Indigenous Knowledge in the Built Environment
A Guide for Tertiary Educators

David S Jones, Darryl Low Choy, Richard Tucker, Scott Heyes, Grant Revell & Susan Bird
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Indigenous Knowledge in The Built Environment
A Guide for Tertiary Educators

David S Jones, Darryl Low Choy, Richard Tucker, Scott Heyes, Grant Revell & Susan Bird
Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the Australian continent, islands and adjacent seas, who remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their lands and waters and who continue to practice their values, languages, beliefs and customs.

***

Matilda House, a Ngambri-Ngunnawal person, a traditional custodian of the Ngunnawal Country in and around Canberra, on 12 February 2008, was the first Aboriginal to express a Welcome to Country in the Australian Houses of Parliament:

Introduction

*Murra yerribi yarrabi dyunial Buranda*

Our journey – our future

Acknowledgement

First, let me acknowledge the Prime Minister, President of the Senate, Minister Macklin, Leader of the Opposition, Members, Senators, and their guests. I also acknowledge our Elders; our Ancestors; and all those who have gone before us. And I acknowledge all Australians in all our diversity.

Welcome

Today is also significant because it is the first time in the history of the Australian Parliament, a Prime Minister has honoured us, the first people of this land, by seeking a Welcome to Country. In doing this the Prime Minister shows what we call, proper respect - to us, to his fellow Parliamentarians, and to all Australians. A Welcome to Country acknowledges our people and pays respect to our Ancestors’ spirits who created the lands. This then allows safe passage to visitors. For thousands of years our peoples have observed this protocol.

Prime Minister, my grandchildren have handed you a gift of a message stick, a tangible symbol of today’s ceremony. This message stick, a means of communication used by our peoples for thousands of years, tell the story of our coming together. With this renewed hope and pride our Strength is refreshed. Like our ancestors, we can reach new heights soaring on the wings of eagles.

***

On 10 December 1992 Prime Minister Paul Keating, in Redfern Park in Sydney, made a speech that is now called the ‘Redfern Address’ where he stated:

“There is one thing today we cannot imagine. We cannot imagine that the descendants of people whose genius and resilience maintained a culture here through 50,000 years or more, through cataclysmic changes to the climate and environment, and who then survived two centuries of dispossession and abuse, will be denied their place in the modern Australian nation.”

***
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Foreword

The relationship between many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Country is deep and intimate. From an Indigenous perspective, one belongs to Country and there is a reciprocal relationship that exists between people and Country. People and Country take care of each other.

This highlights a way of understanding that has long existed within our cultural belief systems where reciprocity is grounded within Country.

Elder April Bright (quoted in Rose 1996: 49) of the MakMak (Sea Eagle) peoples, of the Marranunggu language group in Northern Territory, has stated that "It is part of our responsibility [to be] looking after our country. If you don't look after country, country won't look after you."

Current, and future generations of built environment (architects, planners and landscape architects) educators, students and practitioners need to better respect, understand and work in partnership with Aboriginal peoples in nurturing healthy and stimulating places, landscapes and strategies that align to the spirit and values of Country observed by Aboriginal peoples.

Future projects, including designs, structures, places, landscapes, plans, and strategies of various scales and complexities, need to incorporate and better understand the values implicit in Country. Working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples can enrich designs and plans, craft more sustainable landscapes and places, and draw upon generations of environmental knowledge and wisdom that Aboriginal peoples can provide that would not otherwise be available through conventional Western-based design, planning and site analysis inquiries and educational approaches.

This resource, Indigenous Knowledge in The Built Environment: A Guide for Tertiary Educators (2017), provides a profound foundational platform to any built environment educator, student or practitioner to commence a respectful engagement with Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems pertinent to the built environment sector.

I would encourage all built environment educators, students and practitioners to read it, take on board its messages, and consider its thoughts and information towards creating a more positive and respectful relationship with the generations of Aboriginal people who have and continue to look after Country, and will continue to care for Country into the future thereby maintaining their cultural relationships.

Thanks

Rueben Berg
a Founder and Director of
Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria
“Strengthening Culture and Design in the Built Environment”
www.iadv.org.au
18 November 2016
This Guide

The Guide is purposely intended as a teaching and learning resource kit for built environment (architecture, landscape architecture, planning) academics, students and professional practitioners. Not exhaustive, it is a substantive starting point for aiding the formulation of units/courses/programs of study, as well as professional practice activities, that address, involve, and implicate Indigenous issues, topics, places, representatives and communities.

The Guide offers immediate assistance in informing built environment academics, students and professional practitioners about initial protocols and resources that they need to heed, be mindful of, and have available to them, that may be directly pertinent

- to their research activities;
- to their design ideation and studio work;
- to their drafting of plans and strategies; and,
- to their formulation of strategies for contact, engagement and consultation.

It includes:

- architecture, landscape architecture and planning precedents around Australia, and
- key architecture, landscape architecture and planning / Country literature and resources that could inform their design and or planning activities.

In tabling this Guide, the authors offer this Guide and its contents to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education centres and schools to develop and acknowledge that further consultation is required with the respective university Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education centres and schools, or Elders, to develop these protocols and resources into workable ways of Indigenising planning and design higher education curriculum and professional practices. Similarly it is available to the built environment professions.
The beginning of time (Kaldowinyeri in the languages of First Nations peoples in the South-East of South Australia), was “when song, stories and law were birthed, as were the ancestors – out of the land” (Watson 2015: 11). The first footprints on the Australian continent were those of First Nations peoples, they lived under their laws, exercising their sovereignty for over 60,000 years before colonisation by the United Kingdom. Their descendants have never ceded their land nor entered into any treaty with the ‘settlers.’

The British cloaked their taking of the continent in a legal doctrine called Terra Nullius or “land belonging to no-one”. This doctrine allowed countries seeking new territory to ‘settle’ on land that was regarded as empty; that is “belonging to no-one.” It was soon obvious that there were people living on the land. However, in a racist extension of the terra nullius doctrine, it was allowed to apply to land that was “practically unoccupied, without settled inhabitants or settled law” (Cooper v Stuart 1889). The High Court later explained that Aboriginal peoples, according to terra nullius, were seen as “so low in the scale of social organisation” that their rights could not be recognised at law (Mabo No 2; 28). Although the doctrine was called a ‘legal fiction’ by the Court, it has not been fully removed from the law and remains part of the colonisation of the Australian landscape.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were denied full humanity before the coloniser’s law and this situation continues to a large extent. Any attempt by First Nations peoples to assert their sovereignty and punish the invaders for breaches of their law led to violent retaliation, such as murders and massacres. The denial of the humanity of Australia’s First Nations peoples and their sovereignty and relationship to their lands led to policies of protectionism and later assimilation (Wadjularbinna Nulyarimma & Ors v Phillip Thompson 1999). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were dispossessed of their lands and forced onto Reserves and Missions. Many of their children were taken away and placed with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. This process has been acknowledged in the Bringing Them Home Report, an inquiry into the stolen generation (Australia 1987).

First Nations peoples engaged in acts of resistance and political action, such as the establishment of the Tent Embassy (Foley, 2014). The struggle to remove ‘terra nullius’ from the law and acknowledge the title of First Nations peoples began in the courts in 1971 in the Gove Land Rights Case ([1971] 17 FLR 141) brought by the Yolgnu people. The Judge found against them holding that their complex system of law did not include any property rights that he could recognise. This was mainly because they did not buy or sell the land.

In 1992, the Mabo Case found that ‘native title’ survived colonisation (Mabo No 2 1992 107 ALR). However, neither sovereignty nor full title to land was recognised. The taking of the continent was justified as “an act of state.” Basically ‘native title’ rights were confined to “traditional rights of ceremony, hunting and gathering.” The principles of the Mabo Case were put into law in the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). The processes for proving and claiming title are very complicated and many claimants fail to prove ‘traditional connection’ (Yorta Yorta v Victoria [2002]). Colonisation survives the Mabo Case, as Watson writes: “the phenomenon of colonialism remains ongoing” (Watson 2015: 13).

First Nations peoples turned their attention to international law to decolonise their lives and have their right to self-determination recognised. However the United Nations’ (2007) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples gives state power precedence. Under its framework self-determination becomes what the state will allow. Domestically there have been attempts to recognise Aboriginal peoples by Australian governments. These include the outcomes of the Australian 1967 Referendum, Prime Minister Paul Keating’s ‘Redfern Speech’ (1992), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) (1990–2005), the Reconciliation movement, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991), the Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families (1995) or the ‘Stolen Generation Report’,

These attempts may be seen as part of a necessary decolonisation process. They may create a sufficient momentum for a treaty to be entered into between the Australian governments and the First Nations peoples. Watson calls for “resistance to the ongoing colonial project, which is ingrained within the education … of the colonial state” (Watson 2015: 8). A starting point to decolonisation, to the dismantling of the colonial project, begins with non-Indigenous Australians educating themselves, and being open to Indigenous knowledge systems. This project is a part of this process.

It is important for students and educators to understand the doctrine of terra nullius and how the perpetuation of this myth was an inaccurate reflection of Indigenous connections to lands and waters, and that this deeply affected Indigenous societies in Australia.
Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians are the First Nation inhabitants of the Australian continent and nearby islands. Recent archaeological and genetic research indicates that Indigenous Australians descended from the first modern humans to migrate out of Africa, and arrived on this continent between 60,000-125,000 years ago (Malaspinas et al., 2015; Tobler et al., 2017). Australian Aboriginals are identified as being “Indigenous” to the Australian continent, and the Torres Strait Islanders are often Indigenous to the Torres Strait Islands. The term “Aboriginal” is normally applied only to Indigenous inhabitants of mainland Australia and Tasmania, along with some of the adjacent islands (i.e., the “first peoples”). Indigenous Australians is an inclusive term used when referring to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

The Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner recognises the diversity of the cultures, languages, kinship structures and ways of life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Commissioner has concluded that “there is not one cultural model that fits all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples” and that these “peoples retain distinct cultural identities whether they live in urban, regional or remote areas of Australia.” The Commissioner defines the word ‘peoples’ as recognising that “Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have both a collective and individual dimension to their lives”, as affirmed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (AHRC 2014: 181; UN 2007).

There is a contemporary debate about the appropriate terminology to be used when referring to ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’. Terms used for the First Nations peoples of Australia include ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’, ‘First Nations’ and ‘First Peoples’, ‘Indigenous Australians’, ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders’, ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people(s)’ and ‘indigenous people[s]’, international documents frequently use the term ‘indigenous peoples’ when referring to the Indigenous peoples of the world. The answer to your terminology choice lies in asking the Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander peoples participating in your project as to protocol use (AHRC 2009: 15, 43; AHRC 2014: 181).

The United Nation’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), endorsed by Australia in 2009, acknowledges the recognition of Indigenous peoples and individuals:

Concerned that indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interest [… and]

… have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right.

The broad term ‘Aboriginal Australians’ includes many regional groups or Nations that often identify to a particular or linguistically-related language. These include, for example, Koori (or Koorie or Goorie) in NSW and Victoria; Kulin (of the Wurundjeri, Boon Wurrung, Wadawurrung, Taungurong and the Dja Dja Wurrung); Ngunawal in the ACT and surrounding areas of NSW; Murri or Goorie in South East Qld and some parts of northern NSW; Murrdi in southwest and central Qld; Nyungar or Noongar in southern WA; Nunga in southern SA; Anangu in northern SA, and neighbouring parts of WA and NT; Yolngu in eastern Arnhem Land (NT); and the Palawa in Tasmania.

There is also a contemporary shift occurring away from the respected Elder honorific terms ‘Uncle’ and ‘Aunty’ towards honorifics that are language-specific to that particular Aboriginal community and Country.

In 1983 the High Court of Australia defined an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander as “a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.” Judge Merkel in 1998 (Shaw v Wolf: 213) defined
Aboriginal (or Torres Strait Islander) descent as technical rather than real, establishing that anyone can classify him or herself legally as Aboriginal provided he or she is accepted as such by his or her community:

In these circumstances Aboriginal identification often became a matter, at best, of personal or family, rather than public, record. Given the history of the dispossession and disadvantage of the Aboriginal people of Australia, a concealed but nevertheless passed on family oral ‘history’ of descent may in some instances be the only evidence available to establish Aboriginal descent. Accordingly, oral histories and evidence as to the process leading to self-identification may, in a particular case, be sufficient evidence not only of descent but also of Aboriginal identity.

Like the discussion about terminologies above, there is also debate about the term ‘Traditional Owner’. Across various Australian and State/Territory statutes the definition of ‘traditional owner’ or ‘Aboriginal owner’ can vary quite significantly, depending on the legislative context (Edelman 2009). For example, in s.3 of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth),

“Traditional Aboriginal owners”, in relation to land, means a local descent group of Aboriginals who:

(a) have common spiritual affiliations to a site on the land, being affiliations that place the group under a primary spiritual responsibility for that site and for the land; and

(b) are entitled by Aboriginal tradition to forage as of right over that land.

This definition is replicated in s.368(4)(a) of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth):

The traditional owners of indigenous people’s land are:

(a) a local descent group of indigenous persons who:

(i) have common spiritual affiliations to a site on the land under a primary spiritual responsibility for that site and for the land; and

(ii) are entitled by indigenous tradition to forage as of right over the land.

Understanding and getting to know the Indigenous people who belong and relate to a particular area or region is relevant to all the Australian built environment disciplines. Terminology and nomenclature guidance should always be sought. This understanding will allow for greater appreciation of cultural identity, land and water sovereignty and ownership, communities of association, cultural rights, obligations and responsibilities.
Australia’s International Obligations Regarding Indigenous Peoples


The Declaration affirms that “that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such”. It also articulates the following Articles that are relevant to Australian built environment practice:

**Article 2:** Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based in their indigenous origin or identity.

**Article 3:** Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

**Article 10:** Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return.
**Article 19:** States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

**Article 26:**
1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.

2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.

3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

**Article 32:**
1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

3. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

Thus, **Article 19** contains the right to “free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them”, which is mentioned in **Article 10** and repeated in **Article 32**, placing a responsibility upon “States” (meaning nation states) to consult “in good faith… in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent”, and this includes (as expressed in **Article 32**) getting consent for “the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water and other resources” [and other resources in this context can also be interpreted to mean land] “to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact”. These Articles can be interpreted as fundamental, enabling rights to land use development, including the right to cultural difference and the right to pursue a pathway to social and economic development that is determined and controlled by Indigenous people themselves. They also embody an international level concession for the loss of the opportunity for Indigenous peoples living within established States to claim statehood over territory; that is, their own sovereignty (Wensing 2014: 9-20).

While the Declaration is not a legally binding instrument in Australia under international law the Declaration does “represent the dynamic development of international legal norms and it reflects the commitment of the UN’s member states to move in certain directions.” It articulates individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples, as well as their rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues. Core to the Declaration (2007) is a recognition that the human rights of Indigenous Peoples need to be respected noting that “Indigenous historical grievances, contemporary challenges and socio-economic, political and cultural aspirations” are the “culmination of generations-long efforts by Indigenous organizations to get international attention, to secure recognition for their aspirations, and to generate support for their political agendas.”

In addition to the international obligations embodied in the Declaration (2007), Australia as a signatory is also obligated to address the following international agreements, covenants, etc.:
The United Nations Charter in Article 1 requires “respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples” and the ideal of non-discrimination and enjoyment of human rights (United Nations 1945);

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), whereby Article 2 states that “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (United Nations 1948);

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) whereby Article 27 expresses that in “States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language” (United Nations 1966);

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) whereby Article 1 states that “All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (United Nations 1966);

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1992), signed as part of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, whereby Article 8j states “Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices” (UNESCO 1992);

The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), whereby Article 4 states that “The defence of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity. It implies a commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and those of indigenous peoples. No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope” (UNESCO 2001); and,

The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), in the Preamble, recognises “the importance of traditional knowledge as a source of intangible and material wealth, and in particular the knowledge systems of indigenous peoples, and its positive contribution to sustainable development, as well as the need for its adequate protection and promotion”, the need to take into account “the importance of the vitality of cultures, including for persons belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, as manifested in their freedom to create, disseminate and distribute their traditional cultural expressions and to have access thereto, so as to benefit them for their own development” as well as content in Articles 2.3 and 7 of the Convention (UNESCO 2005).

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) [UN DRIP] is particularly relevant to the Australian architecture, planning and landscape architecture disciplines as it relates to the practice of community consultation, statutory and strategic land planning, management, spatial knowledge exchange, and landscape design.
Indigenous Knowledge Systems

‘Indigenous knowledge’, is a) a philosophy or a way of thinking; and, b) Indigenous environmental knowledge. Over the past few decades, Indigenous knowledge systems have been described using various descriptors, such as ‘Traditional knowledge’ (TK), ‘traditional ecological knowledges’ (TEK) and ‘local knowledges’ (Hutchings & Morrison 2017: 3-4).

Writing on First Nation knowledge in Canada, José Mailhot (1994: 11) explains, that this is:

…the sum of the data and ideas acquired by a human group on its environment as a result of the group’s use and occupation of a region over very many generations.

To the Bundjalung (Gnibi Elders 2015: 1):

Indigenous Knowledge is a relevant, ethical, intelligent, effective and a useful way of knowing.

Indigenous knowledge systems includes knowledges about ‘traditional technologies’ of subsistence (e.g. tools and techniques for hunting or agriculture), seasons and climate patterns, land management, ethno-botany, ecological knowledge, celestial navigation, ethno-astronomy, medicines, etc. This knowledge, based upon a generational accumulation of empirical observations and interactions with the environment, is integral for subsistence and survival in the host landscape.

The International Council of Science (ICS) (2002: 3) defines traditional knowledges as

…a cumulative body of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations maintained and developed by peoples with extended histories of interaction with the natural environment. These sophisticated sets of understandings, interpretations and meanings are part and parcel of a cultural complex that encompasses language, naming and classification systems, resource use practices, ritual, spirituality and worldview.

UNESCO’s (1992) Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognized the value of ‘traditional knowledge’ in protecting species, ecosystems and landscapes, and incorporated language regulating access to it and its use. In addition, UNESCO’s Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge (1999), and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) all seek the engagement of Indigenous societies in respect of their rich environmental knowledge, land ethic and the need for more equitable benefit sharing.

The World Trade Organisation’s (1994) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) thereupon established rules for creating and protecting intellectual property to delimit conflict with the agreements made under the CBD, and subsequently the CBD signatories have asked the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to investigate and advise upon the relationship between intellectual property rights, biodiversity and traditional knowledges.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ systems of learning and knowledge acquisition are circuitous, in contrast to Western predominantly linear systems of learning and knowledge acquisition.

Indigenous knowledge systems are particularly relevant to the Australian planning and landscape architecture disciplines as it relates to the practice of land planning, management, spatial knowledge exchange and landscape design.
**Country**

Rose (1986: 7) suggests that

*In Aboriginal English, the word ‘Country’ is both a common noun and a proper noun. People talk about Country in the same way that they would talk about a person: they speak to Country, sing to Country, visit Country, worry about Country, grieve for Country and long for Country. People say that Country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, and feels sorry or happy. Country is a living entity with a yesterday, a today and tomorrow, with consciousness, action, and a will toward life. Because of this richness of meaning, Country is home and peace: nourishment for body, mind and spirit; and heart’s ease.*

While the Dreaming is the intellectual Country of Indigenous peoples and their communities, the physical manifestation of that Country is the Australian landscape; night sky, day sky, land surface, below land, its waters, and the air within. The Dreaming is both the ancient time of creation and the present-day reality of Dreaming. The word ‘Dreaming’ is also not an universally agreed upon word for this content.

Country holds special meaning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, everything in their Country is alive and everything is embodied in relationships, whereby the past, present, and future are one, and where both spiritual and physical worlds of Country interact. The Dreaming is an ongoing celebration and reverence for past events: the creation of the land, the creation of law, and the creation of people. Stories have been given to and vested in Aboriginal peoples from the Dreaming, everything comes into being through the expression or journey through story or stories, and the Dreaming is the ancestors. All things exist eternally in the Dreaming; the Dreaming is alive. An individual is born to Country, not just in Country but from Country, and his or her identity is inextricably and eternally linked to the Dreaming (Milroy & Revell, 2013).

Country is specific to birth, invests cultural responsibilities, and one can only talk about their Country. Thus, a Gunditjmara’s Country is the landscape that Budj Bim created in southwestern Victoria. To reside in this landscape is to live ‘on country’, and to reside in say the Wurundjeri / Boon Wurrung Country’s of Melbourne is to live ‘off country’. Country is not owned, like a Certificate of Title under the Torrens registration system, but rather Country owns the individual and their community, and possesses a set of culturally-informed laws that an individual and their community enforce, respect and sustain.

The recent Uluru Statement from the Heart (2017) (see Appendix A) also echoes this sentiment:

*Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from ‘time immemorial’, and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.*

*This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.*

*How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?*

Country is particularly relevant to the Australian planning and landscape architecture disciplines as it relates to the practice of statutory and strategic land planning, management, spatial knowledge comprehension, and landscape design.
Country: Who can talk and represent

As a consequence of the Mabo (No. 2) decision by the High Court of Australia and the enactment of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth), there is now a formal institutional arrangement for who can speak for a Country. These institutional arrangements not only apply to Native Title matters, but can sometimes include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ‘heritage’. The latter is especially prevalent in Queensland where the State’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage protection legislation defers to the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) to ascertain who can speak for Country in any particular location.

The Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) established two discrete organisations:

- Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) or Native Title Service Providers (NTSPs); and
- Prescribed Body Corporate (PBCs) or Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBCs) following a determination.

A Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) or Native Title Service Provider (NTSP) is an organisation approved by the Commonwealth Minister with responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters to represent the interests of Aboriginal peoples’ or Torres Strait Islanders within a particular region. These bodies may be elected local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land councils, legal aid services or other such bodies, and have special responsibility to assist and represent native title holders and claimants. Details about NTRBs and NTSPs with links to each NTRB/NTSB can be viewed here: [http://www.auroraproject.com.au/node/65](http://www.auroraproject.com.au/node/65)

In terms of Prescribed Body Corporate (PBCs) or Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBCs), when the Federal Court makes a determination of native title it must, at the same time, determine whether the native title is to be held in trust, and, if so, by whom.

If the native title rights and interests are to be held in trust, a representative of the native title holders (‘common law holders’) must nominate, in writing to the Federal Court, a prescribed body corporate to be trustee and include the written consent of the body corporate. If the common law holders give this nomination within a set period, the Federal Court must determine that the prescribed body corporate is to hold the native title rights and interests on trust for the common law holders. If the prescribed body corporate is determined and it complies with the Regulations, it will be registered on the National Native Title Register and known as the ‘registered native title body corporate’.

The registered native title body corporate provides a practical and legal point of contact for those wishing to deal with native title holders in relation to a particular area of land or waters. A registered native title body corporate is entitled to all of the procedural rights available under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) and State/Territory legislation. A registered native title body corporate represents the interests and views of the native title holders and may hold their native title rights and interests in trust. If a non-native title party wishes to carry out any activities affecting those native title rights and interests, it will have to liaise with and, in some instances, obtain the consent of the registered native title body corporate.

Whether the body corporate holds native title in trust or whether it is an agent or representative of the common law holders, it can perform a range of functions in relation to native title given to it under ss8 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). It must consult with, and act in accordance with the directions of, the common law holders in performing any of its functions. The body corporate, as trust or agent, may hold any compensation payable under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) in trust for acts affecting native title. If it does not hold the native title in trust, the body corporate can enter into agreements that are binding on the common law holders, so long as the common law holders have been consulted about, and have authorised, the agreements and the agreements have been made in accordance with the regulations of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). More information about PBCs are at: [http://www.nativetitle.org.au/](http://www.nativetitle.org.au/)


Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Recognising that ontology and epistemology are Western concepts that cannot be applied as such to other systems of thinking, and that there a gap in compatible vocabularies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous languages/worlds, Western concepts of Indigenous ontology and epistemology fit uncomfortably in this discussion.

Each Country’s peoples’ possess a Country-specific narrative about Country creation and their role to Country.

The following story, by Uncle Bryon Powell (2015: 6), from the Wadawurrung people who are the Traditional Owners of Country near Ballarat and Geelong, and Chair of the Wadawurrung (Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation), recounts how the Wadawurrung people came to be. This Wadawurrung-specific story explains how their Country was created, the ancestral beings whom created their landscape. The story demonstrates the link that Aboriginal people maintain with the land, sentient and non-sentient beings, and the cosmos.

**In the beginning … Bunjil (Wedge-tailed Eagle (Aquila audax)) summoned six men to assist him in the creation of the land, the people and all living things and to pass on his teachings and knowledge to all men and women.**

The six men were: Djurt Djurt, the Nankeen Kestrel (Falco cenchroides); Thara, the Black-Shouldered Kite (Elanus axillaris); Dantun, the Blue Mountain Parrot (Platycercus elegans); Tadjeri, the Brush-tailed Phascogale (Phascogale tapoatafa); Turnun, the Feather-tailed Glider (Acrobates pygmaeus); and, Yukope, the Great Parakeet (Melopsittacus undulates).

All were capable of mighty deeds in the name of Bunjil.

After Bunjil made the country and all the living things in it, he taught the people how to use their tools and the rules of social behaviour.

When he had finished, Bunjil gathered his wives (one of whom was Ganawarra, the Black Swan (Cygnus atratus)) and his children (one of whom was Binbeal, the Rainbow) and instructed Belin-Belin (the Musk Crow (Corvus coronoides)) who was in charge of the winds: “Belin – Belin, open your bag and let out some wind.”

Belin-Belin open his bag and released a wind so strong it carried big trees into the air, roots and all.

Bunjil wanted more wind, so Belin-Belin opened all his bags and released a wind so great that it carried Bunjil and his family to Tharangalk-Bek (the heavens).

Bunjil and his family now live in the heavens and are stars looking down on the world.

You can see them in the night sky: Bunjil is the star Altair in the Eagle Constellation; the two stars beside Bunjil are Ganawarra and her spirit; Bunjil’s brother is the star Antares in the Scorpion Constellation; Turnung is Venus; Tadjeri is the star Achernar, in the Eridanus Constellation; Dantun is the star beta Crucis, the Southern Cross; Djurt-Djurt is the star Beta Centauri, one of the pointers; and, Thara is the star Alpha Centauri, the other pointer.

While managing Country was interwoven with traditional custodial relationships, the Western notion of ‘sustainability’ is different to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For example, in the Preamble to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority’s Basin Plan, the approach of Traditional Owners to caring for the natural landscape, including water, has been expressed in the words of Ngarrindjeri elder Tom Trevorrow:

‘… our traditional management plan was don’t be greedy, don’t take any more than you need and respect everything around you. That’s the management plan—it’s such a simple management plan, but so hard for people to carry out’ (Trevorrow 2010).
In the late 18th century, there were between 350 and 750 distinct Aboriginal social groupings, and approximately 250 languages or dialects in Australia and on the Torres Strait Islands. At the start of the 21st century, fewer than 150 Indigenous languages remain (Dalby, 1998; Romaine, 2004).

To Indigenous Australians, language is integral to sustaining their continuing relationship with Country. Their custodial relationships and land management practices embody a matrix of complex techniques informed by Indigenous knowledge systems of which language is the library of this knowledge and of practice rules.

Language is the carrier of information about who we are, how we express ourselves and our culture, it defines our world around us (http://www.vaclang.org.au/; accessed 1 September 2017)

Of these languages, many had various dialects and accordingly it is now believed that were about 500 language varieties used across Australia. Many Indigenous people were fluent in often five or more of these different languages. The Australian landscape was like a European landscape whereby different dialects identified, and continue to identify, regional and place-specific cultural backgrounds and ancestries.

To Indigenous Australians, language is important because it embodies identity and the heritage of where an individual has come from and who that individual is. Words and language are alive, use of words in a language maintains links to the past, and saying words in language celebrates the knowledge vested by ancestors. Thus, language is an ancestral right and it distinguishes something special about Indigenous Australians from non-Indigenous Australians. Language is an integral component of culture, knowledge about culture empowers an individual and their community, and language scaffolds the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, reinforces connectivity between Elders and young people and is the cornerstone of Indigenous education and in explaining Country.

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Understanding that there are many distinct Aboriginal language groups in Australia is particularly relevant to the Australian planning and landscape architecture disciplines as the definition of terms relates to the practice of statutory and strategic land planning, management, spatial knowledge exchange, and landscape design.
Ethnobotany

Of roots and vegetables they have plenty. The muurang (Murnong) [Microseris lanceolata] which somewhat resembles a small parsnip, with a flower like a buttercup, grows chiefly on the open plains. It is much esteemed on account of its sweetness, and is dug up by the women with the muurang pole. The roots are washed and put into a rush basket made on purposes and placed in the oven in the evening to be ready for the next morning’s breakfast. When several families live near each other and cooks their roots together, sometimes the baskets form a pile three feet high (Dawson 1881 in Zola & Gott 1992: 6-7). (Dawson 1881 in Zola & Gott 1992: 6-7).

In 1881 James Dawson wrote of his observation of this practice, across the Western District landscape that was commonplace. It was a practice that Gammage (2011) has discussed extensively, and several contemporary authors (Gott [south-eastern Australia], Zola & Gott [south-eastern Australia] Clarke [South Australia], Bindon [Western Australia], Isaacs [central Australia], Latz [central Australia], Kenneally [Western Australia]) have all recorded the fabric, medicinal, edible, and material uses that Australian plant species were historical used by Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander peoples, drawing upon both contemporary and period sources.

Ethnobotany involves the applied science of the role and potential of plants through the lens of Indigenous communities. While plants were integral to feeding communities, their harvesting was dependent upon the fire management of the Australian landscape. While plants are first thought of as a food source, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ plants also offered signals as to changes in the season, medicinal aids and cures, materials for implements and artefacts, materials for clothing and basketry, and could be traded between communities and shifted around Australia because of their properties and attributes. Thus, particular quality spear timbers, or the bunya (Araucaria bidwillii) fruit, were disseminated across Australia for exchange for other items. Today, the medicinal properties of many Australian plants, used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, increasingly offer possibilities as to new medicinal treatments and cures, and several of these plants are finding their way into mainstream restaurant menus and jams.

Select key plants, containing ethnobotanical properties include:

- Murnong (Microseris lanceolata)
- Cumbungi, Reed Mace (Typa sp)
- Common Reen (Phragmites australis)
- Water Ribbons (Triglochin proceras)
- River Red Gum (Eucalyptus camaldulensis)
- Coast Wattle (Acacia sophorae)
- Pigface (Carpobrotus rossii)
- Muntries (Kunzea pumifera)
- Coast Banksia (Banksia integrifolia)
- Kangaroo Apple (Solanum simile)
- Nardoo (Marsilea drummondii)
- Quandong, Native Peach (Santalum acuminatum)
- Bracken (Pteridium esculentum)
- Bulbine Lily (Bulbine bulbosa)
- Cherry Ballart (Exocarpos cupressiformis)
- Black Wattle (Acacia mearnsii)
- Blackwood (Acacia melanoxylon)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ seasonal calendars represent significant Indigenous biocultural knowledge translations. Seasonal calendars provide mental structuring devices, fluid and oral in their form, which contain multiple announcements, signals and cultural obligations for land management, stewardship and occupancy traditions and relationships. They are unwritten management plans in their own right that can have direct application to Western land management regimes. In Kakadu and Uluru Kata-Tjuta national parks, the respective Yolngu and Anangu seasonal calendars structure Commonwealth-approved national park management plans. Each apportioned season determines what set of landscape management actions to prepare for, action, and foreshadows post-action activities.

The CSIRO has devised, in conjunction with respective communities, various seasonal calendars (e.g. Gulumoerrgin (Larrakia), Walmajarri, Ngadjju, Ngan’gi, Wagiman, Gooniyandi, MalakMalak, Matngala) across northern Australia. These calendars influence conclusions and recommendations for the ecosystem sciences (including Indigenous engagement, fire and climate science, fisheries and wetlands management).

Comprising ‘traditional ecological knowledge’ (TEK) in anthropological and environmental design literature, and ‘Indigenous bio-cultural knowledge’ in the ecosystem sciences and management, these seasonal models incorporate plant, aquatic and terrestrial animals, fire, climate, drought, flood, astronomical information (that can be termed a ‘spectrum of knowledge’) drawn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sources and corroborated by contemporary Western science. While scientific acceptance of this knowledge for northern Australia is now academically documented, little research on the topic has been entertained in south-eastern Australia.

For example, Reid (1995) suggested that six seasons are prevalent in the middle Yarra Valley of Melbourne. In Wurundjeri Country, Entwisle (2014) has proposed a five season hypothesis for Melbourne. Jones et al (1997) have concluded that there were seven seasons and two additional variables for the upper Yarra Valley, with Reid and Entwisle basing their conclusions upon cyclical ecological patterns and Jones et al upon the biocultural knowledge spectrum with direct Wurundjeri engagement.

For western Victoria, the Gunditjimara have articulated their seasons into the PV et al (2015) co-drafted Ngootyoong Gunditj Ngootyoong Mara South West Management Plan; this being the first use of ‘Indigenous biocultural knowledge’ for a Victorian state-approved land management plan. Gammage (2011) and Rose (2005) cite the need to understand and map Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seasons for attuned Australian land management re-awakening. Heyes (1999) and McCarthy et al (2017) have also undertaken similar investigations for the Kaurna and Boandik Country’s Understanding Seasons is particularly relevant to the Australian planning and landscape architecture disciplines as it relates to the practice of land planning, management, spatial knowledge exchange, and landscape design.
Talk and Representation

Indigenous Australia uses oral language as its narration of knowledge, meaning, history, law and discussion. Western communication assumes a written and or digital/paper-based language to convey knowledge, meaning, history, law and discussion. Thus, there is historically a conflict of ‘talk and representation’ mediums.

Australian universities recognise and acknowledge that their respective centres or schools of Indigenous studies have the expertise to advise, consult, form multi-disciplinary partnerships, teach and research on matters relating to Indigenous peoples. These Indigenous centres or schools support and guide their host universities in the development of teaching and research programs that contribute to the advancement of Indigenous peoples and the addressing of critical human rights and social justice issues. Importantly, they accept that in order to promote Indigenous self-determination and governance, and to ensure the respect and protection of Indigenous intellectual property and cultural protocols, commitment to the sharing of physical and ideological space and other resources must be ongoing. They have responsibilities to oversee graduate attributes of Indigenous cultural competency and the work-ready needs of students advancing to the built environment professions.

Built Environment academic staff and students consult with their centres or schools of Indigenous studies when seeking to conduct teaching on Indigenous topics and people and issues that impact on Indigenous people.

Built environment professionals need to be aware of their respective institutional ethics and guidelines in ascertaining and or identifying the culturally appropriate processes and person/s when approaching an Indigenous community and the cultural and social protocols associated with that task. Indigenous communities are often led by Indigenous Organisations, Corporations, Language Centres, Legal Services, Land Councils or Native Title Groups, for example, and professionals need to understand the correct processes by which Indigenous peoples are consulted within those formal groups, regardless of how arduous these processes may sometimes seem. These decisions should essentially be left to those Indigenous bodies that have the authority to represent Indigenous knowledge, culture, values and their belief systems. When in doubt, the built environment professions should consult with their respective academies and their Indigenous studies centres or schools for advice.

In summary, both the Academy and the Professions of the built environment need to respect the guidance and wishes of Indigenous peoples and learn to simply ‘ask first’ (Australian Heritage Commission, 2002) when working with Indigenous topics, people and issues that impact on Indigenous people.
Respect

A core value, and expectation, in Aboriginal culture is respect:

*Don’t tell us any more about us, let us tell you*  
(Marlowe 2011: 1).

Over recent years, academic and professional guidelines, protocols and ethical policies for working with Indigenous peoples and their knowledge, culture, values and beliefs systems have grown to place significant focus on cultural respect as a key determinant or attribute to Indigenous cultural literacy and competency. Cultural respect is very much tied to the underlying rights of Indigenous peoples. Further, the associated responsibilities and obligations to uphold these rights is the business of all academics, practitioners and professionals.

The former Australian Heritage Commission, for example, enacted this protocol of cultural respect by publishing *Ask First: A Guide To Respecting Indigenous Heritage Places And Values* (2002), which "provides a practical guide for land developers, land users and managers, cultural heritage professionals and many others who may have an impact on Indigenous heritage". *Ask First* (2002) articulates that consultation and negotiation with Indigenous stakeholders is the best means of addressing Indigenous heritage issues. It is also the first, and simplest step that people need to take, to put the subject on the agenda." Respect in this case, is underlined and practiced by the due process of building relationships with Indigenous peoples for the cultural safety of managing Indigenous heritages resources and values.

A further meaningful practice of enacting cultural respect would, as argued by Martin (2008), exist "where conceptual, cultural and historical spaces … come alongside each other, producing new relationships to knowledge, to research [learning and teaching] and to self”. For many built environment academic and professionals, to help plan and/or design these historical or contemporary ‘spaces’ from which to teach, research or practice is again tied to ethical ways of being and to honouring and committing to due Indigenous-led processes of knowledge sharing and engagement.
Welcome to Country & Acknowledgement of Country

‘Welcome to Country’ and ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ are protocols often used in Australia at the opening of meetings, launches, special events and official functions. The practice shows respect for the traditional custodians of a particular region or area.

‘Welcome to Country’ and ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ are dynamic statements, and are changeable by the author according to the circumstances.

Warren Mundine (2010), a Bundjalung person and prominent Aboriginal leader has observed, “I think it’s fantastic, ten years ago we weren’t even acknowledged.” A Welcome to Country is where an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custodian or Elder from the local region welcomes people to their Country. This may be done through speech, song, dance or ceremony.

Tandop [Uncle] David Tournier, from the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative, in 2009 expressed this Welcome first in Wathaurong tongue and then in English:

**Nyoorra woorreeyn,**  
*Koonyaba morgalyoo / Kardeeneeyoo,*

Woorreeng woorreng; Nedock; Tandop; Babarang; Wanoong; Wairnga knettiuk; Peetyarr; Ngardang; Tatee baa Yanabeel.


Keem barne barre Wadda Wurrung Kitjarra-ngitj, bitjarra ngala, mok barra tjarra ngitj

Keen keen beel baa yoowang ngitj; Nyatne

How do you do  
Good morning / afternoon;  
Grand Mother; Grand Father; Uncle; Aunty; Brother; Sister  
Father; Mother; Friend and Visitor  
To give Thankyou we Creator- for the who to watch-he land-our; to give Thankyou we Creator- for the who to watch-he land-our to stand we; to give Thankyou we Creator- for the who to watch-he land-our visitor many; we proud to follow track spirit Aborigine to go before us. This is Wathaurong Country; Let us talk together, let us not fight, let us have peace; Black and White together Thank you.

An Acknowledgement of Country is usually a statement made by an Aboriginal or a non-Aboriginal to show respect to the traditional custodians of the land. Richard Wynne, the Victorian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has stated that “[Acknowledgement of Country] says to the world, and more importantly to ourselves, that we accept the fact we are in a place that has a history and story far beyond 220 years. It says to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fellow Australians that we are all in the future journey of our country together”. Poet and Wiradjuri man Jonathan Hill (2014) has written:

**Acknowledgement of Country**

I wish to acknowledge the Wiradjuri people as the traditional custodians of this land – this place of brown-water rivers and dry-blond planes – that cradles me as I write my words. I also wish to pay respect to Elders both past and present, and to extend my respect to all Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across Australia, and living in other parts of the world.

Today we stand in footsteps millennia old. May we acknowledge the traditional owners whose cultures and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture, this land, since men and women awoke from the great dream. We honour the presence of these ancestors who reside in the imagination of this land and whose irrepressible spirituality flows through all creation.

As a demonstration of respect, honouring and participating in Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country is relevant to positive Indigenous engagement for all disciplines.
Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Recognising that ‘heritage’ is a Western concept and word, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage is prevalent within and across the lands and waters of Australia: *Country*. All tangible and or intangible components of a landscape may be important to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community as comprising their ‘living heritage’. These Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage values include rights and interests integral to their spirituality, customary law, original ownership, custodianship, past and continuing traditions and their contemporary history. Effective recognition and conservation of this cultural heritage sustains a community’s identity, health and well-being. Maintaining this cultural heritage also ensures a continuing role and validates responsibility for caring for *Country* – something that benefits all occupiers of these landscapes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ spirituality, law and customs are the central tenets of their cultural heritage – but such are not protected to the same extent in each state, territory and Commonwealth jurisdiction. Recognition of this, and its conservation, ensures continuing respect for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors and ancestral beings who shaped and determined the lands and waterways and established the narratives for their management of their *Country*. Thus, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have direct mutual obligation relationships with certain animals or plants linked to these management responsibilities. Places that possess tangible and or intangible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage values and meanings are integral to stories of a community, or communities, including recent histories of resistance, survival and cultural revival.

A key document in Australian cultural heritage philosophy and practice is the Australia ICOMOS (2013) *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013. When considering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage this document provides the core guide for Australian conservation practice, and expects the formulation of a Statement of Significance after quality investigation, assessment and evaluation.

The *Ngootyoong Gunditj Ngootyoong Mara South West Management Plan* (2015), for example, has resulted in an evocative Statement of Significance prepared by the Gunditjmara Elders to explain their human relationships with their *Country*:

>Gunditjmara Statement of Significance

“Ngatanwarr wartee pa kakay teen Gunditjmara mirring”.

Welcome brothers and sisters to Gunditjmara Country.

For Gunditjmara people, ‘Country’ includes all living things - none better than the other but equal in its importance in forming this diverse natural landscape that is Gunditjmara Country. Country means people, plants and animals alike. It embraces the seasons, stories and spirits of the creation. This flowing, connected cultural landscape possesses its own sacred places, languages, ceremonies, totems, art, clan groupings and law. Our spirit is in this Country, from Koonang Mirring (Sea Country) up through Bocara Woorowerook Mirring (Glenelg River Forest Country) where Boandik Country north west of Bocara (Glenelg River) embraces Woorowerook Mirring (Forest Country) and across the wetlands to Budj Bim (Mt Eccles) Tungatt Mirring (Stone Country). Our Country is a place of belonging and pride that comes with this belonging. We are proud to share many aspects of our land, art and culture with visitors/guests. It is a part of us and who we are, and we ask that you care for it when you visit. It is our responsibility to look after country, our children will continue to look after country, because that’s the way it is and will be.

Gunditjmara Elders (2012: 1; Parks Victoria 2015: 23).

This spiritual relationship is an important aspect of Indigenous cultural heritage, that should not be overlooked in engaging with communities, in crafting architecture, landscape architecture designs and plans in consultation and in conjunction with a community.
Decolonisation

Much has been stated and documented about the human and environmental effects colonisation by Indigenous Australians and academic and professional practitioners in Australia and New Zealand (Porter 2010; Smith 1999, 2012). Little of this scholarship has been specifically devoted to the built environment disciplines. Sweet et al (2014) conclude that colonisation disrupted Indigenous peoples’ connection to Country, to culture, to communities and to families through policies that sought to control, stigmatise and intervene in people’s lives.

Decolonising theory and practices seek to reverse these modes of being and practice to ensure all Australians uphold the rights of and understand the values of Indigenous Australian peoples. For built environment academics and professionals, the decolonisation process can begin by analysing the specific roles that their own institutions have played in colonisation. Such an analysis might ask how planners, landscape architects, and architects, for example, have influenced the Australian identity, and its generative understanding of environmental knowledge and its stewardship, to ensure that Indigenous people self-determine their rights to capacity building within their own lands and waters and within these academic and professional institutions. It might also be asked, how inclusive has it been to move away from

... problematising Indigenous peoples to a focus on strengths, capacity and resilience, and stress the importance of proper process, including allowing the time and opportunity to develop relationships and trust. Decolonising practices also include respect for Indigenous knowledge and stress the importance of reciprocity — that [teaching], research and practice should reflect community priorities and explicitly aim to provide useful service (Sweet et al 2014: 626).

It is important to localise decolonising practices in the fields of built environment education and professional practice. Specific Indigenous peoples and their communities have their own priorities in how these practices should be deconstructed, and improved practices implemented. Nonetheless, the seminal work of Smith (1999, 2012) suggests seven strategies for decolonisation:

1. **Deconstruction and reconstruction** – this involves the interrogation of how history has been incorrectly represented and includes the rewriting or retelling the stories of the past and envisioning the future to facilitate the processes of recovery and discovery;

2. **Self-determination and social justice** – issues in teaching, research and professional practice need to identify how participants have been overpowered by Western hegemonies. Wider frameworks of think and practicing that enact Indigenous self-determination and social justice are required.

3. **Ethics** – principles, protocols, policies and guidelines need to be developed to protect Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing;

4. **Language** – Indigenous languages are integral to mediating the teaching, research, and community engagement processes, recovering and revitalising, validating Indigenous knowledge and cultures of the historically marginalised and thus creating space with the inclusion of Indigenous research and practice paradigms;

5. **Internationalisation of Indigenous Experiences** – Indigenous scholars and practitioners need to have their own spaces, local, national and international, to come together to plan, design, organise and work collectively for Indigenous self-determination;

6. **History** – Opportunities should be provided to allow scholars and practitioners to study the past to recover or discover their history, culture and language to enable a reconstruction or conservation of what was lost or exists that is useful to inform the present; and,
7. Critique – There needs to be a continual critique of colonial influences on the academies and professions to allow Indigenous peoples to communicate from their own frames of reference.

Matunga (2013: 3) also cautions that theorising “Indigenous planning” is a potentially risky business. Any attempt to map out conceptual territory must be firmly hitched to analyses of it as a continually evolving practice by Indigenous peoples and communities around the world – in other words, “planning by, rather than for these communities”.

Decolonisation of learning and re-evaluating learning is an important methodological lens that can offer new insights to the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture and planning in better understanding both Indigenous cultures and their relationship with the Australian landscape and its Country’s.
Indigenous Protocols

Built Environment Guidelines & Protocols for Indigenous Related Teaching, Research & Professional Practice in Australia
The following are teaching, research and professional guidelines and practice protocols for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and representatives.

Purpose:
Australian universities and their Built Environment (architecture, landscape architecture and planning) professions recognise the need for institutional protocols to guide university staff, students and professional practitioners conducting teaching on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander topics and people and/or research and professional projects on issues that impact on Indigenous peoples. Such academic and professional activities need to address the key issue of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination, especially in regard to intellectual property and cultural rights.

These guidelines seek to promote and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination in any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander related teaching, research or professional practice activity in Australia. They are aimed at encouraging and assisting teachers, researchers, students and practitioners to undertake better informed work that:

1. is respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,
2. builds the academic and professional capacity of Indigenous scholars, practitioners and community members, and
3. has beneficial outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as academics and professionals themselves.

Principles & Protocols for Built Environment Teaching, Research and Professional Activities on Issues Relating to or Impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People:
When preparing and undertaking academic or professional project proposals on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander topics and on issues impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, participants should be aware of and committed to the following principles.

Built Environment university staff, students and professional practitioners will:

1. show respect for both Country and their Traditional Owners, or equivalent, according to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and that Welcome to and Acknowledging Country are respectful processes of cultural safety and knowledge engagement;
2. recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:
   i. support well-conducted relevant academic, research and practice activities that contribute to greater appreciation of their culture and mutual knowledge advancement, preceded by fully informed prior consultation and consent;
   ii. are not homogeneous and that there may be multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, perspectives and decision-making processes;
   iii. retain the integrity and authenticity of their Ancestral custodial responsibilities and practices by contemporary processes and methods;
   iv. have rights to their intangible and tangible heritage, their living culture, and that recording, use, material removable and intellectual property obligations and permissions need to be sought and consented to, and that such approval may be withdrawn at any time without any reasons;
v. have vested certain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with authority to represent their Country and that there are protocols to liaise and or work with appropriate people in any activity or project engagement; and

vi. Country may be impacted by any development, plan, design or strategy that implicates their Country, places, values or people and need to be consulted on these initiatives; and

vii. representatives and organisations may be constrained in knowledge sharing.

3. strive to foster a creative and empowering environment that significantly benefits Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

4. seek to establish Centres or Schools of Indigenous Studies, memorandums of understanding, actions plans, etc., that are expressions of their institutional commitment to Indigenous self-determination and their partnership(s) with Indigenous communities;

5. understand that any associations established with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be based on genuinely respectful partnerships that include:
   i. proactively including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the inception of the project;
   ii. negotiating beneficial outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including free, prior and informed consent;
   iii. addressing matters of intellectual property and cultural protocols including shared authorship and ownership over outcomes, however they may be defined;
   iv. adequately resourcing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars and community members to fully engage in the project;
   v. participating in a reciprocal sharing of knowledge;

vi. recognition that there are many Country’s across the Australian landscape, often with their own language, and separate dialects, culture, traditions and belief systems; and,

vii. reporting research findings back to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and groups in ways that are meaningful to them.

6. be committed to, and prioritise, increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander capacities in teaching, research and professional practice activities by including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars, practitioners and community members in academic or professional processes that enable them to increase their teaching, research and professional practice qualifications, expertise, skills, confidence and experience;

7. strive to demonstrate cultural competence and respect when engaging in teaching, research and professional practice activities that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

8. be committed to undertake teaching, research and professional practice activities promoting understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and ways of living, past, present and future.

9. identify, examine and refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific ethical guidelines relevant and applicable (of which Corporations or Traditional Owners may already have protocols) to the proposed teaching, research or professional practice activities or programs, and all university research will follow the AIATSIS (2012), Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies. Make reference to the Resources identified and listed elsewhere in the document.

Or,

as Uncle Bryon Powell of the Wadawurrung (Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation) says, “Ask First”, which is the title of the advice prepared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the former Australian Heritage Commission in Ask First: A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values (AHC 2002).
Universities in Australia

Universities Australia’s (2011a, 2011b) investigations into Indigenous Cultural Competency have concluded that most universities have struggled with successfully devising and achieving a translation of Indigenous protocols into their curricula. Wallis & Grant (2000: 65) have also concluded that, given the nature of the built environment disciplines and their professional practice activities, there is a “need for specific cultural awareness education” to service these disciplines and not just attempts to insert Indigenous perspectives into their curricula.

Bradley’s policy initiative at the University of South Australia (UniSA) (1997-2007), while “has not achieved its goal of incorporation of Indigenous perspectives into all its undergraduate programs by 2010,” having regard to the considerations and recommendations of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Committee (2007), the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (2007), the Vision for 2020 of the Review of Australian Higher Education (2008) all of which were embodied into the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education (2008) recommendations. Contextually, Vice Chancellor Bradley’s strategic educational aim at the University of South Australia was to ensure that all its graduates demonstrate “an understanding of the cultural, historical and contemporary frameworks which have shaped the lives of Indigenous Australians” and are articulated in Bradley et al’s (2008: 5) belief that “education is at the core of any national agenda for social and economic change” and by the “deepening understanding of health and social issues, and by providing access to higher levels of learning to people from all backgrounds, it can enhance social inclusion and reduce social and economic disadvantage.”

The Universities Australia’s Indigenous Cultural Competency project (2011a, b) explains that:

*Indigenous cultural competency refers to the ability to understand and value Indigenous perspectives. It provides the basis upon which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians may engage positively in a spirit of mutual respect and reconciliation* (Universities Australia 2011a: 3)

and, that

*Student and staff knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities and awareness of Indigenous protocols, combined with the proficiency to engage and work effectively in Indigenous contexts must be congruent to the expectations of Indigenous Australian peoples* (Universities Australia 2011a: 3).

More recently Universities Australia (2017: 10) has proposed an Indigenous Strategy 2017-2010 that recognises that there is a lack of “a coherent sector-wide initiative that binds all universities together with common goals.” This strategy outlines Universities Australia’s response to the United Nations’ Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). It acknowledges that universities have responsibilities to Australia’s Indigenous people, and to reflect the right of self-determination by working in partnership with Indigenous communities. The Strategy (Universities Australia 2017: 11) seeks to:

- increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in higher education as students, as graduates and as academic and research staff;
- increase the engagement of non-Indigenous people with Indigenous knowledge, culture and educational approaches; and
- improve the university environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
University Learning and Research Protocols

The over-arching Australian academic protocols for research linked to ‘Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People’ is the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC 2007a) - prepared jointly by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee (AVCC).

The National Statement (Chapter 4) expresses principles and ethical obligations for research that involves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It emphasises six core values: reciprocity, respect, equality, responsibility, survival and protection, and spirit and integrity. It also articulates an international referral system whereby an application “must have included assessment by or advice from people who have networks with … and/or knowledge of research with … [or are] people familiar with the culture and practices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people”. Several universities extend the “Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island Peoples” category by adding “or Issues” in their internal criteria defining whether a project is Low Risk or necessitating a national-level application.

The National Statement (NHMRC 2007a: 69) acknowledges the complexities of research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait people stating in its preamble on this topic:

Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples spans many methodologies and disciplines. There are wide variations in the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, communities or groups are involved in or affected by research to which this chapter applies. The variations depend on the scope of the project, the demographics of participants, the illnesses or social phenomena under study, and their historical, social and cultural context and connections. Researchers should address relevant issues of research design, ethics, culture and language. Depending on the field of study and complexity of the proposed research, these issues might be addressed in numerous ways. A cornerstone of an ethical research relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is respect for and valuing of cultural and language diversity.

As a sub-branch of the National Statement there are also guidelines specifically for human health research: Keeping research on track (NHMRC 2006) and Values and Ethics (NHMRC 2003) as distinct from ‘country’ health.

While the above is relevant, and procedurally important in Australian universities, the Principles of Ethical Research contained in AIATSIS’s (2012) Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies embody key protocols for all research. These principles are founded on respect for rights, recognising that Indigenous peoples have inherent rights, including the right to self-determination. “These include rights to full and fair participation in any processes, projects and activities that impact on them, and the right to control and maintain their culture and heritage. AIATSIS considers that these principles are not only a matter of ethical research practice but of human rights.” These 14 principles can be grouped together under 6 broad categories:
### Rights, respect and recognition is essential.

**Principle 1:** Recognition of the diversity and uniqueness of peoples, as well as of individuals,

**Principle 2:** The rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination must be recognised.

**Principle 3:** The rights of Indigenous peoples to their intangible heritage must be recognised.

**Principle 4:** Rights in the traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions of Indigenous peoples must be respected, protected and maintained.

**Principle 5:** Indigenous knowledge, practices and innovations must be respected, protected and maintained.

### Negotiation, consultation, agreement and mutual understanding

**Principle 6:** Consultation, negotiation and free, prior and informed consent are the foundations for research with or about Indigenous peoples.

**Principle 7:** Responsibility for consultation and negotiation is ongoing.

**Principle 8:** Consultation and negotiation should achieve mutual understanding about the proposed research.

**Principle 9:** Negotiation should result in a formal agreement for the conduct of a research project.

### Participation, collaboration and partnership

**Principle 10:** Indigenous people have the right to full participation appropriate to their skills and experiences in research projects and processes.

**Principle 11:** Indigenous people involved in research, or who may be affected by research, should benefit from, and not be disadvantaged by, the research project.

**Principle 12:** Research outcomes should include specific results that respond to the needs and interests of Indigenous people.

### Benefits, outcomes and giving back

**Principle 13:** Plans should be agreed for managing use of, and access to, research results.

**Principle 14:** Research projects should include appropriate mechanisms and procedures for reporting on ethical aspects of the research and complying with these guidelines.
Importantly, these protocols are for ‘research’ as distinct from teaching and learning engagements, for which there are few national university protocols or guidelines.

In terms of education, many of Australian universities now embed their Indigenous Education Statements (IES) within broader frameworks for employing Indigenous education, research and community engagement principles across disciplines, faculties and the greater campus. These IES are key vehicles for decolonizing the academy and their related professions with action to:

- establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in educational decision-making;
- increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed as academic and non-academic staff in higher education institutions;
- ensure equitable access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to higher education;
- achieve the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education, at rates commensurate with those of all other Australians;
- enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in higher education as for other Australians; and,
- to provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary cultures.

Re-casting terra nullius blindness: empowering Indigenous protocols and knowledge in Australian university built environment education (Jones et al, 2017), supported by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, is a practical commitment to improving teaching and practice. The project is situated alongside the respective local and national Indigenous education policies and statements, and their needs to recognise and integrate other disciplinary practices of Indigenising the academy. These are all key decolonising initiatives that deserve greater importance and resources to built environment learning, teaching, research and professional practice.

University research protocols require national level approval where research involves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about their past, present and future built environment.

Universities need to demonstrate a stronger commitment to addressing the recommendations of the Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: Final Report (Behrendt et al, 2012), and the built environment sector can offer and take a major lead initiating actions that enable these recommendations.
Reconciliation Action Plans

In Australia, Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) express practical actions or strategies that an organisation will seek to implement to construct enhanced respect and solid relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their employees. A RAP also articulates an organisation’s aspirations to establish greater equality by pursuing sustainable opportunities.

In 2006, Professor Mick Dodson AM, as Chair of Reconciliation Australia, and former Prime Minister the Hon John Howard launched The RAP program as part of 40th anniversary celebration of the 1967 referendum. The referendum altered the Australian Constitution to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the census. The anniversary of the referendum, 27 May, is recognised each year as the first day of National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and the anniversary of the 1992 Mabo decision, 3 June, marks the final day of NRW.

A RAP, which is viewed as a ‘living’ document and an organisational ongoing commitment to relationship advancement, is based on three key areas: Relationships; Respect; and, Opportunities.
In addition to internal university learning and teaching, and Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) compliance accreditation, the three built environment professions of architecture, planning and landscape architecture undertake regular professional accreditation assessments of tertiary courses to ensure that the knowledge and skills of graduates satisfy and address their respective policies and criteria. For a graduate, satisfactory completion is essential of an accredited course that meets the educational requirements for corporate membership of the respective Institute, and thereupon a pathway for registration to practice as an architect, planner or landscape architect.

In Australia, architectural education is overseen by the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) in partnership with the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) and state-based Registration Boards. Accreditation and learning outcome performance is evaluated through the Australian and New Zealand Architectural Program Accreditation Procedure: ANZ APAP (AACA & AIA 2012). The ANZ APAP (2012) requires “an understanding of the history and theory of Western, non-western, regional and indigenous architecture” and “an awareness of the broader cultural context in which architecture is practised” together with “an awareness of social and cultural dimensions of place” alluding to cultural literacy (AACA & AIA 2012: 3.3.1ii, 3.5.1i, 3.6.1i)

In addition, AIA’s (2008: 11) Indigenous Housing Policy recommends:

**Mandatory curriculum content on Indigenous cultural awareness is to be encouraged in all accredited tertiary architectural, building and planning courses, including on such topics as contact history, discrimination, cultural change, socio-economic implications of poverty and disadvantage and the history of poor housing delivery and its causes over the last 50 years.**


1. **Knowledge of unique and special position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and Indigenous peoples, their rights and interests, knowledge, culture and traditions, and the appropriate protocols of respect and recognition for engaging with them on matters affecting their rights and interests.**

Such a requirement, presently in transition, will be mandatory for all PIA accredited programs from 2021 (PIA 2016: 19).

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Accreditation Standards and Procedures (2016: 11) requires “curriculum … coverage of these key areas of knowledge and skills (inter alia):

- **Environment** - Natural, cultural, geographical, and land management systems, ecology (made/natural), constructed ecologies/green infrastructure, living landscapes, water/ecosystem services, sustainability and resilience, plant & soil science including knowledge of plant species … [as well as]

- **History and Theory** - Precedents, history of landscape architecture, cultural heritage, environmental history and theory, broad understanding, interrogation/critique, research and research methods, interdisciplinary studies

but does not contain any specific expectation as to fluency in Country, Indigenous knowledge systems or ecological knowledges.

Professional accreditation by AIA, PIA and AILA as to Indigenous knowledge systems and or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities lacks consistency and co-ordinated oversight of aspiration and compliance. This Guide provides a resource to these institutes and their academic, professional and student members to carry out best practice.
Architecture and Indigenous Ways of Knowing

To the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA):

*Architecture influences all aspects of the built environment and brings together the arts, environmental awareness, sciences and technology. By combining creative design with technical knowledge, architects create the physical environment in which people live, which in turn, influences quality of life. Not only do architects inform the overall aesthetics of a city or region by pushing the boundaries of design and style, they also make invaluable contributions to the quality of life, public health and sustainability of any given region (AIA 2015).*

From an Indigenous perspective, while architecture is about the design and construction of housing and activity venues, it is also about place-making and shelter provision. Historically, shelter from environmental conditions, whether permanent or transitory, was integral to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ campsite location and formation.

While there is some academic debate about the notion of ‘Aboriginal Architecture’ and its authenticity, the real contemporary issue is the need for structures that respectfully accommodate Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ that recognise their socio-cultural requirements, and for places that serve to interpret, exhibit, and teach about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ knowledge and artefacts, both internally and to the wider community, in a manner that resonates and engages with Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ‘Placemaking’, siting and design formulation of these structures is important for they reside in Country and form part of the new Country in conveying and enabling knowledge, respect and a sharing of responsibility of Country. This is true irrespective of whether these structures constitute housing, courts, gaols, Keeping Places, galleries, visitor information centres, or similar.

*Indigenous Places* (Pieris et al, 2013) profiles many examples of such architecture. For instance: the Brambuk Cultural Centre in Gariwerd on Djab Wurrung and Jardwadjali Country, the former (Melbourne) Koorie Heritage Centre on Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung Country, the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre at Uluru on Anangu Country, and the Karijini Visitors Centre on Yindjibarndi Country. These examples demonstrate in particular that highly creative and peer-acclaimed designs require a respectful consultative process with Aboriginal communities.

Notable architectural projects include: Aboriginal Dance Theatre (Redfern, NSW); Achimbun Interpretive and Visitor Information Centre. (Weipa, Qld); Birabahn Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Centre, University of Newcastle, NSW; Bowali Visitor Centre (Kakadu National Park, NT); Brambuk Cultural Centre (Halls Gap / Budja Budja, Gariwerd / Grampians National Park, Vic); Djakanimba Pavilions (Wugularr or Beswick, NT); Girrawaa Creative Works Centre (Bathurst, NSW); Karijini National Park Visitors Centre (Pilbara, WA); Kurongkurl Katitjin Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research (Edith Cowan University, Perth, WA); Marika Alderton House (Yirrkala, NT); Nyinkka-Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre (Tennant Creek, NT); Port Augusta Courts Complex (Port Augusta, SA); Tjulyuru Ngaanyatjarri Cultural and Civic Centre (Warburton, WA); Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre (Uluru, NT); West Kimberley Regional Prison (Derby, WA); and, Wilcannia Health Service (Wilcannia, NSW).

‘Quality of life’, responsive to client and place, enabled in shelter design and construction is integral to architecture.
The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects “… champions quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities and greater environmental stewardship” (AILA 2015).

_Landscape Architecture is an internationally recognised profession with a responsibility to shape and form future communities through the creative combination of art and science. The importance of Landscape Architecture as an agent for positive change has never been greater with the environmental and social challenges facing the planet, independent nations and local communities. Landscape architects have a leading role to play in defining and implementing the urgent integrated solutions required (AILA 2013)._ 

Landscapes include urban, regional and rural places, but the core value of AILA is directed towards the creation of quality designed places and environmental stewardship. From an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ perspective, landscape stewardship and the careful design and management of places and landscapes is integral to ‘Caring for Country’. While Western landscape architecture practice is often driven by the crafting of places for humans and wildlife to enjoin and prosper within, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ perspective places a greater emphasis upon healing, nurturing and a long-term perspective about looking after place in anticipation of the return of their ancestors.

Core to these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ values is healing, maintaining and sustaining healthy environments from a holistic perspective. Thus, while design is an attribute of landscape architecture, it is the conscious and cultural obligatory responsibilities of tangible and intangible landscape attributes from the past, in the now, and for the longitudinal future that are more significant.


_Environmental stewardship and ‘design with respect’ are values embedded in AILA’s Australian Landscape Charter (2013)._
Planning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing

To the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA 2015).

Planning is the process of making decisions to guide future action. The planning profession (which is also referred to as ‘urban planning‘ or ‘town planning‘) is specifically concerned with shaping cities, towns and regions by managing development, infrastructure and services. Planners are professionals who specialise in developing strategies and designing the communities in which we live, work and play. Balancing the built and natural environment, community needs, cultural significance, and economic sustainability, planners aim to improve our quality of life and create vibrant communities.

From an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective, sensitive land use planning is integral to the fulfilment of Country responsibilities, whether the Country is land, water, sea, sky or below. Western planning is concerned with the shaping of places to accommodate human activities, enabling safe and healthy environments. In contrast, Indigenous Australians perceive that ‘land use planning’ is about custodianship of place and Country to sustain its health and those of all its occupants (including terrestrial and aquatic wildlife), and custodianship of its stories to celebrate its past in anticipation of the return of ancestors, and to protect the land and waters for future generations.

Contemporary planning, and particularly property law, has muddied these responsibilities and aspirations through notions of terra nullius and ownership, and attempts to define residency and native title; all governance structures that echo historical United Kingdom land governance systems. This has led to the vesting of land management governances, as well as community consultation engagement obligations contained in planning schemes/development plans and planning legislations, within contemporary Australian national and state laws as legislations, charters and agreements (Byrne 2003).


Caring for Country is implicitly expected in PIA’s policies.
Acknowledgement of Country


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Terra Nullius


Cooper v Stuart (1889) 14 AP Case 286 Privy Council


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Members of the Yorta Yorta Community v Victoria [2002] HCA 58; 214 CLR 422; 194 ALR 538; 77 ALJR 356; http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/JCULawRw/2002/10.html#fn1


Wadjalarbinna Nuyyarimma & Ors v Phillip Thompson; Buzzacott & Ors v Minister for the Environment (1999) 95 FCR 153; (1999) 156 ALR 621; [1999] FCA 1192


Western Australia v Ward [2002] HCA 28; 213 CLR 1: 76 ALJR 1098. 191 ALR 1: https://jade.io/j/?a-outline-id=68337


Yarmirr v Northern Territory [2000] FCA 48; 208 CLR 47; https://jade.io/j/?a-outline-id=101133
Indigenous Australians


Australia’s International Obligations Regarding Indigenous People


Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Seeing


Country


Indigenous Knowledge in the Built Environment
A Guide for Tertiary Education


Country: Who can talk and represent


Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) and Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (RNTBCs): http://nativetitle.org.au/


Language


Ethnobotany


Concepts of Time


Talk, Mapping and Representation


Respect


Welcome to Country & Acknowledgement of Country


Indigenous Cultural Heritage


Decolonisation and Methodology


Indigenous Protocols


Universities in Australia


University Learning and Research Protocols


Museums Australia Incorporated - Continuous Cultures and Ongoing Responsibilities: Principles and guidelines for Australian museums working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage. http://www.museumsaustralia.org.au/dbdoc/ccor_final_feb_05.pdf#search=%22continuous%20cultures%20and%20ongoing%20responsibilities%22


Reconciliation Action Plans


AIA, AILA and PIA Professional Accreditation


Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) and the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA). (2012). Australian and New Zealand Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure: ANZ APAP. Canberra. ACT: AACA and AIA.


Architecture and Indigenous Ways of Knowing


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Page, A (2002). Building Pride: Cultural journeys through the built environment, Australian Planner 40 (2): 121-122


Landscape Architecture and Indigenous Ways of Knowing


Indigenous Knowledge in the Built Environment
A Guide for Tertiary Education


Planning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing


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### Appendix A: Key Resources for several Country’s

The following is a short (but not exhaustive) list of resources that we have found that might be helpful that are geographically linked to particular a Country or area that can aid initial discussions:

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<th>Country</th>
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<td>Northern Cape York</td>
<td>Cape York, Qld</td>
<td>Sharp, N (1992), <em>Footprints along the Cape York Sandbeaches</em>. Aboriginal Studies Press: Canberra, ACT.</td>
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<td>Quandamooka</td>
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<td>Quandamooka Yoolooburrawbee Aboriginal Corporation, <a href="http://www.qyac.net.au/">http://www.qyac.net.au/</a></td>
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Appendix B: Uluru Statement from the Heart

ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from ‘time immemorial’, and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia’s nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are aliened from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness.

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.


Note: this text is italicised as per the original document.
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Abbreviations
ACT  Australian Capital Territory
AI   Australia ICOMOS
AIA  Australian Institute of Architects
AILA Australian Institute of Landscape Architects
AIATSIS Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
ANU  Australian National University
ANZAPS Australian and New Zealand Association of Planning Schools
AQF  Australian Qualification Framework
ARC  Australian Research Council
ASLA American Society of Landscape Architects
BE   Built Environment
BE   Built Environment professions = architecture, landscape
      architecture and planning represented by AIA, AILA and PIA
CUT  Curtin University of Technology
DU   Deakin University
FUA  Federation University Australia
GU   Griffith University
JCU  James Cook University
LA   Landscape Architecture
LU   LaTrobe University
MU   Monash University
MQU  Macquarie University
NSW  New South Wales
NT   Northern Territory
NZIA New Zealand Institute of Architects
NZILA New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects
NZPI New Zealand Planning Institute
PIA  Planning Institute of Australia
QUT  Queensland University of Technology
RMIT RMIT University
UC   University of Canberra
UN   United Nations
UNESCO United Nations Economic and Scientific Organisation
UM   The University of Melbourne
UNSW University of New South Wales
USC  University of the Sunshine Coast
UTas University of Tasmania
UTS  University Technology, Sydney
UWA  The University of Western Australia
Vic  Victoria
WA   Western Australia
To all who walk this land,
May you stand tall as a tree
Be as gentle as the morning mist
And be as strong as
The earth under your feet.
May the warmth of the campfire
Be in you and may
The creator spirit
Of the Wathaurong people
Always watch over you.

Aunty Betty Pike
(2013)