



**JOHN
HOLLAND**

INLAND RAIL ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL PROJECT

Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan

John Holland acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Inland Rail Illabo to Stockinbingal project is located, the Wiradjuri Peoples. We pay respects to Elders, past and present.


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Revision History

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Inland Rail: Illabo-Stockinbingal Section

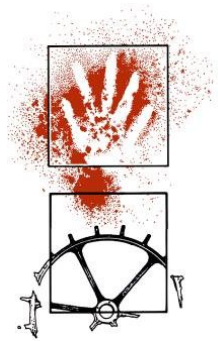


Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan: *Walumarra - to guard and protect*

Final-



January 2026



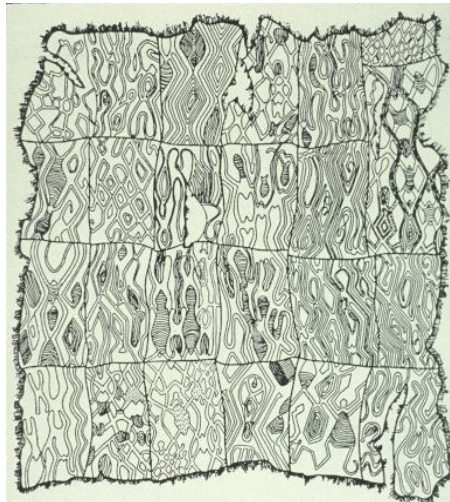
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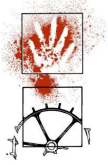
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Document control

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NOHC Cover photographs: Images of workshops at Young, Cootamundra, and Wagga Wagga. Native hibiscus the symbol of Cootamundra Girls Home (licence free Pixabay), Goanna – Gugga a Wiradjuri totemic species.

Previous page: Aboriginal possum skin rug collected 1839-1840 from the Hunter River region, eastern NSW (Smithsonian Inst. Washington D.C. Cat. no. E5803).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this plan is to fulfil the requirement for this Culture Values Plan (the Plan) in the Instrument of Approval Clause E133 for CSSI-9406 (4th September 2024) Inland Rail – Illabo to Stockinbingal.

The development of this plan involved workshopping how to recognise and sustain local Wiradjuri cultural values with Aboriginal community Knowledge Holders. The identified values were contextualised with a brief overview of local Wiradjuri history. These workshops were held at Young, Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga.

A broad range of Aboriginal cultural and spiritual values were identified during Aboriginal community consultations. Many related to biological considerations and stewardship responsibilities, while others related to the revitalisation and practice of culture and language and the intergenerational and cross-cultural transmission of knowledge about Aboriginal people and history in the region.

During community consultations, there were several proposals for integrating Aboriginal cultural and spiritual values into planning, design and operation of the Inland Rail Project.

Section 6 of this report sets out the draft cultural Values Plan under the heading '*Walumarra* - a plan for recognising and sustaining cultural values.' It includes initiatives regarding:

- the inclusion of Wiradjuri language
- the adoption of two Wiradjuri principles to underpin the design construction and environmental works
- community led cultural inductions
- support Aboriginal-led caring for Country
- local Aboriginal community benefits through employment
- design inputs
- heritage interpretation
- reporting on work in progress and achieved

The document recommends on-going engagement with the Local Aboriginal Land Council at Young and at Wagga Wagga, the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party and several other recognised community Elders. There was a high degree of consensus between the participants at the three workshops on the cultural values and the ideas for sustaining them.

Feedback from workshop participants, JHG, Inland Rail and ARTC were incorporated into the draft report which was then provided to all workshop participants and the Registered Aboriginal Parties for final review and comment. This final report has been updated to reflect comments received.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	REFERENCES, DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS	7
1.1	COMPLIANCE ROADMAP	7
1.2	DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS	8
2	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.1	THE INLAND RAIL PROJECT	1
2.1.1	<i>Illabo to Stockinbingal (I2S) Project.....</i>	<i>1</i>
2.1.2	<i>This Cultural Values Plan and its relationship with responsible entities.....</i>	<i>2</i>
2.1.3	<i>Relationship with other documents.....</i>	<i>3</i>
2.1.4	<i>Leaving a Legacy.....</i>	<i>3</i>
2.2	FREE PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT	3
2.2.1	<i>Confidentiality</i>	<i>4</i>
2.3	CHALLENGES.....	4
2.4	AUTHORSHIP	4
3	METHODOLOGY.....	6
3.1	BACKGROUND PREPARATION.....	6
3.1.1	<i>Preparation: building the list of participants.....</i>	<i>7</i>
3.1.2	<i>Workshops.....</i>	<i>7</i>
3.1.3	<i>Workshop format</i>	<i>8</i>
3.2	PREPARING THE PLAN	8
3.3	MANAGING EXPECTATIONS	8
4	CULTURAL CONTEXT	9
4.1	OVERVIEW OF TRADITIONAL OWNERSHIP	9
4.2	OVERVIEW OF DOCUMENTED CULTURAL VALUES.....	9
4.2.1	<i>Archaeological evidence of pre -invasion Wiradjuri life</i>	<i>10</i>
4.2.2	<i>Exploration Invasion and dispossession</i>	<i>10</i>
4.2.3	<i>The stolen generation</i>	<i>11</i>
4.2.4	<i>Cootamundra Girls Home.....</i>	<i>11</i>
4.2.5	<i>Pastoralism, Droving and Travelling Stock Routes</i>	<i>12</i>
4.2.6	<i>Evidence of the Dreaming</i>	<i>12</i>
4.3	PLACE NAMES AND LANGUAGE	12
4.4	ABORIGINAL VALUES IN NATURE.....	13
5	WORKSHOP OUTCOMES.....	14
5.1	YOUNG	14
5.1.1	<i>Identifying Cultural Values.....</i>	<i>14</i>
5.1.2	<i>Celebrating and Sustaining Cultural Values.....</i>	<i>16</i>
5.1.3	<i>Possibilities and constraints</i>	<i>18</i>
5.2	COOTAMUNDRA	20
5.2.1	<i>Identifying Cultural Values.....</i>	<i>20</i>
5.2.2	<i>Celebrating and Sustaining Cultural Values.....</i>	<i>21</i>
5.2.3	<i>Possibilities and constraints</i>	<i>24</i>
5.3	WAGGA WAGGA	26
5.3.1	<i>Identifying Cultural Values.....</i>	<i>26</i>
5.3.2	<i>Celebrating and Sustaining Cultural Values.....</i>	<i>29</i>
5.3.3	<i>Possibilities and constraints</i>	<i>30</i>
5.4	DISCUSSION.....	31
6	WALUMARRA - A PLAN FOR RECOGNISING AND SUSTAINING CULTURAL VALUES	34
6.1	WIRADJURI LANGUAGE.....	34
6.1.1	<i>Principles to underpin the design construction and environmental works.....</i>	<i>34</i>
6.1.2	<i>Dual naming.....</i>	<i>34</i>
6.2	COMMUNITY LED CULTURAL INDUCTIONS.....	35



6.3	SUPPORT LOCAL ABORIGINAL LED CARING FOR COUNTRY	35
6.4	LOCAL ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT	37
6.5	DESIGN INPUT	38
6.6	HERITAGE INTERPRETATION	39
6.7	MITIGATING IMPACTS ON ABORIGINAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE	40
6.8	REPORTING ON WORK IN PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS	40
6.9	MATTERS REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION AND CONSIDERATION	40
APPENDIX A.....		49
CULTURAL VALUES WORKSHOP INFORMATION AND RELEASE FORM		49

Figures

Figure 2-1	The general location of the inland Rail project and the Illabo to Stockinbingal (I2S) Project	2
Figure 2-2	Overview of the study area	5
Figure 5-1	The tree created by the Young LALC workshop. (Photo NOHC)	15
Figure 5-2	Participants in the workshop left to right Keith Freeman, Enid Clarke, Janayah Freeman, Tori Apps, Brodie Apps, Lisa Goodman and Claire Bridges. (Photo NOHC)	19
Figure 5-3	Participants in the workshop left to right: Alona Apps, Makali Tonpi, Marnie Freeman, Fred Baxter, Keith Freeman and Enid Clarke. (Photo NOHC).....	19
Figure 5-4	The tree created by the Cootamundra workshop participants (Photo NOHC)	21
Figure 5-5	Participants in the workshop L to R Chrystal Summerfield, Deboral Lynette Roxborough, Gary Luck, Mitch Summerfield Snr. (Photo NOHC)	25
Figure 5-6	Participants in the workshop L to R: Amanda Levatt, Donald Elphick, Mitchell Grant Summerfield Jnr, Kim Sannazzaro (standing), Colina Meadows. (Photo NOHC).....	25
Figure 5-7	The Wagga Wagga workshop required 2 trees to incorporate all the values they identified. (Photo NOHC).....	28
Figure 5-8	Participants in the workshop	31
Figure 5-9	Places of cultural values or interest as marked up in all three workshops	33
Figure 6-1	JHG has now adopted the recommendation for dual language signs in their construction camp	35
Figure 6-2	The JHG procurement process which has been implemented in the I2S project.	38



1 REFERENCES, DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1.1 Compliance Roadmap

The following is a tabular representation of the Cultural Values Plan requirements as described in the Infrastructure Approval for CSSI-9406 (4th September 2024) Inland Rail – Illabo to Stockinbingal and a reference to relevant sections in this document.

Table 1-1: Compliance Roadmap

Reference	Requirement	Applicable Section in this Plan
3.1 a)	A commitment to achieve quality objectives contained in the Contract and a statement of the quality objectives the Contractor intends to deliver.	This Plan
E 133	<p>An Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan must be prepared to inform how Aboriginal Cultural Values will be integrated into the broader design of the SSI including design elements (form and fabric), landscaping (the collection, propagation and replanting of traditional plant resources), language, and cultural design principles. The Plan must identify how interpretive themes, and cultural values will be implemented and provide a timeframe for their provision during construction. The Plan must recognise the spiritual, intangible, linguistic and cultural values of the sites to Aboriginal people and address the full story of the place (s) (i.e. landscape through the eyes of Aboriginal people); Aboriginal design and story elements, patterns and motifs or other appropriate visual interpretations. The Plan will be developed in conjunction with the Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. The Strategy will detail the consultation process with Aboriginal stakeholders and identify the Aboriginal cultural values to be incorporated into the design of the CSSI. The Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan shall be submitted for the approval of the Planning Secretary one (1) month prior to commencing construction. The Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan must be implemented.</p>	<p>The methodology used in developing the plan is described in Section 3 with a description of the consultation workshops held are in Section 5.</p> <p>Relevant historical cultural themes are provided in Section 4.</p> <p>Sections 6.5 and 6.6 provide specific commitments relating to heritage interpretation and integration in design.</p> <p>The community engagement methodology used in developing this plan was consistent with the Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy- see section 2.1.3 and section 3.</p> <p>The commitments that form the Cultural Values Plan are included in Section 6 and summarised in Table 6-1 with an indicative timetable for implementation.</p>
E132	Prior to the commencement of construction, an Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy shall be finalised and implemented, in consultation with Heritage NSW, relevant RAPs, and LALCs. The Strategy will detail and include, but not be limited to, the consultation process with Aboriginal stakeholders for the integration of Aboriginal cultural values into the CSSI.	Sub-Plan Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 5-0019-220-PMA-00-ST-0001 is referenced in section 2.1.2



1.2 Definitions and Abbreviations

To the extent possible this report avoids the use of acronyms. However, some are used in quoted statements and therefore have been unavoidable.

Term	Meaning
AHIMS	Aboriginal Information Management System
CCSI	Critical State Significant Infrastructure
Cultural Values Plan	A plan that sets out the commitment and steps to recognising and sustaining identified cultural values.
Cultural Values	Cultural values include knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and customs acquired by membership in a social group.
Elders	Senior community members with the cultural authority to speak on matters of heritage and culture.
Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)	Free Prior and Informed Consent is a fundamental principle that ensures Indigenous Peoples have the right to give or withhold consent for projects affecting their lands, territories, and resources.
Gugga	Wiradjuri name for goanna one of the local Wiradjuri totemic species
Indigenous Ecological Knowledge	Indigenous ecological knowledge, also known as traditional ecological knowledge and locally as Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge, refers to 'a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs handed down through generations by cultural transmission about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment' (Berkes, 1993).
JHG	John Holland Group
Knowledge Holders	Aboriginal community members who are recognised as holding knowledge about their heritage cultural protocols
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council – a corporate body constituted under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (ALR Act)
Local Land Services	NSW Government department which works with landholders and Aboriginal communities to protect Aboriginal cultural values in the landscape, both tangible and intangible
NOHC	Navin Officer Heritage Consultants
Pied Currawong	One of the local Wiradjuri totemic species referred to in the workshops
Totem	An animal, plant, or natural object serving among certain tribal or traditional peoples as the emblem of a clan or family and sometimes revered as its founder, ancestor, or guardian.
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Inland Rail Project

The following program overview is reproduced from the I2S EIS Engagement Report, 2022

Inland Rail is an Australian Government-funded project that forms part of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA) portfolio. In late 2013, the former Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Warren Truss MP, established the Inland Rail Implementation Group to provide high-level leadership for the implementation of Inland Rail. The Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) has been appointed to deliver Inland Rail in partnership with the private sector.

Inland Rail is a once-in-a-generation project connecting regional Australia to domestic and international markets, transforming the way we move freight around the country. It will complete the 'spine' of the national freight network between Melbourne and Brisbane, via regional Victoria, New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland.

This 1,700-kilometre line is the largest freight rail infrastructure project in Australia. The objectives of the Inland Rail Program as stated in the Service Offering are to:

- provide a backbone rail link between Melbourne and Brisbane to serve future rail freight demand and stimulate growth for interstate and regional/bulk rail freight
- provide an increase in productivity that will benefit consumers through lower freight transport costs
- provide a step-change improvement in rail service quality in the Melbourne–Brisbane corridor to deliver a freight rail service that is strongly competitive with road
- improve road safety, ease congestion and reduce environmental impacts by moving freight from road to rail
- bypass bottlenecks on the congested metropolitan Sydney rail network, and free up train-path capacity for other services on the coastal route, including passenger services through the Sydney region and bulk freight through the NSW Southern Highlands
- act as an enabler for regional economic development along the Inland Rail corridor.

2.1.1 Illabo to Stockinbingal (I2S) Project

The project area for the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of the Inland Rail is show in Figure 1.1. The Inland Rail - Illabo to Stockinbingal (I2S) Project is a 39-kilometre greenfield section where a new track will be constructed in a newly established rail corridor, just east of Illabo, tracking north to Stockinbingal, NSW.

This new section of rail corridor will provide a direct route from Illabo to Stockinbingal through to the existing Forbes line. The line will bypass Cootamundra and the steep and windy Bethungra Range with the Bethungra Spiral.

Bypassing the Bethungra Spiral will improve reliability and reduce travel distance by approximately 23 kilometres.

Burley Griffin Way will undergo a major realignment and a new road over rail bridge will be built. This will enable the closure of one of the existing rail level crossings in Stockinbingal, improving safety. In addition, Ironbong Road will undergo a minor realignment around the proposed level crossing to improve safety.



The project connects with the Albury to Illabo (A2I) and Stockinbingal to Parkes (S2P) enhancement projects.

This design and construct project works will include:

- New track construction
- Earthworks
- Bridge construction
- Culvert and drainage installation
- Road works
- Activated and passive level crossings
- Installation of rail systems
- Utility Adjustments

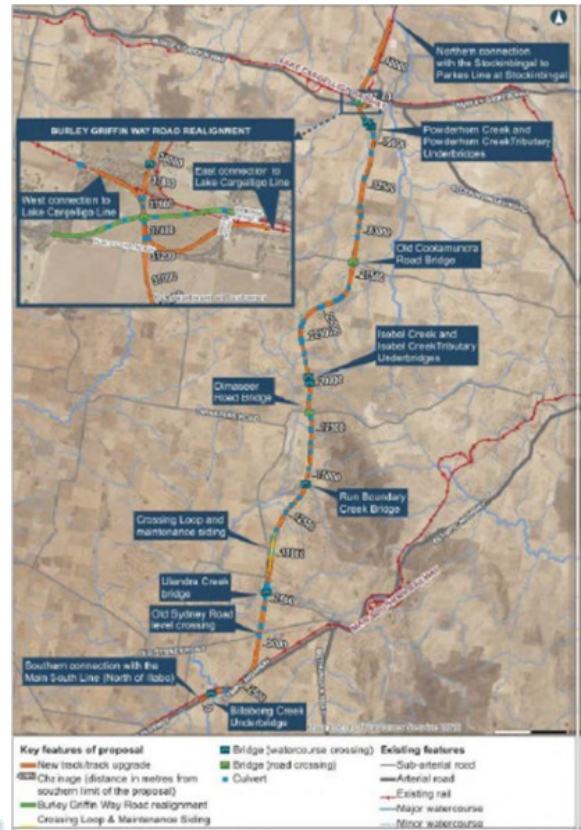


Figure 2-1 The general location of the inland Rail project and the Illabo to Stockinbingal (I2S) Project

2.1.2 This Cultural Values Plan and its relationship with responsible entities

John Holland Group have been engaged by Inland Rail to construct the Illabo to Stockinbingal Project. As noted previously this project is one segment of the Inland Rail. Once completed and operational, the Rail line and its easement will be owned and managed by ARTC. The rolling stock (trains) that will run on the line will be the property of ARTC’s clients. This context of responsibilities and ownership was important for the Aboriginal Knowledge Holder’s to understand as they worked their way through the development of this plan.

Navin Officer Heritage Consultants was engaged by John Holland Group to work with Mountains to Sea Heritage (MTS Heritage) to prepare this Cultural Values Plan.

Implementation of this plan is a shared responsibility that will require ongoing engagement with the Knowledge Holders who engaged in its development (see Section 6 and Table 6-1).



2.1.3 Relationship with other documents

The Cultural Values Plan (the Plan) draws on and/or informs the

- Sustainability Management Plan (5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0044). Sustainability considers social, economic, and environmental performance. This document sets out the sustainability parameters and goals of the project and notes the connection between community health and well-being project and sustainability,
- Temporary Accommodation Facility Management Plan (5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0051 as regards implementation of recommendations for dual signage and yarning circle at the village referred to in section 6.6.
- Social Impact Management Plan (5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0064)
- Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Management Plan (5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0045)
- Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (5-0019-220-PMA-00-ST-0001)
- Sub-Plan Illabo to Stockinbingal Heritage Management 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0059. This document outlines how the tangible cultural heritage i.e. artefacts, sites and archaeological deposits will be managed and /or impact mitigated, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.
- JHG and CM+ I2S Visual and landscape Impact Mitigations Plan (Oct 20205). This document incorporates recommendations from the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan workshops on culturally useful native plant species.
- Reflect Reconciliation Plan ARTC (currently being revised). This document illustrates ARTC commitment to Indigenous people both within and outside its workforce.

2.1.4 Leaving a Legacy

John Holland Group (JHG) and Inland Rail representatives that attended the workshops explained to participants that both organisations sought to leave a positive legacy for local communities. This aspiration has been considered in this report.

2.2 Free Prior and Informed Consent

The gathering and use of information to complete this Plan is consistent with the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Free Prior and Informed Consent is a fundamental principle that ensures Indigenous Peoples, in this case Wiradjuri Aboriginal people, have the right to give or withhold consent for projects affecting their lands, territories, and resources.

The Aboriginal Knowledge holders who participated were provided with information on the project and how the information collected would be used. Information about the project was provided in part by the 'information about the project section' of the consent form which was removed and left with each participant at the time of signing. This brief document included information section about the project, the purpose of the Cultural Values Plan and the proposed use of the information collected. It also included the contact phone number and email address of the facilitator so that if the participant had any input or questions that came to mind after reflection or discussion with family they could, even after the workshop was over, raise their concern and /or add additional information that they felt was relevant. Information was also provided verbally at the workshops by the JHG and /or Inland Rail person who attended and was able to answer any project impact related questions. The consent form is provided as Appendix A.



They signed consent/ release forms which approved the use of the information collected and this consent covered the images used in this report for purposes relating to the project. They were also provided with timely written summaries of the matters raised in the workshops and invited to add or clarify any information. They were provided an opportunity to review and reflect on the draft Plan before finalisation and were provided with an opportunity to review the final draft. Any comments and input received relating to the project were incorporated.

FPIC is recognised in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and is essential for respecting the rights of Indigenous communities. It ensures that consent is obtained freely, prior to any project initiation, and informed about the potential impacts of the project. This principle is crucial for promoting self-determination and protecting Indigenous rights against exploitation and marginalization.

Key Elements of FPIC include

- Free: Consent must be given voluntarily, without coercion, intimidation, or manipulation. The process should be self-directed by the Indigenous community.
- Prior: Consent should be sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities, allowing adequate time for consultation and decision-making.
- Informed: Indigenous Peoples must receive comprehensive information about the project, including its nature, scope, potential impacts, and duration, in a language and format they understand.
- Consent: The decision-making process must be collective, respecting the customs and traditions of the Indigenous community. Consent can be given, withheld, or conditioned based on the community's preferences.

2.2.1 Confidentiality

No information in this report has been classified as confidential.

2.3 Challenges

This project involves a relatively small section of the proposed Inland Railway which is intended for the movement of freight. Neither John Holland Group the developers, for this section of the rail line, nor Inland Rail, the project proponent, will be the end user/managers of the railway. Once the line is completed it will be owned and managed by ARTC. This arrangement was a challenge to the participants to understand and for them to understand who would deliver the elements of the plan. To address this and provide transparency, the responsible entities are identified for each commitment in Table 6-1.

In addition, the section of the proposed rail line that this Plan relates to is one part of a single rail line that runs northward from Stockinbingal to Brisbane and southward from Illabo to Melbourne. The Plan however is only required to apply to this small 39km section of the overall rail line route. There are no stopping points or stations along this section of the line. All of these factors added to the challenge for the Knowledge Holders to conceptualize appropriate initiatives to recognise and sustain cultural values for what is one segment of a continuous rail easement. The workshop discussions included input from Inland Rail to explain the nature of the project and the roles of the different entities.

2.4 Authorship

This report was completed by Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy, BA (Hons) University of Sydney 1982, PhD James Cook University 2002. Dr McIntyre-Tamwoy is an Associate Director at Navin Officer Heritage Consultants. Ms Noreena Tamwoy assisted with workshop preparation. The content however is collated from a range of sources including the information provided by participants of the workshops held at Young, Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga. The names of the participants are provided in sections 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 and their input is acknowledged as the core content of this report.



Figure 2-2 Overview of the study area



3 METHODOLOGY

The aim of this project is to gather information on cultural values of the Country through which the Inland Rail project traverses and use this information to develop a Cultural Values Plan (the Plan) acceptable to both the project proponent and the local Aboriginal community.

In gathering the information, we have adopted a broad interpretation of 'cultural values' and aim to identify spiritual, intangible, linguistic and cultural values of sites to Aboriginal peoples and address the story of the place and identify Aboriginal design and story elements, patterns and motifs and other appropriate visual interpretation. The plan considers how interpretive themes, and cultural values will be integrated into the broader design of the Inland Rail, including design elements, landscaping, language and cultural design principles.

We have done this through a flexible approach, designed to deliver targeted and meaningful consultation with Aboriginal Knowledge Holders regarding cultural values. The methodology includes a combination of techniques as required, including desktop archival research, and a balance of face-to-face workshops, emails or phone consultation as needed. The methodology to develop the Plan is outlined below.

3.1 Background preparation

The Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (Sub- Plan 5-0019-220-PMA-00-ST-0001) was being developed at the same time as the initial planning for the CVP and it set the framework within which this engagement activity was undertaken. Specifically, that sub plan noted that a Cultural Values Plan would be developed that aimed to:

...identify spiritual, intangible, linguistic and cultural values of sites to Aboriginal people and address the story of the place and identify Aboriginal design and story elements, patterns and motifs and other appropriate visual interpretation. It will also identify how interpretive themes, and cultural values will be integrated into the broader design of the Inland Rail, including design elements, landscaping, language and cultural design principles (see Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan section 5.3)

It was important that cultural Knowledge Holders were identified from within local communities to participate in the development of the Cultural Values Plan. It noted that

Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders will be identified by Navin Officer through additional consultation and liaison with Inland Rail's First Nations Engagement Advisor, as the First Nations relationship owner for Inland Rail (op. cit.)

The Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy noted that to develop the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan, consultation would need to focus on those people who might hold relevant knowledge such as Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders and would require opportunities for face-to-face consultation with Aboriginal Knowledge Holders and other stakeholders on country, in their home environment (see Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Section 5.3). The strategy noted that consultation required to develop the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan would need to differ somewhat from the consultation for the archaeological programme as the latter was continuing a process already in place consistent with the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents* (DECCW, 2010a) and the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan required engagement with local Knowledge Holders. There was some overlap of people and organisations involved in each of these programmes.

The consultation for the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan was carried in parallel to the consultation and engagement in the archaeology programme (Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Section 5.4) which was already being progressed. For transparency and to ensure opportunity for engagement the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) for the archaeological programme were provided with advice that the preparation of the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan was also underway.



They were provided with a brief questionnaire see 3.1.1 below which included questions relating to the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan.

3.1.1 Preparation: building the list of participants

Ensuring the success of workshops requires a lot of work behind the scenes. In this case it included building a familiarity with the region and history and compiling a list of participants. Compiling the list of participants began with names of Elders and Knowledge Holders known to the project officers within JHG and Inland Rail from their engagements with local communities. This included discussions with the two Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) whose areas of responsibility overlap with the project area i.e., Younga LALC and Wagga Wagga LALC. The locally based Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party was also consulted to identify local Knowledge Holders.

The initial list of names was built on through discussions with those people about other Knowledge Holders within the community who were likely to hold information regarding the cultural values of the project area. This method of gathering information on who should be involved, often referred to as 'snowball sampling', is used in qualitative research when the population is hard-to-reach or hidden. It's particularly useful when studying sensitive topics and it puts the consultation process in the hands of known community Elders and Knowledge Holders.

In addition, as the consultation process for the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment of the proposed rail corridor was being undertaken at the same time a questionnaire was sent to each of the Aboriginal parties that has registered for that process (the RAPs) which advised them that a cultural values plan was being developed and asked if they had an interest in attending a workshop and/or whether they had specific knowledge of cultural values associated with the project area. The specific questions included:

- Are you interested in participating in cultural values workshops and/or interviews? (This is likely to involve participating in one workshop up to 4 hours long and/or one interview of approximately 1 hour).
- Please provide a brief description of any previous cultural values workshops and/or interviews that you may have participated in?

There was an overlap in the consultation process for the Archaeological programme and the Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan development as some of the participants of the workshops were also engaged as RAPs in the Aboriginal cultural heritage field work, although this was not a requirement of participation in the workshops.

The preparation phase involved many phone calls and/or emails to known Knowledge Holders and listening to their advice regarding which people were likely to hold relevant knowledge. The guidance of local Knowledge Holders was also sought on all practical matters relating to the workshops such as venue and timing; their knowledge of local facilities was key to selecting venues which would be convenient to people and in which they felt comfortable.

3.1.2 Workshops

Originally two workshops were proposed, one to be held at Young and one at Cootamundra. Individuals Knowledge Holders/Elders that might be located in Wagga Wagga were proposed to be followed up through individual interviews. However, as consultations progressed the methodology was updated to include a third workshop at Wagga Wagga instead of individual interviews when it became clear that there were a reasonable number of participants who had been recommended for inclusion in that area and that the workshops were a suitably comfortable method which allowed Elders to share information and support each other in the consultation process.

In all three workshops some younger people participated. This was a deliberate strategy on the part of some Knowledge Holders to mentor younger community members as part of intergeneration transmission knowledge and authority. For example, Norma Freeman Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Young LALC expressed this as a rationale for inclusion of some young community members in the workshop held in Young.



All participants were asked to sign a consent and release form, and information was provided to ensure that Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) was given to the collection and use of the information to develop the Plan. A sample of this form is included in Appendix A. Signed copies of the form will be provided for the project record but are not for public distribution.

3.1.3 Workshop format

Workshops were small, aiming for around 10-12 participants each and followed a similar format:

- Registration – attendance sheet and release forms
- Welcome to Country
- Brief introduction of the workshop purpose
- Cultural values exercise (see Figure 5-1, Figure 5-4 and Figure 5-7)
- Discussion of identified values – using large format aerial photos/maps of the area along the route to illustrate as needed (combined marked up map Figure 5-9). The map helped respond to the question -are there places that are particularly associated with these values?
- Are there specific people who might have additional information on cultural values?
- Brainstorm -how can these values be recognised, preserved, nurtured?
- Discussion: Where to from here? What is possible? What is not possible?

3.2 Preparing the plan

Immediately following the workshops, a brief summary report of the workshop discussions was provided back to participants to give them the opportunity to review and correct to supplement the information. That information was then used in the preparation of the draft Cultural Values Plan. The plan provides a summary of the cultural values identified and acknowledges all contributors and their input. The plan sets out initiatives to acknowledge, celebrate and where relevant conserve cultural values along the route of the project. All cultural values that have a spatial footprint were mapped by hand on the map provided at the workshop (Figure 5-9). These locations are for the most part outside the proposed rail easement. The exception may be the reported territory occupied by a large Gugaa (Goanna), which participants at Cootamundra workshop were concerned about because it appears to be close to the proposed line. A Geospatial Information System (GIS) file has been created of the places noted in workshops however locations should be noted as approximate (see Figure 5-9).

The Aboriginal participants were given the opportunity to review, correct and provide feedback on the Plan before it is finalised. The final draft plan was also circulated to the project RAPs involved in the archaeological programme for their comment and input. The response from the RAPs was supportive of the Plan which had been developed with the workshop participants.

3.3 Managing expectations

This project involves a relatively small section of the proposed Inland Railway which is intended for the movement of freight. Neither JHG, the developers for this section of the rail line, nor Inland Rail, the project proponent, will be the end managers of the railway line. Once completed ARTC will be the owner and manager of the line. These factors introduce limitations to the viability of some interpretive strategies that might otherwise be used as a way of acknowledging cultural values. It was important therefore to have open discussions with Aboriginal knowledge holders about the practicality of possible actions so that false expectations are not raised and for this reason representatives from Inland Rail and JHG also attended the workshops and were available to answer any project specific questions.



4 CULTURAL CONTEXT

4.1 Overview of traditional ownership

The Wiradjuri are one of the largest Aboriginal nations in NSW with a territory encompassing approximately 80,000 square kilometres of central New South Wales (McDonald 1998:162). At the time of first European contact the population of Wiradjuri people was estimated at 3000 (Smith 1980) although all population estimates have are subject to range of qualifications, including recorder bias. Read (1983:1) notes that the traditional boundaries of the Wiradjuri at least at the time of first European observations

Enclosed the eastern section of the country between the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee rivers. Beyond these boundaries, Wiradjuri speakers lived south of Wagga Wagga to the Murray, west of the Willandra Creek to Ivanhoe, north of the Lachlan to Wellington, and along the Tumut River.

The Wiradjuri are located along the Murrumbidgee River between Jugiong and Hay (Mathews 1897, cited in Pardoe and Martin 2011:24), which includes the town and vicinity of Wagga Wagga. Anthropologist Gaynor MacDonald (2011) describes Wiradjuri Country as being focused on the Macquarie, Lachlan and Murrumbidgee Rivers and the creeks and tributaries (*dharuwaay* in Wiradjuri) which feed into them. R. H. Mathews (1897, cited in Pardoe and Martin 2011:24) placed a southern group of Wiradjuri speakers at “the Murrumbidgee River between Jugiong and Hay”. The project footprint, extending south-east from Wagga Wagga, is watered by creeks draining into the Murrumbidgee River and located squarely within Wiradjuri Country.

4.2 Overview of documented cultural values

This section documents findings of a review of cultural values documented in the ethnohistoric record for the region. None are specifically connected to places within the project area but rather they demonstrate the range of cultural values that people have previously been ascribed to the Wiradjuri Country. Many of the observations of early ethnographers relate to places along major creeks and rivers. Early encounters between Europeans and Aboriginal communities often occurred along rivers such as the Murrumbidgee as they were used as major stock and trade routes including the journey from Sydney to South Australia. The Murrumbidgee provided a permanent source of water and food, even during times of drought (Bonney 1884; Angas 1847; Butlin 1983). The closest part of the current project area to the Murrumbidgee River is Stockinbingal which is approximately 37km north of the river. However, while the project area is away from the river, there are several major creeks that pass through the project area, that would have provided rich habitats for people and their food resource. These creeks include Bland Creek, Ironbong Creek, and Billabong Creek.

While the major creeks and rivers could support larger populations, this is not to say that the Wiradjuri did not know or use their Country farther from the main rivers, indeed ethnographers noted the Wiradjuri had skilfully devised water storage methods in the land away from the Murrumbidgee (Gilmore 1935:36; McGuire 1910:180).

When Aboriginal Elders today are asked about places of particular cultural value, they refer to a wide range of places from the archaeological or pre-European past through to the places that their parents and grandparents lived and worked. It is this evidence that links them to past generations and reinforces their connection with Country.

The idea of land is the idea of [Wiradjuri] presence, a writing of oneself onto the landscape: it is a humanising and socialising of that within which one is embodied. Presence is expressed in the stories of people which make places live, which bring people and place into relationship.

These can be stories of events that took place, or part of journeys people make, historical events or places where people have lived and worked. They include heritage sites where Wiradjuri people of the past have left the marks of their presence, and sites which, even without those



visible marks, they strongly believe are places their ancestors would have favoured and frequented. There are places associated with the presence of spiritual power, experienced as strong feelings of warmth, fear or apprehension.

It is the notion of 'presence'-of self and others understood as part of selves-which characterises many of the Wiradjuri land-people speech acts and practices. This is a land-people relationship defined primarily in social terms, whether or not it also includes spiritual, economic or political dimensions or expressions. (McDonald 1998:164)

4.2.1 Archaeological evidence of pre -invasion Wiradjuri life

Farming and other land use has modified the natural landscape across most of the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri Nation and is likely to have destroyed substantial archaeological evidence of the traditional (pre-invasion) lives of Wiradjuri people. Nevertheless, as in most other parts of rural Australia a surprising diversity of material evidence in the form of campsites, stone tool quarries, scarred and carved trees, burial grounds and other types of Aboriginal use and occupation sites are likely to survive throughout the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people.

Specifically, within and adjacent to the proposed rail easement, previous surveys recorded a total of 22 recorded artefact locations, and several Aboriginal scarred trees. While many of the records were single occurrences of a stone artefact (referred to as 'isolated finds'), some of these occurred associated with areas of potential archaeological deposits which were then subject to testing. During the test excavations GML excavated 231 test pits from which they recovered a low density of Aboriginal stone tools (Total =133), predominantly made of local quartz, GML2022:92).

Further archaeological assessment is proceeding in parallel to these workshops and is likely to reveal more information about these archaeological sites. As the proposed route for the Illabo and Stockinbingal section of the rail line is running through private land from which Aboriginal people have been excluded for generations, it is unlikely that workshop participants will have specific knowledge of these sites prior to archaeological survey. Nevertheless, archaeological sites are often valued as tangible evidence of a connection to the lives of their ancestors and Traditional Owners are therefore often keen to participate in surveys and investigations and to recover this tangible evidence of the lives of their ancestors.

4.2.2 Exploration Invasion and dispossession

In 1829-30, Captain Charles Sturt led an expedition into the interior of south-eastern Australia "for the purpose of tracing the Morumbidgee [Murrumbidgee River], or such rivers as it might prove to be connected with, as far as practicable" (Sturt 2001 [1833]). After reaching its junction with the Lachlan on 25 December 1829, the party proceeded by whaleboat and on 14 January 1830 were the first Europeans to reach a "broad and noble river", which was later named the Murray in honour of Sir George Murray, the secretary of state for the colonies (Gibbney 1967). Sturt published a popular account of the journey in 1833, as part of the 2-volume work *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia, including observations on soil, climate and natural resources*. While his book is credited with adding to the geographical knowledge of the interior, his assessment of the agricultural and grazing potential of the region was less than favourable: he described extensive and barren plains along the lower Murrumbidgee characterised by red sandy soil and covered with saltbush, with adjacent alluvial land "so extremely small as scarcely to afford food for our cattle"; and the forested Murray valley was considered potentially flood-prone and likely to "require much labour before it could be brought under cultivation" (Sturt 2001 [1833]; Beissel 2001:7).

Government policies and practices from the 1800s caused the movement of Aboriginal groups onto Aboriginal reserves, missions and 'stations' in the region (Pardoe and Martin 2011), bringing about the settlement or confinement of previously semi-nomadic Aboriginal societies, and a more sedentary form of social organisation. Usurpation of Wiradjuri land by pastoralists began in the 1850s.



4.2.3 The stolen generation

The forced removal of Aboriginal people occurred throughout the region and the consequential loss of cultural knowledge caused by this break in the intergenerational transmission of cultural information is a pain still felt by many Aboriginal people today and this is one of the reasons why community Elders place such a high value on not only the knowledge that has survived the present day but also cultural knowledge that is being recovered through active revival processes (e.g. language revival programmes) and created as communities adapt and respond to a changing world.

From around 1883 and up until at least 1970 the lives of the Wiradjuri became increasingly constrained and controlled first by Churches and the Aboriginal Protection Board and later, after the passing of the Aborigines Protection ACT 1909 by controlling government policy towards Aboriginal people.

Between 1883 and about 1900 there was a period of comparative benevolence, in which the members of the Aborigines Protection Board hoped that old and feeble Aborigines would remain on the newly established stations, and the young and able-bodied would make their way into the white community. By 1900 it was apparent, at the Wiradjuri stations Warangesda and Brungle no less than elsewhere, that Aborigines could not be persuaded to abandon movement patterns of long standing. The large stations were out of control, and the official realisation that Aborigines could not be managed without statutory authority found legislative expression in the Aborigines Protection Act of 1909 and by several successive amendments to strengthen it. The policy embodied in the Act attempted to drive most of the adults from the reserves and the children into institutions. (Read 1983: xiv),

4.2.4 Cootamundra Girls Home

The history of the Wiradjuri is described by Read as a story of 'struggle carried out on a day-to-day basis, at one level, to stay alive, and at another, to retain as far as it was possible, the perceived values of Aboriginal society' (op.cit xv1). Many Wiradjuri children were taken from their families in New South Wales, often without warning and were transported by train to institutions like the Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls (Brindley 1994, Read 1983b, Kabaila 1995, 2012) and the Kinchela Boys Home, where they were separated from siblings and subjected to strict assimilation practices. They were often forbidden from speaking their language and were deliberately prevented from participating in cultural practices. Many of these children never saw their parents or sibling again, Some, were subject to Abuse and neglect in the institutions that proclaimed to save them. Such stories of personal loss and pain are now well documents see for example, the firsthand testimonies at www.stolengenerationstestimonies.com and www.cootagirils.org.au .

There were several reserves and missions on Wiradjuri Country, the one of closest proximity to the project area is Cootamundra Girls Home established in 1911. Prior to Aboriginal girls were sent to Warangesda for training as domestic servants. In 1916 amendments to the Aboriginal Protection Boards Policies overseen by A. Petitt, *instructed teachers to assist boys to become useful farm or station d. 5 labourers and the girls to become useful domestic servants (Read 1983:150)*. Petitt considered that Aboriginal Children should be removed from birth at the Board' discretion to have a better chance of removing tradition influences and ensuring they could be better trained and assimilated. In the first two months of the new policy one third of the children removed from their parents were Wiradjuri. Conditions at the Cootamundra Girls Home appear to have been harsh, isolating and devoid. Read cites two independent observers' complaints about the treatment of the girls both of which were ignore by the authorities. At 14 years of age the girls were placed in domestic service either in country homesteads, or in middle-class homes in Sydney.

A new amendment to the policies in 1940 resolved that children in the Board's care '*should not be allowed to return home except under compelling circumstances*' (A.P.B., Minutes of meetings, 19 November 1940 cited in Read 1983:189).

The emotional attachments to the Cootamundra Girls Home of former residents and their families is complex and layered with trauma. Often expresses as a strong sense of loss but sometimes



complicated with a sense of nostalgia for time spent with fellow residents. Once children entered the home many did not ever see their immediate families again.

The home was finally closed in 1975. Young girls who were there at the time of closure would now be in their 60s, 70s and 80s.

4.2.5 Pastoralism, Droving and Travelling Stock Routes

Travelling stock routes (TSRs) known colloquially as ‘the long paddock’ developed from the 1860s in all States and Territories. They often used Aboriginal routes linking water supplies (Lennon, 2014). Aboriginal men often found employment as stockmen and drovers, being seen to have an affinity for animal husbandry and also able to utilise and adapt their traditional knowledge and skills e.g. removing bark from trees to fashion on to shelters and water trough for animals. Wiradjuri stockmen had a reputation for being highly skilled in horsemanship, mustering, and bushcraft. Their deep knowledge of the land made them invaluable workers on remote stations.

4.2.6 Evidence of the Dreaming

Given the rapidity which European invaders forcibly took possession of the land, the cultural values documented in the ethnohistoric records are to a large extent geographically focussed on riverine land, in proximity to Aboriginal reserves, where traditional connections could be more readily and actively maintained (Donaldson 1984), and in those places where Aboriginal people were able to find employment i.e. on the railways, as stockmen and household workers on pastoral properties and as drovers.

Site-specific cultural values previously documented in the project study area fall into several general categories, including sites associated with the Creation period, Dreaming’s and other traditions; locations significant to post-colonial Aboriginal history and social identity, such as missions; locations associated with frontier violence and/or massacres; and burial mounds.

Gaynor Macdonald (2011) indicates that Aboriginal societies of the Riverine shared common belief in Baiame, a ‘Sky God’ whose mythology was celebrated in ritual activities which often brought together large groups from across the broader region. The vicinity of Balranald (more than 50 km north-west of the project footprint) contains a number of traditional Dreaming narratives identifying several totemic species and focused on particular sites or landscape features; the Lakes system south-west of the Murray River is associated with an array of sites of traditional, cultural and social significance.

R.H Mathews records several encounters with Wiradjuri people in the 1890s, and he described in detail a Wiradjuri Burbung (initiation ceremony) he witnessed. He also recorded the story of *Dhuramoolan* the spiritual being central to the initiation ceremony (Matthews 1896). It is clear from his account that the Wiradjuri people had a rich ceremonial life and that the places where such rituals were performed, often adjacent to creeks, were subject to careful preparation and can be regarded as sacred landscapes extending over a large area including campsites, ceremonial pathways and multiple restricted places.

By way of overview, the ethnohistorical records demonstrate a rich variety of traditions over the project study area. Most of these site-specific values are documented as being located on or close to major rivers. Such sites with their subtle modification of landscape are very susceptible to impact from European pastoral and farming activities which level, clear and crop the land.

4.3 Place names and Language

Howitt noted three major clan-groups between Yass and Hay: Narrandera, Kutu-mundra and Murringballa (Howitt 1904:56). These three clans are today reflected in the names of major towns: Narrandera, Cootamundra and Murrumburrah. As noted above one of the common strategies used to force Aboriginal children to ‘assimilate’ was to forbid the learning or speaking of Wiradjuri language. The relationship between Aboriginal identity and language is understood to be deeply intertwined; language is a cornerstone of cultural expression, connection to Country, and personal and communal identity. Complex aspects of a society’s world view are embedded in language and often the nuances of



cosmological concepts are difficult to convey outside of traditional language (Merlan 1981; Blair 2001; Walsh; O'Shannesy and Meakins 2016). The world shapes the language and the language shapes our understanding of the universe

Over the past several decades there have concerted effort to revive the Wiradjuri language as a statement of cultural revival. There have been several initiatives including:

- The Wiradjuri Language and Cultural Heritage Recovery Project, at Charles Sturt University which includes a graduate certificate course in Wiradjuri Language.
- High school language programs (noting Young High School participates in this program).
- Development of Wiradjuri Dictionary online and a mobile phone application

4.4 Aboriginal values in nature

In Western discourse 'culture' and 'nature' are often seen as separate realities with culture as the artefacts of human endeavour and nature as the external environment on which culture is enacted. This concept of dualism permeates many aspects of western thought and practice and is evident in our laws, our environmental assessment processes (separate reports and consideration given to culture and nature) and conservation funding regimes. Increasingly, the usefulness of this dualism is being contested as a western conceptualisation that does not address the interconnection of culture and nature (Haila 2000: Mitchell *et. al.*, 2017).

Wiradjuri people do not see nature and culture as separate domains and land management; the conservation and use of native species are all commonly addressed as cultural values. Native plants and animals hold significance for Aboriginal communities due to their value as clan totems, food, fibre, medicine and other traditional uses. The value Aboriginal people place on natural resources stems from the strong relationship and respect they have for the land. They feel an obligation to care for Country which is connected to their identity and wellbeing. It is recognised that the health of the land and the maintenance of biodiversity continue to be linked to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, both physically and spiritually (see for example Rose 1996).



5 WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

At each workshop, for the purpose of this exercise participants were asked to consider what values they would like to see maintained for future generations. The term 'values' can be subjective and it's meaning difficult to grasp. The participants were advised that rather than being hung up on a definition of the word, they should consider what cultural activities, practices and culturally important places, landscapes, plants or animals would they want to be maintained for their children's, children's, children? Further they were assured that there were no wrong answers, and they could speak of feelings, experiences, practices and or physical things such as places and species etc. The value did not have to relate to the rail line thinking about the rail line route would come later.

5.1 Young

A cultural values workshop was held with members of the Young Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) on Tuesday 6th May commencing at 4pm. The workshop was held at the Young Services and Citizens Club and led by Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy of NOHC. All attendees were provided with a brief written description of the purpose of the workshop which also outlined how information gathered in the workshop might be used in developing the overall cultural values plan. All attendees also signed a consent form allowing the use of data collected and photos taken at the workshop in the cultural values plan if required. All attendees were paid for their time and contribution.

In attendance were Norma Freeman (CEO Young LALC), Enid Clarke, Keith Freeman, Marnie Freeman, Alona Apps, Brodie Apps, Tori Apps, Gail Freeman, Jahnaya (Naya) Freeman, Fred Baxter, Makali Tonpi. Also present, were Claire Bridges (JHG) and Lisa Goodman (Inland Rail) (see Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3). The participants included a mix of Wiradjuri Elders, other Knowledge Holders and young people. This mix of generations was deliberate as the Young LALC put a strong emphasis on inter-generational learning.

"In Young LALC, we put a lot of emphasis on bringing our young people through the ranks. If we want to build a sustainable corporation, we need to support our younger generation to grow and learn from our Elders" Norma Freeman CEO Young LALC

5.1.1 Identifying Cultural Values

A brief discussion of what was meant by cultural values took place as described above. Each value was written on a leaf by the participant and added to the tree of cultural values. The symbol of a tree is used as it shades and protects those sheltering beneath it. The list that emerged included:

- Language camps in every school
- Further my Wiradjuri Language
- Learn more of my culture
- Being able to stand on Country and learn through your Elders
- Learning Culture
- See all native animals
- Dive deeper into our history
- Dance
- Able to know their culture
- Rivers/surroundings/landscape



- Pride in Culture
- Acknowledgement of Culture through signs in towns in language
- Camping – connect with nature
- Be proud to be Aboriginal
- That our language still lives on through our younger generation
- Teach culture -share culture as we are the oldest living culture on the planet
- Respect.

Language came across as a very important value to participants. The revival of the Wiradjuri language has been a personal mission for several participants. Enid Clark Has been involved in a language revival project at the Local Young High School, and several younger participants were former students in that project.

“Language is so important in conveying the meaning of our stories and culture. As children many of us had our Wiradjuri language stolen from us. It is a source of pride and joy to see our younger generation learning Wiradjuri language and knowing that they will carry our culture forward” Enid Clarke, Chairperson Young LALC.

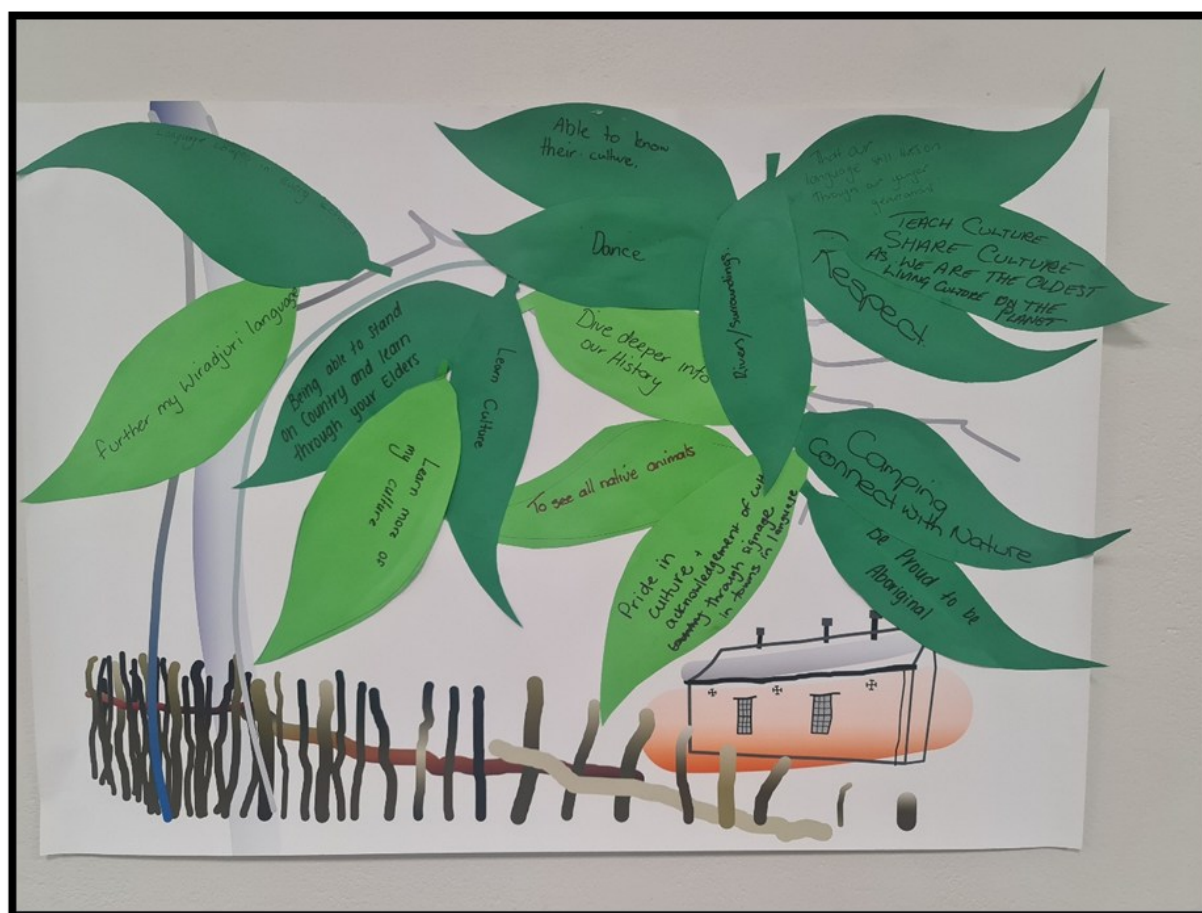


Figure 5-1 The tree created by the Young LALC workshop. (Photo NOHC)



5.1.2 Celebrating and Sustaining Cultural Values

The participants were next asked to consider what could be done in the context of the Inland Rail project to celebrate and sustain these important things to ensure that our future generations can experience them?

Participants were asked for their ideas on how these values might be protected and sustained so that they remained, or in some cases could be revived, to be vibrant elements of the lives of future generations. In a very active brainstorming exercise, they provided the following ideas for how such values could be sustained and strengthened:

- Information/interpretation signage at Illabo and Stockinbingal rest area (the latter near Burley Griffen Way)
 - Signage needs to be fit for purpose and weather resistant
 - The community needs to be involved in selecting and developing the stories and information.
- Tourist information
 - Signage in townships as a legacy of the project – in places people will see them rather than along the line.
 - use a consistent logo designed by local Aboriginal artists on signage
 - reflecting Aboriginal Country
 - Information about the Country through which the train travels
- A train logo that is a stylistic representation of the map of Aboriginal Country through which the route passes from Queensland to Melbourne. Inclusive of all the Aboriginal nations through which it travels
 - Map of route that shows different nations along the route placed at start and finish of line
- Artwork on rail bridge (the overbridge at Stockinbingal)
 - use local Aboriginal artists – the Aboriginal community in Young include artists
- Aboriginal management of Country
 - regeneration of camps and construction compounds etc.
 - ongoing Land management through cultural burning. The LALC has a group of 15 being trained in cultural burning.
 - possible ongoing management of environmental offset land – they were interested to understand more about the environmental offsets and if there were any planned within Young LALC boundaries
 - interested in opportunities for ongoing management by LALC
 - can they augment such areas with Aboriginal bush tucker and culturally useful plants?
 - kickstart/seed funding for a Young LALC Wiradjuri ranger program



- Aboriginal site officers involved in earthworks and constructions
- cultural monitoring
- Cultural awareness and heritage induction for
 - construction workers
 - ongoing staff/operators
 - preparation of an information booklet by LALC- for workers in cultural and heritage to cover
 - sites – scarred trees, artefacts along route
 - Aboriginal meanings
 - recent Aboriginal history
 - protocols – respect for Country
 - Wiradjuri language in dual language signage at construction camps
- Opportunities for signage in town/rest areas for recent Aboriginal history stories:
 - Stockman
 - Police trackers – Bubbo, Fred Freeman
 - Sarah Freeman Aboriginal midwife travelled widely via horse and cart to assist women
- The LALC owns land at Stockinbingal- perhaps an economic opportunity if used for construction/accommodation camp.

When asked about specific animal and plant species, the group responded that if you get the plants/habitat right the animals will follow. The community would like to see native plants from the local area used in regeneration and landscaping. They would like a focus on culturally useful plants and native bush tucker. There are potentially more to choose from but the examples below were suggested as they grow relatively low to the ground and the participants felt that low growing plants would be more suitable in the context of a rail easement

- Chocolate Lilly
- Kangaroo Grass (ground seeds for food, weave baskets)
- Native sarsaparilla
- Native pigface- purple flower
- Local wattle (food-seed; sap -glue, bark -dye)
- Cumbungi- dry stalks. Fluffy seeds used for lining babies' baskets etc.
- Old man saltbush---- eat the leaves
- Rosy Bluebush---- medicine in leaves and seeds
- Tarvine----- taproot contains water and energy



- Native flax lily----- leaves for weaving, berries food, and tubers eaten.
- Chocolate Lily---- tubers eaten raw or roasted.

5.1.3 Possibilities and constraints

In subsequent discussions with JHG, Inland Rail and ARTC it was made clear that while all ideas had merit some were impractical to commit to, largely due to the complex laying of roles and responsibilities involved in the proposed line. Some of challenges are noted here:

Train names and/or artwork: In particular, ARTC clarified that while they would ultimately own and manage the rail line, the trains themselves would not be owned by them but rather by various clients. In addition, these same trains might also operate on other lines in completely different areas. Nevertheless, the idea was an interesting one and would be passed on to train operators as a suggestion. It could not however be a commitment in the Cultural Values Plan because none of the parties involved in the planning construction or operation had the authority to make this decision.

A legacy project around and interpretative signage project: As noted in the workshop there is little practical opportunity for interpretive signage along the Illabo-Stockinbingal section of the proposed rail line as there are no stops or viewing points along the route, which largely passes through private property.

It was in this context that the idea of leaving a legacy by developing interpretive signage for the local community at a place where visitors and local already frequent was discussed. Options that were discussed included Bethungra Dam, or a public rest area/park in Town were suggested. This is very practical approach and would enable the Young Aboriginal community to share some of their stories with the broader local community and visitors. This type of legacy project was also raised in the Cootamundra workshop (see section 5.2). Given that all the places mentioned are not under the control of Inland Rail, JHG or ARTC, further consultations would be required with property owners/managers to confirm approval and co-operation and to identify the most suitable place. For this reason, the commitment in this document can only be to – ‘use best endeavours to develop an Aboriginal heritage interpretation project in partnership with the Aboriginal community and property owner at one of the locations or another suitable location agreed to by all relevant parties (see Section 6.6)’

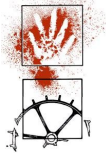


Figure 5-2 Participants in the workshop left to right Keith Freeman, Enid Clarke, Janayah Freeman, Tori Apps, Brodie Apps, Lisa Goodman and Claire Bridges. (Photo NOHC)



Figure 5-3 Participants in the workshop left to right: Alona Apps, Makali Tonpi, Marnie Freeman, Fred Baxter, Keith Freeman and Enid Clarke. (Photo NOHC)



5.2 Cootamundra

A cultural values workshop was held with members of the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party on Thursday 8th May commencing at 4:30pm. The workshop was held at the Cootamundra Ex-Services Club and led by Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy of NOHC.

All attendees were provided with a brief written description of the purpose of the workshop, which also outlined how information gathered in the workshop might be used in developing the overall cultural values plan. All attendees also signed a consent form allowing the use of data collected and photos taken at the workshop in the cultural values plan if required. All attendees were paid for their time and contribution.

In attendance were Amanda Levatt, Chrystal Summerfield, Colina Meadows, Debora Lynette Roxborough, Donald Elphick, Gary Luck, Kim Sannazzaro, Mitch Summerfield, Mitchell Grant Summerfield. Also present were – Claire Bridges (JHG) and Emma Bryant (JHG) (see Figure 5-6).

5.2.1 Identifying Cultural Values

A brief discussion of what was meant by cultural values took place as described above. Each value was written on a leaf by the participant and added to the tree of cultural values. Each value was written on a leaf by the participant and added to the tree of cultural values. The list that emerged included:

- To revive spiritual practice through the right to connect to Country
- To go bush
- Language
- Connection to Country
- Hear the sound of the birds in the trees
- To learn about our culture so that it isn't forgotten
- Access to Country to connect to it
- Strong cultural pride and sense of self
- Appreciate First Nations dance
- Learning from and With Country
- To be able to speak language freely and fluently
- Being able to have access to culture and land
- School students all learn a local language
- To camp in the bush
- Sit beside the river uninterrupted
- To remember and learn from the past
- *Yindyamarra*
- Black wallabies



Participants were asked for their ideas on how these values might be protected and sustained so that they remained or in some cases revived to be vibrant elements of their future generations lived. In a very active brainstorming exercise, they provided the following ideas for how such values could be sustained and strengthened:

- Opportunities through schools
- more cultural information
- sports – unifying activity
- cultural camps
- Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group (AECG)- hold riverine camps
- get schools together
- Environmental Stories about the Wiradjuri landscape
- Dance – film local dances as a resource for schools

Language

- Need teachers in schools
- Property, locality, street names in local language (Chris Orchard Charles Sturt University – current project on language).
- Develop dual naming of streets and other signs around town
- Level crossing- Aboriginal design signage / language

The following suggestions were made for engagement with the Inland Rail construction team

- PPE using Wiradjuri symbols and language – can be arranged through Luke Penrith
- Cultural Inductions for workers (use local people)
- There is a video by Stan Grant – *Yindyamarra Yambuwan* (Respect Everything)
- Dual language signage in construction camps
- Care re contamination – oils etc.
- Rehabilitate laydown areas and construction camps with local native species- use local people to do this
- Use LALC for control burns – LALC and National Parks Wildlife Services have been undertaking traditional burning methods training and mapping property owners agreeable to this
- Take care of habitat- control feral pigs

Design

- Include animal underpasses but need to situate them where the animals normally traverse- identify existing animal tracks/travel routes



- Note at the crossing over Sydney Road there is a very large Gugaa (goanna)– must be very old and care should be taken when doing construction work around there.
- Rail dams - control water to improve native animals/fish etc.

Long term land management

- Build on existing work by Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party/ local farmers and Local Land services – working with local farmers on regenerative farming practices.
- Take care of habitat and animals will follow
- Healthy water ways /cultural flows

Interpretive signage

- Sharing stories traditional, early historical
- Not useful along rail line- focus on places visitors and locals already go. For example:
 - Bethungra Dam campground- opportunity for interpretation, artwork, revegetation and language
 - Pioneer Park – yarning place, native hibiscus (symbol of stolen generation at Cootamundra girls' home), soundscape and stories (sees wetland at Wagga for an example)
- The purple hibiscus would be a good local logo to build into signage style

When asked about specific animal and plant species, the group responded that if you get the plants/habitat right - the animals will follow. The community would like to see native plants from the local area used in regeneration and landscaping. Plants that were specifically mentioned were:

- The native hibiscus- symbol of stolen generation
- Old man weed (suit wet conditions)- drink with water as a tonic or mix with oil as a salve
- Chocolate lilies
- Yam daisies- food
- Flax lily -used in weaving
- Acacia -multiple uses: for wood, seeds used in cooking etc.,
- Kangaroo grass

Animals that were considered particularly important were the Wiradjuri totem animals specific to Cootamundra:

- *Gugga* (Goanna)
- *Gudhamang dhuray* – long necked freshwater turtle
- Pied Currawong



5.2.3 Possibilities and constraints

The participants in the Cootamundra workshop took a very broad approach to brainstorming ideas to sustain and celebrate their culture. They acknowledged that not all of the ideas would necessarily be practical for the current project for example they started with some of the things that they wanted to ideally see continuing or being normalised within the community such as cultural camps for children etc.

In subsequent discussions with JHG, Inland Rail and ARTC it was made clear that while all ideas had merit some were impractical to commit to, largely due to the complex laying of roles and responsibilities involved in the proposed line. Some of challenges are noted here:

Aboriginal cultural burning of easement: While the uses of the LALCs for control burns to manage the easement might sound ideal, this is not a practical commitment to implement given the narrow corridor through private land.

A legacy project around and interpretative signage project: As noted in the workshop there is little practical opportunity for interpretive signage along the Illabo-Stockinbingal section of the proposed rail line as there are no stops or viewing points along the route, which largely passes through private property. The idea of a legacy project featured not on the line but on improving heritage interpretation at a place that people already go to was discussed at the Cootamundra Workshop and similar ideas were proposed. As well as Bethungra Dam, Pioneer Park was also suggested.

The same clarification applies that was discussed at the workshop held in Young. Given that all the places mentioned are not under the control of Inland Rail, JHG or ARTC, further consultations would be required with property owners/ managers to confirm approval and co-operation and to identify the most suitable place. For this reason, the commitment in this document can only be to – ‘use best endeavours to develop an Aboriginal heritage interpretation project in partnership with the Aboriginal community and property owner at one of the locations or another suitable location agreed to by all relevant parties (see Section 6.6).



Figure 5-5 Participants in the workshop L to R Chrystal Summerfield, Deborah Lynette Roxborough, Gary Luck, Mitch Summerfield Snr. (Photo NOHC)



Figure 5-6 Participants in the workshop L to R: Amanda Levatt, Donald Elphick, Mitchell Grant Summerfield Jnr, Kim Sannazzaro (standing), Colina Meadows. (Photo NOHC)



5.3 Wagga Wagga

A cultural values workshop was held with Aboriginal community members from Wagga Wagga and Narrandera on Tuesday 1st July, commencing at 10:00am and concluding at 1:00pm. The workshop was held at the Wagga Wagga RSL and led by Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy of NOHC. The meeting was opened with a welcome to Country delivered by Hewitt Whyman.

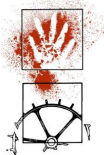
All attendees were provided with a brief written description of the purpose of the workshop, which also outlined how information gathered in the workshop might be used in developing the overall cultural values plan. All attendees also signed a consent form allowing the use of data collected and photos taken at the workshop in the cultural values plan if required. All attendees were paid for their time and contribution.

In attendance were: Peter Beath, Mary Atkinson, Cheryl Penrith, Dorothy Whyman, Hewitt Whyman, Robert Carroll, Maxine Kirby, Darryl Charles (Wagga LALC), Joey Charles (Wagga LALC). Also present, were Claire Bridges (JHG), Dylan Nelson (Inland Rail), Hannah Morris (Inland Rail) (see Figure 5-8). Apologies were received from: Roland Williams and Neerim Carroll.

5.3.1 Identifying Cultural Values

Each value was written on a leaf by the participant and added to the tree of cultural values (Figure 5-7). The list of values recorded included:

- To revive spiritual practice through the right to connect to Country
- Family histories
- Family stories about droving
- Family stories about railways – ‘uncle worked on railways’- railway workers/family lived in Stockinbingal
- All the stories should be told about how our people grew up
- Rail lines have stories important to Aboriginal people
- Good and bad stories
- Railways used to remove children – Stolen Generations- Cootamundra Girls Home
- Culture
- Cultural tress – carved tress ring trees
- Clean waterways, creeks, rivers, swamps
- Storytelling, truth-telling
- Sharing information and knowledge
- Native grasses and plants
- Swimming and fishing
- Important historical waterways



- Language
- Dinarseer – property called ‘Retreat’ Aboriginal connection/ partnership with landowner
- Bush Foods
- Country
- Sense of belonging - Connection to Country
- Kids need to be able to visit and experience Country
- Awareness of cultural spirits and feelings
- Access to Country previously locked up
- Bethungra- important place – needs updated interpretation
- Preservation of waterholes, plants, and camp sites
- Animal habitats
- Retaining local information about First Nations occupation
- Travelling stock routes
- Respect for culture and sites
- Cultural history of sandhills at Narrandera
- Growing up on the river



5.3.2 Celebrating and Sustaining Cultural Values

The participants were next asked to consider what could be done in the context of the Inland Rail project to celebrate and sustain these important things to ensure that our future generations can experience them?

Participants were asked for their ideas on how these values might be protected and sustained so that they remained or in some cases revived to be vibrant elements of their future generations lived. They provided the following ideas for how such values could be sustained and strengthened:

Language

- Language name for camp/facilities
- The Albury to Illabo section already uses the term '*Yindyamarra Way*' = proceeding with Respect/ taking time to do things the right way
- Could use '*Walumarra*' for this section. Means to protect and guard.

Inland Rail construction team

- Cultural Inductions for workers (use local people)
- Brochure for workers
- Yarning circle at camp (later talk to landowner re Aboriginal access to it and /or relocated it to local public school at Stockinbingal
- Dual language signage in construction camps
- Language name for construction camp/facilities
- Care re contamination – oils around waterways
- Rehabilitate laydown areas and construction camps with local native species- use local people to do this
- Use LALC/rangers for control burns along easement as needed
- Take care of habitat
- Restore creek lines- using native plants i.e. Cumbungi
- Inscribe Inland Rail's statement of commitment on the trains- However, it was pointed out that this recommendation was not within Inland Rail or ARTC 's purview as the trains themselves, are owned by other entities. Private operators own the trains that run on the ARTC managed rail line.

Design

- Aboriginal artwork on bridges (engage local Aboriginal artists).
- Wiradjuri name on engine like named planes

Long term land management

- Restoration of habitats
- Local Aboriginal management of offset areas



- Leave the felled trees for habitat
- Use LALC to do rehab work. - plant native species
- Package of works around waterways suitable for LALC/rangers – can't use pesticides
- Use native plants/culturally significant plants e.g. Cumbungi, Quandong, saltbush, Oldman Weed, Emu Bush, native berries
- Healthy water ways
- Manage the easement – where Aboriginal sites occur in or near easement include a sign on gate alerting contactors/ land managers to this- contact LALC, check the Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIMS).
- Traditional burning – partnership with neighbouring landowners
- Native grasses could be brought back to easement as it will be protected from cattle and sheep- animals will return
- Re-wilding of easement, construction area and crossing.

Interpretive signage

- Sharing stories traditional, early historical
- Not useful along rail line- focus on places visitors and locals already go. For example:
- Bethungra Dam campground- opportunity for interpretation, artwork, revegetation and language
- Bridges- suitable for artwork
- Design for engine – something that captures everyone's Country and the concept of the journey through Aboriginal land
- Information brochure – capturing local Aboriginal stories, for distribution through local tourist information outlets.

5.3.3 Possibilities and constraints

The Wagga brainstorming session was enthusiastic and roamed widely. It was again a challenge at first for participants to understand the limitations of the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of the proposed train line in terms of accessibility and the chain of responsibility between JHG, Inland Rail and ARTC.

Environmental Land Management of easement. As in the other workshops environmental management of the easement both during construction and also in the long term once the line is operation was a major point of discussion. Cultural burning as well as careful clearing and rehabilitation around river and creek crossings were mentioned as desirable areas of interest and opportunity for participation especially for the Wagga LALC rangers. However, the potential involvement of local Aboriginal people in such work is complicated by the procurement processes of ARTC, who will be the easement managers, after the rail line is constructed.

Landscaping Interpretation and design. Landscaping and later rehabilitation of the construction camps area was also seen as a possible opportunity to include cultural elements such as a yarning circle and language names identifying camp facilities or dual naming was considered a positive opportunity to reinforce cross cultural sharing in addition to inductions and an information brochure.



It was noted that there are several artists amongst the local community who would be interested in being engaged to design artwork for the one overbridge in this section of the rail line and also in any community heritage interpretation project and or brochure.

Design elements on rolling stock. Participants at this workshop also raised the idea of naming engines with Wiradjuri names and or designs on engines. As noted in section 5.1.3, ARTC has clarified that while they would ultimately own and manage the rail line, the trains themselves would not be owned by them but rather by different 'clients'. In addition, these same trains might also operate on other lines in completely different areas.



Figure 5-8 Participants in the workshop

5.4 Discussion

There was a high degree of consistency between the cultural values identified across the three workshops. Most of the values raised can be grouped under the following headings: Caring for Country /land management; sustaining Wiradjuri language; sharing stories of Wiradjuri people and experiences, recognition and respect for Wiradjuri culture.

Two important words emerged that capture key aspects of Wiradjuri philosophy to culture and the environment. They are 'Yindyamarra' and 'Walumarra'. Dylan Nelson (Inland Rail) informed the Wagga workshop participants that the term *Yindyamarra Way* had already been adopted as a key word guiding the works along that part of the proposed rail line from Albury to Illabo. The workshop participants noted that it equally applied throughout Wiradjuri Country. Another word that was also very relevant and could be used to differentiate the project sections was Walumarra which means to guard and protect.

A map of the project area was provided to aid discussion in each of the workshops; however, most participants have not accessed the properties through which the easement runs. No information on places of cultural value specific to the easement were identified, although it was noted that Aboriginal



sites were being mapped and excavated in the parallel archaeological survey and assessment process. Some other archaeological sites in the vicinity of the easement were noted from previous investigations. This was not unexpected given that the area is largely privately owned, and therefore Aboriginal people have effectively been locked out of this portion of their Country for several generations; a point that was made by participants at several workshops. A number of places of particular interest were noted in the project vicinity, and the approximate location of these are shown on Figure 5-9.

While the cultural values of tangible sites along the easement were not a major focus in discussion the participants were well aware that survey and excavation were being conducted in a parallel assessment process. Generally, such sites are valued because they provide a tangible connection to ancestors and window into the past life of those ancestors prior to and, in some cases, during the early stages of European invasion.

Wiradjuri concerns for and interest in land management were clearly at the forefront of participants minds in the workshop. Internationally there are a range of terms that have emerged to try and capture the important contributions between people and nature for example NCP (Nature's Contributions to People) and PCN (People's Contributions to Nature) are two mutually complementary conceptual approaches (Hill et al 2021; Topp et al 2021; Larsen 2023 et al.). Included under this general heading of caring for Country the following concerns and interest can be captured:

- rehabilitation of any construction and camp area with native species and in particular 'useful' native species (e.g. those used for traditional food and crafts).
- a desire to be involved in long term management of the rail easement – e.g. traditional burns
- concern that construction dams be used to encourage wildlife after construction
- concern that the fenced rail easement will block native animal pathways and conversely as a they may provide safe haven for smaller native species as fenced protection from predators.

Opportunities for employment and engagement with Aboriginal business was also raised at each workshop, particularly in relation to land management and rehabilitation. ARTC has advised that meeting these aspirations may be a challenge because of current procurement processes. ARTC have a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (ARTC n.d.) which is currently undergoing a refresh. That Pan includes an action

9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

9.1 Develop a business case for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy. (ARTC n.d:12)

It would be timely to review procurement policies to consider ways in which contractor and subcontractor procurement could support employment of local Aboriginal people so that future arrangements for land management within easements could meet community aspirations.

The agreed action plan is detailed in the following section. Some elements of the plan were adopted immediately and had already been implemented in whole or part by the time this report was finalized. For example, JHG implemented the recommendation for dual naming throughout their construction camp and the list of culturally useful plants produced in the workshops was incorporated into the Visual and Landscape Impact Mitigation Plan.

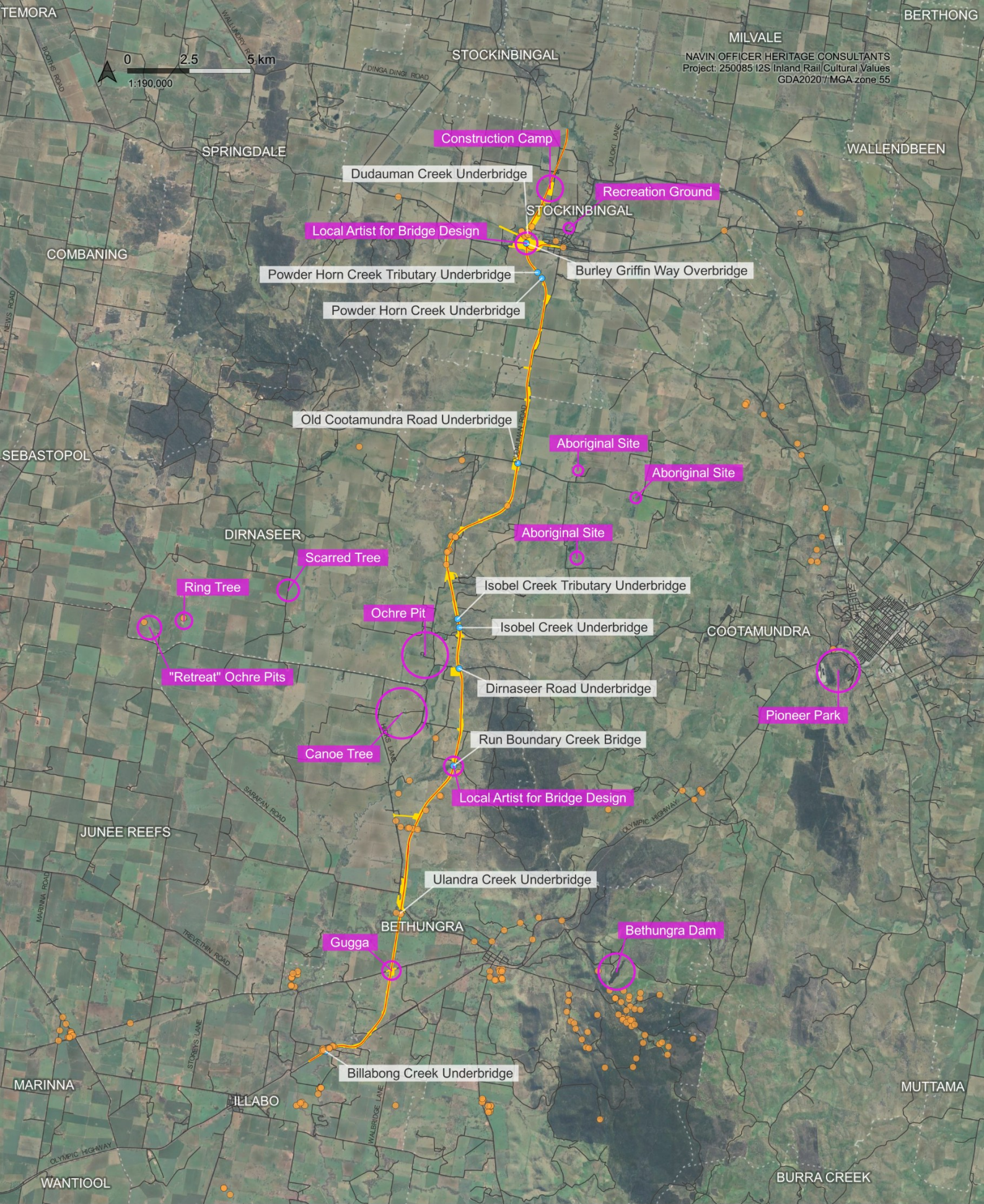


Figure 5-9 Places of cultural values or interest as marked up in all three workshops



6 WALUMARRA - A PLAN FOR RECOGNISING AND SUSTAINING CULTURAL VALUES

6.1 Wiradjuri language

Revival and transmission of Wiradjuri language was a priority expressed in all three workshops for as the by-line on the Wiradjuri Dictionary¹ reads: *Wiray ngiyang wiray mayiny* (No language, no people!). Language is a powerful vehicle for transmitting the meaning behind complex concepts. Two key concepts: *yindyamarra* and *walumarra* were identified during the workshops that should be adopted as principles to underpin the design, construction and environmental work along the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of the Inland Rail as outlined below. The use of Wiradjuri words and dual naming is a simple, but powerful and effective way of reinforcing respect for Wiradjuri culture amongst the construction team, visitors and the general population.

6.1.1 Principles to underpin the design construction and environmental works

6.1.1.1 *Yindyamarra – proceeding slowly with respect*

Participants at all three workshops highlighted the Wiradjuri word *Yindyamarra*² which means to do something slowly with respect and honour. Inland Rail advised that the phrase Yindyamarra Way has already been adopted to apply to work on the section of the line south of Illabo (i.e Albury to Illabo). Nevertheless, the participants felt it was a term that applied equally well to the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of the Inland Rail as it typifies the right way to work in Wiradjuri Country. This concept should be adopted as a foundation principle underpinning the work of JHG and Inland Rail in this project.

6.1.1.2 *Walumarra- to guard and protect*

At the Wagga workshop a second concept was introduced that was pertinent to the sustainability of Wiradjuri cultural values in the design and construction of the Inland Rail through Wiradjuri Country. This was 'Walumarra' which mean to guard and protect which is a principle that participants felt should underpin the efforts to preserve, transmit and strengthen the cultural values for this project. This concept should also be adopted as a foundation principle underpinning the work of JHG and Inland Rail in this project.

6.1.2 Dual naming

Many participants spoke of the need for cultural induction of the workforce as more than a one-off cultural induction. A simple and effective way of doing this is through dual naming of directional signs within the construction camps and compounds. The constant, subtle reinforcing of a Wiradjuri presence through dual naming can be a powerful way of reinforcing any cultural induction. There are easily accessible resources available to assist with this including Aunty Enid Clarke (Young High School), The Wiradjuri Dictionary (Uncle Stan Grant and Aunty Flo Grant) available at <https://wiradjuri.wccclp.com.au/> and the Regn8 app (Dr Stan Grant and Dr John Rudder) <https://regen8.org/language-revitalisation/apps/wiradjuri-dictionary/> which includes words for toilets, women, men, track etc., all of which are likely to be relevant to the construction camps directional signage.

¹ <https://wiradjuri.wccclp.com.au/>

² Op cit.

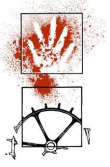


Figure 6-1JHG has now adopted the recommendation for dual language signs in their construction camp

6.2 Community led cultural inductions

During the construction phase, all construction staff and personnel involved in the project, including contractors should attend a cultural induction. The induction and induction materials should be developed in collaboration with local community Elders. As a minimum, that induction should include: a welcome to Country delivered by an agreed community Elder(s), a brief summary of Wiradjuri heritage and history, an explanation of the Wiradjuri language signage and of the concepts of *Yindyamarra* and *Walumarra*, a brief overview of any cultural sites found along the route during archaeological surveys and advice regarding legal obligations should any additional Aboriginal objects or sites be discovered during construction.

6.3 Support local Aboriginal led Caring for Country

Caring for Country is about more than 'landcare', it is intrinsically linked to maintaining the cultural life, identity, autonomy and health of Aboriginal people. Measures which contribute to community health and wellbeing are an objective of the Sustainability Management Plan(5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0044) and may contribute to credits (Hea-1 Measures to positively contribute to community health and wellbeing) in measuring the sustainability of the project.

The long-term management of the rail track and easement will be the responsibility of ARTC. The ARTC Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is currently under review but nevertheless includes several actions and deliverables that apply to supporting local Aboriginal-led caring for Country in the management of the easement.

Relevant deliverables identified in the RAP under Relationships include:

1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

1.1 Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.



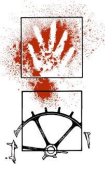
1.2 Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

One of the deliverables listed in the RAP under 'Respect' is to:

5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.

Access to, and the health of nature, contributes to people's quality of life in multiple ways. All of the Elders and Knowledge Holders who contributed to this plan expressed their concern for the environment and their interest in rehabilitation and management of the disturbance footprint of the project. The rehabilitation activities which the local community consider they could provide include hand weeding where such care may be required (for example around creek banks), planting tube stock, and potentially other works required such as temporary fencing to protect regrowth areas and cultural burns to reduce fuel loads, if and where appropriate. Young and Wagga Local Aboriginal Land Councils are both actively engaged in land management and members of the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party are actively engaging with local landowners on caring for Country projects through the local Land Services. Delivering on community aspirations for an ongoing role in land management related to this project is complicated by the fact that neither JHG nor Inland Rail will have final ownership of the easement. With that in mind the following actions are recommended:

- a) consideration should be given to contracting the Young and/or Wagga Wagga LALCs to deliver appropriate revegetation works as part of the rehabilitation and landscape maintenance works (see above) within the project footprint. Both LALCs have aspirations to develop an Aboriginal ranger program, and such work would support this aspiration. Procurement may be directly with those organisations or as subconsultants to other contractors whichever is practical. This will need to be considered in the light JHG and Inland Rail procurement guidelines.
- b) ARTC should consider the local Aboriginal community aspirations to be involved in the long-term management of vegetation within the easement. For example, around creeks and waterways where the use of pesticides and large machinery is not appropriate and a careful approach is needed. This would be done in line with the ARTC RAP deliverables of Relationship and Respect.'(see above).
- c) discussions should be undertaken with Department of Planning and Environment with a view of securing a long-term role for Young and /or Wagga LALC in managing any environmental offset areas within their LALC boundaries.
- d) plants used in landscaping and rehabilitation of the easement and /or work areas should consider culturally valuable native species such as:
 - a. Cumbungi, (fluffy seeds traditionally used for lining babies' baskets)
 - b. Quandong,
 - c. Saltbush (eat the leaves)
 - d. Oldman Weed (drink with water as a tonic or mix with oil as a salve),
 - e. Emu Bush,
 - f. native berries
 - g. the native hibiscus- symbol of stolen generation,
 - h. chocolate lilies (tubers eaten raw or roasted),
 - i. yam daisies (food),
 - j. flax lily (used in weaving, berries and tubers eaten),
 - k. Acacia (multiple uses for the wood, seeds used in cooking; sap used for glue, bark used for dye),



- l. Kangaroo Grass (ground seeds for food, weave baskets)
- m. Native sarsaparilla
- n. Native pigface- purple flower
- o. Rosy Bluebush (medicine in leaves and seeds)
- p. Tarvine (taproot contains water and energy)

Regarding the local Aboriginal community aspirations to be involved in the long-term management of vegetation within the easement; ARTC should review procurement procedures to facilitate local Aboriginal employment in future contracts. For example, contractors could be required to demonstrate awareness and experience of local cultural knowledge of Country either through their own knowledge (in the case of Aboriginal owned businesses) or through partnership with local Aboriginal people/organisations. This is also applicable to 6.4

6.4 Local Aboriginal community benefits through employment

Further engagement with Knowledge Holders and Aboriginal community groups including Young LALC, Wagga LALC, the Cootamundra Working Party and the Local Land Services is to be undertaken to ensure that local Aboriginal people are engaged where appropriate, based on skills required, in environmental management and rehabilitation, particularly revegetation.

This plan reiterates and reinforces the employment and engagement targets already in place to maximise benefits to the Local Aboriginal community. To the extent possible JHG and Inland Rail should prioritise **local** Aboriginal participation in employment and works packages and procurement opportunities should maximise the employment of **local** Aboriginal people. It is noted that some strategies are already in place (see JHG 2025 Social Impact Management Plan (5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0064)) but as emphasised here, they should include:

- strategies for maximising training and employment opportunities
- identify the capacity of **local** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers to be ready for potential additional demand (this includes the organisations listed above)
- provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement targets
- identify tailored 'meet-the-contractor' events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to learn about potential opportunities associated with the delivery of the project.

In relation to the above it is noted that John Holland has a proven track record in subcontracting to First Nations businesses and the approach to engagement is cascaded to the I2S project and involves:

- Corporate partners: I2S engage with John Holland partnerships including Yarpa Hub, NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and Supply Nation.
- Continuation of business relationships: John Holland have an established database of over 200 First Nations businesses, managed by the Strategic Procurement team. The database was curated from the directories of Supply Nation, NSW ICC, and through other projects. I2S draw on this database to identify and proactively engage First Nations businesses for supply opportunities on I2S.
- Multi Criteria Assessment: John Hollands MCA is implementation in the I2S tender process which includes a weighted scoring system for commitment to procuring with First Nations businesses.

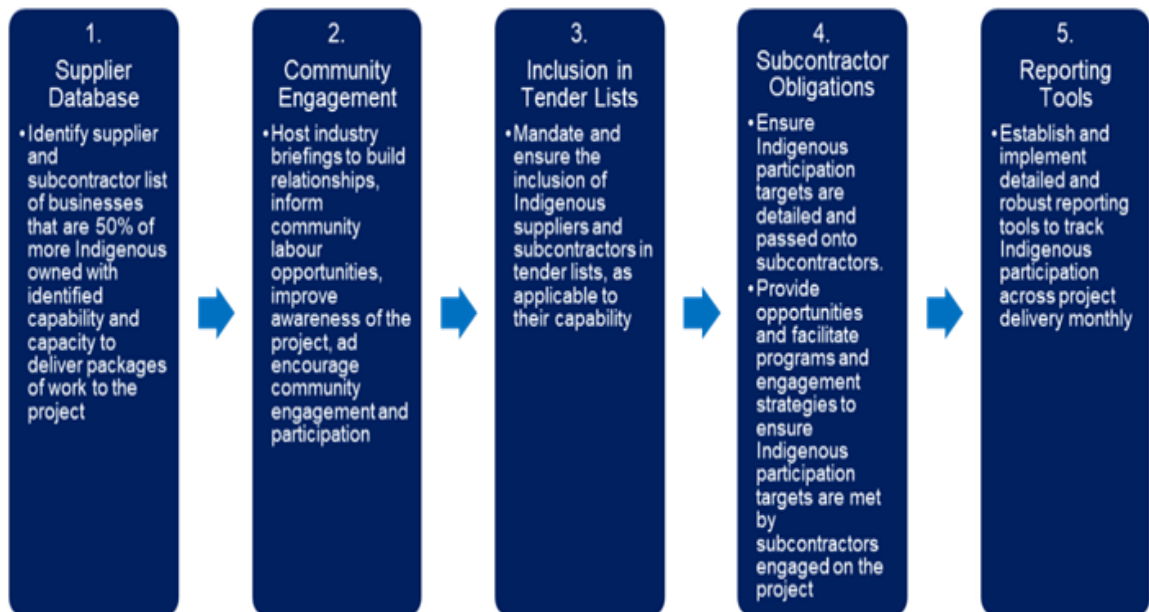


Figure 6-2 The JHG procurement process which has been implemented in the I2S project.

6.5 Design input

As previously noted, opportunities for design input on the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of the Inland Rail are constrained by the relatively narrow easement which mostly travels through private property, the lack of station or stopping points which could provide opportunities for visible design elements and heritage interpretation. However, there was a strong desire expressed by the Knowledge Holders who participated in the workshops that the design acknowledge the Aboriginal land through which the line passes. To this end

- the single over-bridge in the Illabo to Stockinbingal section should incorporate artwork by a **local** Aboriginal artist
- culturally useful native species should be used in landscaping as suggested in section 6.3. Note the Visual and Landscape Impact Mitigation Plan (Oct 2025) has adopted this aspiration from the Aboriginal community.
- design of the construction camp(s) should include dual naming signage and a culturally appropriate social/focal point such as a yarning circle. The dual naming initiative has been implemented (see Figure 6-1).
- adoption of a culturally approved brand for interpretation signage (see 6.6 below)
- Noting that the ARTC are not the owners of the rolling stock, ARTC should forward to the private train operators for their consideration, the following aspirations of the Aboriginal community for their consideration.
 - The strong recommendation from the Elders that the engines used on the line should be named for the Aboriginal lands through which they travel (akin to the names given to Commercial aircraft). Recognising that these engines also travel through the traditional lands of other Aboriginal Nations, they suggest that one could be given a Wiradjuri name to be displayed on the engine.
 - The suggestion that artwork be commissioned for a distinctive decoration/logo on the engines that depicts the journey through the lands of the different Aboriginal groups.



6.6 Heritage Interpretation

The Elders felt strongly that given that the Inland Rail through Illabo to Stockinbingal, once operational would be largely inaccessible to the public that heritage interpretation would be more effectively focused on places that visitors (local and tourists) already used, and which would therefore provide an opportunity to showcase local Aboriginal history and heritage. In this way JHG could leave behind a legacy of benefit for the local Aboriginal community that would last well beyond the construction of the rail line. Along with the townships of Young and Cootamundra themselves, two places were consistently mentioned as requiring cultural heritage interpretation signage i.e. Bethungra Dam and Pioneer Park, Cootamundra and additional opportunity may be at Stockinbingal near Burley Griffin Way where some road redesign works are required.

Both JHG and Inland Rail representatives who attended the cultural values workshops referred to their respective organisations commitment to leaving a positive legacy for local communities and this is commitments is also documented in the Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Management Plan (IRPL Document Number: 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0045) which notes:

John Holland will invest in innovative ways to actively support the community. We will continue to support local charitable organisations and build on the partnerships that we have already developed. (p18)

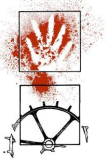
JHG and Inland Rail together and in collaboration with Aboriginal Knowledge Holders will employ their best endeavours to develop a heritage interpretation project as a community legacy project. The Interpretation project should include a series of high-quality interpretive signs that capture community stories. Such stories may include, but are not limited to, some of the suggestions raised by participants in this plan:

- Wiradjuri life before European invasion
- Wiradjuri totems *Gugga* (Goanna), *Gudhamang dhuray* (long necked freshwater turtle), Pied Currawong etc.,
- Cootamundra Girls home (noting with care that some of the Elders and or their immediate family were at one time residents of the home)
- The role of railways in local Aboriginal lives (oral stories of family members working on the railways, the role of railways in removing children, and in connecting the Wiradjuri diaspora as families moved voluntarily for work and/or were forced to move)
- Stories of important local historical figures for example police trackers – ‘Bubbo’ Fred Freeman; Sarah Freeman Aboriginal midwife who travelled widely via horse and cart to assist women.

Signage should include a distinctive style and iconography and that style should be mirrored in a digital heritage brochure that can be used by the LALCs and the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party in their educational and community outreach work.

For the purposes of this commitment ‘best endeavours’ means - active and sustained effort involving discussions with the Aboriginal community and the relevant landowner manager with the aim of reaching a mutually beneficial outcome regarding:

- The selection of an appropriate location (noting community suggestion made in the workshops as documented in this report.
- Co -design with Aboriginal community of stories to be included
- Approval from landowner/manager to install interpretive signage



6.7 Mitigating impacts on Aboriginal archaeological heritage

The recommendations to mitigate impacts on the archaeological heritage as outlined in the Sub Plan Heritage Management 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0059 will be implemented. Feedback from the final RAP consultation process for this Plan was received emphasising the importance of a whole of project approach to the consideration of archaeological consideration and protection and specifically the inclusion of all access tracks and equipment laydown areas.

6.8 Reporting on work in progress and achievements

During construction, JHG should provide regular updates at least every two months on the project and the implementation of this plan to the Aboriginal community via the Young and Wagga LALC and the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party and to the Registered Aboriginal Parties for the Illabo to Stockinbingal Inland Rail Project. The two LALCs may choose to disseminate this information broadly to community members through their facebook pages or other social media. This is consistent with the commitment to 'communicate early and often, while permitting two-way dialogue' (Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Management Plan p10).

6.9 Matters requiring further investigation and consideration

While many of the commitments can be implemented immediately some require further investigation and discussions. These matters include:

- The community aspiration expressed in Section 6.3 c) above regarding involving the Local Aboriginal land Councils in the management and if needed rehabilitation of environmental offset areas. Inland Rail has advised that the offsets follow different approval pathways and proposed works related to management works may require Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permits and the preparation of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Reports which would provide opportunities for Aboriginal community engagement. This does not, however, fully address the community aspirations regarding these offsets as they extended beyond consideration of Aboriginal sites to include environmental matters, and so further consultation and feedback on this matter with the Knowledge Holders and LALCs is required. As the offset agreements have not included the commitments in table 6.1.
- The desired initiative in Section 6.5 regarding Wiradjuri naming and or design on any engines is not within the purview of ARTC to mandate as they do not own the trains. This was explained to at the workshops and the knowledge holders noted this but professed a strong desire for ARTC to discuss this with train operators. ARTC agreed that they would discuss this further with the engine operators/owners.
- Developing a legacy heritage interpretation project (see 6.6 above). During the workshop ideas about the subjects to be interpreted and the locations were discussed. However, most of these require the agreement 3rd party property owners or managers. There is also a need to develop with the knowledge holders the concept and content of any heritage interpretation project. To this end JHG has commissioned a Heritage Interpretation Plan (HIP) which will work with the Knowledge Holders and property managers to develop one such project.



Table 6-1 Cultural Values Plan Summary of Actions, Responsibility and Timing

Ref	Initiative	Commitment	Responsibility	Timing	Report section or relevant document
CVP-1a	Adopt project principles in Wiradjuri language	Develop and adopt written policy statements re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yindyamarra</i> – proceeding slowly with respect • <i>Walumarra</i>- to guard and protect 	JHG & Inland Rail	Develop immediately; then implement during: Detailed Design Pre-construction Construction	6.1.1.1 6.1.1.2
CVP-1b		ARTC's will continue to adhere to their existing Environmental Principles. The concepts of <i>Yindyamarra</i> and <i>Walumara</i> are consistent with ARTCs environmental principles of 'respect for the environment and for the communities in which they operate'.	ARTC	Throughout operation	ARTC's Environmental Policy and Principles
CVP-2	Promote Wiradjuri identity through language	Dual naming- in construction camp and signage	JHG	Detailed Design Pre-construction Construction	6.1.2 Note - This has been implemented see Figure 6.1
CVP-3	Community leadership	Community led cultural inductions	JHG	Pre-Construction Construction	6.2
CVP-4	Support local Aboriginal community-led Caring for Country	Identify, promote and encourage opportunities for local Aboriginal participation in environmental management, revegetation and rehabilitation works.	JHG	Construction Post construction	6.3



Ref	Initiative	Commitment	Responsibility	Timing	Report section or relevant document
					Refer- Social Impact Management Plan 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0064
		Locally indigenous and 'useful' native plants should be prioritised in landscaping and rehabilitation works.	JHG	Construction Post construction	Section 6.3 c) for list of specific plants recommended by the Aboriginal community
		Consider the local Aboriginal community aspirations to be involved in the long-term management of vegetation within the easement and review relevant deliverables and enabling documents (ARTC RRAP and Indigenous procurement procedures) as necessary Note this is consistent with the existing ARTC Sustainable Procurement Policy.	ARTC	Post construction Operation	6.3 ARTC RRAP deliverables of Relationship and Respect ARTC Sustainable Procurement Policy
CVP-5	Local Aboriginal community benefits through employment	a) strategies for maximising training and employment opportunities b) identify the capacity of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers to be ready for potential additional demand (this includes the organisations above)	JHG (a-d)	Construction	6.4 Refer - JHG 2025 Social Impact Management Plan 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0064



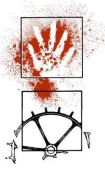
Ref	Initiative	Commitment	Responsibility	Timing	Report section or relevant document
		<p>c) provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement targets</p> <p>d) identify tailored 'meet-the-contractor' events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to learn about potential opportunities associated with the delivery of the project.</p> <p>e) ARTC to review procurement procedures to remove barriers/ enhance opportunities for local Aboriginal employment in land management /rehabilitation.</p> <p>f) ARTC will continue to identify opportunities for local Aboriginal employment in easement management consistent with their existing commitment of "Targeting capability development and transferrable skills pathways for local and Indigenous businesses, individuals, and social enterprises".</p> <p>They will continue to report as appropriate via RRAP and or annual report on employment/ contracting targets.</p>	ARTC (e)	Post -Construction/ operation	<p>Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 5-0019-220-PMA-00-ST-0001 (see section 3)</p> <p>ARTC RRAP (Action 9.1)</p> <p>ARTC Sustainable Procurement Policy</p>
CVP-6	Design input	<p>a) Artwork on over bridge</p> <p>b) adoption of a culturally approved brand/icon for interpretation signage (see 5.6)</p>	JHG	Detailed Design-Pre Construction	6.5



Ref	Initiative	Commitment	Responsibility	Timing	Report section or relevant document
		c) culturally useful native species should be used in landscaping as suggested in section 5.3	JHG	Post-construction	Section 6.3 c) for list of specific plants recommended by the Aboriginal community JHG and CM+ 2025, Visual and landscape Impact Mitigation Plan: section 4.3
		d) Design in construction camp(s) should include -dual naming signage and -a culturally appropriate social/focal point such as a yarning circle	JHG	Pre-construction	
CVP-7	Heritage Interpretation- Leaving a legacy	Develop an off-site heritage interpretation-project (employ best endeavours) as described in section 6.6. Feature approved Aboriginal stories/history Including signage Including a digital brochure for community use.	Inland Rail & JHG	Post construction (although commence necessary consultations immediately)	6.6 Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Management Plan 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0045 (see Investing in Community p18)

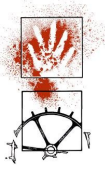


Ref	Initiative	Commitment	Responsibility	Timing	Report section or relevant document
	Mitigate impacts on archaeological sites	Implement Cultural Heritage Management Subplan (CHM) ensuring comprehensive assessment of Aboriginal archaeological heritage	JHG	As per Subplan CHM	6.7
CVP-8	Review and report	Provide Aboriginal community update via newsletter or similar	Inland Rail	Pre-construction Construction Post construction	6.8 Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Management Plan 5-0019-220-PMA-00-PL-0045
CVP-9	Further work and consultation	Several matters require further work and consultation. These are detailed in section 6.9 of this report.	IR ARTC JHG	Immediately until resolved	6.9



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APPENDIX A

CULTURAL VALUES WORKSHOP INFORMATION AND RELEASE FORM



INLAND RAIL ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL PROJECT- Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan

Information we are seeking and why

Navin Officer Heritage Consultants is working with Mountains Heritage and John Holland Group to identify cultural values that might be impacted by the Inland Rail Illabo to Stockinbingal Project. This project is additional to an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment that is separately being undertaken. That project will identify any Aboriginal Archaeological sites that may occur along the route and or be impacted by the project.

This cultural values assessment will complement other assessments by considering the cultural values that may include

- intangible heritage, natural and spiritual aspects of the Country through which the Inland Rail project passes.
- specific plants and animals whether they are used for traditional food, crafts and so forth.
- places that you or your family visit for hunting, fishing or family gatherings and /or ceremonies.
- Places which are part of stories handed down through your family, including places where your parents and grandparents lived, worked or passed away.

We are not seeking to collect any culturally restricted, secret /sacred information. For example, you may be concerned about impact to a sacred site. As an example, let's say you know of a sacred lake, and you are concerned about how the Inland Rail might impact it. It would be useful for us to know generally where this lake is and that it is sacred. You do not have to tell us secret information about the lake. It would be useful to understand what worries you have about the idea of the route passing by the sacred lake e.g. if you are concerned because you think that noise will affect it or some other concern that you may have.

The information we collect will inform the environmental assessment of the proposal and the project design. This may help to inform any comment you have on the Environmental Impact Statement.

Your name will be recorded for this interview and your contribution to the project will be acknowledged.

How Information will be managed

Workshops

NOHC will record notes, marked up maps and photos as part of the workshop process. You will be asked if we can use photos taken in our report. A brief summary of the workshop will be prepared and supplied back to participants for their record within two weeks of the completion of the workshop.

Interviews

NOHC will prepare a rough transcript of interviews which we will return to the interviewee for review and correction. We will not retain or publish the transcripts, rather relevant information will be extracted from them,

amalgamated with the information from other transcripts and tabulated. The interviewer will provide you with an opportunity to review and correct the information that you provide. The information from the interviews and the workshop will be used as the source of information in our report. Sometimes cultural values are described best in the words of the speaker, and should we choose to quote you directly we will come back to you so that you can check that the quote is as you intended.

What will be produced from the project

In addition to the brief workshop reports and raw interview transcripts we will also be producing a report for our client summarizing our findings regarding the cultural values associated with the project area. Part of this will include a Cultural Values Plan that will seek to identify how the identified values will be recognised and protected.

About the Project Team

Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy and Noreena Tamwoy are from a company called Navin Officer Heritage Consultants and we are working with Mountains Heritage to prepare a Cultural Values Plan that acknowledges the cultural values of the landscape through which the rail line will travel in the Illabo to Stockingbingal section.

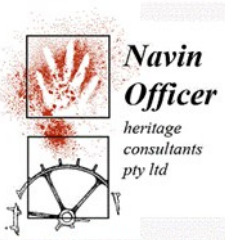


Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy



Ms Noreena Tamwoy

If you think of anything later that you would like us to know please feel free to contact Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy at smcintyre-tamwoy@nohc.com.au or 0425215012.



interview and copyright consent form

Project name: Inland Rail Illabo to Stockinbingal Project- Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment

NOHC PROJECT ID: 250085

Interviewer: Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Ph 0425 215 012, and Noreena Tamwoy

I agree to the use of material and information that I provide, as outlined in this consent form.

1. I have been provided with information about the nature and purpose of the research/interview project.
2. I understand that this consent form applies to the use of the material collected for the above project.
3. I realise that the content of what I say during interviews, and other information I provide, is not intended to be confidential.
4. I undertake to clearly indicate to the researcher any matters about which I wish confidentiality to be respected and to be treated as "off the record".
5. I am aware that I may ask to examine the interview notes and transcripts, to ensure that they are an accurate reflection of my statements.
6. Copyright in the transcript will reside with the interviewee, however the information in the transcript unless clearly identified as noted in point 4 above will be used by the researchers for the above project.

Optional [please initial either yes or no below]: I consent to give Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd and their associates the right to take my photograph, and I understand it may be used in their report or in project presentations to their client.

Yes or, No.....

Name of respondent

Address of respondent.....
(for return of transcript)

Signature of respondentDate.....