

NSW Department of Planning and Environment

Community Consultation and Outcomes Report

Coffs Jetty Revitalisation Draft Masterplan

August 2022

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Country and pay respects to the Gumbaynggirr people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and waters on which the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore is situated and connected to via a broader cultural landscape.

We recognise their continued connection to Country and that this connection can be seen through stories of place and cultural practices such as art, songs, dances, storytelling and caring for the natural and cultural landscape of the area.

We also recognise the continuing living culture of First Nations people, and the significance of the Gumbaynggirr Nation in that living culture. We recognise the contemporary stories of displacement and the cultural significance of Coffs Harbour in the continued journey of self-determination in Australia.

We acknowledge all the people who have and will contribute their stories of the Gumbaynggirr Nation and their connection to this place.

We recognise the importance of telling the First story, first. All other stories of place come from and are woven into the First Story.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	1
1 Introduction	1
2 Community Consultation Process	2
2.1 Summary of community engagement processes	4
Phase One – Input into the development of the Jetty Foreshore Draft Masterplan	4
Phase Two – Feedback on the Draft Masterplan	5
2.2 Participant feedback on the community consultation process	9
3 Key Findings Informing the Draft Masterplan	10
3.1 Sites of significance	10
3.1.1 Giidany Miirlarl – Moon Sacred Place	11
3.1.2 Gidding Mirreh – Shiny Rock.....	12
3.1.3 Happy Valley	12
3.1.4 Foreshore between Happy Valley and Dung Hill.....	13
3.1.5 Dung Hill.....	13
3.1.6 Fergusons Cottage	14
3.1.7 Archaeological Sites	15
3.1.8 Unnamed Sacred Site	15
3.1.9 Former Deep Sea Fishing Club site	15
3.1.10 Bunyun Miirlarl – Red Browed Finch Place.....	16
3.1.11 Gularrgan Miirlarl (Lobster Place).....	16
3.2 Guiding Principles for Development of the Precinct	17
3.2.1 Do no harm and undo past harm	17
3.2.2 Respect and forefront Gumbaynggirr Country, heritage and culture	18
3.2.3 Co-design with Aboriginal people	18
3.2.4 Principles of Place.....	19
4 Community Feedback on the Draft Masterplan	21
4.1 Community responses to the Draft Masterplan.....	21
4.2 Long term outcomes	24
Outcome 1 Repatriation of Gumbaynggirr Country	24
Outcome 2 Servicing Fergusons Cottage and Happy Valley	26
Outcome 3 Inclusivity, recognition, and celebration of Gumbaynggirr Country and Culture	26
5 Conclusion.....	29
Appendices.....	30
A. Stakeholder Contact list	30
B. Abbreviations.....	30
C. Glossary.....	30

1 Introduction

Property and Development NSW (PDNSW), on behalf of the NSW Government, is progressing a community-led masterplan to activate the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct ("the Project") that can be meaningfully delivered over short, medium, and long-term horizons.

The Coffs Jetty Foreshore Revitalisation is an opportunity to create a vibrant and thriving foreshore precinct that is enhanced and activated for the benefit of the community, while maintaining the cultural and neighbourhood qualities the Coffs Harbour community value. The Project aims to facilitate the improvement of connections between the waterfront and the rest of Coffs Harbour, provide additional land uses and deliver improvements to the public domain, while stimulating job growth and economic activity in line with strategic drivers.

The Precinct is an area of approximately 63 hectares. It is situated on Gumbaynggirr Country. Gumbaynggirr Country encompasses an area of about 6,000 km² on the Mid North Coast from the Nambucca River to as far north as the Clarence River (Grafton), and eastward to the Pacific Coast. Gumbaynggirr Country is home to the largest midden-shell deposit in the Southern Hemisphere and many sites of Aboriginal cultural and historical significance. The Country on which the Precinct is located is known to be an area that is particularly dense with sites of significance for the Gumbaynggirr people. In line with the standards and principles enunciated in the NSW Government Architect's *Draft Connecting with Country Framework*¹, close consultation with the Aboriginal community was identified by PDNSW and lead consultant McGregor Coxall as a critical dimension of the Masterplan development process.

In 2021 McGregor Coxall engaged Murawin to design and deliver an Aboriginal engagement strategy over the second half of 2021 to inform the development of the draft masterplan. The aim of the process was to ensure the draft masterplan was responsive to Aboriginal knowledge about and priorities for Country on which the Precinct is located. This included capturing the Aboriginal community's response to the draft Vision, Place Principles and Big Ideas that had been proposed to guide the draft masterplan; identification of Sites of Significance and their implications for development within the Precinct; identification of principles for development informed by Aboriginal priorities and value systems; and any other feedback or suggestions. PDNSW engaged Murawin to undertake a second phase of Aboriginal community engagement in May/June 2022. The purpose of this was to capture Aboriginal community responses to the draft masterplan during its six-week formal public consultation process. Murawin was also asked to work with the community to identify any key outcomes the Aboriginal community would like the revitalisation of the Jetty Foreshore area to deliver.

Murawin has worked alongside PDNSW and McGregor Coxall throughout the Project's draft master planning process to ensure engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders has been best-practice, meaningful, inclusive, and respectful. The extensive and rigorous Aboriginal engagement process undertaken has highlighted that Country within the Precinct is rich with memories, stories, spiritual meaning, ceremonial importance, ecology

¹ Government Architect NSW, *Draft Connecting with Country*, NSW Government, 2020 viewed 10 June 2022. <https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/ga/media/files/ga/discussion-papers/draft-connecting-with-country-framework-2020-11-12.pdf> Department of Planning and



and songlines. It covers several inter-connected sites of both spiritual and historical significance to the Gumbaynggirr people. Given the significance of the Jetty Foreshore and surrounds; the long history of displacement and disempowerment of the Gumbaynggirr people on their own Country; and the repeated desecration and disruption of Country in this place since colonisation; the Aboriginal community hopes that any plans for the Precinct going forward will create opportunities for Gumbaynggirr people; take into consideration their values and priorities; deliver reparations in some form; and enable caring for and healing of Country in this place.

It is important to the community that plans to revitalise the Jetty Foreshore do not reduce Gumbaynggirr access to Country in order to deliver material benefits primarily to an elite few in the broader Australian community. On the contrary, they view this project as an opportunity to make good some of the harms of the past, whether it be through active regeneration of Sacred Sites, improvements to sites of significance or ensuring that clear benefits flow to the local Aboriginal community from it.

This report has been prepared by Murawin to comprehensively document:

- the Aboriginal community consultation process to date
- the key findings and outcomes of that process, including the Sites of Significance and Principles of Development that the community identified for the masterplan design team to take into consideration in developing the draft masterplan
- the responses of Aboriginal stakeholders to the draft masterplan, including their levels of support or objection to the various proposed features of the draft masterplan within each of its four proposed precincts
- the priority outcomes and benefits Aboriginal stakeholders would like the Jetty Foreshore area to deliver to the Aboriginal communities on Gumbaynggirr Country.

It is important to note that the Aboriginal community members consulted emphasised that they could not speak for the community and spoke only for themselves. This report should be read as representing only the views of those members of the Aboriginal community who were directly consulted by Murawin.

The report will follow this structure and order of information. It begins in the next section with an outline and explanation of the Aboriginal Community Engagement Process that has been undertaken to date by Murawin.

**The Coffs Harbour
Jetty Foreshore is
like the heart of
Gumbaynggirr
Country in the sense
that it is an epicentre
of connections**

Cultural Knowledge Holder, Coffs Harbour, September 2021



Phase One consultations – individual interviews and yarning circles.
Image source: Murawin Pty Ltd.


2 Community Consultation Process

This section outlines the Aboriginal community engagement process undertaken by Murawin. All Murawin's community engagement work is designed to facilitate productive working relationships with Aboriginal communities through the creation of frameworks for genuine participation. Our engagement approach is guided by Aboriginal informed protocols for engagement in relation to Place-Making projects that are articulated in documents such as:

- The Australian Indigenous Design Charter: Communication Design Protocols
- Create NSW's Aboriginal Cultural Protocols for the Arts
- The NSW Government Architect's Designing with Country Discussion Paper
- The NSW Government Architect's Draft Connecting with Country Framework

Murawin's engagement approach emphasises:

- Indigenous led design that draws on local knowledge and recognises local culture in its historical and current living form
- Respectful and reciprocal relationships from deep listening
- Avoidance of tokenism – genuine reciprocity includes addressing issues put forward by Aboriginal people as well as investment in local Aboriginal communities
- Recognition that Aboriginal ways of knowing, doing and being have social, economic and ecological value in place making and precinct development
- Recognition that Aboriginal people have an obligation to custodianship of the land and of the importance of designing places that enable that connection
- Truth-telling – telling the whole story of place



Murawin has worked closely and collaboratively with PDNSW, McGregor Coxall and members of the Aboriginal Community living on Gumbaynggirr Country to create a culturally safe, respectful, and meaningful community engagement process that centres Country and Aboriginal ways of knowing, doing and being.

Central to Murawin's approach is that a significant part of our work occurs outside of the formal engagement spaces. Prior to the commencement of the formal community consultation process, Murawin networked extensively with the Aboriginal community, particularly those in Coffs Harbour, to identify those individuals recognised by that community as the appropriate people to speak for Country and community – those identified included Cultural Knowledge Holders, Traditional Owners and Custodians and other key community representatives. Murawin made efforts to connect with the people identified through the networking process well in advance of the formal consultations. This was to show respect, build relationships and ensure participants were well informed about the purpose of the consultation spaces to which they were being invited.

Murawin then worked to ensure that as many of these community members as possible had access to and were comfortable to participate in the process. This was achieved by arranging interview and yarning spaces that were flexible and responsive to the diverse needs and preferences of community members. In the first round of consultations participants met one-on-one and in small groups with the Murawin team at the location of their choice – including on Country within the Precinct, in their homes, in cafes and in their places of work. Some participants engaged with the process over the phone, in online meeting spaces and via email. Cultural safety was facilitated by the presence of experienced Aboriginal Cultural Advisors and Facilitators in all spaces.

Meaningful and effective community consultation is best achieved by the provision of multiple and repeated community engagement spaces. The provision of multiple spaces maximises opportunities for participants to engage; to consult family and community members outside of the formal spaces; to build trust and strong collaborative relationships with design teams leading to stronger communication and better outcomes; and for feedback to participants as to how the information they have provided is being used. The latter is a critical and often overlooked dimension of reciprocity, respect and trust-building. Murawin has facilitated formal consultation spaces at five different points in the draft masterplan development and feedback process (detailed in Table 1 below). The Murawin team has also been available by phone and email to all participants throughout the Aboriginal community engagement process.

Also central to Murawin's approach is ensuring that the community engagement process is a responsive and evolving process. Networking continued throughout all phases of the engagement process to ensure that as many members of the community as possible were reached and had the opportunity to participate in the process. Feedback from participants informed and shaped the process throughout.

2.1 Summary of community engagement processes

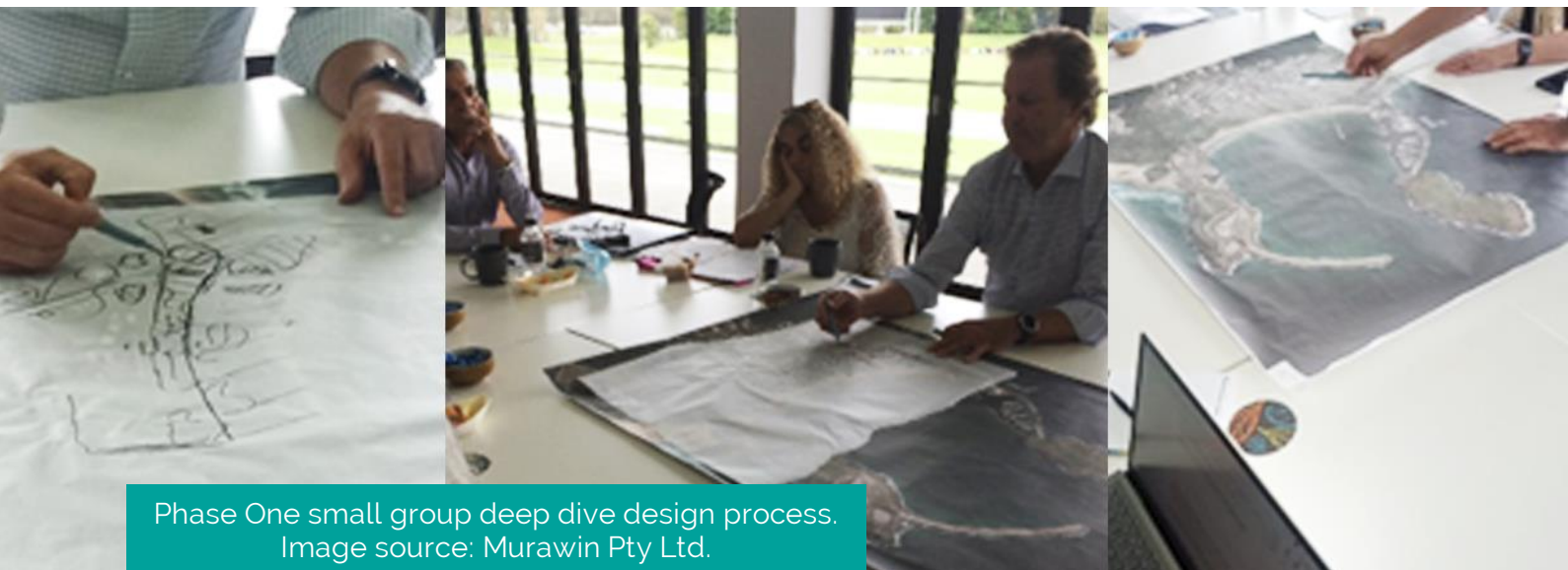
The community consultation process consisted of two phases. Phase One was designed to inform the preparation of the draft masterplan so that it could be responsive to Aboriginal knowledge of Country and Aboriginal community member's aspirations, values and priorities for community and Country. The focus of Phase Two was on capturing feedback from the Aboriginal community on the draft masterplan once it was released and on identifying key outcomes the Aboriginal community would like to see the Project deliver for the Aboriginal population.

Phase One - Input into the development of the Jetty Foreshore Draft Masterplan

During Phase One, Murawin facilitated rigorous community engagement to ensure the local Aboriginal community was able to provide input into the design and development of the draft masterplan. From September to December 2021 Murawin facilitated one on one interviews: face-to-face, online and by phone; small group deep dive design workshops and follow up briefings. 29 Aboriginal community members from the Coffs Harbour region participated in these spaces. Murawin also met with several Aboriginal led organisations including the Galambila Health Service, the Wanggaan (Southern) Gumbaynggirr Nation Aboriginal Corporation, the Yarrowarra Cultural Centre, and representatives of the Coffs Harbour & District Local Aboriginal Land Council (CH&D LALC).

Participants were generous with their time, knowledge and ideas. The rich information they shared helped PDNSW and McGregor Coxall to better understand:

- Sites of significance and their implications for planning and development of the Jetty Foreshore.
- Aboriginal aspirations for the Jetty Foreshore area.
- Caring for Country opportunities.
- How to ensure ongoing Aboriginal involvement throughout the life of the project.
- How the Project can deliver value and reparations to Country and to the Aboriginal community.
- Innovative and creative design suggestions that embed Aboriginal presence, knowledge, symbolism, and perspectives in the built environment.



Phase One small group deep dive design process.
Image source: Murawin Pty Ltd.

Phase Two - Feedback on the Draft Masterplan

The aim of Phase Two of the community engagement process was to ensure key Aboriginal stakeholders, Elders, and Knowledge Holders were fully informed about the contents of the draft masterplan; to obtain their feedback on it; and to identify the key outcomes they would like the Project to deliver for the Aboriginal community. This phase was timed to align with the draft masterplan public exhibition and consultation process from May-June 2022. Two deep dive Yarning Circles were facilitated in which the draft masterplan was presented directly to key Aboriginal stakeholders by PDNSW and discussed with them. A whole of community drop in space was also organised to ensure that all community members would have the opportunity to have the draft masterplan explained and to have their say in a culturally safe space. This took the form of a community BBQ at which the draft masterplan model was on display and PDNSW representatives were present to answer questions and receive feedback. In total 23 community members participated in these spaces.

The broader public consultation process on the draft masterplan included an online survey. Originally the Phase Two community engagement strategy had included efforts by Murawin to promote this online survey within the Aboriginal community and to support individuals to complete it. This was not pursued in response to feedback from some individuals early in Phase Two that quantitative research methods can sometimes be experienced by the community as culturally inappropriate. They emphasised that meaningful consultation is best achieved through engaging with key stakeholders such as Elders, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Knowledge Holders through Yarning Circles and one on one in depth conversations. Surveys can also unintentionally undermine cultural processes. This advice was accepted, and the facilitators ceased encouraging participation in the online survey. Accordingly, the feedback on the draft masterplan documented in the community consultation spaces is more qualitative in nature.

Participants in these spaces were once again generous with their time and knowledge and feedback on the draft masterplan was obtained (see Section 4) along with some clearly identified key outcomes the community would like the Project to deliver to the Aboriginal Community. Participants also expressed strong support for ongoing community consultation for the duration of the Project and gave guidance as to how they would like this to proceed.

In total, across Phase One and Phase Two of the community engagement process, direct contact was attempted with 79 individuals. Many more were advised of community engagement opportunities through the distribution of flyers and word of mouth. A total of 49 community members participated in the consultation spaces provided. Several participated in multiple spaces. A full list of community members contacted directly is provided in Appendix A. This appendix is not embedded in the document for reasons of confidentiality.

An 'at a glance' summary of the Aboriginal Community Engagement process is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Aboriginal Community Engagement Process

Stages	Purpose	What we did	Outcome
Phase One			
Stage One Aug 2021	Develop an understanding of the Gumbaynggirr Country and local Aboriginal Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the submissions from the Aboriginal participants in the Ethos Urban community consultations in early 2021 Desktop research of Gumbaynggirr Country, Coffs Harbour's Aboriginal community, known Traditional Custodians, Knowledge Holders, and Stories of Place to understand the local context and Gumbaynggirr Country Preliminary identification of Traditional Custodians, Knowledge Holders, Aboriginal community representatives and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations 	<p>Preliminary insights gleaned as to Aboriginal community attitudes to the Project</p> <p>Preliminary cultural mapping of Gumbaynggirr Country</p> <p>Initial stakeholder list developed</p>
Stage Two Aug – Sept 2021	<p>Informal introduction of the Project to the Community</p> <p>Relationship building</p> <p>Further networking to identify key stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacted stakeholder list by phone and email to inform them of the Project, identify additional key contacts and invite them to engage in the community consultation process Distributed flyers with Project information to the general community Adopted a snowballing sampling method to ensure appropriate community members were contacted 	<p>Key stakeholders in the community informed of upcoming Community Engagement activities</p> <p>Stakeholder list expanded</p>
Stage Three: Sept – Oct 2021	Initial community consultations to inform the community about the Project; identify Sites of Significance and how they should be respected; identify key considerations for the development of the draft masterplan; and obtain feedback on the draft Vision, Place Principles and Big Ideas	<p>Initial community consultations undertaken with key stakeholders in the local Aboriginal community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four days of face-to-face semi-structured individual and small group interviews on Country Phone interviews Online (Teams) interviews Email correspondence. Presentations to organisations 	<p>Interviews with 26 individuals</p> <p>Presentations to four organisations</p> <p>Key Sites of Significance identified and mapped, guidance on appropriate development on and around these sites documented</p> <p>Community feedback on the draft Vision, Place Principles and Big Ideas, and key concerns and priorities for the Project captured</p> <p>Interim report provided to PDNSW and McGregor Coxall</p>

Stage Four Nov 2021	<p>Deep dive direct conversation between design team and Aboriginal community members to clarify community priorities to be considered in and delivered by the draft masterplan and to clarify information gleaned from Stage Three consultations</p>	<p>Deep dive small group design workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two x small group Yarning Circles with PDNSW, McGregor Coxall and key community members • One on one meetings to brief and consult those who could not attend Yarning Circles due to COVID restrictions 	<p>Deep dive direct conversations had with 16 community members</p> <p>Direct relationships and trust built between Aboriginal community members, PDNSW and McGregor Coxall</p> <p>Information from Stage 3 interviews confirmed and enriched</p> <p>Clarification of Aboriginal community priorities and concerns relating to the Project</p> <p>Clarification of the implications of the Sites of Significance for the development of the draft masterplan</p> <p>Deeper understanding by the Aboriginal community members of the Project and draft masterplanning process</p>
Stage Five Dec 2021	<p>Update small group participants from Stage 4 consultations on how their advice was informing the Masterplan development and consult on issues arising</p>	<p>One x small group briefing and yarning circle with PDNSW, McGregor Coxall and participants from Stage Four consultations</p>	<p>Eight community members updated and consulted about the progress of the draft masterplan</p> <p>Interim Report for Stages Four and Five provided to PDNSW and McGregor Coxall</p>
Phase Two			
Stage One April 2022	<p>Re-engage with local community, inform them the draft masterplan had been released, advise of upcoming community consultations on the draft masterplan and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacted full stakeholder list by phone, email and word of mouth • Flyers sent out through Aboriginal community and organisational networks promoting community consultation spaces 	<p>Community informed of upcoming consultations</p> <p>Community feedback process finalised</p> <p>Further key contacts identified</p>

	consult re best approach to obtain community feedback on draft masterplan		
Stage Two May-June 2022	Document community feedback on the draft masterplan; identify priority outcomes for the community from the Project	<p>Community feedback spaces on the draft masterplan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two x small group deep dive Yarning Circles with key community members and PDNSW • One x community BBQ organised as a 'whole of community' drop in and feedback opportunity where any member of the community could view the model, have the draft masterplan explained and discuss it directly with PDNSW staff in a culturally safe space 	<p>draft masterplan explained to 22 community members by the PDNSW and their questions and concerns discussed</p> <p>Feedback on draft masterplan documented</p> <p>Community members present achieve a comprehensive understanding of the draft masterplan</p> <p>Interim report provided to PDNSW</p>
Stage Three	Prepare final report on the full community engagement process and confirm findings are accurate and endorsed by Aboriginal community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive report prepared on the process, findings and outcomes of Phases One and Two to inform the draft masterplan process going forward • Draft report sent to community members who participated in the engagement spaces for their review • Two days of face-to-face individual and small group feedback sessions on the Draft Report • Phone and email feedback obtained from community members unable to attend the face-to-face sessions • Draft report amended in line with feedback and finalised 	<p>Comprehensive report on the process, findings and outcomes of the full Aboriginal community engagement process endorsed by 10 participants in the consultation processes. Participants were explicit that this endorsement was on behalf of themselves personally and not the Aboriginal community as a whole. The tight turnaround meant that not all participants in the process could be reached and others were unwilling to endorse the report without the opportunity to consider the report as a large group but expressed no personal objections to its content</p> <p>Report finalised and delivered to PDNSW</p>

2.2 Participant feedback on the community consultation process

The community response to the engagement process has been positive. Throughout the multiple consultation spaces participants spontaneously made observations to the effect that they felt culturally safe, listened to and heard, and that the process felt genuine. This is a testament to the design and facilitation of the community consultation process and to the cultural competence of the PDNSW and McGregor Coxall staff involved. One participant contrasted it favourably with their previous experiences in a long history of participating in Government and industry consultation spaces. Another commented that they appreciated the collaborative nature of the process. They recommended that it be implemented as standard across all forms of Government engagement with Aboriginal communities.

"It has been a refreshing experience"

"This is the first time I've ever really felt listened to in a government consultation"²²

Consultation fatigue is a common phenomenon in Aboriginal communities as they are often the focus of a disproportionate number of research and other consultation processes. As a result, Aboriginal people can have limited patience for processes they perceive to be a tick a box exercise, insincere or unlikely to deliver outcomes. It is noteworthy therefore that a significant proportion of participants gave their time and knowledge to multiple stages of this process. Others who were unable to participate in a particular space sought workarounds to stay connected to the process – such as remote dial-in or personal briefings outside of the formal spaces. Some contacted Murawin between stages to share additional information or to inquire as to the progress of the process. All of this is a further testament to the process being experienced as genuine and productive by several of the Aboriginal community members involved. It is also indicative of the importance of the Project to the Aboriginal community and of their concern and deep care for Country that will be impacted by it.

As with any community consultation process, there are many stories of place that remain to be told and that not all community members could be reached. Community members emphasised that they do not speak for the community, only for themselves. They confirmed, however, that the majority of the key Aboriginal stakeholders for this community have been contacted as part of this community engagement process and that the key stories of Country and Aboriginal aspirations pertinent to this stage of the development of the draft masterplan have been captured. The findings from the community consultation processes are outlined in the next section.

²² All unattributed quotes highlighted in colour in this document are direct quotes from participants in the Aboriginal Community Engagement process.

3 Key Findings Informing the Draft Masterplan

The overarching purpose of Phase One of the Aboriginal Engagement process was to ensure Aboriginal knowledge of Country, values and aspirations informed the draft masterplan. The initial individual and small group interview process in Stage Three of the community engagement process identified multiple Sites of Significance within the Precinct. Participants located these sites broadly on a map provided; explained their significance and gave suggestions of ways in which they can appropriately be recognised and respected in any plans developed for the Precinct. The guidance provided included some direction as to appropriate restrictions on development on or around those sites. The small group co-design workshops and briefings in Stages Four and Five of the process were an opportunity to do a deeper dive on this information. Information shared in these spaces both confirmed the significance of these sites and deepened the Design Team's understanding of these sites and of their implications for the design of the Precinct.

A second aspect of the guidance provided was that of high-level guiding principles for the development of the Precinct. Participants clearly and consistently articulated principles they wanted the draft masterplan to be guided by, that are reflective of Aboriginal values and priorities for Country and Community and of their cultural obligations to care for Country. They are reported here, together with feedback on how the six Principles of Place articulated in the draft masterplan could be interpreted and applied from Aboriginal perspectives.

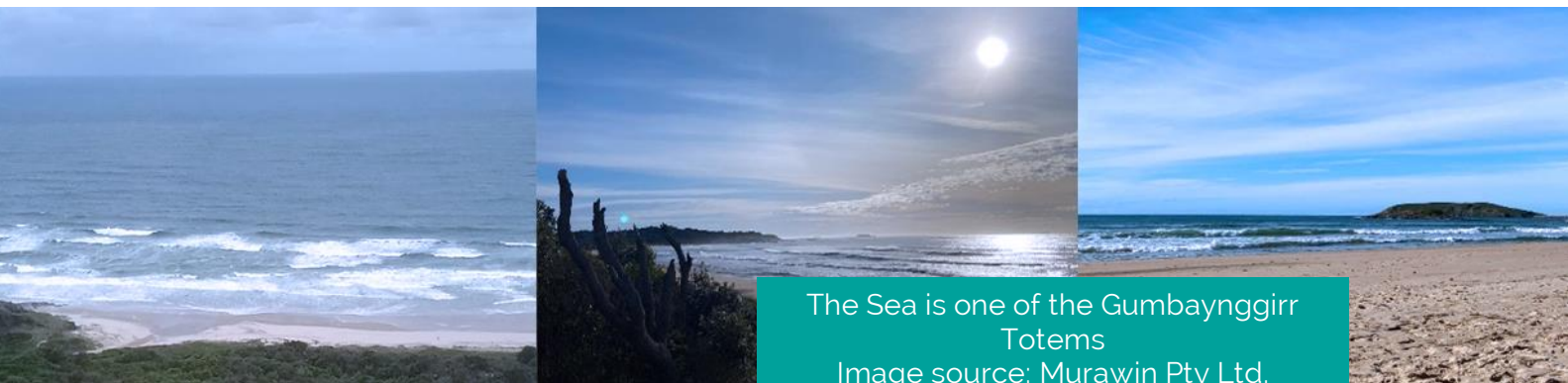
The first part of this section reports the Sites of Significance and their implications for the development of the Masterplan. The second part of this section reports the key guiding principles the Aboriginal participants would like to inform the design process more broadly.

3.1 Sites of significance

Country on which the Precinct is located is dense with sites of spiritual and historical significance to the Gumbaynggirr people. One Gumbaynggirr man described it as '*an epicentre of connections on Gumbaynggirr Country*'. It is important to acknowledge that although Sites of Significance may be identified with a particular physical location, their significance is also often bound up in far reaching and complex connections with Country beyond that immediate place. Country is interconnected. It encompasses the lands, waterways and seas. The Aboriginal community asks that the interconnected nature of Country be taken into consideration in understanding the implications of the Sites of Significance outlined here.

"Think of Country like a body – it can't be broken up."

The Aboriginal community explained that the value placed on the Sites of Significance needs to take into account the broader context of a long history of cumulative loss from historical developments on and around the Precinct that have preceded this most recent draft masterplan. Accordingly, the participants emphasised that what now remains warrants the maximum respect and protection.



The participants in the consultation process emphasised that they could not speak for community members who were not present. Even so, a broad consensus emerged in relation to the key Sites of Significance in and around the Precinct that the Aboriginal community members wanted to be taken into consideration.

There are deep history stories of place (Dreamtime story, Sacred Sites, creation of the ocean – one of the Gumbaynggirr totems) and the more recent stories of place arising from colonisation (Aboriginal people camping along the train lines, Happy Valley, Ferguson's Cottage, and the desecration of Sacred Sites). The Sites of Significance arising from these stories of place are described here in sequence on a journey from the northern tip of the Foreshore - Giidany Miirlarl (more commonly known as Mutton Bird Island), along and around the coastline to South Coffs Island off Corambirra Point, home to the Sacred Site Bunyun Miirlarl, and referred to by some as the Old Quarry Site.

3.1.1 Giidany Miirlarl – Moon Sacred Place

More commonly known as Mutton Bird Island, the whole of this island is a sacred site. It has been identified as the site of Moon Story and also the story of the Goanna Sisters – which is linked to the caves on the island.

“When the tribe was here on the beach way back there were two sisters [who were] promised to the old guys. The sisters would not marry them, so the sisters were banished out to the Mutton Bird Island. They passed away there. When the sun goes down you can see their faces in the caves.”

The island is a spiritually potent place and there is widespread consensus that this area should be preserved in its current state. As a sacred site it would ideally not be walked on. Many participants requested that this spiritual law be treated like past approaches to climbing Uluru. Namely, that signage be provided that invites visitors to consider and respect its sacred status by not walking on it. People did not ask for visitors to be banned from walking on the site but did ask for them to be given an informed choice. Respect for this sacred site is a current spiritual practice for many in the Gumbaynggirr community with several indicating that they and their families do not walk on the island. At a minimum, it is requested that visitors to the island are required to stay on the walking track to avoid further desecration of this Sacred Site.



Mutton Bird Island.
Image source: Murawin Pty Ltd.

3.1.2 Gidding Mirreh – Shiny Rock


Gidding Mirreh, also known as Shiny Rock or Moon Rock, is connected to the Moon Story of Giddany Miirlarl. There is some uncertainty about the location of Gidding Mirreh. It is associated by some with the shallow rocks on the northern side of the causeway near the Fisherman's Co-op that have now been partially buried by that causeway. Others locate it as near the constructed boat ramp on inside the south side of the bay. A factor in this uncertainty is that it can no longer be seen having been partially covered and submerged by works associated with the building of the causeway or the boat ramp. Gidding Mirreh means Big Moon or 'The place where the big moon rises from the sea'. Before it was buried by development, it was the site of an optical illusion whereby the moon appeared to be rising out of the sea close to shore. This site was identified by community members as an education opportunity and point of interest with suggestions the site be marked by signage and sculptures that tell the story of this place. There is little objection to development along the causeway because it is man-made.

3.1.3 Happy Valley

Happy Valley sits just outside the boundary of the northwest corner of the Precinct, to the north of the Jetty Foreshore Parkland sector in the draft masterplan. This is a site of immense historical and personal significance to the Gumbaynggirr people. Without exception it was identified as a place that must be protected in any design process.

"Keep in mind the cultural integrity of Happy Valley and talk to the community."

Happy Valley is currently owned under Crown Land and managed by the Coffs Harbour & District (CH&D) LALC. It is subject to a land claim by the CH&D LALC. Aboriginal people have lived there for many generations, and it is a site of unbroken and ongoing connection to Country in this intensely urbanised area. Pre-colonisation, Aboriginal people camped here for many thousands of years. Post-colonisation it was a campsite for Aboriginal people who had been displaced from their land. Many families were ultimately forced to relocate to public housing. In the early 1980s/90s dwellings were constructed to house Aboriginal people still living in Happy Valley. Two cabins remain and Happy Valley continues to be home to both housed and unhoused Aboriginal residents. The construction of these cabins was intended to be a temporary solution to the falling down huts that were rapidly becoming uninhabitable. The current structures and facilities on the site have been identified as inadequate. Accordingly, there is opportunity for this accommodation to be upgraded and better serviced for the benefit of its current residents. The community requests that any changes to Happy Valley, even if intended solely to benefit its residents, be undertaken in close collaboration with the current residents and with their full consent.



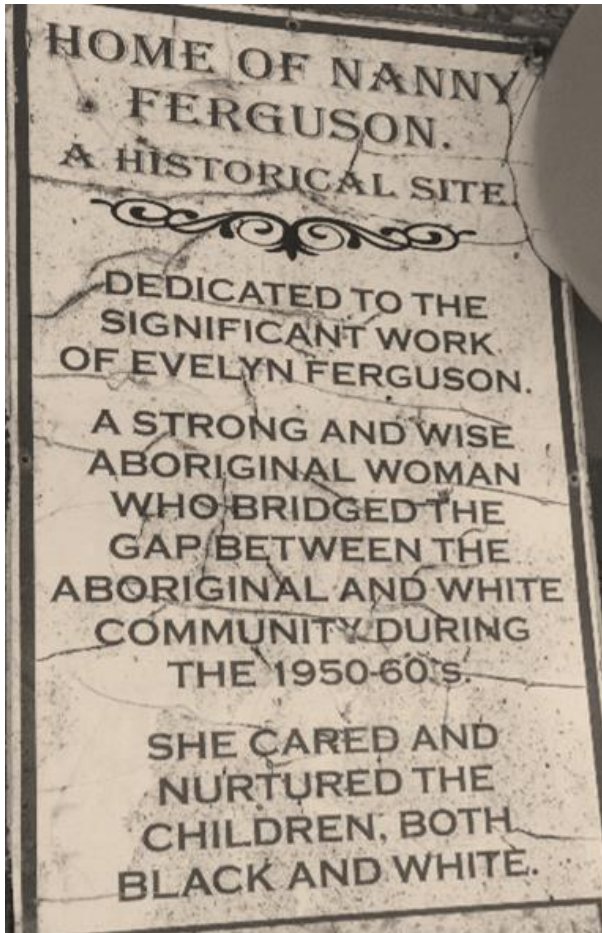
Many members of the Aboriginal community either grew up in or had family that grew up in Happy Valley. It is a place associated with strong and fond memories. Without exception all those consulted emphasised that they want Happy Valley to remain untouched, and the privacy and amenity of its current residents to be protected. The location of Happy Valley on the boundary of the Precinct has implications for how this edge of the Precinct is used. Participants indicated that respect can be shown by minimising thoroughfare through this area. Some suggested that a green space buffer would be appropriate use of the land along this edge of the Precinct. They also indicated that high density development along this Precinct boundary would not be supported by the community. It is noted that development is not proposed along this boundary in the draft masterplan. The community would like the history and significance of this site to be honoured and its story told through appropriate signage.

3.1.4 Foreshore between Happy Valley and Dung Hill

Pre-colonisation, this stretch of land was likely a walking trail used by Aboriginal people as they travelled between campsites. The back section that contains the train lines that is currently fenced off does not contain sacred sites or other sites of significance. This area has been identified as the best space for any prospective development of the Jetty/Foreshore area and one that will have the least harmful impacts on Sites of Significance.

3.1.5 Dung Hill

Dung Hill is a natural bushland area stretching from the southwest corner of the Precinct up to Ferguson's Cottage. A section of it is owned by the CH&D LALC. It was identified as a special area of connection and community, where Aboriginal people once lived, continue to live and ideally will be left to live in peace. The community has made it clear that they would like this area to be protected and left untouched. Songlines pass through this site up into the mountains. Some openness was expressed towards *temporary* land disturbance for the purpose of laying additional essential pipe infrastructure in line with existing pipe infrastructure through that site. In contrast, a road through this site was not considered acceptable. It is noted that no road is proposed through this site in the draft masterplan.



Plaque dedicated to Nanny Ferguson at the Fergusons Cottage.
Image source: Murawin Pty Ltd.

3.1.6 Fergusons Cottage

Ferguson's Cottage is located within the Corambirra Point precinct of the draft masterplan boundary. It lies to the west of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club Site.

Ferguson's Cottage is critically important both because of its history and because descendants of the Ferguson family still live there. Granny Evelyn Ferguson and her husband Andrew Ferguson relocated there when Aboriginal people were moved off the missions. It was the old quarry office and they obtained permission to live there when the quarry closed. Granny Ferguson made it a safe haven for children from all backgrounds throughout the 1960s and 70s. It was also a refuge for many Aboriginal people who were moved off the missions. It is an important place of connection and community. Many generations of Fergusons grew up there and still visit regularly. It is reported that Granny Ferguson refused to relinquish the site despite being offered significant sums of money for it.

The cottage is now heritage protected in honour of Nanny Ferguson's immense legacy in the community. It is subject to a lease agreement between the CH&D LALC and the NSW Government and to a land claim by the CH&D LALC.

The site is one of immense emotional and historical significance to the Aboriginal community and particularly to the families connected to this place. They have made it clear that they want this site to be left untouched. This does not preclude any development of the site, it just means that they would like any such development to be undertaken strictly in accordance with the wishes of the Aboriginal community and under their direction and control. This includes the green areas around it. Development in the immediate vicinity of this site would ideally be sensitive to its significance and be designed for minimal impact on this special place. This includes, for example, limiting the development of any imposing high-rise structures in the vicinity that could impact on the safety, privacy and amenity of the cottage and the people who live there. Although it is a site of historical significance, the Ferguson family have requested privacy and for the site to not become a public spectacle or thoroughfare. The Aboriginal community would welcome funding for improvements to the site in terms of structures, green spaces and connection of services, but as noted, any such works would ideally be undertaken in close collaboration with the Aboriginal families associated with this site and the CH&D LALC who are the leaseholders.



A Cultural Knowledge Holder points out Sites of Significance in the Precinct.
Image source: Murawin Pty Ltd.

3.1.7 Archaeological Sites

The stretch of land encompassing Dung Hill to the man-made causeway connecting Corambirra point to the Old Quarry Site, is an area rich with archaeological deposits. The Aboriginal community would like a thorough archaeological survey to be undertaken here before any development is undertaken in this area. There are the possibility of human remains in this area due to nearby burial grounds. The archaeological significance of this area has been identified as an education and awareness raising opportunity for the broader community that could be marked by signage.

3.1.8 Unnamed Sacred Site

There is an unnamed Sacred Site that falls partially within the Precinct on Corambirra Point. Its location was broadly identified as falling on the southside of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site and extending beyond the southern Precinct boundary. This Sacred Site is reported by some community members to be one of the most important Sacred Sites in the area. It is not appropriate to share further information with the public about this site. What needs to be understood is that it is important that the Aboriginal community does not want any development undertaken that encroaches on this site.

3.1.9 Former Deep Sea Fishing Club site

This site is located on Corambirra Point and backs onto a particularly sacred area (noted at point 3.1.8 above). It is embedded in a section of the Precinct that is dense with sites of great historical, spiritual, and emotional significance to the Aboriginal community. Many in the Aboriginal community have a long running association with the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site and feel very strongly that control of it should be handed to the Aboriginal community in some form. This is evidenced by the applications groups in the Aboriginal community have made to take over the lease of this site and the land claim that has been submitted in relation to it by the CH&D LALC. Everyone we spoke to said they wanted any future use of this site to involve the Aboriginal population and to forefront Gumbaynggirr culture. The community has put a lot of thought into how this site could be used by the Aboriginal community to deliver an Aboriginal led enterprise of value both to themselves and the broader Coffs Harbour community and its visitors. They have articulated many dreams for this site and the ways in which it could deliver outcomes for the Aboriginal community. Any decision to demolish the former Deep Sea Fishing Club and develop the site for private or commercial use without consideration for the Aboriginal community's vision for this site, is likely to be perceived as a rejection and disregard for what the Aboriginal community has repeatedly said matters to it.

3.1.10 Bunyun Miirlarl – Red Browed Finch Place

Bunyun Miirlarl or 'Red Browed Finch Place' is on the island to the east of Corambirra Point, sometimes referred to as the old quarry site. It is a Women's Site, birthing place, and a sacred place of healing – all of which are connected to the fresh spring that once flowed there prior to the desecration of the site by quarry activity. The use of the site as a Women's Sacred Site is a living cultural practice for Gumbaynggirr women today. It is a Red Browed Finch increase area. The island was once connected to the mainland by a sandbar revealed at low tide. It is now permanently connected by a constructed roadway. This Sacred Site is spiritually connected to the unnamed Sacred Site at Corambirra; Giidany Miirlarl (Mutton Bird Island) and to women's sites throughout the region. Songlines flow from it through Dung Hill and up into the mountains. There used to be burial caves in the area.

The community expressed considerable distress and ongoing grief about the harm the quarry activity has caused to Country here. They spoke extensively about creating space and opportunity for Country at this site to heal. The brightly painted rocks extending from the quarry are considered by some to be disrespectful. Nearly all participants reported that the site needs healing through both ceremony and regeneration. Some people spoke of a desire to restore the natural spring, flora, and fauna.

The upper sections of the island are reported to be the most sacred. The Aboriginal community was emphatic that they do not want the upper parts of the island to be subjected to further desecration through development of the site for commercial purposes or walking tracks. Many expressed a strong preference that walking on the top of the site should not be permitted. Less concern was expressed about the lower sections of the island, though it was asked that consideration be given to the proximity of the sacred site to these areas. No concern was expressed about potential development on the man-made causeway that connects the base of the island to the mainland.

In summary, further development of this site would be deeply offensive to many in the community. They wish either that it should be left untouched to heal itself or be actively regenerated drawing on Aboriginal knowledge of Country. It is noted that the draft masterplan currently leaves this site untouched.

Bunyun Miirlarl was identified as a truth-telling and educational opportunity. It was suggested that the Red Browed Finch story be told through signage and sculpture, together with the full story of the desecration of this Sacred Site.

3.1.11 Gularrgan Miirlarl (Lobster Place)

Also located within the Precinct is Gularrgan Miirlarl. It is a 'lobster increase' area with implications for ecological management of the area in which it is located. Gularrgan Miirlarl was identified as a potential education opportunity by marking the Lobster place and story with signs and sculptures.



3.2 Guiding Principles for Development of the Precinct

Over the course of the community engagement process key themes began to emerge. These related not so much to the detail of caring for Country at particular sites, but to the basic approach the community wanted to see incorporated into the development of the draft masterplan. In addition to the very specific and detailed information shared about Country and Aboriginal community aspirations for this project, community members also articulated some fundamental guiding principles for the draft masterplan from Aboriginal perspectives. These are reported and explained in this section.

Also reported in this section is the community's response to the six Principles of Place adopted by the design team to guide the formation of the draft masterplan. These were developed in early 2021 through a consultation process with the broader community of Coffs Harbour (including some of its Aboriginal members). These Principles of Place were shared with Aboriginal community members for feedback in Phase One of the Aboriginal community engagement. Several participants went beyond simple agreement or disagreement with the Principles of Place. They also offered guidance as to how the Principles of Place could be interpreted and applied in line with Aboriginal values, aspirations, and obligations to care for Country. The table below reports the community response to the six Principles of Place. Also included in the table are comments that were not made specifically in response to these principles but have bearing on their interpretation and application.

The three guiding principles that have arisen thematically from the Aboriginal community engagement process are reported immediately below, followed by the Principles of Place table.



3.2.1 Do no harm and undo past harm

As noted repeatedly in this report, the Aboriginal community is most concerned that the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Revitalisation is not a project that further harms Country and reduces Gumbaynggirr access to it in order to deliver material benefits primarily to an elite few in the broader Australian community. Rather this project represents a prime opportunity to heal Country and deliver reparations for past treatment of it and of the Aboriginal people connected to this place.

Participants explored many ways this orientation can be incorporated into the design of the Project. These include making reparations to Country by minimising disruption of Country; protecting Sites of Significance; actively regenerating Sites of Significance – with particular emphasis placed on regeneration of the Old Quarry Site; and enabling access to Country and creating designated spaces for ceremony and other healing practices by the Traditional Custodians of Country. Ideally the community wants works to restore and regenerate Country to be undertaken by people who love and are connected to Country, such as the CH&D LALC Green Team.

The community put forward multiple ideas for ways in which the design of the Project can deliver reparations to the Traditional Custodians of Country. These include protecting the people currently living on Country at this site (both housed and unhoused); delivering

long-term employment opportunities for Aboriginal people; prioritising procurement through Aboriginal business at all stages of the process; supporting the development of Aboriginal enterprise in the Precinct; ensuring some of the economic benefits of the project flow to the Aboriginal Community including in an ongoing way from the use of this land; signage that engages in truth-telling; and returning land to the care and control of the Aboriginal community wherever possible.

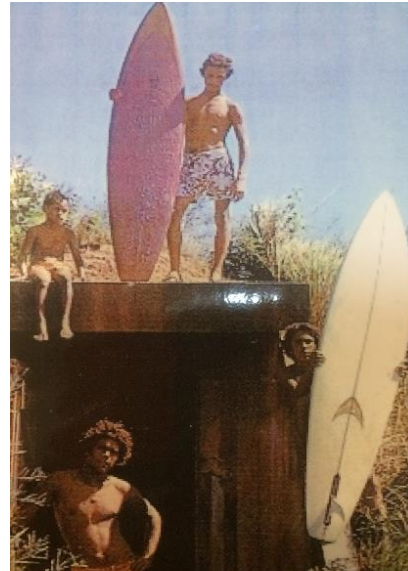


3.2.2 Respect and forefront Gumbaynggirr Country, heritage and culture

The need for a revitalised Precinct to forefront Gumbaynggirr culture, heritage and Country was a strongly recurring theme in the community engagement process. This was stated plainly but also arose in the land use and precinct design suggestions.

"Reflection of Culture is key."

Suggestions included incorporating prominent Aboriginal led enterprise spaces that forefront culture, such as a shop front space in a prime location in the proposed Jetty Hub, or ideally the handing over of control of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site. Other suggestions included dual language signage; renaming the Jetty Foreshore area and surrounding streets and walkways; Aboriginal artwork; storyboards and artwork honouring Sites of Significance; plaques commemorating key Aboriginal community identities and their contributions to community, such as Nanny Ferguson and Uncle Mark Flanders; murals celebrating the strong Aboriginal surf culture and history in this place; permanent shade shelters on the beach that replicate traditional Aboriginal shelter; signed walking trails throughout the precinct that explain Country and its interconnections and Sites of Significance.



Historical photo of local Aboriginal surfers at the Jetty Foreshore.
Image source: Reg Craig



3.2.3 Co-design with Aboriginal people

Participants reiterated throughout the process the importance of collaborating closely with Aboriginal people at every stage of the process, and of collaborating closely with the *right* Aboriginal people. There are different Knowledge Holders for different sacred sites. They would like any works around Happy Valley to be guided by the input and approval of the current residents of Happy Valley. Similarly, they would like any works on or around Ferguson's Cottage to be guided by the input and approval of the family groups connected with that site. They suggested Aboriginal artists and designers be involved in the design process and the development of any public art. They strongly emphasised that Aboriginal community members will ideally continue to be consulted as the Project unfolds and different questions arise. Aboriginal members want to be consulted in relation to the physical design of the Precinct, how Sites of Significance can best be honoured and protected, how to ensure long term employment and other economic benefits from the project flow to the Aboriginal community, what ceremony needs to be undertaken to heal Country from past harms and prepare Country for the further disruption that will accompany this project. Aboriginal people want consultation with them embedded in every stage of this project.

3.2.4 Principles of Place

The table below outlines the feedback received from the participants that has bearing on how the six Principles of Place can be interpreted and applied from an Aboriginal standpoint in the development of the draft masterplan.

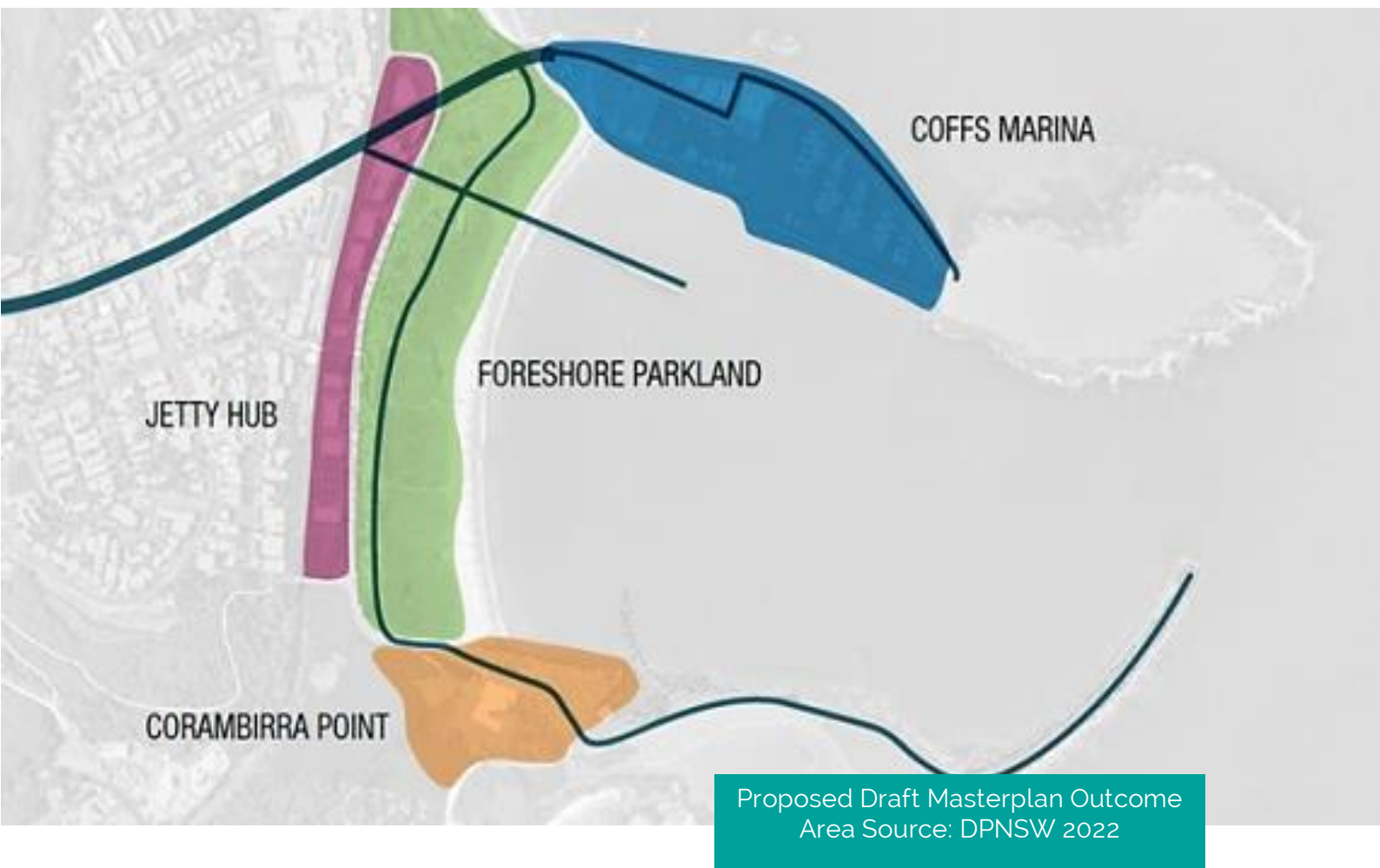
Principle of Place	Community Feedback
<p>Gathering Place Become the premier place on the North Coast where all are welcome and feel at home, now and in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assumption underlying this principle was challenged on the basis that more is not always better. Participants highlighted that it is important not to overburden Country, especially in an area already so heavily utilised by the public. They posed the question, "How many people is enough?" and asked that this be meaningfully considered in the masterplan development.
<p>Seamlessly Connected Tie the city structure and regional networks into the precinct and provide accessibility for all abilities throughout</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This principle is supported but participants would like it to take into account the Sites of Significance and the impact on them of increased accessibility and redirected foot traffic. They have asked that the likelihood of increased foot traffic on or near these sites and how it can be managed, be considered in the design of new thoroughfares. This was particularly noted in relation to thoroughfares through or near Happy Valley and Ferguson's cottage.
<p>Sustainable Economy Foster a wider mix of uses that leverage existing industry to create a balance of local employment opportunities and waterfront activation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A sustainable economy is one that utilises the existing natural and cultural features of the Precinct intelligently for commercial purposes while also preserving them. A sustainable economy is one that delivers long term employment, spaces within the built environment of the Precinct for Aboriginal led enterprise and other ongoing economic opportunities to the Aboriginal population. A sustainable economy is not one that delivers the temporary value of increased employment during the build, if that build creates an 'eyesore' that takes away something that cannot be experienced anywhere else. This includes features of Country such as the dunes, bush tucker, Sites of Significance and their stories. A sustainable economy should ideally not only be measured in simple dollar values nor in simplistic measures of that dollar value. Specifically, a sustainable economy is not one that delivers monetary wealth to a few at the expense of the more profound ecological, spiritual and social wealth of place which is shared by all and owned by no one. A sustainable economy is one that minimises harm to Country and maximises healing of Country – if we care for Country, Country will care for us.
<p>Resilient Environment Be the exemplar for the North Coast on adapting to climate change by safeguarding existing assets and mitigating future risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This principle is served by adhering to the Aboriginal principle that the environment is naturally protected through respecting Sacred Sites. The desecration of Sacred Sites has both ecological and spiritual consequences. For example, the Sacred Site of Bunyun Miirlarl is a Red Browed Finch increase area. By respecting the protocols for accessing this site the Red Browed Finch is protected. It is noted that this site is not subject to any development in the draft masterplan. Bush tucker foods, such as Pig Ears are observed to be steadily dying out. These and other native vegetation are critical to the wellbeing of Country. For example, they protect the dunes from erosion and provide habitat for endangered species. The regeneration of these plants is part of safeguarding existing assets and mitigating future risk. The community would like the removal and replacement of trees that do not belong to this area to be considered.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design would ideally be careful to impact the natural environment as little as possible by leaving the dunes, green spaces, and other natural spaces intact. • To the extent that the built environment is extended, cutting edge environmental design should be drawn on. This includes the use of solar and smart waste management, including water waste.
<p>Choice Destination Enhance the precinct as a family friendly collection of local and regional destinations offering an accessible, engaging, safe, comfortable, and inclusive environment day and night</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Aboriginal community has suggested that 'Choice Destination' should not be interpreted to mean making the Precinct just like any other commercial tourist spot. Nor should it assume built structures as the centrepiece. Participants instead suggested a 'choice destination' is one that capitalises on the appeal of Coffs Harbour's unique cultural and natural features. • There should be retention and enhancement of existing green spaces as a key focus of the design. • It is important that the existing character of the Precinct is actively retained so that people do not <i>'feel out of place'</i>. While an upgrade is welcomed it is important that its impact is not to sever the deep connection and long histories so many in the community have with this place such that it <i>'won't feel like home'</i>. • This principle means that the creation of exclusive private spaces is ideally avoided in the design of the Precinct. Private residential accommodation that takes up public space for the exclusive use of an elite few is not congruent with the principle of inclusivity. There was less objection to private business spaces that make a profit but are accessible to and can be enjoyed by everyone.
<p>Celebrate Country Ensure opportunities for Gumbaynggirr people to Care for Country and heal Country, with long-term community involvement, cultural activation and education, and protection of significant heritage sites</p>	<p>In one sense this entire report is intended to operate as guidance on the interpretation of this Principle of Place. The following dimensions of this Principle of Place were flagged by participants, many of which are expanded on elsewhere in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Aboriginal horticulturalists and landscapers, such as the CH&D LALC Green Team, for the regeneration and maintenance of Country, especially on or around Sites of Significance • Deliver tangible outcomes for the Aboriginal community (see section 4.2) • Protect and respect sacred sites (see section 3.1) • Do no further harm and repair past harms (see section 3.2.1) • Forefront Gumbaynggirr Culture and people in the visual design of the Precinct (see section 3.2.2) • Integrate Ceremony: provide spaces for Aboriginal gathering, ceremony, and cultural practices; incorporate ceremony into all phases of the development to heal Country from past disruption and prepare Country for the disruption of the construction phase of the Project. • Embed consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal Traditional Custodians, Knowledge Holders and stakeholders into all aspects of the Project – from design to delivery to maintenance.

4 Community Feedback on the Draft Masterplan

The purpose of Phase Two of the community engagement process was to obtain feedback on the draft masterplan and to identify any key outcomes Aboriginal people would like the project to deliver for the Aboriginal community. This section reports those findings.



4.1 Community responses to the Draft Masterplan

As noted in Section Two of this report, there was uncertainty, due to both cultural reasons and accessibility for some demographics, around the participation levels of the Aboriginal population in the online survey. Accordingly, PDNSW requested that Murawin attempt to capture feedback on specific features of the draft masterplan through the consultation spaces. The feedback received in relation to these features is recorded in the table below,

along with any general feedback offered on each of the four draft masterplan sub-precincts. The free-flowing nature of Yarning Circles and the low participation in the community drop in space meant that it was not possible to get comprehensive feedback on all features. This also means that where 'no objection' to a particular feature is recorded in the table below, it should be relied on with caution. While it is fair to assume that strongly felt objections were aired, it cannot be assumed that all objections were captured in the loosely structured Yarning Circle discussions of the draft masterplan. The findings presented here will, however, be supplemented by the online survey results, which, although not actively promoted in the community engagement spaces, would have attracted Aboriginal respondents. Five percent of the participants in the survey component of the Ethos Urban community consultations in early 2021 identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The findings presented in this section should be read in conjunction with the rich information shared in Section Three in relation to the Sites of Significance and the Guiding Principles for development of the Precinct.

Design precinct location	Community response
Coffs Marina Precinct	<p>It was recognised by most participants that there is a need for parking within the Jetty Foreshore area. The majority did not object to the proposed height increase at the Marina sub-precinct from three to four storeys to allow for one level of car parking. The objections that were recorded related largely to concerns about technical issues, such as vulnerability to flight paths and the viability of additional parking in terms of traffic management. These objections should also be contextualised in a generalised reluctance by some to increase building heights in the Precinct unless necessary. One participant requested that the spiritual significance of Giidany Miirlarl (Mutton Bird Island) and its spiritual counterpart Bunyun Miirlarl (the island off Corambirra Point) be taken into account in building design and location</p>
Foreshore Parkland	<p>There was general support for the proposed upgrades in this area, particularly in relation to public safety and amenity. Enthusiasm was expressed for an increase in the Precinct's mobility friendliness and accessibility. It was hoped that upgrades would incorporate Gumbaynggirr Country, Aboriginal Culture, greenery and native flora. Strong support was expressed by some for multiple playground areas, with emphasis on disability friendly playgrounds. One participant requested the inclusion of a park gym.</p> <p>Alongside this support, were concerns that the proposed upgrades in the Foreshore Parklands sub-precinct do not change the character of the area and therefore impact people's connections to Country. This was linked to the importance of undertaking a careful co-design process with the Aboriginal and broader community at all stages of the project to ensure the existing character of the area is not compromised, memories lost, and this special place made to feel unfamiliar.</p> <p>Few objections to the proposed boardwalks were recorded. Some participants strongly emphasised that any boardwalk must be built in a way that does not impact the sensitive local eco-system, with particular reference to the creek and nesting areas for terns. One participant requested that it not be concrete like the existing boardwalk which is unpleasant to walk on.</p>



	<p>Concerns in relation to the Foreshore Parklands area largely centred around the impact of development on Happy Valley – its privacy, amenity and of ensuring access was not negatively impacted. One participant requested more trees in the area surrounding Happy Valley. There was support for improved services to current Happy Valley residents, including the suggestion of the installation of solar power, provided any improvements were done in close consultation with and with the full approval of current residents. The servicing of the site with electricity was supported by a current resident. It is noted that Happy Valley currently falls outside of the precinct and the draft masterplan.</p> <p>Some emphasis was placed on leaving things in the most natural state possible and on the critical importance of protecting the dune system. There was widespread consensus around the importance of greenery and native planting.</p>
<p>Jetty Hub Precinct</p>	<p>The key features of the draft masterplan for the Jetty Hub sub-precinct related to development zoning and built environment height increases.</p> <p><u>Zoning and uses of the site</u></p> <p>Mixed use development zoning, for the most part, was supported. Most participants agreed that zoning for local businesses, retail, community, recreation, tourist attractions and activities, food and beverage and meeting spaces. Many strongly objected, however, to the use of this space for private residential accommodation. This objection was based partly on principle, whereby people felt that public land should not be taken for the exclusive use of an elite few and this accommodation is unlikely to address housing shortages in the demographics that most need it i.e., it is use of community space that will not directly benefit the community. It was also objected to by a couple of participants on the grounds that being overlooked by people on their balconies reduces the unselfconscious enjoyment of the Precinct by the generality of the population below. It is noted that this concern was resolved by PDNSW through clarification of the distance from the proposed accommodation and fact that it will not look directly down on community spaces in the draft masterplan. Tourist accommodation was also resisted but was less strongly objected to and by fewer participants. Some observed that it could potentially benefit enterprise within the broader Precinct, including Aboriginal led enterprises.</p> <p>In relation to other uses of this sub-precinct, concern was expressed by some that the incorporation of bars and clubs in the Jetty Hub Precinct would negatively impact public safety. They advised that the area should be family friendly and not alcohol focused. There was widespread support for space to be set aside within this sub-precinct for Aboriginal led enterprise, especially if the former Deep-Sea Fishing Club site should not be used for this purpose.</p> <p>In whatever way the Jetty Hub sub-precinct is ultimately used, it was generally agreed that developments in this area should be set up to deliver ongoing benefits for the Aboriginal community, namely through business opportunities and royalty/'pay the rent'¹ type arrangements.</p> <p><u>Proposed height increases in built environment</u></p> <p>The proposition to include some buildings within the Jetty Hub sub-precinct with a height of six storeys was strongly opposed by a majority of those who were consulted. Less concern was expressed in relation to the proposed increases of 2-4 storeys. There was some initial concern that the privacy and amenity of Happy Valley would be negatively impacted, but this concern was resolved when actual distances from Happy Valley of the buildings were clarified. Some participants indicated that if there are to be height increases to six storeys then they want to see these height increases deliver a direct benefit in other ways, such as funding the development of an Aboriginal led enterprise space. The majority of the participants were receptive to some increase in the built environment in this area, but one participant indicated that she did not want to see any increase in the built environment in the sub-precinct.</p>



<p>Corambirra Point</p>	<p>The draft masterplan proposes a single storey height increase at the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site. No objections were recorded regarding this proposed height increase. However, it was noted that any height increase should ensure there are no impacts on visual amenity for users of the site and on the amenity and privacy of neighbouring spaces, such as Ferguson’s Cottage. A broad range of uses were supported for this site, but accommodation was not one of them.</p> <p><i>“I don’t think accommodation there adds anything to protecting and preserving and promoting culture”</i></p> <p>Participants universally and strongly emphasised that they wanted control of the former Deep-Sea Fishing Club site passed to the Aboriginal community for the development of Aboriginal led enterprise that would benefit the whole of the community.</p> <p>In relation to Corambirra Point more broadly, concern was expressed by some that no development be permitted to proceed in this archaeologically rich area without a full archaeological assessment.</p>
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4.2 Long term outcomes

Throughout consultations, particularly during Phase two, several priority outcomes for the community from the Project were identified. These priority outcomes are perceived by the community to be beneficial for Gumbaynggirr Country and for the Aboriginal community connected to it. A total of seven desired outcomes have been identified, which have been divided into three thematic groups.

Outcome 1 Repatriation of Gumbaynggirr Country

A critical question arises once it is understood that Country, from Aboriginal perspectives, *‘is, has always been and will always be Aboriginal land’*. This includes all the land falling within the Precinct. The question that arises is that of legal ownership of the land and all that this implies for the right to care for it and to benefit from it economically. Returning Gumbaynggirr Country to Gumbaynggirr people was repeatedly articulated as a key desired outcome from this project. It is understood to be an act of justice and reparations this project can deliver in recognition of the long history of displacement from and desecration of Country in this place. Three desired outcomes have been articulated by the community in relation to this principle.

Outcome 1.1 **Return the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site to Traditional Custodians**

The delivery of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site into the care and control of the Gumbaynggirr people in some form was the subject of consistent, unanimous and passionate advocacy throughout the entire community engagement process. The community has made it clear that the use of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site for the benefit of the Aboriginal community would be a potent gesture of recognition and reparations. It has been unequivocally identified as a high priority outcome from this Project that would be welcomed by the entire Aboriginal community.

The community pointed to its long running relationship with this site, both pre and post the construction of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club. They also highlighted the site’s proximity to multiple Sites of Significance. The community has been discussing plans for some time for an Aboriginal led enterprise operating out of this space that forefronts

Culture both for the benefit of the Aboriginal community and for non-Aboriginal visitors to the site. Ideas include a cultural showcase and education space, a cultural tourism enterprise base, training/conference facility, café and community hub.

"My vision of an Aboriginal-led enterprise is something that promotes, protects and preserves Gumbaynggirr Culture. Meeting rooms, lecture room for teaching and training, a restaurant and theatre or shops."

Several options were discussed in the community consultation spaces as to how this could be achieved in an economically viable way that delivers real and long-term benefits to the Aboriginal community. The community was open to a range of ideas and structures. These included, for example, granting a finite lease to developers to finance the building of desired facilities on the site, so long as Aboriginal people would ultimately benefit from these facilities and their interests were fully protected in the process.

Outcome 1.2 Fast track current outstanding Land Claims

Land Claims have been submitted by the CH&D LALC for Happy Valley³, Fergusons Cottage and the Former Deep Sea Fishing site. A speedy resolution of these land claims to enable the CH&D LALC to take unencumbered care and control of these sites on behalf of the Aboriginal community is a widely supported outcome.

Outcome 1.3 Embed long term economic benefits from Gumbaynggirr Country

While it was appreciated by the participants that the entirety of the Precinct will not be returned to them, they emphasised their moral right to benefit economically from it.

'First Nations land and First Nations people should be making money from it regardless of what is happening on it and who is using it'.

This was particularly emphasised in relation to any parts of the site acquired by developers. Participants suggested multiple pathways that could be explored for the achievement of this outcome. Suggestions included the setting aside of commercial space for the Aboriginal community in the Jetty Hub; some kind of ground rental arrangement to ensure benefits flow to the Aboriginal community in perpetuity no matter how the land is zoned; and an enforceable 'pay the rent' arrangement as a clause in any business leases.

These suggestions need to be distinguished from the concept of 'compensation'. Participants were clear that no price could be put on Country, the cumulative harms that have been caused to it, nor on the nature of the loss Gumbaynggirr people have experienced. Rather they perceive access to economic benefits from the Precinct as the natural and ongoing right of the true owners of the land.

"The Aboriginal community should be benefitting from all of that land the development is on."

³ During the writing of this report the Happy Valley Land Claim was reported as granted.

Outcome 2 Servicing Fergusons Cottage and Happy Valley

Sites of Significance, such as Fergusons Cottage and Happy Valley, are home to Aboriginal residents who have access to very limited basic amenities. Several participants were supportive of improved amenities and servicing of these sites. Participants emphasised that it is important to them that the connection of services and any other changes to these sites is done in close collaboration with the current residents of Happy Valley and with certain key families in relation to Ferguson's Cottage. A resident of Happy Valley who participated in the consultations expressed support for the connection of electricity to the site. It is noted that Happy Valley currently falls outside of the Precinct covered by the draft masterplan.

Outcome 3 Inclusivity, recognition, and celebration of Gumbaynggirr Country and Culture

For the Gumbaynggirr people, Gumbaynggirr Country is rich with history and Sites of Significance. Their connection with Country extends back many millennia. Their culture is a living culture. It is a core aspiration of the community that Gumbaynggirr Country, heritage and culture be a highly visible component of the final Precinct design. Numerous suggestions were made that related to how Gumbaynggirr Country, heritage and culture can be fore fronted in this space to deliver an immersive, First Nations experience for visitors to the Precinct. Three suggestions in particular attracted widespread endorsement.

Outcome 3.1 Celebration of Gumbaynggirr Country through an Aboriginal led enterprise

The provision of space and economic support for Aboriginal led enterprise that showcases and promotes Gumbaynggirr Country, heritage and Culture was widely and strongly endorsed. Participants identified multiple economic and educational activities that could be pursued by the Aboriginal community in the Precinct to provide passive and active education to the wider community about Gumbaynggirr Country, heritage and Culture. Ideas include cultural tourism, convention centre, educational spaces, cultural centre, café incorporating a bush tucker menu and hospitality training for Aboriginal youth, as well as other Aboriginal businesses. The setting aside of such a space within the Precinct for Aboriginal people would also support widespread aspirations to have a culturally safe space in which Aboriginal people can gather, meet & practise their culture.

"We can have a cultural centre, run a restaurant, have a theatre, art gallery, Clarke and Troy launch their tours from there, paddle boards, can get a boat and take people out whale watching – if we can have all of that its art, jobs, culture..."

It was universally agreed that the ideal site for such an enterprise and gathering space would be the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site. The provision of a shopfront space in a prime location within the Jetty Hub precinct of the draft masterplan would be a secondary, but still desirable alternative.

"The next best option would be one of the entry sites so first thing people see is Gumbaynggirr identity..."

Outcome 3.2 **Wayfinding and renaming the Jetty Foreshore**

This Project presents an opportunity to more comprehensively incorporate into the Precinct Gumbaynggirr language and wayfinding rooted in Aboriginal values of Country in this place. The renaming of the Jetty Foreshore, walkways and streets in language was widely supported.

"Rename streets in Gumbaynggirr language."

Storyboards and signage could also be considered throughout the site, preferably in a cohesive connected self-directed walking tour that educates visitors to the site, helps them to appreciate Gumbaynggirr Culture and show respect to Country in this place.

Outcome 3.3 **Heal Country**

It was requested that Bunyun Miirlarl should be left alone to heal or actively regenerated in close collaboration with the Aboriginal community. Either way it should be respected as a Sacred Site and be subject to no further desecration or development. Multiple participants requested that the design of the Precinct discourage people from walking on this site. Ideally, the active regeneration of this site will be funded as part of this process and the work undertaken by female Aboriginal teams, such as the CH&D LALC Green Team and in close collaboration with the Cultural Knowledge Holders for this place. Regeneration could include the endemic planting of local flora, including bush tucker plants, healing ceremony or even the reconstruction of the fresh spring that once ran through that site. It is noted that the current draft masterplan does not propose any development on this site.



Gumbaynggirr Country.
Image source: Murawin Pty Ltd.



5 Conclusion

The Coffs Jetty Revitalisation project is on Country of immense spiritual, historical and cultural significance for the Gumbaynggirr people. A dedicated stream of Aboriginal community consultation has been undertaken over the past 10 months to ensure that the development of the draft masterplan for this Project is informed by Aboriginal knowledge, values, aspirations and connection to Country. Murawin was engaged to facilitate this community engagement in line with best practice and in a culturally safe way.

The community engagement was undertaken over two phases. It utilised a Place Based Methodology and a staged approach to integrate an Aboriginal narrative and design lens across the Project. This consisted of five stages of face-to-face engagement with the community in the form of interviews, Yarning Circles, briefing sessions and drop-in days. In total, 50 community members engaged with the process, many repeatedly. A strong relationship based on trust and open communication was built between a core group of community members and the DPE staff responsible for the draft masterplan design process.

The community engagement process has identified numerous Sites of Significance within and around the Precinct that need to be protected and respected. It has identified key long-term outcomes the Aboriginal community would like the Project to deliver for the Aboriginal community. It has thrown up a plethora of creative ideas around the representation of Gumbaynggirr Culture and Country in this place. Importantly it has enabled the Aboriginal community to clearly communicate the importance of healing Country in this place, delivering reparations to Country and its Traditional Custodians through this Project; collaborating with Aboriginal people at every stage of the Project design and delivery; and of fore-fronting Gumbaynggirr heritage and culture throughout the Precinct through art, information and the prominent location of Aboriginal led enterprise.

For the Gumbaynggirr people the Precinct is a location of significant emotional and spiritual importance and, post-colonisation, of repeated desecrations for which there has been little formal acknowledgement or reparations. The proposed Jetty Foreshore revitalisation is fundamentally viewed as an opportunity to give back to Aboriginal people. They have expressed grave concerns that it does not become yet another act of taking, exclusion from and desecration of Country. This position by many in the Aboriginal community does not preclude development on this site but does have implications for where on the site development can appropriately be undertaken and what it should be.

Appendices

A. Stakeholder Contact list

Appendix A is not embedded in this document for reasons of confidentiality.

B. Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
CH&D LALC	Coffs Harbour & District Local Aboriginal Land Council
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment
PDNSW	Property and Development NSW
The Draft Masterplan	Coffs Jetty Revitalisation draft masterplan
The Precinct	Land encompassed by the draft masterplan
The Project	The revitalisation of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct

C. Glossary

Term	Meaning
Connecting with Country Draft Framework	Developed by the Government Architect NSW, the Connecting with Country Draft Framework is a 'draft framework for understanding the value of Aboriginal knowledge in the design and planning of places. It contains a list of seven key principles for engagement with Indigenous people on matters relating to Country. It offers an evolving best-practice framework for the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into all government infrastructure projects in NSW. All infrastructure projects by the Department are subject to this draft framework and must align their processes with its guidance.
Caring for Country	Country needs to be valued, respected and cared for. Caring for Country focuses on engaging in activities that protect and nurture the lands and seas in a physical and spiritual sense. It is also embedded in Aboriginal people's culture and beliefs. If you care for Country, Country will care for you.

Connecting with Country approach	A Connecting with Country approach embraces Aboriginal heritage and culture throughout planning and designing processes. It also ensures that Aboriginal perspectives and concepts are privileged across all aspects of project development, materials, design, and construction.
Country	Country is integral to Indigenous identity through recognition and practice of deep time connections to language and lore of the lands. Country is inherent to our identity. It sustains our lives in every aspect: physically; spiritually; emotionally; socially; and culturally.
Elders	An Aboriginal Elder is someone who is greatly respected and has gained recognition as a custodian of wisdom, knowledge and lore.
Lore	Lore is knowledge or tradition passed from generation to generation. In contrast, Law means a rule or a collection of rules.
Our Place on Country	Department of Planning and Environment's Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy. It is described as 'a roadmap to empower Aboriginal voices within decision-making; to give Aboriginal people greater choice, access and control over land, water, housing and resources within the state; to drive success in Aboriginal organisations and businesses; and to create better outcomes for every Aboriginal person in NSW.' Its underlying principles are self-determination and co-design, and it identifies seven key outcomes to which the Department address within their projects.
Songlines	Songlines are fundamental to Aboriginal Culture as they carry laws and stories about place, people, animals, and the creation of Earth. Songlines are passed on from Elder to Elder and were used as a form of communication across Country and for mapping of Country.
Traditional Custodians	Also referred to as Traditional Owners, Traditional Custodians are recognised as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people whose ancestors originally inhabited Country and have continuing spiritual, cultural, political, and physical connection to land of which their ancestors lived. It is important to acknowledge and pay respects to the Traditional Custodians of the Land of which you live and work on.
Yarning Circles	A form of communication used in Aboriginal culture to develop respectful relationships as well as preserve and pass on cultural knowledge throughout communities. Yarning Circles are also a safe and collaborative space that encourage deep listening, respect, problem solving, and mindfulness.



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