

Coffs Harbour & District LALC

Community Land and Business Plan

1 July 2022 – 30 June 2027

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Our Past



How did we get here?

Our History

The Aboriginal Land Rights network was formed in 1983 through the introduction of the *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (ALRA)* which recognised the prior ownership and occupation of land by Aboriginal people. Coffs Harbour & District Local Aboriginal Land Council (CH&DLALC) was formed at this time.

The purpose of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW)* is:

- a. To provide land rights for Aboriginal persons in New South Wales
- b. To provide representative Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW
- c. To vest land in those Councils
- d. To provide for the acquisition of land by or for those Council's and the allocation of funds to and by those Councils.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) administers the ALRA legislation on a state level. Local Aboriginal Land Council's (LALCs) are body corporates which are constituted under the ALRA and have been established to hold land and enhance the interests of all Aboriginal persons within the LALCs area.

Our Objects

The ALRA states that the objects of each Local Aboriginal Land Council are to **“improve, protect and foster the best interests of all Aboriginal persons within the Council's area and other persons who are members of the Council”**

Our Functions

The functions of the Land Council include:

- Acquire land and to use, manage, control, hold or dispose of, or otherwise deal with, land vested in or acquired by the Council;
- Protect the interests of Aboriginal persons in its area in relation to the acquisition, management, use, control and disposal of land;
- Take action to protect the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons in the Council's area, subject to any other law;

- Promote awareness in the community of the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons in the Council's area;
- Prepare and implement, in accordance with the Act, a community, land and business plan;
- Manage, in accordance with the Act and consistently with its community, land and business plan, the investment of any assets of the Council;
- Facilitate business enterprise in accordance with the Act, and the regulations, and consistently with the community, land and business plan;
- Directly, or indirectly, provide community benefits under the community benefits scheme;
- Make claims on vacant crown land;
- Provide, acquire, upgrade or extend residential accommodation for Aboriginal persons within its area;
- Establish or participate in the establishment of, a trust for the purpose of providing a community benefits scheme.

What have we achieved?



Our LALC has had many achievements over the past four decades and has been successful in building a financially viable and stable organisation. We are very proud of the continuity and contributions of our members.

Our Achievements

Our achievements include:

- A substantial number of land claims lodged with a high proportion of successful claims
- Assets worth \$12 million
- Development of a new housing policy which has increased our rental income
- Introduction of a No Alcohol policy within all public areas of Wongala
- Development of organisational infrastructure
- Establishment of a strong Board and staff
- Installation of a new playground
- Establishment of many partnerships with both government and non-government organisations
- Provision of programs for members
- Social housing for members
- More effective internal communications processes e.g. emails, logs of when messages have been received, electronic calendar
- Compliance with risk assessment from NSWALC
- Work with National Parks e.g. wild dog baiting, bush regeneration
- Medium risk LMSS (land council management system) status achieved
- Community hall (Grace Roberts Hall) has been built, and its use expanded over time
- Lots of new partnerships, e.g. Elders groups, State forests, Transport, NPWS, LLS, Roads to Home
- LALC has an extensive asset plan
- National Housing Registration achieved
- Culture and heritage program strengthened

Our Present

Who are we?

The Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council is situated on the North Coast of New South Wales and was formed under the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1983.

The CH&DLALC boundaries extend from Red Rock (Dirty Creek Range) in the north to south of Urunga (Oyster Creek) and also encompasses Glenreagh, Nana Glen, Ulong and Fernmount east of Bellingen. Originally the CH&DLALC leased office space in the Coffs Harbour town centre before relocating to a purpose built community centre in Wongala and acquiring the Wongala Housing Cooperative.

Currently the CH&DLALC owns and/or manages 55 dwellings for members of the Council within the Council boundaries and these dwellings range in size from 1 bedroom share accommodation to six bedroom family accommodation.

The CH&DLALC is also responsible for the protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage as prescribed in the NSW ALRA 1983. This means there is numerous consultative processes with government and non-government entities and private land holders.

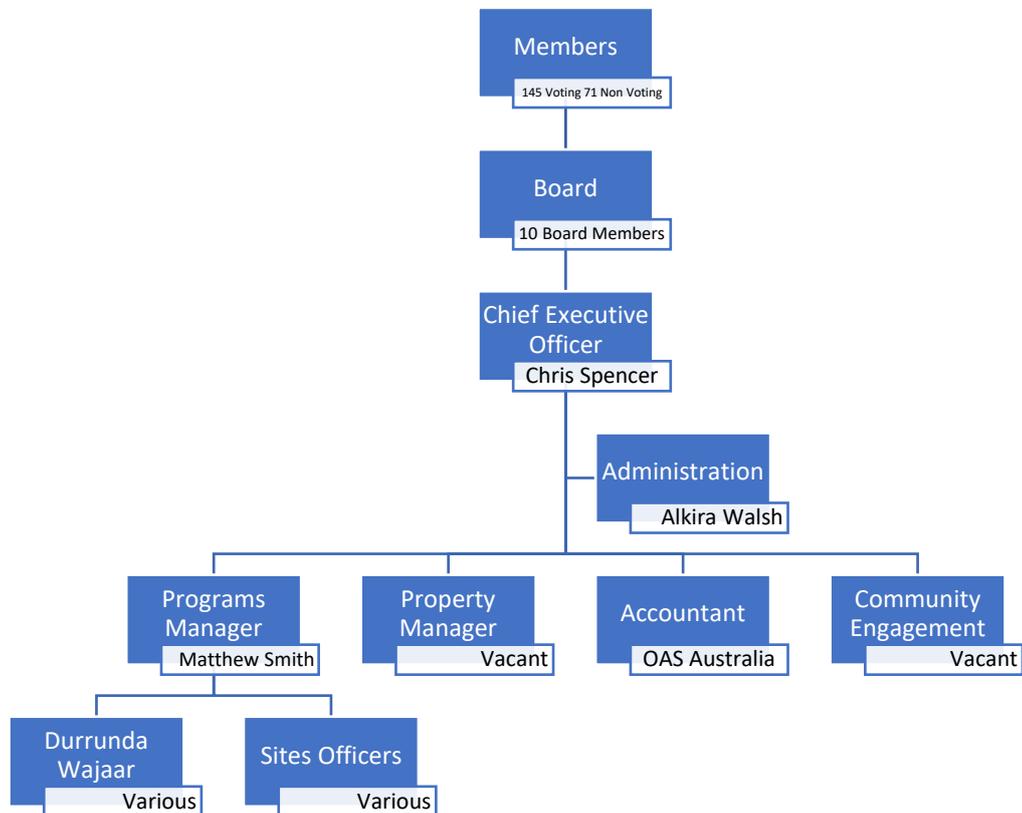


Our Structure

The CH&DLALC is a 3 tiered structure made up of Members, a Board and a CEO and Staff. The Membership are responsible for electing a Board of between 7 to 10 Members. The Board are responsible for Directing and Controlling the LALC and recruiting and managing the CEO. The CEO is responsible for the day to day running of the LALC and for employing and managing other staff members.

In terms of activities the LALC currently runs the following programs:

1. **LALC Administration:** The LALC is funded annually by the NSWALC to continue to administer the LALC. These funds are utilised to employ a CEO and contribute towards other administration costs of the LALC.
2. **Property Management:** The LALC manages 55 residential properties plus a number of commercial properties. The LALC has its own maintenance team responsible for maintaining the condition of properties.
3. **Land Management:** The LALC owns and manages a green team responsible for several land regeneration contracts and works with various Government and Non-Government stakeholders.
4. **Culture and Heritage:** The LALC manages a successful culture and heritage program designed to promote and protect items of cultural significance within the LALC's boundary and throughout the Gumbaynggirr nation.



What are we about?

Our Vision

Our vision is for a financially independent, prosperous organisation which supports strong cultural identity, the well-being of our community and equal opportunities for all.

We aspire to meet the needs of our community, through managing our land and assets, providing social housing, creating opportunities for education, training and employment, protecting our culture and heritage.

We manage the land for future generations.

Our Values

- We aspire to the values of:
- Pride in our Council and our community.
- Community ownership and focus.
- Commitment to democratic processes.
- Honesty, justice and fairness.
- Sensitivity to community issues and needs.
- Being open and transparent.
- Guiding our community members.

Why are we here?



Why Are We Here? (Our Purpose)	We are here as custodians of our culture, our country and our community.
How Do We Do Things? (Our Processes)	We do this by preserving and protecting our culture and country for current and future generations. We actively engage with our community and advocate on their behalf forming mutually beneficial partnerships with our stakeholders. We act with integrity, transparency and unity building long-term networks and relationships based on mutual trust and respect.
What Do We Do? (Our Products)	We operate a number of activities and projects across a broad spectrum of areas including land development, land management and the acquisition of land. We provide a number of benefits for our community including employment and training opportunities as well as social housing and community support and referral services. We are passionate about promoting and protecting Aboriginal Culture & Heritage. We strive to provide further opportunities to our community by actively seeking and participating in economic development opportunities and grant programs to further expand our capacity to provide for our communities needs including economic development, employment & training, housing, health, education and cultural preservation.

Our Future



Our Culture

Why is culture important to us?

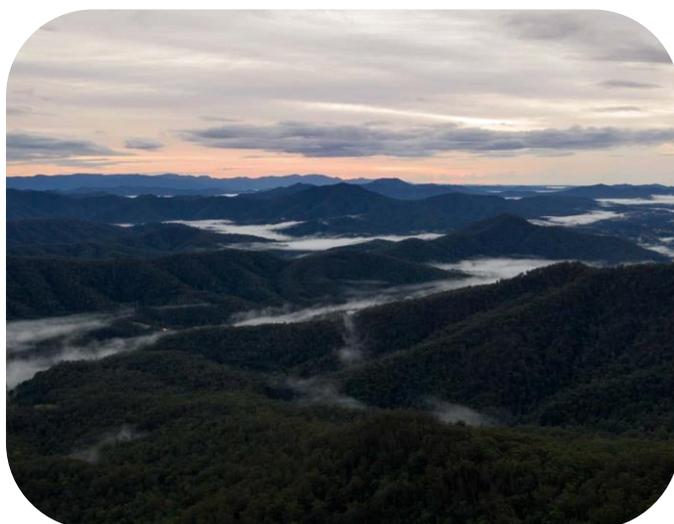
Culture is a part of us, central to our identity and central to our country. It forms our world views and outlines our responsibilities to country and communities as well as our ancestors. We have a responsibility to pass on our culture to future generations so that we can maintain lore and our spiritual connection. This is critical to maintain our physical and spiritual wellbeing and guide us in our everyday lives and decision making. Without our cultural identity we lose our purpose, our sense of belonging, our connection. This then leads to a deterioration of mental and physical health and a breakdown in society as we are seeing today.

Promote our Culture & Heritage	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Continue to promote cultural awareness in the wider community particularly utilising NAIDOC and other culturally significant events	Ongoing
Develop a cultural promotion program for school students that increases the transfer of cultural knowledge	Feb 2021
Protect our Culture & Heritage	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Ensure significant sites are recorded and if required protected against loss or destruction	Ongoing
Finalise development of CH&DLALC's Culture and Heritage Management Plan	Jun 2022
Continue to actively monitor the NSW Cultural Reform discussions and ensure CH&DLALC's rights and responsibilities are protected	Ongoing
Develop a CH&DLALC archaeologist position and finalise recruitment including succession planning to employ a fully qualified Aboriginal archaeologist	Jun 2023
Continue to jointly manage Hungry Head with our Native Title partners	Ongoing

Preserve our Culture & Heritage	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Continue to facilitate Gumbaynggirr Language Classes	Ongoing
Develop and maintain a cultural preservation database to record oral history, stories and yarns, family groups and elders	Dec 2022
Continue to actively monitor the treaty and constitutional recognition arena and ensure CH&DLALC's rights and responsibilities are protected	Ongoing
Set up a cultural preservation fund to protect and preserve sites	Jun 2024
Seek partnerships with Registered Training Organisation's to develop a culture and heritage training program for staff and to ensure relevant staff and community are appropriately trained and cultural knowledge is maintained	Jun 2022
Pursue Culture & Heritage Opportunities	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Investigate and pursue cultural tourism and promotion opportunities	Ongoing
Develop, market and implement a Culture Awareness Training package	Feb 2022

Our Country

Why is country important to us?



'Land in the State of NSW was traditionally owned and occupied by Aboriginal people. Land is of spiritual, social, cultural and economic importance to us and we have a symbiotic relationship to Country. As a result of past Government decisions the amount of land set aside for Aboriginal people has been progressively reduced without compensation.'

(Preamble to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983)

Land is our mother, the provider of all things. We have a cultural responsibility as custodians to care for the land with respect in a mutually beneficial relationship to maintain balance and harmony in accordance with our cultural lores and customs. To harm the land is to harm ourselves as all food, water and shelter required to sustain human life comes from and is provided by mother earth.

Continue to Advocate for Land Claims to be processed and Investigate Opportunities to Lodge Future Claims	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Review the current list of outstanding land claims and start to prioritise which claims are of higher significance either culturally, economically or environmentally	Dec 2023
Continue to liaise with Crown Lands to progress those claims that are identified as being high priority	Ongoing
Apply continued pressure to ensure at least 50% of current outstanding land claims are processed	Jun 2025
Continue to advocate for the lands and required infrastructure at Happy Valley and Ferguson's Cottage	Dec 2023
Strategically lodge claims as and when the opportunity arises	Ongoing

Continue to Support and Expand the CH&DLALC Ranger Program	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Strategically investigate and form long-term partnerships with potential funding providers and partners to assist with land management activities and fund CH&DLALC positions	Ongoing
Strategise land use options to reduce ongoing land maintenance costs including asset protection zones	Ongoing
Continue to seek economic opportunities to expand and grow the CH&DLALC Ranger Program including Tourism, Marine Parks, Joint Management of National Parks, National Disability Insurance Scheme, Fire Management, Junior Ranger Day etc.	Ongoing
Complete a stand-alone business plan on the ranger program which identifies opportunities, risks and sets a future direction which is obtainable and sustainable	Jun 2023
Continue to investigate Land Development Opportunities to Assist in Addressing the Social, Cultural and Economic Needs of our Staff, Board, Members & Community	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Complete a comprehensive land use strategy which examines all CH&DLALC land parcels including zoning, ongoing land management costs, land restrictions and potential future use including development, biodiversity, housing, commercial use	Jun 2025
Investigate the possible development of a multipurpose commercial building and opportunities to expand, relocate or repurpose Grace Roberts Hall	Dec 2023
Ensure the CH&DLALC is utilising all land assets to their highest and best use including implementing strategies to better utilise land and assets	Jun 2025
Ensure Members are involved in all land decisions including forming strategies on the future use of land and other assets including implementing a member-based subcommittee	Jun 2023
Participate in discussions on the Jetty Development and protect and secure the interests of CH&DLALC Members and the broader Aboriginal community	Ongoing
Seek Opportunities to Improve and Upgrade LALC Community Infrastructure	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Continue to investigate and apply for funding sources to improve and upgrade LALC community infrastructure	Jun 2027
Continue to consult with tenants and community members to pursue a long-term strategy for Wongala Estate and Corindi	Jun 2027

Our Community



Why is community important to us?

The CH&DLALC would not exist without our strong and dedicated community. Through our families and connections, we are able to build a united and committed LALC which is focused on building a better life for all community members. We share the same values and beliefs in relation to promoting and protecting our land and culture and have a shared vision in relation to closing the gap for our people so that they can live long and fulfilled lives maintaining our strong cultural identity with access and continued connection to our land.

Training and Development of Staff & Community	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Ensure all staff members complete a Training Needs Analysis and have a current Performance and Development Plan	Dec 2022
Develop and Implement a Training and Development Plan and look at capacity development options (e.g. Job Rotation/Secondment/Upskilling etc.)	Dec 2023
Seek funding through smart and skilled and partnerships to implement the Training and Development Plan at minimal cost to the LALC and open up training opportunities to broader community members when available	Ongoing
Engaging our Community and Strengthening Our Membership	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Facilitate and promote programs which assist in the mental health and wellbeing of our Staff, Board, Members and Wider Community	Ongoing
Develop and implement a youth and elder engagement program	Jun 2023
Target an average member attendance of 40 members per meeting and 5% membership growth per year	Jun 2027
Develop and implement a Community Benefit Scheme to assist and promote member attendance including but not limited to funeral support	June 2023
Diversify and target community engagement activities for specific community groups (e.g. Youth/Elders/Schools etc.) and develop an annual schedule of events	Jan 2023
Continue to Provide Safe Affordable Housing	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Identify CH&DLALC as a Growth Provider eligible to take on management and ownership of additional Aboriginal Housing stock	Jun 2023
Continue to maintain CH&DLALCs status as a nationally accredited community housing provider	Ongoing
Identify, advocate and assist with complex housing needs for community members	Jun 2027
Build or purchase an additional 4 (1/2 bedroom) properties to meet the needs of the CH&DLALC current household complements and the CH&DLALC housing waiting list	Jun 2027
Investigate and Promote Home Ownership Opportunities for Members	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Seek information from IBA, the AHO or NSWALC on possible homeownership models which meet the requirements of the ALRA	Dec 2023
Develop an approved Home Ownership Community Benefit Scheme including possible incentives to promote home ownership	Dec 2024
Look to form partnerships with IBA and/or other banks to assist in obtaining finance for members wishing to purchase their home or another property	Dec 2024
Promote and Participate in Enterprise Development	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Continue to promote employment and business opportunities for LALC Staff and Members particularly in relation to major Government procurement contracts (e.g. Coffs Bypass)	Ongoing

Advocate and negotiate on behalf of community to ensure Government are holding to their Aboriginal employment and procurement targets	Ongoing
Continue to slowly build current business opportunities including NDIS services, Professional Consultancy Services, school-based programs and fee for service	Ongoing
Continue to monitor and take advantage of LALC business enterprise opportunities as they arise, based on solid feasibility and risk assessments	Ongoing
Build and Maintain a Strong LALC Administrative Base	
<i>What we will do</i>	<i>By When</i>
Continue to maintain a funded status with the NSWALC and a minimum medium risk status	Ongoing
Ensure the LALC obtains unqualified audits and remains in a solvent financial position	Ongoing
Develop and implement a capital investment strategy with a targeted interest return on our reserve funds of 7% or above	Dec 2023

