



Gunyanjara Master Plan Background Information

Narrariyal Aboriginal Corporation

March 2019

SVA Consulting

Gunyanjara in profile



A strategically important location

Gunyanjara (also known as Ski Beach) is located in Melville Bay, on the Gove Peninsula in North East Arnhem Land. It is approximately 15 kilometres west of the town of Nhulunbuy.

Melville Bay is a strategically important location, as the key port between Darwin and Cairns and the gateway to North East Arnhem Land.



Local infrastructure and services

Gunyanjara has access to good infrastructure, including electricity at standard tariffs, quality drinking water, fully reticulated sewerage system, and good road and telecommunications connections.

The community has access to local education, health, and administrative services, with other services provided nearby in Nhulunbuy.



A base for Gumatj people

The traditional owners of the region are the Gumatj clan of the Yolŋu nation, who have lived in the region for at least 50,000 years. Gunyanjara is the administrative and residential base for Gumatj people.



An active local economy

There are a range of existing enterprises in the lease area, including the popular Gove Boat Club, commercial freight operations, a lumber mill and workshop, and a local store and café.



A growing population

There are currently approximately 285 people living in Gunyanjara, most of whom are Yolŋu people. The population is expected to grow considerably over the next 20 years.



Open for business

Narrariyal is a Gumatj-owned company which administers the township lease and facilitates development opportunities.

Narrariyal will seek to form respectful partnerships with third parties, based on a mutual commitment to the empowerment of Gumatj people.



Secure tenure arrangements

Gumatj traditional owners have entered a 99 year township lease over Gunyanjara and surrounding land. The lease enables secure tenure arrangements and faster decision-making.

Gunyanjara is an island in North-East Arnhem Land, which serves as the residential base and administrative centre for the Gumatj clan of the Yolŋu nation

Gunyanjara (also known as Ski Beach) is located in Melville Bay, on the Gove Peninsula in North East Arnhem Land.

The island of Gunyanjara is joined to the mainland by a causeway. It is approximately 15 kilometres west of the town of Nhulunbuy.

The traditional owners of the region are the Gumatj clan of the Yolŋu nation.

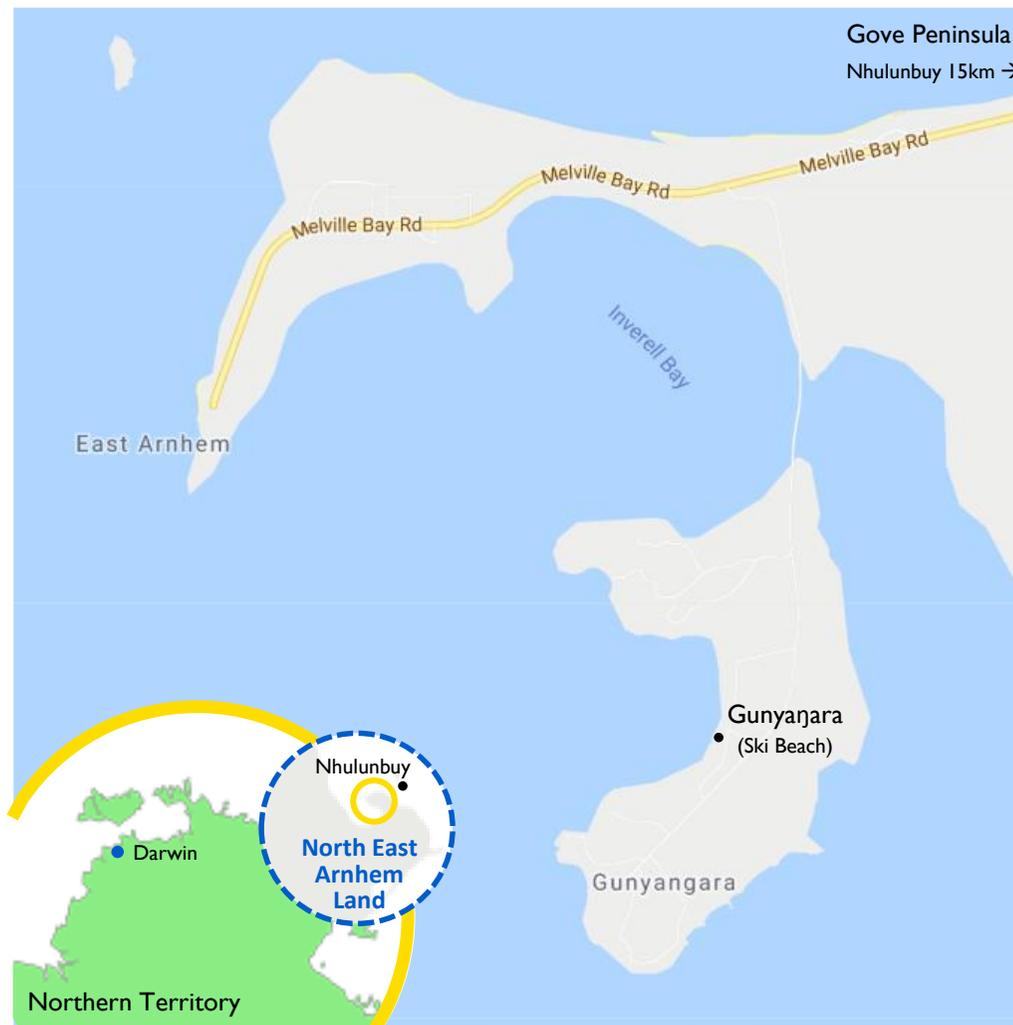
Yolŋu people have lived in the region for at least 50,000 years. Yolŋu clans have maintained a distinct cultural identity and a continuous connection with the land and sea.

Gunyanjara is considered a place for Gumatj to live and prosper on their own country, but as part of the modern world.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Gumatj people moved to Gunyanjara following the establishment of mining operations on their nearby lands. Beginning with only a caravan and a few tents, these early pioneers had a vision for a new life, and a new direction, which inspired the development of today's community.

Gunyanjara serves as a residential base and administrative centre for the broader Gumatj estate.

This estate encompasses Gumatj homelands at Dhaniya and Birany Birany, the Garrathiya cattle station, and Gulkula, which includes the Garma site, Gulkula Mine and space launch facility.



Gumatj people have secured a 99 year Township Lease over Gunyaḡara and surrounding areas, enabling them to reclaim control over Gunyaḡara and its future

The township lease gives traditional owners the power to make direct decisions about their land. It enables clearer land tenure arrangements and faster decision-making, to facilitate community and economic development in Gunyaḡara.

Township leases are a long-term lease over a township on Aboriginal land under section 19A of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976. Under the township lease, ḡarrariyal is responsible for all land use decisions within the boundary and is responsible for negotiating and implementing land use agreements such as subleases and licences.

The Gunyaḡara township lease commenced in 2017. It covers the Drimmie Peninsula, on which the Gunyaḡara community is located, as well as areas around Melville Bay.



There is a **streamlined application process**, where interested parties can negotiate directly with traditional owners about utilising their land.



Long-term subleases and licences are available, which provide security of tenure and favourable investment conditions.



Traditional owners can signal that their land is **'open for business'**: that Gumatj people are interested in attracting and working with potential developers, service providers and investors.



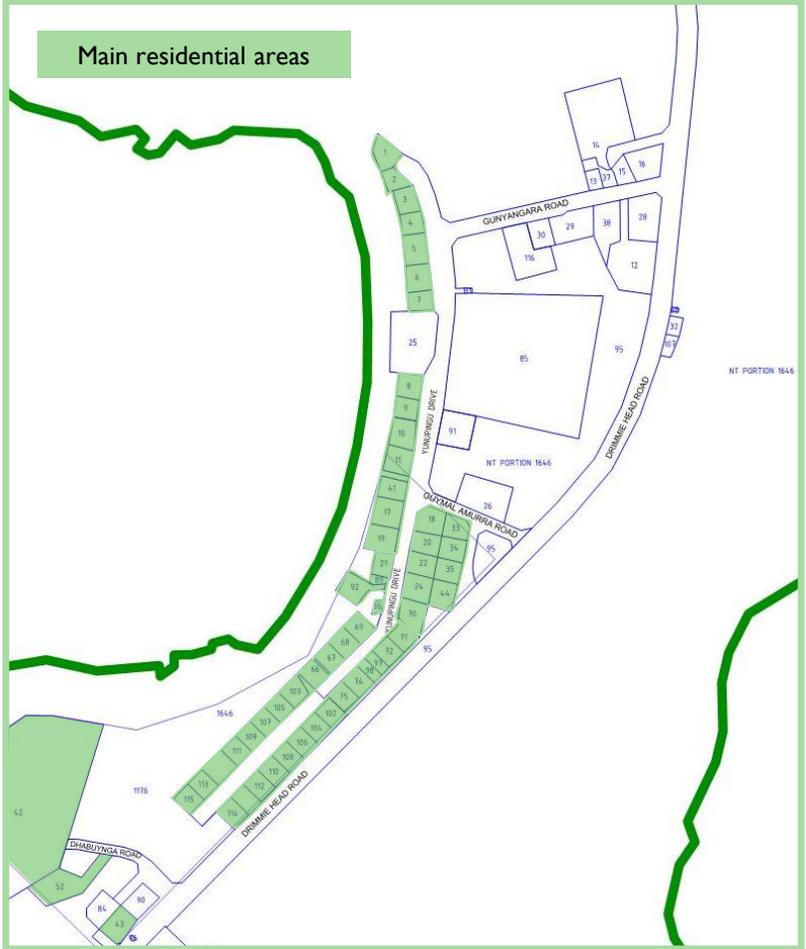
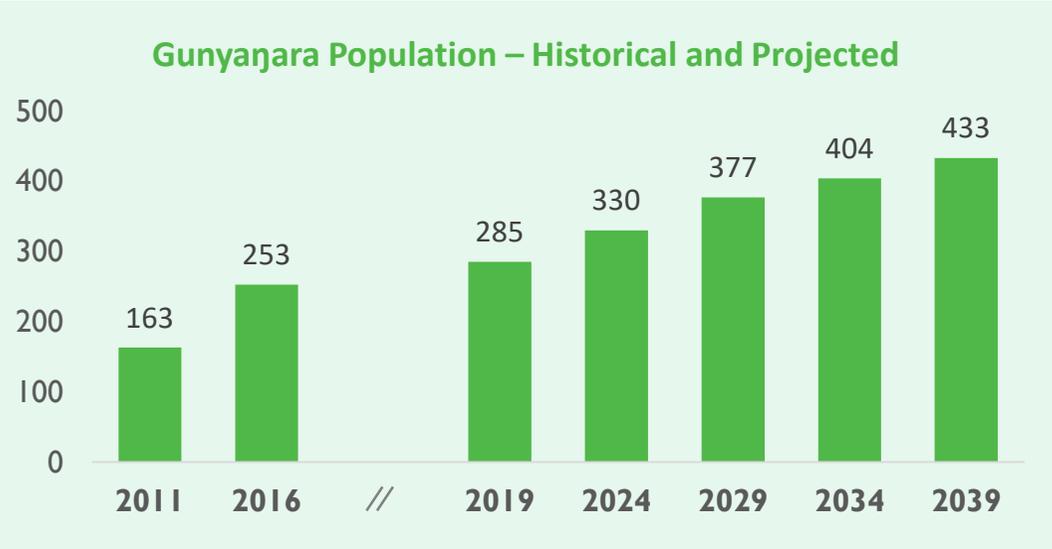
Rental income from subleases will be directed to community and economic development which will improve the prosperity and wellbeing of Aboriginal residents of the Gunyaḡara community.

Today, Gunyangara is a community of 285 predominantly Gumatj people, living in 50 dwellings, but that population is expected to grow considerably

The population of Gunyangara is centred around the main town centre area near Ski Beach. There are currently, approximately 285 people (both Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu) living in Gunyangara, most of whom are Gumatj people.

The Yolŋu community of Gunyangara is expected to grow from an estimated 285 people, to 330 people by 2024, and 433 people by 2039. This estimate reflects:

- Natural population growth of 1.4% over the 20 year period
- In-migration by Yolŋu families living nearby at Birritjimi, as well as from the Gumatj homelands of Birany Birany and Dhaniya.



Source: 2011 and 2016 population based on Census figures for Gunyangara State Suburb. Figures adjusted to reflect net Indigenous undercount of 17.5%. 2019 and later populations based on projections.

Gunyanjara residents enjoy access to basic community infrastructure, which is mostly in good condition

In June 2016, the NT Department of Local Governance and Community services commissioned WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff to investigate and assess the conditions and capacity of local infrastructure. The assessment revealed that existing assets are in generally good condition.



Electricity

- Electricity at Gunyanjara is supplied to all customers at the Northern Territory standard tariff and standard connection charges apply



Water

- Gunyanjara has a plentiful groundwater source with very good quality water, which is disinfected with sodium hypochlorite and monitored monthly for microbes.



Sewer

- Gunyanjarahas a fully reticulated sewerage system.



Roads

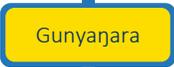
- From Nhulunbuy CBD the community is accessible via Melville Bay Road, 13 km of sealed road; travel time is 10 mins. The community is serviced by Gove Peninsula Public Bus (YBE2)



Telecommunications

- There is a Telstra underground pit and pipe system providing landline service to the community. There is access to Telstra and Optus 3G/4G mobile phone coverage and landline telephone infrastructure.

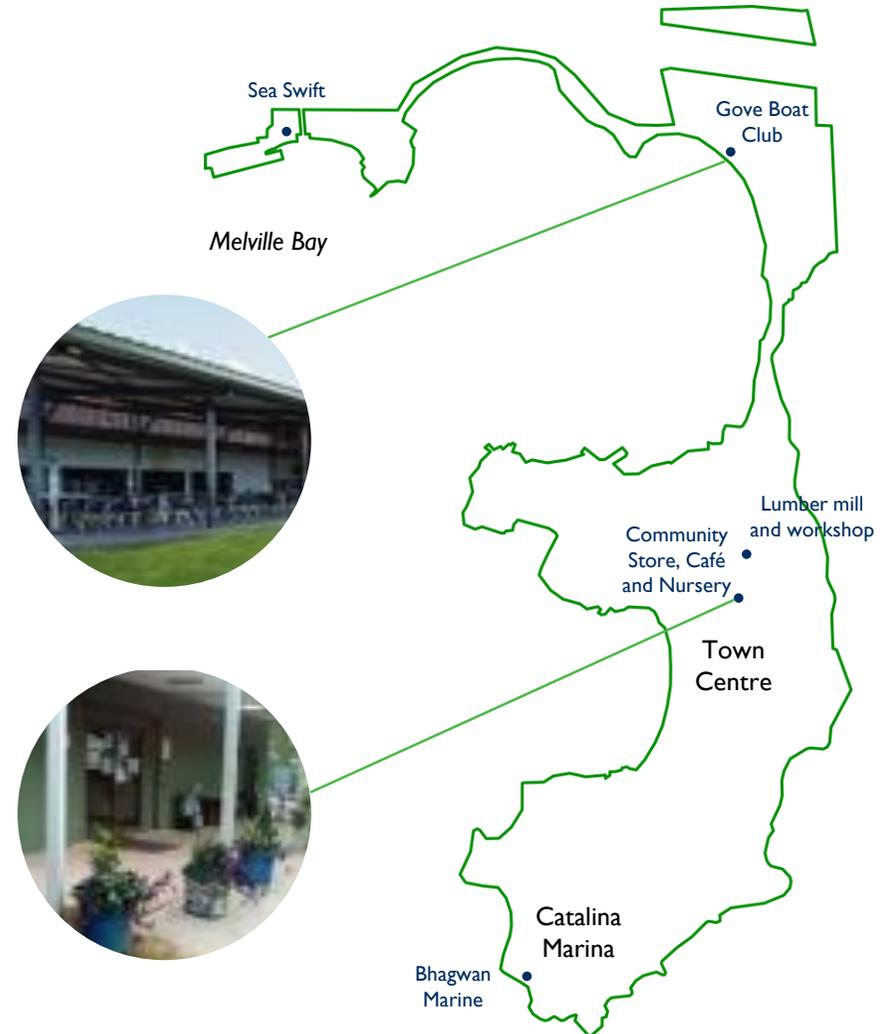
Gunyanjara residents enjoy access to basic community infrastructure, education and health services, with other services provided nearby in Nhulunbuy

	 Local services	 Nearby services
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marrngarr Resource Centre operates a Youth Centre and Education Hub, and delivers the School Nutrition Program and Remote School Attendance Strategy. The Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program provides early learning for children aged 0-4 years and their parents. The Transition Class educates children in Kindergarten to Year 2, and supports transition to Nhulunbuy Primary School for Year 3. FaFT and Transition classes are delivered by Nhulunby Primary School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary and high school children can attend school at Nhulunbuy Primary and Nhulunbuy High School. There are a number of further education and training options in Nhulunbuy, and both Flinders University and Charles Darwin University have regional campuses in town.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation operates a health clinic which provides a walk-in service for all acute and preventative care needs. Miwatj Health also offers mobile outreach services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nhulunbuy offers a range of health services, including a hospital, pharmacy, community health centre, a vet, and emergency services.
Employment Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miwatj Employment & Participation has a small office in Gunyanjara CDP will transition from Miwatj Employment & Participation to the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA) on July 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miwatj Employment and Centrelink both have regional offices in Nhulunbuy.
Shopping, dining and commercial services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Store provides a range of basic groceries, and the cafe sells snacks and drinks. The Store also sells artwork and woodwork produced by local artists and manufacturers. The Gove Boat Club is open for meals, Thursday to Sunday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nhulunbuy has a Woolworths supermarket, a petrol station, and a number of restaurants, cafes and takeaways. It has other shops and services including a pharmacy, newsagent, hardware, fishing, camping and clothing shops, a Westpac Bank, an Australia Post outlet, and a toy shop.
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrariyal, Gumatj Corporation and the East Arnhem Regional Council have administrative headquarters and provide limited employee housing. The East Arnhem Regional Council operates a local office, and provides municipal services, and maintains community facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM&C, the Northern Territory Government, Developing East Arnhem Ltd and the East Arnhem Regional Council have regional offices in Nhulunbuy.

There is a mix of Gumatj-owned and third party enterprises already operating on the township lease

Currently there are three main zones of economic activity in Gunyana, which support Gumatj owned and third party enterprises. In addition, the boundaries of the township lease were negotiated to include an additional zone on the northern part of the lease.

- In the Melville Bay area, which provides a natural entry point to the township, private entities have leveraged Gunyana's naturally occurring deep water harbour for sea freight, fishing and tourism.
 - **The Gove Boat Club** caters to local and visiting yachts and local boating enthusiasts. It includes a kitchen and bar, and the proprietors have received the approval of Njarrariyal to develop a camping ground.
 - **Sea Swift Pty Ltd**, Australia's largest privately-owned shipping company provides freight services for the Gove region from its location on the harbour inlet.
- In the main town centre area, Gumatj Corporation operates:
 - **The Community Store, cafe and nursery**, and
 - a **lumber mill and workshop**, using stringybark timber harvested by Gumatj at the Rio Tinto mine site (nearby Gulkula).
- The southern part of the island supports additional marine activity from the Catalina Marina
 - **Bhagwan Marine**, a marine vessel operator that services the resources, port services, towage and construction industries, is based at the Catalina Marina.
- On the northern part of the lease, at Birritjimi (adjacent to Wallaby Beach), there is an attractive and secluded beach area, which has not been developed to date but has potential for future private residential or tourism developments.



Gunyanjara will be a stable and strategically important location in the region as it undergoes a transition from mining to a more diversified economy.

The Gove region is beginning a transition from single-focus mining economy to a multi-faceted diversified economy.

The regional economy has historically been dependent on Rio Tinto's bauxite mining and alumina refinery operations. Rio Tinto ceased production at the Gove alumina refinery in 2014, and announced in November 2017 that it would not be reopening the refinery. The refinery will now be fully shutdown and dismantled. The Gove operations continue to export bauxite. The mine has an expected mine life of around 10-15 years.

The Northern Territory Government and other stakeholders are actively investing in opportunities to support this diversification.

The Northern Territory Government sees an important future role for the Gove region given its strategic location as a key port between Darwin and Cairns and its role as a residential and commercial capital for North East Arnhem Land. There is valuable economic infrastructure in Gove, including the Gove Port and the Gove Airport.

The Northern Territory Government has identified potential for growth in the areas of tourism, fisheries, agriculture, forestry, defence and services. Both Territory and Commonwealth Government are investing in new economic and community infrastructure, including:

- upgrades to the Central Arnhem Road;
- upgrades to the Gove Hospital, and establishment of a new aged care facility;
- a new boarding school and trade training centre at Nhulunbuy, and
- redevelopment of the Gove Port.

The vision for the region and proposed investments are described further in the Northern Territory Government's 2018 planning document, [Planning for a vibrant future](#), and its [10 Year Infrastructure Plan 2018-2027](#). DEAL has commissioned analysis by Geografia of [Economic Options for the Gove Peninsula](#), which outlines both the challenges and opportunities for the region as it diversifies.

Gunyanjara, given its location in Melville Bay, is central to the regeneration of the region.

Many of the opportunities identified for the region – including tourism and fisheries – are based around the water.

The township lease area includes a naturally occurring deep-water port, which will be an increasingly important asset for the region. The town of Nhulunbuy has very limited water access, which has led to the development of the Gove Boat Club area as an important destination for Nhulunbuy residents and visiting tourists. The dismantling of the refinery will make the area more attractive for tourism and fisheries.

The township lease area will be sheltered from some of the uncertainty in the broader region due to steady population growth in the Yolŋu community.

Nhulunbuy's non-Aboriginal population may see spikes during the period of Rio Tinto's departure, and will need to find a new equilibrium thereafter.

Yolŋu, however – who make up the vast majority of residents in Gunyanjara – have lived in the region for thousands of years. The Yolŋu population is expected to steadily grow, which means there is reliable long-term demand for new housing and infrastructure investments in Gunyanjara.

Gumatj people are building a functional market in Gunyajarara, which depends on respectful partnerships and a mutual commitment to the empowerment of Gumatj people

Gumatj traditional owners have begun to develop the foundations for a resilient economy in and around Gunyajarara.

The activities of Gumatj Corporation demonstrate an approach to economic development based on integration, diversity and investment in workforce capacity.

Gumatj Corporation enterprises have pursued geographic and supply chain integration.

Lumber harvested at the Rio Tinto mine site is milled and manufactured into timber products at Gunyajarara. The Gumatj-owned construction joint venture between Deltrareef and Gumatj Corporation, DRG Industries (DRG), which services the East Arnhem Region, is used to construct new housing in Gunyajarara.



Gumatj Corporation has taken advantage of opportunities in diverse sectors such as construction, mining, tourism and food production.

Customers include local community members, but also other businesses, and governments – for example, Gumatj timber has been used as part of the Northern Territory Government’s Cavenagh Heat Mitigation Project in Darwin.

Gumatj Corporation has targeted emerging opportunities, including by establishing Australia’s first Indigenous-owned bauxite mine at Gulkula, and through a pilot space launch project with Equatorial Launch Australia.

All Gumatj enterprises employ Yolŋu workers, and intentionally prioritise workforce development.

For example, DRG has constructed dwellings on a ‘slow-build’ basis, to provide greater opportunity for on-the-job training. The Gulkula Regional Training Centre supports the capacity of the Yolŋu workforce through certified and pre-certification training across a range of disciplines.

In pursuing development under the township lease, Njarrariyal will seek to form respectful partnerships based on the following **principles of engagement**.

Njarrariyal seeks partners who:

- Acknowledge Gunyajarara as place of historical and cultural importance to Gumatj people, and recognise that the township lease represents an opportunity for Gumatj empowerment;
- Value the knowledge of Yolŋu people, and support Gumatj traditional owners to preserve and strengthen their culture;
- Negotiate rent at market rates, and are accountable on commercial terms;
- Promote employment opportunities for Yolŋu people that are meaningful and flexible, and build on employees’ strengths;
- Partner with Gumatj traditional owners to develop creative and proactive strategies to develop the capabilities of the local workforce, and
- Offer Gumatj-run enterprises a right of first refusal in construction tenders and other procurement processes.

Njarrariyal will support partners by:

- Negotiating opportunities in a professional manner, and making decisions in a timely way;
- Facilitating collaboration with other stakeholders in Njarrariyal’s local and regional networks;
- Identifying opportunities to co-invest, and to leverage co-investment from government and third parties, and
- Engaging directly with Gumatj traditional owners and other residents in Gunyajarara to facilitate community buy-in and participation.



For further information on the Gunyangara Master Plan,
or to discuss opportunities for land use, please visit
gunyangara.com.au or email info@ngarrariyal.com.au