

Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee



Minutes

Date: 7 August 2018	Time: 1-2pm	Venue: Fred Ash Building Level 3
Meeting No: 4	Extraordinary Committee Meeting	

Attendance

Attendance [Committee Members alphabetically]:

Daryn McKenny (Miromaa ALTC)
 Luke Russell (Wylaa Buuranliyn)
 Robert Russell (Awabakal LALC)
 Abie Wright (Yarnteen Ltd)

NCC staff attendance:

Lillian Eastwood - Guraki Facilitator
 Ian Rhodes - Community Planning Co-ordinator

Apology:

Maree Edwards (Community Rep)
 Cherie Johnson (Community Rep)
 Cheryl Kitchener (Aboriginal Affairs NSW)
 Angela Pearce (Community Rep)
 Andrew Smith (Worimi LALC)
 Cr Emma White

Meeting Item	Action, Responsibility, Timing
<p>1. Open meeting Meeting opened at 1.10pm. With endorsement of the Chair, L Eastwood conducted the meeting.</p>	L Eastwood
<p>2. Acknowledgement Acknowledgement to Country, in Kathung language.</p>	L Russell
<p>3. Apologies Apologies as noted above.</p>	Noted by all
<p>4. Proposed Cultural Burning at Blackbutt Reserve - Discussion Council requested that a meeting be convened to discuss a proposed cultural burn at Blackbutt Reserve on Monday 13 August 2018. Council asked the Committee to respond to this matter in a timely fashion, and to consider whether the proposed burn could still proceed on the 13 August as a hazard reduction burn without the significant cultural aspects.</p> <p>All members were updates via email regarding this matter. M Edwards requested that her email dated 7 August 2018 be tabled and read.</p> <p>L Eastwood advised that Council seeks the Committee to considered two objectives for this proposed cultural burn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of fuel load in bushland, Blackbutt Reserve • Training and promotion of traditional Aboriginal burning techniques 	<p>For noting by all.</p> <p>Email tabled and read by L Eastwood. For noting by all.</p>

<p>Each Members present spoke to the matter, highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns were raised because of the lack of information about this proposed cultural burn, lack of community consultation, and no clarity around the role and selection of the Traditional Owner group who were identified as taking part in this burn. Members also discussed the legal recognition of the term '<i>Traditional Owners</i>', and its misuse in some naming conventions of local community entities. • Re-introduction of cultural burning practices has been on the community's agenda for a number of years. In 2002, Miromaa ATLC set out to re-introduce the practice of cultural burns on this country, however at that time there was a lack of recognition by the wider community of the importance for local Aboriginal people undertaking burn practices. • Need further research on cultural fire burning practices specific to the Newcastle region, cannot always apply techniques from other countries. • From a local cultural perspective we obviously have lost some knowledge and need to regain, research, and revive that knowledge about our own local practices. Traditionally burning was done in the appropriate seasons and appropriate areas to enrich and sustain life. In this matter it seems we have put a cultural spin on what is basically a hazard reduction, and from an ecological position we don't need a scorched burnt process. • Our ability to continually care for country is lacking; our access to land for ceremony, which is our business, is not happening therefore spiritual practices are also not happening; and our seasonal calendars are not there. We (Members) are here speaking to this matter because we understand what is going on. Seasonal calendar takes into account ceremonial obligations and responsibilities; when to burn and what to burn; a whole life structure (cycle). • This is an opportunity for CN to partnering with Miromaa ALTC to develop a local Aboriginal seasonal calendar, and consider future opportunities to undertake cultural burning practices, community engagement strategies, and cultural awareness training for staff. 	
<p>5. Recommendations</p> <p>5.1. Members requested more detailed information about the processes engaged to facilitate this culture burn, and clarification regarding the expected role of the Awabakal Traditional Owners Corporation in the cultural burn process.</p> <p>5.2. Members are happy to have CN convene a meeting with all parties to further discuss cultural burn practices and community engagement.</p> <p>5.3. Members discuss the request from CN to continue with a hazard reduction burn at Blackbutt reserve on 13 August and agreed that it was not their position to deny that process if it was absolutely necessary to conduct that burn due to the extent of the fuel load.</p> <p>5.4. Members discussed opportunities for CN to develop cultural awareness training for CN staff, referencing an action in CN Aboriginal Heritage Management Strategy.</p> <p>5.5. Members suggested that CN work with the community to develop a local Aboriginal seasonal calendar, which is a companion in determining time and factors for cultural burn practices.</p>	<p>CN to advise Membership by email of outcome</p>
<p>9. Meeting Closed 2pm</p>	