

MEETING NOTES

FIRST NATIONS ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025 | 2:00PM-4:00PM

Attendees:

First Nations Advisory Group Members:

Alison Page (Chair)

Bryce Liddell

Lloyd Walker

Peter White

Chris Ingrey (online)

Jessie Longbottom (online)

Harbour Trust:

Janet Carding, Executive Director

Brad Manera, Member of the Trust

Helen Lochhead, Member of the Trust

Kathryn Roberts, Director Marketing & Visitor Experience

Susan Thompson, Head of Engagement & Experience

Michelle DeCarteret, Assistant Curator & Producer – Middle Head

Eloise Dalmas, Community Engagement Officer

Invited Guests:

Catherine Macarthur, Harbour Trust Heritage Architect

Rowena Welsh-Jarrett

MEETING OPENING

1. Welcome and apologies

Lloyd Walker opened the meeting with a Welcome to Country. Alison Page (AP) noted apologies for Donna Daly and Metro Land Council.

The First Nations Advisory Group (FNAG) approved the notes from the previous meeting (February 13) with no comments.

2. Executive Director Update

Janet Carding (JC) updated the group on the recent Labour Government election commitment, promising \$10.2 million towards swimming and kayaking at the slipways on Cockatoo Island. JC

clarified that the Minister's press release had an error, and that the project relates to the slipways and not the Fitzroy Dock.

JC also noted the election commitment funding made by the Liberal Government for Mosman Council's new amenities block at the Middle Head / Gubbuh Gubbuh site.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3. Macquarie Lightstation & Greenway Wall Update including Interpretation

An overview of the interpretation at the site and the research into the topography was presented to the group by Catherine Macarthur (CM).

The materials used for the interpretation were discussed, noting that for longevity a steel plate was chosen. It was further noted that sections will be able to be replaced individually rather than the whole sign, if deterioration should occur overtime.

The intention is that the completion of the project, including interpretation, will have a formal launch. The group will be informed of the date once this is confirmed.

Chris Ingrey discussed La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council's recent acquisition of Signal Hill Lighthouse and queried if discussions regarding heritage maintenance could be discussed with the Harbour Trust heritage team. JC confirmed that the Harbour Trust would be very happy to discuss heritage issues once the land council is ready.

4. First Nations Strategy Finalisation & Next Steps

The inclusion of the First Nation's strategy in the Harbour Trust Corporate Plan 2025-29 was discussed. The group raised that they would like to discuss who delivers the First Nation's training and that it would be useful to have some early discussions with Gujaga Foundation.

As well as supporting the development of the First Nations Strategy, the current contract with *Terri Janke and Company*, includes staff awareness and initial training on ICIP Rights and handling First Nations data (IDsov). AP mentioned that the FNAG should be invited to this part of the training. It was confirmed that the Harbour Trust would provide an outline of the proposed training and come back to the group to discuss the intention in more detail later in the year.

The monitoring of the Strategy's implementation was discussed, with a suggestion to have regular reports marked with traffic lights to signal progress of each deliverable.

The various pillars of the strategy were discussed and how they can become agenda items for future FNAG meetings.

A one-year report after the strategy's inception was recommended to understand any action items that may turn out not be feasible.

It was agreed there would be a further opportunity for comment by Group members before finalisation. It was also confirmed that once finalised, it would be appropriate for the document to be made public.

ACTION:

- Harbour Trust to confirm training components of the strategy (FNAG will be offered the opportunity to be involved)

5. Stage 1 Implementation of Middle Head Masterplan- Workshops

The group were notified about the three workshops that will be held across May (Military Heritage, Inclusion and Accessibility and Natural Heritage).

The interpretation of the layers of history and the historical changes across the site were discussed, including whether there are specific areas where First Nation's stories should be told. Additionally, the group discussed that an important consideration for Middle Head (MH) will be how First Nation's heritage values co-exist with state and national heritage listings.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

6. Middle Head Interpretation Project Discussion

Michelle DeCarteret presented a Briefing Paper covering proposed First Nations interpretation at Middle Head / Gubbuh Gubbuh, with the intention to seek advice on First Nations storytelling to assist with the curatorial/historical research and development of the interpretation scope. This included recommendations around the approach for the plateau walk, the incorporation of Dreaming stories, and culturally significant flora and fauna. Potential research relating to Indigenous veterans, the First Nations Farm, and ASOPA were also discussed.

A roadmap for interpretation and storytelling was suggested to understand a clear timeline of when and how best to unveil certain stories as the Harbour Trust does not need to tell all stories, all at once. The idea of a roadmap was also tied to discussions around grants for specific stories that could benefit from being represented on a larger scale.

A narrative hierarchy and how this could be co-designed with community was also raised by the group.

ACTIONS:

- Harbour Trust to reconvene the FNAG for a workshop to discuss more fully the interpretation and stories for Middle Head. To be held early June.

7. Cultural Heritage Review (*Rowena Welsh- Jarrett*)

Rowena Welsh-Jarrett's (RWJ) consultancy with the Harbour Trust includes reviewing historical data to help increase and develop strong partnerships at Cockatoo Island. Community engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders will also be undertaken to capture their priorities for this site. RWJ will also compile a report to help lead the Harbour Trust in building and implementing broader relationships with First Nations stakeholders.

It was determined that a workshop to discuss interpretation opportunities of Cockatoo Island was necessary. Consultation with Gamay Rangers and Gujaga will be a key component for this as well. This workshop will be combined with the discussion around Middle Head / Gubbuh Gubbuh.

ACTIONS:

- Harbour Trust to reconvene the FNAG for a workshop to discuss more fully the interpretation and stories for Cockatoo Island with Rowena Welsh-Jarrett

**8. AOB**

It was suggested that members of the FNAG could be invited to the next Harbour Roundtable, to discuss a whole of harbour approach to First Nations storytelling.