

Local Aboriginal
Land Council

NEWSLETTER

Issue 02



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Local Aboriginal Land Council

DARKINJUNG

Welcome

In the four months since our inaugural Dispatch, the world as we know it has been turned on its ear. The COVID-19 public health crisis has given us no option but to redefine the way we live, work, learn and communicate.



Photo by Nicole Avagliano from Pexels

From an executive perspective, we are attempting to make everything as close to business as usual as possible – however it's important to remember nothing is unchanged. As with many businesses and community groups, we have taken the decision to temporarily close the doors to our offices to ensure the ongoing health and welfare of our community.

Given the evolving situation we have also had to suspend all scheduled members meetings until such time as rules around social distancing and isolation are relaxed.

Yet while we can't meet in person any longer, you can be assured your elected community representatives are working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure we deliver on our commitment to honour our country, protect our people and strengthen and nourish our collective spirit.

We have put in place a number of new initiatives we believe will make us stronger both as a

community and as an organisation now and into the future.

Many of us are hurting with business closures and job losses having a significant impact. For our members in greatest need, we have made available a limited number of food parcels. These contain a range of essential grocery items and will be distributed on a weekly basis to eligible members.

At difficult times like these we rely on our cultural grounding and look to connect with our spiritual identity more than ever.

As such we will shortly be introducing a free online cultural immersion program aimed at giving our community members increased exposure to the Darkinjung language. It will likely involve storytelling and detailed breakdowns of some of our more notable cultural practices and traditions

While the world around us may have changed, we are continuing to work hard to achieve our aspirational agenda.

PLANNING PROPOSAL

WALLARAH IN THE WORKS

It is Darkinjung's goal to unlock the potential of our lands to grow opportunities and meaningful jobs for Coasties close to where they live.

Every day 30,000 Central Coast residents flood out of the region to jobs in Sydney, Newcastle and beyond, denying them the opportunity to spend quality time with their family or contribute to their local communities' economic, cultural and social fabric.

Not to mention the carbon emissions created by that many people commuting long distances every day in addition to the further burden on already stretched transport and roading infrastructure.

As many of you will be aware, we recently put on public exhibition, via the Central Coast Council, plans to rezone the 87ha site located to the south west of the Doyalson Link Road that forms its northern border, from rural (RU6 Transition) to an approximately half and half split of environmental conservation (E2 45ha) and general industrial (IN1 42ha).

Our quest to rezone land in Wallarah perfectly illustrates our twin ambitions to grow jobs on the Central Coast while protecting the environment.

In all 86 submissions were received from the public.

As part of the proposal, we intend to preserve the southern half of the site as an untouchable green corridor to protect the bush, resident animal populations and riparian zones around Wallarah Creek, while unlocking the enormous potential to grow jobs in the north of the site.

Although it is zoned rural, the site is not considered to be productive agricultural land, so it's not currently achieving anything for either the environment or the local economy and job prospects of local people.

As the largest non-Government landholder on the Central Coast, we are focused on a strategic program to utilise our lands to better the lives and

future prospects of not just our people, but the entire Central Coast community.

We believe that being so close to a major link road offers enormous potential to develop industrial uses for the northern section of the Wallarah site.

Not only would this employ people directly but would stimulate further economic activity in the area and have a multiplier effect to generate yet more employment.

Your Board has worked closely with the NSW Government to develop a new planning framework to provide Aboriginal people with greater ability to determine the use of our land, released in February 2019.

The suite of measures includes an Interim Development Delivery Plan that is a pipeline of sites that Darkinjung has prioritised to develop for economic, cultural and conservation purposes.

The Wallarah proposal follows the recent support given to us by the Regional Planning Panel to rezone 130ha of our land in Somersby from rural to environmental management and environmental conservation that has the potential to result in a number of rural residential style lots and a conservation zone.

Its successful progression has acted as a kick starter to enable Darkinjung to focus on the Wallarah proposal and then onto other projects in the pipeline, including the proposal to rezone a 150ha site in Lake Munmorah to a mix of residential development and environmental conservation uses.

We believe that progressing our pipeline of development projects will enable us to achieve the big ambitions we have to both improve the lives of people and preserve the beautiful natural environment that we are lucky enough to enjoy on the Central Coast.



Photos courtesy of Central Coast Council.



INTEREST SOUGHT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL CENTRE AT NORAH HEAD

On the 25th March expressions of interest were sought from appropriately qualified architectural firms to help us take the first step in developing a concept plan for our proposed Cultural Centre at Norah Head. The construction of a cultural centre is a long held ambition of our members. This first step will enable us to look to partner with all levels of Government in realising this ambition.



CARE PACKAGES

Darkinjung has launched a Connected Community approach program delivering care packages to some of our most vulnerable members of our community.

These contain a range of essential grocery items and will be distributed on a weekly basis to eligible members.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all of

you have taken the time to express your appreciation and in response we would like you to know that we consider it an honour to be able to support our community through trying times.

For those of you who have not yet been a recipient of one of our care packages please keep an eye out for our friendly staff who may be visiting over coming weeks.



UPDATE ON GOSFORD REGIONAL PLAY SPACE

Work is progressing on the Gosford Leagues Club field with Darkinjung working closely with the Gosford community, Central Coast Council and the broader Central Coast community to help create a unique recreation destination that can be enjoyed by all, regardless of age and ability.

A key feature of the park is the tidal terrace, a water-play zone which connects to Brisbane Water to rise and fall with the tide. Imbued with Darkinjung design, this unique space brings the harbour into the park, promoting unstructured play while sharing the stories of the region's original inhabitants.

The works, which will continue throughout 2020, will also see more than 800 new trees and thousands of plants installed as part of the nature-inspired play space.



Darkinjung has played an important part in helping to design the new nature-inspired play space which as well as promoting the stories of our ancestors will also feature an impressive water-play zone.



SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

Your executive recognises and values the role we play in supporting our diverse community. Which is why some time ago we launched an initiative that helps support individuals and groups within our community that require funds for joint celebrations, events and activities.

Called the Sponsorship Community Benefits Scheme, the project aims to offer eligible applicants access to grants of up to \$2,500 per year to assist with such things as registration, travel, uniforms or event staging.

These are the categories under which eligible members can apply:

- Sports:** Funding for individuals or teams who are selected to represent their state or club to participate in a local, regional, interstate or overseas event
- Arts & Culture:** Financial support for events that

- facilitate community participation or celebrate the cultural and social life of Darkinjung Country
- Elders:** Makes funds available to support and recognise the collective wisdom and experience of Elders within our community
- Education & Training:** Financial support for members to develop skills in a leadership or education program
- Youth:** Offers funds to help recognises and encourage the achievements of young people in the community aged 21 and under.

Applicants must be a Darkinjung member. To check your eligibility or apply for this scheme, please email your request to sponsorship@dlalc.com.au. Alternatively, call (02) 4351 2930 and ask to speak to Adina Duncan to find out more.



THAT'S ALL FOR THE MEANTIME

As we continue to try and navigate this new and unpredictable landscape together, we urge you to maintain a calm yet cautious approach while actively managing your own wellbeing.

We urge you to continue to practice social distancing to keep all in our community safe. Now more than ever it is important that we work collectively to stay connected and we ask that you continue to reach out

to the more vulnerable members of our community - particularly our elders, those living alone and others who may be struggling. Sometimes just a kind word or a good deed can make all the difference.

Lots of Love
Darkinjung

Under The Sea



Kids, unleash your inner artist by entering our exciting Under the Sea colouring competition. Entries are open to those aged 12 and under, so get in quick for your chance to win a unique book pack. To enter send your completed entry, together with your name, age and contact number to: members@dlalc.org.au by 5pm Friday May 29, 2020.