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DARKINJUNG DISPELS MISINFORMATION ON PROPOSED KARIONG DEVELOPMENT

Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) has announced that its 13-hectare proposed development at 300 Woy Woy Road Kariong is a conscious and ecologically sustainable development, with the organisation wanting to dispel misinformation currently circulating about the project.

As the Central Coast's Local Aboriginal Land Council, Darkinjung LALC is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for caring for Country, which encompasses all land, waterways, flora and fauna. The organisation has an ongoing commitment to conserving the land and protecting the biodiversity of the Central Coast region.

Chair of Darkinjung LALC Tina West said, "Caring for Country is at the core of our mission. We exist to protect and conserve the environment and Aboriginal cultural heritage for generations to enjoy, while also creating tangible social and wellbeing benefits for the broader community."

Under Darkinjung LALC's proposed use of the site, more than half of the 13 hectares will be zoned under Environmental Conservation (C2), preserving the landscape in its bushland state as well as the few identified Aboriginal cultural sites within the zone. This environmental conservation zone of over 7 hectares borders Brisbane Water National Park, with the National Park containing sites like the 'Grandmother Tree' and Kariong Sacred Land.

"Darkinjung LALC has been careful not to harm any existing cultural sites within or even in the vicinity of the proposed development, including what has been referred to as the 'Grandmother Tree', which is located over 1 km away from the site, or 'Kariong Sacred Land', which is to the south of the 13-hectare area," continued Tina.

The remaining part of the site, which borders the existing Kariong village will be developed into a residential community inspired by conscious design principles that incorporate native vegetation, deep soil planting areas and 50 low-density homes within large blocks. The development will also feature a 0.4-hectare area under Environmental Management (C3) zoning, serving as parkland facilities for the enjoyment of the local community.

Darkinjung LALC has followed rigorous processes to design a development that supports sustainable outcomes, including sourcing various independent reports to meet requirements under both the NSW Planning System and the Planning Systems SEPP (Aboriginal Lands).

The Biodiversity Certification Assessment Report and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment report have addressed the potential inadvertent impacts of the proposed development and provide excellent conservation outcomes for known Aboriginal sites as well as any remnants, sites or cultural artefacts that may be discovered during the development.

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Additionally, the impacts on the biodiversity of the area have been assessed extensively and determined to be acceptable and manageable with appropriate mitigation measures in place.

"We have taken a thorough and considered approach to ensure we achieve positive outcomes for Country and the community. All Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations on the Central Coast, and by extension a majority of Aboriginal people on the Central Coast, have supported the progression of this rezoning through the NSW Planning System for almost a decade," explained Tina.

The proposed site complements both the natural bush surroundings and the existing Kariong housing community.

The public exhibition regarding the project will be held online from Friday 1 December and will run until Monday 29 January 2024.

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About Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council

Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to the protection and conservation of Aboriginal heritage and to support the development of the Aboriginal community. The Darkinjung LALC is the Central Coast's Local Aboriginal Land Council, created under the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW ALR Act).