

Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030

Blueprint for a Strong and Diverse Economy



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Warrumbungle Shire local government area sits on Gamilaraay land to the north, Wiradjuri land to the south, and Weilwan and Kawambarai (Werrin) land to the west. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, and pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.



Our Vision for a Prosperous Future

Warrumbungle Shire will be a strong and diverse economy, underpinned by its thriving businesses, 'real country' visitor experiences and prosperous communities.

Executive Summary

The *Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030* is Warrumbungle Shire Council's blueprint to drive the Shire's economic growth and development over the next five years and beyond. Informed by comprehensive research and extensive community and stakeholder input, it presents a suite of initiatives that are framed to deliver tangible outcomes in the short-to-medium term, which will underpin the vibrancy, diversity and economic prosperity of Warrumbungle Shire and its constituent communities for generations to come.

Warrumbungle Shire Council is committed to setting the course for a diverse and thriving economy, through a strategic and informed approach to local business engagement, planning and place management, tourism promotion, visitor servicing, advocacy and investment attraction. Working in collaboration with its partners in government, industry and the communities of the Shire, this strategy is the guiding document for Council as it works to fulfil its vision for Warrumbungle Shire as **a strong and diverse economy, underpinned by its thriving businesses, 'real country' visitor experiences and prosperous communities.**

The *Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030* is Council's plan of action to:

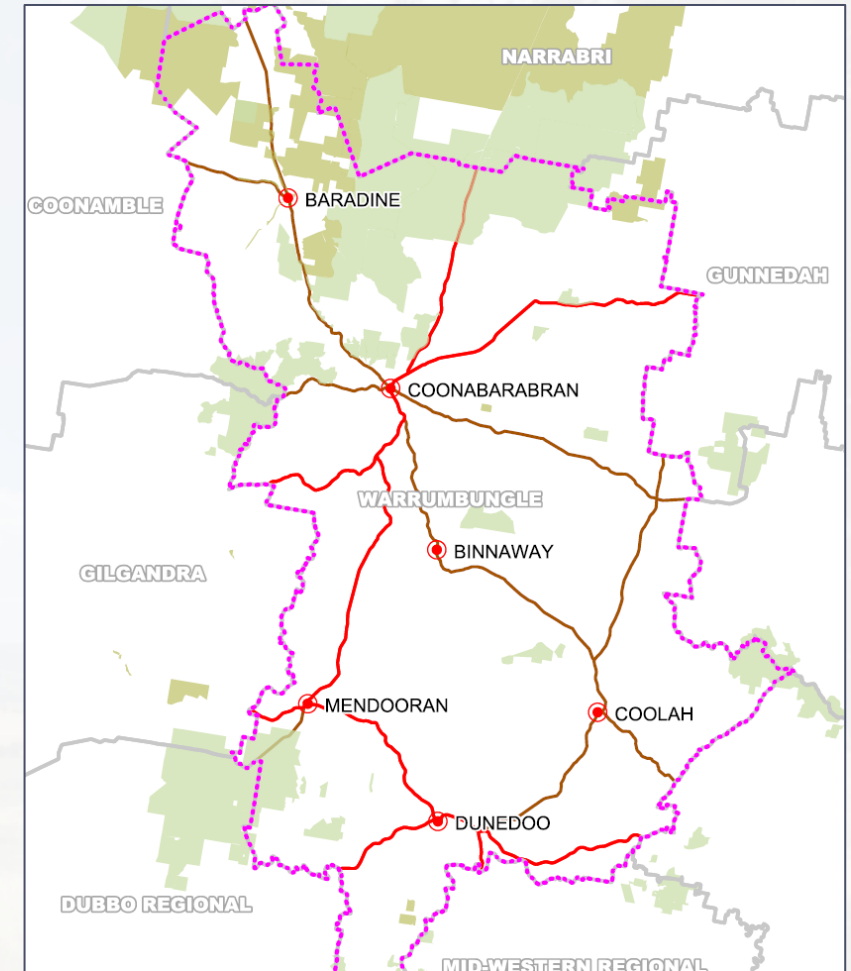
1. Support Warrumbungle Shire's businesses to prosper;
2. Enhance Warrumbungle Shire's profile as a 'real country' visitor destination; and
3. Nurture Warrumbungle Shire's appeal as a place in which to live, learn and prosper.

Working alongside state and federal governments, key asset owners and managers, peak industry bodies, local businesses and community groups, through this strategy Warrumbungle Shire Council will lead the delivery of 30 initiatives, addressing key challenges and seizing opportunities to drive the Shire's economic success.

Aligned with the directions and priorities articulated in other key strategies and plans, this strategy informs operational planning for economic development and tourism within the context of Warrumbungle Shire Council's broader program of work and strategic objectives. All of the actions will be implemented in line with determined priorities and the availability of resources to progress the initiatives identified. Some of the actions seek to build on or continue initiatives already in place, some are already resourced while others require additional resourcing.

Embracing a partnership approach to economic development and tourism, the *Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030* will be used by Council to inform advocacy initiatives and collaborations to secure support from its partners in the other levels of government. The strategy will evolve with annual reviews and a full update in 2030, ensuring it remains relevant and effective.

Warrumbungle Shire



1. Strategy Purpose: Supporting a Strong and Diverse Economy

Blueprint for a Prosperous Future

The *Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030* is an aspirational and practical plan to support the vibrancy, diversity and economic prosperity of Warrumbungle Shire and its constituent communities over the next five years and beyond.

Located in the central western region of New South Wales, approximately 450 kilometres north-west of Sydney, half-way between Melbourne and Brisbane, Warrumbungle Shire lies within 2 hours' drive of the regional cities of Dubbo and Tamworth. Covering some 12,380 square kilometres and with a population of approximately 9,200, Warrumbungle Shire encompasses the townships of Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo, Mendooran, Baradine and Binnaway, with numerous rural communities in-between.

Home to 1,234 businesses, a labour force of 4,250 and approximately 3,100 local jobs, Warrumbungle Shire has a predominantly rural-based economy supported by a strong and growing tourism sector. While these industries will continue to underpin economic activity in the Shire, a static population means that a more diversified industrial base is needed to drive future prosperity. This can be achieved by leveraging the Shire's comparative and competitive advantages, including its strategic location, natural features, its agricultural capabilities, tourism assets and its appealing country lifestyle offer.

Recognising Warrumbungle Shire's challenges and its potential for economic growth, this strategy articulates Council's economic development and tourism focus areas, and the levers it will use to influence positive outcomes for all communities of the Shire. Aligned with the directions and priorities of other key plans and strategies, the *Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030* will help Council and its partners to deliver practical outcomes to realise the vision for a strong and diverse economy.

Our Vision for a Strong and Diverse Economy

Warrumbungle Shire will be a strong and diverse economy, underpinned by its thriving businesses, 'real country' visitor experiences and prosperous communities.

Key Outcomes

Informed by extensive research, stakeholder consultation and data analysis, this strategy articulates Warrumbungle Shire Council's commitment to take the lead in building a prosperous future for the Shire, through the realisation of the following outcomes:

- Business growth and investment that builds on Warrumbungle Shire's strengths in a diversity of existing, new and emerging industries;
- The development of a strong and vibrant visitor economy, underpinned by the depth and diversity of 'real country' experiences and realised through growing visitor numbers, tourism expenditure and value; and
- Sustainable population and employment growth throughout the Shire in line with Council's and the community's vision for a prosperous future.

Strategy outcomes will be realised through the implementation of a suite of initiatives across three pillars that are designed to ***support Warrumbungle Shire's businesses to prosper; enhance the Shire's profile as an authentic 'real country' visitor destination; and nurture the Shire's appeal as a place in which to live, learn and prosper.***

Embracing a collaborative approach, the strategy underpins Warrumbungle Shire Council's advocacy initiatives to secure support from its partners, including peak bodies, business chambers and industry associations, key infrastructure asset owners and managers, regional development bodies and the other levels of government.

2. The Warrumbungle Shire Economy: An Overview

The Warrumbungle Shire Economy and Key Industries

With a Gross Regional Product of \$703.5 million, the major industries that drive and support economic activity in Warrumbungle Shire include its long-established agricultural sector and its vibrant visitor economy (tourism), while other key sectors of economic activity and employment include health, education, retail trade, public administration and construction.

Beef, sheep and grain production are the Shire’s key primary industries as well as a burgeoning vine growing and horticultural sector. Tourism is defined by the Shire’s natural assets in the Warrumbungle National Park, Coolah Tops National Park, the Pilliga Forest and Castlereagh River, as well as recreational assets including cycling and walking trails. Home to Australia’s largest optical astronomy research facility, Siding Spring Observatory, the Shire is internationally recognised for its dark skies and is the home of Australia’s (and the southern hemisphere’s) first Dark Sky Park. These catalyst attractions provide a firm base on which to grow other sectors of the visitor economy, including food and beverage tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism and events.


Warrumbungle Shire is also presented with emerging industry opportunities, notably the potential for businesses, contracts and trades to benefit from the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone and Inland Rail. This includes opportunities driven by construction activity as well as the development of industry supply chains in transport and logistics as well as a myriad of other key service industries.


Warrumbungle Shire’s liveability is one of its greatest assets. The Shire’s industry capabilities, coupled with its location, its lifestyle attributes and relative affordability, makes the area an appealing prospect for businesses, their owners and staff seeking the best of rural living combined with access to jobs, clients and markets. But there are also challenges that need to be addressed if Warrumbungle Shire is to realise its economic potential. These include an ageing and static population, labour (skills) and housing shortages, as well as health care, childcare and other community service constraints.


Addressing both the challenges and the opportunities for economic development and tourism in Warrumbungle Shire, in a strategic, informed and targeted manner, is the focus of this strategy.


Key Metrics at a Glance

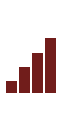
Selected key metrics highlighting Warrumbungle Shire’s socio-economic profile are provided as follows, with additional demographic and economic data presented overleaf.


 The Warrumbungle Shire (Local Government Area) has 9,269 residents (2024 estimate), projected to remain stable, reaching 9,353 by 2041.

 There are 3,123 jobs located in Warrumbungle Shire and 3,226 employed residents.

 The Warrumbungle LGA has an unemployment rate of 2.8% (September 2024) compared to 3.4% for Regional NSW and 3.8% for NSW.

 There are approximately 1,220 businesses in the Warrumbungle Shire LGA (two-thirds of which are non-employing).

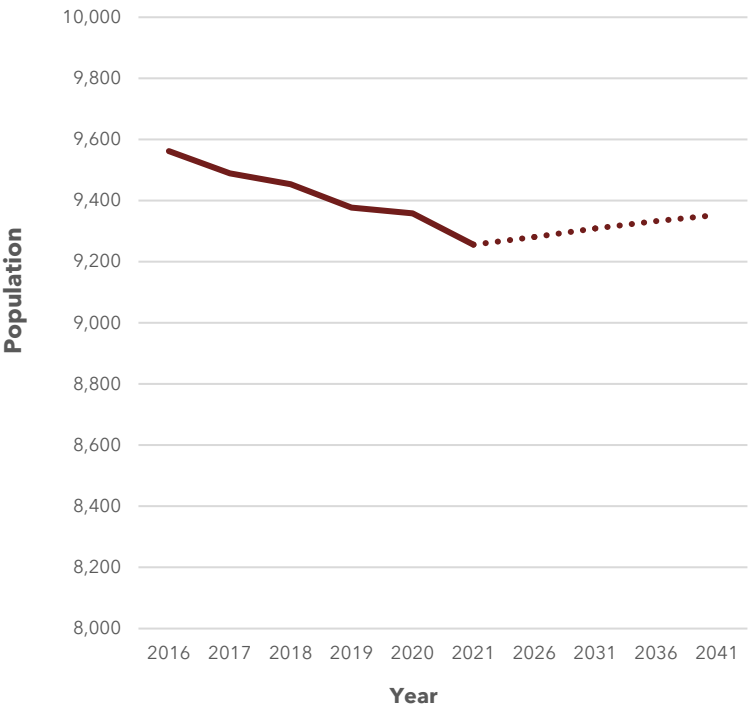
 Key industries (in value and employment terms) include agriculture, tourism, health, education, retail, transport, public administration and construction.

 In 2024, the Warrumbungle Shire LGA’s Gross Regional Product (GRP) was \$703.5 million. GRP per worker was \$201,214 compared to GRP per worker of \$199,637 for NSW.

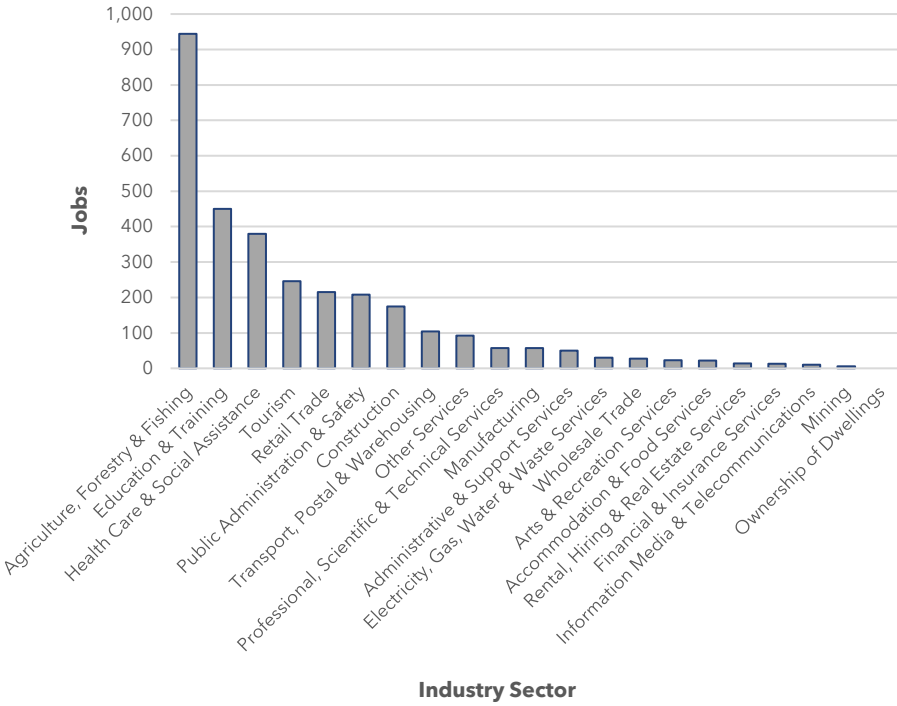
Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Planning NSW (2024), Jobs and Skills Australia (September 2024) and REMPLAN (2024)

3. Warrumbungle Shire Socio-Economic Snapshot

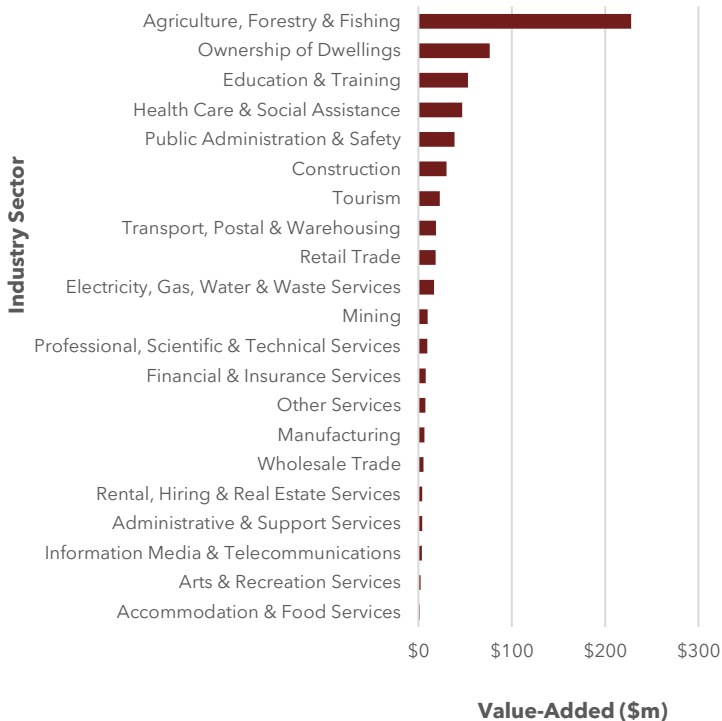
Population, Warrumbungle Shire, 2016-2041 (Projected)



Local Jobs by Industry, Warrumbungle Shire, 2023



Value-Added by Industry, Warrumbungle Shire, 2023



Population
9,269

Median Age
50
(compared to 39 for NSW)

Av. Household Size
2.3 Persons
(compared to 2.6 for NSW)

Local Jobs
3,123
(compared to 3,226 working residents)

Unemployment
2.8%
(compared to 3.8% for NSW)

Labour Force Participation
47%
(compared to 59% for NSW)

Businesses
1,221
(two-thirds of which are non-employing)

Annual Visitors
280,000
(2019)

Gross Regional Product per worker
\$201,200
(compared to \$199,000 for NSW)

Sources: ABS Census (2021), ABS Counts of Australian Businesses (June 2024), Jobs and Skills Australia (September 2024), Planning NSW (2024), REMPLAN (2024) and Tourism Research Australia (2019)

4. Council's Economic Development and Tourism Focus Areas

Warrumbungle Shire Council's Economic Development and Tourism Support Activities

Warrumbungle Shire Council is committed to providing the foundations for prosperity by working to strike a balance between lifestyle and economic opportunity for all communities of the Shire. Through the delivery of the actions presented in this strategy, Council supports economic development and tourism through six focus areas:

- **Business and Industry Engagement** – Warrumbungle Shire Council encourages established and emerging enterprise development, innovation and capacity by connecting businesses with a range of resources and support services to build capability and resilience and to encourage business and jobs growth.
- **Tourism Promotion and Visitor Servicing** – Warrumbungle Shire Council promotes visitation and visitor spend throughout the Shire (and region) through branding, marketing & promotion, infrastructure and facilities investment and visitor servicing.
- **Workforce Planning Support** – Council partners with the Shire's and wider region's education and training providers, business and industry and key government agencies to encourage the development of workforce capacity and capabilities, bringing stakeholders together to develop a future-focused, and appropriately skilled workforce.
- **Planning and Place Management** – Council maintains a regulatory and land use planning framework that supports population, workforce and business growth while protecting and enhancing the Shire's built and natural assets, providing and managing infrastructure and services to facilitate economic activity of an appropriate scale and nature.
- **Investment Attraction** – Warrumbungle Shire Council facilitates private sector investment by promoting what the Shire and its communities offers prospective investors (its value proposition). It markets and facilitates investment opportunities and priority projects, promoting the development of existing and emerging new industries.
- **Advocacy and Partnership-building** – Council engages with its partners to provide a unifying voice for the Shire's communities and its businesses when lobbying all levels of government and decision-makers on economic and infrastructure issues and in promoting the Shire as a place in which to live, work, visit and invest.

Through its key economic development and tourism support functions and guided by this strategy, Council is committed to the implementation of 29 individual actions to fulfill its vision for a strong and diverse economy.

Warrumbungle Shire Council's Economic Development and Tourism Focus Areas



5. Strategic Alignment and Implementation Partners

A Collaborative Approach to Economic Development and Tourism

Warrumbungle Shire Council's commitment to promoting economic development and tourism throughout the Shire does not occur in isolation, and key to supporting the development of the Shire's economy is strong connections across departments within Council.

Designed to support its commitment to build a prosperous future for all communities of the Shire, the Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy is aligned with and supports the Shire's Community Strategic Plan, other key Council strategies as well as other local and regional strategies external to Council's operations.

Equally important as connections across departments within Council is strong partnerships between Council and other key agencies and organisations throughout the Shire and surrounding areas. In delivering the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, Warrumbungle Shire Council promotes a collaborative approach to economic development and tourism with its key partners including:

- Neighbouring councils;
- Key State and Federal Government departments and agencies;
- Orana Joint Organisation;
- RDA Orana;
- Destination NSW and Destination Country and Outback NSW;
- Business chambers and trader associations;
- Community groups; and
- Education and training providers.

Warrumbungle Shire Council's commitment to a collaborative approach to strategy implementation is supported by the establishment of and ongoing engagement with the Shire's Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee.

Strategic Alignment Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy



6. Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Action Plan

Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Pillars

This Economic Development and Tourism Strategy contains 29 actions across three pillars. The initiatives are focussed on:

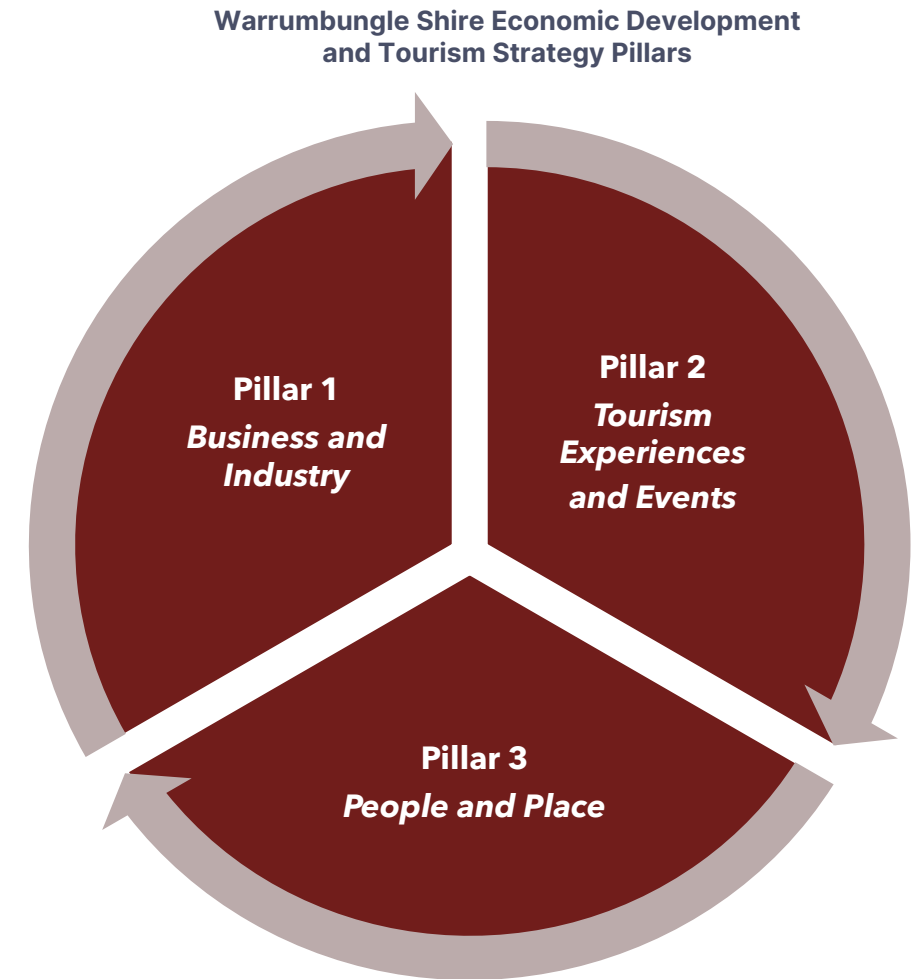
- 1. Supporting Warrumbungle Shire's businesses to prosper;**
- 2. Enhancing the Shire's profile as an authentic 'real country' visitor destination; and**
- 3. Nurturing the Shire's appeal as a place in which to live, learn and prosper.**

The actions are presented in the following pages, under each of the three pillars. Reflecting Warrumbungle Shire Council's key focus areas for economic development and tourism, they represent 'Council-led' initiatives that involve specific tasks and an allocation of Council's human, physical and financial resources. They include key advocacy initiatives, where delivery relies on a partnership approach.

Designed to encourage economic activity that capitalises on the unique character and features of the Shire, to help fulfil the vision for a strong and diverse economy, the actions are outcomes-focussed with an emphasis on what needs to be done to promote positive economic development outcomes throughout Warrumbungle Shire.

Each action is assigned a level of priority / timing according to whether it is a high (short-term) measure (to be implemented in Year 1), a medium-term initiative (Years 2 and 3) or a longer-term initiative (Years 4-5). Implementation partners are also identified.

All of the actions will be implemented over the course of the five-year plan in line with determined priorities and the availability of resources to progress the initiatives identified. Some of the actions seek to build on or continue initiatives already in place, some are already resourced while others require additional resourcing.



Pillar 1: Business and Industry



Pillar 1: Support Warrumbungle Shire's Businesses to Prosper

Warrumbungle Shire Council is committed to pro-actively attracting and facilitating economic growth and development through initiatives that capitalise on the area's comparative and competitive advantages while being cognisant of emerging industry trends and prospects. It is equally committed to initiatives to help build the Shire's business and employment base from within. Supporting small-to-medium sized enterprises to grow and prosper is key to ensuring that there are opportunities for the Shire's resident workforce.

As it is often a first point of contact for prospective new businesses and those seeking information on business support services or opportunities to expand, Council plays an important role in facilitating the delivery of information to help promote business development throughout the Shire. Council can assist with readily-available information on, for example, government grant funding programs and locations for investment, including the availability of commercial floorspace and industrial land. Council embraces an 'open-for-business' approach in its efforts to facilitate new businesses investment and support business expansion, consistent with its vision for a strong and diverse economy.

Warrumbungle Shire's future prosperity lies in the continued growth and development of its 'driver' industries in agriculture and tourism, as well as the realisation of opportunities associated with emerging sectors including renewables, transport and logistics and the services economy. When the Shire's driver industries flourish, demand for the goods and services of its service sectors, including health, education, retail and the professional services, will also grow.

The Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), for example, provides scope for local businesses to explore supply chain opportunities and to benefit from increased economic activity generated through new business and employment generated by the REZ. The REZ may also offer employment opportunities for locals during project construction and operation. Likewise, the Inland Rail, which is a once-in-a-generation project connecting regional Australia to domestic and international markets, presents potential supply chain and employment opportunities in Warrumbungle Shire.

Key to the development of competitive businesses and strong industries is a capable workforce that is equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of businesses so that they can compete effectively in a constantly evolving economic environment. Warrumbungle Shire Council pro-actively promotes local jobs for its resident workers. It will continue to take the lead in addressing workforce needs and opportunities by liaising with business and industry, business chambers and peak industry bodies, as well as the wider region's education and training providers, to address Warrumbungle Shire's workforce planning priorities.

Pillar 1 contains 10 key initiatives, presented overleaf.



Pillar 1: Business and Industry

Support Warrumbungle Shire's businesses to prosper

Action		Implementation Partners	Indicative Timing
1.1	Engage with business chambers and community groups throughout the Shire to promote and facilitate access to government-sponsored small business grants and support services.	Business chambers; community groups; RDA Orana; State Government	Year 1
1.2	Work with business chambers and community groups to deliver a program of regular networking functions to be held throughout Warrumbungle Shire.	Business chambers and community groups	Year 1
1.3	Collaborate with the Shire's business chambers and community groups to design and deliver an annual business awards night.	Business chambers and community groups	Year 1
1.4	Conduct business information sessions on Warrumbungle Shire Council's Purchasing Policy to inform local businesses of opportunities to supply goods and services to the organisation.	Business chambers	Year 1
1.5	Engage with EnergyCo and project proponents in the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone to identify local business supply chain and employment opportunities.	EnergyCo; project proponents; business chambers and community groups	Year 2
1.6	Engage with the Australian Rail Track Corporation and Warrumbungle Shire's transport and logistics industry stakeholders to identify local business supply chain and employment opportunities associated with the Inland Rail.	Australian Rail Track Corporation	Year 2
1.7	Prepare and utilise an investment prospectus to promote Warrumbungle Shire's key industries and investment opportunities to prospective investors and key government agencies.	RDA Orana; State Government	Year 2
1.8	Quantify and report on current and planned industrial land supply across the Shire to inform business investment enquiries and the preparation of the proposed investment prospectus.	State Government	Year 2
1.9	Partner with the health and community services sector to map critical training needs, to build capacity in priority areas including childcare, early learning and aged care.	Health and community service providers; RTOs	Year 3
1.10	Engage with industry, schools and education and training providers to explore the potential for an annual careers expo in Warrumbungle Shire.	Schools; State Government	Year 3

Pillar 2: Tourism Experiences and Events



Pillar 2: Enhance Warrumbungle Shire's Profile as an Authentic 'Real Country' Visitor Destination

Tourism is an important contributor to Warrumbungle Shire's economy, accounting for 8% of all jobs in the Shire (compared to the NSW average of 5%) and 4% of the Shire's industry value-added (compared to 3% for NSW) (source: REMPLAN). Warrumbungle Shire's destination offer is defined by its natural assets in the Warrumbungle National Park, Coolah Tops National Park, the Pilliga Forest and Castlereagh River, as well as key recreational assets including cycling and walking trails. Home to Australia's largest optical astronomy research facility, Siding Spring Observatory, the Shire is also internationally recognised for its dark skies. These catalyst attractions provide a firm base on which to grow other key sectors of the visitor economy, including food and beverage tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism and events.

Warrumbungle Shire Council recognises the potential of the tourism sector to help diversify and grow the Shire's economy, through the development of the Real Country Tourism Experience Strategy. Prepared in partnership with Gilgandra and Coonamble Shire Councils, the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan leverages the region's unique natural assets to create a compelling destination for travellers seeking authentic Australian experiences. It includes an assessment and opportunity analysis of the Real Country region to develop the visitor experience and marketing strategy and is accompanied by a business case, which details planned infrastructure investment across the region to make the Real Country tourism experience a reality.

The Real Country Business Case encompasses the creation of an Adventure Precinct in Coonabarabran featuring nature-based activities like mountain biking, treetop adventure circuits and river experiences. It will integrate educational and interpretive signage to share the rich cultural narratives of the First Nations people, enhance riverfront areas for community gatherings and events and implement sustainable practices to preserve the ecological integrity of the river and surrounding landscapes.

Other priority projects include the dark sky viewing tower; Visitor Information Centre (VIC) enhancement and connecting pathways to the VIC; developments at Binnaway and Mendooran; Nandi Creek Reserve development; Neilson Park connectivity enhancements; acoustic infrastructure solutions to enhance visitor comfort and experiences at key locations; river access solutions to enhance public access; and artistic wayfinding installations throughout the Shire. These projects, which aim to improve infrastructure and enhance the visitor experience, require grant funding for further investigation and feasibility analysis.

There is potential to expand the scope of project opportunity to provide a more equitable distribution of tourism benefits throughout the Shire. For example, the Central West Cycle Trail, which traverses Dunedoo and Mendooran, is a key asset for the region that can be promoted and capitalised upon for the benefit of local businesses and the communities.

Pillar 2 contains 9 key initiatives, presented overleaf.



Pillar 2: Tourism Experiences and Events

Enhance Warrumbungle Shire's profile as an authentic 'real country' visitor destination

Action		Implementation Partners	Indicative Timing
2.1	Refresh Warrumbungle Shire's destination branding and web site in line with the 'Real Country' brand to grow engagement and inspire visitation to Warrumbungle Shire.	Destination NSW; neighbouring Councils; tourism operators	Year 1
2.2	Invest in a campaign to promote the <i>Real Country</i> destination brand style and associated visual identities, logos, graphics and guidelines amongst Warrumbungle Shire's businesses and residents to build brand identity and shared ownership.	Business chambers and community groups; tourism operators	Year 1
2.3	Progress applications for funding for priority infrastructure projects outlined in the Real Country Tourism Experience Strategy and Infrastructure Business Case.	Destination NSW; neighbouring Councils	Year 1
2.4	Highlight Warrumbungle Shire's proximity to the Central West Cycle Trail enhance the Shire's profile of diverse destination offerings.	Destination NSW; neighbouring Councils; tourism operators	Year 1
2.5	Review Warrumbungle Shire's visitor information delivery / servicing model to ensure visitor information needs are being addressed.	Destination NSW; tourism operators	Year 2
2.6	Curate digital itineraries to connect visitors with up-to-date information on Warrumbungle Shire's key attractions and to facilitate visitor connectivity between towns.	Tourism operators	Year 2
2.7	Develop relationships with Warrumbungle Shire's First Nations representative bodies / Elders to support growth of First Nations cultural tourism, including new opportunities that complement and add value to existing tourism assets and attractions.	First Nations representatives	Year 3
2.8	Promote a coordinated approach to the planning, promotion and delivery of the Real Country region's festivals and events, including marketing and coordination of an events calendar.	Destination NSW; neighbouring Councils; tourism operators	Year 3
2.9	Undertake research into the experience of Warrumbungle Shire as a visitor destination using biennial customer satisfaction surveys to identify visitor experience gaps and needs.	Tourism operators	Year 3

Pillar 3: People and Place

Pillar 3: Nurture Warrumbungle Shire's Appeal as a Place in which to Live, Learn and Prosper

The people of Warrumbungle Shire's townships and communities are its most important resource, and a stable and growing population will underpin the economic and social viability of all communities of the Shire. An increase in population will support local service delivery, attract government funding, serve to retain existing businesses and attract new investment as confidence in Warrumbungle Shire as a place to live and work grows. New investment will generate more opportunities for employment, creating a multiplier effect of more people, more investment and more jobs.

Warrumbungle Shire Council is a place-maker, utilising its land use planning, regulatory and place-making levers to continually enhance the Shire's lifestyle appeal. It directly invests in a sense of place and the functioning of its townships and settlements through streetscape enhancements, place activation and urban improvement programs. It also advocates, plans for and invests in essential infrastructure and services including recreation, leisure and entertainment facilities, arts and cultural facilities and community services and facilities. In doing so, Council pro-actively works to enhance Warrumbungle Shire's appeal as a desired location in which to live, learn and prosper.

Council also recognises a number of challenges that need to be addressed to elevate the Shire's appeal to both existing and prospective new residents and businesses. These challenges include town centre amenity and vitality, signage, adequate provision of housing to attract and retain residents, health care, aged care and childcare services and access to tertiary education. Consistent with its approach to providing support for workforce planning and development, Council can collaborate with its partners in industry, the community and in the education and training sector to explore and establish the case for the delivery of tertiary (university) education in the Shire.

Community consultation suggested there is a strong appetite for continual investment in initiatives that will activate retail and commercial activity in Warrumbungle Shire's town centres such as town entry signage, streetscaping, interpretive trails, murals, markets and festivals & events. These and other town centre initiatives can be designed and developed as a partnership between local businesses and community members with Council support. Council will also continue to prioritise place-making investments in the interest of community need while advocating for sustained levels of investment from the other tiers of government.

Pillar 3 contains 10 key initiatives, presented overleaf.



Pillar 3: People and Place

Nurture Warrumbungle Shire's appeal as a place in which to live, learn and prosper

Action		Implementation Partners	Indicative Timing
3.1	Engage with EnergyCo and REZ project proponents on opportunities to deliver key legacy project investments for the benefit of the communities of Warrumbungle Shire.	EnergyCo; project proponents; business chambers and community groups	Year 1
3.2	Continue project advocacy and ensure Warrumbungle Shire's priority projects are afforded the appropriate level of priority in wider regional advocacy programs.	RDA Orana; Orana Joint Organisation	Year 1
3.3	Continue advocacy on Warrumbungle Shire's enabling transport infrastructure priorities.	Neighbouring councils; RDA Orana; Orana Joint Organisation; State Government	Year 1
3.4	Investigate and prioritise Warrumbungle Shire's mobile phone blackspots, determine priorities and advocate for improvements.	RDA Orana; Orana Joint Organisation	Year 1
3.5	Curate a <i>Welcome to the Warrumbungle Shire</i> information pack and utilise Council's web site and social media to deliver information to new residents and businesses.	Industry and community partners	Year 2
3.6	Work with government, industry and the education and training sector to investigate the business case and funding opportunities for a Country Universities Centre in Warrumbungle Shire.	State and Federal Governments; education and training providers	Year 2
3.7	Work with communities to facilitate sustainable town centre planning, local infrastructure improvements and place activation strategies, including short-term project opportunities as the catalyst for grant funding applications.	Business chambers and community groups	Year 2
3.8	Undertake a childcare needs, opportunities and site options analysis in Warrumbungle Shire and use this information to inform calls for expressions of interest from childcare providers.	State Government	Year 2
3.9	Promote Warrumbungle Shire as an attractive rural work-life location for skilled health care professionals including aged care workers, allied health care specialists and General Practitioners.	Health care sector	Year 3
3.10	Prepare a Shire-wide housing strategy informed by projected needs and a review of policies on existing housing capacity, zoning, land release and development controls.	State Government	Year 3

7. Strategy Targets, Monitoring and Evaluation

Measuring and Monitoring Strategy Outcomes

The initiatives presented in this five-year strategy have been developed with reference to the overarching aspirations for the Warrumbungle Shire economy, consideration of the Shire's economic status as well as broader economic trends, impacts and influences in a constantly-evolving economic landscape.

As a whole-of-Council strategy that has been prepared in the context of Warrumbungle Shire Council's broader program of work and strategic objectives, this strategy will be implemented in line with determined priorities as well as the availability of resources and the capacity of Council to progress the initiatives identified.

Aligned with the Community Strategic Plan and the vision for a strong and diverse economy, the strategy's implementation progress and identified priorities will be used to inform ongoing operational planning, budget allocation and project/program delivery.

Some of the strategy actions seek to build on or continue initiatives already in place, some are already resourced while others require additional resourcing (depending on implementation priorities), either from internal or external sources such as government grants.

To ensure it is working effectively in collaboration with its partners towards addressing the Shire's strategic objectives and the vision for the future economy, Council will continually monitor, assess and report on the implementation of the actions and the achievement of key milestones.

Means of monitoring and evaluating implementation progress will include the use of both 'output' measures related directly to the recommended actions and their implementation as well as some broader 'outcome' metrics.

Key Performance Measures

Strategic planning **outcome metrics**, which will be monitored and measured using authoritative data sources to track Warrumbungle Shire's economic development, include the following:

- Population growth (as measured by population and housing growth rates).
- Employment creation (an increase in local jobs in the Warrumbungle LGA).
- An increase in employment self-sufficiency (more local jobs for the Shire's resident workers).
- Higher levels of workforce participation and employment (as measured by labour force participation and employment / unemployment rates).
- New businesses (as measured by the net change in local business registrations).
- Increased construction activity (as measured by building approvals data).
- Greater economic diversity (as measured by industry diversity indices).
- Economic activity and productivity (as measured by increases in GRP value per capita).
- Tourism activity (as measured by growing visitor numbers, expenditure and yield/value).

Output measures that will be used to monitor progress on set tasks include:

- Tracking progress of actions contained in this strategy – implementation rates (ongoing).
- Success in attracting, retaining and assisting businesses as well as supporting business start-ups, captured through targeted business and industry engagement (ongoing).
- Success in attracting and growing major events.
- Business confidence and community satisfaction surveys on Warrumbungle Shire Council's approach to economic development and tourism in line with this strategy.

The *Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025-2030* will be reviewed annually to ensure that implementation priorities reflect the key challenges, opportunities and priorities of the day.



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