



FISHERMANS BEND

Aboriginal Cultural Values Interpretation Strategy

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| Built & Urban Heritage | Aboriginal Heritage | Archaeology | Interpretation | Intangible Cultural Heritage | World Heritage |

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Document Control Page

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CLIENT: Fishermans Bend Taskforce

PROJECT NAME: Fishermans Bend Aboriginal Cultural Values Interpretation Strategy

REAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION: Suburbs of Fishermans Bend, Lorimer, Wirraway, Sandridge & Montague

DATE: February 2017

EXTENT PTY LTD INTERNAL REVIEW/SIGN OFF				
WRITTEN BY	DATE	VERSION	REVIEWED	APPROVED
Ian Travers	3.11.16	V1 Draft	Jim Wheeler	3.11.16
Ian Travers	21.02.17	Final	Jim Wheeler	22.02.17

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment for Fishermans Bend has been to identify and understand the traditional, historical and contemporary cultural values and meanings of the study area; and, where possible, map specific places, features and landforms that have traditional, historical or contemporary Aboriginal values. The second stage of the project, which is the subject of this report, has been the development of an interpretation strategy that identifies how values can be interpreted, commemorated and celebrated in a meaningful, culturally appropriate and practical way.

Maintaining connections to heritage values and places is a vital part of the Aboriginal and wider community's sense of place and cultural identity. This strategy will provide important input into defining the characteristics of each neighbourhood and creating interesting places that contribute to the amenity of Fishermans Bend. It will also provide direction for incorporating the results of future more site-specific investigations.

The Stage 1 Cultural Values Assessment identified broad themes that encapsulate Aboriginal associations within the Fishermans Bend area, and this second 'Stage 2' Interpretation Strategy identifies methods through which these themes can be conveyed. The approach set out in the strategy provides a 'baseline'. A major recommendation of the strategy is that a formal process of consultation be undertaken with a suitably qualified cultural heritage consultant to identify potential interpretation opportunities. This should occur in the early design stages of larger specified development projects¹ to identify the most appropriate

site specific means of implementing the principles of the strategy that best achieve recognition of Aboriginal values, themes and stories specific to each part of Fishermans Bend. The recommendations from this consultation would inform the pre-application meeting with the Responsible Authority. Should specific aspects of cultural heritage be identified, consultation should be undertaken with Traditional Owner groups.

The Strategy provides objectives and principles for interpretation and then direction on the nature, content, focus, locations and methods to be used. It then includes strategies for progressing the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the area, including developing interpretation, relationships to other planning guidance, and links to other Initiatives supporting the Strategy.

¹ For the purpose of this strategy 'larger specified development projects' refers to sites with an interface to the Yarra River, large master planned sites, public buildings, sites with an interface to open space, corner sites, sites with an exposed design wall, landscaped areas, encumbered spaces, drainage reserves, town squares and parks, recreation areas, public spaces, boulevards, roundabouts, and the principal pedestrian network.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Strategy

Maintaining connections to heritage values and places will be a vital part of the future community's sense of place and cultural identity at Fishermans Bend.

The next stage of the Fishermans Bend renewal project will include development of detailed precinct plans for each of the five precincts. Development of these plans will be informed by the Interpretation Strategy (hereafter the 'Strategy') that is the subject of this report. The Strategy will provide important input into defining the characteristics of each neighbourhood and assist in creating interesting places via a history that is yet to be explored through urban planning.

This Strategy provides specific direction about the interpretation of Aboriginal Cultural Values for the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area (hereafter 'Fishermans Bend'). The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that the traditional, historical and contemporary cultural values and meanings held by Aboriginal people associated with Fishermans Bend are indelibly integrated into the renewal area in a meaningful, culturally appropriate and practical way.

This Strategy has been prepared by Extent Heritage on behalf of the Fishermans Bend Taskforce (FBT). It follows on directly from the Stage 1 Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment prepared on behalf of the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), which involved the following tasks:

- A review of relevant previous investigations of the study area and primary historical research to identify aspects of Aboriginal use and occupation of Fishermans Bend before European colonisation and since;
- Engagement with local Aboriginal communities to gain cultural knowledge of particular places and to identify themes, messages and storylines; and identify stories and traditions associated with

particular places and other intangible aspects of cultural heritage; and

- Identification of:
 - ♦ Aspects of the study area that may have influenced past Aboriginal settlement, e.g. waterways;
 - ♦ former and current areas, features and landforms that are associated with Aboriginal cultural values;
 - ♦ sites or places of significance identified in Aboriginal oral history, and the activities that occurred;
 - ♦ Significant intangible cultural heritage associations with the study area and larger themes across the landscape of which Fishermans Bend forms a part.

The resulting *Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment* report (Extent 2016) identified fourteen themes covering the Aboriginal cultural heritage of Fishermans Bend and provided an initial source of information for the development of related interpretation. The development of the Stage 2 Strategy is informed by the cultural values identified during Stage 1 of the project and has involved the following work tasks:

- Confirmation from the Aboriginal Traditional Owner groups of the themes and stories identified in the *Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment* report;
- Identification of opportunities to interpret, commemorate or celebrate significant associations between the local Aboriginal community and place, theme or storyline;
- Consultation with local communities to identify appropriate approaches and locations for interpretation;
- Identification of strategies for communicating themes and stories for interpretation of pre-contact and modern Aboriginal culture; and
- Consultation with the VPA, local LGAs and the FBT to develop a contemporary strategy tailored to meet the requirements of the planning and design process.

1.2 The Study Area

Fishermans Bend is the largest urban renewal area in Australia. It comprises approximately 485 hectares of land on the south side of the Yarra River, between Melbourne's CBD, the Port of Melbourne and Port Phillip Bay.

Fishermans Bend has been divided into five precincts. Lorimer Precinct and the Employment Precinct are situated in the City of Melbourne. The other three precincts – Wirraway, Sandridge and Montague – are part of the City of Port Phillip. The precincts of Fishermans Bend are shown in Figure 1.

Vision for the study area

The five Fishermans Bend precincts are envisioned to complement one another to achieve the State Government's growth vision for Fishermans Bend:

- Lorimer as a high-density residential precinct and an extension of Docklands, with supporting retail and civic uses.
- Montague as a high-density office and residential precinct, and an extension of Southbank and the city. It will also recognise its sensitive interface with South Melbourne.
- Sandridge as a mixed-use area of medium-density residential and commercial activities.
- Wirraway as a lower-rise family friendly residential extension of Port Melbourne, with 'high street' feel activity centres.
- Fishermans Bend as an Employment Precinct to attract new jobs and commercial/industrial premises, with a focus of high-tech industry.

At the time of writing, the Fishermans Bend Vision - The next chapter in Melbourne's growth story September 2016, has been released to propose a future for Fishermans Bend and its distinctive precincts up to 2050.

1.3 Use of the Strategy

Purpose and Users

This strategy is designed to provide guidance for the interpretation of Aboriginal heritage at Fishermans Bend.

It is designed to be succinct and easy to use.

The urban renewal of Fishermans Bend will take place over an extended period of time, and master planning is still in its early stages. Recognising that exact specifications may therefore become redundant, this document provides high-level guidance intended to remain relevant throughout initial redevelopment and beyond across the life of the project.

It is anticipated that the Interpretation Strategy will be consulted and used as follows:

- State Government agencies and Local Government Authorities (LGAs) will use the Strategy to ensure that Aboriginal cultural values and themes are reflected in developments which they undertake, resource or have a role in approving.
- The purpose of the strategy is to advise how developers may engage with Traditional Owner groups or their suitably qualified representatives early in the design process. The report recommends specific types of development which should address cultural heritage interpretation.
- The development industry and proponents will use this Strategy to ensure Aboriginal cultural values and themes are appropriately incorporated into proposed development designs for larger specified developments. For the purpose of this strategy 'larger specified development projects' refers to sites with an interface to the Yarra River, large master planned sites, public buildings, sites with an interface to open space, corner sites, sites with an

exposed design wall, landscaped areas, encumbered spaces, drainage reserves, town squares and parks, recreation areas, public spaces, boulevards, roundabouts, and the principal pedestrian network.

- All other development proponents will use the Strategy as a guidance document to incorporate Aboriginal cultural values and themes into development proposals, where feasible to do so.

Structure of the Strategy

This Strategy provides:

- objectives for interpretation
- principles for interpretation
- direction for interpretation, including the:
 - ◆ nature of interpretation
 - ◆ content for interpretation
 - ◆ focus of interpretation
 - ◆ locations for interpretation
 - ◆ methods for interpretation
- strategies for progressing the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the area.

Each of these elements forms a section of this document below.

Policy Framework

The Fishermans Bend Taskforce was established in January 2016 to deliver planning for Australia's largest urban renewal project. The Taskforce comprises staff from a range of State Government departments and agencies, City of Melbourne and City of Port Phillip. The Taskforce is working with all stakeholders as well as the local and future communities to develop a blueprint for transforming Fishermans Bend.

This Strategy will help to inform the preparation of the Fishermans Bend Framework and the five precinct plans.

The implementation of this Strategy will lie with the planning approval bodies associated with the Fishermans Bend precincts, including the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) at a state level and the City of Melbourne and the City of Port Phillip at a local level, through their statutory planning processes.

It is important to note that the Strategy has been prepared to be consistent with the Councils' existing commitments in relation to Aboriginal heritage, in particular through the implementation of the policy documents listed below. Should the implementation of this Strategy require further consultation with Traditional Owners, this consultation will be undertaken by Local Government, in accordance with the Councils' established procedures and policy context – both Councils have established working groups for consultation with Traditional Owners.

City of Melbourne Policy Context

Action 2.6 of the *City of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018* is to:

- 'Consider opportunities to inform and educate the community about Melbourne's Aboriginal heritage and culture.'

In support of this action, Measurable Target 2.6.1 of the Reconciliation Action Plan is:

- '*Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18* implemented.'

Within this separate *Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18* document, Action 2.2 is to 'Increase the level of interpretation at key places in a culturally appropriate manner while also ensuring sensitive places are protected', and the following supporting measures are prescribed:

- 2.2.2. Development of an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Policy; and
- 2.2.3. New interpretation signs at Aboriginal heritage places.

City of Port Phillip Policy Context

Several of the Actions in the *City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan 2012-2015* relate to increasing awareness of Aboriginal culture, including:

- '14. Signage – increase the use of signs in public locations that pay respect to the area's Traditional Owners – the Yalukit Wilam clan of the Boon Wurrung.'

A proposed action in the pending *City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan 2016-2019* will relate to the protection and recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage through the Fishermans Bend urban renewal project.

Links to Other Initiatives

The LGAs have undertaken programs and produced a large amount of interpretive material on the Aboriginal use and culture of the Melbourne area – see the example of interpretive material produced in association with the City of Port Phillip included in Figure 2. Furthermore, a number of large urban renewal or master planning projects are underway along the Yarra River and in the Melbourne CBD that involve consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage – major examples in the region are shown in Figure 3.

Interpretation in Fishermans Bend should seek to relate and tie in to these initiatives in the interests of achieving more effective presentation of Aboriginal culture and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage across the city. This will avoid duplication and promote a more coherent interpretation of the values and themes that cut cross the city.

Where existing interpretation material exists, the existing information and format should be complemented in Fishermans Bend rather than repeated or superseded. Similarly, connection with initiatives beyond Fishermans Bend should be explored, in consultation with the relevant bodies, in order to provide interpretation that responds to significant

Aboriginal cultural associations that extend beyond the area – for example, relating to the larger Yarra River / Birrarung corridor.

Integrating the Results of Future Cultural Heritage Works

The Strategy is designed to identify and present broad themes across the whole of Fishermans Bend as key inputs to inform the neighbourhood precinct planning and design process.

More intensive site-specific investigations, such as Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, will be required further along the development pathway for specific development activities triggered under the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2009*.

Proposed 'high impact activity' developments as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2009* that are located within areas of 'cultural heritage sensitivity' as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2009* will require the approval of a CHMP before a Planning Permit can be issued for the project. In these circumstances, preparation of a CHMP is mandatory, unless it can be demonstrated that the site has already been subject to 'Significant Ground Disturbance' (as defined by the Regulations). In circumstances where a mandatory CHMP is not required, such an investigation may still be undertaken on a voluntary basis where the risk of impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage is believed to be high.

Under Regulation 23, all of Fishermans Bend within 200m of the course of the Yarra is deemed to be of cultural sensitivity. In addition, all of the land with 200m of Hobsons Bay (to be exact, the high water mark of the coastal waters of Victoria) is deemed to be of cultural sensitivity under Regulations 27 and 28.



In addition, the *City of Melbourne Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18* includes provisions for the following:

- Voluntary CHMPs undertaken on all “high impact” CoM building development projects, as defined by the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007; and
- Advice provided to developers encouraging Voluntary CHMPs for all “high impact” building development projects as defined by the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

The results of CHMPs and, where they relate to Aboriginal people, the results of all future cultural heritage investigations undertaken at Fishermans Bend, should be used to contribute further content and detail that can be used in the implementation measures recommended in this Strategy. It is envisaged that these investigations will provide information, and perhaps cultural material, that is specific to particular properties and can provide an additional complementary layer to the broad thematic framework for the whole of Fishermans Bend that is provided by the *Cultural Values Assessment* report.

1.4 Authorship

This strategy was written by Ian Travers, Senior Associate at Extent Heritage, with contributions by Heritage Advisors Lucy Welsh, Emma Beckett and Hannah Forrest. The strategy was reviewed by Jim Wheeler, Managing Director of Extent Heritage.

1.5 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for their assistance and valuable input into the project:

- Ron Jones, Bobby Mullins, Alan Wandin, Perry Wandin, Alice Kolasa, Colin Hunter Jnr, Sean-Paul Stephens and Alex Parmington of the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council
- Gheran Steel, Carolyn Briggs and Robert Anthony of the Boon Wurrung Foundation

- Dan Turnbull, Chris West and Fiona Newson of the Bunurong Land Council
- Gail Dawson, Robert Ogden and Phillip Thomas of the Bunurong Land and Sea Association (now merged into the Bunurong Land Council)
- Stephanie Harder, Courtney Daniels, Karoline Ware and Ken King of the VPA
- Julie Hallyburton, Todd Berry and Andrea Kleist of the Fishermans Bend Taskforce
- Rueben Berg of Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria (IADV)
- Jeanette Vaha’akolo, Senior Indigenous Policy Officer in the City of Melbourne Aboriginal Melbourne Team
- Todd Condie, Senior Indigenous Policy Officer at the City of Port Phillip.




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Drawn by: Lucy Welsh
 Checked by: Jim Wheeler
 Date: 22 March 2016
 Projection: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
 Data sources: Extent, NearMap



Fisherman's Bend Aboriginal Cultural Values Interpretation Strategy

 Fishermans Bend Precincts

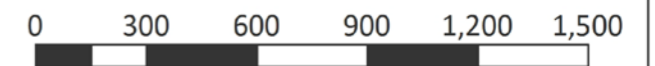


Figure 1 – The five precincts of the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area

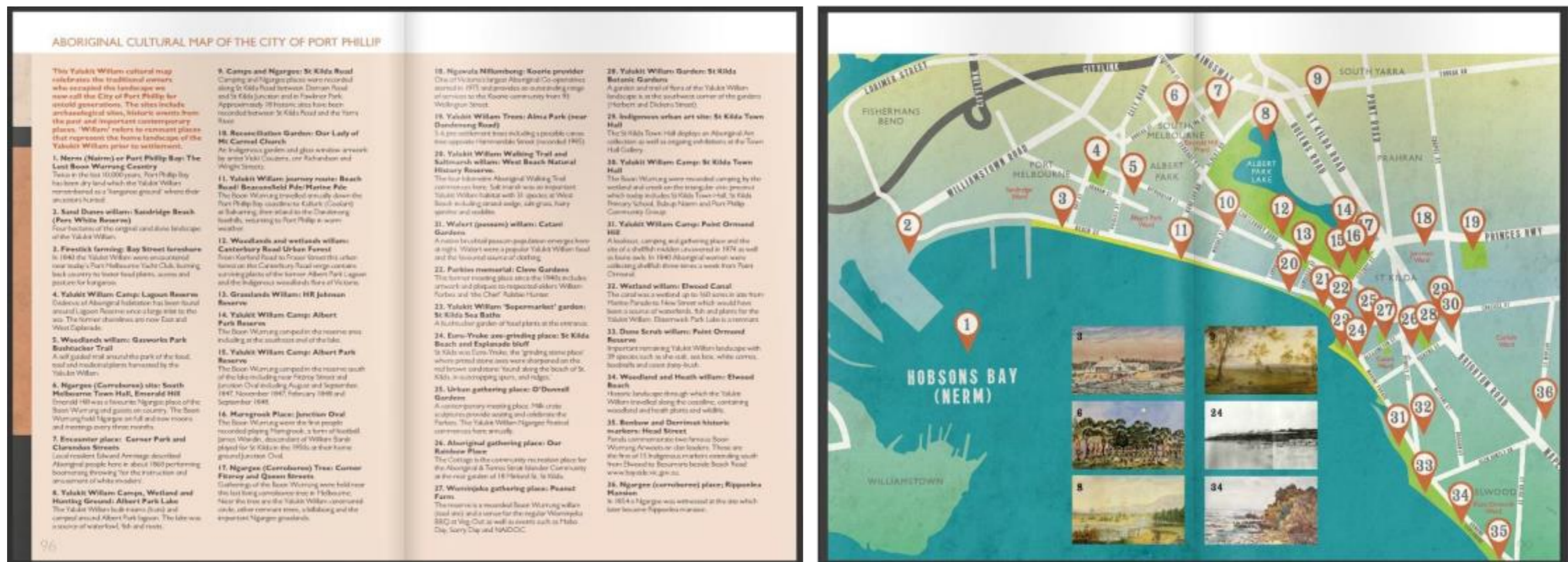


Figure 2 – Aboriginal Cultural Map of the City of Port Phillip in Eidelson M. 2014 Yalukit Willam; The River People of Port Phillip City of Port Phillip in consultation with the Boon Wurrung Foundation, showing places of Aboriginal cultural significance to the south of Fishermans Bend, to which interpretation should link



Figure 3 – Major renewal, or master planning projects, along the Yarra River corridor and in the Melbourne CBD (November 2016)

2 Objectives of the Interpretation Strategy

Objectives of development in the Fishermans Bend precincts should include the following:

- Establish a consistent long-term strategy for the incorporation and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural values and themes that ensures goals are shared and efforts are complementary in the long-term.
- Build awareness of the Aboriginal significance of the area and of the continuing presence of Aboriginal people, acknowledging and respecting Aboriginal language, tradition and ceremony.
- Create an Aboriginal identity for the area, in which all non-Aboriginal residents and visitors are aware of its Aboriginal significance.
- Acknowledge and celebrate local Aboriginal culture and achieve a sense of place for the Aboriginal community, through which Traditional Owners can recognise their cultural roots and ancestors.
- Strengthen Traditional Owners relationship with their Country at Fishermans Bend through:
 - ◆ Recognition of, and respect for, its cultural heritage significance;
 - ◆ Re-introduction of Aboriginal language and cultural activities to the area; and
 - ◆ Creation of places at which people from the Aboriginal, and wider, community can gather.
- Create opportunities for young Aboriginal people to be involved in the presentation, interpretation and strengthening of Aboriginal culture at Fishermans Bend.
- Recognise the profile of the Yarra River ('Birrarung') and Hobson's Bay, as significant landscape features as part of the development of Fishermans Bend.
- Use Indigenous species that would have been represented in pre-European vegetation communities at Fishermans Bend as part of revegetation works to improve biodiversity and create a connection

with aspects of the landscape that existed before European settlement.

- Cross-reference Aboriginal cultural heritage with other heritage themes in Fishermans Bend to reduce the 'otherness' of Aboriginal cultural heritage and create positive impacts on community attitudes.
- Tie the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage at Fishermans Bend into interpretation initiatives implemented across the wider metropolitan area, to reflect the extension of relevant themes across the landscape.

3 Methodology

The methodology employed in the preparation of this strategy is summarised below.

The general philosophy and process used in the development of the Strategy is adopted from the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (2013) which defines interpretation as, ‘all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place. Interpretation may be a combination of the treatment of fabric; the use of and activities at the place; and the use of introduced explanatory material.’

The approach adopted is in line with the protocols for Traditional Owner engagement established by the City of Melbourne and City of Port Phillip through their Reconciliation Action Plan and the former’s Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015-2018. It is also informed by recent cultural values assessments designed in partnership with Aboriginal community stakeholders.

3.1 Cultural Values Assessment

Preparation of the *Cultural Values Assessment* report entailed the following steps:

Background Information Report

Prior to the consultation sessions a ‘Background Information Report’ was assembled and sent out to the Traditional Owner organisations. The purpose of the background report was to provide the attending Aboriginal representatives with contextual background information to support their contribution to the cultural values workshops.

Aboriginal Community Consultation

There is currently no single traditional owner group recognised through the Registered Native Title claimant process, the Victorian Traditional Owner Settlement claimant process or Registered Aboriginal Party

(RAP) process. Therefore, potential Aboriginal knowledge holders were identified through Aboriginal Traditional Owner claimant bodies that have either submitted Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) applications covering Fishermans Bend in the past or have membership who were involved in those prior RAP applications. The following Traditional Owner claimant organisations were identified as relevant to the study area:

- Boonwurrung Foundation
- the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
- the Bunurong Land and Sea Association
- Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council.

The purpose of consultation was to identify cultural values, places and traditional stories associated with the land that need to be considered in planning and may be included in development of a heritage interpretation strategy.

The consultation entailed a three-staged process, including:

- Inception Meetings with each group (in January and February 2016);
- Bus tours and cultural values workshops (in February and March); and
- Additional consultation with specific Elders unable to attend the workshop

Workshops were held in July, August and September 2016.

Draft Report

The Stage 1 work resulted in a draft *Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment Final Report* setting out prevailing themes and identifying specific places and landscape features of significance to the Aboriginal stakeholders and knowledge holders.

3.2 Interpretation Strategy

Preparation of the Interpretation Strategy entailed the following steps:

Inception Meeting

An inception meeting was attended by the FBT and VPA to review the project to date and confirm the requirements for the Strategy.

Review Workshops

Workshops were held in July and August 2016 with each of the Traditional Owner claimant organisations² to confirm the themes and stories presented in the draft *Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment Report* and to gain approval for use. The meetings also provided opportunity to discuss appropriate approaches for inclusion of the content in the Interpretation Strategy.

Additional Research

Additional research was carried out to provide supporting content in relation to identified themes and stories. This addressed topics identified for further research in the Draft *Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment Report*.

Coordination with Other Complementary Projects

The consultant team contacted other agencies responsible for other projects addressing Aboriginal heritage in the metropolitan area to identify opportunities and requirements for cross-project (inter-authority) interpretation initiatives.

Identification of Methods and Options for Interpretation

Responding to the above tasks, methods and options for interpretation of the agreed themes and stories were explored, including: traditional installation approaches, multimedia content and cross-platform

strategies, commissioned artworks, heritage inspired design and design guidelines for built form, infrastructure and open space.

Interpretation Workshops

Workshops meetings were held with the Traditional Owner claimant organisations at which the proposed interpretation methods and options were discussed in relation to the agreed themes, and the processes and mechanisms required to ensure appropriate Aboriginal community input into the development of Fishermans Bend were established.

These workshops were undertaken with input from Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria (IADV) who provided examples of installations and design approaches for integrating Aboriginal cultural heritage into development.

Interpretation Strategy

This Interpretation Strategy has been developed in A3 'master planning-style' landscape format to read easily with other similar level planning documents.

² By the time of this workshop, the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and the Bunurong Land and Sea Association had merged to form a single organisation under the former name.

4 Principles for Interpretation

The interpretation of Aboriginal cultural values in Fishermans Bend should be undertaken with regard to the following principles. These have been developed in consultation with the Traditional Owner claimant groups.

- The representation and appropriate interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage should be achieved through consultation with a suitably qualified cultural heritage consultant, to identify potential interpretation opportunities. This should occur in the early design stages of larger specified development projects³, to identify the most appropriate site specific means of implementing the principles of the strategy that best achieve recognition of Aboriginal values, themes and stories specific to each part of Fishermans Bend. The recommendations from this consultation would inform the pre-application meeting with the Responsible Authority. Should specific aspects of cultural heritage be identified, consultation should be undertaken with Traditional Owner groups. This process will ensure that Aboriginal cultural values are appropriately recognised and incorporated, and it should certainly be the case for developments that affect statutorily designated sites of significance. Ideally, consultation should be integral and ongoing. Both the City of Port Phillip and City of Melbourne have established working groups for consultation with Traditional Owners.
- The *Cultural Values Assessment* report identified broad themes that encapsulate Aboriginal associations with the Fishermans Bend area, and the Interpretation Strategy identifies methods through which these themes can be conveyed where opportunities arise. However,

this should be seen as a ‘baseline’, providing the minimum direction. In relation to statutorily designated sites of significance, ideally consultation with Traditional Owners should be undertaken to build on this baseline.

- The interpretation content recommended in this Strategy should be augmented with any cultural heritage material that is directly provenanced to each particular development site – for example, any archaeological finds that are recovered from related works (e.g. through a CHMP).
- Interpretation should recognise that Aboriginal attachments to the area, particularly those which precede European colonisation, often relate to the wider landscape and not just individual properties.
- Aboriginal people are not one homogenous group, and it is important to recognise the distinction between Traditional Owners of the land around Melbourne and the wider Aboriginal community – i.e. Aboriginal people from other parts of Australia, many of whom have lived and worked in the area.
- Aboriginal cultural values should not be confined to specific locales that might become segregated as ‘the Aboriginal place’, and should not be isolated from other heritage themes. Rather Aboriginal culture should be ‘built in’ across the environment through a mix of passive/background design elements and active interpretation installations and programs where appropriate. The result should reflect the previous and continued presence of Aboriginal culture throughout the Fishermans Bend area and beyond – stating clearly that ‘Aboriginal people are part of this place’.
- Interpretation materials, fabric and media need to be durable – measures should be taken to ensure security of tenure. Piecemeal changes that disrupt or undermine the coherent overarching narrative should be avoided.
- Aboriginal artwork or language should only be used in interpretation, or otherwise, in consultation with, and with permission from, Traditional Owners. In the case of language, agreement on appropriate wording should also be sought from the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL).

³ For the purpose of this strategy ‘larger specified development projects’ refers to sites with an interface to the Yarra River, large master planned sites, public buildings, sites with an interface to open space, corner sites, sites with an exposed design wall, landscaped areas, encumbered spaces, drainage reserves, town squares and parks, recreation areas, public spaces, boulevards, roundabouts, and the principal pedestrian network.

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- Themes and stories should be presented in a positive and accessible way that is mindful of the audience whilst being factually correct but. Interpretation should provide a positive focal point to use the precinct as a way of connecting the community.

5 Themes

The following Aboriginal heritage themes were identified at Fishermans Bend. More information is supplied in relation to each in the Stage 1 *Cultural Values Assessment* report.

5.1 Specific Themes

Formation of the Land and Landscape Change and Creation of Port Phillip

- The dynamic history of geographical formation at Fishermans Bend is intimately related to its human use.
- The formation of the landscape is tied to creation stories of Bunjil, the creation of the Birrarung (Yarra), and stories about the lost lands in the bay.
- Aboriginal people maintained and passed on the stories, providing a lens through which their adaptation from river to coastal people could be understood.
- Dramatic changes to the landscape had profound effects on Aboriginal people who lived on either side of Bass Strait in modern-day Victoria and Tasmania.
- Fishermans Bend holds a vast accumulation of sands deposited by the Yarra River since the end of the last Ice Age – high ridges of sand gave the name Sandridge to the area, but much of the area was flood prone with dense shrub.
- In addition to the obvious changes relating to the area's domestic and industrial development, more wholesale landscape changes have been made, including levelling and drainage.

Birrarung – The River of Mist

- Birrarung, the Yarra River, was a central focus of Aboriginal life in pre-contact Melbourne.
- The significance of water to Aboriginal people cannot be overstated – rivers were important arterial conduits to Aboriginal people, rather than barriers.

- The Yarra River was called 'Birrarung' – the 'River of Mist' by Aboriginal groups who lived along its banks.
- The river is the focus of many mythological and spiritual (intangible) attachments, including creation stories.
- The significant attachments to the river have already been impacted by the loss of the Yarra Falls (near Queen Street Bridge).
- The change of alignment to the Yarra is seen as unfortunate by the Aboriginal people, but the spiritual connection to the water continues.

Identity, Ownership and Survival

- There is disagreement between the different traditional owner claimant groups over whether the study area would have been Wurundjeri (Woi Wurrung) or Bunurong/Boon Wurrung Country.
- This land has been the subject of competing Registered Aboriginal Party applications to the Aboriginal Heritage Council.
- The dispute over land is genuine and deeply felt on both sides. It ties into identity, important cultural traditions about connection to country and the long struggle for survival and retention of culture in the face of dispossession and dislocation from traditional land.

Emerald Hill

- Emerald Hill was a prominent high point overlooking the swamplands and dunes of Fishermans Bend, which existed across the study area before European settlement. It was a culturally important site of ritual inter-tribal conflict and Ngargee ceremonies.
- The hill was a traditional social and ceremonial meeting place for a number of Aboriginal tribes.
- The European name 'Emerald Hill' would seem to relate to its verdant vegetation, contrasting with the surrounding wetlands and scrub of Fishermans Bend.
- The site became the Melbourne Orphan Asylum and then the extant South Melbourne Town Hall.
- The hills around Melbourne have individual and collective significance. Each was an important place for gatherings and ceremony and an important cultural landscape and boundary marker.

Resources of the Land and Water

- Fishermans Bend was a rich hunting and gathering ground for game, fish and tubers. Aboriginal people will have known when to use resources, judging by the seasons and meteorological/astrological observations.
- Aboriginal people have seen vast environmental variation and change in the area as the sea advanced and retreated, rainfall oscillated from very dry to very wet periods, and the topography varied.
- Available flora, fauna and mineral resources varied in composition and accessibility over long periods.
- Aboriginal people hunted kangaroos, possums, bandicoots, wombats and lizards; caught fish, aquatic birds and seasonally harvested eels, as well as collecting shellfish, bird eggs, a wide range of plants and tubers for food and medicine and bark from River Red Gums. Aboriginal fish traps are known to have been used in the area – possibly at Sandridge and along the lower reaches of the Yarra.
- Before the Fishermans Bend area was built up, there were lagoons along the line of Williamstown Road.
- The nearest, and probably the most reliable, freshwater was at the Yarra Falls. This high basalt ledge divided the river into two different freshwater and salt water ecosystems and provided the only crossing point for several kilometres.
- Aboriginal people still know Station Pier and Princes Pier to be good locations for collecting mussels.
- Hobson's Bay was a kangaroo ground before its inundation, and the Fishermans Bend wetlands continued to provide rich hunting grounds for waterbirds, if not for larger land mammals to the same extent as before.
- There are references to an Aboriginal quarry at Fisherman's Bend, but it seems unlikely given the surface geology (i.e. lacking rocky outcrops). ('Fishermans Bend' was originally used to describe the area around the original northern curve of the Yarra, approximately 1.5 km to the north).

Cultural Routes through the Area

- The Fishermans Bend area was located at a confluence of Aboriginal routes.
- Rail lines and other major transport links may still follow the routes Aboriginal people took across the land.
- Sandridge, now City Road, was probably a traditional route from the edge of Port Phillip to the Yarra Falls.

Role of Aboriginal Women

- There is a lot of focus on the roles of Aboriginal men and significant male individuals, but less on the roles and activities of women.
- Women were largely responsible for keeping knowledge and transferring it to the younger generations.
- Aboriginal women played a key role in ceremonies, like those which occurred on Emerald Hill.
- The reading of the stars and constellations was a very important part of women's business.

Significant Elders Past

- The workshops raised a number of significant historic Aboriginal individuals who are known to have been active in the study area or to have strong associations with it.
- These included Derrimut, William Barak, Yaunki Yaunker, Benbow, Billibellary and Poleorong.

Contemporary History and Relationships to the Wider City

- It is important to stress the importance of contemporary Aboriginal history, as well as the distant past.
- Fishermans Bend is not just an isolated area. The study area is integral to broader themes and stories of the city – e.g. colonisation and migration.

20th Century Living and Working in Fishermans Bend

- Aboriginal people came to work in the area from around the country.
- People who had been displaced had to create a new way of living, as with other migrants from elsewhere. It was a case of 'survival and adaptation'.
- Aboriginal people would more likely have been working in the study area until after the 1940s and 1950s when people started to come off the missions.

Coming Back from the Missions

- The importance of the 20th century history of many Aboriginal families returning after living on the missions cannot be over-emphasised.
- This migration narrative is part of a larger theme across the city and the broader community.

Recreation

- Like the rest of the community, Aboriginal people continue to use the area – particularly the coast, for recreation.
- There are likely many Aboriginal connections with the Port Melbourne Football Club.

Recent Ecological Initiatives

- Initiatives like the Port Phillip Eco-centre and Port Phillip Bay Keeper programs are involving the Aboriginal community in coastal management all around the bay.
- Parks Victoria is directing the management of Westgate Park to emulate Perce White Reserve to the south, the only site of remnant dune vegetation that pre-dates European colonisation of Port Phillip Bay.
- These ecological initiatives are part of traditional cultural obligations to care for Country.

5.2 Relationship to National and State Thematic Frameworks

The national and state themes that apply to Fishermans Bend are outlined in Table 1 below⁴. These have been matched to specific stories in the right hand column and specific local themes to the far left. The national and state themes can be used to look at sites across Victoria or Australia wide and compare places that have similar histories and values. They provide a common framework that can be used to identify key facets of the significance of a place.

⁴ National heritage themes developed by the Australian Heritage Commission (2001) can be found at <http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/e5e08ce4-5d6e-421d-8cba-1f76a16519e8/files/australian-historic-themes.pdf>; and

Victorian state heritage themes developed by the Heritage Council of Victoria (2010) http://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Victoria_Framework_Historical_Themes_themes2.pdf

Table 1 – Aboriginal cultural values and stories: identified local, national and state themes at Fishermans Bend

Fishermans Bend Themes	Australian Theme	Victoria Theme	Victoria Sub-theme
Formation of the land and landscape change The creation of Port Phillip – the time of chaos	1. Tracing the evolution of the Australian environment	1. Shaping Victoria's environment	1.1 Tracing climatic and topographic change
			1.2 Tracing the emergence of Victoria's plants and animals
			1.4 Creation stories and defining country
Identity, ownership and survival Role of Aboriginal women Emerald Hill Ngargee place Coming back from the missions	2. Peopling Australia	2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes	2.1 Living as Victoria's original inhabitants
			2.2 Exploring surveying, mapping
			2.6 Maintaining distinctive cultures
			2.8 Fighting for identity
Cultural routes	3. Developing local, regional and national economies	3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications	3.1 Establishing pathways
The River – Birrarung Resources of the land and water Formation of the land and landscape change	3. Developing local, regional and national economies 5. Working	4. Transforming and managing land and natural resources	4.1 Living off the land 4.2 Living from the sea 4.7 Transforming the land and waterways
Living and working in Fishermans Bend	3. Developing local, regional and national economies 5. Working	5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce	5.2 Developing a manufacturing capacity
Post contact and contemporary history and relationship to the city Significant Elders past	4. Building settlements, towns and cities	6. Building towns, cities and the garden state	6.2 Creating Melbourne 6.8 Living on the fringes
Role of Aboriginal women Identity, ownership and survival Coming back from the missions	7. Governing	7. Governing Victorians	7.2 Struggling for political rights
Emerald Hill – Ngargee place Recent Ecological Initiatives	6. Educating 9. Marking the phases of life	8. Building community life	8.1 Maintaining spiritual life 8.5 Preserving traditions and commemorating
Recreation	8. Developing Australia's cultural life	9. Shaping cultural and creative life	9.1 Participating in sport and recreation

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Fisherman's Bend Cultural Values Assessment

- Study Area
- 4 April 1839-The Port Phillip Native Corroboree
- 14 March 1839-Location of William Thomas's census
- 15-19 September 1839-The Body of Langhorne's servant is found
- 25 April 1838-Tullamarina
- 1840-Emerald Hill Corroboree
- c.1840s-200 Aboriginal Evacuation
- 19th century-William Barak
- Former Line of Hobsons Bay
- Emerald Hill Corroboree Site
- Former Course of the Yarra 19th Century
- Former GM Holden Apprentice Training Facility
- GM Holden
- Lagoon Reserve
- Perce White Reserve
- Point Park
- Westgate Park

Drawn by: Lucy Welsh
Checked by: Ian Travers
Date: 12 December 2016
Projection: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
Data sources: Extent, NearMap

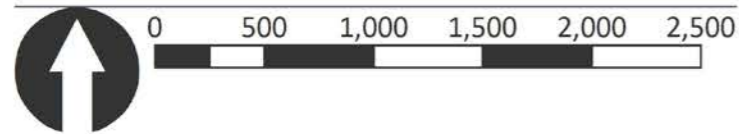


Figure 4 – Aboriginal cultural values mapping for Fishermans Bend (from the Cultural Values Assessment report)

6 Interpretation Direction

This section provides direction on the following:

- **Nature of interpretation** – conveying stories/themes and place-making
- **Content for interpretation** – including sources of additional information
- **Focus of interpretation** – considering the likely audience and practicalities of scale
- **Locations for interpretation** – broad guidance on where interpretive material or design can be incorporated into Fishermans Bend
- **Methods for interpretation** – various approaches to be used individually or in combination to present and interpret Aboriginal cultural heritage in the area.

A series of strategies for progressing the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage are set out.

6.1 General Approach

Proposals for interpretive actions should employ locations, materials, forms and content (text and images or design inspiration) to best convey the theme so that a theme or story can be experienced on a number of levels.

A didactic message is an obvious form of interpretation where the message is clear. However, other ways of telling a story may be less apparent, revealing a story in a more passive, and perhaps more emotional, level where the message is perceived or discovered, and these approaches may require more than one visit to enable the message to unfold over time.

Interpretation must be practical, having regard to the purpose, character and function of the spaces or places in which it will exist. The intention of interpretation is to convey the significant cultural values of a place, and

‘practical’ interpretation is able to achieve this in a way that is appropriate to the location and its particular circumstances.

6.2 Additional Traditional Owner Consultation

It is important to recognise that knowledge of Aboriginal cultural values relating to the area will increase and mature, even amongst the Traditional Owner groups, through the projected long life of the renewal project, including the preparation of the Fishermans Bend Framework and Precinct Plans.

Therefore, ideally, each instance of interpretation development should be informed by consultation with the relevant Traditional Owner groups to gain additional direction to those provided in this strategy specific to the circumstances of the particular scheme. Input should be sought on each of the areas addressed below – a recommended process for this is set out under ‘Frequency of Interpretation’ below.

6.3 The Nature of Interpretation

The goals of Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretation at Fishermans Bend are broadly twofold:

- To convey the significant Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the area in a way that builds understanding and respect and encourages the safeguarding and strengthening of Aboriginal culture.
- To assist in ‘place-making’ within the Fishermans Bend urban renewal, including to:
 - ♦ Broadly contribute to the creation of urban and local neighbourhood character and amenity, and;
 - ♦ Create places for the use of, and to become valued by, the Aboriginal community.

Action 4 of the *City of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018* establishes an intention to ‘support the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community’s efforts to establish an Aboriginal gathering place in the area’, and it may be that this can be achieved at Fishermans Bend.

In relation to Indigenous place-making, Pieris et al (2014) state that *'The creation, maintenance and dissemination of knowledge on these cultural spaces requires sustained collaborative efforts between state government bodies, Aboriginal communities and local interest groups'*.

Particular interpretation schemes within Fishermans Bend should bear the above in mind and be clear in their intention, although it can be the case that valued 'places' develop organically where significance is revealed.

It should be recognised that, whilst some of the identified Aboriginal cultural heritage themes relate to the pre-contact past, many relate to after colonisation and to a continually evolving history. Whilst sufficient respect should be paid to the Aboriginal heritage, it should not be regarded as 'separate', but should be viewed as a part of the wider heritage of the place. Indeed, where possible Aboriginal heritage interpretation should occur in conjunction with the interpretation of broader heritage themes to assert this related layering of stories. This should especially be the case in relation to entities of 'shared value' such as the site of the GM Holden Factory which is known to have employed at least several Aboriginal people and thus has significance to both the Aboriginal and wider community.

Coordination of Interpretation

It will be necessary for one or more bodies to coordinate the development of Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretation (as with other heritage interpretation) across Fishermans Bend, especially as development of the renewal area will occur through numerous disparate developments over a prolonged period of time. The role could be performed by a state agency, the City of Melbourne or City of Port Phillip or a working group comprised of members from each, with the involvement of Traditional Owner representatives.

Coordination should promote interpretation throughout the Fishermans Bend area and ensure that schemes are complementary. Steps should be taken to ensure that all of the themes identified in the *Cultural Values Assessment* report are covered, but repetition of message or method

should be avoided if this undermines the effectiveness of the interpretive offering as a whole. Ideally interpretation should follow a standardised format to convey a unified message, but this may not be possible given the multiple jurisdictions under which the area will be developed.

6.4 Content for Interpretation

Content and inspiration for interpretation should be derived from a range of sources, as follows.

Cultural Values Assessment

The *Cultural Values Assessment* report that supports this strategy should be the first point of call for the development of Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretation at Fishermans Bend. Interpretation should reflect one or more of the themes identified (summarised above).

Additional Existing Sources of Information

Several additional studies have been undertaken, which provide contextual information relevant to the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Fishermans Bend area, including its broader (non-Aboriginal) cultural heritage. In addition, several studies of the Aboriginal heritage of the wider area have been produced. Relevant studies are listed in References below.

Material from Site-specific Investigations

Information, and potentially cultural material, from archaeological investigations that are specific to the site (for example a CHMP) should be reflected in interpretation.

Figure 5 provides an example of how material from a site could be displayed within an interpretive installation in an interesting and engaging way (although the example shown is faunal (a snake skin), this approach could equally be followed with stone tools).

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Figure 5 – An example of the incorporation of site-specific material into interpretation installations – here a snake skin (Source: Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Playground. Image by Rueben Berg)

Input from relevant bodies

In addition to further consultation with the Traditional Owner groups on the content and inspiration for interpretation, input could be sought from relevant agencies. These should include wider consultation within local Councils – to encompass arts, culture and community strengthening sections in particular, and bodies such as Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria (IADV).

Incorporation of Aboriginal Language

Wherever possible, Aboriginal language should be used for naming locations in the Fishermans Bend development, and elsewhere in

interpretation. Use of traditional language – for example ‘Birrarung’, the Aboriginal name for the Yarra, would be a significant positive change and an important recognition of the original inhabitants. The wording should ideally tie into the relevant identified themes.

It is vital that the use of language occur with the agreement and permission of the Aboriginal community, and that there be full agreement on the wording – in relation to spelling, etc.

The relevant Traditional Owner groups have protocols for assisting in the provision of names and should be approached in the first instance, either directly or through the LGA. Action 2.6.2 of the *City of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan* relates to the development of naming protocols, in consultation with Traditional Owner Groups, to guide the Council process for naming of open spaces, reserves, roads, lanes and buildings.

Confirmation on wording to be used should be sought from the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL).

Aboriginal Artwork

The use of Aboriginal artwork for interpretive installations, to illustrate interpretation material and to inspire design is strongly encouraged.

Appropriate Aboriginal motifs should be identified through consultation with the Traditional Owner organisations, and these organisations and the LGAs will be able to identify Aboriginal organisations or individuals from whom original artwork can be commissioned.

6.5 Focus of interpretation

It is unrealistic to present every theme through every technique at every opportunity, and the interpretation of Aboriginal and broader cultural heritage must of course find its place amongst other community amenities. However, it is necessary to ensure that a minimum level of interpretation occurs, and to provide direction through which to achieve an optimum level.

The Audience for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Interpretation at Fishermans Bend

Conveying and commemorating the cultural meaning of places is fundamental to interpretation, but to some extent the range of potential audiences will also determine the opportunities that are most suited to interpretation of the cultural heritage of an area.

The main audiences for interpretation at Fishermans Bend are likely to be:

- Local residents, including existing community and new residents moving to live in Fishermans Bend;
- Workers who are employed at Fishermans Bend in existing or new businesses, or who commute through the area.
- Local school groups (Fishermans Bend will incorporate a number of new schools);
- Community groups that will emerge within the new Fishermans Bend community;
- State and local government land management agencies with responsibilities to manage open space; and
- Visitors, including people passing through the area for recreational purposes.

Many of the above (and the first four groups in particular) are likely to come from a range of demographic and cultural backgrounds – given the regenerative nature of the development, the majority of these people will likely be new to the area, and many may be new to Melbourne, Victoria or even Australia.

This indicates there is quite a wide audience from a range of age groups, education levels, interests and cultural/language backgrounds. This suggests that interpretation should cover a range of themes and a selection of different media pitched at different levels of prior knowledge and education so that the interpretation is of interest and appeal to a wide target audience.

Levels of Interpretation

The varied nature of the likely audience for interpretation at Fishermans Bend indicates that a tiered or layered approach to interpretation is likely to be most effective. We would recommend a three-tier approach that conveys the themes identified through the *Cultural Values Assessment* report but also aims to more passively build a sense of ‘Aboriginality’ into the wider environment, as follows:

Primary (Site) Level

This would involve didactic interpretive signs and panels placed at key nodes to provide concise and engaging plain English interpretive information pitched at a general audience of people who are passing by and/or engaged in nearby activities. These could also form part of interpretive trails through the area. The signs would include links to the proposed City of Melbourne ‘Aboriginal Melbourne’ website (see below) to provide more detailed information on each theme.

Secondary (Background) Level

The City of Melbourne ‘Aboriginal Melbourne’ website should be employed, perhaps with pages dedicated to Fishermans Bend or specific elements of it, to provide more detailed content that fleshes out the themes presented on the interpretive signs and panels – thus providing a supporting reference for viewers seeking more information. The website should provide additional media and material, such as maps that could inform self-guided tours to each of the interpretive nodes, and support mobile apps and/or a virtual interpretive trail (see below).

The City of Port Phillip should link its own webpages and resources to the City of Melbourne site.

Passive Level

This would employ Aboriginal cultural heritage information to inform the creation of elements in the landscape that contribute to sense of place, and specifically assert the previous and continued presence of

Aboriginal people in the area – engendering a sense of ‘Aboriginality’. This should comprise a combination of Aboriginal language use in place-naming and interpretation material, art installations and the design of buildings and facilities informed by Aboriginal cultural heritage themes and motifs. It should also include the re-establishment of characteristics of the pre-European landscape and vegetation communities that existed at Fishermans Bend, to provide a sense of the radically different landscape that once existed there.

Frequency of Interpretation

The frequency at which development can incorporate interpretation schemes at each of the above described levels is difficult to predict at this early stage of the long term urban renewal process. It is however understood that a hierarchy of open spaces will be incorporated into the urban renewal area, ranging from larger ‘Metropolitan’, ‘Municipal’ and ‘District’ parks to smaller ‘Local’, ‘Pocket’ and ‘Linear’ reserves, and it is anticipated the scale of other components of the urban renewal, including residential and other developments, will also vary. The extent to which interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage is incorporated in each should be proportional to the size of the element.

Larger specified development projects should incorporate the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in design. It is suggested that one theme from each of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 lists below be considered. A proportionally lower requirement could be considered for smaller developments.

Developers who are including Aboriginal cultural heritage as part of the development design for a larger specified development project should obtain advice from a suitably qualified cultural heritage consultant in the first instance, at the visioning stage of the project. The outcome of this consultation should then inform the pre-application meeting with the Responsible Authority.

The interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage at Fishermans Bend should not be limited to defined larger specified development projects.

Developers who are including cultural heritage as part of the design should discuss interpretation with the Responsible Authority during the pre-application process. For clarity, a recommended basic process is set out in Figure 6 below.

The recommended process envisages the creation of succinct Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Implementation Plans, as a means of applying this strategy to particular developments. These should each include concise details of the development and the proposed interpretation (themes, methods, locations), including how they are to be related, sufficient to fully inform consultation and agreement with the Aboriginal community and Responsible Authority.

Themes for Interpretation

Table 2 provides direction on which themes should be given priority for interpretation by identifying two ‘tiers’ within these themes. No relative significance is implied by each theme’s assigned tier or position in the table.

All of the themes identified are relevant across the area, but those identified as ‘Tier 1’ themes are either more closely related to a specific geographic entity within the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area, such that their interpretation is more pertinent, and/or they have been identified as more pertinent to the area in consultation with the Traditional Owner groups. This is the case for the closely related ‘Formation of the land and landscape change’ and ‘Creation of Port Phillip’ themes. Plan 1 (below) illustrates the areas in which each Tier 1 theme is to be foremost.

In each location, interpretation should initially address the relevant Tier 1 theme, and then address additional Tier 1 or Tier 2 themes as appropriate. These themes should apply directly to more didactic forms of interpretation, which should not only explain the nature and significance of that theme, but also provide inspiration for more passive forms of interpretation (see above).

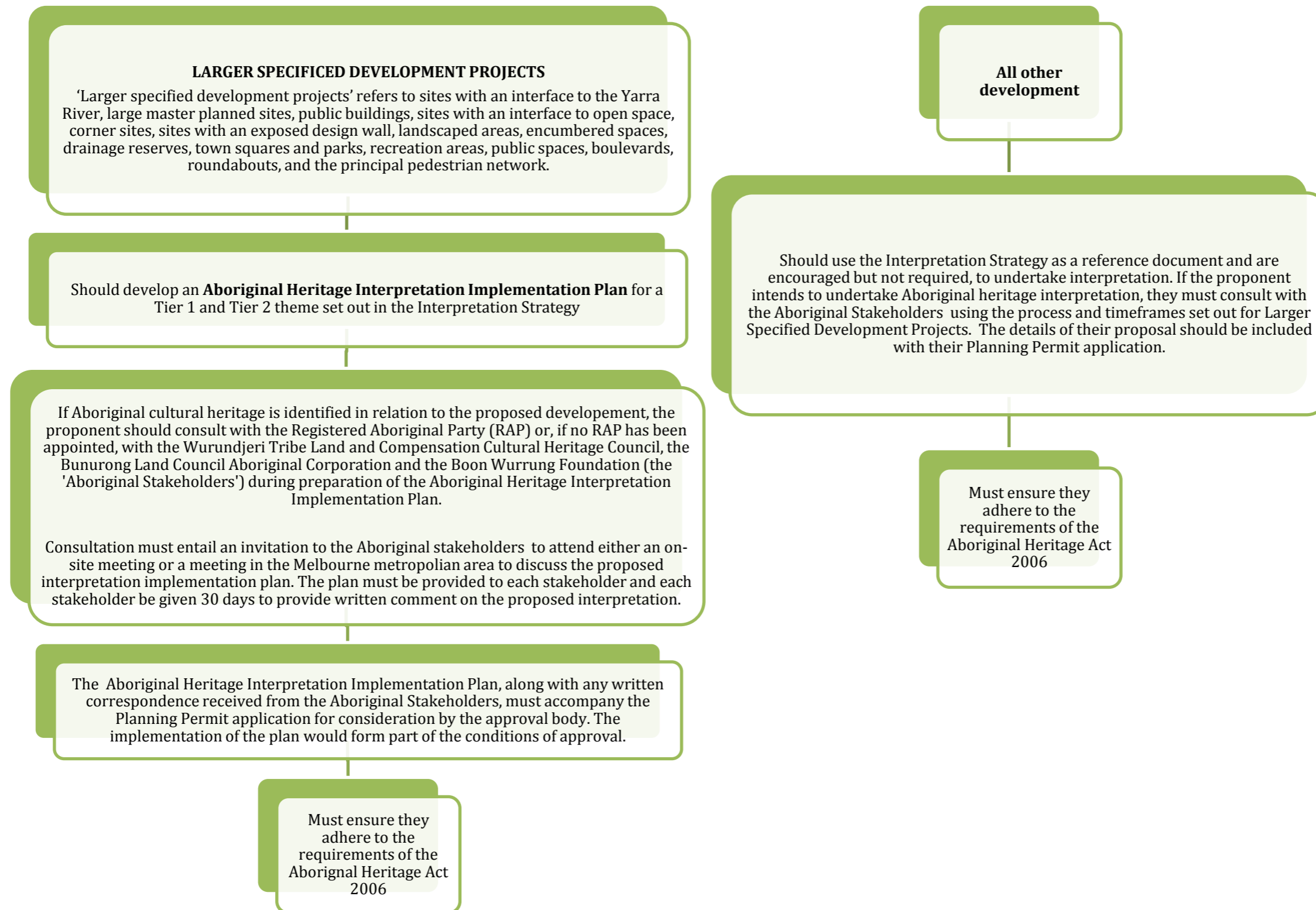


Figure 6 – Recommended basic process for ensuring that large developments incorporate the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage through statutory planning processes.

Table 2 – Priority of Aboriginal cultural heritage themes for interpretation at Fishermans Bend

Priority	Themes	Rationale
Tier 1	Formation of the land and landscape change & creation of Port Phillip	Identified as of greatest significance in the Fishermans Bend area by the Traditional Owner groups.
	Birrarung – the ‘River of Mist’	Related to the Yarra River (both its original and amended course)
	Emerald Hill	Related to Emerald Hill (the top of which is now the site of South Melbourne Town Hall)
	Recent Ecological Initiatives	Related to Westgate Park
	Recreation	Related to the Port Melbourne Football Club ground
	20 TH century living and working in Fishermans Bend	Related (most closely) to the GM Holden factory
Tier 2	Resources of the land and water Coming back from the missions Contemporary history and relationships to the wider city Cultural routes through the area Role of Aboriginal women Significant Elders past	Related to the whole Fishermans Bend area

6.6 Locations for Interpretation

Current Proposals

Assigning specific locations for interpretation through this strategy is problematic for the following reasons:

- This strategy has been prepared at an early stage of what will be a lengthy planning process, and the specific locations of each development and appropriate interpretation, cannot be predicted.
- As mentioned in the previous section, few of the themes identified in the *Cultural Values Assessment* report are related to specific geographical entities⁵.
- Few specific locations of particular Aboriginal heritage significance have been identified in the Fishermans Bend area. Rather, significance is attributed to the general landforms, areas and geographic features.

Consultation with the Traditional Owner groups did identify some general locations at which interpretation nodes could be installed. These were at Westgate Park, other parks and road reserves and along main transport routes.

In addition, highlighting the relationship between Fishermans Bend and the surrounding area, Traditional Owner Elders were very keen to encourage the establishment of interpretive signage at several locations outside the urban renewal area, to identify the importance of these places to Aboriginal people. During consultation the Elders pointed out that residents of the area had little idea of how important these places are for Aboriginal people. The places suggested included Emerald Hill

⁵ Even where research into certain themes has benefited from ethno-historical references, it has not been possible to identify specific reference locations owing to the lack of accuracy in the sources and the dramatic change in the environment since the records were made which have removed or changed historic points of reference.

(the top of which is now the site of South Melbourne Town Hall), Lagoon Reserve and Point Park. Further discussion with the relevant Councils is required in relation to these places.

Refining the Interpretation Offering

Given that, in the main, the identified Aboriginal cultural heritage themes for Fishermans Bend relate to the whole urban renewal area, the development of interpretation should occur organically across the area.

However, to provide a focus for this organic development, State government and the LGAs should seek to develop set-piece initiatives, especially in the reserves/open spaces that they will develop and manage. This will help to avoid interpretation becoming skewed to particular locations and help to effectively convey all of the identified themes.

6.7 Methods for Interpretation

The following section briefly introduces and describes the types of interpretive installations and tools, including interpretive design and media, which could be employed at Fishermans Bend to convey its Aboriginal cultural heritage values and themes.

A primary consideration in the development of interpretation should be matching the correct methods to the prevailing circumstances at a particular site and the intended audiences. All interpretation should reflect, or be inspired by the themes identified in the *Cultural Values Assessment* report as summarised above.

Primary (Site) Level Methods

Interpretation Panels and Signs

Interpretive panels and signage should be employed as far as possible across the Fishermans Bend renewal area as the main didactic 'primary' interpretation tool. Panels are dedicated to presenting information on a theme or theme. Signs are intended to convey other information – for example providing directions or announcing arrival at a destination, but

can be rendered in a way that reflects a cultural theme. Both can, and should, employ Aboriginal language and art.

Panels should be located where aspects of the particular theme(s) being interpreted can best be appreciated by the viewer. For example, the location of panels relating to landscape change should afford a view across at least part of the landscape, and panels concerning the river should ideally be placed where it can be seen (although it is recognised that the Fishermans Bend renewal area includes only a relatively small section of riverbank). Interpretation at more enclosed locations could address themes which are less closely related to expansive geographic entities and/or more general to the area – including the Tier 2 themes listed above.

Signs should of course be generally located as required by their intended purpose, but exact positioning should take account of the above advice (with relation to panels) and be chosen to achieve exposure to the largest audience.

To most effectively convey information to the casual viewer, it is recommended that interpretation panels:

- Contain a maximum of 250 words
- Contain a maximum of two images
- Reflect no more than two distinct themes.

Where possible, to achieve a consistency of presentation, the 250 words should be broken down into paragraphs that can be repeated as standalone sections for smaller signs or other interpretive elements.

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Figure 7 – Example of interpretation panels in a park environment (Source: Mallanbool Reserve, Murrumbidgee. Art by Ian Dalton: <http://iandalton.com/work/signage/mallanbool-park>. Image by Rueben Berg)

Thematic Trails

The size of the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area lends itself to the development of themed Aboriginal cultural heritage trails, or one or more general Aboriginal heritage trail(s) addressing several or all of the themes. These could be walking trails or shared pathways.

The lack of specific significant locales within the area means that there are no obvious locations to which the trail should be directed. This also creates flexibility within the area with regard to its course, increasing the range of possible routes that could still remain relevant to a particular theme or themes.

With reference to Links to Other Initiatives (section 1.3) above, there is great potential for the creation of new Aboriginal heritage trails through connection with initiatives external to Fishermans Bend, or for continuing trails initiated elsewhere into the renewal area. The *City of Melbourne Aboriginal Heritage Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18* contains measure 3.2.2 which is to explore the potential for an inner municipal

‘Aboriginal Trail’ with the Cities of Port Phillip, Yarra, Maribyrnong and Stonnington.

The creation of a trail from the Botanic Gardens to Fishermans Bend would pass across the entire pre-European wetland landscape and enable interpretation of the related and shared themes. Development of such a trail would likely require the establishment of a working group across jurisdictions – to include Fishermans Bend, City of Melbourne, Places Victoria, the Botanic Gardens and others. A physical trail could be complemented by a digital ‘fly-through’ of a virtual reconstructed landscape – see below.



Figure 8 – Example of an interpretation panel forming part of an Aboriginal heritage trail (Source: Winjeel's Trail, Pakenham. Art by Sinatra Murphy: <http://www.sinatramurphy.com/>. Image by Rueben Berg)

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Figure 9 – Home page from the 'Finding Bennelong' website (Source: Extent Heritage)

Secondary (Background) Level Methods

Website and Mobile Apps

The City of Melbourne Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015–18 contains the following measures:

- 2.3.2. "Aboriginal Melbourne" website launched.
- 2.3.3. Develop an "Aboriginal Melbourne" platform suitable for use on mobile devices.

As stated above, the City of Melbourne 'Aboriginal Melbourne' website should be employed, perhaps with pages dedicated to Fishermans Bend or specific elements of it, to provide more detailed content that fleshes out the themes presented in on-site interpretive media – interpretive panels and signs, and through trails.

The website should be seen as a central resource to support interpretation across the Fishermans Bend area, the rest of the City of Melbourne LGA and the wider metropolitan area – the City of Port Phillip should link its own webpages and resources to the City of Melbourne site. Developments should be encouraged to contribute to the development and support of this resource.

The website should be used to support multimedia content relating to the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Fishermans Bend area, such as mobile apps, and all on-site interpretation should link to the website, for example through QR codes.

The range of media that can be presented on the website will doubtless grow with developments in technology and knowledge relating to the area, but the initial offerings could include, but not be limited to, the following:

- audio-visual clips, including interviews with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people with associations to the area;
- background information focussing on particular themes and related stories, for example significant past Elders (a similar approach to that shown in Figure 9 could be adopted);
- additional supporting resources, such as maps, illustrations, photographs and artwork; and
- 3D models and other dynamic web content, for example a virtual interpretive trail (see below).

Development and support of the website and mobile apps will require substantial resources, which will likely be beyond the capacity of individual projects. It is therefore anticipated that it will be necessary to make arrangements for contributions to, and the coordination of, this task in addition to the support of the LGAs and State agencies.

Virtual Interpretive Trail

The development of a website would support the creation of a 'virtual heritage trail' to tell specific stories and elucidate particular themes through the Fishermans Bend area. The virtual tour could be experienced remotely through the website or, through the use of mobile devices, in combination with physical on-site interpretation – the viewer using the virtual trail whilst visiting a series of nodes where physical interpretive signs would be placed in appropriate locations in the landscape.

The trail could be supplemented by digital recreations of historic views, of which a large number are available for the Fishermans Bend area. Mobile GPS-enabled device technology can enable historic views to be overlaid onto views of the current landscape, and this would provide an excellent approach to demonstrating and explaining the dramatic landscape change to which the Fishermans Bend landscape has been subjected since colonisation.

One advantage of the virtual trail approach is that the trail would not be constrained by the need to be physically connected by a single pathway, thereby providing much greater flexibility to select interpretive sign locations and nodes that best capture the range of stories and themes in Fishermans Bend. Another is that the Fishermans Bend part of the virtual trail could be linked to similar sections elsewhere in the city to form a much larger experience.



Figure 10 – Example of the many historic illustrations of the Fishermans Bend area that could be employed to illustrate a virtual heritage trail – 'Sandridge from the lagoon' by Henry Burn c.1870 (Source: State Library of Victoria, File No. b28338:3187103)



Figure 11 - Ngarara Place was designed by Aboriginal architect Jefa Greenaway. The design is based upon four key pillars – Connection to Country, Cultural Motifs, Contemporary Aboriginal Art and Knowledge exchange. Pedagogical panels facilitate knowledge exchange (Source: <http://www.greenawayarchitects.com.au/RMIT-Ngarara-Place>)

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Passive Level Methods

Public Art

Public art featuring Aboriginal motifs, stories and possibly also audio language would be a good means to imprint a subtle design-based form of interpretation in the new Fishermans Bend precincts that has cultural relevance and ties into the landscape. Aboriginal imagery and symbolism can be used to communicate stories and identity. In addition to helping achieve sense of place for the wider community, this can help members of the Aboriginal community to rebuild connection to place and cultural identity.

Aboriginal artwork should be commissioned where opportunities arise, particularly in public spaces. Opportunities could arise at a large scale, such as on large blank walls (see Figure 11), or at the more localised street level, for example through the use of Aboriginal motifs or interpretation of Aboriginal themes on street furniture (see Figure 12 & Figure 13).

As stated above, Aboriginal organisations or individuals from whom original artwork can be commissioned should be identified through consultation with the Traditional Owner organisations and the LGAs.



Figure 12 – Example of Aboriginal themes public art (Source: Australian Catholic University. (Source: Artwork by Megan Cope. Image: <http://thisisnofantasy.com/exhibition/australian-catholic-university-commission/>)

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Figure 13 – Example of Aboriginal motifs employed at street level in Bourke Street, Melbourne. (Source: Art by Lisa Kennedy. Image by Rueben Berg)



Figure 14 – Large scale graphic, the Wadawarrung story intertwined in the Wyndham Vale landscape. Part of the Regional Rail Link project at Wyndham Vale. (Source: <http://nutshell.com.au/projects/regional-rail-link-wyndham-vale-railway-station/>)

Community Facilities and Meeting Places

The development of community facilities provides an excellent opportunity to incorporate Aboriginal cultural heritage themes and motifs, contributing to sense of place and passively engendering a sense of ‘Aboriginality’.

An excellent example is the award-winning Royal Park Nature Play playground, in which the seven Wurundjeri seasons of Melbourne are central, informing its structure, planting and the play experiences of the space. This was developed through close consultation between the City of Melbourne and the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council (Figure 15).

The development of community facilities should bear in mind the need – identified by Action 4 of the *City of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018* – for the establishment of an Aboriginal Gathering Place. It may be that a dedicated Aboriginal place or places can be created, but this need must inevitably compete with other purposes for valuable public space. The creation of combined community facilities incorporating Aboriginal meeting places, or ‘yarning circles’, may be an appropriate solution. The creation of the Birrarung Willam (‘River Camp’) installation within Birrarung Maar park on the Yarra River in central Melbourne is a good example. Figures 17a and b illustrate other examples in the City of Moonee Valley to the northwest of central Melbourne.

Other Interpretative Design

Passive interpretation can be created in a wide range of ways through the incorporation of interpretive content into the design of buildings – both internal and external, and places or elements in the landscape.

The representation of Aboriginal culture in this regard should not be seen as backward-looking but should assert contemporary Aboriginal culture as well as respecting the Aboriginal past. Innovation is to be welcomed – a recent example of innovation is the rendering of an image of William Barak, the last traditional ngurungaeta (‘head man’ or ‘tribal leader’) of the Wurundjeri-willam clan, in the design of the Swanston Square building in the city.

Landscape design could be employed, with the use of indigenous species, to re-establish elements of the pre-European landscape in open space and parks.

The development of interpretive design should always be the subject of consultation with Traditional Owner groups, and the advice of bodies such as Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria (IADV).



Figure 15 – Royal Park Nature Play playground interpreting the seven Wurundjeri seasons of Melbourne (Source: Image by Rueben Berg)

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Figure 16 – Example of Aboriginal themed artwork built into the environment at Collins St, Melbourne. (Source: Art by Ray Thomas. Image by Rueben Berg)



Figures 17a and 17b – Meeting places around sculptures in Cross Keys and Boeing Reserves, Essendon: TOP – resembling a spear in homage to the Aboriginal occupation of the land; BOTTOM – representing the natural land before human occupation and resembling a new shoot breaking through the soil. Two of 'The Totems' series by artist Glenn Romanis (Source: Extent Heritage Pty)

7 Key Issues and Implementation Strategies

7.1 Key Issues

Several key issues have been identified in relation to the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage at Fishermans Bend. Together with the strategies intended to address them, they are as follows:

Traditional Owner Representation

There is currently no one Traditional Owner group that is statutorily identified as representing the Fishermans Bend study area, either through becoming the Registered Aboriginal Party for the area under the *Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, or being recognised as having native title rights under the *Victorian Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* or the *Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993*. It is possible that one or more groups may be awarded RAP or native title rights over the area in the next years, and this will have to be recognised.

The Interpretation Strategy has been developed in consultation with each of the three Traditional Owner groups that currently speak for the area. The stories and themes are the product of inputs from each of these groups, and each has agreed on their final forms. In the event that one group becomes statutorily recognised as representing the Fishermans Bend area, the content supporting the themes will need to be revisited, and amendments will need to be made to specific interpretation material. However, the themes themselves and the wider interpretation strategy should remain equally relevant and effective.

Access to the Yarra River

The Yarra River (the 'Birrarung' or 'River of Mists') is of very high significance to the Aboriginal people of the region, and a major focus of the Fishermans Bend area. However, the current land tenure situation at Fishermans Bend means that the river is only accessible in some places.

Design and interpretation throughout the Fishermans Bend area will seek to recognise and reference the river and its Aboriginal significance.

The Extent of Landscape Change at Fishermans Bend

The landscape of the Fishermans Bend area has changed dramatically, including through the realignment of the Yarra River ('Birrarung') since European colonisation, and the area has been almost completely developed. As such, little remains of the pre-contact 'Indigenous' landscape, to which Aboriginal significance could be attributed.

Although the extant environment has changed substantially, the Aboriginal presence remains. Whilst in one way this will take the form of sub-surface archaeological deposits, it also continues in the enduring attachments that the Aboriginal community holds for the area and the wider landscape of which it is part. It should also be recognised that Aboriginal people have continued to work and live in the area since colonisation, initially on the peripheries of the growing city and then in the industries and housing developments that grew up since the 19th century, particularly after the 1940s and 1950s when Aboriginal people started to come off the Missions.

Resourcing the Aboriginal Community

Whilst the local Aboriginal communities gain some support through activities in which they have a statutory role – most significantly through the responsibilities assigned to them under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, this resourcing is project (usually development) specific and must be directed towards maintaining the group's ability to respond as required. Less resourcing is available to enable the community groups to undertake community strengthening works, including in relation to their own knowledge of culture, and this affects their ability to contribute to the development of long-term schemes to present and interpret Aboriginal values.

Proposed schemes for the presentation and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Fishermans Bend area will occur in consultation with Traditional Owners. Mechanisms should be explored for providing

ongoing support to the Aboriginal community organisations to ensure that they are well equipped to contribute to the presentation and interpretation of Aboriginal culture in the Fishermans Bend area.

Future consultation with the Traditional Owner Groups should occur through established processes administered by the City of Port Phillip (*Reconciliation Action Plan – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts*) and the City of Melbourne (*City of Melbourne Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015-2018*). These are listed in the references for this document and flagged earlier in the Policy Framework Section of this report (p4).

7.2 Additional Strategies

The following strategies should be employed to progress the interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage at Fishermans Bend. These are intended to complement the provisions in the following documents, and their successor versions:

- *City of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018*
- *City of Melbourne Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015-2018*
- City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan 2016-2019 (pending).

There should be a recognition that this suite of strategies will likely need to grow over time.

Developing Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Interpretation at Fishermans Bend

- Opportunities should be identified to recognise and interpret Aboriginal cultural heritage and reflect the Aboriginal values of Fishermans Bend and the wider landscape. Interpretation approaches might include:
 - ♦ interpretive panels and signs
 - ♦ cultural heritage tours and virtual tours
 - ♦ development of the Aboriginal Melbourne website and mobile apps

- ♦ re-introduction of Aboriginal language in naming areas, streets or places
- ♦ art works, weaving and sculpture in public places, including creating new takes on traditional patterns and motifs in paving and murals
- ♦ incorporating and embedding interpretive content into design of structures and places
- ♦ recognizing ceremonial and traditional activities
- ♦ theme-based facilities such as playgrounds
- ♦ planting of indigenous species and re-establishing pre-European landscape elements.

This should identify ways to incorporate Aboriginal culture into the design and development of the Fishermans Bend built environment, including the commissioning of Aboriginal artists, architects and other designers.

- Revegetation works, employing Indigenous species appropriate to the pre-contact state of the area, should be undertaken whenever and wherever possible. These works should be directed towards improving biodiversity in a culturally appropriate manner and strengthening the wellbeing of Country and therefore Traditional Owner communities. In addition, the recreation of physical aspects of the previous landscape will enable it to be ‘read’ and understood.

Other Planning Documents

- Recognition and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage values should be encouraged in planning and development tender documents for Fishermans Bend on identified sites of cultural heritage significance.
- The Interpretation Strategy should be clearly referenced in all documents relating to additional cultural heritage works, to ensure that the results of these works are contextualised (and can be interpreted) with reference to, and through, the Interpretation Strategy.

Links to Other Initiatives

- Municipalities adjacent to Fishermans Bend have produced a large amount of relevant interpretive material on the Aboriginal use and culture of the area. Opportunities to link into and complement these initiatives rather than repeat existing information and formats should be identified.
- In collaboration with the City of Melbourne, the City of Port Phillip and other agencies, the FBT should seek to achieve interpretation that better reflects the Aboriginal values of the wider landscape, of which interpretation for Fishermans Bend would be part.

Developing Interpretative Content

- To ensure that interpretation is designed through consultation with the Aboriginal community wherever possible, the FBT should liaise with the City of Melbourne Aboriginal Melbourne Team and the City of Port Phillip with a view to channelling consultation with Traditional Owner groups through existing and evolving Council processes.
- The City of Melbourne and City of Port Phillip should develop a strategy to identify and commission Aboriginal artists and designers to contribute to development in the area.
- Design initiatives should be developed to identify ways in which Aboriginal culture can be incorporated into design in the Fishermans Bend development – for example by creating new takes on traditional patterns and motifs. A goal of these projects should be to capture the essence of contemporary Aboriginal life in an inclusive way rather than reinforce any sense of ‘otherness’ in relation to Aboriginal culture.

Supporting this Strategy

- The City of Melbourne’s Aboriginal heritage database and Aboriginal Melbourne website is the appropriate resource to support Aboriginal heritage interpretation at Fishermans Bend, and the development of these resources should be supported.

- The Fishermans Bend Taskforce is currently preparing the draft Fishermans Bend Framework and Precinct Plans for consultation with the community and stakeholders. When finalised these documents, which will be informed by this Strategy, will provide planning guidance for the future development of Fishermans Bend. There is future potential for the implementation of this Strategy to occur through the application of design guidelines for Fishermans Bend.
- However, development of the Fishermans Bend area will occur over decades, and so the agreements and processes supporting the Interpretation Strategy should provide mechanisms for reacting to future opportunity rather than rigid direction that may not respond well to the circumstances in which development eventually occurs.
- As with other strategies of this type, in order for it to remain relevant and in tune with current best practice and approaches, this Strategy should be regularly reviewed. It is recommended that this occur every five years.

8 References for Interpretation

Sources of content on the Aboriginal, and broader, cultural heritage of Fishermans Bend and the wider area:

- Arts Victoria 2014, *Nyernila – Listen Continuously: Aboriginal Creation Stories of Victoria*
- Briggs C. 2014, *The Journey Cycles of the Boonwurrung*, Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
- Eidelson M. 2014, *Yalukit Willam; The River People of Port Phillip*, City of Port Phillip in consultation with the Boon Wurrung Foundation
- Golder Associates Pty Ltd 2016, *Preliminary Land Contamination Study; Employment Precinct, Fishermans Bend*, report for DELWP
- Travers I. 2010, *City of Melbourne Indigenous Heritage Study*, Context Pty prepared for the City of Melbourne
- Vines G. 2013, *Fisherman’s Bend Heritage Study*, Biosis prepared for Places Victoria

Policy documents relevant to the presentation and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage at Fishermans Bend:

City of Melbourne *Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018*

(<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/reconciliation-action-plan-2015-18.pdf>)

- City of Melbourne *Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015-2018*

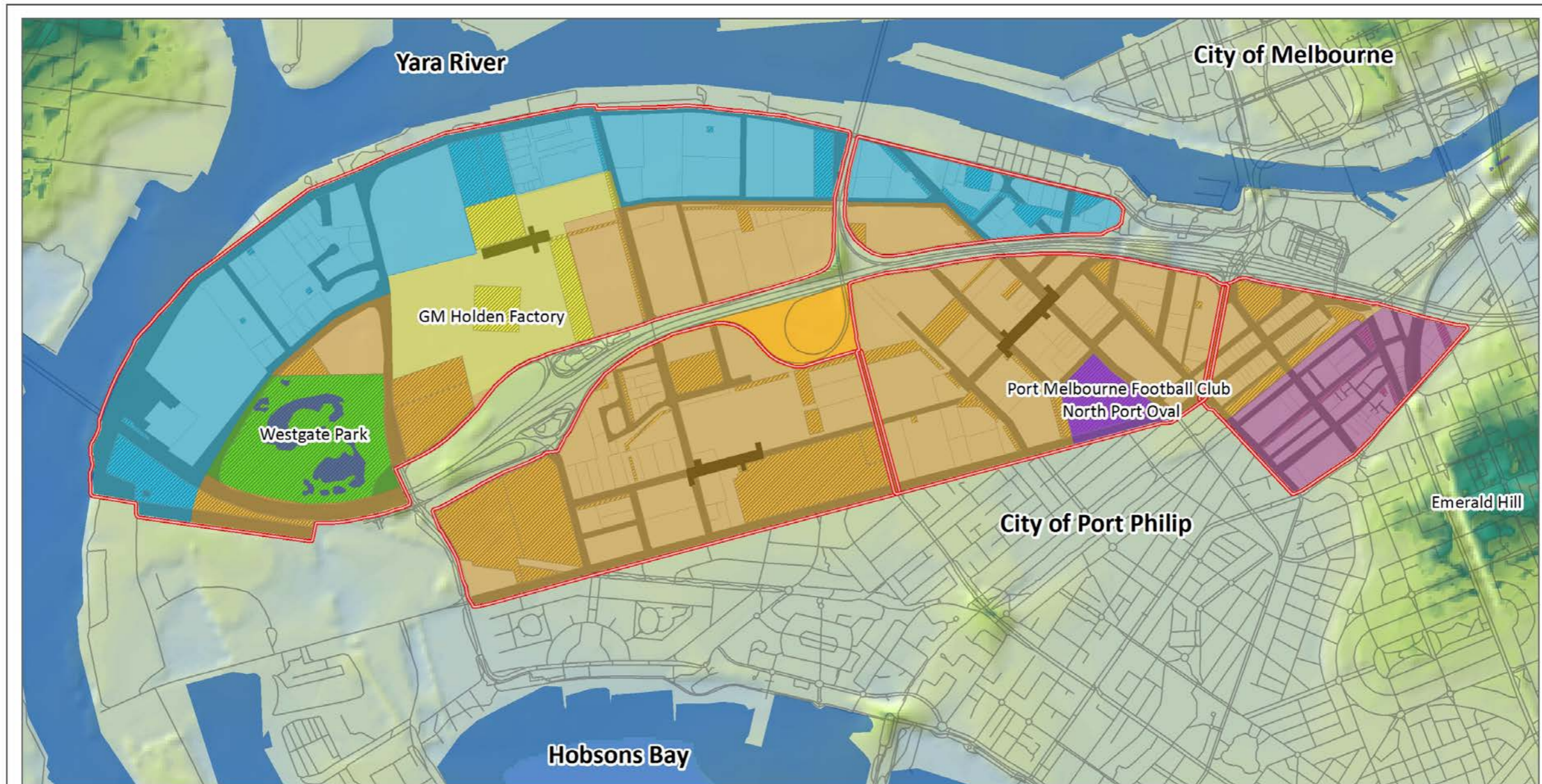
(<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/aboriginal-heritage-action-plan-2015-18.pdf>)

- City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan 2016-2019 (pending)
- City of Port Phillip *Aboriginal Resource Primer*
 (http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/default/GovernanceDocuments/Aboriginal_Resource_Primer.pdf)

Guidance on Aboriginal place-making:

- Pieris A., Tootell N., Johnson F., McGaw J. & Berg R. 2014 *Indigenous Place; Contemporary Buildings, Landmarks and Places of significance in South East Australia and Beyond*, Melbourne School of Design, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, the University of Melbourne

Plan 1 – Tier 1 Themes



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Incorporating AHMS and Futurepast



Drawn by: E. Beckett
Date: November 2016
Projection: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
Data Sources: Extent Heritage, OSM, Geosciences



Fishermans Bend Cultural Values Interpretation Strategy

Fishermans Bend Precincts

Tier 1 Themes

- Formation of Land and Landscape Change and Creation of Port Philip
- Birrarung - The River of Mist
- Emerald Hill
- Recent Ecological Initiatives
- Recreation
- 20th Century Living and Working in Fishermans Bend



Plan 2 – Context for Interpretation

