

03. Design Parameters

This section includes the place design vision, objectives, principles and design considerations that guided the design, and provides a summary of key project elements.



Figure 65: View towards the bay from Carradah Park, taken during the walk on Country

3.0 Design parameters

3.1 Vision

Berrys Bay will become a vibrant new public green space, enhancing community access to Sydney’s iconic foreshore. By bridging the missing link in a key waterfront connection, it will create a seamless and accessible network of open spaces. Designed to cater to a diverse range of recreational activities, the space will offer opportunities for relaxation, play, and cultural engagement. Rooted in its rich history, Berrys Bay will celebrate Sydney’s unique maritime and natural heritage, fostering a deeper connection between people and place.





Figure 66: Aerial view from Berrys Bay overlooking The Harbour

3.2 Urban design objectives and principles

The Western Harbour Tunnel design has been driven by overarching objectives and principles documented in PDLP Document 1. Given the unique context of the Berrys Bay Parklands, specific urban design objectives and principles have been developed to align with the objectives documented in the LCVIA (Appendix V of the EIS - refer to [Section 1.2.1](#)), detailed context analysis, and engagement with Local Knowledge Holders. The engagement process and emerging narratives are detailed in [Section 3.3](#).

These objectives and principles have been considered throughout the detailed design phase of project components to drive an integrated and quality outcome.

1



Designing with Country

Express the natural and social layers that comprise Country through genuine consultation that leads to design outcomes that speak to place and living culture.

Principles

- Work collaboratively with Aboriginal communities to ensure meaningful representation and stewardship of the site
- By recognising Aboriginal cultures as a living culture, facilitate the continuation of and use of the site for ongoing cultural practices thus bringing First Nations histories and stories to life
- Weave First Nations storytelling in play equipment, street furniture, and design details

2



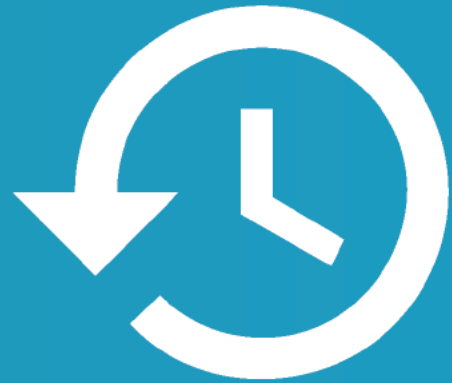
Create an inclusive and safe space

Design a welcoming, accessible, and universally inclusive environment that caters to all ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.

Principles

- Incorporate flexible and varied open spaces to cater to different types of events, community activities, and cultural practices
- Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, particularly passive surveillance and clear, legible connections in the public domain, to increase safety and the perception of safety for people
- Create spaces with universal access
- Use public art opportunities to represent the community and culture
- Provide places at Berrys Bay that complement other destinations on the Peninsula, such as the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability, Waverton Park, Carradah Park, and Balls Head Reserve

3



Express the layers of history

Berrys Bay has a long history in pre- and post-colonial Sydney. Acknowledge and interpret this rich history of the site, from Aboriginal occupation to boat-making and oil storage, as captured through historic accounts and community stories.

Principles

- Integrate storytelling elements, heritage markers, and public art to reflect the site's evolving identity
- Incorporate the elements of heritage significance within the site into the design
- Play experiences integrated with site history and character
- Draw on the site's maritime and industrial history to inform the form and detailing of architectural elements

4



Rejuvenate pre-industrial vegetation and improve biodiversity

Heal the landscape with endemic plants that create habitat for native fauna.

Principles

- Use locally endemic plant species in 'natural' informal planting arrangements to strengthen biodiversity and habitat connections
- Extend habitat creation initiatives undertaken at adjacent parklands to encourage fauna population
- Maximise the planting opportunities and increase canopy coverage
- Enhance the marine habitat through the cleansing of run off into the harbour
- Minimise vegetation clearing where feasible
- Utilise the unique vegetation along the foreshore and extend it across the wider site, shaping the experience of the Bay

5



Sustainability

Embed sustainability considerations into the design, delivery and operation of the project in order to minimise environmental and social impacts.

Principles

- Design with durability and resilience in mind, using materials and landscapes that require minimal upkeep
- Incorporate self-sustaining ecosystems and climate-responsive strategies
- Maximise the use of tunnel spoil and recycled materials, in accordance with circular economy principles
- Accommodate for sea level rise in the design of maritime elements
- Incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles and passive storm water quality solutions to reduce reliance on the water network and improve urban water quality

3.3 Designing with Country

3.3.1 Engagement process

A robust Connecting with Country process was implemented to inform the design process, with community engagement as a key component of the planning for the parklands. The engagement process for Berrys Bay aligned with the overall project engagement strategy, with the design team participating in workshops and walks on Country to assist in design development. This process included:

Connect to Traditional Knowledge Holders

- Research, identify, and confirm the authorities of Country, using foundational work completed on the project to date. When possible, allow for continuity of participants from previous phases to respect the contributions made by community members
- Identification of possible conflicts, including between community groups, Elders, and Traditional Knowledge Holders.

Engagement round 1

- First Walk on Country with Traditional Knowledge Holders to learn about the cultural significance of the place and hear any key stories and observations
- First Workshop to confirm understanding and start to develop opportunities

Draft up key themes

- Nguluway DesignInc developed initial design ideas based on walk and workshop outcomes

Engagement round 2

- Second Walk on Country, beginning with presentation and validation of key themes
- Second Workshop focusing on applying themes to specific places /zones

Develop design

- Incorporation of ‘place’ opportunities into design, as key moves
- Development of landscape concept and planting palette

Engagement round 3

- Third Walk on Country, focusing on native plant selection and their cultural uses
- Validation of suite of opportunities, including canvas for cultural interpretation

Preparation of artist brief

- Continuing integration of cultural interpretation with concept design to allow for engagement of First Nations artist



Figure 67: Participants looking over the site on the Walk on Country



Figure 68: Co-design workshop at DesignInc Sydney studio

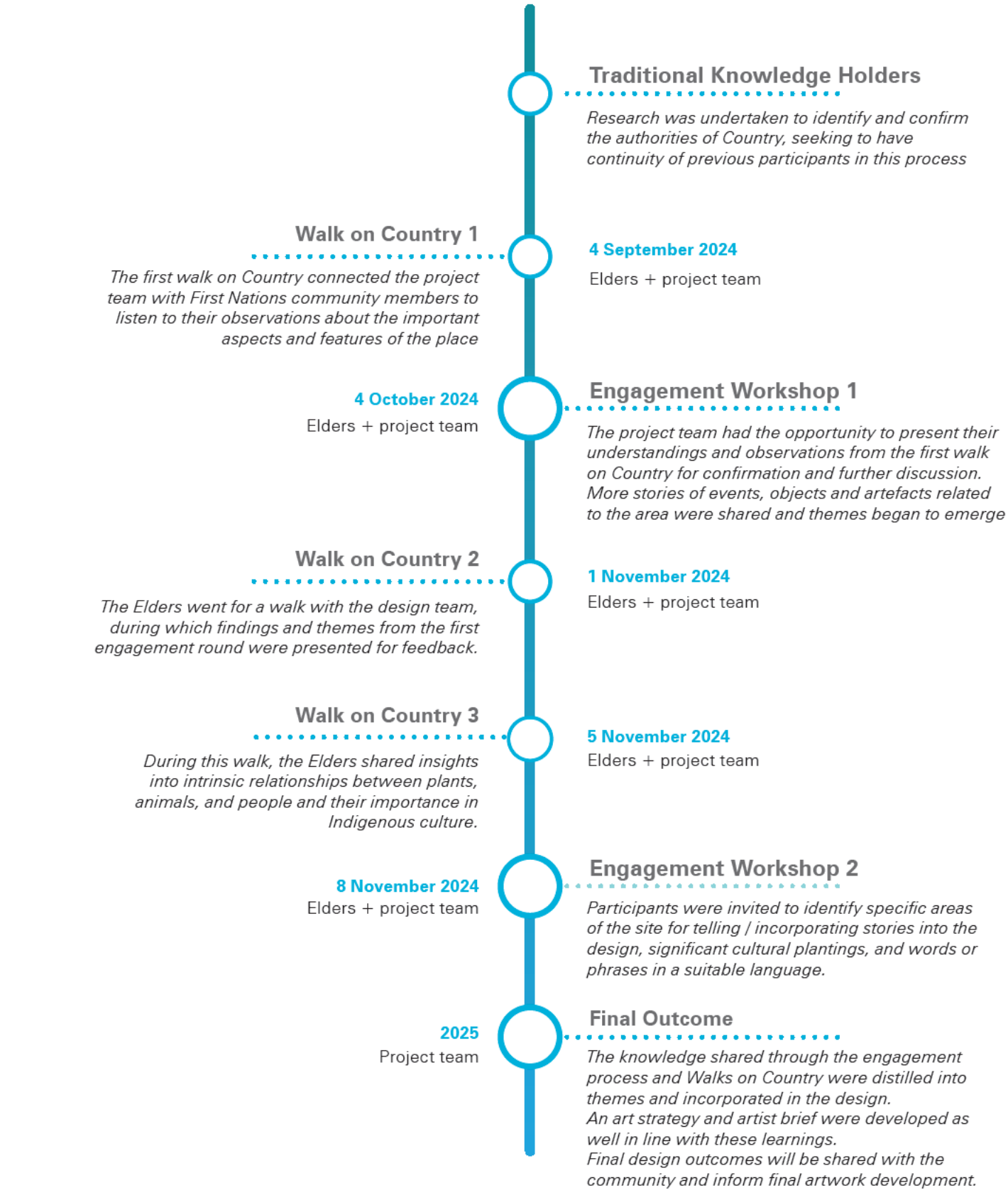


Figure 69: Co-design process timeline

3.3.2 Theme 1: Thresholds / Gathering

The theme of Threshold/Gathering alludes to the moments and modes of movement, transition, and pause on Country. This is reflected in a broad range of ways, including fire trails on land, canoes in water, and the connection and exchange between the Cammeraygal, Gadigal, and other neighbouring cultural groups.

- Shorelines: points of departure for the 14 islands within Sydney Harbour, places for meeting and trade, and views over the water
- Middens: physical remnants of gathering spaces, places of cultural nourishment with large quantities of shellfish, pipis, mussels, and cockles
- Giba Gunyahs (rock shelters): locations where people slept, talked and shared knowledge through rock art
- Bora (ceremonial grounds): meeting areas where sacred customs were performed
- Cooking mounds and watering holes: raised remnants of land, or depressions carved in the flat rock to catch water

3.3.3 Theme 2: Water / Harbour

The theme of Water/Harbour directly relates to the natural foreshore environment at the park and the relationship between land and water.

- Movement and flow: tidal movements between water enclaves, seasonal migration patterns of whales and other aquatic life; coastal currents
- Sharing and exchange: Sydney Harbour as the first highway used for trading, facilitating knowledge sharing between different cultural groups
- Fishing practices: women using nawis (canoes) with burning fires on board for cooking while fishing
- Aquatic fauna: oysters, crabs, seahorse, whale, dolphin, flathead, shark, burra (eel), wallamai (snapper), stingray

3.3.4 Theme 3: Terrestrial Country

The theme of Terrestrial Country speaks to the broader landscapes that make up Cammeraygal land, and unite the site with the stories that stretch from the harbour and across the sandstone geologies of the Sydney basin.

- Colours and patterns of Country: ochre pigments, sandstone shades of yellow, orange, red, brown, and purple
- Engraving: cultural practice of knowledge sharing, such as the whale story carved at Balls Head
- The escarpment: natural blocks and sandstone outcrops
- Hills and high points: viewlines used when sharing stories of the land, water and sky
- Native fauna and plants: wallabies, blue tongue lizards, echidnas, lorikeets; Gynea lily, gadi (grass tree), and Sydney wattle
- Gathering: traditional practices of making and constructing shell hooks, fish traps, spears and canoes, and preparing materials for cooking
- Burning: a customary practice for signalling between headlands, creating grasslands for hunting kangaroo, and opening dense shrubs to create paths

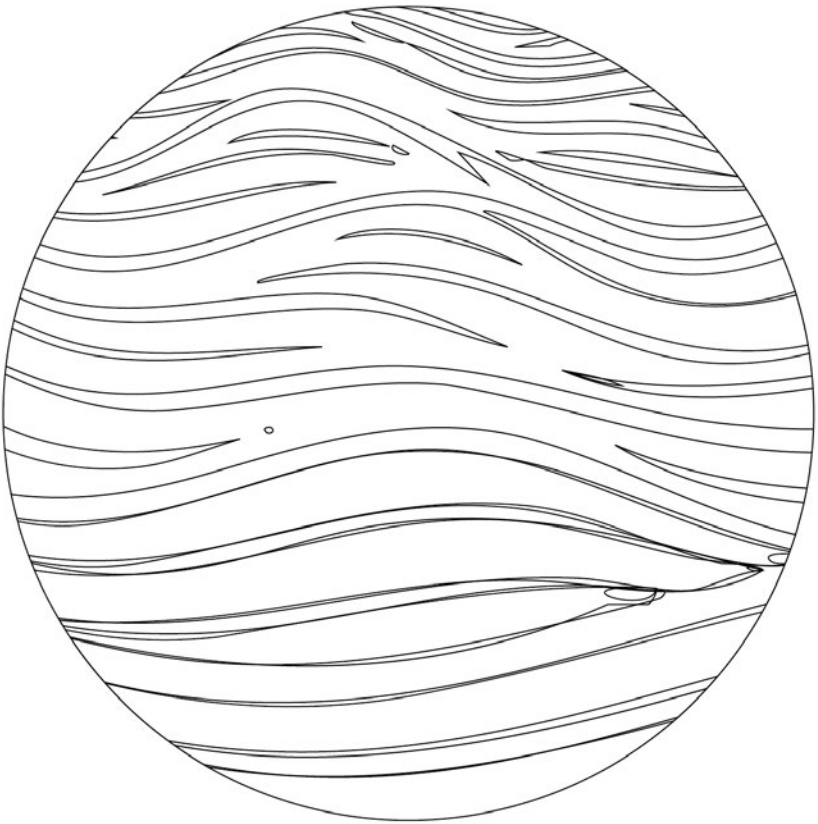


Figure 70: Imagery for the three themes: Thresholds / Gathering; Water / Harbour; Terrestrial Country, developed by Nguluway DesignInc

3.3.5 From themes to outcomes

The Connecting with Country engagement—the walks and workshops—has influenced the design. The three themes outlined on the previous page are retained, to show how the initial thinking and opportunities have developed into key design moves, and where they are spatially located within the Berrys Bay site. In other words, the diagrams below describe the ‘what’ and ‘where’, supplementing the ‘why’ of the opportunities.

In summary, the proposed design responses and the intended outcomes for Country are:

THRESHOLDS / GATHERING

Design responses

- Art installations and interpretation of nawis (canoes), weaving, spear making
- Create wetlands to support frog habitat
- Create large open spaces with seating and amenities
- Celebrate the cultural landmark that is Balls Head
- Create entries and access, including accessible spaces and links to them for wheelchair users and prams / strollers
- Retain and formalise high points for viewing songlines
- Design a bush path network to touch and connect with sandstone features

Connecting with Country outcomes

- The design respects and responds to the cultural values of the place by embedding into it:
- Significant gathering spaces
 - Important sight lines to and from Country (retained, enhanced and created)
 - A site to reflect on Country, that connects the land, water and sky
 - A place to share stories of making with the next generations

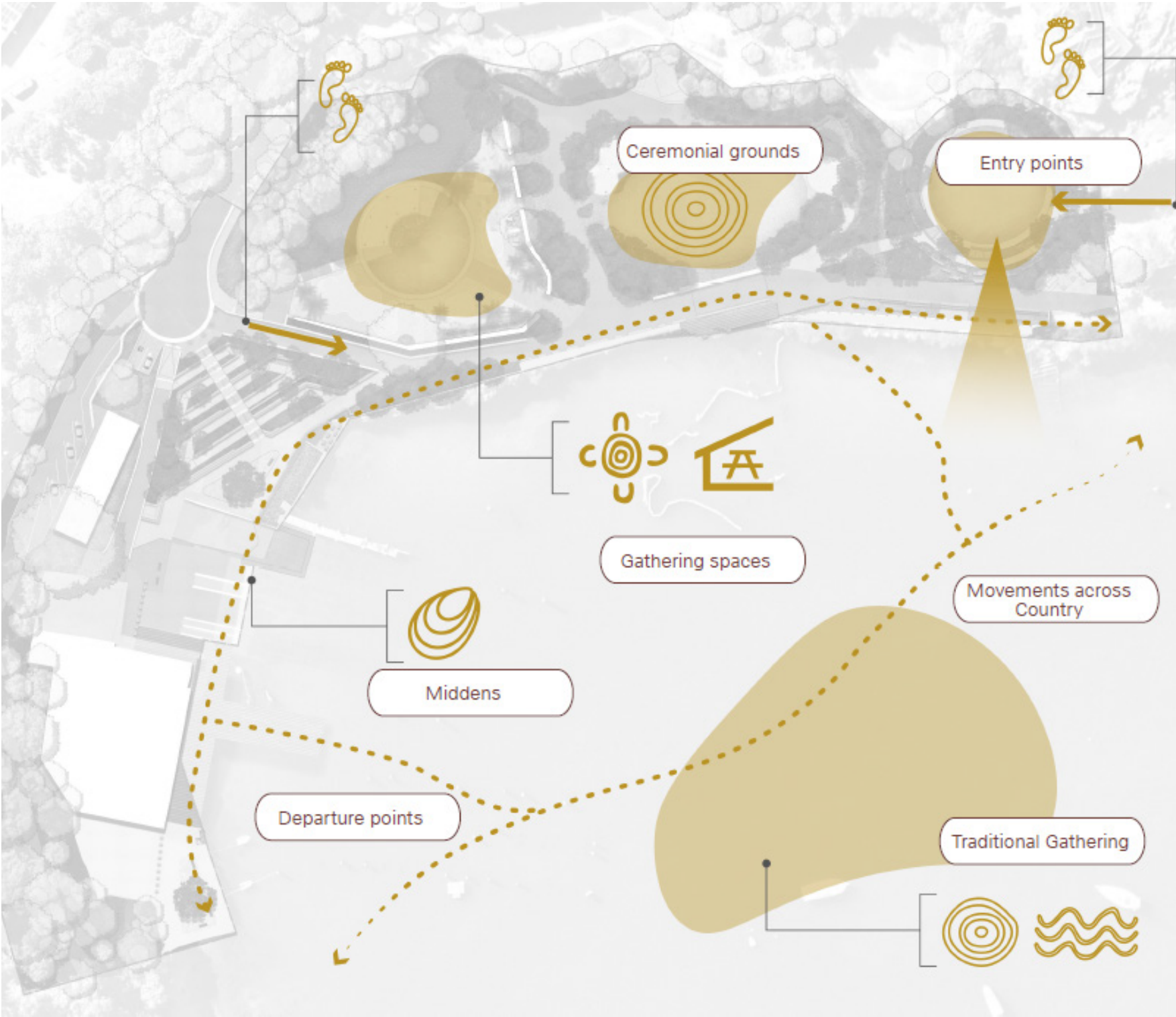


Figure 71: Thresholds / gathering - themes presented and discussed at the beginning of Walk on Country 2
(design underlay represents design at time of consultation, with graphics indicative of themes and opportunities during early design stages)

WATER / HARBOUR

Design responses

- Improve visual and sensory connections to the Harbour at the seawall
- Use the story of nawi to strengthen understanding of the importance of water
- Improve the health of the Harbour – use swales to manage water and runoff
- Maintain sight lines to water from elevated gathering spaces, and views out to and across the harbour
- Develop / locate artistic interpretation(s) of sea life to acknowledge and support the existing whale engraving
- Create gathering site/s for ceremony and storytelling
- Introduce species to the planting palette that were traditionally used to form baskets and canoes (associated with fishing)

Connecting with Country outcomes

The design respects and responds to the cultural values of the place by embedding into it:

- A place to share the story of the whale with the next generations
- Visual and physical connections to the water that reinforce a sense of place
- Cleaner water that will allow for the population of frogs to return, celebrating a healthy ecosystem and recalling the frog as totem
- Ways / places to view the change in seasons and cycles by observing the migration of aquatic creatures
- Culturally important endemic plants that highlight their traditional use and can help educate and inform about traditional water-related skills and knowledge

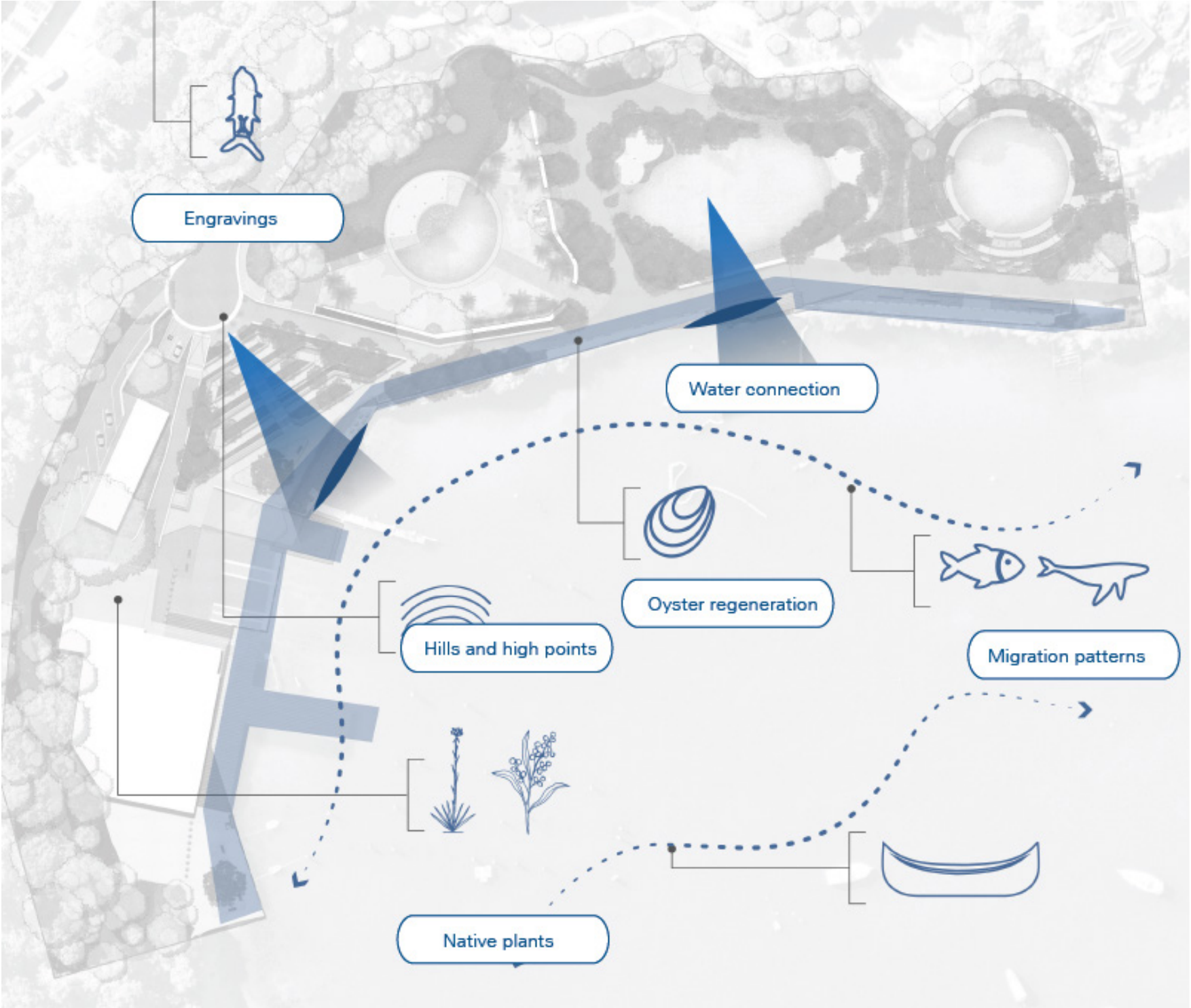


Figure 72: Water / Harbour - themes presented and discussed at the beginning of Walk on Country 2
(design underlay represents design at time of consultation, with graphics indicative of themes and opportunities during early design stages)

TERRESTRIAL COUNTRY

Design responses

Celebrate the relationship of the parkland to sandstone:

- Preserve the dominance of the sandstone cutting, and views of it, through selecting low-lying planting and by not obscuring it with structures
- Integrate existing sandstone blocks, outcrops and linework engravings into the design, and amplify them
- Design a bush path network to touch and connect with the sandstone features
- Maximise pervious paving throughout the site
- Use wayfinding, signage and lighting to highlight the dreaming stories of the site. This could include the use of QR codes
- Retain the bund wall and other remnants as areas for interpretation
- Retain and formalise high points for viewing songlines
- Draw attention to the Bora rings in close proximity
- Repair and remediate soils, including capping contaminated soils
- Use endemic plants that are culturally important, including:
 - » a range of native grasses for weaving to make and form baskets, canoes, tools and clothing
 - » protecting and integrating groves of Angophora and Allocasuarina

Connecting with Country outcomes

The design respects and responds to the cultural values of the place by embedding into it:

- The ability to view sandstone carvings and stories within the immediate geological escarpment
- Sightlines and pathways that promote a deep connection with the land, water and sky – to escarpment, bush, peninsulas and the flows of the Harbour
- Viewing the change in seasons through the cycles of flowering and harvesting of endemic plants
- Inviting and accessible gathering spaces, that allow you to reflect on Country, including Sky Country
- Regeneration of native vegetation to bring back local fauna, including birds, butterflies, insects, and reptiles. This could include hearing the cries from the Glossy Black Cockatoos in the canopy
- Opportunities for increased awareness by the public of Culture and songlines:
 - » travelling routes across islands within the Harbour from Berrys Bay
 - » occupation of camps identified by middens across the foreshore.
 - » women fishing from canoes and gathering shellfish
 - » key figures such as Barangaroo

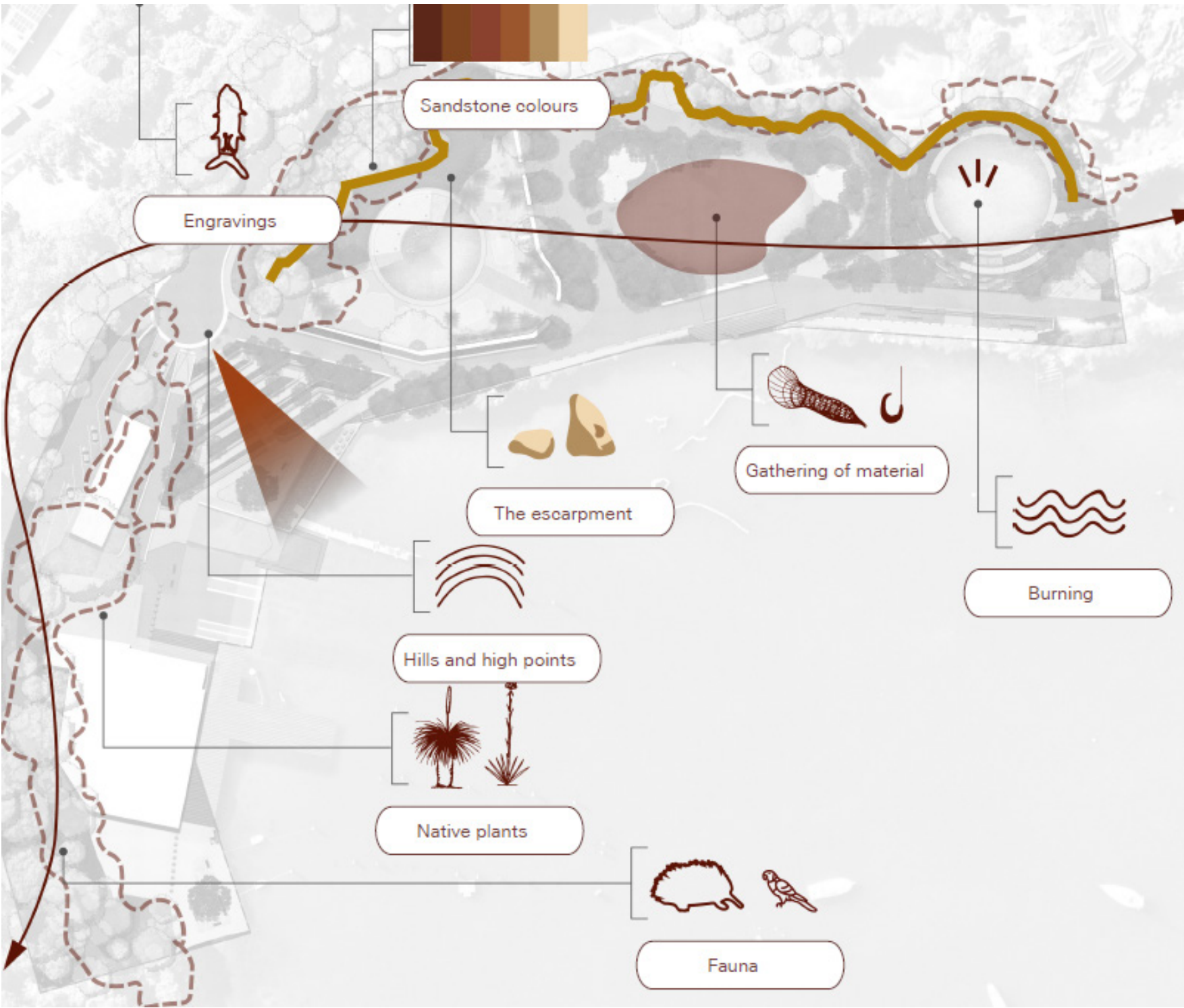


Figure 73: Terrestrial Country - themes presented and discussed at the beginning of Walk on Country 2
(design underlay represents design at time of consultation, with graphics indicative of themes and opportunities during early design stages)

3.3.6 Traditional watercraft and constructing nawis

Key project team members met with Uncle Dean Kelly to understand more of the history, cultural significance, construction techniques, and uses of nawi (bark canoes), with a view to integrating the nawi story with the Berrys Bay public domain and artistic works.

Dean is a Yuin Walbunja Shurga Gurung Wailwin Nyampi man, a member of the La Perouse community, and has been building traditional bark canoes for the past 12 years from a desire to learn, revive, and share age-old techniques.

From the consultation, the process of making nawi and the cultural significance of the process was better understood by the design team. This knowledge informed the interpretation of maritime legacy, stretching back beyond the industrialisation of the harbour and linking with the Traditional Knowledge Holders and patterns of habitation and movement across the Harbour.

The nawi story has informed the design development of the playground and will continue to be represented in further interpretation through wayfinding and art integration as the design of these elements is finalised.

As part of the project, the team remains engaged with Uncle Dean and exploring ways to support the preservation of knowledge around nawi craftsmanship.



Figure 74: Uncle Dean Kelly with a nawi he made from Stringybark. Photo courtesy Dean Kelly and as published in the St George & Sutherland Shire Leader 23-10-2021



Figure 75: Fishing no 1, foreign field sports, fisheries, sporting anecdotes from drawings by Messrs. Howitt, Atkinson, Clark, Manskirch, State of New South Wales. This drawing shows Aboriginal women fishing from nawi (canoes) with fires on board