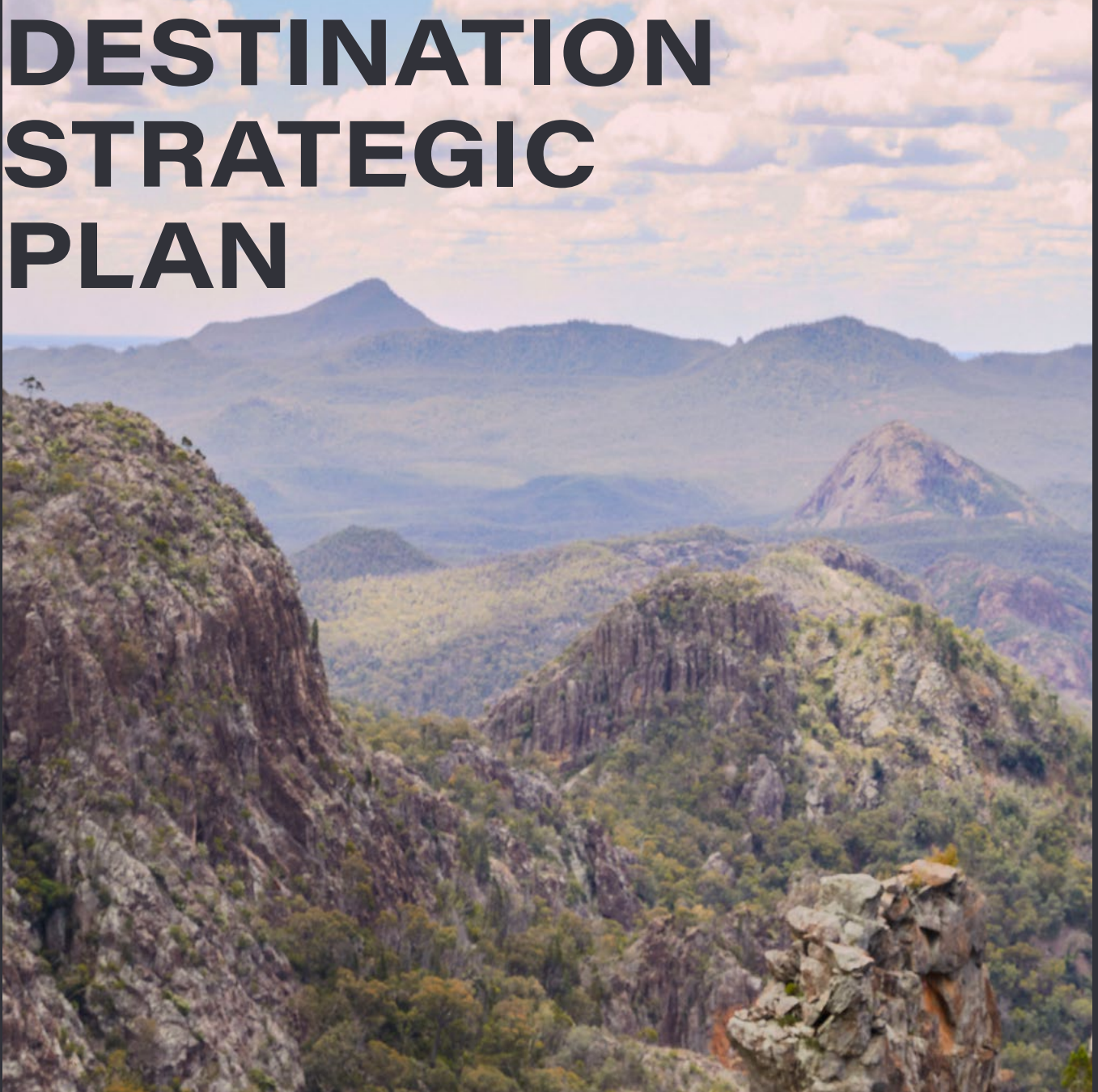


# REAL COUNTRY DESTINATION STRATEGIC PLAN



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**JASMAX**

**Real Country.**  
COONAMBLE / GILGANDRA / WARRUMBUNGLE

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the authors and contributors to the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, extend our deepest respects to the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands encompassing Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle Councils. We honour the wisdom and enduring stewardship of the Gamilaraay, Weilwan, and Wiradjuri peoples, whose profound ties to these territories resonate through time.

Their cultural and spiritual relationship with this Country forms the bedrock of our strategy. We acknowledge the Elders who have walked these lands before us, those who tread upon them now, and the emerging leaders who will guide future generations. In the spirit of reconciliation, we recognise their contributions to our shared history and the enduring impact of their cultures on our society.

The Gamilaraay, Weilwan, and Wiradjuri peoples view the land, sky, water, and all living things as inseparable elements of a singular, vibrant ecosystem. It is through their eyes we seek to understand that when we nurture the land, the land nurtures us in return.

From the flowing waters of the Castlereagh River to the ancient formations of the Warrumbungles, each

site is steeped in millennia of Aboriginal lore, culture, and knowledge. These places are living classrooms from which we all can learn the virtues of guardianship, respect, and sustainable living.

It is here, within the heart of the Gamilaraay, Weilwan, and Wiradjuri nations, that our Place Strategy takes root. Inspired by the principle that the land is our most faithful ally, we commit to uphold the values of conservation and community intrinsic to Aboriginal teachings.

We embrace the lore of the local Aboriginal groups, which tells us of creation, of harmony, and of living in accordance with the laws of the natural world. Through song, dance, and ceremony, they have expressed their connection to Country, and it is in this tradition that we move forward, guided by a vision that honours the past, enlivens the present, and safeguards the future.

As we prepare to implement this strategy, let it be known that our work is a testament to the Aboriginal heritage that has shaped, and will continue to shape, the identity of Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle. We stand together on this Country, committed to a legacy that fosters unity, celebrates diversity, and champions the spirit of place that is uniquely Australian.



# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYORS

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**Tim Horan**  
Mayor of Coonamble  
Shire Council



**Doug Batten**  
Mayor of Gilgandra  
Shire Council



**Ambrose Doolan**  
Mayor of Warrumbungle  
Shire Council



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan is a visionary blueprint designed to transform the Gilgandra, Coonamble, and Warrumbungle local government areas into a leading destination for travellers seeking authentic Australian Real Country experiences. At the heart of this strategy is a commitment to sustainable tourism that celebrates the region's natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and the enduring spirit of its communities.**

## Nature, River's Pulse, And Regional Tapestry

A crucial element of the strategy is to capture the vibrancy of the river network and foster stronger local and regional ties to elevate experiences and attractions. This strategy carefully integrates the Real Country brand into the collective efforts of Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle, merging natural landscapes, culture, and economic aspirations into a unified visual tapestry. This approach is designed to captivate and delight visitors, painting a collective portrait of regional prosperity and appeal.



### Cultivating Core Character

The strategy positions the Castlereagh River as a key component of the tourism experience, transforming it into a pathway of discovery with bespoke experiences that narrate the land's story. This vision encompasses the town centres and villages, seen as dynamic centres for cultural exchange and economic collaboration. The aim is to weave local tradition with innovative tourism offerings, generating an impact that extends beyond local confines and establishes Real Country as a prime destination for investment and rural rejuvenation.

### Strategic Direction and Pillars

The strategic approach is founded on key pillars, including the nurturing of river health, honoring First Nations' legacy, promoting environmental and cultural stewardship, and fostering the agricultural heritage. Additionally, it emphasises enriching community spaces with local narratives and improving spaces with targeted infrastructure and connectivity. A strong focus is on elevating the authentic visitor experience through targeted marketing and the development of signature events and activations calendar. The aim is to bolster and sustain regional synergy and interweave the regional tapestry through effective governance.

### Catalyst Infrastructure Projects

The strategy identifies several catalyst infrastructure projects, each designed to enhance the physical experiences along the Castlereagh River. These projects are not merely about improving the aesthetics or functionality of the riverbanks; they are about creating a more intimate connection between the river and the town centres and villages it traverses. By upgrading leisure, activation, and recreation spaces, each council—Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle—aims to weave the river into the fabric of community life. This interconnected approach is expected to yield significant benefits, from increased visitor engagement to economic uplift for local businesses, attractions, and accommodations. The strategy envisions a seamless blend of natural beauty with urban convenience, ensuring that the riverfront becomes a hub of vibrant activity and a cornerstone of the visitor experience in Real Country.

### Catalyst Marketing Projects

In conjunction with these infrastructure enhancements, the strategy emphasises destination marketing initiatives focused on bolstering the digital presence. Real Country is set to rejuvenate its online profile, ensuring its digital representation is as captivating as the in-person experience. Enhancements in signage and wayfinding will intuitively guide visitors, making their exploration both straightforward and enriching. Events and activations along the riverfront will act as lively platforms to highlight the region's distinct offerings. Central to this marketing drive is promoting an authentic visitor experience – showcasing local businesses and products, celebrating the river's health, and conveying the rich cultural and historical tales that define Real Country. These marketing efforts are meticulously planned to not only draw visitors but to deeply engage them with the region's true essence.

Together, these infrastructure and marketing initiatives are crucial to the strategy's success, enhancing both the tangibility of the region's offerings and the stories they tell. The ultimate goal is to create a holistic and immersive Real Country experience, where every element, from the physical to the digital, resonates with the heart and soul of this remarkable part of NSW.

**This strategy encapsulates the Real Country ambition to revitalise the region, focusing on sustainable development, cultural respect, and community engagement to establish Real Country as a distinctive, regionally recognised destination. The strategy combines a deep respect for the region's natural and cultural assets with a forward-looking approach to tourism and economic development, aiming to create a sustainable, vibrant, and prosperous future for Central West NSW.**



## Destination Strategic Plan Delivery Framework

### ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT FOR REAL COUNTRY

#### PLACE FRAMEWORK VALUES

#### NATURE AND RIVER'S PULSE

#### ACTIVATION THREADS

#### REGIONAL TAPESTRY

#### STRATEGIC PILLARS

1	Nurture River Health	6	Bridging Spaces: Strategic Infrastructure & Connectivity
2	Celebrate First Nations Legacy	7	A signature Events and Activations calendar
3	Champion Environmental and Cultural Stewardship	8	Enhance an Authentic Visitor Experience
4	Enriching Community Spaces with Local Narrative	9	Strengthen and Sustain Regional Synergy
5	Cultivate and Showcase Agricultural Legacy	10	Stitch the Regional Tapestry through Strategic Governance

#### DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIVITY

CULTURAL PROMOTION AND HERITAGE

ECONOMIC GROWTHS AND PARTNERSHIPS

#### WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

#### INFRASTRUCTURE CATALYST PROJECTS

**Coonamble / Warrena Weir** Recreation Precinct

**Gilgandra / River Precinct Upgrade** Town Centre to Coo-ee Centre

**Warrumbungle / River Precinct** Upgrades to Coonabarabran, Binnaway and Mendooran

#### DESTINATION MARKETING CATALYST PROJECTS

Enhanced digital presence and marketing

Improvement of signage and wayfinding

Riverfront activation and events

Real experience visitor experience through local business and product promotion

River health, cultural and historical storytelling

SECTION A

# ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT FOR REAL COUNTRY

## 1.0 / THE THREE COUNCILS

### 1.1 / Defining Real Country: A Tapestry of Authentic Rural Experiences

Real Country's mandate is to collectively showcase and promote the unique attributes of the Gilgandra, Coonamble, and Warrumbungle local government areas. This collective is a mosaic of diverse landscapes and rich cultural tapestries, stretching across a vast expanse of Central West NSW.

The region boasts a variety of natural wonders, from the iconic Warrumbungle National Park, known for its dramatic volcanic remnants and as Australia's first Dark Sky Park, to the serene flow of the Castlereagh River that meanders through the heart of the area. Gilgandra, with its welcoming community and vibrant local culture, serves as a gateway to the natural splendours of the region. Coonamble, rich in agricultural heritage, offers a glimpse into the heartland of rural NSW with its authentic rural charm. The Warrumbungle area, meanwhile, invites exploration with its unique geological formations and starlit night skies.

Real Country stretches across a terrain that is both rugged and beautiful, encompassing vast wheat fields, picturesque riverside settings, and ancient volcanic

landscapes. This diversity offers a range of experiences from bushwalking and bird watching to stargazing and immersing in Aboriginal heritage.

While each area within Real Country has its distinct character and charm, they collectively represent the essence of the Australian rural spirit. Gilgandra's warm hospitality, Coonamble's iconic rodeo culture, and the Warrumbungle's breathtaking natural beauty come together to form a destination that is more than the sum of its parts.

Bordering the larger expanse of NSW, Real Country is strategically positioned. To the north, it edges towards the Queensland border; to the east, it approaches the lush Central Tablelands; the expansive plains of the Far West lie to the south, and the fertile riverina region to the west. While there are defined boundaries, visitors often experience Real Country as part of a larger journey through NSW, presenting opportunities to integrate and complement the tourism offerings of neighbouring regions.

A detailed Issues Paper has informed the background context for the development of the Real Country Strategic Destination Plan

[To view this report click here](#)

### 1.2 / Strategic Road Connections: Gateway to the Australian Bush

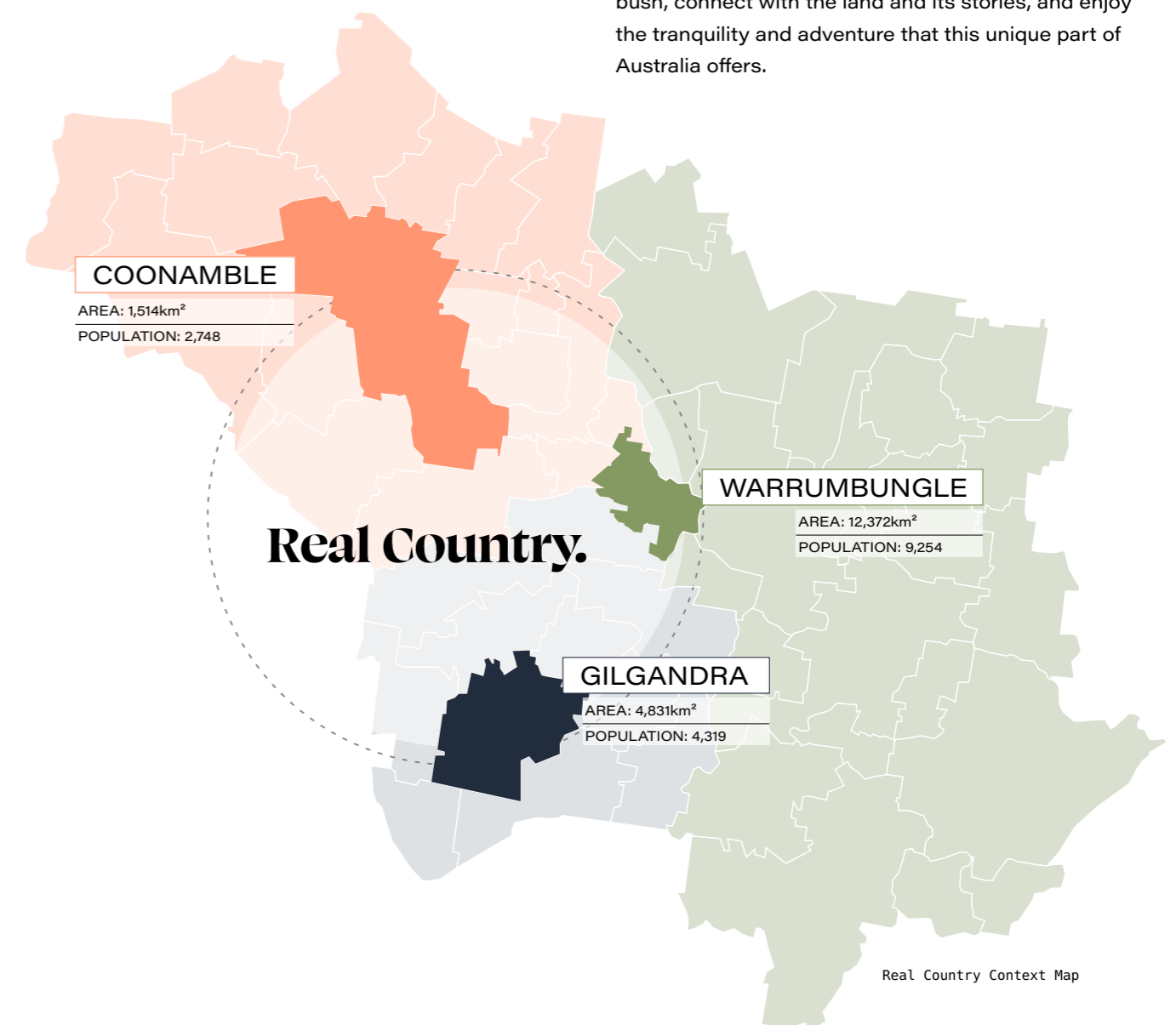
Real Country stands as a pivotal link in the network of Australian roadways, serving as a crucial gateway for travellers journeying from the southern cities of Melbourne and Adelaide up to the tropical expanses of Queensland. The region is crisscrossed by major highways and roads, including the Castlereagh Highway and the Newell Highway, which offer seamless and scenic drives through the heart of the Australian bush. These routes not only provide direct access to the unique attractions of Real Country but also connect travellers to the diverse experiences of the broader Australian landscape.

For those journeying from the south, the trip to Real Country is a journey of contrast and discovery. Starting from the cosmopolitan hubs of Melbourne or Adelaide,

travellers are taken through changing landscapes – from the wine regions of South Australia, the majestic Murray River, to the sprawling plains of NSW. As they enter the Real Country region, visitors are greeted by the quintessential Australian bushland, offering a stark and beautiful contrast to the urban and coastal experiences of southern Australia.

This strategic position of Real Country as a north-south corridor not only makes it an ideal stopover for long-haul travellers but also positions it as a focal point for road trips exploring the diversity of the Australian landscape. The region's accessibility via these major roadways enhances its appeal as a destination, inviting travellers to explore its natural wonders, cultural heritage, and rural charm as part of their broader Australian journey.

Real Country is a destination where the authentic Australian rural experience comes to life, a place where visitors can immerse themselves in the spirit of the bush, connect with the land and its stories, and enjoy the tranquility and adventure that this unique part of Australia offers.



### 1.3 / Overview of Existing Regional Governance and Partnerships

To lay the groundwork for the development of the strategy, a collection of key documents provides a foundational framework that informs the Real Country vision and details the engagement process. These resources have been essential in setting the scene for the background research, offering critical insights for the opportunity analysis and aiding in the initial concepts as the project advances through the infrastructure and marketing catalyst projects and the Business Case phase.

In developing a compelling and implementable Business Case, it's crucial to thoroughly analyse the background policy setting and ensure it aligns with the strategic understanding of the regional context.

#### Background documentation

The various documents listed have been reviewed based on the relevance to the Councils.

Documents have been analysed to further understand the context of the area, in particular:

- Understand the Real Country initiative as a collaborative project between the three Councils.
- Analyse how natural assets and the unique regional setting is acknowledged in existing strategies
- Investigate the current strategies for the region and align their key directions to economic growth, employment context and key industries
- Recognise and analyse local resilience



Castlereagh REDS - Regional Economic Development Strategy / 2018 - 2022



Western Plains REDS - Regional Economic Development Strategy / 2023



Nsw Visitor Economy Strategy 2030



Destination Country And Outback Destination Management Plan 2022-2030

### Community Strategic Plans

The Community Strategic Plans for the 3 LGAs that make up the Real Country region provide comprehensive roadmaps that outline the long-term vision, values, priorities, and actions for each community. The outcomes of these strategies significantly shape the future of the proposed marketing strategy and event programming for regional collaboration.

#### COMMUNITY

In order for the community's members to take ownership of proposed initiatives and build on the proposed programming to strengthen their community ties, expand their businesses, and have a greater impact in the area, it is essential to understand what the community values. The plans also lay out how partnerships will grow and how they would react to the directives given by the CSPs.

#### GOVERNANCE

Local government serves as an advocate between state and federal institutions, facilitating proposed projects and ensuring community engagement in regional decision making.

#### ECONOMY

Initiatives to boost the visitor economy, as well as programs to promote small businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, and draw in investment, are all part of the LGAs' economic development plans. Understanding the main economic principles of Real Country will help develop marketing initiatives and programming that are responsive to these sectors, drawing in a niche market and promoting overall economic growth.

#### ENVIRONMENT

The Real Country's natural resources are its prized assets and should be carefully examined in all strategic choices. Delivering infrastructure, planning events, and advertising should all focus on reducing waste, fostering sustainable development, and creating a route to net zero in the area.

### 1.4 / Strategic Policy Setting

	Coonamble	Gilgandra	Warrumbungle
Community	Coonamble aims to build a stronger connection with its culture and sporting organisations, improve liveability and be a healthier, safer community.	Gilgandra, through its CSP, aims to nurture a proud community that honours culture and heritage, drawing tourists to a dynamic and vibrant destination experience.	Warrumbungle, through its CSP, seeks to enhance overall liveability by improving health services, strengthening crime prevention, backing sporting organisations, and ensuring robust infrastructure.
	<b>Key actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access to health services</li> <li>• Create safer and more appealing public and open spaces</li> <li>• Support sporting organisations and their initiatives</li> <li>• Enhance community engagement and vibrancy</li> </ul>		
Environment	Improve environmental strategies and implement a land use framework that minimises risks for both the community and the environment.	An active and thriving community that leads a healthy lifestyle and actively preserves its natural assets.	Ensure sustainable development, deliver supporting infrastructure and initiate environmental programs.
	<b>Key actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement efficient land use strategies that accommodate sustainable uses, residential needs and affordable housing offer</li> <li>• Support environmental initiatives, reduce waste and maximise resource allocation</li> </ul>		
Governance	Integrity and representation in local governance through community engagement.	An innovative and progressive Council that is engaged and valued by its community.	Support the community and foster collaborative partnerships.
	<b>Key actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An internal culture of continuous improvement</li> <li>• Increase community participation in decision making</li> </ul>		
Economy	Working towards a sustainable and diverse economy is a key goal of Coonamble Shire Council by the year 2032.	Gilgandra's priorities are to build economic resilience through local businesses, skilled employment, and infrastructure delivery.	Leverage economic growth through business and community support and networking, invest in tourism and education initiatives and a vibrant events programming.
	<b>Key actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow the reputation of the LGA, particularly tourism opportunities that expand the visitor economy</li> <li>• Implement and deliver quality education options for all ages</li> </ul>		

## 2.0 / HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

### 2.1 / History of Real Country and its Development

Coonamble, Warrumbungle, and Gilgandra showcase a robust rural identity, with each places economy significantly anchored in agriculture. As of 2021, the largest employment sector in these areas is Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing.

Long before European settlers arrived, the region was home to various First Nations peoples, including the Gamilaraay (also spelled Kamilaroi) and Wiradjuri nations. These groups thrived on the land, which was, and still is, integral to their culture, spirituality, and identity. The land is characterised by its significant natural features, such as the Warrumbungle ranges, which are not only aesthetically remarkable but also hold deep spiritual significance. The rivers and fertile plains provided abundant resources, supporting a way of life intricately connected to the cycles of nature. Today, this elaborate cultural landscape is essential to the region's tourism appeal, giving visitors an opportunity to connect with ancient traditions, narratives, and the deep relationship of First Nations people with their ancestral land.

The era of European settlement brought drastic changes, beginning in the 19th century as squatters and then settlers were drawn to the area's pastoral potential. Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle became focal points for sheep and wheat farming, which remain significant industries to this day. The development of these agricultural hubs led to the establishment of towns and infrastructure, with the iconic silos and classic

country architecture now serving as historical markers of this period. The agricultural heritage offers a wealth of experiences for tourism, from farm stays to local produce sampling and agricultural tours, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the pastoral life that has significantly shaped the region's economic history.

Over time, the Real Country region has evolved, with each area developing its unique identity within the broader region. Coonamble has become known for its agricultural, rodeo and art scene, Gilgandra for its role as a central service town and its WWI history commemorated by the Coo-ee March, and the Warrumbungle area for its stunning National Park and status as a Dark Sky Park, which offers some of the best stargazing experiences. These elements combine to present a tourism potential that is as diverse as it is rich, enabling visitors to immerse themselves in a living history that includes the spirit of the bush, the tranquillity of the night sky, and the heartbeat of the rural community.

As Real Country looks ahead, its tourism prospects continue to evolve, influenced by its rich history and development. The region's skill in blending stories of First Nations heritage, agricultural heritage, and community spirit into its tourism offerings allows visitors to not only witness but also deeply connect with the stories that define Real Country. This integration of the past and present, along with the region's distinctive character, distinguishes it as a destination with diverse tourism appeal.



### 2.2 / Social Dynamics and Community Profile

Marked by a pronounced rural character, this region boasts a substantial agricultural component in its economy. The populations are notably small and stable, cultivating a sense of continuity and strong community bonds. In comparison to metropolitan areas, these regions often have lower median ages, indicative of younger demographics in some parts. This aspect potentially contributes to a dynamic workforce and vibrant community life, significantly influencing the social fabric of the region.

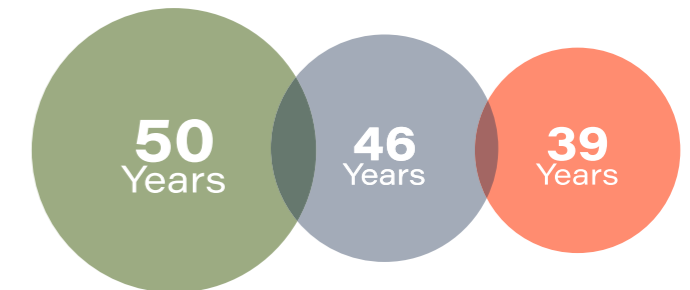
Education levels across the regions show diversity, with a notable number of residents attaining vocational qualifications, reflecting the practical and hands-on nature of the local economy. This is complemented by a workforce that is deeply embedded in the primary industries, demonstrating a connection to the land and traditional skills.

Migration patterns suggest modest growth and movement, with the allure of country living attracting new residents who contribute to the diversity and vitality of the communities. Family structures tend to be traditional, and there is a sense of resilience and self-reliance among the residents.

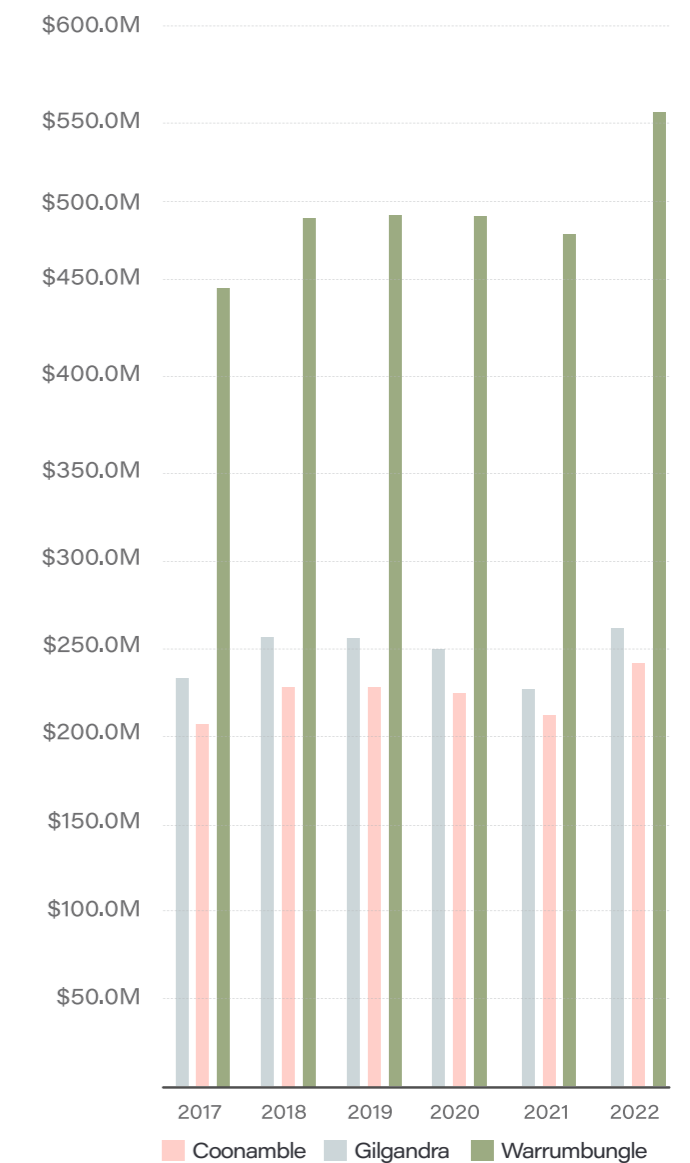
The community profiles highlight a lifestyle that is closely connected to the natural environment, where well-being is influenced by the land and its seasons. The social conditions, with a strong community spirit and a prevailing sense of belonging, are inherently appealing to tourists seeking authentic experiences and a connection with the Australian countryside.

These social dynamics and community profiles form a solid foundation for the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, suggesting that tourism development can leverage the rich cultural fabric, the community's connection to the land, and the emerging trends of new residents bringing diverse experiences and skills to the region.

#### Median Age



#### Gross Regional Product



Source: app.rempln.com.au



# 3.0 / INTEGRATED ECONOMIC OVERVIEW OF COONAMBLE, GILGANDRA, AND WARRUMBUNGLA COUNCILS

## 3.1 / Coonamble Shire Council

Coonamble is a determined and dynamic township on the banks of the Castlereagh River. It lies at the heart of what is a productive agricultural region based on sustainable dryland livestock grazing and cropping industries.



The Coonamble Shire spans almost 10,000 square km from the edge of the Warrumbungle Mountains, across the Castlereagh Plains to the Macquarie Marshes. The area is traditionally home to the Weilwan and Gamilaroi people and has a population of 3,900.

In Coonamble, downtime varies from active to serene. Art groups and cultural activities cater to creative interests, complemented by a full calendar of local events. Additionally, a range of pubs, licensed clubs, cafes, and restaurants offer local dining and social experiences.

### Place overview

Coonamble Shire is approximately 6 hours from Sydney and 8 hours from Brisbane. The region offers the perfect combination of rich history and a country lifestyle.

Coonamble Shire is an adaptive, inclusive and progressive region. The district hosts a suite of health, early childhood, education, training, aged care services.

In Coonamble, tourism supports an estimated 26 jobs, which is 1.8% of total employment. The largest sub-sector in Coonamble is Accommodation & Food Services with 18 jobs supported by tourists expenditure.

## 3.2 / Coonamble Shire Economic Overview

Coonamble Shire, with a population of 3,825, supports 1,408 jobs and generates an economic output of \$434.723 million. Dominated by Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, contributing 37.2% of the total output and providing 414 jobs (29.4% of employment), the region is known for sustainable livestock grazing and cropping. Tourism is in its early stages, supporting 35 jobs, primarily in Accommodation & Food Services. Coonamble's expansive landscape, from the Warrumbungle Mountains to the Macquarie Marshes, presents unique opportunities for agri-tourism and eco-friendly initiatives.

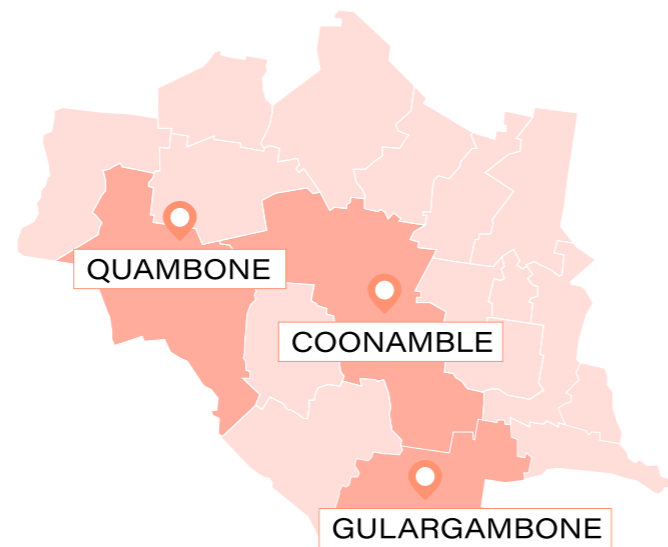
<p><b>Key Industries and Employment</b></p>	<p><b>Gross Regional Product (GRP)</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Agriculture, Forestry &amp; Fishing industry sector is the most significant contributor to the region's economy, with an output of \$161.7 million, making up 37.2% of the total output.</li> <li>This sector is also the largest employer in Coonamble, providing 414 jobs, which is 29.4% of the total employment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRP measures the total value of products and services produced in Coonamble, including nominal GRP (affected by price changes) and real GRP (indicating growth at constant prices).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Geographic and Strategic Advantages</b></p>	<p><b>Opportunities for Development</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coonamble Shire spans 10,000 square kilometres, ranging from the Warrumbungle Mountains to the Macquarie Marshes.</li> <li>The region is recognised for its productive agricultural activities, primarily sustainable dryland livestock grazing and cropping, supported by modern management practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding the agricultural sector through innovation and diversification into areas like agri-tourism.</li> <li>Enhancing the tourism sector, particularly by developing attractions that capitalise on the region's natural beauty, cultural heritage, and unique experiences such as the development of an artesian bore bath experience.</li> <li>Exploring opportunities in sustainable practices and eco-friendly tourism, given the region's diverse environment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tourism Sector</b></p>	<p><b>Collaboration Opportunities with Neighbouring Councils</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism in Coonamble supports an estimated 35 jobs, accounting for 2.5% of total employment.</li> <li>The largest sub-sector within tourism is Accommodation &amp; Food Services, supporting 26 jobs, indicating potential for growth in this area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shires to develop a regional agri-tourism circuit, showcasing each area's unique agricultural strengths and practices.</li> <li>Initiate joint sustainable tourism projects, focusing on environmental preservation and eco-tourism experiences, including the development of an artesian bore bath experience as a future tourist attraction.</li> <li>Collaborate on cross-council cultural festivals, celebrating the diverse heritage and traditions of the regions.</li> </ul>

Coonamble Shire's economic profile highlights a strong agricultural base with room for growth in tourism and related services. Collaborative efforts with neighbouring councils could further develop the region's economy, leveraging its strategic location and natural resources.

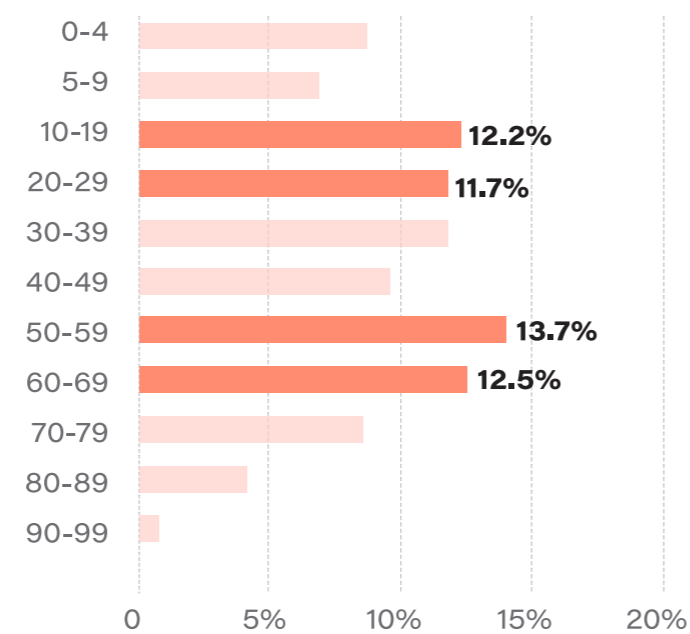
Coonamble, located in the Central West region of NSW, Australia, offers a range of visitor attractions and events that showcase its cultural heritage, natural beauty, and rural charm. Here are some of the top attractions and events that Coonamble is known for:

- Coonamble Rodeo and Campdraft - Coonamble
- Macquarie Marshes - Quambone
- Coonamble Museum - Coonamble
- Coonamble Gold Cup - Coonamble
- Warrumbungle National Park - Coonamble
- Coonamble Greyhound Carnival - Coonamble
- Water Tower Art - Coonamble
- Outback Arts Gallery - Coonamble
- Water Tower Art - Coonamble
- Outback Arts Gallery - Coonamble
- River Walk - Gulargambone

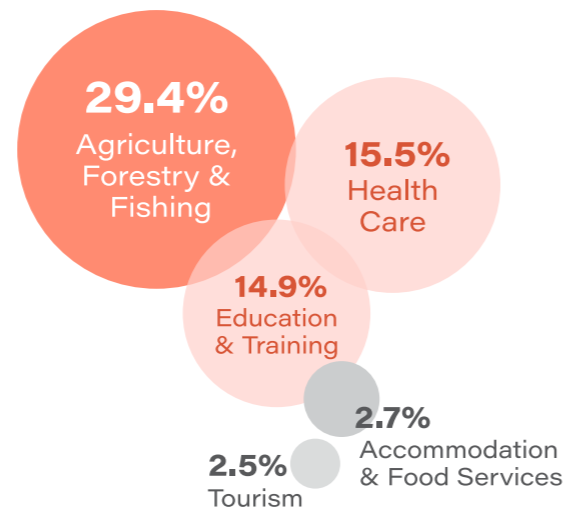
These attractions and events in Coonamble offer visitors a chance to experience the region's rich cultural heritage, natural wonders, and rural traditions. From exciting rodeo competitions to exploring the geological wonders of Crystal Kingdom and immersing oneself in the town's history, Coonamble provides diverse experiences that showcase its unique character.



Age Structure



Employment - Main Industries



Source: app.rempln.com.au

### Outback Arts Gallery - Coonamble

Local artists can exhibit and sell their work at the Outback Arts Gallery, which is situated on Coonamble's main street. Outback Arts collaborates with a wide range of regional community arts development programs and projects to support and promote the arts and culture in the far west.



### Water Tower Art - Coonamble

The 25 metre high Coonamble Water Tower is the perfect spot for a pit-stop and an opportunity to capture a photo in front of this iconic water tower.



### Macquarie Marshes - Quambone

Quambone is the gateway to the Macquarie Marshes, an extensive area of common reed, cumbungi, river redgum woodlands, coolibah woodlands and water couch grasslands. Covering over 200,000 hectares, the Marshes are recognised as a significant Australian colonial waterbird nesting area, and are listed under the Ramsar Convention as a Wetland of International Importance..



### Coonamble Museum - Coonamble

The Coonamble Museum is a treasure trove of historical artefacts, photographs, and memorabilia that depict the local history and culture. Visitors can learn about the region's pioneering days, indigenous heritage, and significant events through engaging exhibits.



### 3.3 / Gilgandra Shire Council

Situated approximately halfway on the inland route from Melbourne to Brisbane, the Gilgandra Shire is an area known to service surrounding townships, agriculture and passing tourists.

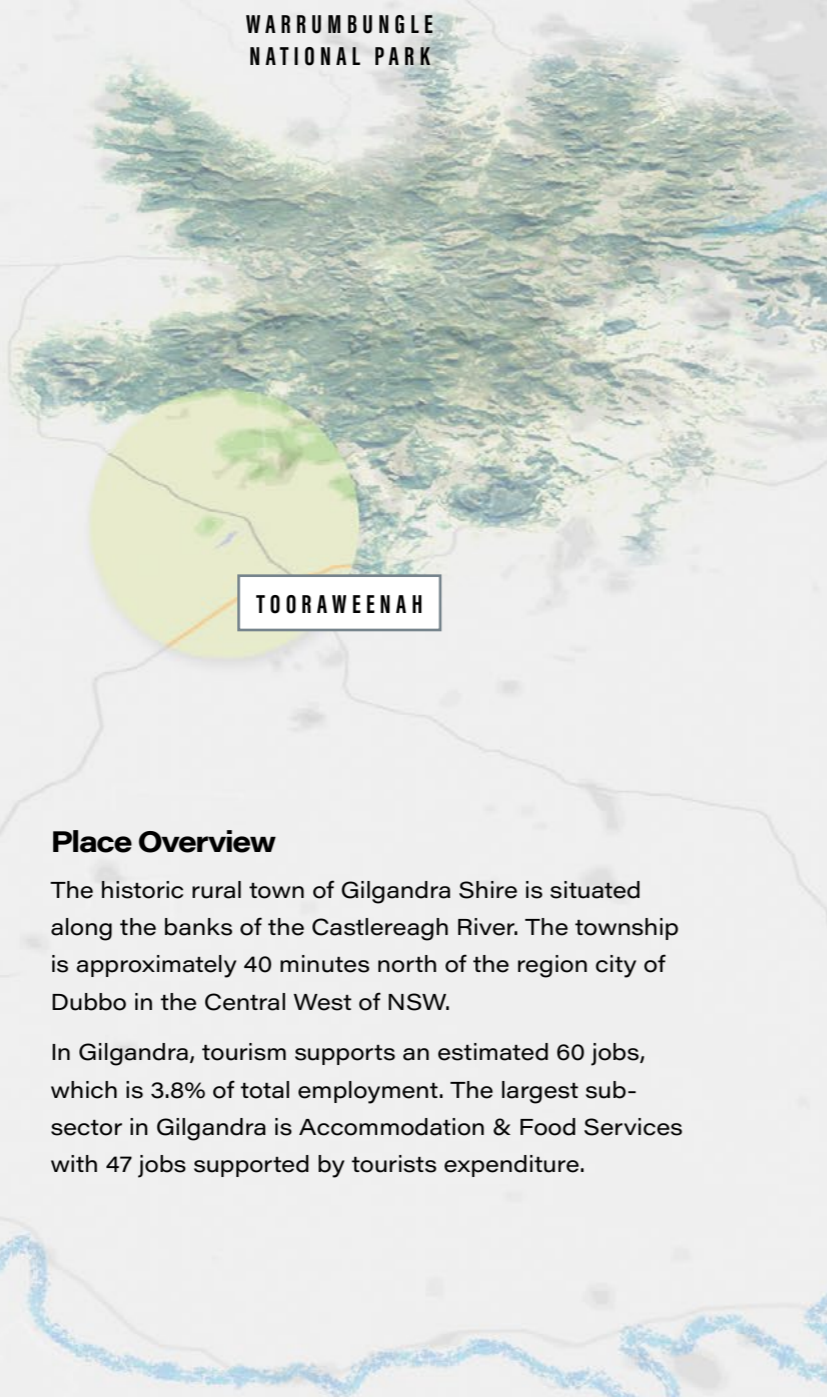
The LGA covers a geographic area of 4,800km and the population of Gilgandra Shire is 4,200, with 3,129 living in Gilgandra township. Other villages are Tooraweenah located at the southern entrance to the Warrumbungle National Park and Armatree in the north of the Shire.

Gilgandra is a friendly community with a great sense of civic pride. Residents enjoy a relaxed country lifestyle with the advantage of a nearby major regional centre. There are numerous sporting clubs and social groups, along with race meetings, concerts, market days, library activities and art exhibitions that contribute to making Gilgandra and district a progressive and proactive community.

#### Place Overview

The historic rural town of Gilgandra Shire is situated along the banks of the Castlereagh River. The township is approximately 40 minutes north of the region city of Dubbo in the Central West of NSW.

In Gilgandra, tourism supports an estimated 60 jobs, which is 3.8% of total employment. The largest sub-sector in Gilgandra is Accommodation & Food Services with 47 jobs supported by tourists expenditure.



### 3.4 / Gilgandra Shire Economic Overview

Gilgandra Shire's population of 4,299 supports 1,524 jobs, contributing \$480.279 million to the economy. The predominant industry is Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, accounting for 41.33% of total output and providing 506 jobs (33.2% of employment). Gilgandra is strategically located at key highway junctions, offering potential for logistics and regional trade. The growth in health care services, especially aged care, and tourism, supporting 62 jobs in Accommodation & Food Services, indicates diversification opportunities.

<p><b>Key Industries and Employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture, Forestry, &amp; Fishing is the leading industry in Gilgandra, contributing \$198.5 million, which is 41.33% of the total output.</li> <li>This sector also is the largest employer, providing 506 jobs, accounting for 33.2% of the total employment in the region.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gross Regional Product (GRP)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRP in Gilgandra measures the total value of products and services produced, including both nominal GRP (showing growth influenced by price changes) and real GRP (indicating growth at constant prices).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Geographic and Strategic Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gilgandra Shire is strategically located at the junction of the Newell, Oxley, and Castlereagh Highways, halfway between Brisbane and Melbourne, which enhances its connectivity.</li> <li>This prime location, close to the regional city of Dubbo, offers significant advantages for transport, logistics, and regional trade.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities for Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraging its strategic location for developing regional trade and logistics centres.</li> <li>Expanding health care services, including aged care, which is a growing sector.</li> <li>Agri-tourism could be further developed, capitalising on the strong agricultural base.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic Diversification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apart from traditional agriculture (including wool, fat lambs, cattle, and cereal cropping), the region has seen a growth in health care services, particularly aged care, as major employers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Collaboration Opportunities with Neighbouring Councils</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work alongside Coonamble and Warrumbungle for a joint heritage and historical tourism project, highlighting the rich and varied histories of each area.</li> <li>Invest collaboratively in technology and innovation hubs, coupled with local skills training and skills brokering to address job gaps and enhance local business growth.</li> <li>Coordinate efforts in sports and recreational tourism, utilising the natural landscapes and facilities available in the regions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tourism Sector</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism supports approximately 62 jobs in Gilgandra, representing 4.1% of the total employment.</li> <li>The largest sub-sector within tourism is Accommodation &amp; Food Services, which supports 48 jobs.</li> </ul>	

Gilgandra Shire's economic profile reflects a strong agricultural base with emerging sectors like health care. Its strategic location offers significant opportunities for growth in logistics, tourism, and service industries. Collaborative efforts with neighbouring councils could further enhance economic development and regional appeal.

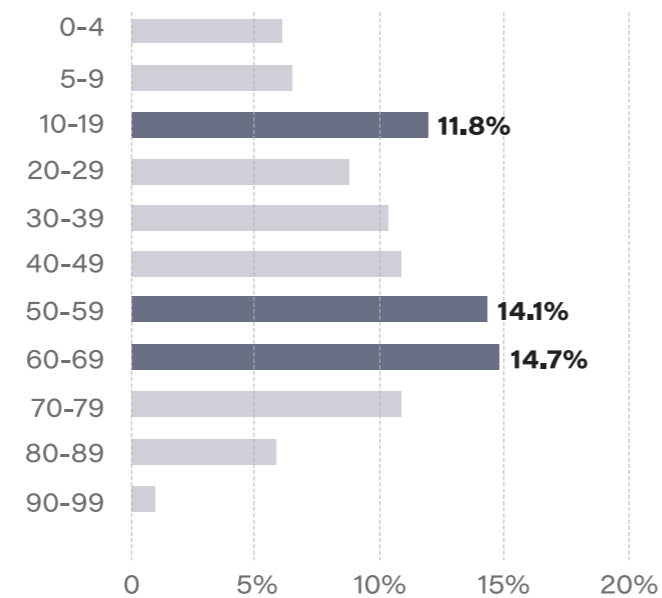
**Gilgandra, located in the Central West region of NSW, Australia, offers several visitor attractions and events that contribute to its unique charm. Here are some of the top attractions and events that Gilgandra is known for:**

- Coo-ee Heritage Centre - *Gilgandra*
- Windmill Walk - *Gilgandra*
- Gilgandra Rural Museum - *Gilgandra*
- Gilgandra Observatory - *Gilgandra*
- Gilgandra Annual Show - *Gilgandra*
- Gilgandra Races - *Gilgandra*
- Gilgandra Speedway - *Gilgandra*
- Flora Reserve - *Gilgandra*
- Historical Walk - *Tooraweenah*
- Orana Cactus World - *Gilgandra*
- Gilgandra Art Expo - *Gilgandra*

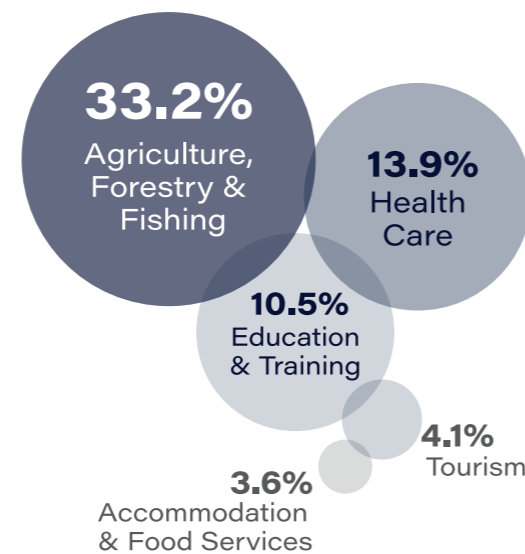
These attractions and events in Gilgandra offer visitors a chance to immerse themselves in the region's history, rural traditions, and natural beauty. Whether it's exploring the heritage centres, gazing at the stars, or experiencing the vibrant atmosphere of local shows and races, Gilgandra provides an array of experiences that highlight the region's unique character.



Age Structure



Employment - Main Industries



Source: app.rempln.com.au



**Orana Cactus World - Gilgandra**

Explore up to 1,000 species of cacti collected from around the world all in one magnificent garden located in the small town of Gilgandra, central NSW.



**Gilgandra Art Expo - Gilgandra**

The Gilgandra Art Expo is an annual art exhibition that celebrates local and regional artists. It showcases a diverse range of artworks, including paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and mixed media. The event provides a platform for artists to exhibit their work and offers visitors the opportunity to appreciate and purchase unique pieces of art.



**Coo-ee Heritage Centre - Gilgandra**

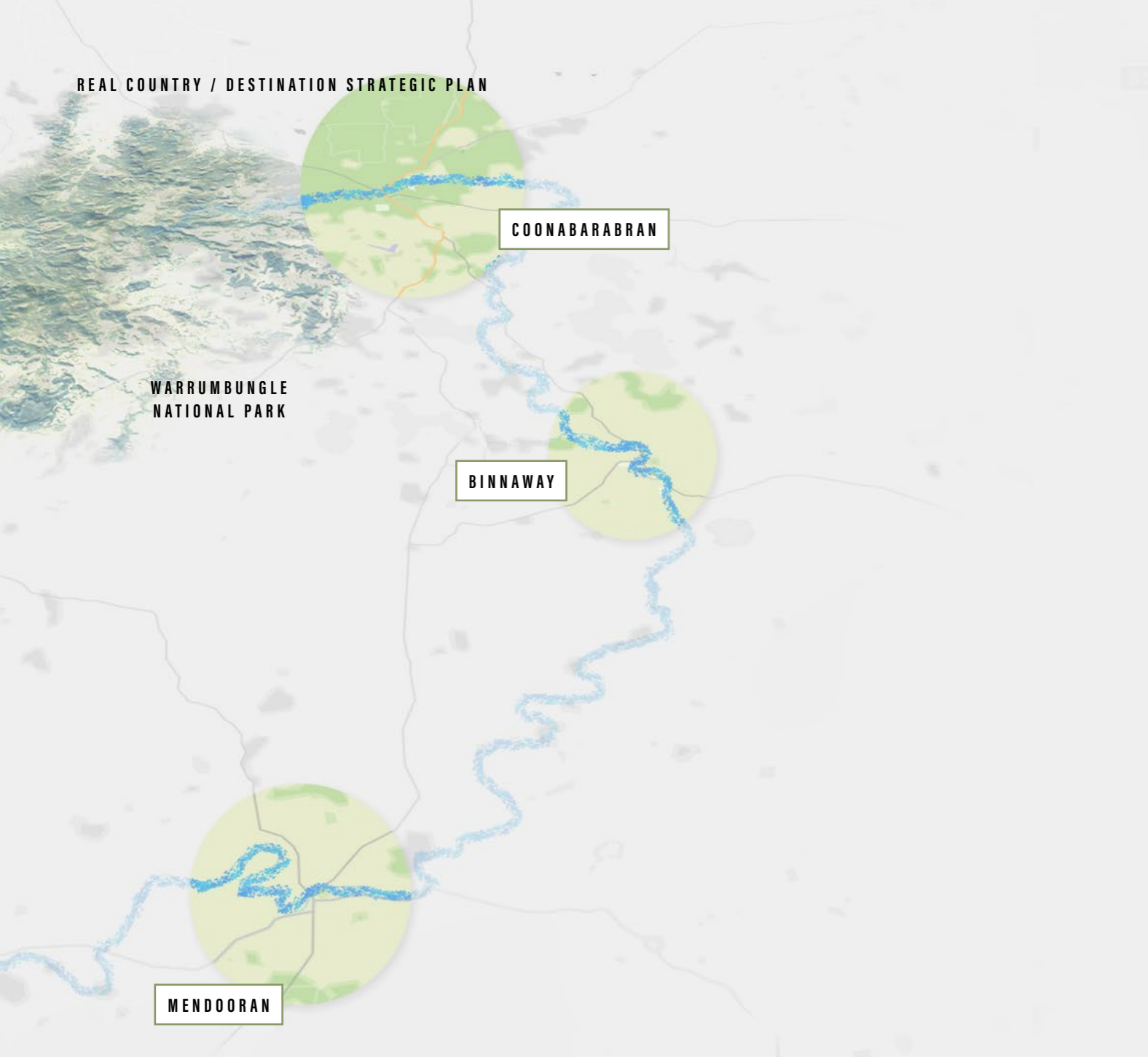
The Coo-ee Heritage Centre is a popular attraction that showcases the history and heritage of Gilgandra and the surrounding region. It houses a collection of artefacts, memorabilia, and displays related to local history, including the famous Coo-ee March of 1915, which was a recruitment march during World War I.



**Gilgandra Rural Museum - Gilgandra**

The Gilgandra Rural Museum provides visitors with insights into the region's agricultural heritage. The museum exhibits a range of farming machinery, tools, and equipment used throughout the years. It offers a glimpse into the farming practices and rural life of the area.





### 3.5 / Warrumbungle Shire Council

Located in Central NSW, Warrumbungle Shire is situated half way between Melbourne and Brisbane, and within 2 hours drive of the regional cities of Dubbo and Tamworth.

The Shire covers an area of approximately 12,380 square kilometres and offers unspoilt beauty and the ability to experience an unique scenery and friendly people.

The towns and villages of the shire comprise of Coonabarabran, Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo and Mendooran; with each community having their own special local charm. The Warrumbungle shire boasts a broad range of cultural, sporting and recreational activities, as well as being surrounded by major

tourism attractions including Australia's largest optical astronomy research facility, the Bush Poetry Festival, Warrumbungle mountain range and Warrumbungle's National Park.

#### Place Overview

The Warrumbungle Region is a diverse area offering beautiful scenery and accessible destinations.

Featuring the three National Parks areas of Warrumbungle, Pilliga and Coolah Tops, the area is a unique and scenic destination for visitors to the region.

In Warrumbungle, tourism supports an estimated 130 jobs, which is 4.2% of total employment. The largest sub-sector in Warrumbungle is Accommodation & Food Services with 98 jobs supported by tourists expenditure.

### 3.6 / Warrumbungle Shire Economic Overview

Home to 9,246 people, Warrumbungle Shire supports 3,123 jobs and has an economic output of \$1.007 billion. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing is the leading sector, generating \$371.9 million and providing 945 jobs (30.26% of employment). The Shire's strategic location on the Newell Highway and diverse landscapes, including the Warrumbungle National Park, position it uniquely for eco-tourism and astronomical tourism, given the Siding Springs Observatory's presence near Coonabarabran.

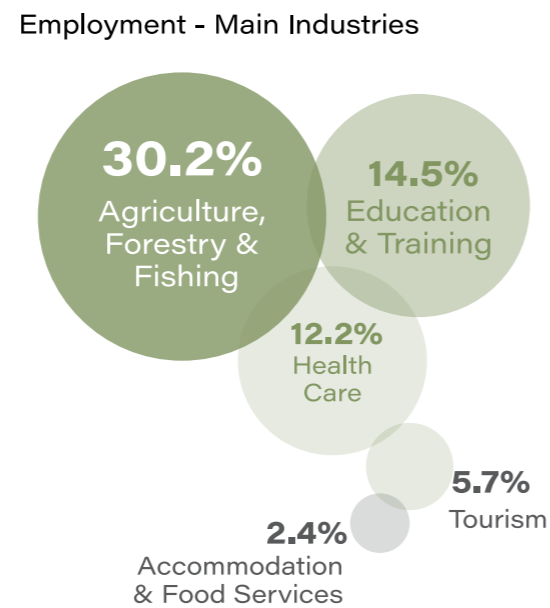
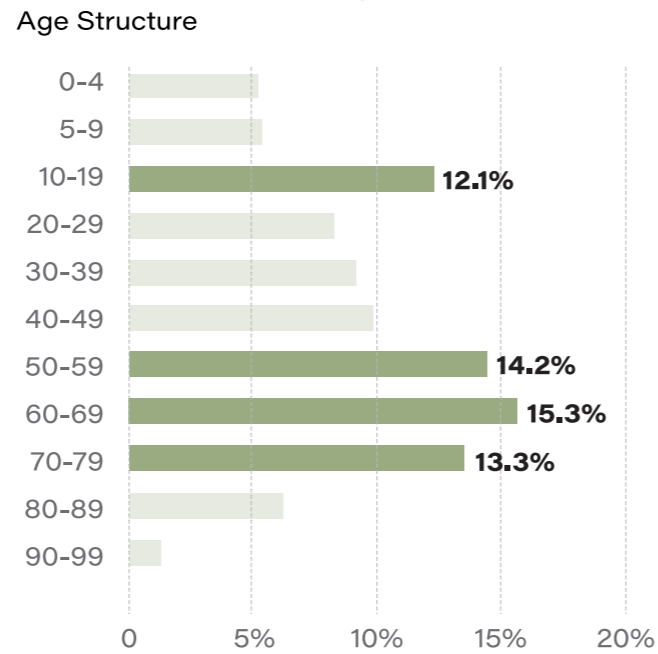
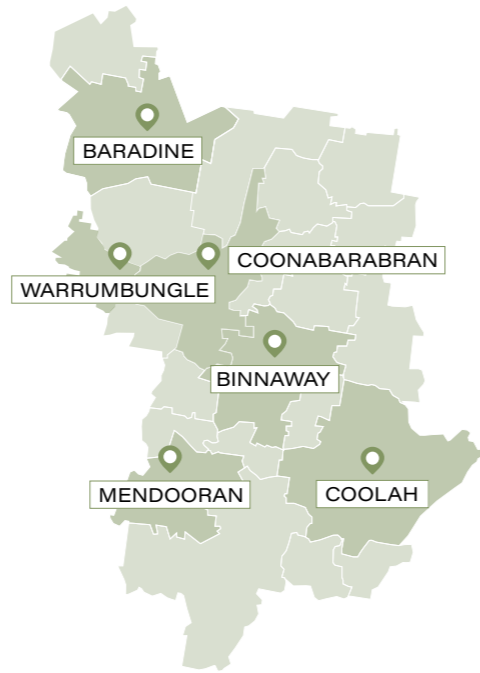
<b>Key Industries and Employment</b>	<b>Gross Regional Product (GRP)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The predominant industry sector is Agriculture, Forestry &amp; Fishing, contributing \$371.9 million to the economy, accounting for 36.94% of the total output.</li> <li>This sector is also the largest employer in the region, providing 945 jobs, representing 30.26% of total employment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRP is a crucial measure indicating the total value of goods and services produced in the region. Warrumbungle Shire's GRP calculation includes both nominal GRP, showing growth influenced by price changes, and real GRP, indicating growth at constant prices.</li> </ul>
<b>Geographic and Strategic Advantages</b>	<b>Opportunities for Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Warrumbungle Shire's strategic location on the Newell Highway, between Brisbane and Melbourne, enhances its connectivity and potential for economic activities.</li> <li>The diverse landscape, from plains to rugged mountainous peaks, provides varied opportunities for economic development, including tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strong agricultural base provides a foundation for agri-tourism and related diversification.</li> <li>Leveraging the unique astronomical features can enhance educational and experiential tourism.</li> <li>Strategic location along major highways offers opportunities for developing transportation and logistics hubs.</li> </ul>
<b>Unique Features and Opportunities</b>	<b>Collaboration Opportunities with Neighbouring Councils</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presence of the Siding Springs Observatory near Coonabarabran, renowned for its astronomical research, underlines the area's potential as the "Astronomy Capital of Australia".</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting regional tourism circuits that include Coonamble, Coonabarabran, and Gilgandra, as well as villages like Gulargonbone, Binnaway, Mendooran, and Tooraweenah, can create a comprehensive tourist experience. Seek opportunities to explore an extension of the Rail Trail concept.</li> <li>Joint marketing initiatives can showcase the region's diverse attractions, from agriculture and astronomy to natural beauty.</li> <li>Infrastructure development, like improved roads or tourist facilities, can benefit all councils and boost economic growth.</li> <li>Coordinating events and festivals across councils can attract a wider audience and promote the region's cultural diversity.</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism Sector</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism, a significant component of the local economy, supports approximately 178 jobs, which is 5.7% of the total employment in the region.</li> <li>The largest sub-sector within tourism is Accommodation &amp; Food Services, accounting for 143 jobs supported by tourist expenditure.</li> </ul>	

This overview provides a snapshot of Warrumbungle Shire's economic landscape, highlighting its strengths and potential areas for growth. Collaborative efforts with neighbouring councils can further enhance the region's economic and tourism prospects, leveraging each area's unique attributes.

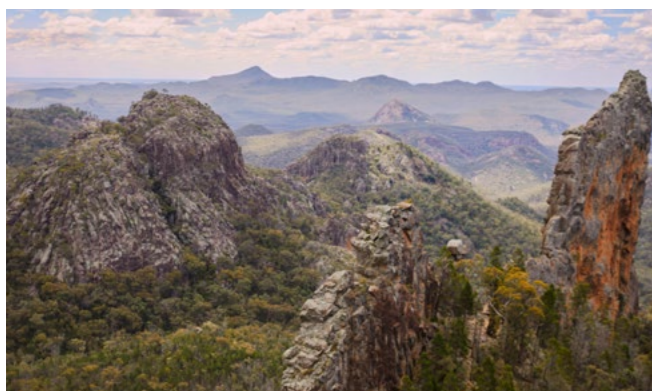
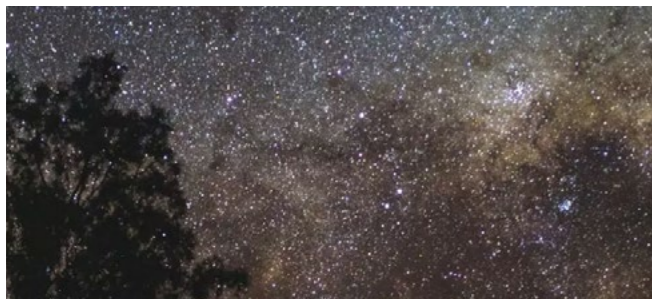
**Warrumbungle, located in the Central West region of NSW, Australia, is renowned for its stunning natural landscapes, astronomy opportunities, and outdoor adventures. Here are some of the top visitor attractions and events that Warrumbungle is known for:**

- Siding Spring Observatory - Warrumbungle
- Crystal Kingdom - Coonabarabran
- Warrumbungle National Park- Warrumbungle
- Camp Warrumbungle - Warrumbungle
- Warrumbungle Dark Sky Park- Warrumbungle
- Warrumbungle Dark Sky Weekend StarFest - Warrumbungle
- Coonabarabran Agricultural Show - Coonabarabran
- Warrumbungle Spring Wildflower Walks - Warrumbungle
- Pilliga Forest - Baradine
- Coolah Tops - Coolah
- Pilliga Pottery - Coonabarabran

These attractions and events in Warrumbungle offer visitors the opportunity to connect with nature, delve into astronomy, and engage in outdoor adventures. Whether it's exploring the national park's breathtaking landscapes, attending stargazing events, or embarking on bushwalking trails, Warrumbungle provides unforgettable experiences that highlight the region's natural beauty and astronomical significance.



Source: app.rempln.com.au



**Coolah Tops - Coolah**

Coolah Tops National Park is a playground for walkers and mountain bikers looking for a great cycling and camping experience. Spectacular views and magnificent waterfalls on walking trails and mountain bike tracks. Coolah Tops is home to an abundance of wildlife and birdlife, so you might see wallabies, eagles, gliders and rare owls.



**Pilliga Pottery - Coonabarabran**

Pilliga Pottery is a popular attraction in Coonabarabran that offers visitors the opportunity to explore a unique pottery studio and gallery. Visitors can witness the creation of pottery pieces, browse through a diverse range of handmade ceramics, and even participate in pottery workshops to learn the craft.



**Siding Spring Observatory - Warrumbungle**

Siding Spring Observatory is one of Australia's premier astronomical research facilities and a major draw for astronomy enthusiasts. Visitors can explore the observatory and learn about the fascinating world of astronomy through guided tours and public stargazing events. The dark skies of Warrumbungle make it an ideal location for observing stars, planets, and celestial objects.



**Crystal Kingdom - Coonabarabran**

Crystal Kingdom is a fascinating attraction that showcases a stunning collection of natural crystals, minerals, and fossils. Visitors can explore the exhibition and marvel at the dazzling displays, which highlight the geological wonders found in the region and beyond.



# 4.0 / ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESILIENCE CONDITIONS

## 4.1 / Environmental Considerations for Real Country

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041 highlights the focus on a "A sustainable and resilient place" through environmental asset goals for the region and directions for healthy and resilient communities and water resources, landscapes, character and cultural heritage.

This focus sets the context for the following analysis of opportunities and threats.



### OPPORTUNITIES

**Biodiversity Protection**  
The plan emphasises identifying and mapping high environmental value (HEV) land to avoid development on these lands and manage impacts on sensitive areas. It also highlights the importance of biodiversity corridors for ecological processes.

**Climate Change and Natural Hazards Resilience**  
The plan outlines objectives to build resilience against climate change and natural hazards, including upgrading water infrastructure, flood-proofing, and energy-efficient initiatives.

**Creating Great Places**  
Strategies to bring more activity to rivers in urban areas, including trails, walking and cycling paths, and commercial or retail reorientation towards waterways, are proposed. This includes protecting riverine environments and celebrating Aboriginal heritage.

**Dark Sky Park**  
The Siding Spring Observatory in the Warrumbungle National Park, a key astronomical site, is at the centre of a Dark Sky Region. The plan supports minimising light pollution to maintain the observatory's operations.

### THREATS

**Environmental Degradation**  
Development on HEV land and improper management of biodiversity corridors could lead to significant ecological damage.

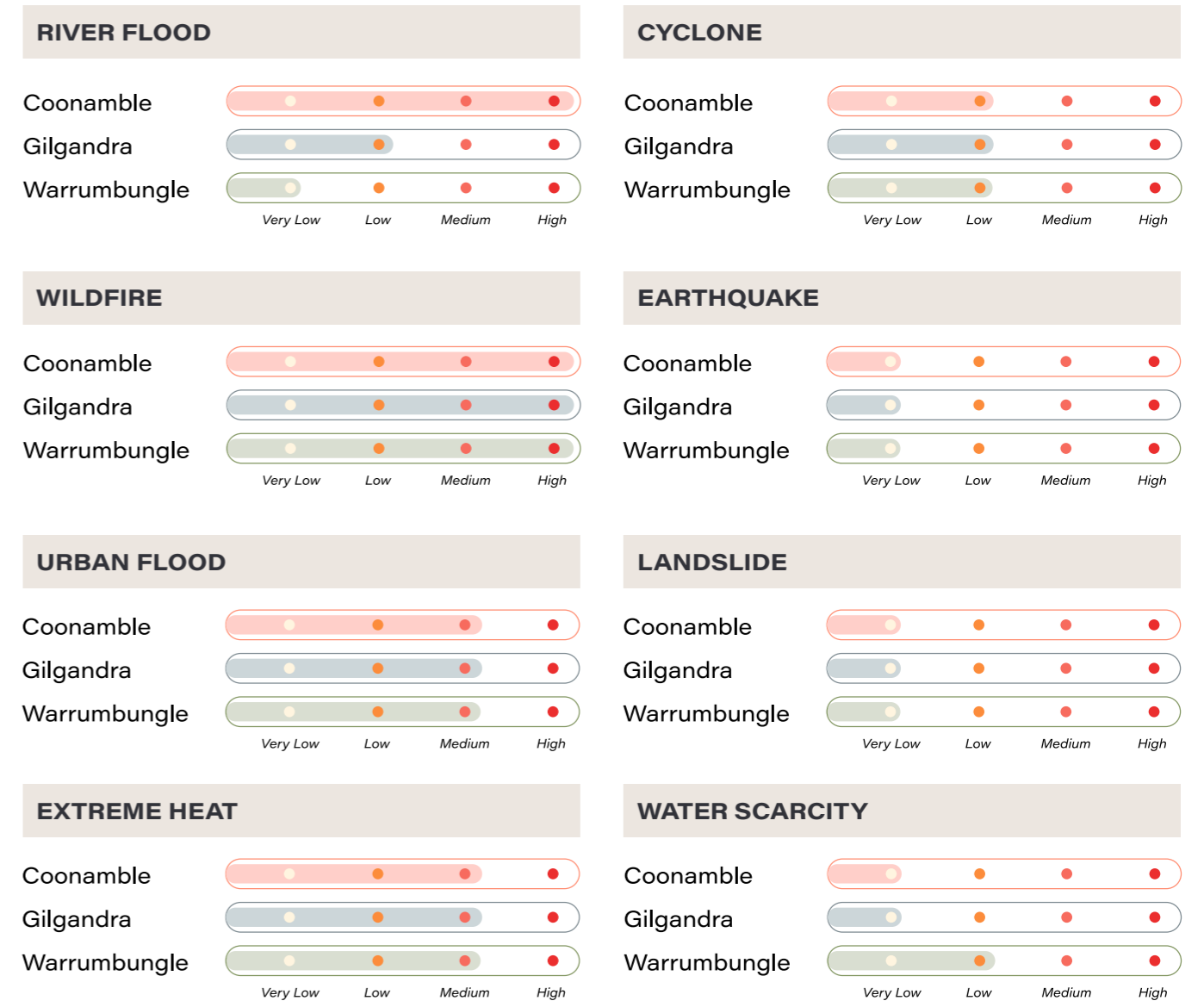
**Water Scarcity and Pollution**  
Inadequate management of water resources, especially in areas like the Macquarie Marshes and Lachlan Catchment, could lead to water scarcity and pollution.

**Climate Change Impacts**  
The region is prone to droughts, bushfires, and floods. Failure to effectively implement resilience strategies could lead to severe impacts on communities and ecosystems.

**Urban Development Pressures**  
If not managed sustainably, urban development near waterways could lead to environmental degradation and loss of cultural heritage.

**Light Pollution**  
Development in the Dark Sky Region without careful consideration of light pollution could impact the operations of the Siding Spring Observatory.

### Hazard Levels



Source: thinkhazard.org

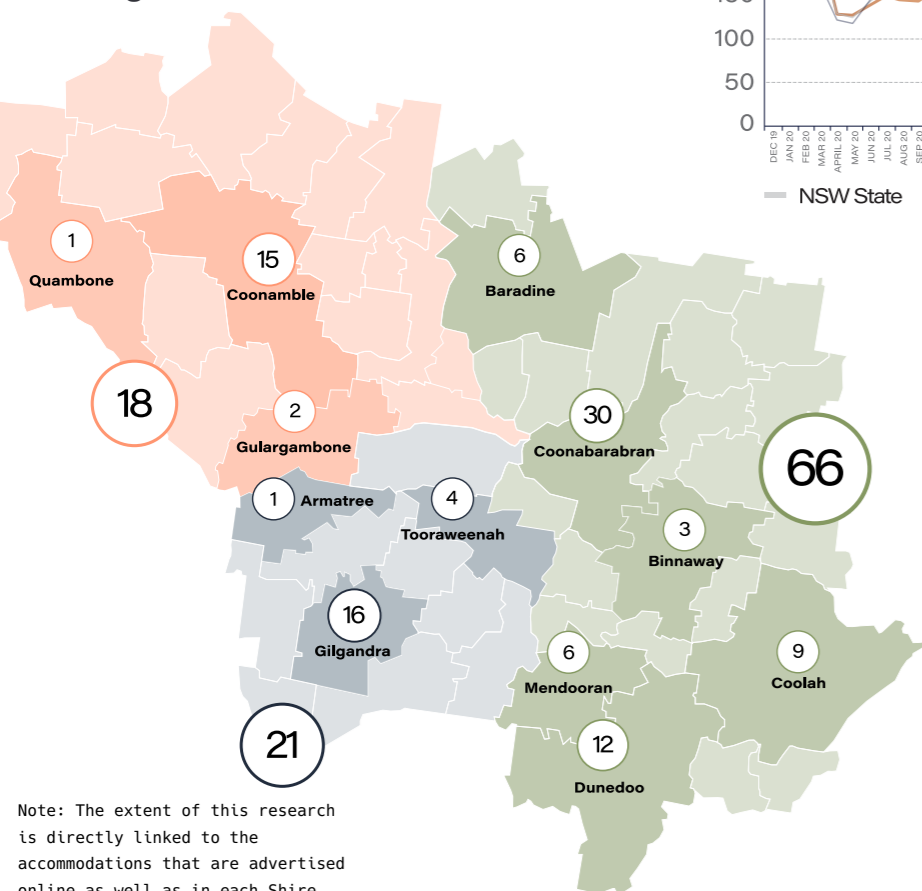
# 5.0 / TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION AND LOCAL SETTINGS

## 5.0 / Current Tourism Infrastructure

### Accommodation Assessment

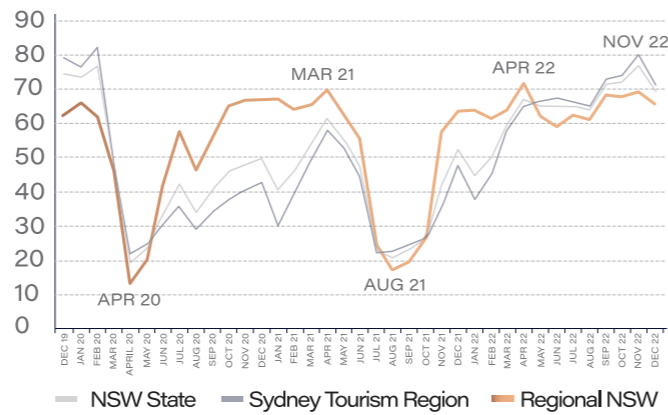
The occupancy rate in Regional NSW has been slowly decreasing since the end of the lockdown. However, the average daily rate is at an all-time high, and revenue has improved substantially since 2021. The majority of the 104 establishments recorded (through online data research) are traditional hotels (42.31%), indicating a strong presence of conventional hospitality businesses, followed by Airbnb listings and camping grounds accounting for 19.23%, catering for personalised stays and immersive nature experiences, as well as farm stays, though smallest in proportion at 3.85%, provide unique rural experiences. Approximately 63.46% are located in the Warrumbungle LGA.

### Number of Accommodations in each region

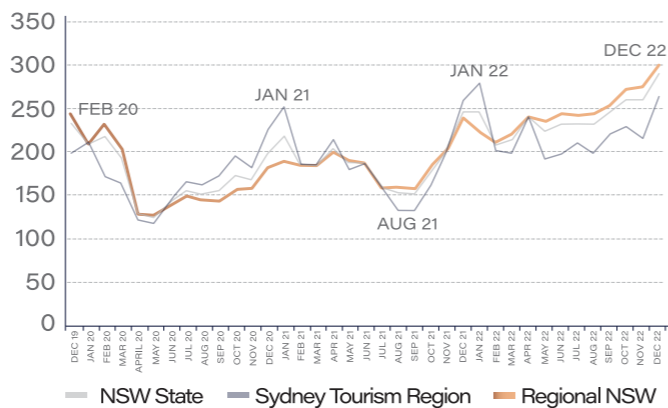


Note: The extent of this research is directly linked to the accommodations that are advertised online as well as in each Shire Council websites.

Occupancy Rate (%)



Average Daily rate (\$)



Cottages and cabins



Hotels and Motels

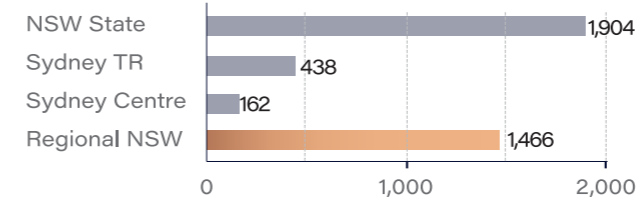


Camping grounds and caravan parks

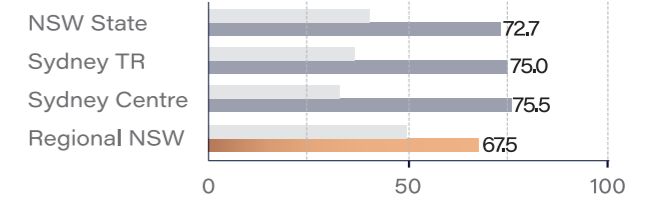
### Establishments with 10 rooms or more (Hotels and Serviced Apartments)

December Qtr 2021 (light grey) December Qtr 2022 (dark grey)

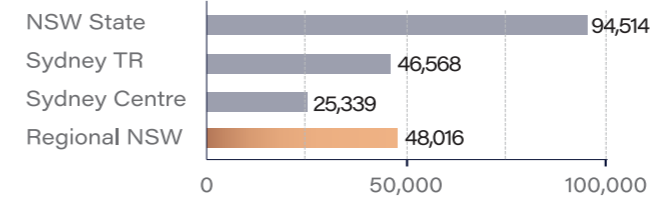
Establishments (No.)



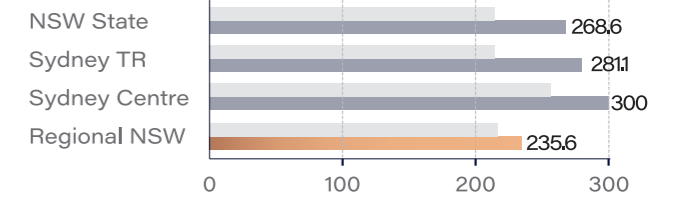
Occupancy Rate (%)



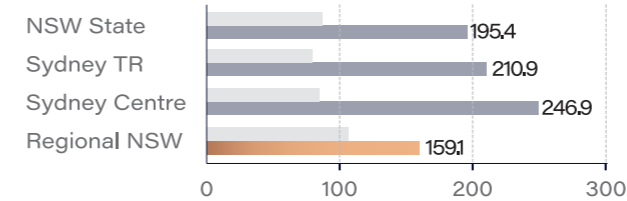
Rooms (No.)



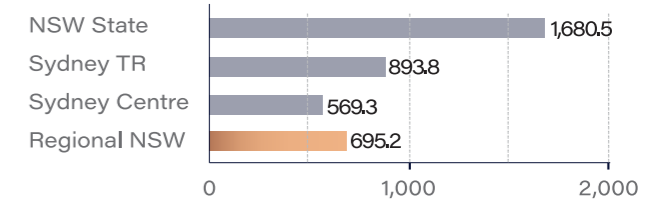
Average Daily Rate (\$)



Revenue Per Available Room (\$)



Takings from Accommodation (\$M)

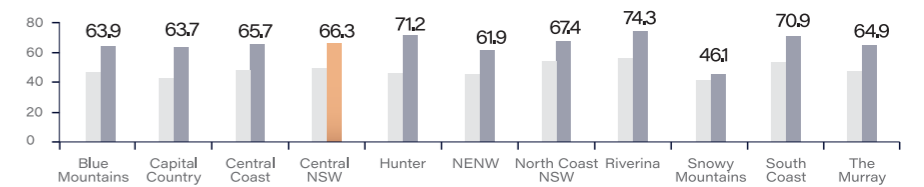


### How to add value

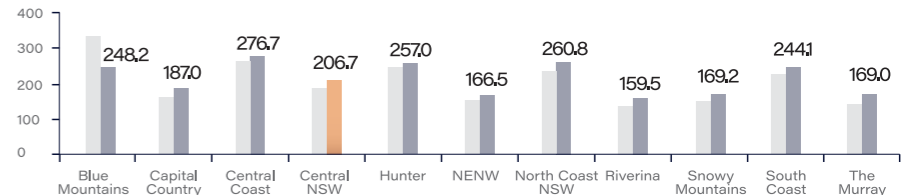
Compared to other regions in Regional NSW, there is an opportunity for increased occupancy rate, leveraging the interest in alternative forms of accommodation, particularly AirBnBs and camping sites, which together make up for approximately 56% of the Real Country accommodation offer.

Promoting off-peak travelling, tied to the current seasonal event offering in the Real Country, can lead to positive and vibrant visitor experiences, as well complementing existing camping and farm stay experiences with sustainable tourism initiatives. Partnering with local establishments for packaged deals that include visitor activities, meals and guided-tours could be a leading value-add for Real Country stays.

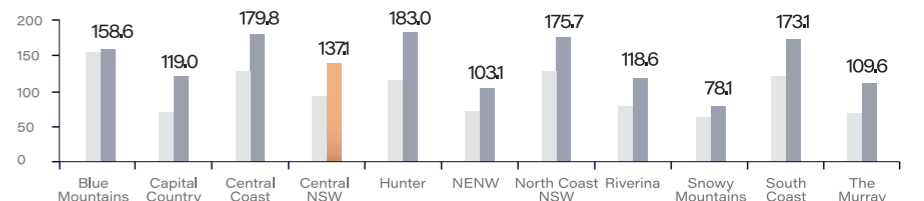
Occupancy Rate (%)



Average Daily Rate (\$)



Revenue Per Available Room(\$)



December Qtr 2021 (light grey) December Qtr 2022 (dark grey)



### 5.2 / Evaluation of Tourist Attractions and Accessibility

Within the Real Country there is an array of attractions that not only boast high Google ratings but also offer a broad spectrum of experiences, reflecting the region's genuine hospitality. The uniformly high ratings across attractions like the Coonamble Rodeo and Campdraft (4.4), Warrumbungle National Park (4.7), and the Siding Spring Observatory (4.5) prove the ability to deliver satisfying and memorable experiences.

Attraction Name	Location	Google Rating	Category
Coonamble Rodeo and Campdraft	Coonamble	★★★★★	Sporting Events
Macquarie Marshes	Coonamble		Natural Wonders
Coonamble Museum	Coonamble	★★★★★	Cultural Heritage
Warrumbungle National Park	Coonamble	★★★★★	Natural Wonders
Water Tower Art	Coonamble	★★★★★	Arts and Crafts
Outback Arts Gallery	Coonamble	★★★★★	Arts and Crafts
River Walk	Coonamble	★★★★★	Environmental/ Eco-tourism
Coo-ee Heritage Centre	Gilgandra	★★★★★	Cultural Heritage
Windmill Walk	Gilgandra		Environmental/ Eco-tourism
Gilgandra Museum and Historical Society	Gilgandra	★★★★★	Cultural Heritage
Observatory	Gilgandra		Astronomy
Gilgandra Jockey Club	Gilgandra	★★★★★	Sporting Events
Speedway	Gilgandra	★★★★★	Sporting Events
Flora Reserve	Gilgandra	★★★★★	Natural Wonders
Historical Walk	Gilgandra		Cultural Heritage
Orana Cactus World	Gilgandra	★★★★★	Natural Wonders
Siding Spring Observatory	Warrumbungle	★★★★★	Astronomy
Crystal Kingdom	Warrumbungle	★★★★★	Cultural Heritage
Dark Sky Park	Warrumbungle	★★★★★	Astronomy
Wildflower Walks	Warrumbungle		Environmental/ Eco-tourism
Pilliga Forest	Warrumbungle	★★★★★	Natural Wonders
Coolah Tops	Warrumbungle	★★★★★	Natural Wonders
Pilliga Pottery	Warrumbungle	★★★★★	Arts and Crafts

#### How to add value

Leveraging the high Google ratings and positive visitor feedback is instrumental in enhancing the region's reputation for quality experiences, which can be achieved through targeted digital marketing campaigns that highlight these ratings and showcase visitor testimonials. Investing in the promotion of lesser-known attractions, adding them to Google Maps and other rating platforms, should also be prioritised.

### SWOT Analysis

#### Strengths

- High Google ratings across a variety of attractions, indicating strong hospitality and high visitor satisfaction.
- Diverse range of attractions experiences, appealing to a broad audience.
- Strong presence in arts and crafts, and nature, showcasing the region's rich cultural and environmental heritage.
- Strategic positioning of attractions like Warrumbungle National Park and Siding Spring Observatory, capitalising on unique natural and astronomical features.

#### Weaknesses

- Some attractions have not yet been rated on Google, which may not fully reflect their true value and appeal.
- Potential gaps in visitor experiences, such as diverse options for entertainment and night time activities.

#### Opportunities:

- Utilising high ratings to enhance the region's reputation for quality experiences and exceptional hospitality.
- Expanding the range of attractions and experiences to attract different visitor demographics and interests.
- Developing targeted marketing campaigns to promote lesser-known attractions and increase their visibility and appeal.

#### Threats

- Over-reliance on a limited number of attractions could lead to sustainability issues and put undue pressure on these sites.
- Environmental and ecological threats that could impact natural attractions, necessitating proactive conservation and sustainability efforts.



# 6.0 / TARGET MARKET

## 6.1 / Visitor Gap Analysis

Understanding the target market is crucial for designing effective marketing strategies that resonate with the desires and preferences of potential visitors. The Real Country appeal to a diverse range of travellers seeking an authentic country experience, nature-based activities, cultural exploration, and affordable yet memorable adventures.

Through comprehensive market research, we have begun to understand in more detail the different market segments and how they are interacting in the Central West region.

### Domestic Travellers

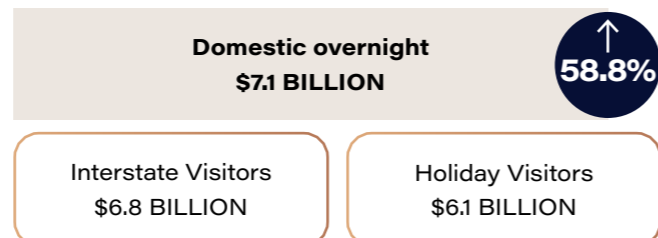
The domestic market represents a significant portion of visitors to Central West NSW. This segment includes families, couples, solo travellers, and friends seeking a break from urban life. They are motivated by the opportunity to reconnect with nature, experience the charm of rural Australia, and explore off-the-beaten-path destinations. They value affordability, unique experiences, and warm hospitality.

### International Travellers

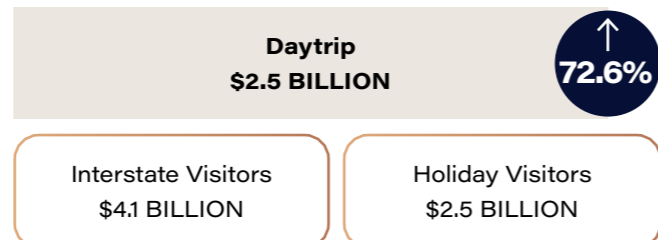
International travellers, including adventure enthusiasts, nature lovers, and cultural explorers, are drawn to Central West NSW for its untouched landscapes, diverse wildlife, and authentic cultural experiences. This segment includes travellers from countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Asia-Pacific regions. They are motivated by the desire to immerse themselves in the local culture, encounter unique wildlife, and witness the breathtaking natural beauty of the region.

### Regional NSW

#### Domestic overnight expenditure growth

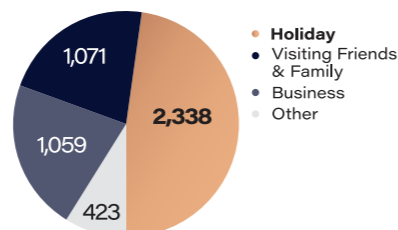


#### Daytrip expenditure growth

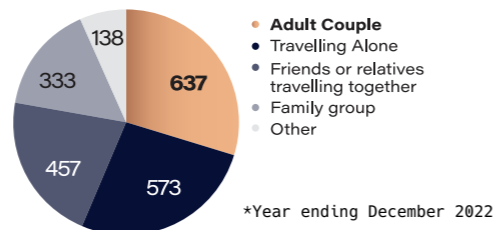


\*Year ending March 2023

#### Purpose of Visit (overnight + daytrip 2022)



#### Travel Party (overnight 2022)



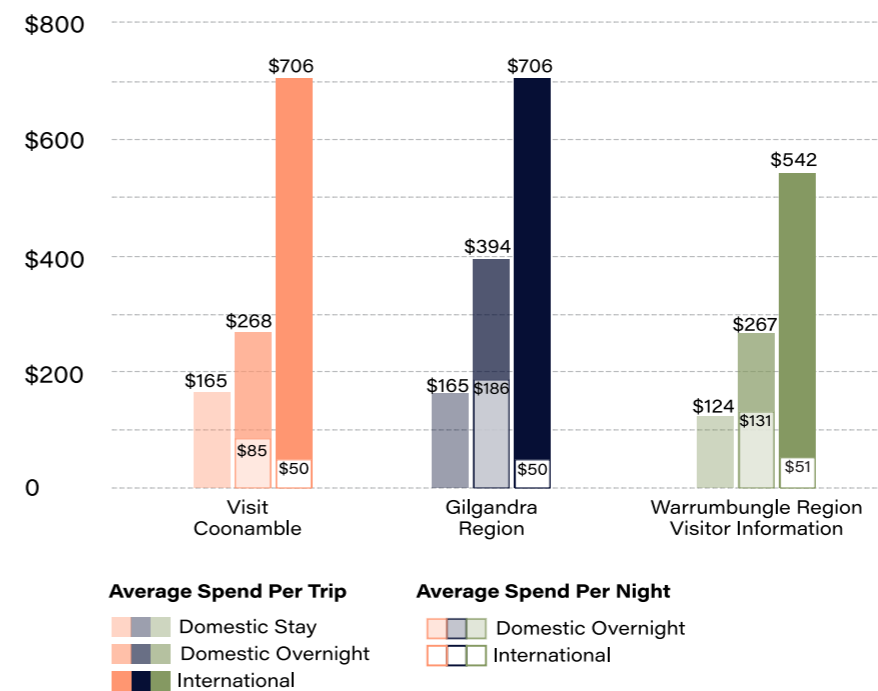
\*Year ending December 2022

With \$30 billion in domestic overnight visitor spend and 36 million domestic overnight visitors recorded in NSW for the year ending March 2023, the potential for tapping into this rich tourism market in the Real Country has never been clearer. The most recent data shows that regional NSW contributed significantly to this growth, with domestic overnight expenditure rising by 58.8% to reach \$7.1 billion

### The Real Country Region

The following profile data is derived from surveys and provides broad guidance regarding average visitor expenditure in each LGA. Domestic day visitors to Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle are estimated to spend an average of \$124-165 per trip.

For those domestic visitors who stay overnight it is either 2 or 3 nights, the average spend per night is estimated as low as \$85 in the case of Warrumbungle and as high as \$186 for Gilgandra, and for international visitors staying 11-14 nights it can range from \$542 is \$50-51. It is important to note that these estimated rates of expenditure reflect averages across many types of visitors. For instance, some visitors stay in paid accommodation, while others will stay with their family or friends.



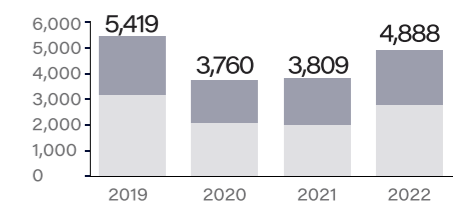
Source Coonamble Shire: ABS 2021 Census Place of Work Employment (Scaled), ABS 2020 / 2021 National Input Output Tables, ABS June 2022 Gross State Product, and ABS 2021 / 2022 Tourism Satellite Account.

Source Gilgandra Shire: ABS 2021 Census Place of Work Employment (Scaled), ABS 2020 / 2021 National Input Output Tables, ABS June 2022 Gross State Product, ABS 2021 / 2022 Tourism Satellite Account, TRA 2019 Gilgandra (A) Local Government Area Tourism Profile - Domestic Overnight Visitors. Destination NSW March 2020 Central NSW Regional Tourism Profile - Domestic Day & International Visitors.

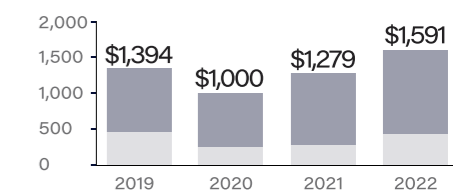
Source Warrumbungle Shire: ABS 2021 Census Place of Work Employment (Scaled), ABS 2020 / 2021 National Input Output Tables, ABS June 2022 Gross State Product, ABS 2021 / 2022 Tourism Satellite Account, and TRA 2019 Warrumbungle (A) Local Government Area Tourism Profile.

### Central West Domestic Travel

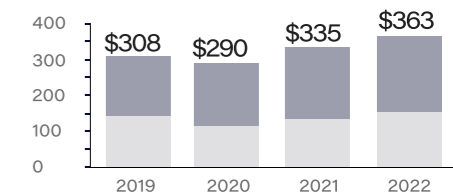
#### Visitors



#### Expenditure (\$M)



#### Spend per Visitor (\$)



Source: National and International Visitor Surveys, TRA.

Daytrip Overnight

### Top 5 Activities (NSW)



Source: National and International Visitor Surveys, TRA.

## 6.2 / Types of Tourism

The following data aims to develop a gap analysis with data from the 2019 National and International Visitor Surveys, collected by Tourism Research Australia, looking at snapshots of different types of tourism - **nature-based** tourism, **culture & heritage** tourism, **food** tourism, **caravan & parking** travel, and **aboriginal** tourism. The gap analysis establishes a strategic foundation for developing the Real Country's visitation profile. It serves as a benchmark for pre-pandemic tourism levels and offers an in-depth understanding of the diverse types of tourism that can be explored and

leveraged through the Real Country tourism initiatives. By addressing the unique demands of various tourism sectors, the analysis enables well-rounded and appealing visitor experience programming. Regarding visitor numbers and expenditure levels, the predominance of nature-based tourism is striking, however, culture & heritage tourism proves to be a valuable type of tourism for the state. Food, caravan travel, and aboriginal tourism experiences are particularly interesting for the Real Country context and therefore are included in the present analysis.



### Nature-based tourism and Astronomy Enthusiasts

Central West NSW, particularly Coonabarabran, holds a significant appeal for astronomy enthusiasts. These individuals, including amateur astronomers, astrophotographers, and stargazers, are attracted to the region's pristine night skies and world-class observatories. They seek opportunities to observe celestial phenomena, participate in stargazing events, and engage in educational experiences related to astronomy.



### Nature Lovers and Adventure Seekers

The region's diverse landscapes, including national parks, rivers, and hills, attract nature lovers and adventure seekers. This segment is drawn to activities such as hiking, bird watching, camping, fishing, kayaking, cycling, mountain biking, dirt biking, and horse riding. They value opportunities for outdoor exploration, wildlife encounters, and adrenaline-pumping adventures.



### Culture and Heritage Enthusiasts

Central West NSW's rich cultural heritage appeals to travellers interested in exploring the region's indigenous traditions, pioneering history, arts, and crafts. This segment seeks cultural tours, historical sites, museums, art galleries, and local festivals. They appreciate authentic experiences, interaction with local communities, and opportunities to learn about the region's unique heritage.



### Food Tourism and Culinary Enthusiasts

This segment comprises travellers who have a strong interest in food and culinary experiences. They seek out destinations that offer unique gastronomic delights, local flavors, and farm-to-table experiences. Culinary enthusiasts are likely to be passionate about exploring the Central West region's food culture, trying local specialties, and engaging with the local culinary community.



### Caravan and parking travel Enthusiasts

Attracted to the availability of caravan and campsites in all 3 LGAs the Central West NSW is an attractive destination on the caravanning circuit. This segment comprises individuals and families who enjoy the freedom and flexibility of traveling in caravans, motorhomes, or RVs. They are attracted to destinations that offer well-equipped caravan parks, campgrounds, and facilities that cater to their specific needs.



### Aboriginal Tourism Enthusiasts

This segment comprises travellers interested in the historical significance and heritage of Aboriginal communities in the Central West region. They are drawn to destinations that offer insights into the ancient traditions, art, language, and stories of Aboriginal peoples. Historical and heritage sites, museums, and interpretive centres that showcase the region's Aboriginal history can capture the interest of this segment.

Visitors	37.0 M
Nights	140.9 M
Expenditure	\$24.0 Bn

Visitors	14.1 M
Nights	83.1 M
Expenditure	\$14.3 Bn

Visitors	5.2 M
Nights	57.4 M
Expenditure	\$9.0 Bn

Visitors	3.7 M
Nights	13.5 M
Expenditure	\$2.0 Bn

Visitors	514 K
Nights	13.1 M
Expenditure	\$1.6 Bn

Source: National and International Visitor Surveys, TRA.

### 6.3 / User Personas

In the competitive tourism market, understanding the target audience in detail is essential. Using visitor data has facilitated the creation of various marketing personas, each mirroring real behavioural trends and preferences of visitors. These personas help in gaining a deeper insight into the audience, which is instrumental in customising Real Country's messaging, offerings, and marketing strategies to cater to the distinct needs of each segment.

Personalisation has become fundamental in successful marketing. By identifying the distinct preferences, motivations, and behaviours of target audience segments, it's possible to offer marketing strategies that are more relevant, engaging, and effective.

The use of data to establish marketing personas enables the crafting of highly personalised marketing campaigns. Instead of a generic approach, there's the opportunity to create messages and experiences that truly resonate with each persona, enhancing the visitor experience and increasing engagement and loyalty.

**Employing data to develop marketing personas sharpens the focus on visitors, seeing them as individuals rather than a uniform mass. This approach is central to the design of marketing strategies, allowing for more effective engagement with and satisfaction of visitors, thus improving the overall success of tourism in the Real Country.**



**Rachel**  
*International Solo Adventurer*

She's adventurous and independent, always looking for off-the-beaten-track experiences, Rachel is a solo travel from overseas who's eager to find about all the hidden gems, sit with the locals at the pub, wander through all the best hikes. Rachel seeks experiences that let her truly understand and engage with the destination she is visiting.

**Rachel loves outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling, and wildlife spotting. She also enjoys immersing herself in local culture by visiting museums, historical sites, and local markets.**



**Sam & Eva**  
*Young Digital Nomad Couple*

Sam and Eva are a young couple travelling in a caravan. They are digital nomads who work remotely, allowing them to stay in one place longer. They need accommodation options that can cater to their lifestyle, such as places with good internet access.

**In their downtime, they enjoy exploring local attractions, trying out new cuisines, and participating in local events. They might also enjoy outdoor activities like hiking or kayaking.**



**John & Mary**  
*Active Retirees*

John and Mary are a semi-retired couple (like 45% of domestic visitors over 55) from Sydney who love to travel, but are keen to stay domestic. They have a high disposable income and are looking for new destinations to add to their bucket list. They enjoy active and immersive experiences and love engaging with the local scene and often choose to travel outside of peak periods to avoid the crowd.

**They enjoy active pursuits like walking, golfing, or bird-watching. They're also interested in local history, arts, and culture, and would enjoy attending concerts, exhibitions, and historical tours.**



**The Taylors**  
*Regional Family*

The Taylors are a family from regional NSW who travel primarily for social activities, just like 92% of regional NSW families do. They often visit friends in different regions and prefer convenience in planning their trips, a frequent pattern in domestic family visitors, of whom 84% book accommodation online and 16% book activities online.

**Their hobbies are likely diverse, including outdoor activities like swimming or cycling, attending local festivals or events, and visiting family-friendly attractions like zoos or adventure parks.**



**Dylan, Olivia, Emily, Aidan & Mia**  
*The weekenders*

Travelling from Lithgow with all their friends for the long weekend, these groups of friends are ready to make memories in the Real Country during their summer break.

**Eating out, adventure packages, pubs and festivals.**



### 6.4 / Tourism Forecast

Forecast for visitors and trends in tourism

#### TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES



Visitors want to go further than just seeing the sites, they want to connect with the place, get to know the intricate stories behind them and travel meaningfully, creating community and memories - 55% of visitors wish to meet new people while away. Rural experiences continue to be desired by domestic visitors planning city escapes.

#### 60,000 OLD CULTURE

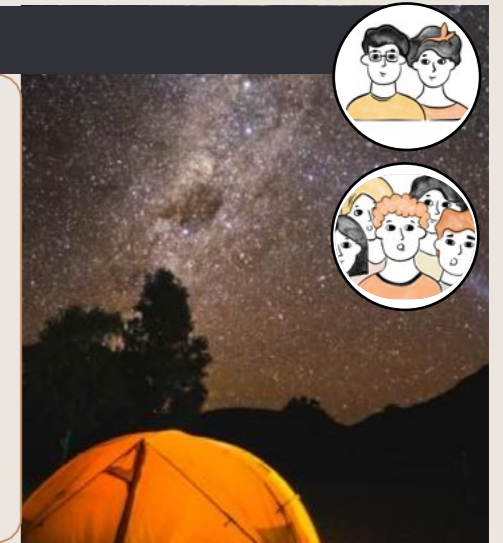


Exploring country Australia, with an arts and culture scene that stretches back over 60,000 years, with legendary stories shared by locals and inspired by the spectacular night-sky, where you can admire our galaxy like nowhere else.

#### AN ODYSSEY JOURNEY

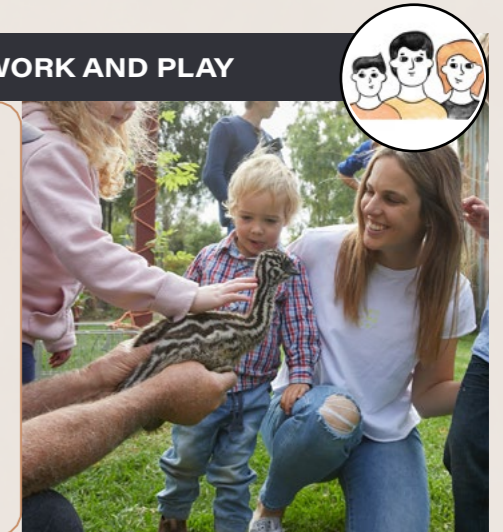


Leveraging the geotrails and nature-based adventures to offer a diverse journey to the ultimate feeling of freedom, exploring the landscape from deeply carved gorges, plunging waterfalls and rich discoveries underground.



#### EDVENTURES - MIXING WORK AND PLAY

Providing visitors, especially families, opportunities for interactive learning and education while on holiday, through workshops and immersive experiences with Real Country's heritage, aboriginal and natural assets.



# 7.0 / COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

## WHAT WE HAVE HEARD

### 7.1 / Engagement Process

The engagement process, designed to complement existing research, has explored the collective desires of the community, key stakeholders, and industry partners. Through a series of workshops, interviews, surveys, and engagement efforts, the voices and aspirations of each local community have been heard and incorporated into the strategic planning process.

Recurrent themes during engagement sessions include considerations on tourism efforts, which should emphasise cultural and historic experiences, unique events and seasonal and nature-based activities. Niche opportunities, such as agri-tourism, sky observation and local stories have also been explored with the aim of having a diversified tourism strategy, in which technology was also highlighted as a tool to be leveraged in the Real Country context.

The need for improved accessibility and connectivity was also a key theme across engagement sessions, particularly regarding town connection and river accessibility. Infrastructure and amenity provision should accommodate growth, along with the focus for regenerative river health and natural landscapes.

Engagement participants have also highlighted the willingness of the community to be engaged in the Real Country project, as well as the need to engage different age groups. Business support should also be a priority to ensure a diverse offer mix, accommodation provision and a vibrant local economy.



A comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement program has provided valuable insights to inform the Real Country Strategic Destination Plan catalyst infrastructure and marketing projects.

[To view this report click here](#)

### 7.2 / Summary of Outcomes

#### Coonamble

Participants underscored the river's importance, viewing it as the town's core, with a focus on its restoration and accessibility. Wareena Weir is envisaged as a future hub for leisure and recreation, while revitalisation plans for the main street aim to boost the town's vibrancy and economic resilience. There is a strong advocacy for more accommodation to support tourism, with the preservation of historical features being vital, especially for the main street buildings. Community engagement has been robust, showing a collaborative spirit to reinforce the regional identity.

#### Gilgandra

Workshop participants advocated for continual renewal of the CBD and Miller Street priorities as well as river crossings to enhance connectivity and public enjoyment. River health remains a top priority, with proposals to position any proposed town beach in a shaded area under the Jack Renshaw Bridge. Emphasising cultural inclusivity and First Nations heritage is crucial, alongside promoting primary industries to highlight Gilgandra's agricultural history. The creation of an accessible walking track is aimed at optimising public spaces, fostering unity that capitalises on collective strengths.

#### Tooraweenah

Participants expressed a desire to leverage the area's natural attractions and proximity to the Warrumbungle National Park. Enhancing communication tools, wayfinding, promoting tourism through events, and supporting local businesses form part of a broader strategy to develop the village's potential. Initiatives such as the Local Village Walk and geocaching are viewed as methods to attract visitors and strengthen regional tourism.

#### Coonabarabran

Coonabarabran's engagement highlights the importance of infrastructure adaptable to its distinct seasonal climate, with a focus on the river's health and the town's ecological balance. First Nations culture is central to the town's identity, with a desire to celebrate art and the main street's role as a connector of key areas. The town's dark sky is seen as a unique asset, with potential to enhance night-time experiences and stargazing opportunities.

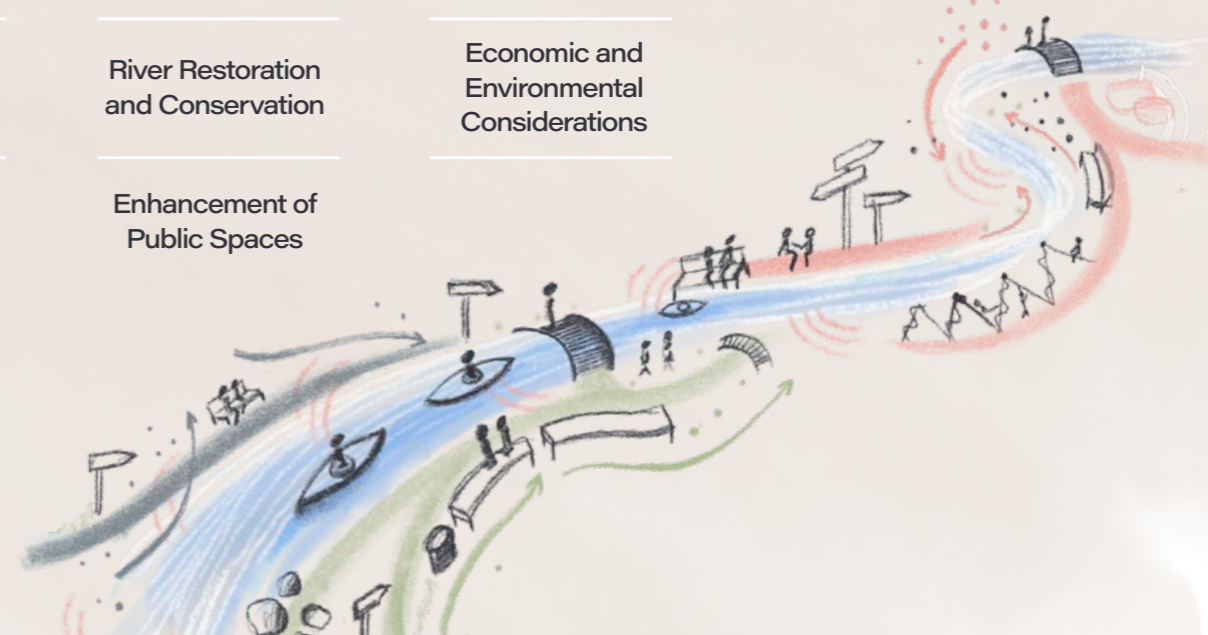
#### Binnaway

The community expressed pride in its historical roots and is committed to preserving its character despite environmental challenges. There is an enthusiasm for expanding tourism initiatives such as cycle trails, bird watching, and events, focusing particularly on river health and Aboriginal cultural tourism. Working in tandem with the community action plan is regarded as a positive step forward.

#### Mendooran

Participants reflected on the unique aspects of Mendooran, celebrated for its murals and picturesque landscapes. The community shows enthusiasm for enhancing river access and promoting local businesses. Addressing approval challenges and engaging with recreational trends like cycling are identified as opportunities. There's also a focus on river health and sustainable community practices.

### 7.3 / Key Themes



SECTION B

# CREATING A COORDINATED VISION FOR REAL COUNTRY

## 8.0 / VISION FOR REAL COUNTRY

### 8.1 / Overview of the Shared Vision

The vision of the project seeks to grow Real Country region into a regional experience destination, provide economic support outside of the agricultural industry, engage with communities, enhance natural assets, drive community and visitor access, increase visitation and overnight stays, increase education, provide cultural experience and wellbeing opportunities, improve space for events, and leverage natural assets with initiatives of activities, art and scapes.

### Cultivating Core Character with the Castlereagh River as a Tourism Beacon

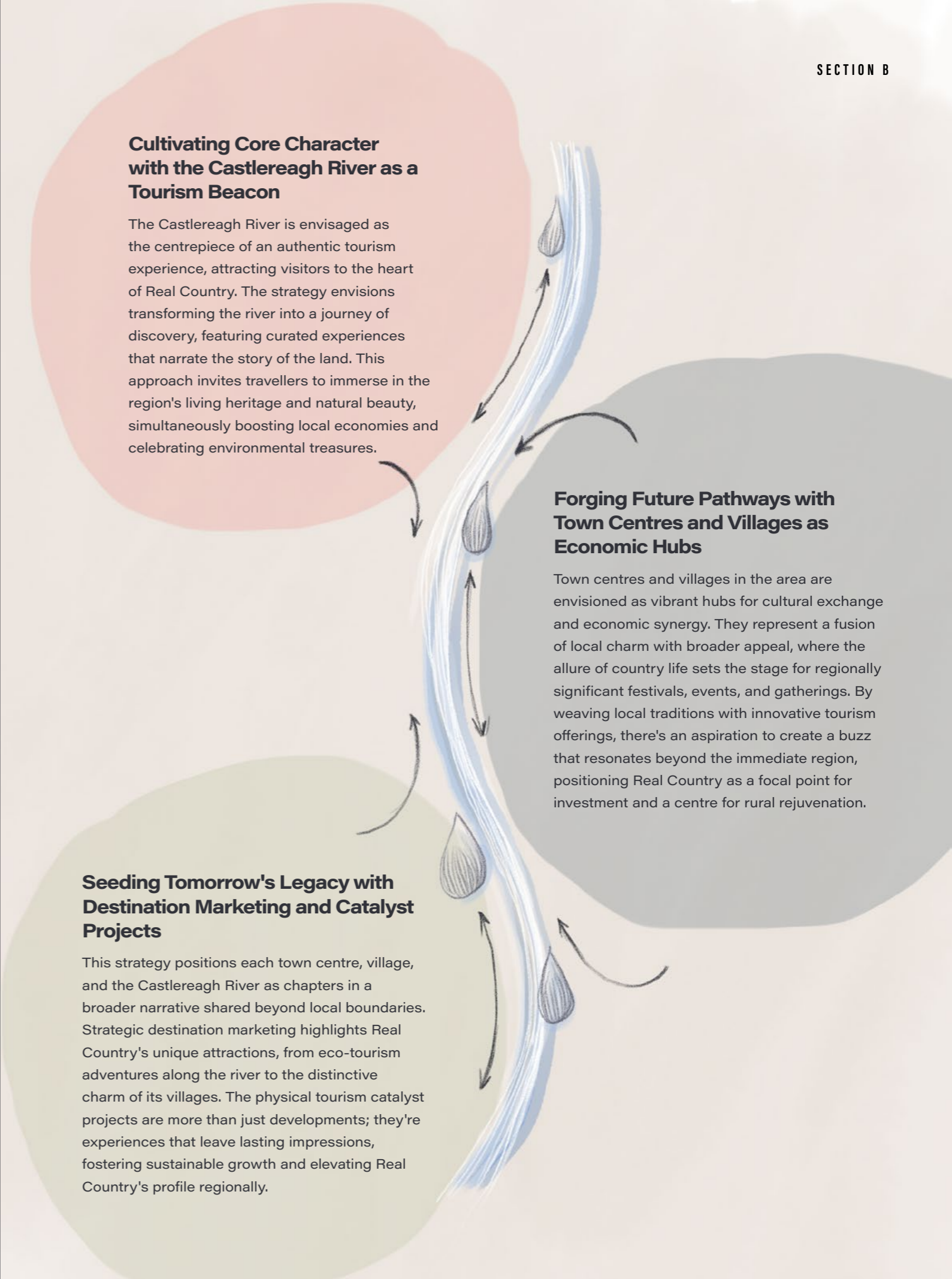
The Castlereagh River is envisaged as the centrepiece of an authentic tourism experience, attracting visitors to the heart of Real Country. The strategy envisions transforming the river into a journey of discovery, featuring curated experiences that narrate the story of the land. This approach invites travellers to immerse in the region's living heritage and natural beauty, simultaneously boosting local economies and celebrating environmental treasures.

### Forging Future Pathways with Town Centres and Villages as Economic Hubs

Town centres and villages in the area are envisioned as vibrant hubs for cultural exchange and economic synergy. They represent a fusion of local charm with broader appeal, where the allure of country life sets the stage for regionally significant festivals, events, and gatherings. By weaving local traditions with innovative tourism offerings, there's an aspiration to create a buzz that resonates beyond the immediate region, positioning Real Country as a focal point for investment and a centre for rural rejuvenation.

### Seeding Tomorrow's Legacy with Destination Marketing and Catalyst Projects

This strategy positions each town centre, village, and the Castlereagh River as chapters in a broader narrative shared beyond local boundaries. Strategic destination marketing highlights Real Country's unique attractions, from eco-tourism adventures along the river to the distinctive charm of its villages. The physical tourism catalyst projects are more than just developments; they're experiences that leave lasting impressions, fostering sustainable growth and elevating Real Country's profile regionally.



## 9.0 / PLACE FRAMEWORK

### 9.1 / Definition of the Place Framework the 3 clear goals of the Place Strategy

#### NATURES AND RIVER'S PULSE

Capturing the local river's vitality and prospects for public space vitality.

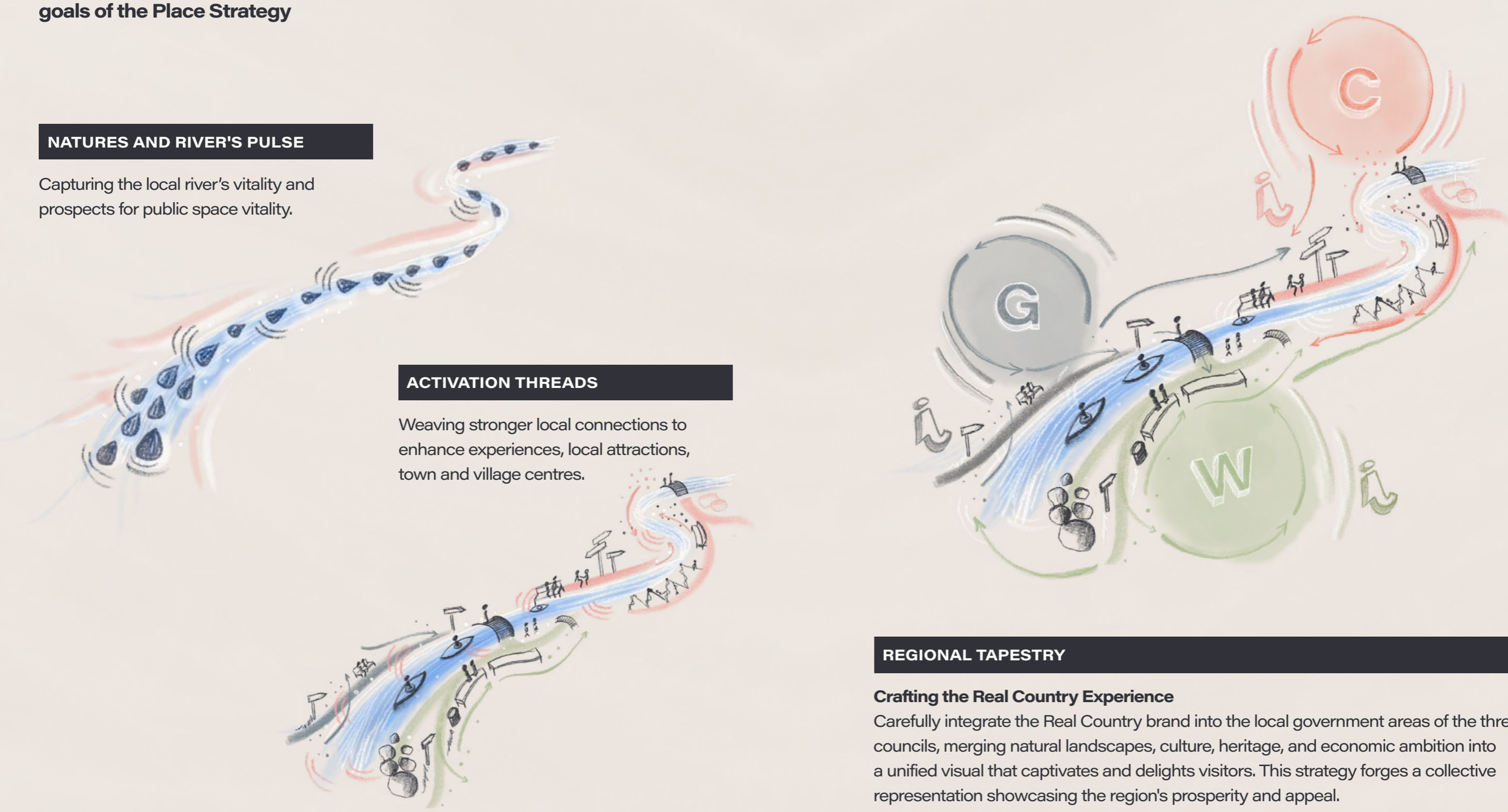
#### ACTIVATION THREADS

Weaving stronger local connections to enhance experiences, local attractions, town and village centres.

#### REGIONAL TAPESTRY

##### Crafting the Real Country Experience

Carefully integrate the Real Country brand into the local government areas of the three councils, merging natural landscapes, culture, heritage, and economic ambition into a unified visual that captivates and delights visitors. This strategy forges a collective representation showcasing the region's prosperity and appeal.



# 10.0 / STRATEGIC DIRECTION

## 10.1 / Strategic Pillars

### 1 / Nurture River Health

Prioritise river rehabilitation and conservation projects to improve water quality, biodiversity, and ecological resilience, ensuring the river remains the vibrant lifeblood of the region. Acknowledge, celebrate and prioritise the role of First Nations in ensuring a healthy river in alignment with their connection to Country.

### 2 / Celebrate First Nations Legacy

Commit to a deep and respectful integration of First Nations wisdom, ensuring that the stewardship of land and cultural practices is not only recognised but also cherished within the Real Country narrative, allowing their stories and perspectives to enrich and guide the region's identity and development. This celebration of heritage will intertwined from educational programs to tourism experiences, fostering a sense of place and history.

### 3 / Champion Environmental and Cultural Stewardship

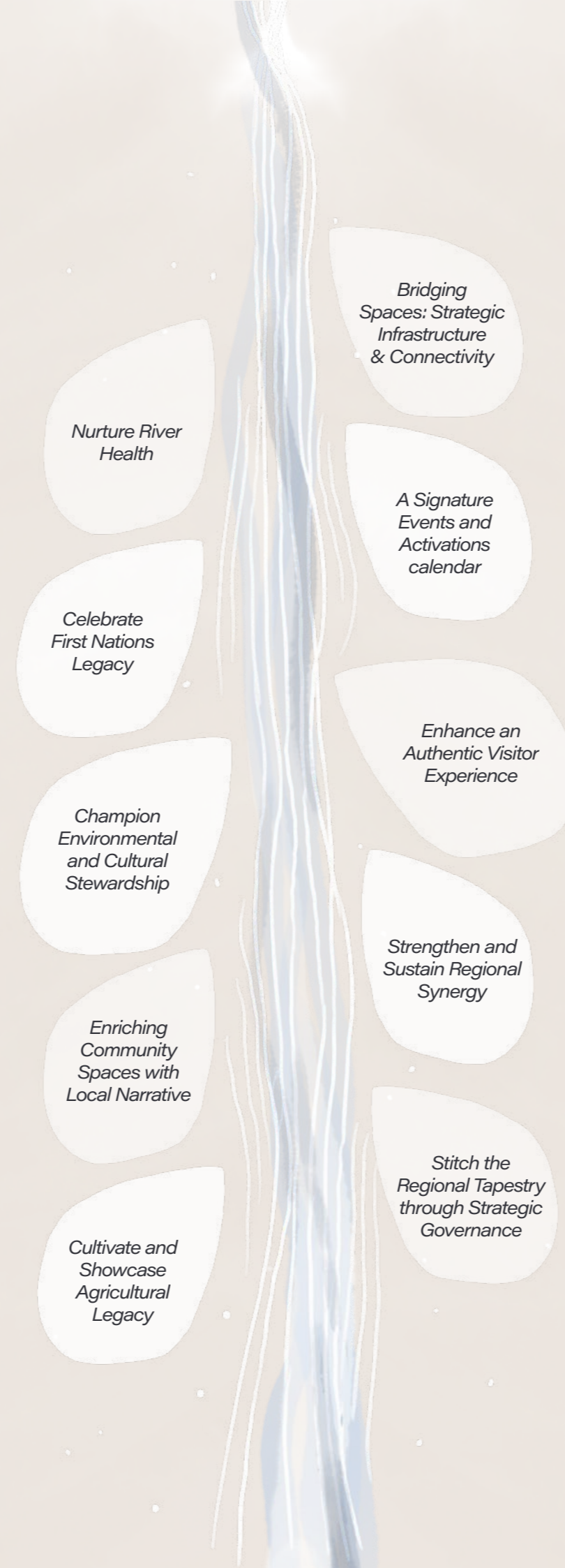
Implement sustainable practices that protect and showcase the region's natural landscapes and cultural heritage, with a focus on environmental education and ethical tourism and a balance between ecological integrity, community needs and visitor enjoyment.

### 4 / Enriching Community Spaces with Local Narrative

Transform the town centre and river areas into vibrant hubs of public life that foster community gatherings, cultural showcases, and seasonal festivities. By enhancing these spaces with thoughtful amenities and clear signage, we create welcoming environments for shared learning and connection. Simultaneously, by weaving in the Real Country's unique cultural, historical, and ecological stories, public spaces will contribute to the visitor experience, spark community pride and ensure that each space not only serves a functional purpose but also becomes a living celebration of the Real Country's story.

### 5 / Cultivate and Showcase Agricultural Legacy

Develop and promote attractions and experiences that bring to life the narrative of the land. Create educational pathways that allow visitors and locals alike to engage with the agricultural journey, from seed to table, reinforcing the connection between the community, the environment, and the food we consume. By integrating agritourism with cultural storytelling, the Real Country will offer a holistic view of the region's agricultural evolution, celebrating the past, present, and future of farming as a cornerstone of the Real Country's identity and economy.



### 6 / Bridging Spaces: Strategic Infrastructure and Connectivity

Deliver infrastructure and connectivity projects through a holistic strategy that intertwines the various threads of physical, technological, and community infrastructure, maximising connectivity across the Real Country by facilitating access, stimulating economic vitality, and improving living standards. Accommodate for growth regarding infrastructure and accessibility provision will not only create a cohesive and accessible network but also support the provision of essential services and facilities, ensuring that every aspect of the region's infrastructure contributes to a seamless, connected, and robust fabric.

### 7 / A Signature Events and Activations calendar

Shape, curate and implement a strategic events and activation calendar that elevates the Real Country's profile, weaving the rich cultural fabric and natural landscape into each event and activation. This approach aims to attract visitors, serve the local community, and promote local businesses, with the riverfront serving as the dynamic stage for a series of engaging, culturally inclusive, and memorable experiences that bolster community spirit and drive tourism.

### 8 / Enhance an Authentic Visitor Experience

Elevate the Real Country's identity through strategic marketing that showcases the region's unique offerings and authentic character. Capitalise on the Warrumbungle National Park's Dark Sky status to anchor astro-tourism and nocturnal adventures, while weaving the rich cultural narratives of First Nations heritage throughout the visitor experience, ensuring that every visit is an encounter with the genuine heart and soul of Real Country.

### 9 / Strengthen and Sustain Regional Synergy

Fortify the social and economic fabric of the Real Country by nurturing local partnerships and regional networks that enhance locally-led experiences and attractions while supporting and promoting local businesses. Support the heart of town centres and village precincts, encouraging initiatives that catalyse economic growth and community wellbeing. Drive investment into business ventures that align with the region's tourism and ecological ethos, bolstering employment opportunities and ensuring economic resilience.

### 10 / Stitch the Regional Tapestry through Strategic Governance

Cultivate a governance dynamic that reinforces the partnership among the three Councils, engaging frequently with state and federal government bodies and key stakeholders to co-create a cohesive regional identity and direction. This strategic partnership will be guided by integrated planning. Together, this will craft a unified regional alignment that highlights the unique and genuine character of the Real Country, ensuring its sustainable and long term prosperity.



SECTION C

# IMPLEMENTING THE FRAMEWORK TO DELIVER REAL COUNTRY

## 11.0 / STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

As we embark on the journey to realise the vision of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, it is imperative to have a clear and actionable framework. This section of our strategy, "Implementing the Framework to Deliver Real Country", is dedicated to translating our ambitious goals into tangible actions. It outlines the crucial initiatives, delineates the timeframes for execution, identifies the responsibilities, and allocates the necessary budget for each action. This structured approach ensures that our vision for Real Country is not just aspirational but achievable, with clear accountability and resource allocation.

### Initiatives: A Roadmap of Strategic Actions

Each initiative under this framework has been carefully curated to align with the overarching goals of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan. These initiatives range from enhancing local tourism and cultural experiences to improving infrastructure and community engagement. They represent the building blocks of our strategy, each contributing uniquely to Real Country's future.

### Responsibility: Defining Roles and Ownership

Clear assignment of responsibilities is key to the success of our strategy. For each initiative, specific councils or teams are designated as responsible. This clarity in ownership ensures that each part of the strategy is driven forward with focus and expertise, fostering a culture of accountability and collaboration.

### Timeframe: Setting Milestones for Success

For each initiative, we have defined a realistic yet ambitious timeframe. This timeline provides a roadmap for implementation, ensuring that progress is both steady and measurable. Short-term, medium-term, and long-term milestones are identified to maintain momentum and allow for adjustments as needed, ensuring adaptability in our approach.

### Budget: Financial Planning and Allocation

A crucial aspect of our action plan is the budget allocation. For each initiative, a detailed budget has been earmarked, reflecting a thoughtful allocation of resources. This financial planning is grounded in feasibility and aimed at maximising the impact of every dollar spent. It balances ambition with practicality, ensuring the financial sustainability of the strategy.



### SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

- Nurture Nature & Regenerate the River
- First Nations Collaborations



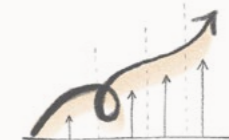
### COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIVITY

- Engage the Local Community
- Improve Infrastructure & Accessibility Provision



### CULTURAL PROMOTION AND HERITAGE

- Amplify Marketing Initiatives
- Enhance the cultural offering focused on the First Nations, Agriculture, Army Heritage and Dark Sky core attractors



### ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Advocate for the Region & Establish Productive Partnerships
- Celebrate Events, Attractions & Experiences

**A. SUASTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

Real Country's enduring beauty and rich ecological tapestry are the cornerstones of its identity and tourism appeal. The Sustainability and Environment theme underscores the commitment to preserving these natural assets for future generations. This theme encapsulates a dual focus on nurturing the intrinsic value of the region's landscapes and waterways, ensuring they remain pristine, and embedding First Nations' perspectives and practices in environmental stewardship, thereby fostering a sustainable relationship with the land.



**Nurture Nature & Regenerate the River**

Real Country is committed to safeguarding its environmental heritage, a key asset for both tourism and the community. Initiatives to protect and promote this heritage will include projects aimed at regenerating the river systems, enhancing biodiversity, and ensuring ecological resilience. These efforts are vital as they not only preserve the natural beauty of Real Country but also enhance the quality of experiences for visitors and locals alike.

**Nurture Nature & Regenerate the River Initiatives**

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>A1. Incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in River Regeneration Projects</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritise First Nations expertise and River connection in planning for regeneration projects</li> <li>Conduct workshops and meetings to gather traditional knowledge</li> <li>Implement joint projects, such as planting native vegetation and restoring natural river flows</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitate with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Environmental Groups	\$\$\$
<b>A2. Enhance and Promote Natural Trails and Recreation Areas</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey and select areas</li> <li>Develop signage and wayfinding facilities</li> <li>Integrate local storytelling</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader Partner with Tourism sector	\$\$\$
<b>A3. Activate river foreshore year-round</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing events, activities and practices.</li> <li>Provide training on environmental impacts at a local level</li> <li>Explore the creation of River Activation Guidelines to assist manage events and activities</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitate with local businesses, community groups and volunteers	\$\$\$
<b>A4. Implement Sustainable Tourism Practices</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit existing practices</li> <li>Provide training on environmental impacts at a local level</li> <li>Work with any local businesses or suppliers to educate and advocate for sustainable practices</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Partnering with Tourism Operators and Environmental Consultants	\$\$\$
<b>A5 Promote and enhance birdwatching experiences</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birdwatching trails and viewing platforms</li> <li>Organise guided tours and educational programs, self guided walks</li> <li>Collaborate with local birdwatching groups for know how and experience</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Partner with Tourism sector and community groups	\$\$\$

**First Nations Collaboration**

First Nations best practice is integral to Real Country's vision, ensuring that the stewardship of the land and cultural practices is deeply respected and interwoven into the fabric of the region's narrative. Actions will be taken to develop cultural experiences that honour First Nations' legacy, enriching the region's identity and contributing to a sustainable and culturally informed future.

**First Nations Initiatives**

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>A6. Promote Aboriginal Leadership in Regional Development</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage First Nations leaders for key roles in regional planning and decision-making</li> <li>Facilitate leadership training and capacity-building workshops for First Nations members</li> <li>Ensure First Nations perspectives are central in regional development projects and policies</li> <li>Create communication channels for regular dialogue</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils	\$\$\$
<b>A7. Support and Promote Aboriginal Art Galleries and Exhibitions</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide funding and support for local Aboriginal artists exhibitions</li> <li>Facilitate events and openings that celebrate Aboriginal art and culture.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils	\$\$\$
<b>A8. Develop Educational Programs on Aboriginal Connections to the Native Flora and Fauna</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support First Nations groups in the development of educational content, namely for schools and visitors</li> <li>Develop interactive and engaging materials, such as guided walks, talks, and online resources.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitate with Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups	\$\$\$
<b>A9. Involve Aboriginal Communities in Intergenerational Initiatives</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and implement projects that bring together elders and youth from Aboriginal communities.</li> <li>Focus on initiatives that allow for the sharing of stories, traditions, and knowledge across generations.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitate with Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups	\$\$\$
<b>A10. Collaborate with Local Aboriginal Land Councils for Culturally-Informed Infrastructure Development</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate Aboriginal art and storytelling into wayfinding and design elements of new infrastructure</li> <li>Engage with Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the early stages of infrastructure planning</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils	\$\$\$

**B. COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIVITY**

At the heart of the Real Country ethos lies the belief that robust communities are fundamental to a flourishing destination. The Community and Connectivity theme embodies this concept, underscoring the importance of involving local residents in the region's development and improving infrastructure to unify Real Country. This approach aims to foster an interconnected community where both the social and physical infrastructure work in harmony, each enhancing and reinforcing the other.



**Engage the Local Community**

The heart of Real Country's strategy lies in its people. Engaging the local community in planning and development is crucial, ensuring that residents are not merely spectators but active participants in the region's evolution. This engagement is expected to drive forward initiatives that resonate with local values and meet community needs.

**Engage the Local Community Initiatives**

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>B1. Foster Community Volunteer Programs</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a range of volunteer opportunities that support local projects and initiatives</li> <li>Create a platform for easy registration and matching of volunteers with suitable tasks</li> <li>Organise regular training and appreciation events for volunteers</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>B2. Establish Mentorship Programs between Elders and Youth</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and engage community Elders willing to share their knowledge and experiences</li> <li>Connect these elders with local youth through schools, clubs, and community groups</li> <li>Design structured activities, including storytelling, skill-sharing sessions, and joint community projects</li> <li>Monitor and evaluate the impact of these programs</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>B3. Facilitate community forums and workshops</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite experts, community leaders, and local residents to lead and participate in these events</li> <li>Ensure forums are accessible to all community members and encourage active participation</li> <li>Use feedback from these events to inform local policies and initiatives</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>B4. Advocate for Seasonal Development Initiatives with Local Businesses</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify seasonal opportunities and trends that local businesses can capitalise on</li> <li>Provide business owners with resources and support for marketing, event planning, and other relevant areas</li> <li>Create a network for businesses to share best practices and collaborate on seasonal initiatives</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>B5. Support local businesses in integrating and enhancing the Real Country experience</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct workshops and training sessions for local businesses on how to incorporate the Real Country brand and ethos</li> <li>Offer consultation and support for businesses to develop experiences or products that align with the Real Country branding and strategic directions</li> <li>Monitor and showcase successful stories as case studies to inspire and guide other local businesses</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$

**Improve Infrastructure & Accessibility Provision**

Developing infrastructure that supports community well-being and seamless connectivity is a strategic priority. The focus is on enhancing transport networks, digital connectivity, and access to key services, thereby improving the overall quality of life and ensuring that Real Country is a connected and accessible destination for all.

**Improve Infrastructure & Accessibility Provision Initiatives**

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>B6. Upgrade Regional Entry Signage and Art Installations</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large scale gateway signage on major roads entering into Real Country Region</li> <li>Integrate Cultural and Historical Information into Wayfinding</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader Partner with local artists	\$\$\$
<b>B7. Improve parking provision</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate and enhance provisions for free camping, caravans, and RVs, exploring pilot trials where necessary.</li> <li>Improve parking provision at tourist spots</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to install EV Chargers in more town and village centres</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>B8. Develop Consistent Signage for Navigation between Town Centres and Villages</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create community-led artistic wayfinding initiatives for town centres and villages.</li> <li>Adhere to and capitalise on Real Country branding across all signage, wayfinding and access improvements.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>B9. Enhancing Accessibility Across the Real Country Region</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct comprehensive accessibility audits in public spaces, town centres and villages.</li> <li>Collaborate with the community to ensure modifications address local and visitor needs.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>B10. Continuously Elevating Visitor Centre Experience in Real Country Actions</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continually refine and enhance visitor centres, focusing on improving physical spaces, displays, food offering and technology for greater visitor engagement.</li> <li>Implement ongoing training for staff in Real Country visitor opportunities, experience and extensive local knowledge.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$

## C. CULTURAL PROMOTION AND HERITAGE

The tapestry of Real Country is woven with rich narratives and legacies that span from ancient First Nations' history to contemporary rural life. The Cultural Promotion and Heritage theme is dedicated to amplifying these stories through marketing initiatives and enhancing the cultural offerings. This theme is not just about preserving the past; it's about enlivening the present and inspiring the future through a celebration of Real Country's unique cultural assets.



### Amplify Marketing Initiatives

Marketing initiatives are set to amplify Real Country's position as a sustainable cultural destination. The region's rich tapestry of stories will be showcased through targeted campaigns, highlighting its unique landscapes, cultural richness, and authentic rural experiences, attracting visitors from across the NSW and Australia.

### Amplify Marketing Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>C1. Deliver a Unified Branding and Messaging Strategy</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the Real Country website as a first point of contact with visitors and a portal for the community to engage with</li> <li>Align all communications with branding and identity developed for the Real Country Region</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>C2. Develop a Regional Travel and Itinerary Planner</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a user-friendly travel and itinerary planner using the Elafent tool in the Real Country website</li> <li>Ensure planner is updated with events, places of interest and activities</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Consultant	\$\$\$
<b>C3. Engage local influencers and bloggers</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage volunteers to identify and connect with local content creators</li> <li>Collaborate on content creation that includes Aboriginal stories and perspective</li> <li>Utilise these partnerships to reach a broader audience and enhance digital content</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>C4. Create a loyalty or rewards program for visitors</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design a loyalty or rewards program that incentivises repeat visits and longer stays</li> <li>Partner with local businesses to offer discounts, special offers, or unique experiences</li> <li>Regularly review and adjust the program based on visitor feedback and participation rates</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>C5. Leverage digital content and interactivity in local events</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate digital elements such as live streaming, interactive filters, or social media campaigns into local events</li> <li>Develop content that enhances the event experience, such as behind-the-scenes footage, interviews, or virtual tours</li> <li>Use digital platforms to extend the reach of events and engage with a wider audience</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$

### Enhance the Cultural Offering

Focusing on core attractors such as First Nations, agriculture, army heritage, and dark sky experiences, Real Country will enhance its cultural offerings. These initiatives will celebrate the region's heritage and contemporary arts, creating a diverse and dynamic cultural landscape for visitors to explore.

### Enhance the Cultural Offering Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>C6. Establish a Signature Annual Dark Sky Event</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore niche opportunities around this theme such as stargazing-themed events and activities</li> <li>Organise night tours and activities</li> <li>Align the event with key initiatives from Actions "Celebrate Events, Attractions and Experiences"</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>C7. Develop agri-tourism experiences</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with local farms and agricultural businesses to create tourism experiences.</li> <li>Develop tours, workshops, farm-to-table and hands-on activities that showcase the region's agricultural heritage and practices</li> <li>Market these experiences to both local and international tourists, highlighting the unique aspects of Real Country's agriculture.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>C8. Promote local heritage sites and museums</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with site managers to improve visitor experience</li> <li>Engage with local schools and community groups to increase local visitation and awareness</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>C9. Support and promote rodeos and horse racing</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and partner with local rodeo and horse racing events</li> <li>Provide support in terms of marketing, logistics, and infrastructure</li> <li>Develop packages that include these events as part of a broader Real Country experience</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>C10. Develop Eco-Tourism Packages with Accommodation Providers</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with local accommodation providers to create eco-tourism packages.</li> <li>Facilitate communication between accommodation providers and tourism businesses to ensure compatibility regarding market needs</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$

## D. ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PARTNERSHIPS

Real Country's vision of prosperity is not just measured in economic terms but also in the quality of partnerships and community well-being. The Economic Growth and Partnerships theme is about leveraging the region's collective strengths to build a resilient economy. It's an acknowledgment that strategic alliances, advocacy, and a celebration of the region's diverse events and experiences are pivotal in crafting a prosperous and vibrant Real Country.



### Advocate for the Region and Establish Productive Partnerships

Real Country recognises the power of collaboration. Advocating for the region and establishing productive partnerships are key actions that will drive economic growth. By forming strategic alliances and advocating for supportive policies, Real Country will bolster its economic foundations and foster a prosperous future.

### Advocate for the Region and Establish Productive Partnerships

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>D1. Develop and Promote Investment Attraction Packages</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design comprehensive investment packages that highlight the Real Country's potential and opportunities</li> <li>Promote these packages to potential investors, both domestically and internationally</li> <li>Organise investment summits or meetings to directly engage with interested parties</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>D2. Establish Strong Relationships with Regional Development Australia (RDA) &amp; Destination NSW Outback</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain regular communication with RDA and Destination NSW Outback</li> <li>Explore joint initiatives that benefit the Real Country region</li> <li>Leverage these relationships to gain insights, support, and resources for regional projects</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>D3. Engage in Regular Dialogue with State and Federal Agencies</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss regional needs, challenges, and opportunities in these dialogues</li> <li>Advocate for policies and funding that support the Real Country region's development</li> <li>Build a network of supportive policymakers and influencers</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>D4. Establish a Regional Tourism Advocacy Group for Real Country</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a group comprising local tourism operators, business leaders, and community representatives</li> <li>Use this group to collectively promote and advocate for the Real Country region's tourism interests</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>D5. Advocate for Joint Funding Opportunities for Real Country</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify potential funding sources for regional projects, including government grants, private investments, and partnerships</li> <li>Prepare and submit compelling applications or proposals for these funding opportunities</li> <li>Collaborate with regional stakeholders to present a united front in funding applications</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Advocate	\$\$\$



### Celebrate Events, Attractions and Experiences

Events, attractions, and experiences serve as catalysts for economic activity and regional branding. Celebrating these elements is essential for creating memorable experiences that not only draw visitors but also stimulate the local economy and enhance the region's reputation as a vibrant and engaging destination.

### Celebrate Events, Attractions and Experiences

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
<b>D6. Collaborate on regional events calendar</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a comprehensive regional events calendar</li> <li>Ensure the calendar is aligned with the Real Country Strategy and the events are inclusive and accommodate both community and visitor needs</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>D7. Collaborate on Seasonal Events and Experiences with Local Businesses</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage businesses to create unique offerings that align with the region's seasonal themes</li> <li>Agricultural harvest festivals, exclusive seasonal menus and First Nations initiatives can enhance the seasons of the Real Country</li> <li>Work with businesses to develop a series of outdoor adventure and nature-based events that coincide with the region's natural cycles, such as guided nature walks, star-gazing nights, or wildlife spotting tours during specific seasons</li> <li>Collaborate with local aviation groups at the Arthur Butler Memorial Aerodrome in Tooraweenah to formalise and organise local meets, festivals, and events, enhancing the aviation enthusiast community and attracting visitors to the region.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>D8. Develop Joint Promotions and Experiences</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore potential partners for joint promotions, such as local attractions, accommodation providers, and tour operators</li> <li>Develop bundled experiences that offer added value to visitors and support businesses return on investment</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
<b>D9. Enhance facilities for art and cultural events</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and implement upgrades or new developments to enhance event precincts, art exhibitions and cultural offerings</li> <li>Work with local artists and cultural groups to ensure facilities meet their needs</li> <li>Initiate a collaborative arts and crafts market that features local artisans, with a focus on showcasing products and crafts that reflect the cultural heritage and seasonal variations of the region, potentially including workshops or demonstrations from local artists and craftspeople.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
<b>D10. Establish a Regional Rail Trail</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a dedicated working group to thoroughly investigate and advance the concept of a regional rail trail. This group would focus on the potential to connect the region through a multi-use trail suitable for walking, cycling, horse riding, and dirt bike riding, evaluating feasibility, route options, and community benefits.</li> <li>Develop a comprehensive plan for the rail trail, outlining stages of implementation, funding strategies, and community engagement processes. This plan should encompass detailed design aspects, environmental impact assessments, and potential partnerships for the trail's development and maintenance.</li> </ul>	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$

## 11.1 / Responsibilities and Timeframes for Implementation

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, is proudly championed by the Councils of Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle. These councils, as the curators of the strategy each bring a unique approach to the implementation of the strategy's key actions. The commitment of the councils is multifaceted, as they embody roles of leaders, facilitators, advocates, and partners across various initiatives. This flexibility ensures that each action within the strategy is approached with the most effective and context-specific methodology, leveraging the strengths and resources of each council to maximise impact.

In this collaborative journey, the councils as leaders, will spearhead catalyst initiatives, setting directions and mobilising resources. When acting as facilitators, they create platforms for collaboration, ensuring that all voices are heard and synergies are formed. As advocates, they champion the causes and projects central to the strategy, rallying support and awareness. In their role as partners, they join hands with stakeholders, sharing responsibilities and successes alike. Additionally, the strategy acknowledges the need of consultants and contractors, appointed by the councils, to bring specialised expertise to certain actions. This multi-dimensional approach is foundational to the successful realisation of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, ensuring that each action is not just executed, but also reflects the collective community spirit and shared vision of the councils.

### Stakeholders of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan

In the dynamic landscape of regional development, stakeholders play a pivotal role in shaping and driving initiatives forward. In the context of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, stakeholders are those groups or entities with a vested interest in the successful implementation and outcomes of the strategy. They are integral to the process, each bringing unique perspectives, resources, and capabilities to the table. Understanding who these stakeholders are and their roles is crucial to aligning efforts and achieving the strategy's overarching goals.

### COUNCILS

- Each local council is at the forefront of the strategy, responsible for spearheading collaborative projects aimed at regional development.
- Their role involves aligning various initiatives with broader objectives like economic growth, employment generation, and the development of key industries.
- They are instrumental in boosting the visitor economy, supporting small businesses, and fostering an environment conducive to entrepreneurship.

### GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Government agencies contribute through regional economic development strategies, such as the Castlereagh REDS and Western Plains REDS, focusing on building economic resilience and fostering growth.

### BUSINESS SECTOR

- The local business community is a key stakeholder, driving economic activity and investment in the region.
- Businesses play a crucial role in leveraging the region's economic strengths for niche market development and overall economic growth.
- Their involvement is aligned with the strategic vision of the Real Country initiative, ensuring that local businesses thrive in tandem with the strategy's objectives.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- The local community's involvement is central to the strategy, with an emphasis on reflecting community values and ensuring ownership of the initiatives.
- Strengthening community ties, expanding business opportunities, and enhancing the overall impact of the area are fundamental aspects of this stakeholder group's contribution.
- The strategy seeks to foster local resilience and active participation in the decision-making process, ensuring that initiatives are grounded in the needs and aspirations of the community.



## 11.2 / Implementing A Series of Phased Outcomes of the Strategy

The implementation of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan is planned across short, medium, and long-term horizons, ensuring a dynamic and responsive approach to regional development.

### Short-Term Outcomes:

- In the immediate phase, the focus is on initiating catalyst infrastructure and marketing projects. This includes enhancing the physical and digital presence of the region, improving connectivity and access, and continuing the promotion of local narratives and cultural heritage.
- Immediate actions also involve community engagement and consultation processes to ensure that the initiatives resonate with local values and aspirations.

### Medium-Term Outcomes:

- In the medium term, objectives focus on the further development and consolidation of strategic pillars, including environmental stewardship, nurturing river health and the celebration of First Nation's legacy. This phase also prioritises securing funds and developing catalyst infrastructure projects to enhance each of the town and village centres
- The medium-term phase of the strategy is aimed at achieving a significant improvement in the visitor experience, boosting tourist numbers, and increasing community involvement in regional initiatives, alongside the advancement of key infrastructure projects.

### Long-Term Outcomes:

- The long-term vision encompasses the complete embodiment of the Real Country identity, featuring a sustainable, flourishing tourism economy, strong community engagement, and well-maintained natural and cultural heritage. This includes the refinement of catalyst infrastructure designs, along with the design, delivery, and implementation of these projects.
- The ultimate aim is to position the region as a premier Australian destination for Real Country experiences, marked by a seamless union of natural splendour, cultural depth, and economic vibrancy, underpinned by the continuous development and enhancement of infrastructure projects.

Through these phased approaches, the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan aspires to elevate the region's stature as a premier tourist destination while simultaneously enriching the economic, social, and environmental tapestry of the communities involved. This journey is about crafting a legacy that cherishes the unique essence of the Real Country, ensuring that each step taken today resonates with a sustainable and flourishing future. The focus is on creating synergies that enhance community life, promote cultural and natural preservation, and drive economic prosperity, all aligned under the visionary scope of the strategy.

### 11.3 / Funding and Budget

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan involves a significant financial commitment to bring its visionary projects to fruition. The budget and funding aspects are central to the successful implementation of this comprehensive plan.

The delivery of the strategy requires a tailored approach, considering the specific context of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan and the resources available to the councils. There is a need to diversify funding sources and leveraging the unique strengths of their region, the councils can create a solid financial foundation for the successful implementation of their vision.

<b>Budget and Funding Overview</b>
<b>Engagement and Advocacy for Funding</b>
Regular dialogues with state and federal agencies to discuss regional needs and advocate for policies and funding support.
Establishing a Regional Tourism Advocacy Group, comprising local tourism operators, business leaders, and community representatives, to promote and advocate for the region's tourism interests.
Identifying potential funding sources, including government grants, private investments, and partnerships, and preparing compelling applications for these opportunities
<b>Government Grants and Funding Programs</b>
Actively seek out and apply for state and federal government grants specifically designed for regional development, tourism enhancement, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation.
Stay informed about new grant programs and changes in funding criteria to maximise chances of successful applications.
<b>Corporate Sponsorship</b>
<b>Targeted Sponsorship Packages:</b> Develop targeted sponsorship packages for different components of the strategy. These can range from high-visibility projects like major events or infrastructure developments to smaller, community-focused initiatives.
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Alignment:</b> Approach corporations whose CSR objectives align with the strategy's goals. Emphasise how sponsoring these initiatives will help these corporations fulfil their CSR mandates and improve their public image.
<b>Marketing and Publicity:</b> Offer corporate sponsors marketing and publicity opportunities. This could include featuring logos in promotional materials, acknowledging them in public events, or providing them with opportunities for positive media exposure.

<b>Philanthropic Foundations and Donors</b>
Reach out to philanthropic foundations that focus on regional development, conservation, cultural heritage, and community building.
Present compelling cases for how the strategy aligns with the foundations' missions and goals.
<b>Advocacy and Lobbying</b>
Engage in consistent advocacy and lobbying efforts with state and policymakers to secure support and funding for regional projects.
Build a network of supportive policymakers and influencers to champion the region's development needs.

Implementing this funding approach requires a focus on grant writing, partnership development, and corporate relations. Regular meetings to assess progress, adapt strategies, and respond to new opportunities will be crucial. It's also important to maintain transparency and keep the community informed about the sources of funding and how they are being utilised, ensuring ongoing support and trust in the council's efforts.

This strategic allocation of resources and active pursuit of funding opportunities reflects the comprehensive and collaborative nature of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan. It underscores the commitment to transforming the region into a vibrant and sustainable destination, leveraging its unique cultural, natural, and economic assets.



# 12.0 / CATALYST PROJECTS LOCAL ACTIVATION INFRASTRUCTURE

## 12.1 / Introduction

Over the past 12 months, a series of infrastructure projects have been developed for each of the three Councils, underpinned by collaborative discussions and engagement with each local community. These projects, created with the aspirations and insights gathered from these communities, reflect a series of strategic directions for the future. This collaborative approach has ensured that the projects not only address the unique needs and characteristics of each area but also align seamlessly with the strategic objectives of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan.

### Strategic Integration

- **Alignment with Place Strategy Goals:** The infrastructure projects are intricately aligned with the key goals of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan. This means each project contributes to overarching objectives such as enhancing local tourism opportunities, preserving and showcasing cultural heritage, and fostering sustainable economic development.
- **Contribution to Regional Real Country Vision:** Each project is instrumental in realising the region's Real Country vision of enhancing opportunities to explore and celebrate the unique natural and cultural identity of the region.

### Implementation Goals

- **Local Facility Enhancement:** Designed to directly benefit visitors and the local communities, these projects aim to improve the quality of local river experiences, introduce new amenities, or enhance existing facilities.
- **Economic Development:** Stimulating local economies is a key goal, with a focus on job creation, tourism attraction, and local business growth.
- **Sustainability and Environment:** Emphasising sustainable practices, these projects aim for environmental preservation and long-term ecological balance within the Castlereagh River and the surrounding natural landscapes.

### Strategic Pillars and Vision

- **Community Engagement:** Projects encourage active community involvement, ensuring that projects reflect the desires and aspirations of local residents.
- **Cultural and Heritage Preservation:** Central to these projects is a focus on celebrating and preserving the region's unique cultural and historical assets.
- **Innovative and Sustainable Solutions:** The emphasis on innovation and sustainability in project design and execution supports the vision of a forward-thinking, resilient region.

A detailed Business Case utilising the template from the 'Strategy Development Fund Regional Infrastructure Business Case Template' has been prepared to supplement the Real Country Strategic Destination Plan, inclusive of a Cost Benefit Analysis, financial appraisal and risk assessment

[To view this report click here](#)

## 12.2 / Business Case vs. Masterplan Projects

The projects in each local government area are identified within a series of Focus Areas and further as either Business Case projects (Stage 1) or Masterplan and future delivery projects (Stage 2).

### Detail Cost Benefit Analysis

The Business Case has analysed the data (both in the Issues Paper, REMPLAN and other Tourism statistics) to understand what aspects of the tourist market in the Orana Region can benefit from the Real Country Strategy and projects.

It has been shown that the quality, authentic and well-designed nature of the projects will attract a higher-spending visitor which in turn will improve tourism industry profitability, employment growth and numerous indirect other market segments.

### Business Case Approach:

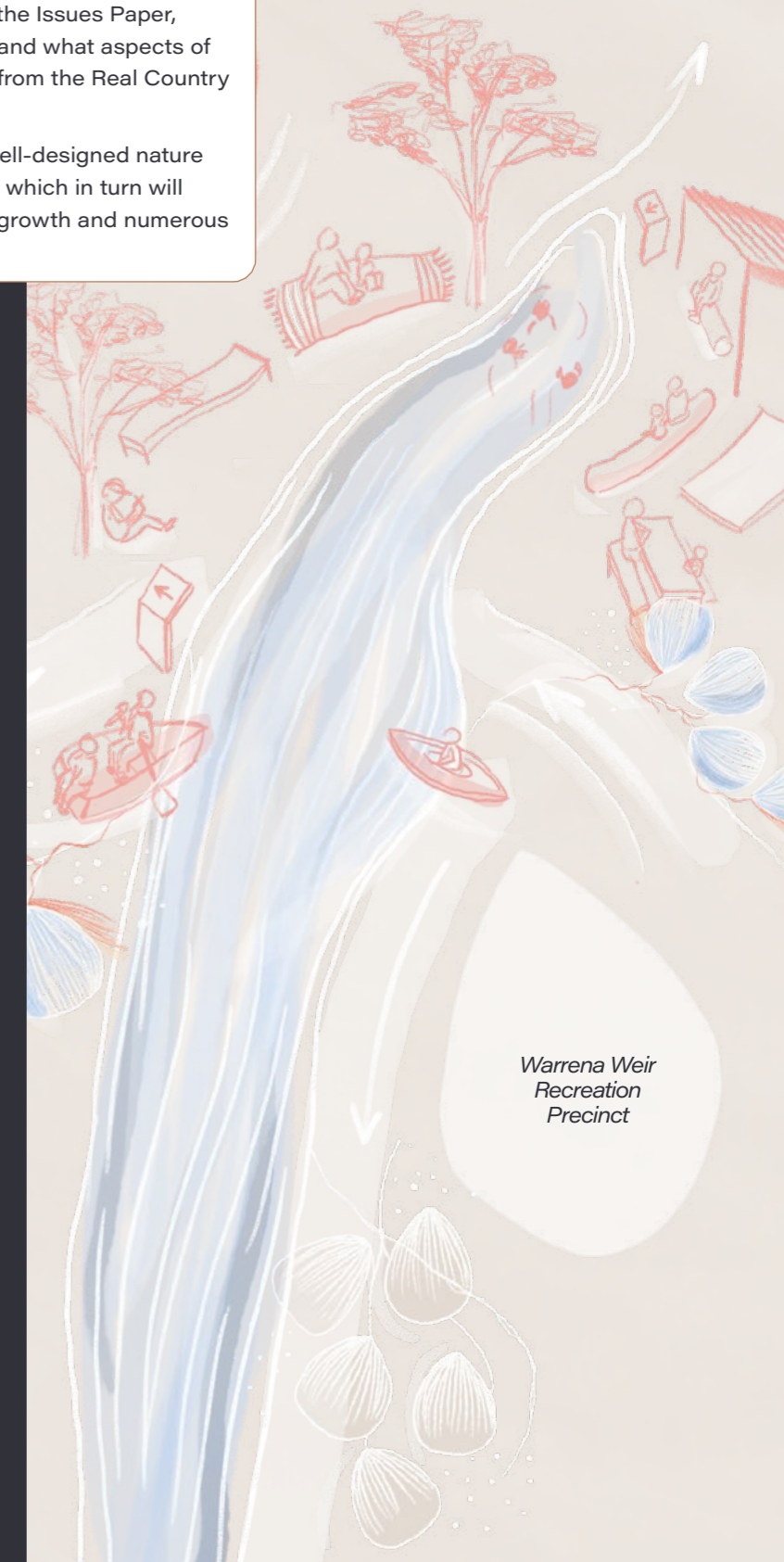
These projects involve

- **Transformational Impact:** Chosen for the potential to positively impact the region, these projects aim for economic revitalisation, community development, and environmental sustainability.
- **Exemplifying Regional Aspirations:** Each project is a tangible representation of the region's aspirations, embodying commitments to innovation, community-centric development, or ecological stewardship.
- **Detail Cost Benefit Analysis:** Focusing on economic viability and potential returns to secure funding and demonstrate financial feasibility.

### Masterplan Approach:

These projects involve

- **Spatial Planning:** Focusing on spatial planning and aesthetic design, these projects are crucial for ensuring the long-term vision of the area's development.
- **Future engagement:** Comprehensive approaches to future infrastructure development, shaped by community input and aligned to the Real Country vision, sets a solid foundation for the sustainable and inclusive growth of tourism recreation across the region, reflecting its unique character and aspirations.





### 12.3 / Design Palette - Response to Place Framework Values

The Business Case for infrastructure projects lays out a foundational framework for the future planning and execution of projects across the three councils. The Design Palette offers a collection of visual cues and principal descriptors to guide the detailed design process of these infrastructure projects. The final design and material selection should align with the overarching values of the Real Country Project, serving as the basis upon which detailed design proposals are assessed and refined.

#### Nature and River's Pulse

Enhancing interaction and sensitive engagement with the Castlereagh River for both communities and visitors requires a blend of new structures and amenities. These upgrades are designed to facilitate direct access to the water and the surrounding ecological areas, thereby improving overall accessibility.



SENSITIVE ECOLOGY

#### Activation Threads

Infrastructure projects are set to transform the riverfronts and town centres of Coonamble, Gilgandra, Coonabarabran, Binnaway, and Mendooran. Focused on enhancing vibrancy, these initiatives will build on existing events and activities in these key regional destinations. The goal is to enrich local communities, drawing in residents and visitors to engage with the unique offerings of each area.



ACTIVATION PLACES & EVENTS

#### Regional Tapestry

Strategic infrastructure upgrades across each centre and village are set to strengthen regional ties and create a vibrant series of experiences along the river. This initiative aims to weave together cultural stories and social interactions, enriching both community and visitor engagement, while preserving the unique character of each location.

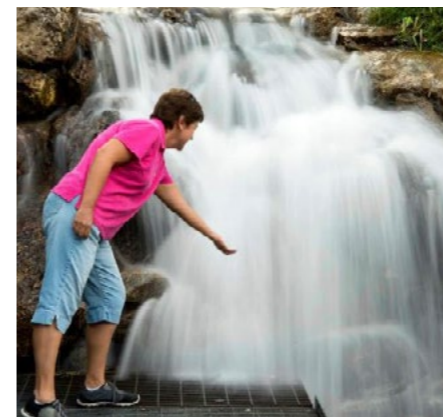


PHYSICAL & CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

### Nature and Rivers Pulse



RIVER ACCESS - SENSITIVE ACCESSIBLE MOVEMENT WITH RECESSIVE NATURAL MATERIALS



RIVER INTERACTION - NATURALISED EDGES AND CONNECTIONS



RIVER STORIES- THROUGH ART, EDUCATION & PLAY

### Activation Threads



WELCOMING - INVITING AND INCLUSIVE, APPROACHABLE SIGNAGE AND LAYOUTS



GUIDING - OFFERING CLEAR, INTUITIVE NAVIGATION TO EXPLORE KEY ATTRACTIONS



SEASONAL - ADAPTING SPACES TO CELEBRATE SEASONAL CHANGES AND ALIGNING WITH LOCAL EVENTS

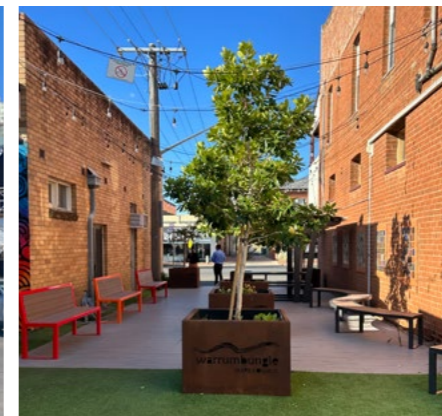
### Regional Tapestry



CONNECTING TO COUNTRY - PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE STORIES



RIVER TO MOUNTAIN - ENHANCING & MAINTAINING CONNECTIONS



TOWN CENTRES & PEOPLE - ONGOING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

## 12.4 / Coonamble

Coonamble town centre is well positioned to take advantage of its proximity to the Castlereagh River, sitting at the heart of the 'wishbone' created by the river and the Wareena Weir. This allows the town to be activated by nature-based infrastructure and water recreation activities along much of its perimeter. The Real Country project has established three key focus areas for investment to support local economic resilience and encourage repeat visitation across the seasons. Several strategic projects have been identified that align to tourism driven outcomes whilst also enhancing the amenity of Coonamble for its local population.

### 1 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT

#### Objective

Activate Warrena Creek, offering diverse recreational experiences to residents and visitors.

#### Approach

The masterplan encompasses a two-stage development, starting with public access enhancements, amenities upgrade, and water-based recreational infrastructure. Stage 2 envisions further expanding these offerings, adding eco-stay cabins, a landmark viewing tower, and extended walking trails.

The intention for this business case project is to enable greater public accessibility to Warrena Creek and a broader diversity of recreational experiences for both Coonamble residents and visitors. The project seeks to renew the area adjacent the existing weir and install infrastructure to enable delivery of a safe and dedicated public swimming area. Other upgrades and activation opportunities proposed in Stage 1 of this project include a new amenities building, a café/kiosk, designated zone for RVs and overnight camping, picnic shelters and barbecue facilities, and two floating pontoons to allow swimming and the launching of kayaks and stand-up paddle boards. Stage 1 would also look to deliver an accessible path from Coonamble town centre out to the weir and along the eastern side of Warrena Creek, supporting walking and cycling and encouraging engagement with the natural landscape. The pathway would be complemented by additional planting, interpretations, and wayfinding to deepen people's knowledge of indigenous stories and practices while nurturing an appreciation for local flora and fauna. Stage 2 of the project would seek to further expand the activation opportunities for the precinct as a regional destination, including the potential for eco-stay cabins, a landmark viewing tower, and additional connections to broader walking trails.

#### KEY IMPROVEMENTS

##### Recreational Activation

Varied activities including swimming, kayaking, and stand-up paddleboarding.

##### Commercial Development

Facilities for RVs, camping, and eco-stays.

##### Cultural and Environmental Engagement

Enhanced pathways with educational elements about local indigenous culture and natural history.



Main Street revitalisation projects; Macdonald Park and Aquatic Centre Upgrade

FOCUS AREA 2 2

FOCUS AREA 1 1

New Business Case Project

FOCUS AREA 3 3

Strategic Project being developed under another funding grant

FOCUS AREA 4 4

#### Artesian Bathing Precinct

This focus area is an existing strategic project of Council and not being considered as part of the Real Country Business Case. However, it is highlighted here as a relevant strategic project for Coonamble's local economy and tourism offering for the wider region.

**1 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT**



**A River Crossings**  
2 x creek crossings, at Baradine Road and at southern end of Warrena Creek Reserve

**B Footpath**  
2.5m x 7km concrete footpath through CBD, eastern shore of the reserve and back onto Tooraweenah Road into town

**C Daytime Carpark**

**D Amenities**  
New and larger combined amenities (toilets) and café building

**E RV Camping Area**  
RV Camping area x 10 vehicles with all-weather surface and landscaping (including access to potable water)

**F Cabin Accommodation**  
10 x off-grid cabin accommodation with sealed pump-out septic systems

**G Look out tower**  
Construction of a 100-150m public art/sculptural lookout tower

**H Wayfinding**  
Wayfinding, plant ID, QR-code 'story' and usage signage

**I Bush tucker**  
Bush tucker and bird-attracting plantings along eastern shoreline (following the path)



**J Yarning Circle**  
Creation of a yarning circle along eastern shore of the reserve

**K Children's play equipment**

**L Shaded picnic areas**  
Shaded picnic and barbecue facilities

**M Floating T-pontoons**  
2 x floating T-pontoons: one in the public swimming area (about 3m frontage onto water) and another further south for launching of canoes, kayaks, etc (about 5m frontage)



**N Public Swimming Area**  
Demarcated boat-free public swimming area near weir wall

**O Clearing of Debris**  
Clearing of debris from front of weir wall to allow use of flood gates (and the functionality of self-dredging)

**1** BUSINESS CASE PROJECT **WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT**



Art Impression: Coonamble View 1 - View looking east from the Warrena Wier with new public swimming zone with picnic shelters and pontoon

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

**1** BUSINESS CASE PROJECT **WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT**



Art Impression: Coonamble View 2 - New river leisure craft activities area with pontoon and picnic shelters looking west along the eastern bank

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

**2 STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECTS THE "TOWN BEACH" PRECINCT**

**Objective**  
Elevate the town centre's connectivity and recreational appeal.

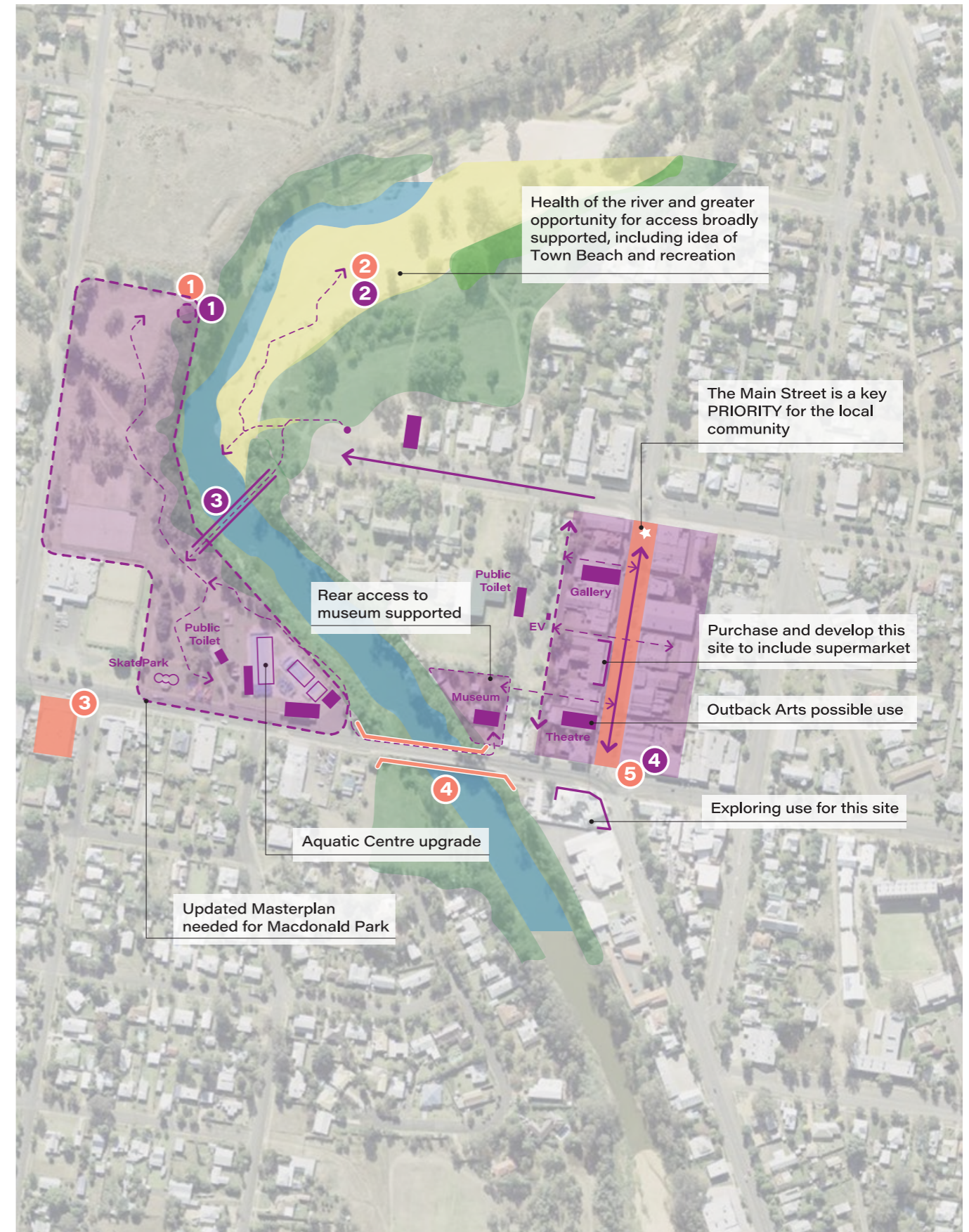
**Approach**  
The strategy proposes creating physical and cultural links across the river, into the town centre and integrating heritage and natural beauty into the visitor experience.

This project centres around several infrastructure project opportunities Council is already actively pursuing, including catalyst projects to revitalise the main street and upgrades to public recreation facilities in MacDonald Park and the aquatic centre. Additionally, the Real Country project has identified the importance of promoting and caring for the natural ecology of the river. At the Town Beach (located at the end of Tooloon Street) there is an opportunity to allow locals and visitors to actively engage with the ecology of the river both physically and through education of river health through a first nations lens. The goal on this focus area is to capture all these projects and initiatives in a holistic vision through a strategic masterplan that sets a framework for the delivery of a vibrant town centre precinct that is connected to and celebrates its natural assets.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Enhanced Connectivity**  
Establishing stronger connections, including a pedestrian bridge.

**Recreational and Cultural Integration**  
Focusing on the town's heritage and ecological preservation.



**3 STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECTS THE VISITOR CENTRE PRECINCT**

**Objective**  
Transform the precinct into a key destination for engagement and exploration.

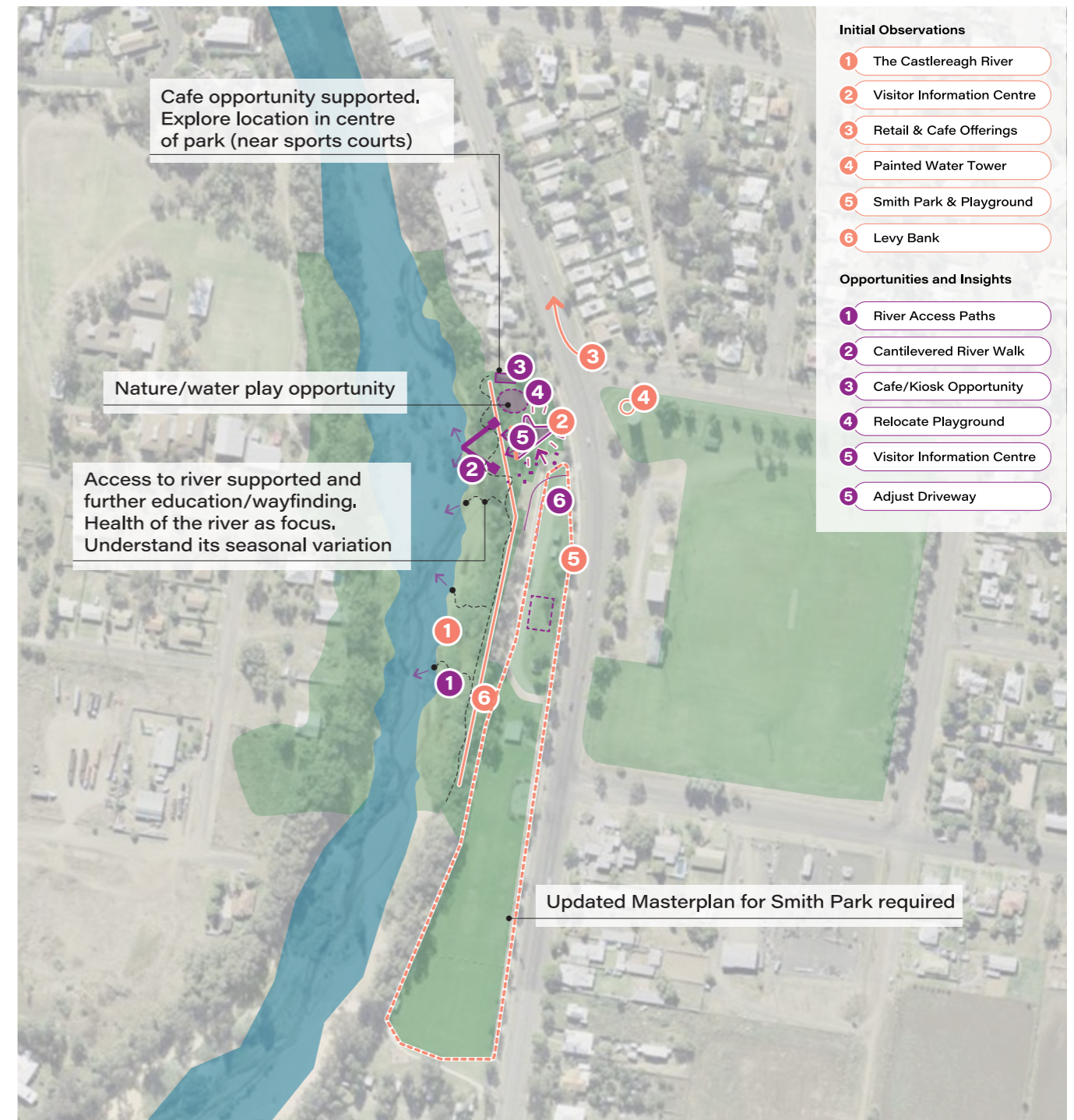
**Approach**  
Develop facilities like playgrounds, cafes, and viewing platforms, complemented by interactive and educational elements, to enrich visitor experiences.

The recently developed Coonamble Visitor Centre at the northern end of Smith Park is the area for this catalyst project. Paired with the painted water tower, the two structures frame a recognisable gateway for locals and visitors. The visitor centre stands as a key destination and the ideal starting point for visitors to connect with the town, discover its unique charm, and explore local experiences. The Real Country project views this as a chance to enhance activation, adding infrastructure that promotes extended visits and deeper engagement. Various possibilities, including a river walk with interpretive elements, nature play areas, a café/kiosk, and an event space, have been contemplated for inclusion in a new masterplan for Smith Park.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Precinct Activation**  
A series of enhancements aimed at increasing visitor dwell time.

**Immersive Experience**  
Nature play, interpretive wayfinding, and public art that narrate the town's story.





## 12.5 / Gilgandra

The town centre of Gilgandra is located on the elevated bend of the Castlereagh River, offering views over the water. To the south, the Coo-ee Heritage Centre and cultural precinct are connected to the town via the Windmill Walk, a formal path tracing the elevated riverbank between them. The town centre has begun implementing a strategy to connect public spaces and retail experiences from Miller Street (Castlereagh Highway) to the river. Building on this strategy's success, there's a chance to draw locals and visitors nearer to the river by extending the Windmill Walk, including pathways to the river's eastern bank, which is currently isolated from the town centre. A similar strategy to consolidate activities in and around the cultural precinct could create a more extensive 'connected loop' from north to south along both riverbanks.

### 1 FOCUS AREA 1

#### TOWN CENTRE PRECINCT

##### Objective

Strengthen the synergy between the main street businesses and the riverfront, enhancing public engagement.

##### Approach

Capitalising on the dual frontages of businesses towards the river, the strategy involves integrating key community assets - the new Gilgandra Library & Community Hub, its adjoining plaza, and the Windmill Walk - to improve river accessibility and engagement.

The revitalisation of Gilgandra's main street, ongoing for the last 3 years, has included a key focus on businesses maximising their unique dual frontages. This strategic approach has been geared towards opening up towards the river, thereby creating new public engagement and activity opportunities. The recent unveiling of the Gil Library & Community Hub and its adjacent public plaza has greatly strengthened the connection between the main street and the river. The Real Country project plans to further this burgeoning relationship, aiming to integrate complementary infrastructure that connects key community assets - the library, plaza, and Windmill Walk. Additionally, Stage 2 presents an opportunity for a strategic masterplan focusing on CBD public domain upgrades. This initiative is aimed at improving accessibility, amenities, interaction with the river, seamlessly blending the town's natural beauty with its vibrant community and business life.

#### KEY IMPROVEMENTS

##### Business Frontage Enhancement

Encouraging businesses to utilise river-facing aspects.

##### Infrastructure Integration

Linking the library, plaza, and Windmill Walk for cohesive public space and a detailed masterplan for the CBD.

### 2 FOCUS AREA 2

#### CULTURAL & HERITAGE PRECINCT

##### Objective

Showcase Gilgandra's rich cultural and historical narrative.

##### Approach

Utilising the Coo-ee Heritage Centre and Gilgandra Museum as focal points, the project aims to create a high-quality cultural precinct that highlights the region's heritage.

The recently refurbished and expanded Coo-ee Heritage Centre provides an in-the-round visitor destination within this precinct that offers a diversity of amenities and opportunities for obtaining knowledge of the region's natural features, cultural richness, and heritage fabric. This tapestry Gilgandra's legacy is further showcased in the adjacent Gilgandra Museum, with its grand collection of historical agricultural machinery and farming practices through the years. This precinct is also home to several popular local events and offers a relaxed high-amenity setting overlooking the Castlereagh River.

#### KEY IMPROVEMENTS

##### Cultural Centre and Open Space

Enhancing the Coo-ee Heritage Centre's role as an immersive visitor destination, with upgrades to the music rotunda, gardens, playground and connected pathways.

##### Museum Integration

Linking the museum's historical agricultural collection to the broader cultural narrative.



**1 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT** **STAGE 1**

**Objective**  
Enhance recreational offerings and engagement with the Castlereagh River.

**Approach**  
Implementing a new pathway along the eastern riverbank, connecting existing trails and creating a comprehensive loop. Additionally, developing recreational areas such as a beach and a timber boardwalk.

The Real Country project has identified a range of priority infrastructure elements to strengthen the activation and recreation offerings in Gilgandra to further encourage and support visitation and dwell time. The focus of these works is enabling greater engagement with the river – in particular enabling accessibility to the water’s edge. The project proposes a new section of pathway along the eastern bank of the river connecting to the existing Windmill Walk via the Jack Renshaw Bridge and a new level ford crossing to connect back to the Coo-ee Heritage Centre. This new pathway will close the loop on a 3km accessible walking and cycling trail with integrated lighting and interpretative wayfinding signage. Two other key activation nodes to be developed in the scope of this project are: a new designated beach area adjacent the existing caravan park on the eastern side of river to enable water recreation, and a new timber boardwalk and viewing platform overlooking the river on the western bank connecting back to the town centre and terminating to align with the new public plaza of the Gil Library and Community Hub, so as to draw people across the street to the water’s edge and allow them to engage with the natural ecology of the Castlereagh River.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Pathway Expansion**  
Completing a 3km accessible walking and cycling trail.

**Recreational and Activation Nodes**  
Establishing a beach area and a viewing platform to facilitate river interaction.



Art Impression: Gilgandra View 1 - New viewing platform opposite the Gil Hub overlooking river towards the Jack Renshaw Bridge

**2 STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECT** **STAGE 2**

**Objective**  
Diversify and enrich the offerings around the Cultural & Heritage Precinct.

**Approach**  
Developing a masterplan to harmonise the Coo-ee Heritage Centre and Gilgandra Museum with the surrounding landscape, incorporating additional amenities, interactive playground and artistic elements.

Gilgandra Shire Council has ambitions to further enhance the diversity of offerings and activation opportunities in and around its established Cultural & Heritage Precinct. This is proposed to be explored through the development of a new masterplan for the precinct. The Coo-ee Heritage Centre and the Gilgandra Museum sit as strong anchors in this park setting. However, the masterplan is an opportunity to better stitch these two cultural buildings together in their landscape and embed additional amenities within the precinct including an improved space for local events, a generous nature play installation that integrates artefacts of industry (eg. former agricultural machinery linking to museum), and additional landscaping and planting embedded with local artworks and interpretations.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Landscape Integration**  
Enhancing the precinct's setting with landscaping, nature play installations and local artworks.

**Amenity Enhancement**  
Upgrading event spaces and integrating cultural and historical narratives.

**These strategic initiatives in Gilgandra aim to not only improve infrastructure but also to deepen the connection between the community and its natural and cultural heritage, aligning with the overarching goal of enhancing the town's charm and visitor appeal.**

**1 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT & STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECT STAGE 1 & 2**



**A Windmill Walk extension**  
 Windmill Walk extension from memorial precinct behind Miller Street shops to Court Street (return loop down Miller Street, 'figure 8' walk)

Reference Image

**B Static signage**  
 Static signage along the accessible pathways

Reference Image

**C Digital signage**  
 Digital signage in GIL plaza accessible pathways

Reference Image

**D Viewing area extension**  
 Viewing area extension over Castlereagh river from the GIL plaza

Reference Image

**F Artwork under bridge**  
**G Walk Connection**  
 Walk connection to Gilgandra Caravan Park

Reference Image

**I Accessible cycle/walkway loop**  
 Accessible cycle/walkway loop from CHC river crossing to Jack Renshaw Bridge (underneath)

Reference Image

**E Boardwalk in this area**  
 Boardwalk in this area (mix accessible – timber look/mesh – core concrete)

Reference Image

**H Town Beach Activation Area**  
 Town Beach activation area - including picnic tables and carparking near Jack Renshaw Bridge

Reference Image

**J Solar Lighting**  
 Solar lighting on southern cycle/walkway

**L River Crossing**  
 CHC River crossing - pedestrian, accessible, concrete

**K Walk Connection**  
 Walk connection to Golf Club and Racecourse

**M Ground levelling, turf and irrigation**  
**N Adventure Playground**  
 Adventure playground connection with Gilgandra Museum

**O Viewing Platform**

**P Sound Shell**  
 Sound shell – 32amp three-way phase power access

1 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT STAGE 1



Art Impression: Gilgandra View 2 - New town beach below the existing Jack Renshaw Bridge

Prepared by Jasmx and PP&P for the Real Country Project

1 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

STAGE 1



Art Impression: Gilgandra View 3 - View of new Castlereagh River crossing looking towards the Coo-ee Heritage Centre

Prepared by Jasmx and PP&P for the Real Country Project

## 12.6 / Warrumbungle

Coonabarabran sits as the primary gateway to the Warrumbungle National Park, famous for its unique rugged landscape and expansive dark skies. This adventurer's playground caters to visitors from the region, as well as domestic and international travellers who come specifically to immerse themselves in the natural wonders of this special place. The town centre of Coonabarabran sits to the south of the Castlereagh River, with the Oxley Highway forming its main street. This presents a challenge, as the town's spine is a high traffic corridor for vehicles moving through the region. At the southern end of the main street sits the existing visitor centre and aquatic centre, while the northern edge of town is framed by the river and parklands to both sides of the bank (including a sports precinct to the northern side).

### 1 2 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT

**Objective**  
Create a nature-based adventure park showcasing the region's natural wonders.

**Approach**  
Building upon existing path networks and community infrastructure, the vision involves developing activation nodes within the park.

The intention for this business case project is to build on the work Council have already undertaken in delivering upgraded path networks and community infrastructure within the park areas south of the river. There is an opportunity through the Real Country project to explore the masterplanning of this precinct as a nature-based adventure park, offering a taste of the possibilities that await visitors to the Warrumbungle National Park. The vision for this precinct is to develop (in stages) a number of key activation nodes within the park that support walking, cycling, mountain biking, a treetop adventure circuit, and river experiences. Stage 1 of this project incorporates a series of new feature elements, such as an amphitheatre by the river, interactive public art and play installations, and bank stabilisation landscaping works to enable greater accessibility to and enjoyment at the water's edge. Additional pathways to allow walking and cycling across the park, including new connections across the river to stitch to the railway line and the sports precinct have also been integrated into the project scope. The project explores the repurposing of the existing rail bridge and creation of an adventure rail trail, helping to unlock activation opportunities north of the river in future stages. A cohesive interpretation and wayfinding strategy will be developed with this masterplan, providing an intuitive and enriching experience for visitors that embeds knowledge of Country and understanding of the natural ecologies.

#### KEY IMPROVEMENTS

**New Recreational Features**  
Introducing elements such as access to the rivers edge, an amphitheatre, interactive art, play installations and landscaping for improved river access.

**Pathway Expansion**  
Enhancing connectivity across the park, including new river crossings and repurposing the existing rail bridge for future activation opportunities.

**Interpretation and Wayfinding**  
Implementing a strategy to enrich visitor experience with local knowledge and environmental understanding through a series of wayfinding and interpretive signage.



Council already have a number of active projects in this area. Need to integrate and build on these

30m of new concrete ramp to Woolworths carpark

Adventure playground approximate location

5 FOCUS AREA 5

1 2 FOCUS AREA 1 & 2

4 FOCUS AREA 4

Main Street shopfront activation and night time mode

3 FOCUS AREA 3

Idea of a viewing tower supported in this location (day and night)

[for future consideration beyond this study]

Concept of river-town loop walks supported in these villages. Health of the river Cycle Trails

**1 2 BUSINESS CASE PROJECT THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT**



**A Outdoor Amphitheatre**  
A dedicated space for performances and community gatherings.

**B Night time Experience**  
Initiatives to leverage the unique dark sky fortnight time activities and celebrations.

**C River Access Solutions**  
Infrastructure to improve public accessibility to the river.

**D Connecting Pathways to Visitor Information Centre**  
Walkways and signs that link the Visitor Information Centre to the Main Park seamlessly.



**E Wayfinding Elements**  
Comprehensive signage to guide residents and visitors.



**F Neilson Park Connectivity**  
Introduction of a new crossing to enhance accessibility within the park.

**G Additional Pathways and Signage Across Neilson Park**  
Expansion of pathways and informational signage on the opposite side of the river.



**H Gateway to Warrumbungles Art/Wayfinding**  
Creative installations that are both artistic and functional for public use.



**I Rail Trail & Sports Precinct Bridge Connection**  
Detailing the specific location and extent of this rail trail to connect to existing sports facilities.

- 1.2km Mesh Walkway
- 10m Concrete connection
- 60m bridge
- 320m Mesh walkway



**J Acoustic Infrastructure**  
Installation of noise-reduction measures near the main bridge or proposed amphitheatre.

**K Adventure playground approximate location**

**L 30m of new concrete ramp to Woolworths carpark**

1 2

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT



Art Impression: Coonabarabran View 1 - New riverfront amphitheatre looking towards the Mary Jane Cain Bridge

Prepared by Jasmx and PP&P for the Real Country Project



1 2

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT



Art Impression: Coonabarabran View 2 - New river's edge activation adjacent to the Mary Jane Cain Bridge with new acoustic treatments

Prepared by Jasmx and PP&P for the Real Country Project

**3 STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECTS THE VISITOR CENTRE PRECINCT**

**Objective**  
Strengthen Coonabarabran's tourism trail, to include the local main street, the natural landscapes alongside the cultural and heritage narrative.

**Approach**  
Revisiting the mainsheet upgrade works and more broadly future plans for the visitor centre precinct to connect this asset more cohesively with the town centre and the river, possibly through a cultural heritage walk.

Located at the southern gateway to Coonabarabran, the existing visitor information centre sits at the high end of the main street but is situated a short walk down the main street to the river. There is an opportunity through the Real Country project to revisit mainstreet beautification works to explore stitching the information centre with the town centre and the river via a cultural heritage walk. Strengthening this connection provides an opportunity to engage directly with existing local businesses and some of the significant cultural and heritage building fabric along the main street, creating new pockets of activation, and telling a cohesive narrative of Coonabarabran's rich local character. This project should also examine opportunities for night-time activation, including a potential viewing tower within the precinct.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Enhanced Cultural Connection**  
Creating wayfinding and interpretation signage creating new activation points along the main street, integrating the town's cultural and historical essence.

**Night-Time Activation**  
Exploring potential features like lighting (sensitive to the policy requirements) as well as a viewing tower for the "Dark Sky" to enrich the precinct's appeal.



**4 FOCUS AREA 4 THE VILLAGES OF BINNAWAY AND MENDOORAN**

**Objective**  
Enhance tourism infrastructure in Binnaway and Mendooran, aligning with regional development goals.

**Approach**  
Delivering a strategic response focusing on connecting Binnaway and Mendooran villages to the Castlereagh River and enhancing recreational access and opportunities.

This project seeks to develop a strategic masterplan for delivering additional tourism infrastructure to the villages of Binnaway and Mendooran. These initiatives would align with the objectives of the Real Country project, focusing on connecting to the Castlereagh River and providing opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with and obtain a greater appreciation for the unique natural assets of the region. The works would seek to deliver on ideas for upgraded walking and cycling pathways, interpretations and wayfinding, and opportunities for on water recreation.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Infrastructure Development**  
Upgrading walking and cycling paths along the rivers edge, wayfinding signage, adding interpretative elements, and creating opportunities for water-based access and recreation.

**5 FOCUS AREA 5 NANDI CREEK RESERVE**

**Objective**  
Increase the capacity and amenity of visitation to this area.

**Approach**  
Nandi Creek Reserve holds strategic and cultural importance and is considered a future project opportunity. The potential includes future infrastructure development to improve accessibility and engagement with the river.

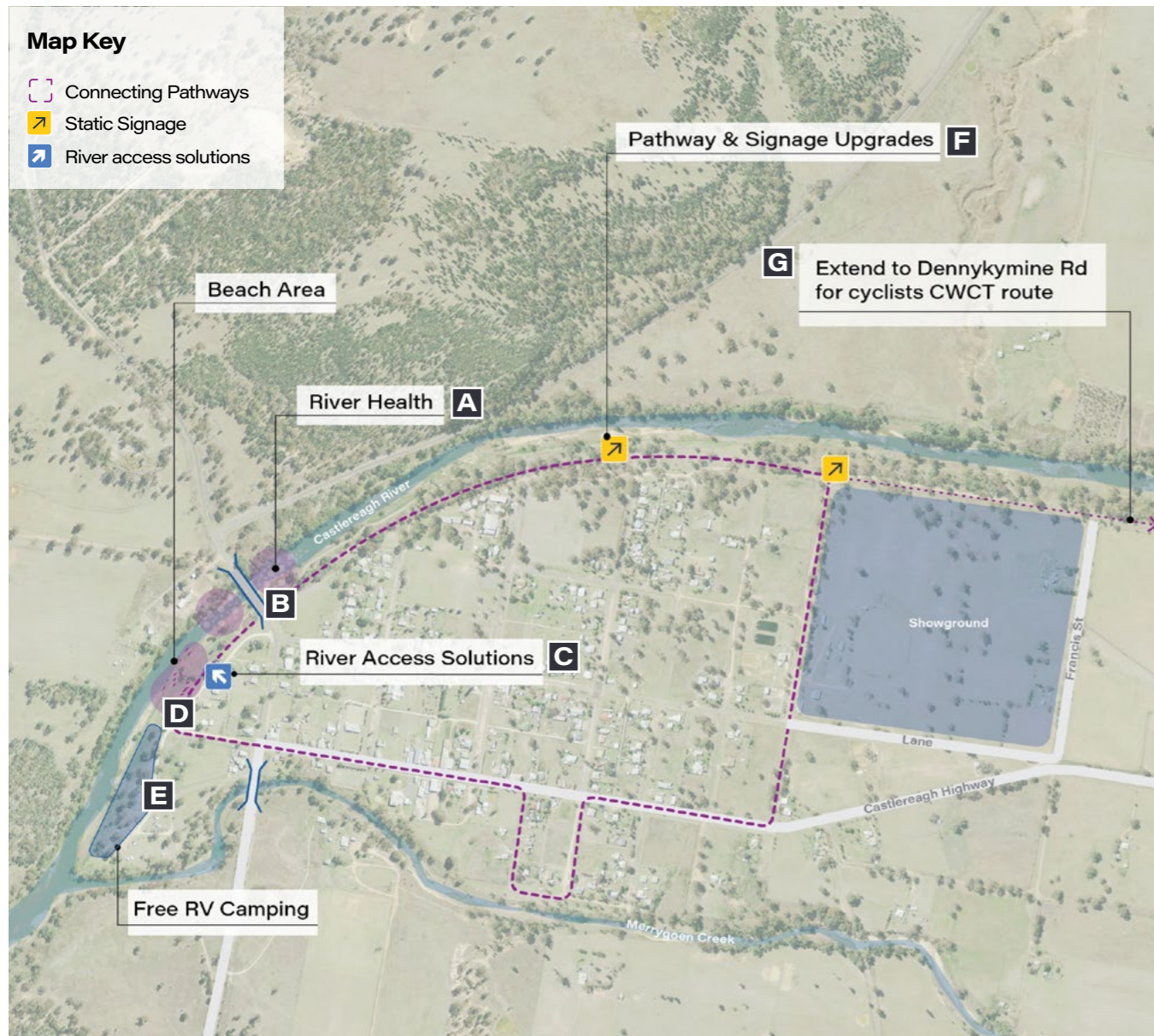
Nandi Creek Reserve, which is located west of Coonabarabran's town centre, has an opportunity to be integrated into the Coonabarabran town centre projects. The area is of strategic and cultural significance, particularly in regard to increasing the capacity and amenity of visitation to the region. The area currently operates as a local camping ground and sits adjacent to the river, offering opportunities to provide future infrastructure to enable accessibility too and engagement with the water and create awareness of its natural ecologies.

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Recreational Enhancement**  
In the future developing the reserve to offer more camping and water engagement opportunities, coupled with environmental awareness.

**These strategic initiatives for Warrumbungle aim to seamlessly integrate the centres within Coonabarabran, Binnaway and Mendooran with the natural environment, enriching the local and visitor experience while celebrating the region's unique character and ecological diversity.**

**4 FOCUS AREA 4 THE VILLAGE OF MENDOORAN**



**A Environmental Initiatives for River Health**  
Programs or installations to monitor and improve the health of local rivers.

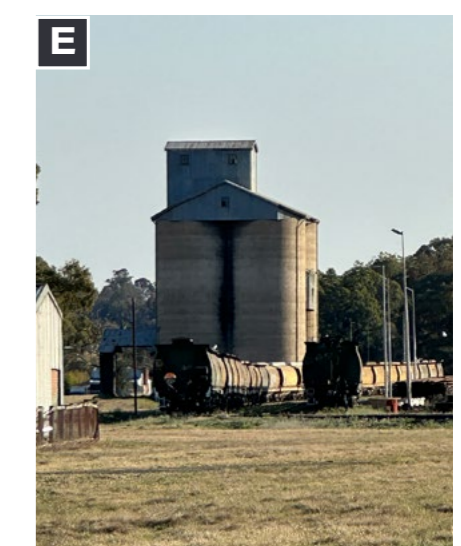
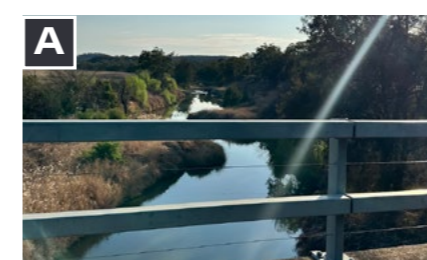
**C River Access Solutions for all River centres/ Villages**  
Infrastructure to improve public accessibility to the river.



**F Pathway & Signage Upgrades**  
Improvement of existing pathways and informative signage.

**G Cycleway**

**4 FOCUS AREA 4 THE VILLAGE OF BINNWAY**



# 13.0 / CATALYST PROJECTS

## DESTINATION AND MARKETING

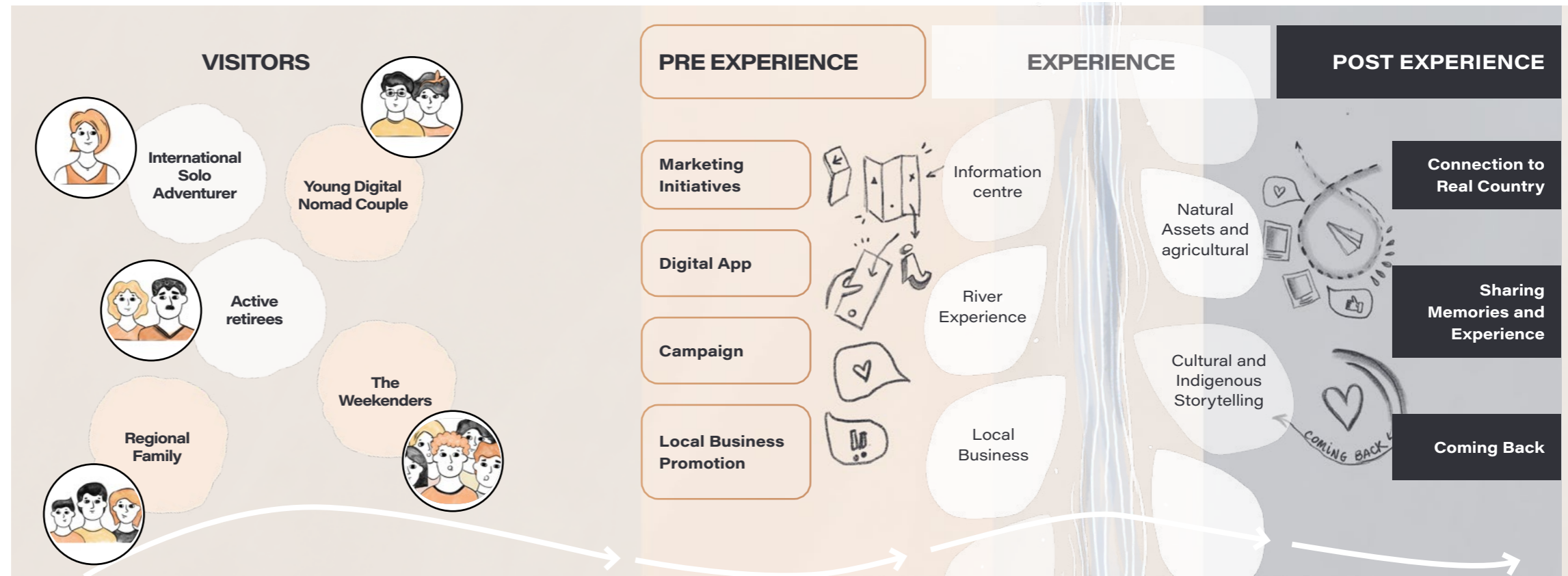
### 13.1 / Catalyst Marketing Initiatives Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of destination marketing, the art of storytelling is pivotal to the Real Country's strategy. Gone are the days when traditional advertising alone could draw visitors. Today, the narrative we weave, rooted in the authenticity of experiences and told through the lens of local colour, is what sparks genuine word-of-mouth promotion and social sharing. Our task is to curate and share the Real Country's tales, creating a tapestry of stories that resonate deeply with our visitors, fostering an emotional bond with the region.

Real Country's narrative is rich with rugged landscapes, star-filled skies, and the spirit of the bush. These stories, when shared, have the power to transport visitors into the heart of our community, inviting them to not just observe but to participate in the region's living heritage.

Real Country's marketing initiatives aim to harness the power of storytelling, utilising various channels to develop and communicate experiences that captivate our target markets. Our visitor centres are more than just information hubs; they are the stages where first impressions are crafted, and the region's narrative begins for our guests. Here, the local people become the storytellers, and through their knowledge and warmth, they offer a personal connection to Real Country, enriching the visitor experience with authenticity.

The strategy visualised in the diagram underscores this flow from developing experiences to communicating them effectively, ensuring that each visitor's journey through Real Country becomes a story in itself, one they are eager to share and relive.



### 13.2 / Visitor Experience

Real Country Visitor Experience approach is our comprehensive way to guiding visitors from dreaming to sharing their adventures. Our strategy encompasses not just the physical aspects of their journey but also the narratives and memories they carry back.

#### Dreaming, Planning & Booking:

At the heart of Real Country's Visitor Experience Plan is a story-centric approach where residents become ambassadors, or "hosts", creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for visitors. We extend this hospitality through a range of unmanned information points, including photo and selfie spots, that encourage post-trip interactivity. Our aim is to not only educate and inform our hosts but also to shift mindsets and behaviours, instilling a strong sense of civic pride.

#### Engagement & Sharing:

From the initial dreaming phase to the booking and planning, our digital strategy includes a comprehensive range of services like the Real Country visitor guide, maps, and toolkits. This is supported by rural and wayfinding signage that directs visitors throughout their journey in Real Country, whether they're staying in local accommodation, finding their way along scenic routes, or exploring our quaint town centres or villages and local points of interest.

#### Integrated Digital Strategy:

Our online presence is reinforced by a solid digital strategy, featuring our own website and extending to national and third-party sites, effectively reaching both domestic and international visitors. Our engagement is specifically tailored to a variety of visitor groups, including digital nomads, regional families, active retirees, along with outdoor adventurers, eco-travellers, and those seeking cultural experiences.

#### Welcome & Information Centres:

Upon arrival, visitors are welcomed by face-to-face services at our visitor information centres, where the human connection is celebrated and nurtured. Throughout their stay, visitors are encouraged to engage with and share experiences through our social media strategy and to take home a piece of Real Country with our carefully curated local products.

#### Destination Marketing:

Our destination marketing is characterised by impactful media coverage and campaign exposure that transcends the usual. We see destination management as an integrated system of visitor information and servicing, delivering timely and relevant touch-points that accompany the visitor throughout their journey — as they dream, research, select, plan, book, travel to and through our destination, return home, and become storytellers of their Real Country experience.

## 13.3 / 5 Key Projects for the Marketing Catalysts Projects

### 1 ENHANCED DIGITAL PRESENCE AND MARKETING

#### Rationale

Enhancing our digital presence and marketing efforts is paramount in an increasingly interconnected world. Real Country boasts a treasure trove of unique regional events and attractions that deserve the spotlight. As we continue to witness the evolving landscape of consumer behaviour, it's evident that an updated website, active social media engagement, and targeted digital advertising are key to reaching a broader audience. Furthermore, our community's express need for promoting these regional gems cannot be ignored. A robust digital strategy is the vehicle to deliver our message effectively and elevate our presence on a bigger scale.

#### Community Connections

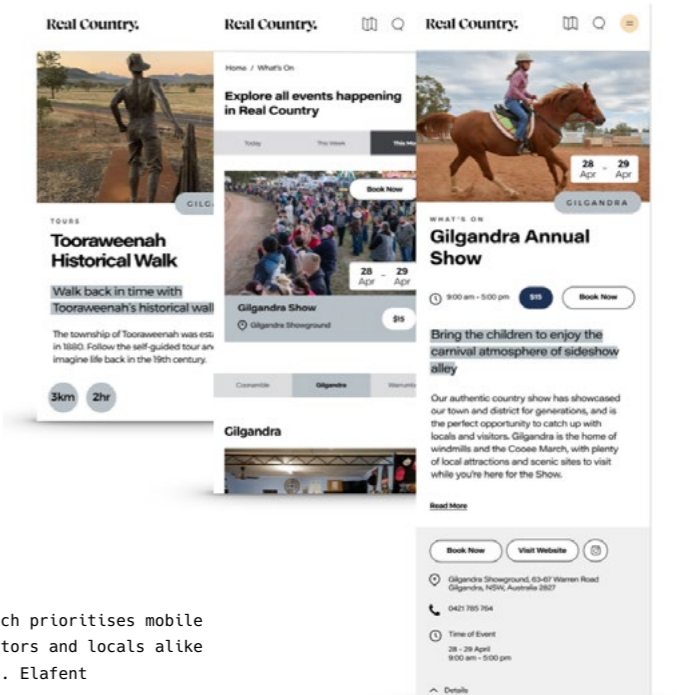
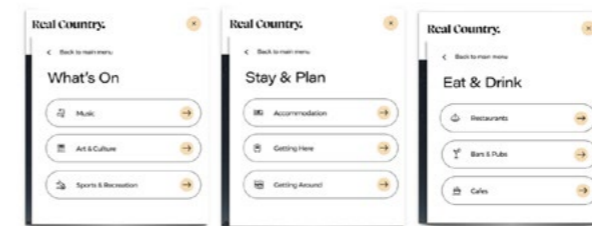
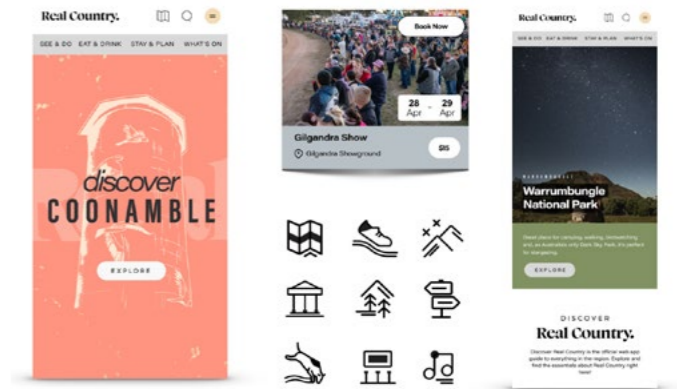
This initiative closely aligns with the community's desire to actively promote regional events and leverage online platforms for strategic marketing purposes.

#### Estimated Budget

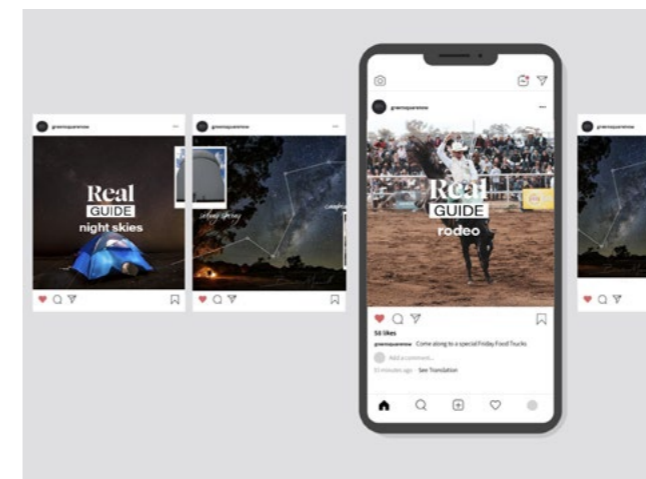
\$100,000 - \$150,000

#### Initiatives

- Develop a user-friendly upgrade to the Real Country website that not only showcases all the towns and villages in Real Country but also highlights key attractions while providing up-to-date information on events that can adapt to various devices.
- Integrating into the Real Country Website a do-it-yourself travel itinerary utilising the Elafent Technology Platform that provides engaging content formats, including a range of map views of galleries, museums, and regional attractions, streamlined booking functionality and adding more interactivity to previous static resources.
- Create on the Real Country Website a blog or news section for storytelling, updates, and feature articles on local businesses, events, and attractions.
- Promoting events in an integrated approach, aligned with packaged itineraries and in a map view form so visitors can plan their stay around events they are attending.
- Building on the social media campaigns for Real Country to engage with potential visitors, fostering a sense of community and excitement.
- Implement targeted advertising campaigns to capture the attention of potential visitors actively seeking unique experiences.
- Use data analytics to track user engagement and tailor content to the interests of visitors.



Example of Digital Mockups of the Real Country website upgrade, which prioritises mobile use to showcase local attractions, events calendar and provide visitors and locals alike all the information to make the most of the Real Country experience. Elafent



Example of social media posts which are coined by authenticity, genuine love for the region, and local stories. Followers can not only stay updated about events, activities and latest Real Country news, but get a digital glimpse of what the Real Country Experience is all about.



Example of video content that shares local stories, promoting local businesses and local personalities alike so that viewers can start creating deep connection with the Real Country region and its people even before their journey begins.

## 2 IMPROVEMENT OF SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

### Rationale

Signage and wayfinding might seem like functional elements, but they play a pivotal role in shaping the first impression of Real Country. Upgrading our physical signage and infusing artistic elements at strategic entry points and town centres is more than just aesthetics; it's about creating an inviting and memorable experience. Visitors should feel not just welcomed but also inspired by the distinctiveness of our region. As we aim to foster a sense of identity, aesthetics, town character, and improved infrastructure become crucial factors in achieving this vision.

### Community Connections

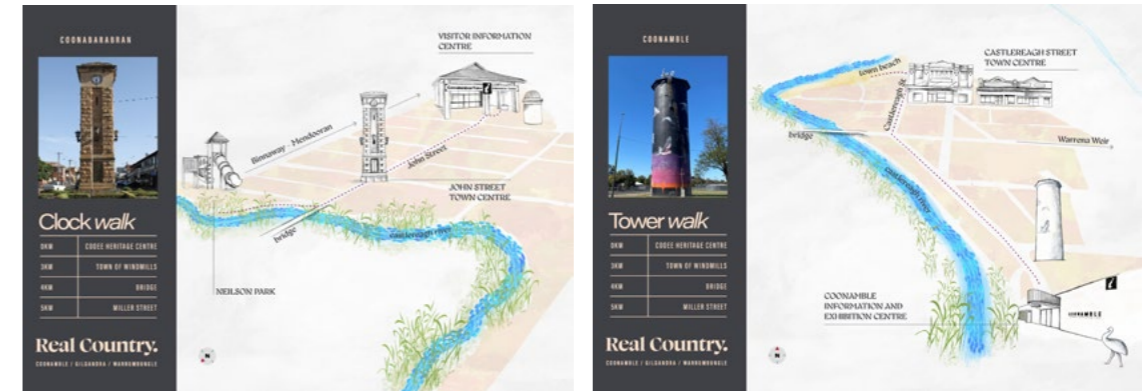
This initiative directly addresses the community's feedback concerning the importance of wayfinding, directional signage, aesthetics, town character, and the necessity for improved accessibility.

### Estimated Budget

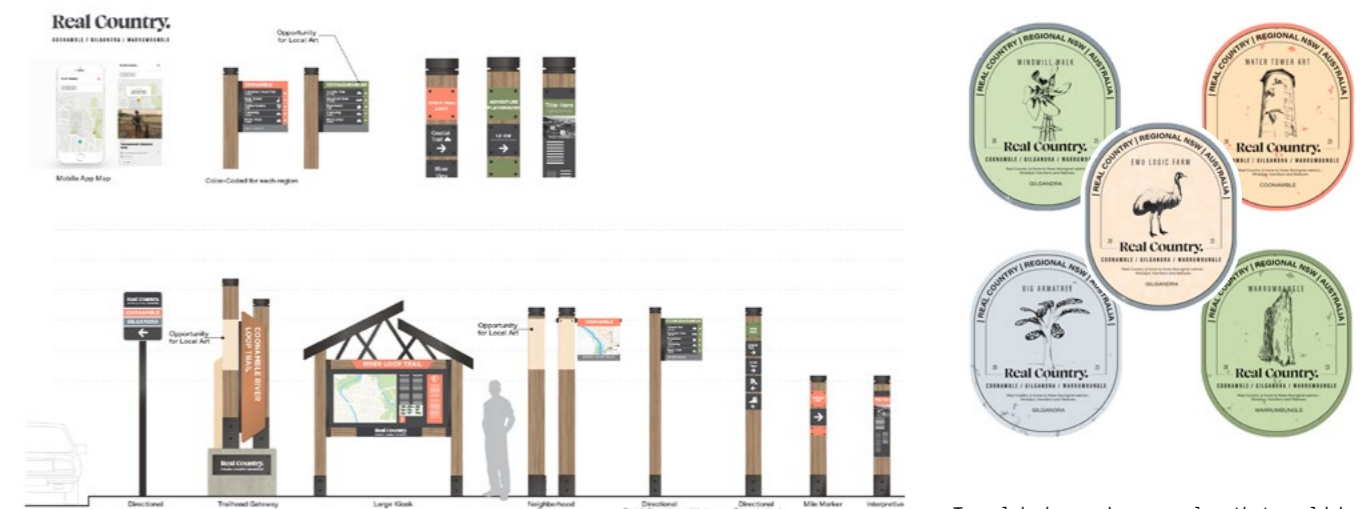
Identified in each Council's Infrastructure delivery projects

### Initiatives

- Launch a comprehensive region-wide signage strategy to standardise and enhance wayfinding, including clear directions from all major roads to key attractions, towns and villages, tourist attractions and essential amenities.
- Consider interactive digital signage in each centre of Coonamble, Coonabarabran and Gilgandra that can provide coordinated real-time information and multilingual support to cater to a diverse audience.
- Infuse local art and cultural elements into wayfinding and interpretive signage designs to reflect the uniqueness and vibrancy of the community, ultimately attracting attention and fostering a sense of identity.
- Explore partnerships with local artists to create gateway distinctive, Instagram-worthy large interactive installations that encourage visitors to share their experiences online.



Example of information centre collateral that aligns with the Real Country identity and branding, maximising information transfer and brand recognition.



Example of wayfinding facilities that are infused with the Real Country's essence and not only deepen the connection to place, but reinforce recognition and minimise feelings of confusion, resulting in longer stays and happier visitors. These are example mockups that would undergo further research and development including an in-depth analysis of location considerations, primary, secondary and tertiary levels of information and material studies.

Travel badge mockup examples that could be delivered in local businesses, attractions and hidden gems to further strengthen the regional tapestry concept by leading visitors in their own journey of finding the Real Country's various threads and stories.



Example of information centre collateral that aligns with the Real Country identity and branding, maximising information transfer and brand recognition.



Example of large Instagramable gateway signage to be installed on major roads entering into Real Country Region

3

**RIVERFRONT ACTIVATION AND EVENTS**

**Rationale**

Our river is not just a geographical feature; is a significant asset for Real Country. Its potential to serve as a magnet for visitors and a hub for community gatherings is immense. Developing and activating our riverfront areas for recreation and events is a core strategic direction. It aligns with our commitment to offer unique experiences and showcases the natural beauty that defines our region. By collaborating with each local council and communities, we are not only enhancing our tourism offerings but also ensuring that our riverfront remains a sustainable and accessible resource for generations to come.

**Community Connections**

This initiative harmonises with the community's emphasis on maximising the river's potential for recreational activities and events.

**Estimated Budget**

\$50,000 - \$150,000

**Initiatives**

- Forge collaborative partnerships with local organisations and communities to co-create inviting riverfront spaces designed for public enjoyment.
- Organise a diverse range of events along the riverfront, spanning cultural festivals to outdoor activities, thereby catering to various visitor interests.
- Develop a signature annual event that highlights the riverfront and becomes an annual drawcard for visitors.
- Introduce eco-friendly and sustainable practices in all development and activation of riverfront areas to align with environmental conservation goals.



Example of interactive art installation, The Big Picture, that people can interact and share their moments with



Example of interactive on-water activation events



Example of community engagement activation for drought periods



Example of Real Country event lineup poster



Example of art installations

4

**REAL EXPERIENCE  
VISITOR EXPERIENCE -  
PROMOTION OF LOCAL  
BUSINESSES AND  
PRODUCTS**

**Rationale**

At the heart of every thriving community are its local businesses. Supporting and promoting these enterprises, particularly those intertwined with tourism, agriculture, and the arts, is not just an economic imperative but a cultural one. Our local businesses are the backbone of Real Country, embodying the essence of our region in their products and services. By strengthening the local economy through collaborative marketing initiatives, we create a ripple effect, fostering a vibrant community that resonates with both residents and visitors. This initiative isn't just about business; it's about nurturing our community's identity and shared prosperity.

**Community Connections**

This initiative underscores the community's collective aspiration to support small businesses and promote the distinctive products that define our region.

**Estimated Budget**

\$50,000 - \$80,000

**Initiatives**

- Develop an all-encompassing local business directory to provide visitors with comprehensive information about the diverse array of local products and services available.
- Create engaging promotional materials that effectively showcase the unique offerings of our local businesses, tourist attractions, accommodation options, events and tourism experiences.
- Encourage collaboration among local businesses to undertake joint marketing initiatives that amplify our collective impact.
- Create experiential packages that combine offerings from various local businesses to provide a holistic experience, such as agri-farm tours, local arts, and crafts workshops.
- Implement a Real Country loyalty program to encourage repeat visitation and foster a sense of community among visitors and residents.



Example of communication collateral for local stories campaign to be used during the pre-visit phase of the visitor journey



Example of communication collateral to be used around the region to be leveraged through events and digital presence



Example of video content that shares local stories, promoting local businesses and local personalities alike so that viewers can start creating deep connection with the Real Country region and its people even before their journey begins.



Example of Real Country tourist attractions brochure  
Example of Real Country loyalty program



5

**RIVER HEALTH, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL STORYTELLING**

**Rationale**

Real Country is not just a place on the map; it's a living tapestry of stories, cultures, and histories. Showcasing the depth of our cultural and historical heritage isn't merely an option; it's a unique selling point that sets us apart. As visitors explore our region, they should be immersed in a narrative that enriches their experience. Our commitment to river health, biodiversity preservation, and cultural engagement is at the core of this initiative. By proactively overseeing the health of the river ecosystems while inviting local Aboriginal groups to share their stories and traditions, we are ensuring that Real Country remains not just a destination but an unforgettable journey through time and culture. This is about more than tourism; it's about preserving our legacy for future generations to cherish and learn from.

**Community Connections**

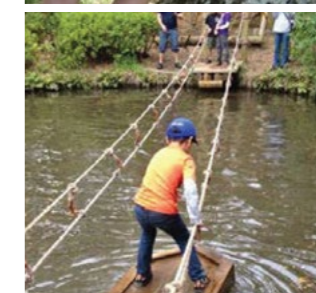
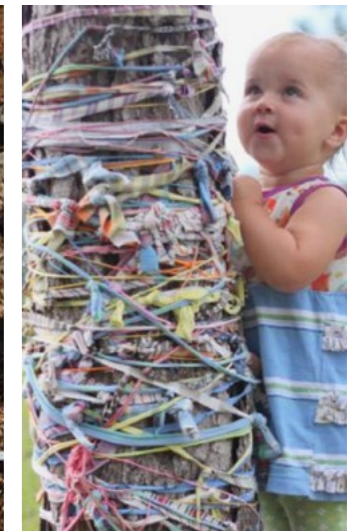
This initiative directly addresses the community's desire to ensure the health of the Castlereagh River while actively involving local Aboriginal groups in the promotion of natural and cultural tourism, preserving our rich heritage for generations to come.

**Estimated Budget**

\$60,000 - \$100,000

**Initiatives**

- Collaborate closely with the Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle Councils to develop a comprehensive River Health Action Plan. This collaborative effort aims to proactively oversee the health of the river ecosystems while promoting tourism and preserving local flora and fauna.
- Engage with local Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups to create immersive cultural trails, captivating storytelling installations, and guided tours.
- Seamlessly integrate these cultural elements into our overarching marketing strategy to showcase our commitment to natural and cultural tourism.
- Develop augmented reality experiences that bring to life the stories and histories of the First Nations and the local heritage for visitors as they explore.
- Set up QR codes at points of interest that lead to multimedia content, including videos, recordings and/or interviews with local elders, historians, and cultural narratives.



Example of River activation that highlights the leading role of First Nations in river health and regeneration, artistic connection to place and storytelling

Example of small scale kids activation initiatives for River storytelling

Interactive augmented reality experiences

# 14.0 / GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY PRIORITIES

## 14.1 / Governance Approach

The governance model for the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to the collaboration between the three councils, is centred around a structured, cooperative approach that leverages the strengths and resources of each council to achieve common goals. This model is crucial for ensuring that the strategy is implemented effectively and benefits the broader region. A breakdown of the governance model and the inter-council relationship is provided below:

### Joint Strategic Framework

At the heart of the governance model is a jointly agreed-upon strategic framework by the three councils. This framework sets out the shared vision, objectives, and key focus areas, forming the backbone of all collaborative efforts and ensuring alignment towards common goals.

### Collaborative Decision-Making

A key feature of the model is collaborative decision-making, involving regular meetings, joint planning sessions, and collective problem-solving. By pooling their knowledge and expertise, the councils make informed decisions that benefit the broader region.

### Resource and Information Sharing

A crucial part of the governance approach is the sharing of resources and information. This includes exchanging data, research findings, best practices, and pooling resources for specific projects, leading to more efficient use of resources and fostering innovation.

### Integrated Project Implementation

The councils work together closely in implementing projects under the strategy. This integrated approach ensures that projects not only benefit individual council areas but contribute to the overall regional development, sharing responsibilities and risks fairly.

### Regular Communication and Reporting

Transparency is a key element of the model, requiring regular communication and transparent reporting among the councils. This ensures updates on project progress, challenges, and milestones achieved are shared, fostering trust and accountability.

### Community Engagement and Feedback Incorporation

Actively engaging community members across the councils' areas is vital. The governance model ensures that community feedback is actively sought and incorporated into planning and implementation, reflecting local needs and aspirations.

### Adaptive Governance

The model is inherently adaptive, allowing for adjustments based on ongoing evaluations, changes in circumstances, or new opportunities. This flexibility is key to effectively responding to regional dynamics and evolving community needs.

### Efficient Resource Sharing and Procurement Efficiencies

The governance model focuses on efficient resource sharing and procurement efficiencies. This includes strategic resource allocation, joint procurement strategies, shared expertise and capacity building, coordinated investment planning, and performance monitoring with shared accountability. These measures ensure maximised efficiency, cost savings, and high-quality outcomes.

### Strategic Resource Allocation

The councils strategically allocate resources such as funding, manpower, and equipment to maximise efficiency and minimise duplication. Pooling resources allows for more impactful and larger scale projects.

### Joint Procurement Strategies

By combining purchasing power, the councils can negotiate better terms with suppliers, leading to cost savings and higher quality resources. This approach also aids in standardising equipment and services across the region.

### Shared Expertise and Capacity Building

The model encourages sharing of expertise and capacity building among the councils, leveraging each other's strengths for enhanced capability and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

### Coordinated Investment Planning

Coordinated investment planning aligns budgeting and investment decisions to support shared priorities and avoid conflicting investments, ensuring individual budgets contribute to broader regional objectives.

### Performance Monitoring and Shared Accountability

Regular reviews of resource allocation and usage ensure effective utilisation for intended purposes. Shared accountability fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the collective initiatives.

This comprehensive governance model, characterised by collaboration, shared responsibility, and adaptive planning, is integral to the effective and sustainable implementation of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, optimising resource use and reinforcing the cooperative spirit crucial for successful regional development.



## 14.2 / Summary of Delivery Priorities

This summary outlines the key delivery priorities for catalyst infrastructure projects across each of the local councils, aimed at enriching the tourism appeal of river towns and villages, and details the marketing catalyst projects designed to elevate the profile of Real Country's unique experiences.

### INFRASTRUCTURE CATALYST PROJECTS

**Coonamble** / Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct

**Gilgandra** / River Precinct Upgrade Town Centre to Coo-ee Centre

**Warrumbungle** / River Precinct Upgrades to Coonabarabran, Binnaway and Mendooran

### DESTINATION MARKETING CATALYST PROJECTS

Enhanced digital presence and marketing

Improvement of signage and wayfinding

Riverfront activation and events

Real experience visitor experience through local business and product promotion

River health, cultural and historical storytelling

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan outlines several governance and delivery priorities across different areas, each reflecting the unique needs and aspirations of the local communities.

A summary of the priority actions for each Council area:

#### Coonamble

- 1. River Restoration and Conservation:** Prioritising the repair and conservation of the river, addressing carp and weed infestations, and improving access to riverbanks.
- 2. Weir Enhancement and Family-Friendly Spaces:** Enhancing the weir area for family recreation, including water activities and nature engagement for children.
- 3. Main Street Revitalisation and Accommodation:** Increasing accommodation options for tourism and events, and revitalising the main street, including preserving historical assets and supporting businesses.
- 4. Community Engagement and Unity:** Emphasising community engagement and collaboration among shires to create a strong regional identity.

#### Gilgandra

- 1. Town Centre and River Crossing Design:** Reevaluating the town centre design and the potential for a new river crossing.
- 2. River Health and Conservation:** Emphasising the maintenance of river health and relocating the town beach to a more accessible location.
- 3. Cultural Inclusivity and First Nations Identity:** Promoting cultural inclusivity and celebrating First Nations contributions.
- 4. Promotion of Primary Industries and Rural Strength:** Highlighting Gilgandra's rural strength and heritage.
- 5. Enhancement of Public Spaces:** Developing public spaces for greater community engagement and recreation, and advocating for regional collaboration.



#### Coonabarabran, Binnaway, Mendooran

- 1. Amphitheatre Design and Seasonal Considerations:** Acknowledging climate seasonality and rethinking amphitheatre design.
- 2. River Health and Ecological Preservation:** Prioritising river health and ecological balance across the region.
- 3. First Nations Engagement and Cultural Identity:** Recognising the significance of First Nations communities and their contributions to cultural identity.
- 4. Promotion of Arts and Vibrancy:** Emphasising art and creativity to infuse vibrancy into town and river precincts.
- 5. Dark Sky and Unique Celestial Views:** Celebrating unique celestial views for nighttime events and stargazing experiences.
- 6. Community-Driven Maintenance and Tourism:** Focusing on community engagement, promoting local businesses, and enhancing river access and health.

#### Ongoing engagement with stakeholders: the priorities:

Emphasis on tourism efforts focusing on cultural, historic, seasonal, and nature-based activities.

Exploration of niche opportunities like nature-based adventures, agri-tourism, dark sky observation and leveraging technology as a communication, engagement and place interaction.

Need for improved accessibility and connectivity, particularly for town connections and river accessibility.

Priority on business support to ensure diverse accommodation offerings and a vibrant local economy.

**These stakeholder priorities reflect an ongoing opportunity for dialogue and collaborative approach to enhancing the Real Country's appeal as a destination. Working alongside local stakeholders will seek to preserve and enhance the natural environment, cultural heritage and fostering community involvement and economic growth in tourism activities for the region.**

### 14.3 / Measuring for Success

Evaluating success and monitoring key performance indicators are crucial components in ensuring the effectiveness of our strategic plan. These metrics provide valuable insights, enabling us to assess and refine our actions across various initiatives to facilitate the best outcomes.

1. Google Analytics
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand visitor interaction with the website</li> <li>Identify the most popular content</li> <li>Measure the effectiveness of the website</li> <li>Identify where visitors are coming from</li> <li>Gauge visitor engagement with the website</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website traffic</li> <li>www.realcountry.com.au</li> <li>User behavior</li> <li>Conversion rates</li> <li>Referral sources</li> <li>Engagement metrics</li> </ul>

2. Social Media Analytics
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess social media campaign effectiveness</li> <li>Monitor growth of social media following</li> <li>Understand audience preferences on social media</li> <li>Gain insights into the social media audience</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement rates for Instagram and Facebook</li> <li>Follower growth</li> <li>Most popular content</li> <li>Demographic information</li> </ul>

3. Customer Satisfaction Surveys
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather direct feedback from visitors</li> <li>Identify areas for enhancing the visitor experience</li> <li>Measure visitors' willingness to recommend the destination</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitor satisfaction</li> <li>Areas for improvement</li> <li>Likelihood to recommend</li> </ul>

4. Tourism Visitor Surveys
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand visitor characteristics</li> <li>Assess the duration of visitors' visits</li> <li>Identify popular tourist activities</li> <li>Gauge visitors' overall satisfaction with the destination</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demographics</li> <li>Length of stay</li> <li>Activities participated in</li> <li>Overall experience</li> </ul>

5. Online Reviews and Ratings
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor feedback and reviews on online platforms</li> <li>Assess destination's performance based on ratings</li> <li>Identify specific areas for improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitor reviews</li> <li>Ratings</li> <li>Feedback on attractions/services</li> </ul>

6. Local Economic Indicators
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure the volume of visitors</li> <li>Measure economic impact</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitor numbers</li> <li>Revenue from tourism-related activities</li> </ul>

7. Economic Impact Studies
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the economic contributions of tourism</li> <li>Assess the impact on job opportunities and growth in the region</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitor expenditure</li> <li>Job creation</li> </ul>

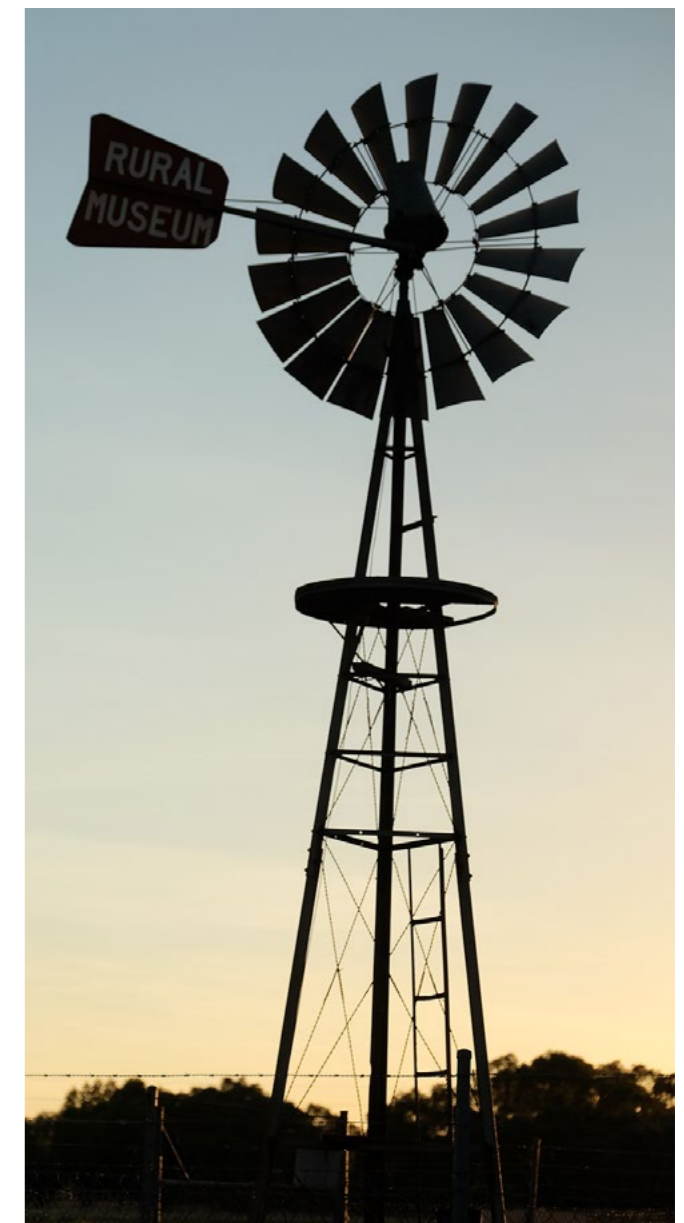
8. Media Coverage Tracking
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate PR efforts</li> <li>Understand how the destination is portrayed in the media</li> <li>Measure the reach of media coverage</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantity and quality of media coverage</li> <li>Key messages conveyed</li> <li>Audience reached</li> </ul>

9. Event Attendance and Feedback
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess event success and popularity</li> <li>Gather insights for event improvement</li> <li>Measure media attention and promotion of events</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of attendees</li> <li>Participant feedback</li> <li>Media coverage</li> </ul>

10. Competitor Analysis
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmark performance against competitors</li> <li>Identify competitive advantages</li> <li>Understand market dynamics</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing strategies</li> <li>Promotions</li> <li>Visitor numbers of competitors</li> </ul>

11. Investment Tracking
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track investments attracted to the region</li> <li>Measure infrastructure development</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private and public investment</li> <li>Investment in tourism-related infrastructure</li> </ul>

12. Business Growth and Development
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the impact of destination marketing on new businesses</li> <li>Measure growth of businesses in tourism and hospitality sectors</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New businesses established</li> <li>Growth of existing businesses</li> </ul>



**Performance Indicators**

13. Employment Statistics
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the impact of tourism on employment and livelihoods</li> <li>Understand the impact of tourism on employment and livelihoods</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs created primary tourism industry</li> <li>Jobs created secondary tourism industry</li> </ul>

14. Event Impact Assessment
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantify the economic benefits of events and festivals</li> <li>Assess the frequency and impact of events</li> <li>Measure event participation and popularity</li> <li>Understand the financial impact of events</li> <li>Assess local business participation in events</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic impact of events</li> <li>Number of events held</li> <li>Attendance figures</li> <li>Revenue generated</li> <li>Local business involvement</li> </ul>

15. Tourism Expenditure Tracking
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand visitor spending patterns</li> <li>Assess visitor spending habits</li> <li>Identify where visitors are spending money in the region</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total expenditure by tourists</li> <li>Average spend per visitor</li> <li>Spending patterns</li> </ul>

16. Hotel and Accommodation Stats
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure hotel and accommodation performance</li> <li>Assess room pricing and revenue generation</li> <li>Understand the efficiency of accommodation facilities</li> <li>Track growth in accommodation options</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occupancy rates</li> <li>Average daily rates</li> <li>Revenue per available room</li> <li>New accommodation developments</li> </ul>

17. Transportation and Connectivity Metrics
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess transport visitation</li> <li>Evaluate connectivity and whether visitors travelled to 1, 2 or 3 of the Real Country Destinations</li> <li>Measure accessibility to key destinations</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle, caravan, motorbike plate readings from outside regions</li> <li>Improvements in wayfinding signage infrastructure</li> <li>Connectivity to key attractions</li> </ul>

18. Property Development and Real Estate Values
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth in property development</li> <li>Changes in real estate values in commercial and residential</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the impact of tourism on property markets</li> <li>Understand property value fluctuations</li> </ul>

19. Retail Sales and Commercial Activity
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess impact on businesses annually and trends year on year</li> <li>Understand the performance of tourist-oriented businesses</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sales figures from retail and commercial businesses based on a range</li> <li>Tourism Attractions Visitation Numbers</li> </ul>

20. Visitor Impact Monitoring
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand how tourism is impacting the river environment and identify areas where management actions may be needed to mitigate negative impacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Data to Collect</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of visitors to river-based attractions, impacts on vegetation, wildlife disturbance.</li> </ul>

Regularly collecting and analysing data from these tools will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, allowing for data-driven decisions and continuous improvement.



**COONAMBLE**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

**GSC**  
GILGANDRA  
SHIRE COUNCIL

  
warrumbungle  
SHIRE COUNCIL

**Real Country.**

COONAMBLE / GILGANDRA / WARRUMBUNGLE

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