the Working Group.

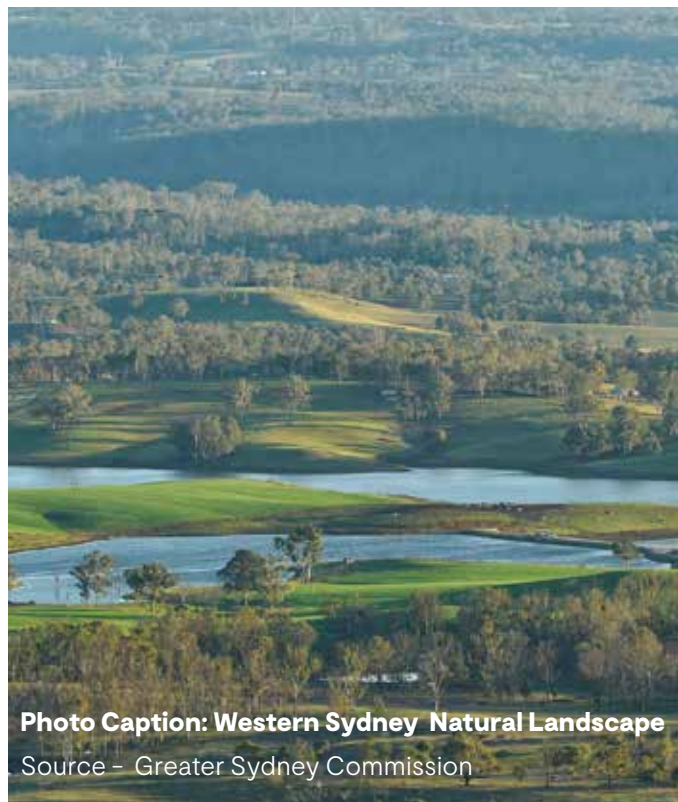


Photo Caption: Western Sydney Natural Landscape

Source – Greater Sydney Commission

02 Country



Photo Caption: Healing Country

Artist - Leanne Watson

2.1 What is Country?

Country is everything. We are Country. All living beings, the systems that support us and the deeper stories that connect us are Country. People are interconnected into a network of living systems rather than as separate or more elevated in a hierarchy than any other being on Country. This includes the plants, animals, water, tides, fire, stars, sky, landscape, the earth, the winds and time. She is continual, cyclical and relational. She is composed of intricate autonomous systems that are bound together. Relationships of Country are based on reciprocity, if we care for Country, she will care for us.

The Dharug people and other close neighbouring groups have obligations to care for the Country where this project will be located. They are the custodians who care for the wellbeing of her systems now and into the future for the coming generations. Dharug people need to heal their Country, and they have a responsibility to care for the people who are on Country.

The Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport stations need to be culturally safe and honour Traditional Custodians from long ago, until now.

Photo Caption: Western Sydney Country

Source – Sydney Water

Cumberland Plain

Western Sydney is open plain Country with lush undulating hills with subtle ridges and valleys, which creates a complex system of ephemeral water. The Cumberland Plain stretches from beyond Windsor in the north to Picton in the south and from the Nepean River in the west across to the inner west of metropolitan Sydney. This area is characterised by grassy woodlands with groups of trees separated by open grass plains. The most common trees are eucalypts, gums and ironbarks with an understorey of grasses. There is a variety of wildlife that has always called this place home.

Wianamatta

This is mothers place. She runs as a life source, from the south on Dharawal Country to the north on Dharug Country, through the middle of Western Sydney that connects with a large and complex network of tributaries including creeks and streams and ephemeral waterbodies. Colonial farm dams have caused water to move and retain differently through Country. Water is life, it nurtures us and gives us all we need. Waterways are living entities and have strong and continuous characteristics of their own – all interconnected as Country.

Country context



Complexity of gathering and life

Life on this Country is rich and complex, aligned with lore and systems. Knowledge holders and Elders, revered for their wisdom, are honoured as people who kept and keep Country healthy. Seasonally everyone is in tune with the adjustments that are needed to stay in balance with Country. Dharug Country hosted gatherings for the exchange of knowledge and important cultural practices. Aboriginal people are much more than hunters and gatherers, they hold deep time knowledge of Country and her complex systems. Continued connections to Country manifest wisdom, knowledge and guidance for the way this project proceeds into the future.



Colonial story

The impact of colonisation is wide reaching amongst the Dharug people and Country and other groups within the broader Sydney basin. From brutality and segregation to displacement and devastation, this Country and her communities have shown resilience and strength. Some of the first British visitors acknowledged the value of this Country for farming and began to take and conquer. Dharug people continue to host visitors from other nations who have made this place home. Awareness of these nuances of current living practices can only be understood through the lens of Traditional Custodians for translation to the built environment. Importantly, connections are strong and require ongoing relationship building processes to facilitate competent, co-designed and collaborative design strategies.



03 Themes



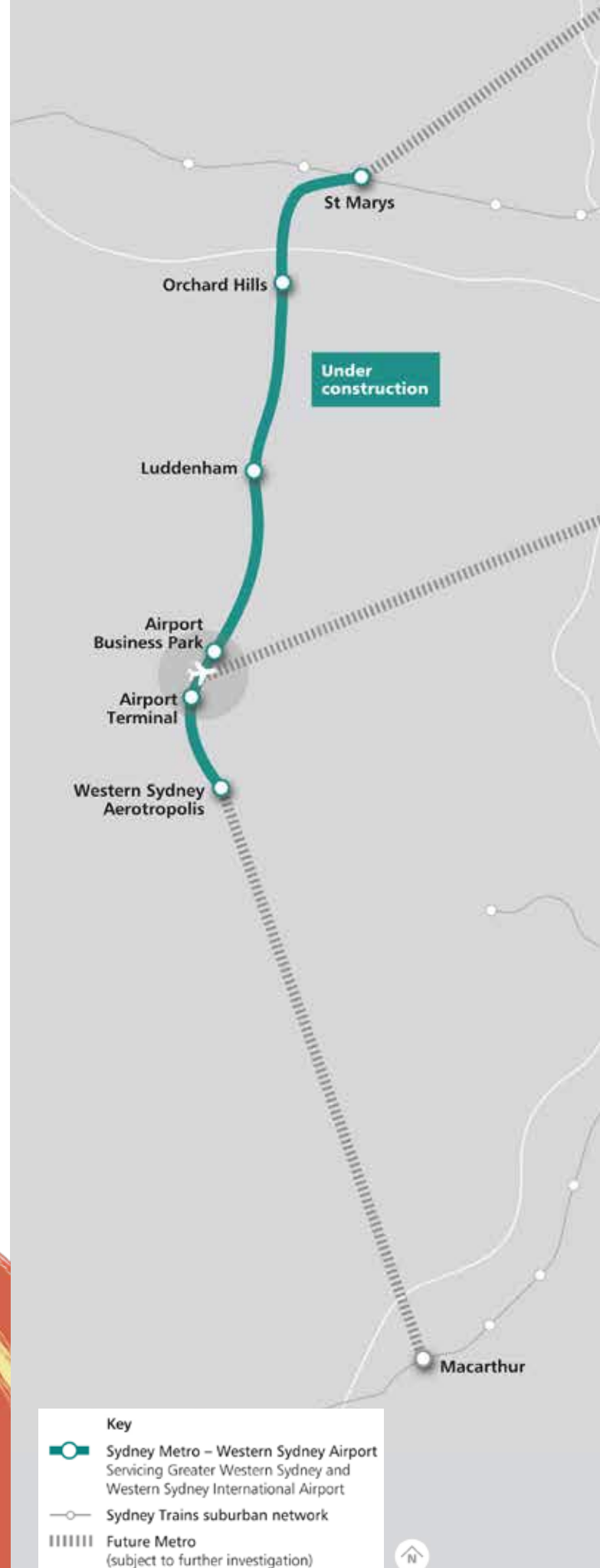
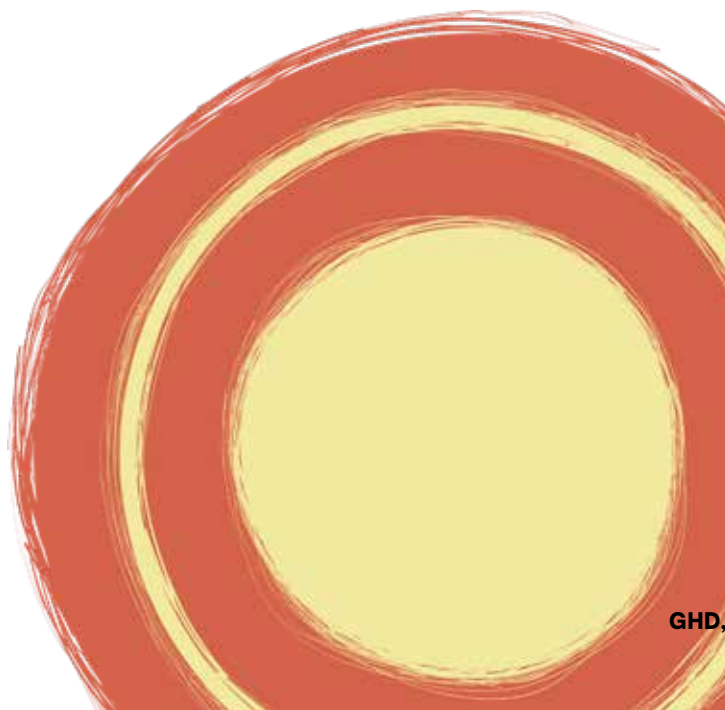
Photo Caption: Traditional tools

Artist - Leanne Watson

The Connecting with Country Working Group has developed a series of themes that reflect what Country tells them about the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport alignment. These themes have been developed to help inform responses to the design and construction of the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport project. Behind these themes sits deep cultural knowledge and understanding of Country, which needs to be respected when working within this framework. For more guidance on how to interpret these themes through your tender, refer to section 04.

A line-wide theme has been developed to guide an overarching narrative for the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport corridor alignment. The line-wide theme is to be considered at each station, and along the corridor infrastructure, but does not require literal interpretation. Consideration should be given to how to respond to the line-wide theme and the station themes in competent and co-designed ways.

The line-wide theme provides connections between the stations, and a consistent narrative to interweave the journey along the corridor alignment. The line-wide theme is a distinct opportunity to learn from Country and the Working Group to honour dynamic and unique sensory experiences of place.



Journey and Muru/Yauang (Journey and pathway)

3.1 Line-wide

The theme for the line-wide corridor alignment is 'Journey and Muru/Yauang (pathway)', represented by the Gulamon/gulumon. The theme has been chosen as it acknowledges the relationship between Aboriginal people and Country, and the area as a traditional pathway of connection between many groups in the region. The theme recognises the history of Dharug and others interaction with the natural corridor for living, travel and trade.

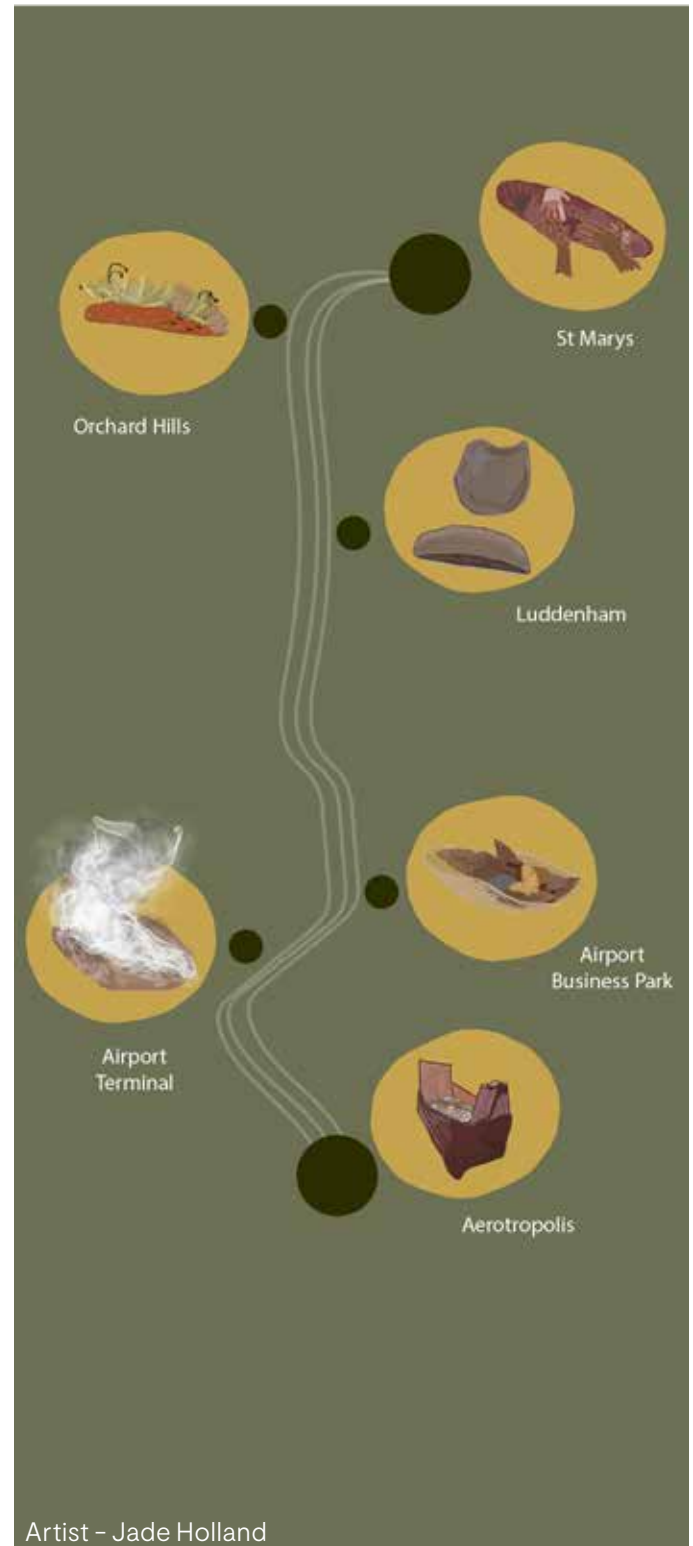
The Gulamon/gulumon is symbolic of everything Aboriginal people carry culturally, such as knowledge, values of Country, and practical material. The Gulamon/gulumon's multifunctional uses are represented by each station's theme. Developed in collaboration with the Working Group, the concept communicates notions that resources, ideas and values are collected into the Gulamon/gulumon and carried across the pathway journey. The line-wide theme can be seen as a pathway of intelligence and an opportunity to engage in cultural learning along the way.

The theme also acknowledges the way Dharug people and Aboriginal communities continue to sustain and conserve the natural habitat, and the importance of working together to care for and protect Country. The Gulamon/gulumon is a generous and practical vessel which can also carry the stories and people of the diverse communities along the Western Sydney – Airport Metro line.

A cracked Gulamon/gulumon represents the impact of trauma intergenerationally. We acknowledge the hurt and dispossession that they experience and the importance of truth telling.



Note: The line-wide corridor alignment should not be interpreted as a songline. This was a clear direction from Working Group members, and out of respect for them, this direction must be followed.



Colour palette:

The colour palette (left) is provided for you to draw from and inspire relationships with place. The colour palette reflects different Gulamon/gulmons and Country across the Sydney Metro - Western Sydney Airport alignment. These colours should be considered in addition to the colour palettes provided for each individual station.



Mood board:

The images presented have been selected to inspire design and construction outcomes for your response. They have been collected from a variety of sources, including from the members of the Working Group.

Badu

(Water)

3.2 Aerotropolis Station

The theme for the Aerotropolis station is 'Badu (water)' (Mothers' Country, nurturing). Waterways are living entities that are constitutive of living beings and have strong and continuous identity of their own. Water is interwoven and relational to Country, connecting people with all beings. Water is an essential element for the circle of life. Healthy waterways are crucial for sustainability and the future of humanity.

In this context, water is nurturing as Wianamatta flows above ground and below ground to feed Country from the south on Dharawal Country to the north on Dharug Country. The sound of moving water is healing for Aboriginal people. Wianamatta nurtures Country like a mother nurtures her child. This theme was selected because Dharug and Dharawal people have nurtured Wianamatta for thousands of years, and in return Country has provided everything needed to live.

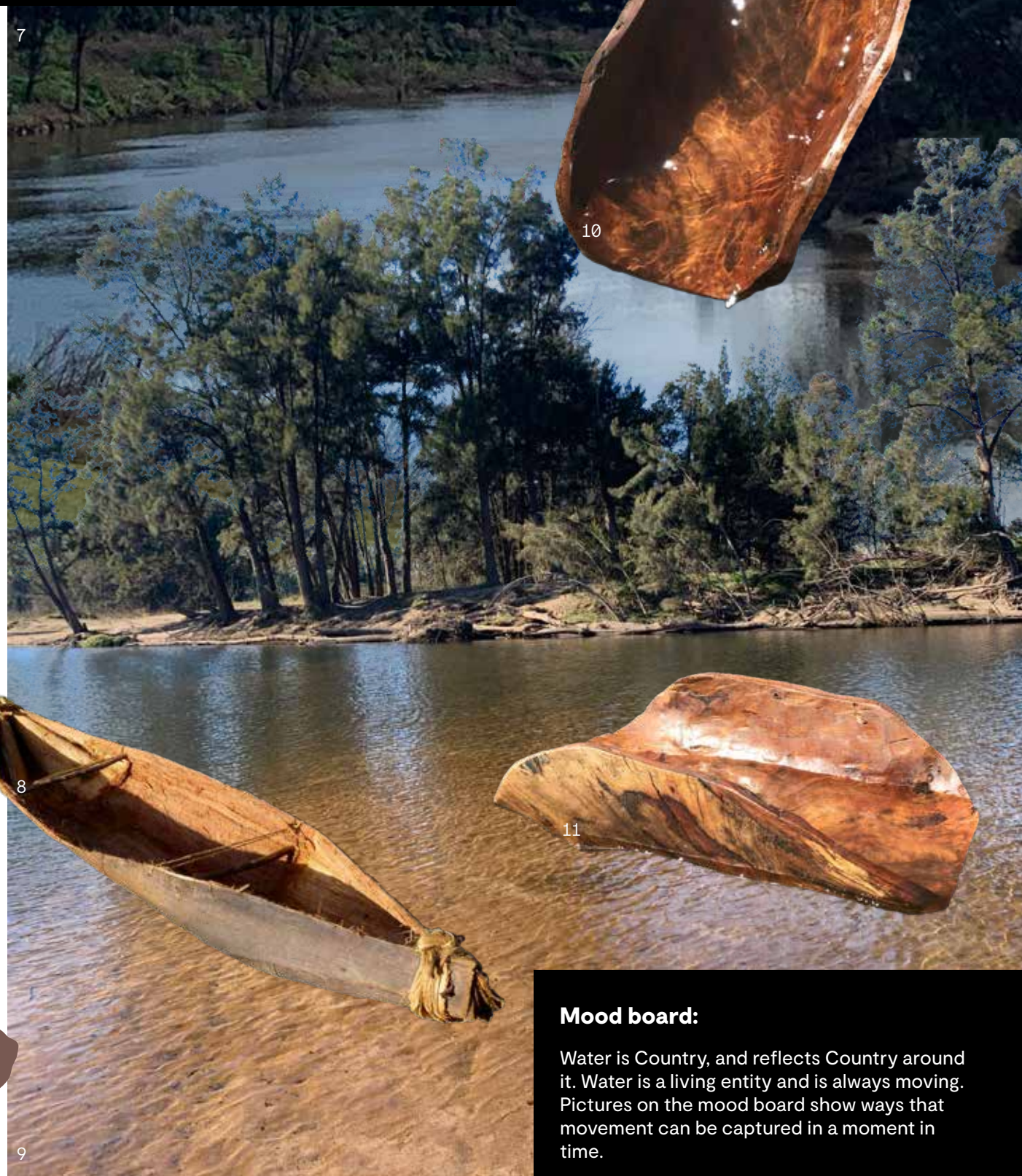
The Gulamon/gulumon is used to scoop and transport water for the community for sustenance. This limits depletion of resources, facilitates relational practices and healthy living environments for all beings.



Artist – Jade Holland

Colour palette:

The colour palette reflects the different colours of the water in Western Sydney. Different perspectives and perceptions will show different colours, depending on the time of day. It also reflects the ephemeral nature of the waterways, which may seasonally dry up and not flow freely all year round.



Mood board:

Water is Country, and reflects Country around it. Water is a living entity and is always moving. Pictures on the mood board show ways that movement can be captured in a moment in time.

Guwiyang/Goyan

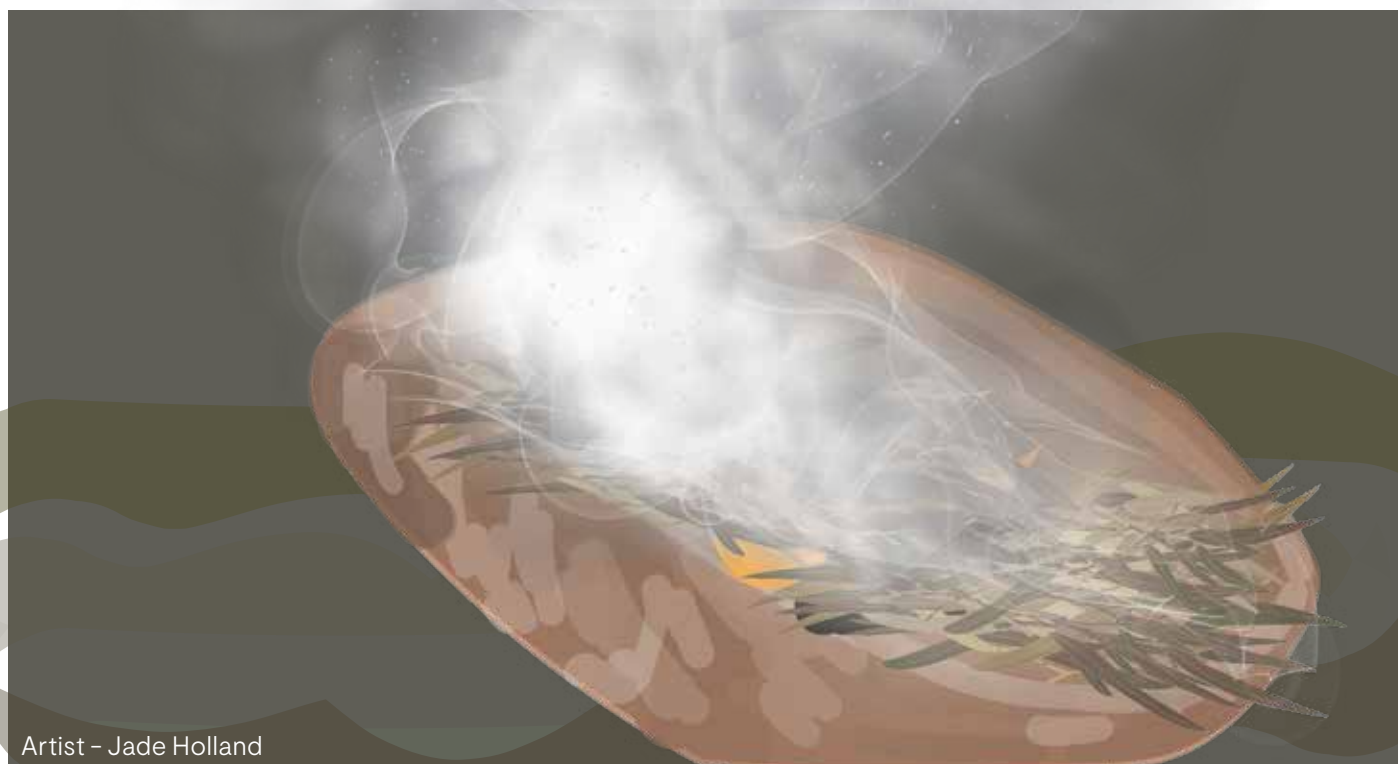
(Fire)

3.3 Airport Terminal Station

The theme for the Airport Terminal Station is 'Guwiyang/Goyan (fire)' (welcoming, healing, resistance). This theme was selected because fire is an integral part of healing, as it cleanses bad energy and helps provide a culturally safe and welcoming space for all. It is important to provide an opportunity for people to be welcomed to Dharug Country at the international airport and ensure they are brought in a 'good way' onto Country. Fire brings Aboriginal people together and is an important part of life. As smoke rises, it connects people to the spiritual world in the sky (or, sky Country). Fire is used for important land management practices, including cultural burning to enable reciprocal relationships with all interconnected beings of Country.

Fire is also a sign of resistance. Dharug people are still here, living in the Sydney basin and have demonstrated resistance throughout time. Fire can ignite within a person and drive a need to fight for what is right.

Smoke, heat and fire are used to cleanse, heal, welcome and promote wellbeing of people and Country. A Gulamon/gulumon is used for carrying fire embers and firesticks to assist in the movement of people and campsite occupation, and for smoking ceremonies.



Artist – Jade Holland

Colour palette:

Colours used for this station reflect the different colours in fire, including the base charcoal black, the flame, and different colours of smoke.

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Mood board:

Fire is represented by different imagery, based on its different uses. The mood board shows its use in smoking ceremony and cultural burning. Fire should not be represented as destructive or out of control, such as a wild fire. Fire does not always burn hot; it can also burn cool to create symbiotic processes for regenerations and nutrient-rich conditions.

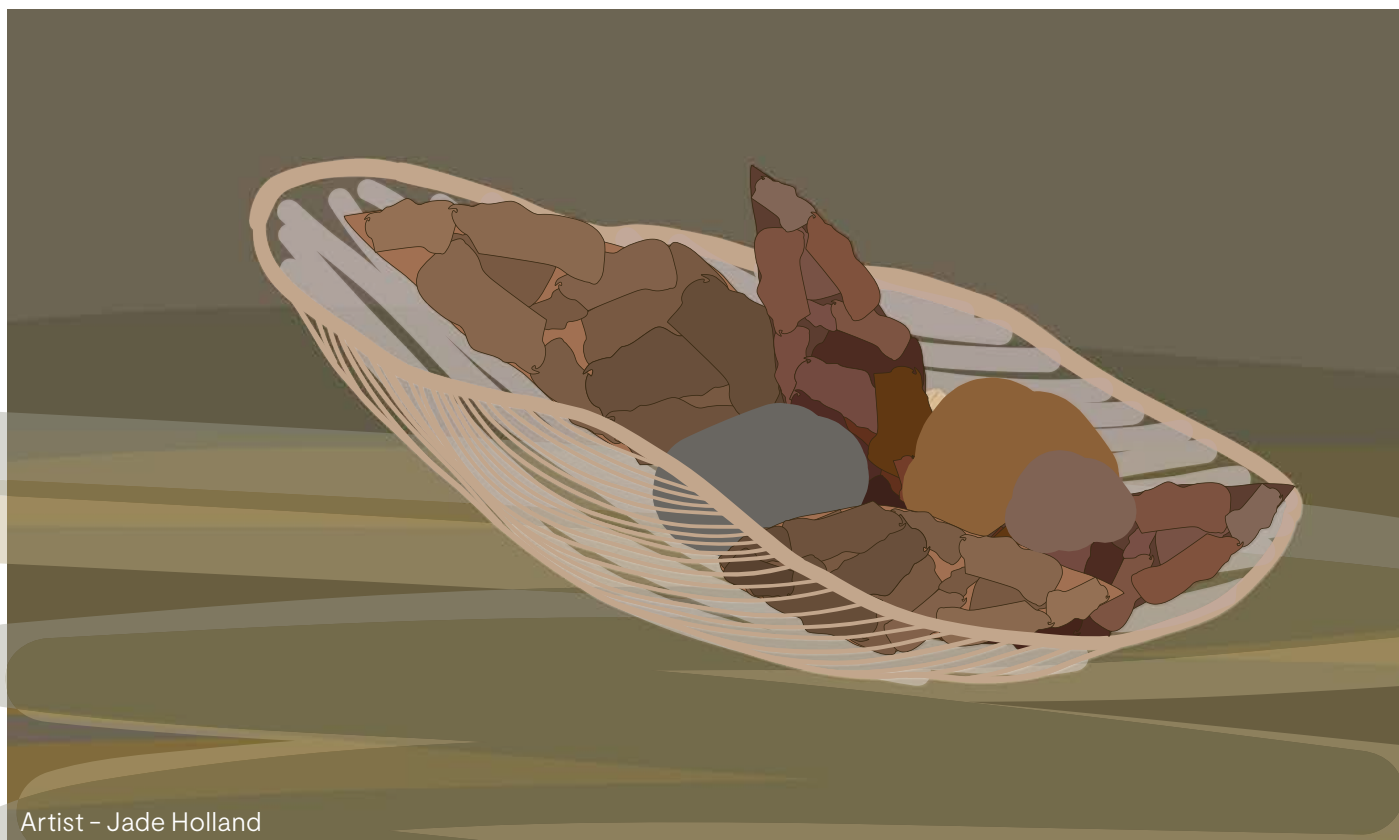
Earth

3.4 Airport Business Park Station

The theme for the Airport Business Park station is 'Earth' (source of material culture, such as tools and stones to enact trade). Each stone or tool that comes from the ground is a part of Country and holds her power. Importantly, this area is known as a place with a nearby quarry site utilised by Aboriginal people. Tools such as axes, stones and grinding stones are resources from the earth that Traditional Custodians traded with Aboriginal groups from Country near and far, to conduct business and maintain the upkeep of relationships. The trading of materials is how Aboriginal people engaged with one another and formed friendships that endures to current day practices.

After colonisation, there was a continuation of trade in the area as land was used for farming and grants. The future use of the area will also involve trade as the Airport Business Park will facilitate spaces for businesses to trade goods and services. This is an important opportunity to embed Dharug presence within this distinct place of business and acknowledge and enact trade that has occurred here since the beginning of time.

Tools such as axes are used to make Gulamon/gulumons by carving shapes out of specific types of trees. The Gulamon/gulumon itself is also a tool and can be used for many purposes. It is important to recognise the resourcefulness of Country, as every single piece of material sourced to make these tools is a product of the Earth, of Country.



Artist – Jade Holland

Colour palette:

Mother earth is filled with a range of colours and materials. This colour palette reflects just some of the most common tones of materials that are sourced and found on Country in the Cumberland Plain. There is a wider variety that can be seen in the mood board.

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Mood board:

During excavations works a wide variety of materials are found in the earth. This mood board includes some of the stones and tools that have been sourced from Dharug Country during these investigations. Colours of mother earth vary significantly across Country and it is important to consider how these colours could be embedded into design outcomes.

Bayadja / Bayadya and Burra

(Air and Sky)



Artist - Jade Holland

3.5 Luddenham Station

The theme for the Luddenham station is 'Bayadja / Bayadya and Burra (air and sky)' (father sky, gathering places, the sharing of knowledge, and meeting). Luddenham is known as a place where people gathered for traditional practices and special occasions, in the open air, under stars and father sky. In contemporary society we always tend to look down at mother earth but old people looked up to father sky. Sky Country has its own complex systems and holds stories important to people and Country. Yarning circles facilitated education processes and vast exchanges of knowledge. The area is close to Twin Creeks (Cosgrove Creek and Wianamatta) and other waterways which allowed it to be a central meeting place where people connect with each other to transfer ways.

The Gulamon/gulumon is used as a vessel for carrying things to places for gathering. This place more widely will focus on education, high technology, research and include a Science Park for the gathering of minds and resources and the creation of future opportunities. There is a strong opportunity to celebrate and highlight Country around this station as a place of knowledge exchange and innovation with a deep time connection.



Note: It is important to acknowledge that this area is a special and spiritual place and must be respected. The full depth of what makes this place special is protected cultural knowledge.

Colour palette:

The night sky was used as inspiration for this colour palette, including the stars and the wind. It was acknowledged that gathering under the stars and father sky is an important part of cultural practice on Country.

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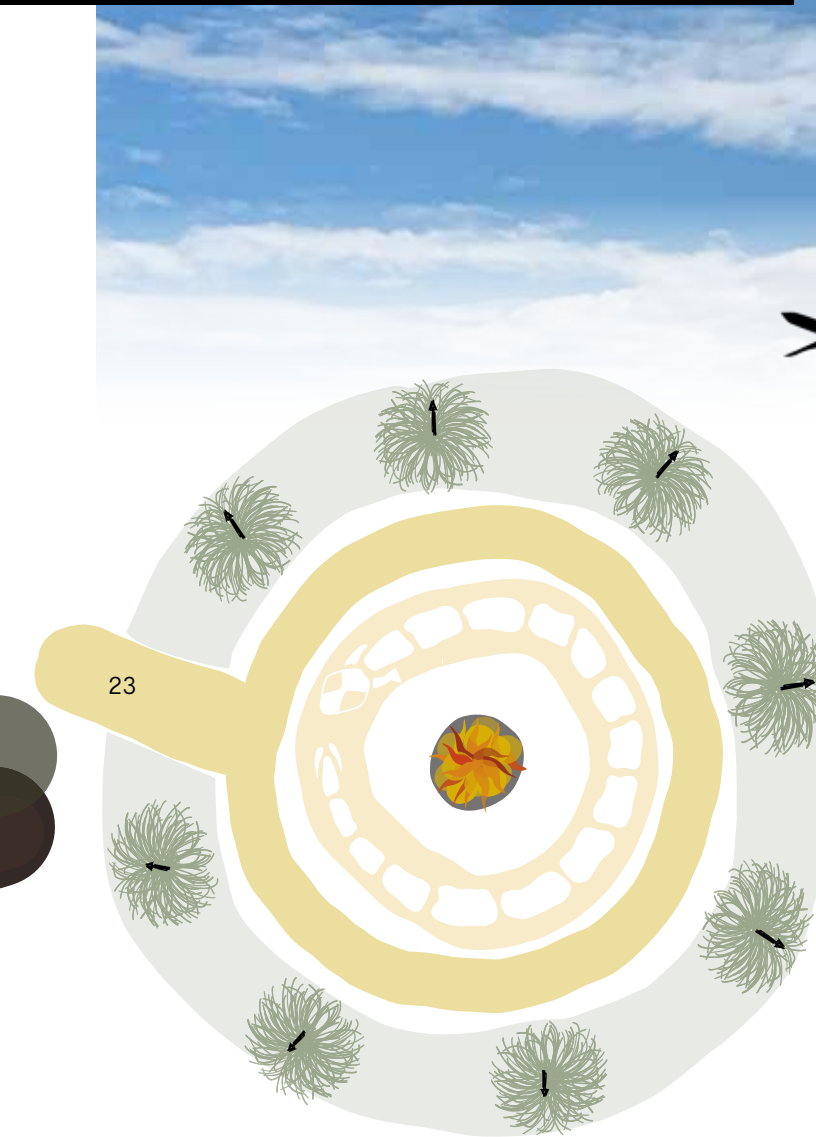


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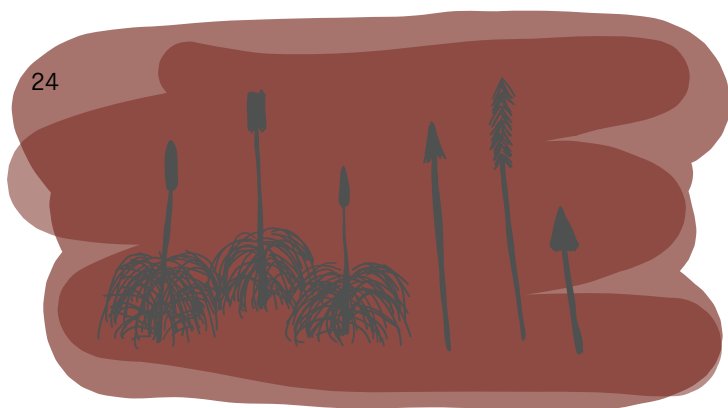
Mood board:

It is somewhat challenging to capture visual images that represent father sky, given the intangible or invisible nature of sky Country. This mood board attempts to capture the complexity of sky Country and provide visual cues for design thinking. It also includes a sketch for a gathering place, which would occur under the sky Country.

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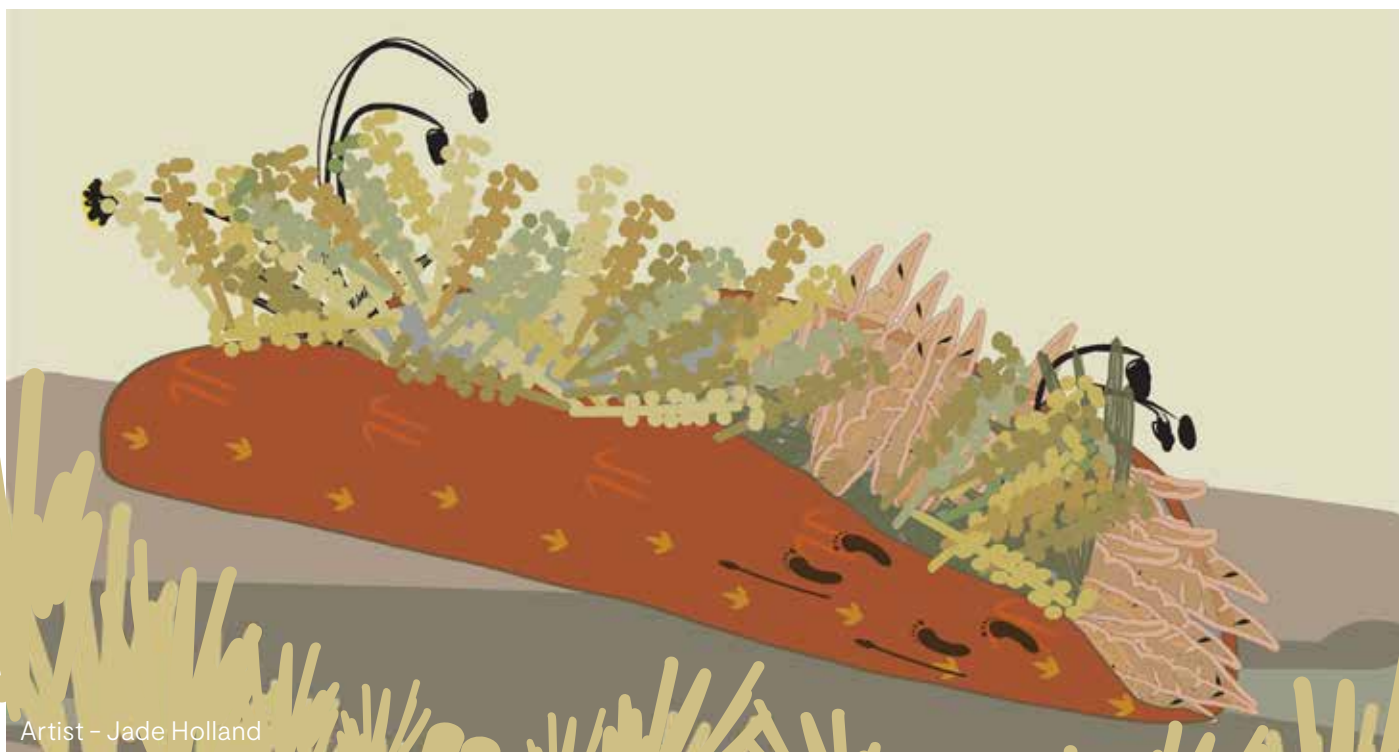


Plants and Wildlife

3.6 Orchard Hills Station

The theme for the Orchard Hills station is 'Plants and wildlife' (resources, living places and practices, and sustainability). Orchard Hills is an area that is known to provide resources such as grasses, seeds, and animals. Dharug people used sustainable hunting practices and traditional knowledge to gather food such as animals and supplies like medicinal plants on this Country. The exchange process involves both giving and receiving resources to only take from Country what is required to sustain living practices. The area has more intact woodland landscape compared to other parts of the alignment, which means the sky and stars can be seen more clearly. The woodland, creeks and floodplain give this area a culturally distinct landscape character. This theme honours practices on Country that have sustained life in this place, over thousands of years.

In this context, the Gulamon/gulumon is used to collect, carry, and store these resources. It was also a very sustainable tool made of Country, which can easily return to Country. One example of a living practice is breadmaking, as seeds were collected and ground into flour using grinding stones, then mixed with water inside the Gulamon/gulumon to make dough. Practice encourages gathering for the transfer of knowledge and the ongoing development of relationships.



Colour palette:

Colours of the Cumberland Plain have inspired this palette. It is reflective of the grasses, plants, trees and resources found on Country.

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Mood board:

Imagery has been sourced to reflect the Cumberland Plain Country and wildlife. It is vital to consider the importance of plants and wildlife in the context of Country and that they hold equal value to people in Country-centered thinking.

Yura

(People)

3.7 St Marys metro station

The theme for the St Marys metro station is 'Yura (people)' (resilience, colonisation, a place of safety, diverse communities and connections of mobs). This theme presents an opportunity for people to increase their knowledge and immerse into our Dharug history in the area. It is important to understand the context of St Marys as this Country has been resilient to many attempts at destruction since colonisation. Country has been protected by Dharug people, Country has resisted and survived. An example of this resistance is resilience seen in the flora and fauna and how they have adapted over time. Resilience can also be seen in the people, as the colonial history saw intercultural marriages take place as a means of survival.

Since colonisation, St Marys has become a place of safety for many Aboriginal people as disease, massacre, and the stolen generations made it difficult for them to remain as they were. Moreover, forced displacement has led many Aboriginal people to work together to form communities outside of their traditional lands in St Marys and surrounding suburbs. For these reasons, St Marys is considered a place of peace, strength and unity through the sharing of knowledge ways. Finding common ground between Aboriginal and Western systems develops capacities for people to understand and activate concepts of caring for Country. This will reinforce mutually beneficial cultural awareness and competence in the project and reawaken memories of cultural landscapes.

There is a significant story that is associated with this station. Teams are encouraged to access the resource to hear more about a story the Working Group would like to see embedded into a design response for this station.

The Gulamon/gulumon contains the many stories at St Marys.



Artist – Jade Holland

Colour palette:

St Marys is a place that holds many stories for many people. The visual expression of these stories is represented by people and the diverse Aboriginal community that call this place home.

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Mood board:

Aboriginal people are diverse in their appearance. There is a wide range of skin tones, hence why the colour palette for St Marys is inclusive and reflective of all Aboriginal people.

04 Outcomes

Photo Caption: Wianamatta
Source – Leanne Watson



The Working Group has also identified a series of desired outcomes from the Connecting with Ngura (Country) process. Where possible, these should be considered through the design and construction for Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport.



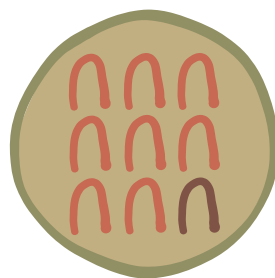
4.1 Education

The interpretation and integration of each theme into the design and construction of Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport provides an opportunity for education. This includes opportunities to further your own learning and education through the process. Opportunities for education include audio and visual material provided on or in stations and trains, education programs in local schools, information to accompany design features, and embedding cultural awareness training into your businesses.



4.2 Language

Country needs to hear language to heal. Use of language should be included where possible, and in collaboration with the Working Group. Aboriginal language and naming can occur beyond place-naming and can be incorporated in your response through overarching concepts and design narratives, thematic propositions, functional spaces, internal wayfinding, signage, and design elements. Language must be given by those who understand language of Country and how to communicate with it and translate proposed intent. Note that language is more culturally empowering when hearing it spoken than when it is communicated in writing. It may also be more appropriate to use it in phrases and sentences rather than individual words.



4.3 Employment

Opportunities for employment of local Aboriginal people during the design and construction of Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport should be considered. Long-term employment should be prioritised over temporary work. This can begin within your own team, and also apply to sub-consultants and sub-contractors. The inclusion of Dharug community members and Aboriginal professional practitioners in the built environment is encouraged to contribute to capacity building outcomes.



4.4 Design and movement

Consider the way that Aboriginal people have moved through Country in the design of Sydney Metro. Aboriginal people would rarely travel in straight lines, and would instead meander and weave through Country. This should be applied to use of straight lines, or walking paths where possible. Interpretation or inclusion of cultural knowledge and stories in design should not be on the ground plane where people would be walking.



4.5 Caring for Country

Traditional Custodians have obligations to care for Country. Ongoing opportunities for caring for Country should be given to Traditional Custodians, including the re-invigoration and regeneration of the Country that is disturbed through the design and construction of this project. Opportunities for broader Aboriginal communities to be involved in Caring for Country should also be considered. Commitments to sustainability targets, landscape restoration, design and construction that leverages traditional knowledge of land and waterway management will create stronger relationships and embed caring for Country practices for the whole project.



4.6 Acknowledgement and truth telling

Country and community carry difficult and challenging stories that requires understanding, time and space for them to be shared. It is important for the teams to commit space to how their response will provide opportunities to acknowledge stories of Country and community. This will increase truth telling in the built environment and create opportunities for education and awareness in places that are distinct and vital to maintaining critical relationships. Through embedding these opportunities, Aboriginal people and storylines of culture will feel seen, acknowledged and celebrated, to privilege cultural safety in our public domain. Where possible, consider a small acknowledgment of the past and Sorry Businesses at each station. Considerations such as placing language and stories in appropriate locations, not where they can be walked on or over for example, will be part of the process of acknowledgement and respect.



4.7 Accessibility

All places and spaces need to be accessible for people of all abilities. Accessibility for Elders to the future Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport is critical to connect the project to voices with connections to Country. Traditional Custodians require access to Country in order to care for it. Currently, much of the land where Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport will be located has been inaccessible due to private ownership. The design and construction methodologies can enhance access to Country for Traditional Custodians to carry out custodial obligations to care for Country. Considerations of culturally competent strategies can commence in this tender process to embed design practices from the beginning of the project story.



4.8 Welcome to Country

Sydney Metro design and construction teams should allow for a welcome to Country and smoking ceremony prior to work commencing. This must be conducted by Traditional Custodians at each station site prior to construction, to ensure safe work and passage on Country. Teams should also consider how passengers might experience a welcome to Country, particularly at the Airport Terminal Station.

05 Design and interpretation protocols

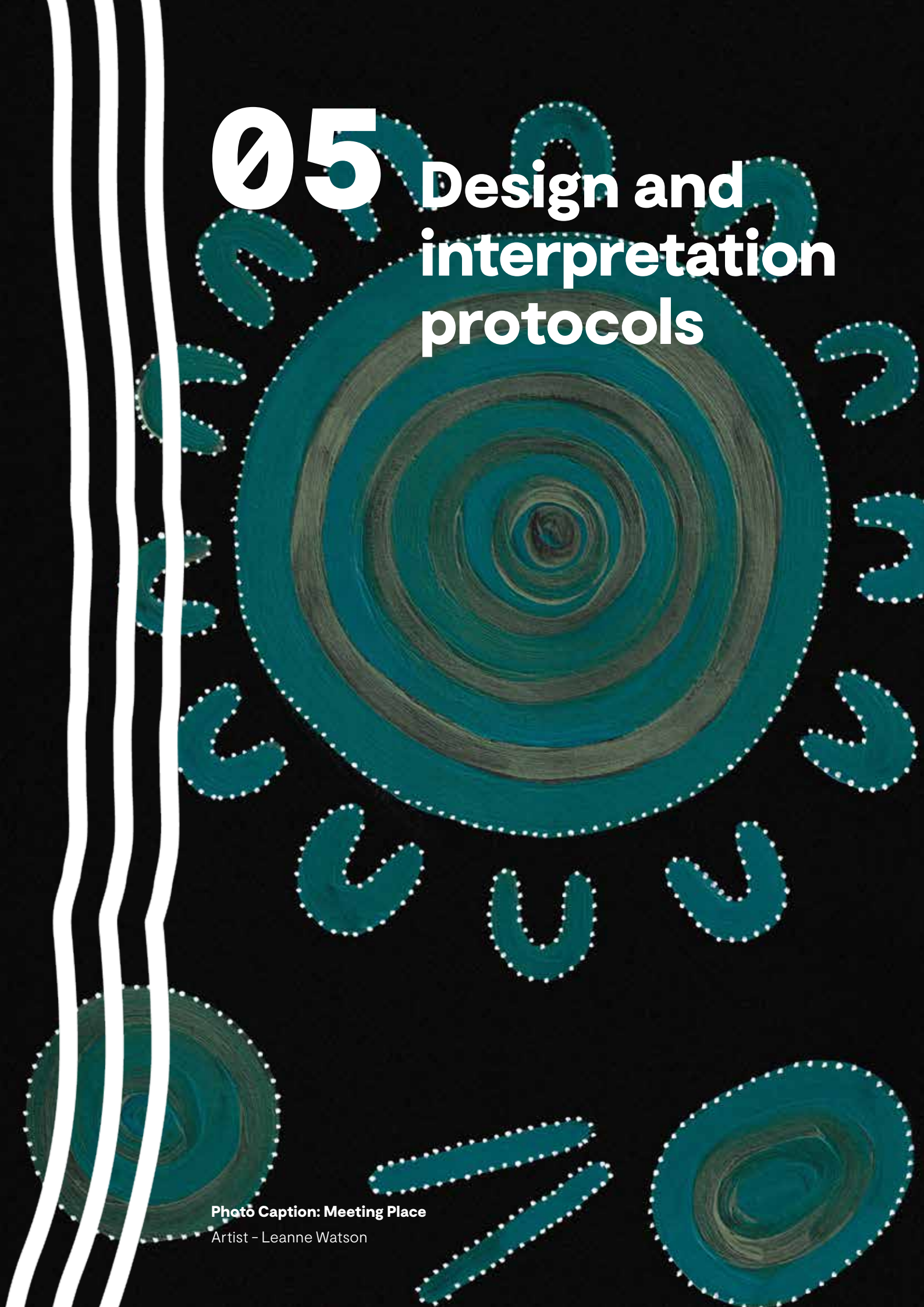
The artwork is an abstract composition on a black background. It features several concentric circles and swirling patterns in shades of teal and dark green, some with a dotted white outline. On the left side, there are three thick, white, wavy vertical lines. The overall style is reminiscent of Indigenous Australian art, with a focus on organic, flowing shapes and a limited color palette.

Photo Caption: Meeting Place

Artist - Leanne Watson

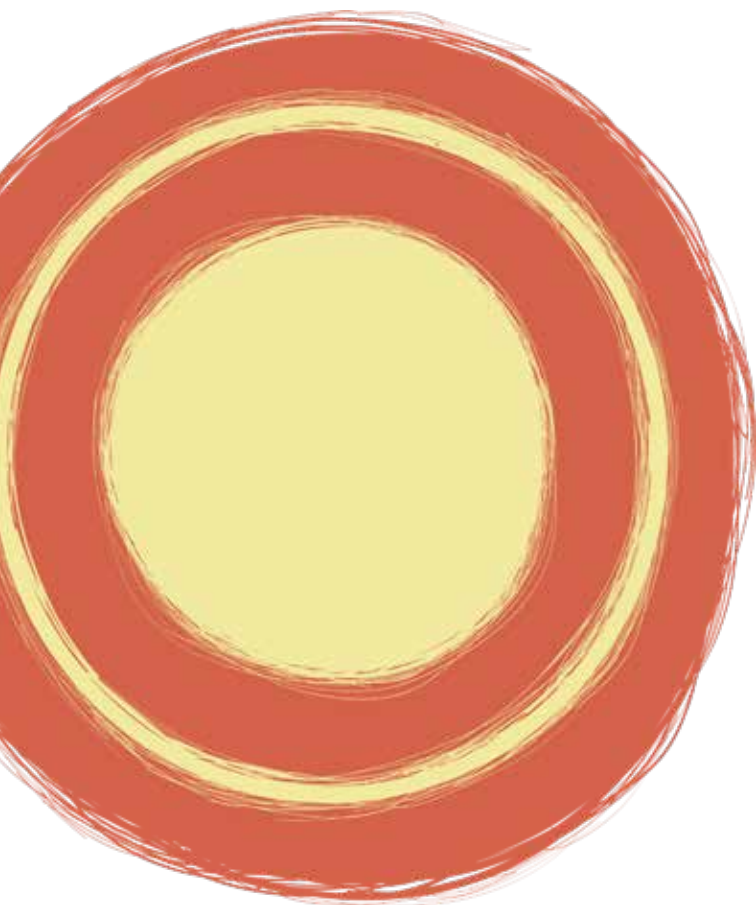
These protocols are ethical principles which guide the approach to working with the content contained in this document. The protocols acknowledge, respect and protect the cultural intellectual property of the Dharug people collectively and their stories, knowledge and relationships to Country.

The Transport for NSW Cultural Protocols 2020–2022 states:

Cultural Protocols: *An approved way of behaviour that respectfully acknowledges the cultural authority of an Aboriginal person, ceremony, event, custom or place.*

Protocol Compliance: *To accurately observe Aboriginal cultural protocol in a manner that is genuine, sincere and promotes greater understanding of Aboriginal ways of being and doing. (page 5)*

Sydney Metro requires proponents to respond to these two statements when working on this project. We have set out some further detail below to inform project teams on our expectations.



5.1 Intellectual Property

These protocols for Cultural and intellectual property rights include the right for Dharug people to:

- own and control their cultural and intellectual property
- ensure that any means of protecting their cultural and intellectual property is based on the principle of self-determination
- be recognised as the primary guardians and interpreters of their cultures and so regulate how stories and information are presented
- authorise or refuse the use of their cultural and intellectual property according to customary law
- maintain the secrecy of their knowledge and other cultural practices
- be given full and proper attribution for sharing their heritage
- control the recording of cultural customs and expressions, the particular language which may be intrinsic to cultural identity, knowledge, skill and teaching of culture.

*Our Culture: Our Future, Terri Janke (1998), pp. 47–48

For this project, the Connecting with Country Working Group has expressed the need for proponents to respect their cultural intellectual property and Sydney Metro strongly supports this. The use and application of information contained within this document needs to appropriately respond to the requirements outlined above and respect the sensitivity of the document's contents.

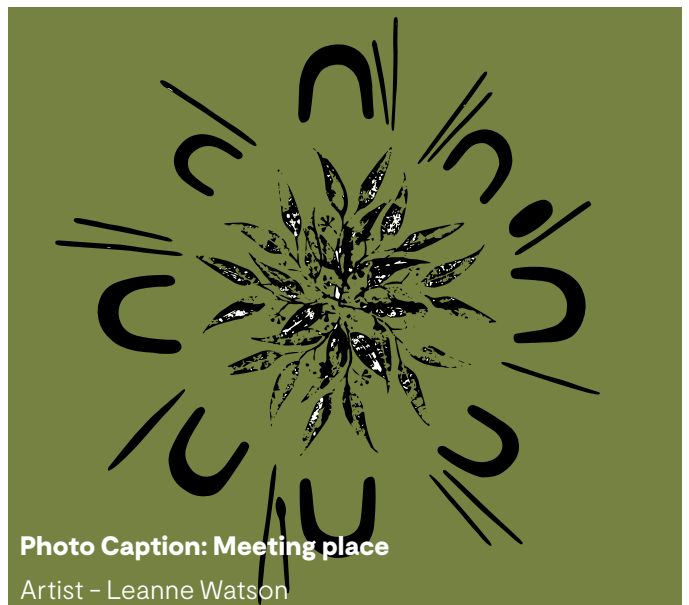


Photo Caption: Meeting place

Artist – Leanne Watson

5.2 Attribution and Acknowledgement

For this project, the Working Group should be given proper credit and appropriate acknowledgement for their achievements, contributions, and roles in the development of and/or use of cultural material. Meaningful attribution to the Working Group collectively as the Custodians of the cultural knowledge that informs the design process will help to avoid cultural appropriation and encourage cultural content that is respectful and reflective of cultural values.

This includes the following requirements in your design response:

- Referencing artists and pieces (from this document) that inspire or inform the design process
- Imagery from this document needs referencing in design submissions
- Tenders to include Connecting with Ngura (Country) design statements which respond to themes and interpretation of the contents of this document and are required to reference the Working Group.

This document and supporting materials have been produced to inform the response to Connecting with Ngura (Country) in the design, construction and operations of the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport line. It is anticipated that the appointed design team will work collaboratively with the Connecting with Country Working Group to further develop a response to these themes and ideas.



Photo Caption: Traditional net
Artist – Leanne Watson

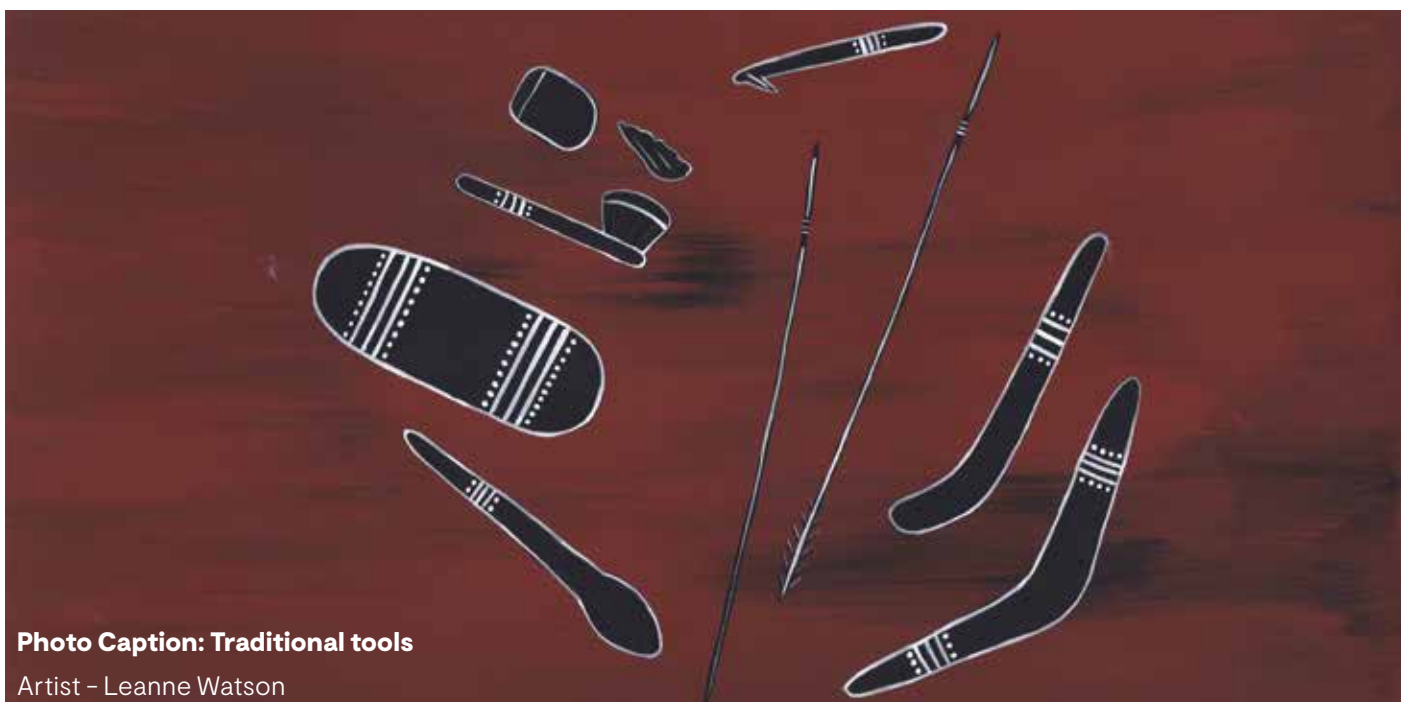


Photo Caption: Traditional tools
Artist – Leanne Watson

06 Next steps

Photo Caption: Eucalyptus Tree
Source - Leanne Watson

To assist tenderers with applying this document in culturally appropriate ways, that adhere to the protocols outlined in section 4, we recommend the following next steps:

- Read and **take inspiration from this document** in relation to design, sustainability, cultural heritage and all elements of your project.
- **Attend the design interactive**, where you will hear directly from the Connecting with Country Working Group about Country, its value, and the importance of Connecting with Ngura (Country).
- **Read the Draft Connecting with Country framework** to understand the requirements Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport will need to meet as a pilot project.
- **Watch the pre-recorded information from the Working Group** that explains the themes of each station and the line-wide theme in greater detail. This will be available in November.
- **Utilise the mood boards** and consider how these might be used to inform your design.
- Reflect on how your tender response and design can **honour what you have learned about Country and culture** in this area.
- Detail how you plan to **collaborate with the Connecting with Country Working Group** over the course of the delivery of your project.
- **Undertake cultural awareness/competency training** for all team members working on the tender.
- Nominate an Aboriginal person or recognised Aboriginal business to attend discussions with the Working Group and to lead the Connect with Country response for your tender, and **engage Aboriginal professionals as part of your response team**.
- **Undertake independent research** into history of Western Sydney and Dharug people (e.g. People of the River by Grace Karskens).
- Read and apply ***Cultural Principles and Protocols for Designers: for Projects and Curricula involving Indigenous Peoples, Communities and Materials*** by Dr Danièle Hromek and Dr Terri Janke.



Mood board image references:

1. na. (nd). Australian Aboriginal Carrying Vessels – Paperbark Coolamon [Photograph]. Joy of Museums <https://joyofmuseums.com/museums/australasia-museums/australian-museums/museums-of-sydney/australian-museum/coolamons-aboriginal-carrying-vessel/>
2. na (nd). Collamon [Photograph]. The Worimi Conservation Lands <https://worimiconservationlands.com/the-worimi-warrimay-have-always-been-and-remain-today-the-traditional-custodians-of-a-large-area-of-land-the-worimi-nation-oral-history-passed-down-by-the-elders-record-that-the-w/>
3. Munro. L (nd). Muraay Bin.guwi (Sulphur-crested Cockatoo Coolamon) [Photograph]. Koskela <https://koskela.com.au/products/ynarr-maramali-gomerioi-dhigaraagal-exhibition-muraay-bin-guwi-sulphur-crested-cockatoo-coolamon-by-lorelle-munro-ynarr-maramali-sustainable-paper-raffia-36-x-16cm>
4. Palmer. A,B (2013). Aboriginal Coolamon [Photograph]. Arthur Beau Palmer <https://www.arthurbeaupalmer.com/cms/gallery/master-pieces/15-consultant-investment-fine-and-tribal-art/master-pieces/161-aboriginal-coolamon>
5. Watson. L (nd). Gulamon [Photograph]
6. Watson. L (nd). Information signage [Photograph]
7. Watson. L (nd). River [Photograph]
8. Payne. D (2014). Bark canoe [Photograph]. Australian National Maritime Museum <https://www.sea.museum/2014/05/26/bark-canoe-building-at-bents-basin-a-npws-sydney-aboriginal-community-cultural-gathering>
9. Watson. L (nd). Sandy riverbed [Photograph]
10. Watson. L (nd). Gathering water with a Gulamon/gulumon [Photograph]
11. Watson. L (nd). Gathering water with a Gulamon/gulumon 2 [Photograph]
12. Wilkins. E (nd). Cultural burning [Photograph]
13. Wilkins. E (nd). Fire stick [Photograph]. The Firestick was made by Rob Anders, a Trawlulwuy man from Tebrakunna Country in North East Tasmania. This Firestick was carried up gifted to the Darug women for use in one of our cultural burns on Darug Country.
14. Watson. L (nd). Ash fire pit [Photograph]
15. Watson. L (nd). The colours of fire [Painting]
16. Davidson. E (nd). Fire Gulamon/gulumon [Photograph]
17. Wilkins. E (nd). Fire in stone pit [Photograph]
18. Watson. L (nd). Artifacts 130E 179N NE [Photograph]
19. Watson. L (nd). Artifact 130E 180N SW [Photograph]
20. Watson. L (nd). Unsorted Artifacts [Photograph]
21. Watson. L (nd). Artifacts (2) 130E 179N NE [Photograph]
22. Watson. L (nd). Artifacts display [Photograph]
23. Laws. C, & Holland. J (2021). gura gumul Ngura (to warm friend camp from Dawes, Collins & Matthews The Sydney Language Jakelin Troy) [Digital artwork]
24. Laws. C, & Holland. J (2021). mulla gamay (man spear from Collins The Sydney Language Jakelin Troy) [Digital artwork]
25. Watson. L (nd). Sky above Western Sydney [Photograph]
26. Holland. J (2021). Bird silhouettes [Digital artwork]
27. Watson. L (nd) Emu in Sky [Painting]
28. Davidson. E (2020). Western Sydney bushland [Photograph]
29. na (nd). Walking track interpretive signage – Nitmiluk [Photograph]. The Interpretive Design Company <https://interpretivedesign.com.au/portfolio/interpretive-projects/walking-track-interpretive-signage/>
30. na (nd) Kangaroo statue, Perth, Western Australia [Photograph]. Notes from Camelid Country https://notesfromcamelidcountry.net/2017/02/11/perth-the-worlds-most-isolated-city/img_1116/
31. Watson. L (nd). Eucalyptus tree [Photograph]
32. Watson. L (nd). Gathering [Painting]
33. Wilkins. E (nd). Women holding Gulamon/gulumon [Photograph]
34. Watson. L (nd). Healing Country [Painting]
35. Laws. C (nd). Durali [Painting]
36. Watson. L (nd). Brolgas [Painting]

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Printed Date	0/00/0000 0:00:00 AM
Last Saved Date	17 November 2021 6:33 PM
File Name	\\ghdnet\ghd\AU\Sydney\Projects\21\12537512\Tech\Design\Connecting with Country Report\12537512_Connecting with Ngura (Country)_Sydney Metro_Rev1.pdf
Author	C. Webb, C. Sullivan, E. Davidson, B. Arnold, M. Mossman
Project Manager	Chloe Sullivan
Client Name	Sydney Metro
Project Name	Sydney Metro Aboriginal Engagement Advisor
Document Name	Connecting with Country Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport
Document Version	Rev 1
Project Number	12537521

Document Status

Status code	Revision	Author	Reviewer		Approved for Issue		
			Name	Signature	Name	Signature	Date
S4	1	C. Webb C. Sullivan E. Davidson B. Arnold M. Mossman	L. Harding		L. Harding		17.11.21

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