



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

Truth Telling and Healing for Dharug Ngurra

August 2025

Introduction

Dharug Strategic Management Group Ltd (DSMG) is a not-for-profit company and registered charity. It operates as an organisation for Dharug people, managed by Dharug yura (Dharug people).

DSMG's mission is to build strong relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians to walk together along the journey of truth telling, healing and learning to belong together with Dharug Ngurra (Dharug Country).

We value, celebrate and share Dharug culture and knowledges.

We work to extend recognition of Dharug yura as the traditional custodians of Dharug Ngurra, including the Blacktown Native Institution site to which the company holds legal title, and to promote connection to Ngurra and community through culture and ceremony. We continue the journey in remembering and respecting the resilience, strength and spirit of the Ancestors, the people who are already on their paths, and those yet to come.

Our vision

DSMG has a clear vision for both the immediate activation of the Blacktown Native Institution site and its long-time development as a focus for the recognition, celebration and strengthening of Dharug people, Dharug culture and Dharug contributions to the wider community. This strategic plan develops the pathway for delivering on this vision with a clear focus on *Dharug Truth Telling and Healing*.

Our vision emphasises

- culturally led ecological restoration
- Dharug presence in the cultural landscape
- cultural activation of the BNI
- welcoming Dharug community and the wider community to truth-telling and truth-hearing, deep listening and healing at the BNI
- fostering wider appreciation of the value of the BNI as a window for recognition, understanding and caring to secure a future Dharug Culture Centre at the BNI
- ensuring that DSMG navigates a path of protection, caring and healing that maintains the integrity of the BNI in the face of the Richmond Road Upgrade Project of TfNSW
- advocating and advancing the return and management of Dharug Ngurra to Dharug care and management through DSMG as a land-holding organisation for Dharug community.

Overview

DSMG was established in early-2018 as a public company limited by guarantee. Our charitable purpose is to advance the culture and wellbeing of the Dharug people and promote reconciliation,



respect and harmony between Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islanders and non-Aboriginal Australians. Specifically, the company acts to exercise care for elements of Dharug Ngurra (Country) that return to Dharug care. In October 2018, the company was granted title to part of the State Heritage listed Blacktown Native Institution site. The nearly six-hectare site is located on the corner of Rooty Hill and Richmond Roads in Oakhurst. It is the first of Dharug Ngurra to return to Dharug ownership from the colonial State Government of NSW since the early 19th Century. The company sees truth telling and healing as central to our care for this important place.

This land is for Dharug people: a place to connect to Country, culture, and community. This Strategic Plan 2025-2030 frames how we will work with our community and strategic partners to support this important place becoming a place of healing and belonging by restoring biodiversity, improving water management, revegetation, and delivering environmental restoration, cultural and community programs.

Advancing towards delivering the Dharug community's aspiration for a Dharug Culture Centre at the BNI is a priority for this Strategic Plan.

Our Core Values – the foundation of the Strategic Plan

- Reciprocity
- Collaborative relationships
- Recognition
- Respect
- Remembrance
- Commemoration
- Connection
- Accountability

Our Organisational Strengths

1. **Ngurra:** Caring for, connecting to and healing Ngurra that is returned to Dharug care has a positive effect on the mindset, level of cooperation, and unity of the community. DSMG's role at the BNI site to Dharug care has changed the community narrative in regard to Dharug futures.
2. **Community and Culture:** DSMG is part of the Dharug community and connected to Dharug culture and cultural knowledge, practice and protocol that has been nurtured with Ngurra over countless generations.
3. **Place:** the BNI site is well situated, in relation to the Dharug cultural landscapes of Western Sydney. It is at the centre (historically and geographically) of the Blacktown LGA and located strategically in relation to the new airport and other major developments that are changing Western Sydney and its communities.
4. **Board Culture:** DSMG is led by a solid, focused Board, with a wide skill base and strong cultural knowledge, as well as clearly allocated responsibilities and a culture that is committed to integrity, Dharug cultural protocols, accountability and good governance.
5. **Connections:** DSMG has diverse and meaningful networks in culture, community and environment.
6. **Recognition and Respect:** DSMG has developed a strong profile as a reliable partner with good governance and cultural integrity.
7. **Purpose:** DSMG's clear articulation of our organisation's purpose and direction has facilitated the development of strong programs, relationships and financial foundations for success.
8. **Trust:** DSMG has built trust with the diverse Dharug communities, but never takes this for granted and works to deserve that trust in everything we do.



9. **Relationships:** DSMG maintains collaborative relationships with Blacktown and Parramatta Councils, as well as with other significant networks of decision-makers, practitioners and change agents.
10. **Government and commerce:** DSMG works in an environment that present diverse opportunities to deliver DSMG's vision and some resources to address the challenges we face in doing so.

Key Factors Affecting Our Development

The following factors will be instrumental in the development of the DSMG in coming years:

1. **Funding and Financial Management:** Our ability to continue to augment funds towards our vision for a Dharug Culture Centre, and competently manage these finances.
2. **Communication:** The way that we market our programs, events and services, as well as how well we communicate with our stakeholders, especially regarding community engagement.
3. **Collaboration:** The extent that we effectively collaborate and maximise these relationships (and the resources available) to enhance what we are trying to achieve.
4. **Leadership:** How we demonstrate leadership and inspiration, especially in the way that we communicate our vision and strategies and bring the community along on our journey.
5. **Site Focus:** How we maintain momentum and focus on caring for the BNI site, while also working to secure the return of other places to Dharug ownership and care where opportunities arise.
6. **Skill Base:** How we utilise our skill base and expertise (governance, volunteers and staffing), building capacity and competence.

Key Criteria in Considering Our Development as an Organisation and a Community

The following criteria **must** be met when DSMG develops plans, activities and programs:

1. **Aligns with Vision and Values:** The proposal is fully aligned with DSMG's vision values, and cultural underpinnings.
2. **Aligns with our Expertise:** The proposal is in line with DSMG's purpose, values, vision, expertise and skills, as well as its capacity to sustainably expand its activities and programs for its communities.
3. **Aligns with our Capacity:** The developments can be undertaken within DSMG's organisational and resource capacity, at a governance and operational level.

Priority Outcomes for 2025-2030

- Enhanced site security and infrastructure, making the BNI site accessible and welcoming.
- Initial ecological restoration efforts, laying the groundwork for long-term biodiversity and habitat health.
- Establishment of a permanent Dance Circle, facilitating cultural events and gatherings.
- Development and initiation of cultural programming, fostering community engagement and cultural appreciation.
- Developing comprehensive business cases for
 - (a) construction of the Dharug Culture Centre and
 - (b) long-term site development, ensuring sustainability and future funding.
- Continuing to refine and build the company's capacity to receive, hold, manage and care for Dharug Ngurra and to return it to Dharug care and ownership.



Risk Management Assessment

DSMG has a low appetite for risk. We hold the BNI (and any other land returned to Dharug care) in trust for future Dharug generations. Nothing we do should ever allow Ngurra, culture or Dharug heritage to be put at risk ecologically, socially or financially.

DSMG will maintain all relevant insurances as a principal risk mitigation strategy.

Risk Assessment Matrix:

LIKELIHOOD	CONSEQUENCE				
	Insignificant (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Major (4)	Catastrophic (5)
Rare (1)	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
Unlikely (2)	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Possible (3)	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Likely (4)	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Almost certain (5)	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme

Risks facing DSMG

Risk	Risk Rating	Actions to Address the Risk
1. Misalignment of Community Perception; Failure to Secure Community Buy-in: DSMG loses community support with negative perceptions preventing community buy-in.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain effective communication strategies to inform the Dharug community of all key developments.Maintain focus on securing the future Dharug Culture Centre.Ensure effective promotion of key DSMG activities and developments.Maintain strong Dharug majority presence and community involvement in the operations and activities of DSMG.Board applies key criteria to approve and review of all activities (ie alignment with our vision and values, expertise, and capacity).
2. Site Mismanagement: DSMG fails to appropriately manage the BNI site, misallocating resources and not demonstrating appropriate levels of care and cultural sensitivity.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure clear allocation of Board and staff responsibility for all site developments.Obtain expert input for all major developments on and related to the BNI site.Undertake effective community consultation about any developments on and related to the BNI site.Review BNI site issues at each Board meeting as part of our routine reporting.
3. Financial or Legal Mismanagement; Non Compliance with Requirements: Finances are mismanaged or misappropriated; or DSMG fails to meet its legal and other compliances.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain structures for effective financial and compliance reporting, ensuring regular updates at DSMG Board meetings.Maintain and implement policies addressing the company's legal reporting obligations.Ensure allocation of clear Board responsibilities for all financial, legal and compliance matters.
4. Political Interface: DSMG fails to engender strong political support, with subsequent impact on government funding sources.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clearly identify government funding opportunities and their associated political 'champions'. Establish effective relationships with these and other key political personnel.Establish a pattern of regular communication with key personnel, backed up by an effective communication and promotional strategy.



Risk	Risk Rating	Actions to Address the Risk
5. Failure of Key supporters or Partners: DSMG fails to capitalise on the MOUs with key supporters and partners; alternatively the supporters' or partners' own problems mean they cannot deliver on their agreements with DSMG.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish clear Board responsibilities for communicating with all key supporters and partners.Establish a regular pattern of communication and review with all key strategic supporters and partners.Ensure a regular flow of information to these supporters and partners.Ensure that feedback on risks arising from relationships are reported back to the DSMG Board.
6. Loss of DSMG's identity as a Dharug Controlled entity: Non-Dharug personnel take control of the company or its strategic direction.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure there is majority Dharug involvement on the Board of DSMG as required by the company's Constitution .Involve Dharug community members in working groups of the Board, to ensure a continued flow of Dharug personnel available to serve on the Board.Clearly state the focus on the Dharug community in all public communications.Establish a succession plan for the DSMG Board that prioritises maintenance of Dharug majority presence on the Board and across the company.
7. Being perceived as the main Dharug representative organisation: DSMG, through its high profile, becomes seen as the 'go to' organisation for Dharug issues (which is not the aim of the organisation).	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain effective and open communication with Dharug community peak bodies that makes it clear with other that it is <u>not</u> the aim of DSMG to be the voice of the Dharug community for all general Dharug issues.State this clearly in appropriate written and verbal communication.Establish a clear foundation in policies for DSMG's role as a Dharug not-for-profit company.
8. Lack of organisational systems and processes: DSMG does not develop its organisational systems and processes, resulting in conflict and dysfunctional behaviour.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure clear documentation of all facets of DSMG's operations.Prepare a clear set of policies and procedures.Prepare PDs for all staffing and volunteer roles.Clearly document all Board meetings and decisions.Establish sound governance processes and procedures.
9. The organisation or key personnel become over-stretched, causing burnout and poor oversight: Too few personnel are tasked with responsibilities, becoming burnt out, resulting in loss of leadership and organisational oversight.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare and follow a Strategic Plan, with regular reviews and feedback.Ensure sufficient directors, members, staff and volunteers are available to manage all key functions and responsibilities that DSMG takes on.Ensure service expansion fits in with organisational capacity.Ensure recognition, appreciation and support is in place for all those involved with responsibility at DSMG – Board, staff, and volunteers.
10. Inability to attract and maintain level of staff quality and support: DSMG is unable to attract or retain quality staff, and is unable to support these staff to carry out the DSMG aims.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and maintain a strong succession plan for company leadership at Board level.The Board to maintain strict standards in recruiting staff, based on agreed PDs.Ensure high levels of mentoring, support and supervision for all staff.Document expected standards for staff performance.Ensure that there are sound HR processes in place for staff and volunteers – recruitment, induction, supervision and support, training, performance review.Ensure volunteers are fully aware of DSMG's strategic direction, its core values and its key priorities.

DSMG's Strategic Goals

- Caring for Ngurra:** DSMG will manage the BNI site, through ecological restoration projects, cultural and ceremonial activities, and construction and successful operating of a Community Hub, which rejuvenates the landscape, and delivers skilled management of the water resources,



support for the site's biodiversity, and an overall fostering of the Dharug community's connection to Ngurra.

2. **Caring for Culture:** DSMG will ensure full cultural activation on the BNI site, including comprehensive use of the site for cultural events, extensive teaching and learning for all ages, signage in language, dedicated gender-specific spaces, and the embedding of cultural protocols for all activities.
3. **Caring for Community:** DSMG will ensure strong Dharug community connections, through the establishment of economic programs, regular Corroboree consultations with the community, the management of effective, ongoing organisational relationships, fostering and advocating for a range of non-duplicating Health and Wellbeing programs, and implementing a high-profile marketing and communication strategy.
4. **Caring for the Company:** Utilising this Strategic Plan as a blueprint, DSMG will develop a strong set of governance, management and staffing policies, will establish sound financial and compliance systems, will seek competent, professional staff and volunteers as resources allow, will ensure effective recruitment, support and training of Board, staff and volunteers, and will establish sound systems for shared responsibility, transparency and accountability.

Action Plan 2025-2030

Caring for Ngurra

DSMG will manage the BNI site, through ecological restoration projects, cultural and ceremonial activities, and construction and successful operating of a Dharug Culture Centre. This will rejuvenate the landscape, and deliver skilled management of the water resources, support biodiversity across the site, and foster the Dharug community's connection to Ngurra.

DSMG will pursue delivery of the CMP across the whole site and inclusion of an area of land currently held by Blacktown City Council into the planning for the future around issues of safe access and sustainable activation of the site and planning for the Dharug Culture Centre.

DSMG will foster recognition, understanding of, and connection to the wider Dharug cultural landscape of Western Sydney through the BNI for the wider communities of the region.

Objectives	Tasks	Timeline
BNI site planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish and strengthen relationships with key supporters and partners• Seek feedback and collaboration on masterplan design proposals from key stakeholders• Protect the BNI from major impacts during roadworks for the Richmond Road Upgrade Project and maximize collaboration to support delivery of landscape healing• Find partner(s) to help develop concept design that reflects the CMP and extends the planning program to the area south of the SHR curtilage currently held by Blacktown Council• Community consultation on concept design options for regeneration and community hub	Continual 2025-2026 Continuing throughout the TfNSW project period (TfNSW-DSMG Working Group) 2026-2028 2025-2028
Development of Site, Onsite facilities and Community Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a steering committee including board members to oversee the development of the BNI Site• Establish a plan for the involvement of and consultation of the local Dharug community and other key stakeholders (corroboree)• Plan and deliver a major information and advice meeting on site with relevant service providers, funding agencies and potential industry funders and supporters.• Confirm a final design for the BNI site and community hub• Establish appropriate facilities to onsite activities in alignment with the Master Plan• Seek funding for development, looking at opportunities with Council to utilise funding from the stormwater management project	2025-2027 2026 2026 2027 2027-2030 2026-2030



Objectives	Tasks	Timeline
Ecological restoration at the BNI site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilise BNI site masterplan to plant 2,000 trees on site in two yearsIdentify and develop appropriate partnerships to support regeneration, working with plant suppliers, regeneration experts, local Council etcAlign site activities with site masterplan and Blacktown Council stormwater management activities.Identify and prioritise funding sources and potential partnersSubmit relevant grant applicationsImplement restoration projects	2026-2028 2026-2028 2026-2027 Continual Continual 2025-2028
Protecting the Dharug and heritage values of the BNI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Responding to threats to the integrity of these values from external activities including industrial, infrastructure and commercial projects.	Continual
Consulting across Ngurra	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Responding or referring EOIs and consultation requestDevelop a consultation response map, to support decision making around DSMGs response and responsibilities	Continual 2026-2027
Community Mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hold regular community working days to plant trees on the site, use as an opportunity to build working relationships with communityBuild community mobilisation around siteEnsure there is a continual flow of information to the community updating them on developments at the BNI site and ways that they can be involved.Building awareness and advocacy of the BNI.Building and strengthening strategic partnerships with Council and others.	Continual Continual Continual Continual Continual
Bushcare or Ranger Programs: Establish a Dharug Country-care or Ranger Program, involving community members in the training and employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore development of strategic partnerships (TAFE, NPWS, HRCC etc) to develop a structured program to support Dharug youth and supplement a site-based volunteer program.Identify potential for a developing a successful Dharug Ranger Program or similar opportunity to integrate community participation in site restoration and caring for wildlife activities with training and employment opportunities for Dharug people in caring for Ngurra.Integrate the project planning with site master planning and wider DSMG economic initiatives.Consult with appropriate agencies to identify likely sources of support.Submit relevant grant or partnership applicationsRecruit Dharug participants and deliver effective training, orientation and support.	2026-2028 2027-2029 Continual Continual Continual

Caring for Culture

DSMG will nurture cultural activation on the BNI site. This will include Dharug cultural, ceremonial and eventing activities, sharing culture, knowledge and Lore, for all ages, signage in language, dedicated gender-specific spaces, and embedding Dharug cultural protocols in all activities.

Objectives	Tasks	Timeline
Community Activities: To organise and conduct a series of community cultural events and programs.	<p>To establish a community consensus for naming of the site (and the road intersection) as a way of decolonising the way the site is understood.</p> <p>Map out a vibrant program of Dharug-led arts, culture and education activities, including promoting cultural utilisations of the site and involvement of the Dharug community, local schools and community groups</p> <p>Ensure strong community and cultural input into the landscape planning and healing of the site, to reflect the necessary cultural protocols are intact and recognised.</p>	025-2026 025-2027 Continual
Protocol Development: To develop clearly understood protocols for use at the BNI.	<p>Develop protocols and trial them with Dharug organisations</p> <p>Use the protocols as a template for development of MOUs to guide developing strategic partnerships.</p>	2025-2026 Continual



Objectives	Tasks	Timeline
Create Cultural Programs	Map out vibrant arts, cultural and educational programs, including promoting cultural utilisations of the site and involvement of the Dharug community, local schools and community groups	2025-2028

Caring for Community

DSMG will nurture strengthening Dharug community connections to Country at the site. DSMG's oversight of the site and her involvement in broader programs of truth telling and healing through activities on the site will foster a stronger sense of community, visibility and identity.

Objectives	Tasks	Timeline
Connecting to Dharug Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure community can access information from DSMG regarding events, programs and activities at the BNI site and ways they can be involved in truth telling and healing.	2025-2030
Connecting to strategic partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Building and strengthening strategic partnerships with Council and othersAdvocate to peak bodies, government and other agencies	2025-2030 Continuing
Connecting to neighbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthen relationships with broader community around the BNI Site.	2026-2030

Caring for the Company

Utilising this Strategic Plan as a blueprint, DSMG will maintain a strong set of governance, management and staffing policies and sound financial and compliance systems. It will seek competent, professional staff and volunteers as resources allow, will ensure effective recruitment, support and training of Board, staff and volunteers, and will establish sound systems for shared responsibility, transparency and accountability.

Objectives	Tasks	Timeline
Governance: The DSMG Board will maintain strong governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Board will maintain its strong governance and accountability focusThe Board develop the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ A Succession Plan, based on a skill matrix, and including a process for filling Board vacancies.✓ Board training and Annual Retreat.	Continuing 2026-2027 Annual



2025-2030 Program Delivery Plan

Truth Telling and Healing at the BNI

Community Need	A place at the BNI for Dharug ceremonial and cultural activities and performances	Places at the BNI for yarning, teaching and engagement that foster truth-telling, healing and connecting	Basic facility at the BNI for storage of equipment and supplies on the site and for shelter during activities	Improved site security and accessibility	
Proposed Initiative	Dharug Community Ceremonial Space Dance Circle Fire Pit	Dharug Yarning-Teaching Spaces Yarning Circle Sheltered teaching space Women's yarning space	Secure Facilities Secure storage for assets Installation of water tank, solar power and security cameras Strategies reduce risk of vandalism or theft	Long-term Entrance & Parking Redesigned entrance from Rooty Hill Rd North, including signal controlled access, gate, parking and access to BNI across the drainage channel	
Inputs	Design options Management proposals Cost estimate Project schedule and tender Community endorsement	Design options Management proposals Cost estimate Project schedule and tender Community endorsement	Design options Management proposals Cost estimate Project schedule and tender Community endorsement	Design options for access, parking, fencing and security Collaboration with Richmond Rd Upgrade Project and Blacktown Council on access and entry development Cost estimate and budget Project schedule and tenders	
Activities	Installation of a permanent space to support Dharug ceremonial and cultural activation of the BNI site. A permanent Dance Circle and Fire Pit will facilitate safe and sustainable activities on the site without requiring reinstallation for each event. It will facilitate more frequent and spontaneous cultural activity and events and provide a key focal point for the delivery of the landscape design plan	Creation of spaces within the landscape design that nurture culturally sensitive and appropriate opportunities for engagement in a range of small group activities such as community consultation, workshops to teach a range of cultural skills and knowledge, On-Country experience workshops for non-Dharug groups (including truth-telling programs, schools programs, industry training etc). Spaces are required that will allow programs to proceed under a range of weather conditions (rain, heat, sun etc) It is appropriate to include creation of a discrete women's space along Bells Creek that facilitate women's only programs	A modest storage facility is being installed to accommodate basic materials including tables, chairs, teaching materials, gardening and landscaping equipment, safety equipment will greatly facilitate activation and maintenance of the site. Landscaping of the area within the storage compound to support cultural programs and comfort for users.	To ensure facilities installed as part of the Truth Telling & Healing Project are protected from damage or loss through vandalism and theft. To design fencing and other security options that are sensitive to the site's carceral history and future management in line with the Conservation Management Plan	
Risks	<i>NB: Insurance cover must be maintained as a core risk mitigation strategy</i>	The scale and storying of the site requires a sensitive response to the scale of installed facilities to retain the intimacy and respond to the vulnerability of the site. Getting the scale wrong will risk overwhelming the broader landscape design and inviting commercialisation rather than fostering cultural integrity of the site in the future.	The Yarning Circle should be harmonised with the Dance Circle and may include the Fire Pit The sheltered teaching space must be accessible (universal design) and sit lightly on Country and allow easy access to toilet and storage facilities and be integrated into rainwater harvesting and solar power collection designs. Women's Yarning Space to be created through landscape design and planting along Bells Creek towards Richmond Road	Inappropriate design not accepted by Dharug community or creates adverse impacts on neighbouring properties Off-grid options not acceptable to Council or other regulatory authority but continue to seek options to ensure necessary utility. Scale of facilities is insufficient to meet operating needs	Increased visibility of the site will increase its visibility as a target for racist or casual vandalism Installation of facilities on the site will be seen as public facilities and attract inappropriate or undesirable uses and activities on the site Improved accessibility to the site will increase risks of theft from facilities Inappropriate fencing or security presents the site as a carceral landscape rather than a place of healing and belonging
Outcomes	Submission of DA or other required approvals Signed contracts for completion Installation of the Dance Circle and Fire Pit	Submission of DA or other required approvals Signed contracts for completion Installation of the Yarning Circle and Sheltered Teaching Space Planting and landscape work to create women's yarning space	Submission of DA or other required approvals Signed contracts for completion Installation and smooth operation of the facilities	Submission of DA or other required approvals Signed contracts for completion Installation and smooth operation of the facilities	
Evaluation Measures	Approvals Completion Community use for events Successful maintenance	Approvals Completion Community use for events Successful maintenance	Approvals Completion Community use for events Successful maintenance	Approvals Completion Successful maintenance without losses	