

March 2024

Caring for Country Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy 2024-2033



The Caring for Country Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy is a 10-year plan to implement the Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities' visions for healthy Country.

The Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (CPCP)

The Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (CPCP) provides biodiversity approvals to enable new housing, jobs, and infrastructure in the Western Parkland City. The CPCP will offset impacts to native vegetation from new development by protecting important biodiversity through a network of private and public conservation land across Western Sydney.

Through these actions the CPCP is preserving the health and wellbeing of Country. The CPCP area is shown in Figure 1.

The Caring for Country Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy

One of the outcomes of the CPCP is to support economic participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, promote Aboriginal culture and knowledge and help enable Aboriginal communities maintain distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical, and economic relationships with land and waters in Western Sydney.

To achieve this, the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the department) has co-developed the Caring for Country Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy (the Strategy) with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities.

The implementation of this Strategy helps deliver our goals to:

- improve the health and wellbeing of Country
- promote Aboriginal culture and knowledge



- help enable Darug, Dharawal, Gundungurra and other Aboriginal people maintain distinctive relationships with the land, waters, and sky in Western Sydney, including supporting ongoing and genuine access to Country
- support economic participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The department recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's unique and valuable knowledge relating to Country and has been committed to empowering Aboriginal voices in creating and developing the Strategy and will continue to do so.

This strategy has been co-developed with Aboriginal communities to support:

- Dharug, Dharawal, and Gundungurra Traditional Custodians
- Aboriginal communities
- Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) in the CPCP area
- Aboriginal organisations
- Aboriginal businesses.

As the department delivers the Strategy and its initiatives, we will keep Aboriginal communities informed about what has been done to date, what is currently being worked on, and where the Strategy is heading next.

We will strive to ensure that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of the Western Sydney region are closely involved in the development and implementation of policies and programs that impact them.



Figure 1 - Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan area





The Strategy focuses on 4 themes and 18 actions.

Theme 1 – Co-developing actions with Aboriginal communities through partnerships

We commit to deliver the actions in ongoing consultation and cooperation with the Darug, Dharawal, Gundungurra Traditional Custodians, knowledge holders, and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, LALCs and Aboriginal organisations. We will also listen to and embed the ideas of young Aboriginal people into the implementation of the Strategy.

We will continue learning from Aboriginal communities, cultural experts, and colleagues in the industry to better understand Aboriginal cultures, knowledge, needs and aspirations. We aspire to effectively facilitate a flexible, culturally safe, and transparent space for Aboriginal communities to have a voice.

Theme 2 – Caring for Country

Aboriginal people have managed, cultivated, and cared for Country and the CPCP region for thousands of generations. They hold profound knowledge and understanding of, obligation to and custodianship of the landscape and waterways, often referred to as ‘Connection to Country’.

The actions in this theme are focused on working with Traditional Custodians, Aboriginal communities, organisations and LALC’s to protect and restore Aboriginal-owned land, jointly manage new reserves and support the establishment of biodiversity stewardship sites. The actions also provide opportunities to collaborate on traditional Aboriginal waterway health and restoration, traditional fire management and land management programs.

Theme 3 – Honouring Aboriginal culture and heritage

The actions in this theme strive to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage and values, and to support the continuance of Aboriginal living culture in Western Sydney. This includes supporting Aboriginal local language revitalisation to restore the true names of Country and, funding projects for Western Sydney’s Aboriginal communities to recognise and protect Aboriginal culture and heritage. We will invest in and deliver research opportunities co-led by Traditional Custodians to better understand how traditional land management practices can support conservation outcomes in Western Sydney.



In addition, we will fund projects to increase the department's and general public's cultural competence and understanding around Aboriginal cultures and traditional practices that contribute to maintaining biodiversity and the health of country.

Theme 4 – Enhancing Aboriginal businesses, employment and training in the environmental sector

This theme aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and people to overcome barriers to reach better economic outcomes and ensure they will benefit from the economic opportunities arising from implementing the CPCP.

This could mean, for example, business development grants to support Aboriginal businesses in building their capacity and capability.

Please see Figure 2 for actions of the Strategy.



Figure 2 - Themes and actions of the Strategy

Themes and Actions			
<p>1 Co-developing actions with Aboriginal communities through partnerships</p>	<p>2 Caring for Country</p>	<p>3 Honouring Aboriginal culture and heritage</p>	<p>4 Enhancing Aboriginal businesses, employment and training in the environmental sector</p>
<p>Actions</p> <p>1.1 Partner with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities to deliver actions under the Strategy and CPCP.</p> <p>1.2 Customise engagement with Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities over the life of the Strategy.</p> <p>1.3 Embed young Aboriginal voices in the implementation of the Strategy and the CPCP.</p>	<p>Actions</p> <p>2.1 Fund the up-front costs and support to establish biodiversity stewardship sites on Aboriginal land.</p> <p>2.2 Work with Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders to pilot a traditional fire management program.</p> <p>2.3 Support the development of opportunities for joint management of new conservation areas with Aboriginal community members under the CPCP.</p> <p>2.4 Investigate opportunities for alternative land management partnerships led by Traditional Custodians.</p> <p>2.5 Investigate and support current or new food security initiatives that Aboriginal community members manage.</p> <p>2.6 Support opportunities for collaboration with traditional Aboriginal waterway health and restoration programs.</p> <p>2.7 Develop and fund Aboriginal Ranger positions to support the ongoing management of jointly managed conservation areas under the CPCP.</p> <p>2.8 Support relevant agencies with the resolution of Aboriginal land claims under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 to achieve cultural and biodiversity outcomes in the CPCP area.</p>	<p>Actions</p> <p>3.1 Engage with Aboriginal communities to support Aboriginal local language revitalisation initiatives.</p> <p>3.2 Identify and deliver research opportunities co-led by Traditional Custodians to better understand how traditional land management practices can support conservation outcomes in Western Sydney.</p> <p>3.3 Fund projects for Western Sydney's Aboriginal communities to recognise and protect Aboriginal culture and heritage.</p> <p>3.4 Fund projects to extend existing education programs in Western Sydney, including education officers to provide cultural competency activities at schools and in the community.</p>	<p>Actions</p> <p>4.1 Provide funding, training and support to build capacity in Aboriginal businesses so that Aboriginal-owned businesses receive a minimum 5% expenditure.</p> <p>4.2 Investigate and fund initiatives that support Aboriginal employment and training pathways in the environmental sector.</p> <p>4.3 Use the full extent of the procurement framework in implementing the CPCP to encourage Aboriginal businesses to take part in tendering.</p>





Implementation of the Strategy

The implementation and engagement model that the department will use to deliver the Strategy's initiatives and programs will occur in 4 stages every 2.5 years from 2024 to 2033.

Contact Us

If you want to get involved in this important work, please join us. To find out more, please contact the Caring for Country team via email CPCP@planning.nsw.gov.au or call 02 9585 6060.