



Property and Development NSW

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# Reconciliation Action Plan

February 2023 – February 2024





# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society.

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### Title

Property and Development NSW Reconciliation Action Plan  
February 2023 – February 2024

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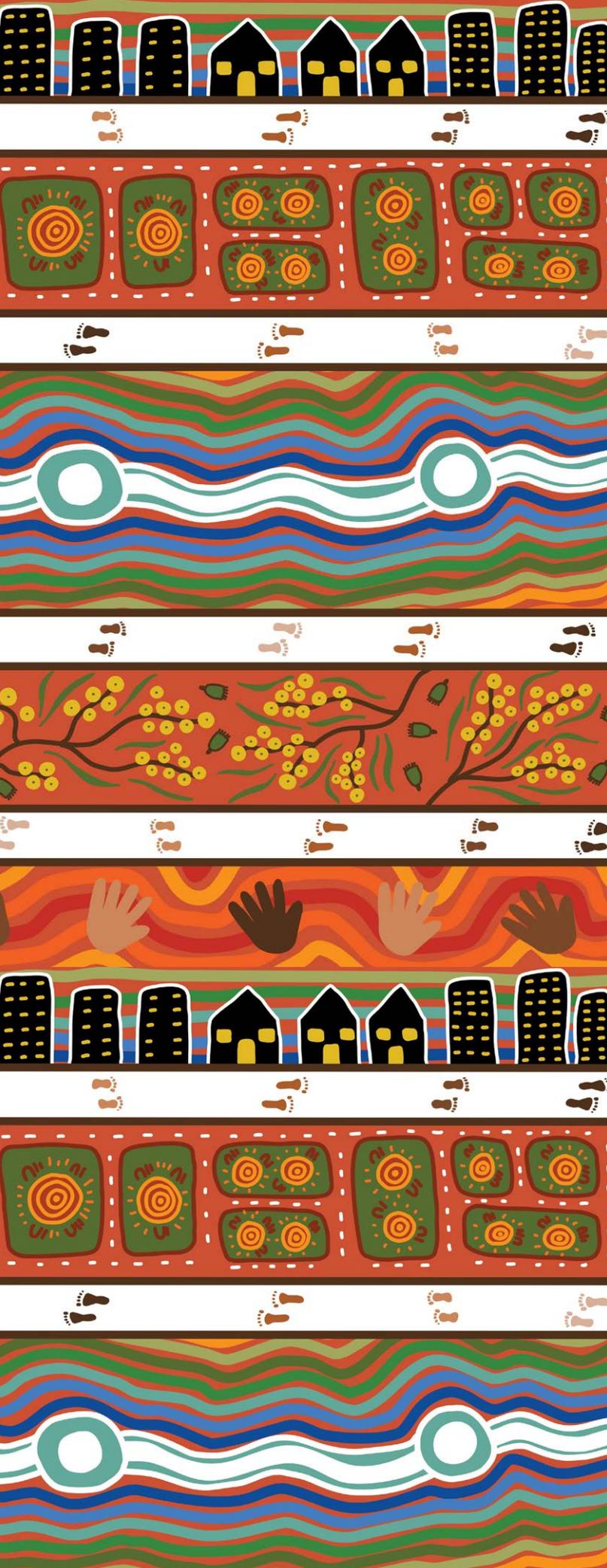
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Artwork by Sonny Green

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# Artwork and design

## Story

The figure in the centre is a pathway between two meeting grounds, within this context, it signifies two-way communication with the community. This idea of information travelling back and forth has been amplified by the footsteps between each section.

The houses and buildings represent property, while the aerial view represents the land and its people.

The florals represent care of the land and land management.

The hands represent a community focussed partnership and the process of building strong relationships with Aboriginal people and communities.

The colour scheme was inspired by the sun setting over country and the calmness of nature.

## Artist

Sonny Green is a proud Gamilaroi man from North Western NSW, a town called Moree – where he was raised. His family originates from Moree and Brewarrina. He has over six years of experience working in the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector, most notably in Aboriginal Health Research Ethics. Sonny's goal is to create art that is visually stunning and also weaves in strong storytelling components.



# Messages

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Property and Development NSW to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.



Property and Development NSW joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Property and Development NSW to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Property and Development NSW, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine

**Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia**



## I am delighted to present the first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan for Property and Development NSW (PDNSW).



At PDNSW, we're committed to working with Aboriginal communities as we partner with our agency partners to deliver purpose-led property solutions for government that reimagine property, rejuvenate environments and revitalise communities for the people of NSW.

Although this is our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we are proud of the work we have done to date in building strong partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organisations, as well as some of the commitments we have made to honouring Country and anchoring our projects and policies in Aboriginal voices.

We are committed to driving change in partnership with Aboriginal communities, but equally, we are committed to driving the cultural capability of our organisation and growing stronger minds and attitudes that respect and embed Aboriginal ways of working.

We want to build on these commitments and continue to challenge ourselves by making partnership with Aboriginal communities a feature of who we are.

To guide the implementation of this RAP, our key focus areas will be centred around building and strengthening relationships, taking a creative and collaborative approach to increasing Aboriginal employment and workforce development, and ensuring that our project work meaningfully considers how to embed Aboriginal governance at all stages.

Most importantly, we will remain open to continuous learning and ensure that our actions facilitate two-way communication. It is important that our organisation, through this RAP and beyond, undertakes deep listening and is open to hearing how we can continue to grow and walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

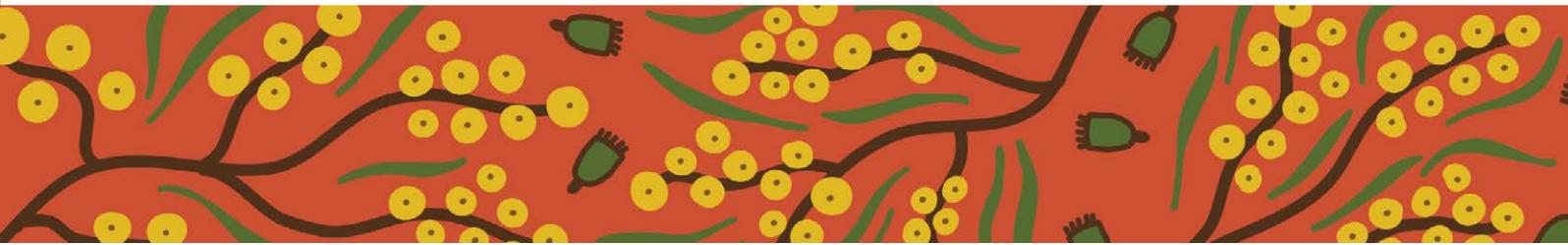
I am particularly proud to take on the role of RAP champion and, in partnership with my colleagues, guide the implementation of this RAP in our everyday business. As a leader of the business, I am committed to ensuring the principles in this RAP shape our leadership values and become part of how we behave.

I am committed to growing in my own journey, along with the organisation, and to ensuring that we are meaningfully listening, responding and taking action.

I look forward to this next important chapter of work at Property and Development NSW.

Leon Walker

**Deputy Secretary, Homes, Property & Development  
Chief Executive Officer, Property & Development NSW  
Department of Planning and Environment**



# Our business

PDNSW is part of the Homes, Property and Development Group within the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

As the central property agency for the NSW Government, we partner to create purpose-led property solutions that solve problems for our client agencies and harness whole of government opportunities to deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes for the people of NSW.

We provide end-to-end diversified property services. As property specialists, we design, deliver and manage workplaces, reimagine and divest government assets, lead sustainability and environmental programs, and create precincts that help communities to thrive. Our vast experience in large-scale, complex real estate and environment projects ensures we bring expert capability to every solution.

We recognise that all of our projects operate on Aboriginal land, and one of our key priorities is to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in partnership with Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal communities.

Our Aboriginal workforce is currently a small one; however, it is a key focus of our business to increase this significantly over the coming years.

Our reach is truly state-wide. We employ over 150 people and have a presence in multiple communities across regional and remote NSW.

Our network of key stakeholders extends to Aboriginal Land Councils and a range of other Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, as well as other state and local government bodies, who share a focus on driving reconciliation.

# Our teams

## Commercial Development and Management

Commercial development and management services for the NSW Government workplace and property portfolio including strategy, leasing, development, delivery and asset management.

## Advisory and Transactions

Development management and real estate advisory services for green and brownfield projects, including transaction management on behalf of NSW Government landowning agencies, providing strategic advice on the most innovative uses of government land and property to help achieve the maximum benefit for the community.

## Environmental Services Group

Incorporating Waste Assets Management Corporation, advisory and project management of environmental projects and sustainability technology projects and management and rehabilitation of contaminated land.

## Precinct Development

Work with multiple stakeholders to co-create and facilitate the delivery of place-based and vision-led precincts for the State's economic and public benefit.

## Office of the Deputy Secretary – PDNSW Operations

Delivery of divisional strategic projects and PDNSW operations, stakeholder engagement and communications, procurement assurance, compliance, health and safety, risk management, finance, and performance management and reporting.

# Our RAP

The purpose of our RAP is to make a public commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities through meaningful engagement and the development of effective partnerships with Aboriginal communities. This RAP also articulates PDNSW's commitment to identifying and creating employment opportunities across the workplace, including senior executive roles for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

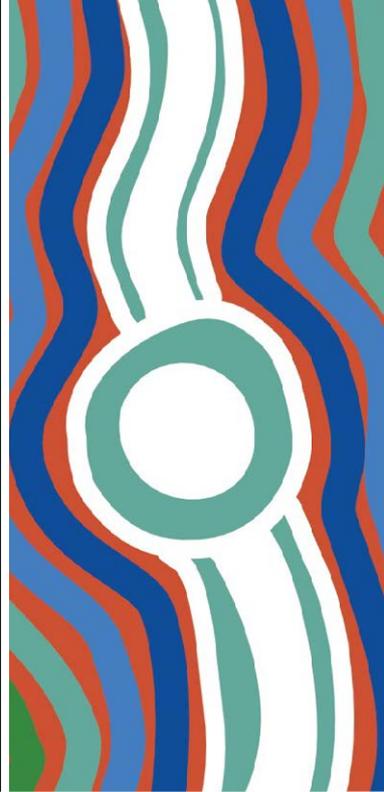
Our motivation for creating this RAP is to formalise our commitment in a way that can be transparent, open and celebrated. When our organisation talks about growing a stronger and more liveable NSW, we know that can only be done in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

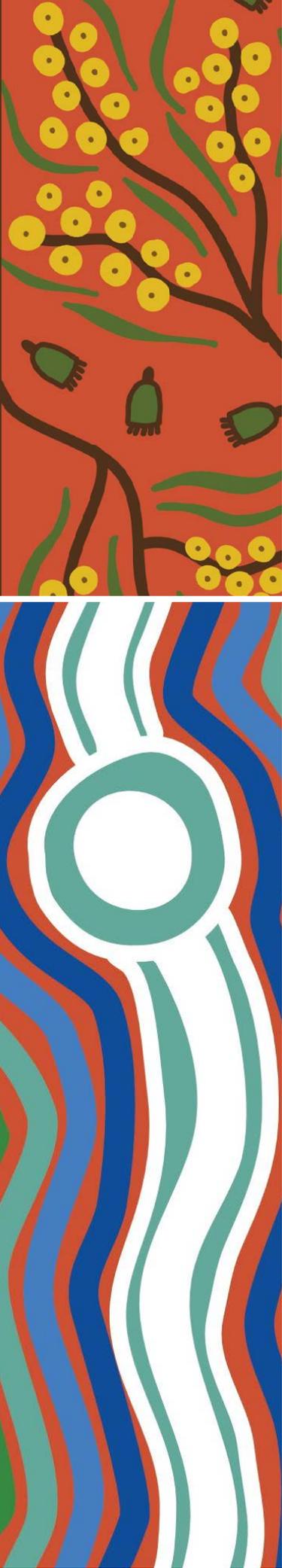
A significant amount of our work is focused on property and the built environment, including sustainability and remediation activities that contribute to healing and enhancement of the land. All of the land on which our activities are conducted and outcomes are achieved is Aboriginal land. We aim to ensure that our work considers the environmental, cultural and spiritual health of Country, and aligns with aspirations that Aboriginal communities may have for their families, regions, businesses and our state.

We intend to approach the implementation of our RAP in a way that encourages collaborative decision making across our organisation, with the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Many of our commitments are focused on things like holding yarning circles to listen and learn, embedding two-way communication channels so that we aren't just advising, but rather having meaningful dialogue, and reporting regularly and openly to community to increase accountability to critical stakeholders.

We also see opportunity to work across our own sector in delivering better Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes and genuinely embedding NSW Government frameworks such as Connecting with Country in a way that strengthens the NSW Government's objective of better use of government land and property. Our RAP sets a tangible platform to begin that engagement, cross-sector collaboration and community partnership.

We have made some progress to date in embedding important, respectful protocols, such as Acknowledgments of Country in our business practice, exploring a dual naming policy in NSW to honour traditional names of Country, and building partnerships with Aboriginal Land Councils and organisations in the delivery of project work.





# Our vision

At the forefront of purpose-led property solutions for government, we're reimagining property, rejuvenating environments and revitalising communities, for the people of NSW.

Our vision for reconciliation is for an Australia that not only respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge but that actually embeds that in the way we think, behave and approach building stronger communities. It means fostering joint decision making and taking time to have respectful conversations, to guide how we walk together.

PDNSW is committed to improving diversity and inclusion through improved engagement with staff and community stakeholders throughout NSW. One of our primary commitments is to work better with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to increase employment and economic opportunities.

PDNSW wants to be a leading agency in the application of the NSW Government Connecting with Country framework, through employing best practice in engaging with Aboriginal communities and providing opportunities to empower Aboriginal communities through consultation on the design and development of significant sites.

PDNSW wants to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, providing a culturally safe workplace, where all staff can be provided opportunities to reach their full potential.



# Our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

## Brewarrina

In 2020, the Yetta Dhinnakkal minimum security prison located near the town of Brewarrina, in remote north-west NSW, was closed. Corrections NSW, aware that the facility provided local employment and supported the local economy, was keen to ensure the any reuse of the facility would benefit the community. Corrections NSW engaged PDNSW to work with the local community to develop ideas for future uses of the site.

PDNSW worked closely with the area’s Traditional Owners – the Ngemba, Ualiarai, Murrawarri and Wailwan groups – as well as Brewarrina Shire Council, to identify potential uses of the site. A campaign, ‘Call for Future Use’, was developed, which called for community to put forward ideas. All stakeholders emphasised that community should be at the centre of decision-making processes concerned with the site.

The community identified the need for the land to be returned to its traditional owners, as well as using the facilities on the site to be used as a women’s rehabilitation service. The Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council sought access and control of the lands to enable community members to undertake production and agricultural activities. An agreement was reached to transfer some of the lands to Brewarrina Shire Council, which will lease the site to Orana Haven Aboriginal Corporation. Orana is in the process of establishing a drug and alcohol rehabilitation service on the site that will allow Aboriginal women from the area to receive treatment without having to travel long distances or attend mainstream services. The facility will allow



**PDNSW CEO Leon Walker, Brewarrina Shire Council Mayor Vivian Slack-Smith, Orana Haven Aboriginal Corporation Acting CEO Tracy Gordon, Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council Chairman David Kirby.**

these women to have their children with them while they receive treatment and care. The centre will also provide employment opportunities for local people, as well as attracting people with skills in health care, social work and education to the area, which will, in turn, support the local economy.

Brewarrina Shire Council also reached an agreement with the Local Aboriginal Land Council to transfer Aboriginal ownership of approximately 10,000 hectares of land that will be used for agriculture and cultural purposes.

These outcomes have seen a strengthening of relationships between the Brewarrina community and the NSW Government.



**Former Brewarrina Correctional Facility**



## Working with the Darkinjung people

In October 2022, in a landmark agreement, the NSW Government transferred ownership of Peat Island and a portion of the mainland foreshore at Mooney Mooney on NSW's Hawkesbury River to Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (DLALC). In the early 1900s, the island was established as an asylum for boys and men, with many of the facilities being built by the inmates and staff. It was only in 1951 that a school opened to provide the young male inmates with an education. Girls were admitted to the facility in the 1970s. Many patients lived out their entire lives on the island, having been admitted as children. The facility was closed in the 1980's and has laid dormant since.

The Darkinjung aim to rehabilitate the island and to establish economic and cultural opportunities on the island. The Darkinjung also propose to develop an Aboriginal Discovery Centre, an Indigenous Walking Path and other cultural tourism opportunities that will capture and help preserve the rich Aboriginal cultural heritage on and surrounding Peat Island.

The land transfer has been negotiated by PDNSW, on behalf of the NSW Government, with the DLALC. PDNSW have worked closely with the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council throughout the planning process, providing an opportunity to partner with First Nations people and to pay respect to a shared history. The DLALC is anticipating the site will become a showcase that preserves Aboriginal history in a way that respects the past use of Peat Island and its former residents.





# Design and delivery of workplace hubs

As part of the design and delivery of workplace hubs across metropolitan and regional NSW, PDNSW bring a supportive and inclusive focus for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and acknowledgement. Over the last five years the Portfolio Management and Development team has worked collaboratively with client agencies and Aboriginal consultant partners to:

- acknowledge Country signage in foyer and meeting rooms
- celebrate and display local Aboriginal art and sculptures in both base building and workplace fitouts
- create outdoor areas for collaboration in the landscape design with the integration of native flora
- create Indigenous working groups for consultation in the design process
- ensure culturally appropriate ceremonies such as smoking ceremonies prior to the occupation of staff in new workplaces





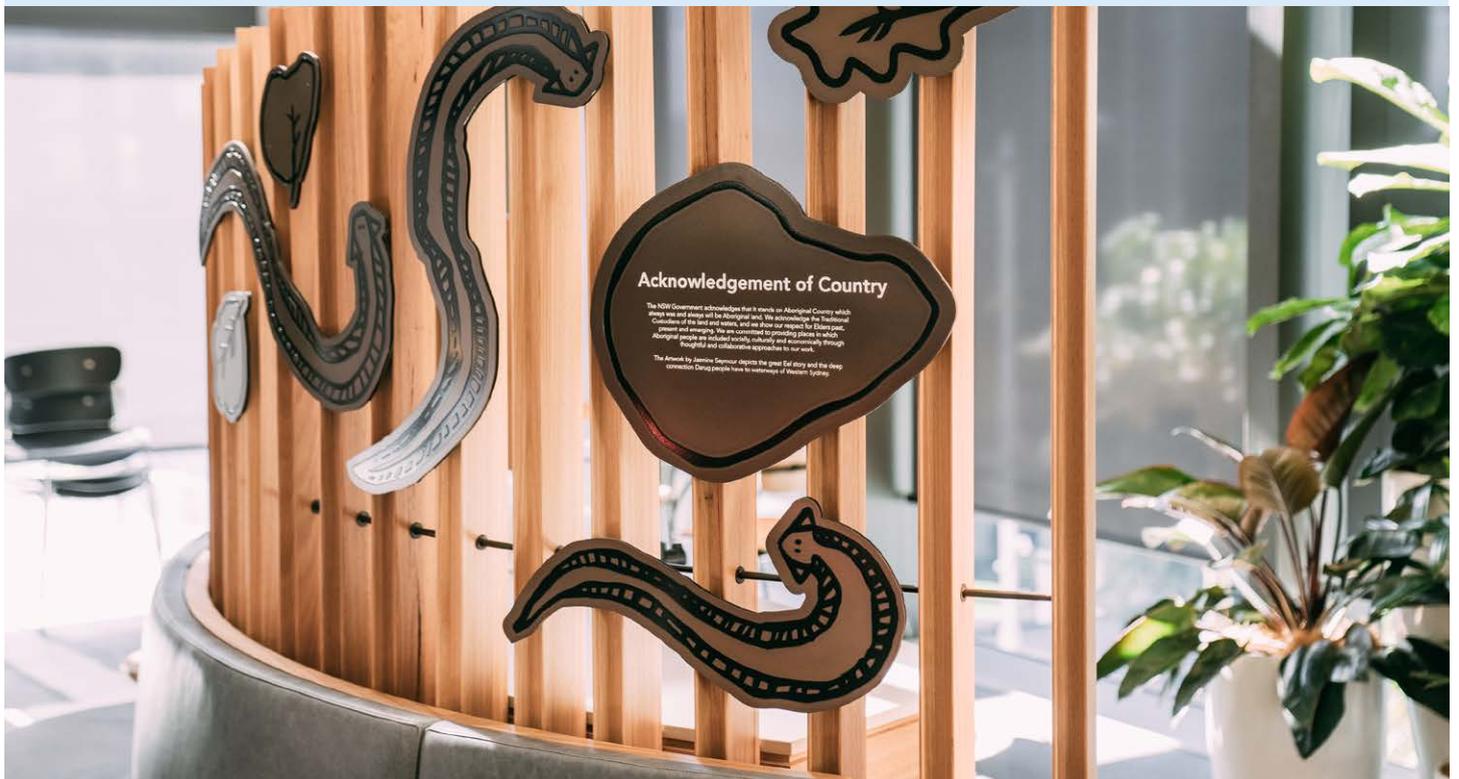
## Parramatta Square

PDNSW worked with the Aboriginal, Sydney-based design agency, Balarinji, to develop a Welcome to Country for Parramatta Square.

Two concept designs from local Aboriginal artists were presented, with the final design by Jasmine Seymour being chosen and installed at 6 Parramatta Square. Jasmine's work depicts the great Eel story and the deep connection Darug people have to waterways of Western Sydney. Eels have a unique ability to swim in both freshwater and saltwater and can also live out of water for periods of time. Their annual migration from one environment to the other was a seasonal indicator and signified the time for neighbouring cultural groups within the

Sydney Basin to gather together. Like the eels, both saltwater and freshwater people congregated during this season, and this story speaks to Aboriginal peoples' resilience and the enduring importance of coming together.

The Acknowledgement of Country passage included in the artwork was reviewed and endorsed by the department's Aboriginal People and Culture Team and the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office and is consistent with the passage physically linking NSW Government workplaces at 4 and 6 Parramatta Square.





# Relationships

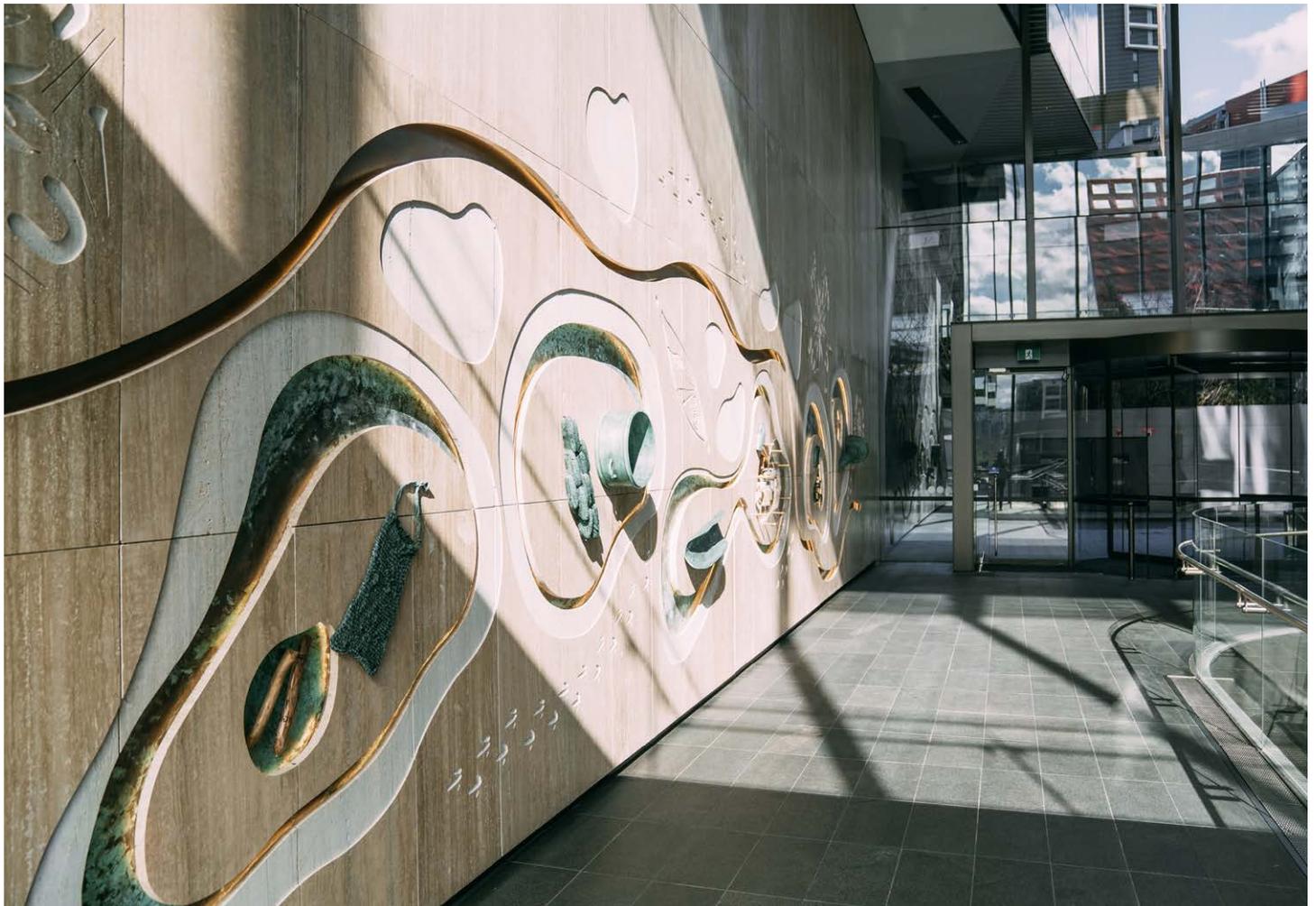
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations across NSW	Build strong relationships developed with numerous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders across NSW, including projects relevant Aboriginal Land Councils.	September 2023	Executive Directors: Advisory and Transactions Precinct Development Environmental Services Group Commercial Development and Management
	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	September 2023	Executive Directors: Advisory and Transactions Precinct Development Environmental Services Group Commercial Development and Management
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2023	Executive Director: Precinct Development
	Hold yarning circles with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to develop two-way understanding of specific developments and projects.  Build in Yarning Circles as an optional protocol for State significant projects and programs.	November 2023	Executive Director: Precinct Development



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Week resources and other reconciliation materials to all PDNSW staff.	May 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	PDNSW staff encouraged to participate in external NRW events in alignment with the Aboriginal Events and Engagement Strategy.	May 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	April 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Develop a RAP communications strategy and disseminate to all PDNSW staff.		
	Identify other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	September 2023	Executive Directors: Advisory and Transactions  Commercial Development and Management
	Explore at least one formal partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)		Precinct Development
	Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders with our RAP, to inform of our commitment to reconciliation.	June 2023,	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Commit to biannual community reporting through our website to update the community on our RAP achievements.	November 2023	
Embed Connecting with Country Framework within workplace development and delivery.	June 2023	Executive Director, Commercial Development and Management	
Provide PDNSW staff with education and ongoing support in respect to the Connecting with Country framework.	June 2023	Executive Directors	



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	September 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Align this research with existing Department policies		
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	September 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Ensure findings of this review align with existing Department policies		





# Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	Provide training and a program to increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.	October 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation building on the cultural learning needs review undertaken in 2021, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilise data from People Matter survey</li> <li>develop tailored survey for PDNSW staff</li> </ul>	October 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Moving from the pilot, deliver two experiential training sessions on Acknowledgement of Country and Indigenous engagement in partnership with Aboriginal stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this context, this would include either a workshop led by Traditional Custodians or a yarning circle involving Aboriginal community members. Align activities with the Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework</li> </ul>	June 2023, November 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Identify opportunities to embed Aboriginal knowledge across property development related workstreams, strategies and plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Aboriginal design from initial concept and then throughout a project's phases, ensuring appropriate Aboriginal input throughout project lifecycle.</li> </ul>	September 2023	Executive Director, Commercial Development and Management
	Provide training on the NSW Government Connecting with Country Framework for relevant employees.	June 2023	Executive Director



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	Develop guidance to identify and connect with the local Traditional Owner groups of the lands and waters across PDNSW operational area.	November 2023	Executive Director, Environmental Services Group
	Increase our understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>socialise and implement Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols.</li> <li>align any activity with the Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework and Learning Hub</li> </ul>	June 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Investigate an Acknowledgement of Country for all PDNSW buildings, offices, and project sites that meet select criteria.	July 2023	Executive Director, Commercial Development and Management
	Develop standardised Acknowledgement of Country wording across all of PDNSW.		
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC week.	Raise awareness and share information among our staff about the meaning and history of NAIDOC Week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>align activity with the Aboriginal Events and Engagement Strategy</li> </ul>	July 2023	RAP Champion
	Encourage all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participate in at least one event during NAIDOC Week.</li> <li>align activity with the Aboriginal Events and Engagement Strategy</li> </ul>	July 2023	RAP Champion
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2023	RAP Champion



# Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify and promote opportunities at all levels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment across PDNSW</li> <li>ensure PDNSW job advertisements and Role Descriptions are inclusive and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applications</li> <li>include opportunities to engage with high school and tertiary aged students to foster genuine employment opportunities</li> <li>meet with the NSW Public Service Commission to finalise the business plan</li> <li>ensure that the RAP is promoted as a core commitment of PDNSW when we are advertising open roles</li> <li>explore how this links in with the overall group people plan</li> </ul>	September 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	October 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Promote successful employment outcomes to communities to raise awareness of PDNSW, with the aspiration to becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	November 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Investigate cadetship and internship for First Nations peoples through developing relationships with tertiary institutions with courses relevant to PDNSW's services.	August 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Encourage participation in NSW public sector First Nations employee network from current First Nations employees and relevant internal First Nations staff networks.	June 2023, September 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Align with department protocols on procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses. This may include attendance of PDNSW at two Aboriginal business trade shows (one regional, one metropolitan).	December 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
	Create partnerships with local First Nations groups and commit to appropriate KPIs when undertaking projects in regional NSW, that will generate employment opportunities for local communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible consider commercial and economic opportunities for Aboriginal communities</li> </ul>	September 2023	Project leads
	Identify outsource service provider partnership opportunities to leverage Aboriginal supply chain opportunities and social procurement provisions.	December 2023	Executive Director, Commercial Development and Management
	Support and promote the department's Supply Nation membership.	May 2023	Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary
Lead on built environment projects	Utilise the Community of Use policy to continue to offer sites that meet the criteria to Land Councils.	December 2023	Executive Director, Advisory and Transactions
	Embed Connecting with Country Framework within master plans.	June 2023	Executive Directors: Advisory and Transactions Precinct Development



# Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	March 2023	RAP Champion
	• Draft a Terms of reference for the RWG.	March 2023	RAP Champion
	• Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	March 2023	RAP Champion
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2023	RAP Champion
	• Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2023	RAP Champion
	• Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	March 2023	RAP Champion
	• Define with RWG appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March 2023	RAP Champion
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	July annually	RAP Champion
	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August annually	RAP Champion
	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2023	RAP Champion
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2024	RAP Champion

