

JUNE 2013

STAKEHOLDERS BULLETIN

A message from the Chief Executive Officer

Following a busy first half of the year, I am pleased to be able to update you on the various programs and initiatives Darkinjung LALC has been working on over the past months.

Darkinjung LALC has raised the stakes for developers on the Central Coast with our new residential development at Blue Haven, Menindee Ridge. The development surpassed all expectations with Stage 1A lots selling out in less than six months. Stages 1B and 1C lots will be available for sale soon and we anticipate demand to continue to drive strong sales.



With the Central Coast's population expected to grow rapidly over the next 20 years, now is the time to start planning for the future of our region. With such strong growth forecast, it is essential we are actively developing affordable housing options, like Menindee Ridge, for future generations.

Darkinjung is proud to be leading the way for other developers in this respect, taking a long-term view, including partaking in the Lower Hunter Strategy Group in May. Darkinjung put forward a submission for a planned approach to the future management of LALC land, with the view to creating affordable homes for the community while also providing economic independence for Aboriginal people.

It is important to maintain strong relationships with government to ensure we can create mutually beneficial outcomes for our community. We are proud to announce that Darkinjung LALC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Gosford City Council – an event which has strengthened the already strong partnership between our two organisations.

As the year swiftly progresses, we are also proud supporters of NAIDOC Week, a celebration of the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The week offers us the ideal opportunity to run a range of events to raise awareness of the local Indigenous community with the wider Central Coast population.

On another note, Darkinjung LALC has been nominated for a 2013 NAIDOC Award under the category of 'Caring for Country' and we are proud to have an opportunity to showcase our commitment to responsible land management.



Local Aboriginal Land Council
DARKINJUNG

Lower Hunter Strategy Group



Chief Executive Officers of 8 Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) from the Lower Hunter held a meeting in May to formalise their submission to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure which addresses planning of the Lower Hunter over the next 20 years.

This submission which provides input to "The Lower Hunter over the next 20 years: A Discussion Paper" was submitted on behalf of 8 LALCs located within and surrounding the Lower Hunter, including Awabakal, Karuah, Bahtabah, Mindaribba, Biraban, Worimi, Wanaruah and Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

Chief Executive of Darkinjung LALC Sean Gordon welcomed the opportunity to provide input into the review of policy that will guide the location of future residential, employment and conservation lands across the Lower Hunter until 2031. The submission will also assist Darkinjung with the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan.

"A planned approach to the future management of LALC land has the potential to not only provide economic independence for Aboriginal people, but also potential for the broader community through development opportunities and environmental sustainability," he added.

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (LHRS) 2006 recognised Aboriginal occupation of the region from approximately 30,000 years ago and acknowledged that the area is rich in cultural sites.

However, the government has not fully appreciated the significant land interests held by LALCs in the area. As well as being rich in Aboriginal culture and heritage, LALCs are the largest land owners in the region as a result of successful land claims under the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983.

"These LALCs are some of the largest private land owners across the region and should therefore be recognised as key stakeholders in all future planning," said Mr Gordon.

The submission will enable an opportunity for LALCs to be considered beyond traditional cultural and heritage and land management roles and be recognised as significant contributors to the broader economy and regional development.

The Central Coast's Aboriginal Community

In 2012, the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC), the state's peak Aboriginal representative body commissioned The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) at the Australian National University (ANU) to undertake a detailed analysis of results of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

The aim of the analysis was to undertake social science research on Indigenous policy and development that informs intellectual understanding, public debate, policy formation and community action.

The research highlighted localised statistics across the Sydney Newcastle region. The following information was drawn from this:

- The Sydney Newcastle NSW Aboriginal Land Council Region was estimated in the 2011 Census to have a population of 5,121,052. Within this population, around 1.7% identified as being Aboriginal, with 42,326 Aboriginal males and 44,051 Aboriginal females.
- There were a total of 25,850 families in the region that had at least one usual resident who identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Just over 45% of Aboriginals aged 15 to 24 and approximately 8% of the local Aboriginal population aged between 25 and 54 are participating in any kind of education. This compares to more than 60% and approximately 9% of the non-Aboriginal population respectively.
- 66% of Aboriginal males and approximately 55% of Aboriginal females aged 25 to 54 years were employed. While closer to 90% of non-Aboriginal males and just over 70% of non-Aboriginal females in the same age bracket were employed.
- The mean income for Aboriginal males was \$34,282 while for Aboriginal females it was \$24,302. In comparison, the mean income for the non-Aboriginal male population was \$55,963 and for the non-Aboriginal female population was \$36,654.
- The statistics indicate that just over 40% of Indigenous families own their own home compared with close to 70% of non-Aboriginals. Private letting figures sit between 25 and 30% for both groups. Those renting from a state housing authority are higher among the Indigenous population at close to 25% while it sits at less than 5% for non-Indigenous households.



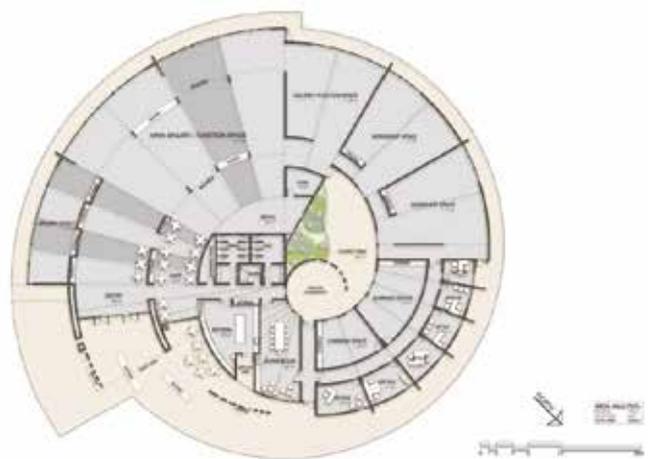
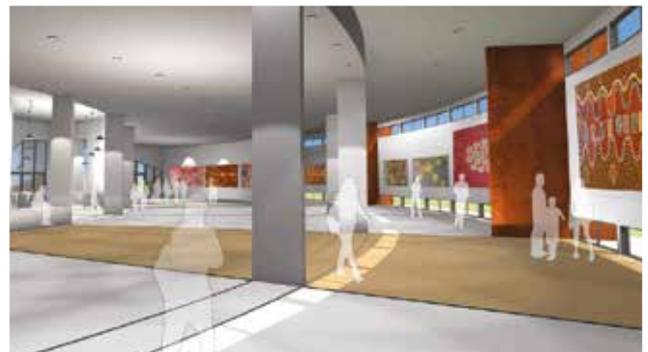
Aboriginal Cultural Centre for the Coast



Following our 2011 investigation into the prospect of establishing a Cultural/Community Centre for Darkinjung LALC, we are currently exploring the suitability of several sites around the Central Coast for the development of the Centre.

If developed, the Centre will assist in protecting, preserving and promoting Aboriginal culture and heritage on the Central Coast. As a result of extensive community consultation, including workshops and surveys, we have established that the Centre would be a valuable gathering place for Aboriginal people, where community members can support one another as well as share their culture and educate others about their heritage.

We have also recognised the importance of creating a sustainable development and engaged CBM Sustainable Design to design an engaging and unique architectural concept for the Centre. The concept was inspired by the shape and symmetry of a seashell and combines contemporary design with the natural world.



Local development leads the way



Darkinjung LALC has set the benchmark for other local developers with our new 109 lot development at Blue Haven – Menindee Ridge.

Currently the only major residential development underway on the Central Coast, we are preparing to release Stage 1B and 1C lot sales, following the sale of all Stage 1A lots within 4 months.

The Housing Affordability Review commissioned by Pacific Link Housing into housing on the Central Coast, projected that our region's population will grow by 39 percent in 2036. These findings present a number of infrastructure challenges and highlight the need to prioritise affordable housing when planning strategically for our future.

Chief Executive Officer of Darkinjung Sean Gordon believes that developments such as Menindee Ridge are essential to the future planning for the region.

"By 2036, the Central Coast will need more than 50,000 new houses to accommodate the population's growth," said Sean.

"Menindee Ridge demonstrates a real opportunity to meet the growth needs of the Central Coast and Darkinjung is proud to be planning for the future of our region," he explained.

A recent paper released by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure has revealed that Sydney's population estimates for 2031 are far higher than initially anticipated, resulting in demand for more than 570,000 new homes.

As the largest land owner on the Central Coast, it is our responsibility to work with key stakeholders to ensure the region is prepared for the future.

In addition, we are currently in the process of working through a development application with our land holdings at Halekulani through the future establishment of a Manufactured Home Estate comprised of 251 dwellings.

Along with delivering affordable and sustainable residences, this project will create a number of employment and enterprise development opportunities.

Forming the Reconciliation Action Plan



Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council is in the process of developing a Regional Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the Central Coast of NSW.

Darkinjung has undertaken a survey to assess the Central Coast local community's knowledge and understanding of Reconciliation

Currently, approximately 9,020 Indigenous residents live on the Central Coast and there is a growing Indigenous youth demographic compared to the region's non-indigenous population.

Given this, reconciliation with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community is vital to ensuring the wider Central Coast community has an opportunity to develop and continue to grow.

The purpose of the research is to aid Darkinjung in determining if the Central Coast community recognises the value of Darkinjung developing a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Of those who have participated in the survey to date, 89% stated that they do not identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The research also indicated that the more than three quarters of respondents (78%) identified primarily with Gosford City Council (36%), Wyong Shire Council (33%) or Darkinjung LALC (9%).

Social and demographic data indicates that Indigenous Australians are more likely to be disadvantaged and socially excluded than other groups in society.

This highlights the need to embrace reconciliation and build better relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider Australian community.

Revealing the statistics

The research also revealed:

- 47% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'the reconciliation vision is clear to me'. By comparison 29% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed and 21% noted that they were neutral or unsure
- When questioned whether they could see the value in reconciliation for the region 92% stated they either agreed or strongly agreed. Just 1% of respondents noted that they disagreed with this statement
- 62% said they would actively participate in reconciliation on the Central Coast, while 30% nominated a neutral stance and just 5% said they disagreed or strongly disagreed
- When asked whether respondents believe their community is highly committed to reconciliation the majority (43%) revealed they were neutral, indicating there is a sense of uncertainty. One quarter noted they disagreed with the statement while 29% agreed or strongly agreed
- The majority (93%) of respondents indicated that they were open to learning more about Aboriginal history, if it helps achieve reconciliation
- 36% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Central Coast has the necessary mindset and attitude for reconciliation, while 17% disagreed or strongly disagreed
- When it came to resources and support needed for long-term reconciliation 22% disagreed or strong disagreed, 42% were neutral and one third agreed or strongly agreed
- 29% said they believe their community is highly committed to reconciliation. 25% disagreed and 43% were uncertain, noted they were neutral
- More than half (69%) of those surveyed revealed they feel the community's capacity to deliver on long-term reconciliation needs improvement, while 24% were neutral and 6% disagreed.



NAIDOC submission



A nomination has been submitted on behalf of Darkinjung to the 2013 NAIDOC Awards for the category of Caring for Country. The annual NAIDOC Awards recognise the outstanding contributions that Indigenous Australians and organisations make to improve the lives of Indigenous people in their communities and beyond or to promote Indigenous issues in the wider community.

The national Caring for Country award recognises the contribution of Indigenous people and communities who care for country – the land, waters and all living things – conserving

our biodiversity and protecting our environment for future generations.

The nomination detailed the numerous contributions that Darkinjung LALC has made towards caring for country in recent years, including:

- Darkinjung's role as a leader in business, advocacy and land development on the Central Coast
- our affordable housing development at Blue Haven, Menindee Ridge
- our commitment to adamantly objecting to the proposed Calga Sand Quarry Southern Extension as well as similar development proposals upon the Somersby, Peats Ridge and Kariong Plateau
- our efforts in identifying numerous sites on the Central Coast to be formally recognised as areas of significance to the Aboriginal community
- our position as a leader and educator in responsible and sustainable land management
- our provision of land management training to neighbouring Local Aboriginal Land Councils
- our efforts in addressing and deterring bush fire hazards, as well as educating stakeholders by hosting fire management workshops
- the implementation of Darkinjung's Illegal Dumping Clean Up Project
- gaining the title of part of Kincumba Mountain to ensure it will remain as a public reserve into the future
- developing the Asset Management System computer program to manage land assets.

We look forward to receiving feedback in relation to the nomination and are proud to have an opportunity to showcase our accomplishments in this area.