



BUSINESS PAPER

Ordinary Council Meeting Wednesday, 12 March 2025

Date: Wednesday, 12 March 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

**Location: Gulargambone Central School
Yalcogrin Street
Gulargambone**

The Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Oath/ Affirmation of Office made at the start of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of Coonamble Shire and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities, and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act or any other Act, to the best of their skill and judgement. It is also a requirement that the Mayor and Councillors disclose conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice.

**Daniel Keady
Mayor**

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Gulargambone Central School, Yalcogrin Street, Gulargambone on Wednesday, 12 March 2025 at 10:00 AM.

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1 OPENING MEETING**2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet today, the Wailwan people and the Gamilaroi people and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**4 APOLOGIES/APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS****5 DEPUTATION/DELEGATIONS****6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****RECOMMENDATION**

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council held on Wednesday, 12 February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting.



MINUTES

**Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday, 12 February 2025**

**MINUTES OF COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE SHIRE CHAMBER, COONAMBLE
ON WEDNESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 9.00AM**

PRESENT: Mayor Daniel Keady, Deputy Mayor Steven Butler, Cr Karen Churchill, Cr Adam Cohen, Cr Paul Fisher, Cr Margaret Garnsey, Cr Phillipa Goldsmith, Cr Ahmad Karanouh, Cr Paul Wheelhouse

IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Gallagher (General Manager), Bruce Quarmby (Director Corporate Services), Kerrie Murphy (Director Infrastructure), Barry Broe (Director Community, Planning, Development & Environment), Jennifer Maundrell (Executive Manager Corporate Governance), Deborah Tatton (Manager Finance and minute taker).

1 OPENING MEETING

The Mayor opened the meeting at 9.06 am, advising the attendees of the following:

- The meeting is being livestreamed and/or recorded for on-demand viewing via Council's website and a person's image and/or voice may be broadcast;
- Attendance at the meeting is to be taken as consent by a person to their image and /or voice being webcast (time will be allowed by the Chairperson for people to leave the meeting before it starts);
- All speakers should refrain from making any defamatory comments or releasing any personal information about another individual without their consent;
- Council accepts no liability for any damage that may result from defamatory comments made by persons attending the meetings – all liability will rest with the individual who made the comments;
- The recording will be available on Council's website for a minimum of 12 months and retained as a Council record;
- Individuals acting in a disorderly manner can be asked by the Chairperson to leave the meeting under the Council's Code of Meeting Practice;
- The meeting must not be recorded by others without the prior written consent of the Council in accordance with the Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet today, the Wailwan people and the Gamilaroi people and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Nil

4 APOLOGIES/APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS

Nil

5 DEPUTATION/DELEGATIONS

Report 10.14 – Hello Coonamble - Jamie-Lee Trindall, Michael Cathcart, Hannie Rayson

Report 10.12 – Moonya Feedlot Expansion - Angus Chadwick, Daniel Drum, Michelle Clifton

Crs Keady, Butler and Wheelhouse declared a pecunery interest in the item and advised that they would listen to the presentation but would leave the room when the item was being considered.

Extension of time requested for presentation**RESOLUTION 2025/1**

Moved: Cr Karen Churchill

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That an extension of time be granted to the applicants and consultants for further questions on the Development Application.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**RESOLUTION 2025/2**

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That amendments identified be made to correct the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council held on Wednesday, 11 December 2024 and be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

7 DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Danny Keady declared pecuniary interest in Report 10.12 as he is the owner of a neighbouring property and will leave the meeting and not participate in the deliberation of the item.

Cr Paul Wheelhouse declared pecuniary interest in Report 10.12 as he will likely receive additional business from the expansions and will leave the meeting and not participate in the deliberation of the item..

Cr Steven Butler declared pecuniary interest in Report 10.12 as he will likely receive additional business from the expansions and will leave the meeting and not participate in the deliberation of the item.

Cr Pip Goldsmith declared non-pecuniary in Report 11.10 as she is a user of the tennis courts.

Cr Margaret Garnsey declared a non-pecuniary in Report 11.10 as she is a committee member of the Quambone Resources.

RESOLUTION 2025/3

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That the disclosures be received and noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

8 MAYORAL MINUTE

At 10:02 am, Cr Paul Wheelhouse left the meeting.

At 10:04 am, Cr Paul Wheelhouse returned to the meeting.

MAYORAL MINUTE**RESOLUTION 2025/4**

Moved: Mayor Daniel Keady

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That the report be received and noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Cr Paul Fisher gave a verbal update on the Australia Day events from Gulargambone.

SECTION A - MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL**SECTION B - MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY****9 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Nil

10 REPORTS TO COUNCIL**10.1 CORRESPONDENCE****RESOLUTION 2025/5**

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

That the report be received and noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.2 COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS/ACTIONS UPDATE**RESOLUTION 2025/6**

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

THAT COUNCIL NOTES THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION STATUS (ANNEXURE 1).

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Motion: Letter to purchaser of Sons of the Soil

RESOLUTION 2025/7

Moved: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That a letter is sent to the purchaser of the Sons of the Soil Building to lodge a Development Application by the end of March 2025.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Motion: Design of Town Entry signs

RESOLUTION 2025/8

Moved: Cr Karen Churchill

Seconded: Cr Paul Fisher

That a report be provided at the March 2025 Council meeting on the adopted design of the boundary and town entry signs which was part of the Master Plan.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.3 RATES AND CHARGES COLLECTIONS - JANUARY 2025**RESOLUTION 2025/9**

Moved: Cr Adam Cohen

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That Council receive and note the information provided in the report for rates and charges collection.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

The meeting was suspended for morning tea at 10.30am and returned at 10:58am

10.4 STATUS OF INVESTMENTS - DECEMBER & JANUARY 2024/2025**RESOLUTION 2025/10**

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That Council receives and notes the list of investments from 1 December 2024 to 29 January 2025 and that these investments comply with section 625(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and Council's Investment Policy.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.5 ADOPTION OF DRAFT POLICIES

RESOLUTION 2025/11

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

That Council adopts the following policies:

- 1. The draft Code of Meeting Practice.**
- 2. The draft Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy.**
- 3. The draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.6 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY REPORT

RESOLUTION 2025/12

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

- 1. That Council receives and notes the information in the Community Development report.**
- 2. That Council authorises the General Manager and Mayor to sign and affix the Council seal for the North Western Library Cooperative Agreement 2025-2030.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.7 WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORT FEBRUARY 2025

RESOLUTION 2025/13

Moved: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That the monthly report on waste management activities be received and noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and

Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Motion: Waste Facilities income and expenditure

RESOLUTION 2025/14

Moved: Cr Karen Churchill

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

That the waste management report includes a summary on the income and expenditure of each facility.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Motion: New Waste Facility Shed

RESOLUTION 2025/15

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That a report is provided to Council regarding the procurement process surrounding the new shed build at the Coonamble waste facility.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Motion: Quambone Waste additional bins

RESOLUTION 2025/16

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Paul Fisher

That Quambone waste transfer station to be provided with additional bins to allow the waste to be sorted at the time the waste is deposited.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and

Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

At 11:30 am, Cr Paul Wheelhouse left the meeting and declared a precunery interest in Report 10.8 (3a) as he lives close to the Yarran St Development which could have an affect on his land value and he is likely to receive additional business throughout the building phase. He removed himself from the room during the discussions.

At 11:38 am, Cr Paul Wheelhouse returned to the meeting prior to the item being voted on.

10.8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH - PROGRESS REPORT

RESOLUTION 2025/17

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Economic Development and Growth report.
2. Participate in a workshop after the March Council meeting to discuss the previous work done on the masterplans for the Coonamble CBD and Warrena Creek and to prepare a future program of work and the estimated funding required.
3. Authorise the General Manager to make two submissions under the Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program, being for:
 - (a) The Yarran Street Housing Development infrastructure.
 - (b) Continuation of the Coonamble Youth Empowerment Program

AMENDMENT

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Nil

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Economic Development and Growth report.
2. Participate in a workshop after the March Council meeting to discuss the previous work done on the masterplans for the Coonamble CBD and Warrena Creek and to prepare a future program of work and the estimated funding required.
3. Participate in a workshop with staff to collaborate on a business case and project plan for the Yarran St Development
4. Authorise the General Manager to make grant submissions for Continuation of the Coonamble Youth Empowerment Program with a Council Contribution limited \$100,000

The amendment was lost due to lack of seconder.

AMENDMENT

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Steven Butler

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Economic Development and Growth report.
2. Participate in a workshop after the March Council meeting to discuss the previous work done on the masterplans for the Coonamble CBD and Warrena Creek and to prepare a future program of work and the estimated funding required.
3. Participate in a workshop with staff to collaborate on a business case and project plan for the Yarran St Development.

THIS AMENDMENT BECAME THE MOTION FOR

RESOLUTION 2025/17

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Economic Development and Growth report.
2. Participate in a workshop after the March Council meeting to discuss the previous work done on the masterplans for the Coonamble CBD and Warrena Creek and to prepare a future program of work and the estimated funding required.
3. Participate in a workshop with staff to collaborate on a business case and project plan for the Yarran St Development.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey and Phillipa Goldsmith

Against: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Cr Paul Wheelhouse abstained from the vote

CARRIED 7/1

10.9 REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN - 016 - BOGAN, WARREN, AND COONAMBLE**RESOLUTION 2025/18**

Moved: Cr Karen Churchill

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That Council defer the Regional Drought Resilience Plan Report pending the outcome of a meeting with the General Mangers and Mayors of Coonamble, Bogan and Warren Shire Council.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.10 PLANNING, REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE PROGRESS REPORT

RESOLUTION 2025/19

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Paul Fisher

That the Planning, Regulatory and Compliance Progress Report be received and noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.11 PLANNING PROPOSAL TO REZONE COUNCIL OWNED LAND

RESOLUTION 2025/20

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That Council

- 1. Endorse Planning Proposal PP002/2024 for the Old Sheepyards Industrial Estate and forward it to the Minister for Planning seeking an amendment to the Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011 and request that a Gateway Determination be issued, excluding the delegation of Plan making powers, to enable the public exhibition of the Planning Proposal pursuant to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.**
 - (a) Upon receipt of a Gateway Determination for PP001/2024 under Section 3.34 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, places the Planning Proposal and any supporting material on public exhibition pursuant to any requirements of the Gateway Determination and Schedule 1, Clause 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*; and**
 - (b) Subject to the conditions of the Gateway Determination, undertakes those actions necessary to address outstanding matters.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith and Ahmad Karanouh

Against: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

CARRIED 8/1

Motion: Mayor Keady vacates chair

RESOLUTION 2025/21

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That Cr Goldsmith takes the chair to allow Mayor Keedy, and Deputy Mayor Butler to leave the meeting for discussions on item 10.12 DA037/2024 Moonya Feedlot Expansion

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

At 11:59am, Mayor Daniel Keady vacated the chair and leaves the meeting.

At 11:59am, Deputy Mayor Steven Butler, Cr Paul Wheelhouse leaves the meeting.

Cr Goldsmith takes the chair for the discussions on item 100.12 DA037/2024 Moonya Feedlot Expansion.

At 11:59 Lesley Duncan (Manager Planning, Regulatory & Compliance) attended the item.

10.12 DA037/2024 - MOONYA FEEDLOT EXPANSION

RESOLUTION 2025/22

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

That Council approves DA037/2024 for Intensive Livestock Agriculture (Cattle Feedlot – increase capacity from 10,000 head to 30,000 head, construction of additional feedlot pens, cattle handling facility, silage pits, flood levee, stock lanes and feed alleys, drains ponds and vehicle access) on Lot 113 DP754199, Lot 119 DP754199, Lot 121 DP754199, Lot 124 DP754199 and Lot 1 DP1124929., 701 Quambone Road, Coonamble, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development being carried out in accordance with the development application and supporting documentation except where amended by the following conditions:

Plan Title	Drawing No.	Rev.	Date
Development Application Plans and Documentation prepared by Premise			
Title Sheet & Schedule of Drawings	C001	D	22/10/2024
Existing Layout Plan	C002	D	22/10/2024
Proposed Layout Plan	C003	D	22/10/2024
Bulk Earthworks Proposed Feedlot Pens Layout	C004	D	22/10/2024
Preliminary Concept Bulk Earthworks Cut-Fill Plan	C005	D	22/10/2024
Environmental Impact Statement	-	C	22/10/2024
Soil and Water Impact Assessment	-	B	8/10/2024
Visual Impact Assessment	-	B	30/9/2024
Traffic Impact Assessment	-	B	4/10/2024
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment (redacted)	-	B	4/10/2024
Flood Impact Assessment	-	C	22/10/2024
Report prepared by Assured Environmental			
Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment	-	R0	19/06/2024
Odour Impact Assessment	-	R1	13/08/2024
Report prepared by Ecology Consulting			

Biodiversity Report	Assessment	-	v1.0	24/05/2024
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Capacity

2. The approved capacity of the feedlot is limited to 30,000 head of cattle

Prior to Issue of a Construction Certificate

3. Construction work with a value greater than \$25,000 or more requires payment of the NSW Governments Long Service Levy prior to release of any construction certificate. Evidence of payment must be provided to the registered certifier to allow release of any construction certificate. Payments should be made direct to the corporation at the following website <https://www.longservice.nsw.gov.au/>

Prior to Commencement of Works

4. Prior to the commencement of construction works, the Applicant is to obtain a Construction Certificate from either Council or Registered Certifier, certifying that the proposed works are in accordance with the Building Code of Australia and applicable Council Standards prior to any building works commencing.

Note: It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the development complies with the Building Code of Australia and applicable Council Standards in the case of building work. This may entail alterations to the proposal so that it complies with these standards.

5. The applicant is to submit to Coonamble Shire Council, at least two days prior to the commencement of any works, a 'Notice of Commencement of Building or Subdivision Works' and 'Appointment of Principal Certifier'.

During Construction

6. No nuisance or interference with the amenity of the area is to be created by reason of any process or operation on the premises causing the emission of noise, dust, smoke or any polluted discharge whatsoever.
7. Construction work involving the use of electric or pneumatic tools or other noisy operations shall be carried out only between 7.00 am and 6.00 pm on weekdays and 8.00 am and 1.00 pm on Saturdays. No work on Sundays or Public Holidays is permitted.
8. Throughout the course of construction operations on the land, toilet facilities are to be provided, at or in the vicinity of the work site. Toilet facilities are to be provided at a rate of one toilet for every 20 persons or part of 20 persons employed at the site.
9. All building rubbish and debris, including that which can be windblown,

shall be contained on site in a suitable container for disposal at an approved Coonamble Shire Council Waste Landfill Depot. The container shall be erected on the building site prior to work commencing and shall be maintained for the term of the construction to the completion of the project.

Note: No building rubbish or debris shall be placed or permitted to be placed on any adjoining public reserve, footway or road.

Note: The waste container shall be regularly cleaned to ensure proper containment of the building wastes generated on the construction site.

Upgrade to Intersection with Quambone Road

10. The access from Quambone Road is to be upgraded to the minimum required intersection treatment, being a rural Basic Auxiliary Left/Basic Auxiliary Right (BAL/BAR), as per Austroads Guide to Road Design – Part 4a Unsignalised and Signalised Intersections to facilitate safe and efficient movement of vehicles accessing the site. The applicant is to submit to Council detailed plans of the proposed road construction works together with an application under s138 of the Roads Act 1993 prior to the commencement of any works within the road corridor.

Protection of Aboriginal relics

11. Should Aboriginal relics be discovered work shall cease immediately and application be made for an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit under the provisions of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

Siding Springs Observatory – Maintaining Dark Sky

12. The development shall not contain:

- (a) Outside light fittings other than shielded light fittings, or
- (b) More than 7 shielded light fittings or more than 5 such light fittings that are not automatic light fittings, and
- (c) Be likely to result in the emission of light of 50,000 lumens or more.

Outside light fitting means a light fitting that is attached or fixed outside, including on the exterior of a building.

Shielded light fitting means a light fitting that does not permit light to shine above the horizontal plane.

Vegetation Buffer

13. (a) A vegetation buffer is to be installed in accordance with the Odour Impact Assessment prepared by Assured Environmental and dated 13 August 2024. Detailed plans showing the layout and species of tree are to

be submitted to Council prior to commencement of any vegetation planting.

(b)The applicant is to submit to Council for approval a Vegetation Management Plan at least six months prior to commencement of works. The Vegetation Management Plan is to provide details and timing of the proposed planting and management of the vegetation buffer, as well as the mitigation measures outlined in the Visual Impact Assessment and the Biodiversity Assessment Report. The vegetation buffer is to be in place six months prior to any works start.

Visual Amenity

14. Mitigation works are to be carried out as detailed in Part 5 of the Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) prepared by Premise and dated 30 September 2024. The following plans are required to be submitted to Council prior to any commencement the works identified in the VIA:
 - a. Plan showing trees to be retained
 - b. Plan of temporary and permanent access. All access roads are to minimise vegetation removal, changes to landform and visual impacts.
 - c. Lighting plan for construction compound that complies with AS4282-2019 Control of obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting and complies the requirements of s.5.14 Siding Spring Observatory – maintaining dark sky.

Flood Levee

15. Prior to the commencement of any works on the flood levee, the applicant is to consult with Water NSW and obtain approval under s90(4) of the Water Management Act 2000. If approval under the Water Management Act 2000 is not required, documentary evidence is to be provided to Council.

Odour

16. (a) A vegetation buffer - a minimum of 10 m wide is to be planted as detailed in section 7.3 Buffer Design in the Odour Impact Assessment prepared by Assured Environmental and dated 13 August 2024. The vegetation buffer is to be planted along the southern, eastern and north-eastern sides of the facility. A detailed plan of the vegetation buffer is to be provided to Council for approval prior to any planting taking place.

(b) Odour Mangement Plan - The applicant is to undertake monitoring of odour levels emitted from the premises. An Odour Management Plan is to be submitted to Council for approval at least 6 months prior to commencement of works on the site. The Odour Management Plan is to provide details of the methodology of sampling and details of offensive odour complaints management system. The Plan must include baseline measurement and reporting of odour levels before any works start and regular ongoing measurement of odour.

Prior to Occupation or Commencement of Use

17. Prior to the occupation or use of the development, an Occupation Certificate must be obtained from the Principal Certifier for the subject development and all conditions of development consent fully complied with.

Prescribed Conditions under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000

18. A development consent for development that involves any building work must be issued subject to the following conditions:

- (a) that the work must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia, in force on the date of the application.
- (b) in the case of residential building work for which the Home Building Act 1989 requires there to be a contract of insurance in force in accordance with Part 6 of that Act, that such a contract of insurance must be entered into and be in force before any building work authorised to be carried out by the certificate commences.

Note: This condition does not limit any other conditions to which a complying development certificate may be subject, as referred to in section 85A (6) (a) of the Act.

Note: This condition does not apply:

- (a) to the extent to which an exemption is in force under clause 187 or 188, subject to the terms of any condition or requirement referred to in clause 187 (6) or 188 (4), of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000, or
- (b) to the erection of a temporary building, other than a temporary structure that is used as an entertainment venue.

Note: In this condition, a reference to the Building Code of Australia is a reference to that Code as in force on the date the application for the relevant complying development certificate is made.

19. A sign must be erected in a prominent position on any site on which building work, subdivision work or demolition work is being carried out:

- (a) showing the name, address and telephone number of the principal certifying authority for the work, and
- (b) showing the name of the principal contractor (if any) for any building work and a telephone number on which that person may be contacted

outside working hours, and

(c) stating that unauthorised entry to the site is prohibited.

Any such sign is to be maintained while the building work, subdivision work or demolition work is being carried out, but must be removed when the work has been completed.

Note: This condition does not apply in relation to building work, subdivision work or demolition work that is carried out inside an existing building, that does not affect the external walls of the building.

Note: This condition does not apply in relation to Crown building work that is certified, in accordance with section 109R of the Act, to comply with the technical provisions of the State's building laws.

Note: This condition applies to a complying development certificate issued before 1 July 2004 only if the building work, subdivision work or demolition work involved had not been commenced by that date.

Note: Principal certifying authorities and principal contractors must also ensure that signs required by this clause are erected and maintained (see clause 227A which currently imposes a maximum penalty of \$1,100).

EPA General Terms of Approval as per Attachment A

In Favour: Crs Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith and Ahmad Karanouh

Against: Cr Karen Churchill

CARRIED 5/1

At 12:09pm, Cr Paul Wheelhouse, Deputy Mayor Steven Butler and Mayor Daniel Keady returned to the meeting. Cr Goldsmith vacated the chair and Mayor Daniel Keady returned to the chair.

At 12:09pm Lesley Duncan (Manager Planning, Regulatory & Compliance) left the meeting.

10.13 COUNCILLOR REQUESTS FOR INCLUSION IN THE DRAFT 2025/26 OPERATIONAL BUDGET.**RESOLUTION 2025/23**

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

- 1. That Council receive and note the contents of the report suggesting items to be considered for inclusion in the draft 2025/26 Budget.**
- 2. That Councillor suggestions for items to be considered for inclusion in the draft 2025/26 Operational Plan and Budget be returned to Council's Corporate Services Department by 7 March 2025.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.14 PROJECT PROPOSAL - HELLO COONAMBLE**RESOLUTION 2025/24**

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

- 1. That Council notes the information contained within this report.**
- 2. That Council requests that Coonamble Shire Council be granted all copyrights to the Hello Coonamble Project and its collateral.**
- 3. That conditional on Council being granted copyright to the production and collateral, Council resolves to agree to fund the "Hello Coonamble Project" to the value of \$50,000.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Cr Karen Churchill

CARRIED 8/1

At 12:24 pm, Cr Adam Cohen left the meeting.

At 12:26 pm, Cr Adam Cohen returned to the meeting.

10.15 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW - DECEMBER 2024**RESOLUTION 2025/25**

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Adam Cohen

1. That Council approves the variations to votes as listed in the budget review documents distributed under separate cover.
2. That Council notes, in the opinion of the Responsible Accounting Officer based on the information as presented in the December Budget review; that Council will be in a satisfactory financial position as at 30 June 2025.
3. That Council notes the classification and position of Council's estimated restricted (reserve) funds as at 31 December 2024.
4. That a report is presented to Council bi-monthly to identify outstanding grant debtors and associated costs for the project.
5. That Council move to prioritise works for which the grant funding has been received or where milestones have a due date in the near future.
6. That Council implements procedures where grant funding is to be acquitted within 60 days of the final invoice being paid.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

10.16 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES - WORKS IN PROGRESS**RESOLUTION 2025/26**

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Paul Fisher

That the information be received and noted on the works in progress within Council's Infrastructure Directorate.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11 NOTICES OF MOTIONS/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE/RESCISSION MOTIONS**11.1 NOTICE OF MOTION - PLANNING PROPOSAL PP001/2024****RESOLUTION 2025/27**

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith
Seconded: Cr Paul Fisher

That Council endorse Planning Proposal PP001/2024 for the Coonamble Artesian Bore Bath Project and forward it to the Minister for Planning seeking an amendment to the Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011 and request that a Gateway Determination be issued, excluding the delegation of Plan making powers, to enable the public exhibition of the Planning Proposal pursuant to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

- (a) Upon receipt of a Gateway Determination for PP001/2024 under Section 3.34 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, places the Planning Proposal and any supporting material on public exhibition pursuant to any requirements of the Gateway Determination and Schedule 1, Clause 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*; and**
- (b) Subject to the conditions of the Gateway Determination, undertakes those actions necessary to address outstanding matters.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher and Phillipa Goldsmith

Against: Crs Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Margaret Garnsey, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

LOST 4/5

At 1:06 pm, Cr Adam Cohen left the meeting after the voting for resolution 2025/27 had occurred.

At 1:08 pm, Cr Adam Cohen returned to the meeting.

11.2 NOTICE OF MOTION - INCENTIVE TO RATEPAYERS FOR MAINTAINING PUBLIC FOOTPATHS - CR P WHEELHOUSE**RESOLUTION 2025/28**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That Council notes the information provided and seeks a further report following investigation into the options available to achieve the outcome of better maintaining public footpaths.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11.3 NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCIL TO APPLY FOR LOAN TO FUND EXTENSION OF BITUMEN ROADS - CR P WHEELHOUSE**RESOLUTION 2025/29**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

Seconded: Cr Paul Fisher

That Council seeks financial modelling and a detailed analysis and report on borrowing funds for sealing roads to be considered as part of the development of the upcoming community strategic and operational plans.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11.4 NOTICE OF MOTION - CLASSIFICATION OF TOORAWEEENAH ROAD AND PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR TOORWAWEEENAH ROAD PROJECT - CR P WHEELHOUSE**RESOLUTION 2025/30**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

That Council notes the information provided in response to the notice of motion on Tooraweenah Road, which details that:

- 1. Tooraweenah Road is classified as a Local Road.**
- 2. Tenderlink is a portal where tendering information is received and stored, with Council being solely responsible for all decision-making.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11.5 NOTICE OF MOTION - FORMATION OF PRIORITY QUARRY SUB COMMITTEE - CR P WHEELHOUSE**RESOLUTION 2025/31**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

- 1. That Council establishes a quarry committee and associated Terms of Reference for the purposes of facilitating the pending crushing plant renewal at the quarry.**
- 2. The committee will comprise of the Mayor, two Councillors (Cr Wheelhouse, Cr Fisher, alternate member be Cr Butler in the event that Cr Wheelhouse is precluded due to his business interests), General Manager, Director Infrastructure, Director Corporate Services and the Quarry Manager.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11.6 NOTICE OF MOTION - PRIORITY PREPARATION FOR BORE BATHS AND INTENTIONS FOR EXCESS WATER - CR P WHEELHOUSE**RESOLUTION 2025/32**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That Council notes that a master plan for the Artesian Bore Bath project will be prepared that encompasses the treatment and disposal of wastewater and the appropriate consultation with the EPA will be undertaken.

In Favour: Crs Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Cr Daniel Keady

CARRIED 8/1

11.7 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS IN QUAMBONE - CR M GARNSEY**RESOLUTION 2025/33**

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

That Council notes that a pool party occurred in Quambone on 5 February 2025 and that future Australia Day celebrations will include Quambone.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11.8 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMPLETION OF BRIGIDINE SISTERS GARDEN - CR M GARNSEY**RESOLUTION 2025/34**

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

That Council note the information provided in the response to the Notice of Motion on the completion of the Brigidine Sisters Garden.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**11.9 NOTICE OF MOTION - PRESENTATION OF COONAMBLE TOWNSHIP - CR M GARNSEY****RESOLUTION 2025/35**

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That Council notes the information provided in response to the Notice of Motion on presentation of the Coonamble township.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**11.10 NOTICE OF MOTION -COONAMBLE AND QUAMBONE TENNIS COURTS UPGRADE - CR M GARNSEY****RESOLUTION 2025/36**

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

That Council notes that Tennis NSW have visited the Coonamble tennis court site and will provide a report on their audit of Council's tennis facilities in the local government area.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

That a report is provided to Council including:

- 1. The full costs to bring the tennis courts up to standard;**
- 2. The scope of works provided to the contractor to carry out the works of both facilities and provide full disclosure of the grant expenditure of these works.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

AMENDMENT BECOMES THE MOTION
CARRIED 8/1

12 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Nil

13 Conclusion of the Meeting

The Meeting closed at 1:30pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Council held on 12 March 2025.

.....
CHAIRPERSON

7 DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

8 MAYORAL MINUTE

MAYORAL MINUTE

File Number: M3
Author: Daniel Keady-Mayor
Authoriser: Daniel Keady, Mayor
Annexures: Nil

I am pleased to deliver the Mayoral report for March 2025.

SENIORS WEEK

Our Seniors are celebrating Seniors Festival this month with two events. The Seniors Safari Luncheon on 6 March has already attracted more than 100 members of the community. It is always a pleasure to enjoy the company of this generation who have contributed so much to Coonamble Shire.

Then on 13 March, a busload of adventurous Seniors will head off on the Seniors 'Gone Wild' Western Plains Zoo trip, thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the Department of Communities and Justice. These two activities rely on the services provided by our local business community and on the work of Council's Community Development team. I thank all involved for providing these two events for our Seniors.

REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN

The General Manager and I met with the General Managers and Mayors of Bogan and Warren Councils on 20 February 2025. A report has been provided in the March business paper, however the essence of the meeting was to discuss the Regional Drought Resilience Plan 016 – and the proposed \$300,000 funding against the projects that were included in the plan document. The aim is to form a collaborative approach to establish the region as a premier nature-based tourism destination.

MASTER PLANS

As a new Council, many of us continue to familiarise ourselves with the framework of plans and strategies that guide the work of Council and the decisions we make. Councillors were invited to a workshop recently with staff to consider three elements.

Firstly, the Coonamble Shire Masterplan 2020-2030. Secondly, what we can do to revitalise the CBD and attract more businesses. Thirdly, the need for a Warrena Creek Reserve Masterplan and Plan of Management to guide future development of that site.

CORE AND CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Representatives from Orana Support Services recently presented their plans for a Core and Cluster Women's Refuge in Coonamble to a workshop with Councillors. This project is supported by a grant from the Department of Communities and Justice that will fund the building of a 'core' facility – housing the administration and consultation suites, along with a separate communal area for tenants – and several stand-alone units that 'cluster' around it.

The Core and Cluster Women's Refuge would provide temporary accommodation for women and children up to the age of 18 to leave situations of domestic violence.

Council will be considering a report at the March meeting regarding this development and how we can assist. It is crystal clear in this report how important it is for Coonamble to have this type of facility. Statistics about the incidence of domestic violence in Coonamble reinforce this need. For example, Coonamble records the second highest rates of domestic violence assault across all Local Government Areas of NSW.

BORE BATH PROJECT

Council has been considering the direction of this project and in particular the best location for it. Councillors met recently with staff to discuss the status of the project and advised of their preference to move the site back to where the project was originally proposed beside the golf course. Council will consider the way forward for the project at the March meeting

INDUSTRIAL LAND

Council is well on the way to establishing more land for industry in Coonamble. This follows our decision at the February meeting to submit a planning proposal to rezone land centred on the old sheepyards at Coonamble, on the corner of Quambone Road and Back Gular Road. This could give up to 5.5 ha available for industrial land blocks.

This planning proposal has several further steps to move through before the land is rezoned. We will get more status reports at coming meetings as the proposal moves through each of these steps.

TESTING FOR PFAS

I congratulate and thank Council's Utilities team on its initiative in testing our Shire's town and village water supplies for the 'forever chemicals' of the Perfluoroalkyl Substances or PFAS group.

The NSW Parliament has set up a Select Committee on PFAS Contamination in Waterways and Drinking Water Supplies throughout NSW to identify communities at risk from this contamination and to determine the best ways to deal with it.

In response, our Utilities team took the initiative to test our drinking supplies and found no detectable traces of these forever chemicals.

In Australia, the historical use of PFAS in fire-fighting foams has resulted in increased levels being detected at sites like airports, defence bases and other sites where fire-fighting training has been conducted or where fire suppression systems are installed for extinguishing liquid-fuel fires.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

SECTION A - MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL

SECTION B - MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

9 COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 CASTLEREGH MACQUARIE COUNTY COUNCIL (CMCC) FEBRUARY 2025 UPDATE

File Number: C6 and N7

Author: Margaret Garnsey-Councillor
Paul Fisher-Councillor

Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager

Annexures: 1. CMCC February 2025  

PURPOSE

To provide Council an update and a copy of the meeting and provide minutes from the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council (CMCC) held on 24 February 2025 meeting.

BACKGROUND

CMCC is a local government authority for weed management control in the Walgett, Coonamble, Warren, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shire Council areas. The committee meets quarterly.

Council's role is to work with landowners and occupiers to help them meet their general biosecurity duty as part of the Biosecurity Act 2015.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP: Strategy 17. Support environmental initiatives which grow our contribution to broader environmental outcomes for future generations

(b) Financial Considerations

None directly relating to this report.

COMMENTARY

The CMCC met on Monday 24th February 2025

The Committee Report and Minutes are attached for Council reference.

Parthenium – On the 17th of December 2024 CMCC staff detected 4 new Parthenium sites in the Walgett Shire (WSC), 20km south of Walgett all within 20km of each other. 308 mature plants were found. All sites have been treated and red awareness posts in place. The infestations all occurred where new roadworks had recently been completed.

There is also an area of concern in Coonamble Shire at the Wingadee Reserve where WSC plant depot was located. The Wingadee reserve will be inspected along with the WSC outbreak every 28 days for 7 years until the area is declared clean.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Legal Implications

Biosecurity Act 2015

(c) Social Implications

Nil

(d) Environmental Implications

Refer to attached report

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Nil

(f) Risk Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The CMCC discussed several matters at its meeting on 24th February 2025 and the attached minutes reflect the meeting outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report and minutes of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council held 24 February 2025 be received and noted.

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council Meeting
24th February, 2025 commencing at 10.35 am.

Attended by Cr Fisher & Cr Garnsey

- Chairperson – Cr Doug Batton (Gilgandra Shire Mayor)
- Deputy Chairperson – Cr Doug Kinsey (Warren Shire)
Both these positions have a 2-year term ending in September, 2026
- Todd Pallister (LLS) addressed the CMCC meeting on the Hudson Pear Programme.
- Normal meeting procedures such as:-
Confirmation on previous minutes held 25th November 2024.
Reports of Committees:- Central West Regional Weeds Committee,
North West Weeds Officers Committee, Parthenium Taskforce & ARIC
Reports of the General Manager
- Quarterly Biosecurity Report in the Unincorporated Areas by Andrea Fletcher
- ◆ **Hudson Pear** - there was an aerial surveillance for Hudson Pear along Stephens Creek in Broken Hill. Core infestations on 3 adjoining properties were found with each property size being 100,000ha each. The biological site on one of the properties that was released 12th October 2024 has taken very well. More releases were made at this site 6th December 2024.

CMCC were engaged to do aerial surveillance over a Hudson Pear infestation that CMCC discovered after attending a workshop in Cobar. The surveillance was to ascertain the spread. This infestation has remained on the one property.
- ◆ **Parkinsonia** - was found on a property along Burr Creek in Milparinka. 10 mature plants were found on this site. Inspection was loaded and plants treated.
- ◆ **Parthenium** – On the 17th December, 2024 CMCC staff detected 4 new Parthenium sites in the Walgett Shire, 20km south of Walgett all within 20km of each other. 308 mature plants were found. All sites have been treated and red awareness posts in place. The infestations all occurred where new roadworks had recently been completed.

There is also an area of concern in Coonamble Shire at the Wingadee Reserve where WSC plant depot was located. The Wingadee reserve will be inspected along with the WSC outbreak every 28 days for 7 years until the area is declared clean.
- ◆ **African Boxthorn** - a power point presentation on the biological control of African Boxthorn was then presented. Of interest is the success of the agent on a site in the Warrumbungle shire at Coonabarabran that can now be used to introduce the rust to other infested areas by taking plant cuttings. This gives CMCC a considerable amount of infected vegetative matter to be able to distribute across the CMCC area.
- ◆ 11th March, 2025 Central West Regional Meeting being held in Coonamble.
- ◆ Next CMCC meeting - 28th April, 2025 Coonamble Shire Council Chambers
- ◆ Meeting closed at 12.35 pm.

9.2 MINUTES OF AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - 26 NOVEMBER 2024

File Number: C-6-19

Author: Deborah Tatton-Manager Finance & Procurement

Authoriser: Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services

Annexures: 1. ARIC Adopted Minutes 26112024 [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

To present Council with minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) meeting held on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The quarterly ARIC meeting was held via Teams at the Coonamble Shire Council administration building on Tuesday 26 November 2024. Minutes of the meeting are attached to this report.

BACKGROUND

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee was established by Council resolution 2023/58 (13 September 2023)

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP L1.3 Deliver successful strategies and operations which increase the community's confidence in the integrity and capability of Coonamble Shire Council.

(b) Financial Considerations

Nil

COMMENTARY

Council is in an agreement with Gilgandra Shire Council to share a common ARIC.

The ARIC meeting of 26 November 2024 was held via Teams at the respective Council buildings.

Items discussed at the meeting were:

- Legislative Requirements
- Risk Management and WHS
- Financial management, including the audited Financial Statements
- IT Governance
- Status update on Council's compliance with the OLG guidelines for risk management and internal audit.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The ARIC is a key component of Council's corporate governance.

(b) Legal Implications

It is a statutory requirement to have an ARIC.

(c) Social Implications

Nil

(d) Environmental Implications

Nil

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Nil

(f) Risk Implications

None attached to this report.

CONCLUSION

The next ARIC meeting is due to be held on 26 November 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held on Tuesday 26th November 2024.

**Coonamble Shire Council
ARIC Committee Meeting**

Tuesday 26 November 2024
Coonamble Shire Council Administration Building
Meeting Room
9:01am

Present

Chair – Graeme Fleming PSM (via videoconference), Sam Helweh (Independent Member - via videoconference), Meredith Caelli (Independent Member - via videoconference) General Manager – Paul Gallagher, Executive Manager Corporate Governance – Jenni Maundrell, Director Corporate Services – Bruce Quarmby, Director Infrastructure – Kerrie Murphy.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet today and recognise their continuing connection to land, water, and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Apologies

Director Community, Planning, Development & Environment – Barry Broe
Cr Pip Goldsmith
Audit Representative Nexia – Brett Hanger

Moved: M Caelli
2nd: S Helweh

Declarations of interest

Chair Graeme Fleming - declared a Standing Declaration of Potential Interest as an occasional provider of consultancy services to local government and as Chair of Lachlan, Warren and Gilgandra ARIC committees. He advised there were no subjects or issues which were directly affected on the current meeting agenda.

Sam Helweh – declared a Standing Declaration of Potential Interest as he has a relationship with a Sister City

Minutes of previous meeting

Comments: Date of previous minutes to be updated to correct date being 2nd October 2024

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee noted the minutes of the Coonamble Shire Council Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held on Wednesday 2nd October 2024.

Moved: S Helweh

2nd: M Caelli

Business arising

Nil

Report 7.1 - Legislative Requirements:

- Discussion on new software tool "Reliansys". This will allow for more automation and for workflows to be more easily reviewed and identified if tasks are overdue, which will then be escalated. Reports can also be generated to be presented to ARIC.

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee

1. Notes that Council's legislative compliance is soon moving from an ad hoc manual process to utilising the online governance platform, RelianSys.
2. Request that a report is prepared and presented to ARIC six monthly on the legislative updates and any actions necessary for Council. The first report to be in April 2025 and thereafter to be in June and November each year and included in our annual work plans.

Moved: G Fleming

2nd: M Caelli

Report 7.2 – Risk Management

- Discussion on recent truck accident and actions taken including but not limited to:
 - Attendance of drivers and passengers to hospital and receive medical clearance to return to work
 - Safe Work notified
 - Employee Assistance was offered – but was not accessed by employees involved
 - Review of practices of using back road which may not be safest options. There is currently no Council Policy to say Back Roads cannot be used.
 - WHS Manager recommended staying on main roads and do not use back roads.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee notes updates in risk management include:

- Finalisation of quarry traffic and vehicle management plan.
- Finalisation of quarry operation of vehicle and mobile equipment procedure.
- Consultation with ELT on strategic risk register.

Moved: S Helweh

2nd: M Caelli

Director Community, Planning, Development & Environment – Barry Broe join meeting at 9:30

Report 7.3 – Financial Management

- Discussion of financial results for year ending 30 June 2024.
 - All funds returned surplus results
 - Heavy reliant of Grant funding
 - Did not carry full FAGS grant to allow \$425k unrestricted funds
 - Follow up of outstanding Grant funding owed to Council
 - Spoken to relevant ministers
 - Signing up to Triparty Agreement to help bring forward cashflow. 20% upfront payment in future.
 - Additional report being provided to MANEX to summarise Grant milestones
 - OLG saying state funding is the reason for the hold up of distribution of funding.
 - Debt Recovery – over the benchmark
 - Additional resources to follow up outstanding debt
 - Beginning the groundwork for Sale of Land for unpaid rates
 - Sewage – Non-residential charge was levied in late June resulting in timing of reporting and collection. This is a limitation to the accounting package Council currently uses.
 - Age of Assets – Water and Sewer
 - Relining Mains program
 - Sewer Maintenance Program
 - Sewer Treatment Works redesign – currently in design stage
 - Water Filtration has had limited maintenance, but overall, there has been an increase in this program.
 - Audit Process
 - Audit Office Draft Management Letter provided new/additional points. Council has provided responses to these and have implemented processes to address these points.
 - Standing Points:

- Excessive Leave balances – Key Staff and limited resources
- Remediation Provisions – Qualitive Surveyor employed
- Segregation of Duties
- There were lots of back and forwards between finance staff and auditors to allow auditors to make clear assessment.
- Aiming for early close off for assets
- General Revaluation of transport infrastructure
- Development Contribution Plan currently not in place as Council have deemed it to be prohibitive to development in the local government area. Possibly should be reconsidered in the future.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee notes:

1. Council's financial position after the quarterly budget review has deteriorated from an original operational budget surplus of \$5,485 to an anticipated operational deficit of \$5,060,469. The deterioration is predominantly attributable to accounting treatment for the prepaid portion of the 2024/25 Financial Assistance Grant.
2. Council's audited Financial Statements for the financial year 2023/24 show a net operating surplus for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes of \$2,185,000.

Moved: M Caelli

2nd: S Helweh

Report 7.4 – IT Governance

- Discussions on Cyber Leadership Course
- Further collaboration between Risk, IT and MANEX on cyber security.
- Biggest Risk identified as being only 1 person in Council for IT.
 - Options to mitigate risk
 - New position of IT Officer to be filled
 - Use 3rd party resources to provide additional back up support services.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee

1. Notes the positive steps that Council is taking to ensure continued capability in its IT Governance, including participation in Cyber Security Leadership training and that Council is performing above national average in self-assessed cyber controls.
2. Requests a report to ARIC to update on Council's Cyber Security Risk and Processes and note any positive actions.

Moved: S Helweh

2nd: M Caelli

Report 7.5 – Status report – Compliance with OLG guidelines

- Amend time limited terms of chairperson and independent members of ARIC to be Sept 28
- Strategic Work Plan – every 4 years
 - Annual Work Plan. Work with Senior Staff to identify areas of improvement to incorporate and build into 4-year Strategic Plan
 - Designed based on prioritise if Council.
 - Sam and Meredith to supply examples from other Councils

RECOMMENDATION: The committee

1. Notes the status of Council’s compliance with implementation of the Office of Local Government’s Risk Management and Internal Audit Guidelines.
2. Agree that the four-year plan, be simple, staff identify all issues, Committee then have a discussion to prioritise issues, and we use the templates that are currently available.

Moved: M Caelli

2nd: S Helweh

General Business

- Sharing of Business Paper reports with Gilgandra Shire Council
- ARIC Conference scheduled for first week in April
- Joint Appointment of Internal Auditor; with recommendations sent to Gilgandra Shire
- Next meeting Tuesday 4th March 2025 at 9am.

Conclusion of the Meeting:

The meeting Closed at 10:46am

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Chairperson

10 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

10.1 CORRESPONDENCE

File Number: C20

Author: Marina Colwell-Executive Support Officer

Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager

Annexures: Nil

CORRESPONDENCE

Each month a list of correspondence is sent out in the Business Paper to Councillors to ensure that they have not missed any information since the last Business Paper was produced.

Date	Information Sent	Author	In	Out	Sent
28/02/24	Email to Councillors– media releases Senior’s trip to Western Palins Zoo	General Manager		✓	✓
26/02/24	Email to Councillors– media releases from the Country Mayors Association	CMA	✓	✓	✓
24/02/24	Email to Councillors– Media release no PFAS in Coonamble LGA water	General Manager		✓	✓
24/02/24	Email to Councillors– GM performance documentation	General Manager		✓	✓
23/02/24	Email to Councillors– advising of draft itinerary for Tour de OROC which will finish in Coonamble on Sunday 11 October	General Manager	✓	✓	✓
20/02/24	Email to Councillors– invite meeting. Cr. Butler request for a meeting to discuss the bore baths	General Manager		✓	✓
20/02/24	Email to Councillors– Service NSW will be in Gulargambone Thursday, 20 March 2025	General Manager		✓	✓
19/02/24	Email to Councillors– Preliminary advice from the funding body and Crown land regarding relocating the bore bath project	General Manager		✓	✓
19/02/24	Email to Councillors– invite to workshop masterplans for the Coonamble CBD and Warrena Creek and briefing on Core and cluster centre	General Manager		✓	✓
19/02/24	Email to Councillors– three media releases from the Country Mayors Association Bank closures; Police Minister; Grants restoration	CMA	✓	✓	✓
17/02/24	Email to Councillors– DA037/2024 - Moonya Feedlot Expansion	General Manager		✓	✓
17/02/24	Coulton’s Catch Up – M Coulton MP 17 Feb 24	M Coulton	✓	✓	✓

10/02/24	Coulton’s Catch Up – M Coulton MP 10 Feb 24	M Coulton	✓	✓	✓
06/02/24	Invitation to Councillors for a briefing on DA037/2024 - Moonya Feedlot Expansion Monday 10 Feb 24	General Manager		✓	✓

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

10.2 COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS/ACTIONS UPDATE**File Number:** C17; C20**Author:** Marina Colwell-Executive Support Officer**Authoriser:** Paul Gallagher, General Manager**Annexures:** Nil**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to keep track of important Council resolutions.

BACKGROUND

Important and significant Council resolutions will be added to the list of items below, and a monthly update on the status will be provided by the responsible officer.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Adopted Council resolutions should ideally link in with Council's suite of Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework documents.

(b) Financial Considerations

The financial considerations relating to each item mentioned below would have been considered by Council as part of the original report that dealt with the matter.

COMMENTARY

Information about outstanding Council resolutions / actions and completed is shown below:

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 14/06/2023	Quarmby, Bruce	Management of Crown Reserve 96390 - Lot 244 DP44910	28/06/2023	2/08/2023	
	10.12	Quarmby, Bruce				
	2023/109					
	25 Aug 2023 11:52am Quarmby, Bruce					
	Letter written to crown lands seeking appointment as crown reserve manager. Public works to be engaged to acquire the land					
	18 Mar 2024 8:02pm Quarmby, Bruce					
	Council has been appointed Crown Land Manager, acquisition of land to proceed.					
	04 Jul 2024 9:25am Quarmby, Bruce					
	NSW Public Works have been approached to handle the acquisition of the land					
	17 Jan 2025 10:20am Quarmby, Bruce					
	Made follow up contact with Public works to progress the issue.					

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 10/07/2024	Quarmby, Bruce	Correction of Lands Title Issue for Lot 1 DP 132634	24/07/2024	9/08/2024	
	10.14	Quarmby, Bruce				
	2024/171					
	13 Aug 2024 10:47am Quarmby, Bruce					
	Emailed Essential Energy advising them of Council's resolution, will await response. If no response the issue will be followed up by the end of September					
	19 Nov 2024 5:02pm Quarmby, Bruce					
	Contacted Essential Energy in Oct, awaiting response					
	17 Jan 2025 9:40am Quarmby, Bruce					
	Follow up email to Essential Energy to receive update on the progress of the lands transfer.					

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 13/11/2024	Broe, Barry	Notice of Motion - Heritage Study 2008-2010 (Cr Churchill)	5/11/2025	27/11/2024	
11.3		Broe, Barry				
			2024/268			
			28 Nov 2024 9:08am Broe, Barry - Target Date Revision			
			Target date changed by Broe, Barry from 27 November 2024 to 05 November 2025 - This is subject to funding being allocated in the 25/26 budget, Grant application for \$25,000 has been submitted, as suggested at the December Council meeting			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Tatton, Deborah	Updated Donations Policy	25/12/2024	17/12/2024	
10.16		Quarmby, Bruce				
			2024/289			
			24 Jan 2025 3:45pm Tatton, Deborah			
			On Public Exhibition for 42 days from 6.1.25			
			28 Feb 2025 9:19am Tatton, Deborah			
			resubmitted to March meeting for adoption after public exhibition			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Lloyd, Stuart	Road Opening - Moorimbilla Solar Farm	25/12/2024	17/12/2024	
10.17		Quarmby, Bruce				
			2024/290			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Broe, Barry	Notice of Motion - Tourism Signs	30/06/2025	17/12/2024	
11.3		Levick, David				
2024/295 24 Jan 2025 4:00pm Broe, Barry - Email An audit of the sites for the signs has been completed and signs are about to be ordered (as of 4 February)						
04 Feb 2025 1:39pm Broe, Barry - Target Date Revision Target date changed by Broe, Barry from 25 December 2024 to 30 June 2025 - The target date in the resolution is by the end of the first half of 2025						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Broe, Barry	Notice of Motion - Untidy House Blocks within the village of Quambone	30/06/2025	17/12/2024	
11.4		Duncan, Lesley				
2024/296 04 Feb 2025 12:24pm Broe, Barry - Target Date Revision Target date changed by Broe, Barry from 25 December 2024 to 30 June 2025 - The target date in the resolution to complete this is by the end of the first half of 2025						
04 Feb 2025 12:25pm Broe, Barry - Email Action Item - Notice of Motion - Untidy House Blocks within the village of Quambone						
04 Feb 2025 1:28pm Broe, Barry An audit of Quambone properties has been done and letters will be sent to relevant property owners in accordance with Local Order No 21						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Gallagher, Paul	Notice of Motion - General Manager Performance Review Process	28/02/2025	17/12/2024	
11.7		Gallagher, Paul				
			2024/299			
			06 Jan 2025 11:41am Quarmby, Bruce - Reallocation			
			Action reassigned to Gallagher, Paul by Quarmby, Bruce - The item relates to the General Manager			
			06 Feb 2025 8:50am Gallagher, Paul - Target Date Revision			
			Target date changed by Gallagher, Paul from 25 December 2024 to 28 February 2025			
			06 Feb 2025 8:51am Gallagher, Paul			
			GM met with Mayor to discuss the resolution, GM contract and KPI's were provided to the Mayor, the contract for the SOTS and Yarren Street land were viewed by the Mayor. GM performance review scheduled end of February with LGNSW facilitating the review			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Sobhani, Azita	Community Development Monthly Report	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
10.6		Broe, Barry				
			2025/12			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Levick, David	Economic Development & Growth - Progress Report	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
10.8		Broe, Barry				
2025/17						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Gallagher, Paul	Regional Drought Resilience Plan - 016 - Bogan, Warren, and Coonamble	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
10.9		Gallagher, Paul				
2025/18						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Tatton, Deborah	Councillor requests for inclusion in the draft 2025/26 Operational Budget.	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
10.13		Quarmby, Bruce				
2025/23						
28 Feb 2025 9:21am Tatton, Deborah						
Noted requests which came from the floor. Will wait until 15th March for any additional requests to come through.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 10.14 2025/24	Council 12/02/2025	Quarmby, Bruce Quarmby, Bruce	project proposal - hello Coonamble	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
04 Mar 2025 7:49pm Quarmby, Bruce						
The necessary budget adjustments have been made as per Council resolution. Staff to write to the Hello Coonamble co-ordinators and commence discussions with regards to the copyright for the production.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 11.2 2025/28	Council 12/02/2025	Quarmby, Bruce Quarmby, Bruce	Notice of Motion - Incentive to Ratepayers for Maintaining Public Footpaths - Cr P Wheelhouse	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
04 Mar 2025 7:52pm Quarmby, Bruce						
Initial investigations have commenced into similar policies / programs being offered by Council's to achieve this goal						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 11.3 2025/29	Council 12/02/2025	Quarmby, Bruce Quarmby, Bruce	Notice of Motion - Council to apply for loan to fund extension of Bitumen Roads - Cr P Wheelhouse	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
04 Mar 2025 7:54pm Quarmby, Bruce						
Preliminary investigations into the modelling have commenced.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Murphy, Kerrie	Notice of Motion - Classification of Tooraweenah Road and Procurement Process for Tooraweenah Road Project - Cr P Wheelhouse	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
11.4		Murphy, Kerrie				
2025/30						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Gallagher, Paul	Notice of Motion - Formation of Priority Quarry Sub Committee - Cr P Wheelhouse	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
11.5		Gallagher, Paul				
2025/31						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry	Notice of Motion - Priority Preparation for Bore Baths and intentions for excess water - Cr P Wheelhouse	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
11.6		Broe, Barry				
2025/32						
28 Feb 2025 9:36am Broe, Barry						
This is an action for the future when the new project is initiated and planning underway						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Murphy, Kerrie	Notice of Motion - Completion of Brigidine Sisters Garden - Cr M Garnsey	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
11.8		Murphy, Kerrie				
2025/34						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Murphy, Kerrie	Notice of Motion - Presentation of Coonamble Township - Cr M Garnsey	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
11.9		Murphy, Kerrie				
2025/35						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Bell, Mick	Notice of Motion -Coonamble and Quambone Tennis Courts Upgrade - Cr M Garnsey	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
11.10		Murphy, Kerrie				
2025/36						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Set Item	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry Whitehead, Janelle	Notice of Motion – Additional Bins – Cr M Garnsey	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
2025/16 28 Feb 2025 9:42am Broe, Barry This is being actioned, funding for the bins first has to be sourced. Council has a limited number of skip bins						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Set Item	Council 12/02/2025	Bell, Mick Murphy, Kerrie	Notice of Motion – Report on Plant Shed – Cr P Fisher	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	
2025/15						

COMPLETED ACTIONS SINCE 12 FEBRUARY 2025

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Quarmby, Bruce	Presentation of Financial Statements and Audit Reports for the year ended 30 June 2024	25/12/2024	17/12/2024	4/03/2025
10.5		Quarmby, Bruce				
			2024/276			
04 Mar 2025 7:46pm Quarmby, Bruce - Completion						
Completed by Quarmby, Bruce (action officer) on 04 March 2025 at 7:46:29 PM - Financial statements were presented as per resolution. No submissions were received by Council						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Wark, Tim	Notice of Motion - Request for investigations and report into Wastewater from the Coonamble Sewer Treatment Plant.	25/12/2024	17/12/2024	25/02/2025
11.2		Murphy, Kerrie				
			2024/294			
06 Jan 2025 11:40am Quarmby, Bruce - Reallocation						
Action reassigned to Wark, Tim by Quarmby, Bruce - The report falls within Tim portfolio						
25 Feb 2025 3:52pm Wark, Tim						
Report has been completed to the March 2025 Council Meeting.						
25 Feb 2025 3:57pm Wark, Tim - Completion						
Completed by Wark, Tim (action officer) on 25 February 2025 at 3:57:13 PM - Report completed to the March 2025 Council Meeting.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 11/12/2024	Quarmby, Bruce	Notice of Motion - Funding request for Outback Arts project	25/12/2024	17/12/2024	4/03/2025
11.5		Quarmby, Bruce				
			2024/297			
			06 Jan 2025 11:12am Quarmby, Bruce			
			A meeting invite has been sent to Outback Arts to discuss the funding proposal that was tabled for Council's consideration at its December 2024 meeting.			
			23 Jan 2025 11:13pm Quarmby, Bruce			
			Meeting has been held and a new funding proposal will be tabled at the February meeting			
			04 Mar 2025 7:47pm Quarmby, Bruce - Completion			
			Completed by Quarmby, Bruce (action officer) on 04 March 2025 at 7:47:35 PM - Council considered the funding request at its February 2025 Council meeting.			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Maundrell, Jenni	Adoption of Draft Policies	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
10.5		Gallagher, Paul				
			2025/11			
			28 Feb 2025 9:37am Maundrell, Jenni - Completion			
			Completed by Maundrell, Jenni (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 9:37:42 AM - Completed. Policy register updated, policies published.			

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 10.11 2025/20	Council 12/02/2025	Duncan, Lesley Broe, Barry	Planning Proposal to Rezone Council Owned Land	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
<p>28 Feb 2025 8:04am Duncan, Lesley Planning Proposal has been lodged with NSW Department of Planning.</p> <p>28 Feb 2025 8:05am Duncan, Lesley - Completion Completed by Duncan, Lesley (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 8:05:09 AM - Planning Proposal has been lodged with NSW Department of Planning</p>						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 10.12 2025/22	Council 12/02/2025	Duncan, Lesley	DA037/2024 - MOONYA FEEDLOT EXPANSION	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
<p>28 Feb 2025 8:05am Duncan, Lesley - Completion Completed by Duncan, Lesley (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 8:05:29 AM - Development consent has been uploaded on the NSW Planning Portal</p>						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Quarmby, Bruce	Quarterly Budget Review - December 2024	9/04/2025	27/02/2025	4/03/2025
10.15		Quarmby, Bruce				
						2025/25
						04 Mar 2025 7:50pm Quarmby, Bruce
						Budget adjustments as per Council resolution have been processed. The bimonthly report for the status of Grant receivables will be tabled to the April 2025 Council meeting.
						04 Mar 2025 7:52pm Quarmby, Bruce - Target Date Revision
						Target date changed by Quarmby, Bruce from 26 February 2025 to 09 April 2025 - presentation of 1st grant receivables report
						04 Mar 2025 7:52pm Quarmby, Bruce - Completion
						Completed by Quarmby, Bruce (action officer) on 04 March 2025 at 7:52:30 PM - matter has been completed

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry	Notice of Motion - Planning Proposal PP001/2024	26/02/2025		4/03/2025
11.1		Broe, Barry				
						2025/27
						04 Mar 2025 11:24pm Quarmby, Bruce - Reallocation
						Action reassigned to Broe, Barry by Quarmby, Bruce - Director responsible for area
						04 Mar 2025 11:24pm Quarmby, Bruce - Completion
						Completed by Quarmby, Bruce on behalf of Broe, Barry (action officer) on 04 March 2025 at 11:24:45 PM - Motion lost, no further action

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry	Notice of Motion - Community Programs and Events in Quambone - Cr M Garnsey	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
11.7		Broe, Barry				
2025/33 28 Feb 2025 9:38am Broe, Barry Future Aus day planning will include Quambone 28 Feb 2025 9:39am Broe, Barry - Completion Completed by Broe, Barry (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 9:39:41 AM - The pool party was held and future Ausday planning will include Quambone						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Set Item	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry	Motion Karen Churchill/Steven Butler	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
		Broe, Barry				
2025/14 28 Feb 2025 9:42am Broe, Barry - Completion Completed by Broe, Barry (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 9:42:22 AM - This action has been completed, the information is included in the March Waste report						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Set Item	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry	Motion Karen Churchill/Paul Fisher	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
		Broe, Barry				
2025/8 28 Feb 2025 9:41am Broe, Barry - Completion Completed by Broe, Barry (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 9:41:25 AM - This action has been completed, a report has been produced for the March meeting						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Set Item	Council 12/02/2025	Broe, Barry	Motion Steven Butler/Karen Churchill	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
		Broe, Barry	Letter to SOTS purchaser regarding D.A			
2025/7 28 Feb 2025 9:40am Broe, Barry - Completion Completed by Broe, Barry (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 9:40:40 AM - This action was completed on 14 February						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Set Item	Council 12/02/2025	Tatton, Deborah	Confirmation of Minutes	26/02/2025	27/02/2025	28/02/2025
		Quarmby, Bruce				
2025/2 28 Feb 2025 9:12am Tatton, Deborah Updates which were required have been made. 28 Feb 2025 9:18am Tatton, Deborah - Completion Completed by Tatton, Deborah (action officer) on 28 February 2025 at 9:18:46 AM - Minutes have been updated						

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the information.

10.3 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS IN QUAMBONE - CR M. GARNSEY

File Number: P1

Author: Margaret Garnsey-Councillor

Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager

Annexures: 1. **NOM Community Events in Quambone** [↓](#) 

SUBJECT HEADING

I, Councillor Margaret Garnsey, give notice that at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on 12 March 2025, I intend to move the following motions:

1. *That resolution 2025/033 titled Community Programs and Events in Quambone that was passed at the meeting of 12th February 2025 be rescinded.*
2. *That Council resolves to direct the General Manager to ensure that when planning of future community programs / activities across Coonamble Shire that Quambone must be included as part of these programs.*

BACKGROUND

At the February 2025 meeting of Council, I tabled a notice of motion for Council's consideration. Based on this notice of motion the following resolution was passed by Council.

11.7 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS IN QUAMBONE - CR M GARNSEY

RESOLUTION [2025/33]

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey
 Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

That Council notes that a pool party occurred in Quambone on 5 February 2025 and that future Australia Day celebrations will include Quambone.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

The resolution passed as by Council did not address the essence of what I was trying to move, as such I request that the necessary processes be undertaken to have Council's adopted resolution reflect the essence of my motion. Quambone is an important part of the Coonamble Shire and has untapped Tourism potential to contribute & already contributes significantly through Agricultural produce to the economic value of the shire. The message that '**Quambone matters**' needs to resonate across Coonamble Shire. Our young citizens residing in Quambone need to

feel that they are as valued as the rest of the shire. As such I have tabled the aforementioned motions for Council's consideration.

COMMENTARY: MANEX

As the notice of motion previously considered at the February 2025 Council meeting has been considered and passed as a resolution, the following procedural steps are required to followed and adopted by Council should it agree with the resolutions as tabled.

- Council to receive a notice of motion to rescind the prior motion, along with a notice of motion to consider the new proposed motion.
- Council consider and pass a resolution to rescind the prior motion.
- Council consider and pass the newly tabled notice of motion, that when passed become the new resolution of Council.

As Clr Garnsey has supplied Council with suitable notice of motion, signed by three (3) councillors this notice of motion as tabled may now be considered by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves

- 1. That resolution 2025/033 titled Community Programs and Events in Quambone that was passed at the meeting of 12th February 2025 be rescinded.**
- 2. That Council resolves to direct the General Manager to ensure that when planning of future community programs / activities across Coonamble Shire that Quambone must be included as part of these programs**

COONAMBLE | Cr Marg Garnsey
 SHIRE COUNCIL | Telephone: 0428 242 117
 Email: margaret.garnsey@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au

Amendment Motions for the 12th February, 2025 Coonamble Shire

Amendment Motion No.1

At the February 2025 meeting of Council, I tabled a notice of motion for Council's consideration. Based on this notice of motion the following resolution was passed by Council.

11.7 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS IN QUAMBONE - CR M GARNSEY	
RESOLUTION 2025/33	
Moved:	Cr Margaret Garnsey
Seconded:	Cr Paul Wheelhouse
That Council notes that a pool party occurred in Quambone on 5 February 2025 and that future Australia Day celebrations will include Quambone.	
<u>In Favour:</u>	Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse
<u>Against:</u>	Nil
CARRIED 9/0	



I would like to amend this motion so that I can move the original motion as worded below. The Council recommendation was insufficient & I did not realise that the Council recommendation was what was voted on as at this part of the meeting it was all very rushed.

Quambone is an important part of the Coonamble Shire and has untapped Tourism potential to contribute & already contributes significantly through Agricultural produce to the economic value of the shire. The message that **'Quambone matters'** needs to resonate across Coonamble Shire. Our young citizens residing in Quambone need to feel that they are as valued as the rest of the shire.

Resolution:

That Council resolves to direct the General Manager to ensure that when planning future community programs / activities across Coonamble Shire that Quambone **must** be included as part of these programs.

10.4 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMPLETION OF BRIGIDINE SISTERS GARDENS - CR M. GARNSEY

File Number: P1
Author: Margaret Garnsey-Councillor
Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager
Annexures: 1. **NOM Completion of garden**  

SUBJECT HEADING

I, Councillor Margaret Garnsey, give notice that at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on 12 March 2025, I intend to move the following motions:

1. *The resolution 2025/34 titled Completion of Brigidine Sisters Garden that was passed at the meeting of 12th February 2025 be rescinded.*
2. *That the Brigidine Sisters garden beds be filled with established plants & the garden fully completed with trellis, solar lighting & garden seating prior to the sister's forthcoming visit.*

That the funding for the works at the Brigidine Sisters garden beds be sourced from Council's Urban Services Operational Budget

BACKGROUND

At the February 2025 meeting of Council, I tabled a notice of motion for Council's consideration. Based on this notice of motion the following resolution was passed by Council.

11.8 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMPLETION OF BRIGIDINE SISTERS GARDEN - CR M GARNSEY

RESOLUTION 2025/34

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey
 Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

That Council note the information provided in the response to the Notice of Motion on the completion of the Brigidine Sisters Garden.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

The resolution passed as by Council did not address the essence of what I was trying to move, as such I request that the necessary processes be undertaken to

have Council's adopted resolution reflect the essence of my motion. As such I have tabled the afore mentioned motion for Council's consideration.

COMMENTARY: MANEX

As the notice of motion previously considered at the February 2025 Council meeting has been considered and passed as a resolution, the following procedural steps are required to followed and adopted by Council should it agree with the resolutions as tabled.

- Council to receive a notice of motion to rescind the prior motion, along with a notice of motion to consider the new proposed motion.
- Council consider and pass a resolution to rescind the prior motion.
- Council consider and pass the newly tabled notice of motion, that when passed become the new resolution of Council.

As Cllr Garnsey has supplied Council with suitable notice of motion, signed by three (3) councillors this notice of motion as tabled may now be considered by Council

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves:

- 1. The resolution 2025/34 titled Completion of Brigidine Sisters Garden that was passed at the meeting of 12th February 2025 be rescinded.**
- 2. That the Brigidine Sisters garden beds be filled with established plants prior to the sister's forthcoming visit.**
- 3. That the funding for the works at the Brigidine Sisters garden beds be sourced from Council's Urban Services Operational Budget.**

Amendment Motion No.2

At the February 2025 meeting of Council, I tabled a notice of motion for Council's consideration. Based on this notice of motion the following resolution was passed by Council.

11.8 NOTICE OF MOTION - COMPLETION OF BRIGIDINE SISTERS GARDEN - CR M GARNSEY	
RESOLUTION 2025/34	
Moved:	Cr Margaret Gamsey
Seconded:	Cr Paul Wheelhouse
That Council note the information provided in the response to the Notice of Motion on the completion of the <u>Brigidine</u> Sisters Garden.	
<u>In Favour:</u>	Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Gamsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse
<u>Against:</u>	Nil
CARRIED 9/0	



The motion as resolved by Council did not address the essence of what I was trying to move, as such I request that the motion be amended to reflect the following wording.

Resolution:

That Council resolves:

1. That the Brigidine Sisters garden beds be filled with established plants & the garden fully completed with trellis, solar lighting & garden seating prior to the sisters the forthcoming visit.
2. That the funding for the works at the Brigidine Sisters garden beds be sourced from Council's Urban Services Operational Budget.

10.5 NOTICE OF MOTION - PRESENTATION OF COONAMBLE TOWNSHIP - CR M. GARNSEY

File Number: P1
Author: Margaret Garnsey-Councillor
Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager
Annexures: 1. **NOM Presentation of Township**  

SUBJECT HEADING

I, Councillor Margaret Garnsey, give notice that at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on 12 March 2025, I intend to move the following motions:

1. *The resolution 2025/35 titled Presentation of Coonamble township that was passed at the meeting of 12th February 2025 be rescinded.*
2. *That public garden beds and open spaces within the Coonamble CBD precinct, be given substantial care and attention as a priority to improve the presentation of these areas to suitable standard to help promote the town in a positive image for the community and visitors to our community*

BACKGROUND

At the February 2025 meeting of Council, I tabled a notice of motion for Council's consideration. Based on this notice of motion the following resolution was passed by Council.

11.9 NOTICE OF MOTION - PRESENTATION OF COONAMBLE TOWNSHIP - CR M GARNSEY

RESOLUTION 2025/35

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey
 Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That Council notes the information provided in response to the Notice of Motion on presentation of the Coonamble township.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

The resolution passed as by Council did not address the essence of what I was trying to move, as such I request that the necessary processes be undertaken to have Council's adopted resolution reflect the essence of my motion. As such I have tabled the afore mentioned motion for Council's consideration.

COMMENTARY: MANEX

As the notice of motion previously considered at the February 2025 Council meeting has been considered and passed as a resolution, the following procedural steps are

required to followed and adopted by Council should it agree with the resolutions as tabled.

- Council to receive a notice of motion to rescind the prior motion, along with a notice of motion to consider the new proposed motion.
- Council consider and pass a resolution to rescind the prior motion.
- Council consider and pass the newly tabled notice of motion, that when passed become the new resolution of Council.

As Cr Garnsey has supplied Council with suitable notice of motion, signed by three (3) councillors this notice of motion as tabled may now be considered by Council

.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves:

- 1. The resolution 2025/35 titled Presentation of Coonamble township that was passed at the meeting of 12th February 2025 be rescinded.**
- 2. That public garden beds and open spaces within the Coonamble CBD precinct, be given substantial care and attention as a priority to improve the presentation of these areas to suitable standard to help promote the town in a positive image for the community and visitors to our community.**

Amendment Motion No.3

At the February 2025 meeting of Council, I tabled a notice of motion for Council's consideration. Based on this notice of motion the following resolution was passed by Council.

11.9 NOTICE OF MOTION - PRESENTATION OF COONAMBLE TOWNSHIP - CR M GARNSEY

RESOLUTION 2025/35

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey
 Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That Council notes the information provided in response to the Notice of Motion on presentation of the Coonamble township.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

The motion as resolved by Council did not address the essence of what I was trying to move, as such I request that the motion be amended to reflect the following wording

Resolution:

That Council resolves:

1. That public garden beds and open spaces within the Coonamble CBD precinct, be given substantial care and attention as a priority to improve the presentation of these area's to suitable standard to help promote the town in a positive image for the community and visitors to our community.

Paul Wheelhouse.

10.6 CORE AND CLUSTER PROJECT

File Number: 1.1

Author: Barry Broe-Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment

Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager

Annexures: 1. Letter from Orana Support Service [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

To provide an update to Council on the status of this project and Council's role in providing land for the project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Core and Cluster Project is a planned new Women's refuge to be built in Coonamble. Council has been attempting to secure suitable land for the project to provide to Orana Support Services, who are responsible for delivering the facility.

A suitable block of land has been identified and accepted by the state government grant body and Orana Support Services at the Limerick Street site owned by Council.

BACKGROUND

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

This is a key social project identified as a significant community need – namely to support women experiencing domestic violence.

(b) Financial Considerations

The only costs to council are any legal costs associated with transferring land.

COMMENTARY

What is Core and Cluster?

Core and Cluster means having self-contained accommodation units (the "cluster") located close to communal facilities/areas (the "core"), that provide access to services such as counselling, legal assistance, education and employment support as well as shared spaces.

In 2022 the NSW Government announced new investment in housing and specialist supports for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.

The investment includes \$426.6 million over 4 years to deliver and operate new Core and Cluster refuges. Construction of the new refuges started in 2022 and will continue for 4 years over 3 tranches.

The core and cluster approach allows residents to access much needed support and assistance, while also having the personal space and necessary amenities to effectively deal with personal issues and trauma

The Coonamble project is led by Orana Support Services which secured funding for a Core and Cluster women's refuge in Coonamble under the 2023/24 Core and

Cluster Tranche 3, led by the NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice.

Council is facilitating the project, through land availability, but is not leading or responsible for the project.

The Coonamble Project

It is widely recognised that Coonamble needs greater support for the community for emergency and crisis accommodation, because people now need to travel to Dubbo for this support.

This was reinforced by the local State Member the Hon. Roy Butler when he addressed the Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, saying:

“.....considering that recent NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research statistics have shown the Coonamble Local Government Area is ranked No. 1 in the State for instances of Domestic Violence and has no dedicated women's refuge”.

The Coonamble statistics reinforce the need to provide this local facility:

- 2nd highest LGA in NSW for reported rates of domestic violence assault.
- 2.9 times the state rate for sexual assaults against women
- 4.5 times the state rate for domestic violence related assaults against women
- 3.9 times the state rate of female domestic assault incidents.

This is not a core function of Council but we have advocated, with the support of all the organisations, for more work to be done in the domestic violence sphere and funding to be secured for a Core and Cluster refuge in order to help end the ongoing cycle of violence and allow women and children opportunities to rebuild their lives.

Orana Support Service (OSS)

Orana Support Service is a specialist service that has been accredited since 1988 for providing emergency and crisis accommodation and other services associated with crisis management and the need for a service for Coonamble.

OSS sought Council's support to seek government funding to construct a core and cluster centre in Coonamble. The main issue was the availability of suitable land that needed to be transferred to their ownership to construct the centre.

The Core and Cluster program requires an accredited service provider that meets the parameters of the Department of Communities and Justice.

Orana Support Service has been successful in gaining around \$7.5m under Round three of the program for a new refuge to be established in the Coonamble Shire.

Coonamble was chosen to ensure Coonamble women and children escaping domestic and family violence can remain in Coonamble in a safe, secure purpose-built facility with client-centred, trauma-informed, wrap-around support services available.

Core and Cluster model

The Core and Cluster Tranche 3 model incorporates an innovative crisis accommodation model with fully independent living quarters. It combines services and support with independent living and transitional accommodation.

It is owned by the Community Housing Provider and the facility design must align with the *NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) Domestic Violence Crisis Accommodation Functional Design Brief* and *Good Design for Social Housing*.

The Core is located to the front of the site, facing the main street entry. Its features are:

- Main entry, reception, office, consulting room, storerooms, accessible toilet, conference/multi-purpose room, communal kitchen, communal lounge/dining room, children's space, staff accommodation, crisis room
- Security, CCTV, screening devices, alarms, panic buttons
- Culturally sensitive and culturally safe
- Wi-fi, air-conditioning, meeting technology

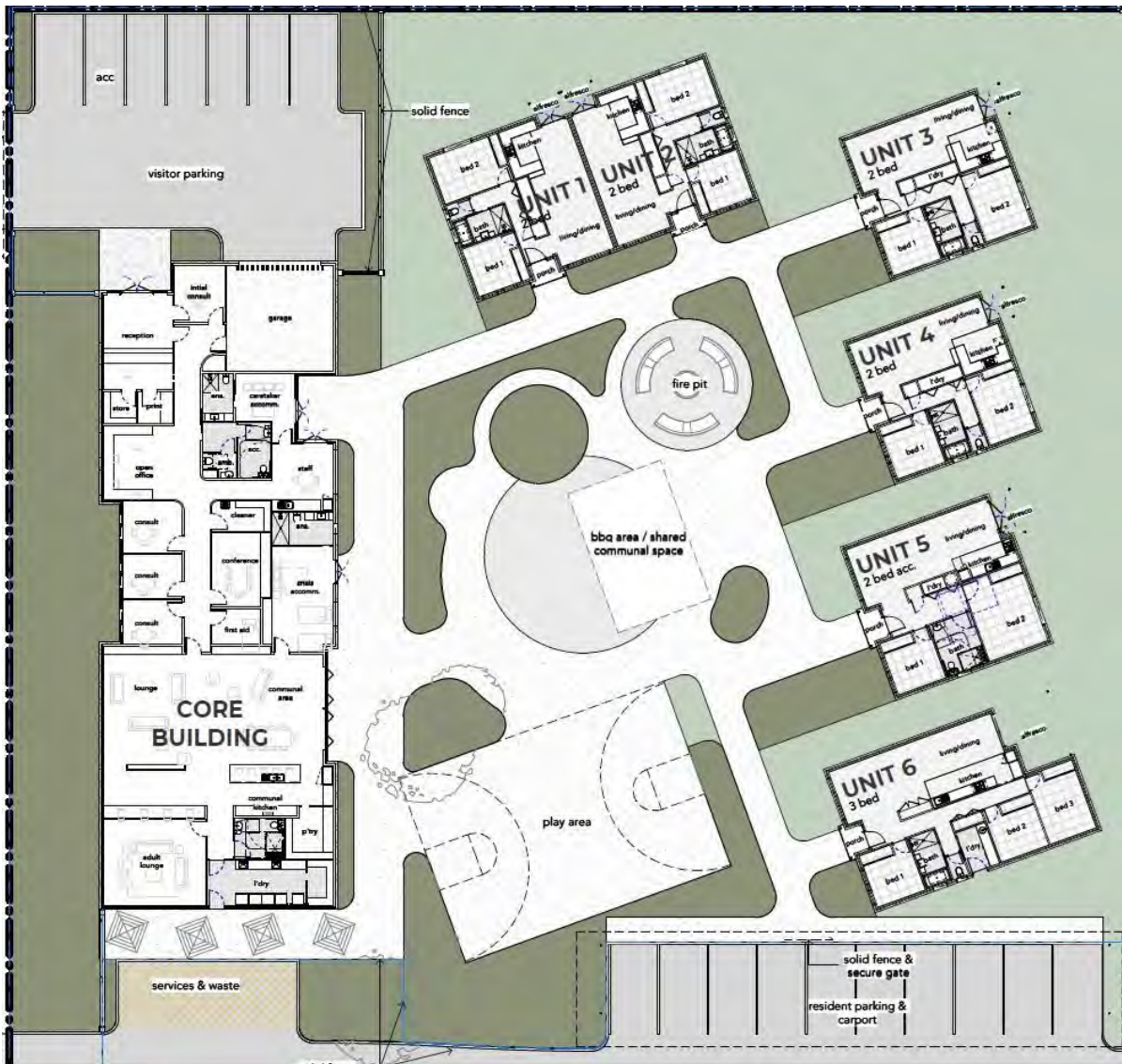
The Cluster has self-contained accommodation units that are located close to the Core, set back from the front of the site. Its features are:

- Spaces with a domestic feel to promote wellbeing, independence, and dignity.
- Self-contained and designed to allow independence.
- Each dwelling is a purpose built, contemporary unit that can be adapted to cater for women with children of different age groups and women and children with disabilities.
- Equity of access for people of all ages and levels of mobility to ensure easy and dignified movement between spaces.
- Landscaping – gardens, children's play and passive recreation
- Private open space/garden belonging to each independent living unit

The actual support services provided are for women and women with children experiencing or at risk of experiencing domestic and family violence:

- Capacity – 5 x 2-bed + 1 x 3-bed – up to 26 individuals.
- Holistic, wrap-around support - Case management, Family support, Family restoration, Independent living, Employment-related skills, Financial, Legal, Housing, Health
- Trauma-informed – supportive, safe environment, focus on recovery
- Client-centred – individualized, tailored, self-advocacy
- Referrals – Integrated service delivery, consulting rooms for visiting providers, AV/IT meeting room

A plan and visualisations of the centre are shown below.





Land for the project

Councils' role from the outset has been to find suitable land for the project as our contribution to this much needed facility. We have no role in the planning and delivery of the project.

Original option at Forgione Street

The preferred site for the project originally was a 7.6ha site in Forgione Street (Lot 82 DP 1102690). The General Manager has been having discussions over a long period of time with the CEO of REDI.E regarding this land, which is owned by Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporation.

The land was sold to Murdi Paaki for \$1 from the Council over 30 years ago to assist with strategies under the Community Development Employment Project (CDEP). Council was seeking to have the land transferred back for the purpose of constructing a Core and Cluster site.

It has become evident that these negotiations may not reach a satisfactory conclusion, or at best may take a long period of time to conclude.

Time is of the essence as the grant has been secured, contract signed for the grant and Orana Support Services are moving swiftly into design, preparing to lodge a DA and initiating procurement.

Land certainty is now a critical component. Therefore, Council had to investigate other possible sites.

Alternative site option

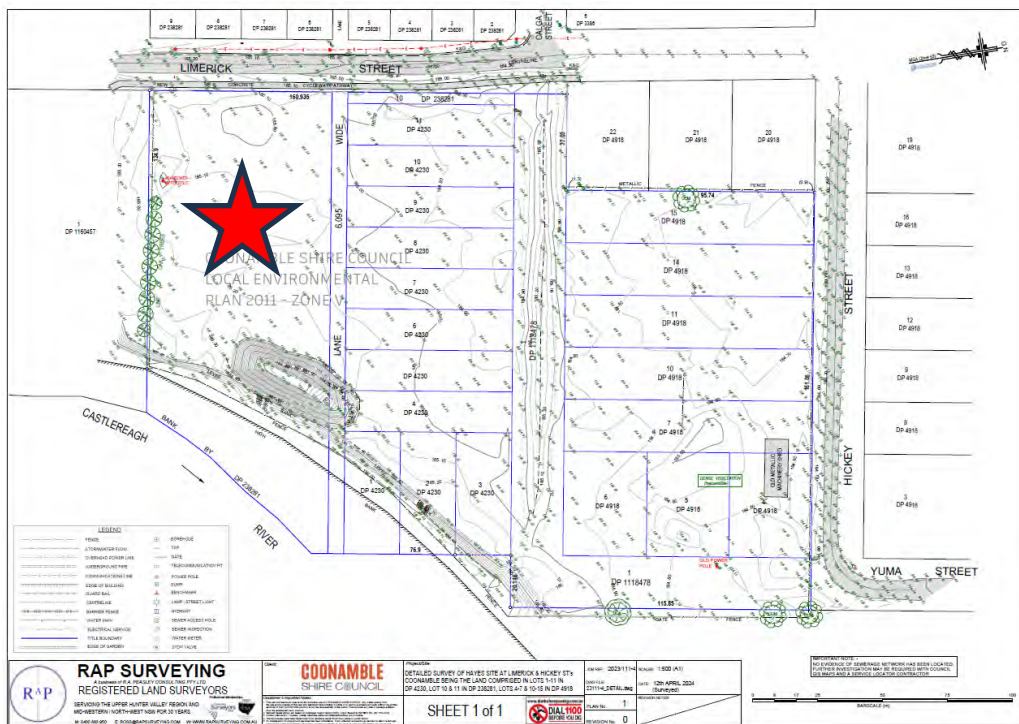
Council has suggested an alternative site at 20-40 Calga Street that Council owns, as shown with the red star below, Lot 11 on DP238281. Both the Grant body (the NSW Department of Communities and Justice) and Orana Support Services, are happy with this site as it meets the guidelines and planning is proceeding on this basis.

The land is not currently classified operational due to an administrative oversight at the time of purchase. It will need to be reclassified from community to operational.

This planning proposal has been prepared and is being submitted to the March meeting for Council approval.

Council purchased the 4ha site for \$423,000 in 2023. The area shown below by the red star is the area proposed for the Core and Cluster project. It is around 1 ha and is valued at around \$100,000.

Council originally said the land would be given to the project to secure a much needed facility for our community. It is notionally valued at \$100k. A clause would be added to the sale contract stipulating that the land would be returned to Council (along with any assets) if the development did not occur within a set time period.



(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Addressing domestic violence is a key policy objective.

(b) Legal Implications

Council is only responsible for providing the land for the project. Council would follow all required legal processes with land transfers.

(c) Social Implications

This is a very significant social project with major benefits to the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

Planning processes (e.g. the DA) will need to consider any environmental impacts.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Council will not own the assets.

(f) Risk Implications

It is a key risk to the project occurring if land cannot be provided in time.

CONCLUSION

Council has been attempting to secure suitable land for Orana Support Services to build a state funded Core and Cluster project in Coonamble. The original site proposed in Forgione Street doesn't look like it will come to fruition. A site offered to Orana Support Services is on Calga Street (Lot 11 on DP238281).

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council notes the status of the project and Council's role in providing access to suitable land for the project.**
- 2. That Council agrees to contribute the identified land on Calga Street to the project (Lot 11 on DP238281) at no cost to Orana Support Service on the basis that the land and assets would be returned to Council should the development not occur within a defined time period.**



Orana Support Service Inc

PO Box 1057 Dubbo NSW 2830 P: (02) 6800 1650 E: admin@oranasupport.com.au

Barry Broe
 Director – Community, Planning, Development & Environment
 Coonamble Shire Council
 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble, NSW 2829
 PO Box 249, Coonamble, NSW 2829
 www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au

Dear Barry

This letter is to confirm that Orana Support Service has been successful in securing funding for the construction of a Core and Cluster women’s refuge in Coonamble, for the NSW Department of Communities and Justice Core and Cluster -Tranche 3.1 Request for Tender program.

The land identified for this project, Limerick Street Lot 11 DP238281, is owned by Coonamble Shire Council with an agreement, should we be successful, for the title to be transferred to Orana Support Service Incorporated.

With the success of our tender, I ask that Coonamble Shire Council make arrangements for the transfer as soon as possible, as the Department of Communities and Justice require confirmation.

Please let me know of any details you require.

Orana Support Service Incorporated
 ABN: 57 433 877 990
 9 – 11 White Street, Dubbo NSW 2830
 Phone: 1800 353 199

Tina Reynolds

CEO
 Orana Support Service
 9 – 11 White Street, Dubbo NSW 2830
 M: 0439 450 503 E: ceo@oranasupport.com.au





REGISTERED
 NDIS
 PROVIDER



I pay my respects to elders both past and present and acknowledge the Aboriginal people of this country as the traditional custodians and knowledge holders of the land that I work on.

10.7 PLANNING PROPOSAL - RECLASSIFICATION OF COMMUNITY LAND

- File Number:** PP001/2025
- Author:** Lesley Duncan-Manager Regulatory, Planning & Compliance Services
- Authoriser:** Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment
- Annexures:**
1. Planning Proposal PP001/2025 [↓](#) 
 2. Site Map [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to gain the endorsement of Council to submit a planning proposal to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure for gateway determination to reclassify the land at 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble from the current Community Land to Operational Land.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council staff have prepared a planning proposal for submission to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Planning Proposal PP001/2025 seeks to reclassify the land at 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble from Community land to Operational land. The purpose of this proposal is to allow for future development and housing opportunities for the site.

The immediate need is to support the proposed Core and Cluster facility (Women's refuge) in Coonamble, which has a state funded grant to build it by Orana Support Service.

BACKGROUND

All public land owned by Council must be classified as either Community or Operational land. Operational land has no special restrictions other than those that may apply to any piece of land. The classification of operational land allows Council to dispose of the land. It is purely an administrative oversight that when Council purchased this land, it was not classified as operational, as is normally the procedure.

Classification as Community land reflects the importance of the land to the community because of its use (such as parklands, sportsgrounds or natural areas). It is land that is intended for public access and use, or where other restrictions apply to the land creating some obligation to maintain public access (such as a trust deed).

Community land cannot be sold, leased licenced or any other estate granted over the land for more than 21 years and must have a plan of management prepared for it. The classification of community land is used for Council's parks, sports fields, swimming pools and the like.

The property at 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble, comprises the following lots:

Lot 10 DP238281	Lot 6 DP4230	Lot 4 DP4918
Lot 11 DP238281	Lot 7 DP4230	Lot 5 DP4918
Lot 1 DP111878	Lot 8 DP4230	Lot 6 DP4918
Lot 1 DP4230	Lot 9 DP4230	Lot 7 DP4918
Lot 2 DP4230	Lot 10 DP4230	Lot 10 DP4918
Lot 3 DP4230	Lot 11 DP4230	Lot 11 DP4918
Lot 4 DP4230	Lot 6 DP4230	Lot 14 DP4918
Lot 5 DP4230	Lot 7 DP4230	Lot 15 DP4918

The land is currently vacant, and part of the land (Lot 10 DP238281) is intended to be used for the construction of a Core and Cluster development to support victims of domestic violence.

The settlement of the purchase by Council of 20-40 Calga Street occurred on 19 December 2023. Following acquisition of the subject land, the status of the site defaulted to Community land.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The reclassification aligns with the Delivery Program action P1.3.1 – Collaborate successfully to deliver programs, projects and initiatives which make our community safe and resilient.

(b) Financial Considerations

Financial implications include staff costs to prepare and progress the planning proposal including public exhibition. There will be a cost to engaging an independent consultant to facilitate the public hearing.

COMMENTARY

Coonamble Shire Council purchased 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble on 19 December 2023 and the classification of the site defaulted to Community land under the Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act), due to an oversight at that time.

The planning proposal seeks to reclassify the subject land from ‘community’ to ‘operational’ to allow for future housing development and possible sale of the land. This will also facilitate the proposed Core and Cluster facility (Women’s refuge) in Coonamble, which has a state funded grant to build. Council cannot sell or give the land to Orana Support Service with its current classification as community.

This will be achieved by amending Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011 to include the subject land in Part 1 of Schedule 4 (no interests changed) of the plan.

The proposal does not seek to change any trusts, estates, interests, dedications, conditions, restrictions, or covenants on the land.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The planning proposal was prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*, and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The planning proposal relates to Council owned land. Accordingly, Council will not seek to act as the planning proposal authority.

Public exhibition of the planning proposal will be carried out in accordance with Council's Community Participation Plan.

(b) Legal Implications

Sections 3.31, 3.32, 3.33, 3.34, 3.35, 3.36 and 3.37 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* are applicable to the planning proposals.

(c) Social Implications

The planning proposal will be publicly exhibited once a gateway determination has been received.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications resulting from this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

There are no economic or asset management implications for this report.

(f) Risk Implications

There is a risk that the proposed reclassification may not receive a gateway determination. Should this occur future sale of the land would not be possible.

CONCLUSION

The planning proposal has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines. The planning proposed has addressed the physical and strategic planning constraints and opportunities, taking into account the relevant environmental, social and economic impacts, as well as the strategic merit of the planning proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- 1. Endorse Planning Proposal PP001/2025 for the reclassification of land known as 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble and forward it to the Minister for Planning seeking an amendment to the Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011 and request that a**

Gateway Determination be issued, excluding the delegation Plan making powers, to enable public exhibition of the Planning Proposal Pursuant to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

- 2. Upon receipt of a Gateway Determination for PP001/2025 under Section 3.34 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, places the Planning Proposal and any supporting material on public exhibition pursuant to any requirements of the Gateway Determination and Schedule 1, Clause 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.**

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL

PLANNING PROPOSAL

Reclassify Land from Community to Operational

20 - 40 Calga Street, Coonamble

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PRELIMINARY

Introduction

The purpose of this planning proposal is to reclassify certain Council owned land from ‘community’ to ‘operational’ land under the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act). The reclassification is required to facilitate the development of new housing in Coonamble.

The parcels of land proposed for reclassification are located at 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble as shown below in Table 1. The land has frontage to Limerick Street, while the Calga Street frontage is not formed as shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3.

Lot 10 DP238281	Lot 6 DP4230	Lot 4 DP4918
Lot 11 DP238281	Lot 7 DP4230	Lot 5 DP4918
Lot 1 DP111878	Lot 8 DP4230	Lot 6 DP4918
Lot 1 DP4230	Lot 9 DP4230	Lot 7 DP4918
Lot 2 DP4230	Lot 10 DP4230	Lot 10 DP4918
Lot 3 DP4230	Lot 11 DP4230	Lot 11 DP4918
Lot 4 DP4230	Lot 6 DP4230	Lot 14 DP4918
Lot 5 DP4230	Lot 7 DP4230	Lot 15 DP4918

The land covers an area of approximately 4.2 hectares and is currently zoned R1 General Residential under the *Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011* (CLEP 2011).

The planning proposal does not seek changes to existing zoning or minimum lot size and has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

Figure 1: Land Proposed to be reclassified – 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble







Figure 2: Aerial View of Land to be reclassified – 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble



Figure 3: Zoning of Land to be reclassified



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
|  R1 General Residential |  RU1 Primary Production |
|  RE1 Public Recreation |  W2 Recreational Waterways |

PART 1: OBJECTIVES OR INTENDED OUTCOMES

The objective of this planning proposal is to facilitate the residential development on the land and provide homeownership opportunities to the local community.

The land is currently vacant, and Coonamble Shire Council is the owner of the land.

PART 2: EXPLANATION OF PROVISIONS

Coonamble Shire Council purchased 20-40 Calga Street, Coonamble on 19 December 2023 and the classification of the site defaulted to 'community' land under the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act).

The planning proposal seeks to reclassify the subject land from 'community' to 'operational' to allow for future development and sale of the land. This will be achieved by amending *Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011* to include the subject land in Part 1 of Schedule 4 (no interests changed) of the plan. The proposal does not seek to change any trusts, estates, interests, dedications, conditions, restrictions, or covenants on the land.

Consistent with the provisions of clause 5.2(2) of the CLEP 2011, this will have the effect of reclassifying the land as intended.

PART 3: JUSTIFICATION STRATEGIC AND SITE-SPECIFIC MERIT

Section A: Need for the Planning Proposal

Is the planning proposal a result of an endorsed local strategic planning statement (LSPS), strategic study or report?

No. The planning proposal is considered to be of local significance only and will require both exhibition under the LG Act and the EP&A Act.

Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcome or is there a better way?

In accordance, with Section 31 (2) and (2A) of the LG Act, the Council may resolve to classify acquired land as 'community' or 'operational' either prior to or within three months after acquisition. Land that remains unclassified after this period is automatically deemed to be classified as 'community' under the LEP. Council in this instance did not resolve to classify the land in the required timeframe.

Accordingly, this planning proposal to amend the LEP is the only mechanism that allows for reclassifying the subject land from 'community' to 'operational'.

Section B: Relationship to Strategic Planning Framework

Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional, or district plan or strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?

The planning proposal aligns with Objective 14 of the *Central West Orana Regional Plan 2041*, which aims to plan for diverse, affordable, resilient and inclusive housing. The planning proposal is the first step in developing the land for future housing needs.

NSW Government’s Framework – LEP Practice Note

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) has also previously published *LEP Practice Note PN 16-001: Classification and Reclassification of public land through a local environmental plan*. This practice note provides guidance on additional matters to be addressed in planning proposals that seek to classify or reclassify public land.

The table below addresses these matters and identifies where matters are addressed in the planning proposal.

No	Requirement	Comment
1	The current and proposed classification of the land.	The subject land is currently classified as community land and is proposed to be reclassified to operational land under the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> .
2	Whether the land is a ‘public reserve’ (defined in LG Act).	The site is not identified as a ‘public reserve’ under the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> . The property came into Council’s ownership on 19 December 2023 following Council’s purchase of the land from a private landowner. Following Council’s acquisition of the subject land, it should have been classified as ‘operational’ land within three months, however, this was an oversight at the time and the site was classified as ‘community’ land by default.
3	The strategic and site specific merits of the reclassification and evidence to support this	The planning proposal to is to address the one-off reclassification of the land. The reclassification will allow for future development of the land.

4	Whether the planning proposal is the result of a strategic study or report.	The planning proposal is not a result of strategic study or report.
5	Whether the planning proposal is consistent with Council's community plan or any other local strategic plan.	The planning proposal is not inconsistent with Council's community strategic plan or any other local strategic plan.
6	<p>A summary of Council's interest in the land including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and when the land was first acquired (e.g. was it dedicated, donated, provided as part of a subdivision for public open space or other purposes, or a developer contribution) • If Council does not own the land, the landowner's consent • The nature of any trusts, dedications etc 	The subject parcels of land were purchased from a private landowner by Council on 19 December 2023 (settlement date). The land is currently still owned by Council. There are no known trusts, dedications, or interests that existing on the land.
7	Whether an interest in the land is proposed to be discharged, and if so, an explanation of the reason why.	There are no interests attached to the land.
8	The effect of the reclassification (including, the loss of open public space, the land ceases to be a public reserve or particular interests will be discharged).	The reclassification will allow for future sale of the land for residential development.
9	Evidence of public reserve status or relevant interests, or lack thereof applying to the land (e.g. electronic title searches, notice in Government Gazette, trust document).	The subject land does not have public reserve status. The title and deposited plans are attached in Appendix A.
10	Current use(s) of the land, and whether uses are authorised or unauthorised.	The current use of the land is vacant residential land.
11	Current or proposed lease or agreements applying to the land, together with their duration, terms and controls.	There is no current or proposed lease on the land. It is Council owned land.
12	Current or proposed business dealings, (e.g. agreements for the sale or lease of the land, the basic details of any such agreement and if relevant,	Council intends to provide a parcel of land to for the construction of a core and cluster development to provide support to victims of domestic

	when Council intends to release its assets, either immediately after rezoning/reclassification or at a later time)	violence. This is to occur immediately after reclassification.
13	Any rezoning associated with the reclassification (if yes, need to demonstrate consistency with an endorsed Plan of Management or strategy)	The planning proposal does not propose to rezone the subject land.
14	How Council may or will benefit financially, and how these funds will be used.	Initially, Council will not benefit financially. Future sale of the land may generate additional revenue.
15	How will Council ensure funds remain available to fund proposed open space sites or improvements referred to in justifying the reclassification, if relevant to the proposal.	This planning proposal does not commit funds to any proposed open space or specific improvements.
16	A Land Reclassification (part lots) Map, in accordance with the standard technical requirements for special datasets and maps, if land to be reclassified does not apply to the whole lot.	Not relevant. The reclassification will apply to the whole of each lot.
17	Preliminary comments by the relevant government agency, including any agency that dedicated the land to Council, if applicable.	The land is owned by Council. No formal consultation has been undertaken at this stage. However, consultation will be undertaken with State and Commonwealth agencies in accordance with the Gateway determination, if required.
18	The concurrence of the land owner must be obtained, where the land is not owned by the Planning Proposal Authority (PPA)	The land is owned by the Planning Proposal Authority (Coonamble Shire Council).
19	Does the planning proposal deliver a public benefit?	The planning proposal seeks to provide land that will provide a service to the community and provide a future supply of residential land.
20	Have the implications for the open space in the LGA in relation to current and future open space needs been considered and will there be a net gain to open space?	The implications for open space in Coonamble have been considered. The site is not defined as a 'public reserve' under the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> . The

		proposal does not affect the current and future open space.
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Is the planning proposal consistent with a Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) that has been endorsed by the Planning Secretary or Greater Sydney Commission (GSC), or another local strategy or strategic plan?

The Coonamble Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) together with the Community Strategic Plan have identified the need for additional residential land that can provide a diverse range of housing types. It is considered that the location of the land in an existing residential area makes it suitable for further development. The land is zoned R1 General Residential which supports a range of housing types.

Priority 2 is relevant to this planning proposal:

Encourage a connected, active and healthy community that gives effect to Planning Policy 3 -Encourage a range of housing options, including affordable housing, housing for older people and family housing.

Goal 11 of the Coonamble Community Strategic Plan is relevant to the planning proposal:

Our community has confidence in our strategic land use planning framework that strengthen the balance of competing land use interests and minimises risks to our community including the availability of suitable residential land and adequate affordable housing.

Is the planning proposal consistent with any other applicable State and Regional Studies or Strategies?

State or regional study or strategy	Comment
Future Transport Strategy 2056	The proposal is consistent with the strategy
Net Zero Plan	The proposal is consistent with the plan
Water Resource Plans	The proposal is consistent with the plans
State Infrastructure Strategy	The proposal is consistent with the strategy
A 20 year Economic Vision for Regional NSW	The proposal is consistent with the vision

Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs)?

The following Statement Environmental Planning Instruments (EPI) have been considered in the preparation of this planning proposal.

SEPP	Relevant	Comments
State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to Coonamble Shire Council (CSC). The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts – Central River City) 2021	No	This SEPP is not applicable to CSC.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts – Eastern Harbour City) 2021	No	This SEPP is not applicable to CSC.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts – Regional) 2021	No	This SEPP is not applicable to CSC.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Parkland City) 2021	No	This SEPP is not applicable to CSC.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Resources and Energy) 2021	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.	No	The SEPP applies to CSC. The planning proposal will not affect the operation of this SEPP.

Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (section 9.1 Directions) or key government priority?

The following relevant Local Planning Directions under Section 9.1 have been considered in the preparation of this planning proposal:

Direction		Planning Proposal Consistency
Focus Area 1: Planning Systems		
1.1	Implementation of Regional Plans	<p>This direction applies to a relevant planning authority when preparing a planning proposal for land to which a Regional Plan has been released by the Minister for Planning. The planning proposal must be consistent with this regional plan.</p> <p>Coonamble falls under the Central West Orana Regional Plan 2041 Regional Plan. As outlined above in this section of the report, the planning proposal is consistent with the intent of the regional plan, the overall vision, goals, directions and actions.</p>

1.2	Development of Aboriginal Land Council Land	This direction applies to all land identified on the Land Application Map in chapter 3 of the SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021. There are no areas in the Coonamble LGA mapped on the Aboriginal Cultural Significance Map.
1.3	Approval and Referral Requirements	This direction applies to planning proposals and aims to ensure LEP provisions encourage the efficient and appropriate assessment of development. The direction requires consent authorities minimise the requirement for concurrence, consultation or referral of development applications to a minister or public authority. The anticipated impacts resulting from the Planning Proposal are considered to be of minor significance.
1.4	Site Specific Provisions	This direction requires that a planning proposal must not contain or refer to drawings that show details of the proposed development. It is considered that this planning proposal is consistent with this direction.
1.4A	Exclusion of Development Standards from Variation	<p>The aim of this direction is to maintain flexibility in the application of development standards by ensuring that exclusions from the application Clause 4.6 of a Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal does not seek to introduce or alter an existing exclusion to Clause 4.6.</p>
Focus Area 1: Planning Systems – Place-based		
1.5	Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.6	Implementation of North West Priority Growth Area Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.7	Implementation of Greater Parramatta Priority Growth Area Interim Land Use	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.

	and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	
1.8	Implementation of Wilton Priority Growth Area Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.9	Implementation of Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.10	Implementation of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis Plan	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.11	Implementation of Bayside West Precincts 2036 Plan	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.12	Implementation of planning principles for the Cooks Cove Precinct	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.13	Implementation of St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.14	Implementation of Greater Macarthur 2040	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.15	Implementation of the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.16	North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.17	Implementation of the Bays West Place Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.18	Implementation of the Macquarie Park Innovation Precinct	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.19	Implementation of the Westmead Place Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.20	Implementation of the Cameillia-Rosehill Place Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.21	Implementation of South West Growth Area Structure Plan	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
1.22	Implementation of the Cherrybrook Station Place Strategy	Not applicable to Coonamble LGA.
Focus Area 2: Design and Place		
At the time of writing this focus area was blank.		
Focus Area 3: Biodiversity and Conservation		
3.1	Conservation Zones	The subject land is not located in an environmentally sensitive area or environmental protection zone and therefore this direction is not applicable to the planning proposal.

3.2	Heritage Conservation	<p>This direction aims to conserve items, areas, objects and places of environmental or indigenous heritage. As outlined in this report there are no items of cultural heritage significance on the subject site or in the vicinity listed under the CLEP 2011 and there are no objects or places of Aboriginal heritage identified in an AHIMS search for the subject site. Accordingly, it is considered that it is unlikely that the planning proposal will impact on items, areas, objects, or places of environmental, cultural or Indigenous heritage.</p> <p>The proposal is consistent with this direction.</p>
3.3	Sydney Drinking Water Catchments	<p>This direction is not applicable to the Coonamble Shire Council LGA.</p>
3.4	Application of C2 and C3 Zones and Environmental Overlays in Far North Coast LEPs	<p>The subject site is not zoned C2 or C3 and therefore this direction is not applicable.</p>
3.5	Recreation Vehicle Areas	<p>The subject site is not located within a conservation area, near a beach or dune area.</p> <p>The proposal is consistent with this direction.</p>
3.6	Strategic Conservation Planning	<p>This direction applies to areas of high biodiversity value that are mapped as avoided land or land that is within a strategic conservation area in <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation 2021)</i>. The subject land is not mapped as avoided land and is not within a strategic conservation area. Therefore this direction is not applicable.</p>
3.7	Public Bushland	<p>This direction does not apply to the Coonamble LGA.</p>

3.8	Willandra Lakes Region	This direction does not apply to the Coonamble LGA.
3.9	Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Waterways Area	This direction does not apply to the Coonamble LGA.
3.10	Water Catchment Protection	The subject site is not located in a drinking water catchment area, accordingly this direction does not apply.
Focus Area 4: Resilience and Hazards		
4.1	Flooding	Flood modelling completed as part of the West Coonamble Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (Jacobs 2021) indicates that part of the subject land may be flood affected. The proposal to reclassify the land is not inconsistent with the direction as future development can be designed to meet the requirements of the <i>Floodplain Development Manual 2005</i> .
4.2	Coastal Management	The subject site is not in a coastal zone.
4.3	Planning for Bushfire Protection	The subject site is not mapped as bushfire prone land in the Coonamble Shire.
4.4	Remediation of Contaminated Land	The subject site is not identified as contaminated land.
4.5	Acid Sulfate Soils	There are no Acid Sulfate Soils in the Coonamble LGA.
4.6	Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land	The subject land is not located in mine subsidence area within the meaning of the <i>Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 2017</i> .
Focus Area 5: Transport and Infrastructure		
5.1	Integrating Land Use and Transport	This direction requires all planning proposals which will create, alter or remove a provision relating to urban land including land zoned for employment uses.

		<p>This direction requires consistency to the aims, objectives and principles of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Improving Transport Choices – Guidelines for planning and development (b) The Right Place for Business and Services – Planning Policy <p>The planning proposal is consistent with this direction.</p>
5.2	Reserving Land for Public Purpose	The land is not defined as a public reserve.
5.3	Development Near Regulated Airports and Defence Airfields	No relevant to the proposal.
5.4	Shooting Ranges	There are no shooting ranges located in proximity to the subject land.
Focus Area 6: Housing		
6.1	Residential Zones	The subject land is currently zoned R1 General Residential and it is not proposed to rezone the land .
6.2	Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates	The proposal does seek to amend provisions relating to caravan parks or manufactured home estates (MHEs). Caravan Parks and MHEs are prohibited in the E4 General Industrial zone.
Focus Area 7: Industry and Employment		
7.1	Employment Zones	This direction requires all planning proposals which will affect land within and existing or proposed employment zone. The planning proposal does not seek to rezone land.
7.2	Reduction in non-hosted short-term rental accommodation period	This direction is only applicable to Byron Shire Council.
7.3	Commercial and Retail Development along the Pacific Highway, North Coast	This direction applies to land within North Coast LGAs that are traversed by the Pacific Highway.

Focus Area 8: Resources and Energy		
8.1	Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries	Not relevant to this proposal.
Focus Area 9: Primary Production		
9.1	Rural Zones	Not relevant to this proposal.
9.2	Rural Lands	This direction is not relevant to the planning proposal.
9.3	Oyster Aquaculture	The Coonamble LGA is not located within a 'Priority Oyster Aquaculture Area'.
9.4	Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast	This direction is not applicable to the Coonamble LGA.

Section c – Environmental, Social and Economic Impact

Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected because of the proposal?

The land subject to the planning proposal has not been identified as containing critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats.

Are there any other likely environmental effects of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?

Flood modelling completed as part of the West Coonamble Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (Jacobs 2021) indicates that part of the subject land may be flood affected. As such, any proposed development should consider the requirements of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's guidelines detailed in Section 9.1 (2) Local Planning Direction 4.1 Flooding.

Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?

Part of the subject land to be reclassified is to be developed as a core and cluster development for to support victims of domestic violence.

Section D – Infrastructure (Local, State and Commonwealth)

Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?

The subject land is in an existing residential within Coonamble. Utility services are available to the land including water and sewer. Any additional services required for future development will be assessed at the development application stage.

Section E – State and Commonwealth Interest

What are the views of state and federal public authorities and government agencies consulted in order to inform the Gateway determination?

Consultation with public authorities will be undertaken in accordance with the Gateway determination received for the planning proposal.

PART 4 – MAPS

No mapping is required to support the planning proposal.

PART 5 – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The planning proposal is required to exhibited for a minimum period of 28 days. At the conclusion of the public exhibition period, a public hearing will also be held as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*.

PART 6 – PROJECT TIMELINE

Stage	Anticipated Timeline
Prepare planning proposal	February 2025
Report to Council	March 2025
Gateway Determination	June 2025
Agency Consultation	July 2025
Public Exhibition	July-August 2025
Public Hearing	August 2025
Report to Council including consideration of submissions	September 2025
Parliamentary Counsel Opinion	October 2025
Plan finalised by Minister (or delegate)	November 2025

APPENDIX A

Title and Deposited Plans



LAND
REGISTRY
SERVICES

Title Search



NEW SOUTH WALES LAND REGISTRY SERVICES - TITLE SEARCH

FOLIO: 10/4230

SEARCH DATE	TIME	EDITION NO	DATE
-----	----	-----	----
27/2/2025	2:06 PM	7	19/12/2023

LAND

LOT 10 IN DEPOSITED PLAN 4230
 AT COONAMBLE
 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA COONAMBLE
 PARISH OF COONAMBLE COUNTY OF LEICHHARDT
 TITLE DIAGRAM DP4230

FIRST SCHEDULE

THE COUNCIL OF THE SHIRE OF COONAMBLE (T AT712947)

SECOND SCHEDULE (1 NOTIFICATION)

1 RESERVATIONS AND CONDITIONS IN THE CROWN GRANT(S)

NOTATIONS

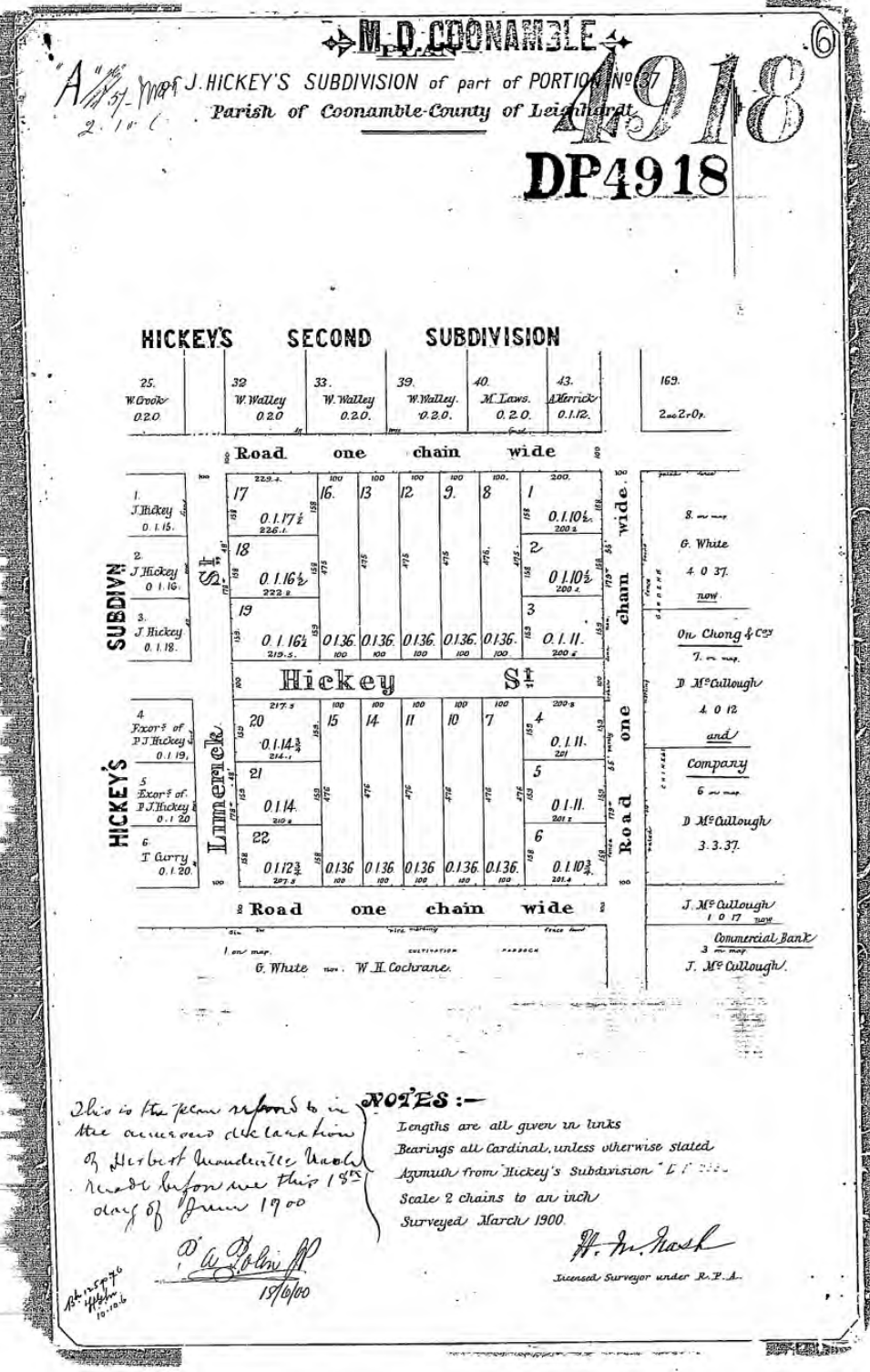
UNREGISTERED DEALINGS: NIL

*** END OF SEARCH ***

bcmanager@coonambleshire.nsw.gov...

PRINTED ON 27/2/2025

* Any entries preceded by an asterisk do not appear on the current edition of the Certificate of Title. Warning: the information appearing under notations has not been formally recorded in the Register. InfoTrack an approved NSW Information Broker hereby certifies that the information contained in this document has been provided electronically by the Registrar General in accordance with Section 96B(2) of the Real Property Act 1900.



I, Bruce Richard Davies, Registrar General for New South Wales, certify that this negative is a photograph made as a permanent record of a document in my custody this 6th day of September, 1979

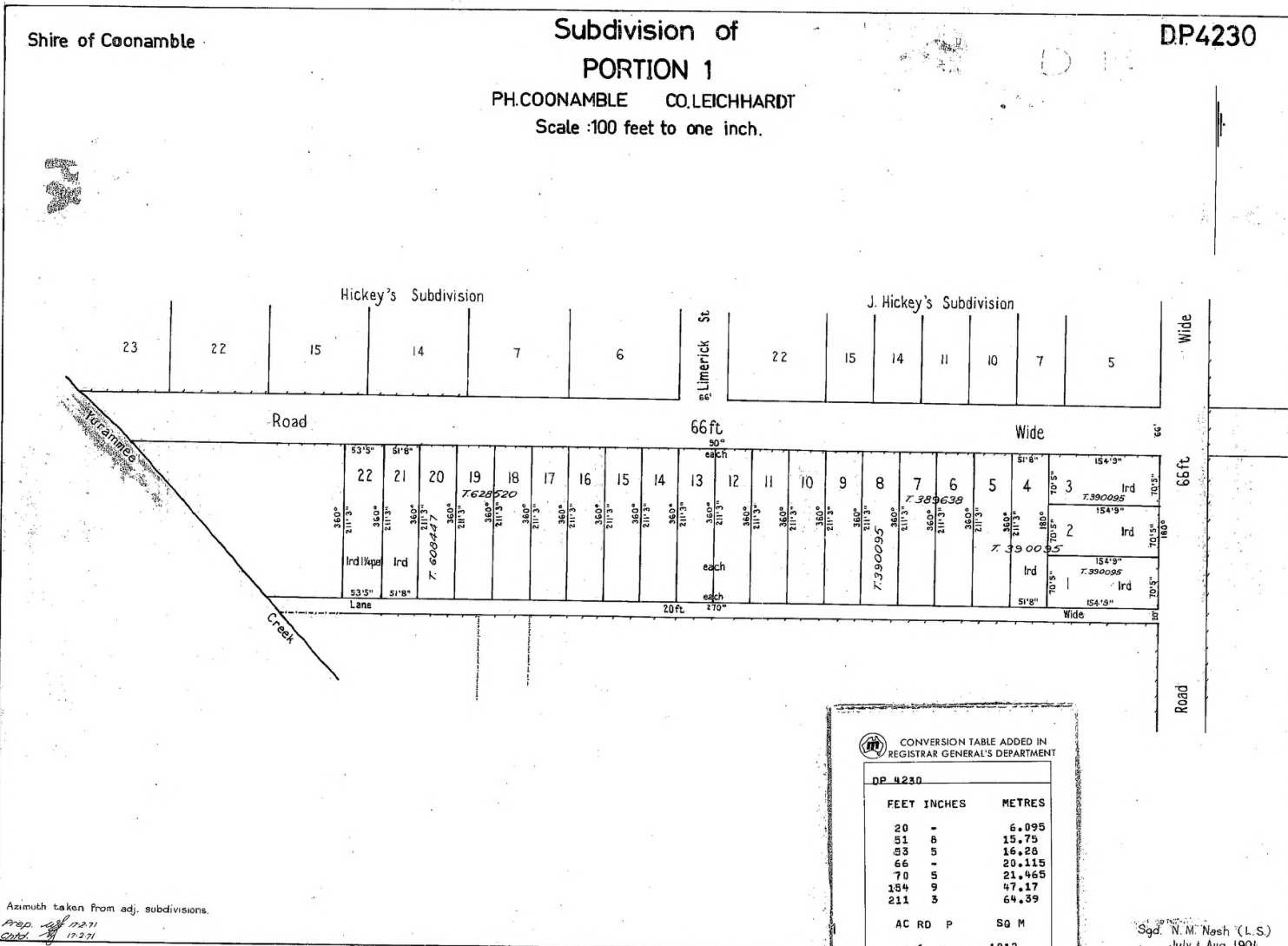
18/6/00

NOTES:-

- Lengths are all given in links
- Bearings all Cardinal, unless otherwise stated
- Azimuth from Hickey's Subdivision 'L'
- Scale 2 chains to an inch
- Surveyed March 1900.

CONVERSION TABLE ADDED IN REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT		DP 4918	
LINKS	METRES	AC RD P	SO M
100	20.115	1.8	1087
150	31.785	1.10 1/2	1277
159	31.985	1.10 3/4	1284
200	40.235	1.11	1290
200.2	40.275	1.12	1315
200.4	40.355	1.12 3/4	1324
200.6	40.395	1.14	1366
201	40.435	1.15	1371
201.2	40.475	1.16 1/4	1423
201.4	40.515	1.16 1/2	1429
201.5	41.74	1.16	1467
207.5	42.405	1.19	1492
210.8	43.07	1.20	1518
214.1	43.755	1.25	1522
217.5	44.185	1.35	1922
219.5	44.82	1.4	2023
222.8	45.485	1.5	2023
226.1	46.15	1.6	2023
229.4	46.815	1.7	2023
475	95.76	1.17	4477
1300	317.85		
AC RD P	SO M	HA	
2.2	1.012		
3.3	1.511		
4.4	1.649		
4.4	1.712		

I, Bruce Richard Davies, Registrar General for New South Wales, certify that this negative is a photograph made of a permanent record of a document in my custody this 4th day of September, 1979.



Azimuth taken from adj. subdivisions.
 Prop. of 1971
 Cont. of 1971

CONVERSION TABLE ADDED IN
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

DP 4230

FEET	INCHES	METRES
20	-	6.095
51	8	15.75
53	5	16.28
66	-	20.115
70	5	21.465
154	9	47.17
211	5	64.39

AC	RD	P	SQ M
-	1	-	1012
-	1	1/4	1043

Sgd. N.M. Nash (L.S.)
 July & Aug 1901

D64530



REFERENCE MARK	DESCRIPTION
A	180° 00' G.I. Rod 1' 6"
B	270° 00' G.I. Rod 12' 0"
C	270° 00' Conc. Block 1' 6"
D	0° 00' G.I. Rod 1' 6"
E	0° 00' G.I. Rod 1' 6"
F	270° 00' Conc. Block 1' 6"

DP 238201

Registered:

C.A.:

Title System:

Purpose:

Ref. Maps:

Last Plan:

PLAN OF
SUBDIVISION OF
LOT C IN PLAN F320439
AND LOTS 12,13,14,15 AND 16
IN D. P. 4230
Scale: 80 feet to an inch

Mun. Shire:

City: COONAMBLE

Locality: COONAMBLE

Parish: COONAMBLE

County: LEICHHARDT

L. RICHARD. BOSS, LANGFORD

of, DURSO

I, RICHARD. BOSS, LANGFORD, a surveyor registered under the Surveyors Act, 1929, as amended, hereby certify that the survey represented in this plan is accurate and has been made in accordance with the Survey Practice Regulations, 1967, and was completed on 20th Nov. 1967.

Signature: *[Signature]*

Surveyor registered under Surveyors Act, 1929, as amended. (Date line of azimuth, XY)

Statements of intention to dedicate public roads or public reserves or create drainage reserves, easements, or restrictions as to user. (Signatures and Seals to appear in panel provided.)

It is intended to dedicate to the public the land shown as road on this plan and the adjacent corner of lot 2.

OFFICE USE ONLY.

WARNING: CREASING OR FOLDING WILL LEAD TO REJECTION.

Council Clerk

I hereby certify that:-

(a) the requirements of the Local Government Act, 1924, as amended, and

(b) the requirements of section 348 of the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Act, 1924, as amended,

have been complied with by the applicant in respect of the above plan.

Subdivision No.

Date:

*NOTE: This part of certificate is for the use of a new road or where the land to be subdivided is subject to Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Act, 1924.



10.8 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY REPORT**File Number: C8****Author: Azita Sobhani-Community Services Manager
Raquel Pickering-Librarian****Authoriser: Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment****Annexures: Nil****PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the activities within Council's Community Development section for the month of February 2025.

BACKGROUND

The Community Development (CD) section focuses on our community and our people and the support that Council offers in the delivery of positive support and outcomes. A short summary of the key areas in the CD section as follows:

- **Youth & Community Services**

Council provides after school activities in Gulargambone and Quambone. Council also delivers school holiday programs in Coonamble and Gulargambone and the Youth Week Program in Coonamble. Council also operates a Youth Forum/Council.

- **Library Services**

Coonamble Shire Council is a member of the Northwestern Library Service (NWLS). The Service covers four local government areas and the libraries within them, i.e. Bogan (Nyngan), Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warren.

The Coonamble Library has two (2) satellite branches located in the villages of Gulargambone and Quambone. The Librarian purchases stock that is rotated between all libraries and participates in book exchanges with Gulargambone and Quambone seven times per year. The Gulargambone Library is run under an agreement with the Gulargambone Rural Transaction Centre Committee. The Quambone Library is run by Council staff.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Community Strategic Plan - P1 Community Services and Wellbeing.

CSP1.1 – Initiate and contribute to effective and needs-based community programs which enhance engagement, cohesion, vibrancy and liveability.

(b) Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations arising from this report.

COMMENTARY

This report presents a summary of community development activities for the previous month.

Coonamble Shire coordinates and delivers the following community services:

- School Holiday Program – Coonamble, Gulargambone & Quambone
- Youth Centre Gulargambone (After School & Holiday Activity)
- After School Care Quambone
- Library Services (Coonamble, Gulargambone, Quambone)
- Creating, coordinating and supporting events e.g. Seniors Week Luncheon
- Funding events e.g. the Interagency Resilience Day, October Wellbeing Day
- Youth Empowerment Program

Community Development

The Community Development Manager attended various meetings this month, including the Interagency meeting and the Connected Community Strategy paper discussion with the Department of Education. Planning has also commenced for the April holiday programs and Youth Week.

All service agencies were invited to a get-together to plan for the upcoming holiday events and the types of activities they would be able to provide, as the public holidays for to Easter and Anzac Day fall during this holiday period, and many staff from services may not be available. The theme will be “our community’s health and wellbeing”, based on discussions with AMS for a day of activities to be held at Smith Park.

Seniors week



The CD section has been planning a fun and engaging festival for our seniors. As in previous years, we are providing a Seniors Luncheon free of charge, thanks to the Coonamble Shire Council and the \$5000 grant secured, and a trip to the Western Plains Zoo for the first time.

Seniors Luncheon

The Seniors Week Festival in Coonamble Shire will start with the Seniors Week Luncheon. With a theme of "Senior Safari," we plan to have amazing decorations, wonderful outfits, and lively music. Thanks to the Council for fully funding the event, there is no cost to attendees.

Royden Donohue will once again attend to serenade the seniors, keeping the tunes rolling and encouraging everyone to get up and dance.

The young ladies and their staff from the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy will be with us on the day, supporting and helping to serve the lunch and mingle with our guests.

SENIORS GONE WILD AT WESTERN PLAINS ZOO A SENIORS WEEK EVENT FOR SENIORS

WHEN: THURSDAY 13 MARCH 2025

LEAVE COONAMBLE 9.00AM front of Council building

LEAVE GULARGAMBONE 9.30AM front of 2828 building

TRANSPORT, ENTRY TO ZOO & LUNCH PROVIDED BY COUNCIL

Tour the Zoo on the bus with an experienced Zoo guide.

BRING: hat, sunscreen, water bottle, money for snacks/souvenirs.

QUAMBONE RESIDENTS: Do you require transport? Please call 6827 1925 and let us know when booking your seat.

WALKING FRAMES WELCOME!! Please consider your mobility. You MUST be able to enter and exit bus (with steps) and walk on gravel/dirt paths with inclines. You must be able to remove and insert your walkers from under the bus yourself. Carers are welcome to accompany those with walkers. Carers over 50 are included in the grant for admission and lunch as they are seniors; those under 50 will need to pay for admission and lunch. You will need to show a Seniors Card or Age Pension Card.

LIMITED SEATS - RESERVATIONS CLOSE 4PM 6 MARCH OR WHEN THE BUS IS FULL

CALL 6827 1900 TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT NOW!



The Seniors Week Festival continues with "Seniors Gone Wild" – an excursion to the Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo.

A 57-seat bus will leave on Thursday, 13 March, picking up at Coonamble and Gulargambone to take Seniors to the Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo, where they will have lunch and then tour the Zoo on the bus, accompanied by an experienced volunteer Zoo Guide. Thanks to the grant, there will be no cost to the seniors. Transport is being organised for any Quambone residents who wish to attend.

Due to popular demand, walking frames will be accepted on the excursion. After liaising with the zoo and speaking with services to determine the possibility and the details, we simultaneously released new posters to all three locations, as well as social media, to include the walking frames. Conditions were that the seniors would need to be able to

handle their frames in and out of the bus either by themselves or with their carers and that they should use their best judgment in terms of mobility considering the zoo has inclines, dirt and gravel paths with loose soil when not on the bitumen road or paved areas.

We hope that we will be able to offer two large events every year to the seniors within our Shire each year from now on, through grants.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

The Youth Empowerment program started its sessions for 2025 and has ramped up its activities by establishing a second group of junior youth, while the first group continues their journey into their second year. This second junior youth group is run by trained facilitators and one of the Youth Champions from our older cohort, who is on a training internship, thereby embedding the program's sustainability.

Information sessions were organised earlier for the parents of children interested in enrolling in the program. Two introductory sessions were also held at the Public Primary School for children in Years 5 and 6. Additionally, an introductory session was organised for parents from St Brigids to familiarise them with the program, its aims, and its philosophy. Flyers have been uploaded on the parents' portal for enrolment.

We are excited about the response and the relationships built with the primary schools. Below are some photos of the first sessions from the two groups.



Here the group is trying to understand how acquiring competence in anything one aims at, needs continuous effort and resilience. That stumbling blocks on the way are simply stepping stones.

The Youth Champions are starting their sessions with two components. One focuses on learning how to run a household, including cooking, nutrition, and budgeting. The other delves into material that unpacks the concept of excellence in all that they aim to do, such as work, relationships, family, school, and the necessary requirements and skills. This addresses issues of passivity and non-engagement in activities and learning at school. Initial discussions have started with Headspace and Literacy for Life to find pathways where youth and their families can be supported by what each of these organizations can offer.



LIBRARY SERVICES

Summer reading club

This event was a success for Coonamble in 2025 after several years of hiatus due to COVID. We finished up with 19 participants in the program. The winner had to have read a minimum of 10 books and all eligible participants went into a draw and the winner was chosen at random. Ella Morrissey was the lucky winner who went home with \$100.

Library exchange

The Gulargambone Library Exchange was completed. Coonamble Library provides both new release books and older books on a rotation basis to Gulargambone library.

LIBRARY STATISTICS (25 January – 26 February 2025)

Service	Loans	New M/ships	Wi-Fi (hrs)	Internet (people)	Internet (hours)	Kids Comp (children)	Junior Visits	Adult Visits
Coonamble	474	4	42	53	1820	72	128	286
Gular	23	0						

- **Manual Statistics** - Coonamble (numbers refer to people attending)

Library Visits	Reference Enquiries	Technology Enquiries	Local History	VIC Enquiries
414	18	42	4	6

- **Activity Statistics** - Coonamble (numbers refer to people attending)

Senior Craft	Pre-School Visits	Seniors Tech	Seniors Cinema	Other
18	0	0	10	4

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The delivery of community development and integrated planning functions and activities are carried out in accordance with Council’s Operational Plan and Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Social Implications

Council’s community services section delivers a broad range of support services, activities, and opportunities to all age groups. These services assist in building social cohesion within the Shire.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

The economic implications of community services are positive, in that these services provide employment opportunities, delivering a service to the community and support the local business sector.

(f) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The updates in this report provide information to Council on the key activities recently undertaken in Council’s Community Development section.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the information in the Community Development report.

10.9 ADOPTION OF DRAFT POLICY - OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION POLICY

File Number: A-17

Author: David Levick-Manager Economic Development and Growth

Authoriser: Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment

Annexures: 1. Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

To seek Council adoption of a draft policy that was placed on public exhibition following the December 2024 Council meeting, being the *Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The draft *Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy* was presented to the December 2024 meeting of Council and subsequently placed on public exhibition for 28 days, with interested parties having 42 days to make a submission in response to the policy, its purpose and proposed implementation.

No submissions were received following the exhibition period.

BACKGROUND

The draft *Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy* was presented to the December 2024 meeting of Council and subsequently placed on public exhibition for 28 days, with interested parties having 42 days to make a submission in response to the policy, its purpose and proposed implementation.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP L1.2 - Strengthen our engagement and consultation with our local community and stakeholders including increasing community participation in decision making.

CSP L1.3 - Deliver successful strategies and operations which increase the community's confidence in the integrity and capability of Coonamble Shire Council.

(b) Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations arising directly from this report. Costs associated with the implementation of the policy are included in the annual Operational Plan and Budget and in the Fees and Charges.

COMMENTARY

The draft policy was placed on the Council website for public consultation and advertised in the Coonamble Times through Council's Weekly Connect and on Council's Facebook page during the exhibition period.

No public submissions were received.

With no public submissions received it is now recommended that the policy be adopted with no further amendments.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The policy standardises the process for recognising the Shire's outstanding community members.

(b) Legal Implications

Legal implications with respect to the recognition of deceased outstanding community members are covered within the policy and its procedures through seeking agreement in writing from immediate family members.

(c) Social Implications

The policy provides a transparent, consistent and fair process for recognition of the Shire's outstanding community members.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications foreseen in implementing this policy.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

None.

(f) Risk Implications

None.

CONCLUSION

With no public submissions made during the exhibition period, it is now recommended that the draft Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy.



OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

The social cohesion and social capital of rural communities, such as those of Coonamble Shire, often rely on outstanding effort and long-term dedication by individuals and community groups. Additionally, some individuals, in their pursuit of individual goals and often with limited resources, achieve outstanding levels of excellence. Recognition of each of these endeavours encourages and inspires other members of the community to 'aim high' and contributes to an ever-improving community.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to implement a framework by which recognition can be given systematically and tangibly to outstanding community members.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Outstanding Community Member Recognition Policy are:

- To identify a suite of means by which the recognition of outstanding community members of Coonamble Shire can be tangibly demonstrated.
- To develop and systematically apply sets of criteria by which an outstanding community member can be identified and the means by which their recognition can best be demonstrated and perpetuated.
- To develop a formal record of the Shire's outstanding community members.

4. LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

Local Government Act 1993

Australia Day Award nomination and winner selection criteria
Nickname Hall of Fame nomination and selection criteria
Plaque placement nomination and selection criteria
Coonamble Shire Council Certificate of Appreciation template

5. APPLICATION/SCOPE

This policy applies to the elected Council, Council directorates, departments and individual Council officials, either nominating an outstanding community member themselves or acting on requests or nominations from the community for the recognition of an outstanding community member.

6. POLICY

Council recognises its community members, who are outstanding in their pursuit of individual excellence or have made a significant contribution to social cohesion or social capital within the Shire, through the application of systematically applied criteria to determine the most appropriate means, from a suite of means, to perpetuate that recognition, being:

- Australia Day Awards.
- Plaque on a park bench seat or other Council asset (eg. a bridge) or installed on Council-owned land.
- The Nickname Hall of Fame.
- Certificates of Appreciation presented either on such days as Volunteer Day or NAIDOC Week, NAIDOC Community Day, other United Nations-declared International Days or Weeks or on an *ad hoc* basis.
- ‘Our Outstanding Community Members’ webpage on Council’s website.
- Another organisation’s Award recognition scheme, such as the NSW SES Awards for Bravery, etc.

7. DEFINITION

Council official Councillors, members of staff, contractors, volunteers, those undertaking work experience with Council, and delegates of Coonamble Shire Council, including members of committees that are delegates of the Council.

Community member An individual or community-oriented organisation operating within Coonamble Shire.

Title: Community Member Recognition Policy		
Department: Community, Planning, Development and Environment		
Version	Date	Author
1.0	December 2024	D. Levick
Review Date: September 2027		
Amendments in the release:		
Amendment History	Date	Detail
Annexure Attached:		
Australia Day Award nomination and winner selection criteria Nickname Hall of Fame nomination and selection criteria Plaque placement nomination and selection criteria Coonamble Shire Council Certificate of Appreciation template		
Paul Gallagher General Manager		



Get your nomination in before 4.30pm, Wednesday, DD January YYYY



- Decide who you will nominate (they must live or operate within Coonamble Shire)
- Gather as much information as possible about their achievement.
- Find someone who will support the nomination you're making (name and phone number).
- Add the details to the form below and return to Council before the closing date (above).



I am nominating:

Name/Organisation:.....

Phone:



Choose a category for your nomination (please check 1 only):

- Citizen of the Year
- Young Citizen of the Year (under 26 years on 26 January 24)
- Community Group of the Year
- Community Event of the Year
- Sportsperson of the Year (over 18 on 26 January 24)
- Junior Sportsperson of the Year (aged under 18 years on 26 January 24)



Reason for nomination:

- This should be a major achievement or a series of achievements or contributions to the community during the year. Explain why this achievement is important (can be in dot points).
- Please attach any supporting documentation, such as a newspaper clipping, and feel free to write on the back of this form, if more space is needed.

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Your details:

Name:.....

Phone:

5.

Details of the person supporting this nomination:

Name:.....

Phone:

6.

Add further details about your nominee here, if you need more space:

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Get your nomination in before 4.30pm, Wednesday, DD January YYYY

7.

Return your completed form in an envelope marked:

Australia Day Award Nomination

Coonamble Shire Council

PO Box 249

Coonamble NSW 2829



Australia Day

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.





Australia Day Awards – Selection Criteria

Eligibility for consideration:

- The nominee has not received the Australia Day Award in the same category in the past five years.
- For the Young Citizen of the Year Australia Day Award, the nominee has not yet had their 26th birthday before the day the award is presented.
- For the Sportsman of the Year Australia Day Award, the nominee has had their 18th birthday before the day the award is presented.
- For the Junior Sportsman of the Year Australia Day Award, the nominee has not yet had their 18th birthday before the day the award is presented.
- For the Community Group of the Year Australia Day Award, the nominee must be a community-oriented group, delivering outcomes that primarily benefit the community (as determined by and agreed to by a majority of the Award panelists).
- For the Community Event of the Year Australia Day Award, the nominee event must demonstrate a degree of inclusivity of the diversity of the local community, including different age groups; be accessible (including affordability for families); create a positive image for Coonamble, locally, regionally and nationally; and have implemented an effective and systematic marketing campaign in its lead-up.
- The nomination should be in recognition of a major achievement or significant contribution or series of achievements or contributions in the past year (or recent five years or more if a series of achievements or contributions).

Criteria to rank nominations:

- Breadth of achievement: was the achievement in only one sport or benefiting only one segment of the community or across several sports and benefiting multiple segments of the community?
- Scale and level of the achievement in relation to the means of the nominee; giving greater preference to the nominee that overcomes greater odds to record the achievement/contribution.
- Depth of devotion and discipline demonstrated by the nominee's practice and training schedule or time devoted to make their contribution to the community, above and beyond what might be available to others in a similar position.
- Degree and consistency of sportsmanship / goodwill shown by the nominee towards team mates / others.
- Degree of self-reliance drawn upon to record the achievement or contribution: was the nominee part of a team? Did the nominee receive external assistance?
- In the case of the Community Event of the Year: have demonstrated a high degree of inclusivity of the diversity of the local community; a high degree of accessibility; have created a positive image for Coonamble (locally, regionally and nationally); and been promoted through an effective and systematic marketing campaign in its lead-up.

Australia Day Awards – Selection Panel Membership

The selection panel shall consist of the following, with decision by consensus or by majority vote when consensus cannot be achieved, meeting in mid-January each year.

Member	Alternative
Mayor	Deputy Mayor or nominated Councillor
General Manager	Director of Community, Planning, Development and Environment
Manager Ec Dev and Growth	Tourism and Events Officer
Previous Year's Citizen of the Year	
Previous Year's Sportsman of the Year	



Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame Nomination Form

(to be completed by the person making the nomination and the person being nominated)

To be eligible for nomination, the person being nominated must be or have been a Coonamble Shire 'local' of more than 10 years and have been known by a consistent nickname for five or more years.

Nominations will be assessed by a three-person selection panel (comprising the General Manager or his/her nominee, the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, and an adult member of the public (who is not an officer of Council), against the criteria found on the reverse side of this nomination form.

Details of the person making the nomination

First and Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone contact: _____ Email contact: _____

I acknowledge that I have read the Selection Criteria and believe the person I am nominating meets the criteria. Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

I hereby wish to nominate the following individual:

Details of the person being nominated for induction into the Nickname Hall of Fame

(to be completed by the nominee or someone who holds Power of Attorney for them, or the Interment Rights of the nominee if he/she is already deceased)

I am completing this nomination as: the nominee
 * the person who holds Power of Attorney for the nominee
 * the holder of the Interment Rights of the nominee

First and last name of Nominee: _____

My address: _____

* My first and last name: _____

Phone contact: _____ Email contact: _____

Nickname: _____

■ I acknowledge that I have read the Selection Criteria and agree to the nomination being considered against these criteria. Yes No

■ I agree to sit for an artist or to provide several quality 'head and shoulder' portrait photographs, taken from several angles, for the purpose of having a cartoon portrait/caricature produced for the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame Yes No

■ I believe I have a sufficiently interesting life story and/or story about my nickname to be inducted into the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame and agree to this 'story' being used in association with my cartoon portrait/caricature. Yes No

■ I agree to Coonamble Shire Council using my cartoon portrait/caricature and Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame 'story' for long-term public exhibition, promotion and retail merchandise, waiving any rights and claim to any remuneration for myself or my heirs in relation to induction into the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame. Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Coonamble Shire Council collects, stores, accesses, uses and discloses any personal Information you provide in order to facilitate services, customer requests and Council business, in accordance with obligations under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and Council's Model Privacy Management Plan. The retention and disposal of your personal

Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame – Selection Criteria

If the nominee or his/her immediate family (in the case of a deceased person) agree to the nomination, the following selection criteria will be applied to determine induction into the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame.

- The nominee has been a resident of Coonamble Shire for 10 years or more.
- Two other long-term Coonamble Shire residents confirm that the person has been known by their nickname for five years or more.
- The nominee has agreed to the production of a cartoon portrait/caricature.
- The nominee has agreed to make themselves available to produce a 'story' about their nickname and/or other life facts
- The nominee's nickname and 'story' relating to how they earned their nickname and/or other interesting life events and facts would not be considered offensive, rude or crass to a general member of the public.
- The nominee has agreed to the use of their cartoon portrait/caricature and 'story' for long-term public exhibition, promotion and retail merchandise and has agreed to waive any rights and claim to any remuneration for himself/herself or heirs in relation to induction into the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame.
- In the case of a nomination being accepted by a person holding Power of Attorney for the nominee, a certified copy of the original Power of Attorney documentation (signed by a Justice of the Peace) is attached to the nomination.
- In the case of a deceased person's being nominated, a certified copy of the original Interment Right documentation (signed by a Justice of the Peace) is attached to the nomination.
- In the case of a deceased person's being nominated and meeting other criteria for induction, their nomination has been publicly exhibited for 28 days to determine whether other family members have any objection to the induction proceeding.



Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame – Selection Criteria

If the nominee or his/her immediate family (in the case of a deceased person) agree to the nomination, the following selection criteria will be applied to determine induction into the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame.

- The nominee has been a resident of Coonamble Shire for 10 years or more.
- Two other long-term Coonamble Shire residents confirm that the person has been known by their nickname for five years or more.
- The nominee has agreed to the production of a cartoon portrait/caricature.
- The nominee has agreed to make themselves available to produce a 'story' about their nickname and/or other life facts
- The nominee's nickname and 'story' relating to how they earned their nickname and/or other interesting life events and facts would not be considered offensive, rude or crass to a general member of the public.
- The nominee has agreed to the use of their cartoon portrait/caricature and 'story' for long-term public exhibition, promotion and retail merchandise and has agreed to waive any rights and claim to any remuneration for himself/herself or heirs in relation to induction into the Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame.
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- In the case of a deceased person's being nominated and meeting other criteria for induction, their nomination has been publicly exhibited for 28 days to determine whether other family members have any objection to the induction proceeding.

Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame – Selection Panel Membership

The selection panel shall consist of the following, with decision by consensus or by majority vote when consensus cannot be achieved, meeting as required.

Member	Alternative
Mayor	Deputy Mayor or nominated Councillor
General Manager	Director of Community, Planning, Development and Environment
Manager Ec Dev and Growth Tourism and Events Officer	Director of Community, Planning, Development and Environment
Community member of 20+ years	



**Recognition Plaque
Nomination Form**

(to be completed by the person making the nomination and the person being nominated)*

To be eligible for nomination, the person being nominated must be or have been a Coonamble Shire 'local' of more than 10 years. If a community organisation, it must have operated continuously for 25 years or more.

Nominations will be assessed by a three-person selection panel (comprising the General Manager or his/her nominee, the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, and an adult member of the public, who is not an officer of Council), against the criteria found on the reverse side of this nomination form.

Details of the person making the nomination

First and Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone contact: _____ Email contact: _____

Are you submitting the nomination on behalf of an organisation? Yes No

If you answered 'yes' to the above question, which organisation: _____

I acknowledge that I have read the Selection Criteria and believe the person I am nominating meets the criteria. Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

I hereby wish to nominate the following individual:

Details of the person/organisation being nominated for a recognition plaque

(to be completed by the nominee or someone who holds Power of Attorney for them, or who holds the Interment Rights of the nominee if he/she is already deceased)

I am completing this nomination as: the nominee
 * the person who holds Power of Attorney for the nominee
 * the holder of the Interment Rights of the nominee

First and last name (or organisation name) of Nominee: _____

Preferred location/placement of plaque: _____

* My address: _____

* My first and last name: _____

Phone contact: _____ Email contact: _____

Amount to be contributed by the nominator for the plaque's placement: \$ _____

■ I acknowledge that I have read the Selection Criteria and agree to the nomination being considered against these criteria. Yes No

■ I agree that Coonamble Shire Council has final decision in determining the placement of the requested plaque. Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Coonamble Shire Council collects, stores, accesses, uses and discloses any personal Information you provide in order to facilitate services, customer requests and Council business, in accordance with obligations under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and Council's Model Privacy Management Plan. The retention and disposal of your personal

Recognition Plaque – Selection Criteria

If the nominee or his/her immediate family (in the case of a deceased person) agree to the nomination, the following selection criteria will be applied to determine whether a recognition plaque will be placed in Coonamble Shire.

- The nominee has been a resident of Coonamble Shire for 10 years or more or, for an organisation, operated continuously within Coonamble Shire for 25 years or more.
- The nominee person or organisation has made a consistent contribution to the well-being, development and/or social capital and social fabric of the community for 10 or more years, in the case of a person, or 25 or more years, in the case of an organisation.
- It is physically possible to place a plaque in the location, and of the type, requested or in a location and of a type determined following negotiations with the nominator.
- The General Manager, or his/her delegate, has agreed to allocate the balance of the cost to install the plaque at the location and of the type agreed between Council and the nominator.
- The nominee or the person holding Power of Attorney for the nominee or, in the case of a deceased person, the holder of the Interment Right for the nominee, has agreed to the nominee’s name and contribution to the community of Coonamble Shire being recognised on a plaque mounted in a public area.
- In the case of a nomination being accepted by a person holding Power of Attorney for the nominee, a certified copy of the original Power of Attorney documentation (signed by a Justice of the Peace) is attached to the nomination.
- In the case of a deceased person’s being nominated, a certified copy of the original Interment Right documentation (signed by a Justice of the Peace), relevant to the nominee, is attached to the nomination.
- In the case of a deceased person’s being nominated and meeting other criteria for recognition by way of a plaque, their nomination has been publicly exhibited for 28 days to determine whether other family members have any objection to the induction proceeding.

Recognition Plaque – Selection Panel Membership

The selection panel shall consist of the following, with decision by consensus or by majority vote when consensus cannot be achieved, meeting as required.

Member	Alternative
Mayor	Deputy Mayor or nominated Councillor
General Manager	Director of Community, Planning, Development and Environment
Manager Parks and Urban Services	Director of Infrastructure
STO Parks and Urban Services	
Community member of 20+ years	

Certificate of Appreciation

This certificate is awarded to

Name

for

Services to the Community
and Environment

11 September 2024

Daniel Keady, Mayor

Date

COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

10.10 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH - PROGRESS REPORT

- File Number:** D5
- Author:** David Levick-Manager Economic Development and Growth
- Authoriser:** Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment
- Annexures:**
1. **Key Data on Grant-Funded Projects (excluding Roads)** [↓](#)
 2. **Open Streets Program 2025-28 Guidelines** [↓](#) 
 3. **Draft EPA Grant application** [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on recent activities and the progress of projects that contribute to the economic development and growth of the Local Government Area (LGA).

BACKGROUND

The economic development and growth function is tasked with providing effective and efficient delivery of an expanded and broader economic base for the LGA, enhancing business prospects, growth, productivity, employment and economic development.

The function facilitates the development of programs and activities that will stimulate economic development by assisting growth and retention of businesses, as well as aiming to reduce barriers and attract diverse, sustainable, and responsible new industry development and improve the profile of the Coonamble LGA to attract investment, industry, new residents, and tourism.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

- ED1.2 Develop our economy, including the visitor economy.
- I1.5 Adopt successful strategies which maximise our community’s access to quality infrastructure and assets.

(b) Financial Considerations

Activities undertaken as described in this report are within approved operational budget allocations for tourism and economic development activities and capital projects or are funded through grant monies.

COMMENTARY

Economic Development and Growth

The following summarises progress on key initiatives.

Coonamble Main Street Enhancement

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- Weight/load capacity for awnings in Coonamble’s main street determined
- Integrity of awnings in Coonamble’s main street determined

- Building owners advised of outcomes of inspections
- Immediate remedial actions taken
- Paint scheme colour palette received for awning painting project
- Lighting determined to highlight Art Deco streetscape
- CBD Precinct Masterplan developed

Commentary: Remedial work carried out in the main street in readiness for a Night on the Town event. Other work is pending a Council decision on the future plan for the main street, following the forthcoming workshop briefing.

Housing Development

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- EOI seeking interest from developers done
- Housing contract for modular homes signed
- Carry out civil works (services, road, kerb & guttering)
- Manufacture housing components
- Assemble housing on site

Commentary: Contract for the supply of housing with Simmons Group signed. Site visits held. Quotes received for subdivision design and electricity infrastructure design. Installation and connection of the Sewerage Pumping Station to the sewerage network underway. DA for subdivision and first houses submitted. Tenders for civil construction and electrical work to be advertised.

Land and Industrial Development

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- Rezoning determined for more industrial land and for improved alignment of zoning to current usage across Coonamble township
- Planning Report drafted for rezoning of the old sheepyards site
- Planning Report drafted for rezoning of the Artesian bore bath project site
- Planning Report drafted for house-keeping rezoning for such areas as the Coonamble Showground
- Some Planning Reports ratified by Council
- Council-ratified Planning Report submitted to the Department of Planning

Commentary: Planning Proposals produced to create an industrial zone at the old Coonamble Sheepyards and re-classify to operational the land at the Limerick Street site.

Youth Accommodation – Coonamble and Gulargambone

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- Advertise RFT for design-and-construction of the youth accommodation units at Coonamble and Gulargambone
- Assess tenders for Youth Accommodation
- Seek further quotations and consider scope adjustments to match budget

- Award contract
- Design work finalised
- Build Youth Accommodation in Coonamble and Gulargambone

Commentary: Contract has been awarded following negotiations post tender process. Cost is now affordable, within the grant funding provision. Designs are being prepared for each specific site.

Bore Bath project

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- Take ownership of site
- Complete geotech and soil contamination studies
- Bore application submitted (Feb 2024)
- Design consultant RFQ released
- Complete site clean-up and demolition

Commentary: See separate report in this business paper.

Real Country Regional Tourism Collaboration

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- Real Country Destination Strategic Plan adopted
- Real Country project, Warrena Creek Reserve development business case adopted in principle
- Real Country infrastructure works incorporated into the Warrena Creek Reserve Plan of Management
- Community consulted on the draft Plan of Management for Warrena Creek Reserve, incorporating proposed Real Country developments

Commentary: Further development of this project was being pursued as part of the rPPP Stream 1 Funding opportunity. This has been announced and Coonamble was not successful. Recipients in NSW included Cessnock, Mudgee, Bathurst and Cobar. Future program for Warrena Creek work to be determined following the forthcoming Council workshop.

Coonamble Region Art Trail

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- Artist brief and project brief developed
- Artist liaison confirmed
- Public Art Advisory Panel appointed
- Detailed submissions invited
- Artworks produced and installed

Commentary: Project manager has met with the Economic Development team and Director. Project brief to include design and costings for new Shire entrance signage.

This project will see the creation of additional public art that is a significant tourism drawcard, being:

- Additional galah sculptures on the Gulargambone town entrance signs.
- A mural painted on the old bore shed in Smith Park.
- Creation of a Tin Town Contemplation Circle north of Macdonald Park, Coonamble.
- Creation of Weilwan Contemplation Circle at Quambone.

Grants (Community, Planning, Development & Environment led)

Grants completed & awaiting acquittal	Comment
Winter / Spring Holiday Fun	
Coonamble Sports Ground Walking Loop	
Australia Day 2025	

Further details on the above grants, their dollar value, due dates, and milestones are attached at the end of this report.

Pending grant submissions:

Submission	Amount sought	Announcement date
Quambone Racecourse Upgrades (CRIF)	\$315,510	May 2025
Coonamble Shire Urban Housing Strategy	\$69,916	April 2025
Coonamble Heritage Reflections	\$25,000	May 2025
Youth Week 2025	\$3,412	Non-competitive

Unsuccessful applications

The Transforming Coonamble proposal, to be funded under the Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (Stream 1) was not successful. It was for funding to develop Business Cases and Quantity Surveys for shovel-readiness for future grant opportunities. It would be sensible for Council to budget in FY25-26 for the completion of business cases and costing for priority projects so that these can be ready for upcoming grant opportunities.

Grant opportunities**Open Streets Program**

- Individual grant of up to \$350,000 for the delivery of annual, street-based events, for three years, that enables ongoing street activation and vibrancy (guidelines attached).
- Closing 14 March 2025
- Three annual events must be delivered, the first year by February 2026, second year by February 2027 and third year by February 2028.
- This is an open, competitive grant, **not requiring any co-contribution**.
- The submission will focus on building on the Vision Splendid event during the October long weekend to offset the economic impact of there not being (at this stage) a Greyhound Racing Carnival.

Grant opportunity (cont.)**Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvement Grant (3 streams)**

- Individual grants of up to \$300,000 for Stream 1 (consolidation and transformation); up to \$250,000 for Stream 2 (Environmental Improvements); and up to \$25,000 for Stream 3 (Advisory services and education).
- Two projects are proposed to raise waste management operations in Coonamble Shire to a standard compliant with NSW Environment Protection Authority expectations:
 1. **Coonamble Waste Facility Upgrade** to ensure more tightly controlled and safer depositing of waste by customers, and safer handling and disposal of waste by Council staff, including the ability to accept asbestos and other hazardous waste.
 2. **Quambone facility upgrade**, including remediation of the site, closing the landfill area and converting the site to a compliant Public Waste Transfer Station.
- Note Gulargambone was not eligible for this grant.
- Cash and or in-kind co-contribution of 30% required for Streams 1 and 2 and of 50% for Stream 3:
 - Quambone facility upgrade to a Waste Transfer Facility, (under Stream 1), requiring a cash co-contribution of \$52,065, and drawing on a further in-kind contribution of \$51,463 from regular operations.
 - Coonamble Waste Facility Upgrade, (under Stream 2) requiring a cash co-contribution of \$47,274, and drawing on a further in-kind contribution of \$86,899 from regular operations.
 - Both projects requiring a further cash co-contribution of \$2,786, and drawing on a further in-kind co-contribution of \$14,928 to cover the Stream 3 component of each.
 - Council already has a budget line item called depot improvements that could potentially be used to support this, should funds not be fully utilised this year and carried forward.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority has served a notice on Coonamble Shire requiring Council to make its waste management facilities compliant or face a \$250,000 fine and daily fine of \$10,000 from the date of the fine until the sites are declared compliant.

Council and EPA staff are working closely to meet the compliance requirements outlined in the EPA Notice, and while the EPA can see Council's wholehearted and immediate effort to undertake the remedial work, it will hold off from applying the fine.

The work proposed for the grant application is that required to bring the waste facilities to a standard that meets the EPA's requirements in a timely fashion.

The alternative is that Council self-fund the work over several financial years at a total costs (based on current costings) of \$765,000.

The opportunity provided by this funding program is that the work be done more quickly, and through a single-year cash co-contribution from Coonamble Shire

Council of \$102,125, and an in-kind contribution of \$153,290 (that constitute regular operational expenses for Council).

Communications

Council continues to maintain its communication with the community through:

- 1 x weekly half-page advertisement, *Weekly Connect* in *The Coonamble Times* – advertising Requests for Quotations, Tenders and Expressions of Interest, policies and other reports currently on public exhibition and upcoming events for the community.
- Paid classified advertising for current tenders, requests for quotations, expressions of interest and positions vacant.
- Posts in the News column on the homepage of Council's website, on various topics as required.
- Posts in the Events Calendar hosted on Council's website.
- Posts on Council's Facebook page, on various topics including all media releases.
- Council's website – sharing all policies, plans and procedures, fees and charges, and documents for public exhibition, in the spirit of open and transparent governance.
- Media releases as required – on road conditions, project milestones, water supply interruptions, etc – distributed to print, radio and TV media across the Central West.

Website: During February, the Council webpage that attracted the highest number of hits was the Employment Opportunities page (379 hits), followed by the Contacts page (376 hits) and the Council Meetings page (315 hits).

Facebook: During February, Council gained 26 new followers on its Facebook page, bringing the total number of followers to 3308, with 68% of followers being women and 32% men. During February, there were 32 posts to Facebook to communicate news and updates on various operational matters. The posts attracting significant reach were announcing the visit by Homes NSW's mobile outreach, training opportunities with VERTO, and the Welcome to Coonamble dinner.

Media Releases: At the time of preparation of this report, there have been 3 media releases (since the last meeting in February) in relation to:

- Coonamble Seniors to 'go wild' at Western Plains Zoo - 28 Feb 2025
- Our water supplies clear of PFAS 'forever chemicals' - 24 Feb 2025
- Council addresses flow-on effects of water billing issue - 18 Feb 2025

Weekly Connect newspaper advertising: during February, the Weekly Connect has been published four times, highlighting the following topics:

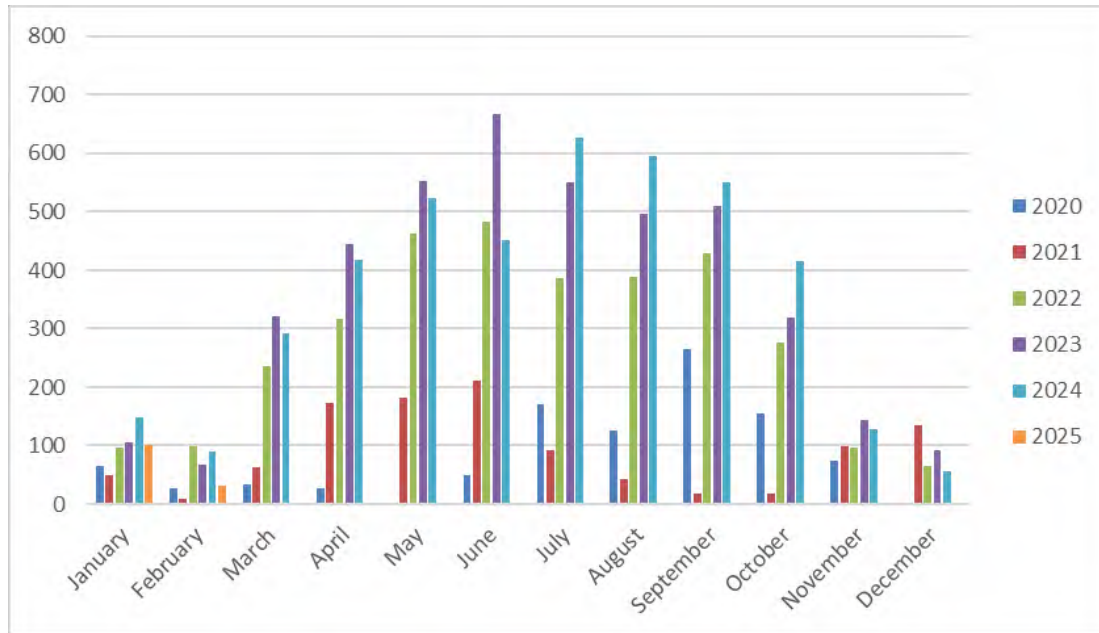
- Coonamble community's responsible water usage.
- The Welcome to Coonamble dinner.
- The Seniors Festival activities: the luncheon and zoo trip.
- Council's decision to rezone the old sheepyards for industrial land.

- Progress on new developments at Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone sportsgrounds.

Tourism and visitation

Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre

Between 29 January and 25 February, the Information and Exhibition Centre welcomed 85 visitors to the Coonamble Shire. Although tourist movements are usually reduced during the summer months, visitation during the last month has decreased by 61% compared to last year. This could be attributed to the growing concern about the cost of living in Australia.



Coonamble District Store

The merchandise range stocked in the Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre is an effective avenue to promote the Coonamble Shire and to offer meaningful and unique mementos for visitors to remember their travels through this Shire.

The District Store stocks a variety of locally sourced items, ranging from postcards, framed artworks, ceramics, food items and more. This range is supplemented by a range of merchandise produced by the Information and Exhibition.

Since 1 July 2024 until 25 February 2025, total merchandise sales totaled \$9,621.50, being \$7,009.00 of Information and Exhibition Centre merchandise and \$2,612.50 of District Store products.

A report to Council has been prepared on this topic for this meeting.



Visitor spending

Despite the marked decrease in tourist numbers to the Coonamble Shire, there has been a 16% increase in spending, when compared with January 2024. This results in a little more than \$130,000 being injected into the Coonamble Shire from visitors. This data is drawn from the Commonwealth Banks’ CounciliQ database to which Coonamble Shire Council subscribes.

This increase has provided benefits across different industries.

Industry	Share of total spending (%)
Private Transport	7.1%
Food Retailing	4.7%
Tourism and Entertainment (Takeaway food and cafes)	26.5%
Discretionary Retail	49.8%

Economic data insights indicate that the top age band of visitors in January were 65+ and the top lifestyle was Retiree, 24.3%.

Marketing and promotions

Real Country partnership

Over the coming months, each of the three Councils that make up the Real Country partnership – Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shires – are developing a coordinated schedule of major events for the coming three years. To support this and the overall promotion of Real Country a marketing strategy is being developed including new content capturing the region to be used in advertising campaigns. This will build awareness of what Real Country has to offer, with target audiences. Expenses will be shared across the three Councils and included in Operational Budgets.

Events

Upcoming events:

- 16 March, Country Championships at Coonamble Racecourse
- 5 April, A Night on the Town
- 25 April, ANZAC Day
- 6-9 June, Coonamble Rodeo and Campdraft

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Policies relevant to activities reported here include the Community Consultation Policy.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications directly associated to this report.

(c) Social Implications

Projects and initiatives described in this report are undertaken with the objective of delivering social benefits to the Coonamble LGA.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications directly associated with this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Development of the projects proposed for funding through available grants and sponsorship are initiatives to meet objectives of the Community Strategic Plan 2022-32, Delivery Program 2022-2026, Coonamble Shire Masterplan 2020, the Economic Development Strategy 2021, and the Coonamble Destination Management Plan 2020.

(f) Risk Implications

Regular reporting to Council provides an opportunity to communicate and manage any ongoing or unexpected related risks that may emerge.

CONCLUSION

Economic Development and Growth activities and projects continue to progress according to the Economic Development Strategy 2021 and work towards achieving the goals of the Coonamble Destination Management Plan 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS**That Council:**

- 1. Notes the Economic Development and Growth report.**
- 2. Agrees to submit an application under the Open Streets Program to fund events in Coonamble's main street, continuing the Vision Splendid theme.**
- 3. Agrees to submit applications under the Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements program for the Quambone waste facility upgrade and the Coonamble Waste facility upgrade, and**
- 4. Commits \$105,000 in the FY25-26 Budget as a cash co-contribution for the Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvement, should the application be successful.**



Key Data on Community, Planning, Development and Environment Grant-Funded Projects in Progress
(at 1 March 2025)

Identifier		Value (ex GST)			Milestone Dates			
Name	Code	Grant	Co-contribution	Total	Due Date	M1	M2	M3
Youth Empowerment Program	RYIP-0270	\$989,680	-	\$989,680	30-May-25	24-Jan-24	31-Jul-24	24-Jan-25
Youth Accommodation (2 x 2BR and 1 x 3BR units)	RYIP-0270	\$1,584,000	-	\$1,584,000	30-May-25	24-Jan-24	31-Jul-24	24-Jan-25
Illegal Dumping Prevention (Baseline Data)	R16Stream1	\$19,080	-	\$19,080	15-Jul-25			
Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Grant	EDAEG27	\$30,000	-	\$30,000	15-Aug-25	14-Nov-24	15-Feb-25	
Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Grant	EDAEG55	\$30,000	-	\$30,000	15-Mar-26	15-Jun-25	15-Sep-25	
Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Grant	EDAEG61	\$30,000	-	\$30,000	15-Mar-26	15-Jun-25	15-Sep-25	
Coonamble Region Art Trail	SCCF5-0092	\$235,035	-	\$234,035	28-Feb-26			
Coonamble Artesian & Cultural Experience	RTAF-0068	\$5,500,000	\$1,250,000	\$6,750,000	27-Mar-26	21-Mar-24	20-Sep-24	27-Jun-25
Seniors Week	SF25015	\$5,000	-	\$5,000	30-May-25	16-Mar-25		

Transport for NSW

Open Streets Program 2025-2028

Guidelines

February 2025

transport.nsw.gov.au



Transport for NSW acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

Many of the transport routes we use today – from rail lines, to roads, to water crossings – follow the traditional Songlines, trade routes and ceremonial paths in Country that our nation's First Peoples followed for tens of thousands of years.

Transport for NSW is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Cover image: Vision Splendid, Coonamble Shire Council.
Credit: Coonamble Shire Council

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ArtWalk 2024, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
Open Streets Program (2024-25)
Credit: Alicia Fox Photography

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- Glossary
- Appendix A: Policy Context.....
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- Appendix C: Core Indicators.....

Grant Program Details	
Application opening time and date	Friday 7 February 2025, 9am
Closing date and time	Friday 14 March 2025, 5pm
Application outcome date	Mid-May 2025
Project delivery timeframe (for successful applications)	First year of events by February 2026 Second year of events by February 2027 Third year of events by February 2028 Approval and implementation of a Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s by the third year of events and no later than February 2028 (if not already in place for the street/s)
Project evaluation and acquittal reports	Required no later than 8 weeks after completion of the final event and no later than April 2028
Decision-maker	Executive Director, Cities Revitalisation and Place, Transport for NSW
NSW Government Agency	Transport for NSW
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	Grant funding milestones over Financial Years 2024/25 to 2027/28: Grant program value total: \$14.65 million excl. GST. Individual grant amounts: up to \$350,000 excl. GST.
Enquiries	Cities Revitalisation and Place, Active Transport and Vibrancy revitalisation@transport.nsw.gov.au



Overview of Program

Program purpose

The Open Streets Program 2025 to 2028 is a \$14.65 million grant program that will provide successful council applicants with up to \$350,000 in funding to help transform our streets into more vibrant, walkable public spaces for people to enjoy and safely access. The Program is one stream of the Vibrant Streets Package, part of the NSW Government’s ongoing commitment to enhance vibrancy in NSW.

From 7 February 2025 until 14 March 2025, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) invites NSW councils to apply for funding to deliver events over three years that are free to the community and temporarily close streets to vehicles and open them to people to help establish enduring vibrancy in our local neighborhoods that support the community, creative sector and local businesses.

This round of the Open Streets Program builds on the success and learnings of previous rounds (2021-22 and 2024-25). It addresses council feedback by providing three years of funding to help enable longer-term planning. The goal is to help improve processes and reduce costs, strengthen existing and emerging partnerships with business and the creative sector, and deepen community connections to place.

Program aims

We invite applications for proposals that deliver on the Open Streets Program’s aims to:

- Promote vibrant local communities through delivery of free recurring street-based events.
- Empower local councils to deliver reduced costs and improved efficiency for street-based events.
- Support cultural industries and drive economic growth with more sustainable ongoing delivery of street-based events.
- Enable councils, community groups and businesses to activate their local streets.

Why open streets to people?

From the NSW Guide to Activation: The role of events and programming in enduring street vibrancy

Our streets, roads and laneways are key public spaces that play a critical role not only for transportation, but in fostering public life, supporting local jobs, showcasing local content and small business, improving mental and physical wellbeing, and allowing us to connect with each other and our environment.

Opening our streets for events can improve the amenity and activities available in our streets, allowing people to more comfortably and safely enjoy their streets in new and exciting ways. This active programming helps to breathe new life into them year-round and allows us to reimagine what they can be: vibrant local places where communities can socialise, play and connect.

Events and programming are one component of creating vibrant, lively places that are used in different ways, by different people, day and night. Some other considerations when driving enduring vibrancy include:

Having a vision and creating a legacy

Coordinate activation within the framework of an overarching vision, objectives, and target outcomes for the space or precinct.

Relationship to context

Activation should complement and make the most of the location, movement, activity, routines and demographics of people using adjoining land and transport networks.

Accessibility

An activated public space is easy to access by all, day or night, and weekday or weekend. To support the activity of people, make walkability and cycle movement a priority. Include pedestrian links to, from and through the space and ensure there is access for events and servicing, as appropriate.

Physical form

An activated public space is comfortable, attractive, safe, and flexible for a range of uses. Ensure there is appropriate infrastructure and amenities for daily use as well as events, as appropriate.

Community role and use

An activated public space offers a balance of permanent activation as well as temporary, planned, and curated activation to attract a diversity of people, both locals, and visitors. This includes opportunities for recreation, cultural and community expression, social connection, relaxation, and eating. It spans across the day and night, as well as weekday and weekend.

For more information on activation and its benefits, the key enablers for activated spaces, and practical tools for practitioners to maximise activation, visit the [NSW Guide to Activation](#).



Kiama Winter Street Festival, Kiama Municipal Council
Open Streets Program (2024-25)
Credit: Peter Izzard Photography

Eligibility Criteria

Funding is available for projects delivered by councils to drive enduring vibrancy across NSW. All applications will be assessed for eligibility and only eligible applications will be considered for funding. Councils across NSW applying for funding can only submit one application.

Applicants may apply for up to \$350,000 to be expended over three years of events (across four Financial Years).

Eligible applicants

- Applicants must be a local council within NSW.
- Applicants can only submit one application (but may propose multiple events within the single application).

Eligible projects

Projects must:

- Involve the temporary closure of a street or street/s to vehicles. The closed street/s must:
 - Be in council or NSW Government ownership.
 - Be primarily used for vehicles.
 - Be either:
 - Within 500m radius of a local centre, close to services and retail, and where available in the council area be close to public transport; or
 - On a street with a public facility and/or social infrastructure, such as a school, library, sports centre or community centre, and where available in the council area be close to public transport.
- Deliver street-based events across three years, at least once per year, on the selected closed street/s.
- Include the preparation and implementation of a Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s, that includes the selected street/s from dot point one, during the three-year period or demonstrate there is one already in place for the selected street/s.
- Encourage capacity building in the local business and creative industry to empower ongoing street activation and vibrancy.
- Target a reduction in costs associated with street closures across the life of the project.

- The events must:
 - Maintain a consistent event brand/theme across the three years, with flexibility to evolve year-on-year in response to community feedback and learnings.
 - Be free and inclusive, however, free ticketed events are acceptable for managing attendance.
 - Include joint co-programming with one or more local creative organisations, e.g. an arts organisation, cultural institution, gallery, school, library, community group or similar.
 - Include collaboration with local businesses or business associations, asset owners or major nearby employers to encourage participation.
 - Host the majority of the event programming and activations on the temporarily closed street area.
 - Reflect and contribute to the local character and identity of the place.

Projects may:

- Include multiple different series of events, however there must be one instance of each event series per year. Projects should also consider value for money.
- Be held more than once per year, which is encouraged.
- Contribute to broader placemaking objectives for the selected street/s, which is encouraged.
- Include council and/or sponsor co-funding, which is encouraged.
- Partially close a street to vehicles. Applicants must demonstrate how safety and amenity will be maintained.

Ineligible projects

The following projects are ineligible for funding:

- Events that include any type of participation fee.
- Events that do not occur at least once per year.
- Projects that are located on streets that are not primarily used by vehicles.
- Existing or planned activations or events, except where the project substantially increases the event scope or footprint, for example, by closing and activating a street that was not previously planned for closure.

CASE STUDY: Spot On

Location: St Pauls Street, Randwick City Council

Under the Open Streets Program (2024-25), Randwick City Council delivered *Spot On*, a series of vibrant street activations in The Spot, Randwick. The initiative aimed to revitalise the area, addressing challenges such as reduced visitation and vacant storefronts. Spanning 10 weeks, the event closed a 100-metre section of St Pauls Street every Thursday evening from 4-10pm. The family-friendly event featured partnerships with local businesses, artists, and cultural institutions to create an inclusive atmosphere during the cooler months of the year, from August to Halloween.

The street activations aimed to reinvigorate The Spot as a local cultural and commercial hub and build on the success of the one-day *Spot Festival*, held in March each year. It tested the feasibility of implementing a recurring street closure while enhancing community engagement and participation through entertainment, dining, and cultural programming. Council created an inviting experience that encouraged both residents and visitors to support local businesses and celebrate the area's cultural offerings.

The event series showcased what St Pauls Street already had to offer, platforming the existing businesses and retailers and complementing their offerings with lighter-touch activations. This included:

- Weekly street closures giving more space over to businesses, performers and visitors to stay, play and connect.
- Outdoor dining, live entertainment, and lighting.
- Collaborations with businesses such as the with the local cinema to align programming and to create "Instagrammable" red-carpet experiences.
- Performances by local dance studios and emerging artists.

Spot On provided a unique opportunity to bring vibrancy and engagement to The Spot and served as a pilot to explore the long-term viability of regular street closures. Its approach to community collaboration and its focus on creating shared, memorable experiences, reflected a strategic effort to foster local cultural and economic resilience.



Spot On, Randwick City Council
Open Streets Program (2024-25)
Credit: Randwick City Council

Timeframes

The application and assessment process and approximate timeframes for the program are outlined below.

Table 1. Timeframes for Program

Target Date	Milestone	Action
7 February 2025	Applications open	Online applications open for councils to apply
14 March 2025	Applications close	Councils submit application in SmartyGrants by 5pm, Friday 14 March 2025
March – May 2025	Assessment	Assessment of applications against selection criteria
May – June 2025	Notification of outcome and funding agreement execution	Councils formally advised of outcome of application and funding offers made Funding agreements signed and first milestone payments made Announcement of successful projects
From July 2025	Projects commence	Councils commence projects
July 2025 – February 2028	Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s	Preparation and implementation of a Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s for the proposed street/s complete by third year of events (if not already in place for the street/s)
July 2025 – February 2026	First year of event programming	Event management plan prepared for first year of events Councils deliver first year of events Evaluation of first year of events at latest 4 weeks after event delivery
March 2026 – February 2027	Second year of event programming	Event management plan prepared for second year of events Councils deliver second year of events Evaluation of second year of events at latest 4 weeks after event delivery
March 2027 – February 2028	Third year of event programming	Event management plan prepared for third year of events Councils deliver third year of events Evaluation of third year of events
March – April 2028	Project completion	Project completion and acquittal at latest 8 weeks after final event delivery

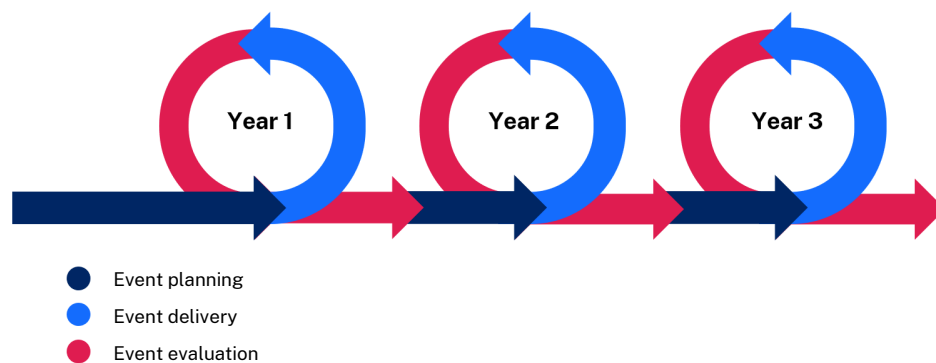


Figure 1. Continuous improvement approach to event delivery across the Program

Application Process

The Open Streets Program (2025-28) is an open, competitive grant as outlined in the Grants Administration Guide. This means that applications will be assessed on their comparative merits against a set of criteria (see *Assessment Criteria*).

Applicants must be a local council within NSW, with only one application per council.

To apply:

1. Familiarise yourself with the grant requirements set out in these guidelines, including the eligibility and assessment criteria.
2. Complete and submit your application via the SmartyGrants portal available at placeandpubliclife.smartygrants.com.au by 5pm, 14 March 2025.
3. Applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgement of application receipt. Unless further information is required, applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by mid-May 2025.

The assessment process (see *Assessment Process*) is competitive and applications that do not clearly and sufficiently respond to the criteria will be disadvantaged during the assessment process. Applicants should ensure they provide clear and relevant information in their application.

Available support

To help applicants prepare their application, additional information and resources are available on the [Open Streets Program](#) webpage, including FAQs.

Transport for NSW is available to provide information to potential applicants on interpretation of these guidelines including types of projects eligible for funding.

For inquiries or more information:
revitalisation@transport.nsw.gov.au

Applicants are encouraged to seek advice from their legal, business and financial advisors to determine the suitability of the funding before applying.



Moon Festival, Cumberland Council
Open Streets Program (2024-25)
Credit: Cumberland Council

What we're looking for

In planning projects, councils are encouraged to consider:

A place-based approach

A place-based approach focuses on the unique circumstances of a place and actively involves local people in planning, design and activation. This is particularly important for streets, where diverse activities, users, and demands vary throughout the day and night.

Partnerships and collaboration with community, businesses and institutions

The Program seeks to strengthen partnerships and collaboration between local government and the community, businesses and institutions. These partnerships should be meaningful and adapt to the specific needs of the event and stakeholders.

Improving walkability and connection

Walkable public spaces connect people of all abilities with local destinations and services. Projects should encourage walking along streets by prioritising safety, directness, and comfort, ensuring accessibility for all ages and abilities.

Streets as centre stage

Our high or main streets are home to a rich mix of businesses, services and amenities. By temporarily closing them to vehicles we can showcase these existing providers and transform our streets into a stage to platform local businesses, facilities, artists, performers and cultural institutions. Projects should focus on bringing in elements that complement rather than compete with the street's existing offerings.

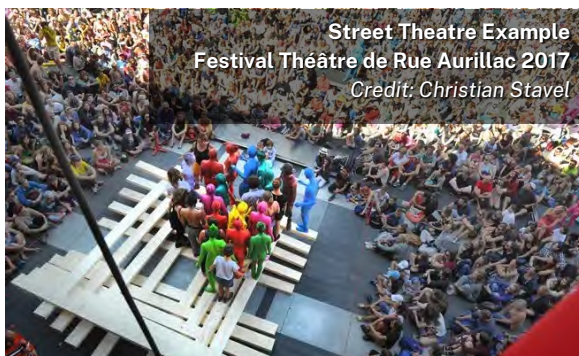
Longer term planning

Driving enduring vibrancy requires a multi-faceted approach and involves ongoing place governance, sustained funding, enabling infrastructure, improved processes, and an empowered community, business and cultural sector. Councils should consider how projects can lay the foundation for ongoing street vibrancy.

In particular, councils should consider how the implementation or use of a Global Traffic Management Plan/s (TMP) and/or Global Development Application/s (DA), required as part of all funded projects, can be used to create more event-ready environments for future use.

Project Examples

- Creating a series of regular events that transform the street into a temporary public square with outdoor dining and performances, allowing local cafes and restaurants to expand into the street.
- Hosting an outdoor concert or arts festival on the street.
- Transforming a street by hosting trails and tours to encourage exploration and discover local retailers and makers.
- Transforming a street through an event that includes the creation of an artwork co-designed with community e.g. bringing creativity and colour through painted streets (asphalt art).
- Creating a play street with organised children's activities and entertainment.
- Opening a street for a pop-up outdoor library, exhibition space or outdoor theatre, creating a new meeting place for people.



CASE STUDY: Wonderful Wardell

Location: Richmond Street, Wardell

Ballina Shire Council revitalised Richmond Street in Wardell Village by transforming it into a temporary pop-up play space through the Open Streets Program (2024-25). The initiative aimed to encourage community engagement, test the space's potential for ongoing activation, and foster ideas to inform permanent upgrades in the area.

The project featured a one-day *Wonderful Wardell: Creative Community Day* event which included a series of facilitated community art workshops, street performances, and a pop-up parklet. To facilitate the event, Richmond Street was closed to traffic, trialing its use as a pedestrian-friendly small events space.

The street-based event format was well-received by the community, with 90+% of

surveyed participants wanting to see more street-based events in the location. The project also increased awareness and attachment to place, with 100% of surveyed participants saying they were likely or very likely to visit Wardell Village again after the event.

The project demonstrated the viability of Richmond Street as a vibrant community space, increased awareness of Wardell Village, and strengthened its identity as a hub for social and cultural activity.

Community engagement from the event supported further placemaking initiatives in the project location, transforming a footpath and pedestrian underpass with murals inspired by ideas from the event's art workshops. This helped to improve active transport connections to and from Richmond Street as a legacy beyond the life of the event project itself.



Wonderful Wardell, Ballina Shire Council
Open Streets Program (2024-25)
Credit: Mia Zapata Photography



Before



After

Assessment Process

The assessment process involves four key stages: eligibility checks, assessment, decision-making and notifications of outcome.

Submission method

Applications will only be accepted via SmartyGrants.

Eligibility check

Transport for NSW will perform an eligibility check of applications received against the eligibility criteria (see *Eligibility Criteria*). Only applications deemed eligible will progress for panel assessment.

Where possible, Transport for NSW will seek to remedy eligibility issues with the applicant. Councils will be given two business days to respond to requests for information/clarification. Where an application is still deemed ineligible or if the applicant has not provided the information requested, the application will not progress for panel assessment.

Panel assessment

Eligible applications will then be assessed and ranked against the assessment criteria to determine the suitability of each project for funding. Applications will be assessed against the program objectives, deliverability, and expected benefits (see *Assessment Criteria*).

Advice may be sought from other NSW Government agencies to assist in the assessment of projects. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.

The assessment panel may recommend part-funding for projects if there is insufficient funding available for the whole project or where only a component of the project is considered suitable/eligible.

Broader factors that may be considered during the assessment process include the following:

- Total amount of funding available.
- Geographical distribution of projects across NSW.
- Diversity of event models and approaches.
- Alignment with existing NSW Government policies and strategies.

During the assessment process, Transport for NSW may ask applicants to provide additional information to assist in the assessment process.

Decision making

The Minister for Roads has approved the Open Streets Program (2025-28).

Transport for NSW will provide the assessors' advice and recommendations to the Executive Director Cities Revitalisation and Place, Active Transport and Vibrancy as the delegated grant decision maker for consideration and approval.

Transport for NSW is the sole agency responsible for administering this grant.

Probity advice

An independent probity advisor will provide guidance to Transport for NSW and the assessment panel on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

Distribution of projects between Metropolitan and Regional NSW

15 grant opportunities will be reserved for the top 15 ranking eligible regional council applications (if received). This is to ensure an equitable geographical distribution of projects between Metropolitan and Regional NSW. This does not prevent more than 15 regional councils being awarded a grant if there are more than 15 regional councils in the top-ranking applications.



Assessment Criteria

Table 3. Assessment criteria

Criteria	How this is demonstrated in the application (not exhaustive)
Project Merit 50%	
Project activates the street/s and transforms it/them into vibrant places for the community and visitors to connect, stay, and play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear project description that communicates how activation, vibrancy and inclusivity will be achieved. • Approach to how programming and activations will complement and showcase, and not compete with, the local place and existing services and amenities within the street. • Approach to how community and visitors will be able to connect, stay and play.
Project improves connectivity, accessibility and perceptions of safety in streets and surrounding areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic project location with a description of how the location and project will improve connectivity, accessibility and perceptions of safety for the community. • Relationship between the project location, proposed event/s, and public and active transport options. • Consideration of how the project can trial and contribute to ongoing connectivity, accessibility and safety in the street/s and surrounding areas.
Project celebrates local character and place identity through brand/theme and creative programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and distinct event concept and brand/theming that speaks to the local character and identity of the community and place. • Preliminary programming ideas that could showcase the local character and identity of the community and place. • Concept and theming that complements broader placemaking initiatives in the street/s and surrounding areas.
Project involves meaningful partnership and co-programming with the local businesses, arts organisations and cultural workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to partnering with a local arts organisation, cultural institution, gallery, school, library, community group, and/or similar, and the role they will play in co-programming. • Approach to partnering with the local businesses, local chamber of commerce, business associations, asset owners and/or major nearby employers and the role they will play in the event and programming. • Well-defined, meaningful and inclusive opportunities for collaboration and partnership are identified. • Letter/s of support from specific proposed partner/s including the local creative sector (if available). • Letter/s of support from the local business community (if available).
Project considers potential long-term place management strategies to promote vibrancy for the duration of the grant period and beyond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of intended longer-term outcomes for the project. • Approach to driving enduring vibrancy and street activation through improvements/changes to place governance, event processes, infrastructure and/or funding models. • Description of intended future use of the Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s in the selected street/s. • Demonstrate how local business, community, and the cultural sector will be empowered to continue to activate their streets in an ongoing capacity.
Project Deliverability 25%	
Experience and ability to deliver the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline experience in delivering similar projects. • Governance structure and stakeholders identified. • Letter of support from councils General Manager, CEO or equivalent.

Criteria	How this is demonstrated in the application (not exhaustive)
Risk mitigation and approvals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of applications (i.e. approvals) required. • Risks have been identified and mitigation measures considered.
Financial viability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed budget breakdown.
Project is deliverable within the Program timeframes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed project timeline that accounts for potential delays.
Value for Money 25%	
Project delivers value for money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed budget breakdown that demonstrates appropriate allocation of funding. • Statement of how Council intends to achieve value for money and target a reduction in costs associated with street-based events across the life of the project and into the future. • Statement of how Council will use a Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s to improve efficiencies and reduce costs for street-based events into the future.
Project supports the local economy and local employment during and beyond the funding period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a clear focus on local business, local employment and supporting existing businesses within the street and centre during the project and beyond. • Demonstrates clear opportunities for partnership with local businesses and/or business associations. • Demonstrates consideration to build skills and knowledge within the local business community.
Project delivers social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits for the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of beneficial outcomes anticipated that will improve experience of local businesses, the creative industry and the community. • Description of any additional expected social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits during the grant period and beyond.

Figure 2. Range of possible event models



CASE STUDY: Wander OnQ

Location: Queen Street, Campbelltown

Campbelltown City Council brought Campbelltown CBD to life with a large-scale creative and cultural event, Wander OnQ. Multiple streets were temporarily closed, Dumaresq Street, Queen Street and Lithgow Street, to create three unique event zones that showcased the different precincts, and offerings, within the CBD.

The event was focused on supporting 'local', with a curated business activation program and a creative and performing arts program led by Campbelltown Arts Centre and Renew Australia. The event aimed to establish new collaborative relationships with local businesses through co-designing business activations, supporting businesses through a micro-grant program, and the temporary re-use of vacant shopfronts. Businesses were invited to apply for grants to extend hours, create event-specific promotions, or activate their storefronts, helping ensure Wander OnQ's increased amount of people walking through benefited the local economy.

The event saw over 10,000 attendees roam the streets, partnerships formed with 34 local businesses, and a Guinness World Record broken with the world's longest Halal Snack Pack. Renew Australia revitalised vacant shopfronts with a series of interactive fashion workshops, not only bringing life to unutilised shopfronts but also creating a platform for local designers.

Overall, the event helped create a foundation for long-term partnerships, with local businesses gaining an understanding of and aligning with Council's vision for a vibrant CBD. The positive experience encouraged their involvement in future events and strengthened their connections within the community.



Successful Projects – Funding Conditions

This section outlines funding compliance and what funding can and cannot be used for. These should be considered alongside the eligibility criteria.

Use of funding

Funding may be used for:

- Costs associated with street closures, including traffic control, signage, barriers or other infrastructure and cleaning;
- Costs associated with the development and implementation of a Global Development Application/s and/or Global Traffic Management Plan/s;
- Event infrastructure, including the leasing and purchase of event equipment such as chairs, trestle tables and marquees;
- Event production, including operations, logistics and technology providers;
- Engaging artists, performers, musicians, or other creative workers, including reasonable associated costs;
- Engaging a local creative, arts or cultural institution for program development and delivery;
- Microgrants (up to 10% of the total funding) to local businesses, community groups, schools or similar, to encourage organisations and businesses in the area to participate in programming, provided the grants are consistent with the program aims and objectives;
- The installation of new public placemaking elements, art and/or street murals, where they can clearly be shown to support the event or activation;
- Promotion and marketing of the event/s;
- Any other service or resources (up to a reasonable proportion of the funding amount) provided they contribute to delivering the event or activation and are approved by Transport for NSW;
- The expansion of an existing or planned event if the event scope or footprint is substantially increased;
- Funding of council event personnel, staff positions or contractors may be considered for up to 10% of the total funding and subject to approval by Transport for NSW. Funding cannot be used for existing salaries or staff expenses, must be directly associated with delivery of the project, and must be requested and approved by Transport for NSW through a labour cost exemption as part of the application process.

Funding cannot be used for:

- Projects that involve permanent capital works, with the exception of placemaking elements such as public art, festoon lights, and street murals (asphalt art).
- Funding for works that are part of council's ongoing maintenance and management of a site.
- Existing staffing costs including salaries or staff expenses, or any staffing costs directly associated with the delivery of the project that have not been approved by Transport for NSW.
- Projects requiring ongoing funding from NSW Government, or retrospective funding to cover any project component that is already complete or underway.
- To offset expenses of an existing or planned activations or events, noting funding can only be used for expanded areas and scope.

Funding agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Transport for NSW. The funding agreement will set out the obligations of the recipient regarding the funding, including but not limited to monitoring and reporting, project completion, and milestones and payment.

The funding agreement will be populated with key project details as submitted in the application form. Transport for NSW reserves the right to amend the agreement before it is entered into with any recipient.

The NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign a funding agreement.

Project management

Grant recipients will be responsible for delivering and meeting the project requirements and milestones. This includes ensuring all relevant approvals are obtained; ensuring compliance with any relevant regulation or approval; acknowledging and agreeing that it is solely responsible for delivering and completing the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.

Project variations

Projects will need to be delivered in line with the funding agreement. Grant recipients are required to request any changes to approved projects in writing to Transport for NSW. Change requests will be assessed on their impact to the purpose, scope, timing and conditions of the approved project, and will only be allowed once agreed upon by all parties through a formal variation. If approved, information on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder may be updated to reflect the project change.

Consultation with the community and other key stakeholders

The grant recipient will be responsible for monitoring the project and is required to make adjustments to aspects of the project as needed in response to feedback from the community and other key stakeholders.

Evidence of consultation with community and other key stakeholders is an integral part of the project and is a requirement in the project milestones.

Applications - Approvals

Endorsement/provision of a grant under this Program does not negate the need for successful applicants to obtain all necessary/required approvals such as road changes and/or traffic facilities under the *Roads Act*, *Transport Administration Act*, and *Local Government Act*, etc, and any relevant planning approvals under the *Environment Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act* and associated *Environmental Planning Instruments*, etc.

As part of the Program requirements, successful recipients will need to implement or use Global Traffic Management Plan/s and/or Global Development Application/s within the three-year period.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to ensure they have identified and are aware of the applications and approvals required and can demonstrate how they will consult with relevant parties such as local council, local Transport for NSW or other state agency representatives, property owners and affected businesses.

Proposed projects are not required to have received approvals prior to applying. However, they must demonstrate an approach to achieving approvals and factor in the timeframes required.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Successful applicants will be required to submit project progress reports to the NSW Government as outlined in the funding agreement. Examples of measures to be included in the report are outlined in the Appendix C: Core Indicators. Grant recipients are required to:

1. Provide 'before' and 'after' reporting against Appendix C: Core Indicators. This includes use and analysis of findings from the Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life and the Community Survey Tool for Public Space and Public Life which are available at: [Tools | Transport for NSW](#)
2. Provide high quality photographs before and during the funded events (including images taken from the same spot/position) with relevant credits and permissions for NSW Government use. Images must include photos taken on the street/s themselves, in addition to other event spaces. Should a video (optional) be created of the event, it must include relevant credits and permissions for NSW Government use.
3. Provide milestone reports each year of the project and a final acquittal report via SmartyGrants at the completion of project including a signed Statement of Expenditure and signed Procurement Certificate.

Project promotion and opening event

A communication pack will be provided to grant recipients to provide approved key messages, required credits, branding, logos and multimedia to help promote the project and acknowledge the funding contribution.

Grant recipients must acknowledge the funding contribution from the NSW Government in all communications and media for the project as per the requirements outlined at the [Sponsorship and Funding Acknowledgement](#) webpage.

For all funded events, the recipient must invite the Minister for Roads, local MPs, and Transport for NSW representatives to attend any funded event with no less than 20 business days' notice.

To make the invitation, the recipient should access the Minister's [web form](#) and local MPs web forms. Invitations to Transport for NSW representatives should be sent to revitalisation@transport.nsw.gov.au. All invitations should note any formal proceedings taking place during the event.

Payment of grants

Payment of funding will be conditional on the funding being used only for the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement. Payment of funding will be made in accordance with the milestones and payment schedule set out in the funding agreement and will be subject to compliance with the recipient's obligations.

Timing and requirements will vary at NSW Government's discretion, depending on the scope and risk of the project.

Unless expressly stated, all sums payable or consideration to be provided under a funding agreement for the Open Streets Program are exclusive of GST. GST will not be paid for by Transport for NSW in addition to the grant amount.

Any unspent funds must be returned to Transport for NSW as part of acquittal or as outlined in the funding agreement.

Publication of grants information

Information about the grants awarded will be made available on the [NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder](#) no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect. All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*.



Wonderful Wardell, Ballina Shire Council
Open Streets Program (2024-25)
Credit: Mia Zapata Photography

Additional information and resources

Need advice?

Transport for NSW is available to provide information to potential applicants on interpretation of these guidelines, including types of projects eligible for funding. Transport for NSW can also provide advice on the online application process.

For further information, contact revitalisation@transport.nsw.gov.au.

Source Agency

Transport for NSW is the sole agency responsible for administering this grant.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing. Any questions you have about grant decisions for this opportunity, send to revitalisation@transport.nsw.gov.au.

If you do not agree with the way Transport for NSW has handled your complaint, you may complain to the NSW Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the relevant department. Visit the NSW Ombudsman at www.ombo.nsw.gov.au.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)*. Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)* makes government information accessible to the public by:

- Requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available.
- Encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible.
- Giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information.
- Restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Privacy Policy

Transport for NSW is required to comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988*. Transport for NSW collects the minimum personal information you voluntarily provide to enable it to contact an organisation and to assess the merits of an application.

Any information provided by council will be stored on a database that will only be accessed by authorised personnel and is subject to privacy restrictions. The information will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected.

Applicants must ensure that people whose personal details are supplied with applications are aware that Transport for NSW is being supplied with this information and how this information will be used.

Disclaimer

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. The costs of preparing an application are borne by the applicant.

Councils who have received funding through a previous round of the Open Streets Program are not guaranteed funding through this competitive round and are not at an advantage over other applicants.

Glossary

For the purpose of the Program the following terms have been provided to be drawn upon:

Activation includes both permanent and temporary interventions as per the definition in the [NSW Guide to Activation](#). For the purposes of this grant, permanent activations are limited to placemaking elements such as public art, festoon lights or street murals (asphalt art).

Co-programming involves two or more partners working together to design and deliver programmed activities and events.

Events are a type of temporary activation that provide a location-based experience.

Full road closure refers to a closure of all traffic lanes, requiring the diversion of traffic flow to an alternate route.

Global Development Application (DA) also known as a Blanket DA, refers to where council pre-defines the parameters of events at a specified site where the approval can be reused over a specified time period, including but not limited to event planning considerations, traffic, security, noise and emergency management, and temporary structures and their layouts.

Global Traffic Management Plan (TMP) similar to Global DAs, a Global TMP can pre-define traffic management arrangements for recurrent street-based events with consistent parameters (e.g. consistent signage, traffic controller locations, detours and diversions, temporary bus stop locations, hostile vehicle mitigation, no stopping zones, traffic guidance schemes, etc).

Local centres provide a range of retail, business, entertainment and community uses for the people who live, work, learn or visit the area. A local centre is where you find for example your local café, barber shop or dentist, a place for local communities to meet and take care of their daily needs. They can include public and active transport options such as a bus stop, tram or train station or ferry wharf, and walking or cycling paths.

Local character means the character of what makes the neighbourhood distinctive and is the identity of a place. It encompasses the way it looks and feels. It is created by a combination of land, people, the built environment, history, culture and tradition including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and looks at how they interact. Local character is distinctive, it differentiates one area apart from another. It includes the sense of belonging a person feels to that place, their emotional response and the stories that come out of people's

relationship with that place. Refer to the [NSW Public Spaces Charter](#).

Partial road closure refers to a closure of one or more, but not all, lanes of a street to continue to allow through-lane traffic to ensure two-way traffic can continue to operate under traffic control. A partial road closure does not divert any traffic flow.

Place-based describes an approach that targets the specific circumstances of a place and engages local people as active participants in development and implementation. This approach focuses on how specific places work and collaborative processes that recognise the value and need for local expertise, knowledge, responsibility and investment, allowing development of a shared vision and values.

Place activation refers to the planning, development and change delivered to encourage and increase diverse human activity in a place. An activated public space entices people to visit, use, stay and enjoy the space. It is typically associated with terms like 'vibrancy', 'animation', 'liveliness' and 'programming'.

Placemaking means the reimagination and rejuvenation of public spaces to help improve both short and long-term social, cultural, environmental and economic value for customers and communities.

Project means one or more event series that takes place over three years.

Public facility and/or social infrastructure refers to indoor public spaces (such as libraries, museums, galleries, civic/community centres, showgrounds and indoor public sports facilities) as well as other places (social infrastructure) that support local communities such as schools. These places are often publicly owned or for public use, free to access and enjoy. Refer to the [NSW Public Spaces Charter](#) for more on public facilities.

Public Road is per the definition in the *Roads Act 1993 No 33*: (a) any road that is opened or dedicated as a public road, whether under this or any other Act or law, and (b) any road that is declared to be a public road for the purposes of this Act.

Street means any main or high street, local street and civic space, as defined by [Movement and Place – Design of roads and streets](#), that is used primarily by vehicles.



Halloween on Majors Bay, City of Canada Bay
Ten Streets Program (2024-25)

Appendix A: Policy Context

Table 4. Alignment with NSW Government strategies and policies

Policy area and agency	Goals, Strategies and Plans	Description
Transport Transport for NSW	Future Transport Strategy	Future Transport Strategy is the long-term strategy for planning transport in NSW. The Strategy recognises the critical role that transport plays in enabling – or inhibiting – successful places.
	NSW Guide to Public Space Activation	The NSW Guide to Public Space Activation is designed to help councils, place managers, communities and government agencies take a place-based approach to public space activation. It provides case studies, options for governance and management, and models of funding and enabling infrastructure.
	Active Transport Strategy	The Active Transport Strategy draws on the Future Transport Strategy and its vision for walking, bike riding and personal mobility. The Strategy provides a plan to guide planning, investment and priority actions for active transport across NSW.
	Great Places Toolkit	The Great Places Toolkit helps bring the principles of the NSW Public Spaces Charter to life through a collection of free resources to support local government, state agencies, industry and the community, including the Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life.
	Movement and Place	Movement and Place is a cross-government framework for planning and managing our roads and streets across NSW. The framework delivers on NSW policy and strategy directions to create successful streets and roads by balancing the movement of people and goods with the amenity and quality of places.
Vibrancy reforms	NSW Government	<p>The NSW Government is committed to enhancing vibrancy in NSW by creating an environment for venues and artists to flourish, simplifying the regulation of entertainment noise, removing red tape for local councils to host special events, supporting outdoor activation, and modernising the liquor licensing system.</p> <p>This includes making outdoor activation easier by streamlining the approval process for using private land and carparking spaces for outdoor dining, and empowering councils to approve temporary street closures for outdoor dining, performance and the extension of foyer space.</p>
24-hour Economy Strategy NSW Treasury	Greater Sydney 24-hour Economy Strategy	The 24-hour Economy Strategy supports the recovery and growth of the night-time economy sectors to realise its social and economic potential.

Appendix B: Application Submission Requirements

Eligible Applications

Must:

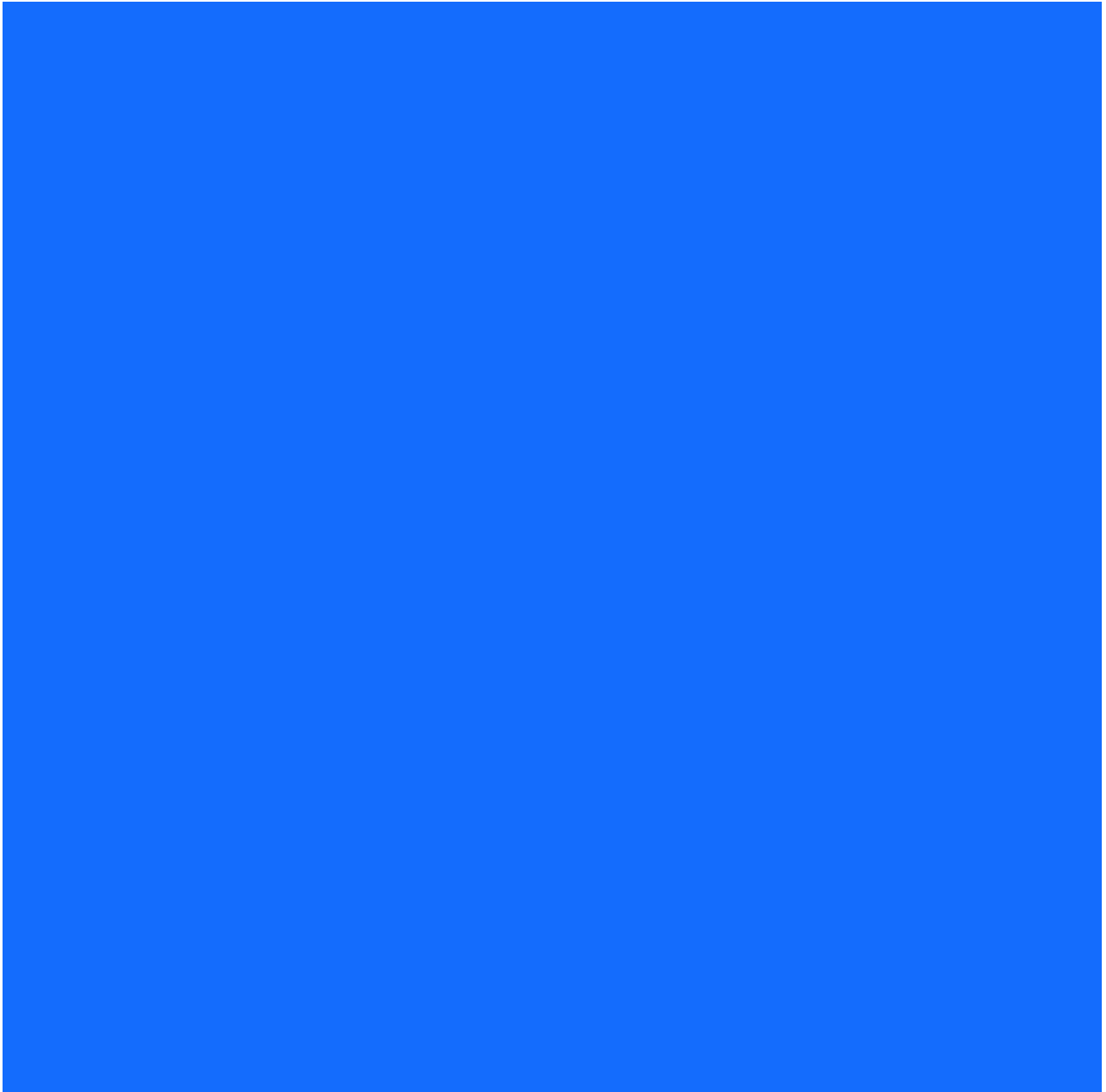
- Be sufficiently detailed and specific to allow consideration against the program criteria and objectives.
- Include a clear description of the project scope, including but not limited to:
 - The concept and brand/theming for the event series.
 - Preliminary ideas for event programming and activities.
 - The chosen project location/s and street/s proposed for closure.
 - Events and activations that address the eligibility criteria.
 - Site map of the proposed location/s.
 - Proposed partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders in the local creative industry and local business community.
- Include a clear outline of project deliverability, including but not necessarily limited to:
 - Delivery timeframes.
 - Expected approvals required.
 - Risk assessment and mitigation strategies.
 - Project governance.
 - Budget breakdown, including co-contributions if applicable.
 - A letter of support from the council General Manager, or equivalent delegated officer.
- Include a clear description of the project's expected outcomes and value for money, including by not limited to:
 - Longer-term outcomes, including long-term place management strategies and capacity building in community and the local business and cultural sectors.
 - Social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.
 - Alignment with strategic plans, policies or placemaking initiatives.
- Be submitted by the deadline of 5pm, 14 March 2025.

Appendix C: Core Indicators

Table 5. Core indicators for evaluation of project delivery.

These apply to project delivery of successful grantees, not the assessment of applications. Note: brief analysis of findings from ‘before’ and ‘after’ surveys using the [Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life](#) and the [Community Survey Tool for Public Space and Public Life](#) will be required in acquittal of funded projects.

Indicator	Measure	Evidence options
Types and number of interventions/activations delivered	Quantity Qualitative	Self-reported
Range of services and infrastructure to enable street closure and event	Quantity Qualitative	Self-reported
Details of application/s (i.e. approval/s) required	Quantity Qualitative	Self-reported
Number of temporarily pedestrianised streets	Quantity	Self-reported
Area of road space temporarily pedestrianised	Area in m2	Self-reported
Total area of public space improved / activated (including within any utilised streets or open spaces such as parks)	Area in m2	Self-reported
Change in vehicle usage in the streets, including number of parked and driving vehicles	Quantity	Counters / Self-reported
Number and increase in visitors	Quantity	Counters / Observation / Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life
Change in dwell time of visitors in the space before and during the event	Quantity	Counters / Observation / Survey / Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life
Diversity of visitors including gender and age	Quantity Qualitative	Counters / Survey / Observation / Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life / Community Survey Tool for Public Space and Public Life
Transport modes taken by visitors to get to and from the event	Quantitative	Counters / Survey
Number and details of partners involved	Quantity Qualitative	Self-reported
Increase in sales turnover/change in trading hours of local businesses	Amount/ Number of hours	Self-reported / Survey
Number of additional workers engaged/contracted by council and number of volunteers	Quantity	Self-reported
Community and stakeholder sentiment including what approaches could help them activate their streets in an ongoing capacity	Qualitative	Engagement / Survey
How events will/did evolve in response to community and local business feedback	Qualitative	Self-reported
Contribution to local character and identity	Qualitative	Self-reported / Engagement / Survey
Long term outcomes (e.g. reduction in costs and approval complexity associated with street closures for events, informs streetscape upgrades, established ongoing partnerships, etc)	Qualitative	Self-reported



Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (February 2025) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including Transport for NSW), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice relevant to their own circumstances when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.



EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)

COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

Grant Application

EPA Grant Application Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)

Intake March 2025

EPA Grant Application
 Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



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EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



1 Introduction:

Coonamble Shire Council (CSC) operates three waste facilities:

- Coonamble Waste Facility & Landfill (CWF)
- Quambone Waste Facility & Landfill (QWF)
- Gulargambone Waste Transfer Station (GWTS)

CSC is consolidating and upgrading its waste operations for operational efficiency, EPA Compliance, and safety reasons.

In consultation with its community, the council has resolved that the 3 locations need to be retained but urgently require upgrading.

Although the small LGA's limited financial resources constrict upgrading, the EPA's Grant program has the potential to make these urgently needed upgrades a reality.

The plan and Grant application, as presented in this document, includes the following objectives.

Core objectives:

- 1) Closure of QWF Landfill, conversion to Public Waste Transfer Station
- 2) Improve waste reception processes to review incoming materials and comply with the EPA and Act requirements. Specifically, inspect and intercept problems and hazardous waste not permitted into landfills.
- 3) Improve waste reception and interception practices to recover and reuse a recyclable item.
- 4) Introduction of specific controls for intercepting and managing problem waste (Asbestos, dead animals)
- 5) Controls will be implemented at the Coonamble WF landfill to limit the impact of wind-blown litter on the sites and their surroundings.
- 6) Upgrade GWTS for improved compliance and safety.

The availability of funds is limited, dictating the timing of the 2 projects described in this document.

EPA Grant funding support, as requested, will permit CSC to start and complete the projects in under 10 months from funding approval.

Grant Application Description:

Coonamble Shire Council grant applications for critical Waste infrastructure across all 3 current EPA Grant streams.

- Stream 1 – Quambone Landfill closure and Conversion to Waste Transfer Station.
- Stream 2 – Coonamble Landfill improvements
- Stream 3 – Advisory Services & Education

This document describes the two projects associated with the three streams of the EPA LCEI Grant application.

While the preference is to complete both projects together if we were pushed to choose the priority for CRC is project 1 followed by 2.

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



The rationale is that CWF is the hub of the council's waste management. It is important to get this site functional, safe, and compliant first. CWF needs to be upgraded to receive the additional volume of waste coming from QFW with its conversion to a WTS.

Upgrades to GWTS for compliance and safety improvements will be the subject of a later plan.

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



2 Approvals:

The plan and grant application described in this document have been presented to the CRC and approved by the following Persons.

Mayor: Cr Daniel Keady

Sign: _____ Date: ____/____/2025

General Manager: Paul Gallagher

Sign: _____ Date: ____/____/2025

Manager Waste Recycling & Employment Initiatives: Janelle Whitehead

Sign: _____ Date: ____/____/2025

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



3 Project 1- Coonamble Waste Facility:

The CWF site is in poor condition after a long stint under a contractor's control. The council has taken back control of the site in December 2024 and has much to do to make it functional, safe, and compliant.

3.1 Core issues:

3.1.1 Compliance:

Current processes put the public in control of what we receive and where. With deposition points spread across a broad site area, it is impossible to supervise the public appropriately. We have ongoing issues with contamination in all our stockpiles due to incorrect material being deposited.

The site's contamination issues are the subject of long-standing EPA notices that must be addressed.

The contamination issues represent a health risk and have turned what should have been recyclables into problem waste that needs to be landfilled.

We understand and want to meet our OH&S obligation, our obligations under the Act, and our obligations with the EPA. Unfortunately, our infrastructure, site set-up, and equipment make it difficult to comply.

3.1.2 Safety:

As the EPA has acknowledged in its Strategic Plan 2024-29, point 3 is to Enable a **safe** circular economy. Safe sites generate greater circularity.

The current facility requires the public to visit various stockpiles spread around the site. The spread makes it impossible to supervise their activity as they are often out of site. While on the site, there is a serious risk of harm to the public.

Risks include but are not limited to:

- Exposure to hazardous waste. (Contaminates in one of the many stockpiles)
- Trips, falls, cuts and contact injuries, unobserved by staff (no timely first aid response).
- Scavenging related injuries.
- Contact with operating plant/Machinery. The public is out of vehicles in areas where trucks and machines operate.
- Dangerous behaviour by the public causing harm to themselves or others.
- Contact with waste from other vehicles/customers.
- Falls into deposition pits.
- Snake bites.

We need to implement a revised site that contains the public in controlled, monitored and level areas for their safety and for our staff to be able to regulate their behaviours and what they are depositing.

We must separate operating areas for trucks and machinery away from the public.

Injuries, fatalities, and hazardous materials shut down waste management operations. Closure of this core facility for any of these reasons will have a crippling effect on the waste operations of the CRC. It will lead to illegal dumping and community discontent.

EPA Grant Application
 Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



3.1.3 Asbestos and Hazardous Materials Management:

There is uncertainty about how the previous site contractor managed hazardous materials like Asbestos, and we are confident that customers have put hazardous materials incorrectly into unmonitored stockpiles.

We don't want to move forward with uncertainty. We want to control the receipt handling and treatment of hazardous materials. Taking control of this process is required in EPA notices for the site.

By creating a facility that permits us to inspect each load for hazardous material and problem waste items, we can ensure that such waste is directed to the CRC or properly contained deposition points.

Asbestos and dead animals must be accepted and managed differently in our facility to avoid being illegally dumped. We do not have an appropriate method to receive and address these materials other than urgently burying them. This is the subject of an enduring EPA notice for CWF.

3.1.4 Fire:

Fires are a significant and increasing challenge in the waste industry and for us at our landfills.

The frequency of fires in the waste stream is increasingly attributed to batteries.

To reduce the fire risk, every measure must be taken to intercept Batteries and E-Waste (often fitted with batteries).

The new facility must facilitate the indemnification and interception of these fire-risk items.



3.1.5 Pollution:

With a large flat site exposed to wind, we have a significant problem with wind-blown litter blown across the site and into neighbouring properties.

We desperately need to get this under control.

The project must include measures to:

- Capture litter around the landfill working face
- reduce the spread and quantity of stockpiles.
- Contain materials in bins, cages, or bays.



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3.2 CWF Site:

CWF is the heart of CSC's waste operations, and after many years of neglect, it desperately needs improvement.

We aim to bring the site to best practice standards for compliance and safety.

The two images below of our site show:

- Red are all the deposition areas on site that our community is directed to.
- Yellow is our current landfilling area.
- Blue is the area that our redevelopment project will confine the public to.

With the public contained in the blue area, the rest of the site is reserved for machine and truck movements.



Figure 1: From site centre back to entry

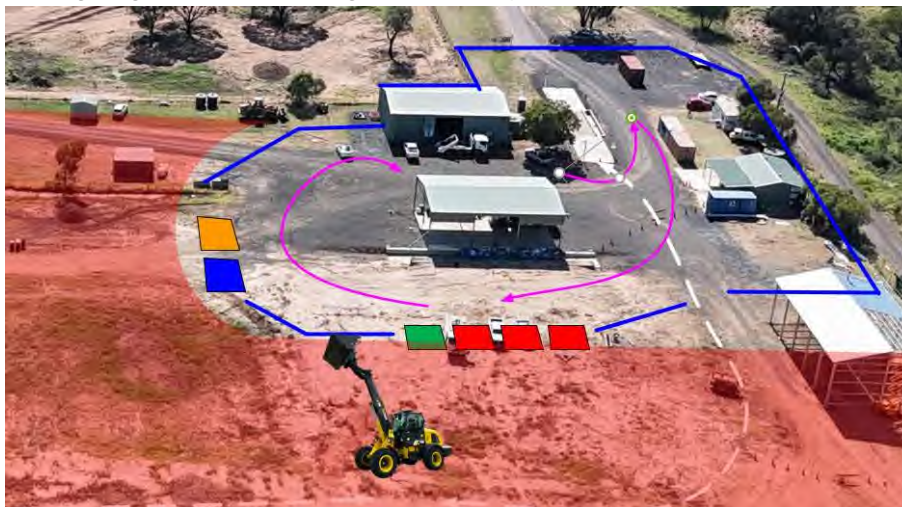


Figure 2 From site Centre away from entry.

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3.3 The Plan:

The following image indicates the arrangement to be implemented at CWF.



Set out notes:

- Contain the public to an area close to the main facility. Bounded by the blue lines.
- Keep all machine operations outside the public area during opening hours (Red Highlighted Areas).
- Establish an LBin PWTS (Red Blocks) in a line using simple gravity barrier systems on compacted ground.
- Expand the LBin capacity by a bay (Green Box) to accommodate green waste reception in the same area.
- Provide a Drop-off Bay and LBin for the receipt of Metals. (Blue Box)
- Provide an Asbestos/Hazardous waste LBin and Bay. (Orange Box).
- Loop the public through cardboard, recycling, and CRC drop-off areas.
- Provide a separate path through the site for trucks.
- Improve reuse recovery using the main shed at the top of the image for storage/sales. Potential for future resale store.

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3.3.1 Waste Transfer Station Area (General Waste):

To mitigate waste from being deposited in stockpiles all over the site, the plan is to develop a Public Waste Transfer station to keep the public contained.

The Public Waste Transfer Station area will consist of 3 LBin bays and LBins to provide a capacity that meets our peak user numbers for general waste.

This will provide a deposition point for the public under the supervision of our staff, who can educate the public on how their waste is to be separated.

- **Problem Waste:** can be identified by staff who ask the public to take it to the CRC or the appropriate deposition point.
- **Reuse & Recycling:** Staff can identify this by asking the public to take it to the appropriate deposition point.
- **Acceptable general waste** is received in the LBin and, when full, moved to the landfill for machine emptying.
- **Hazardous Waste:** Skilled staff can identify asbestos, chemicals and other hazardous waste in a load. This waste is contained within the LBin. The LBin is easily removed from the public area with the hazard controlled. The load can be quarantined for treatment while the PWTS continues to operate. Other facility designs would require the closure of the PWTS to address this.



3.3.2 Waste Transfer Station Area -Green Waste:

With the addition of an extra LBin and bay to the proposed line up, the facility will be sufficient to also receive green wastes. The addition of this capacity will eliminate the need to direct the public to a remote area of the site designated for green waste.

Green waste can be delivered into any LBin in the line-up that does not already contain general waste.

By having green waste reception in the same area as general waste the following benefits occur:

- The public are contained in the red zone for safety and control.
- Eliminate the potential for contamination of unsupervised green waste stockpiles
- Green waste delivered into the LBin supervised area can be inspected easily for contamination. Contaminated loads can be treated as general waste and directed by to landfill. Fees can be charged as general waste rather than concessional green waste rates.

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- The composting value of the green waste is improved due to the interception of contaminants.

From a project perspective, this is a simple expansion of the general waste area.

3.3.3 Waste Transfer Station Area -Metals:

With the addition of one more LBin and a drop-off bay dedicated to receiving metals, the need for a remote stockpile for the public to visit is eliminated.

Having a metals LBin in the public deposition area has the following benefits:

- The public is contained in the red zone for safety and control.
- Eliminates the potential for contamination of metal waste stockpiles that are not supervised.
- Metals delivered into the LBin supervised area are inspected easily for contamination. Contaminates can be safely extracted before committing the load to the bulk stockpile.
- The recycling value of the metals is improved due to the removal of contaminants.

This is a simple expansion of the general waste area from a project perspective.

3.3.4 Asbestos & Hazardous Waste:

We need to make the deposition of Asbestos and Hazardous Materials Management for these materials safe and accessible for the public in the red area.



Per EPA notices, we need to keep the public away from stockpile areas and better manage the collection and deposition of Asbestos.

The project plan is to establish an LBin with a quarantine membrane to receive and contain these materials pending proper management/treatment.

The LBin contains hazardous wastes, so we can inspect, contain, and move the material without ever needing human contact.

This can be done planned and controlled when staff and equipment are available rather than on an emergency basis.

3.3.5 Windblown litter:

Site-wide and neighbouring property pollution is a challenge that consumes resources when picking waste from the site and surrounding properties. This hazardous task draws resources away from more critical functions in waste reception and separation. Our desire is to mitigate the pollution occurring in the first place.

While efforts have been made to minimise the Landfill's working face size, the site has issues with wind and its exposed flat terrain.

To complement the tightening of the working face, we need to utilise modular LitterFences that can be easily moved to accommodate changes in wind direction and movement in the working face.

6 x 8m wide LitterFences are required.

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From a project perspective, there are only a few simple steps to make this operational:

1. Planning 4 weeks
2. Procurement 4 weeks
3. LitterFence Manufacture. 12-14 weeks
4. Site set up & training 3 days.

3.3.6 Equipment:

A telescopic wheel loader with a quick hitch and a nominal capacity of 3 tons of lifting is required on-site to facilitate material handling. The following tasks need to be done with machines:

- operate the LBin Systems,
- load CRC items
- move the LitterFences
- Load recyclables, metals, mattresses, and tyres in green waste bulk bins/cages and transport vehicles.

The extended reach of this machine means that we don't need to create any walls or civil structures to facilitate the limited reach of typical wheel loaders. A simple flat floor is safer and more flexible.



3.3.7 Project Program:

The start is triggered by financial approval.

1. 4 weeks -Site Set out verification/ design.
2. 4 Weeks Procurement & Approvals
3. 12-14 Weeks LBin/Container/LitterFence Manufacture.
4. 10 Week - Site clean-up and filling landfill during manufacturing period.
5. 4 Weeks- Establishing Traffic management plans & operations and maintenance manuals.
6. Site Assembly 1 Week
7. Training 2 Days

After the grant approval, this urgent project will be completed in under 10 months.

3.3.8 Project Resources & Considerations:

As most of the equipment needed is manufactured and delivered by vendors off-site, human resource demands on the project execution are limited.

Limited site work is required, so operational disruptions are minimal.

Site works are focused on grading and preparing the customer area with a compacted road surface. The Shires works department, or external contractors will conduct these works.

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3.4 PROJECT 1 CWF BUDGET:

Please refer to the more detailed Excel Spreadsheet for more breakdowns.

The following is a summary of the funding requirements for executing the project.

PROJECT 1 Coonamble Waste Facility Upgrade				
COSTING SUMMARY				
			External	Internal
Equipment:	339,131	#	339,131	-
Site Preparation:	9,600	#	-	51,457
Site Installation of Equipment:	35,443	#	-	35,443
Project Total:	384,174		339,131	86,899
Stream 2 EPA Grant Funding:	250,000		65%	
CSC Cash:	47,274			
CSC Kind:	86,899		134,174	Total CSC Contribution
TOTAL PROJECT VALUE	384,174			

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4 Project 2: Quambone Waste Facility (QWF)

4.1.1 Overview:

QWF was an unmanned, unfenced, free-access facility for over 15 years. CSC took control of the facility in late 2024, fencing, grading and manning the site.

This project involves the continued remediation of the site, closing the landfill and converting the site into a compliant and safe Public Waste Transfer Station (PWTS).

The sites existence was not publicised or identified with an address. With the project rework of the site the facility will be publicised, increasing awareness and patronage and reducing illegal dumping in the region.



This project is contingent upon gaining funding from this EPA Stream 1 grant.

The existing QWF is illustrated in the following images.



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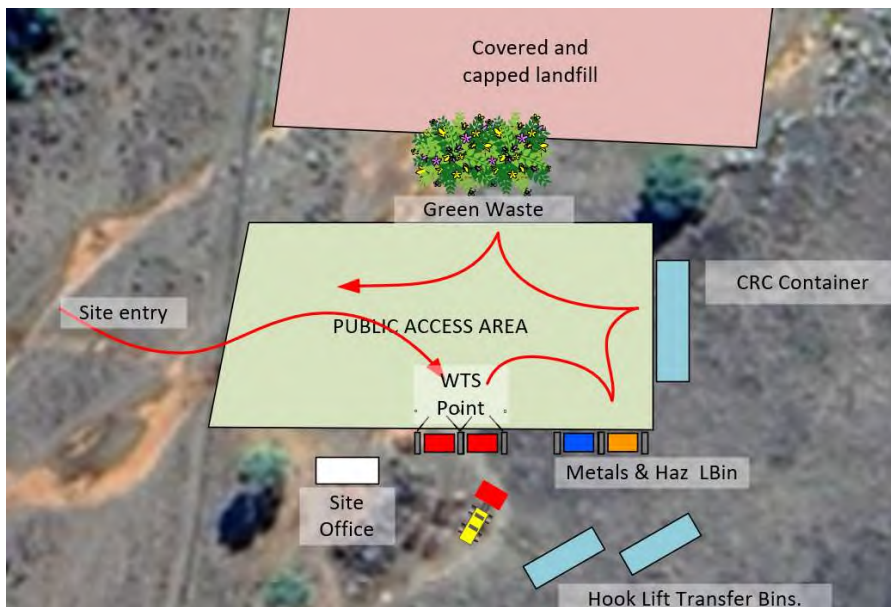
The project will include the following core actions:

- Removing or relocating waste stockpiles to CWF or recyclers.
- Sealing and capping the existing landfill pit.
- Establishing an LBin Waste Transfer Station.

4.1.2 Proposed Site set out:

The proposed site set out is indicated below.

The project scope will involve the preparation of a more detailed set-out and Traffic Management Plan.



4.1.3 Waste Transfer Station:

A flat-to-floor LBin PWTS is proposed to service the site. This will utilise the gravity barrier systems, which do not require footings or a pad but only a compacted level surface.

The Bay quantities will cater to peak and anticipated demand when the site is open and publicised.

The system allows for inspecting each load, the interception of problem waste, and reuse and recycling materials.

The system will eliminate all the major OH&S issues currently at this site.

The system has been selected over traditional WTS solutions such as Sawtooths and Pushpits for the following reasons:



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- Safer than all other typical PWTS typically employed.
- Quick to deploy.
- Low cost.
- Compliance effectiveness.
- Ability to intercept Hazardous and problem waste.
- Improved diversion.
- Reductions in staff manual handling of waste.

4.1.4 Machinery & Equipment:

A small telescopic loader with a nominal capacity of 2.5 to 3t is required to operate the LBin system and load materials for transfer.



The loader will require a quick hitch head to move the LBins and to change to forklift Tynes for loading CRC and recyclable bins to transfer vehicles.

Being a smaller size loader, it can be relocated to other sites using a trailer as a backup or to cover other Waste Transfer Stations on a different opening cycle.

The small loader eliminates most manual handling and provides the versatility to manage a range of issues, including:

- Removing and isolating an LBin that contains Hazardous waste.
- Removing and isolating an LBin that has a developing fire.
- Managing site roadways.
- Loading transfer vehicles.



A trailer will be required to transport CRC items, recyclable Bins and machinery between CSC sites.

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4.1.5 Asbestos & Hazardous Waste:

We need to make the deposition of Asbestos and Hazardous Materials Management for these materials safe and accessible for the public.

The project plan is to establish an LBin with a quarantine membrane to receive and contain these materials pending proper management/treatment.



The LBin contains the hazardous wastes in a way that allows us to inspect, contain, and move the material without ever needing human contact. This can be planned and controlled when staff and equipment are available rather than on an emergency basis.

Asbestos in the LBin can be transferred to skip bins for relocation to CWF, or the entire LBin can be transported.

4.1.6 Waste Transfer Station Area -Metals:

With the addition of one more LBin and a drop-off bay dedicated to receiving metals, the need for a remote stockpile for the public to visit is eliminated.

Having a metals LBin in the public deposition area has the following benefits:

- The public is contained in the controlled area for safety and monitoring.
- Eliminates the potential for contamination of metal waste stockpiles that are not supervised.
- Metals delivered into the LBin supervised area are inspected quickly for contamination.
- Contaminates can be safely extracted before loading the bulk transfer bins.
- The recycling value of the metals is improved due to the removal of contaminants.

Metal waste collected at QWF will be aggregated at CWF for collection by recycling contractors.

This is a simple expansion of the general waste area from a project perspective.

4.1.7 CRC & Recyclables Container:

A specially designed and configured container with roller doors to the side will store out-of-the-weather palletised CRC items and recyclables.



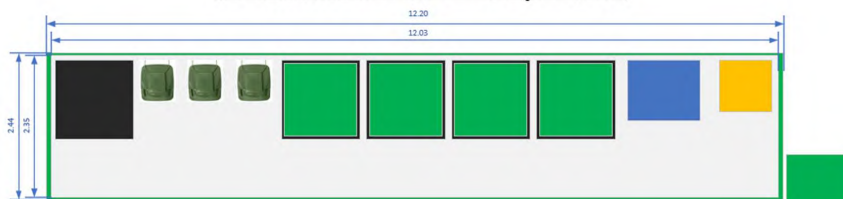
The container will be ventilated, and signs will be fitted for the CRC items.

The configuration of the container will be as illustrated below.

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Container CRC – Top View



Container CRC – Front View



CRC Items collected and QWF will be consolidated at CWF for connection by contractors. The CRC containers at this site will need to be loaded using the wheel loader to the budgeted dog trailer for transfer back to CWF.

4.1.8 Project Program:

- 8 weeks -Site Set out verification/ design & Planning.
- 4 Weeks Procurement & Approvals
- 12-14 Weeks LBin/Container Manufacture.
- 1 Week – Site clean-up and filling landfill
- 2Weeks- Establishing Traffic management plans & operations and maintenance manuals.
- Site Assembly 1 Week
- Training 2 Days

4.1.9 Project Resources:

As most of the equipment needed is manufactured and delivered by vendors off-site, human resource demands on the project execution are limited.

Limited site work is required, so operational disruptions are minimal.

Site works are focused on grading and preparing the customer area with a compacted road surface. The Shires works department, or external contractors will conduct these works.

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4.2 Project 2 QWF Budget Summary:

Please refer to the more detailed Excel Spreadsheet for more breakdowns.

The following is a summary of the funding requirements for executing the project.

PROJECT 2 Quombone Waste Facility Upgrade			
COSTING SUMMARY			
		External	Internal
Equipment:	288,531	# 288,531	-
Site Preparation:	44,442	# 5,100	39,342
Site Installation of Equipment:	12,121	# -	12,121
Project Total:	345,094	293,631	51,463
Stream 1 EPA Grant Funding:	241,566	70%	
CSC Cash:	52,065		
CSC Kind:	51,463	103,528	Total CSC Contributi
Total Project Value	345,094		

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5 Project 1 & 2: Design & Training support (Stream 3)

5.1 Overview:

The upgrade of the facilities at CWF and QWF requires some expert support at initiation and completion of projects 1 & 2.



5.2 Initiation support:

While analysis has defined the breadth of equipment and work needed for the two projects the specifics of the site set out needs to be verified in a considered and informed design process.

This process will resolve not only set out but provide clarity of the sites traffic management plans.

To inform the design process will require mapping/survey of the sites and and contributions from the staff.

5.3 Training:

Once the site and systems are in place staff need to be trained in how to use the system and how to interact with the community when they attend these sites.

The system is innovative and quite different for staff and the public and it requires nuanced training to cover now only how to use the system but why proper use is so important.

There will also be a need to provide training in the use of machinery at the sites. The confident and capable use of the flexible tools will equip staff to use the tolls rather than engaging in risky manual handling of waste.

5.4 Stream 3 Assessment:

The details of the submission are set out in section

5.5 Stream 3 Budget Summary:

Stream 3 for Projects 1 & 2				
COSTING SUMMARY				
			External	Internal
	Planning	17,400	11,100	6,300
	Training	18,028	9,400	8,628
	Project Total:	<u>35,428</u>	<u>20,500</u>	<u>14,928</u>
	Stream 3 Grant Funding	17,714	50%	
	CSC Cash	2,786		
	CSC Kind	14,928	17,714	Total CSC Contribution.
	Total Project Value	<u>35,428</u>		

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6 EPA LCEI Assessment Criteria Response:

The responses below apply to both presented projects:

Project 1: CWF Upgrade (Stream 2)

Project 2: QWF Landfill closure and conversion to Waste Transfer Station (Stream 1)

6.1 Assessment Criteria for Streams 1 & 2

6.1.1 Criterion 1 – 40%

The projects shows need for better waste management and articulates why it is of priority.

- *The application describes, with supporting evidence, how it delivers on the program objectives and outcomes.*
- The sites have been returned to council management after being run by a contractor for many years.
- The environmental and human health of the site is not acceptable or compliant.
- All current stockpiles or potentially recoverable materials are contaminated with wrong materials, problem waste and potentially hazardous waste.

The proposed improvements move the site from being an unsafe and non-compliant facility to best practice in the region.

Refer to the appended system assessments of JRS consulting in appendix A for reference to WH&S and Act and Licence compliance benefits of the proposed LBin Waste Transfer System.

The proposed plan improves:

- EPA complaint, control of pollution, interception of problem waste and interception of hazardous material. Returning this task to the council, seeding control back from the public.
- Improving resource recovery and diversion by up to 400% by providing the capacity to intercept recoverables and mitigate contamination of recoverables.
- Eliminating all the major risk factors typically found at a waste facility. Notably falls from height and contact with machines.
- *The application has a completed risk assessment that addresses current operational conditions and mitigations for the proposed site/facility.*

CSC Has commissioned Risk Assessments for the sites. These assessments are in the appendices of this document

- *The application describes the need and/or priority of activities for the site/facility, including remaining landfill capacity and estimated throughput, where relevant to the application.*

Core Data:

The core data for these sites has been included in the application forms for the LCEI grants.

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The following provides some oversight.

CWF:

- The site received up to 120 public customers on a busy day.
- 28 Commercial vehicles per day.
- The council services a population of over 4500 people.
- The existing landfill is over 20 years old and is forecast to last a further 20 years if targeted diversion levels are achieved.
- The closure of the QWF landfill will add to the volumes coming to this site.

QWF:

- The QWF facility has existed for more than 15 years as an unmanned site.
- CSC actively started managing the site in Dec 2024. The data for this site is inconclusive due to the short duration of data collection.
- The site is not advertised, and its address is only known to enduring residents. Volumes are anticipated to lift substantially with the upgrade of the facility and publication of its address.
- The council services a population of over 4500 people.
- *The application describes how it delivers on broader strategies, including but not limited to Council Waste Strategies, Regional Waste Strategies, and NSW Government priorities.*

The plan is aligned with the following Strategies & Priorities:

- Coonamble stated Strategic Objectives: (“Waste Management Strategy-Originally Approved 27/01/16 and reapproved in Feb 2024)

Where do we want to get to?

The Strategy understands that Council wishes to:

1. Implement best practice disposal and recovery options for the delivery of waste and recycling services;
2. Effectively manage local landfill facilities in an environmentally sustainable manner; and
3. Prevent and best manage illegal dumping in the region.

Council wishes to achieve a planned and collaborative approach to waste management, which is cost effective, supportive of the local community and economy and improves resource recovery in line with State targets.

- REGIONAL NetWaste: TW22135_NetWaste_Regional Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2023-2027_5.0)

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6.2 Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives proposed for the Strategy are as follows:

- Reduce generation of regional waste;
- Increase regional resource recovery;
- Investigate and deliver innovative management solutions for problem wastes;
- Support Climate Change policy;
- Support development of regional waste management infrastructure requirements;
- Limit the impact of waste management on the natural and built environment;
- Support member Councils deliver waste management services in line with their community's changing needs and expectations;
- Support member Councils deliver sustainable procurement outcomes;
- Facilitate regional collaboration for improved waste management planning and investment; and
- Investigate and support innovative circular economy mechanisms and solutions.

The planned improvements address most of the key points of in the NetWaste strategic objectives, noting specifically these core points:

- Coonamble reports a 0% diversion value against a regional weighted average of 39%. The plan targets a significant improvement in resource recovery.
- The plan fully addresses the third point, Innovative management of problem waste.
- Point 5 is addressed by containing wind-blown litter and preventing the problem and hazardous waste from impacting the natural and built environments.
-

EPA: Strategic Plan 2024–29

The project plan aligns with the EPA's Strategic objectives, particularly point 3: "Enable a safe circular economy."

The ability to safely deliver and intercept Reuse, recyclables, CRC Problem waste Items and Hazardous waste are aligned with this point and the need to significantly improve diversion from landfills.

- *The application shows project support from the council and any other decision-making authorities.*

CSC has conducted extensive engagement with decision makers and the community in the preparation of this plan. Engagement has included:

- EPA
- NetWaste,
- Councillors
- CSC Director of , Community, Planning, Development & Environment (Barry Grow),
- The Mayors
- Regional community working groups.

Th plan was most recently presented and work shopped with councillors and the community steering groups during February 2025. All groups are supportive of the proposed redevelopments.

The plan is signed off in section 2 Approvals of this document by those authorised to do so.

- *The application describes a long-term strategy for continued management and future use of the site/facility.*

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Coonamble’s last strategic plan was approved in 2016. The Waste operations, under new management, are preparing a long-term plan. The core principles of that plan are defined in documents presented to the council for the approval of this project. The core features of the plan are:

- Focus resources and efforts to make CWF a best practice facility for managing the council waste and diversion efforts.
- Close the QWF landfill and convert it to a QWTS.
- Make QWTS and GWTS *safe, efficient and compliant*

6.1.2 Criterion 2 – 30%

The applicant and any project partners have shown an ability to deliver the project to a high standard.

- *The application describes the resources required to deliver the project. For instance, project team capacity and capability.*

The plan involves rolling out standard vendor products that are manufactured off-site, with limited preparation of the sites needed.

Site Preparation:

For QWF, Landfill filling, roads, site levelling, and compacting working areas are capabilities that exist within the council’s works department.

The installation of PWTS at both QWF and CWF requires only basic levelling and roadway preparation from the CSC works department.

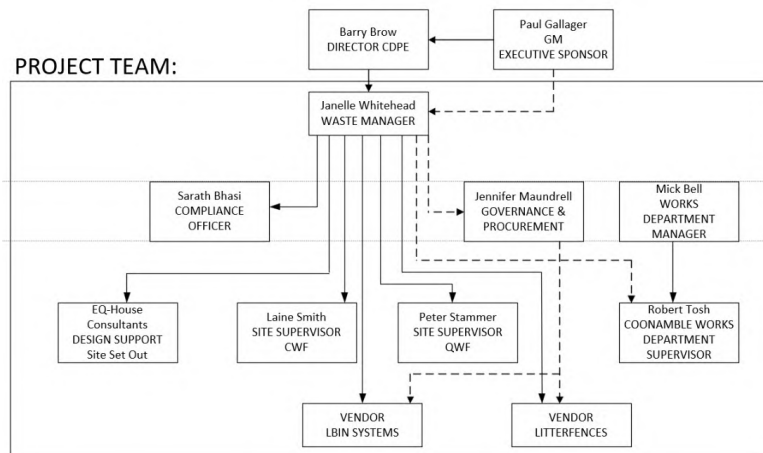
Installation:

The vendor’s expertise will support the installation of systems, which will only require 2 Labourers for 2 days at each site.

The vendor has many systems installed, including Gunnedah WF and Hawkesbury WF.

Project Execution Structure:

The Projects will be managed by Coonamble’s Waste Manager and staff with an organisational structure as follows:



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- *The application shows sound project planning and methodology to deliver the project within two years.*

The project's delivery is critical for complaints and will be commissioned within 10 months of funding confirmation.

- *The application shows compliance with environmental laws, including how activities will be delivered to best practice.*

The project delivery and installation will not adversely impact the sites' environments. Once commissioned, the new Best Practice installations will significantly mitigate impacts on the environment by:

- Closing QWF Landfill, mitigating long-term site contamination.
- Significantly improving diversion.
- Effectively intercepting and controlling Hazardous waste.
- Effectively intercepting problem waste and CRC items. Preventing them from entering landfills.
- Permitting the interception of Reuse items and Recyclables.
- Intercepting contaminants from bulk waste such as green waste.

- *If, in the previous 12 months, the application describes regulatory action taken against the applicant or project partners and explains how the matters were satisfactorily resolved.*

The CSC waste operations needs to address several open EPA notice points with these projects.

The EPA Prevention Notice 3503282 requires action to address:

- Receipt, Handling and disposal of Asbestos.
- Public access to waste stockpiles. Potentially contaminated.
- Pollution due to a lack of landfill cover.
- *The application describes a robust process for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the success or failure of the project and has appropriate evaluation measures in place.*

QWF:

- With its conversion to a PWTS, waste collected on the site will be weighed on delivery to CWS, allowing us to accurately track waste volumes from the site for the first time.

Both Sites (QWF & CWF):

- Customer satisfaction surveys will gauge the public's response to the change.
- Aggregated CRC materials collections and volumes can be monitored and tracked for the first time.
- Diversion volumes can be tracked and reported by carting and weighing recyclables.
- Safety incident reporting numbers will be compared.

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6.1.3 Criterion 3 – 20%

The project provides economic, environmental and/or social benefits for the community of NSW.

- *The application describes how communities will maintain access to waste services, including community engagement and/or education.*
 - *The projects do not involve removing any public side waste services.*
 - *The public will be offered expanded services for sorting waste into a broader range of problem and recyclable streams.*
 - *The new facility opens up the potential for a resale store at CWS.*
 - *The community groups utilising QWF have been engaged in planning this project. The community is supportive of having a safer and better-equipped Waste Facility.*
 - *Staff managing the facilities will now be able to engage and educate the public on waste streams and segregation in a safe, well-presented, and controlled environment.*
- *The application has a credible business case with a clear potential to deliver ongoing outcomes.*

Refer to the details within this application. Noting specifically the following:

- The new facility has the potential to provide a Return On Investment (ROI) due to significant improvements in Reuse and recycling recovery.
- Fewer staff are required to manage these facilities safely.
- These projects significantly mitigate the commercial risk of fatalities, serious injuries, and contamination-related site closures.
- *The application describes other economic values that will result from the project.*

Based on the experiences of other sites and considering the conditions of CSC's existing sites, the following economic *benefits* are expected:

- > 400% improvement in Reuse recovery.
- Contamination-free green waste stockpiles permit composting 100% of the green waste. Over 50% of existing green waste stockpiles are estimated to be contaminated and may need to be pushed to landfills.
- Improved fee recovery by identifying and charging unit cost items like Tires & Mattresses. Expecting a 50% lift in fee recovery and avoidance of these items ending up in *landfills* or incorrect stockpiles.
- The new facility has the potential to provide a Return On Investment (ROI) due to significant improvements in reuse and recycling recovery.
- Fewer staff are required to manage these facilities safely.
- Improved diversion will extend the life of each cell by years. Mitigating the significant cost of establishing new cells.
- *The application describes other environmental benefits.*

Other environmental benefits include:

- *Reducing pollution by capturing wind-blown litter and reducing the spread of stockpiles exposed to wind.*

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- *Significantly improving diversion.*
 - *Effectively intercepting and controlling Hazardous waste.*
 - *Effectively intercepting problem waste and CRC items. Preventing them from entering landfills.*
 - *Permitting the interception of batteries and E-Waste that can potentially cause fires and air pollution.*
 - *Permitting the interception of reuse items and recyclables.*
 - *Intercepting contaminants from bulk waste such as green waste.*
- *The application describes social benefits, including job creation and/or vocational training for disadvantaged or marginalised communities in NSW.*

Social Benefits include:

- *Increased reuse recovery, opening the potential for a resale store that can provide work for disadvantaged workers.*
 - *Public-facing staff operate in a more contained, safe work area that does not require staff to be qualified machine operators.*
- *The application describes how it will support knowledge sharing. For instance, with other local councils.*

Knowledge Sharing:

- *LitterFences is a sharing initiative for the NetWaste group.*
- *CSC is committed to sharing data on its waste operations with the NetWaste Group.*
- *CSC is committed to providing access and guided tours to any council requesting such access.*
- *CSC, via its vendor CWS, will prepare videos for the completed projects to illustrate the projects.*

6.1.4 Criterion 4 – 10%

The project shows value for money.

- *The application pricing and service offering are viable and credible.*

LitterFences:

- *This cost for the mobile LitterFences is appreciably more affordable and functionally more effective than upgrading all boundary fencing.*
- *The technology is proven on many sites around Australia.*
- *The pricing is subject to a regional pricing alignment for NetWaste.*

LBin Systems:

- *LBin is a proven factory-built solution with fixed pricing for the project.*
- *Site preparation is well within the capabilities of the works department, which has estimated the works.*

Other parts:

- *Pricing has come from quotes or market-level pricing searches.*

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- *The application budget shows the required 30% or more co-contribution has been committed, with supporting evidence.*

Refer to the accompanying spreadsheet.

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



6.2 Assessment Criteria for Stream 3

The Stream 3 Services support the 2 Projects described in this document. They relate to detailed planning and training support for the project.

6.2.1 Criterion 1 – 30%

The project shows it will deliver information that is relevant and useful.

- *The application clearly describes, with supporting evidence, how it delivers on the program objectives and outcomes.*

Site Design & Traffic Management Planning:

- Preparing detailed scaled drawings, including sweep plans and traffic flows, is crucial to supporting both projects.

Training:

- Delivering training to staff on safely using the new equipment is critical to operational effectiveness.

- *The application has a completed risk assessment that addresses the proposed site/facility's current operational condition and mitigations.*

The Project 1 & 2 outlines provide details. Preparing detailed site layouts and traffic management plans is critical to the operation's effectiveness and risk mitigation.

- *The application describes how it will address an issue or knowledge gap.*

The LBin systems and LitterFences operate in unique ways. Staff must be trained and navigated through the operations and maintenance procedures.

- *The application describes how the activities are of interest or value. For instance, of council priority, localities, and/or communities.*

The upgrades to CWF and QWF are critical and required steps to bring CSC waste operations up to compliance and best practice levels. Staff training in these new systems is critical to their safe operation.

6.2.2 Criterion 2 – 30%

The project shows an intention to act on the information delivered.

The training and planning underpins project 1 & 2 mobilisation and effectiveness.

- *The application describes how the information delivered will help inform future management and future use of the site/facility.*

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



The training involves the preparation of Operations and Maintenance Manuals to become part of the site O*M procedures. These written documents will inform future managers and staff.

- *The application shows there is a financial commitment to act on the information delivered once the project is complete. For instance, planning for activities within budgetary cycles or how new learnings will be embedded as business as usual.*

The financial commitment is evident in the delivery of projects 1 & 2.

- *The application describes how it will support knowledge sharing. For instance, with other local councils.*

-

Knowledge Sharing:

- *LitterFences are a sharing initiative for the NetWaste group. Data and performance will be shared during group meetings.*
- *CSC is committed to sharing data on its waste operations with the NetWaste Group.*
- *CSC is committed to sharing its generated O&M manuals with other sites that are implementing the system.*
- *CSC is willing to support other regional councils in training their staff to use the new systems.*

6.2.3 Criterion 3 – 20%

The project shows how it will deliver on strategic priorities.

- *The application describes how it delivers on broader strategies, including but not limited to Council Waste Strategies, Regional Waste Strategies, and NSW Government priorities.*

Refer to the sections in Stream 1 & 2 responses.

- *The application describes how the information delivered will contribute to the long-term protection of the environment and communities.*

Refer to the sections in Stream 1 & 2 responses.

6.2.4 Criterion 4 – 10%

The project shows value for money.

- *The application pricing and service offering are viable and credible.*
- Refer to the sections in Stream 1 & 2 responses.
- *The application shows that multiple quotes have been sought.*
- Machine operator training will be sourced under existing agreements with the Council and NetWaste.

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



- The equipment vendor will be engaged in preparing site layouts, and traffic has site layouts for the LBin system due to their unique expertise in the product/system.
- LBin Systems & LitterFence vendors have provided quotes for systems training and O&M manual templates in their proposal.
- *The application budget shows the required 50% or more co-contribution has been committed, with supporting evidence.*
- Refer to the Budget sheets appended with the application.

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



7 Appendix 1: Compliance Report PWTS.

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



8 Risk & Compliance Assessment CWF

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



9 Risk & Compliance Assessment QWF

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



10 Budget Project 1 CWF Upgrade

PROJECT 1 Coonamble Waste Facility Upgrade

All costs Exclude GST.

Equipment:

Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
LBin WTS	LBin 3.6m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,400	3	52,200	52,200	
	Gravity Barriers (Gated)	Vendor Qte	6,800	4	27,200	27,200	
LBin Green	LBin 3.6m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,400	1	17,400	17,400	
	Gravity Barriers (Gated)	Vendor Qte	6,800	1	6,800	6,800	
Metals	LBin 3.6m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,400	1	17,400	17,400	
	Drop off Barriers (No Gates)	Vendor Qte	1,800	2	3,600	3,600	
Hazardous	LBin 3.0m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,000	1	17,000	17,000	
	Quarantine Membrane	Vendor Qte	2,091	1	2,091	2,091	
	Gravity Barriers (Gated)	Vendor Qte	6,800	2	13,600	13,600	
LBin	Transport to site	Vendor Est	2,800	3	8,400	8,400	
LitterFences	Mobile Flat Pack.	Vendor Qte	17,000	6	102,000	102,000	
	Transport to site	Vendor Est	2,000	1	2,000	2,000	
	Telescopic Wheel Loader	Vendor Qte	68,000	1	68,000	68,000	
Signs		Est	120	12	1,440	1,440	
					339,131	339,131	

Site Preparation:

Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
Tpt & Establishment Of Machines (km)	Grader (Hr)	CRC Works	190	43	8,075		8,075
	Excavator (Hr)	CRC Works	175	43	7,438		7,438
	Roller (hr)	CRC Works	140	43	5,950		5,950
	Watercart (hr)	CRC Works	215	43	9,138		9,138
	Tpt Materials (km)	CRC Works	3	233	700		700
	Materials: Road base 40mm DGS (t)	CRC Works	30	200	6,000		6,000
	Labour (ManDay)	CRC Works	456	4	1,824		1,824
Supervisor (ManDay)	CRC Works	616	2	1,233		1,233	
Public Barrier	Hard Barriers						
	Jersey Barriers 6m	CRC Works	1,000	4	4,000		4,000
	Jersey Barriers 3m	CRC Works	700	4	2,800		2,800
	Soft Barriers Water filled	CRC Works	350	8	2,800		2,800
					9,600	-	51,457

Site Installation of Equipment:

Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
Project Management	PM (ManDay)	Councils Waste	1,849	14	25,883		25,883
	Assembly						
Litterfence	Machine Time (Day)	Councils Work:	1,000	2	2,000		2,000
	Labour (ManDay)	Councils Work:	456	4	1,824		1,824
Lbins	Assembly	Councils Works					
	Machine Time (Day)	Councils Work:	1,000	3	3,000		3,000
	Labour (ManDay)	Councils Work:	456	6	2,736		2,736
					35,443		35,443

EPA Grant Application
 Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



PROJECT 1 Coonamble Waste Facility Upgrade				
COSTING SUMMARY				
			External	Internal
Equipment:	339,131	#	339,131	-
Site Preparation:	9,600	#	-	51,457
Site Installation of Equipment:	35,443	#	-	35,443
Projet Total:	384,174		339,131	86,899
Stream 2 EPA Grant Funding:	250,000		65%	
CSC Cash:	47,274			
CSC Kind:	86,899		134,174	Total CSC Contribution
TOTAL PROJECT VALUE	384,174			

EPA Grant Application
 Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



11 Budget Project 2 QWF Conversion to PWTS

PROJECT 2 Quombone Waste Facility Upgrade

All costs Exclude GST.

Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
Equipment:							
LBin WTS	LBin 3.6m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,400	3	52,200	52,200	
	Gravity Barriers (Gated)	Vendor Qte	6,800	4	27,200	27,200	
LBin Green	LBin 3.6m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,400	1	17,400	17,400	
	Gravity Barriers (Gated)	Vendor Qte	6,800	1	6,800	6,800	
Metals	LBin 3.6m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,400	1	17,400	17,400	
	Gravity Barriers (Gated)	Vendor Qte	6,800	2	13,600	13,600	
Hazardous	LBin 3.0m (w)	Vendor Qte	17,000	1	17,000	17,000	
	Quarantine Membrane	Vendor Qte	2,091	1	2,091	2,091	
	Drop off Barriers (No Gates)	Vendor Qte	1,800	1	1,800	1,800	
LBin	Transport to site	Vendor Est	2,800	2	5,600	5,600	
CRC Container	40ft with roller doors.	Vendor Qte	24,000	1	24,000	24,000	
	Transport to site	Vendor Est	2,000	1	2,000	2,000	
Machine	Telescopic Wheel Loader	Vendor Qte	68,000	1	68,000	68,000	
Dog Trailer		Mkt Est 2nd Hand	32,000	1	32,000	32,000	
Signs			120	12	1,440	1,440	
					<u>288,531</u>	<u>288,531</u>	

Site Preparation:

Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
Site Preparation:	Tpt & Establishment Of Machines (km)	CRC Works	25	384	9,600		9,600
Landfill Fill, Roads, Public area etc.	Grader (Hr)	CRC Works	190	34	6,460		6,460
	Excavator (Hr)	CRC Works	175	17	2,975		2,975
	Roller (hr)	CRC Works	140	34	4,760		4,760
	Watercart (hr)	CRC Works	215	34	7,310		7,310
	Tpt Materials (\$/km)	CRC Works	3	99	297		297
	Materials: Road base 40mm DGS (t)	CRC Works	30	90	2,700		2,700
	Labour (ManDay)	CRC Works	456	4	1,824		1,824
	Supervisor (ManDay)	CRC Works	616	1	616		616
Public Barriers	Jersey Barriers 6m	Suppliers	1,000	3	3,000	3,000	
	Jersey Barriers 3m	Suppliers	700	3	2,100	2,100	
	Soft Barriers Water filled	CRC Works	350	8	2,800		2,800
					<u>44,442</u>	<u>5,100</u>	<u>39,342</u>

Site Installation of Equipment:

Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
Site Set Up CRC & Container	Supervision (ManDay)	CRC Waste Staff	616	7	4,314		4,314
	Labour (ManDay)	CRC Waste Staff	456	14	6,384		6,384
LBin's Assembly	Machine Time (Day)	CRC Works	1,000	3	3,000		3,000
	Labour (ManDay)	CRC Works	456	6	2,736		2,736
					<u>12,121</u>		<u>12,121</u>

PROJECT 2 Quombone Waste Facility Upgrade			
COSTING SUMMARY			
		External	Internal
Equipment:	288,531	# 288,531	-
Site Preparation:	44,442	# 5,100	39,342
Site Installation of Equipment:	12,121	# -	12,121
Project Total:	<u>345,094</u>	<u>293,631</u>	<u>51,463</u>
Stream 1 EPA Grant Funding:	241,566	70%	
CSC Cash:	52,065		
CSC Kind:	51,463	103,528	Total CSC
			Contributi
Total Project Value	<u>345,094</u>		

EPA Grant Application
Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



EPA Grant Application
 Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements (LCEI)



12 Budget Stream 3 Design & training support of Projects

Stream 3 for Projects 1 & 2

All costs Exclude GST.

Planning	Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
Project 1 CWF		Prepare Site Layouts, Desing Drafting (Hrs)	VendorEstimate	135	24	3,240	3,240	
		Prepare Traffic Management Plan	VendorEstimate	210	16	3,360	3,360	
		Site Surveys (hrs)	CSC Staff	135	10	1,350		1,350
		Internal Contribitons and Review	CSC Waste Manager	180	10	1,800		1,800
Project 2 QWF		Prepare Site Layouts, Desing Drafting (Hrs)	VendorEstimate	135	24	3,240	3,240	
		Prepare Traffic Management Plan	VendorEstimate	210	6	1,260	1,260	
		Site Surveys (hrs)	CSC Staff	135	10	1,350		1,350
		Internal Contribitons and Review	CSC Waste Manager	180	10	1,800		1,800
						17,400	11,100	6,300
Training	Title	Description	Cost Source	Unit Rate	Qty	Cost (Sub Total)	External	Internal
		System Training LBin & Litterfence	Vendor Quote	7,000	1	7,000	7,000	
		Staff Training (Day rate)		616	11	6,779		6,779
		Machine Training	Vendor	800	3	2,400	2,400	
		Staff Training (Day rate)	Vendor	616	3	1,849		1,849
						18,028	9,400	8,628

Stream 3 for Projects 1 & 2

COSTING SUMMARY

		External	Internal
Planning	17,400	11,100	6,300
Training	18,028	9,400	8,628
Projet Total:	35,428	20,500	14,928
Stream 3 Grant Funding	17,714	50%	
CSC Cash	2,786		
CSC Kind	14,928	17,714	Total CSC Contribution.
Total Project Value	35,428		

10.11 NOTICE OF MOTION - YARRAN STREET HOUSING ESTATE - CR S. BUTLER**File Number: F-6****Author: Steven Butler-Councillor****Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager****Annexures: 1. Cr Butler - NOM Yarran St**  **NOTICE OF MOTION**

Cr S. Butler submitted the following Notice of Motion to be considered at the March 2025 Ordinary Meeting of Council:

- 1. That Council cease all works at Yarran Street Housing site until the costings of the project have been sort and discussed at Council.**

There are no costings available to Council.

MANEX COMMENTARY

Detailed costings are progressively being developed as the infrastructure planning and design continues. An overall estimate is currently being prepared and will be provided as soon as possible to Council.

Tenders will be let for the subdivision roadworks (roads, kerb & channel, stormwater drainage, electricity, and telecommunications) which will give us detailed costings for those works.

Development Applications have been submitted for the subdivision and the first 2 houses to be built (the first demo house and our house). The electrical designer has been engaged and an electrical and telecommunications design is underway.

Sewer and water main works have separate line items funded in the budget. The Sewerage Pump Station has been completed. Works are continuing water service connections. Expenditure has occurred on sewer and water main materials that have arrived ready for install.

These works will also serve the wider area supporting future development and subdivision potential. This area has been assessed as potentially up to 32 ha and 57 lots.

These infrastructure works are progressing in line with Council's adopted 2024/2025 operational plan and budget.

As part of the contract, Council will get a new 3-bedroom home and retain one other block of land. This value (estimated at \$450-550k) effectively reduces the net cost to Council.

Council has signed a contract with Simmons Group and has contractual obligations that involve providing water, electricity and sewer services to every lot, to support the housing being provided by the developer.

The developer is already manufacturing the components and has ordered materials. Our contractual responsibilities require us to meet the project program of the developer who is investing significant funds.

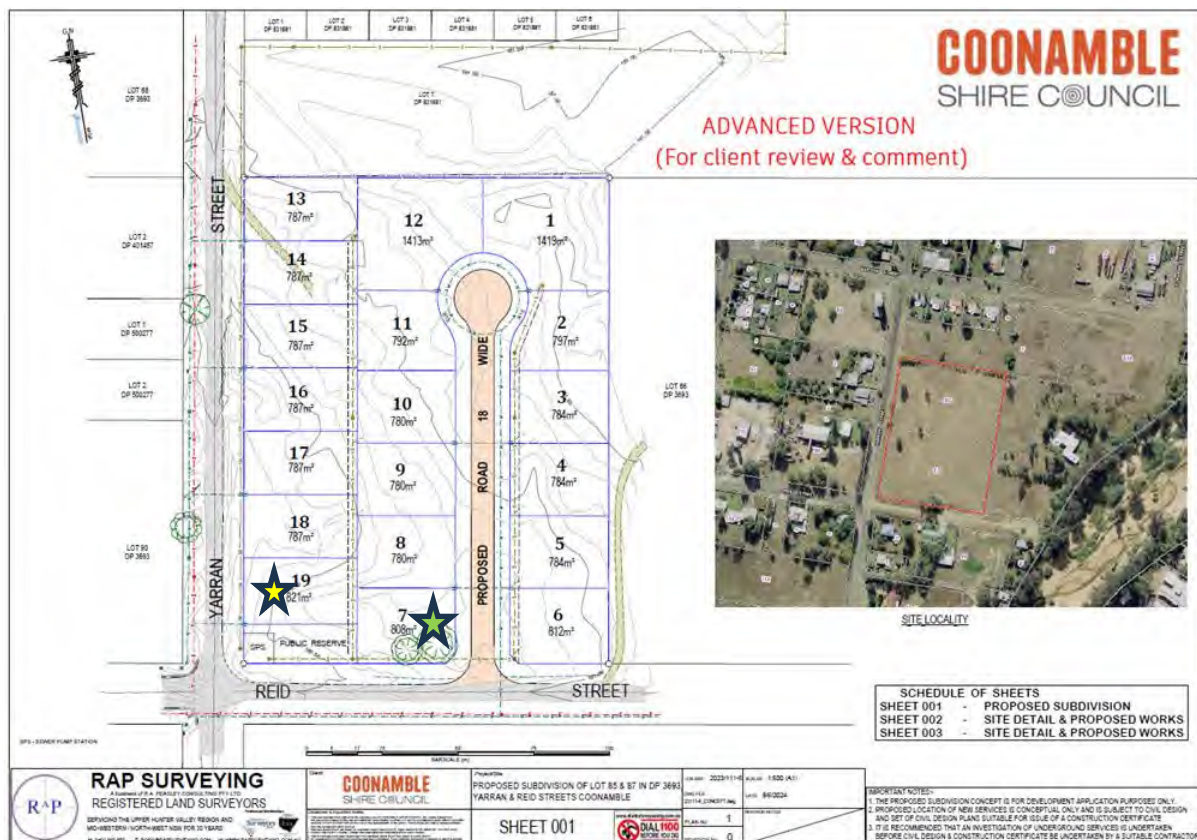
The first demo house will go on Lot 19 (see Diagram below). Then our Council house will go on Lot 7. Service connections are scheduled and on track to support these first two homes.

The developer has advised that the next step is to build the footings, then the demo house would be erected soon after in April/May. The program is currently being confirmed.

Stopping this work could have a major impact on the project and potentially lead to Council being in breach of contract, resulting in claims for compensation. There could also be wider reputational damage to Council

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the workshop on the housing project, as per the resolution from the February meeting, be scheduled as soon as possible.
2. That Council notes that a current cost estimate is now being prepared and will be provided to Council at the March meeting.



21 APPENDIX "A" – NOTICE OF MOTION TEMPLATE

Subject Heading: Yarran st housing estate

Background: No costings available to council

Issues: Motion , Council cease all works at yarran st housing site until for costings of project have been sort and discussed at council

Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework:

Financial Considerations:

Legal/Policy Implications:

Attachments:

Recommendation:

10.12 FORMALISING CRITERIA FOR MERCHANDISE SOLD THROUGH THE COONAMBLE DISTRICT STORE

File Number: T3-1

Author: David Levick-Manager Economic Development and Growth

Authoriser: Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment

Annexures:

1. Coonamble District Store Application Form  
2. Coonamble District Store Evaluation Form  

PURPOSE

To formalise criteria for accepting merchandise to sell through the Coonamble District Store, operating from the Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre (Visitor Information Centre).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Limited space requires the introduction of more formalised transparent criteria to maintain the quality, diversity and uniqueness of the range of merchandise sold through the Coonamble District Store. The proposed criteria are now more focused, with applications to be considered by a panel of three (3) people, making a recommendation to the Manager Economic Development and Growth regarding each application.

BACKGROUND

The Coonamble District Store was established in 2021 to showcase and sell locally produced merchandise from the new Information and Exhibition Centre. As the first point of contact with visitors, the Information and Exhibition Centre showcases the work of local artists and craftspeople to wet the appetite of visitors to local produce and artefacts and to encourage them to visit the artist's or craftsperson's main retail premises, thus increasing sales within the local economy and encouraging longer visitation.

During the growth of the Coonamble District Store, the specific areas that need to be covered by the criteria for the assessment of applications have become more apparent. For example, local production, the message of the product, quality, creativity, uniqueness, craftsmanship and pricing.

The number of suppliers and the limited space available for the display of merchandise and craftwork now require that these criteria be formalised to optimise the quality, diversity and uniqueness of the range offered.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP ED1.2 Develop our economy, including the visitor economy.

(b) Financial Considerations

There is no net financial implication: the goods are bought ex-GST and sold with GST, yielding a zero financial return to Council. However, the range and diversity of merchandise sold through the Coonamble District Store encourages sales of the Information Centre's own merchandise, which generates a small profit.

COMMENTARY

The number of individuals, local artists and craftspeople supplying to the Coonamble District Store is now approaching 20, and limited physical space requires the introduction of more formalised criteria to qualify requests by local suppliers/artists to maintain the quality, diversity and uniqueness of the range of merchandise sold within the space available.

The proposed criteria are now more focused, with applications to be considered by a panel of three (3) people, making a recommendation to the Manager Economic Development and Growth regarding acceptance or decline of the application.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The new application form and evaluation form, based on the more formal criteria, delivers greater transparency, integrity and probity in the decision-making about the choice of stock for the Coonamble District Store.

(b) Legal Implications

None.

(c) Social Implications

None.

(d) Environmental Implications

None.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

None.

(f) Risk Implications

None.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Endorse the draft Coonamble District Store application and evaluation forms that include the suitability criteria for new merchandise;**
- 2. Endorse the public exhibition of the draft Coonamble District Store application and evaluation forms for a period of 28 days, providing interested stakeholders at least 42 days in which to comment on the forms; and**
- 3. Receive a further report, following the exhibition and submission period, including any submissions made on the draft forms, and a recommendation that addresses concerns raised within the submissions received.**



Coonamble Information & Exhibition Centre

DISTRICT STORE

APPLICATION FORM

COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL



ABOUT

Coonamble Information &
Exhibition Centre

**DISTRICT
STORE**

Coonamble Information & Exhibition Centre

Located along Castlereagh Street, opposite Coonamble's painted water tower the Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre, provides information about the region and surrounding areas.

The emu is important to the Wayilwan and Kamilaroi people and the Information and Exhibition Centre has been designed with inspiration from the emu foot.

Full of history and locally made products, the exhibition space and retail area are dedicated to locally produced goods, wares, artwork and exhibitions that endeavour to inspire, nourish, educate and delight visitors.

Application process

Your application and proposal will be evaluated based on their relevance to local production, the message conveyed by the artwork or product, as well as the quality, craftsmanship, and presentation or packaging.

Considerations will also include the existing stock mix, pricing structure, and available space.

Preference will be given to applicants who live or work in the Coonamble Local Government Area. Applicants from outside this area are welcome to apply, but they should demonstrate a connection to or a benefit for the Coonamble area or region.



APPLICATION

Coonamble Information & Exhibition Centre

DISTRICT STORE

Applicant name:

Business name:

Social media:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

ABN:

If you don't have an ABN, please complete a Statement by Supplier form.

www.ato.gov.au/forms-and-instructions/statement-by-supplier-not-quoting-an-abn



Payment terms:

Name of Bank:

Account name:

BSB:

Account number:

Reference:

Authorised person's name:

Signature:

Date:

OFFICE USE ONLY

CREDITOR CODE:

DETAILS ENTERED BY:

DATE:

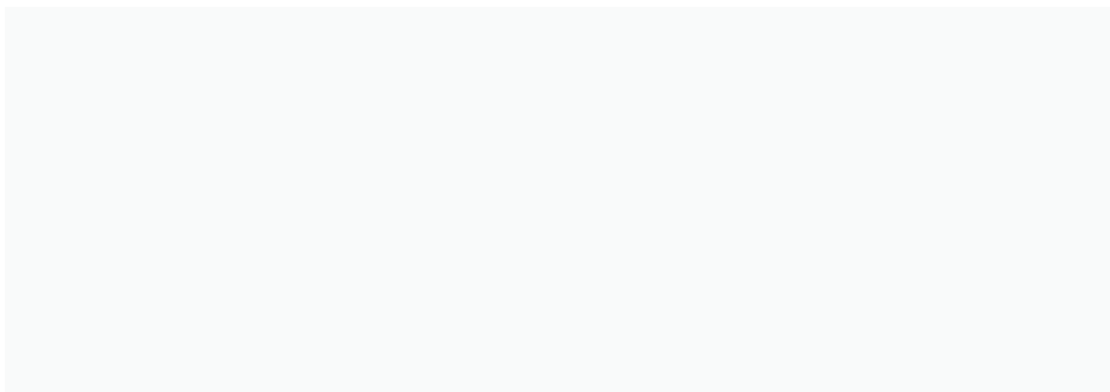
ABOUT

*Coonamble Information &
Exhibition Centre*

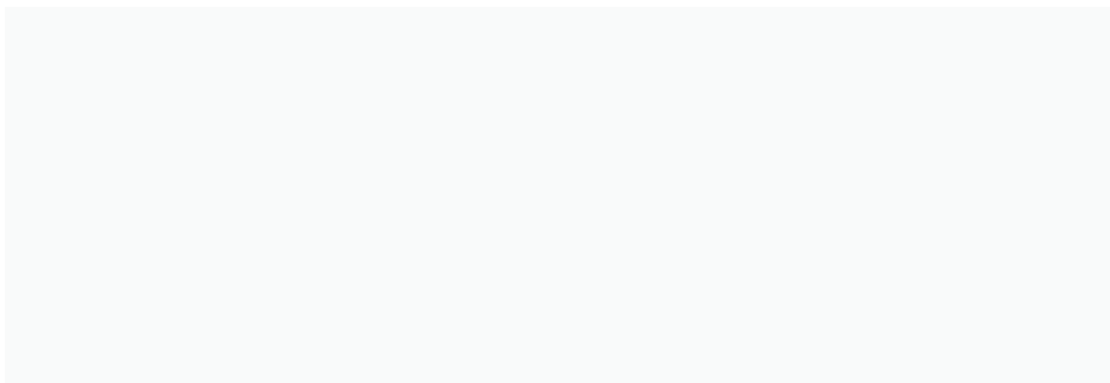
**DISTRICT
STORE**

Please provide some background information about you:

- Who are you?
- When and why did you start creating / producing / making?
- What inspires you?



Please describe your product and what makes it special.



Attach up to 5 images



Attach a pricing guide

RETAIL AGREEMENT

Coonamble Information &
Exhibition Centre

**DISTRICT
STORE**

1. Selection Criteria: Applications will be reviewed with consideration to local production, artist / region message of product, quality, creativity, uniqueness, craftsmanship, and pricing. Other factors such as existing stock mix and space availability will also be taken into consideration. All applications for inclusion in the program are evaluated by a selection committee and are based on the written application and supporting material supplied in the application form. Preference will be given to applicants living or working in the Coonamble LGA. Applicants from outside this area are welcome but should demonstrate a connection or benefit to the Coonamble Shire.
2. Display and Merchandising: Coonamble Information & Exhibition will display stock to the best of its ability. Stock is constantly rotated to keep the displays fresh and new for regular visitors. Due to space constraints, not all stock will be displayed at all times though stock not on display will still be retrieved and recommended to customers. Stock must be for sale.
3. Coonamble Information & Exhibition welcomes stockists to create a broader immersive installation of your works utilising the exhibition space, outside the merchandise area.
4. Branding and Packaging: All products will be labelled with a price tag displaying the RRP, which is the responsibility of Coonamble Information & Exhibition upon receipt of an inventory and price list. You may supply business cards to go with your display. Every product will also be accompanied by an artist/maker bio card created by Coonamble Information and Exhibition utilising the information you have supplied in your application.
5. Payment of makers: Before the payment process can begin, the supplier must be set up in the Coonamble Shire Council finance system and sign the Retail Agreement form. The supplier will deliver an inventory list with each delivery of products, which includes the retail price (inc GST) and wholesale price. The supplier will also deliver an invoice at the time of delivery which will then be processed within 30 days of the invoice date.
6. Copyright: Permission is given by the supplier to photograph the products for promotion purposes for example social media, website and printed material and media.

I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to the terms and conditions laid out in this agreement.

Signed:

Date:

EVALUATION

Coonamble Information & Exhibition Centre

DISTRICT STORE

Applicant name:

Date application received:

Evaluator name & position:

Date of evaluation:

Selection Criteria:

Score out of 5, 1 lowest - 5 highest. All categories must score 3 or higher to qualify for consideration.

Relevance to local culture, messaging and marketing

Standard of craftsmanship

Product presentation, including packaging

Product inimitability

Suitability to existing stock mix

Comparative price point

Connection to the Coonamble Shire

Do you agree this product adheres to the above selection criteria and meets the required standards?

Yes

No

Evaluation comments and recommendations:

10.13 SIGNAGE UPDATE

File Number: T3-15

Author: David Levick-Manager Economic Development and Growth

Authoriser: Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment

Annexures: 1. Quambone Signage Audit [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

To clarify the different categories of signage across Coonamble Shire and to provide an update on work to improve wayfinding signage in and around Quambone.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Councillors raised a number of issues regarding signage across the Shire at its February 2025 meeting, requesting information on wayfinding signage in Quambone, town entrance signage and Shire entrance signage.

BACKGROUND

Shire entrance signage, town entrance signage and wayfinding signage for residents and visitors are important parts of the Shire's 'branding', contributing to the quality of the visitor experience and their impression of area. They also provide valuable information for motorists on directions and how to get around.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP ED1.1 - Grow our reputation as an LGA of choice to live, work and invest.

CSP ED1.2 - Develop our economy, including the visitor economy.

(b) Financial Considerations

Costs for the manufacture and installation of all types of signage must be borne by Council in its Annual Operational Plan.

COMMENTARY

Coonamble Shire Entrance Signage

These are the most strategic signs as they are what visitors see first. New Shire entrance signage is needed on:

- the northern boundary on the Castlereagh Highway.
- the southern boundary on the Castlereagh Highway.
- the northern-eastern boundary on Pilliga Road.
- the south-western boundary on the Warren Road.
- the eastern boundary on the Baradine Road.
- the south-eastern boundary on the Toorweenah Road, once sealing has been completed.

A draft concept design for new highway Shire entrance signage was developed during 2024 and shared with the Coonamble Local Aboriginal Lands Council. Feedback has not been pursued at this time. The proposal is for a three-element

sign, comprising a stencilled steel 'Yaama – Welcome to', a separate stencilled steel 'COONAMBLE SHIRE | Weilwan Country | Gamilaroi Country', and a solid background featuring designs depicting Weilwan and Gamilaroi art and livestock and crop symbols (see below).

It is proposed that the Shire entrance signs for the regional roads would use the stencilled steel components only.

This work, including design finalisation and costing, is being incorporated into the project work of the Coonamble Regional Art Trail that is funded under Round 5 of the Stronger Country Communities Program, currently taking place.

There has been an offer from the Industrial Arts students at Coonamble High School to participate in the creation of the stencilled steel components of the signage, with this technology available at the school.

When the designs are finalised they will be submitted to Council for approval.



One concept for the Shire entrance signage on the Castlereagh Highway.

In 2024 there were suggestions to remove the 'No Coal Seam Gas' signs and machinery around the Shire. With the likelihood of such exploration now significantly diminished, it has been proposed to replace such signage with more general signage focusing on 'Care for Country'.

These would be placed in proximity to the Shire entrance signs and use the approved fonts and colours adopted as the 'branding' for Coonamble Shire.



It is proposed to replace the 'No Coal Seam Gas' signs to ones focusing on 'Care for Country'.

Town Entrance Signage

Town entrance signage was treated extensively in the Coonamble Shire Masterplan and new signage installed in 2022. No further work is required for the town entrance signs, however, the southerly Coonamble town entrance sign will need to be relocated as part of the intersection upgrade work associated with the proposed Moorimbilla Solar Farm.



Project collaborators, including Uncle 'Sooty' Welsh (at left of sign) and former Mayor Tim Horan (right of sign), at the installation of the Coonamble Town Entrance sign. The same design was used for town entrance signs for Gulargambone and Quambone.

Other signage

Other types of signage include:

- Regulatory signage, such as speed advisory signs and speed limit signs.
- Wayfinding signage, both the green and white directional signage to localities, and the brown and white tourism locality signage.
- Council-developed signage, such as those depicting the adopted town logos.



Examples of the wayfinding signage that is to be replaced at Quambone (see attachment).



Examples of the Council-developed signage, old and new (ordered).

An initial set of signs is on order to replace signs in Quambone (see attachment on the audit), with an audit of signage in Gulargambone and Coonamble yet to be undertaken, and damaged signs replaced.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Council has a statutory responsibility to install road, traffic and some wayfinding signage consistent with Transport for NSW regulations and other signage that reflects a high standard of workmanship and durability that enables wayfinding and navigation by residents and visitors to an area.

(b) Legal Implications

Some types of signage must comply with Transport for NSW standards.

(c) Social Implications

Signage gives residents and visitors a 'sense of place' and enable ease of navigation, contributing to a positive experience within the Shire.

(d) Environmental Implications

Proposed signage is made from recyclable, inert materials.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Good wayfinding signage provides a positive visitor experience, encouraging visitors to stay within the Shire for longer, with their spending contributing to the local economy.





(f) Risk Implications





There is a risk of reputational damage should all types of signage not be maintained to a high standard.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the information in the signage update report.

QUAMBONE

Location	Reference photo	Description	Dimensions (W x H mm)	Action
1 Quambone Road, entering from Coonamble		Brown sign, Welcome to Quambone, gateway to the Mac. Marshes	2000 mm x 800 mm	Replace
2 Quambone Road, entering from Coonamble		Willie Retreat and Mac. Marshes	1750 mm x 700 mm	Replace
3 Quambone Road, entering from Coonamble		Green town directional sign	2000 mm x 900 mm	Redesign and replace
4 Gilgunnia Street		Welcome to Quambone sign	1200 mm x 1700 mm	New design attached.
5 Gilgunnia Street, leaving from Quambone		Town directional sign	2000 mm x 900mm	Replace

<p>6 Gilgumnia Street and Tucka Tucka Street intersection</p>			<p>Replace Tucka Tucka Street sign</p>
<p>7 Tucka Tucka Street, heading towards Coonamble</p>		<p>Town directional sign 1900 mm x 900 mm</p>	<p>Replace</p>
<p>8 Merrie Merrie Road, in the direction of towards Quambone</p>		<p>Town directional sign 2000 mm x 900 mm</p>	<p>Replace</p>
<p>9 Tucka Tucka Street and Buckumbe Street intersection</p>		<p>Public toilet sign</p>	<p>Update/replace</p>

10.14 NICKNAME HALL OF FAME REVITALISATION**File Number: 75924****Author: David Levick-Manager Economic Development and Growth****Authoriser: Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment****Annexures: 1. Summary Extract from the Coonamble Brand Style Guidelines**  **PURPOSE**

To replace the current Nickname Hall of Fame signage and update the design to align with Council's current brand guidelines.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The existing Nickname Hall of Fame signage installed in the Coonamble CBD no longer aligns with Council's brand guidelines adopted in 2022. In addition, several profiles are currently not on display or are weather-damaged and need replacing.

The proposed updated design will refresh the project, enhance its visual appeal and align it with current branding.

Profiles currently on display will be reinstalled in their existing location. New locations will be determined within the Coonamble CBD for those not currently on display, in consultation with local business/property owners.

BACKGROUND

The 'Nickname Hall of Fame' was established in 2005 in partnership with the Coonamble 'Streets Ahead' Committee in place at that time.

The project was developed as:

- A celebration and exploration of our local community identity and culture, coinciding with Coonamble's 150-year anniversary.
- A tourism 'attraction' to entice travellers out of their cars and into the businesses in the town's CBD.
- An affordable tourism asset not requiring staffing or significant maintenance.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP ED1.2 - Develop our economy, including the visitor economy.

(b) Financial Considerations

The estimated costs to reprint the posters, print and erect a replacement billboard and produce a commemorative tea towel can be covered within the current financial year's budget.

COMMENTARY

The Nickname Hall of Fame continues to attract local tourists in Coonamble. It is a self-guided activity where visitors can explore the Nickname Hall of Fame by strolling the streets of Coonamble, viewing the billboard style signage.

Additionally, this year marks the 20th anniversary of the Nickname Hall of Fame. The 10-year anniversary was marked by the production of a tea towel emblazoned with the various caricatures. It is proposed to produce a similar commemorative item in 2025.

Current posters use the old Coonamble Shire Council logo. The proposed posters utilise the new Council and tourism logos, fonts and tourism colours in its corporate branding guidelines (attached) for coherence with other Council and tourism collateral and signage across the Shire.

Replacement of the posters, and the billboard on the Castlereagh Highway at the northern and southern approaches to Coonamble, and the commemorative tea towel, is estimated to cost \$10,000, which can be financed within the current financial year’s budget.



The proposed re-branding of the Nickname Hall of Fame posters uses the new Council and tourism logos, fonts and tourism colours.

Regarding a current proposal for a caricature, Angie Little has advised that she does not want a caricature but would prefer a plaque at the entrance to the Museum under the Bridge.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

None.

(b) Legal Implications

None.

(c) Social Implications

The renewal of the posters will generate increased local interest and pride in this initiative.

(d) Environmental Implications

Inert, environmentally safe materials will be used in the production of the components of this project.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

The distribution of the Nickname Hall of Fame posters throughout the Coonamble CBD encourages visitors to wander and shop in this locality, increasing the spend by visitors within Coonamble Shire.

(f) Risk Implications

Posters are firmly fixed where displayed, with very low risk of causing damage or injury to passers-by.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the action to renew the Nickname Hall of Fame posters and highway billboards, and the production of a commemorative tea towel, funded from within the current 2024/25 budget.



COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

BRAND STYLE GUIDELINES

Creating visual consistency where ever our brand appears

JUNE 2020

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL

BRAND USAGE

Use the Coonamble Shire Council **Corporate** logo if:

- Council is the lead organisation delivering the service
- You are communicating or promoting a Council service or facility to local residents
- Council is contributing the most funding
- Council is the accountable body



CORPORATE LOGO

Use the Coonamble Shire Council **Tourism** logo if:

The communication piece is targeted at a range of external audiences particularly attracting people to visit the region including Gulargambone and Quambone.



TOURISM LOGO

Use the Coonamble Shire Council **Corporate** logo co-branded with the **Tourism** logo if: The publication is targeted at a range of internal and external audiences such so those looking to invest in or move to the region.



CO-BRANDING - Council Tourism Service / Event

Use the Coonamble Shire Council **Corporate** logo co-branded with an external service brand if the project is a joint venture, partnership or sponsorship arrangement.



Example purposes only.

CO-BRANDING - External Service / Event

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE BRAND

COLOUR OPTIONS AND THEIR USES

CMYK USED FOR PRINTED MATERIALS

e.g. corporate templates, manuals, reports, flyers, brochures, banners, signage

RGB USED FOR ONSCREEN PRESENTATIONS

Microsoft word applications, PowerPoint presentations & other documents viewed electronically.



COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

POSITIVE



COLOUR REVERSE

FULL COLOUR LOGO

Documents reproduced in black and white (no colour).



COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

MONOTONE LOGO

Screen printing or applications where only 1 colour can be used. Also best for faxes.



COONAMBLE
SHIRE COUNCIL

POSITIVE



WHITE REVERSE

SOLID LOGO

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE BRAND

COLOUR SPECIFICATIONS



PANTONE (PMS)
in the file name for
2 colour printing



PMS
180

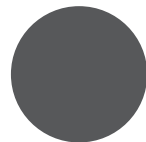


PMS
COOL
GREY
11

CMYK in the file
name for all printed
publications



C 13
M 80
Y 95
K 0

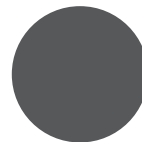


K 80

RGB in the file name for
all publications that will
be viewed on screen



R 203
G 66
B 36

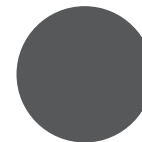


R 70
G 70
B 72

HTML # These numbers
should be used in website
applications



HTML #
CB4334



HTML #
464648

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE BRAND

FONT SPECIFICATIONS

PRIMARY FONT

HELVETICA NEUE FONT

Helvetica Neue can be purchased from:
<https://www.myfonts.com>

BODY COPY & HEADING STYLE 1

HELVETICA NEUE REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

HELVETICA NEUE ITALIC

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

HEADING STYLE 2

HELVETICA NEUE BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

SECONDARY FONT

Where Helvetica Neue is not available
Arial is the preferred alternative

BODY COPY & HEADING STYLE 1

ARIAL REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

ARIAL ITALIC

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

HEADING STYLE 2

ARIAL BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

CONVERSATIONAL FONT

This font is used to communicate
via a conversational tone

DesertDogHmk Font

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

BRAND FONTS

This font is used in the brand and
can also be used as a design sub font.

COASTAL HAND FONT

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
ONLY AVAILABLE IN CAPS

CONTEXT REPRISE LIGHT EXP

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
123456789

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM BRANDS

BRAND SNAPSHOT



MASTER LOGO



TOWN LOGOS



CO-BRANDING

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM BRAND

CMYK in the file name for all printed publications
RGB in the file name for all publications that will be viewed on screen

COLOUR SPECIFICATIONS - SECONDARY PALETTE



C 0 R 235
 M 7 G 89
 Y 11 B 139
 K 0
 # EB598B

C 15 R 207
 M 30 G 162
 Y 50 B 117
 K 0
 # CFA275

C 53 R 114
 M 13 G 167
 Y 65 B 99
 K 0
 # 72A763

C 70 R 61
 M 20 G 137
 Y 30 B 262
 K 0
 # 3D89CA

GULARGAMBONE COLOURS



C 19 R 196
 M 19 G 184
 Y 30 B 160
 K 0
 # C4B8A0

C 0 R 242
 M 50 G 128
 Y 100 B 24
 K 0
 # F38018

C 13 R 203
 M 50 G 67
 Y 95 B 36
 K 0
 # CB4324

C 58 R 79
 M 58 G 68
 Y 70 B 56
 K 29
 # 4F4438

COONAMBLE COLOURS



C 43 R 140
 M 0 G 197
 Y 79 B 83
 K 0
 # 8CC553

C 20 R 206
 M 0 G 221
 Y 100 B 28
 K 0
 # CEDD1C

C 60 R 106
 M 33 G 130
 Y 100 B 49
 K 0
 # 6A8231

C 100 R 0
 M 0 G 157
 Y 15 B 202
 K 0
 # 009DOA

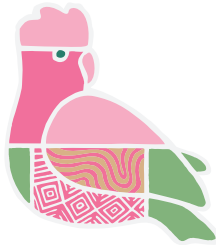
QUAMBONE COLOURS

COMPLIMENTARY COLOUR

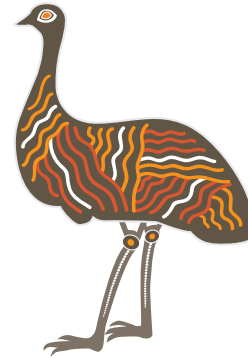
C 100 R 32
 M 90 G 40
 Y 15 B 111
 K 0
 # 20286F

COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM BRANDS

SECONDARY BRAND DESIGN ELEMENTS



GALLAH



EMU



EGRET



CONCENTRIC
CIRCLES



CONNECTED
CIRCLES



DIAMONDS



RIVER LINES



GRASS



THUMBPRINT



MOUNTAINS

10.15 PLANNING, REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE PROGRESS REPORT**File Number: E5****Author: Lesley Duncan, Building & Compliance Manager****Authoriser: Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment****Annexures: Nil****PURPOSE**

To provide information on the activities within Council's Planning, Regulatory and Compliance Services section for the past month. This progress report considers town planning and strategic land use planning, compliance and regulation, environmental management and public health.

BACKGROUND

The Planning, Regulatory & Compliance Services section focuses on all town planning and environmental planning matters including regulation and compliance, public health requirements, waste management, and environmental management considerations.

Strategic Land Use Planning refers to updates to Council's planning instruments and is also included. This report provides a summary of activities undertaken during 2024.

The following topics will be included in the Council Report where there is relevant information to report on:

- Compliance and Regulation

The *Local Government Act 1993*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ('EP&A Act') and *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* are the main legislation providing provisions around environmental management. Compliance and regulation enforce individuals, organisations and businesses to comply with the relevant act or regulation. Environmental management can include the atmosphere, built environment, heritage, land, and water.

- Development Application Information

This information refers to development applications lodged in the Coonamble local government area. However, the consent authority is another authority and not Council or its delegated staff/contractors. This can include:

- The Independent Planning Commission for state significant development,
- The Regional planning panel for regionally significant development, or
- A Public authority (other than council) depending on the type of development declared with an environmental planning instrument.

These types of development applications are rare.

- Strategic Land Use Planning

This relates any potential amendments to Council’s planning instruments such as the Coonamble Local Environmental Plan or Council’s Development Control Plans. Council staff also attend forums, committees and workshops around strategic land use planning, and this information will be provided to Council for information.

- Environmental Management

Opportunities exist for Council to promote ecologically and environmentally sustainable land use and development, initiatives, and programs. Information under this topic will be reported when opportunities present itself and can come from government agencies, community groups and environmental champions.

- Ranger’s Monthly Report

This report provides a summary of companion animals (cats and dogs) impounded and other animals. This includes information on how many animals were rehomed and euthanised. Information on dog attacks is also provided.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

P3.1.2. Inspection of Food Premises.

I3.3.1. Implementation Waste Management recommendations.

EN1.1.1. Enforcement of environmental regulations.

EN.1.1.2. Continue to review Local Environmental Plan.

EN.1.1.3. Ensure compliance with NSW Building Certification.

EN.1.1.4 Provide quality over the counter, telephone, and email advice to customers.

EN.1.1.5 Approvals completed within timeframe required.

P2.2.4 Controlling straying animals.

(b) Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial considerations with this report.

COMMENTARY

Saleyards

No cattle sales were held in February. The income shown below reflects the sale held on 29 January 2025.

Saleyards

	February	Year to Date
Income	8,651	92,399.44
Expenditure	3,490	77,662.48
		14,736.96 Surplus

Truck Wash

During February the truck wash broke down. Repairs have been carried out and the truck wash is now operation again. The financial report for February 2025 is provided below:

Truck Wash

	February	Year to Date	
Income	45	42,125.68	
Expenditure	1,400	6,404.72	
	-\$1355	\$35,720.96	Surplus

Companion Animals

The Regulatory Officer’s report is provided for November and December 2024 and January 2025. The following is a summary of companion animal statistics.

CORRESPONDENCE	February 2025	YTD 2025
Infringements (Animals)	0	0
Infringements (Other)	0	0
Change of Details	1	2
Microchipped dogs	2	3
Registrations	0	0

Companion Animal Seizure and Impounding Activities - Month: February

Seizure Activities:	Dogs	Cats
Seized	2	0
Returned to Owner	0	0

Impounding Activities:	Dogs	Cats
Animals in pound at start of month	4	0
Incoming Animals	Dogs	Cats
Transferred from seizure activities	0	0
Abandoned or Stray	12	0
Surrendered	6	5
Total Animals in Pound	22	16

Outgoing Animals	Dogs	Cats
Released to Owner	4	0
Euthanised	7	0
Released to Rehoming Organisation	8	0
Sold	0	0
Died at Pound	0	0
Stolen from Pound	0	0
Escaped from Pound	0	0
Total Animals Leaving Pound	19	0
Animals in Pound at end of Month.	3	5

Dog Attacks

One dog attack was reported in Coonamble during February, involving three (3) dogs. No injuries were reported. Investigation into this matter is ongoing.

New Pound

Planning has started for a new pound for Coonamble.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The report provides Council with opportunities to understand governance and policy implications in the environment and strategic land use planning area. There may be risk implications depending on the nature of the enquiry.

(b) Legal Implications

Whilst not yet formally received by Council, the EPA has indicated its intention to serve Council both a Clean-up and Prevention Notice in accordance with the provisions contained within the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.

(c) Social Implications

Providing information that is open and transparent to the community will provide positive social implications for the community to understand the work that Council does.

(d) Environmental Implications

The progress report allows for environmental management to be an area of focus for Council and subsequently providing positive environmental benefits. This specifically relates to the area of public health, environmental sustainability, and waste management.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

There may be risk implications depending on the nature of the enquiry.

(f) Risk Implications

There may be risk implications depending on the nature of the enquiry.

CONCLUSION

The Planning, Regulatory & Compliance Progress Report has considered town planning and strategic land use planning, compliance and regulation, and environmental management and health since the last meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning, Regulatory and Compliance Progress Report be noted.

10.16 STATUS OF BORE BATH PROJECT**File Number:** 1.1**Author:** Barry Broe-Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment**Authoriser:** Paul Gallagher, General Manager**Annexures:** Nil**PURPOSE**

To report on the status of the project and proposed next steps in developing the project at an alternative site.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recent Council decisions on the proposed rezoning of land on the current site means that the rezoning cannot be progressed, and the project cannot be built on the River Road site owned by Council.

The feedback provided by the grant body is clear that if their March 2026 deadline to complete the project is not met, the grant will be lost.

Council has indicated that it wants to continue developing a bore bath project, but at the originally proposed site beside the golf course. A recommended approach to developing this project is put forward in this report.

BACKGROUND**(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework**

The main strategic links are about economic development and tourism.

(b) Financial Considerations

Council has secured a \$5.5m grant and allocated \$1.25m in its budget.

COMMENTARY**Work completed to date**

The project has been under development at the current site after Council purchased the 7-hectare site freehold at 36 River Road, Coonamble in December 2023.

Background site investigations and planning on the current site during 2024 have included:

- *Geotechnical and site contamination* – environmental risk assessments and contamination tests, hygienist report
- *Bore licence* - application submitted in February 2024
- *Site clearing* – demolition and site clearance underway
- *Rezoning* – planning proposal developed.
- *Planning* - concept plan produced and feedback sought

Grant funding situation

The rezoning of the current site was on the critical path for the project, as construction must be completed by March 2026 to meet the grant requirements.

A Council workshop in advance of the February meeting was held on Friday 7 February. Representatives from the state department responsible for the grant attended the start of this meeting. They made it very clear that the deadlines were non-negotiable.

Following the Council resolution at the February 2025 meeting not to proceed with rezoning of the land for the Bore Bath Project, the project team contacted the funding body again to seek advice on some of the issues raised with relocating the project site.

It is very clear that the grant of \$5.5million is highly likely to be lost, along with expenditure incurred to date having to be handed back. The reason is that the March 2026 deadline to complete construction cannot be met.

Discussions with the grant body were subsequently held on 18 February after the Council meeting. The consistent message given to staff again was about the timeframe. They said there is no appetite and chance of changing the deadline for completion of March 2026.

If the project changed to a new site, a new project plan would have to be scoped up and submitted to them for assessment. This in itself will take some time. The fundamental challenge with producing a new project plan that could gain approval is being able to demonstrate that the deadline of March 2026 could be met.

They also advised that funding sources are drying up at the state and commonwealth level, and said we would never have got the funding in the first place if it was just for a basic bore bath (i.e. with no accommodation and broader tourism components).

Expenditure so far

A summary of expenditure so far is given below

Income Received to date:

Grant Income received \$1,375,0000

Expenditure to date from grant funds (eligibility is based on the current location):

2023/2024 Expenditure: \$28,419.15

2024/2025 Expenditure: \$59,473.31

Total \$87,892.46

Council Expenditure to date from its own allocation of \$1.25m:

2023/2024 Expenditure: \$ 604,807.30

If the grant has to be handed back or is lost, it is expected that the State will also require the return of the \$87,892. This leaves potentially around \$550k out of the \$1.25m Council allocation for the possible planning of a new project.

Future project development

The resolution on the rezoning proposal from the February meeting did not include a resolution to relocate the project to another site. However, it has been clear from Councillors that the preferred site is now the golf course site.

Before starting any new project, a Council decision would be first needed.

The project should be developed in logical stages as follows:



The first step as part of the project initiation stage is to produce a project plan and get it approved by Council to set it off on the right footing with clear definition.

A good practice project plan or project charter should include:

- **Objectives** – outlines the overall purpose and aims of the project
- **Scope** – defines the elements of the project, facilities, scale and type
- **Quality criteria/KPIs** – sets the performance criteria for the project, and how success will be measured
- **Program and key milestones** – indicative timeframe, program and key milestones
- **Cost and budget** – estimated cost of the project and the budget to work to
- **Funding** – identifying sources of funding for the initial work and full project
- **Resourcing and project management** – how the project will be resourced and project managed
- **Project approvals** – outlining the approvals needed, e.g. Crown Land, environmental, bore licence, OLG Capital Expenditure review
- **Governance** – describing how the project will be guided and decisions made, e.g. a Council committee
- **Communications plan** – strategy and messages for comms with key stakeholders and the public
- **Procurement** – initial plan for various stages, private sector/PPP role
- **Risk management** – plan to manage key risks

Construction at a new site would be highly unlikely to start within the next 3-4 years (should funding be secured).

Acquiring or leasing Crown Land

A key issue for the new site is obtaining land tenure. We have been liaising with Crown Lands and have sought formal advice on the process for leasing or acquiring the land at the golf course site and the timeframes involved.

It should be noted that leasing would not be the best long-term solution that gives land tenure certainty for such a major investment and long-term infrastructure facilities. Regarding the alternative option of acquiring the land for the golf course site, previous advice to Council in 2022 stated that it would take at least one year.

The land needed for the project would also need to be sub-divided. The actual land needed would first have to be identified and confirmed. The previous 7.93 ha site based on planning in 2021 is shown below and has natural constraints.



The process suggested by Crown Lands on 21 February is to seek approval to become the Crown Land Manager (CLM) first to get the project going, and in parallel submit an application to acquire the land, which will take longer.

The steps are below:

1. Council requests appointment as Crown Land Manager (CLM) over the section of the reserve Council identifies for the bore bath project
2. Council engages with the current board of the Coonamble Racecourse and Recreation Land Manager to discuss Council's plans regarding the bore baths project including the proposed subdivision of the reserve for the bore bath project, access, provision of services
3. Council requests the current CLM relinquish management over the bore bath site.
4. The current CLM takes into consideration any potential effects on the current use of the reserve including the current user groups
5. Council submits its request for appointment as CLM in writing, outlining the proposal, include Council's resolution to request appointment and written consent from the current CLM to relinquish management over the identified project site
6. Following consultation with the current CLM and appointment of Council as CLM over part Reserve 520089 the proposed subdivision would be registered to clearly identify the area that Council will manage
7. Council develops and seeks approval for a Plan of Management

8. Once Council is appointed as CLM and has an approved Plan of Management, Council can seek consent for works on the reserve by applying for Landowner's Consent from the Department for construction

CONCLUSION

The recent Council decisions on the proposed rezoning of land on the current site means that the rezoning cannot be progressed, and the project cannot be built on the current River Road site.

The key implication is that the \$5.5 million grant is expected to be lost.

Council has indicated that it wants to progress developing a bore bath project at the site beside the golf course. A recommended approach to developing this project has been put forward in this report, starting with the development of an approved project plan.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The project is a key initiative in the Community Strategic Plan.

(b) Legal Implications

All laws and regulations relevant to the project will be followed. Proper processes and probity need to be adopted in procurement along with development.

(c) Social Implications

There would be major social benefits to the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

The project needs to be designed to have a positive impact on the environment with effective landscaping and green spaces. All project impacts must be mitigated.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Council would own the assets built on the site. Council will be required to fund future maintenance and renewal costs.

(f) Risk Implications

Like any complex major project there are different risks associated with it that will need to be managed – e.g. cost, land tenure, environmental.

CONCLUSION



RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the status of the Bore Bath Project and work done to date

- 2. Notes the likely implications on the Grant of the recent Council decision not to rezone the land and not to continue project development on the current project site**
- 3. Note the expenditure to date and the possible funds remaining for planning**
- 4. Agrees to adopt the recommended staged approach to developing a new project, starting with scoping and a project plan**
- 5. Determines that a council committee be established to initiate, plan, oversee and govern the project**

10.17 NOTICE OF MOTION - LAND ACQUISITION FOR BORE BATH PROJECT - CR S. BUTLER

File Number: F-6
Author: Steven Butler-Councillor
Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager
Annexures: 1. Cr Butler - Crown Land  

NOTICE OF MOTION

Cr S. Butler submitted the following Notice of Motion to be considered at the March 2025 Ordinary Meeting of Council:

- 1. That Council commence land acquisition from Crown Lands Lot 212//DP754199 Reserve 520089.**
- 2. That Council apply to have bore license application transferred to the proposed site at the racecourse.**

Allow future site for Bore Baths Project

MANEX COMMENTARY

Before starting any new project, it is recommended that a Council decision first be made on starting a new project. The project should then be developed in logical stages as follows:



The first step as part of the project initiation stage is to produce a project plan and get it approved by Council to set it off on the right footing with clear consistent definition.

This plan should include at least the following elements:

- Objectives
- Scope
- Timeframe
- Cost and budget
- Funding

Scoping is a key strategic issue to agree on first – e.g. bore bath, accommodation, amenities, RV facilities, admin area, massage/wellness facilities, camping etc

In simple terms, the bore licence application cannot be transferred. It is site specific and project specific. As with the current site, site investigations would first need to be conducted, for example geotechnical, and a Review of Environmental factors (REF). The application for the current site had to include an REF and the geotechnical report, as well as the project details including how much water is sought.

The impacts of any new bore on water resources is a key consideration of the regulatory body. This is clearly site specific and project specific.

In terms of land acquisition, prior to acquiring any land, as the council report on this project recommends, the objectives and scope of the project should first be defined, to help inform and determine how much land is needed.

Subject to funding being available, preliminary site investigations could begin, to input into the REF, project planning and bore licence application. It should be noted that there is no budget for the work on the new project. Should Council wish to reallocate the remaining 550k of Council funds allocated to developing the project on the River Road site, our money, a council resolution would be needed.

The land requirements for the project should be identified based on the project definition and scope above. Details and plans for the project are needed to support any land acquisition application. The land must be suitable and fitness for purpose for the actual project scope. The previous area of 7.93 ha identified is highly constrained and was derived from the original concept plan from the business case.

The options for land tenure should be further investigated before deciding on the best pathway. The two options are land acquisition and Council becoming the Crown Land Manager. The advice from the Crown Lands team is to start by seeking to become the CLM as it will be quicker in progressing the project. A land acquisition application could occur in parallel. See also the Council report for more detail on these steps.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council decides if it wants to start a new project on the golf course site.**
- 2. That the process recommended in the related Council report be adopted, starting with a project plan that includes defining the objectives, scope and budget for the project.**
- 3. That, subject to funding being available, preliminary site investigations start, to input into the REF, project planning, land acquisition and bore licence application.**
- 4. That the land requirements for the project be identified based on the project definition and scope.**
- 5. That the options for land tenure be further investigated and a report brought back to Council on both the land acquisition option and the alternative of Council becoming the Crown Land Manager.**

21 APPENDIX "A" – NOTICE OF MOTION TEMPLATE

Subject Heading: Racecourse crown lands

Background: Future site for bore baths

Issues: Motion , Council commence land acquisition from crown lands for lands at racecourse and golf club for future bore bath location and apply to have bore licence application transferred to racecourse site

Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework:

Financial Considerations:

Legal/Policy Implications:

Attachments:

Recommendation:

10.18 WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORT MARCH 2025**File Number:** G 1-1**Author:** Janelle Whitehead-Manager Waste, Recycling & Employment**Authoriser:** Barry Broe, Director Community, Planning, Development and Environment**Annexures:** Nil**PURPOSE**

To provide information on the activities within Council's Waste, Recycling and Employment Opportunities Section for the last month.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on last month's activities.

BACKGROUND

Council is continuing to operate and improve the three waste facility sites at Coonamble, Gulargambone, and Quambone, and provide waste collection services.

Implementation of re-cycling is continuing to reduce landfill deposits and keep existing resources circulating within the economy, thereby reducing the need to use new resources.

There are many new initiatives in terms of services and facilities that could be implemented in waste. The focus is on a staged, fundable, and manageable roll-out of initiatives that is well communicated and efficiently delivered.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

All actions and strategies related to waste and the environment.

(b) Financial Considerations

Funding is needed to meet the ongoing operational costs, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) compliance, purchase of plant and equipment and implementation of any new initiatives.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Given it is coming up to a year since the landfill management and 6 months since bin collection was taken back in house by Council, it is a timely opportunity to internally review and assess progress and set some future directions.

A recent analysis of the following key issues has been undertaken:

- *Addressing EPA compliance* – plan being developed to clean up Stage 1 of the old landfill site using Caring for Country grant funding. A submission to EPA for a Grant has also been developed.
- *Recycling and tidying up* - Working with various contractors to remove a variety of waste products such as scrap metal, cardboard, eWaste, Containers for change, batteries.
- *Focusing on cost and efficiencies* – e.g. how to operate the 3 stations cost-effectively

Return & Earn

The public continue to support the return and earn 5 days a week from 7am -4pm. Container exchange continues each fortnight. Quambone is increasing with current deposits 71,175 containers.



Coonamble Friday count

EPA Compliance

A transformation has occurred over the past 12 months at Coonamble waste facility site. The latest drone photos shown below have been included in the response to the EPA to address infringement notices outstanding since 2018.

With all outstanding issues being progressively addressed, a hygienist will be contracted to provide compliance services to the EPA. The goal is to action all outstanding issues and get infringement notices removed.

A detailed funding submission to EPA Landfill consolidation and environmental improvements. This will assist with addressing infringement notices outstanding at the Coonamble waste landfill site, improving safety at the site, and better managing the different waste categories.

There is a current issue at the landfill cell with water ponding that is being worked through.



Skip bins



Bulky bin trials were completed in Quambone, Gulargambone, Combara and Coonamble. The trials will be evaluated.

Smaller skips bins have been ordered and will be used for private works (for a fee) and general cleanups around the shire.

The replacement hook bin truck is back at work (see pic), exchanging out skip bins across the shire.

Motor oils

Regarding the Used Motor Oil collection contract from Netwaste, Cleanaway will no longer collect oil from our region from January 2025 as they are considerably downsizing their operations.

However, we now have a supplier NQL Pty Ltd based out of Tamworth that will come every 6 months to pick up our waste oils. We do not receive income but will achieve removal of motor oils from our facilities.

We do not have a supplier to take our oil drums, but we are still looking into this and stockpiling into the cage photo below.



Weighbridge

The weighbridge is working and can weigh vehicles. Next big step is getting software to automate and digitise the system for measuring and recording.



Litterbins and Fences options

Jason Lacey from Contained waste solutions Chullora was given a tour of our waste facilities sites in February. Discussions occurred about new and innovative systems for managing windblown litter, for example Lbins and fence systems.



eWaste

The first pickup of recycled batteries happened in December after negotiations with Mathews Metals Dubbo. Representatives had a site visit prior to the Christmas shutdown. It was agreed that Mathews Metals would work with Coonamble waste for collection and disposal of eWaste and batteries. Income gained from batteries to date is \$1405.25.

It has been reported recently that Australia has the highest average eWaste generation in the world and is predicted to grow by 30% by 2030.

Scrap Metal

Gulargambone, Quambone and Coonamble stockpiles are increasing with a site visit organised by scrap metal dealers for collection in the last week of February.

The Quambone stockpile had to be transferred to Coonamble as it was not viable for contractors to remove.

Gular scrap metal piles before and after shown below.





Coonamble after scrap metal removed on 28 Feb

Cardboard & Plastics

A visit by Tony Morrissey from Paper resource in Kingscliff Sydney occurred last week looking at options for disposal of cardboard and plastics. We are looking at options to reduce deposits from landfill. But transport and logistics are very challenging for western councils such as Coonamble.

Asbestos



A small amount of asbestos was dumped amongst residential waste and cardboard deposited to the tip over the weekend.

Residents are hiding numerous items in unsorted trailers,

Checks are being done by staff and the EPA was notified of the incident,

Wake Up Shake UP

WUSU workshops were run in December and January. 70 people have now successfully completed the course.

Total placements achieved in Wake Up Shake Up workshops so far is 40 as follows.

- 22 placements with Coonamble Shire Council, of these 3 have moved to alternate employment and are working full time, 1 has moved to self-employment and 2 have ceased due to health issues
- 18 placements with other employers in Coonamble - 13 commenced harvest work with Qube & GrainCorp & 5 commenced with contractors for Australia Post office.

Plant operation training

Plant training was completed in January by SKVIL in readiness to undertake this caring for Country activity which is funded by Workforce Australia, Job network Member VERTO and Coonamble Shire Council. Several staff were trained in use of a dozer, grader, backhoe, loader, compactor and skid steer.

Successful plant operators now have their 5 tickets. Dozer and backhoe training will be run next week at the council dirtyyard. Heavy Rigid licence upgrades have been booked in for late March.



Contract Management induction to waste facilities

The WHS Manager is working closely with the waste team inducting contractors to the workplace.

This is now part of the new process where contractors must provide all insurance, registrations plant and equipment; and sub-contractors working on site must be inducted to the site beforehand.

Waste staff introduction TAKE 5 safety booklets occur as part of the daily tasks and toolbox meetings



Other waste stations

Quambone transfer station is being well managed, limiting deposits through recyclables, cardboard, scrap steel, timber and green waste separated stockpiles before being transferred to Coonamble.

Fortnightly collection of the orange skip bin occurs from the waste facility in Gulargambone.

Scrap metal pickups have commenced Feb 25 where waste staff have been removing the stockpiles of timber, concrete and scrap metal from Quambone and Gulargambone to be transferred to Coonamble waste facility

Quambone Containers for change second container was booked in for exchange on 3 March.



Illegal dumping

Green waste is increasingly being deposited by locals on vacant land on the back Warren Road at Gular.

The site apparently has been utilised by country energy and now becoming the site of others trying to avoid tip fees.



Old landfill site

Those participants who went through the Wake Up Shake Up workshops in October November, December and January will be eligible for the Caring for Country Project which will commence in March.

The first stage will be clearing and site preparation activity.

Preliminary training has started in readiness for the activity – e.g. excavator, roller, backhoe, loader, skid steer, forklift, chemical certificate, chainsaw.

Verto job seekers have met with Council staff for induction and scope of works for the caring for country project which will be a cleanup and site preparation of the old tip site in Wingadee Street.

Currently there are still infringement notices by the EPA outstanding on this site. These will be addressed as part of this project.



FOGO

This is due to be phased in and mandated to be in place by 2030. More detail will be provided in future reports.

Customer Requests

Four requests received and resolved quickly.

Financial Overview

As requested at the previous meeting, strategic summary information is provided below:

Centre	Income		Expenditure		Net Operating Result as @ 24/02/2025
	Waste Collection	Gate Takings	Waste Collection	Waste Disposal	
Coonamble	\$ 731,914.29	\$ 124,346.03	\$ 83,854.85	\$ 538,812.38	\$ 233,593.09
Gulargambone	\$ 117,159.75	\$ 4,075.47	\$ 17,501.89	\$ 44,797.45	\$ 58,935.88
Quambone	\$ 28,457.42	\$ 1,677.28	\$ 30,671.60	\$ 23,012.33	-\$ 23,549.23
Total	\$ 877,531.45	\$ 130,098.78	\$ 132,028.34	\$ 606,622.16	\$ 268,979.73

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Updated policies and procedures need to be reviewed and updated, especially as more change and new initiatives are implemented, and new staff are employed.

(b) Legal Implications

Council needs to meet all laws and regulations including environmental, safety and health.

(c) Social Implications

Continuous engagement with the community and education is ongoing to explain the required changes and encourage recycling.

(d) Environmental Implications

Council needs to actively work to maintain a clear focus on protecting the environment surrounding each of the landfill sites and waste facilities and achieve EPA compliance.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Council needs to actively work to avoid financial penalties. Assets must also be well managed to minimise whole of life costs. Also ensuring budgets and resources are reviewed and effectively managed and initiatives are staged in a manageable and fundable way.

(f) Risk Implications

The main risks that must be well managed are health and safety, environmental, costs and public satisfaction with the services.

Fees and charges must reflect the cost of the services being provided – user pays is the key principle.

CONCLUSION

The key activities of the waste operations have continued within the Waste Section for the past month with continuous improvement being implemented across all sites and services.

RECOMMENDATION

That the monthly report on waste management activities be noted.

10.19 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES - WORKS IN PROGRESS**File Number:** R6**Author:** Kerrie Murphy-Director Infrastructure Services**Authoriser:** Paul Gallagher, General Manager**Annexures:** 1. Capital Works Monthly Progress Report - March 2025 [↓](#) **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with information on the works in progress within Council's Infrastructure Directorate.

BACKGROUND**(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework**

- I1.1 Employ a strategic approach to the management of our critical road network.
- I1.2 Strengthen our strategic approach to the management of our water infrastructure and services.
- I1.3 Improve our strategic approach to the management of our sewerage infrastructure and services.
- I1.4 Strengthen our strategic approach to the management of our urban drainage infrastructure and services.
- I1.5 Adopt successful strategies which maximises our community's access to quality infrastructure and assets.
- P3.1 Provide support to our sporting, recreation and community organisations which drives improved sporting and recreational opportunities for our community.
- P3.2 Improve the quality of our parks, open spaces, sporting, and recreational facilities, including the MacDonald Park Precinct.

(b) Financial Considerations

Provision is made within the 2024/2025 Operational Plan and Budget to fund the associated works and programs listed in this report.

COMMENTARY

This report aims to inform Councillors of the works in progress in the Infrastructure Directorate. Updates are provided for each Departmental area which includes Roads, Water and Sewer and Urban Services. Please note that the attachment is in an updated format with a view to provide additional information to that provided previously. The projects in this report will increase as time goes on, and more valuable information will be provided at that time.

WATER AND SEWER

Water usage during February has come down to a manageable level, with demand most days under the WTP (Water Treatment Plant) daily production level.

Council has been actively managing a large number of water main and water service leaks and failures, closely monitoring the critical assets to ensure service continuity.

Stop valve and hydrant replacements have been commenced in February, enabling greater control and the minimization of shut down areas during emergency events along with greater access to water during possible fire events/emergency situations.

PFAS testing results have been received, confirming no detections. This is a positive outcome for Council and the community, reinforcing the safety and quality of the water supply.

Council has recently cleaned out one of the two lagoons at the WTP, which was full of silt and cumbungi which was drastically reducing the capacity of the lagoon. Cleaning of the second lagoon is being programmed also.



Figure 1: Lagoon before cleaning



Figure 2: Lagoon after Cleaning

The Team has been actively managing a moderate number of sewer main (rising and gravity) and sewer service chokes and failures with this month and has completely rebuilt four new sewer (boundary shaft/sewer junction) services to alleviate ongoing failures.

Both of the respective STP's (Gulargambone and Coonamble) have been operated and maintained within their respective EPA license requirements. This has seen sampling conducted on the effluent from both plants and sent to a NATA laboratory for analysis, the results of this analysis will form the basis of the EPA license returns to be conducted with in the first quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year.

Works progressed on the new laboratory room at the Gulargambone STP, and these works are expected to be finalized within March 2025.

All the water and sewer materials have been purchased for the Yarran St Subdivision and installation works have commenced.

Upcoming works:

- *Sedimentation lagoon number 2 clean out (Barton St side) at Coonamble WTP.*
- *All water and sewer assets installed at the Yarran St subdivision.*
- *Step screen installation at the Coonamble STP*
- *New lab fully operational at Gulargambone STP*

URBAN SERVICES***Sporting Fields***

Council has recently renovated the Number one Oval at Coonamble and Gulargambone including the dethatching of grass, coring and fertilizing. The ovals were then top-dressed. This has significantly improved the playability and appearance of these surfaces.

We are heading into the change of seasons and work is progressing on the changeover from Summer to Winter sports. Council has already received many bookings ahead of time.

Upcoming Works:

- *Marking out fields;*
- *Reinstallation of goal posts for Soccer and Rugby sports.*

Main Street

Cleaning up and maintenance to Main Street gardens continue. Damage has been done to some of the garden beds due to water main breaks, with reinstatement in progress. One of the large trees that is planted in one of the garden beds has, unfortunately, suffered root damage when the water main breaks have been fixed. It is unfortunate, however, unavoidable and a lesson to be learnt when there is conflict between infrastructure and amenity.

Council is in the process of engaging a local horticulturalist and getting a plan done for the main street gardens, including the highway intersection, to improve the whole amenity of the street. Once the draft plan is finalised, it will be presented to Council prior to the upcoming budget preparation to ensure the work can be included in the new financial year program.

The Brigidine Garden has been cleaned up prior to the visit of the Brigidine Sisters on 10 March 2025. There have been additional plantings required to improve the aesthetics of the Garden. The trellis has been installed behind the Lilly Pilly's in accordance with the plan, however, they have grown so much that the trellis is now hidden by them. The only outstanding item is the solar lighting which requires further investigation to ensure they are vandal-proof and the solar panels are located so that they can adequately charge the lights.

McDonald Park

Irrigation upgrades have been completed and the park is now irrigated off the town supply as well as the backwash water from the pool which will be connected into the system shortly.

McDonald Park is receiving a lot of vandalism and seems to be the park of choice for this activity, Council has improved the lighting in the area and will continue to monitor the situation.

Upcoming works:

- *Installation of a shelter and an electric BBQ.*
- *There will also be some new picnic tables installed*
- *Additional tree plantings.*

Swimming Pools

Council Swimming pools will be closing for the winter on 5 April 2025.

The pools will still be maintained over the winter season, and further leak detection will be taking place at the Coonamble Pool. This will involve the replacement of the skimmer box in the 50m pool as it has been identified that this is one of the main causes of leaks. There will be an opportunity to also replace aged and leaking pipework around the pool, including the reinstatement of the concrete concourse. This work will be staged over three (3) years and will be subject to funding being available.

The design of the carpark at the rear of the park has been finalized opportunities are being sought for funding. It is hoped that this will be built soon, providing parking for the park and swimming pool into the future. Garden beds and tree planting will also be carried out as part of that process.

McCullough Street Upgrade

Upgrades to McCullough Street are complete. Now that the linemarking is done, Council will be planting new trees to compliment the new parking areas that have been marked out.



Figures 3 and 4: McCullough Street showing linemarking and location of centre tree planting

Cemeteries

New Columbarium's have been built in all towns and these will be having further works done to also improve the amenity of the surrounds with paving, hedging and tree planting to occur.

Planning has also commenced for new lawned sections to be installed at Coonamble and Gulargambone to allow for further options for internments.

The fencing for the Pioneer cemetery will be installed by Council in the near future, once the perimeter has been plotted and pegged. Council has been working with

Angie Little regarding the signage that will also be installed, and she is very happy with the progress.

Upcoming works:

- *Paving, hedging and tree planting to occur at Cemeteries*

Aerodrome

Mowing of the approaches to the Aerodrome has been undertaken prior to the Country Championship Race meeting being held in Coonamble on 16 March 2025. Some slashing work has also been undertaken around the airstrip to ensure that it is safe and tidy.

Council has received very positive feedback, including from the Aeroclub from users since they have taken the maintenance of the facility over in July 2024.

ROADS

Natural Disaster Work

AGRN 987 and 1034 Natural Disaster Restoration works are underway with work completed on Nortongong, Calga, Williga, Thurloo, Bulgan and Killara Roads since the start of January. Work is currently occurring in the Bramble, Goorianawa, Warrawong, Loma and Back Gulargambone Roads areas. Work is being completed by Council roads crews and three contractor crews.



Figure 5: Natural disaster restoration work completed on Calga Road

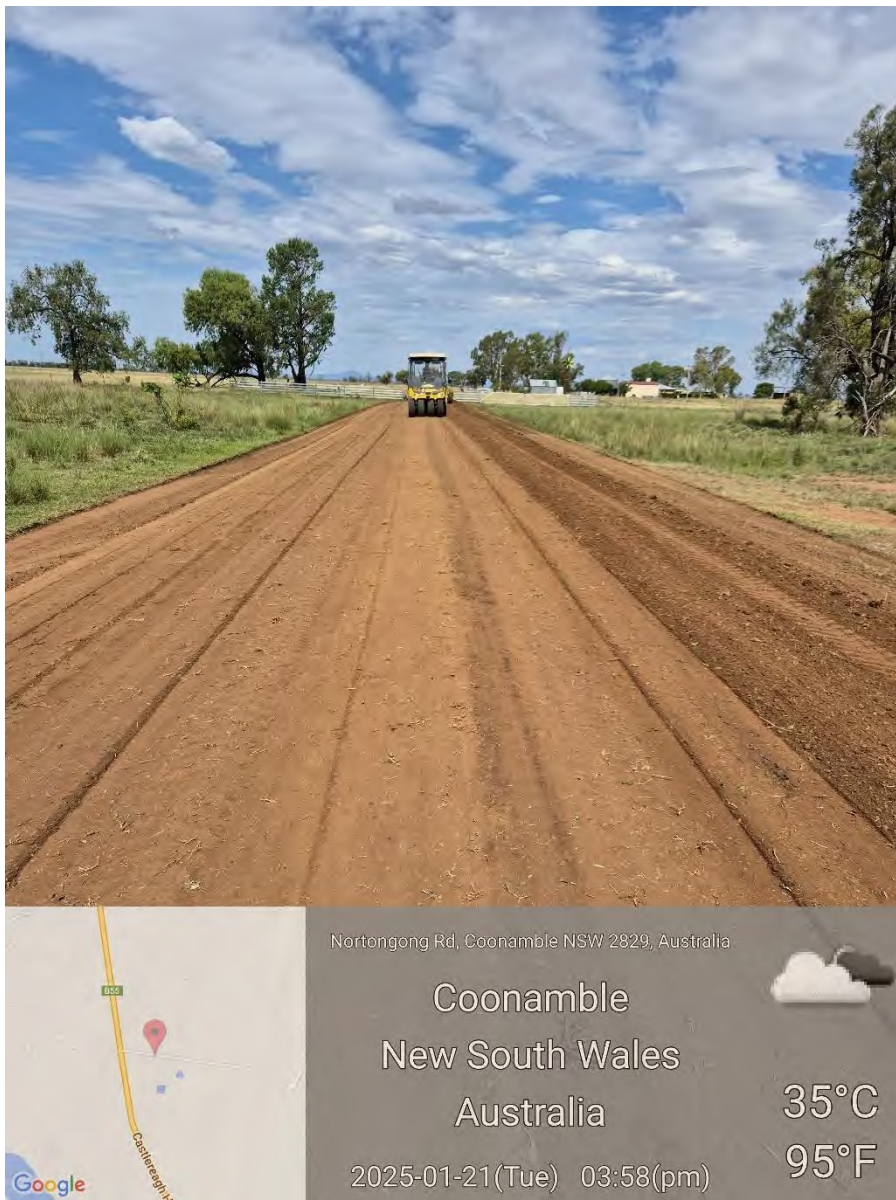


Figure 6: Natural disaster restoration work on Nortongong Road

Upcoming works:

- Flood damage work - Billeroy, Fishers, Yarranville, Peronne, Back Avoca and Gilgooma Roads and Talegar and Gadsens Lane.

Tooraweenah Road Upgrade

Preliminary works are progressing with this project, including the following:

- Location of underground services in the construction footprint using non-destructive digging techniques. This enables a determination to be made whether services will require relocating.
- Procuring for the setting out invert levels of culverts.
- Identification of additional vegetation removal.
- Procurement of additional culvert units now that design has been finalised.
- Tender documents for concrete and steel reinforcement supply.

- Procurement of site office and amenities, site compound components, on-site lab for material and compaction testing.
- Funding sign designs and approvals being sought.
- Arranging for spraying of culvert stockpile site.
- Identification of staging for road closures and side track proposals.
- Public notices regarding road heights being drafted.
- Communications plan being drafted.

Council is currently investigating options for the culvert construction which will reduce the risk exposure to Council and provide opportunities for efficiencies and cost savings.

Once the staging of the project, and road closure sections have been finalised, Council will commence on dry-weather side track construction.

Tallegar Creek Causeway Upgrade

Council has been successful in moving the Betterment Grant (originally allocated to the Euronne Creek Project) to the Tallegar Creek project. Total Project: \$1,189,139. Grant: \$909,139 and Council Contribution: \$280,000 (from Block grant). The next step is to engage a suitably qualified contractor to do the survey and design for the project. Project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2025.

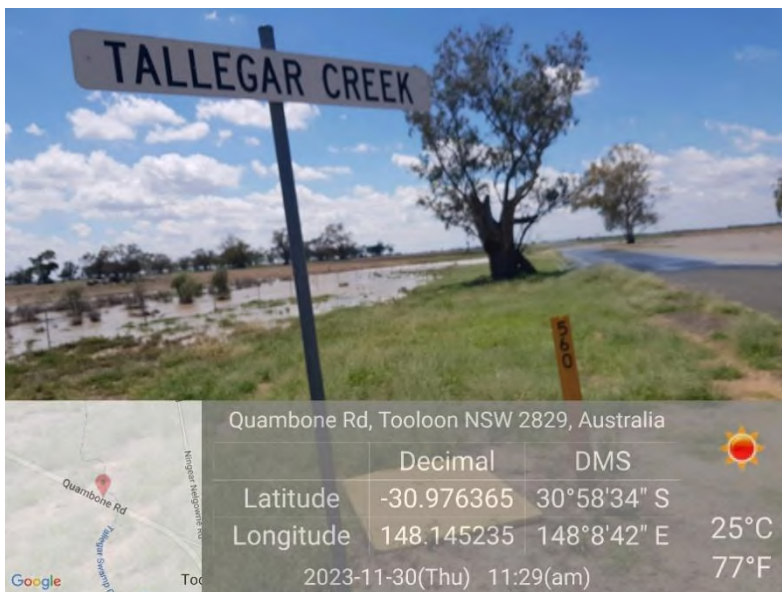


Figure 7: Tallegar Creek on Quambone Road during water weather

Pilliga Road Floodway Project

There has been delays with this project due to contractual and delivery issues with the company engaged to complete the survey and design work. They have now supplied the design and the bill of quantities for the project and Council staff are working on an estimate for all three stages of the project.

- Stage One A funded by Fixing Country Roads grant;
- Stage One B funded by the OLG natural disaster grant;
- Stage Two is currently unfunded.

Council's contribution will be funded from the Block grant for regional roads. Stage One A and B have a deadline on 30 June 2025 though an extension of time has been applied for on our behalf by the OLG. We are still waiting on the outcome of this request.

RMCC

Maintenance is being completed in accordance with the RMAP (agreed schedule with TfNSW). This includes potholes patching, rest area cleaning, routine inspections, sign repairs and roadside slashing.

Heavy Patching program is progressing well. The patches north of Coonamble have been completed and the remaining south of Coonamble to be completed by the end of March.

The resealing program on the highway is scheduled to commence at the end of March.

A payment claim for the Glenhaven project has been submitted. This payment claim is in the sum of just over \$4M. It is expected this claim will be accepted and paid within the month.

Unsealed Roads Maintenance

Council have been busy over the past few months carrying out maintenance on several unsealed roads including Wingadee, Floddenfield, Collie, Bullagreen Roads and the streets at Gular Rail.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Maintenance of Council's infrastructure assets is carried out in accordance with Council's adopted management plans.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Social Implications

Maintenance works are programmed where practical, to minimise social impacts.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Works are scheduled in accordance with Council's adopted 2024/2025 Operational Plan and Budget.

(f) Risk Implications

Maintenance works are programmed to minimise the risk to Council and the public.

CONCLUSION

This report provides updated information on the projects and planned works within the Infrastructure Department for Council's information.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be received and noted on the works in progress within Council’s Infrastructure Directorate.

Road and recreational area users are to proceed with caution at all work sites and observe signage to ensure safety.

Speed zones are enforceable with possible short delays.

For all enquiries, please contact Council's Infrastructure Services Department on 6827 1900.

ROADS - URBAN – COONAMBLE, GULARGAMBONE AND QUAMBONE

<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Urban Resealing	RERRF	215,000	-	215,000	183,935	4,727	188,662	98%	Completed resealing of Bertram, Forgione, Floyd, Barton, Railway and Quonmoona Streets in Coonamble
Yarran Street Subdivision (corner Reid St)	Council	500,000	-	500,000	2,935	63,014	65,949	15%	Detailed survey complete and DA for subdivision underway; Civil Design Consultant engaged and 100% Plans received; Electrical Design Consultant engaged.

ROADS - RURAL – UNSEALED ROAD NETWORK

<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Rural Resheeting	Council	150,000	-	150,000	0	0	0	0	
General Unsealed Road Maintenance	Council	739,952	-	739,952	595,218	74644	669862.58	91%	The following roads have been maintained since 1 July 2024: Billeroy Road, Tooraweenah Rd, Emby Rd, Wingadee Rd, Gilgooma Rd, Bullagreen Rd, Back Gular Rd, Sandy Camp Rd, Quabathoo Rd, Beanbah Rd, Gulargambone Rd, Killara Ln, Orwell South Rd, Nelgowrie Rd, Gibson Way, West Point Rd, Carinda Rd, Walla Walla Rd, Hollywood Ln, Warrabah, Thara Rd, Winnaba, Trafalgar, Toora and Blueys Ln.
Grant Funded Unsealed Roads	RTR 2024-2029	5,727,698	-	7,364,183	88510	123,341	158,486	3%	The following roads have been completed/started since 1 July 2024: Wingadee Road and Urawilkie Road

ROADS - RURAL – SEALED ROAD NETWORK

<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Warren Road Upgrade	ROSI/FCR/Council	3,161,943	-	3,161,943	2,487,269	883,683	3,370,952	80%	Work on the last section has commenced.
Box Ridge Road Reconstruction	LRCI	1,859,636	-	1,859,636	2,074,576	62,300	2,136,876	98%	Construction has been completed. Project Completion Report (PCR) is being prepared.

ROADS - RURAL – SEALED ROAD NETWORK (continued)									
<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Tooraweenah Road Upgrade	ROSI	22,962,000	-	22,962,000	2,970,638	335,636	3,332,066	15%	Letter has been submitted to the Federal Government requesting additional funding to complete all the unsealed section. Response expected late December. Works will start where the seal ends and progress east along Tooraweenah Road. It is estimated that approximately 15km can be delivered using the current funding amount.
Grant Funded Sealed Roads	RTR 2024-2029	2,454,728	-	818,243	317,631	-	317,631	13%	The following roads have been completed/started since 1 July 2024: Box Ridge Road
Pilliga Road Roadworks and Drainage upgrade	Council/LGRG/FCR/Block	1,662,500		1,662,500	63,712	44,698	108,409	10%	Detailed Design Plans received (100%), Bill of Quantities received, ATL (extension of time) submitted and waiting on response
NATURAL DISASTER WORKS – FLOOD DAMAGE									
<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Natural Disaster restoration works - REPA AGRN 987	DRFA	7,995,835	6,279,747	6,279,747	2928116	399069	3327185	53%	Upper Limit reduced (budget) as some defects have been moved to AGRN 1034. Council has carried out restoration works on Billeroy Road, Bulgan Road, Calga, Tooraweenah Road, Goorianawa Road, Emby Road, Killara Lane, Wiliga Road, Bramble Road, Gilgooma Road, Quabathoo Road, Beanbah Road, Mungery Road, Wattle Creek Road, Gular Road, Yarranville Lane, Conimbia Road, Nelgowrie Road, Nortongong, Memsie Road, Ottendorf Road, Nedgera Road, Haydens Lane, Carinda Road, Walla Walla Road, Keewong Lane, Warrawong Road, Toora Road, Tooloon Sth Road, Quandong Road, Pilliga Road, and Merri Merri Road.
Natural Disaster restoration works - REPA AGRN 1034	DRFA	4,603,659	-	4,603,659	-	-	-	0%	Final submission for AGRN 1034 has now been approved and restoration work have been completed on Nortongong Road, Calga Road and Bulgan Road.

WATER									
<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$) (2024-25)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Coonamble Replacement Mains	Council	200,000	-	200,000	48,803.06	-	48,803.06	20	Wingadee Street, project scope completed. Materials purchased, installation works to commence Feb 2025.
Gulargambone Replacements Mains	Council	100,000	-	100,000	-	-	-	10	Breelong Street, project scope completed. Quotations being assessed, installation RFQ being finalised.
Quambone Replacement Mains	Council	200,000	-	200,000	-	-	-	10	Gidgerah Street, project scope completed. Quotations being assessed, installation RFQ being finalised.
SSWP244-Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy (IWCM)	Grant/Council	303,900	-	303,900	100,464.00	-	100,464.00	40	Draft Issues paper review completed by Council with external stakeholders. Consultation with external stakeholders ongoing. Flow monitoring being completed.
Gulargambone – installation of constant water quality monitoring equipment and chlorine room upgrades	Council	75,000	-	75,000	-	-	-	10	Costed proposals currently being assessed.
Quambone – installation of constant water quality monitoring equipment and reservoir security upgrades	Council	40,000	-	40,000	31,226.19	-	31,226.19	100	Chemtrol water monitoring equipment installed and commissioned.
Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone – meter replacement program	Council	43,750	-	43,750	-	-	-	0	Replacement program to commence.
Advanced Support Program Operational	DCCEEW Grant	150,000	-	150,000	-	142,254.78	142,254.78	75	Funding Deed for \$150,000 has been signed and executed by DCCEEW. Invoice sent to DCCEEW for Milestone 1. Meeting with DCCEEW conducted onsite. Milestone 2 works program finalised with DCCEEW and Beca H2O. Works to be completed prior to March 2025.

SEWER									
<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Coonamble Mains Relining	Council	200,000	-	200,000	-	-	-	10	Program finalised, RFQ to be placed on Tenderlink.

Gulargambone Mains Relining	Council	210,000	-	210,000	-	-	-	10	Program finalised, RFQ to be placed on Tenderlink.
Gulargambone Sewage Treatment Plant – Laboratory room installation	Council	72,000	-	72,000	35,425.41	-	35,425.41	25	Lab building installed, services and internal fit out works completed, lab equipment to be purchased.
Gulargambone Sewage Treatment Plant – pressure tank installation	Council	25,000	-	25,000	9,454.55	-	9,454.55	10	Onsite works commenced.
Coonamble STP Upgrade – Concept Design	Council	250,000	-	250,000	119,219.36	-	119,219.36	70	Options study draft report has been issued. Consultation meetings with EPA, DCCEEW and PWA have been conducted. Concept design being completed.

SEWER (continued)

<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Coonamble Sewage Treatment Plant – step screen installation at headworks	Council	170,000	-	170,000	-	161,928.00	161,928.00	10	RFQ accepted, external supplier engaged to complete installation and commissioning, works to commence in Feb 2025.
Yarran Street Subdivision Development – sewerage servicing including Sewage Pump Station, Rising/Gravity Main installations. Plus, water mains and water service connections.	Council	850,000	-	850,000	464,588.64	-	464,588.64	50	Contractor completed Sewage Pump Station and Rising Main install, works commenced on water main/water service/gravity sewer main/sewer junctions' installation.
Gulargambone – Sewage Treatment Plant tertiary ponds desludge	Council	250,000	-	250,000	-	-	-	10	Project scoped and options being considered.

URBAN SPACES

<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Project Expenditure to date (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Coonamble Sportsgrounds Female Amenities/Changerooms 6078-2303-0000	SCCF4 + Council	450,000	130,000	580,000	558,224.49	526,198	526,282	80	Rendering has been completed. Tiling and internal fittings works have commenced. On time for March handover
Gulargambone Sportsground	SCCF5	520,000	100,000	620,000	309,031	565,760	568,105	30	Construction of building is almost complete.

Amenities Upgrade 6055-2301-0001	+ Council								Roofing and internal works to begin next.
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CEMETERIES									
<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Budget Variation (\$)</i>	<i>Total Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Expenditure YTD (\$)</i>	<i>Committed (\$)</i>	<i>Total YTD (\$)</i>	<i>% Completion</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Pioneer Cemetery Coonamble new fence and signage	Council	48,000	-	48,000	23,329	23,330	46,659	80	Materials purchased, and will be installed shortly, signage is being drafted

10.20 NOTICE OF MOTION - TOORAWEEENAH ROAD PROJECT - CR S.BUTLER**File Number: F-6****Author: Steven Butler-Councillor****Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager****Annexures: 1. Cr Butler - NOM Tooraweenah Rd**  **NOTICE OF MOTION**

Cr S Butler submitted the following Notice of Motion to be considered at the March 2025 Ordinary Meeting of Council:

- 1. Works to start immediately on the Tooraweenah Road project, with Stage 1 being the construction of culverts with works to be commenced by end of April 2025 with the use of current available funding.**
- 2. Stage 2 being the rehabilitation and seal to commence after approval of the funding deed.**
- 3. That tendering decisions are to be brought back to Council for consideration, with option for Council to purchase materials and contractors to supply labour and plant.**

Cr S Butler is concerned that the project has sat idle for some time with no start date.

COMMENTARY: MANEXPlanning of Works

There is still substantial work that is required to be done prior to the commencement of construction on Tooraweenah Road. Of note, this involves the location of buried services in the location of the proposed work footprint, setting out invert levels for the culverts and further environmental assessments. Council is currently procuring these works. Council is working through other required planning to enable commencement, including the confirmation of a tender exemption from the funding body.

Tender of Culverts

The tender to undertake the culvert work was considered at the August 2024 ordinary meeting of council, wherein all tenders were rejected due to insufficient funds. The quantum of the culvert construction project is a huge risk to council if contracted out, and this is why the original culvert tender included the R1 and F5 requirements as advised to Councillors in a briefing 13th November 2024. This system is used to provide confidence to the principal (Council) that those tendering have the technical and managerial expertise, financial capacity and previous performance to perform the works. These risks to council have not changed, and in the event, Council does go to tender again for this work, Council could potentially encounter the same result.

Local Contractor Involvement

Council is investigating avenues to ensure that local contractors and workers are given the opportunity to work on the project under Council's management systems.

As the opportunities are identified, advertising and award of these tenders will be in accordance with the Councils' Sustainable Procurement and Contracts Policy and Local Preference Purchasing Policy.

Project Risk

At Council's most recent Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) meeting, the chair of Council's ARIC voiced their concerns regarding the various risks associated with a project of this size and nature and their potential impact on Council. Clarification was sought and provided on the risk control measures, some of which have been identified above, that have been implemented to mitigate Council's overall exposure to risk with these works.

Based on the information provided at the meeting the committee were satisfied with the measures that been identified and implemented to date. Purpose

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RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council notes and receives the information provided in response to the notice of motion on Tooraweenah Road Project.**
- 2. That a report be brought back to Council once the culvert construction methodology has been finalised.**

21 APPENDIX "A" – NOTICE OF MOTION TEMPLATE**Subject Heading: Tooraweenah Road****Background: project has sat idle for some time with no start date****Issues: Motion , Works to start immediately on project, tenders to come back to council for consideration , With option that council purchase materials and contractors to supply labour and plant.****Stage one to commence works by end of April 2025****Stage 1 with current funding, construction of culverts****Stage 2 to commence works after funding deed is approved , sage 2 rehabilitation & seal****Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework:****Financial Considerations:****Legal/Policy Implications:****Attachments:****Recommendation:**

10.21 MT MAGOMETON QUARRY UPDATE

File Number: Q1-1
Author: Kerrie Murphy-Director Infrastructure Services
Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager
Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a status update on the operations of the Mt Magometon Quarry.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is aware of the structural and compliance issues regarding the Mt Magometon Quarry and the endeavours to rectify these issues.

This report provides a update on where Council currently is up to with these issues.

BACKGROUND

Mt Magometon Quarry has been plagued with issues for some time, which resulted in discussions at the 13 March 2024 Ordinary Council and the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 2024/1

Moved: Cr Terence Lees

Seconded: Cr Pat Cullen

That council request a report on the quarry renewal program and its operations.

In Favour: Crs Tim Horan, Adam Cohen, Bill Fisher, Pat Cullen, Barbara Deans, Terence Lees and Brian Sommerville

Against: Nil

CARRIED 7/0

While this report will not address the full intent of the above Resolution, it will provide Council with an update on what has progressed in recent months.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

11.5 - Adopt successful strategies which maximises our community's access to quality infrastructure and assets.

(b) Financial Considerations

Mt Magometon Quarry is a Council asset, and as such, will require significant investment to ensure ongoing compliance and to allow for the continuing of operations.

COMMENTARY

Council would recall the briefing provided to Councillors on the 13 November 2024 advising that the Mt Magometon Quarry was established approximately 62 years ago for the purpose of supplying quarry materials for Councils internal use and that the

last major upgrade to the Mount Magometon crushing plant was some 25 plus years ago when Council renewed the fixed plant.

At the time, the crushing plant design was limited to Councils internal use to deal with the current quantities of material being used on Councils works and operations, along with some regional supply to other LGA's. Over the past several years gravel has been in high demand due to flood damage on roads throughout Coonamble Shire and other LGA's.

From what current staff can understand, there has been a significant historical lack of investment in the maintenance and upgrade of the crushing plant which is now the major contributing factor towards the breakdown of the plant and equipment.

The Resources Regulator attended Mt Magometon Quarry on 21 January 2025 and spent majority of the day onsite. They then also met with Director Infrastructure again on morning of 22 January 2025 wherein various issues were discussed. It was a good, frank discussion with open communication about the way the Quarry has been operating over the last five (5) or more years and the gaps that have resulted in where we are now.

The Regulator's most recent visit to the site resulted in 12 Improvement Notices. These Improvements Notices identified numerous issues, requiring actions including but not limited to the following:

- Review and implement Safety Managements Systems for Castlereagh River Pit and Five Ways Pit;
- Review and implement Safety Managements Systems for Mt Magometon Quarry;
- Review Principal Hazard Management Plans and ensure they are implemented;
- Review Emergency Management Plan and undertake exercise to review;
- Requirement for structural audit on main support legs on the main conveyor;
- Undertake remedial works identified from the structural audit to make plant structurally safe before recommencing operational activities on the plant;
- Restrict access (plant, vehicles and pedestrian) to the main conveyor area until the structural audit has been completed;
- Guarding non compliances/substandard guards were observed on the plant;
- Some conveyors did not have working pull wire lanyard or emergency stopping systems accessible;
- Missing signage on the plant; and
- Various other matters of concern including issues with documentation, no height indicators for powerlines and lack of signage.

In the absence of a fitter on staff at the Quarry, Council has entered into a Maintenance Agreement to have the plant inspected on a quarterly basis, with relevant maintenance activities undertaken at this time. The contractor attended site on 11 February 2025 to assess what is required to have the plant ready for operation and compliance with the regulatory body. Discussions with the contractor are ongoing to program the completion of the work as soon as we can.

Council has been fortunate to nominate a Quarry Manager, through a third party, to assist with the operations and other compliance issues at the Quarry. They will

assist in getting the compliance issues addressed and enable the crushing plant to resume operations.

A new Mobile Crushing Tender is also in progress, which will provide Council with some redundancy and provide additional materials to meet the current demand.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Legal Implications

Work Health and Safety (Mines and Petroleum Sites) Regulation 2022

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017

Local Government Act 1993

(c) Social Implications

Mt Magometon Quarry supplies materials to a large number of customers, so every effort is being made to ensure this can continue.

(d) Environmental Implications

Nil

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Budget has been allocated in the Operational Plan to allow for the improvements to be undertaken.

(f) Risk Implications

Financial risk if the Quarry cannot be made to be operational

CONCLUSION

A copious amount of work has been undertaken at Mt Magometon Quarry in the last few months in an effort to identify issues and the areas of improvement. The inspection of the Resources Regulator has further allowed for additional improvements to be identified and rectified to ensure the Quarry can remain operational.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information in the report Mt Magometon Quarry Update be received and noted.

10.22 WASTE FACILITY MACHINERY SHED PROCUREMENT PROCESS**File Number: G-1****Author: Mick Bell-Manager Parkes & Urban Services****Authoriser: Kerrie Murphy, Director Infrastructure Services****Annexures: Nil****PURPOSE**

This report provides Council with information on the procurement process undertaken for the machinery shed installed at the Coonamble Waste Facility

BACKGROUND

Council took over the waste collection, and associated facilities in December 2023. This required the purchasing of various pieces of plant to carry out these functions.

The following plant was purchased:

- Two (2) kerbside collection trucks;
- Hook-bin truck (blue bins 12m³);
- Skip-bin truck for 4-6m³ bins;
- Trash compactor tractor;
- Wheeled loader; and
- Skid Steer loader.

All this equipment therefore required a suitable parking and storage area which will not only keep the machines out of the weather but allow for the installation of security systems to protect the machines.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

E1.3 Improve our strategies, plans and programs so that we successfully balance the sustainable waste expectations of our community within the resources available to us.

(b) Financial Considerations

This project was funded within the 2024/25 budget as part of the purchase of the plant and machinery for the Waste operations

COMMENTARY

Due to the cost of the shed being below the tender threshold of \$250,000, a select call for quotations was conducted with one (1) local contractor and one (1) external contractor providing quotations. Quotations for the supply of concrete were also sought locally. The external contractor was chosen as best cost benefit after applying the local preference percentage, and a local supplier was used for the delivery of concrete for the footings.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Council has an external and internal auditing process, which is carried out on an annual basis.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications with this report.

(c) Social Implications

There are no Social Implications with this report.

(d) Environmental Implications

Environmental considerations were undertaken as part of the Development Application process.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

This new machinery shed will become part of Councils assets and will require ongoing maintenance as the structure ages.

(f) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications with this report.

CONCLUSION

Council has followed appropriate procurement practices in the purchase and construction of the machinery shed at the Coonamble Waste Facility.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the information contained in the Waste Facility Machinery Shed Procurement Process report be received and noted.**

10.23 EFFLUENT REUSE UTILISATION/OPTIMISATION STATUS REPORT FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS - COONAMBLE SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

File Number: C17
Author: Tim Wark-Project Engineer
Authoriser: Kerrie Murphy, Director Infrastructure Services
Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

To provide Council a status report on the Effluent Reuse System at the Coonamble Sewage Treatment Plant and other premises outlined within EPA licence 4085, taking into consideration the current and future operations, maintenance, and compliance aspects/requirements of the system.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council resolved a motion at the 11 December 2024 Council Meeting, requesting a report into the utilisation/disposal of the Effluent from the Coonamble Sewage Treatment Plant (STP).

The report was requested to address the following components:

- (a) Provide a breakdown of the volume of effluent produced including how much is provided to the Golf Club/Racecourse.
- (b) Investigate options to increase the effluent storage at the Golf Club/Racecourse, including the dredging/desilting of the current storage dam at the Golf Club/Racecourse facility.
- (c) Investigate options for the pumping of effluent from the Sewage Treatment Plant during breakdown times.

Provide a breakdown of the volume of effluent produced including how much is provided to the Golf Club/Racecourse

The STP historically produces 100ML of effluent suitable for reuse annually (this is an average – can be varied upon weather conditions).

Operators utilise 20ML for irrigation within the footprint of the STP facility and lagoons as well as dust suppression for certain areas of the old landfill site adjacent.

The remaining 80ML of effluent is currently pumped to the Golf Club/Racecourse storage dam for irrigation use. The consistent split between the Golf Club and Racecourse is approximately 40% to the Golf Club (32ML) and approximately 60% to the Racecourse (48ML).

Investigate options to increase the effluent storage at the Golf Club/Racecourse, including the dredging/desilting of the current storage dam at the Golf Club/Racecourse facility.

Investigations into the options to increase capacity of the effluent storage dam at the Golf Club/Racecourse determined that it is not possible due to the current approval status of the Reuse scheme.

Council does not officially have reuse approval under Section 60 of the Local Government Act 1993. The advice received from the Regulator is that the current

arrangement is under a grandfather clause and any significant augmentation to the system, such as these works, would trigger the requirement for that approval

Section 60 of the Local Government Act and section 292(1)(a) of the Water Management Act, the Minister for Lands and Water is responsible for approving local water utility works, including:

- construction or extension of water treatment works by a council (section 60(b) of the Local Government Act)
- ***provision of sewage from its area to be discharged, treated, or supplied to any person by a council (section 60(c) of the Local Government Act)***
- construction, maintenance, and operation of water management works and other associated works (including water treatment works and sewage works) by a water supply authority (section 292(1)(a) of the Water Management Act)

Currently there is an approximate 1 – 2 metre sludge blanket throughout the bottom of the storage dam which sees the current usable volume of the dam standing at 1.5ML. If this sludge blanket was removed this amount would increase to a minimum of 2.5ML based on volumetric calculations.

When both dredging and desilting were considered to remove the sludge from the dam it was determined that due to the small size of the dam desilting the dam was the highly preferred and cost-effective option.

Investigate options for the pumping of effluent from the Sewage Treatment Plant during breakdown times.

Options have been assessed/considered to enable pumping of effluent on a 24 hour a day, on demand basis.

This would require a second pump (currently only one pump during maintenance times or pumping cannot occur) to be purchased along with significant upgrades to the suction components. It would further enhance the level of service if telemetry was added as a part of these upgrades also.

This would see a transducer installed within the storage lagoon at the Golf Club/Racecourse facility and when the transducer reached a preset low level it would send a signal for the pumping infrastructure to commence pumping, then subsequently turn off at the preset high (fill) level.

This would see an operator not required to turn on pump, prime, monitor levels and turn off as to which is the current process.

BACKGROUND

Council has been issued an Environment Protection Licence (EPL No. 4085) by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) under the Protection of the Environment Operations (POEO) Act 1997 for the scheduled activity of “Sewage Treatment” at the Coonamble Sewage Treatment Plant in Coonamble.

Within this licence there are eight (8) criterions outlined that Council must adhere to, including “*Administrative Conditions*”.

Within “*Administrative Conditions*”, under sub point A2, the premises or plant to which this licence applies are as follows:

A2.1 - Coonamble Sewage Treatment Plant, Wingadee Street Coonamble NSW 2829 (Lot 20 DP 754199, Lot 21 DP 754199 and Lot 22 DP 754199.

A2.2 – The reticulation (irrigation) system owned and operated by Council that is associated with the STP identified within A2.1, and

A2.3 – The utilisation area (storage dam) located at the Coonamble Golf Course and Coonamble Racecourse complex.

These conditions mean that Council is responsible for all operations, maintenance, and compliance (fencing, signage etc) within all the listed premises.

It has been identified that there are currently several issues with the storage dam at the Coonamble Golf Course and Coonamble Racecourse complex, some critical issues are listed below:

- Thick sludge accumulation within the dam,
- Overgrown vegetation within the immediate surrounds of the storage dam, with some large trees capable of breaching dam if uprooted.
- Undersized - best practice requires a storage dam of this nature to be sized for a minimum of ten days utilisation (usage) for the external user. For example, for one day of irrigation use for just the Racecourse they will utilise 1.6ML this sees the storage dam in its current state not even able to supply one day of demand for its intended use.
- Security - the fence is not secure, and the gates are not shut.
- Signage - the signage is currently not adequate to notify persons from any vantage point of Reclaimed Water – Unfit for Drinking, No Entry, Deep Water etc.

While undertaking the investigations for the purposes of writing this report, several questions have been raised around “who does what? and “who is responsible for ensuring compliance?”

It is very evident that, within the conditions of the EPL, that Council must address these critical issues at the Golf Club/Racecourse storage dam in consultation with the major users.

The only issue that cannot be addressed is the under sizing of the dam as previously stated within this report any such works as increasing the dam’s storage capacity (increase in size) would require full Section 60 approval.

This would see permeability testing required, probable lining, shallow test bores drilled within proximity for ongoing sample analysis, disinfection, full risk analysis, withholding periods invoked after irrigation among other things.

The reason the dam is allowed to be utilised within its current state is that it basically falls under a “grandfather” agreement where it can be utilised but at the point of any augmentation full compliance (Section 60 approval) is required.

It is worth noting at this point that Council has almost completed the SSWP403 Coonamble Sewage Treatment Works (Concept Design) funded project as a part of the NSW Governments Safe and Secure Water Program.

Whilst completing this project and assessing all available treatment methods it has been determined that oxidation ponds (basic primary treatment) will be the most efficient and cost-effective treatment method for the future STP.

Oxidation ponds require a large surface area with minimal depth to utilise UV as the primary treatment method. This in turn results in very high evaporation levels, which, unfortunately, this could impact the amount of effluent water available for reuse

purposes in the future. It is expected the new STP will be completed within 5 years, dependent on external funding being secured.

Additionally, the Regulator has informed Council that Section 60 approval will definitely be required for any possible reuse in conjunction with the construction /commissioning of the new STP.

Council will have some operational decisions to make in the future as Section 60 approval for reuse from oxidation ponds will almost certainly invoke some high capital infrastructure items required such as filtration, chlorination and UV treatment systems.

The possible yield will need to be analysed against the cost to treat to establish if reuse is a viable option. If the yield potentially reduces to less than 50ML per annum and high costs are imminent to treat the effluent water to comply with Section 60 requirements, it no longer becomes an economical resource).

COMMENTARY

Estimates have been obtained to complete all the required works on the storage dam at the Golf Club/Racecourse, these have been itemised below:

Desilting which includes dewatering, importing material to make holding bund area, temporary fencing, removing of sludge, transport, waste facility fees, removal of bund material, site reinstatement (<i>estimate</i>)	\$75,000 ex GST
Removing overgrown vegetation from the banks and surrounds of the storage dam which includes tree lopping, poison painting of stumps too large to remove, brush cutting, chipping, transport, waste facility fees (<i>estimate</i>)	\$18,000 ex GST
Security which includes full fence upgrade and repair (<i>estimate</i>)	\$12,000 ex GST
Signage (<i>estimate</i>)	\$3,000 ex GST
Total	\$108,000 ex GST

To complete all works related to component (c) would alleviate non-pumping times when current pump needs maintenance:

These works include the purchase of a second pump, upgrades to existing suction side of pumping system, telemetry, piping adjustments, electrical works including connection etc.

These costs are estimated at a total **\$65,000** ex GST.

These works, if endorsed by Council, will need to be funded via the sewer fund and placed within the 2025/26 operational plan for completion within the non-irrigation period of July and August.

It must be acknowledged that these large costs would require an increase to all sewer access charges within Coonamble, both residential and non-residential.

Alternatively, Council could consider charging the major users for the effluent water to help fund the above outlined required works and to recognise the ongoing operational costs such as electricity, maintenance, calibrations of flowmeters etc.

The state baseline figure for the purchase of effluent/recycled water is \$0.30 per kilolitre.

Based on the 80ML supplied to the two users, the anticipated income would be \$24,000.00 per year, with the Racecourse paying \$14,400.00 (potable water costs for same volume \$114,957.00) and Golf Club paying \$9,600.00 (potable water costs for same volume \$76,638.00) based on indicative usage.

It is very rare for effluent/recycled water to be supplied free of charge, and with Best Practice heavily relying on full cost recovery principles, it may be the applicable time to start to charge for the water. As Council works towards achieving what is “Best Practice” with regards to their water and sewer operations, Councils fees and charges will need to be considered in future financial years to assist with this.

During brief shut down times this financial year (pump had to have seals replaced due to damage incurred due to overheating – pump was not operational for a period of 10 days, delay was due to seals needing to be sourced, delivered and installed) the Racecourse has had to commence irrigation operations utilising their dual tank system onsite which is feed from towns potable supply. This incurred significant operational costs to the Racecourse when purchasing the water at the potable water usage cost.

CONCLUSION

Council has been provided an overview on the Effluent Reuse System taking into consideration the current and future operations, maintenance, and compliance aspects/requirements of the system.

Recommendation

- 1. That the information in the report regarding Effluent Reuse Utilisation/Optimisation Status Report for Current and Future considerations be noted.**

10.24 REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN - 016 - BOGAN, WARREN, AND COONAMBLE

File Number: D-9-2

Author: Paul Gallagher-General Manager

Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager

Annexures:

1. Far North West Regional Drought Resilience Plan - 016 - Boga, Warren, and Coonamble [↓](#) 
2. RDRP Business Plan March 2025 [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

This report was deferred at the February 2025 Council meeting pending the outcome of a meeting with the Mayor and General Managers of Bogan, Warren and Coonamble Shires on Thursday 20 February 2025 and is now presented with a recommended change in direction on the use of the \$300k under RDPR016 for Bogan, Warren and Coonamble to form a collaborative approach to establish the region as a premier nature- based tourism destination.

BACKGROUND

A meeting with the Mayors and General Managers of Bogan, Warren and Coonamble Shires on Thursday 20 February 2025 identified the potential use of grant funds to establish and deliver real economic benefits to our respective LGA's rather than producing another series of reports identified in the Regional Drought Resilience Plans encompassing.

- Project 1 - Water Security Baseline Project - \$150K Councils - Bogan, Warren and Coonamble (see summary from the FNWJO within this report)
- Project 2 – Social Inclusion and Preparedness Education - \$120K Councils – Bogan, Warren and Coonamble (see summary from the FNWJO within this report)

The meeting noted the proposed Project one and two within the plan are consultant driven. Consensus from the meeting was to recommend that the \$300k under RDPR016 for Bogan, Warren and Coonamble be used in a collaborative approach to establish the region as a premier nature- based tourism destination which will provide direct financial opportunities for local landholders, helping them establish new income streams.

Provisionally titled 'The Country Heartline'—a name chosen to capture the essence of rural charm, immersive agritourism, and the opportunity for visitors to reconnect with the country way of life. Please note that this is a conceptual title only for discussion.

Warren Shire Council is offering to provide the Economic, Development and Visitation Manager to be the lead person to develop the opportunity further by setting up a governance framework and steering committee.

It is further recommended to establish a governance framework around the tri-party arrangement and establish a project steering committee

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND PROVIDED BY FNWJO (FROM THE DEFERRED FEBRUARY REPORT)

1. Drought Plans Developed and Adopted

FNWJO applied for funding in January 2023 to deliver Regional Drought Resilience Plans and associated implementation for the following regions:

- RDPR016 – Bogan, Warren and Coonamble (\$200K)

Draft projects were distributed to Councils for feedback, any feedback provided was included in the plan document before being forwarded to Regional NSW on 16 January 2025. RDPR016 has been lodged for Ministerial approval (State and Federal) and an expected outcome is due early March 2025.

This plan will be approved in its current state; however, each plan is a “living document” and has the ability to be changed, altered or updated to reflect the changing environment at any time.

A Project Business Plan has just been produced and is attached.

Implementation of projects cannot commence until the plan has been approved, however FNWJO aims to have implementation projects resolved by Council, quoted and ready to commence as soon as RDPR016 has Ministerial approvals.

Plan development funding that has not been spent can be carried over into plan implementation activities. FNWJO has been prudent in managing plan development funds and as a result have an underspend of \$50K that can be added to the \$250K already available for plan implementation. The total for plan implementation across the RDPR016 area is \$300K.

2. Drought Plan Implementation

Funds available for implementation

RDPR016	\$250,000
Unspent Stage 1	<u>\$ 50,000</u>
	\$300,000

It is imperative that RDPR016 have clear implementation projects planned and agreed by **28 February 2025**; this will expedite the projects to ensure implementation is commence by end March 2025. **Projects are to be completed and reported on by 30 November 2025.**

FNWJO met with NSW Drought colleagues in Dubbo on Thursday 23 January 2025 to discuss implementation project options.

Issues discussed:

- Currently councils are undertaking IP&R activities, there is a recognised staff shortage across the region and some General Manager have expressed their concern that their Councils do not have the resources to “deliver” the implantation projects and would be more comfortable with FNWJO to manage the delivery.
- Realistic deliverables with available resources and timeframe - Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and the NSW Government

have already extended the completion date by 5 months to 30th November 2025.

- **Limited funds for regional water infrastructure at this time** - The advice from the Department was to "park" planning and infrastructure ideas for future funding opportunities.
- **Recommended prelude to a "Water Infrastructure Project"** with current funding; a regional audit of existing water (artesian/sub-artesian/riverine) availability, current storage and access infrastructure, public and private access/usage by towns/villages/hamlets/industry/rural, and getting this information gathered, documented, organised and catalogued as a starting point for future funding opportunities.
- Project to focus on communication, understanding and strengthening relationships between stakeholders with the view of making future partnerships possible.
- Discussions had with GMs in late 2024, identified that Councils are at different stages of their water security journey. In western NSW we have a high turnover of staff, information gets archived, a new person comes along with a new idea, and we start from ground zero again. Sourcing and cataloguing the historical and current information would prevent the duplication.
- Regional perspective was required - regional interests not just LGA interests' coverage - rivers and water sources don't start and stop at our local government boundaries.
- Advised to **pursue "social and educational" drought preparedness projects**. This was discussed quite a lot during the community consultation processes but it seemed to get diluted in the writing of the strategy (documentation does exist to support these activities).
- Discussion was had about "**drought preparedness workshops/roadshow**" that could be rolled out and delivered by **30th November 2025**.
- "Volunteer fatigue" and "consultation fatigue" are real things in our area.

After consideration of all stakeholders needs and feedback from Kate Mannion (Manager, Drought Resilience Planning Program) in a teleconference 31 January 2025, the following projects were deemed suitable, would provide value for money and could be delivered with current resources and within timeframes, ***if they can be commenced without delay and within 5 – 6 weeks:***

- Project 1 - Water Security Baseline Project
- Project 2 – Drought Preparedness – Education and Social Revitalisation

Project Rationale

Project 1 - Water Security Baseline Project - \$150K (Councils - Bogan, Warren and Coonamble)

A regional Water Security Baseline Issues Report will undertake a comprehensive stocktake of current water resources, infrastructure, and usage patterns across the RDPR016 Area (Bogan, Warren and Coonamble).

This initial phase will establish a clear baseline of water allocations, identify major water users including urban, agricultural, and industrial operations. This will then document existing water security measures in each participating local government area.

This work will create a catalogue of historical reports/plans at both a localised and regional level. This database will be distributed and accessible to all stakeholders and can be used as a baseline for future “water security plans” (basically getting the information into one place).

The water needs of the RDPR016 (Bogan, Warren and Coonamble) area is complex. Water sources are not defined by Local Government boundaries and water quality from rivers and ground sources vary in quality, quantity and potability.

Additionally, the actions of “upstream users” on how water is accessed, stored and used has consequences for “down-stream” users; the complexities are magnified the larger the geographic area being investigated; communities have competing needs and there needs to be recognition that a “Regional Water Security Plan” will require compromise for a regional plan versus a localised “LGA Water Security Plan”.

By understanding our region's current water profile, including surface and groundwater resources, we can better identify vulnerabilities and opportunities for improved drought preparedness, water effectiveness and efficiencies. This foundational work will inform subsequent phases of the planning process, ultimately leading to a coordinated regional approach to drought management and allowing all stakeholders access to information surrounding this complex issue.

The project will be delivered separately across the two RDRP regions. FNWJO will call quotations and request a minimum of three quotes, as per FNWJO procurement policy. The RDPR016 - project 1 is under the \$250K threshold for tenders.

The project scope will include:

- Stage 1 - Identify historical/current data; documentation/information, water infrastructure audit and needs analysis for each LGA. This will include a visit to each LGA to take photos and make face-to face contact with key information sources - Due July 2025
- Stage 2 - Examine and analyse the data from each area; identify issues and providing a baseline needs analysis for each LGA – Due August 2025
- Stage 3 – Analyse data through an independent regional lens – essentially stitching RDPR004 and RDRP016 areas together and examine water security impacts of neighbouring LGA’s (water does not identify LGA boundaries) to provide a regional perspective and provide LGA’s for draft findings for consultation between stakeholder Councils – Due September 2025
- Stage 4 – Production of final findings of regional water security issues
- Step 5 – Identify issues that may require additional future investigation, investigate options of regional solutions; circulate findings with stakeholders (Local Government, State Government, Federal Government, industry, cultural and recreational)

Project Quotations

Procurement is to be undertaken as per Cobar Shire Council procurement policy and as per information provided by Councils in November 2025. The following will be asked to quote, along with any other suppliers recommended by participating Councils:

- Aither - Will Fargher, Global Water Practice Director, 0402336614
- The Stable Group, Jillian Kilby, 0468800625
- Hydro Tech Solutions, Victor Papierniak-Wojtowicz *BE(Hons) CPEng RPEQ*, Principal Engineer, 0421 171 090
- Bruce Whitehall, Senior Water Advisor, Alluvium, 0459 813 554

Project 2 – Social Inclusion and Preparedness Education - \$120K

Councils – Bogan, Warren and Coonamble

This project will deal with the delivery of social, economic and drought preparedness activities as identified in the consultation process and documented in the RDPR016 plan through the roll out of a “Practical Drought Preparedness Roadshow” and associated resources:

- Education component
 - i. Communications and data access – practical ways of improving connectivity.
 - ii. Mental health – practical ways of accessing mental health services.
 - iii. Taking the guess work out of decision making – how to make and effective and efficient decision, with minimal stress.
 - iv. Understanding the concept of maximised production (good season) v’s hibernating production (drought season) and resourcing it appropriately.
 - v. Financial planning – practical ways to access assistance.
 - vi. Stock nutrition.
- Community "re-grouping" - “social” connectedness has declined as communities are "busy" being productive.
- Positive reinforcement and preparedness to "fill-up" the emotional cup.
- "Volunteer fatigue" and "consultation fatigue" are real things – community desire to be a "passive participant".
- Engage a 3rd party supplier with existing regional networks organise, co-ordinate and roll out the program - no stress on existing Council resources.

The project will be delivered separately across the two RDRP regions. FNWJO will call quotations and request a minimum of three quotes, as per FNWJO procurement policy.

Project Quotations

- Stage 1 – Reestablish and create networks, resources and confirm locations/dates for roadshow - Due July 2025
- Stage 2 -Roll out the roadshow throughout region – August, September, October 2025
- Stage 3 – Finalisation of project and reporting – November 2025

Project Quotations

Procurement is to be undertaken as per Cobar Shire Council procurement policy. The following organisations are to be approached for quotation, due to their regional coverage and recent experience with drought activities:

- NALAG
- Mission Australia
- Centacare

Council can recommend additional suppliers.

3. FNWJO Administration and Management - \$30K

Time is tight and Councils are currently under resourced and under pressure with core business activities. With delegated authority from Councils to the Executive Officer of the FNWJO, this project can be managed on Councils behalf with little more than some local input from key people to be involved.

FNWJO advise an allocation of \$30K for project management, monitoring and reporting be recognised in the project budget.

4. RDPR016 - Implementation Budget - \$300K TOTAL

Activity	Budget	Supplier
Project 1 - Water Security Baseline Project	\$150,000	TBD
Project 2 – Social Inclusion and Preparedness Education	\$120,000	TBD
Project Administration and Management	\$ 30,000	FNWJO
TOTAL	\$300,000	

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Our Economy – Economic Development and Growth, manage the lack of support to local businesses, including workforce challenges, drought and lack of housing.

(b) Financial Considerations

Consortia RDRP 016 (Coonamble, Warren, and Bogan) has grant funding of \$300,000 for the project.

COMMENTARY

The aim of the project is to direct continuous funding for drought resilience initiatives which reflect local need and context of drought.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Council supports this regional initiative to enhance resilience and enable a stronger governance capability during drought events.

(b) Legal Implications

The funding will be conditional however, in keeping with other grants does not appear onerous.

(c) Social Implications

The RDRP recognises the need for Community engagement and education in advance of drought events.

(d) Environmental Implications

The implementation of a RDRP, better utilisation of existing assets and responsibly managing operational costs, have positive environmental implications.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

The RDRP economic and Asset Management process is to:

- grow self-reliance and performance of the agricultural sector.
- improve the natural capital of agricultural landscapes for better environmental outcomes.

strengthen the wellbeing and social capital of rural, regional, and remote communities. Strong community and diverse regional economies are core objectives of the NSW Government, providing both short- and long-term opportunities to strengthen drought resilience.

(f) Risk Implications

To collect data to enable evaluation of future risk to the water supply and gather general information on the water network. The lack of a Drought Management Strategy has been identified as a risk. As a result, the implementation of a RDRP is expected to assist in mitigating this risk.

CONCLUSION

Whilst we need to manage drought, like our health and not wait for crisis when it's too late as well as the need to normalise drought by ensuring there are pre-drought, drought and post drought strategies in place – we can't eliminate drought, but we can mitigate the crisis.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council**

- 1. Establish a governance framework around the tri-party (Bogan, Warren and Coonamble) arrangement and three Councils establish a project steering committee for the Regional Drought Resilience Plan.**
- 2. That one Councillor and the General Manager be appointed to the project steering committee and other Coonamble Shire staff as required.**
- 3. Endorses the Regional Drought Resilience Plan 016 (2024 edition) and note that the document is a living document and can be changed and updated to reflect environmental changes.**
- 4. Advise the FNWJO that the \$300k under RDPR016 for Bogan, Warren and Coonamble is to be used in a collaborative**

- approach to establish the region as a premier nature- based tourism destination.**
- 5. Defer the FNWJO's recommendation to undertake the following implementation projects as part of the Regional Drought Resilience Funding**
 - (a) Project 1 – Water Security Baseline Project**
 - (b) Project 2 – Drought Preparedness – Education and Social Revitalisation**
 - 6. Advise the Executive Officer of the Far Northwest Joint Organisation that Council wishes to amend the project deliverables to coincide with the project identified by Bogan, Warren and Coonamble Councils.**

Far North West Joint Organisation Regional Drought Resilience Plan

*Northwest NSW -
Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire
Council and Bogan Shire Council*

August 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands we are on, including the Wailan,



Ngemba, and Wiradjuri People, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging. We celebrate the strength, courage, and resilience of these communities, which inspire all generations to contribute towards a better New South Wales.

As individuals, communities, and governments, it is our collective responsibility to honour the culture and customs that have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. We endeavour to create a safe and inclusive environment for current and future generations, guided by wisdom of the traditional owners and aspirations of all who share this Country.



Foreword

This Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDR Plan - 016) emerges from a collaborative effort across local government boundaries involving community consultation and with the Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Bogan Shire Council which together form the Northwest NSW Region.

This initiative embodies their collective ambition to significantly lessen the impacts of drought, enhance the viability of local businesses throughout these challenging periods, and sustain the economic productivity of the region. Together the Councils strive to enable their communities to emerge from period of drought more robust, adaptable and sustainable, with confidence of long-term liveability within the region.

The Northwest Region of NSW is an arid region of marginal rainfall and scarce water resources. The additional challenges posed by drought are not only a testament to the harsh realities faced by our communities, farmers, and landscapes but also reinforces resilience, innovation, and unity.

This plan is a proactive roadmap for our future, drawing upon the knowledge of our land, the ingenuity of our people, and the strength of our communities. It recognises that the wellbeing of our region is inextricably linked to our ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to the changing environment and climatic events. By engaging with all sectors of the community, including Councils, businesses and farmers, the RDR Plan leverages local

knowledge, scientific research, and practical experience to forge a path forward.

Our region's history is marked by resilience in the face of adversity, and a constant awareness of water scarcity, driving the continual management of resources, whether in times of drought or relative abundance. The recent episodes of drought have underscored the necessity to enhance our proactive measures, focusing on strengthening our environmental, economic and social frameworks to mitigate these conditions.

This RDR Plan lays out strategic priorities and actions that will help us reduce the impact of drought, not only to support our communities during times of scarcity, but to improve the liveability of our communities to be more resilient in times of drought while ensuring the sustainability of our agriculture, local businesses and natural resources. By collectively enhancing these goals, we are setting a course for a resilient, economically vibrant, and sustainable future.

Our sincere gratitude goes to our people, partners and organisations who have contributed to the development of this plan. Your insights, expertise, and dedication have been invaluable in forging a legacy of resilience for future generations.

Signed by Ross Earl
 Ross Earl
 Executive Officer
 Far North West Joint Organisation

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Introduction

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (RDR Plan) ('The Program') is designed to enable local governments and their communities to better prepare for, respond to, endure and thrive during, and recover from drought.

The Far Northwest Joint Organisation (FNWJO) is a representative body for the three Shire Councils of Bourke, Cobar and Walgett. FNWJO lodged successful applications to develop a Regional Drought Resilience Plan on behalf of seven Councils of Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Coonamble, Walgett, and Warren Shire.

All seven councils are part of the Western Plains Functional Economic Region. The councils were grouped into two consortia based on their location within the Functional Economic Regions.

The first consortium, known as the Far Northwest Region, includes Bourke Shire, Brewarrina Shire, Cobar Shire, and Walgett Shire. The second consortium, known as

the Northwest Region, comprises Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires.

This Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDR Plan-016 or The Plan) relates to the Functional Economic Region of Bogan Shire, Coonamble Shire and Warren Shire. The Plan was codesigned with the Bogan, Coonamble and Warren Shire Councils and their respective communities, and for the purpose of RDR Plan-016 will be referred to as the **Northwest Region**.

The Plan included:

- A drought resilience literature review and an initial resilience assessment of the Northwest Region.
- Engagement with the community members, organisations, and local Councils.
- Development of initiatives and projects to improve the drought resilience of the region across four outcome areas:²

People, Culture, and Community	Enhance regional liveability, foster a robust and attractive community, and improve social resilience and wellbeing.
Economy	Expanding the business and agricultural sector's selfreliance and performance, ensuring stability and growth within the region's economy.
Landscape and Natural Environment	Improving the environmental resilience of the entire regional landscape, including agricultural lands and river systems.
Infrastructure and Built Environment	Strengthening infrastructure to support economic and environmental sustainability.

Figure 1 – Outcome Areas

¹ Far North West Joint Organisation (FNWJO) is a representative body for several local government organisations as proclaimed in the Local Government Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Act 2017 No 65. Joint organisations, by this proclamation, are formally included in the Local Government Act 1993.

² The outcome areas were derived from consultation with the communities and Councils of the Northwest Region.

The initiatives and projects form part of a Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management model that has three pillars to prepare, respond and limit the impact of droughts. Those Pillars include³:

Pillar 1 : Planning & Monitoring	Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events	Pillar 2 : Building Future Resilience
Implementing drought monitoring, early warning systems, and responsive planning.	Identifying vulnerable sectors and groups for targeted support during drought.	Undertaking measures to mitigate drought impacts and enhance long-term resilience, including initiatives across the outlined priority areas.

Figure 2 - Drought Resilience, Adaption and Management Model Pillars

The Northwest Region of New South Wales is confronted with a spectrum of challenges that are heavily influenced by shifts in demographics, economic dependencies, and vulnerabilities associated with extreme weather events.



Figure 3 - Drought impacts on social, environment and economy (Source: Adapted from Meridian Urban)

Demographic trends in the Northwest region show a concerning trajectory:

- an expected population decline of 11% over the next 15 years.
- a noticeable decrease of 1.8% in the population since 2018⁴.
- a dramatically ageing demographic, and
- the outward migration of younger generations, largely attributed to the pursuit of opportunities beyond the traditional agricultural sector and compounded by concerns regarding work-life balance and the uncertainties brought about by natural disasters.

These demographic shifts pose a considerable threat to the social and economic framework of the region, through reduced skilled workforce, ageing workforce and pressure on volunteers and business to do more with less. Strategies are essential to retain more young people in the region and to attract new, younger residents to contribute to the region's long-term viability and prosperity.

Among the climatic concerns are anticipated increases in temperatures, modifications in rainfall patterns, and escalation of bushfire risks.

³Adapted from Crossman, 2018. Also see the United Nations Drought Resilience Adaptation and Management Policy Framework, (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) August 2019.

⁴NSW Government, Western Plains Regional Economic Development Strategy 2023 Update (February 2023), available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/Western-Plains-REDS-2023-Update.pdf>.

These factors collectively underscore the necessity to implement robust adaptation and mitigation strategies. Such strategies will help protect and sustain the region's agricultural productivity, biodiversity, and the overall health of the community.

To provide a geographical context for the Northwest Region, RDR Plan-016:

- Bogan Shire is situated at the junction of the Mitchell and Barrier Highways and located around the geographical centre of NSW. The Shire has an abundance of productive agricultural land for wool, cattle and cropping enterprises. Mining is also expanding. Bogan Shire Council has a population of 2467 people (ABS 2021), an area of 14,611 square kilometres and includes the town of Nyngan and the villages of Girilambone, Hermidale and Coolabah.
- Coonamble Shire is on the Castlereagh Highway between Dubbo and Lightning

Ridge and is bounded on one side by the Warrumbungle National Park and on the other by the Western Plains and Macquarie Marshes. The district's broadacre dryland cropping and livestock grazing is highly productive. Coonamble Shire has a population of 3732 people (ABS 2021) an area of 9926 square kilometres and includes the villages of Gulargambone and Quambone.

- Warren Shire is located off the Mitchell Highway, 120 kilometres north west of Dubbo. The district has a highly productive agricultural industry, excelling in the production of sheep, wool, cattle, grain and cotton. Irrigation for farming is sourced from the Macquarie River. The Shire is known for the Macquarie Marshes and internationally renowned Merino Studs. Warren Shire Council has a population of 2550 people (ABS 2021), an area of 10753 square kilometres and includes the villages of Nevertire and Collie.

Coonamble, Warren and Bogan Shire Councils map

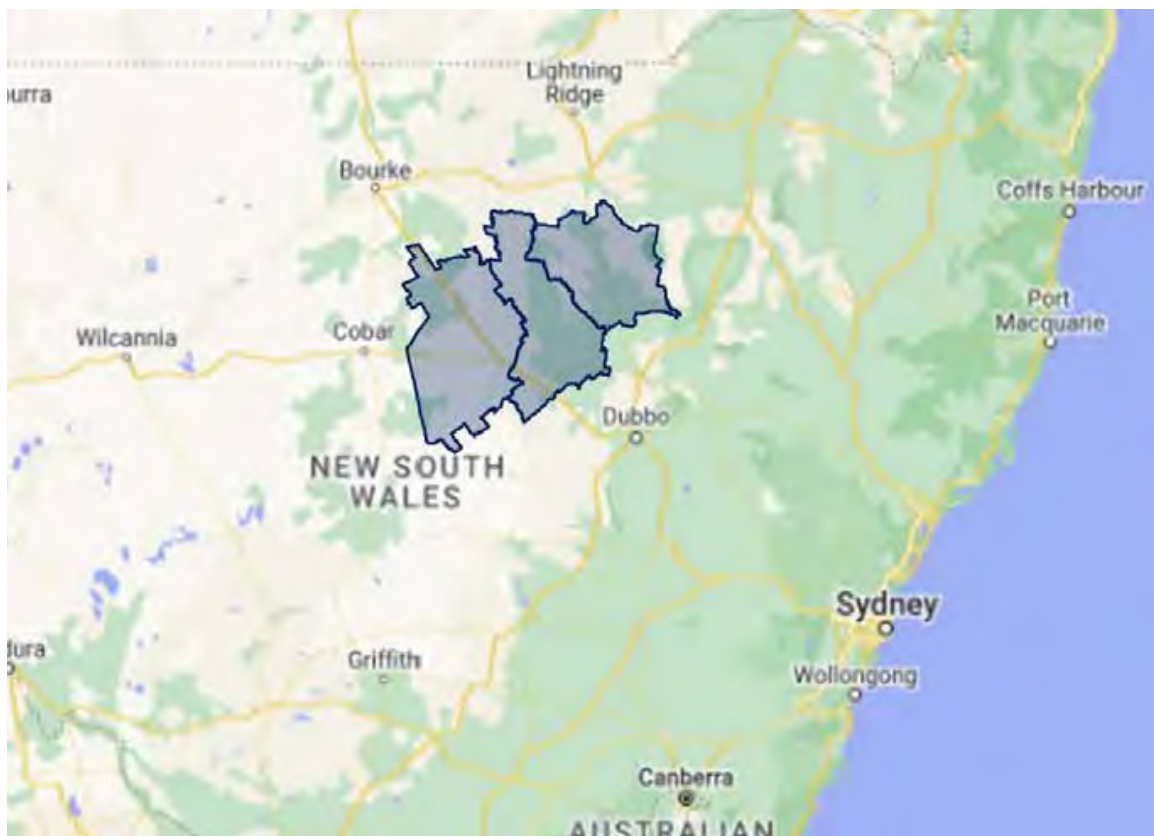


Figure 4 – Map of NSW with Coonamble, Warren and Bogan Shire Councils highlighted. (Google Maps, 2024)

Vision

In the Northwest Region, our resilience against drought is forged through collaboration and co-design with our communities and councils. This vision is built on a foundation of innovative practices, nurtured by strong local networks, and shaped by the diverse voices of our region. It acknowledges the inherently arid and harsh landscape of our regions.

Our vision is to:

- Cultivate a well-prepared and robust community, where every sector works together to sustain our way of life and enhance regional well-being.
- Focus on actions that protect our natural environment, strengthen our local economy, and enrich the social fabric of our community.
- Through collective effort, convert challenges into opportunities for growth and adaptation.
- Emerge from each drought more connected and resilient than before.

To underpin the vision, our strategy is to be dynamic and inclusive, continuously refined through dialogue with our community and adaptive to changing climatic conditions.

Our plan integrates adaptive strategies to respond to changing conditions. This includes continuous monitoring of water resources, flexible infrastructure projects, and community driven initiatives that can be adjusted as new information and technology becomes available.

Strategic investments in water infrastructure, connectivity and sustainable practices are designed to enhance capacity to adapt to future climatic variability.

This plan was developed from extensive stakeholder engagement, involving local government, community members and groups, and various industry sectors. Initial consultations included diverse representation from local Councillors, farmers, businesses and residents. Feedback was gathered through workshops, surveys and follow-up meetings, ensuring that the plan reflects the community's needs and priorities.

⁵ Investment logic mapping is an early-stage technique that assists in developing and documenting the logic that underpins a potential investment decision, before specific solutions are identified, and before a decision is made. Note: The program 'Logic Map' does not represent a theory of change.

By moving forward together, the intent is that we safeguard our region's vitality, preserve our natural resources, and build enduring resilience to drought. Through ongoing dialogue and collaboration, we ensure that the plan remains relevant and effective, with a strong emphasis on local leadership and community engagement.

Through this collective effort, we aim to convert challenges into opportunities for growth and adaptation, ensuring we emerge from each drought more connected and resilient than before.

Drought Resilience at a Glance

Drought resilience in our region is defined as the capacity of communities, local governments and other stakeholders to anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from drought conditions. This resilience is rooted in our ability to adapt, transition and transform our economic, social, and environmental systems in the face of changing climatic conditions. It reflects our commitment to maintaining and enhancing the vitality of our region through collaborative efforts and innovative practices.

Bogan, Coonamble and Warren Shires emphasise that resilience within the region should not just encompass the capacity to withstand drought, but also the ability to transition and transform their systems when maintaining the status quo is no longer viable. This includes exploring new economic opportunities, adopting sustainable agricultural practices, and fostering social cohesion and connectivity.

The Drought Resilience Program 'Logic Map'⁵ is a tool that solidifies our resilience plan into a clear, actionable sequence. It provides stakeholders with an immediate understanding of the steps we are taking to strengthen the region's ability to manage drought conditions.

The 'Logic Map' serves as a focused overview, ensuring that every element of the plan is

aligned with key objectives of preserving regional vitality and managing resources sustainably. It operates as both a planning guide and a communication framework.

By presenting this at-a-glance summary, the Logic Map becomes a foundation of the plan's

implementation, facilitating co-design across all levels of involvement. This plan recognises that resilience is not just about returning to pre-drought conditions but about evolving and strengthening our systems to better withstand future challenges.



Figure 5 – Drought Resilience Logic Map (The Stable Group, 2024)

A Plan for Drought Resilience

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (RDRPP) is one of the five focus areas of the Commonwealth Government's Future Drought Fund. The NSW RDRPP is jointly funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the NSW Government, supporting local governments to work together regionally to plan for drought resilience proactively and pragmatically. The resulting plans focus on innovative ways to build regional drought resilience, taking steps to plan now to stem the impact of future drought on our region.

Objectives

Consistent with the strategic priorities and objectives of the Future Drought Fund Agreement, the objectives of the RDR Plan for Bogan, Coonamble and Warren are to:

Develop the agricultural sector's self-reliance and economic performance:

- Promote diversification within the agricultural sector to reduce dependence on traditional farming.
- Strengthen local supply chains and improve infrastructure to support agricultural productivity and resilience.

Develop the environmental resilience and natural capital of agricultural landscapes:

- Promote sustainable land management practices that protect and enhance natural ecosystems, such as the Macquarie Marshes and other critical habitats.
- Enhance groundwater resources for agricultural and domestic use, ensuring equitable access to water across the region.

Strengthen the social capital and wellbeing of the communities:

- Foster social cohesion to mitigate the impacts of isolation and mental health challenges.
- Improve telecommunications and digital connectivity to reduce social isolation and support community and economic activities, particularly in remote areas.

- Support volunteer networks and reduce volunteer fatigue by providing resources and recognition for community contributions.

Understand and plan for the region's current and future drought resilience by identifying actions, pathways, and opportunities for mitigation, adaptation and improvement:

- Engage with diverse community groups, including First Nations people, young families, and youth to co-develop and continuously refine resilience strategies.
- Ensure ongoing consultation and engagement with stakeholders to adapt strategies to changing climatic conditions and emerging challenges.

The objectives of this plan were derived from the initial extensive in-person consultation, with workshops held across four locations – Coonamble, Marra, Warren and Nyngan, attended by 58 community representatives (~12% under 40). Participation by representatives from NSW Farmers, Progress Associations, Chambers of Commerce, environmental groups, the mining industry and agricultural industry, as well as active community members, meant that the objectives that guided the project reflect the wider community needs, rather than being constrained to a particular group.

This plan identifies priority projects and an implementation pathway to achieve the outcomes and objectives of the RDR Plan. It integrates insights and contributions from stakeholders, so identified projects are practical and impactful align with local conditions, resource capacity and capabilities.

Strategic Alignment

The Northwest RDR Plan is consistent with National Framework for Drought Policy (National Drought Agreement) and Australian Government Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan. The Plan has a focus on long term resilience and preparedness.

The Plan also has strong alignment with national, state, regional and local plans, strategies and policies⁶ including the:

⁶ Refer to Appendix 3 – Background Contexts and Key Inputs for the alignment and relevance of studies, Global academic and government derived strategies to the Plan.

- NSW State Infrastructure strategy - guiding principles:
 - **Strengthen service reliability and resilience** – investments in existing assets should focus on lifting the reliability of those assets and resilience of communities most at risk of disruptive events.
 - **Optimise existing assets and networks** – opportunities to fully utilise existing assets should be prioritised, including through augmentation of existing networks, maintenance and upgrades.
 - **Partner with local governments and communities** – engagement and involvement of local governments, communities and other stakeholder groups should be embedded throughout planning, design, delivery and operation.
- NSW Water Regions priorities and objectives.
- Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) for the applicable Functional Economic Region (FER).
- Local Government Area Integrated Water Cycle Management / Regulatory and assurance framework for the local government councils / water supply authorities exercising water supply and sewerage functions and the Local Government Act 1993 or the NSW Water Management Act 2000.
- Regional Water Strategy for the Local Government Area.

Further, the development of the plan also included consideration of:

- Investment logic mapping.
- CSIRO Regional Drought Resilience Plans, Independent Review Guide.
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment – Water guidance notes for options assessments.
- Regional NSW – Business Case and Strategy Development Fund Regional Infrastructure Business Case Template.
- Alignment to the competency of the local water authority (ability to fund and operate).
- Consideration of the Objectives of the Australian Government Future Drought Fund.

About this Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Purpose of the Plan

The Northwest RDR Plan has been developed in accordance with the guidelines set within the NSW Government Regional Drought Resilience Program. Through co-design, knowledge sharing, and strategic action, with key stakeholders and the voices and experiences of the region's people, the RDR Plan seeks to:

- Build strong, resilience social and community networks that are essential for thriving in an uncontrollable and often harsh climate, through fostering the ability of the communities to adapt and transform in response to social, environmental, and economic shocks and uncertainties, ensuring continuity and support during times of crisis.
- Foster connectivity within and across the communities in the region, contributing to great social capital, well-being, and security.
- Empower the communities to implement transformative activities that enhance their resilience to drought and support sustainable natural resource management, through measures to adapt to changing conditions and mitigate the impacts of drought on industries beyond agriculture, such as tourism, local business, and services, thereby sustaining overall economic vitality of the region.
- Mitigate the economic, social, and environmental impacts of drought, ensuring the long-term productivity and sustainability of the region.
- Improve the region's effective adaptability and maintain economic vitality through sustainable practices and careful stewardship of both human and commodity resources.

The RDR Plan process is intended to be practical, implementable and ongoing. As the region undertakes the specified actions, this plan will assist with monitoring progress and future learning.

The Process for RDR Plan Development

The planning process for the Northwest region: incorporating Bogan, Coonamble and Warren Shire Councils involved a four-stage process (Figure 4).

1. A broad governance structure.
2. A Regional Drought Assessment to provide a robust evidence base using wide consultation.
 - o Consultation with the Bogan, Coonamble and Warren communities.⁷
 - Engaged with 58 community members through 4 community consultations, capturing the voices of stakeholders ranging from Local Shire Councillors to carbon farmers and mining industry representatives.
 - Considered contributions from across the region, with varied participants like health workers, educators, and NSW Office of Regional Youth.
 - Media outlets were utilised to invite the community to consultations, resulting in additional post-consultation interactions, including 2 written submissions and 2 telephone calls, enriching the understanding of the community's needs and concerns.
 - o Initial identification of the Council's priorities.
 - o Review of related Federal and NSW Government policies, initiatives and potential assessment criteria related to potential projects under the program.
 - o Review of over 40 community strategic plans, economic development strategies, drought management plans, and regional water strategies, etc; to determine past and future impacts of drought and identify existing commitments. These included:
 - Council Community Strategic Plans.
 - NSW Government's Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) for each of the Functional Economic Regions (FER).
 - Barwon – Darling Valley Annual Surface Water Quality Report.
 - Far West Enabling Regional Adaptation Report.
 - Far West Regional Plan.
 - Western Regional Water Strategy.
 - Macquarie – Castlereagh Water Strategy.
3. The RDR Plan, which provides a high-level summary of the findings. The Plan includes actions and interventions to mitigate drought impacts in the region.
 - o Further engagement and visits to the Bogan, Coonamble and Warren regions.
 - o Development of Technology Report, listing the Priority Drought Resilience Projects and information developed for each Project.
4. An Investment Framework
 - o Development of a pathway for each of the priority projects to be taken forward.
 - o Provision of the draft plan for comment by the FNWJO and Councils.
 - o Provision of the final plan to the FNWJO.

Background Contexts & Key Inputs

This plan draws from, complements, and builds upon previous work in developing a regional profile and identifying the impacts of past and future droughts. (**Refer to Appendix 3**).

⁷ Refer to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Consultation Report at Appendix 5.

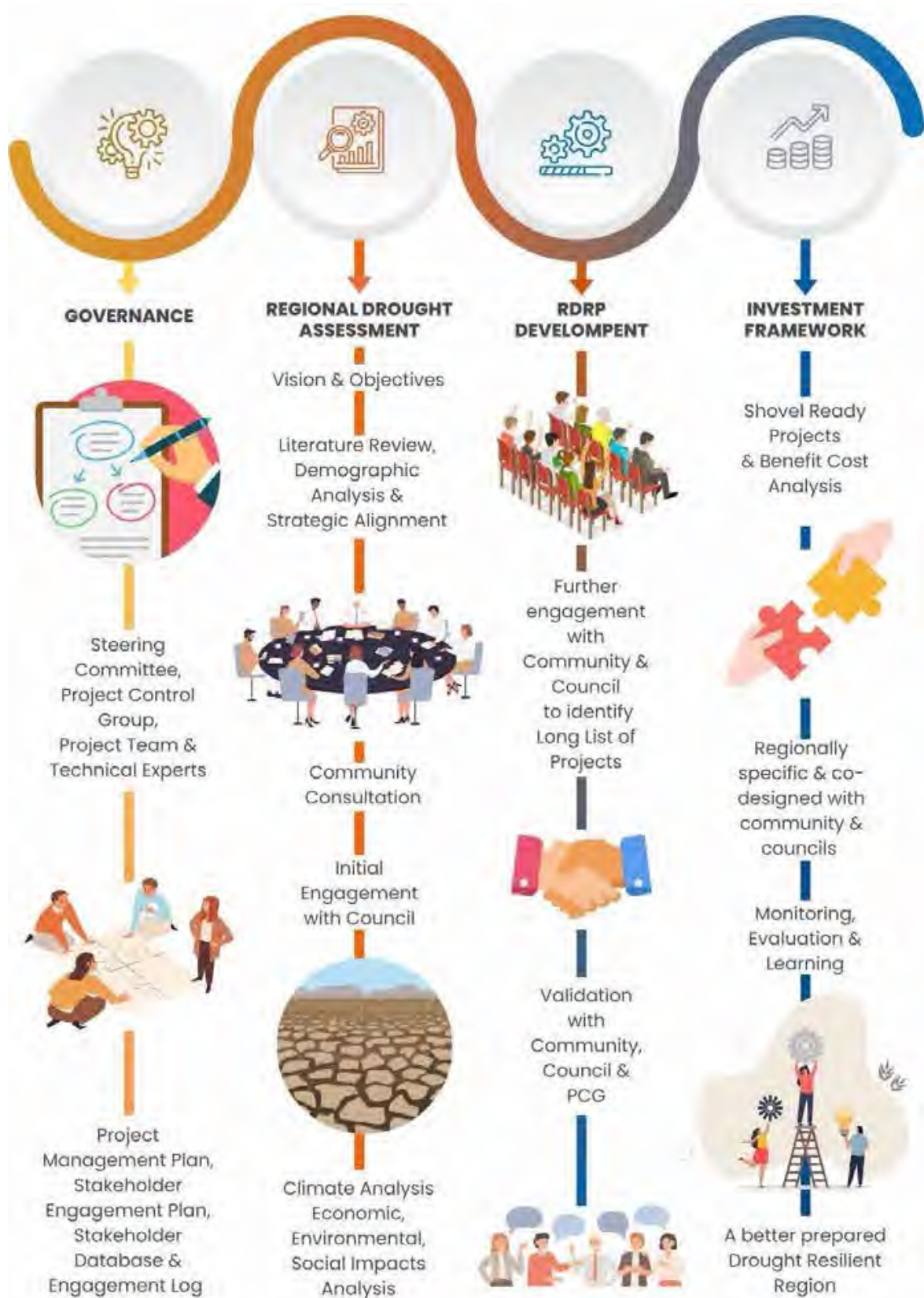


Figure 6 – Process for RDR Plan Development. (The Stable Group, 2024)

Other Important Linkages

It is the intention of this Plan that it is considered and factored into a range of other strategies and plans – including (but not limited to) the following list.

- regional plans
- regional economic development strategies
- regional transport and infrastructure plans
- natural resource management plans
- water resource plans
- local and district disaster management plans
- local asset management and capital works plans
- local corporate and community development plans
- land use planning schemes
- local and regional health strategies

The intention is also, that this plan will be closely considered by charities; non-government organisations; not-for-profits; businesses; and government agencies with an interest in the region.

Our Partners

Broad stakeholder engagement was conducted in developing the RDR Plan, including contributions from the Stable Group and the Far Northwest Joint Organisation. The Project Reference Group⁸ provided essential local insights, helping to refine strategies and define drought resilience actions.

Initial consultations with communities took place from 10 to 14 February 2024 in Coonamble Shire, on 14 February in two locations in Warren Shire, and on 15 February in Bogan Shire, leading to the development of a long list of projects (Appendix 4).

Projects were further refined through a second round of consultations conducted via Microsoft Teams, engaging representatives from all four Shires, despite lower attendance compared to earlier meetings. A survey was circulated to gather additional input on project prioritisation, receiving feedback from 18 community members.

Community consultations were coordinated closely with local councils and regional management bodies and adhered to strategic priorities of economic, environmental, and social resilience. Sessions used the Drought Resilience Logic Map to focus discussions on understanding community perceptions, drought-related risks, and potential resilience actions.

Stakeholder engagement was complemented by a commissioned review of drought innovation, identifying potential transformative projects across multiple resilience research areas such as water management, digital technology, and community development. (Refer to Appendix 5).

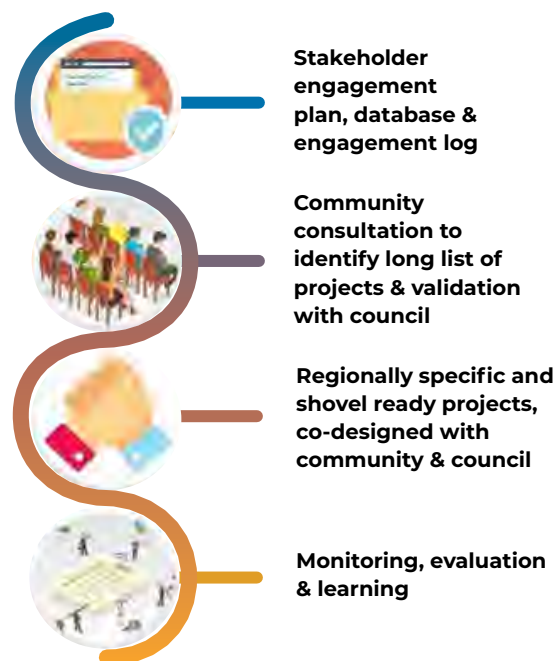


Figure 7 – Stakeholder Engagement Process for RDR Plan Development. (The Stable Group, 2024)

This early engagement facilitated the integration of diverse regional knowledge and expertise, culminating in a collectively owned, region-specific plan. This process not only identified key regional priorities but also ensured the plan was co-designed with the community and council to address the unique challenges and opportunities in Northwest NSW.

⁸ SRG members include participating council representatives and NSW Government representatives. The SRG is co-ordinated by the Far North West JO

Regional Profile

The portion of the Northwest region, which is covered by this plan, covers an area of 35,297 km², and includes the Coonamble, Warren and Bogan Shire Councils (Figure 5). It is home to over 8,749 people. The majority of the population, services and administration of the Region are centred in Dubbo.

The region spans country of the Wiradjuri, Wongaibon, Weilwan, Ngemba, and Kamilaray Nations.



Figure 8 – Map of Region that the RDR Plan covers with Coonamble, Warren and Bogan Shire Councils labelled. (Google Maps, 2024)

The key-socio-economic statistics for the Northwest regions and each of the three LGAs are:

Bogan		Coonamble		Warren	
Population			Australian Digital Inclusion Index		
2,467	3,732	2,550	2,467	3,732	2,550
Projected Population (2041)			Unemployment Rate		
1,581	2,965	1,755	3.2	6.7	3.2
Median Age			SEIFA 2016 Socio-Economic Index of Social Disadvantage		
41	39	37	948	893	952
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples			Number of Local Businesses		
440	1,267	392	449	589	449
% of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples			Population that Need Assistance due to Disability		
17.8	33.9	14.3	153	257	180
% People who speak a language other than English at home			Decline in Population 2001 - 2021 (%)		
440	1,267	392	-20.1	-18.9	-19.2
Median Total Personal Income (\$/yr)			Decline in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People 2001 - 2021 (%)		
41	39	37	+34.9	+32.9	+5.6

Figure 9: Socioeconomic Profile of Individual Local Government Areas (Source: ABS, REMPLAN, NEMA (2024))

The Natural Landscape of the Region

The Northwest region of New South Wales encapsulates a rich tapestry of natural landscapes, from the sprawling plains to riverine ecosystems and significant conservation areas. These landscapes not only define the physical character of the regions but also underpin their ecological, cultural, and economic vitality.

Geographical Overview and Biodiversity

The geographical diversity of these regions supports a wide range of ecosystems, each with unique biodiversity, as follows:

- Nyngan, the main town in the Bogan Shire is situated along the Bogan River and features expansive plains that support a mix of natural bushlands and Bogan River weir pools supporting birdlife and threatened species as well as agricultural lands.
- Coonamble Shire is renowned for its highly productive fertile floodplains along the

Castlereagh River and natural grasslands.

- The Macquarie Marshes, within the Warren Shire, represent one of Australia’s most significant wetlands, offering vital habitats for myriad bird species, including migratory birds and waterbirds.

Agricultural Land Use

Agriculture forms the backbone of the Northwest Region economies with land use typically a balance between cropping, grazing, and conservation. Bogan Shire and Coonamble Shire focus on broadacre, dryland farming and livestock grazing reflecting the adaptation to the semi-arid climate. Warren benefits from the Macquarie River and the Albert Priest Channel, enabling diversification into irrigated agriculture, especially cotton, which contributes to its economic profile.

There has been a significant increase in land values which have doubled in some areas in the past 10 years. Agricultural land is seen as a viable investment and developed land is attracting a premium.

The following tables outline the primary agricultural activities, along with the key crops or livestock associated with each Shire.

Bogan Shire	
Total area of LGA (ha)	1,461,100
Primary Agricultural Activity	Grazing sheep and cattle, Broadacre dryland farming, wheat, barley
Total area of broadacre crops (ha)	167,377
Total gross value agricultural production	\$232,690,000

Coonamble Shire	
Total area of LGA (ha)	992,600
Primary Agricultural Activity	Grazing sheep and cattle, Broadacre dryland farming, wheat, barley & chickpeas.
Total area of broadacre crops (ha)	226,948
Total gross value agricultural production	\$266,170,000

Warren Shire	
Total area of LGA (ha)	1,076,000
Primary Agricultural Activity	Grazing sheep and cattle, Broadacre dryland farming & Irrigated Cropping
Total area of broadacre crops (ha)	194,479
Total gross value agricultural production	\$249,260,000

Figure 10: Primary Agricultural Activities of each Local Government Area. (Source: REMPLAN, NEMA, Warren Shire Council (2024))

Natural Water Resources and Management

During the most recent drought, from January 2018 – January 2020, the Barwon-Darling Valley experienced extreme hot and dry conditions, which led to substantial reductions in river flow and water quality, as well as impacted community water supplies and aquatic habitats.

Availability of, and access to water from both groundwater and surface water resources is an essential enabler of diversity and prosperity of communities, agriculture and industry in the Northwest Region. Given the variability of rainfall and historic droughts, current efficient water uses and sustainable management practices are an essential part of the lived experience.

Existing strategic planning efforts and recent community consultations have endorsed water efficiency and water management as a critical concern across the Northwest Region. The Northwest Region supports strategic planning efforts which address the challenges of water security not only for communities, but for environmental, agricultural and industrial sustainability of their communities.

Water is a highly valued and emotive resource, and the Northwest Region is under continuous threat from inaction; high costs and slow processes; perverse outcomes of water policy or aspirations of industry. Community have expressed a frustration caused by inactivity on water management during RDR Plan consultation. Examples include:

- **Inaction:** The Albert Priest Channel carries water from the Macquarie River at Warren to Nyngan where it meets the Bogan River. Evaporation rates are high and recommendations of the Water and Drought Security Report to line the channel or pipe the channel have not proceeded.

As demonstrated by the very effective Cap and Pipe the Bores Scheme, more efficient movement of water and conservation of water would give industry security into the future enabling investment and creating employment opportunities.

Bogan Shire Council has a counter rational to community with concerns that the costs associated with piping the Albert Priest Channel is not a priority due to costs; and lining of the APC has never been a recommendation by Bogan Shire Council due to the impossibility of protecting the lining from stock and wildlife damage and associated renewal costs. Water Security for the Bogan Shire is a contentious issue, with no easy fix.

- **High costs and slow processes:** Despite the Burrendong Dam reaching 145% capacity during the last flood without structural implications, advocacy to upgrade the Burrendong Dam to provide resilience against future droughts through increased water storage, is not being actioned quickly enough. Increasing the capacity of Burrendong Dam by 20% alone, will enable an extra 200 GL of water storage, the total consumption of water for agricultural and residential purposes in one year. The Federal and NSW Labor Governments are investing \$9.35 million to develop a Final Business Case for the Macquarie-Wambuul Water Security Scheme including changes to Burrendong Dam to increase water supply in the flood mitigation zone of the dam. This is the next step in a thorough and rigorous process and will be subject to further analysis before any decisions are made.

- **Perverse outcomes of government Water Buyback Policy as part of the Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP):** Under legislation that was updated in 2023, another 450 gegalitres of water must be bought back from Murray Darling irrigators by the government by

2027. To date, under the Basin Plan, 83GL have been recovered from the Macquarie Valley, above and beyond the legislated target of 65GL, and dramatically higher than the 20GL originally proposed by the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) in 2010. The over recovery of environmental water has perversely impacted the economic and social structure of Warren Shire with

downturn in the local economy, loss of jobs and population.

• **Aspirations of industry:** Access to the Great Artesian Basin in Coonamble Shire and the northern parts of Warren Shire for stock and domestic water supply is crucial and a highly valued resource Coonamble Rallied against the fracking of underground water reserves in the Great Artesian Basin.

Below is a table that provides an insight into the key natural water resources within each Shire:

Shire	Key Natural Water Resource	Use
Bogan	Bogan River and Albert Priest Channel	Agriculture, Town Water Supply
Coonamble	Castlereagh River and Great Artesian Basin	Agriculture, Biodiversity Conservation, Town Water Supply
Warren	Macquarie River and Albert Priest Channel, Great Artesian Basin in the north of the LGA	Irrigated Agriculture, Agriculture, Biodiversity Conservation, Town Water Supply, pipeline to Cobar

Figure 11: Key Natural Water Resources of each Local Government Area

Regional Weather and Climate Characteristics

The Northwest Region, exhibits variability of climatic conditions, profoundly influenced by water availability and extreme temperature.

North-west Regional Weather and Climate Characteristics include:

- Average maximum temperatures during summer ~ 34°C.
- In winter, the average minimum temperature ranges from 4–6°C.

- Over 50 hot days are experienced Northwest of Nyngan.
- The number of cold nights (< 2°C) experienced < 20°C northwest of Nyngan.

Rainfall across the Northwest Region demonstrates a gradient from east to west. Coonamble mean rainfall is 499mm annually, transitioning to approximately 442mm in Nyngan. This gradient is mirrored and exacerbated by evaporation rates, underscoring the challenges of water management in areas where evaporation outpaces rainfall.

The following table describes the climate characteristics for different periods and their impacts on the Northwest Region:

Period	Characteristic	Impact on Macquarie - Castlereagh Region
1900s - 1940s	Dry Period	Marked by short to decadal droughts, setting a precedent for dry conditions.
1950s - 1990s	Wet Period	A relatively moist interval, providing relief and replenishing water sources.
Post-Millennium Drought	Return to Dry Period	Illustrated by extreme variability, significant droughts and flooding events.

Figure 12: Climate impacts on the Northwest Region

Society, Population and Demographics

The social fabric of the Northwest Region is marked by a strong sense of community, resilience, and adaptability. These characteristics are crucial in facing the socio-economic challenges and leveraging the opportunities that arise from demographic shifts and economic transitions. Residents of the North West Region have long established generational ties to the land - both First Nations and non-Indigenous families and have a strong

sense of the region being “home”.

The population of the Northwest Region has witnessed a continual decline over many years due to a range of factors including economic opportunities, lifestyle preferences, and access to essential services. Drought and prolonged dry periods have been a trigger for families and younger people to move out of the region to fulfil educational, business and career aspirations resulting in a sustained and significant loss of population over many years. This is a concerning trend as Australia and NSW’s populations continue to increase.

The following demonstrates loss of approximately 20% of the population in the 20 years from the 2001 census to the 2021 census.

Census Information	Population of Bogan LGA	Population of Coonamble LGA	Population of Warren LGA
2001 Census Year	3083	4567	3150
2021 Census Year	2467	3732	2550
Total population loss	- 616	- 835	- 600
Average change per annum	- 30.8	- 41.75	- 30
% loss over 20 years	20%	18%	19%

Figure 13: Population decline of the Northwest Region 2001-2021. (Source: ABS 2024)

A key characteristic of the population in the Northwest Region is the aging population, placing additional pressure on aged care service delivery, healthcare, and community support structures. The Northwest Region is also challenged by the outmigration of younger people to regional centres such as Dubbo or to larger cities in search of education and employment opportunities.

Despite the obvious trend, each Council remains optimistic and embraces opportunities to improve the liveability of their community and attract skilled workers. For example:

- **Bogan and Nyngan:** These areas have witnessed fluctuating population trends, largely influenced by employment opportunities in agriculture and mining sectors. Efforts to diversify the economy and improve local infrastructure are aimed at stabilising and potentially increasing the resident populations.

- **Coonamble:** Faced with a declining population over the years, Coonamble has been focusing on revitalising the community through enhancing local services, supporting agricultural innovation, and promoting cultural and eco-tourism as means to attract new residents and retain existing ones.

- **Warren:** Warren has experienced demographic shifts driven by changes in the agricultural sector and water resource challenges. Community resilience and adaptability are evident in efforts to attract investment and develop sustainable practices.

Built Form and Infrastructure

The Northwest Region exhibits a diverse array of built environments, from historic town centres with heritage buildings to modern agricultural and mining infrastructures that underscore the regions’ economic foundations.

Urban areas typically feature a mix of residential, commercial, and public buildings that cater to the local community's needs, whereas rural areas are characterised by extensive agricultural lands, supported by infrastructure such as homes, fencing, silos, sheds, and irrigation systems.

An observation to note across the region is the increase in vacant buildings in the CBD of each of these towns. Many buildings are owned by older people who are relying on the capital asset for superannuation and have unrealistic expectations for re-sale value. The buildings are often left vacant, in need of repairs and maintenance and no longer "fit for purpose" for new and emerging businesses. Younger businesspeople are opting to work from home, co-share workspaces or have on-line business. This change to business models is reducing the need for traditional "shop fronts" and are leaving our empty spaces in our CBD's.

Despite significant advancements, the Northwest Region's councils face challenges related to aging infrastructure, water security, and the need for change to sustainable energy and digital connectivity solutions. Addressing these challenges is crucial for future-proofing the regions against economic and environmental pressures.

- **Bogan Shire Council:** Infrastructure development has been geared towards supporting the mining and agricultural sectors, with significant investments in road and rail upgrades to improve logistics and transport efficiency. The Nyngan Solar Power Plant represents a milestone in the regions' move towards renewable energy. Bogan Shire Council is improving off-river storage with \$20 Million in recent years spent on water security infrastructure.
- **Coonamble Shire Council:** Coonamble's focus has been on enhancing water management systems and upgrading local roads and bridges to support its agricultural base. Efforts to improve flood mitigation and water storage capabilities are ongoing.
- **Warren Shire Council:** Infrastructure in Warren includes the development of water conservation and management projects to support both the town's needs and the surrounding agricultural lands. The town also benefits from investments in community facilities and recreational spaces to improve residents' quality of life.

Significant investments in infrastructure such as mines, feedlots, grain storage facilities and cotton gins underscore the region's role as both an importer and exporter of freight, supporting a diverse range of industries from agribusiness and mining to manufacturing.

Future investment projects shaping the Northwest Region

Current planned or ongoing investment projects of note that will have a significant investment and disruptive effect in the Northwest Region are:

- **Inland Rail:** A transformative infrastructure project enhancing freight efficiency, supporting over 21,500 jobs at peak construction, and providing long-term economic development opportunities.
- **Renewable Energy transition and Resource Sectors:** The region's transition towards renewable energy, including solar, wind, and bioenergy projects, is pivotal in driving economic diversification and reducing carbon emissions. With 75% of the state's coal-powered electricity generation expected to reach the end of its technical life within 15 years, the transition to renewable energy sources is underway. This transition will require significant infrastructure development to connect new energy sources.
- **Digital Connectivity:** Improvements in digital infrastructure to improve NBN and mobile services are vital for economic and social participation, particularly for smaller centres leveraging their locational advantages. "Black spots" are quite obvious to landowners and travellers between towns and villages.

Further water and energy security projects are critical for sustaining regional development, with projects aimed at ensuring reliable access to these essential resources.

A coordinated approach to planning and infrastructure development is essential to maximise investment benefits for the region and minimising the disruptive impacts. Strategic land use planning, lifestyle blocks and housing development, and infrastructure is essential to support the needs of the changing demographic and economic opportunities. Disruptive impacts may include:

- The increased reliance on a temporary workforce is impacting the economy of the Northwest Region towns. The proximity of some of the projects may provide drive-in-

drive out opportunities for residents in competition with local job opportunities.

- Extra competition may arise to provide suitable local housing choices and services that cater to both temporary and permanent residents. Housing reserves are often run down and efforts to provide housing that meets the diverse needs of the community are crucial in supporting the region’s growth and prosperity.

Economy

The Northwest Region is a complex and at times vibrant economic landscape, marked by a reliance on agriculture, alongside growing industry of mining and emerging industries such as tourism and renewable energy. Overall, Northwest Region has a Gross Regional Product of approx. \$715 M, with mining and agriculture being significant contributors.

	Bogan LGA (2024)	Coonamble LGA (2023)	Warren LGA (2018)
Gross Regional Product*	\$272 M	\$271.35 M	\$171.22 M
Value of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing economic output	\$67 M	\$180.2 M	\$158.72 M
Value of Mining	\$66 M	\$0	\$0
Number of jobs in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	381	414	463
Number of jobs in mining	380	0	0
Total jobs	1280	1408	1113

Figure 14: Gross Regional Product (GRP) and the economy by Shire. (Source: REMPLAN, NEMA, Warren Shire Council (2024))

Natural Water Resources

Traditionally, agriculture stands as the cornerstone of employment across the Northwest Region. Employment levels and the nature of work have undergone significant changes over recent decades. A trend towards larger, more mechanised farms has reduced the demand for local unskilled and semi-skilled labour, exacerbating unemployment in small towns and communities which is compounded during periods of drought.

The employment landscape is diverse, with substantial roles played by the health care, social assistance, manufacturing, construction, and retail sectors. The Northwest Region faces challenges from external pressures like pandemics and climate variability, yet the promise of projects such as Inland Rail, renewable energy initiatives, and strategic infrastructure investments offer pathways to resilience and growth.

Bogan Shire’s, mining and agriculture are the primary economic drivers, contributing significantly to the region’s \$272 million GRP in 2024. The presence of minerals like copper, zinc, and lead has historical roots, yet the area’s economy remains diversified, with health care, education, public administration, and retail trade also providing substantial employment. Nyngan, known as the Gateway to the Great Outback, has a strategic location on the on the junction of the Mitchell Highway and Barrier Highway offers a gateway to major freight networks, presenting opportunities for value-adding in agriculture and tapping into global markets for commodities.

Coonamble’s economy, while robust, is heavily dependent on agriculture, which accounts for a substantial portion of Gross Regional Product which was \$271.35 M in 2023. The impact of recent droughts, overshadowing even the global pandemic, underscores the need for economic diversification. The Inland

Rail project which will be accessible from the railway junction at Curban presents an opportunity for local employment and industry benefits, with economic uplift projections indicating potential growth in jobs, GRP, and output over a decade.

Warren Shire's Gross Regional Product (GRP) is estimated at \$171.22 million, emphasising the economic significance of its agricultural base. This sector, along with retail trade, education, training, health care, and public administration, accounts for the majority of local employment. The strategic positioning of major freight routes, including the Oxley and Mitchell Highways, further enhances Warren Shire's economic activity, connecting it to broader markets and facilitating the movement of goods.

Tourism in Warren Shire, notably branded as the 'Gateway to the Marshes,' is on the rise, fuelled

by its natural attractions such as the Macquarie Marshes Nature Reserve, a site of international ecological importance. This natural asset not only contributes to the community's quality of life but also attracts visitors, making tourism an emerging sector. However, external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, drought, and flooding have left indelible marks on the region, particularly affecting agriculture and tourism.

The economic narratives of Warren, Bogan, and Coonamble highlight the regions' adaptability and potential for sustainable development. Significant challenges have continued to diminish the liveability of the Northwest Region and create uncertainties for investment, yet by leveraging natural assets, strategic location, and emerging opportunities, it may be possible to navigate the complexities of economic diversification, ensuring longterm prosperity and resilience in the face of challenges.

Our History of Drought Impacts

Of all the climate and weather-related conditions that affect Australia, drought is often the most challenging. New South Wales (NSW) in particular, is prone to periods of persistent drought.

Droughts are a natural and recurring feature of the Australian climatic cycle. As such, droughts will come again, and they are anticipated to get worse.

Droughts are challenging times, not just at the farm gate. Droughts do not appear suddenly like other natural disasters or events. They are incremental and start with a dry spell that becomes persistent.

(Regional Drought Resilience Planning: Project Narrative, NSW Government)

The history and impacts of drought in the Northwest Region are characterised by their extensive challenge to economic livelihoods, social structures, and environmental sustainability. Droughts are stressful for farmers, communities and those providing services in the region. Conversely, drought also highlights the resilience and adaptive measures being employed to mitigate these impacts.



Figure 15 - Farm in drought conditions in the Northwest of NSW (NSW Agriculture)

Drought Declaration

Australia has highly variable rainfall records and highly variable periods of low rainfall. Drought is difficult to predict, and difficult to determine a start point as the creeping reality of a “dry period” becomes more severe and pervasive. Droughts are difficult to compare with differences in seasonality, extent, duration, severity, among other variables all contributing to the drought experience⁹. The end of a drought is also difficult to declare with the distressing economic and social impacts being felt long after the landscape has recovered.

Drought in Australia, redefined in policy approaches since the 1990s from a ‘natural disaster’ to a ‘manageable risk’, places farmers in the role of risk managers tasked with planning for recurring drought events rather than as victims of unforeseeable catastrophes. This shift underscores the complexity of drought as not just a meteorological event but a socioeconomic crisis that requires a proactive and informed response from all sectors of society.

The Bureau of Meteorology has four definitions of drought¹⁰, which are meteorological, agricultural, hydrological and socio-economic.

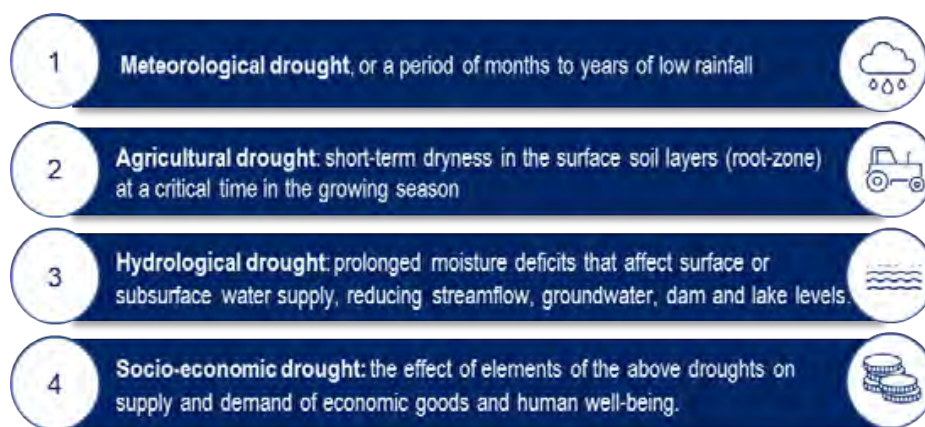


Figure 16 - Bureau of Meteorology Four Definitions of Drought (BoM)

A key feature of the Enhanced Drought Information System (EDIS) is the development of the NSW DPI Combined Drought Indicator (CDI). The CDI integrates a range of data and model outputs in a framework that is useful for decision makers. It combines meteorological, hydrological and agronomic definitions of drought using indexes for rainfall, soil and water and plant growth. From these, a fourth index, drought direction (DDI), is developed¹¹.

Used together, the indices classify six stages of drought. The six stages progress from a non-drought stage where all indicators suggest good conditions for production to recovery, drought affected and improving, drought affected and worsening to fully drought affected.

^{9 & 10} Bureau of Meteorology Drought Knowledge Centre on-line <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/drought/knowledge-centre/>

¹¹ Enhanced Drought Information System on-line <https://edis.dpi.nsw.gov.au/cdi-drought-phases>

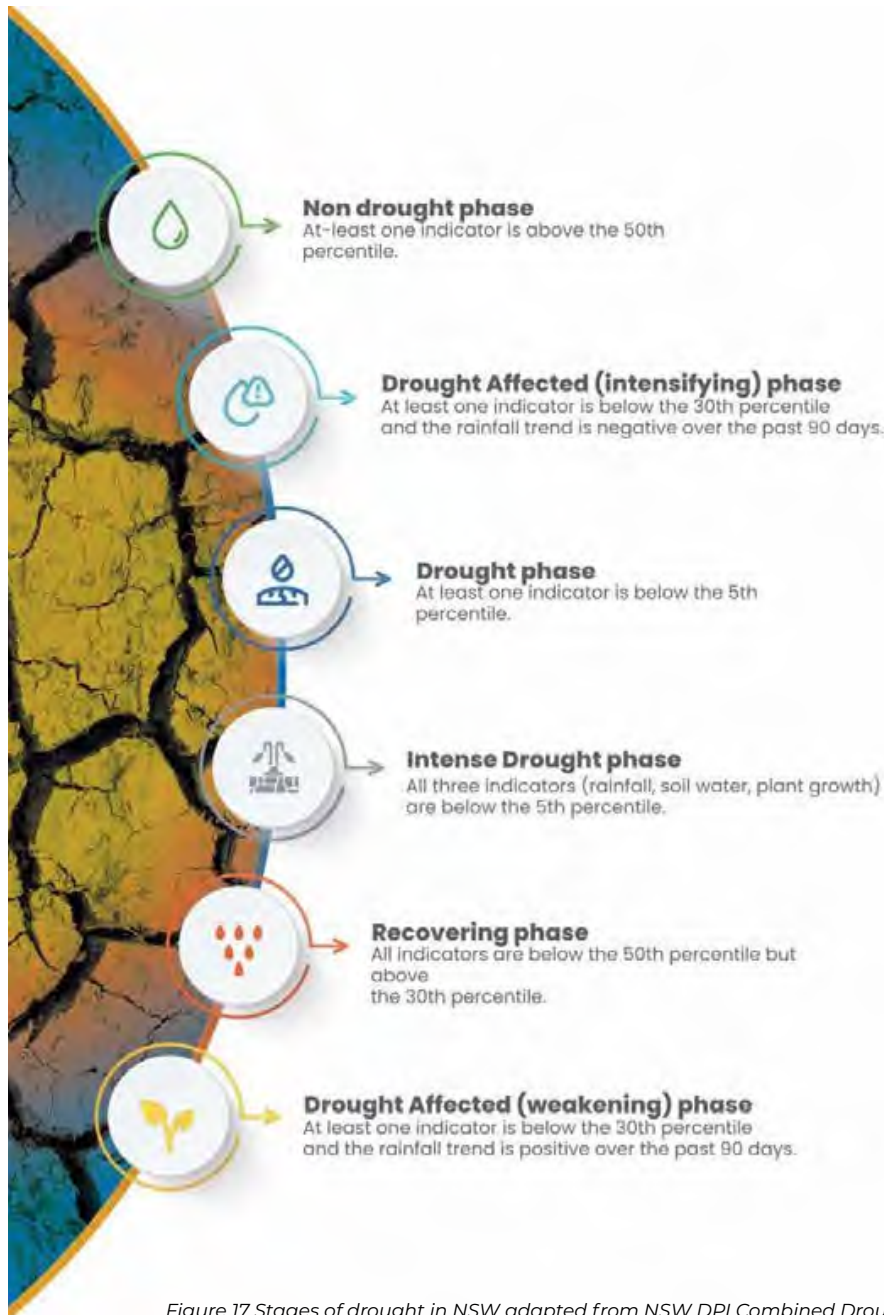


Figure 17 Stages of drought in NSW adapted from NSW DPI Combined Drought Indicator Drought Stages (Adaptation of source: Enhanced Drought Information System (EDIS))

Drought Impacts on Agriculture

The onset of the drought in 2017, less than 10 years after the Millennium Drought, left little time for primary producers to recover and protect themselves against future crises, exacerbating the social and economic impacts of the current drought.

(Regional Drought Resilience Planning: Project Narrative, NSW Government)

The agricultural industry, vital to the Northwest Region, is deeply affected during drought.

Initially in a “dry time” or Drought Affected (Intensifying) Phase, conditions are deteriorating; production is beginning to get tighter. Ground

cover may be modest, but growth is moderate to low for the time of year. This phase is met with changes in productivity such as:

- weaning and destocking, (selling livestock before they reach their potential),

- purchasing fodder (to sustain the core herd),
- changes in farming plans (e.g. choosing not to plant, spray, fertilise), or
- reduced yields.

During Drought Phase conditions become very dry and there is low soil moisture or plant growth. As Intense Drought Phase becomes apparent ground cover is low and soil moisture stores are exhausted, ongoing decisions are required to sustain the farming business such as:

- Economic decisions to reduce spending on investment items, to renegotiate loan arrangements, or to seek off farm income. Flow on effects spending cutbacks are felt in the local towns with less money being spent on agricultural supplies and reduced employment opportunities for farm workers. The 2008 report by the Australian Government highlighted the severe reduction in employment within the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries due to ongoing drought, predicting a gradual recovery but also an unprecedented skills and labour shortage.
- Social decisions to reduce spending on discretionary items, to avoid social interactions and volunteer activities The framework of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) identifies key areas affected by drought, including people’s way of life, culture, community cohesion, political systems, environmental quality, health and wellbeing, personal and property rights, and fears and aspirations.
- Environmental sustainability decisions such as destocking to preserve groundcover, are brought forward as growth low for the time of the year. Maintaining fodder and water supply becomes a daily chore and thoughts turn to improving water access options.

The Recovering Phase is characterised by a sense of disbelief and uncertainty. Questions are raised as to whether the drought is over or there will be follow up rain to fill the soil profile and top up dams and rivers. Production is occurring but would be considered ‘below average’. Full production recovery will not have occurred if this area has experienced drought conditions over the past six months. This recovery phase may take years given the need to scale up to full production and rebuild reserves such as stock on hand and financial reserves.

Understanding Drought Resilience in Northwest NSW

Drought cannot be prevented nor avoided in our Australian environment, only managed.

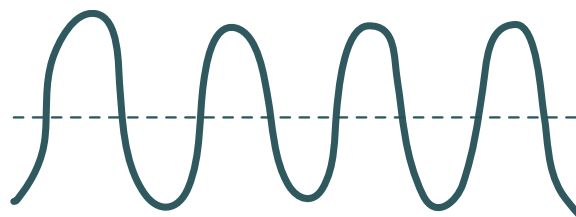
Effective Drought Resilience ensures maximising production, creating strong and cohesive communities and ensuring reliant and robust service delivery networks in good seasons, so there is a level of established preparedness when drought occurs.

Waiting to take action and implement strategies of resilience in the midst of a drought is not effective and reflects ineffective crisis management. Putting strategies in place to reduce the depth and severity of the trough will ensure greater sustainability in the long term.

Drought Management through Created Resilience

Good Season (peaks) - WIND UP

Optimise production and “put away resources” for drought



Drought (troughs) - WIND DOWN

Minimise production and draw on reserves to undertake projects achievable in drought to optimise production during good seasons

Figure 18 Drought management through created resilience

Drought Impacts on regional communities

In Coonamble, the economic stress induced by the 2017-19 drought was palpable, with families grappling with reduced incomes while continuing to meet financial and familial obligations. This scenario was compounded by visible signs of decline, such as empty shop fronts, which served as stark reminders of the town’s dwindling business activity and population. Unemployment rates rose as businesses closed, further exacerbating the cycle of poverty.

Amidst these difficulties, the implementation of water access schemes, such as the Cap and Pipe the Bore Scheme, had alleviated some of the drought’s immediate impacts and underscored the critical role of effective water management strategies in sustaining agricultural productivity and, by extension, community resilience.

Warren's struggle mirrored that of Coonamble, with the added complexity of water security being a significant concern. The community's heavy reliance on agriculture made it particularly vulnerable to the drought's impacts, leading to a decrease in population as people left in search of better opportunities elsewhere. Drought not only has environmental effects, but repercussions on the fragile economic and social fabric of North Western Communities.

The narrative from Nyngan added another layer to the understanding of drought impacts, emphasising environmental degradation and the psychological toll of enduring "dust storms". The lack of specialised services and the challenge of maintaining a stable population amidst declining natural and economic resources underscored the need for comprehensive support and planning.

Drought impacts on the Northwest Region

Quantitatively, the regional impact of drought was stark, with 80% of businesses reporting a negative impact on their cash flow. This economic strain was further illustrated by the agricultural sector, where 97.8% of businesses reported being affected by the drought. The downturn in business activity was mirrored by a reported average profit loss of 36% in the Far West and Orana Region, the highest across all New South Wales regions. This data underscored the extensive economic fallout from drought conditions, highlighting the urgent need for targeted support and interventions.

The resulting economic contraction was further exacerbated by volunteer fatigue, as the dwindling number of residents available to support community functions and emergency responses grew increasingly stretched.

The questioning of why droughts were not considered "natural disasters" reflected a broader call for policy recognition and support, highlighting the need for a more robust framework to address the complexities of drought management and assistance.

A concerning 18.7% of businesses admitted to feeling ill-equipped to mitigate risks associated with drought, highlighting a vulnerability to such climatic adversities. The longterm sustainability of businesses was a significant concern, with 59.6% worried about the enduring impacts of the

drought on their operations. In response to these challenging conditions, 85.5% of businesses were compelled to scale back on capital spending, deviating from earlier plans.

This comprehensive data paints a vivid picture of the economic devastation wrought by the drought on the Far West and Orana businesses, underlining the critical need for strategies aimed at resilience and recovery in the face of environmental challenges.

The overall reduction in staffing levels by an average of 1.5 employees among affected businesses spoke to the broader social impacts of drought, affecting employment opportunities and community cohesion. The fact that 69% of businesses considered themselves moderately well-prepared to mitigate drought risks, yet 63.5% reported that the impacts of the 2018 drought were more severe than previous droughts, pointed to an escalating challenge that required more than just preparedness—it demanded proactive and comprehensive management strategies.

The Drought Impact Survey 2020, completed by the Royal Far West, reflected on the experiences of 36 rural families in NSW, starkly illustrates the multifaceted toll of prolonged drought. It reports a nearly 50% rise in the number of individuals struggling with housing costs and a significant 40% of adults indicating poor or fair health, a figure that has doubled, exacerbating the financial and mental health strain on rural families. Lindsay Cane, CEO of Royal Far West, emphasised the compounded adverse effects of drought on the well-being of rural families, which are further intensified by concurrent crises such as bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey quantitatively highlights the escalation in financial stress, with more than a third of families facing challenges in affording food, over half unable to meet health costs, and a notable deterioration in the ability to pay for health services and dental care. Transportation affordability has also suffered, affecting half of the respondents. This financial hardship contributes to job losses, elevated living costs, strained relationships, and heightened mental health needs among families and communities. The expressed need for enhanced access to health services, including mental health counselling, underscores the critical necessity for targeted support and services in rural areas.

Future Drought Projections and Impacts

Overview

Assessment of the impact of drought and drought patterns observed during the Millennium Drought (2006 – 2010) and the recent drought (2017 – 2020) provide insights into potential future drought impacts.

The future impacts of drought in the Northwest Region of New South Wales are closely tied to the compound effects of various shocks and ‘megatrends’ that not only exacerbate the challenges posed by drought, but also present opportunities for action and improved resilience.

Climate projections and impacts

Factors such as climate change, with a predicted increase in temperature and variability in rainfall, have significant implications for the region.

Temperature Projections

Historical records indicate a warming trend, with average, maximum, and minimum temperatures rising. Specifically, the last 30 years have seen an increase in hot days and consecutive days above 38°C, reflecting broader trends of climate change impacting the regions. The following outlines the temperature projections for future periods in the Northwest Region:

Period	Increase
Near Future (2020 - 2039)	+0.7 °C to +1.5 °C
Far Future (2060 - 2079)	+1.8 °C to +2.7 °C

Figure 19: Temperature Projections (Source: CSIRO, 2024)

A map representation of the mean surface temperature projections for the Northwest Region Local Government areas of Bogan, Coonamble and Warren – 2030 to 2090 follows.¹²

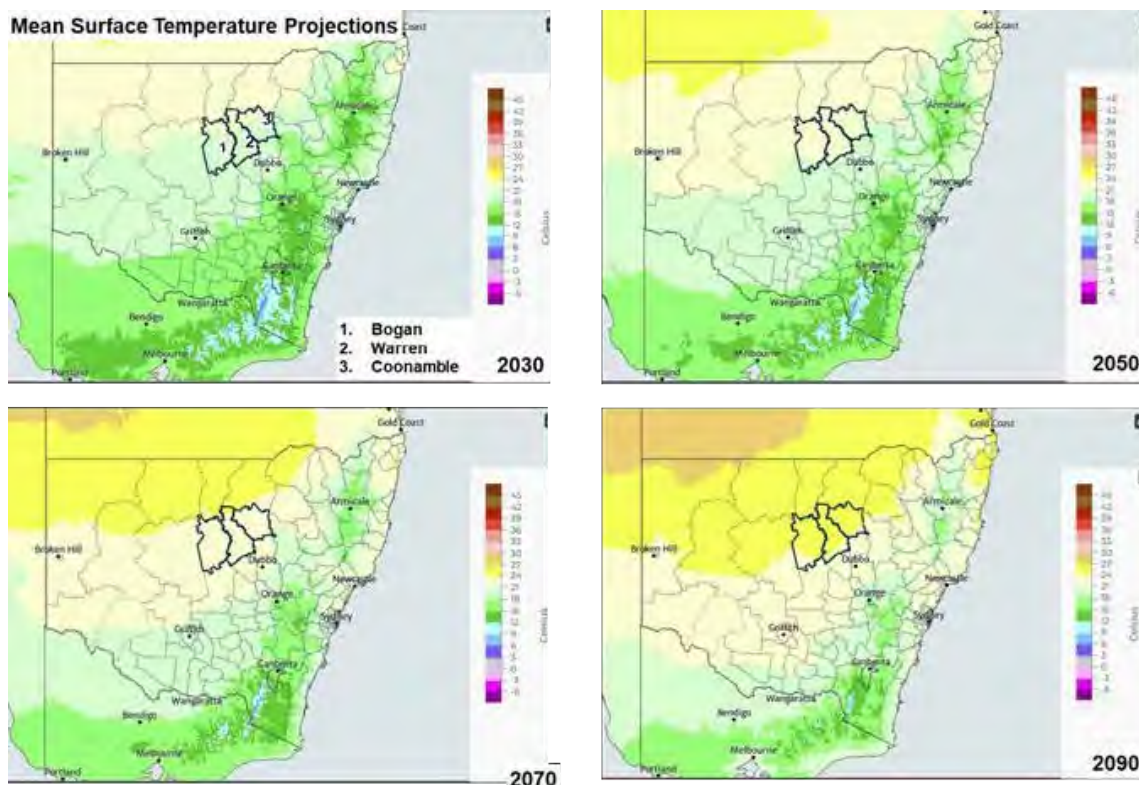


Figure 20 Mean Surface Temperature Projections (Source: CSIRO, 2024)

¹² <https://www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/en/projections-tools/>

Rainfall Projections

The rainfall climate science projections and modelling scenarios for the Northwest are:

Factor	Projection
Rainfall Decrease	Up to 12% reduction in average annual rainfall by 2070.
Seasonal Shifts	Decrease in Spring rainfall, increase in Autumn rainfall.

Figure 21: Rainfall and evaporation Projections

A map representation of the climate science rainfall projections for the Northwest Region Local Government areas of Bogan, Coonamble and Warren – 2030 to 2090 follows.

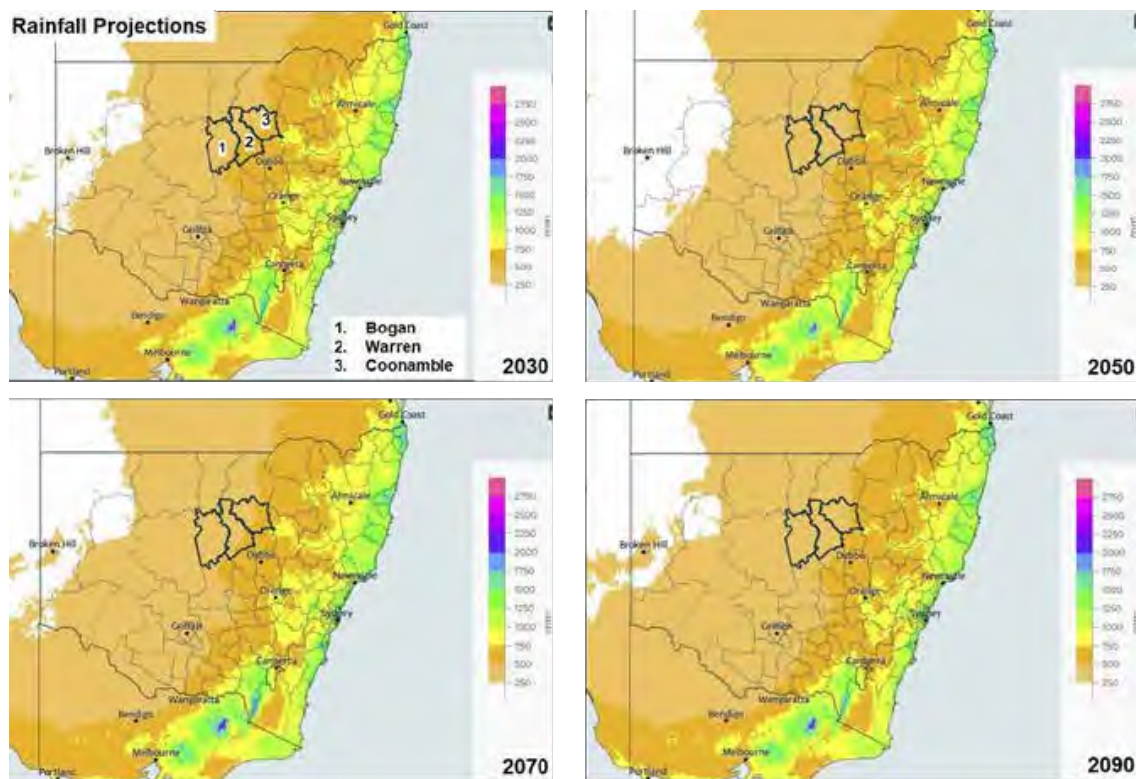


Figure 22: Rainfall projections. (Source: CSIRO, 2024)

The reduction in average rainfall will have significant impact for many farmers and landholders, particularly in crop varieties reliant on irrigated agricultural land. The data below represents the irrigation requirements per crop type (ABS, 2022)¹³.

¹³ Water Use on Australian Farms, ABS, 2022.

Crop	ML	Ha	ML/Ha
Rice	538,365	45,084	11.94
Cotton	1,326,321	197,401	6.72
Fruit and Nut (excluding grapes)	1,127,108	196,906	5.72
Sugar Cane	795,440	157,521	5.05
Grapevines	516,550	130,534	3.96
Vegetables	382,626	98,785	3.87
Pastures and Cereal for Hay and Silage	664,712	210,391	3.16
Pastures and Cereal for Grazing	1,429,495	495,779	2.88
Cereals Crops (excluding rice)	718,870	320,093	2.25

Figure 23 - Irrigation requirements by Crop Variety (Source: ABS, 2022)

Natural Water Resources

Significant quantities of irrigated cotton are grown in Warren and Bogan LGAs, with groundwater an important water source for this irrigation. Multiple large cotton gins are located within the region, including Queensland Cotton, Namoi Cotton and Auscott, all with facilities in Warren¹⁴. Broadacre irrigated crops, specifically cotton lint, were valued at \$54.6 M and \$33.7 M in Bogan and Warren respectively. Irrigated cotton covers a land area of 6,291 ha in the Bogan Shire, ranked 7 for land coverage in NSW¹⁵. In 2021 cotton growing accounted for 4.4% of jobs in Warren Shire.

Dryland cropping, wool and livestock (cattle, sheep, goats) production also contributes significantly to the economy across Bogan,

Warren and Coonamble LGAs. Production data is not readily available however in 2023 employment in agriculture represented 39.8% of the workforce in Warren shire, 26.5% in Coonamble shire, and 22.7% in Bogan shire.

A future scenario involving a reduction in the average annual rainfall will have significant impacts on the value of agricultural production in the region, with the likelihood of cotton gin increasing due to a lack of water resources to maintain production and operation.

Hot Days and Drought Frequency Projections

The projections for the frequency of hot days and drought conditions for the Northwest Region are:

Condition	Projection
Hot Days Increase	More hot days and consecutive days above 38°C.
Drought Severity	2 – 3% probability of severe droughts (similar conditions to 2017 – 2020).

Figure 24: Frequency of hot days and drought conditions

¹⁴ Agriculture Industry Snapshot for Planning – Central West Slopes and Plains Sub Region, Department of Primary Industries, 2020

¹⁵ AgTrack – Agricultural and Land Use Dashboard, NSW Government, 2020

The NSW Government's advanced climate data has unveiled the natural climatic variability extending beyond the observed records. This data suggests that the region has historically experienced more severe wet and dry periods

than recorded in the last 130 years.

*Given the combination of changes in temperature and rainfall, the evapotranspiration 16 projections for 2030 to 2090 are:*¹⁶

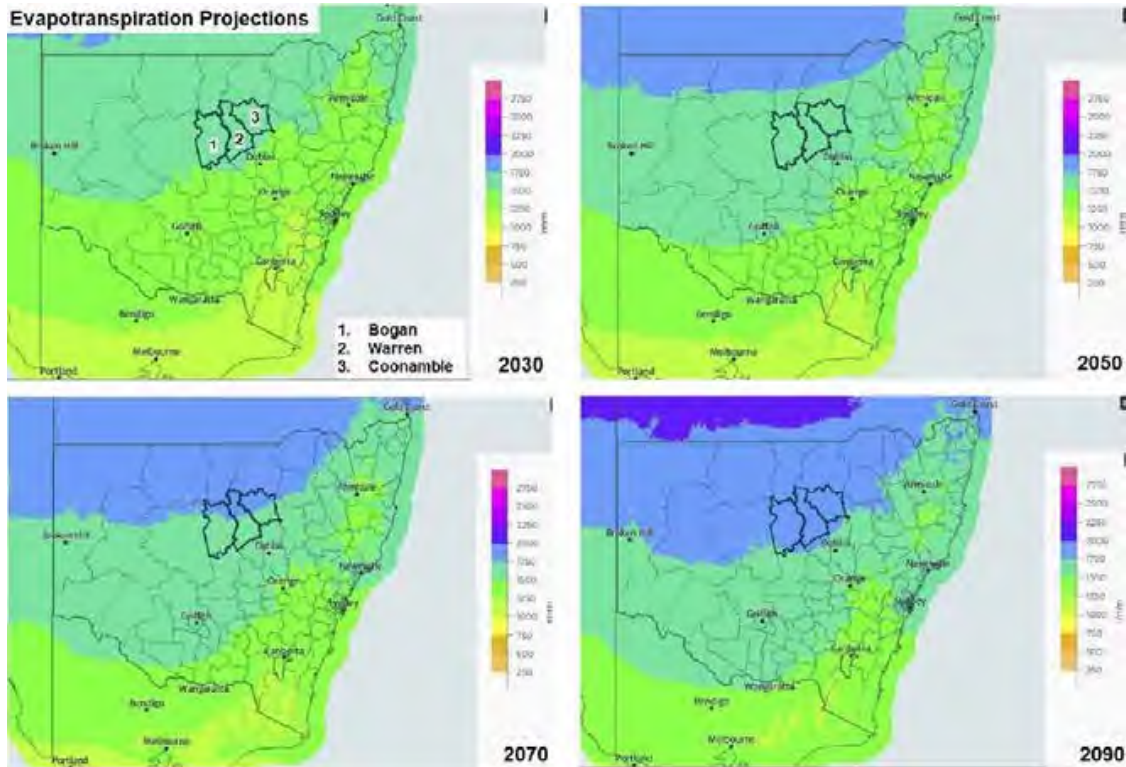


Figure 25: Evapotranspiration Projections (Source: CSIRO, 2024)

Prolonged drought conditions result in increased pressure on water resources, adversely affecting agricultural productivity and leading to a cyclical pattern of economic hardship and population decline.

Impact of Climate Projections on the Region and Project Priority

The future drought scenarios in the North West will significantly influence the delivery of key projects related to water security, telecommunications, community strengthening, and sustainable tourism. As temperatures rise and rainfall decreases, the prioritisation of water security projects such as the development of new bores and increased water storage will become paramount. However, the increased frequency and severity of droughts may stretch financial and logistical resources, potentially leading to delays and higher costs. These projects will likely become the top priority, but

securing the necessary funding and materials may be challenging as the region competes with other drought-affected areas. This increases the significance of forward planning and proactive implementation of water security infrastructure, to ensure that the region is prepared for future scenarios.

Telecommunications infrastructure improvements, essential for maintaining connectivity and supporting remote work and education, will become increasingly vital. However, these projects may face lower prioritisation compared to immediate water security needs. The scarcity of resources may necessitate phased implementation or scaling down of such projects, impacting the region's ability to stay connected and resilient.

The harsh climatic conditions may also deter visitors, as the region's natural attractions could suffer. The scarcity and restrictions on water also

¹⁶ <https://www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/en/projections-tools/>

decrease accessibility to the region, with road maintenance delayed due to its reliance on water in the project delivery. However, simultaneously, the deprivation of tourism and sparsity of visitation and spending within the region, will have significant economic consequences for residents, due to many farmers and land-owners often recommended to diversify their income through farm stays, etc, that rely on visitation. As a result, the significant infrastructure and tourism promotion will be required to maintain visitation during these periods.

Population Impacts

The population rate in the Northwest region has declined from 2006 to 2021, with the most substantial declines occurring during drought periods (see the following Population and unemployment trends in the region between 2006 – 2021 graphic). In the Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires, the overall population trends are characterised by a declining and aging demographic, particularly in agricultural sectors.

Drought exacerbates these trends, leading to increased migration to urban centres as younger residents seek more stable employment opportunities, better housing and access to childcare. This out-migration contributes to an aging population, workforce reductions, and challenges in maintaining economic stability and community services.

Future droughts are likely to intensify these population impacts and create further economic challenges. The aging population may lead to a further decline in the size and capability of the workforce, especially in agriculture, which is heavily dependent on physical labour. Continued

drought could accelerate population decline as residents, especially the younger demographic, seek more stable living conditions and employment opportunities elsewhere. This out-migration will have long-term implications for the region's demographic structure, reinforcing the trend to an aging population and a shrinking labour force, further constraining economic growth and community vitality.

This trend suggests that droughts are a critical factor driving population decline, likely due to the associated economic and environmental hardships. The ongoing challenge for these regions is to develop strategies that enhance liveability, drought resilience and economic diversity to mitigate the impact of future droughts on population trends.

Outmigration also undermines the confidence needed to invest in and revitalise shrinking communities. This lack of confidence stifles local entrepreneurship and discourages new businesses from setting up, further accelerating economic decline. Decisions to invest in the community are often driven by emotional rather than economic motivations, as residents strive to improve their 'home' and attract like-minded people.

“There are opportunities but its difficult to weight up the investment potential versus financial returns. There is not a lot of confidence to ‘grow’ small communities when they have been experiencing a ‘shrinkage’ of population, services and business growth over the past 20 years.”
 – Emily (Nyngan)

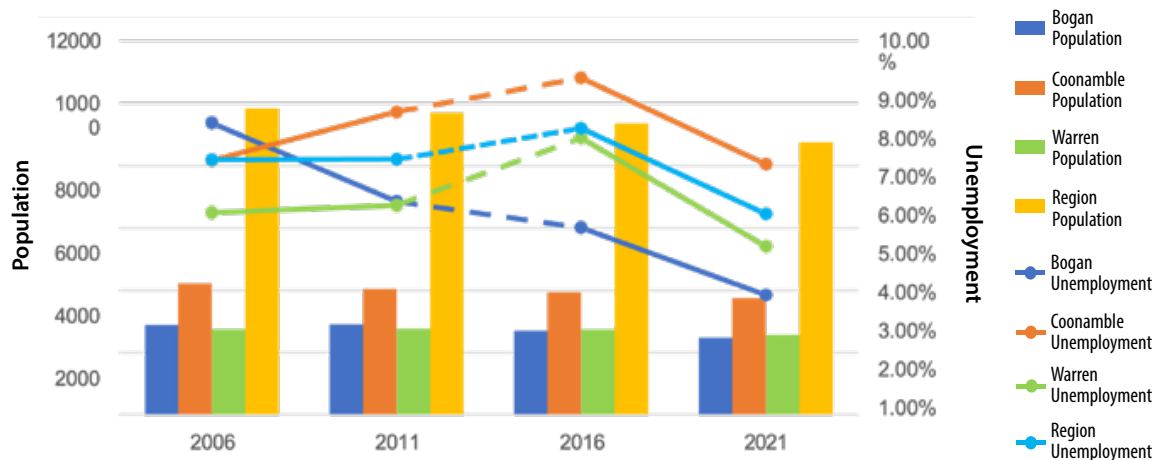


Figure 26 – Population and unemployment trends in the region between 2006 - 2021 (ABS).

Economic Impacts

Economic impacts of future droughts on employment complex and influenced by several factors including government policy and funding, structural changes in agriculture, economic diversification and resource management and sustainability.

• Economic impacts - Government Policy and funding

The economic resilience of the region during drought periods has historically depended on emergency relief efforts, government subsidies, and temporary employment packages.

While these measures can provide short-term relief, they are not sustainable options for long-term drought resilience and may not sustain long-term employment stability, with this impact likely exacerbated in future droughts, particularly because of tightened lending due to reduced national economic activity.

Farmers can now access low interest loans to help prepare for, manage and recover from drought through the:

- i. Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) Farm Investment Loan and RIC Drought Loan, to make the farm business stronger, more resilient and more profitable.
- ii. Drought Ready and Resilient Fund, a loan facility of up to \$250 000 can be used for products, activities and services relating to animal welfare, farm preparedness, income diversification, environmental improvements as well as training and business development.
- iii. Drought Infrastructure Fund (previously known as the Farm Innovation Fund) the loan product can be used for drought preparedness and mitigation by investing in permanent on-farm infrastructure that will:
 - **manage adverse seasonal conditions** - improve water efficiencies with irrigation systems, cap and piping of bores, new dams, install water tanks and desilting of ground tanks
 - **ensure long term sustainability** - increase the viability of a farm business and improve pasture and soil health, plant trees for shade and wildlife corridors, eradicate weeds, flood proof property and fence riverbanks.
 - **improve farm productivity** - reduce risks and improve efficiencies by building fodder and grain storage facilities, sheds, fencing, roadworks and solar power conversions.

These initiatives were designed to bolster the resilience of NSW farmers to future adverse weather events and climatic conditions, such as drought. The absence of low interest loans like these during subsequent droughts would limit a farmers' ability to adapt to drought conditions, to invest in necessary improvements or maintain operations. This could potentially lead to business closures and a significant reduction in the agricultural workforce.

The downside of low interest loans is that repayment of the loan is contingent on return to more profitable outcomes which may be delayed in an extended drought. Low interest loans in addition to any pre-existing loans will put added pressure on the farming business especially in times of rising interest rates and inflation.

A further drought would likely exacerbate economic vulnerabilities, leading to more significant reliance on external financial support and emergency relief measures. This dependency could strain regional and national resources, especially if drought conditions become more prolonged and severe due to climate change.

• Economic impacts - structural changes in agriculture

Evident in the Northwest Region, employment in the agricultural sector shows a more consistent decline over the entire period, with the most significant drops occurring between drought periods. This trend suggests that the sector's downturn is not solely due to drought conditions but also to broader structural changes within the industry, such as increased mechanization, increased use of external contractors versus local employees, shifts towards less labour-intensive farming practices, and farm consolidation. These changes are often aimed at increasing efficiency and reducing reliance on variable human labour, but they also lead to a reduced agricultural workforce over time.

This is a common trend in drought scenarios globally, where prolonged drought conditions catalyse farm consolidation and the adoption of farming practices that are less dependent on human labour, thus leading to a persistent decline in agricultural employment outside of active drought periods.

• Economic impacts – diversification

Employment in the administration and public services sector often increases during drought periods due to heightened demand for public assistance and the implementation of drought relief programs. These programs, typically

funded by government initiatives, aim to mitigate the immediate effects of drought on communities, leading to temporary job creation in local government and support services.

This rise in administration and public services roles may occur, but is more likely centralised in regional centres such as Dubbo. Many drought relief programs are delivered out of Dubbo or other regional centres and access to the service is online or by travelling to Dubbo or by drive-in drive-out service. Remote delivery of services to the Northwest Region adds little to the community and puts extra pressure on the strained resources of the Northwest Region, especially when travel to a regional centre to access a service is required.

Once these drought-specific programs conclude, employment in this sector declines substantially, reflecting the temporary nature of such interventions. The observed decline in employment between drought periods in administration and public services can be attributed to the cessation of temporary drought relief programs and a return to pre-drought

governmental operations.

This cycle indicates a reactive rather than proactive approach to drought management, where employment opportunities are directly tied to immediate drought response efforts rather than long-term resilience planning.

“Short-term government employment contracts don’t offer financial security for residents in small communities to “settle” and become a part of the community - they can’t buy a home, can’t plan for the future. This also has implications for alternate off-farm incomes.”

- Lee (Coonamble)

This pattern may not be sustainable in future droughts. While temporary employment opportunities might arise from relief efforts, these jobs are not a replacement for the lost permanent positions in agriculture and related industries. Over time, repeated droughts could lead to a permanent shift in the job market, with an increased number of short-term, low-security jobs, further destabilising the region’s economy.

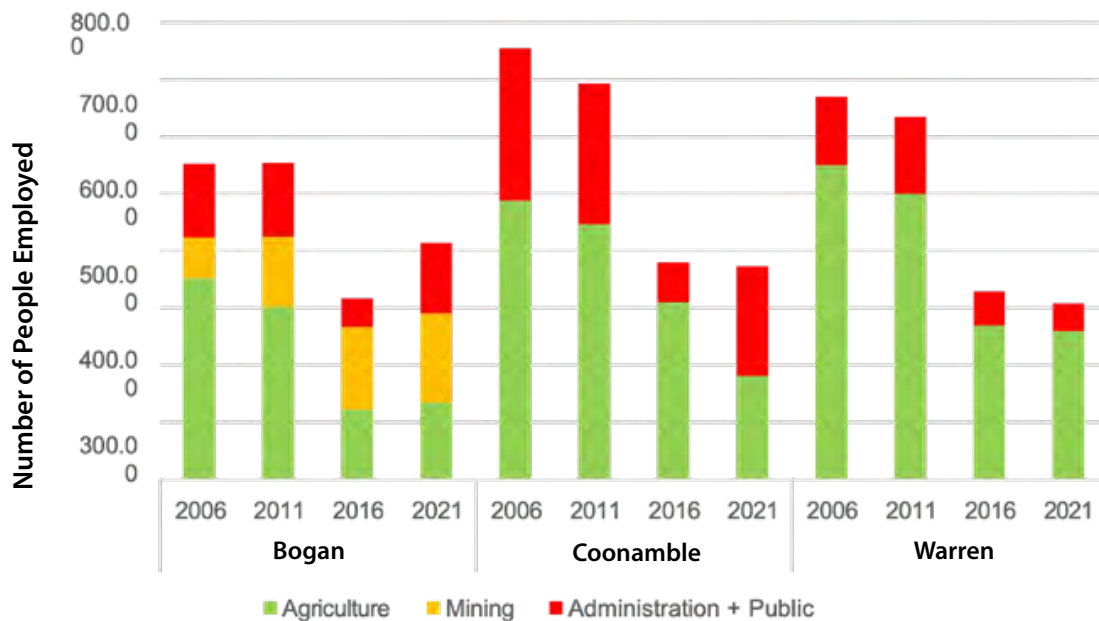


Figure 27 – Industry employment trends from 2006 - 2021 (ABS - Top 5 Industries).

A trend which started in the 2017-2020 drought and gained momentum during the Covid Pandemic was the rise in prominence of remote working and home-based business. Digital connectivity has enabled the people of Northwest Region to connect with education, business and customers like never before.

An off-farm income is an extremely valued defence for farming families against the boom-and-bust cycle of drought and recovery. For example, the incredibly successful “Buy from the Bush” social media campaign promoted regional businesses was launched from a kitchen table on a property near Warren. It

leveraged the enormous opportunity to connect city customers who really cared about the bush with over 250 bush retailers. It is estimated Buy from the Bush provided \$14 million in revenue to regional businesses during its operation.

Regions with economies heavily dependent on agriculture will face increased vulnerability from drought, requiring improvements in digital connectivity to facilitate training opportunities for business diversification and sustainable farming practices. Also, the future success of small businesses in the Northwest Region is contingent on access to a larger market.

Buy from the Bush founder Grace Brennan: "Often you get a very one- dimensional perspective, with rural issues only trending in times of crisis," she said. "But we want to be able to provide a nuance beyond farmers in paddocks when times get tough ... we have this incredible untapped resource in the way rural Australia works to solve problems. For me, it's like a secret sauce. We need to mine in and leverage it."

Sydney morning Herald 10/09/2023

Expansion of digital connectivity is vital for economic and social participation, particularly for smaller centres where "off-farm" income is a significant strategy in drought preparedness and drought resilience.

• Economic Impacts - resource management

Efficient management of resources including human resources, reserves of fodder and water are directly linked to productivity and profitability. When a business is thriving, more money can be spent on resource management and confidence is high.

Conversely, droughts result in reduced capacity to earn an income and result in a rundown of reserves or resources. Not only reserves of pasture, fodder and water are depleted: human reserves of energy and confidence are also depleted giving rise to physical and mental health issues. As the Northwest Region relies on the goodwill of volunteers to run events such as school carnivals, sporting fixtures and agricultural shows, social activities are curtailed further compounding the issue. Suicide or mental illness deeply affects the community whose lives are deeply entwined through business or social activities.

Unemployment and loss of income not only

affects those directly involved in agriculture, but also ripples through the local economy, impacting sectors like retail, services, and manufacturing that rely on the spending power of these primary sector employees. The impacts on local business were exemplified in the most recent 2017 – 2020 drought, where the inability of non-primary producers to access subsidies resulted in significant business closures, many of which have not reopened since.

• Economic impacts - employment

The economic impacts of future droughts on employment in regions like Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren can be significant, affecting various sectors differently based on their reliance on natural resources and government interventions. The fluctuating employment trends in these regions, particularly in the administration, public services, and agriculture sectors, reflect the broader economic vulnerabilities and structural adjustments that occur in response to drought conditions.

During drought, the changes in agricultural employment are minimal, possibly due to the necessity to maintain operations despite reduced water availability and productivity. Government subsidies and support during these periods can help sustain agricultural employment temporarily, but they do not address the underlying trend of workforce reduction in the sector.

Following the 2017 - 2020 drought farmers have demonstrated a propensity to de-stock based on Bureau of Meteorology seasonal forecasts, thereby reducing the workload to feed stock and reducing constraints on their time possibly freeing up time to pursue an off-farm income.

Addressing these challenges will require integrated-long term strategies that enhance regional resilience to drought while supporting sustainable employment and economic growth.

The economic impacts of future droughts on employment in Bogan, Coonamble and Warren regions, will likely continue to reflect the complex interplay between temporary government interventions, structural changes in agriculture, and the need for greater economic diversification and sustainable resource management.

Social Impacts

The Drought Impact Survey 2020¹⁷ conducted

¹⁷ West, R. F. (2020). Cumulative effects of drought show sustained hardship – survey.

by Royal Far West on rural families in NSW paints (responses recorded by 36 rural families staying at Royal Far West in February and March of 2020) a distressing picture of the broad-reaching consequences of prolonged drought, which has severe implications for predicting the social impacts of future droughts.

The survey's findings on financial stress, where over a third of families struggled to afford food, and more than half faced difficulties meeting health costs, suggest a significant decline in living standards and access to basic needs. The deterioration in the ability to afford essential services like health and dental care, coupled with transportation challenges affected half of the respondents, reflecting the extensive economic strain and social isolation experienced by these communities.

Studies have shown that droughts exert long-term psychological and social effects, leading to increased rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in affected populations. The loss of livelihoods, uncertainty about the future, and the degradation of the natural environment can lead to a sense of hopelessness and helplessness among community members.

Predicting the social impacts of future droughts based on these findings suggests a continuing and possibly worsening trend of financial hardship, health issues, and social disintegration in rural areas. The compounded stress of successive droughts and other overlapping crises can erode community resilience, weaken social bonds, and lead to a breakdown in social cohesion.

The expressed need for better access to health services, including mental health counselling, highlights the urgent requirement for comprehensive support systems that address the multifaceted challenges posed by drought.

Impacts on Indigenous Communities

The future drought impacts on Indigenous communities in the Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren regions, as evidenced during the 2017 - 2020 drought, are profound and multifaceted. These impacts go beyond the immediate environmental and economic effects, touching the very core of cultural identity and community well-being.

• Environmental impacts

The decline in native flora and fauna during drought, alongside the loss of breeding grounds for birds and fish, signifies a broader ecological

crisis affecting the entire ecosystem's health and sustainability.

The ongoing struggle for water rights and the impact of large-scale agricultural and mining operations, underscore the challenges of managing water resources in a way that respects both the environmental needs and the rights of Indigenous communities. The upstream water extraction for irrigation highlights a critical need for equitable water management policies that consider the cultural, ecological, and economic needs of all communities along these river systems.

• Economic impacts

The drought's economic impact on these communities, particularly those engaged in traditional land and water-based activities, is severe. With rivers drying up, activities like fishing, swimming, and hunting, which are not only cultural practices but also vital sources of sustenance and income, are no longer feasible.

Drought also reduces casual and seasonal employment opportunities such as harvest or planting operations.

• Cultural impacts

Water sources in these regions are not merely physical resources but hold cultural significance for Indigenous communities. They are places of cultural practices, storytelling, and spiritual solace. Severe drought leads to dry rivers and disappearing wetlands, disrupts cultural practices and connections that these communities have with their land and water.

The distress expressed by community members the Gamilaraay and Yuwalarraay elders and residents like Rhonda Ashby and Brenda McBride speaks to a profound sense of loss, not only of water but of culture, heritage, economic stability, and environmental health. The ongoing challenges faced by these communities call for urgent and inclusive water management strategies that recognise and integrate the cultural, spiritual, and ecological significance of water to Indigenous Australians.

• Community impacts

Their communities, which are deeply connected to the land and water for cultural practices, livelihood, and identity, will face increasing challenges as droughts become more frequent and severe.

Access to water is a critical concern, with drought conditions reducing river flows and water levels,

thereby affecting not only daily life but also the health of sacred and culturally significant sites such as the Macquarie Marshes. This situation threatens to disrupt traditional activities and cultural heritage.

Environmental Impacts

The diverse impacts of drought on ecosystems, as noted by Bond et al. (2008), underscore the multifaceted nature of drought effects on environmental and ecological systems.

The Murray Darling Basin has experienced significant ecological stress due to drought conditions, with notable events such as toxicity in the lakes in the lower Basin and large-scale mortality of floodplain forests. These incidents, driven by low river inflows and the absence of flooding, highlight the critical link between water flow and ecosystem health.

For the Northwest Region, the insights gained from studies and modelling of changing conditions within the Murray Darling Basin can be used to predict the impact of future droughts.

Prolonged and future droughts will likely have significant impacts on aquatic ecosystems, which are particularly vulnerable to reduced river flows and lower water levels in natural bodies. As a result, fish populations and other aquatic life forms may face decline due to the reduced availability of habitat and water quality issues.

Similarly, terrestrial ecosystems will suffer from decreased moisture availability, causing vegetation stress, higher mortality rates in plant species, and adverse effects on wildlife dependent on these habitats.

Soil erosion and land degradation are additional concerns during drought periods. The absence of vegetation cover can lead to increased erosion by wind and water, leading to the loss of fertile land, which is detrimental to agricultural productivity and natural ecosystems. Dust storms are a typical feature of extended drought in the Northwest Region.

Drought conditions also exacerbate climate change feedback loops. For example, stressed vegetation due to drought captures less carbon, and soil erosion can release the carbon stored in the soil, thus contributing to increased greenhouse gas emissions.

These interconnected impacts of drought highlight the need for strategies to mitigate environmental degradation and promote sustainability in Northwest NSW.

Unpredictable Factors that may Affect Future Drought Response

The Economic, Environmental and Social scenarios that may arise and affect responses to future Droughts are summarised as follows.

Future Scenario	Factors Contributing	Effects	References
Economic			
Economic Recession	Global market dynamics, changes in commodity prices, trade policies, economic policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced consumer spending and investment in the region, leading to business closures and higher unemployment. • Increased financial strain on local governments, limiting their ability to fund drought response and resilience projects. • Higher levels of poverty and reduced economic stability – inability for farmers to manage finance in ‘non-drought periods’ to prepare for drought. 	NSW Business Chamber Drought Survey Warren Shire Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan
Policy and Governance Changes	Government decisions (local, state and federal), changes to funding allocation, changes in water management policies, regulatory adjustments, political shifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty in water allocations, complicating drought response efforts. • Change to funding priorities, effecting delivery of projects. • Delays in implementing drought resilience projects due to policy changes and variation in regulatory paperwork. • Inconsistent support and resources from government agencies. 	Regional Water Strategy

Future Scenario	Factors Contributing	Effects	References
Technological Advancements	Pace of technological innovation, funding for research and development, acceptance by the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variability in the effectiveness of new technologies for drought management. • Dependence on government and community support for successful implementation. • Potential for increased disparities between those with access to new technologies and those without. • Change in network coverage type, and redundancy of existing on- farm and off-farm technological investments. 	<p>Regional Water Strategy</p> <p>Warren Shire Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan</p>
Environmental			
Climate Variability	Climate change, variability in precipitation and temperature, changing atmospheric conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in predicting weather patterns, complicating water usage and agricultural planning. • Increased frequency of extreme weather events, stressing infrastructure and resources. • Greater unpredictability in water availability, affecting long-term planning and investments. 	<p>Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot</p> <p>Western Enabling Regional Adaptation – Central West and Orana Report</p>
Increased Fire Risk	Dry conditions, high temperatures, accumulation of dry vegetation, insufficient fire management resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread environmental damage and loss of property. • Significant resource allocation for firefighting and recovery, diverting resources from other drought response efforts. • Long-term degradation of natural habitats and ecosystems. 	<p>Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot</p> <p>Western Enabling Regional Adaptation – Central West and Orana Report</p>
Social			
Health Crises e.g. Viral Outbreak	Predicted increase of global pandemics and epidemics, decreased response to viral antibodies and antibiotics e.g. antibiotic resistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strain on healthcare resources, increased incidences of heat stress, respiratory problems and mental health issues. • Outmigration to increase access to healthcare facilities on demand. • Increased costs for healthcare and social services. • Less mobile workforce and decreased resource capacity. 	<p>Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot</p> <p>Western Enabling Regional Adaptation – Central West and Orana Report</p> <p>Business Chamber Drought Survey</p>
Outmigration	Mine closures, lack of employment opportunities, reduced agricultural viability, inadequate access to education and healthcare, and overall decline in economic prospects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced labour force, impacting the local economy and capacity to deliver essential services and priority projects. • If amongst youth, increased demand for healthcare and social services, with a diminished workforce to support these services. • Social fragmentation and weakened community bonds due to reduced social support networks that are critical during crises. • Decreased availability of volunteers for essential community services. 	<p>Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot</p> <p>Regional Water Strategy</p> <p>Warren Shire Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan</p>

Figure 28 – Summary of potential Economic, Environmental and Social scenarios

The analysis of the future drought projections and impacts, demonstrates the interconnected nature of the natural, economic and social environments.

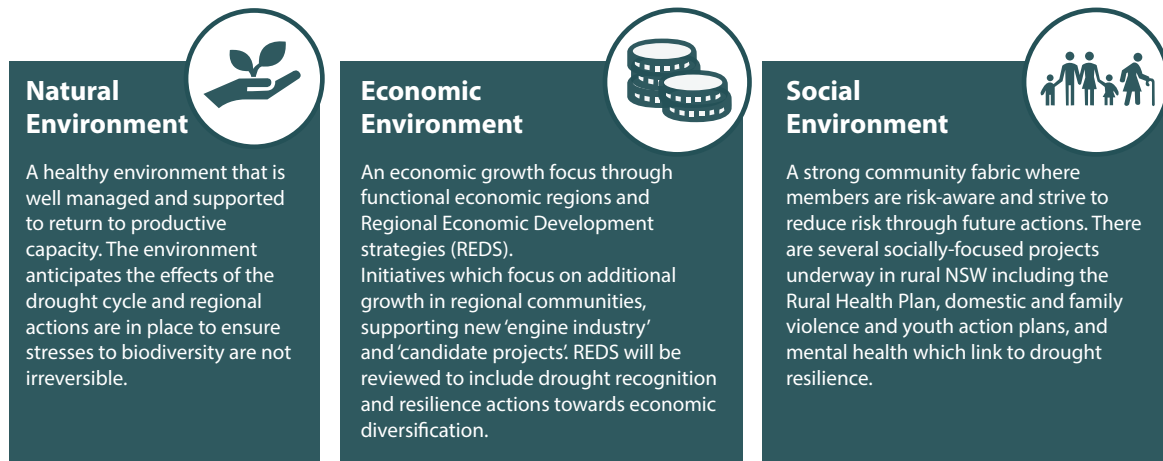


Figure 29 Viewing resilience as a system

The interconnected nature of those environments reinforces the requirement for initiatives and projects that contribute to improving the drought resilience of the region to be considered as a system, and not in isolation.

Our Drought Resilience Journey

The plan:

- o Recognises the proactivity of farmers and communities in regard to drought preparedness.
- o Highlights that further preparedness is required to continue to address the currently identified and future impacts of drought, and the associated climate trends.

Councils, community members, industry leaders and technical stakeholders have identified strategic initiatives and projects with corresponding actions for the Northwest Region which are required to improve the drought resilience of the region.

The projects and initiatives detailed were distilled from a 'long list of projects' arising from the initial stakeholder consultation processes.

The initiatives:

- o Form a pathway towards improving the resilience of the region to the impact of drought and its related stresses and shocks.
- o Contribute to maintaining, modifying and transforming existing systems and functions within the region.

It should also be considered that drought is dynamic in nature and there is no single point at which resilience of a region is attained. Therefore, it should be expected that as a project or an initiative progresses, further opportunities will

arise that might be pursued and incorporated into the plan to further improve the drought resilience of the region.

This plan incorporates a series of projects under four initiatives:

- **Long-Term Water Security Projects.** The initiatives include Groundwater, off-stream storage, and water reuse projects.
- **Telecommunication security.** The initiative is aimed at improving the telecommunications connectivity across the region.
- **Stronger Communities Program.** The initiative is aimed at improving the community cohesion, well-being and financial resilience in region.
- **Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Strategy.** The initiative is aimed at developing and implementing a tourism strategy across the region on a sustainable basis.

The project and initiatives in this Plan are aligned to the Key Outcome Areas to foster a more resilient, innovative and united region:

- People, Culture, and Community,
- Economy
- Landscape and Natural Environment
- Infrastructure and Built Environment

Project / Initiative	People, Culture, and Community	Economy	Landscape & Natural Environment	Infrastructure & Built Environment
	Enhance regional liveability, foster a robust and attractive community, and improve social resilience and wellbeing.	Expanding the business and agricultural sector's self-reliance and performance, ensuring stability and growth within the region's economy.	Improving the environmental resilience of the entire regional landscape, including agricultural lands and river systems.	Strengthening infrastructure to support economic and environmental sustainability.
Long-Term Water Security Projects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Telecommunication Security	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stronger Communities Program	✓	✓		
Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓

Figure 30 – Alignment of Project / Initiatives by Outcome Area

As an outcome of future droughts, and implementation of drought resilience projects and the evaluation of the outcomes and impact over time, the plan across the four outcome areas will need to adapt, transform and change over time.

The plan for each initiative includes:

- A description of the initiative and project.
- Scope of the initiative and projects.
- Pathway to implementation.
- Analysis of how the initiative / projects supports 'Broader Drought Resilience.
- A Timeline for implementation.
- An economic analysis of the initiative.
- A governance structure to support the implementation of each initiative.
- An analysis of the responsiveness to potential future scenarios and uncertainties on the implementation and delivery of each project.
- An evaluation approach to the implementation, outcomes and impact of each project.

The program logic described in the following diagrams: v

- underpins the investment decisions for the initiatives, and
- reflects the linkage of the various components through the Plan responding to future uncertainty and change around:
 - Situation **(if)**.
 - Initiatives / Projects, Inputs and Planning, Outputs **(then)**.
 - Outcomes **(has the impact of)**.
 - Impact **(contributes to the vision of)**.

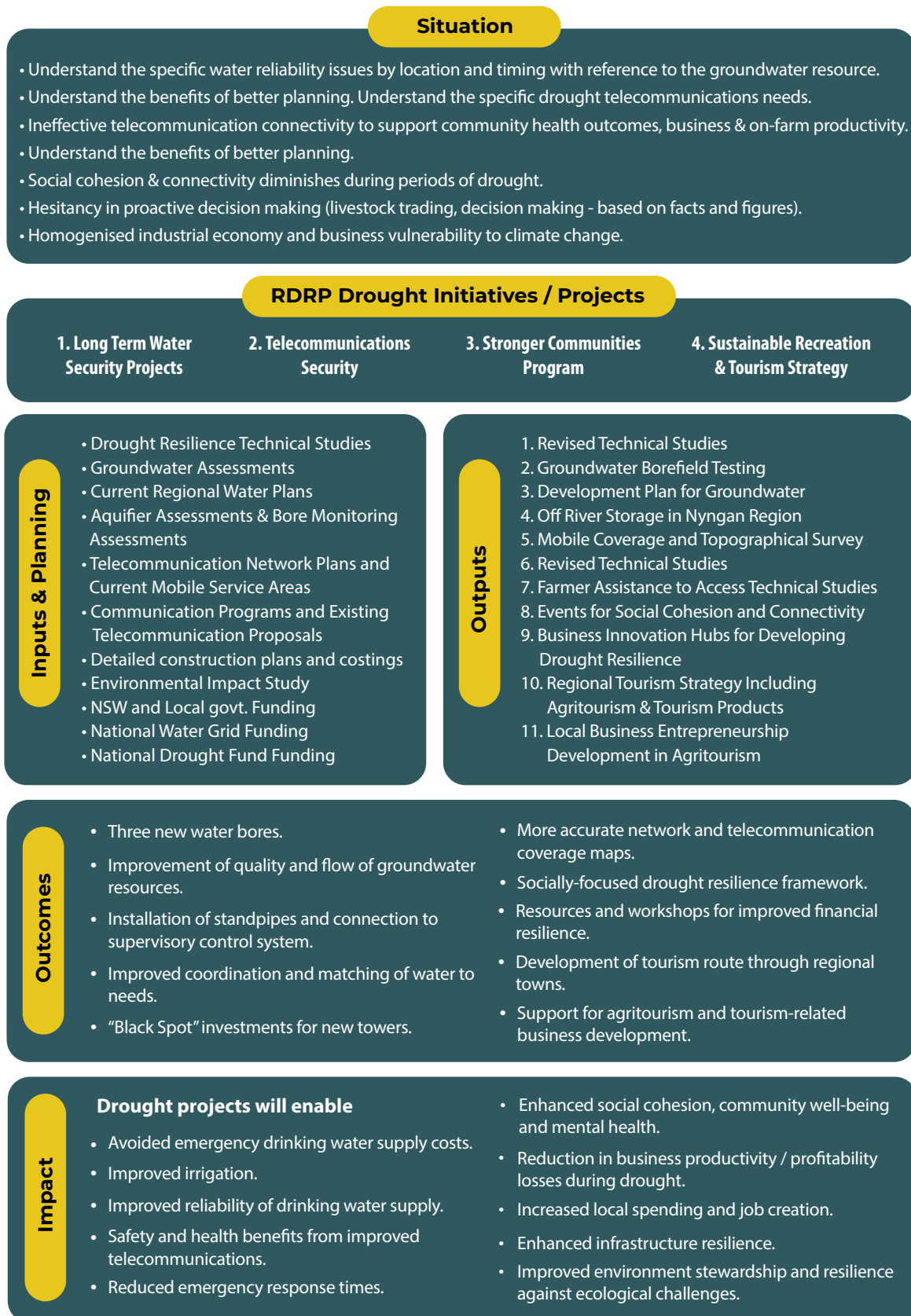


Figure 31 - Drought Resilience Program Logic Map at a Project Level (Bogan, Coonamble and Warren LGAs) (The Stable Group, 2024)

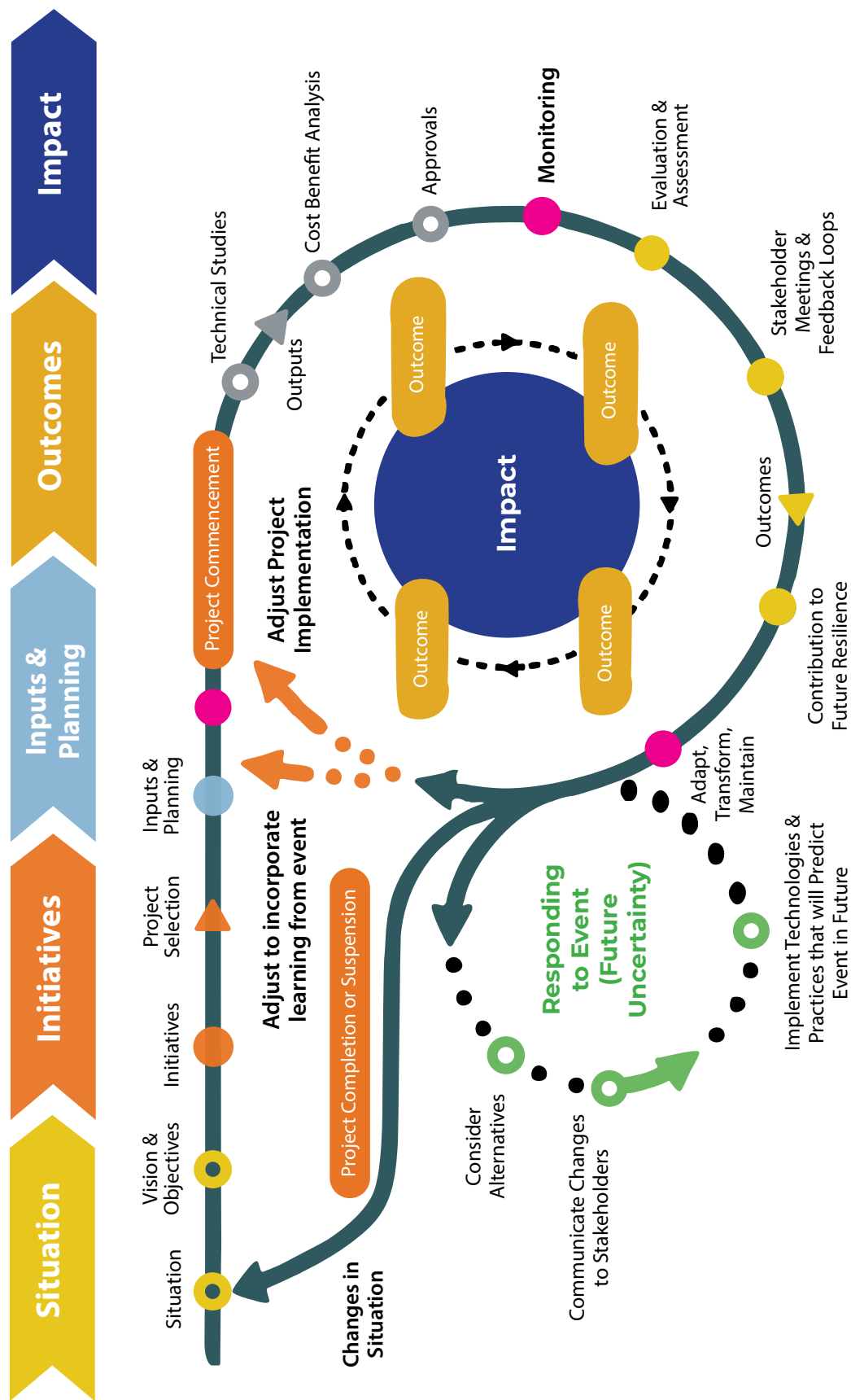


Figure 32 - Drought Resilience Program Responding to Future Uncertainty and Change (The Stable Group, 2024)

Long-Term Water Security Projects



Project Description

The shortlisted long-term projects to improve water security include the provision of:

- Groundwater bores.
- Nyngan water security project including access to boar water an associated pipeline.
- Increased dam storage capacity at Burrendong Dam.

Scope

Water Security Groundwater in Warren Shire Council – Proving of Groundwater Resources (Quality and Flow) and Installation of Standpipes

The proving of groundwater resources (quality and flow) and installation of standpipes (connected to a supervisory control system to provide a capability for standpipes to be switched on/off, to cross level usage between locations to adjust for changes in quality and flow rates) in up to five locations, to provide greater resilience for the agriculture and town water supplies of local towns.

Water Security – Off River in Warren Shire Council

Establishing an off-river storage (circa 3,000 ML) at or before the Nyngan off-take to secure the water supply to the Warren Shire (industry, environment, irrigators, domestic supply).

Water Security – Raise the capacity of Burrendong Dam

Increase the capacity of the dam by circa 20% to reduce the risk of water shortages to the region.

Pathway to implementation

The pathway to the delivery of the projects includes (as required):

1. Conduct of feasibility and technical / geotechnical investigation and studies to assess the viability, sustainability, and environmental impact of proposed water projects.
2. Survey and Detailed design.
3. Environmental assessments.
4. Detailed cost estimate.
5. Complete full business case.
6. Funding applications & regulatory approvals.
7. Tender for construction.

Supporting Broader Resilience

The water security projects will contribute to improving drought resilience of the Northwest Region through:

- Modifying the existing system for the provision of water for stock, domestic use and dust suppression for road maintenance/ construction activities, by increasing the number of water bores.
- Modifying the existing water storage capacity of the region, through inclusion of an additional off-river storage with 3,00 ML capacity to reduce water risks to the region.
- Transforming the existing water storage capacity by increasing the capacity of the Burrendong Dam.

The projects support the pillars of drought resilience through:

Pillar 1 : Planning & Monitoring	Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events	Pillar 2 : Building Future Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Carry out feasibility studies to identify the most effective water security projects, such as new groundwater sources or reservoirs. · Implement monitoring systems for existing water sources to proactively manage water levels and quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Designate and support vulnerable sectors with alternative water supplies and conservation measures during drought. · Activate contingency plans based on monitoring data to mitigate the immediate impact on water availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Construct resilient water infrastructure projects that ensure long-term availability and quality of water for all sectors. · Launch initiatives that promote sustainable water use and educate the community on water conservation practices to protect this vital resource.

Figure 33 - Drought Resilience, Adaption and Management Model Pillars – Water Security Projects

Timeline



Figure 34 - Timeline – Water Security Projects

Economic Analysis

An economic analysis for the Water Security Projects follows. The analysis included identification of the Costs and Benefits of the projects, and the completion of a Cost Benefit Analysis.

This Cost Benefit Analysis methodology employed, was consistent with the real options methodology of the NSW Treasury Guidelines and remained within the cash flow framework of Treasury’s recommended rapid cost-benefit analysis technique.

Accordingly, the nature of the technique, is to assess benefits and costs at a high level, using readily available secondary data, but not undertaking primary research. Where primary research is lacking, the assessment proceeds by estimating through a decision tree the likely costs and benefits of each “known unknown” in the project logic and incorporating this assessment on a risk (probabilistic basis) in the analysis.

To deliver on this methodology economic data needs included:

- Available secondary data sources, including past assessments of proposals, or of related projects; and
- Rapid assessment, using those sources, of

the project logic as integrating within the plan logic.

Additional specific project-related data was also utilised:

- Water Security
 - Groundwater - assessments and water reliability studies for the region and its member Councils. This may include aquifer assessments, bore monitoring programs, or water supply assessments including groundwater. Key data sources were the respective Councils and the NSW State planning bodies (Regional Water Plans).
- Water Security Planning
 - Existing water planning for the wider region, including Western Regional Water Strategy, and identifying from Councils. The key sources were existing water plans.

The options considered for the economic analysis comprised:

- **Base Case** – Planning Without Projects. It is assumed for the sake of clarity, that considering a program with up to three projects will incorporate a base level of expenditure on water security planning. The analysis is focused on the water planning net benefit estimates on projects that might develop from that planning.

- **Option 1** – Water Security: Groundwater – Monitoring of existing ground water sources and if required investigation and development of additional bore fields in the region if required.
- **Option 2** – Water Security – Additional off-river storage in the region.

The option of raising the capacity of Burrendong Dam by 20% was not included in the economic analysis. A full cost benefit analysis will be required as part of a business case for the project.

Costs

	Capital Cost per Unit Capacity (\$/ML)	Benchmark (Location)	Capacity (ML)	Cost (\$)	Notes
Offstream Storage	\$37,000	Walcha (Apsley)	300	\$11,000,000	
Offstream Storage	\$43,000	Tuross River Study	3,000	\$130,000,000	Cost was revised as part of a variation

Figure 35 Capital Cost Benchmarks

Benefits

The impact charts illustrate the likely benefits of the major options:

- Groundwater
 - o Avoided emergency drinking water supply costs – typically valued in the literature at above \$7 per kL; and
 - o Irrigation benefits – typically valued at crop gross margins of \$3 per ML.

Groundwater

The costing for the groundwater project has been developed with a view to conduct a ground water resource study, drill three new water bores, prove quality and flow of groundwater resources, install standpipes and connect to a supervisory control system (to provide a capability for standpipes to be switched on/off, to cross level usage between locations to adjust for changes in quality and flow rates) across a three phase program at a total cost of \$0.81 M.

Water Security

The costs for the off-river storage at or near Nyngan have been benchmarked from Queensland and NSW studies.

- Water planning
 - o Improved reliability of drinking water supply from better matching of storage and transmission. Values in terms of emergency supply costs avoided at \$7 per kL.

In this section, these benefits are broken down in more detail for input to the cash flow analysis. It's important to first set down that many of the benefits are driven by the town, regional or state population.

The following table, adapted from the main reports, sets the key values for this region:

	Bourke	Brewarrina	Cobar	Walgett	Bogan	Coonamble	Warren
Population	2,340	1,356	4,059	5,253	2,467	3,732	2,550
Projected Population (2041)	1,556	931	2,555	3,732	1,581	2,965	1,755
Drought water consumption (kL pa 2023)	101,739	40,478	176,478	228,391	68,739	162,261	110,870

	Bourke	Brewarrina	Cobar	Walgett	Bogan	Coonamble	Warren
Drought water consumption (kL pa 2041)	67,652	58,957	111,087	162,261	107,261	128,913	76,304
Household water consumption (kL per household pa)	597	400	203	300	314	165	231
Portable water consumption (kL per household pa*)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 36 Population and Water Demand. Source: NSW Department of Planning Population Projections & NSW Department of Local Government Water Supply Statistics. *Estimated using urban individual use metering studies.

Groundwater

Groundwater is a significant variable in managing water security in the councils in this plan. Groundwater is used in town water supplies to ensure volume in droughts by providing supplementary water when, for example, regulated releases cease from upstream storages during drought, or surface water quality declines with reduced flows in dry periods.

Borefields are described as one of the key system assets in delivering Water Security as: Groundwater accessed through borefields supplements surface water sources, particularly during periods of drought. The use of borefields requires careful management to prevent over-extraction, which can lead to declining water levels and quality.

Water Planning

The benefits of water planning include improved reliability of the drinking water supply through better matching of storage and transmission, with values in terms of emergency supply costs avoided estimated at \$7 per kilolitre.

Cost Benefit Analysis

The outcomes of the Cost Benefit Analysis, including a sensitivity analysis for each Water Security Option follows.

Results

The following tables show the results after costs are netted off from benefits.

Option	NPV	BCR	NPV Rank out of 2	BCR Rank out of 2
Base Case: Planning without projects	-\$170,915		-	-
Option 1: Water security: Groundwater	\$550,791	2.144	2	2
Option 2: Water security: Off river storage Nyngan	\$128,719,996	2.350	1	1

Figure 35 Capital Cost Benchmarks. Source: Analysis using NSW Treasury Rapid BCA Model

Options 1 and 2 have benefit cost ratios greater than 1 at 5% discount rate.

Sensitivity and Distributional Analysis

All options have positive Net Present Values at all discount rates considered.

Sensitivity	3% Discount Rate		7% Discount Rate		10% Discount Rate	
Option	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$170,729		-\$170,912		-\$170,632	0.106
Option 1	\$571,433	2.083	\$530,831	2.203	\$502,352	2.285
Option 2	\$210,584,491	2.959	\$75,745,210	1.891	\$28,613,666	1.397

Figure 38 Sensitivity Testing - Discount Rate

The results are insensitive to cost and benefit variance up to +/- 20%.

Option	Costs +20%		Costs -20%		Benefits +20%		Benefits -20%	
	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$209,962		-\$131,867		-\$166,050		-\$175,779	
Option 1	\$454,514	1.787	\$647,069	2.680	\$757,227	2.573	\$344,355	1.715
Option 2	\$109,643,314	1.958	\$147,796,678	2.937	\$173,540,677	2.819	\$83,899,315	1.880

Figure 39 Sensitivity to Cost and Benefit Variance

All options have positive Net Present Values for both Low case scenarios and High case scenarios.

Scenario	Low Case Scenario		High Case Scenario	
	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$214,827		-\$127,002	
Option 1	\$248,078	1.429	\$853,505	3.216
Option 2	\$64,822,633	1.566	\$192,617,358	3.524

Figure 40 Sensitivity to Negatively Correlated Benefit/Cost Variance

Governance Structure

The 'owner' of the initiative, and therefore the Chair of the Steering Committee for each project within the initiative will be at the discretion of the Far Northwest Joint Organisation and the respective Councils within the region.

Governance Structure for the project would comprise the following:

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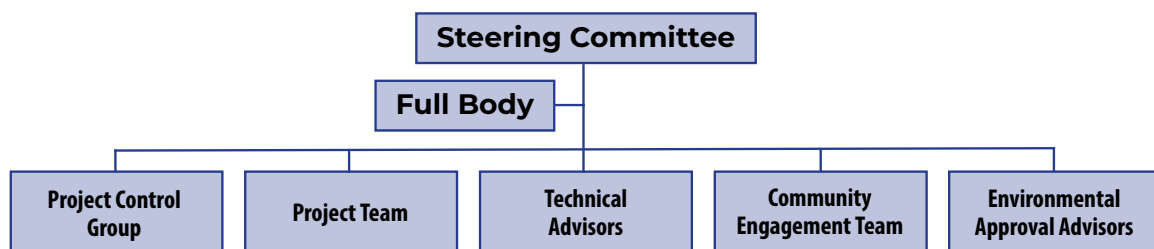


Figure 54 – Governance Structure – Telecommunications Security Projects

- Steering Committee: responsible for strategic direction, oversight, decision-making, and ensuring that the project aligns with the Regional Water Strategies. It could include representatives from the key stakeholders such as:
 - o Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water (DCCEE) – Water.
 - o Water NSW.
 - o Agriculture NSW.
 - o NSW Farmers Association
 - o Representatives of identified agriculture industries.
 - o Mayors and Council representatives
 - Funding Body: Representatives from the funding body such as
 - o Future Drought Fund
 - o Australian Government National Water Grid
 - o NSW Government Representatives from DCCEE - Water
 - Project Control Group (PCG): Responsible for monitoring progress, managing project risks, making decisions about day-to-day operational issues, and ensuring the project stays on schedule and within budget.
 - Project Team: Comprising of Project Manager, Technical Team Members and Administrative Support.
 - Technical Advisors: Experts in water management, agriculture, environmental science, and community engagement, would provide technical advice to feasibility studies.
 - Community Engagement Team: Manage stakeholder communications and engagement activities.
 - Environmental Approval Advisors: Oversee all environmental assessments, ensure compliance with regulations, and manage the environmental impact studies and development approvals process.
- A proposed adaptive framework for monitoring and updating the project / initiative follows.

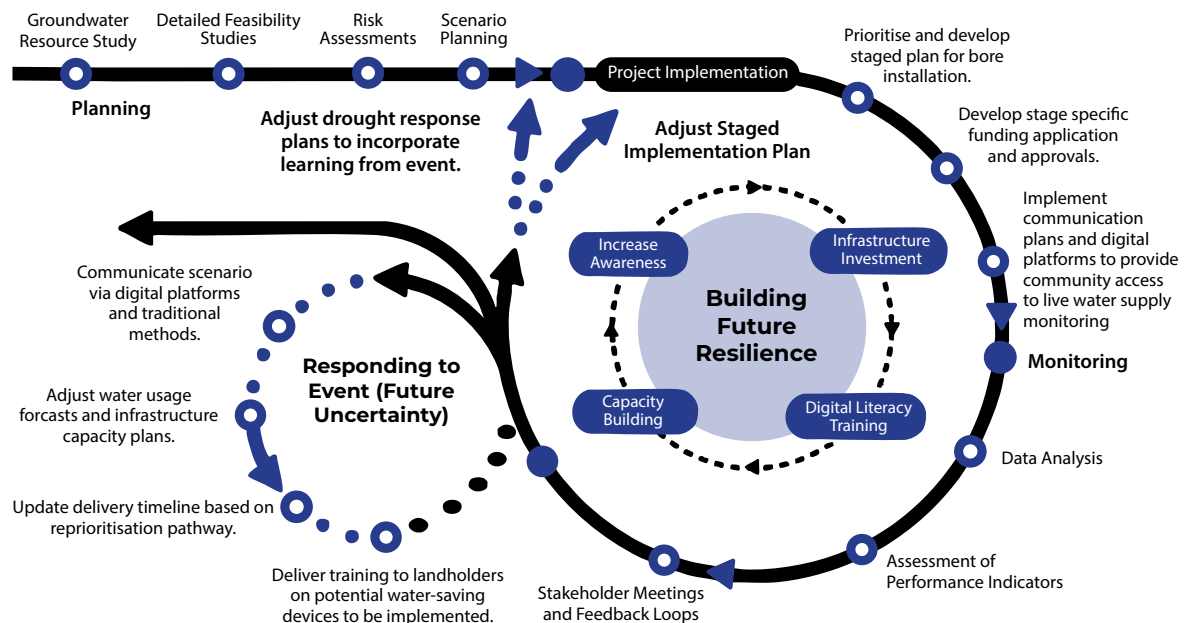


Figure 42: Framework for monitoring and updating the Long Term Water Security Project delivery (TSG 2024).

Responsiveness to Future Scenarios and Uncertainties

An analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties on the implementation and delivery of each project follows.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Economic Recession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased funding availability for water security projects. • Lower community and stakeholder support due to economic hardships. • Reduced ability to invest in advanced water management technologies. • Altered water usage patterns, particularly for industry and manufacturing e.g. road construction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek additional funding from state or federal grants. • Adjust project scope to align with reduced budgets, prioritising essential components like groundwater proving and standpipe installations. • Focus on cost-effective solutions and prioritise critical infrastructure upgrades. • Implement flexible pricing models to maintain water service affordability. • Complete a more detailed cost-benefit analysis to identify the most economically viable project.
Policy & Governance Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty in water management policies, affecting project planning and implementation. • Delays in approvals and funding due to regulatory changes. • Delays or modification to project delivery timeframe due to different project prioritisation. • Change in Federal budget affects funding allocation to water projects. • Inconsistent support for long-term water security initiatives. • Potential changes in water allocation and usage regulations affecting project feasibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased advocacy and engagement with policymakers to ensure supportive policies. • Flexibility in project timelines and milestones to accommodate policy changes. • Regular monitoring of policy developments and proactive adjustments to project plans. • Establish a project advisory group to guide the project and navigate regulatory changes. • Develop adaptable project frameworks to comply with evolving regulations, including possible modifications to groundwater extraction and off-river storage strategies.
Technological Advancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variability in the adoption and effectiveness of new water management technologies. • Potential disparities in access to technology among community members. • Changes in water usage efficiency due to technological improvements and water saving device implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate budget for training and capacity building in new technologies/ • Incorporate the latest technologies for water management and monitoring systems, e.g. advanced groundwater sensors and automated control systems for standpipes. • Collaborate with technology providers and researchers to stay updated on advancements. • Ensure equitable access to new technologies by providing support and resources for all community members. • Adjust long-term water usage forecasts based on expected efficiency gains from new technologies.
Climate Variability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased strain on water resources due to more frequent and severe droughts. • Potential damage to water infrastructure from extreme weather events. • Increased variability in water supply, complicating planning, management and delivery. • Altered precipitation patterns impacting groundwater recharge and surface water availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased budget for climate-resilient infrastructure and repair contingencies. • Contingency planning for extreme weather events, include rapid response protocols. • Incorporate infrastructure designed to withstand extreme weather conditions, such as reinforced storage facilities and resilient bore installations. • Regular monitoring and adaptive management to address changing conditions. <p>Implement advanced water management technologies to monitor and respond to variable water availability, such as automated standpipes and remote monitoring systems.</p>

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Increased Fire Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to water infrastructure and storage facilities, reducing water availability. • Significant resources diverted to firefighting and recovery, affecting project funding. • Long-term degradation of water quality and water supply infrastructure. • Increased demand for water for firefighting, impacting overall availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement fire-resistant infrastructure, including fire-resistant bore casings and storage facility materials. • Increased budget for fire management and recovery efforts. • Development of emergency response plans specific to fire risks, ensuring rapid deployment of water resources for firefighting. • Potential delays and increased costs due to fire-related disruptions. • Implement water storage and distribution systems capable of supporting firefighting efforts, such as strategically located standpipes.
Health Crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced community engagement and participation in water conservation and management programs. • Increased strain on local healthcare systems impacting project staff and community well-being. • Higher costs for ensuring health and safety standards in project implementation. • Potential shifts in water usage patterns due to increased hygiene and health needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of health and wellness components in the project to address community needs. • Collaboration with healthcare providers to integrate services into project plans. • Allocation of additional resources for health-related infrastructure and programs. • Flexibility in project timelines to accommodate health crises and ensure community well-being. • Implement strict health and safety protocols for project activities and adjust water usage forecasts accordingly, ensuring adequate supply for hygiene needs.
Outmigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced local workforce available for construction and maintenance of water infrastructure. • Decreased community engagement in water conservation programs. • Lower local economic activity, affecting funding and support for the projects. • Reduced water demand, altering usage patterns and affecting long-term water planning. • Potentially fewer bores needed if population declines significantly. • Variation to prioritisation of bore implementation due to change in specific region water demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend project timelines due to reduced workforce availability. • Increased costs for attracting and retaining skilled workers. • Implementation of community outreach programs to maintain engagement and participation. • Adjust water usage forecasts and infrastructure capacity plans based on changing population trends. • Reassess the number of bores and off-river storage facilities needed based on population changes. • Develop partnerships with regional organisations to support workforce needs.

Figure 43: Analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning - Pillar Implementation

Success measures and indicators that might be used by the Project Steering / Control Group for the project to measure the extent of progress towards the outcomes expressed in the program logic and delivery of the project follow.

Pillar 1 : Planning and Monitoring

- Risk Assessments and Scenario Planning:
 - Conduct detailed risk assessments to identify potential impacts on water security projects, including economic, social and environmental factors.

- Develop scenarios for various shocks, including climate events and economic shifts, to anticipate challenges and plan responses.
- Advanced Data Analytics:
 - Use geographical information systems (GIS) to monitor environmental conditions water resource availability, particularly focusing on groundwater levels and surface water storage.
 - Analyse data to assess the impact of climate variability on water infrastructure and supply.
- Regular Stakeholder Meetings and Feedback Loops:

- o Engage local businesses, community members, and government agencies in regular consultations.
- o Incorporate stakeholder feedback to adapt plans and improve project outcomes.
- Performance Indicators:
 - o Establish KPIs to track the success of water security initiatives and infrastructure resilience.
 - o Use real-time monitoring to adjust strategies as needed.

Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events

- Drought Response Plans:
 - o Develop clear actions and responsibilities for managing water resources during droughts, including the prioritisation of bore drilling and off-river storage utilisation.
 - o Ensure plans include maintaining water supply and supporting agricultural needs.
- Water-Efficient Technologies and Practices:
 - o Install advanced water-saving technologies in infrastructure projects, such as automated standpipes and efficient irrigation systems.
 - o Use drought-tolerant landscaping and irrigation systems to maintain green spaces with minimal water use.
- Alternative Community Activities:
 - o Promote the use of alternative water sources such as recycled water and desalination where possible.
 - o Enhance groundwater extraction and management to supplement surface water supplies.
- Emergency Communication Strategies:
 - o Implement communication plans and digital platforms to keep community members informed about drought conditions, water usage, infrastructure status and water availability.

Pillar 3 : Building Future Resilience

- Climate Resilient Infrastructure:
 - o Invest in flexible, adaptive water infrastructure that can operate under different environmental conditions, such as reinforced bore casings.
 - o Incorporate sustainable design principles to enhance durability and reduce environmental impact.
- Economic Diversification:

- o Support local businesses in adopting water-efficiencies to reduce their economic vulnerability.
- Community Education and Capacity Building:
 - o Provide training for local residents on water conservation and management practices, particularly focusing on the use of new technologies, water saving devices and water efficient systems.
 - o Promote awareness of water resilience and the importance of robust water infrastructure.

Monitoring Against Objectives

The applicable objectives of the Future Drought Fund Agreement, and relevant project level indicators to track outcomes and how the project is contributing to drought resilience outcomes follow.

Objective 1: Develop the environmental resilience and natural capital of agricultural landscapes.

- Number of new water bores drilled and operational.
- Improvement in groundwater quality metrics (e.g. purity, chemical composition).
- Number of people with access to groundwater supply.
- Reduction in water wastage through effective use of standpipes and supervisory control systems.
- Volume of water distributed through standpipes for agricultural and domestic use.
- Increase in agricultural output (e.g. crop yields and livestock health) due to improved water availability. Drought-on-drought improvement in value of agricultural products.

Objective 2: Understand and plan for the region's current and future drought resilience by identifying actions, pathways, and opportunities for mitigation, adaptation and improvement.

- Number of water infrastructure projects initiated based on these outcomes.
- Increased time before surface water storage diminished (drought-on-drought comparison).
- Reduction in the number of days with water supply shortages during drought periods.

Telecommunications Security



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Project Description

Improve the 4G and 5G telecommunications infrastructure in the rural region, thereby supporting the operational continuity of local businesses, community and agricultural activities and improving the community's confidence in their economic stability.

The initiative arises from significant challenges currently faced by the region, where existing telecommunications infrastructure fails to meet the growing demands for digital connectivity and is vulnerable to disruptions caused by natural disasters.

With the termination of 3G connectivity within the region, the effect to be achieved is:

- Maintain the sustainability of local businesses, tourism and agricultural operations.
- Address the impact of the Agtech devices, applications and software within the agricultural sector that will no longer be operational.

“...The disjointed connectivity across Western NSW. The latest technology, from remote sensing for anything from a farm dam through to a major irrigation project, all revolves around the next network generation, either 3G that is leaving, 4G that will be here for a while, or 5G. The redundancy of prior networks e.g. 3G, has significant effects of the compatibility and operation of existing on-farm and off-farm investments that required significant investment from landowners. The connectivity across Nyngan, Bogan and Warren Shire is hopeless and that limits agriculture and makes things harder to do in a good time, but in a hard time it is just impossible.”

~ Eleanor Faulkner

The following figure demonstrates the potential network coverage that could result from adoption and implementation by the Warren Shire Council within their LGA.

Coonamble and Bogan Shire also have identified telecommunications gaps and a similar project scope of works to address telecommunications security projects across the region could easily be supported.



Figure 44: Network coverage (yellow region), if adopted by Warren LGA.

The level of coverage would be dependent on the number of solar powered stations installed, which would be further scoped through a detailed business case and model.

Scope

The scope of the telecommunications security project includes:

- Conduct of telecommunications assessments, feasibility and technical studies.
- Identification of partner telecommunications providers.
- Development of a telecommunications plan to address gaps within the telecommunications strategy.
- Upgrade of existing and installation new telecommunications infrastructure to extend and enhance 4G and 5G coverage throughout the region.
- Installation of solar powered stations and roof antennas, that will facilitate signal transmission from the station to your home through a fixed wireless, point-to-point network.
- Installation and integration of a low-power, long-range data service alongside the wireless internet service to enable communication between on-farm devices and the internet.
- Establishment of an 'Agtech' replacement program.

Pathway to implementation

The pathway to the delivery of the initiative includes:

1. Conducting telecommunications assessments, feasibility and technical studies.
2. Identifying partner telecommunications providers.
3. Development of a telecommunications plan to address identified shortfalls in the telecommunications strategy.
4. Environmental assessments.
5. Detailed cost estimate.
6. Complete full business case.
7. Funding applications / arrangements and regulatory approvals.
8. Tender (as required) for construction of new and upgrade of existing infrastructure.
9. Establishment of the 'agtech' and solar programs (including associated education and training programs).

Supporting Broader Resilience

The telecommunications projects will contribute to improved drought resilience of the Northwest Region through:

- Transforming the 'agtech' communications infrastructure and capability.
- Modifying and enhance the existing and remote water monitoring capability of the agricultural sector (through tank level sensors, trough level sensors, remote pump control, pressure/flow sensors, remote cameras, weather stations, and vehicle Wi-Fi meshing).
- Maintaining sustainability of local businesses, tourism and agricultural operations, through the provision of a resilient telecommunications system.

Additionally, the relevance of the project to improving the resilience of the region to identified challenges follows.

Challenge	Telecommunications Security Relevance
Economic Hardship	Secure telecommunications allow families facing economic hardship to access financial services remotely, such as online banking, applying for aid, or seeking employment opportunities. It also enables e-commerce for businesses trying to reach wider markets outside drought-impacted areas, helping sustain local economies.
School Closures or Reduced Services	With schools and health facilities potentially closing (decreased demand, operational challenges or funding) or reducing services (due to downsize from families moving away), reliable telecommunications is required for continuing education through online platforms and accessing telehealth services. This ensures that education and healthcare services are uninterrupted, bridging the gap caused by physical service disruptions.
Labour Needs on Farms	As labour demands increase on farms, telecommunications can facilitate the use of smart farming techniques, which can be monitored remotely, reducing the need for constant physical presence. This allows families to balance educational and health priorities alongside agricultural responsibilities.
Health Issues	Secure telecommunications networks ensure that individuals facing health issues can continue to access health information and Telehealth services without needing to travel. This is important in managing both emergency and health conditions when local health resources are strained or inaccessible.
Transportation	When transportation is unreliable or inaccessible, telecommunications provide a link to the outside world. Secure networks ensure that virtual meetings, remote schooling, and digital healthcare consultations are possible, mitigating the impact of disrupted physical mobility.

Challenge	Telecommunications Security Relevance
Psychological Stress	Reliable telecommunications support mental health by enabling access to online counselling and support groups, which are more common during times of increased stress and isolation caused by drought. These services help maintain mental well-being and provide coping mechanisms for individuals and communities facing prolonged drought conditions.

Figure 45: Analysis of Resilience Challenges associated with the project

The projects support the pillars of drought resilience as follows:

Pillar 1 : Planning & Monitoring	Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events	Pillar 2 : Building Future Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Identify telecommunications blackspots of 4G and 5G networks. · Plan for the upgrade and expansion of 4G and 5G networks. · Monitor current network usage and predict future demands to inform infrastructure improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Identify and prioritise network support for critical agricultural operations and essential businesses during drought conditions. Timely data about weather changes, soil moisture, and crop conditions can significantly mitigate the impact of drought on agricultural productivity. · Implement emergency communication protocols to maintain connectivity for critical services when standard infrastructure fails. For drought stricken areas, this means ensuring that critical updates regarding water availability, relief programs, and health advisories reach all community members reliably and quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Invest in resilient telecommunications infrastructure capable of withstanding extreme weather events. · Foster innovative tech solutions to ensure uninterrupted connectivity and support the digital needs of businesses and agriculture.

Figure 46 - Drought Resilience, Adaption and Management Model Pillars – Telecommunications Projects

Timeline



Figure 47 – Timeline – Telecommunications Security Projects

Economic Analysis

An economic analysis for the Telecommunications Project follows. The analysis included identification of the Costs and Benefits of the projects, and the completion of a Cost Benefit Analysis.

The methodology employed was consistent with the real options methodology of the NSW Treasury Guidelines and remained within the cash flow framework of Treasury’s recommended rapid cost-benefit analysis technique.

Accordingly, the nature of the technique is to assess benefits and costs at a high level, using readily available secondary data, but not undertake primary research. Where primary research is lacking, the assessment proceeds by estimating through a decision tree the likely costs and benefits of each “known unknown” in the project logic and incorporating this assessment on a risk (probabilistic basis) in the analysis.

For the cost-benefit analysis, the telecommunications strategy was assessed against a base case:

- Base Case – Planning without projects – A base level of expenditure based on current planning for water security and telecommunications within the regions is assumed.
- Option 1 – Telecommunications Upgrade – Improve telecommunications connectivity (4G and 5G) in the region to support business and agricultural productivity.

The principal tasks involved in the Telecommunications Security project include investigating significant areas of non-connection to the mobile broadband network and subsequent implementation of “black spot” investments to locate new towers to support continuity of coverage. This will enable in-paddock and at-home phone service improvement and improve work-from-home capabilities.

Costs

The costs have been calculated on benchmark estimates by area and scope.

A number of similar programs, including Squadron Link, have been used to benchmark costs.

Description of work	Unit cost	Units	Total cost:
Mobile coverage and Topographical Survey	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Towers	\$20,000	30	\$600,000
Fibre connectivity	\$200,000	1	\$200,000
Solar powered battery packs	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Licensing & Subscription	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Project Management	\$200,000	1	\$200,000
Escalation & Contingency	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Total Cost			\$1,200,000

Figure 48: Mobile Phone Coverage Investment

Benefits

The impact charts illustrate the likely benefits of the major options:

- Improved telecommunications offer safety and health benefits to the region. As permanent infrastructure, benefits accrue both in and outside emergency situations like drought or flood.
- Safety: Emergency response time savings valued using risk and value of life.
- Health: Reduced transport cost to nearest health centre. Improved pre-care for emergency patients.
- Supporting operational continuity of local businesses, community and agricultural activities.
- Improving the community's confidence in their economic stability.

These benefits can be further broken down into:

- Local business and community operational continuity benefits;
- Benefits for non-local users, either as receivers of telecommunications in other regions, or as visitors to the region; and
- Health-related benefits for the local community.

To these can be added the technological benefits of the proposed device program being used by farmers to give a more efficient water use. Measuring these benefits includes calculating the time savings from better telecommunications and valuing them using average earnings.

Description of work	Total cost:	
Black spots addressed	5	
Population Impacted	100%	
Time saving (hours per annum per person)	0.1	Estimate
Value	\$1,958	Average Weekly Earning
Value per hour	\$56	35 hour week
Value of time saving per annum	\$5.59	
Total population impacted	2,550	Population of the Warren region

Figure 49 General Telecommunications Benefits

The total value in the Rapid Cost Benefit Analysis Model is calculated as the value of local time saving (\$5.59 per person) times the local population, plus the value to the population as a whole per person, \$0.06 times the state population.

Cost Benefit Analysis

The outcomes of the Cost Benefit Analysis, including a sensitivity analysis for the telecommunications security project follows with the tables showing the results after costs are netted off from benefits.

Option	NPV	BCR
Base Case: Planning without projects	-\$170,915	
Option 1: Telecommunications Security	\$2,483,237	3.471

Figure 50 Rapid Cost Benefit Analysis Results. Source: Analysis using NSW Treasury Rapid BCA Model

Option 1 has a benefit cost ratio greater than 1 at a 5% discount rate.

Sensitivity and Distributional Analysis

The Telecommunications Security project has a positive Net Present Value at all discount rates considered.

Sensitivity	3% Discount Rate		7% Discount Rate		10% Discount Rate	
Option	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$170,729		-\$170,912		-\$170,632	0.106
Option 1	\$3,418,118	4.408	\$1,821,703	4.408	\$1,149,572	2.139

Figure 51 Sensitivity Testing - Discount Rate

The results are insensitive to cost and benefits variance up to +/- 20%.

Option	Costs +20%		Costs -20%		Benefits +20%		Benefits -20%	
	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$209,962		-\$131,867		-\$166,050		-\$175,779	
Option 1	\$2,282,284	2.893	\$2,684,189	4.339	\$3,180,837	4.166	\$1,785,637	2.777

Figure 52 Sensitivity to Cost and Benefit Variance

The Telecommunications Security project has positive Net Present Values for both Low Case scenarios and High Case scenarios.

Option	Low Case Scenario		High Case Scenario	
	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$214,827		-\$127,002	
Option 1	\$1,584,685	2.314	\$3,381,789	5.207

Figure 53 Sensitivity to Negatively Correlated Benefit / Cost Variance

The Low Case Scenario assumes a cost increase of 20% and a benefit decrease of 20% with a social discount rate of 5%.

The High Case Scenario assumes a cost decrease of 20% and a benefit increase of 20% with a social discount rate of 5%.

Governance Structure

The 'owner' of the initiative, and the Chair of the Steering Committee for each project within the initiative will be at the discretion of the Far Northwest Joint Organisation and the respective Councils within the region.

Governance Structure for the project would comprise the following:



Figure 54 – Governance Structure – Telecommunications Security Projects

- Steering Committee: responsible for strategic direction, oversight, decision-making, and ensuring that the project aligns with funding program. It could include representatives from the key stakeholders such as:
 - o Federal/State Governments.
 - o Telecommunications Regulators.
 - o Mobile Network Operators.
 - o Mobile Network Infrastructure Providers.
- Project Control Group (PCG): Responsible for monitoring progress, managing project risks, making decisions about day-to-day operational issues, and ensuring the project stays on schedule and within budget.
- Project Team: Comprising of Project Manager, Technical Team Members and Administrative Support.
- Technical Advisors: Experts in telecommunications, environmental science, and community engagement, would provide technical advice to feasibility studies
- Community Engagement Team: Manage stakeholder communications and engagement activities
- Environmental Approval Advisors: Oversee all environmental assessments, ensure compliance with regulations, and manage the environmental impact studies and development approvals process.

A proposed adaptive framework for monitoring and updating the project / initiative follows.

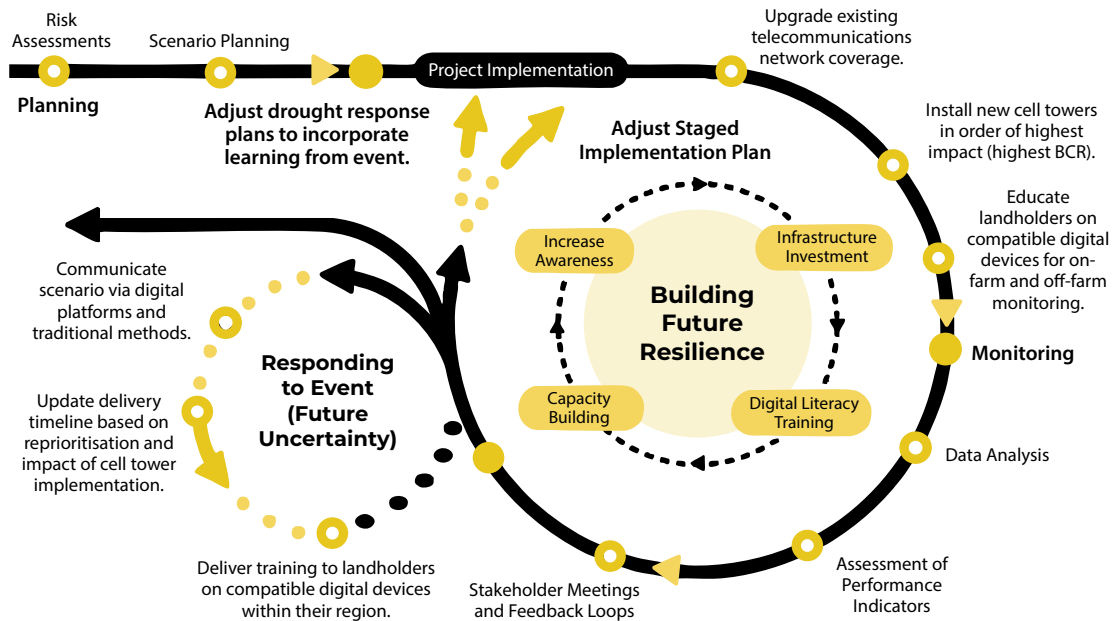


Figure 55: Framework for monitoring and updating Telecommunications Strategy delivery (TSG 2024).

Responsiveness to Future Scenarios and Uncertainties

An analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties on the implementation and delivery of the project follows.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Economic Recession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased funding for telecommunications upgrades and maintenance. Lower participation in digital literacy and economic stability programs due to financial hardships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek additional funding from state or federal grants. Adjust project scope to align with reduced budgets. Focus on low-cost, high-impact infrastructure upgrades e.g. staged implementation of upgrades with most significant coverage.
Policy & Governance Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty in policy direction, affecting strategic planning and resource allocation. Delays in funding and support for telecommunications programs due to regulatory changes. Inconsistent support for social and infrastructure development initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased advocacy and engagement with policymakers to ensure supportive policies. Develop partnership with a private telecommunications company to reduce effect of government changes on delivery timeline. Establish a policy advisory group to guide the project and navigate regulatory changes. Provide community engagement sessions between telecommunications provider to ensure community members are aware of the effect of technological redundancies that may result from policy variation.
Technological Advancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variability in the adoption and effectiveness of new technologies for telecommunications. Potential disparities in access to technology among community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that technology advancements are compatible with all network generations to prevent redundancy. Allocate budget for training and capacity building for landowners to implement advanced technology and utilise efficiently. Ensure that cell towers can be easily updated at a reduced cost when technology becomes available. Develop long-term partnerships and contracts with telecommunications providers that ensure updates to technology are conducted as they become available.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Climate Variability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk of damage to telecommunications infrastructure from extreme weather events. • Potential interruptions in service affecting business continuity and community communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased budget for climate-resilient infrastructure and repair contingencies. • Ensure that cell towers and installed technology is designed to withstand extreme weather conditions. • Complete regular maintenance and monitoring to ensure infrastructure resilience.
Increased Fire Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to telecommunications infrastructure, reducing service availability and impacting communication. • Significant resources diverted to firefighting and recovery, affecting project funding. • Long-term degradation of community connectivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement fire-resistant telecommunications infrastructure.
Health Crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced community engagement and event attendance in digital literacy programs due to health concerns. • Increased strain on local healthcare systems impacting telehealth services. • Diversion of funding from telecommunication investment to the healthcare system. • Diminished ability for individuals to access healthcare services on-demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with healthcare providers to integrate telehealth services. • Implementation of strict health and safety protocols for infrastructure installation and maintenance. • Digital health platform that connects residents with all healthcare providers in the region.
Outmigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced participation in digital literacy programs. • Change in percentage coverage and proportional access from cell tower implementation in particular regions. • Lower volunteer numbers, impacting the implementation and maintenance of infrastructure. • Decreased economic activity and local business engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended timeline for project delivery due to reduced workforce availability. • Re-prioritise cell tower implementation regularly following implementation of prior tower. • Increased costs for attracting and retaining volunteers and participants. • Implementation of incentives to encourage local participation and retention. • Develop targeted outreach programs to re-engage out-migrated community members.

Figure 56: - Analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning – Pillar Implementation

Success measures and indicators that might be used by the Project Steering / Control Group for the project to measure the extent of progress towards the outcomes expressed in the program logic and delivery of the project follow.

Pillar 1 : Planning and Monitoring

- Risk Assessments and Scenario Planning
 - Conduct detailed risk assessments to identify potential impacts on telecommunications infrastructure and digital services.
 - Develop scenarios for various shocks, including climate events and economic shifts, to anticipate challenges and plan responses.

- Advanced Data Analytics
 - Use geographical information systems (GIS) to monitor environmental conditions and infrastructure performance e.g. how has coverage and network connectivity varied due to implementation of cell towers.
 - Analyse data to assess the impact of climate variability on network reliability and coverage.
- Regular Stakeholder Meetings and Feedback Loops
 - Engage local businesses, community members, and government agencies in regular consultations.
 - Incorporate stakeholder feedback to adapt plans and improve project outcomes.

- Performance Indicators
 - Establish KPIs to track the success of telecommunications upgrades e.g. redundancy of on- and off-farm technologies is decreased with subsequent network updates. network coverage across the region is increased and maintained.
 - Use real-time monitoring to adjust strategies as needed

Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events

- Drought Response Plans
 - Develop clear actions and responsibilities for maintaining telecommunication services during droughts.
 - Ensure plans include supporting remote monitoring of agricultural equipment and community connectivity.
- Water-Efficient Technologies and Practices
 - Implement solar-powered stations to reduce dependency on water-intensive power generation.
 - Use drought-tolerant landscaping around cell towers to maintain access with minimal water use.
- Alternative Community Activities
 - Promote online and virtual community activities that do not rely on physical presence.
 - Enhance digital infrastructure to support remote work, education, and social engagement during drought conditions.
- Emergency Communication Strategies
 - Implement communication plans and digital platforms to keep community members informed about drought conditions, responses and resultant changes to the program schedule.

Pillar 3 : Building Future Resilience

- Climate Resilient Infrastructure
 - Invest in flexible, adaptive telecommunications infrastructure that can operate under different environmental conditions.
 - Incorporate sustainable design principles to enhance durability and reduce environmental impact.
- Economic Diversification
 - Support local businesses in adopting digital tools to expand their market reach, reduce economic vulnerability, reduce

reliance on human resources, and enable off- farm farm management.

- Community Education and Capacity Building
 - Provide training for local residents on digital literacy and the use of new telecommunications technologies.
 - Promote awareness of digital resilience and the importance of robust telecommunication infrastructure.

Monitoring Against Objectives

The applicable objectives of the Future Drought Fund Agreement, and relevant project level indicators to track outcomes and how the project is contributing to drought resilience outcomes follow.

Objective 1 : Develop the agricultural sector’s self-reliance and economic performance.

- Percentage increase in 4G and 5G coverage across agricultural areas.
- Number of agricultural operations utilising enhanced telecommunications for remote monitoring and control of equipment, and decreased technology and device redundancy with implementation of new networks.
- Percentage reduction in operational downtime due to improved connectivity.
- Increase in productivity and efficiency metrics because of Agtech adoption (e.g. reduced water usage, optimised crop yields).

Objective 2 : Strengthen the social capital and wellbeing of the communities.

- Number of community facilities (e.g. schools, health centres), with improved telecommunications infrastructure.
- Number of telehealth services available and utilised within the community.
- Percentage increase in mental health support sessions conducted via telecommunication platforms.

Objective 3 : Understand and plan for the region’s current and future drought resilience by identifying actions, pathways, and opportunities for mitigation, adaptation and improvement.

- Percentage of farmers and businesses utilising drought data from sensors and monitoring devices for real-time tracking of environmental conditions and decision making.

Stronger Communities Program



Project Description

Residents of the Northwest region frequently experience increased stress during drought conditions. During Droughts the situation is worsened:

- by the departure of key services and community members, which puts additional strain on the remaining volunteers and community leaders.
- by a noticeable lack of support or awareness of the available aid during these times.
- when various social events are organised with a primary focus on drought-related themes. This approach often limits opportunities for community members to engage and interact without the constant overshadowing of drought conditions.
- by the sole reliance on farming for a large majority of businesses within the region, increasing vulnerability of businesses during periods of drought.

The community has expressed a significant need for better data on the social effects of drought and the effectiveness of mental health interventions to address these issues.

The Stronger Communities Program is designed to improve community cohesion, well-being and financial resilience in the Northwest Region through:

- A series of targeted activities and frameworks specifically designed to maintain and improve the social fabric of rural and regional communities, and the resilience of businesses, particularly during extended or intense periods of drought.
- Events held regularly (monthly), in different towns across the region, regardless of 'drought' periods, to foster and promote social connectivity and stronger communities. These events aim to provide opportunities for community members to engage with each other in a relaxed environment, with a focus on interaction rather than drought discussion.
- Events designed to coincide with existing regional events (shows, festivals, etc), and have some reliance on partnerships

with local businesses and services. While not intended to be a counselling service, counselling representatives will be in attendance to establish trust and connections for those experiencing mental health challenges.

- The incorporation of Rural Financial sessions and mentoring to improve the knowledge, skills and strategies of local farmers and businesses to better plan for, respond to, and recover from drought events.

“There is a reason for the decrease in population, especially in adult males, because historically we would have three or four people always working with us, but now technology is such that a lot of middle-aged males are out there on their own for extended periods. Our paranoia about being away from the farm is there. The big winner has been the regional sport for adults and kids. Kids sport brings families together. All of this also prevents children and teenagers from being at home bored, they are not acting as delinquents around our streets at 2 O'clock in the morning. It isn't a drought thing, but a social living thing.”

– *Greg Whiteley*

Scope

The scope of the 'Stronger Communities Program includes:

- Activities and events aimed at promoting social cohesion and connectivity, supported by council-led initiatives.
- Regular, targeted consultations with key demographic groups, (including First Nations people, young families, and the youth), to incorporate their insights into resilience planning
- Community sports activities and events designed to counter social isolation and bolster mental health, particularly among young men.

- Provision of administrative support roles to alleviate the workload on volunteers and community leaders during droughts.
- Content development for financial resilience sessions e.g. government assistance, debt mediation, risk management, business diversification, etc.
- Delivery of financial resilience sessions.
- Provision of community resources to serve as innovation hubs for developing drought resilience solutions.
- Development of a socially focused drought resilience framework to evaluate the impact of drought and the effectiveness of support programs.
- Development and delivery of educational programs, direct business mentoring, and the promotion of innovative practices that enhance drought resilience.

3. Development of a socially focused drought resilience framework to evaluate the impact of drought and the effectiveness of the support programs.
4. Detailed cost estimate (activities, (including the financial resilience sessions) and administrative support roles).
5. Design of the administrative support roles.
6. Funding applications and approvals.
7. Content development for financial resilience sessions.
8. Development of the detailed program of events / activities.
9. Scheduling and advertising of events / activities.
10. Conduct and evaluation of activities.

Pathway to implementation

The pathway to the delivery of the initiative includes:

1. Formation of a Steering and Project Control / Working Group under the respective Council.
2. Development of a plan (that includes stakeholder engagement) to underpin the implementation of activities and events aimed at promoting social cohesion and connectivity (targeted consultations, community events and activities).

Supporting Broader Resilience

The ‘stronger communities’ program projects will contribute to improving drought resilience of the Northwest Region through:

- Modifying the existing system for the provision of support during periods of drought.
- Maintaining the social cohesion and connectivity of the region.

Additionally, the relevance of the project to improving the resilience of the region to identified challenges follows.

Challenge	Stronger Communities Program Relevance
Social Isolation and Mental Health	Programs aimed at enhancing social cohesion and providing mental health support reduce the strain on community members, improving overall community well-being during drought periods.
Reduced Community Services	Increasing the capacity of local services and supporting volunteer leaders, the program helps maintain essential community functions during challenging times.
Reduced Community Knowledge Sharing Opportunities	Encourages connection among community members, enabling them to share effective coping strategies and support each other through the collective experiences of managing drought impacts.
Sports Facility Maintenance	Supports the maintenance of sports facilities which suffer during droughts, ensuring they remain operational. This maintains opportunities for physical activity and social interaction, important for mental and physical health during challenging periods.

Challenge	Stronger Communities Program Relevance
Decline in agricultural productivity	By providing educational programs and strategic management tools, the program helps farmers make informed decisions during critical phases of drought, such as destocking or modifying farming plans to preserve resources, thereby mitigating the severity of productivity losses.
Economic contraction and loss of employment	The program promotes diversified income sources, such as tourism and alternative agricultural practices, reducing the sole reliance on traditional farming. This diversification helps stabilise local economies and retain populations during droughts, thereby sustaining employment and economic activity.
Environmental degradation	Training and support in innovative farming practices and environmental management are central to the program, helping farmers adopt sustainable practices that maintain soil health and reduce environmental impact during drought conditions.

Figure 57: Analysis of Resilience Challenges associated with the project

The projects support the pillars of drought resilience as follows:

Pillar 1 : Planning & Monitoring	Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events	Pillar 2 : Building Future Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in data collection and regular community consultation to inform resilient planning and support system development. Support the development of regional drought resilience and management plans, ensuring they reflect the community's needs. Educate farmers and business owners on proactive decision-making through workshops and one-on-one mentoring. Incorporate responsive planning and agricultural practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch community activities and support services quickly during drought periods to maintain social networks and well-being. Implement administrative support roles to alleviate pressures on community leaders and volunteers. Identify vulnerable sectors within agriculture and local businesses that require support during drought. Develop targeted support mechanisms for these groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop enduring community facilities and infrastructure that contribute to long-term drought resilience and community wellbeing. Foster local leadership and entrepreneurship, particularly among the youth, to drive community initiatives that build resilience. Encourage the adoption of innovative farming practices and diversification strategies. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop infrastructure and business models that can withstand drought conditions. Undertake measures such as workshops and consultations to mitigate the impacts of drought and enhance long-term resilience.

Figure 58 - Drought Resilience, Adaption and Management Model Pillars – Stronger Communities Program

Timeline



Figure 59 - Timeline – Stronger Communities Program

Budget

Specific budgets to be allocated post-consultation phase for each activity, with considerations for infrastructure, personnel, and marketing.

Accordingly, an economic analysis for this program has not been able to be completed within this plan.

Governance Structure

The 'owner' of the initiative, and therefore the Chair of the Steering Committee for each project within the initiative will be at the discretion of the respective Council within the region.

Governance Structure for the project would comprise the following:

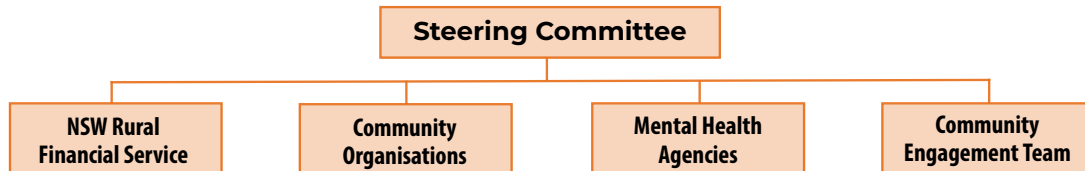


Figure 60 – Governance Structure – Stronger Communities Program

The Steering Committee is responsible for the strategic direction, oversight, decision-making, and ensuring that the project aligns with a funding program.

A proposed adaptive framework for monitoring and updating the project / initiative follows.

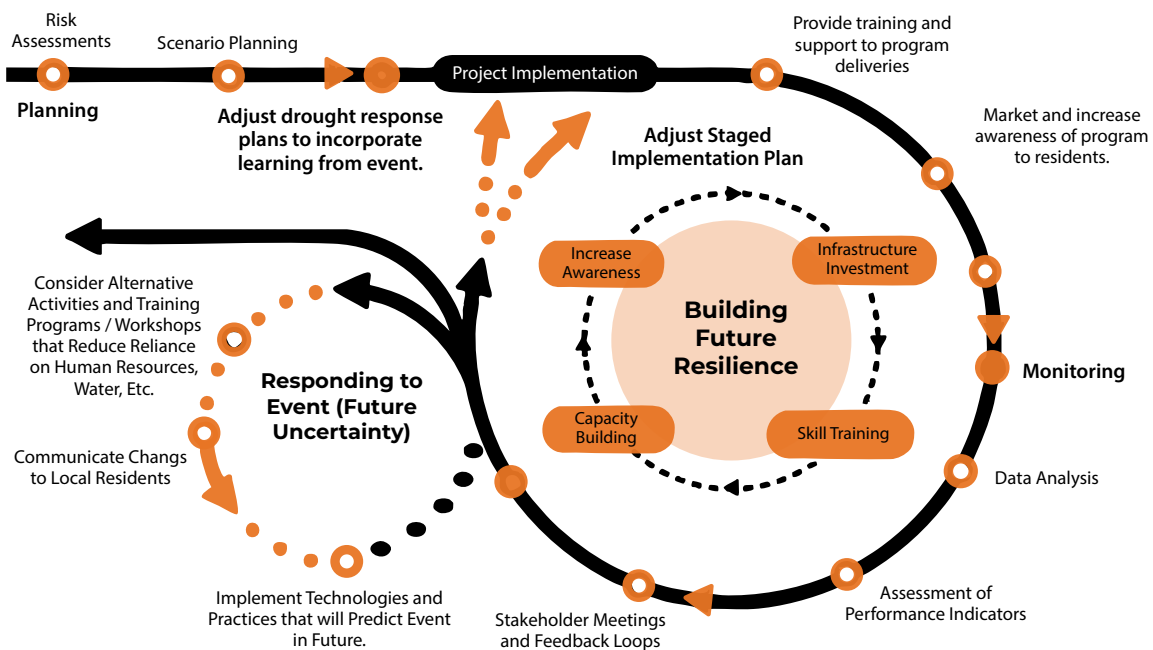


Figure 61: Framework for monitoring and updating the Stronger Communities Program (TSG 2024).

Events Schedule: Example of Events Schedule - Each community will develop their own Events Schedule with activities, dates and locations TBD by each Steering Committee.

Date	Location	Event Title	Event Description	Sponsor
October 10, 2024	Coonamble Showground Pavilion	Community BBQ & Games	A fun day with BBQ, games, and activities for all ages.	Coonamble Shire Council
October 20, 2024	Coonamble Community Hall	Financial Literacy for Rural Families	Workshop on financial literacy, budgeting, and savings tailored for rural families.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW

Date	Location	Event Title	Event Description	Sponsor
December 8, 2024	Warren Windows on the Wetland Precinct	Family Movie Night	An outdoor movie night for families with free popcorn.	Warren Shire Council
December 15, 2024	Online	Online Workshop on Drought Management	Webinar on managing finances during drought, including emergency funds.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW
February 12, 2025	Nyngan Showgrounds	Teen Sports Day	A day of sports competitions and activities for teenagers.	Bogan Shire Council
February 25, 2025	Warren Community Room	Tax Planning and Preparation	Detailed workshop on tax planning, preparation, and maximizing deductions.	Warren Shire Council
April 16, 2025	Coonamble Recreation Park	Family Picnic Day	A relaxed picnic with food, music, and family games.	Coonamble Local businesses
April 20, 2025	Online	Superannuation Essentials	Understanding superannuation and planning for the future.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW
June 10, 2025	Warren Sport & Cultural Centre	Adults' Trivia Night	A fun trivia night with prizes for adults.	Warren Local Businesses
June 15, 2025	Nyngan Community Centre	Managing Loans and Interest Rates	Workshop on managing loans, understanding interest rates, and financial planning.	Bogan Shire Council
August 12, 2025	Coonamble Park	Family Gardening Day	A day dedicated to community gardening and environmental activities.	Coonamble Environmental Club
August 25, 2025	Online	Children's Financial Literacy Program	Interactive program teaching children the basics of financial management	Local Schools
October 14, 2025	Coonamble Showgrounds	Family Fun Fair	A fair with rides, games, and food stalls for families.	Coonamble Community Groups
October 20, 2025	Coonamble Community Hall	Tracking Farm Finances Effectively	Workshop on effective tracking of farm finances, including income and expenses.	Coonamble Shire Council
December 9, 2025	Warren Sport & Cultural Centre	Adults' Comedy Night	A comedy night featuring local comedians for adults.	Warren Community Groups
December 15, 2025	Online	Understanding Depreciation	Webinar explaining depreciation and its application in farming.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW
February 10, 2026	Nyngan Civic Centre	Teen Disco	A disco night with music and dancing for teenagers.	Bogan Community Groups
February 20, 2026	Warren Community Room	End of Financial Year Planning	Workshop on preparing for the end of the financial year with practical tips.	Warren Shire Council
April 14, 2026	Coonamble Swimming Pool	Family Sports Day	A day of sports activities and games for families.	Coonamble Sports Clubs
April 25, 2026	Online	Investment Strategies	Strategies for investing wisely in rural communities.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW
June 9, 2026	Warren Museum & Art Gallery	Adults' Wine & Cheese Evening	A sophisticated evening of wine tasting and cheese for adults.	Warren Cultural Association

Date	Location	Event Title	Event Description	Sponsor
June 20, 2026	Nyngan Community Centre	Debt Management and Credit	Managing debt, understanding credit, and improving financial health.	Bogan Shire Council
August 11, 2026	Nyngan Recreation Reserve	Kids Art Workshop	An art workshop for kids to explore their creativity.	Bogan Arts Council
August 25, 2026	Online	Kids' Saving Strategies	Teaching kids about saving money and setting financial goals.	Local Schools
October 13, 2026	Coonamble Town Hall	Family Halloween Party	A Halloween party with costumes, games, and treats for families.	Coonamble Retailers
October 20, 2026	Coonamble Community Hall	Budgeting and Cash Flow Management	Creating effective budgets and managing cash flow in agricultural businesses.	Coonamble Shire Council
December 8, 2026	Warren Victoria Park & Oval	Adults' Live Music Night	A night of live music performances for adults.	Warren Music Society
December 15, 2026	Online	Building Financial Resilience	Building financial resilience in rural areas to withstand economic challenges.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW
February 9, 2027	Nyngan Community Centre	Teen Talent Show	A talent show for teenagers to showcase their skills.	Bogan Youth Centre
February 20, 2027	Warren Community Room	Long-Term Financial Planning	Planning for long-term financial stability and succession planning.	Warren Shire Council
April 13, 2027	Coonamble Park	Family Gardening Day	A day dedicated to community gardening and environmental activities.	Coonamble Environmental Club
April 25, 2027	Online	Using Financial Tools and Apps	Using modern financial tools and apps for better financial management.	Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW

Figure 62 – Stronger Communities Program - Events

Responsiveness to Future Scenarios and Uncertainties

An analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties on the implementation and delivery of each project follows.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Economic Recession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased funding for community events and programs. Lower participation in financial literacy and resilience sessions due to economic hardships. Reduced support from local businesses and sponsors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek additional funding from state or federal grants. Adjust project scope to align with reduced budgets. Focus on low-cost, high-impact activities and events. Strengthen partnerships with local businesses to share resources and costs. Introduce subsidised participation fees to encourage involvement.
Policy & Governance Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty in policy direction, affecting strategic planning and resource allocation. Delays in funding and support for community programs due to regulatory changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a policy advisory group to guide the project and navigate regulatory changes. Flexibility in project timelines and milestones to accommodate policy changes.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Policy & Governance Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent support for social and economic development initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring of policy developments and proactive adjustments to project plans. • Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to keep stakeholders involved.
Technological Advancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variability in the adoption and effectiveness of new technologies for community engagement and financial literacy. • Potential disparities in access to technology among community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate budget for training and capacity building in new technologies. • Incorporate the latest compatible technologies for community engagement and financial management tools. • Collaborate with technology providers and researchers to stay updated on how advancements can be implemented in region to reduce human resource reliance. • Develop user-friendly digital platforms to enhance community participation and access to information.
Climate Variability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancellation or low attendance at outdoor events due to extreme weather conditions. • Damage to infrastructure like community centres and sports facilities, reducing venue availability. • Increased difficulty in maintaining green spaces and sports fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased budget for climate resilient infrastructure and event venues. • Contingency planning for extreme weather events, including alternative indoor venues. • Adjust event schedules to avoid extreme weather periods. • Incorporate flexible infrastructure that can be adapted quickly to changing conditions. • Regular maintenance and monitoring of community spaces to ensure safety and usability.
Increased Fire Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to community infrastructure and homes, reducing venue availability and participation. • Significant resources diverted to firefighting and recovery, affecting project funding. • Long-term degradation of community spaces and green areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement fire-resistant infrastructure and safe community spaces. • Deliver community activities that enable all residents to be involved in advocacy, awareness and prevention of fires.
Health Crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced community engagement and event attendance due to health concerns. • Increased strain on local healthcare systems. • Higher costs for enduring health and safety standards at events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of health and wellness components that match the crisis at the time e.g. education and awareness. • Collaboration with healthcare providers to integrate health services. • Implementation of strict health and safety protocols at all events.
Outmigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced participation in community events and financial literacy sessions. • Lower volunteer numbers, impacting event organisation and community support. • Decreased economic activity and local business engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended timeline for project delivery due to reduced workforce availability. • Increased costs for attracting and retaining volunteers and participants. • Implementation of incentives to encourage local participation. • Adapt event schedules to ensure maximum attendance and engagement. • Develop targeted outreach programs to reengage out-migrated community members.

Figure 63: - Analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning – Pillar Implementation

Success measures and indicators that might be used by the Project Steering / Control Group for the project to measure the extent of progress towards the outcomes expressed in the program logic and delivery of the project follow.

Pillar 1 : Planning and Monitoring

- Risk Assessments and Scenario Planning
 - Conduct detailed risk assessments to identify potential impacts on community events and support services.
 - Develop scenarios for various drought conditions to anticipate challenges and plan responses.
- Advanced Data Analytics
 - Use geographical information systems (GIS) to monitor environmental conditions and community engagement/ participation patterns.
 - Analyse data to assess the impact of climate variability on event participation and involvement of community support services.
- Regular Stakeholder Meetings and Feedback Loops
 - Engage local businesses, community members, and government agencies in regular consultations.
 - Incorporate stakeholder feedback to adapt plans and improve project outcomes.
- Performance Indicators
 - Establish KPIs to track the success of community initiatives e.g. reduced mentalhealth related appointments with healthcare services, reduced feelings of isolation.
 - Use real-time monitoring to adjust strategies as needed.

Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events

- Drought Response Plans
 - Develop clear actions and responsibilities for managing community resources and supporting local businesses during droughts.
 - Ensure plans include maintaining social cohesion and supporting mental health services.
- Water-Efficient Technologies and Practices
 - Install water-saving devices in community facilities.

- Use drought-tolerant landscaping to maintain community spaces with minimal water use.
- Alternative Community Activities
 - Promote indoor and water-independent activities e.g. workshops, indoor sports and cultural events.
 - Create flexible infrastructure that can adapt to varying environmental conditions.
- Emergency Communication Strategies
 - Implement communication plans and digital platforms to keep community members informed about drought conditions, responses and resultant changes to the program schedule.

Pillar 3 : Building Future Resilience

- Climate Resilient Infrastructure
 - Invest in flexible, adaptive community facilities that can operate under different environmental conditions.
 - Incorporate sustainable design principles to enhance durability and reduce environmental impact.
- Economic Diversification
 - Support alternative income sources and business ventures to reduce dependence on traditional agriculture.
- Community Education and Capacity Building
 - Provide training for residents on drought-resilient practices and financial management.
 - Promote awareness of community resilience and mental health support among residents. Promote community cohesion, connectivity and ensure residents feel a purpose outside of their individual 'workplaces'.

Monitoring Against Objectives

The applicable objectives of the Future Drought Fund Agreement, and relevant project level indicators to track outcomes and how the project is contributing to drought resilience outcomes follow.

Objective 1 : Strengthen the social capital and wellbeing of the communities.

1. Number of community events held annually and attendance rates at community events.

2. Percentage decrease in reported mental health issues related to drought stress and social isolation.
3. Number of targeted consultations with key demographic groups (e.g. First Nations people, young families, youth).
4. Participation rates in sports activities, particularly among young men.
5. Percentage of youth and disadvantaged groups reporting reduced feelings of isolation and improved mental health.
6. Reduced crime rates in youth.
7. Percentage of programs adjusted based on evaluation feedback and incidence of future shock scenarios.
8. Reduction in workload reported by volunteers, and increased initiative of entire communities.
9. Decrease in the outmigration rate and the subsequent rate of population decline.

Objective 2 : Develop the agricultural sector's self-reliance and economic performance.

1. Number of financial resilience sessions conducted and the percentage of participants reporting improved financial knowledge and skills.
2. Percentage of farmers and businesses adopting risk management and diversification strategies.
3. Reduction in financial losses reported by businesses during drought periods.
4. Number of drought resilience solutions developed and implemented through innovation hubs.

Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Strategy



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Project Description

Develop and implement a tourism strategy:

- That focuses on sustainable recreational access to regional destinations such as rivers and marshes, with a special emphasis on adapting to drought conditions.
- Tailored for the Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes (inspired by successful models like the Darling River Run) regions.
- To implement infrastructure for the sustainable management of tourist facilities and explore agri-tourism to diversify economic opportunities.

The strategy will facilitate the creation of recreational infrastructure that can adjust to fluctuating water levels and promote activities suitable for dry seasons.

The initiative aims to boost local economies, particularly in areas where recreational access is limited due to variable climate conditions, such as frequent droughts.

It will support local entrepreneurship through tourism-related businesses such as Airbnbs and Farm Stays and include town planning strategies to enhance attractiveness to visitors.

“Buy from the Bush’ was a great initiative, but we need to transition to ‘Buy in the Bush’ as besides the dollars gained from the actual purchase, no other money is entering into the region’s economy from this initiative. ‘Buy in the Bush’ would mean people are in the bush, staying over, visiting coffee shops, taking part in activities, and overall contributing greater to the economy... The community want something that is lasting – a legacy. A Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Strategy would provide economic development and the ability to create a long-term fund that can be contribute towards water security projects.”

– Susan Balogh (Warren)

“If you set local residents up to develop and attract people to their Green Stays, Farms Stays and AirBnB accommodations..., that would be incredibly beneficial. This could be incorporated into a tourism strategy to prepare and teach the local residents how to prepare themselves and diversity their income streams.”

– Gary Woodman (Warren)

Scope

The scope of the ‘sustainable recreation and tourism strategy’ includes:

- Development of a tourism strategy.
- Development of a framework and mechanisms to support local entrepreneurship for tourism related businesses (such as Airbnbs and Farm Stays).
- Development of infrastructure (facilities / support arrangements) to support the management and sustainability of tourism and recreational facilities.

Pathway to implementation

The pathway to the delivery of the initiative includes:

1. Development of a draft tourism strategy.
2. Review of town planning strategies and identification of policy and regulatory constraints.
3. Development of a framework and support arrangements for local entrepreneurship in tourism-related businesses.
4. Amendments to regulatory and policy town planning Implementation of town planning strategies to enhance town attractiveness for visitors.
5. Detailed design and cost estimates for infrastructure projects for the sustainable management of tourist and recreational facilities.
6. Business Case development and regulatory approvals.
7. Tender for construction or implementation of support arrangements (as required).

Supporting Broader Resilience

The ‘sustainable recreation and tourism strategy’ will contribute to improving drought resilience of the Northwest Region through:

- Maintaining the existing system of the local economy during times of drought.

- Modifying the town planning strategies to enhance tourist visitation.

Additionally, the relevance of the project to improving the resilience of the region to identified challenges follows.

Challenge	Stronger Communities Program Relevance
Economic Dependence on Agriculture	The strategy aims to diversify the local economy by introducing alternative income streams through tourism, which is less dependent on seasonal variability than agriculture. This helps mitigate economic risks associated with farming during drought periods.
Impact of Drought on Agriculture	Tourism provides an alternative economic activity that can continue during drought when agricultural productivity declines. This helps maintain cash flow and employment in the community, reducing the severe economic impacts of drought on farming.
Reduced Local Spending and Employment	By promoting tourism, the strategy can stimulate local spending and create jobs, counteracting the economic downturn caused by drought. This includes supporting small businesses and encouraging new ventures in the tourism sector.
Social Isolation and Community Well-being	Tourism fosters greater community engagement and well-being by providing recreational opportunities and events that bring people together, countering the social isolation often experienced during tough economic times like droughts.
Environmental Degradation	Sustainable tourism practices emphasise the preservation and careful management of natural resources, which is important during drought conditions. This can lead to improved environmental stewardship and resilience against future ecological challenges.
Volunteer Fatigue and Reduced Community Services	Tourism can help revitalise community spirit and increase the number of visitors and residents who can contribute to community services and volunteer efforts, thus alleviating the strain on the remaining local population during challenging times.
Infrastructure Strain and Water Management	Part of the tourism strategy includes developing infrastructure that is resilient to drought, such as water-efficient facilities and services. This not only supports tourism but also improves the overall community’s resilience in managing scarce resources.
Psychological Impact of Drought	Tourism and recreational activities can improve mental health by providing escape and relaxation opportunities for residents, mitigating the psychological toll of enduring drought conditions and economic uncertainty.

Figure 64: Analysis of Resilience Challenges associated with the project

The projects support the pillars of drought resilience as follows:



Figure 65 - Drought Resilience, Adaption and Management Model Pillars - Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Strategy

Timeline



Figure 66 - Timeline – Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Strategy

Budget

Preliminary budgets will be determined following the planning phase and are anticipated to encompass strategy development, workshop execution, infrastructure enhancement, and promotional activities.

Accordingly, an economic analysis for this strategy has not been able to be completed within this plan.

Governance Structure

The ‘owner’ of the initiative, and therefore the Chair of the Steering Committee for each project within the initiative will be at the discretion of the Far Northwest Joint Organisation and the respective Council within the region.

Governance Structure for the project would comprise of the following:

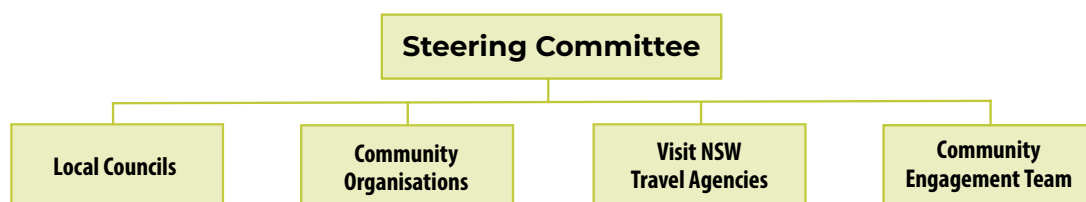


Figure 67 – Governance Structure – Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Strategy

- Steering Committee: responsible for strategic direction, oversight, decision-making, and ensuring that the project aligns with funding program.
- The supporting organisations will be involved in contributing to the design, construct and management of the strategy.

A proposed adaptive framework for monitoring and updating the project / initiative follows.

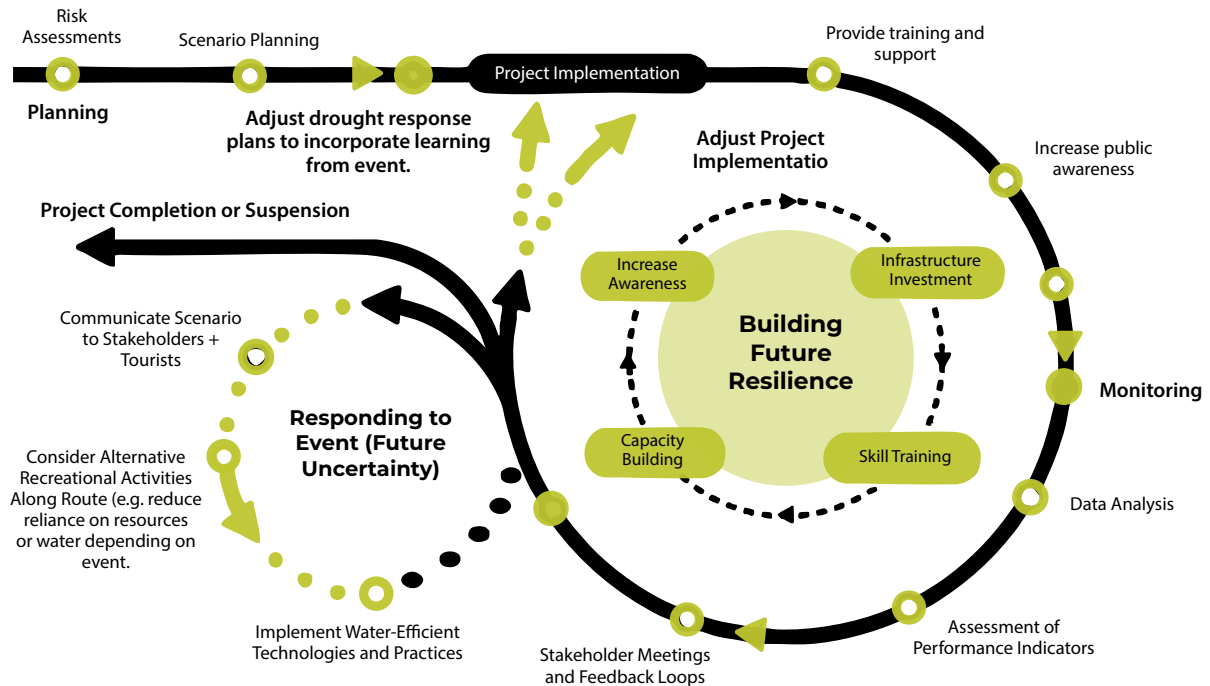


Figure 68: Framework for monitoring and updating the Sustainable Tourism and Recreation Strategy (TSG 2024).

Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Run

The Route: Proposed route to be further investigated and confirmed by stakeholders prior to implementation to account for community events and tourism product availability.

Day	Route	Stops
1		Walgett
2	Walgett to Coonamble	Follow the Castlereagh River, stopping via: • 'Burrima' Boardwalk in Upper Macquarie Marshes • Quambone – Marsh Meanders Kayaking Coonamble Outback Arts Gallery
3	Coonamble to Warren	Gulargambone – Stop to see the iconic Two Eight Two Eight Gallery, Sculpture Walk and Town Murals Warren – Window on the Wetlands Centre and Oxley Park
4	Warren to Nyngan	Roundtrip from Warren to Macquarie Marshes Nature Reserve. Gin Gin Weir Trangie – Explore the Trangie Agricultural Research Centre Nyngan – Nyngan Museum and Mid-State Shearing Shed
5	Nyngan to Cobar	Travel to Cobar – Discover the mining heritage at the Great Cobar Heritage Centre and Fort Bourke Hill Lookout.
6	Cobar to Bourke	Cobar Regional Park Mount Grenfell Historic Site – Explore the indigenous rock art site near Cobar Bourke – Visit the Back O'Bourke Exhibition Centre and take a paddleboat cruise on the Darling River.
7	Bourke to Walgett	Brewarrina – Aboriginal Fish Traps

Figure 69 - Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Run Route (Table)

The Natural Highlights on the Route include:

- Macquarie Marshes
- Macquarie Valley trails
- Pilliga Forest
- Mount Grenfell Historic Site

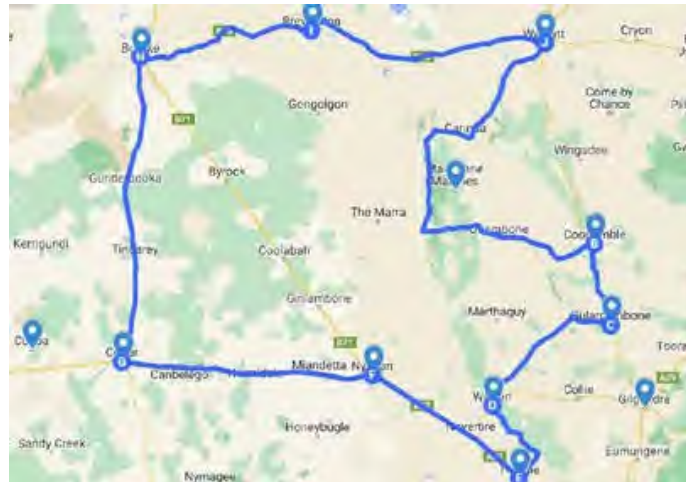


Figure 70 - Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Run Route

Nominal Costs:

Phase 1 - Nominal Capital Costs					Total
Capital Costs	Nominally:	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	
Project & Operations Manager - Tourism (0.5 FTE of Grade 7 equivalent)		\$34,072			\$34,072
Webpace (content, purchase-to-pay, design, hosting, payment service, maintenance contract)		\$15,000			\$15,000
Computer and Software (Microsoft licenses, CANVA)		\$4,200			\$4,200
Graphic Design and Brand Logos		\$2,000			\$2,000
Printing (brochures, fact sheets, information booklets, etc)		\$1,500			\$1,500
Route Signage		\$3,300			\$3,300
Outdoor displays – construction and design (total 8 signs across main locations – overnight stay locations or stops – Walgett, Coonamble, Gulargambone, Warren, Nyngan, Cobar, Bourke, Brewarrina)		\$16,000			\$16,000
Content – 50 hours at \$100 per hour		\$5,000			\$5,000
Nominal Capital Investment		\$81,072			\$81,072
Contingency (10%)		\$8,107			\$8,107
Nominal Total Capital Investment		\$89,179			\$89,179

Figure 71 - Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Run Route (Indicative Investment)

Outcomes Achieved from the Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Run:

Category	Derived Benefits
Economic Growth and Job Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tourism and subsequent spending in the region (accommodation, food, fuel, services). • Increased demand for services subsequently increases jobs in hospitality, tourism and retail. • Opportunities for business diversification for sustainable operation – tour guides, agritourism, Airbnb's, cultural tours, etc.

Category	Derived Benefits
Infrastructure Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased regional investment to improve roads, signage, rest stops and other infrastructure to support access to the regions.
Environmental Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging sustainable tourism practices can lead to the preservation of natural habitats and wildlife. • Increased awareness and education about the importance of conservation. • Preservation and promotion of cultural heritage sites, indigenous art, and historical landmarks.
Regional Additions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Infrastructure – Development of visitor centres, information kiosks, and interactive maps to guide tourists through the route. • Outdoor Activities – Development of outdoor recreational activities such as hiking trails, birdwatching tours, camping sites and water sports along the rivers.
Opportunities for Regional Council Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry Fees – Charging entry fees for access to certain sites on Council land. • Collaborate with private businesses to develop tourism infrastructure, such as hotels, restaurants, and recreational facilities. • Tourist Services – Offering services such as guided tours, shuttle services, and equipment rentals, either directly or through partnerships with local businesses. • Ticketed events and festivals to increase visitation. • Tour Packages – Collaboration with travel agencies to create packages that include multiple attraction and services within the region. • Government Grants – State and Federal grants aimed at tourism development, infrastructure improvement, and cultural preservation. • Development Funds – Setting up tourism development funds that attract investment from stakeholders interested in the region’s growth. • These funds can be used to support investment in water security infrastructure e.g. bores, off- river storage, etc.

Figure 72 - Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Run Route (Indicative Investment)

Responsiveness to Future Scenarios and Uncertainties

An analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties on the implementation and delivery of the project follows.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Economic Recession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased tourism spending, reducing economic growth and job creation. • Lower investment in infrastructure development. • Reduced community spending and engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek additional funding from state or federal grants. • Adjust project scope to align with reduced budgets. • Focus on low-cost, high-impact activities and infrastructure. • Strengthen partnerships with local businesses to share resources and costs.
Policy and Governance Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty in policy direction, affecting strategic planning and resource allocation. • Delays in infrastructure projects due to regulatory changes. • Inconsistent support for tourism development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased advocacy and engagement with policymakers. • Flexibility in project timelines and milestones to accommodate policy changes. • Regular monitoring of policy developments and proactive adjustments to project plans. • Formation of a policy advisory group to guide the project.

Future Scenario	Effect on Intended Project Outcomes	Changes to Project Implementation or Delivery for Prevention
Technological Advancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variability in the adoption and effectiveness of new technologies. • Potential disparities in access to technology among local businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate budget for training and capacity building. • Incorporate the latest technologies for water management and infrastructure. • Collaborate with technology providers and researchers. • Develop strategies to ensure equitable access to new technologies for all community members.
Climate Variability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced tourism due to extreme weather conditions, affecting regional spending. • Damage to infrastructure like roads, signage, rest stops, reducing access. • Increased difficulty in preserving natural habitats and wildlife. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased budget for climate resilient infrastructure. • Contingency planning for extreme weather events. • Regular review and adjustment of project plans to accommodate changing climate conditions. • Investment in flexible, adaptive infrastructure that can adjust to varying conditions.
Increased Fire Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to natural habitats and infrastructure, reducing tourism appeal. • Significant resources diverted to firefighting and recovery, affecting project funding. • Long-term degradation of natural habitats and ecosystems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement fire-resistant on-farm and off-farm infrastructure. • Increased budget for fire management and recovery efforts. • Development of emergency response plans specific to fire risks. • Potential delays and increased costs due to fire-related disruptions.
Health Crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced community engagement and tourism due to health concerns. • Increased strain on local healthcare systems. • Higher costs for enduring health and safety standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of health and wellness components in the project. • Collaboration with healthcare providers to integrate health services. • Allocation of additional resources for health-related infrastructure and programs. • Flexibility in project timelines to accommodate health crises and ensure community well-being.
Outmigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced tourism and subsequent spending in the region (accommodation, food, fuel, services). • Lower demand for services, decreasing jobs in hospitality, tourism, and retail. • Fewer opportunities for business diversification in sustainable operations like tour guides, agritourism, Airbnb's, cultural tours, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended timeline for project delivery due to reduced workforce availability. • Increased costs for attracting and retaining workers. • Implementation of training programs for local workers to fill gaps. • Enhanced marketing and outreach to attract tourists and investors.

Figure 73: - Analysis of the impact of potential future scenarios and uncertainties

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning – Pillar Implementation

Success measures and indicators that might be used by the Project Steering / Control Group for the project to measure the extent of progress towards the outcomes expressed in the program logic and delivery of the project follow.

Pillar 1 : Planning and Monitoring

- Risk Assessments and Scenario Planning.

- Conduct detailed risk assessments to identify potential impacts on tourism infrastructure and activities.
- Develop scenarios for various drought conditions to anticipate challenges and plan responses.
- Advanced Data Analytics
 - Use geographical information systems (GIS) to monitor environmental conditions and visitor patterns.

- Analyse data to assess the impact of climate variability on tourist destinations.
- Regular Stakeholder Meetings and Feedback Loops
 - Engage local businesses, community members, and government agencies in regular consultations.
 - Incorporate stakeholder feedback to adapt plans and improve project outcomes.
 - Performance Indicators.
 - Establish KPIs to track the success of tourism initiatives and infrastructure resilience.
 - Use real-time monitoring to adjust strategies as needed.

Pillar 2 : Responding to Drought Events

- Drought Response Plans
 - Develop clear actions and responsibilities for managing water resources during droughts.
 - Ensure plans include maintaining tourist attractions and supporting local businesses.
- Water-Efficient Technologies and Practices
 - Install water-saving devices in tourist facilities.
 - Use drought-tolerant landscaping to maintain aesthetic appeal with minimal water use.
- Alternative Recreational Activities
 - Promote activities in each town that doesn't rely on water e.g. hiking, cultural tours and wildlife viewing.
 - Create flexible infrastructure that can adapt to varying water levels.
- Emergency Communication Strategies
 - Implement communication plans to keep tourists and stakeholders informed about drought conditions and responses.
 - Use digital platforms to provide real-time updates on water availability and tourist site accessibility.

Pillar 3 : Building Future Resilience

- Climate Resilient Infrastructure
 - Invest in flexible, adaptive recreational facilities that can operate under different environmental conditions.
 - Incorporate sustainable design principles to enhance durability and reduce environmental impact.
- Economic Diversification

- Support agri-tourism and other sustainable tourism ventures to reduce dependence on traditional agriculture.
- Encourage local entrepreneurship in tourism-related businesses such as Airbnb and Farm Stays.
- Community Education & Capacity Building
 - Provide training for residents on drought-resilient tourism practices.
 - Promote awareness of sustainable tourism and conservation efforts among visitors and the community.

Monitoring Against Objectives

The applicable objectives of the Future Drought Fund Agreement, and relevant project level indicators to track outcomes and how the project is contributing to drought resilience outcomes follow.

Community Developed RDRP Objectives Addressed:

Objective 1 : Develop the environmental resilience and natural capital of agricultural landscapes.

- o Number of eco-tourism project that incorporate conservation activities (e.g. native species planting, wildlife habitat restoration, adopt-an-animal (funding to farmers), etc).
- o Percentage improvement in soil quality parameters (e.g. water retention capacity) on properties used for agri-tourism. This will ensure that farms with alternate income streams are reinvesting profits to improve their resilience and capacity to remain viable as an agricultural producer in subsequent droughts.
- o Number of tourism businesses adopting sustainable agricultural practices.
- o Number of water conservation features and devices installed in tourism infrastructure e.g. rainfall harvesting systems.

Objective 2: Understand and plan for the region's current and future drought resilience by identifying actions, pathways, and opportunities for mitigation adaptation and improvement.

- o Number of educational programs delivered to residents on diversification of income and development of agritourism businesses.

- o Increase in the number of farm stays, Airbnbs, and eco-tourism experiences offered.
- o Revenue generated from sustainable tourism activities.
- o Percentage increase in tourist visitation to drought-affected areas due to new sustainable tourism options.
- o Percentage increase in local employment in sustainable tourism sectors.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The following table describes Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework for this Plan.

Key Evaluation Questions		
How effectively are the councils integrating drought resilience initiatives into their BAU activities? What measurable progress is being made towards the objectives set within the Initial Resilience Assessments for priority agricultural areas? How are the interventions influencing the community, economic stability, environmental resilience, and infrastructure within the region?		
Projects		
• Long Term Water Security Projects • Telecommunications Strategy • Stronger Communities Program • Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Strategy		
Implementation and Monitoring Framework		
Pillar 1 : Planning and Monitoring	Pillar 2 : Respond to Drought Conditions	Pillar 3 : Building Future Resilience
Councils will embed the Drought Resilience Logic Map within their strategic planning frameworks to ensure a systematic approach to drought monitoring and early warning system deployment. This tool will guide the assessment of initial situations and the alignment of planning efforts with broader resilience goals.	The monitoring process will focus on the effectiveness of response mechanisms activated during drought alerts. This includes evaluating the support provided to identified vulnerable sectors and groups, ensuring rapid and effective aid.	Councils will periodically review and update their strategies to enhance long-term drought resilience based on the feedback and data collected through the Logic Map and other MEL activities. These updates will aim to strengthen the economic, environmental, social, and infrastructural pillars of the region.
Assumptions Underpinning the Implementation of the Plan		
Councils will regularly update and refine MEL processes to align with state and national guidelines.	Stakeholder engagement remains proactive and constructive, ensuring that feedback loops are operational and inform continuous improvement.	Sufficient resources (financial, human, informational) are allocated for the ongoing support of MEL activities.
Key Assumptions Affecting Outputs to 1-2 Year Outcomes		
Early identification and mitigation of drought impacts will stabilize the regional economy and protect vulnerable sectors.	Enhanced infrastructure and community support systems will improve immediate disaster response and recovery capabilities.	Initial community and stakeholder engagement will establish a strong foundation for sustained cooperation and collaboration.
Key Assumptions Affecting Outcomes from 2+ Years		
Long-term planning and regular reassessment of strategies will adapt effectively to changing environmental conditions and emerging economic trends.	Ongoing education and community engagement will elevate the general understanding and proactive management of drought impacts.	Strategic partnerships and investments will continue to evolve, driving innovation and resilience in agricultural practices and broader economic activities.
Continuous Improvement and Reporting		
Progress against the MEL Plan will be reported through regular updates at council meetings and public forums, ensuring transparency and community involvement. (People, Culture, and Community, Economy, Landscape and Natural Environment, Infrastructure and Built Environment)		
Biannual and annual reports will detail the short and long-term impacts of the initiatives, supported by data from the Logic Map and additional quantitative and qualitative metrics.		
Successes and learnings from the pilot year and subsequent phases will inform adjustments in strategies and actions, aligning with the evolving needs of the Northwest region.		
By aligning the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning activities with these frameworks, councils will ensure that drought resilience planning is not only integrated into their Business As Usual activities but also dynamically supports the region's ability to manage and adapt to drought conditions effectively.		

Appendices

Appendix 1: Glossary of Key Terms

Absorptive capacity	The ability of individuals and groups to continue without adapting or changing their behaviour in response to environmental and socioeconomic changes (Béné et al., 2012).
Adaptation	Adjustment or modification in natural and/or human systems in response to actual or expected shocks and stresses to moderate harm, reduce vulnerability and/or exploit beneficial opportunities (CSIRO, 2022).
Adaptive capacity	The ability of individuals and groups to adjust and respond to environmental and socioeconomic changes (CSIRO, 2022).
Adaptive governance	Coordinating iterative, flexible and responsive interactions between systems when designing interventions and for their implementation and evaluation.
Catchment	A natural drainage area, bounded by sloping ground, hills or mountains from which water flows to a low point. Flows within the catchment contribute to surface water sources as well as to groundwater sources.
Climate variability	Describes the way key climatic elements, such as temperature, rainfall, evaporation, and humidity, differ from the average over time. Variability can be caused by natural or man-made processes.
Co-design	The process of partnership to develop and formulate project delivery and agreed objectives and needs, using participatory methods. A process of working together utilising generative and explorative processes.
Drought	Drought in general means acute water shortage. Drought is a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of available water is insufficient to meet our normal use (BoM, 2022).
Drought resilience	Means the ability to adapt, reorganise or transform in response to changing temperature, increasing variability and scarcity of rainfall and changed seasonality of rainfall, for improved economic, environmental and social wellbeing (Australian Government Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 - 2024).
Economic resilience	The ability of the economy to absorb the economic impact of shocks and stressors without changing the economic status or outcomes (CSIRO, 2022).
Environmental resilience	The ability of the natural environment to cope with a diverse range of shocks and stressors while maintaining natural processes and ecosystem services (CSIRO, 2022).
Environmental water	Water allocated to support environmental outcomes and other public benefits. Environmental water provisions recognise environmental water requirements and are based on environmental, social, and economic considerations, including existing user rights.

Evaporation	The process by which water or another liquid becomes a gas. Water from land areas, bodies of water and all other moist surfaces is absorbed into the atmosphere as a vapour.
Governance	Governance is the structures and processes by which individuals, groups and agencies in a society share power and make decisions. It can be formally institutionalised, or informal (CSIRO, 2022).
Gross regional product (GRP)	Gross regional product (GRP) is the total value of the goods and services produced in a regional economy
Groundwater	Water located beneath the surface of the ground in the spaces between sediments and in the fractures of rock formations.
Floodplain	Flat land bordering a river or stream that is naturally subject to flooding and is made up of alluvium (sand, silt and clay) deposited during floods. Floodplain harvesting is the collection or capture of water flowing across floodplains.
Inflows	The amount of water coming into a surface water source or groundwater source.
Intervention options	Alternative or complementary actions, projects, programs, policies, initiatives and investments that are planned to bring about change in the system (Maru et al., 2017).
Local knowledge	Local knowledge and First Nations knowledge incorporates elements of lived experience within a landscape, bearing witness to the operation of systems. It includes aspects of people, landscape, culture – how people interact with surroundings and as part of communities and processes.
Public Good	For infrastructure and other capital investment or on-ground works, ‘public good’ is taken to mean that the project would not otherwise be able to recover costs—for example, utility pricing—and should deliver significant spill-over benefits for society and the economy, well beyond those derived by private beneficiaries (Australian Government Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 - 2024).
Resilience	The ability of a system to absorb a disturbance and reorganise so as to maintain the existing functions, structure and feedbacks (Walker et al., 2004). Also see general resilience, specified resilience, economic resilience, environmental resilience and social resilience.
Resilience planning	Resilience planning is about more than developing a plan to improve the state and trajectory of a region. Resilience plans focus on developing the capacities of a system to absorb, adapt, or transform, and to deal with specified stresses or shocks, such as drought, as well as unspecified stresses or shocks. (Adopted from the CSIRO Drought Resilience Planning, Independent Review Guide).
Resilient regional centres	Means water users are able to withstand extreme events, such as drought and flood, and/or adapt and respond to changes caused by extreme events.
Risk	The potential for adverse consequences for human or ecological systems, recognising the diversity of values and objectives associated with such systems (IPCC, 2020).

Shock	Sudden, short-term events that threaten a city (or region). Examples include major storms, floods, bush fires, heatwaves, disease outbreaks, terrorism and cyber-attacks' (Resilient Sydney, 2018).
Social resilience	The ability of the human society to cope with a diverse range of shocks and stressors while maintaining existing social and community functions (CSIRO, 2022).
Stochastic climate datasets	Stochastic climate datasets are extended climate sequences that are synthesised using statistical methods applied to observed data of rainfall and evapotranspiration and can include paleoclimatic data. These extended sequences include a more complete sample of climate variability, part of which describes more severe drought sequences.
Storage	A state-owned dam, weir or other structure which is used to regulate and manage river flows in the catchment. There are also a range of storages owned by local water utilities. Also refers to the water bodies impounded by these structures.
Stormwater	Flow generated from rainfall falling on hard (impervious) surfaces.
Stressor	An event that occurs gradually over a timeframe that causes an adverse effect, e.g., drought (CSIRO, 2022).
Surface water	All water that occurs naturally above ground including rivers, lakes, reservoirs, creeks, wetlands, and estuaries.
Systems	The interaction of processes, networks and inter-dependencies across a complex 'whole'.
Theory of change	Refers to theories, causal mechanisms and assumptions that explain how and why outcomes and impacts will be achieved through use, implementation and production of proposed inputs, activities and outputs (Maru et al., 2018).
Trends	Major global or regional influences that have driven change in the past and are expected to shape change into the future (Taylor et al., 2017).
Threshold	The point at which a change in a level or amount a controlling variable causes a system to shift to a qualitatively different regime. Also referred to as a tipping point (Folke et al., 2010).
Transform	The process of radically changing or building a new system with different structure, functions, feedbacks and identity (Folke et al., 2010).
Transpiration	The process where plants absorb water through their roots and then evaporate water vapour through pores in their leaves.
Trigger point	A pre-agreed situation or event, that when met, activates a management intervention. Trigger points are usually defined in the planning phase (Wise et al., 2014).
Water security	In the context of regional water strategies refers to the acceptable chance of not having town water supplies fail. This requires community and government to have a shared understanding of what is a 'fail event' (for example, no drinking water or unacceptable water quality) and the level of acceptability they will pay for.

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Appendix 3: Background Context and Key Inputs

The background contexts (BC), review of prior strategies, and relevance of Global academic and government strategies and reports considered, in the identification of existing drought initiatives, within NSW, Australia and International regional and rural contexts, for potential implementation within the regions considered in this plan follow.

Background Contexts

1. (BC.1) Australian Government Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan.

On 12 December 2018 the Australian, state and territory governments signed the National Drought Agreement (NDA), replacing the 2013 agreement. The NDA commits the Australian, state and territory governments to develop policies and programs that position farmers to plan for and manage risk; and prepare for, manage and recover from drought. It is in place until 30 June 2024 and will be reviewed approximately two years before expiry.

The Australian Government Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan, which in effect arises from the NDA and:

- has a prime focus on preparing farm businesses and rural communities to manage drought in pursuit of a prosperous and sustainable future.
- is supported by the Future Drought Fund Act 2019.

The purpose of the Fund is to enhance the public good by building drought resilience. This means the benefits generated by the funding must be able to be accessed and/or shared by many (public benefits), rather than be captured solely by individual businesses or industries solely for private commercial gain (private benefits). It also means the benefits achievable from the funding should outweigh the costs.

The Fund has three interconnected strategic priorities and objectives focused economic resilience, environmental resilience and social resilience of communities.

The *Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 to 2024* sets out an approach for making arrangements or grants in relation to drought resilience, or entering into agreements in relation to such grants, under the Future Drought Fund. A Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework has been developed to outline the rationale, scope and approach for monitoring and evaluating the activities carried out under the Funding Plan, and for the generation and sharing of knowledge gained through funded activities about how to build drought resilience.

The Australian Government, within the October 2022-23 Budget Measures is:

- providing a further \$94.5 million over six years from 2022-23 to consolidate the Drought Resilience Funding Plan in place under the Future Drought Fund Act 2019.
- investing \$6.6 million over two years from 2022-23 to support work to prepare for future droughts. This includes work to review and revise the National Drought Agreement with the states and territories and the Commonwealth Drought Plan.

2. (BC.13) Baseline Drought – Developing a Baseline Understanding of Farmer and Community Perceptions of Drought.
3. (BC.14) Building Climate Resilience Through Nature Based Solutions in Europe.
4. (BC.15) Climate Change in the North-West and Local Land Services Region.
5. (BC.16) Coordinated Strategic Plan to Advance Desalination for Enhanced Water Security.
6. (BC.17) Draft Inquiry Report – Government Drought Support.

7. (BC.18) Enhanced Aquifer Recharge of Stormwater in the United States: State of the Review Science.
8. (BC.19) EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change.
9. (BC.20) Far West Enabling Regional Adaptation Report.
10. (BC.21) Final Report – Support for Drought Affected Communities in NSW.
11. (BC.22) Interim Report – Support for Drought Affected Communities in NSW.
12. (BC.23) Macquarie – Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy.
13. (BC.24) Managing and Preparing for Drought.
14. (BC.25) Regional Strengths and Infrastructure Gaps Regional Analysis: NSW.
15. (BC.26) Regional Water Strategy: Western Implementation Plan.
16. (BC.27) Resilience Strategies for Drought.
17. (BC.28) Social and Economic Impacts of Drought on Farm Families and Rural Communities.
18. (BC.29) Strengthening Agricultural Resilience in the Face of Multiple Risks – Resilience to Drought in Australia.
19. (BC.30) The Role of Conservation Programs in Drought Resilience.
20. (BC.31) Water Efficiency and Infrastructure Technical Brief.

The key inputs considered, in identifying the drought resilience projects included the following

21. Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot: NSW Government - Office of Environment and Heritage 2014.
22. Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036: NSW Government - Planning and Environment 2017.
23. Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041: NSW Government - Planning and Environment 2022.
24. Coonamble Shire Council Drought Management Plan: Coonamble Shire Council 2022.
25. Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance: A Quantum Leap in Local Government Thinking.
26. Macquarie – Castlereagh Long Term Water Plan: NSW Government - Planning, Industry and Environment 2020.
27. NSW Business Chamber Drought Survey 2018: NSW Business Chamber 2018.
28. Regional Water Strategy – Macquarie Castlereagh: NSW Government - Planning and Environment 2023.
29. Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance.
30. Warren Shire Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan: Warren Shire Council 2023.
31. Western Enabling Regional Adaptation - Central West and Orana Region Report.
32. NSW Government's Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) for each of the Functional Economic Regions (FER).
33. Council Community Strategic Plans.
34. Western Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan.
35. Water and Drought Security Report.

Desktop Review and Strategic Alignment

The review of prior strategies focused on ensuring the alignment of strategic priorities and projects for this Plan, with the Western Regional Water Strategy and the Macquarie Castlereagh Water Strategy. Below are the region-specific documents, plans and reports that were assessed, analysed and incorporated into this Plan.

Strategy (Year)		Region (Organisation)	Description	Assessment of past drought impact?	Links to Regional Water Strategy	Addresses Regional Characteristics?	Addresses future shocks or uncertainties?
Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot (2014)	Central West and Orana NSW Government – Office of Environment and Heritage]	The report provides detailed projections on the impacts of climate change in the Central West and Orana regions, focusing on temperature, rainfall, and fire weather changes. This document serves as a critical resource for understanding climate trends and preparing for future conditions.	No	No	Yes – Location, population, natural ecosystems e.g. Macquarie Marshes.	Yes – Climate Projections (temperature, rainfall, fire weather).	
Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 (2017)	Central West and Orana NSW Government – Planning and Environment]	The plan outlines the vision, goals, and actions for the Central West and Orana region by 2036, focusing on economic diversification, environmental sustainability, infrastructure development, and community well-being.	Yes – The plan discusses the impacts of past droughts on agriculture and water resources.	Yes – Challenges: Reducing water supply risks, maintaining and improving river health, supporting a growing regional economy; Priorities: Safe water supply, natural system resilience.	Yes – Describes social, economic, and environmental characteristics, including population, land use, natural resources, and economic sectors.	Yes – Addresses future uncertainties related to climate change, economic transitions, population growth, and infrastructure needs.	
Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041 (2022)	Central West and Orana NSW Government – Planning and Environment]	The plan provides a strategic framework for the region, focusing on sustainable growth, economic diversification, infrastructure development, and community well-being up to the year 2041.	Yes – Discusses impacts of past droughts on water resources and agriculture.	Yes – Challenges: Reducing water supply risks, supporting a growing regional economy; Priorities: Safe water supply.	Yes – Describes social, economic, and environmental characteristics, including population, land use, natural resources, and economic sectors.	Yes – Addresses future uncertainties related to climate change, economic transitions, population growth, infrastructure needs, and the shift to renewable energy sources.	
Coonamble Shire Council Drought Management Plan (2022)	Coonamble [Coonamble Shire Council]	The plan provides a framework to assist in handling future droughts, ensuring a basic water supply is available to all users. It includes monitoring strategies, drought activation triggers, and communication plans to manage water demand during drought conditions.	Yes – Discusses past droughts, including the Millennium Drought (2001-2009) and the drought from 2016-2019.	Yes – Challenges: Climate resilience, reducing water and supporting a growing regional economy; Priorities: Safe water supply, efficient water use.	Yes – Describes social, economic, and environmental characteristics, including water supply systems, population served, and significant water users.	Yes – Addresses future uncertainties related to climate change, increased water demand, and infrastructure challenges, including the need for water conservation and management strategies.	

Strategy (Year)	Region (Organisation)	Description	Assessment of past drought impact?	Links to Regional Water Strategy	Addresses Regional Characteristics?	Addresses future shocks or uncertainties?
NSW Business Chamber Drought Survey (2018)	NSW (NSW Business Chamber)	The survey evaluates the impact of drought on businesses across various regions in NSW, highlighting revenue losses, cash flow issues, staffing reductions, and concerns about business viability. It provides an overview of how different industries and regions are affected by the drought conditions.	Yes – Provides detailed analysis of the impact of the current drought on businesses, including economic and operational challenges.	No – The survey focuses on business impacts and does not directly link to the regional water strategy's challenges or priorities.	Yes – Describes social and economic characteristics, including revenue impact, cash flow challenges, staffing issues, and regional economic weaknesses.	Yes – Addresses future uncertainties related to prolonged drought conditions, economic stability, business viability, and potential need for business closures or scaling back operations.
Regional Water Strategy – Macquarie-Castlereagh (2023)	Macquarie – Castlereagh Region (NSW Government – Planning and Environment)	The strategy identifies key water-related challenges in the Macquarie-Castlereagh region and outlines actions to address them, ensuring secure, reliable, and resilient water supplies for regional and remote communities over the next 20 years and beyond.	Yes – The strategy addresses the impacts of past droughts on water availability, agriculture, and community well-being.	Yes – The report sets the priorities and challenges in the region relating to water security and drought.	Yes – The strategy describes social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the region, including water use, climate snapshot, and cultural connections to Country.	Yes – The strategy addresses future uncertainties related to climate change, reduced water availability, and the need for climate adaptation for industry and communities.
Warren Shire Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan (2023)	Warren (Warren Shire Council)	The strategy and action plan aim to progress, evaluate, monitor, and report on economic development opportunities within Warren Shire, focusing on tourism, liveability, infrastructure development, and business growth.	Yes – Discusses past drought impacts on agriculture and the broader economy.	Yes – Challenges: Reducing water supply risks, supporting a growing regional economy; Priorities: Safe water supply, natural system resilience, efficient water use.	Yes – Describes social, economic, and environmental characteristics, including population demographics, economic sectors, and infrastructure.	Yes – Addresses future uncertainties related to economic transitions, population changes, infrastructure needs, and environmental challenges, including climate change.
Western Enabling Regional Adaptation – Central West and Orana Region Report (2017)	NSW Government – Office of Environment and Heritage	The report outlines vulnerabilities to climate change in the Central West and Orana region and identifies adaptive strategies to build resilience across various sectors, including agriculture, water management, infrastructure, and community health.	Yes – Discusses impacts of past droughts on water resources, agriculture, and community well-being.	Yes – Challenges: Climate resilience, water security, sustaining regional economies; Priorities: Integrated water management, enhancing adaptive capacity, fostering resilient communities.	Yes – Describes social, economic, and environmental characteristics, including population demographics, land use, natural resources, and economic sectors.	Yes – Addresses future uncertainties related to climate change, water availability, economic stability, infrastructure resilience, and community health and well-being.

Relevance of Global academic and government strategies and reports

Global academic and government derived strategies and reports were also reviewed, with their relevance assessed against the strategic priorities and objectives identified by regional stakeholders the initial round of consultation for this plan.

Strategy (Year)	Region (Organisation)	Enduring Level of Supply for Regional and Rural towns	Coordination Across Government levels	Management of Extreme Events	Rural Water Conservation & Efficiency	Access to additional Water Entitlements or Alternate Measure Utilisation	Improved Water Literacy, Drought Education & Greater Community Engagement	Enhanced Financial Support for Drought Affected Communities	Reduced Skills Shortage for Effective Water Management	Enhanced Understanding & Management of Climate Risk
<i>Relevant to the Strategic Objectives and Priorities of the RDRP (Yes [Y]/ No [N])</i>										
Australian Government Drought Response Plan (2019)	Australia [Australian Government – Department of Agriculture]	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Baselining Drought - Developing a Baseline Understanding of Farmer and Community Perceptions of Drought (2022)	Southern NSW [Southern NSW Innovation Hub – Sustainable Agriculture, Landscapes and Communities]	Information relevant to challenges only.								
Building Climate Resilience Through Nature Based Solutions in Europe (2022)	Europe [Academic Journal – Climate Risk Management]	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Climate Change in the North-West and Local Land Services Region (2015)	North West Region [NSW Government – Local Land Services North West]	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y

Strategy (Year)	Region (Organisation)	Enduring Level of Supply for Regional and Rural towns	Coordination Across Government levels	Management of Extreme Events	Rural Water Conservation & Efficiency	Access to additional Water Entitlements or Alternate Measure Utilisation	Improved Water Literacy, Drought Education & Greater Community Engagement	Enhanced Financial Support for Drought Affected Communities	Reduced Skills Shortage for Effective Water Management	Enhanced Understanding & Management of Climate Risk
<i>Relevant to the Strategic Objectives and Priorities of the RDRP (Yes [Y]/ No [N])</i>										
Draft Inquiry Report – Government Drought Support (2008)	Australia [Australian Government – Productivity Commission]	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y
Enhanced Aquifer Recharge of Stormwater in the United States: State of the Review Science (2021)	US [US EPA]	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N
EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change (2021)	Europe [European Commission]	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
Far West Enabling Regional Adaptation Report (2017)	Far West NSW [NSW Government- Office of Environment and Heritage]	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Final Report - Support for Drought Affected Communities in NSW (2021)	NSW [Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development]	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N

Strategy (Year)	Region (Organisation)	Enduring Level of Supply for Regional and Rural towns	Coordination Across Government levels	Management of Extreme Events	Rural Water Conservation & Efficiency	Access to additional Water Entitlements or Alternate Measure Utilisation	Improved Water Literacy, Drought Education & Greater Community Engagement	Enhanced Financial Support for Drought Affected Communities	Reduced Skills Shortage for Effective Water Management	Enhanced Understanding & Management of Climate Risk
<i>Relevant to the Strategic Objectives and Priorities of the RDRP (Yes [Y]/ No [N])</i>										
Interim Report - Support for Drought Affected Communities in NSW (2020)	NSW [Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development]	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Macquarie - Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy (2023)	NSW [NSW Government - Department of Planning and Environment]	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Managing and Preparing for Drought (2018)	NSW [NSW Government - Department of Primary Industries]	N	N	N	N	N	Is a literacy resource to aid Regional and Rural Farmers.	N	N	Provides strategies for individual farmers and businesses to manage drought.
Regional Strengths and Infrastructure Gaps Regional Analysis: NSW (2022)	NSW [Australian Government - Infrastructure Australia]	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Regional Water Strategy: Western Implementation Plan (2022)	Western NSW [NSW Government- Department of Planning and Environment]	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N

Strategy (Year)	Region (Organisation)	Enduring Level of Supply for Regional and Rural towns	Coordination Across Government levels	Management of Extreme Events	Rural Water Conservation & Efficiency	Access to additional Water Entitlements or Alternate Measure Utilisation	Improved Water Literacy, Drought Education & Greater Community Engagement	Enhanced Financial Support for Drought Affected Communities	Reduced Skills Shortage for Effective Water Management	Enhanced Understanding & Management of Climate Risk
<i>Relevant to the Strategic Objectives and Priorities of the RDRP (Yes [Y]/ No [N])</i>										
Resilience Strategies for Drought (2018)	US [Center for Climate and Energy Solutions]	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Social and Economic Impacts of Drought on Farm Families and Rural Communities	Australia [Australian Institute of Family Studies]	Information relevant to challenges only.								
Strengthening Agricultural Resilience in the Face of Multiple Risks - Resilience to Drought in Australia (2020)	Australia [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development]	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
The Role of Conservation Programs in Drought Resilience (2013)	US [United States Department of Agriculture]	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Water Efficiency and Infrastructure Technical Brief (2016)	US [US EPA]	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N

Appendix 4: Long List of Projects

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes / No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation 'Possible Projects' (016)
Coonamble LGA												
1	Council sponsored Off-Farm Employment	Council engages local community members to conduct road maintenance activities, instead of engaging outside contractors	Economy	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities & diverse regional economies	Economic - Investment in road maintenance remains within the community Social - Increased community cohesion, reduced demand for mental health services given off-farm income avenue. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	3 - 6 Months	Regional NSW	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Identify the road maintenance activities that local community members could be engaged for. 2. Develop a contracting /employment model and agreements. 3. Discuss with Transport for NSW potential for road maintenance activities during times of drought. 4. At a suitable point in time, seek Expressions of Interest from the community for participation in road maintenance activities. 5. Initial road maintenance program. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	1
2	Stronger communities program	Series of activities of events to promote social cohesion and connectiveness that Councils initiate during periods of droughts (staff paid to organise, conduct and clean up)	Social	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	Economic - Initiatives would contribute to an off-farm income stream. Social - Increased community cohesion, reduced demand for mental health services. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintaining aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	2 - 3 Months	Regional NSW	To be determined	Actions required: 1. In conjunction with Community organisations develop a program of activities. 2. Develop a plan for the conduct of each activity. 3. Deliver the scheduled activities. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	6

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation Projects' (016)
3	Water security - Groundwater	Increase the number of water bores for stock and domestic use and dust suppression for road maintenance / construction activities. The proving of ground water resources (quality and flow) and installation of standpipes (connected to a supervisory control system to provide a capability for standpipes to be switched on / off, to cross level usage between locations to adjust for changes in quality and flow rates) in up to five locations, to provide greater resilience for the agriculture and town water supplies of local towns.	Economy Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations. Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of bores on the natural environment.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Transforming aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund	Pre- Construction - 16 months Construction - 6 months	NSW DPE-Water Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers association Identified Agriculture Industries	Yes	Actions required: 1. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 2. Detailed design of selected bore locations. 3. Detailed cost estimate. 4. Complete full business case. 5. Funding applications and approvals. Tender for construction. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Conduct a ground water resource study aligned to Agriculture use. 2. Prove (drill and assess) bores (quality and flow) in an agreed number of locations (e.g. five).	7
Warren LGA												
1	Telecommunications Security	Improve telecommunications connectivity (4G and 5G) in the region to support business and agricultural productivity	Economy		Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on telecommunications, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are telecommunications options to support their business operations.	Planning and Monitoring (Pillar 1) Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Modifying aspects of the Region to transform and improve resilience to drought)			NSW & Federal Governments. Councils	Yes	Actions required: 1. Initiate discussions with NSW State Government and Commonwealth Departments. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil	11

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation 'Possible Projects' (016)
2	Livestock Nutrition Program	Combination of: - two workshops (circa 2-hrs each) about livestock nutrition principles, and nutrition strategies. - 6 to 12 hours (one-on-one) consultations for each participating farmer.	Economy	Coonamble Community Strategic Plan - Strategy 10 NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger primary industries prepared for drought	Economic - Improved ability to maintain livestock nutrition Social - Improved resilience of farmers in managing through drought. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Planning and Monitoring (Pillar 1) Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund NSW Regional Growth Fund	Program development 3-6 months. Program delivery 4-6 months.	Regional NSW Cth Department of Agriculture Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers Association	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Identify underpinning funding agency. 2. Call for Expressions of Interest to engage a Veterinary / Agri service provider. 3. Design program construct, constraints, participation agreements (content, duration, numbers of participants, number of programs to be delivered, agreement requirements). 4. Advise the program and Call for participants. 5. Schedule and delivery program(s). Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies. Nil	15
3	Rural Financial Program	Provision of business mentoring to support proactive decision making (livestock trading, decision making-based on facts and figures) (Workshops / one-on-one)	Economy	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger primary industries prepared for drought	Economic - Improved ability to maintain livestock nutrition Social - Improved resilience of farmers in managing through drought. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Planning and Monitoring (Pillar 1) Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Immediate	Regional NSW NSW Rural Financial Counselling service	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Identify topics to be covered (e.g. Succession planning Farm budgeting Forecasting and cash flow analysis Farm debt mediation Bank reviews and relationships Help refinancing debt Access government assistance and rural loans Understand farm loan interest rates Understand your financials \ Build a business plan Identify areas of risk Benchmarking Referrals Debt relief and negotiation) 2. Develop a schedule. 3. Advertise program and call for participants. 4. Deliver the program.	15 & 33

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation Projects' (016)
4	Council sponsored Off-Farm employment	Council engages local community members to conduct road maintenance activities, instead of engaging outside contractors	Economy	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	Economic - Investment in road maintenance remains within the community Social - Increased community cohesion, reduced demand for mental health services given off-farm income avenue. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	3 - 6 Months	Regional NSW	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Identify the road maintenance activities that local community members could be engaged for. 2. Develop a contracting / employment model and agreements. 3. Discuss with Transport for NSW potential for road maintenance activities during times of drought. 4. At a suitable point in time, seek Expressions of Interest from the community for participation in road maintenance activities. 5. Initial road maintenance program. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	17
5	Stronger communities program	Series of activities of events to promote social cohesion and connectiveness that Councils initiate during periods of droughts (staff paid to organise, conduct and clean up)	Social	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	Economic - Initiatives would contribute to an off-farm income stream. Social - Increased community cohesion, reduced demand for mental health services. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	2 - 3 Months	Regional NSW	To be determined	Actions required: 1. In conjunction with Community organisations develop a program of activities. 2. Develop a plan for the conduct of each activity. 3. Deliver the scheduled activities. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	24

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes / No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation 'Possible Projects' (016)
6	Water security - Groundwater	Increase the number of water bores for stock and domestic use and dust suppression for road maintenance / construction activities. The proving of ground water resources (quality and flow) and installation of standpipes (connected to a supervisory control system to provide a capability for standpipes to be switched on / off, to cross level usage between locations to adjust for changes in quality and flow rates) in up to five locations, to provide greater resilience for the agriculture and town water supplies of local towns.	Economy, Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations. Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of bores on the natural environment.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Transform aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund	Pre- Construction - 16 months Construction 6 months	NSW DPE - Water Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers association Identified Agriculture Industries	Yes	Actions required: 1. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 2. Detailed design of selected bore locations. 3. Detailed cost estimate. 4. Complete full business case. 5. Funding applications and approvals 6. Tender for construction. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Conduct a ground water resource study, aligned to Agriculture use. 2. Prove (drill and assess) bores (quality and flow) in an agreed number of locations (e.g. five).	25
7	Water Security	Remediation of the existing Gin Gin Weir to provide a secondary storage capacity. (Remediation options study, assessment to dam safety guidelines, and remediation of the storage)	Economy, Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations. Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of water usage on the natural environment.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Transform aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund NSW Safe and Secure Water program	Pre- Construction - 24 months Construction 12 months	NSW DPE - Water NSW Dams Safety Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers association Australian Government National Water Grid	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Geotechnical investigation. 2. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 3. Detailed design. 4. Detailed cost estimate. 5. Complete full business case. 6. Funding applications and approvals. 7. Tender for construction. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Geo-technical and raw water remediation options study. 2. Community consultation.	26

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation 'Possible Projects' (016)
8	Water security -	Increase the storage of the Burrendong Dam by an additional 20%	Economy, Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources 2023/2024 Operational Plan & Estimates	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations. Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of water usage on the natural environment.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Transform aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund NSW Safe and Secure Water program	Pre- Construction - 36 months Construction 18 months	NSW DPE - Water NSW Dams Safety Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers association Australian Government National Water Grid	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Geotechnical investigation. 2. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 3. Detailed design. 4. Detailed cost estimate. 5. Complete full business case. 6. Funding applications and approvals. 7. Tender for construction. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Geo-technical and raw water remediation options study. 2. Community consultation.	26
9	Water security -	Establish storage at or before the Nyngan off-take to secure the water supply to the Warren Shire (industry, environment, irrigators, domestic supply)	Economy, Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations. Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of water usage on the natural environment.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Transform aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund NSW Safe and Secure Water program	Pre- Construction - 24 months Construction 12 months	NSW DPE - Water NSW Dams Safety Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers association Australian Government National Water Grid	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Geotechnical investigation. 2. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 3. Detailed design. 4. Detailed cost estimate. 5. Complete full business case. 6. Funding applications and approvals. 7. Tender for construction. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Geo-technical and raw water remediation options study. 2. Community consultation.	26

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation 'Possible Projects' (016)
10	Water Security - Supply Channels	Lining of supply channels - Albert Priest Channel and piping of Triton Mine at Myrigan to reduce evaporation	Economy, Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources 2023/2024 Operational Plan & Estimates	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity. Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations. Environmental - Not directly identified.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Transform aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund	Pre- Construction - 24 months Construction 12 months	NSW DPE - Water NSW Dams Safety Agriculture NSW NSW Farmers association	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 2. Detailed design. 3. Detailed cost estimate. 4. Complete full business case. 5. Funding applications and approvals. 6. Tender for construction. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Community consultation.	26
11	Chlorination System Upgrades for Warren, Nevertire, and Collie	The project aims to upgrade the chlorination systems in Warren, Nevertire, and Collie to best practice levels to ensure the delivery of a safe and adequately priced water supply.	Economy, Environmental	2023/2024 Operational Plan & Estimates	Social : Improved water quality can lead to better health outcomes for resident especially during drought conditions when water quality may deteriorate. Economic : Ensuring a reliable and safe water supply supports the local economy, including agriculture, by maintaining productivity and reducing potential disruptions during drought periods. Environmental : Best practice chlorination systems can minimise the environmental impact of water treatment processes, helping to maintain ecological balance, especially during the stress of drought.	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)		Construction 6 months	NSW DPE - Water Council Community	To be determined	Actions required: Installation of chlorination systems to meet best practice standards.	NA

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation Projects/ (016)
12	Water Security - Reservoir Drop Tests & Leakage Rectification	Carry out reservoir drop tests in order to check the level of leakage in the pipe networks and rectify any significant leakage.	Economy, Environmental	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Sustainable, secure and healthy water resources	<p>Economic: Identifying and repairing leaks to ensure more efficient use of water for agricultural and business operations, thereby preserving economic stability during drought conditions.</p> <p>Social: Ensuring the integrity of the water supply network builds community trust in water management and provides reassurance that water resources are being maintained effectively.</p> <p>Environmental: Detecting and rectifying leaks reduces water waste, ensuring that scarce water resources are preserved for essential ecological functions and habitats, particularly during drought periods.</p>	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies) Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund NSW Safe and Secure Water program	Pre- Construction - 6 months Construction 12 months	NSW DPE - Water Council Community	To be determined	<p>Actions required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigation. 2. Detailed design. 3. Detailed cost estimate. 4. Funding applications and approvals. 5. Tender for construction or conduct rectification works by council. <p>Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Geo-Technical and raw water remediation options study. 2. Community consultation. 	
13	Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Strategy Development	Develop and implement a tourism strategy to facilitate sustainable recreational access to rivers and marshes, enhancing drought resilience through community-involved planning. This includes developing recreational infrastructure that is adaptable to water levels and promoting activities suitable for dry seasons, thus supporting local economies and ecological preservation during varying climate conditions.	Social, Economic, Environmental	Warren Shire Delivery Program 2022 - 2026	<p>Economic: supports tourism during drought</p> <p>Social: maintains community well-being</p> <p>Environmental: sustainable management of natural resources</p>	Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)		6-12 Months	Council (s) Tourism industry stakeholders Environmental Agencies	To be determined	<p>Actions required: Develop drought-adaptive visitor destination management plan, Development of river locations for low-water recreation</p>	

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation Projects' (016)
14	Smart Water Metering	Conducting an investigation and installing smart water meters across the town to monitor and manage water usage effectively, ensuring adherence to licensed water allocations and promoting conservation, especially during drought conditions.	Economy, Environmental	Warren Shire Delivery Program 2022 - 2026	<p>Environmental: optimises water usage, reduces waste</p> <p>Economic: potentially reduces costs for consumers and the shire</p> <p>Social: promotes community awareness of water usage and conservation</p>	<p>Planning and Monitoring (Pillar 1)</p> <p>(Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)</p>		Investigation: 6 months Installation: 12 months	Council Community Industry	To be determined	<p>Actions required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation into smart meter technology Detailed cost estimate. Funding applications and approvals. Installation process 	NA
Bogan LGA												
1	Stronger communities program	Series of activities of events to promote social cohesion and connectivity that Councils initiate during periods of droughts (staff paid to organise, conduct and clean up)	Social	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	<p>Economic - Initiatives would contribute to an off-farm income stream.</p> <p>Social - Increased community cohesion, reduced demand for mental health services.</p> <p>Environmental - Not directly identified.</p>	<p>Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2)</p> <p>Build future resilience (Pillar 3)</p> <p>(Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)</p>	NSW Regional Growth Fund	2 - 3 Months	Regional NSW	To be determined	<p>Actions required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with Community organisations develop a program of activities. Develop a plan for the conduct of each activity. Deliver the scheduled activities. <p>Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.</p>	27
2	Tax Incentives / Economic Zone	Introduction of tax incentives for all local industries and businesses to support economic stability and prevent population decline in rural and remote regions.	Economy	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	<p>Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses within the community, to sustain their economic activity.</p>	<p>Build future resilience (Pillar 3)</p> <p>(Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)</p>	Not Applicable		Australian Government NSW Government	No	<p>Actions required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate discussions with NSW State Government and Commonwealth Departments. <p>Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil</p>	30

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation Projects' (016)
3	Tax Incentives / Economic Zone - Local Spend Targets	Implementation of local spend targets for state or federal infrastructure projects to ensure that investments remain within the local economies of rural and remote regions.	Economy	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses within the community, to sustain their economic activity	Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	Not Applicable		Australian Government NSW Government	No	Actions required: 1. Initiate discussions with NSW State Government and Commonwealth Departments. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil	NA
4	Water Security Plan	Develop a regional water security infrastructure plan for the Macquarie River	Economic, Environmental		Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund		Australian Government national Water Grid NSW Regional Growth Fund Murray River Basin Authority	To be determined	Actions required: 1. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 2. Detailed cost estimate (business case / funding application). 3. Development of the plan. 4. Discussion with stakeholders and community. 5. Finalisation of plan. 6. Identification of business case requirements for subsequent priority initiatives / plans / actions. 7. Progression of business cases / implementation actions. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: 1. Conduct a water demand study aligned to Agriculture and domestic uses. 2. Community consultation to facilitate concept for the plan, prior to detailed development.	32

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes / No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation 'Possible Projects' (016)
5	Water Security Infrastructure for Nyngan	Continuation of infrastructure projects aimed at ensuring the water supply security for Nyngan	Economic, Environmental	Draft Delivery Program - 2022 - 2025	<p>Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity.</p> <p>Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations.</p> <p>Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of water usage on the natural environment.</p>	<p>Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2)</p> <p>Build future resilience (Pillar 3)</p> <p>(Modifying aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)</p>	<p>NSW Future Drought Fund (for technical studies)</p> <p>Australian Government national Water Grid</p> <p>NSW Regional Growth Fund</p>	<p>Pre- Construction - 24 months</p> <p>Construction 12 months</p>	<p>NSW DPE - Water</p> <p>NSW Dams Safety</p> <p>Agriculture NSW</p> <p>NSW Farmers association</p> <p>Council</p>	To be determined	<p>Actions required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 2. Detailed design. 3. Detailed cost estimate. 4. Complete full business case. 5. Funding applications and approvals. 6. Tender for construction. <p>Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community consultation. 	NA
6	Nyngan to Cobarr Pipeline Project (Stage 2)	Albert Priest Channel Improvement and Pipeline Augmentation Project (Nyngan to Cobarr Pipeline Project). The project involves upgrading existing water infrastructure between Nyngan and Cobarr to provide long-term water supply reliability and involves technical, environmental, and cultural heritage studies.	Economic, Environmental	Final business case developed, with stakeholder and community engagement.	<p>Economic - Provides for the continued operation of agriculture and businesses that rely on the supply of water, within the community, to sustain their economic activity.</p> <p>Social - Provides a level of confidence to the local community, that there are options for the supply of water to support their business operations.</p> <p>Environmental - Supports decision making in managing the impact of water usage on the natural environment.</p>	<p>Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2)</p> <p>Build future resilience (Pillar 3)</p> <p>(Transform aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)</p>	<p>\$45.5M secured for Stage 1</p> <p>Australian Government national Water Grid</p> <p>NSW Regional Growth Fund</p>	<p>Stage 1 urgent pump station replacement,</p> <p>Stage 2 pipeline replacement, with final business case due second half of 2023.</p>	<p>NSW DPE - Water Council(s)</p> <p>Industry & Mining Sectors</p> <p>First Nations</p> <p>Local Communities</p>	To be determined	<p>Actions required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct Drought Resilience technical studies. 2. Detailed design. 3. Detailed cost estimate. 4. Complete full business case. 5. Funding applications and approvals. 6. Tender for construction. <p>Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community consultation. 	NA

No.	Initiative / Project Name	Description (Short)	LGA Key Outcome Area	Program Strategic Alignment	Drought Resilience Benefit (Economic, Social, Environmental)	Drought Resilience Pillar (1, 2, 3)	Funding Source Availability	Implementation Timeframe	Key Stakeholders	Recommended for Shortlist (Yes/No)	Drought Technical Study(s) Required / Priority Actions	Cross Reference to Community Consultation Projects' (016)
ALL												
1	Additional Consultation & Community Connection	Regular consultation focused on the impacts of drought on key demographic groups, including First Nations people, young families, and the youth, to integrate their perspectives and solutions into community development.	Social		Social - Increased community cohesion	Planning and Monitoring (Pillar 1) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	2 - 3 Months	Council(s) First Nations Youth Young Families	To be determined	Actions required: 1. In conjunction with Community develop a consultation schedule. 2. Develop a plan for the conduct of each consultation. 3. Deliver the engagement log of the consultation. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	NA
2	Economic Development, Visitation and Tourism Strategy - Cross Region Implementation	Implementation of a tourism strategy similar to the Darling River Run in the Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes regions to boost local tourism and economic development through workshops on setting up tourism-related businesses like Airbnbs and Farm Stays.	Economic	NSW Future Ready Regions Strategy - Stronger communities and diverse regional economies	Economic - Initiatives would contribute to an off-farm income stream.	Planning and Monitoring (Pillar 1) Respond to Drought events (Pillar 2) Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Modify aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	2 - 3 Months	Council (s) Tourism industry stakeholders	To be determined	Actions required: 1. In conjunction with Community develop a workshop/training material. 2. Develop a plan to conduct workshop/training. 3. Deliver the workshop/training. 4. Provide follow-up after the workshop/training. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	NA
2	Mental Health Awareness in Young Men	Increase community sporting activities and events, like community BBOs, to enhance social connections, thereby addressing isolation among farmers and improving mental health among young men.	Social		Social - Increased community cohesion	Build future resilience (Pillar 3) (Maintain aspects of the Region to improve resilience to drought)	NSW Regional Growth Fund	2 Months	Community members Local sports clubs Mental health organisations	To be determined	Actions required: 1. In conjunction with Mental Health Organisations develop program content. 2. Develop a plan to conduct program. 3. Deliver the program. 4. Provide follow-up after the program. Supporting Drought Resilience Technical Studies: Nil.	

**Appendix 5: Stakeholder
Engagement Plan &
Community Consultation
Report**



The Stable.

***Regional Drought Resilience Program (RDRP016)
Community and Council Consultation Feedback:***

Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Bogan Shire Council

23rd of April 2024

STABLE

~adjective

not likely to give way or overturn; firmly fixed

~noun

a group of people who perform a similar activity or are employed by the same organization.

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1. Document Control

Document Summary Information	
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Document History				
Version	Document Type	Issued by	Issued to	Date
1	Draft	Donald Murray	Ross Earl	23/04/2024
2				

Document Information
This document provides a detailed summary of the feedback obtained across consultation periods with community groups and the Councils, within the Coonamble, Bogan and Warren Shires.

2. Summary

The Regional Drought Resilience Plan is designed to enable local governments and their communities to better prepare for, respond to and recover from drought. Community level drought resilience depends upon strong primary industries and agricultural supply chain sectors, as well as other businesses, community organisations and local government.

The consultation process with the Coonamble, Bogan, and Warren Shires as part of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) was comprehensive, engaging a broad spectrum of the community including local government councils (Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, and Bogan Shire Council), community members, and various stakeholders such as local organisations and businesses. The engagement was structured around initial assessments, community and council sessions focused on drought resilience, and follow-up meetings to refine strategies and gather additional feedback.

Key themes identified during these consultations included water security, with proposals for upgrading the Burrendong Dam and improving water transport channels; regional connectivity, emphasising the need to enhance digital connectivity to support local businesses and agriculture; economic development, with initiatives aimed at boosting tourism and local spending along with suggestions for tax incentives to stimulate local economies; and social cohesion, where community sporting events and activities were highlighted to

address social isolation and mental health issues, particularly among adult males.

Community and council feedback highlighted the perennially dry and arid conditions of the area, with drought only exacerbating the scarcity of water. Water security is a major concern, with supplies often only assured for six to twelve months following the onset of drought. Another significant issue raised was the criteria for drought declaration, which typically comes when businesses and industries are already suffering, delaying the availability of funding and support programs.

Feedback from the councils underscored varying priorities: Warren Council was sceptical of past consultation efficacy and stressed the need for tangible, beneficial projects. Coonamble Council noted the strategic importance of diversifying focus from water security due to their geographical advantage, and Bogan Council marked water security as a critical priority and showed interest in collaborative water management projects with neighbouring regions.

Overall, the consultation process was pivotal in shaping the strategic direction of the RDRP, aligning it with community needs and leveraging local insights to forge effective drought resilience strategies. This approach highlighted a community preference for practical and impactful projects that promise sustainable and resilient community development.



3. Introduction

This report provides the results from an interpretation of the consultations conducted to understand the communities experiences of drought and their insights for enhancing drought resilience.

The aim of the consultations and the subsequent co-design process with community stakeholders is to:

1. Inform the community and stakeholders about the RDRP project;
2. Generate great ideas, solutions, options, opinions and stories;
3. Form relationships with community members who have capacity to champion and lead projects;
4. Understand gaps in prior responses to drought resilience; and
5. Finalise a long list of potential drought resilience projects.

The aim of the consultation and review process with Council stakeholders, including Mayors and General Managers, is to:

1. Understand the services previously delivered by Council during drought to improve drought resilience, and the limitations to their success or reasoning for success;
2. Understand projects currently in development that aim to deliver improvements to drought resilience;
3. Gather feedback on the long list of projects developed through consultation with community members, in relation to projects that have been previously actioned or projects that are missing;
4. Co-prioritise the projects to develop the short list of priority projects for further detail and analysis; and
5. Gather feedback on the overall drought resilience report to ensure that it aligns with Council expectations and visions.

Drought operates cyclically, which means that at any given moment, the community is engaged in preparation, recovery, and adaptation. These phases can be segmented into four main stages: the good period, the uncertain period, the drought period, and the recovery period. While the specific impacts of these stages may differ from one drought to another, the goal is to implement measures, training, and strategies during the good periods. These proactive efforts are designed to lessen the severity and

destruction experienced during the uncertain and drought periods, thereby supporting a more rapid and efficient recovery.

Good Period

During periods of average or above average rainfall, the communities in the Northwest Region experience a relative sense of stability. These are the times when agricultural production stabilises, and there is less strain on water resources, allowing the community and businesses to operate under 'normal' conditions. However, as emphasised in the consultation, harsh arid conditions are a perennial state and therefore even during 'normal' conditions, water efficiency and water saving is still a paramount concern.

Uncertain Period

During uncertain periods, where growing conditions are below average, there is a heightened sense of anxiety and cautiousness among farmers and businesses. These periods challenge the community to adapt to less predictable conditions, potentially leading to a reduced agricultural output and increased monitoring of resource allocations, especially water and feed for livestock.

Drought Period

During official drought periods, where rainfall is consistently below average, feedback highlighted substantial challenges. The region, being inherently arid, faces acute water shortages that severely impact agricultural productivity and local industries. Consultation responses emphasised the critical nature of water security, with a focus on long-term solutions like dam enhancements and improved water management systems. There was a notable concern regarding the late declaration of drought periods, which often come after businesses and the agricultural sector have already encountered significant hardships.

Recovery Period

In the recovery phase, while rainfall might increase, the community and businesses still face the lingering effects of the drought. Feedback suggested that this period is crucial for rebuilding and planning for future resilience. Initiatives such as the implementation of more sustainable agricultural practices, investments in infrastructure to better manage future droughts, and continued support for affected businesses and communities are vital. The emphasis is on not just returning to pre-drought conditions but improving the overall resilience and sustainability of the region to better withstand future droughts.

4. Initial Consultation - Community Groups

Consultation Workshops

Town	Male	Female	Under 40	TOTAL
Coonamble	3	7	2	10
Marra	6	4	1	10
Warren	14	13	3	27
Nyngan	8	3	1	11
	31	27		58

Across region RDRP016, business diversity and community group representations was present at the 4 community consultation and included; Local Shire Councillors, NSW Framers Local Councillors, town and village Progress Associations and Chamber of Commerce, cereal and cotton growers, wool producers, goat producers, cattle producers, retail businesses, trades people, health workers and nurses, cotton ginner, Tourism operators, Educators, Environmental Groups (Macquarie Wetlands), Local Lands Services, MDBA, NSW Crown Reserve Trustees, Sustainable Agriculture and Water Management groups, past Drought Resilience and Rural Financial Councillors, NSW Office of Regional Youth, junior and

senior sporting clubs, Mining Industry workers and suppliers, carbon farmers.

Additional Consultation Activities and Access

Throughout the consultation period print, radio and social media invited community to reach out to the Drought Plan Officer co-ordinating the consultation to ensure open and transparent consultation access. Post consultation, 2 written submissions and 2 telephone calls were received from attendees, and as a result they provided additional thoughts and evidence to further provide a comprehensive understanding of issues raised.

4.1. Coonamble Shire Council

Consultation with the Coonamble Shire Council took place from the 10th – 14th of February across various towns. Some of the key discussion topics included:

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
Financial, Health and Relationship Stress	Financial stress, coupled with ongoing financial obligations and family expectations, creates significant social and economic pressure, making it challenging for individuals and families to maintain stability. The strain is particularly pronounced during drought periods, intensifying the struggle to manage everyday life and relationships effectively.
Community Impact and Population Decline	Drought has a profound impact on the community, notably visible in Coonamble where the cycle of poverty becomes more pronounced. The town appears uninviting with empty shop fronts, reflecting the decline in business and population. This leads to unemployment and limited job opportunities, acting as a catalyst for further population decline. Vacant houses deteriorate or become vandalised, exacerbating the town's decline.
Challenges in Population Recovery Post- Drought	Post-drought recovery is hindered by barriers that prevent attracting and retaining new families, such as the lack of childcare and suitable housing. The absence of lifestyle blocks for new housing developments further complicates this issue, making it difficult for potential residents from the city to find appealing living conditions that meet their expectations.

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
Water Security	While water security in some areas of the shire is satisfactory, it could be improved. Not all areas benefited from the bore and capping scheme, which was crucial for water access. The perception of unfair water competition and the need for additional drought storage in Burrendong Dam are significant concerns, emphasising the necessity for equitable water access and enhanced storage solutions.
Social Connectivity	The importance of maintaining social connectivity is recognised, especially during droughts. Community events like 'Rain Dance' and random cricket games play a vital role in keeping the community united. It's essential to foster this connectivity continuously, to build resilience that can withstand the challenges of dry years.
Business Mentoring and Decision Making	There is a significant need for increased access to business mentoring to assist in proactive decision-making concerning livestock nutrition, trading, and relying on accurate data before situations worsen. This approach is crucial for sustaining operations through challenging times.
Media Awareness and Perception of Farmers	Changing the negative media perception of farmers is crucial. There is a need to promote a more accurate image of proactive, resource-managing farmers rather than the often portrayed bleak scenarios. Highlighting the essential role of farmers in food production and encouraging the purchase of Australian products are key strategies to improve public perception and support for the agricultural sector.
Labour Challenges Post- Drought	Finding qualified, skilled labour becomes increasingly difficult after a drought. This affects both on-farm and off-farm businesses as local economies revive. Initiatives like scholarships or incentives for youth upskilling are essential to cultivate local talent and ensure continuity of services.
Isolation and Connectivity Issues	Poor mobile and data connectivity exacerbate the feelings of isolation, particularly during droughts. Improving telecommunications services, such as expanding mobile coverage and introducing new providers like Starlink, could significantly reduce this isolation.
Volunteer Fatigue	Small communities heavily rely on volunteers for organising functions and services. However, volunteer fatigue is a significant issue, especially during and after droughts, when the community's capacity to volunteer diminishes due to increased personal and economic pressures.
Succession and Transition Planning	Drought complicates succession planning within farming families, often delaying or disrupting it due to the financial and emotional stresses involved. Transition planning for older farmers and integrating younger generations into the farming business are critical for continuity but are often overlooked during challenging times.
Educational Access and Costs	Access to quality education is a barrier for many families, with distance and associated costs discouraging higher education pursuits. Families sometimes relocate to provide better educational opportunities for their children, impacting the demographic composition of rural communities.

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
Importance of Local Support During Drought	Local support initiatives, such as 'Buy Local' campaigns, are vital during droughts. They help sustain the local economy and are preferable to external aid like hampers, which might not always meet the community's needs as effectively as local purchasing power would.
Comprehensive Business Planning	There is a pressing need for thorough business planning and mentorships to foster preparedness and resilience in the face of recurring droughts. Businesses that plan and prepare tend to fare better during and after droughts, highlighting the importance of proactive management and strategic decision-making.
Government Service Continuity	The lack of continuity in government positions, particularly in health and local land services, impedes effective community support and development. Longer contract terms and integrated local services could provide more stability and effectiveness, benefiting the entire community.

4.2. Warren Shire Council

Consultation was undertaken across the Warren Shire in two locations on the 14th of February.

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
Financial, Health and Relationship Stress	Warren Shire experiences significant social and economic challenges during drought periods, notably financial, health, and relationship stress. Reduced income combined with continuous financial commitments and family expectations creates substantial hardship, making it difficult for residents to maintain stability. The economic effects are profound, with businesses closing and financial institutions shutting down, forcing residents to travel further to access banking services. The resultant job losses lead to a decline in the local population, which reduces the number of volunteers and affects community services like education and retail, further exacerbating the economic downturn.
Business Mentoring and Water Security	Business mentoring is seen as crucial in Warren for helping residents make proactive decisions, especially concerning livestock nutrition and trading. Water security is a significant concern; limited access during drought undermines confidence in investing in the community, correlating directly with declines in population and business activity. Proposals such as more bore and capping programs and increasing Burrendong Dam's capacity by 20% are suggested to improve the situation and support economic stability.
Isolation and Connectivity Issues	Isolation is particularly severe in Warren during droughts due to inadequate mobile and data access, which hinders not only personal communication but also the viability of online or home-based businesses. This lack of connectivity affects the social fabric of the community, making it difficult to maintain relationships with family and friends, and restricts residents from accessing essential services and information.
Volunteer Fatigue and Red Tape	Volunteer fatigue is a notable issue, with the same individuals repeatedly bearing the brunt of community support efforts. The financial and time costs associated with volunteering, alongside

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
	<p>excessive bureaucratic requirements, discourage community participation and contribute to a decline in volunteer numbers. Reducing red tape, particularly around environmental planning, is suggested to make life easier in the bush and encourage community retention during droughts.</p>
<p>Infrastructure and Skilled Labour Challenges</p>	<p>Limited access to reliable electricity infrastructure restricts the development of alternative industries that do not rely on water, such as wind and solar energy, which could provide alternate income streams during droughts. Additionally, accessing skilled labour is a persistent challenge, exacerbated by the lack of local educational opportunities in agriculture and trades, leading to business under- resourcing and staff burnout.</p>
<p>Health Services Continuity</p>	<p>The lack of continuity in health services becomes a critical issue during drought, as frequent changes in medical staff hinder the development of stable patient-provider relationships. This inconsistency discourages residents from seeking medical help, particularly for mental health issues, further straining the community's wellbeing during already challenging times.</p>

4.3. Bogan Shire Council

Consultation was undertaken across the Bogan Shire on the 15th of February.

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
<p>Population Loss and Community Cohesion</p>	<p>Drought has profoundly impacted population dynamics and community cohesion. There is a noticeable decline in the younger population returning to regional communities, as other opportunities appear more exciting, and a generation has not returned to the land. Additionally, mid-aged skilled individuals have left during the drought and not returned, exacerbated by an increase in properties owned by corporate agriculture and overseas investments, which typically lack a strong sense of local community responsibility. This shift contributes significantly to the local social and economic fabric's erosion, as these entities often do not support local businesses as traditional community members would.</p>
<p>Volunteer Fatigue and Social Isolation</p>	<p>Post-drought, volunteer fatigue is substantial, with many feeling too exhausted to organize or participate in community functions, such as those at the recently repaired Marra Hall. Drought also imposes significant social isolation; financial constraints limit social activities, poor communication infrastructure impedes connectivity, and family interactions can sometimes intensify existing stresses.</p>
<p>Infrastructure Deterioration and Economic Challenges</p>	<p>Drought leads to the deterioration of transport infrastructure, like unsealed roads, making them hazardous and inaccessible for essential services like ambulances during adverse conditions. Economically, drought creates a cyclical downturn, with each period of drought forcing the local economy to almost restart from ground zero. The challenge of resourcing, including re-establishing a workforce and securing housing in post-drought periods, becomes a daunting and expensive task.</p>

Discussion Topic	Information and Details
Water Security and Government Resource Allocation	Water security remains a crucial concern, with significant environmental and economic implications. The health of water systems like the Macquarie Marshes is vital for maintaining livestock and agriculture. However, limited access to essential water infrastructure like piping and capping exacerbates the challenges during drought. Moreover, community frustration often increases due to perceived misallocation of government resources, such as investing in inappropriate equipment during drought or providing short-term employment contracts that do not support sustainable community development.
Decision Making and Anxiety Post-Drought	The anxiety associated with making future decisions post-drought is palpable, with many in the community needing more education and resources to make informed decisions confidently. This uncertainty affects the community's ability to recover and rebuild economically and socially, highlighting the need for targeted support and education to reinforce local confidence and resilience.

5. Secondary Community Consultation

A second round of community consultation was undertaken to gain feedback surrounding the long list of projects developed and understand the community priorities. This was to ensure that the long list of projects, presented to Council for prioritisation, accurately reflected the needs, perspectives, and insights of the respective communities.

This consultation was undertaken via Microsoft Teams with representatives across all three communities present at the one meeting, facilitating region-based discussion.

Based on the long list of projects the following priorities were raised by the community:

Priority Project	Commentary
Water Security 1. Upgrade Burrendong Dam Capacity to 120%. 2. Upgrade Gin Gin Weir	Expansion of Burrendong Dam capacity to 120% will enable an extra 200 GL of water storage. This is enough to provide an extra year of water for both residential purposes and agriculture. In the last flood, the capacity of the Burrendong Dam reached 140% without structural implications, suggesting that there is the capability of increasing capacity to 120% within minimal costs. Suggestion: Business Case/ Feasibility study for the Burrendong Dam Capacity Upgrade of raising of Gin Gin Weir wall. Could also include employment of project officer to gather and synthesise information across the three LGAs to support the application.
Regional Connectivity	Remote sensing of farm dams and major irrigation projects depend on connectivity between regions whether that be 4G or 5G. The connectivity limits agriculture and makes things difficult in good times and impossible in harder times.
Economic Development, Visitation and Tourism Strategy – Cross Region Implementation: Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes	Emphasis was placed on not just buying from the bush but buying in the bush – getting tourists to come to the region and spend in the region. One example was the Darling River Run (https://www.thedarlingriverrun.com.au/) which has been very beneficial in its application – could a similar tourism strategy be rolled out within these three LGAs. Workshops to teach people how to set up their own tourism businesses e.g. Air BnBs, Farm Stays, etc.

Priority Project	Commentary
	<p>The intention is to be able to use the income generated from these programs to fund bores and road upgrades. Warren Council were willing to hold responsibility across all three councils.</p>
<p>Economic Zones and Tax Incentives</p>	<p>While interest in such projects was expressed, scepticism was also raised and emphasis was placed on the careful wording of such projects to ensure it didn't become a media target or regional subsidy program.</p> <p>Suggestion 1: Tax incentives for local industries and businesses (for all business not just agriculture).</p> <p>Suggestion 2: Implementation of local spend target for state or federal infrastructure projects within regions to ensure that money is spent in the local economies.</p>
<p>Social Cohesion</p>	<p>Population decline and increase in rates of mental health (particularly amongst adult males) is a significant concern. In past generations / decades, 3 or 4 people would assist as farmhands, creating a stronger community, but now due to economic conditions, farmers often now work in isolation for several hours or days. They are also more fearful of leaving the farm due to fears of theft and the lack of support. As a result, rates of mental health has increased. A result of the financial uncertainty, and the increased cost of pub food and meals, has meant that the number of pubs in the region has declined. This is reducing opportunities further for social cohesion and connection. It was suggested that the big winners in the community are sporting activities for adults and/or kids, as even youth sports bring the families out to mingle.</p> <p>Suggestion: Implementation of community sporting activities and programs and community bbqs / events, to increase the number of opportunities for social connection within community.</p>

Feedback:

Representatives from the Warren Shire expressed a desire for actions that delivered tangible outcomes with observable progress, particularly in areas such as water security and the ability to adapt to changing drought and water conditions. The council expressed a strong preference to implement and manage projects internally, leveraging their own capacities rather than relying on external consultants. They aim to lead economic and tourism development strategies across all three councils. Additionally, they highlighted the need for better engagement with the 30-50 age group, who have been minimally involved due to a distrust of political bureaucracy.

Representatives of the Coonamble Shire mentioned that water security isn't a top priority for them, given their advantageous location above the Great Artesian Basin. They are interested in prioritising projects that aren't

already covered by existing implementation programs. Furthermore, there was a significant emphasis on the importance of implementing tax incentives within the region. Coonamble seek to focus on strategic projects and policy implementations that promise long-term benefits, rather than compiling a mere list of potential initiatives.

Bogan Shire Representatives identified water security as a critical priority for their area. They proposed the idea of collaborating with Warren and potentially Cobar on a joint water security project within the Macquarie River region, indicating a regional approach to the issue. This cooperation could potentially enhance the impact and feasibility of the water security measures they undertake.

6. Survey Feedback

While the secondary community consultation raised crucial information relating to the prioritisation of the long list of projects, due to the breadth of the region and pre-existing commitments, in comparison to the initial consultation, the attendance was significantly reduced. In order to ensure that all initial members of the community had the opportunity to comment on project prioritisation, a survey was developed which contained the long list of projects presented within the table in Section 6 of this report. 18 responses were recorded.

Commentary	Average Score (1-10)
<p>Water Security: Expansion of Burrendong Dam capacity to 120% will enable an extra 200 GL of water storage. This is enough to provide an extra year of water for both residential purposes and agriculture. In the last flood, the capacity of the Burrendong Dam reached 140% without structural implications, suggesting that there is the capability of increasing capacity to 120% within minimal costs. <i>Project Suggestion:</i> Business Case/ Feasibility study for the Burrendong Dam Capacity Upgrade of raising of Gin Gin Weir wall. Could also include employment of project officer to gather and synthesise information across the three LGAs to support the application.</p>	5.9
<p>Ongoing Consultation and Community Connection: Ongoing consultation around the impacts of drought on population and community development needs to be a regular activity, especially in key demographic groups such as First Nations people, young families and the youth. Their view on drought, the connection to it and the solutions around it, should not be underestimated. <i>Project Suggestion:</i> Throughout the life of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan, energy is invested in ensuring that underrepresented groups have the opportunity to contribute to the future of the region.</p>	5.1
<p>Regional Connectivity: Remote sensing of farm dams and major irrigation projects depend on connectivity between regions (either 4G or 5G). The connectivity limits agriculture and makes things difficult in good times and impossible in harder times. <i>Project Suggestion:</i> Continue to look for ways to improve connectivity and increase infrastructure.</p>	7.2
<p>Economic Development, Visitation and Tourism Strategy - Cross Region Implementation: Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes: Let's get tourists to come to the region and spend in the region. One example was the Darling River Run (https://www.thedarlingriverrun.com.au/) which has been very beneficial in its application. <i>Project Suggestion:</i> A similar tourism strategy be rolled out within these three LGAs with workshops to teach people how to set up their own tourism businesses e.g. Air BnBs, Farm Stays, etc.</p>	6.2
<p>Economic Zones and Tax Incentives: Taxation incentives are critical for rural and remote regions to keep people in the region. Declining population is the most significant concern. <i>Project Suggestion:</i> Tax incentives for local industries and businesses (all businesses, not just agriculture).</p>	6.9

Commentary	Average Score (1-10)
<p>Economic Zones and Tax Incentives: Taxation incentives are critical for rural and remote regions to keep people in the region. Declining population is the most significant concern. <u>Project Suggestion:</u> Implementation of local spend target for state or federal infrastructure projects within regions to ensure that money is spent in the local economies.</p>	6.9
<p>Social Cohesion: Population decline and increase in rates of mental health (particularly amongst adult males) is a significant concern. In past generations/ decades, 3 or 4 people would assist as farmhands, creating a stronger community, now farmers often work in isolation. This is reducing opportunities further for social cohesion and connection. It was suggested that the big winners in the community are sporting activities for adults and/or kids, as even youth sports bring the families out to mingle. <u>Project Suggestion:</u> Implementation of community sporting activities and programs and community bbqs / events, to increase the number of opportunities for social connection within community.</p>	7.2

7. Council Review

The RDRP Program requires Councils to:

- Consider both water security and environmental and social resilience needs.
- Collaborate across Local Government boundaries.
- Encourage active community participation to capture ideas and thoughts related to drought preparation, management and recovery.

The aim of the hybrid (in-person and online) Council review meeting was to:

- Collect Council feedback, and reach an agreeable position across the region, on previously completed sections of the RDRP.
- Gain Council input and perspectives on observations and lessons from prior droughts, current or planned economic initiatives and responses to drought, and key organisations and community groups to be engaged during the project.
- Review the current compiled list of potential projects and initiatives, and received feedback on whether they align with any Council project plans and/or whether any projects/initiatives are absent from the list.
- Provide Councils with the planned next steps for the completion of the RDRPs.

Based on the discussions completed during this meeting the following feedback was received, which guided the prioritisation of projects and feedback.

Bogan Shire Council

Bogan Shire Council sees significant merit in strengthening community programs, viewing these as crucial for enhancing social cohesion. However, they believe tax incentives, though beneficial, are not feasible in the short to medium term and thus not recommended currently. The council emphasises the importance of regional water security but indicates specific local projects like the Nyngan bore and the repair of leaks in the Albert Priest Channel are more immediately relevant than broader studies or the Nyngan to Cobar pipeline, which they deem irrelevant to their direct interests.

Coonamble Shire Council

Coonamble Council, expresses that water security is not their highest priority due to their advantageous geographical location above the Great Artesian Basin. Their focus is on initiating and prioritising projects that aren't already covered by existing programs, aiming for strategic implementations that bring long-term benefits and avoid merely extending current efforts. They emphasize the need for actionable tax incentives and strategic projects that yield tangible progress.

Warren Shire Council

Warren Shire Council has outlined a strong preference for substantial projects that deliver ongoing benefits, particularly in water security enhancements at Burrendong Dam and Gin Gin Weir, and the development of sustainable recreation and tourism strategies. They express a need for internal execution of projects rather than reliance on external consultants, and stress the importance of involving middle-aged demographics in the planning processes to ensure the initiatives meet the actual needs and avoid bureaucratic disconnects.

Discussion Insights

The roundtable discussions highlighted a broader context in which these councils operate, emphasising the need for a shift from overemphasising agriculture to a more diversified approach to drought resilience. This includes recognising the arid environmental conditions that dictate regional capabilities and framing drought not just as a cyclical challenge but as a constant condition requiring

ongoing management strategies. There is a noted need for more inclusive community engagement strategies, particularly with hard-to-reach groups like Aboriginal communities and the critical 30-40 year age group, who are pivotal for future community stability.

8. Consultation Overview

Combining all insights, it is evident that all three shires seek more than just short-term fixes; they demand robust, integrated strategies that address both immediate and long-term needs. Water security emerges as a common thread of concern, albeit with different priorities and proposed solutions reflecting each council's specific circumstances. The feedback also underscores a universal desire for improved economic, social, and environmental resilience that can sustain these communities through the unpredictable challenges posed by drought and other climatic variabilities.

Appendix 6: Projects Economic Feasibility Assessment and Benefit Cost Ratios

Economic Assessment

for Regional Drought Resilience Plan

016 - Northwest NSW - Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council and Bogan Shire Council

Far North West Joint Organisation

1. Introduction

This report contains an assessment using rapid economic appraisal of the options shortlisted for the Regional Drought Resilience Plan for the Far North West Joint Organisation.

2. Background

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (RDR Plan) ('The Program') is designed to enable local governments and their communities to better prepare for, respond to, endure and thrive during, and recover from drought.

3. Project Reports

There are two completed reports for the project under the Program:

- Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDR Plan-016) covering Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Bogan Shire Council which together make up the Northwest NSW Region; and
- Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDR Plan-004) covering Bourke Shire, Brewarrina Shire, Cobar Shire and Walgett Shire, which together make up the Far Northwest Region¹⁸.

One of the outcomes of each report is the development of initiatives and projects to improve the drought resilience of the region across four outcome areas:

- People, Culture, and Community
- Economy
- Landscape and Natural Environment
- Infrastructure and Built Environment

Each report contains a long list of considered projects, and each project proposal is marked according to whether it was recommended for shortlisting.

This economic assessment addresses the first Plan (RDR Plan-016) covering Coonamble Shire, Warren Shire, Bogan Shire, which together make up the Northwest Region.

4. Economic Assessment

The assessment phase of the project is for The Stable economics team to do a rapid assessment of the shortlisted projects.

It is proposed that this assessment comprise:

- A logic structure that expands at the project level, that structure developed for the plan¹⁹;
- A rapid cost-benefit analysis²⁰, inputting cost and benefit data to the NSW Treasury proforma, estimated utilising the data calculated in previous two tasks.

The "rapid" nature of the technique is to assess benefits and costs only at a high level, using readily available secondary data, but not undertaking primary research. This methodology follows broadly the real options methodology in the NSW Treasury Guidelines, while remaining within the cash flow framework of Treasury's recommended rapid cost-benefit analysis.

5. Data needs

To deliver on the above methodology there are simple economic data needs:

- Available secondary data sources, including past assessments of proposals, or of related projects;
- Rapid assessment, using these sources, of the project logic as integrating with the plan logic.

5.1. Projects for Analysis

The study used detailed consultation techniques to shortlist projects for potential investment. The following project types were shortlisted across both reports:

- Water security - Groundwater
- Telecommunications Security
- Water Security Plans

These three project types can be described generically as:

¹⁸ This region is not to be confused with the Far North West Joint Organisation (FNWJO), which is a representative body for Bourke, Cobar and Walgett Shire Councils as proclaimed. The FNWJO lodged successful applications to develop these two Regional Drought Resilience Plans on behalf of the seven Councils of Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Coonamble, Walgett, and Warren Shire. All seven councils are part of the Western Plains Functional Economic Region.

¹⁹ Pg. 20-21, TPG23-08 NSW Government Guide to Cost-Benefit Analysis

²⁰ See A8.1 Preliminary Cost-Benefit Analysis, Pg. 100, TPG23-08 NSW Government Guide to Cost-Benefit Analysis

- **Water security:** Including Groundwater assessments and water reliability studies for the two regions or their member councils. This may include aquifer assessments, bore monitoring programs or water supply assessments incorporating groundwater. Key data sources were the Councils themselves and state planning bodies (regional water plans).
- **Telecommunications planning,** including mobile service areas, programs to identify communications gaps and post proposals to address telecommunications issues in these regions. Key sources were past telecommunications projects and their project managers.
- **Water Security Planning:** Existing water planning for the wider region, including Western Regional Water Strategy, and identifying complementary plans from within Councils. The key sources were existing water plans.

In addition, some of the “To be considered” projects (not shortlisted in the first round, but ranking highly) were selected for further analysis. These are projects that did not make the cut, but were thought worthy of further consideration. A panel reviewed these projects and chose a selection. In some cases these aligned with existing projects, providing expansion or more details scope – eg. Improving bore water quality, rather than quantity.

5.1.1. Projects for RDRP 016

The final shortlisted projects for Regional Drought Resilience Plan 016 for Northwest NSW – Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Bogan are listed below.

The following specific projects in Area 016:

Water Security

Water Security Groundwater in Warren Shire Council - Proving of groundwater resources (quality and flow) and installation of standpipes

- Increase the number of water bores for stock and domestic use and dust suppression for road maintenance/construction activities. The proving of groundwater resources (quality and flow) and installation of standpipes (connected to a supervisory control system to provide a capability for

standpipes to be switched on/off, to cross level usage between locations to adjust for changes in quality and flow rates) in up to five locations, to provide greater resilience for the agriculture and town water supplies of local towns. Three bore locations have been considered in this particular case.

Telecommunications Security

- Improve telecommunications connectivity (4G and 5G) in the region to support business and agricultural productivity.

Water Security Off River in Warren Shire Council

- Establish an off river storage at or before the Nyngan off-take to secure the water supply to Warren Shire (industry, environment, irrigators, domestic supply). Analysis indicates an additional off-river storage with 3,000 ML capacity could reduce water security risks for Nyngan and increase resilience of Nyngan, Cobar and nearby mines during drought.²¹

Water Planning

The following project was shortlisted in the 016 Region with water planning objectives:

- Develop a regional water security infrastructure plan for the Macquarie River

In conceptualising this project, the plan includes a scope of feasibility studies, community engagement and development of funding proposals. It is difficult in an economic analysis to measure the benefits of regional or basin plans per se, so we have taken the approach of assuming that the proposed plan would occur as part of the base case, but the development of the plan into particular options has been measured by representative case studies of groundwater security and off river storage.

From these shortlisted options, we deduce three options for analysis:

- **Base Case:** Planning without projects: it is assumed for the sake of clarity, that considering a program with up to three projects will incorporate a base level of expenditure on water security planning, and we've focused the water planning net benefit estimates on projects that might develop from that planning.

²¹ https://bogan.nsw.gov.au/images/Business_Case_Nyngan_Cobar_Water_Security_DRAFT_V2.0.pdf

- **Option 1: Water security: Groundwater** – investigation and development of bore fields in the region
- **Option 2: Telecommunications Upgrade** – Improve telecommunications connectivity (4G and 5G) in the region to support business and agricultural productivity
- **Option 3: Water security: Off river storage** at or near Nyngan

5.2. Projects Logic

This task consists of adapting the program logic diagrams down to the project level by identifying key benefits and costs and the logic of how they will be delivered.

For Project 016, the following Logic Map was presented:

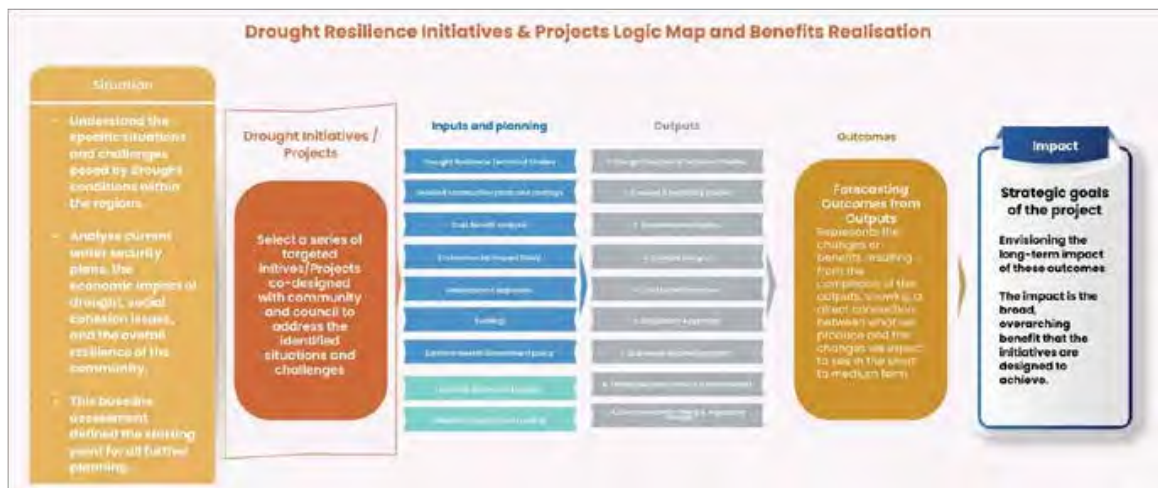


Figure 1: Initiatives and Projects Overview Logic Map

For the shortlisted individual projects, the draft project logic maps proposed are:

REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN 016 (BOGAN, COONAMBLE AND WARREN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS)

Drought Resilience Initiatives & Projects Logic Map and Benefits Realisation

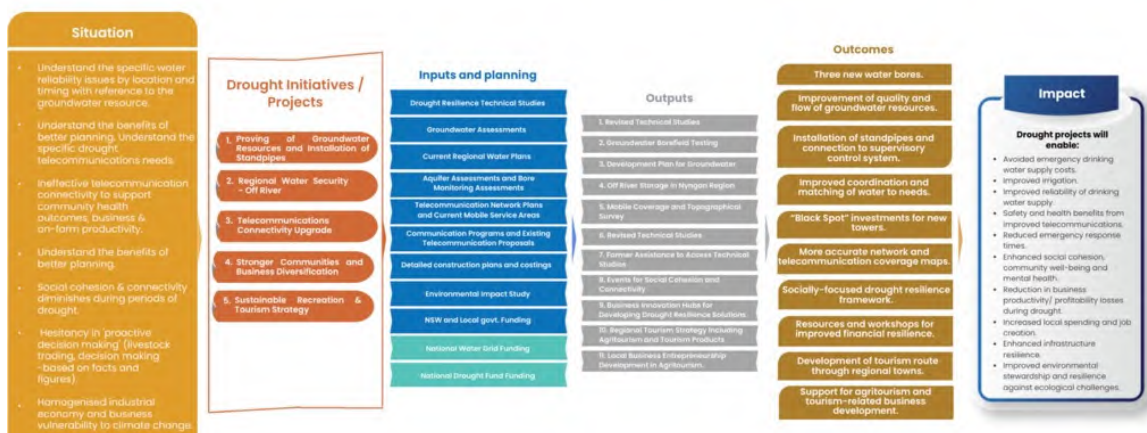


Figure 2: Projects Logic Map

6. Costs

The costs have been calculated on benchmark estimates by area and scope. This section breaks down the costs for each option to achieve the benefits listed in Section 6 Benefits.

6.1. Groundwater

The costing for the groundwater project has been developed with a view to conduct a ground water resource study, drill three new water bores, prove quality and flow of groundwater resources, install standpipes and connect to a supervisory control system (to provide a capability for standpipes to be

switched on/off, to cross level usage between locations to adjust for changes in quality and flow rates) across a three phase program at a total cost of \$0.81M.

6.2. Telecommunications

The principal tasks of the Telecommunications Security project was to investigate significant areas of non-connection to the mobile broadband network and to implement “black spot” investments to locate new towers so that there is continuity of coverage.

There have been a number of similar programs that can be used to benchmark costs.

Description of work	Total cost	Units	Total cost
Mobile Coverage and Topographical Survey	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Towers	\$30,000	20	\$600,000
Fibre Connectivity	\$200,000	1	\$200,000
Solar Powered Battery Packs	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Licensing & Subscription	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Project Management	\$200,000	1	\$200,000
Escalation & Contingency	\$50,000	1	\$50,000
Total Cost			\$1,200,000

Table 2: Mobile phone coverage investment

6.3. Water Security

The costs for the Off river storage at or near Nyngan have been benchmarked from Queensland and NSW studies.

	Capital Cost per Unit Capacity \$/ML	Benchmark Location	Capacity ML	Cost \$	Notes
Offstream Storage	\$37,000	Walcha (Apsley)	300	\$11,000,000	
Offstream Storage	\$37,000	Tuross River Study	3,000	\$130,000,000	Cost revised as part of a variation

Table 3: Capital Cost Benchmarks

7. Benefits

The impact charts illustrate the likely benefits of the major options:

Groundwater

- Avoided emergency drinking water supply costs – typically valued in the literature at above \$7 per kL;
- Irrigation benefits – typically valued at crop gross margins of \$3 per ML.

Telecommunications

- Improved telecommunications offer safety and health benefits to the region. As permanent infrastructure, these benefits accrue both in and outside emergency situations like drought or flood.
- Safety: emergency response time savings valued using risk and value of life.

- Health: reduced transport cost to nearest health centre. Improved pre-care for emergency patients.

Water planning

- Improved reliability of drinking water supply from better matching of storage and transmission. Values in terms of emergency supply costs avoided at \$7/kL.

In this section, these benefits are broken down in more detail for input to the cash flow analysis.

It's important to first set down that many of the benefits are driven by the town, regional or state population. The following table, adapted from the main report, sets the key values for this region:

	Bourke	Brewarrina	Cobar	Walgett	Bogan	Coonamble	Warren
Population	2,340	1,356	4,059	5,253	1,467	3,732	2,550
Projected Population (2041)	1,556	931	2,555	3,732	1,581	2,965	1,755
Drought Water Consumption (kL pa 2023)	101,739	40,478	176,478	228,391	68,739	162,261	110,870
Drought Water Consumption (kL pa 2041)	67,652	58,957	111,087	162,261	107,261	128,913	76,304
Household Water Consumption (kL per household pa)	597	400	203	300	314	165	231
Potable Water Consumption (kL per household pa)*	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4: Population and Water Demand. Source: NSW Department of Planning Population Projections & NSW Department of Local Government Water Supply Statistics * Estimated using urban individual use metering studies

7.1. Groundwater

Groundwater is a significant variable in managing water security in the councils in this plan. Groundwater is used in town water supplies to ensure volume in droughts by providing supplementary water when for example, in drought, regulated releases cease from upstream storages, or in dry periods more generally, surface water quality declines with reduced flows.

In the main report, borefields are described as one of the key system assets in delivering Water Security:

- **Borefields.** Groundwater accessed through borefields supplements surface water sources, particularly during periods of drought. The use of borefields requires careful management to prevent over-extraction, which can lead to declining water levels and quality.

7.2. Telecommunications

In the main report, Telecommunications Security is proposed as a project because of the likely benefits that are described as:

- supporting the operational continuity of local businesses, community and agricultural activities and
- improving the community's confidence in their economic stability.

These benefits can be further broken down into:

- local business and community operational continuity benefits;
- benefits for non-local users, either as receivers of telecommunications in other

regions, or as visitors to the far west region;

- health related benefits for the local community.

To these can be added the technological benefits of the proposed device program being used by farmers to give a more efficient water use.

That is, by the types of users and their location.

Measuring these benefits includes calculating the time savings from better telecommunications and valuing them using average earnings.

The following Table shows the calculation of business and community continuity benefits:

General Telecommunications benefits		Notes
Black spots addressed	5	
Population Impacted	100%	
Time saving (hours per annum per person)	0.1	Estimate
Value	\$1,958	Average Weekly Earnings
Value per hour	\$58	35 hour week
Value of time saving per annum	\$5.59	
Total population impacted	2,550	Population of the Warren region

Table 5: General Telecommunications Benefits

The total value in the Rapid CBA Model is calculated as the value of local time saving (\$5.59 per person) times the local population, plus the value to the population as a whole per person, \$0.06 times the state population.

supply through better matching of storage and transmission, with values in terms of emergency supply costs avoided estimated at \$7 per kilolitre.

7.3. Water Planning

The benefits of water planning include improved reliability of the drinking water

8. Net Benefit

The following tables show the results after costs are netted off from benefits.

8.1. Results

Option	NPV	BCR	NPV Rank out of 3	BCR Rank out of 3
Base Case: Planning without projects	-\$170,915		-	-
Option 1: Water security: Groundwater	\$550,791	2.144	3	3
Option 2: Telecommunications Security	\$2,483,237	3.471	2	1
Option 3: Water security: Off river storage Nyngan	\$128,719,996	2.350	1	2

Table 6: Rapid Benefit Cost Analysis Results. Source: Analysis using NSW Treasury Rapid BCA Model

Options 1, 2 and 3 have benefit cost ratios greater than 1 at 5% discount rate.

8.2. Sensitivity and Distributional Analysis

All options have positive Net Present Values at all discount rates considered.

Sensitivity	3% Discount Rate		7% Discount Rate		10% Discount Rate	
Option	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$170,729		-\$170,912		-\$170,632	0.106
Option 1	\$571,433	2.083	\$530,831	2.203	\$502,352	2.285
Option 2	\$3,418,118	4.408	\$1,821,703	2.810	\$1,149,572	2.139
Option 3	\$210,584,491	2.959	\$75,745,210	1.891	\$28,613,666	1.397

Table 7: Sensitivity testing – Discount Rate

The results are insensitive to cost and benefits variance up to +/- 20%.

Option	Costs +20%		Costs -20%		Benefits +20%		Benefits -20%	
	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$209,962		-\$131,867		-\$166,050		-\$175,779	
Option 1	\$454,514	1.787	\$647,069	2.680	\$757,227	2.573	\$344,355	1.715
Option 2	\$2,282,284	2.893	\$2,684,189	4.339	\$3,180,837	4.166	\$1,785,637	2.777
Option 3	\$109,643,314	1.958	\$147,796,678	2.937	\$173,540,677	2.819	\$83,899,315	1.880

Table 8: Sensitivity to Cost and Benefit Variance

All options have positive Net Present Values for both Low case scenarios and High case scenarios.

Scenario	Low Case Scenario		High Case Scenario	
Option	NPV	BCR	NPV	BCR
Base Case	-\$214,827		-\$127,002	
Option 1	\$248,078	1.429	\$853,505	3.216
Option 2	1,584,685	2.314	\$3,381,789	5.207
Option 3	\$64,822,633	1.566	\$192,617,358	3.524

Table 9: Sensitivity to Negatively Correlated Benefit/Cost Variance

The Low Case Scenario assumes a cost increase of 20% and a benefit decrease of 20% with a social discount rate of 5%. The High Case Scenario assumes a cost decrease of 20% and a benefit increase of 20% with a social discount rate of 5%

9. Conclusion

This report contains the analysis of a range of remote regional drought projects using rapid cost benefit techniques. The conclusion is it is quite plausible for these projects to have benefit cost ratios greater than one, and would be recommended for a full cost benefit analysis as part of funding and approval processes.

Appendix: Cash Flow Tables

Cost Benefit Analysis Extended Report <small>Presented to the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002, section 22C(1)(b)</small> <small>Approved by the Council on 12/03/2025</small> <small>Page 10 of 10</small>												
Category	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total
Section 1: March 25												
Costs												
Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Expenditure	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Total Costs	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Benefits												
Revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Savings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cost	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Section 2: March 26												
Costs												
Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Expenditure	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Total Costs	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Benefits												
Revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Savings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cost	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Section 3: March 27												
Costs												
Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Expenditure	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Total Costs	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000
Benefits												
Revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Savings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cost	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,200,000

Appendix 7: Community Consultation RDRP016 Coonamble, Warren and Nyngan

“WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID”

Prepared by Far Northwest Joint Organisation

Contact Belinda Colless
 Drought Plan Officer
 Far Northwest Joint Organisation
 droughtplan@farmnorthwestjo.nsw.gov.au

Drought Discussion		Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Financial, Health and Relationship Stress Reduced income, continued financial commitments, family expectations – “is difficult trying to hold it all together”</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Drought results in population decline that has flow-on effects for whole of community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Drought the cycle of poverty is more pronounced in Coonamble • Town looks uninviting, empty shop fronts as business / population has declined • Unemployment and futile unemployment opportunities – catalyst for population decline • Housing is vacated and left to be vandalised or in need of repairs and maintenance because it's not lived in • Shops and businesses close, people have to travel or rely on freight to access goods and services 	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Need to increase population post drought - Our community is not in a position to attract and retain families due to infrastructure limitations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Childcare and preschool access – insufficient early childhood places, skilled parents are unable to work and they have moved away from family support 2. Limited suitable housing – rental vacancy rates are 0 to 0.4%; housing standards also an issue as professional people from the city have an expectations 3. Shortage of “lifestyle” blocks to build new houses with space for bikes / horses 	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Water Security OK, but could be improved in some areas of Shire</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Properties in north west sector of shire able to access ‘cap and pipe’ scheme for artesian bores – this was a game changer to have access to water <p>Not all areas had access to this scheme – an extension of this scheme for other areas and in particular “new” bores would be most beneficial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling that during last drought Warren irrigators “stole” water from Macquarie Marshes for environmental flow • Needs to be additional drought storage in Burrendong Dam • Unfair platform / competition for water access 	✓	✓	✓	✓

Drought Discussion	Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Social connectedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was supported by community in the drought – “Rain Dance”, random games of cricket • Need to keep the community connected in the good years to create resilience in the dry years 5. Functions that brought people together – don’t have to be huge, just creating and supporting the idea of “connectedness”. Need to support existing and community-driven events and activities rather than creating imported ‘additional’ events. 	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Business Mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More access to business mentoring to assist people with proactive decision making 6. livestock nutrition and trading • decision making based on facts and figures before it’s too late 	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Media Awareness Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to change perception of “farmers” that has been portrayed on the media – farmers in 2024 are pro-active, manage their assets and make decisions – not the bleak, sad stories portrayed on TV and press • Farmers care for their animals and the environment • Need to elevate the message “we need food, so we need farmers, so at least buy Australian” – Red Tractor ad • Why would people move to the bush after seeing all the negative images of drought? 	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Difficult to find qualified / skilled labour and attract and retain long-term community members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worse after a drought, when you need to “gear up” quickly to take advantage of growing seasons, markets and improved agricultural conditions. • Affect both on-farm and off-farm businesses as local communities experience economic stimulation • Need to “grow our own” with scholarships / incentives for upskilling youth i.e hex debt cancelled after 5 years like NSW Education staff committing to 5 years rural and remote • Interrupted service provision with short-term contracts or high staff change over makes it difficult to have consistency and continuity of services (i.e health) 	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	
<p>Volunteer Fatigue and perceived reluctance to get involved – this is pre, during and post drought</p> <p>9. Volunteers are depleted - small communities rely on volunteers to organise functions, services and support in rural communities, particularly communities that have had significant population decline due to drought.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers are becoming choosy about what they do and who they work with as time and resources are precious – Rain Dance had committed committee, timeframe and clear objective to deliver and disband 10. Too much responsibility and risk to be a volunteer - needing police checks and certs, the cost to obtain, ridiculous red tape 11. Asking volunteers to distribute donated products during drought adds extra burden and also has a negative impact on revenue of local businesses already suffering downturn 			

Drought Discussion	Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Succession Planning is interrupted by drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No money, time or resources to undertake succession planning • Succession planning is stressful – families often avoid this during already stressful times like drought • Need to have consideration for “Transition” Planning for older farmers to retire • Younger generations find it difficult to see a clear future for themselves and their families as they have little financial control / decision making influence– this can also add to the pressure to move from the community during times of drought and find alternate security 	✓	✓	
<p>Poor and expensive trade and tertiary education options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance and access to education institutions is a barrier for some families / youth – it’s either “too hard”, “too expensive” with travel and accommodation expenses or in some cases families will move so children can access a broader range of educational institutions 	✓	✓	
<p>Buy Local / Local purchasing is really important in drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “we need to stick together”, so we all make it through • Hampers are a lovely gesture from people but “buy local” vouchers would be BETTER to keep the local economy ticking over and easier to distribute • Hay drives were well intended, but missed the mark with the quality of the hay delivered 	✓	✓	
<p>During Drought EVERYONE SUFFERS</p> <p>12. Assistance for non-ag businesses during drought to prevent closures- if agriculture is suffering, the flow on affect is immediate for local business. Local small businesses (retail, service, trade) don’t have access to financial assistance or large assets to borrow against to access line of credit</p> <p>13. Power problems; brown outs for long periods – days in some cases</p>		✓	✓
<p>Need for more business planning and mentorships to make informed decisions earlier – programs initiated in last drought were good but need them now to create preparedness / resilience. Businesses that are planners and prepared to make decisions, fair better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal nutrition / Destocking plans • Soil health / pasture health / Plans to adapt to seasons 	✓	✓	✓
<p>Confidence in economic investment and growth has been stunted by drought – too risky</p> <p>14. Zonal taxation rewards to stimulate and reward investment – pilot program to get things started</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise moving and starting a business in regional and remote NSW – tax rewards, to encourage productivity = increased population 	✓	✓	

Drought Discussion	Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>No continuity of Government Positions (Health, LLS) makes it difficult to get traction and be effective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During drought, if one partner has a secure "government" job and the other is working in agricultural industry – this provides the family with economic stability • Contract terms need to be longer – 12mths is not realistic – need to be 5 years+ so people in government jobs can settle in the community, but a home etc • Some government services could be delivered by working in collaboration with existing businesses i.e support a local spray operator to spray roadside weeds, contract the local vet to undertake LLS work, physio undertake contract work for Health – "collaboration" would assist in keeping local people already settled in the community, in town 	✓	✓	✓
<p>All government-funded projects should have a local employment/purchasing bias, especially during drought.</p> <p>15. All infrastructure and service delivery programs targeting regional communities should include minimum standards for local or regional employment and for purchasing of materials/inputs. This would help drought-proof local economies by retaining workers, stimulating local business at no additional cost to government.</p>			
<p>Secured Financial Loans to provide confidence – Agriculture businesses and small business in towns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't want grants and hand-outs – want tools to be more self-reliant • Need for a dedicated rural bank • Long-term bank loans with low interest rates locked in for 20 years – to provide planning confidence to grow businesses in uncertain seasons – 10 years of drought is not unheard of, so a financial arrangement that recognises this. 		✓	
<p>Freight Rebates Drive prices up</p> <p>Great idea in principle, but drove up the price of hay – farmers didn't really benefit</p>		✓	



Coonamble Main Street has many empty shops – it's not an inviting look for industry and new business



Post drought, there are still parts of the Coonamble Shire that are quite dry



Mink and Me is a “Fresh” business in Coonamble owned by a Milenial

Drought Discussion		Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term	Responsible
<p>In drought times, Council provide employment opportunities for farmers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i.e heavy earthmoving, locals do the work, off farms and fix roads in dry times; don't get outside contractors; Note: Needs to be compliant with regulations and insurances 			✓		Council
<p>Economic Zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To attract population to our town post-drought – we need to make it easier, this would be a competitive advantage over other regions to access land, housing, jobs, education 		✓	✓		Council - to update LEP
<p>Increased population - campaign to attract young people to rural and regional communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to get away from media negatively portraying "poor, unfortunate farmers". • Regional Australia is resilient, younger farmers are early adaptors and use technology to improve economic and environmental outcomes. • Promote the benefits of living in a rural community – support, friendly, small so everyone has connections / relationships 		✓	✓	✓	Council
<p>Campaign to attract new residence and increase population – Welcome to Coonamble / welcome to Western Plains</p>		✓			Council
<p>Awareness campaign to city "sell the bush campaign" – there are opportunities in the bush – it's not all bad</p>			✓		RDA / Council
<p>More community gatherings particularly aimed at getting the community together with the view to enhancing community spirit – maybe "pay" someone to organise and have it as fee for service so volunteer resources are not stretched i.e hire a caterer, hire bar staff, pay a cleaner, post event, pay an event co-ordinator to organise</p>		✓			Community Groups / Council
<p>Increased water security with more bores for stock and domestic use, dust suppression during drought – taking pressure off existing water sources</p>			✓	✓	Dep Environment
<p>Expand community-owned childcare and preschools – availability of places allows families to remain in the district; expanded services provide more local non-ag employment.</p>					
<p>Support 'building society' type housing developments – providing quality, affordable options for local families and skilled workers; construction employs more workers, local purchasing of materials supports and strengthens local business.</p>					
<p>Fast-track rezoning to allow access to small rural lifestyle blocks – would help attract young families, professionals and retain younger retirees (especially those off the land). Rules around minimum rural lot size are ridiculous in areas where land is readily available.</p>					Council
<p>Return training opportunities to local communities by making local TAFE campuses multi-purpose training hubs – many TAFE courses, including those that support agriculture and related industries, have been centralised to major regional centres. This means increased costs for students to access courses and exacerbates out of town shopping. TAFE campuses are under-utilised and should have stronger relationships with local business and industry for all post-secondary education and training. They should also be used as University Hubs providing study spaces, fast internet access and supported learning opportunities to build and retain skills in the community.</p>					

Submission, [REDACTED] Coonamble, received 14/2/2024

Hi Belinda,

The ideas that were noted last night were great ideas for building our towns and communities. All these ideas we have been trying to achieve and have been spoken about at every meeting. Our shire and community is well aware of these points and working on ideas to achieve resilience. If governments need this in a plan, great!! And if gov will help, even better.

I have 2 children back on the farm with young kids. Our farms support 3 families in the middle of succession planning and transition. There was not a single idea on the board that would have helped my family and farms in the last drought. Which left me feeling down hearted. The drought starts on the farms and spreads through the community.

The things that would help us would be extremely low interest rates in drought. To relieve pressure from banks because farms have to borrow money in droughts and most farms have debt. And keeping staff on so subsidising wages would have helped when we were all under so much stress, to share the workload would have helped. There are already loans with RAA that we can get, great!

I really believe we need a Rural Bank (not private) Government owned and viable to keep taxpayer happy that can adjust to how the climate change going to treat us/ Farmers and rural businesses going forward. Our Farm businesses can't fit in the 9 to 5 world because of climate and it all comes down to how much rain in the gauge.

Insurance wasn't mentioned we need affordable insurance and seasonal protection insurance . But now with the world feel the effects of climate change insurance companies can't afford to offer this. So it would have to be government body this need investigation to see if can be done and be viable to Gov and Rural people.

A game changer would be saving \$20 ton on our grain Freight by having Inland rail to Coonamble like it will do at Narrabri and Narromine. We pay \$47/ton freight to Narrabri and pay \$21 / ton freight in a good year - this would put back in \$35.million to our shires the figures are there to prove this - This would help drought proof by having more income good times to get through hard times. Our area is drained by freight costs. We are the largest Grain receival site NSW. This is a very BIG idea long lasting and empowering farmers and towns for Coonamble but it has to come to our silos not a spur line.

It was hard to get a word in last night and water is very important, and the bad governance of government departments is deplorable. I know this because of interacting with ARTC. The damming report by Kerri Shotts about ARTC poor actions proved the people and the community were right about the despicable behaviour of ARTC to land holders and communities. So, this report may have given Coonamble a chance to put a case forward.

Thanks [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Marra Hall – 14th February 2024 (10 participants)

Drought Discussion		Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Drought has resulted in loss of population and sense of community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in younger population coming back to regional communities – other opportunities more exciting and a generation hasn't returned to the land • Decrease in mid-aged productive / skilled people due to drought and they have not returned to community • Increase in carbon blocks has resulted added to population decline – don't need to be on-site to manage. • Properties are owned by corporate agriculture, O/S investment and superannuation company owned – they don't have the same sense of community and don't have corporate responsibility to "buy local, support local". 	✓	✓		
<p>Volunteers are exhausted after drought – really difficult to stay motivated and keep things going post drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marra hall has been fixed with grant money but no functions because we're exhausted 	✓	✓		
<p>Drought is socially isolating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't afford to be going out – other priorities to spend money on • Communication is a barrier to – poor mobile phone reception – you can't ring up while you're driving and down the paddock/shed, expensive and need knowledge to fit "skylink" or similar • Only see family – this can sometimes magnify family stresses 	✓			
<p>Transport and Roads deteriorate during drought and require additional maintenance post drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsealed roads deteriorate during dry periods, making them dangerous • Ambulances are not 4 x 4 and will not travel on roads with water over them or impassable due to wet weather 	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Drought causes a downward spiral in the local economy – every time the season and economic outlook changes, it's like starting from ground zero again and having to re-resource is expensive and time consuming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing stock depleted – housing deteriorates if not lived in, and new housing is difficult to acquire with limited trades, red tape involved in new housing on farm • Post drought it takes time to re-instate a workforce, find places for them to live etc 	✓	✓		
<p>Need for more business planning and mentorships to make informed decisions earlier – programs initiated in last drought were good but need them now to create preparedness / resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal nutrition / destocking plans • Soil health / pasture health • Plans to adapt to season 	✓	✓	✓	

Drought Discussion	Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>During Drought access to care / schools / education is magnified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No childcare or after school care available for parents considering "off farm" income Limited access to secondary school due to distance – continuity of boarding school under threat due to expense To access TAFE trade, students need to attend regional centres – travel to and from training and costs associated with "block" training are generally met by the bank of "Mum and Dad" – this is an additional financial stress during times of drought that some families can't afford 	✓	✓	
<p>Isolation and lack of connectivity in drought is amplified – can't just reach out and talk to someone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited mobile and internet service to house 16. Aerial extenders available but expensive, need to be fitted by expert and sometimes don't live up to advertised expectations Phone calls and emails are sent after hours, breaking into "family time" Limits access to on-line information / communication 	✓	✓	✓
<p>Water Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macquarie Marshes healthy water system No water = no stock, if there is water there are still opportunities to feed no access to piping and capping, sub artesian 300-200 metres dry holes Have ground tanks, have to do yourself and pay for its care 17. Macquarie River and creeks go dry, Bogan goes dry, no water for stock 18. environmental heritage care - employees have never been past Dubbo (unaware off water shortage to farms) 	✓	✓	✓
<p>Makes communities angry to see Government money wasted during drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firetrucks had expensive flood equipment added during the height of a drought but government jobs have short-term employment contracts – would be more sustainable for the community to re-direct funds into providing job security in regional and remote towns so people had confidence to become part of the workforce 		✓	
<p>Difficult to make decisions post drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxiety in future decision making – is it the right decision or not??? Need more education to make more informed decisions to reinforce confidence 	✓	✓	✓



Marra Hall Consultation – attendees lived in the Coonamble, Warren, Brewarrina and Nyngan Local Government Areas



Above & Below: Macquarie Marshes wetlands - viewing platforms



Marra - Possible Project Development		Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term	Responsible
<p>“Grow our Own” – promote skill development in locals that are already “resilient” and are used to the harsh and sometimes challenging conditions of rural and remote areas – “when the going gets tough – these guys already know what it’s like”</p>				✓	NSW State Gov
<p>Increase population = increased access to services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional campaign to encourage people to move to our communities 				✓	Everyone
<p>Diversification to increase financial independence during times of drought</p> <p>19. Off farm incomes should be encouraged and rewarded as part of resilience plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate energy incomes Solar / Wind / Carbon • Access to communications to support alternate service delivery i.e professionals working from home, on-farm, • Tourism / farm-stay activities 		✓			Farmers
<p>Isolation of Drought is further amplified by poor communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile telephone and internet access is poor and patchy – can’t maximise production in the good times to create resilience in the bad times • Businesspeople can’t be “mobile” to undertake business communication – they have to stay at home – this really restricts production and opportunity 				✓	Telcos, Government, Farmers to install own infrastructure
<p>“Use it or Lose it” or “Promote Local Campaign”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a resilient community we need to commit to buying and supporting local business or they will pack up and leave = population decline 					Council
<p>Community Resilience Strategy to ensure “absentee landholders” are committed to and invest in the local communities where they have investment land – can’t just take from the land and not give to the community.</p>		✓		✓	Council
<p>Promote “buy local” with services provided to Local Government i.e plant, grader hire etc</p>	✓				Council
<p>More Education and mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Cashflow Management Strategies for businesses (agriculture and town businesses) i.e take out the economic peaks (bumper years) and troughs (drought years) through cash management schemes, tax incentives, instant tax write-offs, forward payments • Stock Management, nutrition management and stock Trading 	✓				LLS, Farmers, RFCS

Marra - Possible Project Development				Responsible
Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term	Responsible	
<p>Change media portrayal of the regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers don't want to be seen looking for "hand-outs" but instead would like to be supported. And who would want to move out here post "doom and gloom" drought stories so fresh in city dwellers memories. 	✓			Council / RDA

Warren Consultation, 14th February 2024 (23 Participants)

Drought Discussion	Social			Economic	Environmental
<p>Financial, Health and Relationship Stress</p> <p>Reduced income, continued financial commitments, family expectations – "is difficult trying to hold it all together"</p>	✓			✓	
<p>Drought results in population decline that has flow-on effects for whole of community.</p> <p>20. Loss of employment – people move away to find new employment opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss families in community – reduced number of volunteers, reduced number kids at school, reduced number kids sports • Flow-on economic effects of community shrinkage i.e. need for less teachers, retail workers, service providers – businesses close • Financial institutions / banks close – have to travel away to access money • When families move, skilled workforce move, making succession planning in the workplace difficult • Houses are left vacant and lack maintenance and care – existing housing stock sits in disrepair. • Young people with no "ties" are more likely to move as it's easier for them to "pack up" and move – once they move it is difficult to get them back after the drought 	✓		✓		
<p>Business Mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More access to business mentoring to assist people with proactive decision making • livestock nutrition • livestock trading • decision making based on facts and figures before it's too late 	✓				
<p>Water security is poor during drought – historically in Warren during drought periods water security is limited. Without secure water it is difficult to have confidence to invest in business. There is a direct correlation with population and business decline when there is a shortage of water, this limits confidence and investment in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More bore and capping programs – rural stock and domestic use and for road safety and maintenance during dry periods (dust suppression) to take pressure off already scarce water stocks 			✓	✓	

Drought Discussion	Social	Economic	Environmental
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council - Dust Suppression and road deterioration – more bores to access for road works, maintenance and construction and available for rural stock and domestic use • Uncertainty with future water allocations • Localised conflicts between irrigators and graziers • poor water security • Permanently increase Burrendong Dam by 20% - as they have done in the past - 			
<p>Isolation, particularly in drought made worse with poor access to mobile and data and no “connectivity” to assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can’t just “reach out” and talk to someone in the paddock or the shed or on the tractor – you are limited by mobile telephone reception • no mobile service 9km out of Warren • Ability for “on-line” or homebased businesses “on farm” as an alternate income stream (resilience income) is not possible as communications infrastructure does not support • landline services can go down and difficult to report • have to stay on phone for over an hour if problems • poor internet communication, this limits ability to access information, run business, stay on top of markets • Difficult to keep in contact with family and friends – social aspect of “face-timing” relatives to keep in touch 	✓	✓	
<p>Volunteer fatigue and perceived reluctance to get involved – this is pre, during and post drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same people are keeping the community together • It can be “too expensive” to be a volunteer and people don’t have the extra cash so are not in a position to put their hand up – cost of time taken away from work, fuel to travel, many organisations have requirements for training i.e OHS, RSA, going to regional meetings etc • Community relies so heavily on volunteers – city dwellers don’t understand importance of volunteers – in small communities no-one gets paid for anything • Too much responsibility and risk to be a volunteer - needing police checks and certs, the cost to obtain, ridiculous red tape - Rotary had to prove they were not terrorists! • It’s becoming “too hard” to be a volunteer – easier to just say no 	✓	✓	
<p>Reduce Environmental Plan red tape in the bush - Reduce the red tape to make life in the bush easier to encourage industry and development i.e industrial buildings, worker accommodation – if this was easier it would help “tie” people to communities in drought and prevent them from leaving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for more lifestyle blocks as an attraction for young families / farm workers / business people • DA required for intensive feeding operation for over 999 / head – there are lots of intensive feed operations in drought that are not identified for this reason – red tape is too hard, takes time, requires specialist knowledge and is expensive, so just ignore it 	✓	✓	✓

Drought Discussion		Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Limited Access to electricity infrastructure – limiting access to alternate industries that don't rely on water and are alternate industries and incomes for communities in drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind and solar industries need access to the grid • Power problems; brown outs for long periods – day in some cases 		✓	✓	✓
<p>Accessing skilled labour, pre, during and post drought seems impossible so businesses are under resourced to grow, suffer burn-out of existing staff or move to where they can find skilled labour.</p> <p>Ability to “grow your own” in terms of up-skilling local community has challenges;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no agricultural teachers at high school (eg Ag had to stop) • No local access to trade education – have to travel far away • TAFE online - poor delivery and limited choices <p>Riversmart project, unable to get numbers and go ahead</p>	✓	✓		
<p>No continuity of health services - this becomes magnified during drought as community do not have a familiar relationship with health providers. Every time you go to the GP you need to “re-explain” your circumstances. Eventually you just give up going to see the GP. This attitude does not support or encourage people to reach out about mental health issues.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulty getting staff – Drs, Nurses and auxiliary staff are constantly changing • No permanent GP – rely on locum GP's to service community • Families of GP's don't live here, poor homelife for GPs • Agency nurses, burn out and leave 	✓			

Warren - Possible Project Development				Responsible
Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term		
<p>In drought times, Council provide employment opportunities for farmers</p> <p>i.e heavy earthmoving, locals do the work, off farms and fix roads in dry times; don't get outside contractors; The Red Scheme - pilot scheme Warren Shire; Use local labour where possible</p> <p>Note: Needs to be compliant with regulations and insurances</p>	✓			Council - Council already has self-help scheme in place but needs assistance
<p>The empty buildings in the main street make the town look unappealing. Buildings require maintenance / make-over.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to repurpose buildings? Encourage small businesses / home businesses to take up residence. • Create a “Hub” for part-time small businesses to have a shop front 	✓			Owners / Chamber Commerce / Council / Facilitation

Warren - Possible Project Development		Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term	Responsible
<p>Take advantage of demand for 'rural lifestyle blocks' To attract population to our town post-drought, is it possible to open-up more life-style blocks to encourage young families, industry and trades to move to Warren Additional lifestyle blocks for Warren area</p>		✓			Council to update LEP
<p>More tourism infrastructure to support tourism as an alternate industry to agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need additional accommodation and existing accommodation needs updating • Additional Eco-tourism product – promotion and access to the Macquarie Marshes • Activate rural "Air B n B" rural style with incentives / workshops to assist people to get "business ready" • Activate City dwellers to experience rural and environmental tourism – Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra – "Three Rivers visitation – Castlereagh, Bogan and Macquarie Rivers" 		✓			Tourism Operators / Council (Destination Macquarie Marshes plan being developed)
<p>Increased population - campaign to attract young people to rural and regional communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to get away from media negatively portraying "poor, unfortunate farmers". • Regional Australia is resilient, younger farmers are early adaptors and use technology to improve economic and environmental outcomes. • Promote the benefits of living in a rural community – support, friendly, small so everyone has connections / relationships 		✓			
<p>More local ownership of water to ensure we have secure water for production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stop overseas interests from owning our natural resource 				✓	Murray Darling Basin Authority / Council facilitating
<p>Campaign to attract new residents and increase population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to Warren / welcome to Central NSW • Events and media • Warren Prospectus for new business / industry, 		✓			Council
<p>Awareness campaign to city "sell the bush"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the slogan "want to help? Why don't you come for a visit?" • "Drought can be positive, and every drought is different" but it's even more difficult to manage when you don't have the same tools as everyone else in more populated areas – ie technology, weather radar, access to information and training • Close the "culture" gap between country and city people 		✓			RDA / Council

Warren - Possible Project Development		Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term	Responsible
<p>More community gatherings particularly aimed at getting the community together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “pay” someone to organise and co-ordinate events and have it as fee for service so volunteer resources are not stretched i.e hire a caterer, hire bar staff, pay a cleaner post event, pay an event coordinator to organise 	✓				Community Groups / Council
<p>Increased access to water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding availability to access more bores for stock and domestic use – taking pressure of existing water sources • Dust suppression during drought for road restoration and rehabilitation 		✓	✓		Dep Environment / Council
<p>Water Security Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gin Gin Weir – reconstruction to allow for secondary storage capacity. • Burrendong Dam – increase to 120% capacity to be made new 100% capacity. 21. Off River Storage at or before the Nyngan off take to secure water supply to Warren Shire (industry, environment, irrigators, domestic supply) • Lining of supply channels - Albert Priest Channel and piping of Trinton Mine at Nyngan to reduce evaporation 		✓	✓		NSW Water



Warren – many vaccant shops in the main street.

An observation – rural communitites have vaccant pubs but active bottle shops – community are not socialising at the Pub but deciding to have a drink at home.

Submission, [Redacted] Warren, Received 16/2/2024

G'day Belinda,

Thanks to a few storms around last night and subsequent decent falls of rain I've been able to get into the office and tidy up a few jobs! It was great to be a part of the forum on Wednesday night and hear you speak and also listen to the concerns/ideas of those present. My apologies that I had to leave early. I figured that I could shoot you an email or have a chat on the phone at a later time!

The thought I had was around Small businesses in those 7 LGA's (20% of the state) that are as prone to any to the effects of Drought. Although in saying that, I wonder if the following could be applicable to rural areas nationally? Primary Producers obviously have some really useful tools in place at Tax time to reduce taxable income, one of which are the FMD's.

It got me thinking that there should be an opportunity for a small business (non-primary producing business) to participate in a similar scheme? We talk about the 'peaks and troughs' of Rural life as far as production goes and climate dictates. It would be a nice thought that small businesses could have the option of putting some pre-tax funds away at the end of June to go into a 'Small Business Management Deposit' (SBMD). Funds would be locked up but only released back to the Small business to use once their LGA was Drought declared?

We all know that some Overheads are really hard to reduce at times with permanent staff wages being one. We talk about ways we can retain our Rural Staff and avoid the 'Brain drain' which occurs in an Easterly direction once they are let go due to cost pressures. So, I thought something like this might help? This would give small businesses potentially a buffer/insurance policy for the next period of drought and we all know the clock is ticking.

Some interesting ideas around rural housing too I thought. Are there already existing schemes with rural housing between Government and private enterprise? I don't know how it would look like but I just think of those tunnels and tollways down in Sydney that seem to have these partnerships in place?

Also, does Decentralisation only apply to centres like Bathurst, Wagga, Albury, Tamworth etc? Maybe government need to consider incentivising businesses to move certain industries out West like low interest loans or tax breaks?? Yes, yes I know, we need housing!!

That's about as far as my mental intuition (if you call it that!) will handle for a Friday afternoon!

Best wishes,

[Redacted Signature]

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Nyngan Consultation – 15th February 2024 (11 Participants)

Drought Discussion	Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Mines are supported by the community on the whole and provide an alternate income stream to the Nyngan community during times of drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employs locals but mainly FIFO – these are generally specialised positions • Mining stabilizes town economy • Opportunities for our kids for employment • Farmers can work, extra income 	✓	✓	
<p>Financial, Health and Relationship Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income is difficult, trying to balance business and family pressures <p>It's disheartening when you have a second income as a diversification strategy for financial security but its taxed.</p> <p>22.Drought is depressive - dust storms, brown gets you down, environment is dying around you and losing value of natural assets</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p>Drought results in population decline that has flow-on effects for whole of community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of population – this is a killer – friendship groups are broken up, school class numbers decrease, kids sporting activities affected, reduced people living in Nyngan affects community multiplier effect. <p>Flow on to reduced population is less volunteers, less community functions and gatherings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shops closing and lots of vacant shops, no machinery dealerships • Fluctuation of population affected stability of childcare numbers – this affected its financial viability and as a community run organisation it posed too much risk for volunteers, so Shire took it on to provide security for childcare provision in the town. 	✓	✓	
<p>Community feel exhausted or “Planned Out”, with no or few changes to the political environment surrounding drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to manage cashflows with such diverse seasonal conditions, sometimes it feels impossible to manage and stay on top of the social, environmental and financial changes being experienced. Government red tape does not help or encourage progress • Why are droughts not natural disasters, “frequent climate events” Government should have a policy and plan by now - still not available • sold cattle in the middle of a drought and still had to pay tax • Farm Management Deposits are difficult to administer • Some people specialise on getting the “free” money instead of trying to be self-sufficient • when you create money in good times, there is a tax bill - no balance for droughts 	✓	✓	

Drought Discussion		Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Water security is poor during drought – there is no basin under Nyngan – water security is dire as there are no other alternatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without secure water it is difficult to have confidence to invest in business. • There is a direct correlation with population and business decline when there is a shortage of water, this limits confidence and investment in the community. • water restricted by Macquarie River flows • Town is on water restrictions even outside of “Drought” declarations • Farmers rely on surface water and ground tanks to harvest their own water • Stop saving water for environment – there is conflict with Nyngan residents and supporters of environmental flows to the Macquarie Marshes. There is a feeling in Nyngan that the Macquarie Marshes environmental flows are not controlled and take water essential for the survival of the Nyngan community. 		✓	✓	✓
<p>Inability to manage business, particularly in drought made worse with poor access to mobile and data and no “connectivity” to assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile lots of areas with no service – businesses in the city or regional towns don’t have issues like this and the lack of understanding during drought is very frustrating 23. Have to spend \$15K on boosters or Starlink- no rebates and difficult to install if you’re not an IT person 	✓	✓		
<p>Volunteer Fatigue and perceived reluctance to get involved – this is pre, during and post drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No volunteers and workers, same 5 people volunteer for everything 24. Our volunteers are ageing, reflective of our ageing population • Financial pressures require people to work long hours and sometimes multiple jobs – there is no time to volunteer • Eg’s of volunteer decline - Vinnie’s open 3 days a week, no junior cricket, no tuckshop at school –mothers working, no rotary, no apex anymore <p>Too much responsibility and risk to be a volunteer - needing police checks and certs, the cost to obtain, ridiculous red tape - Rotary had to prove they were not terrorists!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s becoming “too hard” to be a volunteer – easier to just say no 	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Reduce Environmental Plan Red Tape in the bush - Reduce the red tape to make life in the bush easier to encourage industry and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red tape and Govt regulations are not encouraging for development in the bush 25. New housing subdivision -2yrs and still no progress, biodiversity regulations put it back 2 yrs • same rules and regulations required in Nyngan as in the middle of Sydney • too many barriers to develop in Nyngan • same price for investment as in a major city but less return – no confidence to invest <p>Need small “lifestyle blocks”</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

Drought Discussion		Social	Economic	Environmental
<p>Accessing skilled labour, pre, during and post drought seems impossible so businesses are under resourced to grow, suffer burn-out of existing staff or move to where they can find skilled labour.</p> <p>Ability to “grow your own” in terms of up-skilling local community has challenges;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visiting OT • lack mechanics and trades people • short term contracts and people come and go - no security • inconsistent service delivery • mining takes workers as more attractive 7 on 7 off, work when you want 		✓	✓	
<p>No continuity of health services - this becomes magnified during drought as community do not have a familiar relationship with health providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency nurses, burn out and leave • Bogan Shire Council now manages the Medical Center in Nyngan to ensure continuity of service provision – This is not a traditional council role that Council is remunerated for through rate provisions. Council is “filling” the gap to meet community expectations. 		✓	✓	



LEFT: Restored Nyngan Town Hall

RIGHT: Empty Town Shops in Nyngan



LEFT: Empty Town Shops in Nyngan

RIGHT: Empty Town Shops in Nyngan



Nyngan- Possible Project Development		Short / Term	Mid / Term	Long / Term	Responsible
<p>Community Gatherings that are pre-organised and not run by volunteers – people want a break.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evident in the smaller villages and hamlets where it's difficult to get to town to socialise 	✓				Council
<p>Maintaining Local Economies during drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy local campaign – keep money stimulating local economy Instead of people "giving" hampers etc, perhaps vouchers for local grocery shops? drought assist non farmers to help our community – this will assist with population and employment, support local businesses and existing services Encourage "home businesses" to have a shopfront 		✓			Owners / Chamber Commerce / Council Facilitation
<p>Attract population to our town post-drought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more life-style blocks to encourage young families, industry and trades to move to Nyngan. promote the town, cheap to buy, has hospital and schools, lots of jobs, 2 hrs to Dubbo, mines Promote the benefits of living in a rural community – support, friendly, small so everyone has connections / relationships Campaign to attract young people to rural and regional communities 		✓			Council - to update LEP
<p>Flatten out the peaks and troughs of agriculture cash-flows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax incentives / economic zone - reward people for having a go and sticking it out 				✓	Aust Government
<p>Infrastructure for Alternate Industries i.e electricity, freight routes (rail and road)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salt bush feedlots Solar farm 		✓		✓	Aust Government
<p>Water Security Plan for new infrastructure along the Macquarie River</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure water security for domestic, industry, stock and farming 	✓	✓		✓	Aust Government

Phase Two - Project Identification

Sub-Group LGA Representation- RDRP016 – Project Identification and Development Ideas

The below group provides a cross-section of LGAs, gender, age and interests, industry, community and Council representation.

The following have been approached to undertake 2 x 1 hour facetime group interviews to discuss and come up with viable ideas for Project Implementation for RDRP016 to participate in the following;

- 1st Facetime Meeting – 7pm to 8pm Wednesday – discuss ideas
- Participants receive an e-mail outlining ideas for consideration to narrow down to 10 projects
- 2nd Facetime Meeting – 7pm to 8pm Wednesday – finalise ideas

Project Priorities

- **Projects do not over burdening existing organisations / individuals (volunteers)** with already limited resources
- Ensure the **lead organisation has adequate capacity and resources** to execute the project
- Be community-led, are relevant, integrated, targeted, inclusive, and reflective of community and stakeholder needs.
- Prioritise and focus on developing drought resilience through a lens of regional development.
- Be achievable
- Be cost effective (total budget of \$200K with the view to sourcing additional funding or working in partnerships with other organisations i.e LLS)

RDRP 004 - Idea Generators Consultation Meetings

1. Media campaign – “Visit the Bush” (Mid Term)

- Elevate more positive picture of regional and remote Australia and in particular “farmers”.
- Educate children about where their food comes from and why farms are important and valuable – without farms we don’t eat.

- Encourage people to visit the bush – just a short burst of economic stimulation will assist with much needed cashflow and business confidence.
- Promote our communities as a viable place to consider investing in and raising a family – “move to the bush”

2. Develop a water security plan for Coonamble, Warren and Nyngan (Long-term)

- Incorporate river and bore water options
- Include town, village, stock, industrial, irrigation and domestic usage
- Investigate efficiencies in water delivery and storage
- Advocate for communities and financial assistance to implement

3. Mental Health Awareness in the bush (Short to mid-term)

- Use existing organisations / networks to promote mental health awareness i.e Western Plains Rugby Union – provide funding / resources for a “mental health awareness” round.
- Have a healthy check list ” i.e mental health, skin check, breast / cervical cancer check / prostate check -complete 3 and will a prize (Conversation starter shirts (Tade Mutt)
- Mental Health 1st Aid, particularly for rural and remote communities that don’t have a full-time mental health presence in their community.

4. Community Gatherings (Short-term)

- Community want to keep the “support” groups / events that occurred during the drought going forward – this was a great way to create support networks , share information and tackle isolation, BUT we don’t want to put additional pressure on our volunteers – just simple “get togethers” – no dressing up, no catering, nothing fancy just basic to organise and run

5. Education / Workshops (Short to mid-term)

- Liked on-farm workshops during the drought, with practical / visual approach where appropriate.

- More access to business mentoring to assist people with proactive decision making – having confidence to make a decision is a huge help to business and mental health.
- livestock nutrition – when, where and how? Knowing sometimes it's not worthwhile to persist and better off to sell.
- Livestock trading – understanding markets to “bounce back” quicker post drought.
- Financial decision making – what are the key inputs/ outputs to be monitored.
- Succession planning

6. Telecommunications Review (Mid-term)

- Gathering data and information on the real effects of inadequate communication systems in Western NSW and the impacts they have on mental health, safety and reduced productivity during drought
- What will be the benefits of a much anticipated “Starlink” connection to communities with limited or zero internet or telephone access?

7. Stimulate local economies / main streets with more shop front activity

- “Community Hubs – pooling of resources to purchase a building with multiple users
- Succession planning for small business – How can a transition occur to allow younger people to buy into small business
- Promote community benefits – work and business opportunities

8. Councils to review LEP's to encourage industry and development

- provisions for additional lifestyle blocks
- Make it easier to build / locate worker accommodation on farm –acknowledge that some Councils don't have a full-time Health and Building service.

9. Economic Zone strategy developed / reviewed for consideration by government to include;

- Provisions and pre-approvals for development to encourage investment. i.e grain storage sheds, intensive feeding operations
- Incentives and rewards for maximising production – rewarding optimal behaviours.

10. “Grow Our Own Program”

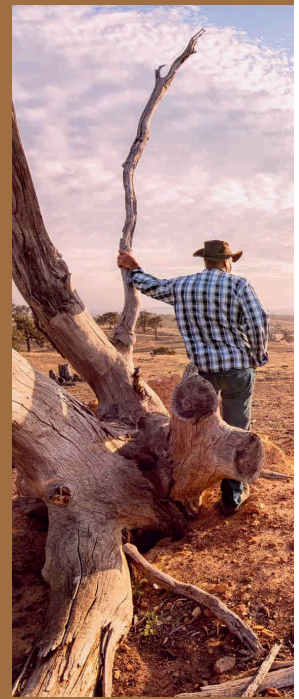
- Encourage youth from the area to develop skills / access education to bring skills back to the bush.
- NSW Government offers incentives for teachers, nurses, police officers, ambulance to undertake contracts in rural and remote areas. Instead of “importing” skilled people to a foreign community (rural and remote), why not turn the program around to encourage easier access for bush youth to gain skills and bring them back to the bush? They will be more likely to stay in the long-term.



Drought Resilience Plan Project

THE COUNTRY HEARTLINE

Project Business Plan
2025



Presented To:
Bogan Shire Council
Coonamble Shire Council
Warren Shire Council

Presented By:
Warren Shire Council
Economic Development
and Visitation Manager





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CALL TO ACTION

A Strategic Investment in Regional Sustainability

The Country Heartline initiative represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* to proactively shape their economic future through sustainable tourism development. This project is not just about boosting visitor numbers; it is about securing long-term economic resilience for our farmers, landholders, and rural communities in the face of ongoing drought conditions and market fluctuations.

Endorsing and implementing Country Heartline will ensure that the available funding is invested in a practical, on-the-ground initiative that directly benefits local economies, rather than being diverted into a stocktake report that, while informative, risks becoming yet another document sitting on a shelf with limited real-world impact.

The councils of *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* have an opportunity to establish a pioneering model of tourism-driven drought resilience—one that complements existing agricultural industries, generates alternative revenue streams, and strengthens the region's position as a key player in New South Wales' visitor economy. By leveraging the region's natural assets, cultural heritage, and working farmland, Country Heartline transforms challenges into opportunities, turning the rural experience into an economic driver.

Importantly, Country Heartline is not competing with existing tourism initiatives but rather strategically counterbalancing them. With The Pub Route drawing attention to neighbouring regions, this project ensures that *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* remain equally competitive, attracting a different market segment that seeks immersive, nature-based, and agritourism experiences. Without such an initiative, our region risks being bypassed by the increasing flow of regional tourism.

This is a long-term investment in resilience. It is an initiative designed to leave a lasting legacy—not just in visitor numbers, but in direct financial benefits to farmers, the creation of new local businesses, and the sustained economic uplift of our towns and communities. The governance structures, marketing strategy, and implementation roadmap presented in this plan provide a clear, actionable framework to ensure this project is delivered efficiently and successfully.

The decision before each council is not merely whether to support a tourism project—it is a decision about how to use limited funding to create the maximum long-term impact. It is a choice between a short-term consultancy report or a tangible, income-generating, drought-resilient tourism initiative that will continue to benefit our communities for years to come.

By formally endorsing the Country Heartline project, *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shire Councils* will be making a bold and proactive decision to ensure that regional funding is used to create real, lasting economic opportunities. This is not just another tourism initiative—it is a foundational step in building a stronger, more drought-resilient future for our communities.

The time to act is now. The opportunity is before us. Let's take the lead in regional resilience and secure a future where our shires are not just surviving, but thriving.

FOREWARD

The following document presents a strategic vision or a proposed regional tourism initiative aimed at strengthening the visitor economy and enhancing drought resilience across *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*.

It is important to note that the concepts detailed within this document are intended as a suggested marketing framework only. To improve readability, clarity, and cohesion, the initiative has been provisionally titled 'The Country Heartline'—a name chosen to capture the essence of rural charm, immersive agritourism, and the opportunity for visitors to reconnect with the country way of life. However, this is a conceptual title only and has been used to assist with the structure and flow of this document.



The Collaborative Governance Group, consisting of representatives from all three councils, will workshop project concepts before finalising a unified direction. Until the group reaches a formal agreement on a concept, the ideas presented in this document remain indicative only.

Attached as Annexure 2 is a detailed marketing analysis outlining the relevance and marketability of the Country Heartline concept. This includes an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the suggested name, as well as an assessment of its alignment with regional tourism trends and visitor demand.

This document serves as a starting point for collaboration between the three councils, landholders, local businesses, and tourism operators, providing an informed basis for strategic decision-making. The framework outlined here seeks to position our region competitively within the broader NSW visitor economy while ensuring that local communities and landowners benefit directly from the opportunities it presents.

By working together, *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* have the opportunity to develop a compelling tourism experience that celebrates the diverse landscapes, agricultural heritage, and cultural richness of our region while ensuring long-term economic sustainability.

This document is not a finalised plan but a suggested pathway forward, designed to stimulate discussion and guide future decision-making. It remains open to input, refinement, and adaptation as the project progresses.



How the Document is Presented

Introduction & Background

- Drought Resilience Context –
Why this project aligns with regional drought resilience objectives.
- Overview of the Three Shires –
Summarising their economic and tourism landscape.

Introduction of the Country Heartline Concept

- Brief introduction of the proposed Country Heartline tourism route concept idea.
- Comparison with The Pub Route –
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to highlight why this counterbalancing initiative is essential.

Governance & Project Steering Committee

- Governance Structure –
 - Warren Shire Council's Economic Development & Visitation Manager as the project lead.
 - *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires'* representatives as core members.
 - Specialist roles under each section (marketing, design, infrastructure, funding oversight, etc.).
- Roles & Responsibilities:
 - Who is responsible for what?
 - How decisions will be made?
 - How will councils contribute in-kind resources (travel, administration, project time, etc.)?

Financial Plan & Budget Allocation

- Funding Overview –
 - Projected budget allocation table (where money will be spent).
 - Timeline of financial releases vs. implementation milestones.
- Value for Money Argument –
Reinforcing why this investment provides long-term economic benefits over

Document Layout

Project Description: What We Are Building

- The Core Concept – A detailed breakdown of:
 - What the Country Heartline will look like.
 - Key tourism assets involved (Macquarie Marshes, farm stays, cultural experiences, etc.).
 - How it integrates with regional tourism (and contrasts with The Pub Route).
- Deliverables:
 - Itinerary Development – Suggested routes, themes, and experiences.
 - Branding & Positioning – How we will differentiate Country Heartline from other tourism trails.
 - Visitor Engagement – How we attract, retain, and engage tourists with compelling experiences
 - Farmer Participation & Incentives – Engaging landholders to offer farm stays, tours, or produce sales.

Implementation Roadmap

- Step-by-Step Timeline –
 - Pre-Funding Preparation –
Initiating steering committee, research, branding, and stakeholder engagement.
 - Phase 1: Infrastructure & Content Development –
Mapping routes, signage procurement, working with local landholders.
 - Phase 2: Branding & Marketing Rollout –
Website, brochures, social media, and digital advertising.
 - Phase 3: Visitor Engagement & Soft Launch –
Trialling farm stays, guided tours, and early feedback loops.
 - Full Launch & Review –
Launching to the public and setting up performance measurement metrics.

Marketing, Branding & Advertising Strategy

- Key Messages & Target Markets:
 - Caravanners, grey nomads, families, international visitors, etc.
 - How we position Country Heartline as "A New Way to Experience Regional NSW."

Document Layout

- Marketing Assets:
 - Website Development –
Timeline and objectives.
 - Brochures & Printed Materials –
Design, distribution strategy.
 - Signage & Wayfinding –
Where signs will go, costs, and procurement process.
 - Social Media & Digital Strategy –
Campaigns, influencer engagement, partnerships.
- Leveraging Partnerships:
 - Destination NSW, tourism bodies, travel writers, media outlets.

Risk Management & Contingency Planning

Potential Risks:

- Council capacity risks (staff workloads, administration burdens).
 - Landholder resistance to farm stays & tourism participation.
 - Funding shortfalls or delayed approvals.
 - External factors (drought severity, weather impacts on roads, tourism downturns).
- Mitigation Strategies –
 - How we address, adapt, and pivot.

Performance Measurement & Project Review

- How We Measure Success:
 - Tourism Data – Tracking visitor numbers, regional spend.
 - Economic Impact – Measuring increased revenue for farms, local businesses.
 - Stakeholder Satisfaction – Landholder and council engagement feedback.
- Project Review & Ongoing Management –
 - Who maintains and evolves the project after initial launch.

Document Layout

Why This Structure Works

- ✓ It provides councils with everything they need to make an informed decision.
- ✓ It is structured in a logical, high-level way but allows for detail where necessary.
- ✓ It balances strategic vision with practical implementation.
- ✓ It serves as a living document that councils can use immediately upon funding approval.



Introduction

Strengthening Drought Resilience through Tourism and Economic Diversification

Background: The Need for a Sustainable Approach to Drought Resilience

Drought remains one of the most significant challenges facing regional and rural communities across New South Wales. In response, the Drought Resilience Plan has been submitted for ministerial approval, outlining a series of strategies to enhance the long-term sustainability and economic stability of affected shires. As part of this broader initiative, councils across regional NSW are considering how best to apply funding to ensure maximum community benefit.

For *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* (always listed in this alphabetical order), drought resilience is not just about immediate water management—it is about creating sustainable economic opportunities that empower local communities to withstand future drought conditions. The goal is to foster new revenue streams, particularly in the agricultural sector, that can serve as long-term buffers against the financial pressures of climate variability.

The Proposed Collaborative Approach: Working Together for Regional Solutions

Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires have a unique opportunity to pool funding and resources into a collaborative drought resilience initiative that not only aligns with state and federal priorities but also ensures real, tangible benefits for landholders and local businesses.

Rather than working in isolation, the councils have recognised the greater potential of a regional-scale initiative. A unified approach allows for broader economic impact, improved visitor economy outcomes, and a stronger collective case for future funding opportunities. This collaborative effort is an essential step in future-proofing the region's economy while promoting sustainable tourism and agricultural diversification.



Introduction

The Country Heartline Concept: A Vision for Tourism-Driven Drought Resilience

As part of this strategic direction, one potential concept under consideration is the Country Heartline—a proposed tourism-driven drought resilience project that would see *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* work together to develop farm stays, farm tours, and farm gate experiences. This initiative would diversify income streams for landholders, increase regional visitation, and enhance the long-term viability of rural businesses.

It is important to clarify that Country Heartline is a working project title, designed to provide a cohesive vision for this initiative. The name and branding elements are open to discussion and refinement, allowing for flexibility in final project development. The core focus, however, remains the same: leveraging tourism as a tool for drought resilience and economic diversification.

This project would complement The Pub Route, an eight-loop tourism experience launching across Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett Shires. Country Heartline would provide a unique, alternative visitor experience showcasing the natural landscapes, farm-based tourism, and rural heritage of *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*—strengthening the region’s overall appeal to visitors.

Strategic Risk: The Need to Establish a Counterbalance to The Pub Route

While The Pub Route is a valuable tourism initiative for Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett Shires, its success has the potential to draw significant visitor traffic away from *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*. If no complementary itinerary or counterbalancing tourism initiative is established, the economic benefits of increased regional visitation may bypass our shires altogether, further concentrating visitor spend in neighbouring areas.

By proactively developing Country Heartline, *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* can:

Retain and Capture Visitor Spend – Ensuring that travellers who explore The Pub Route have a compelling reason to extend their journey into our shires, rather than bypassing them.

Position the Region as a Key Destination – Creating a linked itinerary experience between these two tourism initiatives ensures that our region remains competitive.

Expand the Appeal Beyond Pub Tourism – While The Pub Route caters largely to history and pub-focused travellers, Country Heartline appeals to nature lovers, agritourism enthusiasts, and eco-tourists, broadening the visitor base.

By acting now, *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* can ensure that they remain a competitive and desirable tourism destination, securing a share of the visitor economy growth currently being driven by The Pub Route’s upcoming launch.

Introduction

Alternative Proposal: The Consultant-Driven Stocktake Report

An alternative use of the funding has been proposed: engaging a consulting firm to undertake a stocktake report on the existing water resources within the three shires. While understanding local water resources is valuable, this approach risks duplicating existing knowledge that councils already possess. Reports of this nature often sit on shelves, providing limited direct benefits to landholders or the broader economy.

Given the tight project timeframes and the urgency of delivering practical, on-the-ground solutions, there is a clear case for investing in tangible initiatives that provide immediate and lasting benefits.

Why Tourism-Driven Drought Resilience is the Stronger Investment

By pooling resources into a tourism-based resilience initiative, *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* can:

- **Deliver Real Economic Benefits:** Rather than producing another report, this project will provide direct financial opportunities for local landholders, helping them establish new income streams.
- **Create a Lasting Legacy:** The tourism sector is a long-term economic driver, contributing to the resilience of local businesses, accommodation providers, and rural communities.
- **Leverage Regional Strengths:** The Macquarie Marshes, a globally recognised wetland, is a major tourism drawcard, offering significant potential for eco-tourism, farm stays, and cultural heritage experiences.
- **Enhance Regional Tourism Offerings:** This project would fill a gap in NSW's tourism market by providing a complementary travel experience to the Pub Route, ensuring that the region is positioned as a must-visit destination for road-trippers, grey nomads, and experience-seeking travellers.

Ensuring Tangible Outcomes for Farmers and Rural Communities

The core objective of this project is to ensure that funding translates into tangible outcomes for farmers and rural communities. Through carefully designed initiatives such as:

- **Farm Stay & Agri-Tourism Programs –**
Supporting property owners to host visitors, increasing direct farm income.
- **Guided Farm Tours & Experiences –**
Providing new tourism opportunities, connecting visitors with authentic rural life.

Introduction

- Farm Gate and Regional Produce Markets – Helping farmers diversify by selling directly to consumers and tourists.

Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires have a rare opportunity to lead the way in regional drought resilience innovation. By investing in real-world tourism solutions, this project will strengthen local economies, increase regional visitation, and provide lasting financial stability for landholders—ultimately making it a far more impactful and valuable use of available funding than a consultant’s report.



Collaborative Partnership Regional Profiles

Warren Shire

Situated along the Macquarie River, Warren Shire is widely recognised as the Gateway to the Macquarie Marshes, making it central to the success of The Country Heartline. The principal town, Warren, is located at approximately 31°42'00"S latitude and 147°50'00"E longitude.

The shire's economy is underpinned by agriculture, particularly cotton farming, livestock grazing, and agribusiness operations. The Burrinā Boardwalk, a purpose-built structure within the Macquarie Marshes, offers visitors an intimate and immersive way to experience the wetlands without disrupting the fragile ecosystem. Warren serves as a regional hub, providing art galleries, heritage buildings, and scenic riverfront recreation areas. As an advocate for environmental conservation and wetland protection, Warren Shire plays a pivotal role in promoting sustainable tourism and raising awareness about the importance of water management in drought-prone regions.



Macquarie Marshes: The Central Link

The Macquarie Marshes, a Ramsar-listed wetland of international significance, lie at the heart of all three shires, serving as the unifying natural asset that ties The Country Heartline together. The marshes are located at approximately 30°38'24"S latitude and 147°41'31.2"E longitude.

Spanning over 200,000 hectares, these wetlands provide vital breeding grounds for migratory birds, fish, and other native wildlife. The marshes act as a climate buffer, helping to regulate water availability during droughts and ensuring ecosystem resilience.

For visitors, the Macquarie Marshes offer a rare opportunity to explore one of Australia's most significant inland wetland ecosystems. Whether through guided birdwatching tours, eco-education programs, or self-guided kayak adventures, the wetlands present an unparalleled experience in biodiversity conservation, and sustainable tourism.

Together, these three shires create a diverse and interconnected tourism experience, offering visitors an itinerary that transitions from open outback landscapes to rich wetlands, from cultural history to modern rural life, and from starry night skies to tranquil waterways.

Collaborative Partnership Regional Profiles



Shared Regional Strengths

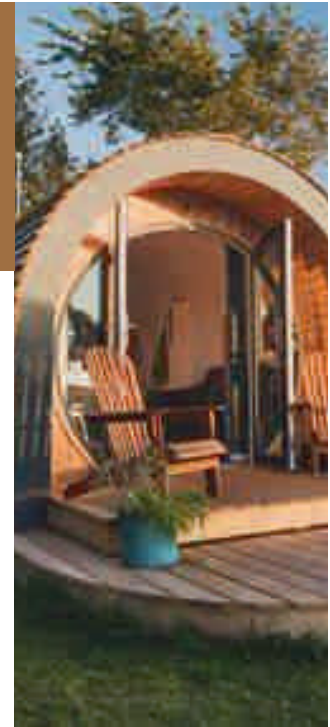
- **Agricultural Backbone:**
All three shires are deeply tied to primary industries, particularly sheep, cattle, and grain farming.
- **Proximity to the Macquarie Marshes:**
A globally recognised wetland that offers significant eco-tourism opportunities.
- **Tourism Potential:**
Growing interest in nature-based tourism, farm stays, and agritourism experiences.
- **Strong Community Identities:**
Each shire has distinct local character while benefiting from regional collaboration opportunities.

This regional profile provides a solid foundation for integrating economic development and tourism strategies within the Country Heartline project.





The Country Heartline Tourism Trail



OBJECTIVE

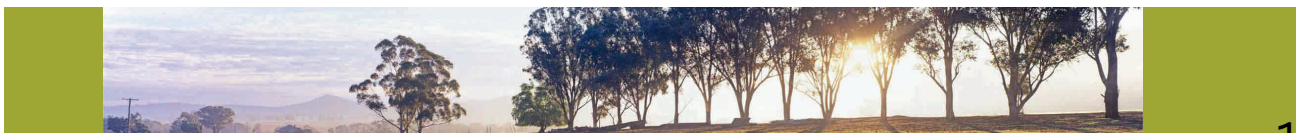
The Country Heartline is a collaborative tourism initiative designed to position **Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires** as a premier destination for eco-tourism, cultural heritage, and slow travel experiences. The project will be guided by a task group with representatives from each shire and industry stakeholders, working together to deliver a world-class visitor experience.

Additionally, this project aligns with broader drought resilience strategies, ensuring that our regional economies remain viable and adaptive during prolonged dry periods. By developing a sustainable tourism model, we create an alternative revenue stream for local businesses, farmers, and producers, offering economic stability when agricultural incomes fluctuate. Tourism serves as a complementary industry that can buffer communities from the economic hardships associated with water scarcity and drought cycles.

This project presents a groundbreaking opportunity for inter-council collaboration, fostering stronger regional partnerships that enhance our collective economic prospects. By working together, **Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires** can leverage shared resources, expertise, and marketing efforts to position our region as a compelling, must-visit destination. This approach ensures that each council benefits from increased visitor numbers, broader regional branding, and enhanced economic sustainability. A united front in tourism promotion strengthens our appeal to government funding bodies, tourism investors, and conservation organisations, making The Country Heartline a flagship initiative for regional resilience and economic development.

Additionally, The Country Heartline provides a future-proofing strategy for our shires to remain competitive amidst growing regional tourism initiatives. Other regions have successfully launched themed trails such as pub routes, adventure circuits, and heritage drives, which cater to different markets. This project ensures that **Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires** offer a complementary alternative, tapping into the expanding market of eco-tourists, cultural travellers, and wellness seekers. Rather than competing directly with high-traffic pub routes, our region will cater to travellers seeking solitude, natural beauty, and immersive experiences—a segment that is growing rapidly in both domestic and international tourism markets.

By integrating eco-tourism, farm-based tourism, and cultural heritage, The Country Heartline will diversify economic opportunities across multiple sectors, from accommodation and food services to guided tours and conservation initiatives. This project is not only about attracting visitors but also about building a long-term drought-resilient economic framework that benefits local businesses, sustains regional livelihoods, and secures our communities against future economic downturns.



SWOT Analysis

Country Heartline Tourism Trail

STRENGTH

Positioned as a slow travel and immersive agritourism experience

showcases farm stays, local produce, heritage, and nature-based tourism

Includes Macquarie Marshes, an internationally recognised wetland, attracting birdwatchers and eco-tourists

Supports economic resilience by generating income for farmers via farm stays, agritourism, and direct sales

Appeals to a wider audience, including families, international visitors, and nature lovers, beyond just pub-goers



WEAKNESS

Requires significant land holder buy in - some farmers may resist involvement in tourism

Infrastructure gaps, particularly in wayfinding signage, digital marketing, and booking systems

Still an unfamiliar concept in NSW requiring strong branding and promotion to attract visitors

More complex logistics than a traditional drive route - farms stays and experiences must be well organised

OPPORTUNITIES

Create a premium agritourism trail in NSW, positioning it as an alternative to the Hunter Valley's wine tourism model but for farm stays and rural experiences

Partner with tourism bodies to boost visibility and funding

Capitalise on international interest in sustainable, nature-based tourism - eco-conscious travellers are seeking impact, immersive travel

Offer new income streams for local farmers, reducing reliance on unpredictable agricultural revenue

THREAT

Delays in landholder participation if not enough farms sign up, the trail lacks core experiences

Severe weather events, (droughts, floods) impacting accessibility and visitor numbers

Competing regional tourism projects, - without strong marketing, visitors may prioritise the Pub Route or other NSW travel experiences

Competition SWOT Analysis

The Pub Route: A Heritage and Touring Experience for Regional NSW

Overview

The Pub Route is a new regional tourism initiative launching on 1st March 2025, developed collaboratively by Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett Shire Councils.

This self-drive experience offers visitors a curated journey through historical pubs, country landscapes, and cultural heritage sites across the three shires.

Designed to appeal to a wide range of travellers, The Pub Route is more than just a "pub crawl"—it is a structured touring experience that weaves together outback history, architectural heritage, and authentic country hospitality.

The initiative is expected to significantly increase visitor traffic to the participating shires, with the potential to draw visitors away from surrounding areas if no complementary tourism project is established.

Structure of the Pub Route

The Pub Route consists of eight distinct driving loops, each offering a thematic experience across the Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett Shires.

Two Rivers Route

Connects Cobar to Louth, Fords Bridge, and Bourke.

Stops include Shindy's Inn (Louth), Warrego Hotel (Fords Bridge), The Northey, and Port of Bourke Hotel.

Copper Route

Starts in Cobar, then passes through Canbelego, Mudgee, Euabalong, Mount Hope, and back to Cobar.

Highlights historic copper mining settlements and notable country pubs.

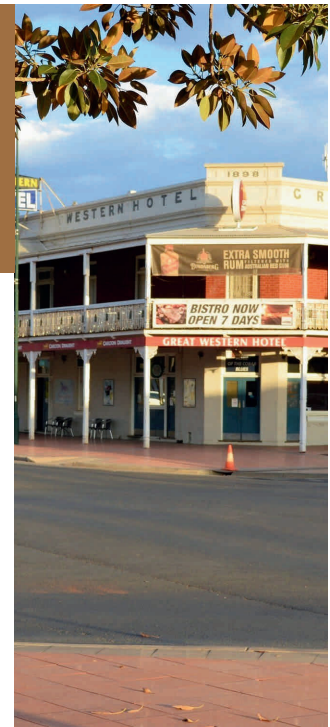
Poets Route

Inspired by Australian bush poets, following the Warrego, Cuttaburra, and Irara Rivers.

Ends into Hungerford, Queensland, offering a cross-



Competition SWOT Analysis



4. River Run Route

- Follows the Darling River down to Tilpa, featuring Shindy’s Inn (Louth) and the Tilpa Hotel.
- Focus on riverside pubs, remote travel, and outback storytelling.

5. Rockholes Route

- An old coach road journey from Bourke to Mt Oxley, Gongolgon, Byrock (Mulga Creek Hotel), then back via the Mitchell Highway.
- Showcases historic stock routes, coach trails, and iconic outback watering holes.

3. Opal Route

- A journey through outback opal mining towns, celebrating the adventurous spirit of early miners.
- Highlights include pubs and local mining culture.

7. Barwon Route

- A broadacre farming and bush pub experience through black soil plains and Coolabah-lined roads.

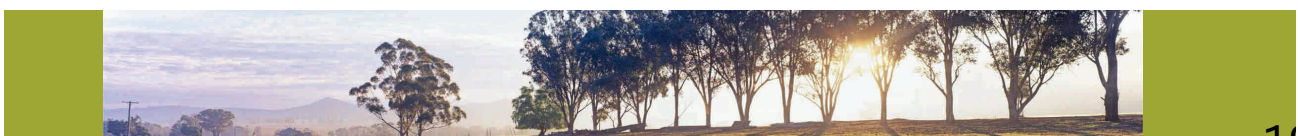
3. Hot Baths Route

- A Great Artesian Basin experience, linking outback hot springs with historic country pubs.

Target Audience & Tourism Appeal

While the name The Pub Route suggests a focus on pub tourism, the initiative is designed to attract a broad visitor demographic, including:

- Caravanners and Grey Nomads – Seeking structured, scenic road trips with clear itineraries and safe, welcoming country hospitality.
- History and Architecture Enthusiasts – Many of the pubs along the route are historically significant, offering insights into regional settlement and colonial Australia.
- Cultural Tourists – The experience integrates Indigenous history, local storytelling, and rural traditions.



Competition SWOT Analysis

CONCLUSION

The Pub Route is an important regional tourism initiative that will drive significant visitor interest to Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett Shires. However, without a coordinated response, it may negatively impact tourism flow into *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*.

The Country Heartline Project serves as the ideal counterbalance, ensuring that our region remains a competitive and attractive destination. By establishing a distinct yet complementary visitor experience, we can strengthen tourism resilience, retain economic benefits, and reinforce our shires as key players in the NSW regional visitor economy.

PUB ROUTE			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well defined and easily marketable as a pub and heritage trail Strong appeal to self drive tourists Rich history tied to outback pubs, colonial Australia, and local legends High visitor spending potential at pubs, accommodation, and fuel stops Supported by 3 councils, leveraging tourism resources and funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited diversity in experiences - mainly pub stops and historic sites Potential for low visitor spend in towns that don't have strong tourism offerings beyond pubs Drinking-focused tourism may deter some markets (families, wellness travellers, eco-tourists) Heavily reliant on pub owners and their ability to provide a great visitor experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage nostalgia and storytelling - many outback pubs have fascinating histories that can be further marketed Encourage extended visitor stays by linking to additional outback experiences (eg national parks, historic stock routes) Expand into themed events - pub trails history tours, and ghost stories to increase visitor appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic downturns could reduce disposable income to pub-centric travel Overcrowding at key pubs may lead to inconsistent visitor experiences Tourism fatigue in small towns - some communities may struggle to keep up with increased visitor demand

SUMMARY: Why the Country Heartline is needed

While The Pub Route has a clear market, it is largely built around historic drinking culture, limiting its ability to attract eco-conscious and experience-driven travellers. The Country Heartline provides a much-needed counterbalance—offering immersive farm stays, food tourism, and eco-tourism, all while supporting drought resilience for farmers.

This complementary positioning ensures that *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires* do not lose visitor traffic to Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett, but instead create a multi-layered experience that extends visitor stays and spending across both regions. This SWOT analysis provides a clear strategic comparison and strengthens the argument for The Country Heartline as a viable, long-term tourism investment.

Governance Framework

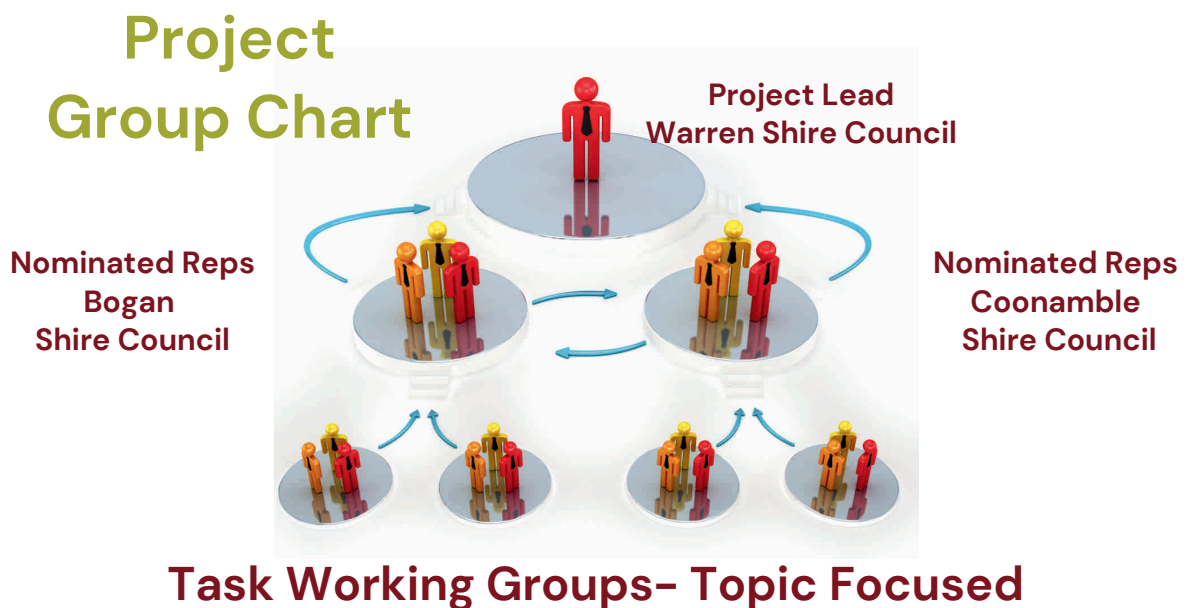
Establishing a robust governance framework is essential for the successful implementation of the Country Heartline project. This framework ensures collaborative decision-making, leverages the strengths of each council, and aligns with regional objectives. Below is a detailed outline of the proposed governance structure and the roles within the Project Steering Committee (PSC).

I. Collaborative Governance Structure

The Country Heartline project will adopt a collaborative governance model, distributing decision-making authority among the three participating councils: This approach fosters *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warrego Shires* shared ownership, mutual accountability, and ensures that the project reflects the diverse interests of all stakeholders.

Key Components:

- Project Steering Committee (PSC):**
 The central decision-making body responsible for strategic oversight and guidance.
- Subcommittees and Working Groups:**
 Specialised teams focusing on specific project areas such as branding, infrastructure, marketing, and community engagement.
- Regular Joint Council Meetings:**
 Scheduled sessions involving General Managers and Mayors to review progress, address challenges, and ensure alignment with regional goals.



Governance Framework

2. Project Steering Committee (PSC)

Composition:

- Chairperson:
Economic Development & Visitation Manager, Warren Shire Council.
- Council Representatives:
 - ***Bogan Shire Council, Coonamble Shire Council, Warren Shire Council***
To nominate a member(s) with expertise in tourism development, community engagement, economic planning, marketing, cultural heritage, agriculture or infrastructure development.
- External Advisors:
 - Graphic Design Specialist (Consultant)
 - Infrastructure and Signage Coordinator
 - Financial Oversight Officer
 - Printing Specialist
 - Others as identified during the project

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Chairperson:
 - Provide strategic leadership and ensure the project aligns with overarching regional objectives.
 - Facilitate effective communication among councils and stakeholders.
 - Oversee the implementation of PSC decisions and directives.
- Council Representatives:
 - Act as liaisons between the PSC and their respective councils, ensuring seamless information flow.
 - Contribute local insights and expertise to inform project strategies.
 - Participate actively in decision-making processes, reflecting their council's perspectives.
- External Advisors:
 - Offer specialised knowledge to guide project components such as marketing campaign infrastructure planning, and financial management.
 - Ensure that project deliverables meet industry standards and best practices.

Decision-Making Process:

- Consensus-Based Approach:
Decisions will be made collaboratively, with each council having equal input to promote shared ownership.
- Regular Meetings:
The PSC will convene bi-monthly to assess project milestones, address emerging issues, and plan forthcoming activities.
- Documentation:

Governance Framework

Decision-Making Process:

- **Consensus-Based Approach:**
Decisions will be made collaboratively, with each council having equal input to promote shared ownership.
- **Regular Meetings:**
The PSC will convene bi-monthly to assess project milestones, address emerging issues, and plan forthcoming activities.
- **Documentation:**
All meetings will have recorded minutes and action items to maintain transparency and accountability.

3. Initial Project Meeting

The inaugural project meeting is pivotal in setting the collaborative tone and establishing a unified vision.

- **Attendees:**
 - General Managers and Mayors from *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shire Councils*.
 - Appointed PSC Members from each council.
 - External Advisors (as identified).
- **Agenda:**
 - Project Overview:
Present the Country Heartline concept, objectives, and anticipated outcomes.
 - Roles and Responsibilities:
Clarify the governance structure, delineate roles within the PSC, and outline expectations.
 - Collaboration Framework:
Establish communication protocols, decision-making processes, and mechanisms for conflict resolution.
 - Next Steps:
Develop an immediate action plan, including scheduling regular PSC meetings and setting initial project milestones.

Detailed Agenda is attached as Appendix 1 to this document.

Outcome:

A formalised commitment from all councils, solidifying their collaboration and support for the Country Heartline project.

This governance framework is designed to ensure that the Country Heartline project operates through a collaborative, transparent, and effective partnership among the three councils, driving regional development and achieving shared objectives.

Financial Implications and Project Arrangements

Project Funding and Resource Allocation

The Country Heartline project is expected to operate within a funding range of \$270,000 to \$300,000 sourced through a combination of project-specific funding allocations and redirected funds from Part 1 of the Drought Resilience Plan. This financial structure ensures that the initiative is strategically funded, balancing external investment with in-kind contributions from participating councils to maximise impact and cost efficiency.

Funding Breakdown

The project funding is structured as follows:

- Core Project Funds
\$200,000 drawn from Drought Resilience Program funding
- Third-Party Consultation:
A dedicated \$50,000 allocation within this budget to engage industry experts, marketing specialists, and regional tourism advisors to enhance project outcomes.
- Balance of Funds:
The remaining funds will be drawn from unspent allocations from Part 1 of the Drought Resilience Plan, ensuring that all available financial resources are directed towards on-the-ground implementation rather than administrative overheads.

This funding model is designed to support the development, branding, marketing, and rollout of the Country Heartline initiative while maintaining strong financial accountability and alignment with strategic drought resilience objectives.

Council Contributions and Shared Responsibilities

While the project is externally funded, each of the three participating councils—[Bogan](#), [Coonamble](#), and [Varren Shires](#)—will be expected to provide in-kind support in the form of:

- 1 Project Personnel –
Each council will assign representatives to the Project Steering Committee, contributing their time, expertise, and operational insights to ensure successful project execution.
- 1 Travel & Administration –
Councils will cover the costs of staff travel and administrative functions associated with their participation in the project. This includes attendance at key meetings, stakeholder engagement, and cross-regional collaboration.

Financial Implications and Project Arrangements

Local Procurement & Resource Allocation –

Where possible, councils will be encouraged to source services and materials locally, ensuring that project-related spending benefits regional businesses and aligns with procurement policies.

By leveraging in-house resources and council expertise, the project minimises reliance on external consultancy services while ensuring that regional knowledge and governance remain at the core of decision-making.

Financial Sustainability and Cost Management

To ensure long-term financial viability, the project will operate under a structured financial management framework that includes:

- ▶ **Transparent Budgeting** – Regular financial reporting and budget tracking to ensure spending remains within approved allocations.
- ▶ **Procurement Compliance** – Adhering to council and government procurement policies, ensuring competitive tendering for third-party services.
- ▶ **Risk Contingencies** – Allocating a portion of funds for risk mitigation, including cost overruns, unforeseen delays, and infrastructure requirements.
- ▶ **Return on Investment (ROI) Focus** – Directing spending towards high-impact initiatives, including branding, signage, marketing, and digital assets, which will continue to generate economic benefits beyond the project's completion.

Maximising Value for Money

The financial structure of the Country Heartline project is designed to ensure the best possible use of available funds, maximising direct economic benefits for farmers, local businesses, and regional communities.

Unlike a consultant-driven water resource stock take report, which would primarily consume funding without delivering direct economic outcomes, this initiative:

Creates tangible tourism assets, such as farm stay opportunities, visitor experiences, and an integrated marketing campaign.

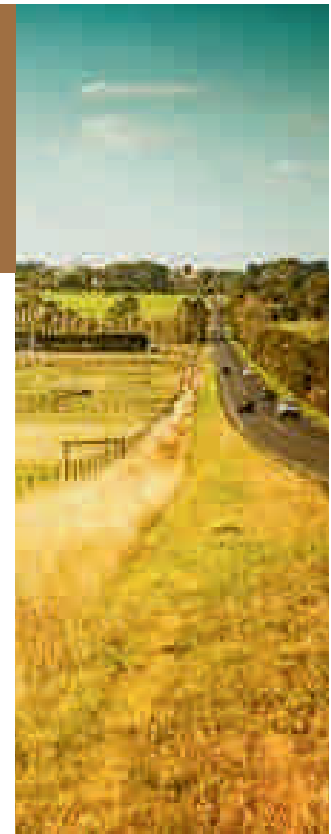
Strengthens regional economies by encouraging increased visitation and extended visitor stays, boosting local business revenue.

Supports farmers and rural landholders by offering alternative revenue streams, improving long-term financial resilience in times of drought.

By taking a balanced approach to funding, combining external investment with council-led contributions, the project ensures that the available budget delivers the maximum possible impact, creating a lasting legacy for **Logan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires**.

2

Detailed Project Overview and Concept: The Country Heartline



The Country Heartline: Country Charm, Country Calm

Find yourself in the Country -

Journey of Immersion, Discovery, and Resilience In a world that moves too fast, where concrete replaces open skies and screens take the place of real conversations, the Country Heartline offers a chance to slow down, breathe deeply, and reconnect—with nature, with history, and with yourself.

This is more than just a scenic drive or a simple farm stay. The Country Heartline is an invitation to step into the rhythm of the land, to immerse yourself in the heart of the country, and to experience the warmth and resilience of the communities that make rural Australia special.

The Experience - Why Visitors Will Come and Why They Will Stay

Journey Through Wide Open Spaces

There's a magic in the wide, unbroken horizons of [Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires](#).

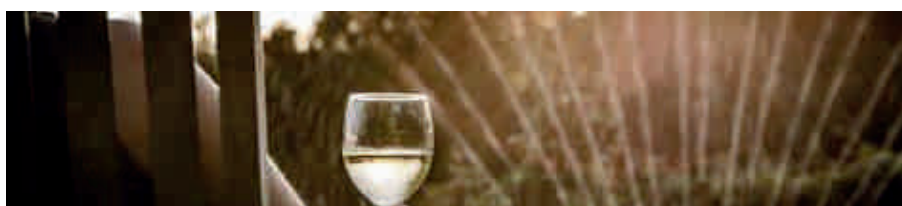
The serenity in the golden fields that stretch endlessly beneath a sky painted with the soft hues of dawn and dusk. The Country Heartline taps into this sense of vastness, freedom, and tranquillity, offering visitors a chance to slow down, take in the fresh air, and find space to think, relax, and reconnect.

Unlike the fast-paced pub tours or bustling regional hubs, this is a tourism experience built around quiet moments, immersive experiences, and meaningful connections—whether it's standing in awe of the internationally recognised Macquarie Marshes, sharing a sunset over the river with a local farmer, or feeling the rich red dirt beneath your fingertips as you pick fresh produce straight from the earth.

Country Charm: Meet the People Who Make The Land Come Alive

The Country Heartline isn't just about landscapes - it's about the people who live here and their stories, their traditions, their hospitality.

Sit on the verandah of a family-run sheep station, sipping a glass of local wine as the sun sinks below the paddocks.



Project Concept



Hear the crackling of a campfire and listen to stories passed down through generations of farmers, drovers, and Indigenous custodians.

Walk through historic townships, where murals tell the story of the past, and friendly locals welcome you like an old friend.

is is about real experiences—genuine, warm, and unfiltered. It’s about connection.

Country Calm: Find Yourself in the Rhythm of Rural Life

The Country Heartline is for those who want to escape the rush and embrace a slower, more mindful way of travelling. Here, visitors can:

Wake up to the sounds of the bush instead of the hum of traffic.

Spend time outdoors, whether it’s birdwatching in wetlands, walking through historic stock routes, or simply enjoying the stillness of a country morning.

Experience hands-on farm life—helping to round up sheep, learning the art of wool-classing, or simply enjoying the unplugged simplicity of a rustic farm stay.

For city-dwellers, this is a chance to reconnect with nature.

For families, it’s an opportunity to show children where their food comes from and let them experience the joy of simple country pleasures.

For road-trippers and grey nomads, it’s an alternative route that offers more than just a pit stop—but rather a way to fully immerse in the landscape.

Why This Matters—Building Resilience for Our Shires and Farmers

Beyond its appeal to visitors, the Country Heartline is a strategic initiative to strengthen regional economies and provide long-term resilience for farming communities.

Drought-Proofing Rural Economies:

By creating new revenue streams for farmers through farm stays, farm gate produce, and agritourism experiences, the initiative helps reduce reliance on unpredictable agricultural conditions.

Boosting Local Businesses:

Visitors will spend money in local towns, supporting family-run bakeries, general stores, cafes, and small-town pubs.

Encouraging Sustainable Tourism Growth:

By focusing on eco-tourism and low-impact travel, the Country Heartline complements rather than competes with existing tourism initiatives.

Project Concept



Complementary Trail – Positioning The Country Heartline Within The Region

The Country Heartline is not just another tourism trail—it's a carefully designed experience that works in harmony with existing regional offerings, ensuring that visitor traffic and spending are distributed more evenly across the shires.

- The Pub Route (Cobar, Bourke, Walgett) attracts travellers interested in history, road trips, and iconic Australian pubs. The Country Heartline provides the perfect counterbalance—offering a slower, nature-focused, and immersive rural experience for visitors who want to extend their time in the region.
- Macquarie Marshes & Eco-Tourism –
The globally significant Macquarie Marshes sit between the three shires and serve as a centrepiece of the Country Heartline experience. This will attract birdwatchers, nature photographers, and international eco-tourists, reinforcing sustainable tourism in the area.
- Supporting the NSW Visitor Economy –
Unlike other well-established food and wine trails in NSW, the Country Heartline brings something entirely unique—a chance to fully experience rural life through slow travel, authentic interactions, and hands-on experiences.

Global Trend, A Local Solution—Why This Works

Across the world, slow tourism and agritourism are booming—and New South Wales has yet to fully embrace this deeply immersive, experience-based approach to regional tourism.

- Italy's Agriturismo model has successfully turned farm stays into a thriving industry, attracting visitors to remote areas and preserving local traditions.
- The US and Canada's Rural Routes have capitalised on farm-to-table movements, hands-on agricultural experiences, and rural wellness retreats.
- Scandinavia's Eco-Farm Getaways have brought in visitors who seek a complete disconnection from city life and immersion in nature.

Australia's rural and agricultural heartland is just as rich in experiences, history, and opportunity. The Country Heartline is our way of unlocking that potential, giving visitors the space to reconnect with the land while directly supporting the communities that call it home.

Project Concept



Conclusion: A New Way to Experience the Country

In a time when travellers are looking for authenticity, depth, and meaning in their experiences, the Country Heartline offers exactly that.

- It is a road trip for the soul, an invitation to slow down and reconnect with nature, people, and oneself.
- It is a living, breathing example of how tourism can support regional communities, helping farmers and local businesses thrive in unpredictable climates.
- It is a trail that balances conservation, culture, and commerce, ensuring that our landscapes and stories remain protected while offering something truly special to visitors.

The Country Heartline is where travellers come not just to visit, but to truly experience, to learn, to breathe, and to find themselves in the country.

This is Country Charm.

This is Country Calm.

This is The Country Heartline.



Key Tourism Assets

The Country Heartline

The Country Heartline is a thoughtfully curated journey that invites visitors to immerse themselves in the authentic rural experiences of *Bogan Shire, Coonamble Shire, Warren Shire* and the natural splendour of the Macquarie Marshes. This initiative highlights key tourism assets, offering a harmonious blend of cultural heritage, ecological wonders, and genuine country hospitality.

Macquarie Marshes:

Spanning approximately 220,000 hectares, the Macquarie Marshes are among the largest semi-permanent wetlands in southeastern Australia.

This ecological haven supports over 200 bird species, making it a paradise for birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts.

Visitors can explore the wetlands via the Burrima Boardwalk, offering an intimate glimpse into this vibrant ecosystem.

warren.nsw.gov.au

Farm Stays and Agricultural Experiences:

The region boasts numerous working farms that open their doors to visitors, providing authentic farm stay experiences.

Guests can engage in daily farming activities, from sheep shearing to crop harvesting, gaining hands-on insight into sustainable agriculture and rural life.

Cultural and Heritage Attractions:

Nyngan Museum:

Located in Bogan Shire, this museum offers a rich tapestry of the area's history, featuring exhibits from the 1800s and stories from local residents.

bogan.nsw.gov.au

Mid-State Shearing Shed:

Also in Bogan Shire, this attraction showcases the significance of the shearing industry, adorned with murals by local artists.

bogan.nsw.gov.au

Coonamble Museum Under the Bridge: Housed in historic police barracks, this museum provides a window into the town's past, highlighting the resilience and spirit of its pioneers.

traveltriangle.com

Natural Attractions:

Tiger Bay Wetlands:

Situated on the outskirts of Warren, these wetlands are a sanctuary for various bird species and aquatic flora. The adjacent Window on the Wetlands Centre offers informative displays about the region's environment and heritage.

warren.nsw.gov.au

Bogan River:

Flowing through Nyngan, the Bogan River provides serene spots for fishing, picnicking, and leisurely walks, embodying the tranquil charm of the countryside.

bogan.nsw.gov.au

Key Tourism Assets

Integration with Regional Tourism

The Country Heartline is designed to complement existing regional tourism initiatives, offering a distinctive experience that emphasises relaxation, ecological appreciation, and cultural immersion.

- **Contrast with the Pub Route:**

While the Pub Route celebrates the historic pubs and lively social scenes of Cobar, Bourke, and Walgett Shires, the Country Heartline offers a serene alternative. It focuses on the natural beauty and cultural depth of *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*, appealing to travellers seeking a peaceful retreat into nature and rural life.
thepubroute.com.au

- **Complementary Itinerary:**

Visitors can seamlessly integrate both experiences into their travel plans. After exploring the vibrant pub culture and historical landmarks along the Pub Route, travellers can transition to the Country Heartline for a rejuvenating experience amidst wetlands, farmlands, and heritage sites.

By highlighting these and other existing (or planned) assets and integrating with regional tourism, the Country Heartline not only enriches the visitor experience but also fosters economic resilience and cultural preservation within these rural communities.

Project Deliverables

The Country Heartline initiative aims to create a distinctive and immersive agritourism experience across the *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*, with the Macquarie Marshes as a central feature. To achieve this, the project will focus on several key deliverables:

- **Itinerary Development**

Crafting a compelling itinerary is essential to guide visitors through the unique landscapes, cultural heritage, and agricultural experiences of the region.

- **Thematic Routes:**

Develop multiple themed itineraries catering to diverse interests, such as:

- **Ecotourism Adventures:**

Exploring the Macquarie Marshes, birdwatching, and nature walks.

- **Cultural Heritage Trails:**

Visiting local museums, historical sites, and Indigenous cultural centres.

- **Farm Life Experiences:**

Participating in farm stays, agricultural workshops, and produce harvesting.

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Key Tourism Assets

Project Deliverables Continued

- **Thematic Routes Continued:**
 - **Ecotourism Adventures:**
Exploring the Macquarie Marshes, birdwatching, and nature walks.
 - **Cultural Heritage Trails:**
Visiting local museums, historical sites, and Indigenous cultural centres.
 - **Farm Life Experiences:**
Participating in farm stays, agricultural workshops, and produce harvesting.
 - **Duration Options:**
Offer itineraries ranging from day trips to week-long stays, providing flexibility for different visitor schedules.
 - **Integrated Activities:**
Incorporate local events, markets, and festivals into the itineraries to enhance the visitor experience and support community engagement.
- **Branding and Positioning**
Establishing a strong brand identity will differentiate the Country Heartline from other tourism offerings.
- **Brand Essence:**
Emphasise themes of "Country Charm" and "Country Calm," highlighting the serene, authentic, and enriching experiences available.
- **Visual Identity:**
Develop a cohesive visual brand, including logos, colour schemes, and design elements that reflect the natural beauty and cultural richness of the region.
- **Storytelling:**
Share narratives of local farmers, Indigenous heritage, and the ecological significance of the Macquarie Marshes to create an emotional connection with potential visitors.



Key Tourism Assets

Project Deliverables Continued

- **Differentiation from Other Tourism Trails**
To stand out in the tourism market, the Country Heartline will offer unique value propositions.
- **Immersive Agritourism:**
Unlike traditional trails, this initiative provides hands-on farming experiences, allowing visitors to engage directly with agricultural activities.
- **Ecological Focus:**
Highlight the Macquarie Marshes as a key attraction, offering eco-tours and educational programs about wetland conservation.
- **Community Integration:**
Facilitate interactions between visitors and local communities through homestays, cultural exchanges, and participation in local traditions.

Visitor Engagement

Attracting and retaining tourists requires creating compelling and memorable experiences.

- **Interactive Platforms:**
Develop a user-friendly website and mobile app featuring virtual tours, itinerary planning tools, and booking systems.
- **Personalised Experiences:**
Offer customisable packages that allow visitors to tailor their activities based on interests and preferences.
- **Loyalty Programs:**
Implement programs that encourage repeat visits, such as discounts for returning guests or referral incentives.



2

Key Tourism Assets

Farmer Participation and Incentives

Engaging local landholders is crucial for the authenticity and success of the agritourism experience.

- **Incentive Programs:**
Provide financial support, marketing assistance, and training for farmers to develop and promote agritourism services.
- **Collaborative Networks:**
Establish a cooperative network among participating farmers to share resources, best practices, and coordinate offerings.
- **Regulatory Support:**
Assist farmers in navigating legal requirements and obtaining necessary permits for hosting visitors.

Engaging local farmers is pivotal to the success of the Country Heartline initiative. To facilitate their active participation, it's essential to provide them with resources and guidance to develop sustainable agritourism ventures. This includes connecting them with third-party organisations and programs that offer expertise in business development and operational setup.

Connecting Farmers with Supportive Organisations

Several organisations specialise in assisting farmers to diversify into agritourism:

- **Destination NSW's Agritourism Program:**
Offers resources and training to help farmers develop agritourism experiences, including guidance on planning approvals and business development.
destinationnsw.com.au
- **Regionality's Agritourism Business Development Program:**
Provides capacity-building and business mentoring specifically designed to support farmers in innovating and expanding into agritourism.
regionality.com.au
- **NSW Department of Planning's Agritourism Resources:**
Offers information on planning reforms and guidelines to facilitate the establishment of agritourism ventures, making it easier for farmers to diversify their income streams.
planning.nsw.gov.au



Case Study 1 Willie Retreat

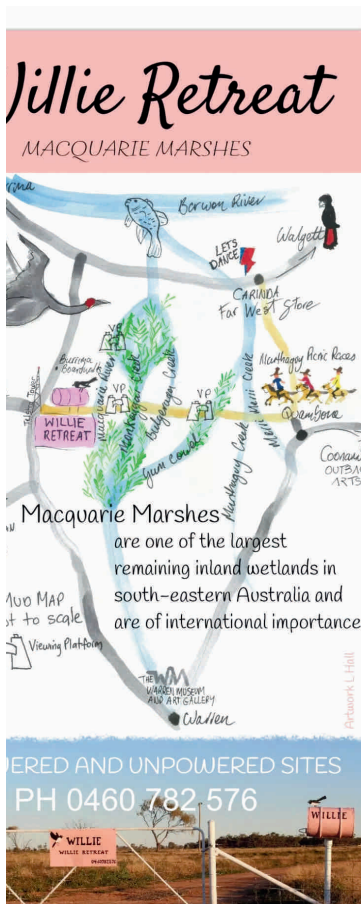
exemplary model within the Macquarie Marshes region is Willie Retreat.

is establishment offers a range of accommodations, including cabins, bunkhouses, and camping facilities, providing visitors with immersive experiences in the heart of the marshes.

developing a simple website and utilising a cost-effective booking platform like Little Hotelier, Willie Retreat has successfully made its services accessible to a broader audience.

is approach demonstrates how leveraging digital tools can enhance visibility and streamline operations for agritourism businesses.

cebook.com



Case Study 2 Callubri Station

Callubri Station, located between Nyngan and Tottenham in Central West New South Wales, serves as an exemplary model of successful agritourism integration. This fourth-generation, 28,500-acre Merino sheep and wheat station has seamlessly blended traditional farming with luxury tourism, offering guests an authentic outback experience.

callubristation.com.au

Key Features of Callubri Station's Agritourism Model:

Luxury Accommodation:

Guests can choose between the unique Sky Suites, elevated accommodations providing panoramic views of the vast landscape, and the River Suite, a wheelchair-accessible option near the Shearer's Quarters Guest Lounge.

callubristation.com.au

Authentic Farm Experiences:

Visitors are invited to participate in daily farm activities, including guided tours led by fourth-generation farmer Mike Armstrong. These tours offer insights into the station's operations and the broader agricultural practices of the region.

callubristation.com.au

Culinary Excellence:

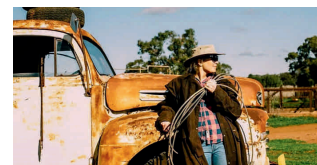
Emphasising a paddock-to-plate philosophy, Callubri Station provides meals crafted from seasonal, locally grown produce. Guests can savour handmade sourdough from stone-milled wheat produced on-site and enjoy Merino lamb raised on the property.

callubristation.com.au

Event Hosting:

The station's Shearer's Quarters Hall accommodates up to 110 guests, making it an ideal venue for conferences, weddings, and private events. The combination of rustic charm and modern amenities ensures a memorable setting for various occasions.

callubristation.com.au



Case Study 2 Callubri Station

Lessons for the Country Heartline Initiative:

Callubri Station's success underscores the potential benefits of integrating agritourism into traditional farming operations:

Diversified Income Streams:

By offering accommodation, dining, and event services, the station has created additional revenue sources beyond conventional agriculture.

Enhanced Visitor Engagement:

Providing immersive experiences fosters a deeper connection between guests and the agricultural lifestyle, promoting appreciation and support for rural communities.

Sustainable Practices:

On-site resources for culinary offerings and activities emphasises sustainability and self-sufficiency, appealing to environmentally conscious travellers.

Action Plan for Farmer Engagement

To replicate such successes, the following steps are recommended:

Workshops and Training Sessions:

Organise events where experts from agritourism development programs can provide hands-on guidance on business planning, marketing, and operational management.

Resource Compilation:

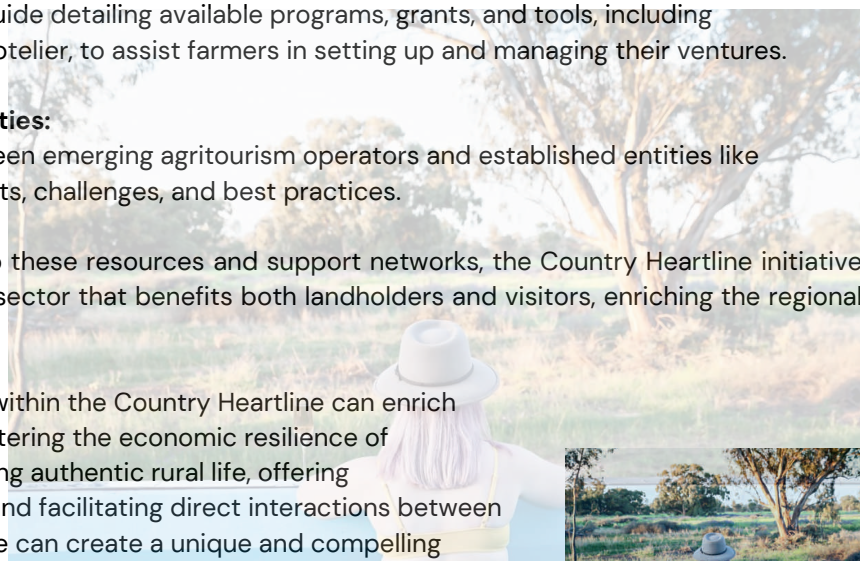
Develop a comprehensive guide detailing available programs, grants, and tools, including digital platforms like Little Hotelier, to assist farmers in setting up and managing their ventures.

Peer Networking Opportunities:

Facilitate connections between emerging agritourism operators and established entities like Willie Retreat to share insights, challenges, and best practices.

By proactively linking farmers to these resources and support networks, the Country Heartline initiative can foster a robust agritourism sector that benefits both landholders and visitors, enriching the regional agritourism landscape.

Incorporating similar strategies within the Country Heartline can enrich the visitor experience while bolstering the economic resilience of participating farms. By highlighting authentic rural life, offering comfortable accommodations, and facilitating direct interactions between guests and farmers, the initiative can create a unique and compelling



Implementation Roadmap

Country Heartline Project Plan and Timeline

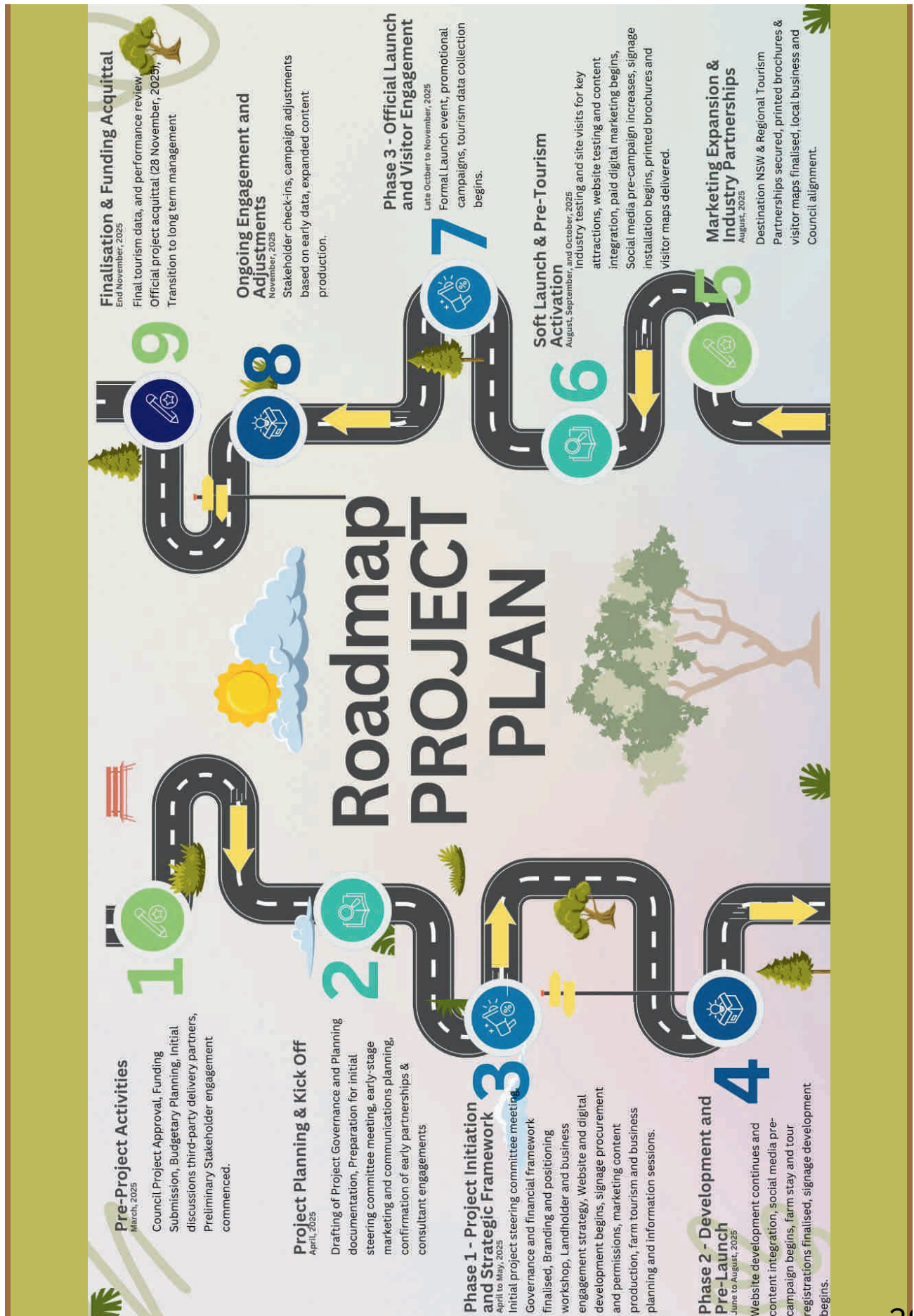
Project Implementation: April to November, 2025

The Country Heartline initiative follows a structured seven-month implementation roadmap, ensuring all elements are developed, launched, and operational within the project timeline.

This detailed project roadmap ensures that the Country Heartline is launched on time, within budget, and in alignment with council and funding expectations. Each phase builds momentum, ensuring that marketing, business engagement, and infrastructure development align seamlessly.

This timeline provides confidence to all stakeholders that the project is well-structured, achievable, and capable of delivering long-term economic benefits for *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*.





Implementation Roadmap

PRE-PROJECT ACTIVITIES (March 2025)

Key Focus: Council approvals, funding application, initial project planning, and preparation for Kickoff.

March 2025 – Project Approval & Funding Submission

✓ Project Proposal Submission to Full Councils

- **Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires** receive the full project proposal for review and endorsement.
- Formal approval sought from each council to proceed with the initiative.
- Endorsement of Warren Shire Council's Economic Development & Visitation Manager as the lead coordinator.

✓ Funding Application Lodgement

- Submission of funding requests under the Drought Resilience Program and other available grants.
- Confirmation of budget allocations, council financial commitments, and in-kind contributions.
- Initial discussions with third-party consultants and potential industry partners to outline cost estimates.

✓ Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Begins

- Early conversations with landholders, tourism operators, and regional businesses to gauge interest and refine the engagement strategy.
- Destination NSW, Outback NSW Tourism, and visitor centre discussions initiated for future collaboration.

April 2025 – Project Planning & Kick-Off Meeting Preparation

✓ Drafting of Project Governance & Planning Documentation

- Development of draft governance framework, initial project scope, and timeline.
- Confirmation of key personnel from each shire for the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- Preliminary mapping of potential tourism experiences, signage locations, and infrastructure needs.

✓ Preparation for Initial Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting

- Agenda developed for the early April kick-off meeting.
- Discussion points include:
 - Roles & responsibilities of each council
 - Initial branding concepts & marketing positioning
 - Stakeholder engagement plans & landholder outreach strategies
 - Website & digital asset development scope

Implementation Roadmap

✓ Early-Stage Marketing & Communications Planning

- Drafting of introductory project messaging for councils, landholders, and key stakeholders.
- Creation of press releases & early social media placeholders for future digital engagement.
- Initial visual branding concepts & potential logo design drafts.

✓ Confirmation of Early Partnerships & Consultant Engagements

- Preliminary conversations with website developers, tourism branding specialists, and agritourism consultants.
- Sourcing of quotes and procurement pathways for project materials and assets.

Phase 1: Project Initiation & Planning (April – May 2025)

Key Focus: Governance, stakeholder engagement, branding, and foundational planning.

April 2025 – Project Kickoff & Strategic Framework Development

✓ Initial Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting (Led by Warren Shire Council)

- General Managers & Mayors from **Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires** formally endorse governance and project structure.
- Assignment of key personnel from each shire to the PSC.
- Agreement on roles, responsibilities, and communication structures.

✓ Governance & Financial Framework Finalised

- Approval of project structure and council commitments.
- Confirmation of funding allocations and procurement guidelines.
- Identification of external expertise required (marketing, signage, digital development, agritourism consultants).

✓ Branding & Positioning Workshop

- Stakeholder discussion on final brand identity, key messages, and positioning strategy.
- Approval of Country Heartline branding, logos, and marketing direction.
- Initiation of website and social media handle registrations.

✓ Landholder & Business Engagement Strategy

- Initial outreach to farmers, landowners, and tourism operators.
- Invitations for expressions of interest in farm stays, farm gate sales, and tour participation.

Implementation Roadmap

May 2025 – Project Infrastructure & Content Development

✓ Website & Digital Development Begins

- Web developer appointed; initial wireframes and SEO strategy initiated.
- Drafting of interactive itinerary-building functionality.

✓ Signage Procurement & Permissions

- Signage designs finalised for roadways, farm gates, and wayfinding markers.
- Costings and council approvals sought for installations.

✓ Marketing Content Production

- Photography and video shoots scheduled for key attractions and landscapes.
- Initial drafts of brochures, social media content, and digital campaigns.

✓ Farm Tourism Training & Information Sessions

- Workshops for landholders interested in developing agritourism businesses.
- Case studies shared (e.g., Willie Retreat, Callubri Station).

Phase 2: Development & Pre-Launch (June – August 2025)

Key Focus: Marketing rollout, infrastructure installation, and business engagement.

June, July, August 2025 – Finalisation of Key Assets & Pre-Marketing Begins

✓ Website Development Continues & Content Integration

- Soft launch with initial itinerary pages, farm stay directory, and booking links.
- Refinement based on usability feedback.

✓ Social Media Pre-Campaign Begins

- Instagram, Facebook, YouTube & TikTok content rollout begins.
- Engagement with influencers and regional travel bloggers.

✓ Farm Stay & Tour Registrations Finalised

- Operators confirmed for launch itineraries.
- Ongoing marketing assistance for new agritourism businesses.

✓ Signage Development Begins

- Roadway wayfinding signs, interpretative signs, and visitor information points developed.

Implementation Roadmap

August 2025 – Marketing Expansion & Industry Partnerships

✓ Destination NSW & Regional Tourism Partnerships Secured

- Inclusion in NSW road trip guides and state-level marketing campaigns.
- Travel writer familiarisation trips coordinated.

✓ Printed Brochures & Visitor Maps Finalised

- Supplied to visitor centres, accommodation providers, and service stations.

✓ Local Business & Council Alignment

- Businesses briefed on tourism expectations & opportunities for engagement.

August, September, and October 2025 – Soft Launch & Pre-Tourism Activation

✓ Industry Testing & Site Visits for Key Attractions

- Final quality checks and familiarisation visits for tourism operators.
- Media previews and trial runs of farm tours and overnight stays.

✓ Website Testing & Content Integration

- Soft launch with initial itinerary pages, farm stay directory, and booking links.
- Refinement based on usability feedback.

✓ Paid Digital Marketing Begins

- Google Ads, targeted social media promotions.
- Promotion in Australian travel and lifestyle media.

✓ Social Media Pre-Campaign Increases

- Instagram, Facebook, YouTube & TikTok content rollout intensifies.
- Increased Engagement with influencers and regional travel bloggers.

✓ Signage Installation Begins

- Roadway wayfinding signs, interpretative signs, and visitor information points installed.

✓ Printed Brochures & Visitor Maps Delivered

- Supplied to visitor centres, accommodation providers, and service stations.

Implementation Roadmap

Phase 3: Official Launch & Visitor Engagement (End October – November 2025)

Key Focus: Full activation, media coverage, monitoring, and evaluation.

November 2025 – Official Launch Month

✓ Formal Launch Event

- High-profile launch in one of the key towns (Nyngan, Coonamble, Warren, or Macquarie Marshes).
- Media coverage, influencer collaborations, and tourism body presence.

✓ Promotional Campaigns

- Television & radio promotions targeting regional NSW and Sydney markets.
- PR campaign featuring travel writers and key influencers.

✓ Tourism Data Collection Begins

- Visitor tracking and economic impact monitoring starts.

November 2025 – Ongoing Engagement & Adjustments

✓ Stakeholder Check-ins

- First-month performance review with landholders, businesses, and councils.

✓ Campaign Adjustments Based on Early Data

- Refinements in digital marketing focus areas.
- Enhancements to visitor itineraries and wayfinding feedback integration.

✓ Expanded Content Production

- Video features and case studies produced for additional marketing outreach.

End November 2025 – Finalisation & Funding Acquittal

✓ Final Tourism Data & Performance Review

- Analysis of visitation numbers, regional spend, and stakeholder satisfaction.
- Economic impact assessment report prepared.

✓ Official Project Acquittal (28 November 2025)

- Final funding and budget reconciliations.
- Submission of acquittal documentation to funding bodies.

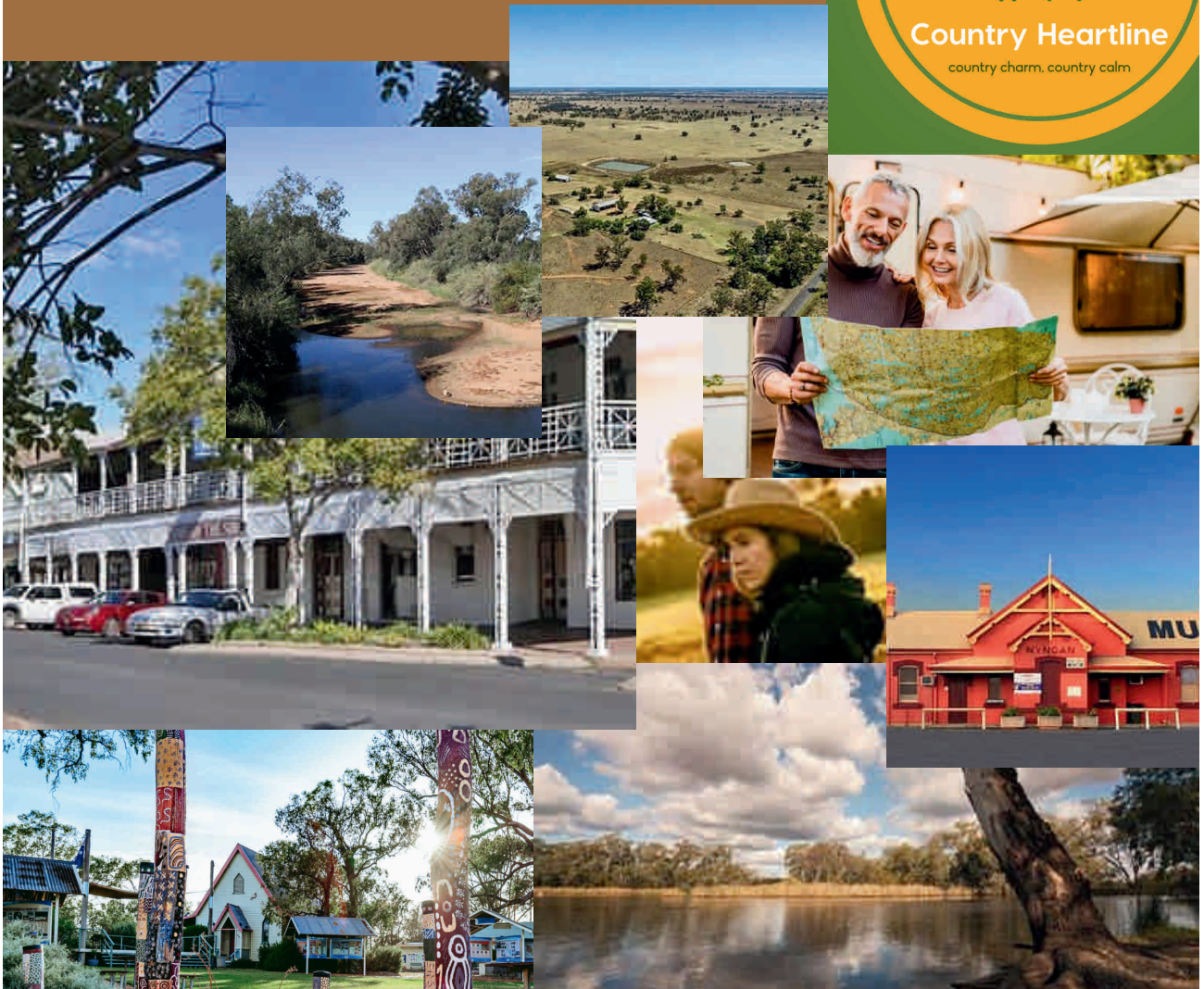
✓ Transition to Long-Term Management

- Governance committee established for continued project oversight.
- Ongoing funding and expansion discussions.

1

Marketing, Branding, and Advertising Strategy

The Country Heartline



Marketing, Branding, Advertising

The Country Heartline is not just another tourism initiative—it is a transformative new way to experience regional New South Wales.

This section details how we will strategically position, promote, and market the Country Heartline to attract, engage, and retain visitors, while ensuring it delivers economic benefits for *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*.

Key Messages & Target Markets

Positioning the Country Heartline

The Country Heartline is a slow travel experience designed for those seeking authentic, immersive rural encounters. With a focus on farm stays, farm gate produce, agritourism, eco-tourism, and cultural heritage, the Country Heartline will be positioned as:

- **A Journey to Reconnect with the Land –**
“Country Charm. Country Calm.”
- **A Slow Travel Alternative –**
A counterbalance to fast-paced tourism routes, allowing visitors to experience rural life, breathe fresh air, and engage with the people who sustain the land.
- **A Drought Resilience Initiative –**
Every stay, tour, and experience directly support farmers, landholders, and regional businesses, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Primary Target Markets

- **Caravanners & Grey Nomads**
 - Retirees and mature travellers seeking extended road trips, authentic rural stays, and relaxing, slow-paced adventures.
 - Likely to travel year-round, high-spending on experiences, food, and accommodation.
 - Marketing Approach:
 - Caravan park and RV-friendly partnerships to ensure easy stopovers.
 - Promotion through Grey Nomads Australia, CMCA (Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia), and caravan touring groups.
- **Families & Self-Drive Travellers**
 - Parents looking for hands-on educational experiences for their children, farm stays, nature-based activities, and cultural discovery.
 - Marketing Approach:
 - Partnerships with family travel bloggers, influencers, and experience-based holiday sites (Kidspot, Family Travel).

Marketing, Branding, Advertising

Primary Target Markets Continued

• International Visitors & Eco-Tourists

- Travellers from Europe, the UK, the USA, and New Zealand who have a strong interest in outback experiences, agritourism, and Indigenous heritage.
- Growing market for birdwatchers and nature photographers drawn to the Macquarie Marshes.
- Marketing Approach:
 - Inclusion in Destination NSW and Tourism Australia's international itineraries.
 - Targeted campaigns in eco-travel publications, conservation networks, and wildlife tourism operators.

• Short-Stay Weekend & Regional Visitors

- Domestic travellers from Sydney, Canberra, and Newcastle seeking a weekend getaway that offer relaxation, cultural experiences, and farm-to-table dining.
- Marketing Approach:
 - PR-driven coverage in regional travel sections of major newspapers (Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian).
 - Partnerships with boutique travel agencies and regional event calendars.

Marketing Assets & Branding Strategy

• Website Development

A visually stunning and highly functional website will be the central hub for all information about the Country Heartline.

- Key Features:
 - High-quality photography and video showcasing the landscapes, farm stays, and experiences.
 - Interactive itinerary builder where visitors can customise their trip based on interests.
 - Integrated online booking system (leveraging third-party platforms like Little Hotelier).
 - Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to rank highly on Google for key search terms like "farm stay NSW" and "Macquarie Marshes tourism."
- Development Timeline:
 - Phase 1 (3 months pre-launch): Website wireframe, branding assets, SEO setup.
 - Phase 2 (1 month pre-launch): Full content integration, mobile optimisation, testing.
 - Phase 3 (Launch & Beyond): Continuous updates, blog content, and video storytelling.

Country Charm
COUNTRY CALM

Marketing, Branding, Advertising

Brochures and Printed Materials

- **Design & Distribution Strategy:**
 - Printed guides for visitor information centres, tourism expos, caravan parks, and key accommodation venues.
 - Inclusion in Destination NSW official guides and regional maps.
 - Digital versions available for download on the website.

Signage & Wayfinding Strategy

To establish the Country Heartline as a recognised tourism trail, we need a consistent and cohesive signage strategy that improves navigation and enhances branding.

- **Types of Signage:**
 - Entry & Welcome Signs – Placed at key entry points into Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires.
 - Directional Signs – Installed on highways and rural roads guiding visitors to farm stays, attractions and key locations.
 - Interpretative & Educational Signage – Located at Macquarie Marshes, historic sites, and key experience hubs.
- **Procurement & Budgeting:**
 - Consult with signwriters early to ensure alignment with branding.
 - Secure council approvals for installation and liaise with Destination NSW for co-funded signage grants.

Social Media & Digital Strategy

- **Content Strategy & Platforms:**
 - Instagram & Facebook – Visual storytelling, video highlights of farm stays, visitor experiences, and behind-the-scenes glimpses into rural life.
 - YouTube & TikTok – Short-form videos featuring farmers, visitors, and immersive experiences.
 - Email Marketing – Monthly newsletters with new itinerary ideas, seasonal travel tips, and special offers.
- **Campaigns & Influencer Engagement:**
 - Influencer Partnerships – Collaborate with travel bloggers, eco-tourists, and family adventure influencers to visit and promote the trail.
- **Seasonal Campaigns:**
 - Winter in the Outback – Featuring campfires, crisp country air, and cozy farm stays.
 - Spring Harvest Trail – Promoting farm gate produce, shearing season, and local markets.

Marketing, Branding, Advertising

Leveraging Partnerships

Key Partners & Collaborative Marketing Efforts

- **Destination NSW & Destination Country and Outback NSW**
 - Inclusion in official marketing campaigns, NSW road trip guides, and international travel expos.
- **Travel Media & Journalists**
 - Press trips for major travel publications, freelance journalists, and digital media outlets.
 - Editorial coverage in Traveller (SMH), Out & About with Kids, and Australian Geographic.
- **Tourism Bodies & Local Councils**
 - Collaboration with visitor information centres, regional tourism boards, and agritourism networks to cross-promote experiences.



Conclusion: A Comprehensive Approach to Tourism Growth

By implementing this holistic marketing, branding, and advertising strategy, the Country Heartline will establish itself as:

- ✓ A recognised and sought-after slow travel destination in NSW.
- ✓ A complementary tourism experience to the Pub Route and existing outback trails.
- ✓ A model for sustainable agritourism and regional economic development.

This is more than just a tourism initiative—it's a movement to reconnect with the land, support rural communities, and offer a deeply meaningful experience to travellers.

Next Steps:

- Finalise branding and website development.
- Begin outreach to tourism partners and influencers.
- Secure signage approvals and confirm distribution strategies.
- Launch pre-campaign teasers and social media engagement.

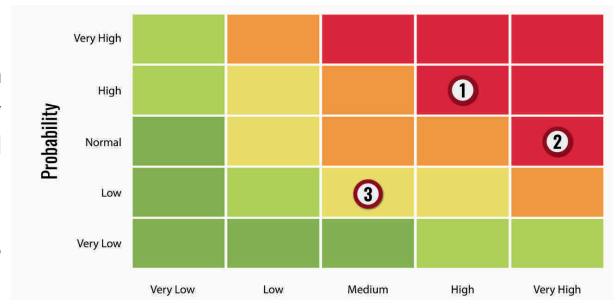
This strategy positions the Country Heartline for long-term success, economic sustainability, and tourism growth in regional NSW.

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Risk Management and Contingency Planning

Implementing the Country Heartline project necessitates a comprehensive risk management and contingency planning framework to ensure its success and sustainability.

Identifying potential risks and establishing effective mitigation strategies will provide confidence to all stakeholders, including the councils of *Bogan, Monamby, and Warren Shires*.



Council Capacity Risks

Potential Risks:

Staff Workloads and Administrative Burdens:

The additional responsibilities associated with the project may strain existing council resources, leading to potential delays or oversights.

Mitigation Strategies:

Resource Allocation Planning:

Conduct a thorough assessment of current workloads and identify areas where additional support is required.

Hiring Temporary Staff or Consultants:

Engage external experts on a contractual basis to manage specific tasks, ensuring that permanent staff are not overburdened.

Inter-Council Collaboration:

Foster a collaborative environment among the three councils to share resources, expertise, and responsibilities, thereby distributing the workload more evenly.

Risk Management and Contingency Planning

2. Landholder Resistance

Potential Risks:

- **Hesitancy to Participate in Agritourism:**
Some landholders may be reluctant to diversify into tourism due to concerns about privacy, increased liability, or lack of knowledge about the industry.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Educational Workshops and Seminars:**
Organise sessions that highlight the benefits of agritourism, featuring success stories and providing practical guidance on implementation.
- **Financial Incentives and Support:**
Offer grants, subsidies, or low-interest loans to assist landholders in developing tourism infrastructure.
- **Partnerships with Tourism Organisations:**
Connect landholders with established tourism bodies that can provide marketing support, training, and resources to ease the transition into agritourism.

3. Funding Shortfalls or Delayed Approvals

Potential Risks:

- **Insufficient Financial Resources:**
The project may face budget constraints or delays in securing necessary funding and approvals.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Diverse Funding Sources:**
Pursue multiple funding avenues, including federal and state grants, public-private partnerships, and community fundraising initiatives.

Risk Management and Contingency Planning

- **Phased Implementation Plan:**
Break the project into manageable stages, allowing for incremental progress aligned with available funding.
- **Regular Communication with Funding Bodies:**
Maintain open lines of communication with grant providers and regulatory agencies to stay informed about application statuses and to expedite approval processes.

4. External Factors

Potential Risks:

- **Drought and Weather Impacts:**
Severe weather conditions could affect road accessibility, the appeal of outdoor activities, and overall visitor experience.
- **Tourism Downturns:**
Economic downturns, pandemics, or other unforeseen events could lead to a decrease in tourist numbers.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Infrastructure Investment:**
Enhance and maintain roads and facilities to withstand extreme weather, ensuring year-round accessibility.
- **Diversified Tourism Offerings:**
Develop a range of attractions, including indoor and weather-independent activities, to appeal to visitors regardless of external conditions.
- **Flexible Business Models:**
Encourage stakeholders to adopt adaptable business practices, such as offering virtual experiences or online sales of local products, to sustain operations during downturns.
- **Insurance and Financial Planning:**
Promote the use of insurance products and financial risk management tools among farmers and business owners to safeguard against income fluctuations due to external factors.

Risk Management and Contingency Planning

5. Regulatory and Environmental Compliance

Potential Risks:

- **Delays Due to Regulatory Approvals:**
Navigating the regulatory landscape for agritourism ventures can be complex and time-consuming.
- **Environmental Concerns:**
Tourism activities may inadvertently impact local ecosystems, particularly sensitive areas like the Macquarie Marshes.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Engage Early with Regulatory Bodies:**
Initiate discussions with relevant authorities early in the planning process to understand requirements and streamline approvals.
- **Environmental Impact Assessments:**
Conduct thorough assessments to identify potential ecological impacts and develop strategies to mitigate them, ensuring sustainable tourism practices.
- **Community Consultation:**
Involve local communities and Indigenous groups in planning to align tourism activities with cultural values and environmental preservation efforts.

6. Biosecurity Risks

Potential Risks:

- **Introduction of Pests and Diseases:**
Increased movement of people may elevate the risk of biosecurity threats to local agriculture.

Risk Management and Contingency Planning

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Implement Strict Biosecurity Protocols:**
Establish clear guidelines for visitors to prevent the introduction and spread of pests and diseases.
- **Education and Awareness Campaigns:**
Inform visitors about the importance of biosecurity and their role in protecting the local environment.
- **Collaboration with Biosecurity Agencies:**
Work closely with governmental biosecurity departments to monitor risks and respond promptly to any incidents.

CONCLUSION

By proactively identifying these potential risks and implementing robust mitigation strategies, the Country Heartline project can enhance its resilience and ensure a sustainable, enriching experience for both visitors and the local communities.



Performance Measurement and Project Review

Implementing the Country Heartline initiative requires a robust framework for performance measurement and ongoing project management to ensure its success and sustainability. This section outlines the key metrics for evaluating the project's impact and details the structures necessary for its continuous evolution.

1. Performance Measurement

To gauge the effectiveness of the Country Heartline, we will employ a multifaceted approach focusing on quantitative and qualitative metrics:

- **Visitor Numbers and Tourism Data:**
Utilise data from Tourism Research Australia and local visitor information centres to monitor the influx of tourists to the region. This includes tracking overnight stays, day visits, and occupancy rates at participating farm stays and accommodations.
- **Economic Impact Assessment:**
Analyse regional spending patterns to determine the financial benefits to local businesses. Metrics will encompass average visitor expenditure, length of stay, and the multiplier effect on the local economy. Regular economic impact studies will be conducted to quantify these benefits.
- **Revenue Growth for Farms and Local Enterprises:**
Monitor the income trajectories of participating farms and businesses by comparing pre- and post-involvement financial data. This will highlight the direct economic advantages of the initiative.
- **Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys:**
Implement regular feedback mechanisms for landholders, council members, and local business owners to assess satisfaction levels, identify challenges, and gather suggestions for improvement.
- **Visitor Experience Feedback:**
Collect and analyse visitor reviews and feedback through surveys, social media platforms, and travel forums to gauge the quality of experiences offered and identify areas for enhancement.
- **Environmental and Cultural Impact Monitoring:**
Evaluate the initiative's effects on local ecosystems, particularly sensitive areas like the Macquarie Marshes, and cultural heritage sites to ensure sustainable and respectful tourism practices.

Performance Measurement and Project Review

2. Project Review and Ongoing Management

Sustaining the momentum of the Country Heartline post-launch necessitates a structured approach:

- **Establishment of a Governance Committee:**
Form a dedicated body comprising representatives from *Bogan, Coonamble, and Warren Shires*, local tourism boards, landholder associations, and Indigenous community leaders. This committee will oversee strategic direction, policy formulation, and stakeholder coordination.
- **Appointment of a Project Coordinator:**
Designate a full-time coordinator responsible for day-to-day operations, marketing efforts, partnership management, and serving as the primary liaison among stakeholders.
- **Regular Performance Reviews:**
Conduct biannual evaluations of the initiative's progress using the aforementioned performance metrics. These reviews will inform necessary adjustments to strategies and operations.
- **Adaptive Management Strategies:**
Stay attuned to industry trends, environmental changes, and stakeholder feedback to adapt offerings and approaches proactively. This includes diversifying tourism products, enhancing marketing campaigns, and implementing sustainable practices.
- **Continuous Stakeholder Engagement:**
Maintain open communication channels with all participants to foster collaboration, address concerns promptly, and ensure the initiative aligns with community values and expectations.
- **Financial Sustainability Planning:**
Explore diverse funding avenues such as grants, partnerships, and revenue-sharing models to ensure the long-term financial viability of the Country Heartline.

Implementing this comprehensive performance measurement and management framework the Country Heartline will not only achieve its initial objectives but also adapt and thrive, delivering sustained economic, cultural, and environmental benefits to the region.



Drought Resilience Plan Project

ANNEXURE 1

Proposed Initial Meeting Agenda

Agenda: Multi-Council Project Kick-Off Meeting**Three Rivers and Macquarie Marshes Tourism & Drought Resilience Project****Date:** [Insert Date]**Time:** 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM**Location:** [Insert Venue]**Chair:** Economic Development and Visitation Manager, Warren Shire Council

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM | Arrival & Registration

- Attendees sign in and collect project materials.
- Light refreshments provided.

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM | Welcome & Opening Remarks**Chair:** Economic Development and Visitation Manager, Warren Shire Council

- Acknowledgement of Country.
- Introduction of project committee members.
- Overview of the day's agenda and objectives.

9:30 AM – 10:15 AM | Project Overview & Vision**Presenter:** Chair & Lead Representatives from Partner Councils

- Why the project exists and its significance.
- Expected outcomes and long-term benefits.
- Introduction to the tourism circuit and farm stay concept.

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Project Governance & Structure**Presenter:** Project Steering Committee Representative

- Role of the Project Steering Committee.
- Governance framework and decision-making process.
- Explanation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM | Morning Tea Break

- Refreshments provided.

11:00 AM – 11:45 AM | Defining the Project Scope & Objectives

Facilitator: Chair

- Explanation of the Project Charter.
- Defining SMART goals for tourism circuit, agritourism, and marketing.
- Understanding success indicators and key performance metrics.

11:45 AM – 12:30 PM | Project Planning & Task Allocation

Facilitator: Chair

- Breaking down the project into workstreams:
 - o Branding & Marketing
 - o Tourism Circuit Development
 - o Farm Stay Program
 - o Stakeholder Engagement
- Assigning responsibilities and initial action steps.

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM | Catered Lunch & Networking

- Opportunity to discuss ideas and build connections.

1:00 PM – 1:45PM | Branding, Marketing & Communications

Presenter: Marketing & Communications Lead

- Project branding discussion: Name, logo, and messaging.
- Website and social media strategy.
- Print and digital marketing plans.

1:45 PM – 2:45 PM | Tourism Circuit & Infrastructure Planning

Presenter: Infrastructure & Planning Lead

- Identifying key destinations and itineraries.
- Infrastructure needs and wayfinding signage.
- Mapping travel routes and accessibility improvements.

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM | Afternoon Tea Break

- Refreshments provided.

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM | Farm Stay & Agritourism Development

Presenter: Agritourism & Business Support Lead

- Engaging farmers and regional businesses.
- Pilot program selection process.
- Business support and farm stay toolkit.

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM | Risk Management & Problem-Solving

Facilitator: Chair

- Identifying risks and mitigation strategies.
- Open discussion: Challenges and potential roadblocks.
- Contingency planning.

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM | Next Steps & Closing Remarks

Chair: Economic Development and Visitation Manager, Warren Shire Council

- Summary of the day's key takeaways.
 - Review of assigned tasks and responsibilities.
 - Next meeting date and communication channels.
 - Closing remarks and appreciation for attendees.
-

Drought Resilience Plan Project

ANNEXURE 2

Marketing & Relevance Analysis

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THE COUNTRY HEARTLINE – BRANDING ANALYSIS

Strengths of the Name ‘Country Heartline’

1. Emotional Resonance & Warmth

The Country Heartline evokes a strong emotional connection, suggesting heritage, authenticity, and the the beating heart of rural life.

It conveys genuine country charm, aligning well with the rural tourism experience.

The word ‘Heart’ subtly reinforces themes of community, resilience, and local pride, making it appealing for both tourists and locals.

2. Broad Appeal

Country Heartline is not limiting in its meaning—it can cover agritourism, nature, history, and culture, making it adaptable for various attractions along the route. The name doesn’t box the route into one experience (e.g., wine, history, or adventure), allowing for flexibility in marketing and future expansion.

3. Marketability & Storytelling Potential

The ‘Heartline’ concept provides a strong foundation for storytelling. You can craft a compelling narrative around people, land, and experiences—‘Follow the Country Heartline and discover the soul of the land.’

Visually, the name lends itself to strong branding elements—a heart-shaped route, warm rustic colour palettes, and natural imagery.

4. Brand Consistency with Other Tourism Trends

Aligns well with experience-driven travel where visitors want to ‘connect’ rather than just ‘see’.

The name fits neatly within existing regional tourism frameworks without competing with known routes like The Pub Route.

Potential Weaknesses & Considerations

1. Lack of Immediate Clarity

While evocative, *Country Heartline* doesn’t immediately signal ‘tourism route’ in the way that ‘The Great Alpine Way’ or ‘The Pub Route’ does.

A tagline may be needed for clarity. Something like:

Country Heartline: The Soul of the Bush

Follow the Country Heartline—Country Charm, Country Calm

Country Heartline: Discover Rural Beauty

2. Does it Differentiate Enough?

While appealing, 'Heartline' could be perceived as generic if not strongly positioned in the market. To ensure differentiation, marketing should reinforce the unique character of the region - what makes it distinct from other country routes?

3. Possible Confusion with Health or Charity Themes

'Heartline' can sometimes be associated with medical services, support organisations, or crisis hotlines.

This can be mitigated through clear branding—logos, visual identity, and messaging must make it unmistakably a tourism route.

Verdict from a Marketing & Branding Perception

Overall Rating: 8.5/10

- *Country Heartline* has strong emotional appeal, marketability, and storytelling potential.
- To enhance its impact, a strong tagline, visual branding, and differentiated messaging will be crucial.
- Consider refining the narrative to highlight authentic rural charm and adventure so it doesn't get lost among other 'country' tourism brands.

Refining the Name and Tagline for Maximum Impact

The initial name—*Country Heartline*—has strong emotional appeal and warmth, but it might lack immediate clarity as a tourism route.

The tagline—*Country Charm, Country Calm*—is beautiful, evocative, and captures the essence of the experience, but we may want to ensure it also communicates movement, adventure, or exploration, depending on what best represents the route.

Option 1: Keep 'Country Heartline' but Strengthen the Tagline

Country Heartline could be enhanced with a more directional tagline to make the tourism angle clearer.

Possible Tagline Enhancements:

1. Country Heartline – Follow the Trail of Country Charm & Calm
2. Country Heartline – Discover the Heart of the Outback
3. Country Heartline – Where Country Life Runs Deep
4. Country Heartline – Experience the Soul of the Bush
5. Country Heartline – The Beating Heart of Rural Australia

These keep the emotional warmth but add a more tourism-focused call to action.

Option 2: Adjust the Name for Instant Clarity

If *Country Heartline* is not quite clear enough, consider alternatives that retain warmth but clearly signal a tourism route.

Alternative Name Ideas:

1. The Country Way – Simple, strong, and clearly a route. (*The Country Way – Country Charm, Country Calm*)
2. Heart of the Outback Trail – Evokes deep connection to rural landscapes.
3. The Country Compass – Feels like a journey, adventure, and discovery.
4. The Heartland Trail – Ties into heartland farming, heritage, and country life.
5. The Country Charm Trail – Directly incorporates your tagline for clarity.
6. The Quiet Country Trail – Evokes peaceful, authentic country experiences.
7. The Backroads & Bush Trail – Appeals to road-trippers and adventurers.
8. The Country Soul Trail – Reinforces depth, heritage, and authenticity.

Option 3: A Hybrid Approach

If the Heartline concept is favoured, but more clarity is required, it could be tweaked slightly:

1. Country Heartline Trail – Simple, adding 'Trail' for instant clarity.
2. The Heartline Way – Sounds like a legendary scenic route.
3. Country Heartline Journey – Suggests a deeper experience-driven trip.
4. The Country Heartline Drive – Signals a road trip-style adventure.

Final Thoughts & Next Steps

- Keeping the original name, refining the tagline might be the best approach.
- For instant tourism clarity, a small tweak to the name (e.g., *The Country Heartline Trail* or *The Heartland Trail*) could be the solution.
- A fresh take, options like *The Country Way* or *The Country Charm Trail* could work beautifully.

Contact Information



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10.25 COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**File Number: G-9-1****Author: Jenni Maundrell-Executive Manager Corporate Governance****Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager****Annexures: Nil****PURPOSE**

To inform councillors of activities relating to the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community engagement is underway for the Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035. Councillors are invited to participate in the activities, which will take place in Quambone, Coonamble and Gulargambone as well as online.

BACKGROUND

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is made under section 402 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The CSP is the highest-level plan that a council will prepare and the purpose of the CSP is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, and to plan strategies for achieving these goals in partnership with key stakeholders.

Each new term of Council is required to develop and endorse a CSP that covers a period of at least 10 years. Council may develop an entirely new CSP, or make amendments to the existing CSP, or the Council may decide the existing CSP is fit for purpose and roll it forward.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Community Strategic Plan is one of the key documents within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

(b) Financial Considerations

Council has budgeted for the development of the Community Strategic Plan. There are no new financial considerations arising from this report.

COMMENTARY

After the February 2025 Council meeting, councillors received information on the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. Further to that, this report is to inform councillors of the stakeholder engagement that will be conducted over the next month that will inform the draft CSP.

Community pop-up sessions are planned so that residents have an opportunity in their own town to speak directly about their community goals. All councillors are invited to attend any or all sessions. The community sessions will be held at:

- Quambone, Tuesday 18 March 2025, 9:30-11:30am outside the General Store

- Coonamble, Wednesday 19 March 2025, 9:30-11:30 outside the Sons of the Soil Hotel
- Gulargambone, Thursday 20 March 2025, 9:30-11:30am outside 2828 Café

Additionally, an evening community meeting will be held at the Coonamble Bowling Club on Wednesday 19 March 2025 from 5:30-7:30pm. Interested parties will have the opportunity to workshop community goals and how various stakeholders can be involved in delivering outcomes for the community.

The community may also have input in writing through the Have Your Say function on Council's website. A device will be available at the pop-up sessions and evening meeting to put ideas straight into the online feedback.

All options for community involvement are being advertised through various media outlets from the week commencing 3 March 2025.

Additionally, late last year a community survey was conducted on Council's behalf by Taverner Research. This survey will also be used to inform the next CSP. A draft report of the raw data has been received and Councillors will receive a presentation from Taverner Research at a workshop on Monday 24 March that will give a good understanding of the context of the survey and its results.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The CSP is a major component of Council governance and informs all policies, strategies and decisions.

(b) Legal Implications

Council is required under the *Local Government Act 1993* to prepare and endorse a community strategic plan.

(c) Social Implications

The CSP is a community plan – while Council is the custodian of the strategy, it belongs to the entire community. All stakeholders within the community have the opportunity to have input to the strategy and to take responsibility for the delivery of actions that are relevant to them or their organisation.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report, however the CSP must address environmental concerns for the local government area.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

There are no economic/asset management implications arising from this report, however the CSP will in turn inform the delivery program and operational plan that deal with these matters.

(f) Risk Implications

Should Council not develop and endorse a CSP, it would be in breach of legislated requirements. Council's adopted risk appetite for non-compliance with legislation is 'Averse'.

CONCLUSION

The draft CSP is due to be presented to Council at the April meeting for endorsement to be placed on public exhibition.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council notes**

- 1. The information contained in the Community Strategic Plan Update report.**
- 2. That community engagement sessions in relation to the Community Strategic Plan will be held at:**
 - Quambone, Tuesday 18 March 2025, 9:30-11:30am**
 - Coonamble, Wednesday 19 March 2025, 9:30-11:30am**
 - Coonamble Bowling Club, Wednesday 19 March 2025, 5:30-7:30pm**
 - Gulargambone, Thursday 20 March 2025, 9:30-11:30am**
- 3. That Councillors will receive a presentation on the community survey conducted by Taverner Research.**

10.26 RATES AND CHARGES COLLECTIONS - FEBRUARY 2025

File Number: Rates - General - R4
Author: Kylie Fletcher, Revenue Officer
Authoriser: Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services
Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to be updated with the most recent information pertaining to its rates and charges collections – as applicable to the month of February 2025.

BACKGROUND

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The annual rate charges are set out within Council’s 2024 / 25 Operational Plan.

(b) Financial Considerations

The annual rate charges are set out within Council’s 2024 / 25 Operational Plan.

	28 February 2025	29 February 2024
Rates and Charges	\$3,723,711.91	\$3,266,647.71
Water Consumption	\$166,342.99	\$475,514.42
Total	\$3,890,054.90	\$3,742,162.13

COMMENTARY

Rates and Charges

	28 February 2025	29 February 2024
Rates and charges in arrears as at 30 June 2024	\$1,431,587.79	\$1,173,804.02
Rates/charges levied & adjustments for 2024/25	\$8,605,546.21	\$8,008,175.31
Pension Concession	-\$101,107.19	-\$103,781.25
Amounts collected as at 29 February 2025	-\$6,212,314.90	-\$5,811,550.37
Total Rates and Charges to be Collected	\$3,723,711.91	\$3,266,647.71

The amount levied for rates and charges for 2024 / 25 includes the current year’s annual rates and charges and any interest added since the date the rates notices were issued. The amount received as of 28 February 2025 includes receipts for both arrears and the current year’s amounts outstanding.

It should be noted that the rates and charges 2024 / 25 levied amount is reduced by the pensioner concession of \$101,107.19; reducing the amount of income derived

from these rates and charges. Of this concession, Council’s contribution is 45%, which represents an amount of \$48,198.24.

The rates and charges as of 28 February 2025 represent 37.10% of the total annual rates and charges levied and outstanding (compared with 35.58% on 29 February 2024).

Water Consumption Charges

	28 February 2025	29 February 2024
Water Consumption Charges and arrears as at 30 June 2024	\$621,860.35	\$393,023.85
Water Consumption charges & adjustments 2024 / 25 year to date	\$68,117.02	\$780,244.12
Amounts collected as at 28 February 2025	-\$446,511.38	-\$697,753.55
Total Water Consumption Charges to be Collected	\$166,342.99	\$475,514.42

The water consumption charges as of 28 February 2025 represents 27.14% of the total water consumption charges outstanding (compared to 40.53% on 29 February 2024). Council will note the main variation between the two financial years is the difference in the water consumption charges levied, i.e. for this financial year being the 2024/25 financial year, Council is yet to generate user pays water accounts.

For Council’s information at the time of writing this report, the previously reported technical issue that impacted Council’s ability to levy user pays water and sewer accounts has been isolated and control measures have been implemented. Further a corrective course of action has been identified and Council staff are in the process of reviewing the impacted accounts and taking the appropriate corrective action with these accounts.

Debt Recovery Agency

During February 2025 Council staff have continued to liaise with Council’s debt recovery agency with a view to continuing Council’s process outlined within Council adopted Debt recovery policy.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Council staff comply with the directions provided by Council’s suite of policies that govern this function of Council.

(b) Legal Implications

The collection of rates and water charges does impact on the community. For this reason, Council is always willing to negotiate payment terms with outstanding debtors. Debtors are afforded several opportunities to contact Council regarding these matters.

(c) Social Implications

The collection of rates and water charges does impact on the community. For this reason, Council is always willing to negotiate payment terms with

outstanding debtors. Debtors are afforded several opportunities to contact Council regarding these matters.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report. However, it needs to be acknowledged that the additional increase in the cost of living could have an impact on Council's ability to collect its rates and charges.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

If Council's rates and charges collection fall behind, it will have an impact on Council's ongoing ability to meet its operational costs and making adequate funding available for necessary asset maintenance and renewal projects.

(f) Risk Implications

As was stated above, the increase in living expenses, has impacted on Council's ability to collect its rates and charges as demonstrated by the increase in Council rates, annual charges, interest, and extra charges outstanding percentage. Strategies have been put in place to mitigate the risk of the further deterioration of this ratio. Council has been working closely with its Debt Collection agency to reduce the amount of debt outstanding from rates and water charges.

CONCLUSION


The rates and charges as of 28 February 2025 represent 37.10% of the total annual rates and charges levied and outstanding from previous years by Council (compared with 35.58% on 29 February 2024).

The water consumption charges as of 28 February 2025 represent 27.14% of the total water consumption charges outstanding from previous years (compared to 40.53% on 29 February 2024).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the information provided in the rates and charges collections report.

10.27 STATUS OF INVESTMENTS - FEBRUARY 2025

File Number: Investments General - I5
Author: Imogen Pawley-Finance Assistant
Authoriser: Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services
Annexures: 1. Imperium report February [↓](#) 

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is for Councillors to note the status of its investment portfolio.

BACKGROUND

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

L1.4.10 Maintain long term financial viability.

(b) Financial Considerations

Investment levels and interest rates are currently on par with the revised estimated calculations.

COMMENTARY

The format of the report has been configured to demonstrate Council’s compliance with the relevant legislative requirements along with Council’s own adopted Investment Policy.

The attached Investment Report was calculated on 25 February 2025 after all maturing dates for investments had passed.

The total Capital Value of Investments as of 25 February is \$20,250,000. This is broken down with \$18,250,000 invested in term deposits as shown in the attached report, with \$2,000,000 in at call savings accounts.

The main areas of expenditure during the month of February can be seen in the table below:

Area	February
Water & Sewer –	\$156,837
Workers Compensation –	\$135,161
Transport –	\$203,260
Special Projects –	
River Road	\$42,097
Sportsgrounds Amenities	\$432,062
Urban Services –	\$65,312

Of these payments \$563,866 will be either funded through Grants or reimbursed to Council.

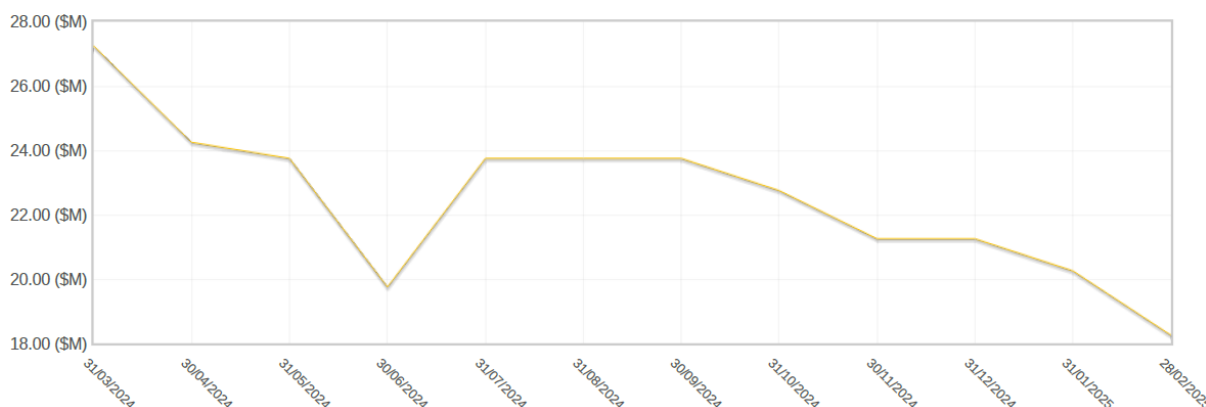
Council has recently acquitted the following grants of which we are expecting the payment to be received in the near future. Once these funds have been received Council anticipates reinvesting in accordance with our Investment Policy.

Dept of Infrastructure and Regional Development	LRCI – Phase 1	\$81,913
Dept of Infrastructure and Regional Development	LRCI – Phase 2	\$39,465
Dept of Infrastructure and Regional Development	LRCI – Phase 3	\$929,818
Department of Climate Change and Energy	SSWP403 – Milestone 2	\$101,250
Dept Of Regional NSW	Reconnecting RNSW – Instalment 2	\$12,664
Dept Of Regional NSW	Caravan Park Redevelopment	\$350,919
Dept Of Primary Industries and Regional Development	Infrastructure Betterment Fund	\$227,284
Dept of Infrastructure and Regional Development	Coonamble Sports Ground	\$135,000
NSW Office of Sport	All Welcome to Play – Female Amenities	\$429,528
Transport for NSW	Hwy Rehab works	\$4,074,498

Council is continuing to work towards recovering all grant receivable outstanding.

Historical Portfolio Balances as at 25/02/2025

31/03/2024	30/04/2024	31/05/2024	30/06/2024	31/07/2024	31/08/2024	30/09/2024	31/10/2024	30/11/2024	31/12/2024	31/01/2025	28/02/2025
27.25	24.25	23.75	19.75	23.75	23.75	23.75	22.75	21.25	21.25	20.25	18.25



N.B please note the above graph does not include the \$2,000,000 currently invested in the on-call account as mentioned previously in this report.

AVAILABLE WORKING FUNDS

Restricted funds are set aside by Council and external parties for a particular purpose to meet future expenses. Unrestricted funds are available to be used to cover all other expenses of Council.

As per the recently completed 2023/2024 Annual Financial Statement the balance of unrestricted cash has been calculated at \$450,000.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Monthly financial reporting ensures transparency of financial reporting to enable Councillors to make financially sustainable and accountable decisions.

(b) Legal Implications

As the authoriser of the report, Council's responsible accounting officer has certified that all investments continue to be made in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993, the Regulations* and Council's Investment Policy.

(c) Social Implications

Council funds are used to provide services and infrastructure to the community, and, as a result, well managed funds maximise the level of financial resources available to support the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Sound economic management includes maximising Council's return on investment, and this is achieved by closely monitoring investments in line with Council's Investment Policy.

(f) Risk Implications

Sound economic management includes maximising Council's return on investment, and this is achieved by closely monitoring all investments in line with Council's Investment Policy.

CONCLUSION

Funds have been appropriately restricted to ensure all areas of Council can continue to operate in accordance with both the annual Operational Plan and the Long-Term Financial Plan. Further, all investments are continued to be made in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993, the Regulations* and Council's Investment Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the list of investments from 1 February 2025 to 26 February 2025 and that these investments comply with section 625(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and Council's Investment Policy.



Investment Report

01/02/2025 to 25/02/2025

Portfolio Valuation as at 25/02/2025

Issuer	Rating	Type	Allocation	Interest Paid	Purchase Date	Maturity Date	Rate (%)	Capital Value (\$)	Face Value (\$)	Accrued (\$)	Accrued MTD (\$)
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	14/08/2024	14/03/2025	5.0000	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	26,849.32	3,424.66
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	28/08/2024	28/03/2025	5.0000	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	49,863.01	6,849.32
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	06/11/2024	07/04/2025	5.0300	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	15,434.52	3,445.21
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	11/09/2024	11/04/2025	5.0000	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00	34,520.55	5,136.99
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	04/11/2024	05/05/2025	4.8700	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	30,420.82	6,671.23
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	06/02/2025	15/05/2025	4.8900	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,679.45	2,679.45
BOQ	A-2	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	03/02/2025	03/06/2025	4.7400	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	5,973.70	5,973.70
Suncorp Bank	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	12/12/2024	12/06/2025	5.0500	500,000.00	500,000.00	5,257.53	1,729.45
Suncorp Bank	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	09/12/2024	09/07/2025	5.0800	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	10,995.07	3,479.45
BOQ	A-2	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	02/12/2024	02/09/2025	5.0500	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	11,898.63	3,458.90
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	24/10/2024	24/10/2025	5.1000	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	17,465.75	3,493.15
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	28/10/2024	28/10/2025	5.0700	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	16,807.40	3,472.60
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	04/11/2024	04/11/2025	5.0900	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	15,897.53	3,486.30
Unity Bank	Unrated	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	18/11/2024	18/11/2025	5.0000	250,000.00	250,000.00	3,424.66	856.16
IMB Bank	BBB+	FRTD	GENERAL	Quarterly	06/08/2024	06/08/2026	4.7600	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,608.22	2,608.22
IMB Bank	BBB+	FRTD	GENERAL	Quarterly	16/01/2025	17/01/2028	5.0400	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	5,661.37	3,452.05
TOTALS								18,250,000.00	18,250,000.00	255,757.53	60,216.85



Portfolio by Asset as at 25/02/2025

Asset Type: TD

Issuer	Rating	Type	Allocation	Interest Paid	Purchase Date	Maturity Date	Rate (%)	Capital Value (\$)	Face Value (\$)	Accrued (\$)	Accrued MTD (\$)
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	14/08/2024	14/03/2025	5.0000	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	26,849.32	3,424.66
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	28/08/2024	28/03/2025	5.0000	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	49,863.01	6,849.32
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	06/11/2024	07/04/2025	5.0300	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	15,434.52	3,445.21
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	11/09/2024	11/04/2025	5.0000	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00	34,520.55	5,136.99
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	04/11/2024	05/05/2025	4.8700	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	30,420.82	6,671.23
NAB	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	06/02/2025	15/05/2025	4.8900	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,679.45	2,679.45
BOQ	A-2	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	03/02/2025	03/06/2025	4.7400	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	5,973.70	5,973.70
Suncorp Bank	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	12/12/2024	12/06/2025	5.0500	500,000.00	500,000.00	5,257.53	1,729.45
Suncorp Bank	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	09/12/2024	09/07/2025	5.0800	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	10,995.07	3,479.45
BOQ	A-2	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	02/12/2024	02/09/2025	5.0500	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	11,898.63	3,458.90
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	24/10/2024	24/10/2025	5.1000	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	17,465.75	3,493.15
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	28/10/2024	28/10/2025	5.0700	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	16,807.40	3,472.60
Westpac	A-1+	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	04/11/2024	04/11/2025	5.0900	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	15,897.53	3,486.30
Unity Bank	Unrated	TD	GENERAL	At Maturity	18/11/2024	18/11/2025	5.0000	250,000.00	250,000.00	3,424.66	856.16
TD SUBTOTALS								16,250,000.00	16,250,000.00	247,487.95	54,156.58

Asset Type: FRTD





Issuer	Rating	Type	Allocation	Interest Paid	Purchase Date	Maturity Date	Rate (%)	Capital Value (\$)	Face Value (\$)	Accrued (\$)	Accrued MTD (\$)
IMB Bank	BBB+	FRTD	GENERAL	Quarterly	06/08/2024	06/08/2026	4.7600	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,608.22	2,608.22
IMB Bank	BBB+	FRTD	GENERAL	Quarterly	16/01/2025	17/01/2028	5.0400	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	5,661.37	3,452.05
FRTD SUBTOTALS								2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	8,269.59	6,060.27



Portfolio by Asset Totals as at 25/02/2025

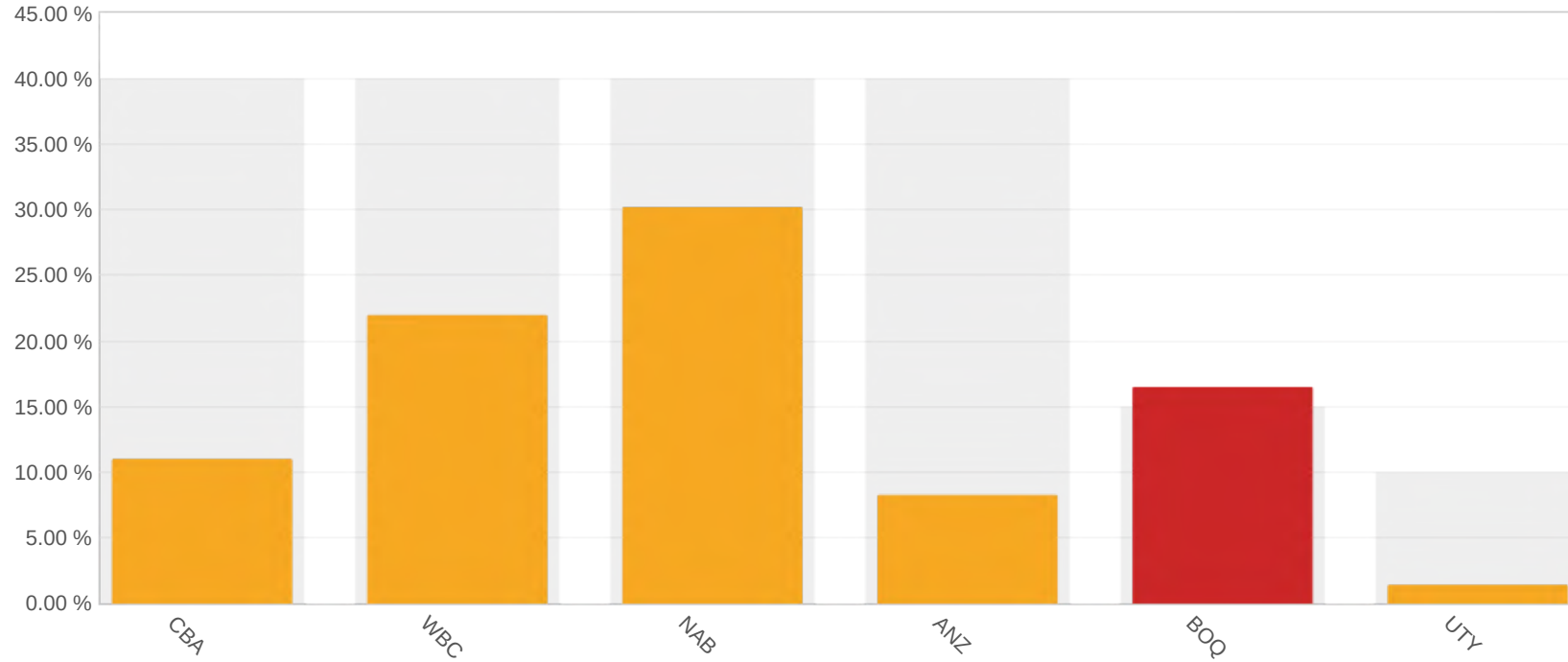
Type	Capital Value (\$)	Face Value (\$)	Accrued (\$)	Accrued MTD (\$)
TD	16,250,000.00	16,250,000.00	247,487.95	54,156.58
FRTD	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	8,269.59	6,060.27
TOTALS	18,250,000.00	18,250,000.00	255,757.53	60,216.85

Counterparty Compliance as at 25/02/2025

Short Term Investments

Compliant	Bank Group	Term	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Limit (%)	Limit (\$)	Available (\$)
✓	Commonwealth Bank	Short	A-1+	2,000,000.00	10.96	40.00	-	5,300,000.00
✓	Westpac	Short	A-1+	4,000,000.00	21.92	40.00	-	3,300,000.00
✓	NAB	Short	A-1+	5,500,000.00	30.14	40.00	-	1,800,000.00
✓	ANZ Bank	Short	A-1+	1,500,000.00	8.22	40.00	-	5,800,000.00
✗	BOQ	Short	A-2	3,000,000.00	16.44	15.00	-	-262,500.00
✓	Unity Bank	Short	Unrated	250,000.00	1.37	10.00	-	1,575,000.00
TOTALS				16,250,000.00	89.04			

Counterparty Compliance - Short Term Investments



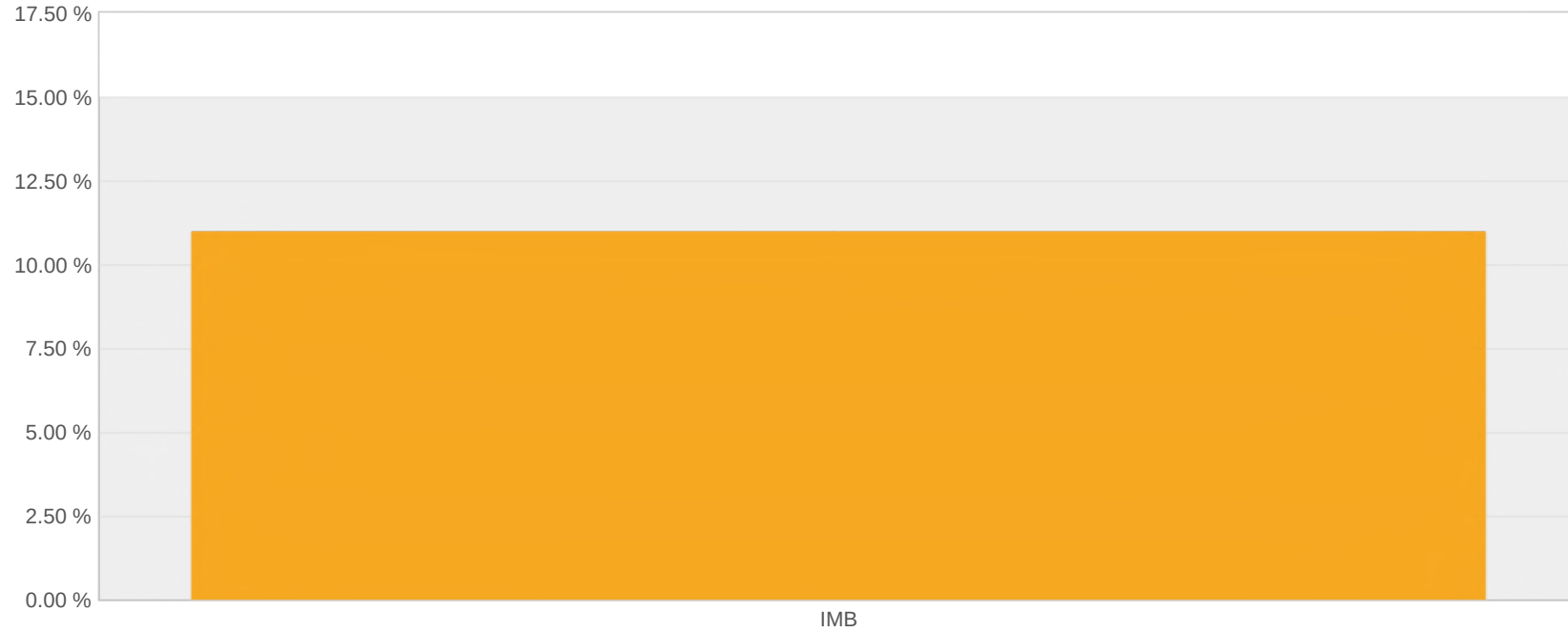


Long Term Investments

Compliant	Bank Group	Term	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Limit (%)	Limit (\$)	Available (\$)
✓	IMB Bank	Long	BBB+	2,000,000.00	10.96	15.00	-	737,500.00
TOTALS				2,000,000.00	10.96			



Counterparty Compliance - Long Term Investments

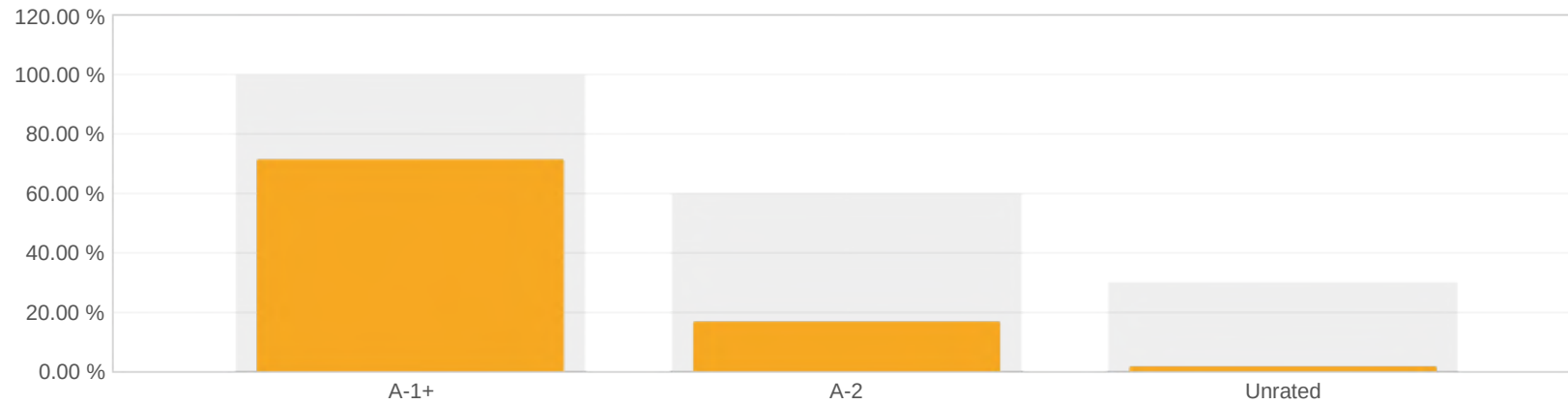


Credit Quality Compliance as at 25/02/2025

Short Term Investments

Compliant	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	A-1+	13,000,000.00	71.23	100.00	5,250,000.00
✓	A-2	3,000,000.00	16.44	60.00	7,950,000.00
✓	Unrated	250,000.00	1.37	30.00	5,225,000.00
TOTALS		16,250,000.00	89.04		

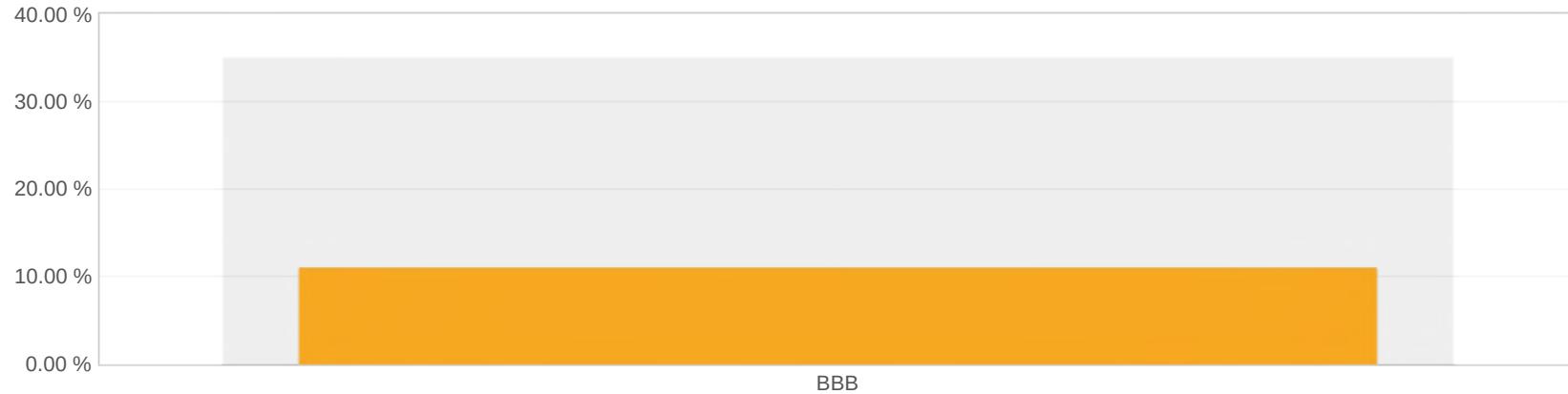
Credit Quality Compliance - Short Term Investments



Long Term Investments

Compliant	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✔	BBB	2,000,000.00	10.96	35.00	4,387,500.00
TOTALS		2,000,000.00	10.96		

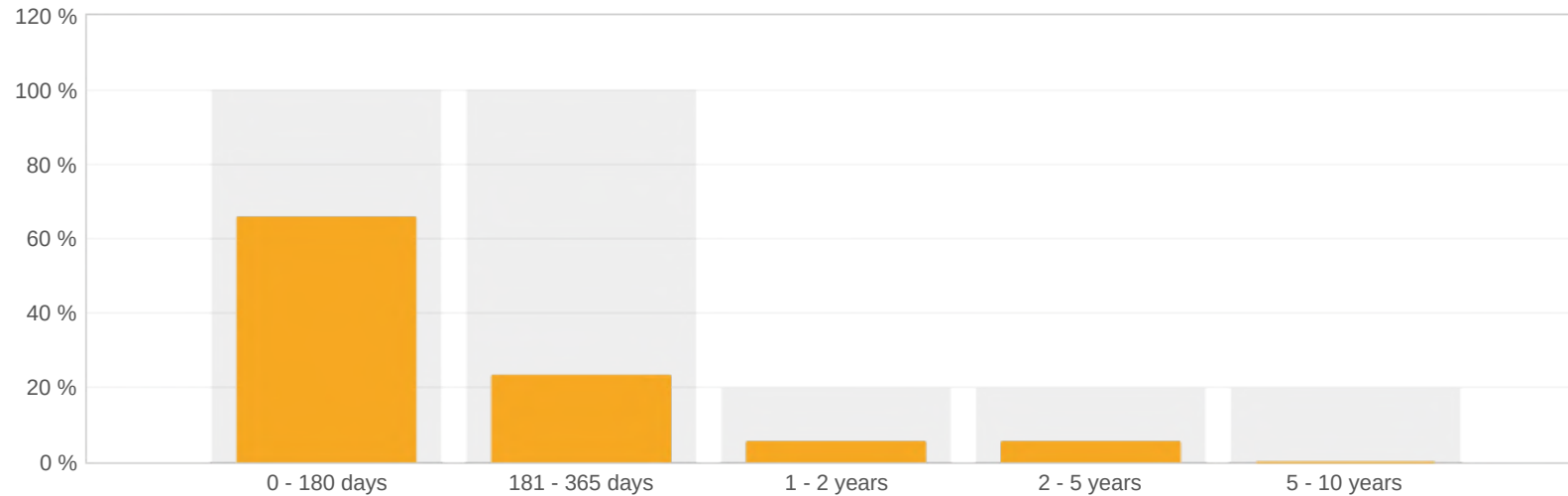
Credit Quality Compliance - Long Term Investments



Maturity Compliance as at 25/02/2025

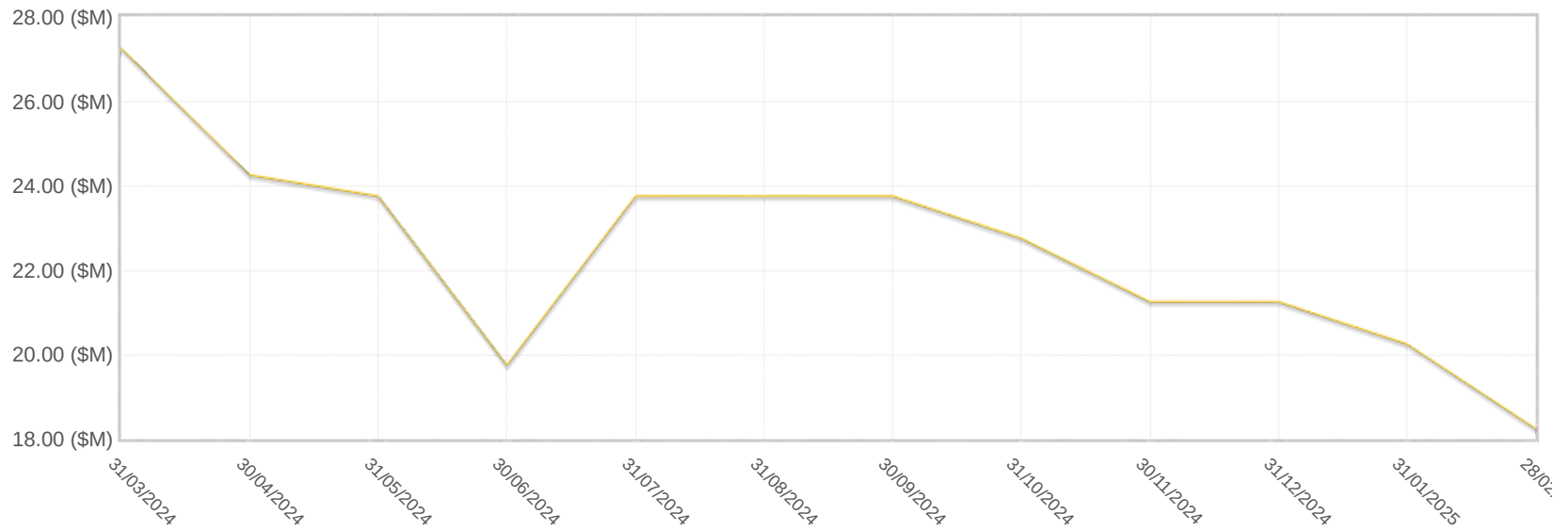
Compliant	Term	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Min Limit (%)	Max Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	0 - 180 days	12,000,000.00	65.75	0.00	100.00	6,250,000.00
✓	181 - 365 days	4,250,000.00	23.29	0.00	100.00	14,000,000.00
✓	1 - 2 years	1,000,000.00	5.48	0.00	20.00	2,650,000.00
✓	2 - 5 years	1,000,000.00	5.48	0.00	20.00	2,650,000.00
✓	5 - 10 years	-	0.00	0.00	20.00	3,650,000.00
TOTALS		18,250,000.00	100.00			

Maturity Compliance



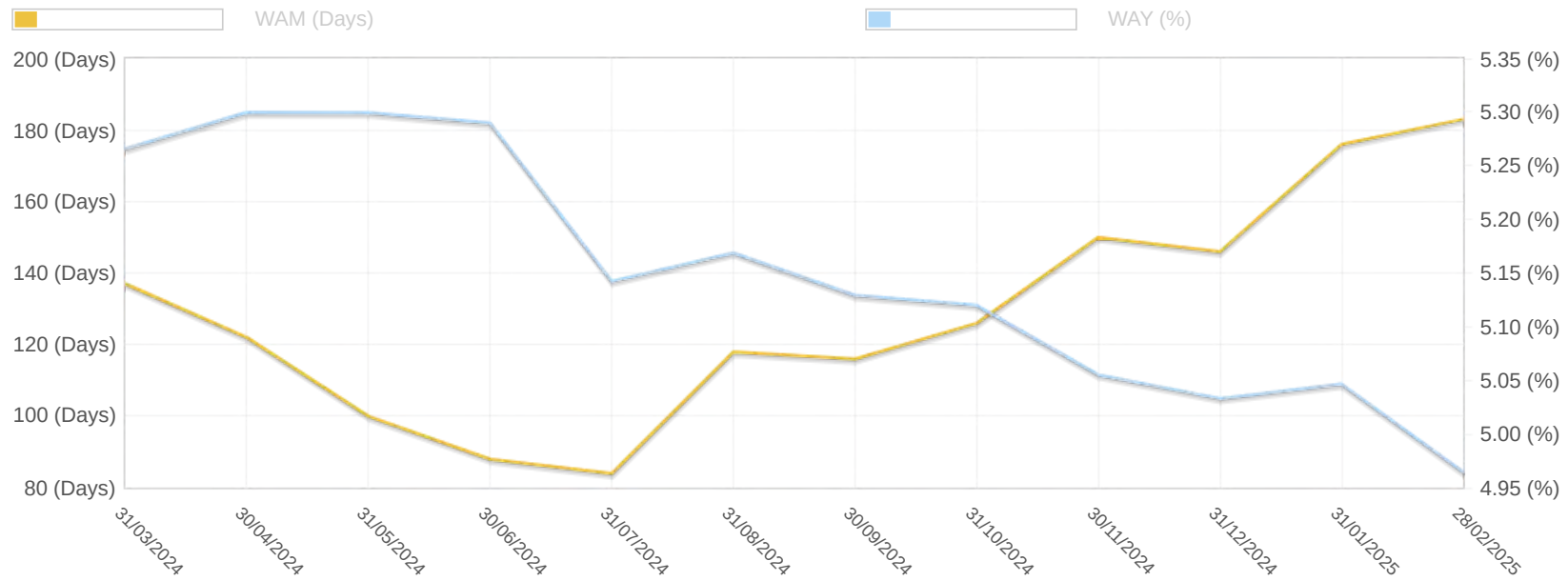
Historical Portfolio Balances as at 25/02/2025

31/03/2024	30/04/2024	31/05/2024	30/06/2024	31/07/2024	31/08/2024	30/09/2024	31/10/2024	30/11/2024	31/12/2024	31/01/2025	28/02/2025
27.25	24.25	23.75	19.75	23.75	23.75	23.75	22.75	21.25	21.25	20.25	18.25



Historical Ratios as at 25/02/2025

	31/03/2024	30/04/2024	31/05/2024	30/06/2024	31/07/2024	31/08/2024	30/09/2024	31/10/2024	30/11/2024	31/12/2024	31/01/2025	28/02/2025
WAM (Days)	137	122	100	88	84	118	116	126	150	146	176	183
WAY (%)	5.2659	5.2997	5.2994	5.2897	5.1424	5.1689	5.1293	5.1201	5.0553	5.0332	5.0467	4.9647



10.28 REVIEW OF INVESTMENT POLICY**File Number: Policies - P15****Author: Bruce Quarmby-Director Corporate Services****Authoriser: Paul Gallagher, General Manager****Annexures: 1. Draft Investment Policy**  **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a reviewed Investment Policy for consideration and adoption.

BACKGROUND

Council's Investment Policy was last reviewed and adopted by Council on 15 September 2021 and as such is due for review. The document has been reviewed in consultation with relevant staff.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

L1.4.4 Governance is open and transparent.

L1.4.5 Review of Council policies.

(b) Financial Considerations

Whilst the Income received from Council's Investment portfolio has improved over the past number of years due to the series of interest rate hikes, Council's overall Cash and Investment Portfolio has declined in value to represent 63.92% of Council's current assets as at the 30 June 2024.

This decline in value is directly correlated to the increase in the level grant receivables owed to Council from State and Federal Government. As previously reported to Council, management have implemented measures to reduce the level of receivables outstanding. Bi-monthly reports, commencing at the April 2025 Council meeting, will also be reported to Council on the level grant receivables owed to Council.

COMMENTARY

In formulating the revised Policy for Council's consideration, the following areas were identified by management as requiring further strengthening and improvement:

- The inclusion of Re-investment Risk as a risk within the policy.
- An amendment of Table 1 under diversification risk to provide clearer clarification and guidance of the composition of Council's investment portfolio.
- Updating the legislative compliance listing to reflect current legislation.
- Removal of the term procurement from the policy title to provide greater clarity on the context of the policy.

For Council's information several other minor amendments have been made to the draft Investment Policy. These adjustments are shown in red in the draft Investment Policy attached as an annexure to this report

As the draft policy has undergone a significant review and to promote open and transparent governance, it would be prudent for Council to place the policy on public exhibition for 28 days and invite comment from the community.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Once adopted by Council, the revised Investment Policy will become a policy of Council.

(b) Legal Implications

This revised Policy has been designed to ensure legislative compliance with the various Act and Regulations that govern this function of Council.

(c) Social Implications

There are no social implications directly attached to this report.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications directly attached to this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

In placing investments, Council staff need to consider the cash flow requirements of Council for both the maintenance and renewal of Council assets.

(f) Risk Implications

The revised draft Investment Policy, as attached, provides guidance on the key risk management criteria that must be considered prior to the placement of investments by Council staff.

CONCLUSION

Council's Investment Policy has been reviewed and amended to ensure compliance with both legislative and operational requirements. The amendments to the policy have been designed to address the shortcomings identified by Council staff, whilst taking into consideration current best practise philosophy.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council notes the information in this report.**
- 2. That Council places the draft Investment Policy, as attached to the report, on public exhibition for a period of 28 days for the purpose of inviting submissions from the community.**
- 3. That Council requests the Director Corporate Services to present a further report, together with all submissions received, to Council at the conclusion of the public exhibition period for Council's further consideration and adoption of the Investment Policy (with or without changes) at its May 2025 Ordinary Meeting.**

1. BACKGROUND

Council has a responsibility to maintain effective control over funds that are surplus to Council's immediate requirements and to ensure that Council's representatives exercise the care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise in investing those funds.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for investment of Council's funds. The policy establishes a series of limits within which Council officers must operate in the planning, and process, of investing Council monies. In setting these limits Council is determining the general level of risk that is acceptable for monies managed on trust for the community of Coonamble.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVE

To provide a framework for the investing of Council's funds at the most favourable rate of interest available to it at the time whilst having due consideration of risk and security for that investment type and ensuring that its liquidity requirements are being met.

While exercising the power to invest, consideration is to be given to the preservation of capital, liquidity, and the return of investment.

- Preservation of capital is the principal objective of the investment portfolio. Investments are to be placed in a manner that seeks to ensure security and safeguarding the investment portfolio. This includes managing credit and interest rate risk within identified thresholds and parameters.
- Managing Council's liquidity. Investments are to be allocated to ensure there is sufficient liquidity to meet all reasonably anticipated cash flow requirements, as and when they fall due, without incurring the risk of significant costs due to the unanticipated sale of an investment.
- Maximising returns within Council's risk appetite as outlined in this policy. Investments are expected to achieve a market average rate of return in line with Council's risk tolerance.

4. LEGISLATION

All investments are to comply with the following:

- *Local Government Act 1993.*
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.
- Ministerial Investment Order - in accordance with the most recently published Order.
- Office of Local Investment Policy Guidelines.
- Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.
- Australia Accounting Standards.
- Office of Local Government Circulars; and
- The Trustee Amendment (Discretionary Investments) Act 1997.

5. APPLICATION/SCOPE

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Authority for implementation of the Investment Policy may be delegated by Council to the General Manager in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The General Manager can delegate the day-to-day management of Council's investments to the **Director of Corporate Services** who will manage the function with the assistance from the relevant Finance Staff.

Officers with delegated authority to manage Council's investments shall be recorded and required to acknowledge they have received a copy of this policy and understand their obligations in this role.

6. POLICY

6.1 PRUDENT PERSON STANDARD

The investments will be managed with the care, diligence, and skill that a prudent person would exercise. As trustees of public monies, officers are to manage Council's investment portfolios to safeguard the portfolios in accordance with this Investment Policy, and not for speculative purposes.

6.2 ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Officers shall refrain from personal activities that would conflict with the property execution and management of Council's investment portfolio. This policy requires officers to disclose any conflict of interest to the General Manager.

Independent Advisors are also required to declare that they have no actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

6.3 APPROVED INVESTMENTS

Officers' delegated authority to manage Council's investments is limited to investments allowed by the Ministerial investment Order and include:

- Commonwealth/State/Territory Government security e.g., bonds.
- Interest bearing deposits issued by an authorised deposit-taking institution.
- Bills of exchange, (<200 days duration). Guaranteed by an authorised deposit-taking institution.
- Debentures issued by NSW Local Government.
- NSW Treasury Corporation

6.4 PROHIBITED INVESTMENTS

This investment policy prohibits any investment carried out for speculative purposes including:

- Derivative based instruments.
- Principal only investments or securities that provide potentially nil or negative cash flow; and
- Standalone securities issued that have underlying futures, options, forwards contracts and swaps of any kind.

This policy also prohibits the use of leveraging (borrowing to invest) of an investment or investments that are themselves leveraged.

6.5 RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The following key criteria must be considered prior to placing investments:

- **Preservation of Capital** – the requirement for preventing losses in an investment portfolio's capital value.
- **Diversification** – the requirement to place investments in a broad range of products so as not to be over exposed to a particular sector of the investment market.

- **Credit Risk** – the risk that a product that Council has invested in fails to pay the interest and or repay the principal of an investment.
- **Market Risk** – the risk that the fair value or future cash flows (Market Value) of an investment will fluctuate due to changes in market prices, or benchmark returns will unexpectedly overtake the investments return.
- **Liquidity Risk** – the risk an investor is unable to redeem the investment at a fair price within a timely period.
- **Maturity Risk** – the risk relating to the length of term to maturity of the investment. The longer the term, the greater the length of exposure and risk to market volatilities.
- **Reinvestment Risk** – the risk that an investor will be unable to reinvest cashflows (e.g. coupon repayments) and maturity proceeds at a rate comparable to their current rate of return because interest rates are lower in the future, thereby resulting in a reduction of income over time.

6.6 COUNCIL'S ATTITUDE TO RISK

All Coonamble Shire Council's investments must be made subject to the following minimum constraints:

- All investments must be of "investment grade" credit rating which implies that there is a **better than** "adequate" or "satisfactory" capacity to meet obligations.
- All investments should be dealt through reputable institutions with a Long-Term Credit rating as listed as per Table 1.
- All Investments must be for a period no longer than the period over which the underlying liability could reasonably be expected to arise.
- Where there is no identified underlying liability the term to maturity of the investments must no exceed 10 years.
- The investment portfolio must be managed in such a way that Council is able to meet its cash flow obligations at all times.
- Real returns must be reasonably matched so as to be compatible with the rising cost of the infrastructure or assets the investment is to fund.
- Preservation of the capital component of all investments must be the highest priority.

6.6 INVESTMENT GUIDELINES/STRATEGY

1. Quotations on Investments

Not less than three (3) quotations shall be obtained from authorised institutions when an investment is proposed and will be authorised by two signatories.

2. Assessment of Cashflow

Investments should be placed for a term which best suits the cashflow requirements of Council but for no longer than the period forecasted in the Long-Term Financial Plan, currently 10 years.

3. Preservation of Capital

a. Credit Risk

There are two types of Credit Ratings: Short-term ratings and Long-term credit ratings, N.B. The credit rating is as determined by Standard and Poor's, Fitch and Moody's.

Short-term credit ratings are an indication of the institutions capacity to meet short term financial commitments, i.e., less than 12 months.

Long-term credit ratings are an indication of the institutions capacity to meet financial commitment over the long term, i.e. greater than 12 months and generally apply to the rating of the institution.

b. Diversification Risk

The following tables represent the maximum allowable investment with any one Financial Institution.

Table 1:

Long term Credit rating	Short term credit rating	Portfolio limit (\leq 12-month investment)	Institution Limit (\leq 12-month investment)	Portfolio limit ($>$ 12-month investment)	Institution Limit ($>$ 12-month investment)
AAA	A-1+	100%	60%	60%	50%
AA+ through AA-	A-1+	80%	60%	60%	40%
A+ through A-	A-1+	60%	40%	30%	35%
BBB+ to BBB	A2 to A	40%	20%	30%	15%
T Corp/IM Funds		100%	100%	20%	100%

Where an institution is unrated (i.e. a Credit Union) but has a local presence (i.e. Coonamble Shire), after careful consideration of the financial capacity of the institution, investments will be placed within the limitation of the Rating of A + or -, and only for periods less than 12 months.

Investments in TCorpIM Funds are diversified in term of both counterparties and assets.

6.7 INVESTMENT ADVISOR

Council from time to time may seek independent advice from an approved and licenced investment Advisor as the office of Local Government Guidelines about the investment strategy and/or specific investments. This advice must be in writing.

The investment advisor must be approved by Council and licensed by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission. The advisor must be an independent person who has no actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to investment products being recommended and is free to choose the most appropriate product within the terms and conditions of the investment policy.

The independent advisor is required to provide written confirmation that they do not have any actual or potential conflicts of interest in relation to the investments they are recommending to reviewing, including that they are not receiving any commission or other benefits in relation the investments being recommended or reviewed.

The NSW Government has provided a waiver to allow Council to engage NSW Treasury Corporation 9TCorp) in the provision of investment advice. This waiver is necessary as TCorp is not licensed by ASIC.

6.8 BENCHMARKING

Performance benchmarks need to be established and should be based on sound and consistent methodology. Council’s investments will be benchmarked against the following indicators.

INVESTMENT	PERFORMANCE BENCHMARK
Cash	11am cash rate
Direct Investments	AFMA BBSW Rate: Average mid – 90 days

AFMA – Australian Financial Markets Association

BBSW – Bank Bill Swap

6.9 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Documentary evidence must be held for each investment and details thereof maintained in an Investment Register. The documentary evidence must provide Council legal title to the investment.

Certificates must be obtained from the financial institutions confirming the amounts of investments held on Council's behalf as at 30 June each year and reconciled to the Investment Register.

All investments are to appropriately record in Council's financial records and reconciled at least on a monthly basis

A monthly report will be provided to Council. The report will detail the investment portfolio in term of performance, percentage exposure of total portfolio, maturity date and changes in market value.

The Investment Policy will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes. The Investment Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage of Council and in the spirit of the policy. Any amendment to the Investment Policy must be by way of Council resolution

6.10 REVIEW

Review of this policy will incorporate relevant legislation, documentation released from relevant state agencies and best practice guidelines.

The standard review period will be every two (2) years from the effective date, however, may occur sooner if there is a change in legislation, Accounting Standards or other relevant guidelines. The responsible Council officer will be notified of the review requirements three (3) months prior to the expiry of this policy.

7. DEFINITION

Term	Definition
Act	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
ADI	Authorised Deposit-Taking Institutions (ADIs) are corporations that are authorised under the Banking Act 1959 (Commonwealth) to take deposits from customers.
AusBond BBI	The Bank Bill Index represents the performance of a notional rolling parcel of bills averaging 45 days and is the widely used benchmark for local councils and other institutional cash investments.
Bill of Exchange	A Bill of Exchange is an unconditional order in writing, addressed by one person to another, signed by the person giving it, requiring the person to whom it is addressed to pay on demand, or at a fixed or determinable future time, a sum certain in money to or to the order of a specified person, or to bearer. These can be underwritten by banks, to become “bank bills” on which the benchmark return is calculated.
BBSW	The Bank Bill Swap reference rate (BBSW) is the midpoint of the nationally observed best bid and offer for AFMA Prime Bank eligible securities. The BBSW is calculated daily. Floating rate securities are most commonly reset quarterly to the 90-day BBSW.
General Manager	Refers to the statutory executive of the Council as defined in section 335 of the Act, including where on an Interim or Acting basis, and under any alternative titles.
Council Funds	Monies that are invested by Council in accordance with section 625 of the Act.
Debenture	A debenture is a document evidencing an acknowledgement of a debt, which a company has created for the purposes of raising capital. Debentures are issued by companies in return for medium and long-term investment of funds by lenders.
FRN	A Floating Rate Note (FRN) is a medium to long term fixed interest investment where the coupon is a fixed margin (“coupon margin”) over a benchmark, also described as a “floating rate”. The benchmark is usually the BBSW and is reset at regular intervals – most commonly quarterly.
TCorp	New South Wales Treasury Corporation (NSW TCorp) including the TCorp Investment Management arm which manages the TCorpIM funds (formerly Hour-glass).

Department: Corporate Services		
Version	Date	Author
Three (3) Review	08/09/2021	B Quarmby
Four (4) Review	28/02/2025	B Quarmby
Review Date: February 2027		
Resolution: Resolution 2021/210		
Amendment History	Date	Detail
No changes	2017	
Amended	2021	Inclusion of risk appetite and definitions
Annexure Attached: Nil		
Paul Gallagher General Manager		

10.29 UPDATED DONATIONS POLICY**File Number:** Donations - D7**Author:** Deborah Tatton, Manager Finance & Procurement**Authoriser:** Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services**Annexures:** 1. Donations Policy - Adopted March 2025 [↓](#) 
2. Donations Application Form [↓](#) **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Donations Policy, along with any submissions received, for Council's consideration and adoption.

BACKGROUND

At the December 2024 the draft Donation Policy was tabled for Council's consideration and adoption. At this meeting Council passed the following resolution:

10.16 UPDATED DONATIONS POLICY**RESOLUTION 2024/1**

Moved: Cr Paul Fisher

Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

1. That Council notes the information in this report.
2. Endorses the amended Donations Policy to go on public exhibition for at least a period of 28 days and provide members of the community at least 42 days in which to comment on the draft policy.
3. At the end of the public submission period:
4. Receive a further report following the exhibition period including any submissions made on the amended Donations Policy, or
5. If no submissions are received, formally adopt the Donations without any changes.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

In compliance with the above resolution, the draft policy was placed on public exhibition for a period of twenty-eight (28) days, with submissions invited from the community until 5.00pm on 17February 2025.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

L1.4.4 Governance is open and transparent.

(b) Financial Considerations

An amount of \$76,100.00 has been included in the donations vote for the 2024 / 2025 financial year.

COMMENTARY

A review of all correspondence during these 42 days identified nil submissions or formal feedback for the Policy. A copy of the draft Donations Policy has been attached as Annexure 1 to this report.

Council will note the main change to the policy was that it was amended to reflect the following.

Following closure of the time allocated for receipt of requests a Council committee comprising of the Mayor, two (2) other Councillors and the General Manager or his/her delegate will consider all requests and make an appropriate recommendation to Council.

The committee will meet biannually with the closure date for the submissions being the second Friday in May and November with the committee making recommendations to the Council during the June and December Council meeting.

It should also be noted that Council agreed that only submissions which follow all guidelines and include all relevant financial data will be considered for the donation. This has always been part of the policy, and no changes were made for this recommendation.

During the period of Public Exhibition, Council has put a hold on approving any further donation requests, until the Donation Policy could be formally adopted. This is due to the change in the assessment method within the policy itself. For Council's information, at the time of writing this report Council has received seven (7) requests for donations with Council, these will be assessed once the draft donation policy is adopted by Council.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Sections 356 and 377 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

(b) Legal Implications

No legal implications are associated with this report.

(c) Social Implications

No social implications are associated with this report.

(d) Environmental Implications

No environmental implications are associated with this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

No economic / asset management implications are associated with this report.

(f) Risk Implications

No risk implications are associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

Following nil submissions or feedback of the drafted policy, the passing of Council resolution 2024 / 289 will bring the Policy into effect with the policy to be reviewed after 12 months. Should Council resolve to adopt that donation policy at this Council meeting, the assessment process for the applications received can commence.

The process of calling for the next round of donation applications from eligible bodies within the community, will commence in April 2025 with a view to having these submissions received, compiled and submitted to the committee for assessment by the close of business second Friday in May. The committee's recommendation will then be tabled for Council's consideration at the June 2025 Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council notes the information in this report and adopts the Donation Policy as presented.**

1. BACKGROUND

It is Council's policy to ensure that its community service obligations concerning the granting of donations to community groups are met in an open, fair and transparent manner and that the administration work in considering donations is streamlined as much as possible.

2. PURPOSE

Each year Council receives numerous requests for donations. These requests can broadly be classified into three (3) categories namely: 1. Local Organisations 2. Community Organisations 3. Council list of organisations to which donations are made categorised as:

- a) Pre-approved donations
- b) Non pre-approved donations
- c) Mayoral donations.

3. POLICY

Local Organisations

Due to the large number of requests for donations from non-local organisations, Council will generally only make donations to local organisations with the exception of the Pre-approved Donations listed in Section 3 a) of this policy.

Donations to this category should be limited to \$100.00 per year per organisation

Community Organisations

Council will only make donations to community organisations, not individuals. This will remove any public perception that may exist concerning Council favouring one (1) individual over another.

Council list of Organisations to which donations are made

a) Pre-approved Donations

This section contains a list of organisations that Council will make an annual donation to without the need for the organisation to apply to Council for the donation. The following organisations have been included in this section:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| • Royal Flying Doctor Service | \$100 |
| • St Vincent de Paul | \$100 |
| • Salvation Army | \$100 |
| • Cancer Council | \$100 |
| • National Heart Foundation | \$100 |
| • Coonamble Hack & Pony Club | \$250 |

- Annual Presentation of Awards
 - Coonamble High School \$100
 - Coonamble Public School \$100
 - Gulargambone Central \$100
 - St Brigid's School \$100
 - Quambone School \$100
 - Doug Moppett Memorial Prize
 - Coonamble High \$125
 - Quambone School \$125

b) Non Pre-approved Donations

Council will place an advertisement in the Coonamble Times inviting local not-for-profit community groups to submit their requests to Council for consideration of a donation. The request for submissions will be made in:

- November
- May

Following closure of the time allocated for receipt of requests a Council committee comprising of the Mayor, two (2) other Councillors and the General Manager or his/her delegate will consider all requests and make an appropriate recommendation to Council.

Applications under this category may include requests for Council to donate the value of the community group's annual general-purpose rates, if applicable. Requests for the donation of the value of rates will be considered in the same manner as other donations.

All applications must be on the Coonamble Shire Council's Application form which lists the Application Guidelines and eligibility criteria.

If required supporting documentation is not submitted at the time of the application, the submission will be deemed an invalid application and not considered by Council.

Successful applicants are required to complete a Community Donation Report and return it to Council by the end of the financial year in which the donation was given.

If a Community Donation Report is not received by Council on the due date, future applications for donations may be declined.

c) Operational Plan Funding

Council acknowledges that the following annual cultural activities, events and festivals will be funded on a recurrent basis through the Operational Plan. No further requests for these mentioned activities, by way of donation, will be considered by Council:

- ANZAC Day
- Australia Day
- Naidoc Day
- Easter/Christmas Celebrations and Street Decorations
- Buy Local Campaign

- Coonamble Show
- Coonamble Campdraft
- Coonamble Rodeo.

In the occurrence, that due to unforeseen circumstances the event/festival does not go ahead, the donation will be foregone for that financial year. If the donation was prepaid prior to the cancellation, the event/festival will forgo the donation in the next financial year with the amount reallocated into the Operational Plan.

d) Mayoral Donations

Mayoral Donations may be up to \$250 per donation for a maximum of \$5,000.00 in any one (1) financial year. Council’s total donations each year will not exceed 1.5% of the rate levy (which currently accounts for around \$76,000).

Implementation / Communication.

The Executive Assistant for the General Manager will arrange for the processing and payment of the Pre-approved Donations listed in Section 3(a) of this policy.

The Executive Assistant for the General Manager will also communicate the information contained within this policy to customer service officers and organisations / members of the public requesting a donation from Council and arrange for advertisements to be placed in the Coonamble Times and information to be placed on Council’s web site and Facebook page, inviting community groups to apply for donations.

Title: Donation Policy		
Department: Corporate Services		
Version	Date	Author
1.0	14 August 2019	Bruce Quarmby
1.1	11 December 2019	Bruce Quarmby
1.3	10 August 2022	Deborah Tatton
1.4	10 December 2024	Deborah Tatton
Amendment History		
Adopted	14 August 2019	Resolution 2019/4461
Amended and Adopted	11 December 2019	Resolution 2019/4626
Amended and Adopted	10 August 2022	Resolution 2022/191
Review Date: November 2026		
Annexure Attached:		
Application for Donation		
Bruce Quarmby Director Corporate Services		



APPLICATION FORM
for a donation under the Donations Policy
(see Council's Donations Policy for details)

Applications are welcome at any time but will be held for consideration on a biannual basis.
Closing dates and times: 4:30pm on the second Friday in November and May

ORGANISATION DETAILS:

Name of organisation/community group: _____

Address: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

President's Name: _____

Secretary's Name: _____

Treasurer's Name: _____

ABN: _____

ELIGIBILITY:

In relation to your organisation/community group:

(please tick)

Is it registered for GST?

Yes

No

Is it community-based and non-for-profit?

Yes

No

Is it based in or affiliated with the Coonamble Local Government Area?

Yes

No

Has it received any previous donation under the Donations Policy within the current or previous 2 years?

Yes

No

PURPOSE:

Describe, in some detail, what your organisation proposes to do with the requested donation.

What are the outcomes/outputs you are hoping to achieve from your project/activity?

How will these outcomes/outputs benefit the people of the Coonamble Local Government Area?



Who—and how many people—do you foresee benefiting from your project/activity both directly and indirectly?

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

What is the amount of the donation you are requesting? \$ _____

If you do not receive the full amount requested, will you still be able to complete your project/activity by the end of the current financial year? If not, what alternative course of action have you planned?

If applicable, does your requested amount include the value of general-purpose rates? Yes No

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION ATTACHED:

Copy of Most Recent Financial Statements, including - Statement of Income and Expense and - Statement of Financial Position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copy of Latest Bank Statement and Investment Accounts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quote(s) for the intended purchase(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
For donation of rates: Copy of Last Assessment Notice	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sign and Date: _____ / /
(Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer’s signature + date)

Please return to: **By Post:** The General Manager
Coonamble Shire Council
PO Box 249
COONAMBLES NSW 2829

By Email: council@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au

By Hand: 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble

For further information regarding the Application Process please contact Council on 02 6827 1900 or email council@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au.

**11 NOTICES OF MOTIONS/QUESTIONS WITH
NOTICE/RESCISSION MOTIONS**

Nil

12 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Nil

13 CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING