

The NLC's new Darwin office precinct reaches critical milestone

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The development of the Northern Land Councils (NLC's) new Darwin office precinct has reached a critical milestone, marking 50% design completion.

The proposed office precinct at 29 Julius Street, Berrimah will serve NLC constituents and the public as a cultural hub, showcasing the history and culture of the NLC's seven regions, while allowing the three Darwin-based locations of the NLC to consolidate and operate from a single site.

Consultations on the design have been underway since January 2021 with project managers Turner and Townsend, Council members, staff and the designated Project Control Group actively participating. Significantly, this process has involved direct engagement with Indigenous leaders who hold Executive member responsibilities within the NLC.

As a result of this collaborative approach, the design is informed by representations of each of the NLC's seven regions, reflecting diversity in art, landscape, dreaming, connection to land and aspirations for the future. Territory-based Ashford Architects have incorporated shared cultural symbols identified in the design:

- the Woomera, a traditional tool used for music, digging and hunting by the seven NLC regions, is represented in the base building and roof structure. The Woomera and spear design 'point' towards each of the NLC regions.
- the Dilly bag, a woven bag representative of the cultural authority of women and their importance to cultural stories and law, influences the entry statement, exterior shade and privacy aspects of the design.

Environmental features of the design include passive solar shading, solar collection, water conservation and compliance with national energy efficiency standards.

NLC Chair Samuel Bush-Blanasi welcomed the 50% design milestone and the involvement of Traditional Owners in the design process.

"The new Northern Land Council Darwin office precinct will represent our history, culture and ambition for the future. I am glad Council Members and staff have been able to contribute to the design."

"Next year is our 50th anniversary. I am pleased we will have a purpose built facility so we can continue to grow and support Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people for our next fifty years."

NLC CEO Mr Joe Martin-Jard said he anticipates a keen interest from local construction and fabrication providers in the next stage of the Darwin office precinct, with NLC inviting tenders for the provision of Design, Document and Construction early in the new year.

“This iconic building will stand as a landmark for Aboriginal rights and autonomy in the Top End and beyond. I look forward to engaging with inspired, enthusiastic partners in its construction.”

To view the Future Tender Opportunity (FTO) visit: [Tenders | Northern Land Council \(nlc.org.au\)](https://www.nlc.org.au/tenders)

The project is being funded through the Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA). The ABA is a special account legislated under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Acts 1976* (Cth) for a range of purposes, including to support the operational and capital requirements of the four Northern Territory land councils.