



# JERRINJA LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

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## POSITIONING STATEMENT: MANYANA SUBDIVISION

It is Reconciliation Week, and this year's theme is "In This Together". It is in that spirit we add our voice to community concerns about the Manyana Subdivision. We thank the many community activists working towards a positive resolution. We all hope the various levels of government will work with the developer to find more than a temporary reprieve.

We are "In This Together". We are all concerned that one of the few unburnt areas of the coast is going to be destroyed at a time when our ecosystem is at its most fragile. Beyond this, the Aboriginal cultural heritage value – particularly in terms of intangible heritage – has increased significantly. There is a recognised Aboriginal site on the land, again one of the few which survived the impact of the bushfires.

While the development is subject to a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, this was developed in line with the current, deeply flawed, processes and legislative framework for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The assessment of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of this site was undertaken in the paradigm of western science, failing to appreciate deep intangible cultural values that are more than physical remnants.

The importance of our connection to Country, and the spiritual, social, and cultural importance of that land, are legislated and we have the mandate to protect Country. We must demand better than a token understanding of what that means. We have 60,000 years' experience in land management and the continual practice of our knowledge system and encouragement from Government could well have mitigated the catastrophic summer bushfires. We want the entire community to benefit from that knowledge - we're all "In This Together".

We have written to all levels of government and to the developer this week. In the interests of practical, rather than symbolic or token reconciliation, we look forward to their reply.

Alfred Wellington  
Chief Executive Officer  
29<sup>th</sup> May, 2020