

NORTH HEAD

SANCTUARY

DRAFT CONCEPT



Harbour Trust



Australian Government
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Harbour Trust respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of North Head, traditionally known as Car-rang-gel, the Gayamagal People. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

North Head / Car-rang-gel has enduring significance for the Gayamagal People. Managed by those with birthright, the Koradgee (medicine men and women healers) occupied North Head / Car-rang-gel intermittently and performed highly spiritual and cultural ceremonies and rituals.

The Harbour Trust recognises the importance North Head / Car-rang-gel represents to First Nations communities who have cared for this land for thousands of years. As part of the conversation with the community about the future of North Head / Car-rang-gel, the Harbour Trust will connect with First Nations communities and stakeholders to understand and recognise their connection with this land and their aspirations for this remarkable place.



North Head Discovery Day, Welcome to Country & Smoking Ceremony, 2018

MESSAGE FROM

THE CHAIR



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

North Head / Car-rang-gel is a place of sanctuary and connection, an invaluable community destination rich with history. It is an urban bushland retreat, it holds cultural significance to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land - the Gayamagal People - and has a special place in the hearts and minds of locals and visitors alike.

With its valuable military assets showcasing the steps we have taken as a nation to defend our values during conflict and the natural setting revealing the diverse mix of native flora and fauna found at the heart of the harbour, North Head / Car-rang-gel provides opportunities for visitors to explore and learn from the distinctive features of Australia's environment and heritage.

The release of this Draft Concept aims to enhance these important features of North Head Sanctuary. It sets a path for future restoration and activation of these sites and presents a defining moment to transform this site of national significance, ensuring it remains accessible and enjoyable for generations to come.

The Harbour Trust is inviting the community to help shape the future vision and direction for North Head Sanctuary.

With the community's input this place can become something truly exceptional. It will have an impact on our connection to Country, our quality of life and on Sydney's continued appeal as a tourism destination.

To achieve this, we will require support from partners, the community and commercial operators, as well as security of tenure.

The current Deed of Agreement for North Head Sanctuary is due to expire in 2032 at which point it would revert back to the custody of the New South Wales government. Discussions about extending this agreement are currently underway.

I encourage all members of the community and our stakeholders to take part in this conversation about the future of North Head Sanctuary.



Joseph Carrozzi
Chair, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

INTRODUCTION



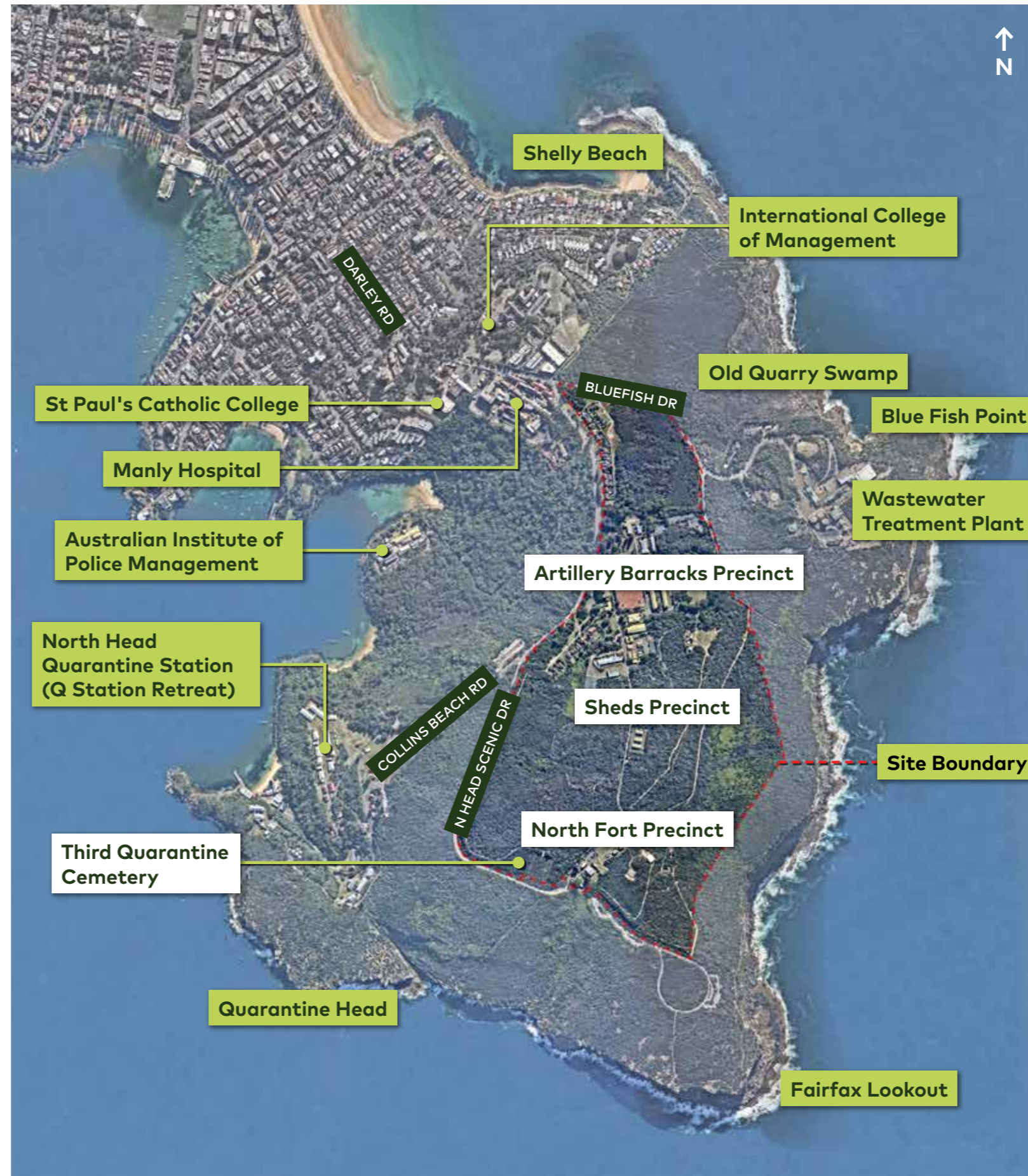
INTRODUCTION

PREFACE

North Head / Car-rang-gel is one of Sydney's great landmarks with a relatively intact and delicate ecosystem. Formed during the last Ice Age when erosional forces separated the headland from the Hornsby Plateau, North Head / Car-rang-gel is a 'tied island', linked to the mainland by Manly's sandspit.

Its remoteness has contributed to the survival of its natural form. Over fifty nationally or locally significant flora, with ten rare plant species, are recorded on site. These include one of Sydney's few remaining patches of Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub. North Head / Car-rang-gel is a refuge for echidnas, reptiles, frogs and more than one hundred species of birds, including the Rainbow Lorikeet, the Little Wattlebird, the New Holland Honeyeater and the White-browed Scrubwren. It is also home to an endangered population of Long-nosed Bandicoots, once common throughout Sydney. Several species, including the Eastern Pygmy Possum, Brown Antechinus, and Bush Rat, are now locally extinct.

North Head / Car-rang-gel is a place of great significance for First Nations People, who used the area as a place for special gatherings, ceremonies and rituals, including burial, education, trade and diplomacy. Land management to regenerate the delicate ecosystem was practiced for thousands of years.



Species of Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (Nature Conservation Council of NSW)



Echidna (Jenny Wilson)



Flannel Flowers and scrub

North Head / Car-rang-gel is recognised as having outstanding heritage value as the northern expression of the seaward entrance to Sydney Harbour (Port Jackson), and has played a major role in the cultural and military life of Australia. The "Heads" have signified arrival and departure at Port Jackson since 1788 and are recognised as important, iconic landmarks of national significance.

North Head Sanctuary is an area of approximately seventy-four hectares resting on the natural ridge of North Head / Car-rang-gel. Almost 80 percent of the Sanctuary is bushland, surrounded on three sides by Sydney Harbour National Park. Darley Road provides the only vehicular access to North Head / Car-rang-gel via the Manly CBD.

Management of the North Head Sanctuary transitioned to the Harbour Trust following its formation, enacted by a Deed of Agreement with NSW Government.

The Harbour Trust was developed following extensive community activism to ensure iconic Sydney Harbour lands were retained in public ownerships for the benefit of the people of Australia. The Harbour Trust continues to be guided by the values and principles that form the basis of its establishment. With extensions to the

Harbour Trust's life, the organisation is evolving and growing its focus from the rehabilitation and conservation of sites to also encompass their activation and interpretation, creating dynamic destinations that respect our history, tell our stories and provide memorable visitor experiences.

The site's *Management Plan 2011* for North Head Sanctuary identifies several significant places:

Artillery Barracks Precinct

Located at the northern end of the Sanctuary boundary are the magnificent Art Deco buildings arranged around an expansive parade ground built in 1936. Many of these buildings were constructed as part of the original North Head Artillery Barracks and were used by the School of Artillery from the mid-1940s.

North Fort Precinct

The North Fort Precinct is located in the south eastern corner of the site. Here the gun emplacements and associated military infrastructure are separated from the rest of the Sanctuary by a stone wall. The main group of buildings are located at the entrance to the site on North Fort Road and were built as part of the original fortifications.

Sheds Precinct

The Sheds Precinct comprises the utilitarian buildings including the underground plotting room and miniature range.

The Third Quarantine Station Cemetery

The Cemetery is located to the west of the North Fort Precinct and has significant National heritage value due to its association with the former North Head Quarantine Station. The Quarantine Station is located to the west of the North Head Sanctuary and is managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

What you have told us so far

In 2020, the Harbour Trust continued the conversation with the community about their values and aspirations for North Head Sanctuary through a community consultation campaign.

Visitors to North Head Sanctuary were invited to engage through a text message conversation or digital survey and invited to share their aspirations for the site.

[Click here to read the *North Head Sanctuary Consultation Report*.](#)

A renewed focus on our First Nations heritage and celebrating Country and culture

- Promote culture and history to a wider audience
- Engage with nature, Country and culture
- A focus on First Nations Peoples health, culture and education
- Share the importance of Local Country both past and present

Rejuvenating and protecting the natural environment

- A need for protection and conservation of flora and fauna, ecology and wildlife
- Promoting appreciation of nature and importance of well-being in the great outdoors
- Continuing to value the beauty of the natural environment

Re-imagine the School of Artillery and share the military history of North Head / Car-rang-gel

- Enhance the visitor experience. Offer immersive and interactive ways of sharing the history
- Invest in the infrastructure around the military artefacts and bring unheard stories to life
- Greater access for schools. Richer and more accessible ways of sharing the history and preserving it for future generations
- Open it to the public in a way that is sensitive to its historical use
- Re-purpose spaces for contemporary uses for events and tourism
- Balanced commercial and community use

HISTORICAL

CONTEXT

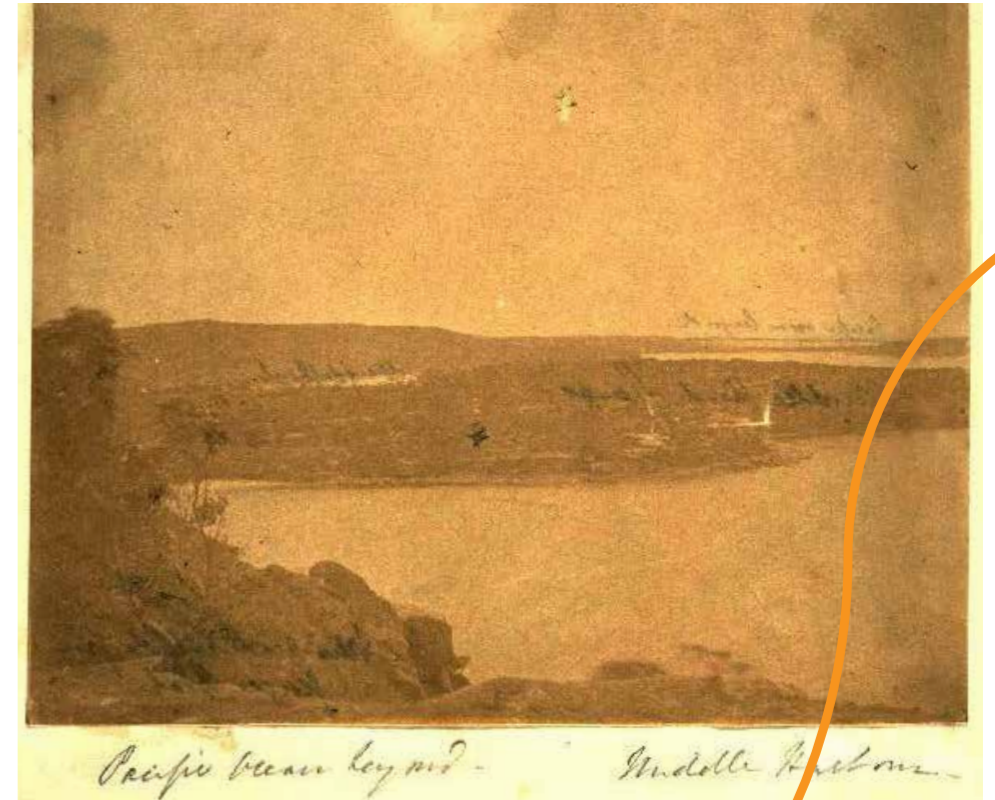
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

NORTH HEAD / CAR-RANG-GEL IN TIME

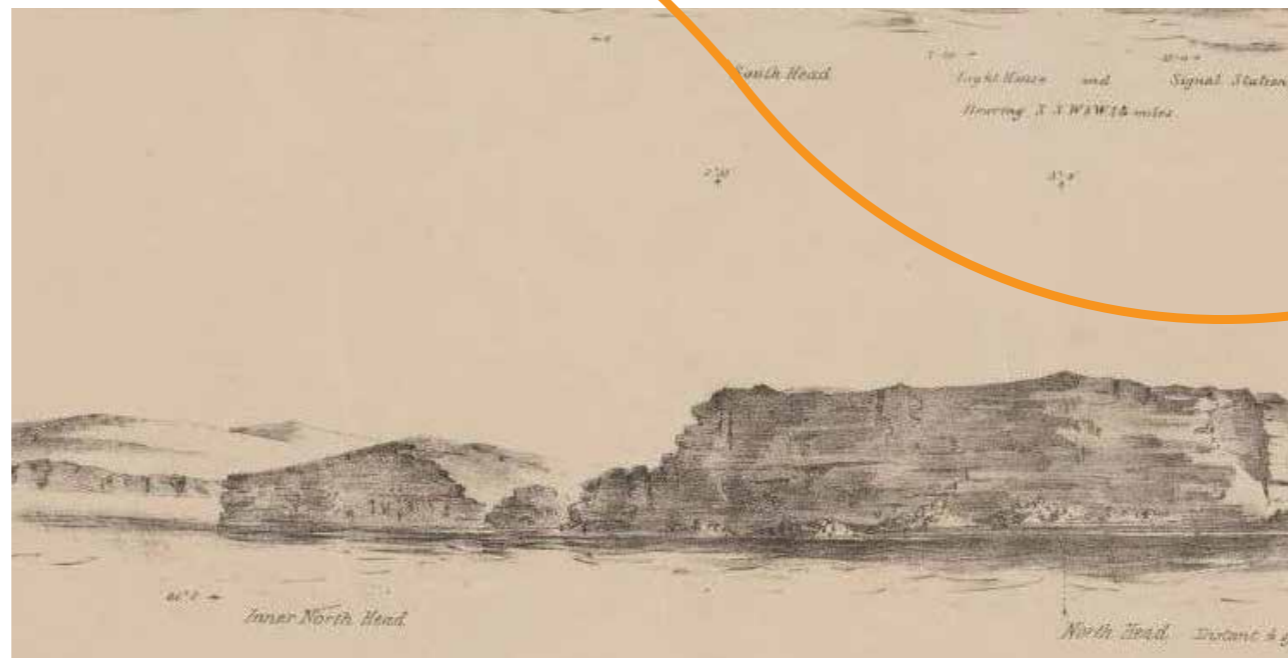
Founded on Hawkesbury Sandstone, the elevated sand dunes of North Head / Car-rang-gel formed the backdrop for the earliest encounters between the original inhabitants and European colonisers. First Nations Peoples have occupied the area for thousands of years, supporting livelihoods and performing cultural ceremonies. There are numerous sites of significance, including rock shelters, art galleries, open camp sites, middens and burial grounds. Early surveys by the colonisers recorded its form and rock shelves, while sketches and photography described its striking position, narrow connection to the main land, and dramatic elevations.



Thomas Mitchell 1840*



William Stanley Jevons 1858*

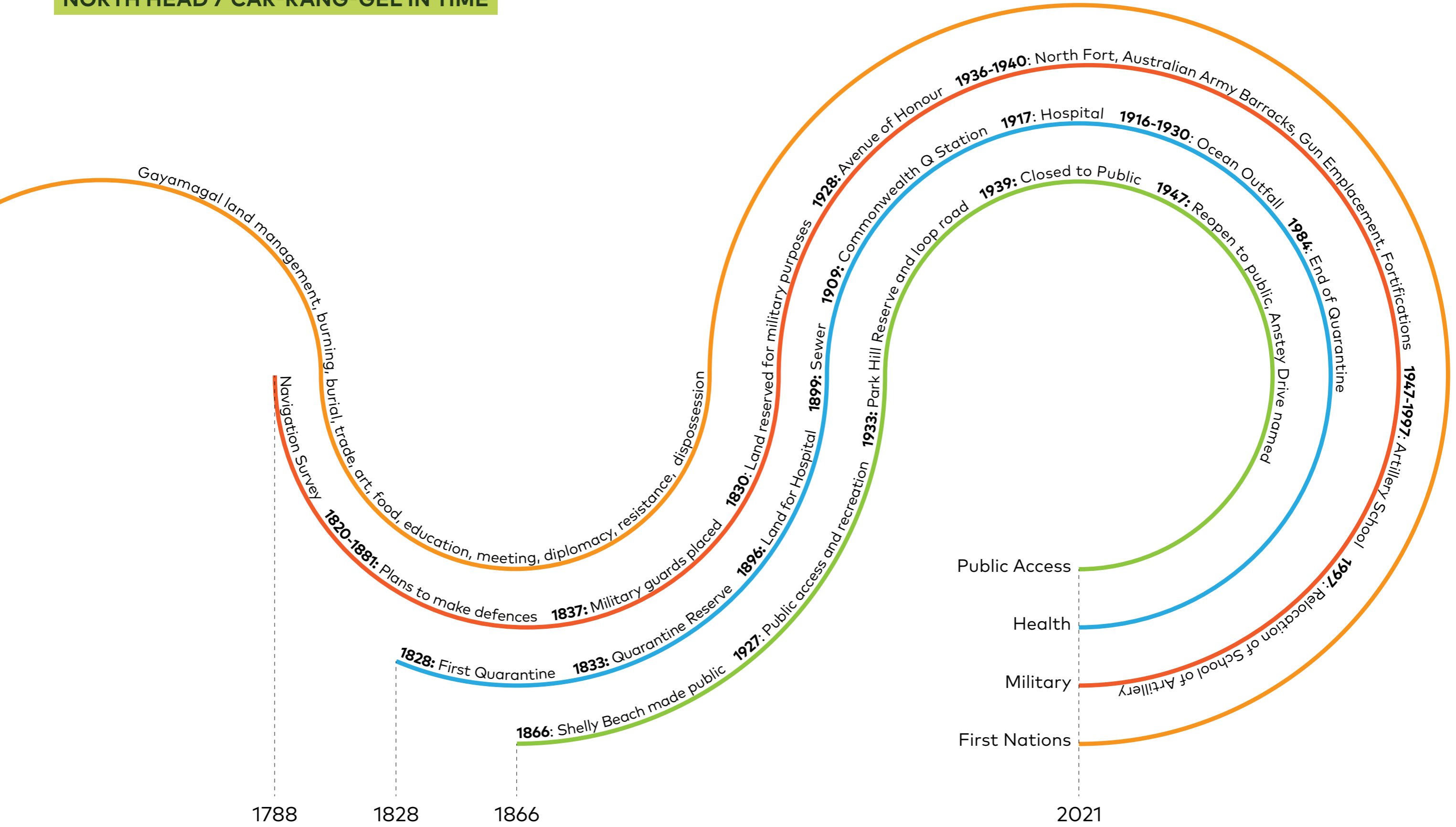


James Glen Wilson 1858*

*Robertson & Hindmarsh Conservation Management Plan 2010

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

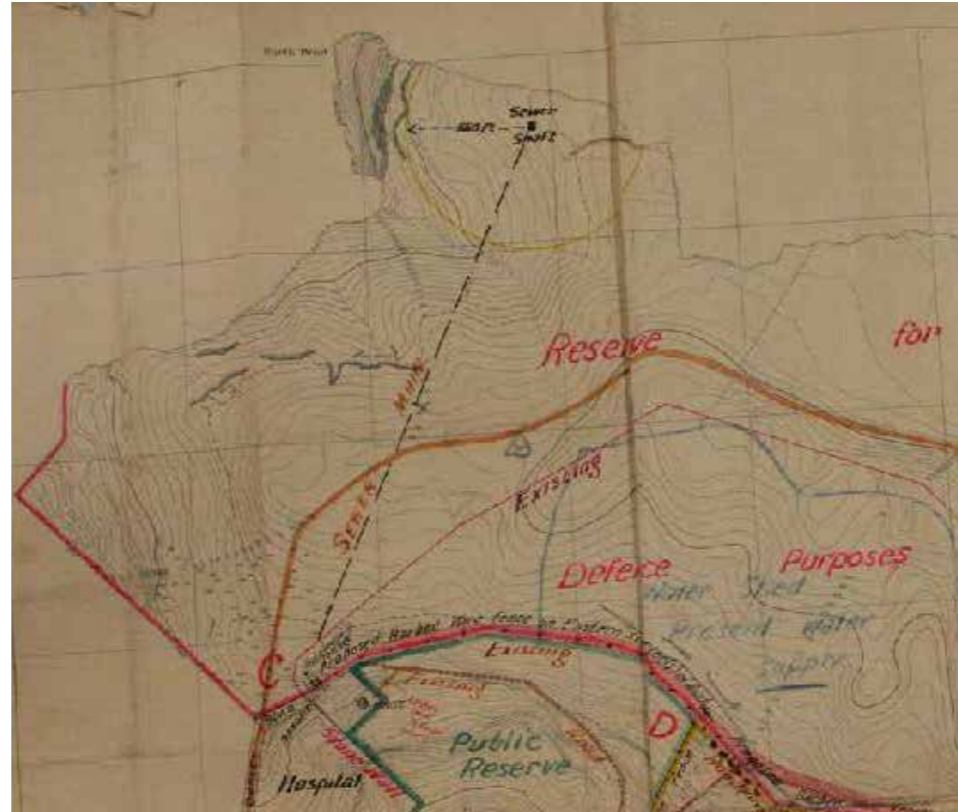
NORTH HEAD / CAR-RANG-GEL IN TIME



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

NORTH HEAD / CAR-RANG-GEL IN TIME

Following First Nations Peoples contact and dispossession and through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, North Head / Car-rang-gel became a contested place. Its various incarnations as a quarantine station, a hospital site, a military headquarters, a sewerage treatment facility, and a national park have meant that North Head / Car-rang-gel today is a place of mixed histories.



Plan showing public reservation about 1930*



Test Firing c.1938*



Manly 1910*

*Robertson & Hindmarsh Conservation Management Plan 2010

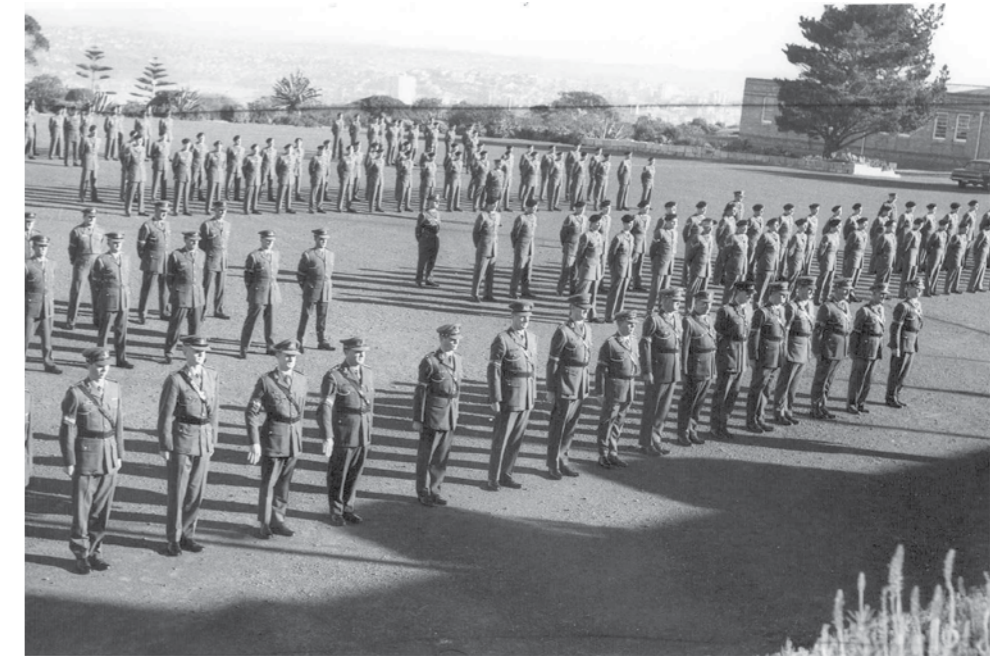
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

NORTH HEAD / CAR-RANG-GEL IN TIME

A 2008 Conservation Management Plan* highlighted the significance of the many sites on North Head / Car-rang-gel drawing particular attention to the more recent heritage values of the North Head School of Artillery and the uniqueness of this site. The School of Artillery has outstanding significance as the most intact and comprehensive barracks complex and military training institution in Australia.



Guns at Entry c.1960's (Harbour Trust Historical Image)



On Parade c.1940's (Harbour Trust Historical Image)



Parade c.1940's (Harbour Trust Historical Image)



1950s (*Dawbin and Associates Conservation Management Plan 2008)

VISION



VISION

GUIDING PRINCIPLE – HEALING COUNTRY

North Head / Car-rang-gel has forever been a place of sanctuary, ceremony, healing and care.

From its earliest occupation by Koradgee medicine men and women healers, to its use as a quarantine station and its role in protecting Australia during war, North Head / Car-rang-gel has been a place of varied histories and intertwined stories.

Today we can experience this unique 'cultural island' as a tangible landscape full of intangible wisdom; as a healing place bestowing physical and mental well-being.

This is Healing Country.

Country is both a lived experience and a heritage. It soars high into the atmosphere, deep into the planet crust and far into the oceans. Country is experienced through the senses and seared into memory. It keeps everything in balance and connected as kin. Country holds everything including human and non-human, land and products of land, knowledge, stories, dance, and song.

As such First Nations space is never empty or lost, it is full of Country.

Christian Hampson, CEO and Co-Founder of Yerrabingin



Harbour Trust Smoking Ceremony

VISION

GUIDING PRINCIPLE – HEALING COUNTRY

Healing Country once again will see North Head / Ca-rang-gel as a place where we celebrate both ancient and contemporary stories - cultural heritage and military history.

Allowing First Nations Peoples to share and celebrate their connection and responsibility as custodians of Country and the knowledge and wisdom embedded within it.

A renewed way to
imagine a place



VISION

NORTH HEAD SANCTUARY DRAFT CONCEPT

Healing Country describes a way of thinking about North Head Sanctuary and its ongoing care, drawing upon community values and aspirations.

The history of North Head / Car-rang-gel tells a story of ceremony and refuge as well as of invasion and resistance, of healing and protection as well as of safety and defence.

The community has spoken passionately of the importance of First Nations culture and acknowledging an often-painful past. It has highlighted the need to conserve the natural environment and the healing that this can bring.

Additionally the community values the important military history of the site and its built heritage.

These ideas of Culture, Environment, History and Renewal form the signature initiatives for revitalising this unique place.

A renewed way to imagine a place



Healing Country

- Bringing the past to life, and telling the truth of the site through interpretation of ancient to recent military history
- Develop environmental and cultural education, focussed on First Nations land management and lessons from thousands of years of custodianship
- Restore and activate major historic military buildings, such as the Other Ranks' Mess (Building One), through partnerships to see these buildings in active use once again
- Protect and enhance the native landscape, flora as well as fauna



SIGNATURE

INITIATIVES



SIGNATURE INITIATIVES

DRAFT CONCEPT

1. North Fort Precinct

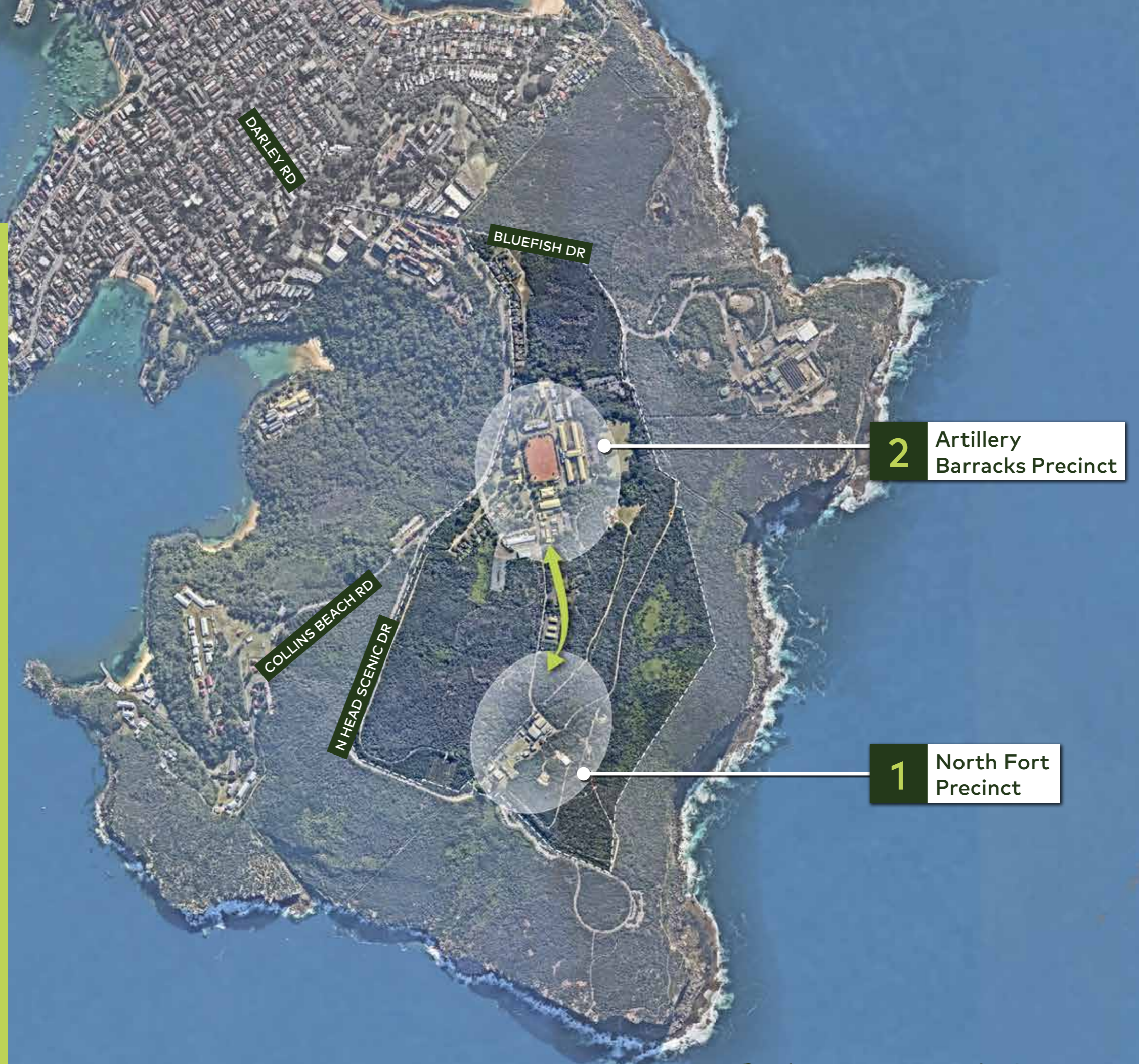
This precinct sees significant focus on enhancing interpretation of the important military installations on North Fort.

An accessible pathway through native gardens will improve site access and lead to an Interpretive Centre of world-class standard, featuring the defence of Australia told in contemporary ways. Unique tunnel experiences will be a focus.

The precinct will also contain an environmental education centre, a First Nations welcoming space, and improved pedestrian access and amenity.

2. Artillery Barracks Precinct

The Precinct's history will be conserved, protected and reimagined with an improved arrival experience, protection of the environment and regeneration, adaptive reuse of the Other Ranks' Mess (Building One), and adaption of the Parade Ground through the creation of a public event asset.



PRECINCTS

NORTH FORT





NORTH FORT PRECINCT DRAFT CONCEPT



1 Site for a new 'world class' Interpretive Centre

2 Accessible path network & native garden

3 Existing car parking reconfigured

4 Site for a 'Welcome Place' & improved precinct entry

5 Walking trail encapsulating gun emplacements, Memorial Walk & Interpretive Centre

6 Environmental Education Centre

1. Site for a new 'world-class' Interpretive Centre

Positioned on the crest of the hill, a new world-class Interpretive Centre will replace the industrial sheds and widen the precinct's access for public education and enjoyment. From this prominent position, the centre will look towards the harbour and tell the intertwined stories of this magnificent place. Interpretive experiences of the site's military history, including the walk of honour, the gun emplacements, the tunnels and engine rooms. The site's ancient culture and natural ecology will also be celebrated.

The public focus of the centre will re-cast the whole of the North Fort precinct as a public place of education and knowledge sharing.

2. Accessible path network & native garden

Accessible pathway through native gardens that will once again be thriving with local endemic species, many of which were used by First Nations Peoples for healing and wellbeing. The Native Garden will complement the environmental education program and reach out to the surrounding community.

3. Existing car parking reconfiguration

Public and active transport options will be encouraged. Those who do drive will park in more discrete areas reconfigured to enhance pedestrian amenity and safety, improving ease of movement. The Interpretive Centre and featured gathering spaces will remain the focus of activity.

4. Site for a 'Welcome Place' and improved precinct entry

When crossing this cultural threshold you will be introduced to Country and given the personal opportunity to acknowledge the land you are on. This will include an introduction to Country and an invitation to explore and experience the oldest living culture in the world.

5. Walking trail encapsulating gun emplacements, Memorial Walk and Interpretive Centre

A walking trail will directly connect the Interpretive Centre to the gun emplacements and memorial walk, linking the stories told within the centre to the surrounding remnant military heritage outside.

6. Environmental Education Centre

The centre will combine world leading science and the ancient environmental wisdom of First Nations Peoples to provide inspiration for our next generation of custodians of Country. Curriculum and cultural experiences connected to the endemic landscape of the site, will see Country as the teacher, the library and the classroom.

NORTH FORT PRECINCT INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

A new world-class Interpretive Centre

A world-class Interpretive Centre will replace the existing industrial sheds at North Fort. The centre will be a 'story-box' – telling stories from the site's recent military history of 'defending country', to its more ancient and enduring stories of Healing Country.

- An exciting Interpretive experience involving the remnant military tunnel system on the site
- An innovative architectural design that responds to the place
- A memorable educational and interactive audio & visual exploration for a wide range of visitors, including families, school groups, as well as international and domestic tourists



Existing



Artist Impression



Artist Impression

Possible connecting ramp
to the remnant military
tunnel system



Sir John Monash Centre Tunnel Entry

NORTH FORT PRECINCT PRECEDENTS

Defending Country

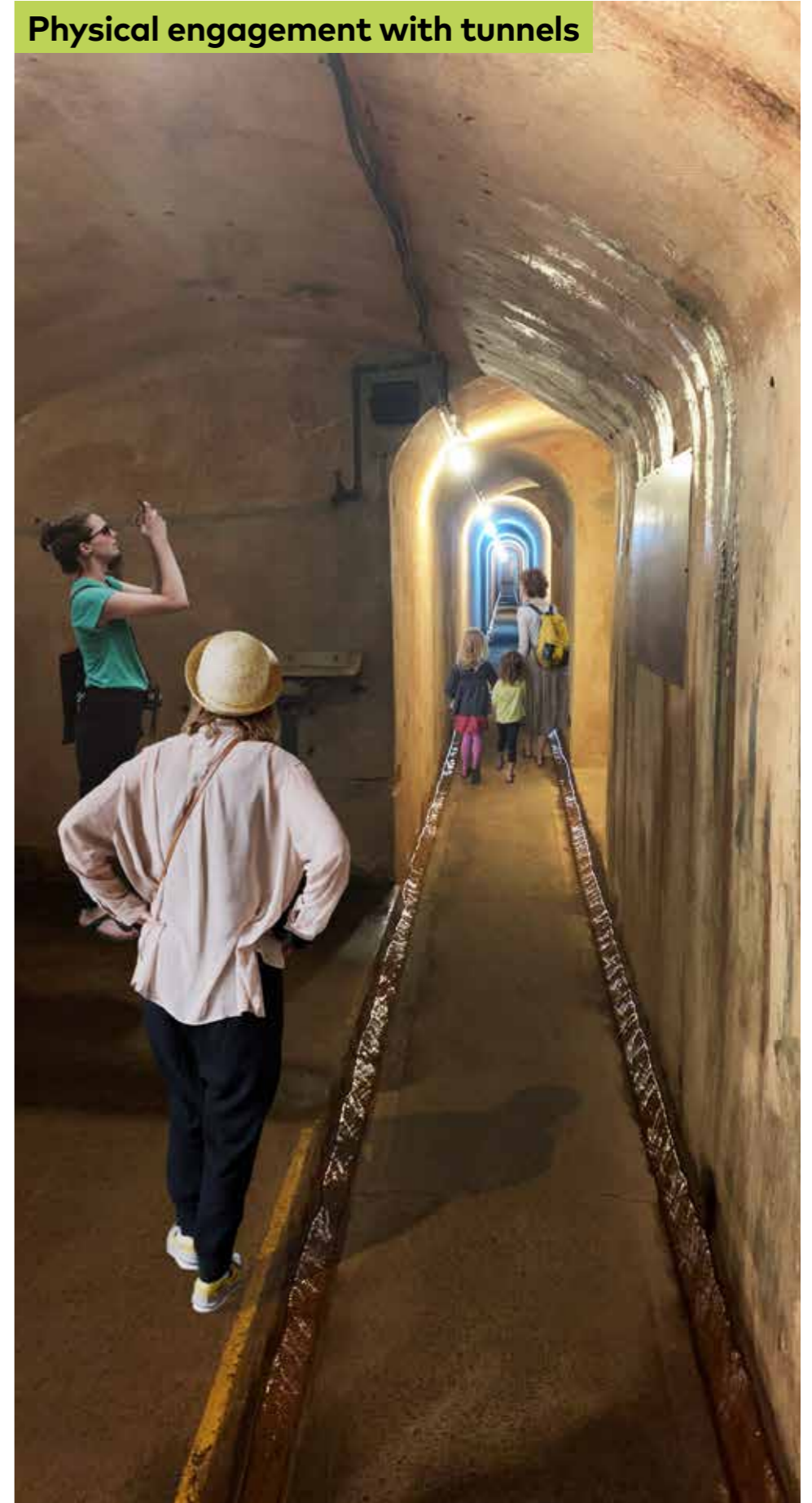
The Interpretive Centre will play an important role in honouring sacrifice and service through sensitive and respectful contemporary interpretations. Building material, form, position and function will all contribute to a cohesive and informative visitor experience.

Diverse interpretation



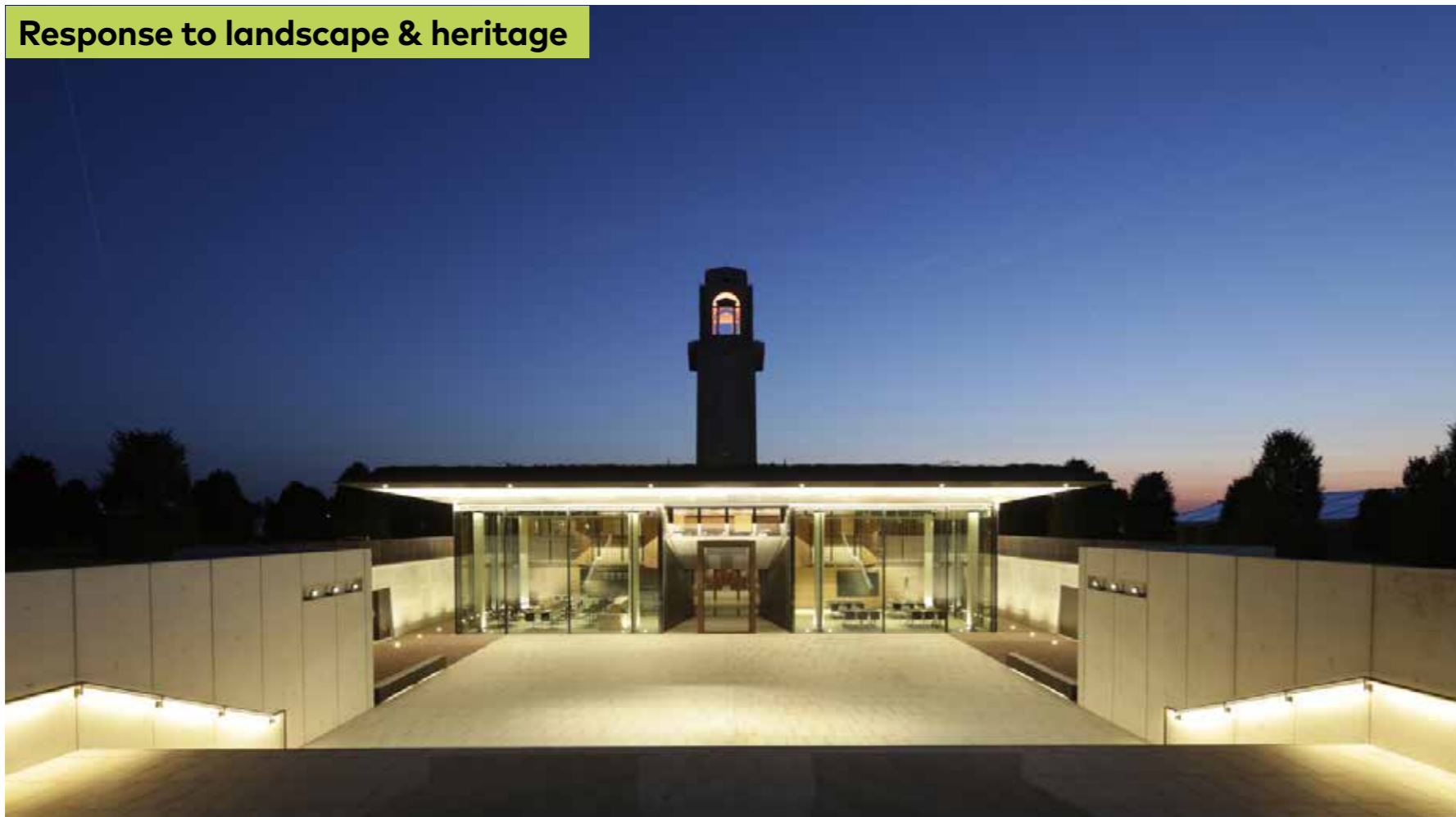
Sir John Monash Centre, France (Cox Architecture)

Physical engagement with tunnels



North Fort Tunnel

Response to landscape & heritage



Sir John Monash Centre, France (Cox Architecture)

**NORTH FORT PRECINCT
PRECEDENTS**

Engine room interpretation



North Fort Engine Room

Digital immersive spaces



Precedent Military Interpretation
Sir John Monash Centre, France (Cox Architecture)

M-24 Midget Sub interpretation



Potential interpretation of M-24 Midget Sub
Image Credit: Model of the M-24 Midget Submarine courtesy of Sydney Ports Corporation.

Engagement - First Nations Peoples



Precedent Military Interpretation
Sir John Monash Centre, France (Cox Architecture)

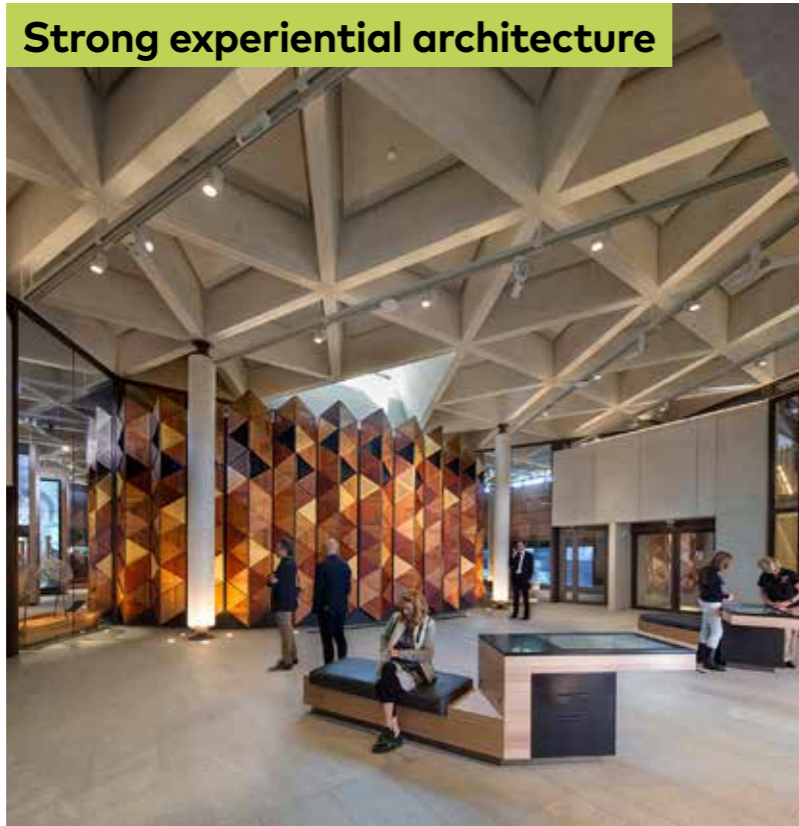
NORTH FORT PRECINCT PRECEDENTS

Interactive display



Precedent Military Interpretation
Sir John Monash Centre, France (Cox Architecture)

Strong experiential architecture



Precedent Military Interpretation
Sir John Monash Centre, France (Cox Architecture)

Engagement with heritage objects



North Fort Engine Room

NORTH FORT PRECINCT

WELCOME PLACE & PRECINCT ENTRY

A Cultural Island

A Welcome Place of cultural importance will anchor the North Fort precinct, celebrating First Nations heritage, stories, landscape and Country.

- Open transparent pavilion
- Interpretation of the site's prevailing winds
- Grounded in stone base and abutments
- Accessible entry



Existing



Artist Impression

NORTH FORT PRECINCT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE

*First Nations space is never lost,
it is full of Country*

Innovative and engaging opportunities for two-way learning about the environment and our relationship to the earth, plants and animals, water and sky will find expression in renewed buildings at North Fort.

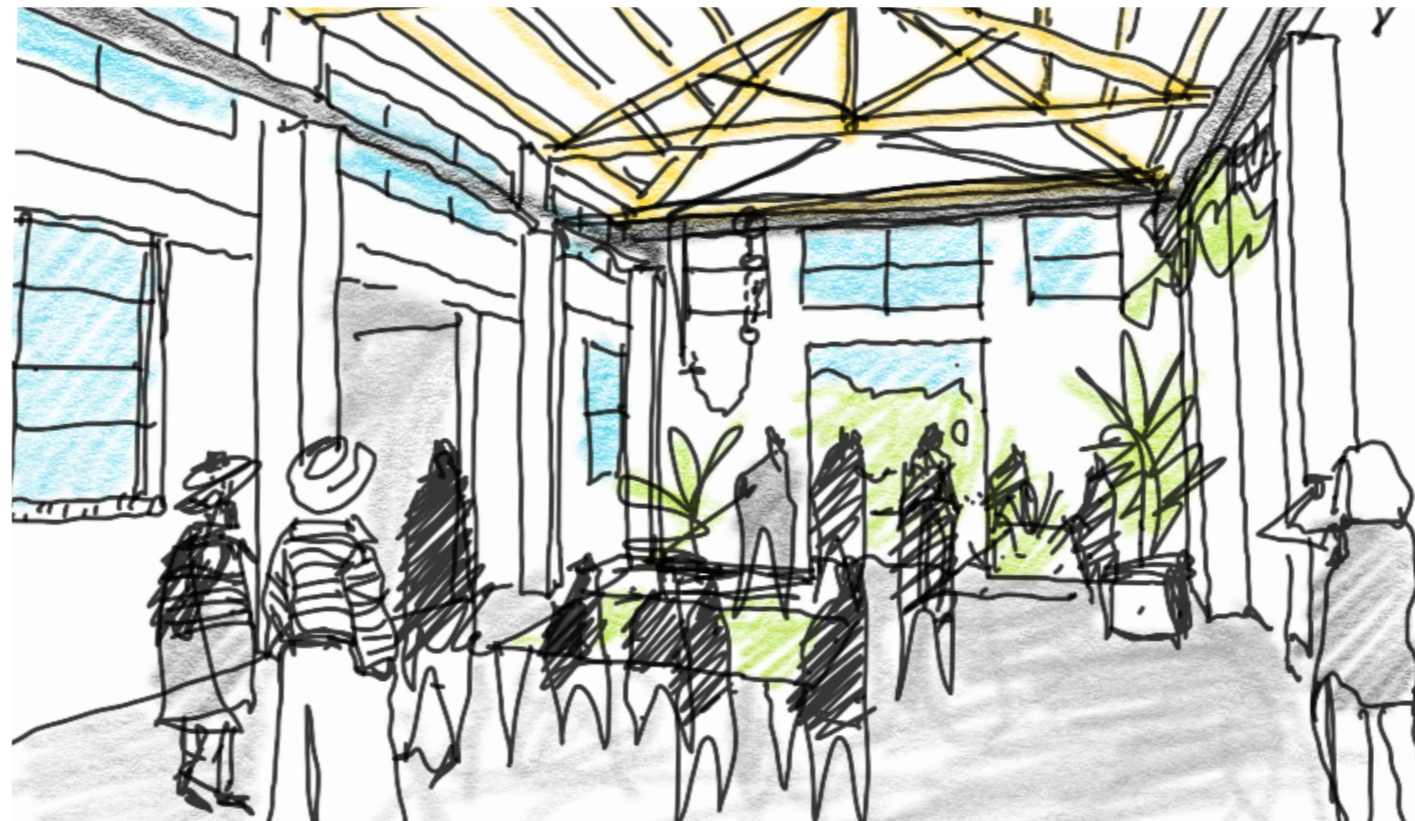
- Existing building refurbished as Environmental Education Centre
- Set in native gardens as an educational resource
- Part of the entry sequence towards Interpretive Centre after the Welcome Place
- First Nations bush management and land care techniques will be shared with visitors
- Northern Beaches Council has expressed an interest in working with the Harbour Trust to establish the centre



Aboriginal Cultural Landscape Garden, South Eveleigh (Yerrabingin)



Rooftop Farm at South Eveleigh (Yerrabingin)



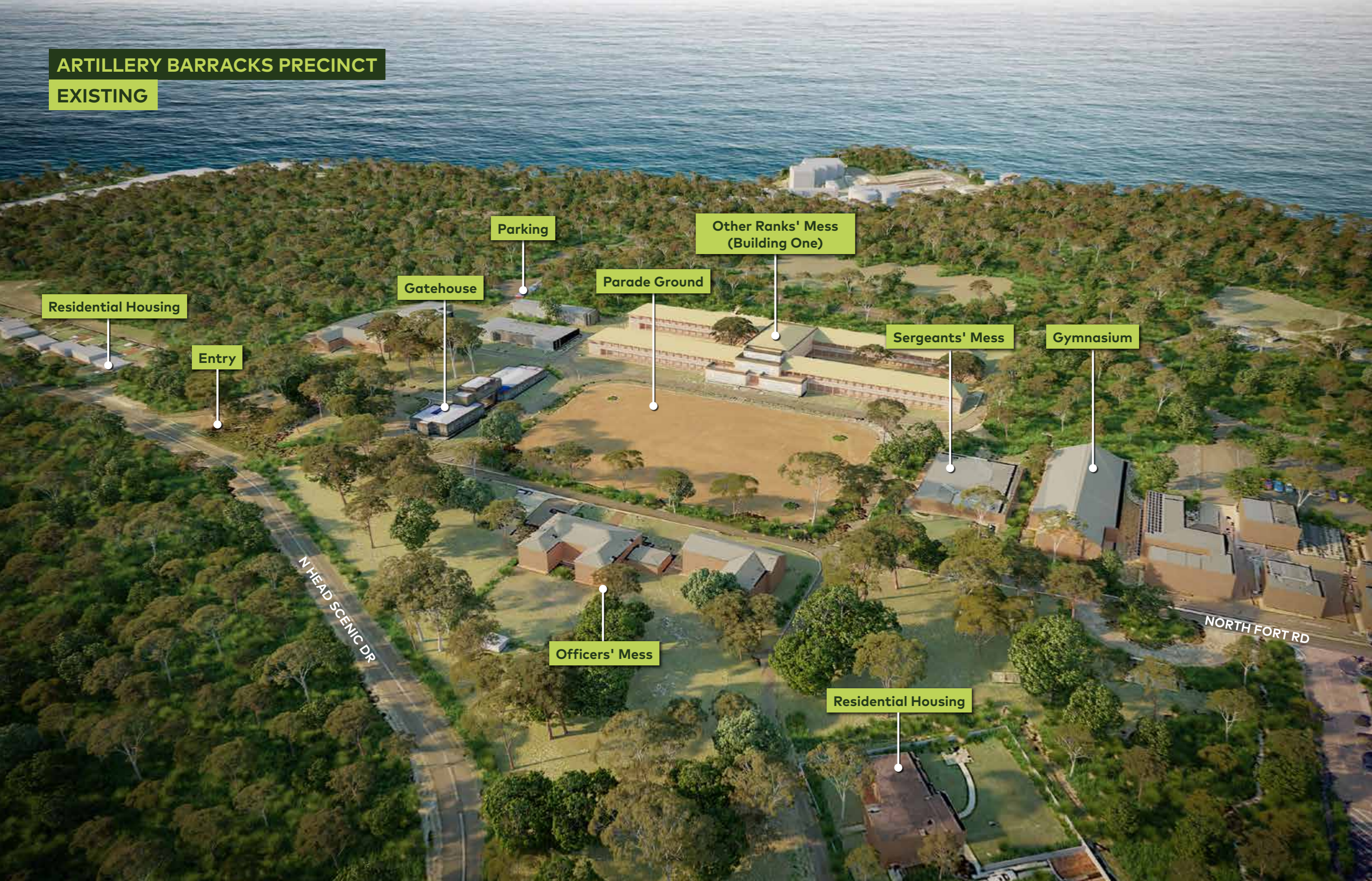
Artist Impression

PRECINCTS

ARTILLERY BARRACKS



ARTILLERY BARRACKS PRECINCT
EXISTING



ARTILLERY BARRACKS PRECINCT

DRAFT CONCEPT



1 More legible precinct gateway

2 A public event space

3 Adaptive reuse & conservation of Other Ranks' Mess (Building One)

4 Protection of the environment & revegetation

4 Protection of the environment & revegetation

5 Walking trail to North Fort Precinct

6 Renew and activate Gymnasium & Officers' Mess

1. More legible precinct gateway

The approach to the Artillery Barracks Precinct will be made clearer as the main public address off North Head Scenic Drive. The existing Gatehouse will be conserved and refurbished - consistent with its heritage status - to become the formal entry to the precinct grounds. More discrete and integrated car parking with appropriate endemic landscape treatments will frame the Gatehouse approach, while improved pedestrian amenity will celebrate the Gatehouse as the precinct entry-point for community and public events held on the parade ground beyond.

2. A public event space

The parade ground is the centrepiece of the precinct. Its important military ceremonial role will be conserved through reinforcing its formal relationship to surrounding buildings, maintaining its iconic gravel surface, introducing endemic landscape elements, and improving pedestrian comfort. The Parade Ground, though now largely silent, will be reactivated for periodic public and community events consistent with the heritage status of the precinct. These curated events may include evening outdoor cinema, food and arts markets, cultural festivities and music recitals that complement existing offerings in the nearby Manly CBD.

3. Adaptive reuse and conversation of Other Ranks' Mess (Building One)

The Other Ranks' Mess (Building One) once played a central role in the life of the Artillery Barracks. Significant potential exists to partner with government or commercial operators to undertake heritage fabric conservation and return the building to active use once again. Consistent with its heritage status, the building could be adapted to sympathetic uses such as education, conference / function facilities, commercial / office space, and appropriate accommodation uses that support the idea of sanctuary and Healing Country. An expressions of interest process will be conducted to identify potential partners.

4. Protection of the environment & revegetation

The themes of education, culture and the natural environment will find expression in a renewed precinct landscape. Here there will be opportunities for native plant propagation, community engagement in landscape cultivation, nurturing of endemic species in native gardens and sharing of cultural knowledge of Country, healing and well-being.

5. Walking trail to North Fort Precinct

North Fort Road offers an important connecting link between the Artillery Barracks Precinct and North Fort Artillery to the south. Now used primarily for vehicle access, this link will become a shared track offering improved pedestrian connectivity and new interpretive experiences that provide access to the former military sheds and connections to the hanging swamps and surrounding natural landscape. This renewed shared road and walking track will improve pedestrian access across the Harbour Trust lands and include potential exposure to rare and endangered species of flora and fauna across North Head / Car-rang-gel. It will help to unify the two precincts into a cohesive whole.

6. Government / commercial partnerships to renew and activate Gymnasium and Officers' Mess

Adaptive reuse of the current vacant Gymnasium and Officers' Mess to be delivered in partnership with Local Government, State Government and / or commercial operators. The Harbour Trust anticipates the Gymnasium could be used to support the sporting community, and the Officers' Mess buildings could take on a range of possible mixed uses including education, commercial, and community.

ARTILLERY BARRACKS PRECINCT MORE LEGIBLE PRECINCT GATEWAY

*A Discoverable, Diverse Place
of Connection*

Formerly the entry to the Artillery Barracks, the Gatehouse will serve a revived ceremonial function as the gateway to the North Head Sanctuary - a renewed place for celebrating nature, culture and military history.

- Gatehouse revived as formal entry to Artillery Barracks
- Building conserved and refurbished for enhanced visitor experience
- Surrounding areas made pedestrian friendly
- Appropriate native vegetation complementing the heritage character



Existing



Artist Impression

ARTILLERY BARRACKS PRECINCT

A PUBLIC EVENT SPACE

*A Place of Healing, Sharing
& Celebration*

The Parade Ground was once the site of military honour and ceremony. Today we respect its history by reinterpreting its function as a community events space, reactivating its spatial grandeur in contemporary ways.

- Parade Ground re-purposed for community use as events space
- Markets, theatrical and musical performance, and cinema under the stars
- Public access to the precinct will be retained and enhanced
- Surrounding roadways will be made more pedestrian friendly
- Landscape and vegetation will support renewed uses



Existing



Artist Impression

ARTILLERY BARRACKS PRECINCT ADAPTIVE REUSE & CONSERVATION

Return to Glory

Significant potential exists to partner with government or commercial operators to undertake heritage fabric conservation and supporting adaptive works and return the Other Ranks' Mess (Building One) to active use once again.

Consistent with its heritage status, the building could be adapted to sympathetic uses such as education, conference / function facilities, commercial / office space, and appropriate accommodation uses. Retaining public access to the site will be an integral part of any future use.



Artist Impression – Ballroom



Ballroom c.1960's (Manly Daily)



Ballroom c.1960's (Manly Daily)

NEXT STEPS



NEXT STEPS

Today North Head Sanctuary welcomes up to 400,000 visitors every year, from local, national, and international visitors. The Harbour Trust sees the concept planning process for North Head Sanctuary as a rare opportunity to revitalise the focus and impact of the Harbour Trust by inviting you to help shape the future vision and direction for this unique place.

This is only part of the journey, which started nearly 20 years ago with the formation of the Harbour Trust, the consultation on the Comprehensive Plan, the community conversation undertaken in 2020, and what will ultimately be further engagement on a detailed masterplan for North Head Sanctuary.



The Draft Concept for each Precinct is informed by the following:

- 1. Consistency with the legislated objects of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001*
- 2. Precinct thinking with people at the core
- life, space, buildings*
- 3. Emphasis on strengthening interpretation of the site's layered history, with an elevation of interpreting the First Nations heritage*
- 4. Leverage the Connecting with Country Draft Framework for developing connections with Country that can inform the planning, design, and delivery*
- 5. Balanced future investment across a mix of public realm and commercial activation, being delivered over time and in partnership with other Government agencies, commercial operators and community organisations*
- 6. Reflective of the NSW Public Spaces Charter*



Harbour Trust



Australian Government
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust