

Local Aboriginal  
Land Council

NEWSLETTER

Issue 03



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MEMBERS

AND MORE!

# THE DARKINJUNG DISPATCH

## DARKINJUNG ART ON SHOW

Darkinjung artists are helping to tell the stories of the region's past through the design of 14 totem poles, as the development of the Gosford Leagues Club Field continues to take shape



**NEW WEBSITE!**  
Visit [darkinjung.com.au](http://darkinjung.com.au)



Local Aboriginal Land Council  
**DARKINJUNG**



# Welcome

2020 continues to challenge us in ways we could never have imagined.

**W**e may only be in August, but as a community we have already faced no less than two once in 100-year bushfire and global health pandemic events that have rocked us to our core.

As with many businesses and community groups, we have taken the decision to ensure the ongoing health and welfare of our members by accepting pre-booked appointments only. All visitors will be temperature screened for COVID-19 tracing purposes.

This does not mean that we are not still connected as a community, but merely that any interactions that must take place are done so with the appropriate social distancing measures in place.

Yet while the re-emergence of the COVID-19 public health crisis continues to test us in new ways, we remain committed to our desire to improve the health

and wellbeing of our people and take seriously our obligation to nurture the relationships with the community in which we live.

And, in this regard too, you may have noticed we have had a little more attention on our actions than we would typically expect.

In recent weeks some of the decisions taken by your board and chairperson have come under close scrutiny by a small but vocal group, determined to make clear their opposition to parts of our planning program.

As a board we remain committed to acting lawfully and responsibly. We are confident that we will stand up against any scrutiny and this has proven the case with any questions surrounding what we are doing able to be addressed openly and honestly.

**As usual, we welcome your feedback.**



## UPDATE ON DARKINJUNG KARIONG PROPOSAL

**We recently received** the welcome news that the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel has approved our proposal to rezone approximately 6.5ha of land in Kariiong for urban expansion purposes.

The decision by the independent planning panel means Darkinjung can now prepare a Planning Proposal for the Kariiong site that, if given a 'Gateway determination' by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, will go out to community consultation before rezoning can occur.

The Planning Proposal would see 7.1ha of the 13.2ha site on Woy Woy Road, Kariiong remains zoned E2 environmental conservation, making it an untouchable green space to protect the bush and resident animal populations.

The proposal will preserve more than half the site in its pristine ecological state for people to cherish and animals and plants to flourish for generations to come, while this protected part of the land will also act as a significant buffer between our development

footprint and the Bambara Aboriginal Cultural landscape.

Despite public criticism from a small section of the community, an independent heritage investigation of the site via two groups of Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) found no culturally significant sites would be impacted by our plans.

Where significant cultural and heritage sites have been identified, a 20m buffer between them and our intended development footprint has been implemented.

The Kariiong project is one of four priority sites Darkinjung has in a development pipeline to realise its economic, cultural and conservation goals. Our proposals in Somersby, Wallarah and Lake Munmorah are at various stages of assessment in the delivery channel.

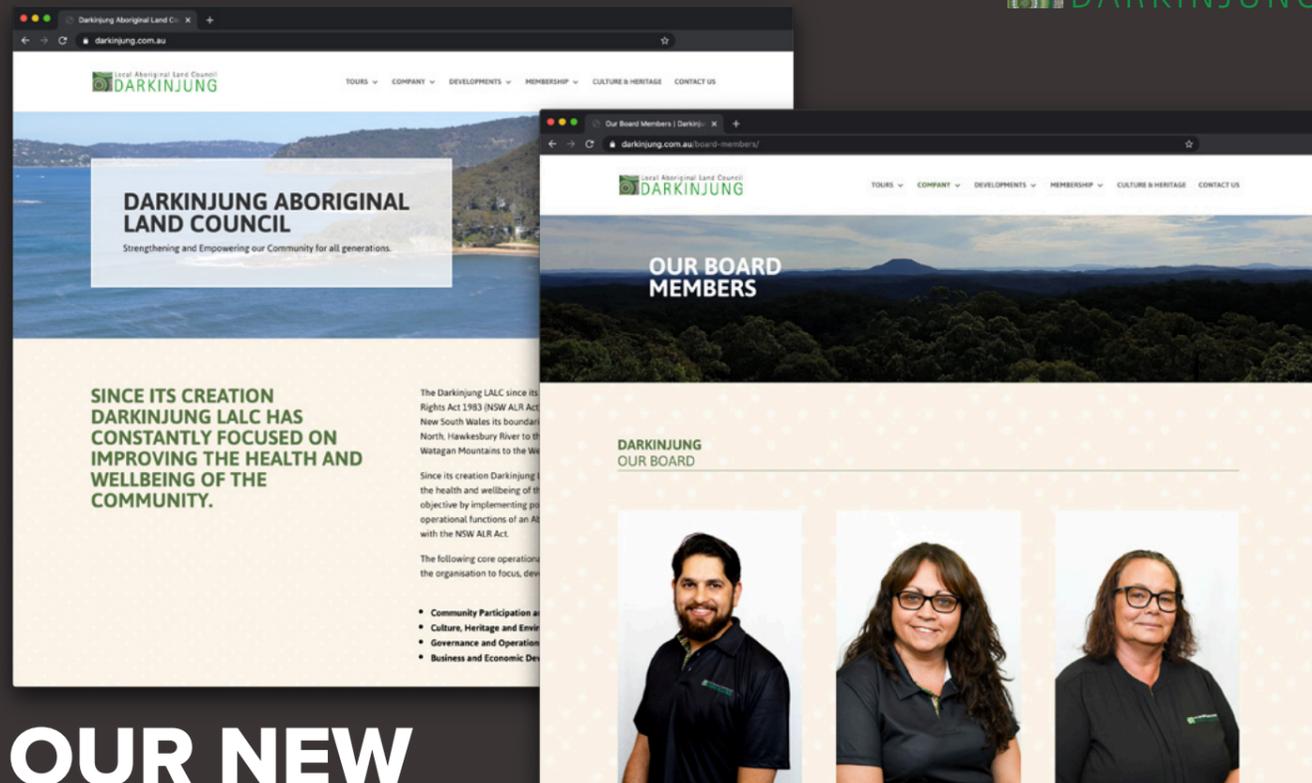
More than half of the proposals' combined land is earmarked to be zoned environmental conservation and kept as green corridors.

## FINAL WORD ON ILLEGAL LAND CLEARING

**In recent weeks** chairperson Matthew West was forced to publicly defend accusations that either he personally or the Darkinjung board had prior knowledge of illegal land clearing activity on our Kariiong site.

We wish to make it clear that at no time did Darkinjung authorise any internal or external party to begin land clearing at the site.

As the matter is now being investigated, we will not be making any further comment on this matter.



## OUR NEW LOOK

In our continued bid to remain as open and transparent as possible, you may also have noticed that we recently gave a much-needed facelift to our website.

In addition to outlining who we are and what we represent, the new site also offers details about our

cultural tours and outlines the registered Aboriginal sites within our boundaries.

As part of the changes, you can now view all our current development delivery proposals, together with any recent statements we may have made on your behalf or to confirm contact details for staff or board members.

## CHILDREN'S DAY 2020

Hearing children's voices today plays a crucial role in them becoming influential elders and future leaders.

This is why "We are the Elders of tomorrow, hear our voice" has been named the theme of the 2020 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day.

Taking place on August 4, the day has been set aside to honour all our elders as custodians of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional knowledge, passed down to our children through stories and cultural practice.

Be sure to encourage your children to check out the colouring in competition on the back page of this issue for their chance to contribute to the day's unique celebrations.



New executive administration officer Brent Ellis (left) and project support officer Tiana Lockwood (right).



## WELCOME ABOARD

In recent weeks we have welcomed two additional staff members to bolster our administration team.

Brent Ellis joined us in June as executive administration officer, where he will act as executive assistant to the CEO, chairperson and the board.

Brent brings with him a host of experience, having worked in administration for the past decade, most

recently as a project officer with NSW Health and the Department of Communities and Justice.

Tiana Lockwood has joined as project support officer. Tiana, who comes to Darkinjung from an administration role at the Muloobinba Aboriginal Corporation, will undertake reception duties and provide back up administration assistance to all staff.

## DARKINJUNG'S POSITION ON CONFIRMATION OF ABORIGINALITY

A Confirmation of Aboriginality is an official letter that is approved by a local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) in which you reside or Country area you come from.

Some organisations require you to provide proof of your Indigenous heritage when applying for Aboriginal-specific services or programs for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander housing, business loans or university courses.

Typically, it is at the discretion of each individual ACCO whether to issue Letters of Confirmation of Aboriginality or Certificates of Aboriginality.

In following the lead of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, your board has made the decision not to issue these types of confirmations, it is however, happy to provide confirmation of Darkinjung LALC membership.

**Contact our office to find out more.**

# THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE DARKINJUNG FUTURE FUND

**Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council** needs to plan for long-term stability and growth to strengthen and empower its community now and in the future.

As a result, some time ago the Darkinjung Future Fund was set up to achieve a sustainable position where our cash flow supports and exceeds our annual operating expenses.

However, the economic turmoil associated with the COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact upon financial markets the world over and we are no exception.

As such, the organisation charged with managing these funds has offered the following update as to how member funds will be impacted now and into the future.

While medium and longer-term outlooks are constructive, there is potential for heightened volatility over the short term as financial markets reckon with real-world developments.

Significant setbacks in virus containment, escalations in geopolitical tensions, and policy error by government or central banks, must all be avoided for financial markets to maintain their current trajectory. A long-term approach enables us to make considered and patient investment decisions, holding off until the right conditions present themselves.

Perpetual's guiding principles to Darkinjung through this challenging and more volatile period are:

## STAY CALM

Just as we sought to avoid getting too fearful when markets sold off, we also do not want to get too greedy as markets show early signs of recovery.

## STICK TO THE PLAN

The longer-term strategy for the portfolio was well established and appropriate prior to the COVID-19 March 2020-market downturn. In addition, it has been constructed across a diversified range of investments and asset classes, to provide some downside protection and better weather market volatility in the short term, while also providing greater reassurance of its ability to deliver on its longer-term return objectives.

## REBALANCE

Our asset allocation as per our 'Growth' investment strategy – 80% Growth assets and 20% Defensive assets, underpins our long-term risk and returns. Perpetual continues to monitor overall allocations on an ongoing basis, and where the portfolio deviates substantially from the benchmark weightings, and then rebalance the portfolio back in line with the agreed target allocations.

## SCAN THE MARKET

As the investment landscape incorporates new information, Perpetual continues to seek investments and managers within each asset class that may benefit from the new cycle. Perpetual and its underlying managers proactively make these adjustments on the Darkinjung portfolio on an ongoing basis.

Colouring competition winner Ava with her prize pack.

# COLOURING COMPETITION RESULTS

We wish to thank all those who entered our Under The Sea colouring competition, included in the last *Darkinjung Dispatch* issue. Clearly there is an abundance of creative talent in our midst. We would like to pass on our hearty congratulations to each of our winners including Ava, Marisa and Jessica.



# THAT'S ALL FOR THE MEANTIME

With the second wave of COVID-19 making itself keenly felt in parts of Melbourne, Sydney and beyond, we continue to urge members to maintain a calm yet cautious approach to staying healthy.

We will endeavour to convene our next members meeting when restrictions allow and when we feel it is safe for our broader community.

In the meantime, we ask that you continue to keep

an eye on the more vulnerable members of our community who may be struggling under such isolating conditions and practice patience when dealing with those who may be feeling out of sorts.

*Lots of Love*  
**Darkinjung**

