



Wadawurrung
Traditional Owners
Aboriginal Corporation



Porronggitj Karrong and aqueduct community reference group

Terms of reference

Acknowledgement of country

We proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which Porronggitj Karrong lies, the Wadawurrung peoples, the First Peoples of this land who have managed this place for tens of thousands of years and continue to do so. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and future. We thank all Wadawurrung peoples for working with us on this project and sharing their wisdom and culture.

Introduction

Porronggitj Karrong (meaning place of the Brolga in Wadawurrung language) is a 66-hectare section of floodplain north of the Barwon River in the Geelong suburb of Breakwater. The name Porronggitj Karrong is a holding title, which will be confirmed throughout our engagement process.

Barwon Water is partnering with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation in this project as they lead us in understanding how we can better care for Country and improve the health of the land and water, transforming the site into a place of connection and living culture. The project will provide a new public place where the Geelong community can connect with the Aboriginal, environmental, cultural, heritage and recreational values of the Barwon River and surrounding landscape.

An important feature of the site is the heritage-listed Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct. The aqueduct is a 756-metre, multi-span bridge structure that crosses the Barwon River. It was constructed around 1915 and used to carry the Geelong outfall sewer across the Barwon River. The aqueduct was added to the Victorian Heritage Register in 1991 as a place of architectural, historical, scientific (technical) and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

In November 2020, Heritage Victoria granted Barwon Water a permit to remove 4 of the 14 spans of the aqueduct to improve safety and enable access to be opened up to the Barwon River and the surrounding parkland.

The Heritage Victoria permit includes a series of conditions relating to the management of the remaining structure into the future. As part of the works, the permit requires the development of a comprehensive recording program of the structure, a Heritage Infrastructure Management Plan (HIMP), Heritage Interpretation Plan (HIP) and structural propping works to be undertaken to stabilise the remaining structure.

As part of the partnership, Barwon Water and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners are committed to open and transparent relationships with key stakeholders throughout the implementation of Porronggitj Karrong cultural and community precinct, including the works on the aqueduct. We are co-chairing the community reference group for this exciting project.

Purpose of community reference group

The purpose of this reference group is to be an information sharing forum on the coordinated delivery of the works and the creation of the Porronggitj Karrong cultural and community precinct.

The reference group provides a regular, scheduled opportunity for dialogue between community members, key interest groups and the partnership team.

The reference group will also provide critical input into the development of the Heritage Interpretation Plan for the aqueduct, which will recognise the historical and architectural significance of the structure, including recording through photographic archival surveys, and using 3D technology.

Authority

The reference group is advisory in nature and is not a decision-making forum.

Membership

The reference group will include representatives from Barwon Water and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, along with up to 15 community members, (with no more than one representative per community organisation).

Key attributes sought

- ability to respect a range of views
- ability and willingness to work respectfully with First Nations people and communities
- be able to work constructively and collaboratively as a group member
- be able to take a balanced view and have a pragmatic approach to solving issues
- have knowledge or an interest in aboriginal living culture, local heritage, and environmental issues
- have an interest in the health and management of the land and waterway
- live in or close to the site in Breakwater
- have strong community networks to ensure the views of the broader community are represented and / or be in a position to represent the views of a key stakeholder or user group
- be able to represent the diversity of the wider Geelong community
- ability to commit to the reference group for the required duration and attend each meeting where practicable

- skills and experience in one or more of the following areas would be advantageous but not compulsory: history and heritage, engineering, hydrology, ecology, community engagement, landscape and environmental planning and design, natural resource management, land management, architecture and working with Traditional Owners to Care for Country, Aboriginal engagement and capacity building.

Responsibilities of members

Reference group members will:

- ensure we are working in and providing a culturally safe space
- act in the best interests of the effective operation of the reference group, including being respectful of the opinions, rights and responsibilities of other members
- work towards reconciliation through the delivery of this project
- ensure they are prepared for meetings, having read the minutes of previous meeting, agendas and other information
- attend each meeting, where practicable
- act in accordance with the Terms of Reference
- declare any conflict of interest
- share information and outcomes about the project with their representing groups while always refraining from disclosing confidential information.

Opportunities for new members

During the life of the reference group and at the discretion of the parties, the membership of the group may be expanded to include representation from any groups / sectors not represented in the original membership.

Meetings

Barwon Water will arrange meetings and provide administrative support. Subject to State Government advice on coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions and the group's preference, meetings will be held online, face-to-face, or a mixture of both.

Life of reference group

The delivery creation of Porronggitj Karrong cultural and community precinct, including the permitted works, is expected to take three to five years and Barwon Water is committed to engaging with stakeholders through this reference group, over the full duration. Membership of the reference group is for a two-year period, after which time the Terms of Reference will be revisited and current members will be consulted on whether they wish to renew their membership.

Frequency and timing of meetings

The reference group will be scheduled to meet four times per year and meetings will run for a maximum of 2 hours. Additional meetings may be required according to project milestones to focus on a particular issue such as the preparation of the Heritage Interpretation Plan. There will also be informal monthly check-ins. Barwon Water would discuss and seek agreement from the group on any additional meetings, and members would be given at least two weeks' notice.

Agendas

The agenda will be compiled by Barwon Water and forwarded to members before each meeting. Agenda items will be given priority, but there will be opportunities to raise general business.

Minutes will be taken at each meeting and distributed to members within two weeks of a meeting taking place.

Contact details

Emma Homes

Barwon Water Communications and Engagement Adviser

Tel: 03 5226 2469

Email: emma.homes@barwonwater.vic.gov.au