

# Real Country.

COONAMBLE / GILGANDRA / WARRUMBUNGLE

## ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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# CONTENTS

<b>SECTION A</b>	<b>4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A.1 Executive Summary</li><li>A.2 Project Background</li><li>A.3 Engagement Workshops</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION B / COONAMBLE</b>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>B.1 Coonamble Workshop</li><li>B.2 Key Findings</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION C / GILGANDRA</b>	<b>30</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>C.1 Gilgandra Workshops</li><li>C.2 Key Findings</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION D / WARRUMBUNGLE</b>	<b>46</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>D.1 Warrumbungle Workshops</li><li>D.2 Key Findings</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION E</b>	<b>66</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>E.1 Implications and considerations for project process</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION F</b>	<b>92</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>F.1 Appendix</li></ul>	

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



Real Country is home to three Aboriginal nations - **Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan**. We are proudly a meeting place for family, friends, locals and visitors alike. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and play and pay respects to our Elders past, present and emerging.

SECTION A

A.1

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle Shire Councils (the Councils) are working together to enhance the visitor experience associated with the rich natural landscapes of the Real Country region. The Real Country Tourism Experience Business Case and Strategy project builds on this collaboration between the Councils, with funding support received through the NSW Government's Business Case and Strategy Development Fund.**



SECTION A

This Engagement Report provides a comprehensive outline of the strategic activities and methodologies used to engage stakeholders, gather insights, and co-create a series of vibrant infrastructure projects and input into the cohesive Marketing Strategy for the Real Country project. 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.

**The engagement process undertaken for the Real Country project has been a undertaken to assist shaping the project's direction, ensuring alignment with stakeholder aspirations, and fostering a collective vision for attracting tourists, visitors, and enriching experiences across the region.**



# A.2

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Introduction

The Real Country project embarks on a transformative journey, collaboratively undertaken by the Council's. This collective initiative envisions revitalising tourism experiences within the three Local Government Areas (LGAs), with a focal point on the vibrant town centres of Coonamble, Coonabarabran, and Gilgandra, as well as the charming villages of Tooraweenah, Mendooran, and Binnaway nestled along the scenic Castlereagh River. This Engagement Report encapsulates the essence of the engagement process, capturing the insights, aspirations, and collaborative efforts that have shaped the Real Country project to seek community-driven actions.



### 2.3 Objectives

In presenting the aims and objectives within the context of the Engagement Report for the Real Country Project, the foundational principles that have guided our approach encompass:

#### Inclusivity

Ensuring a diverse range of stakeholders, including First Nations, are engaged, capturing a comprehensive understanding of issues and aspirations.

#### Early Involvement

Providing stakeholders the opportunity to influence the Real Country Strategy from its inception.

#### Ongoing Engagement

Recognising that community engagement is a continuous process, not just a one-time activity.

#### Clarity

Utilising methods that resonate with key stakeholders and the broader community, ensuring clear and straightforward communication.

#### Strategic Planning

Making engagement a central aspect of the development of the Real Country Strategy and the Real Country Business Case.

### 2.4 Report Overview

This document provides an overview of the range of activities that shaped our stakeholder involvement efforts for the Real Country Project. This report outlines a structured approach that sought to foster meaningful engagement and collaboration. The plan's progression was organised as follows:

#### Stakeholder Workshop

Commencing with an interactive session, this workshop established a strong foundation for collaboration and the exchange of knowledge among participants. The engagement principles that guided this activity promoted inclusivity and active participation.

#### Online Stakeholder Workshop

Recognising the importance of flexibility, a virtual workshop was incorporated to ensure that stakeholders who were unable to attend in person could still engage actively. This approach emphasised inclusivity and enabled diverse participation.

#### Online Survey

This survey offered a platform for gathering insights from a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The survey's design facilitated a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives, enriching the engagement process.



#### One-on-One Interviews

To delve deeper into more detailed topics and garner an understanding of specific industries and niches, these smaller one-on-one sessions fostered in-depth discussions and insights.

By methodically implementing these activities, we endeavoured to create an environment of collaboration and inclusiveness. This report captures the essence of our engagement journey and the outcomes of each activity. We extend our gratitude to stakeholders who actively participated, contributing to the realisation of the Real Country Project's vision across the 3 participating Council's.

# A.3

## ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

### 3.1 Stakeholder Workshop Insights

#### 3.1.1 Insights from the Stakeholder Workshop

The Real Country Project Stakeholder Workshop adopted an interactive, small group format, aimed at soliciting feedback and refining the primary strategies, priorities, and actions outlined in the Issues Paper. The workshop facilitated an environment conducive to diverse insights and collaborative discussions and feedback from the stakeholders.

Stakeholders included accommodation providers, key attractions, event organisers, town centre businesses, key industry leaders, First Nations and creative sector providers.

The agenda comprised several components, including a presentation of the Real Country Project's objectives, and focused discussions on key aspects such as SWOT analysis, evaluating infrastructure and investment opportunities, and acknowledging cultural experiences and heritage. The collective aim was to establish a unified understanding and explore avenues for project advancement.

This report documents the insights gained from the Stakeholder Workshops, one-on-one meetings and online feedback. The subsequent sections delineate the outcomes of the engagement process, encapsulating the various perspectives, innovative ideas, and strategic thinking contributed by stakeholders. These insights serve as a robust basis for refining the proposed infrastructure projects and the Marketing Strategies toward a progressive outcome for the Real Country project.



#### 3.1.2 Activity Summaries and Key Lessons

The Real Country Project's Engagement Process has focused on fostering a deep understanding of the diverse regions within our project scope. Through this engagement process, we embarked on a journey to absorb local knowledge and aspirations while engaging with the communities of Coonamble, Coonabarabran, Gilgandra, Mendooran, Binnaway, and Tooraweenah.

Within each local Council a diverse cross section of the local community and key stakeholders were invited to attend the workshop sessions, including; local business, accommodation providers, local attractions, local event organisers, Local Aboriginal Land Council and community groups.

It was a platform for us to learn about the rich tapestry of these towns and villages, their unique attributes, and the shared vision for their future prosperity as integral components of the Real Country Project. This section presents a comprehensive account of the sessions, underscoring key insights and lessons learned, with a steadfast commitment to advancing economic, social, and cultural enrichment for these communities.

## SECTION A

### 3.1.3 Community Workshops were held within the 3 Council LGAs on the following dates and locations:

- **Coonamble:**  
5 September 2023  
(25 community members, 1 councillor)
- **Gilgandra:**  
5 September 2023  
(18 community members, 2 councillors across 2 workshops)
- **Coonabarabran:**  
6 September 2023  
(10 community stakeholders)
- **Binnaway:**  
7 September 2023  
(5 community members)
- **Mendooran:**  
7 September 2023  
(4 community members, 1 councillor)
- **Tooraweenah:**  
7 September 2023  
(18 community members)
- **Online Digital Engagement:**  
11 September 2023  
(4 community members, 1 councillor)



### 3.1.4 One-on-one interviews were undertaken with the following key stakeholders and the insights gained have been added to the summaries for each locality:

- Aboriginal Land Council from each LGA
- Technical council staff from each LGA to undertake site visits of the focus area projects
- Coonamble Chamber of Commerce, Nakadoo Farm Stay, Coonamble Rodeo Association, Outback Arts and Coonamble Arts Alive, Coonamble Aquatic/ Ski Club and Accommodation providers from Castlereagh Lodge Motel, Bucking Bull Hotel, Coonamble Motel, Gilgoma, Coonamble Riverside Caravan Park



SECTION B

# COO NAM BLE

B.1

**ENGAGEMENT  
WORKSHOPS**



### 1.1 Focus Area 1: Visitor Centre Precinct

**GROUP DISCUSSION ON BUSINESS CASE PROJECT**

The key idea for the visitor centre precinct ties the cultural flow to the water is life concept - river health is a key factor for the public use of the place. The precinct will have an easy buy-in from community and visitors and should be viewed as priority.

**KEY IDEA**



**WHAT WE HEARD**

Participants heard Council's suggestions for infrastructure to be included in the visitor centre precinct, such as an anchor attraction and viewing platform that, increased museum offerings and prioritising the health of the river, a place cherished by families and visitors.

**WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE**

- An activated and upgraded town centre that links seamlessly to the visitor information centre
- An increase in the visitor centre offering, particularly museum artefacts
- Permanent infrastructure at Smith Park
- A healthy river that is a safe place to play and be in nature
- A viewing platform as part of the visitor centre
- Big Boomerang - concept for the visitor centre



**WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO**

- Hands on experiences and activation
- Eco farm tourism with farmer experiences and interactive tours
- Largest Rodeo in Australia and a complementing events calendar that builds on this culture
- Boomerang walk as an experience tied into the suggested concept of the Big Boomerang for the visitor centre precinct

**WHAT DID WE LEARN THAT PROVIDES FURTHER REFINEMENT TO THIS FOCUS AREA?**

- Experiences held at the visitor centre precinct should go through tests and trials to better understand needs and aspirations for the precinct
- Accessibility is key for the success of the Focus Area, namely the expansion of bus services
- Short term initiatives are important



## 1.2 Coonamble Focus Area 2: The "Town Beach" Precinct

### GROUP DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECT

It is important that Focus Areas contribute to making Coonamble a destination rather than a "pit stop", leveraging visitation numbers and acknowledging the importance of visitors from the local area.

### KEY IDEA



### WHAT WE HEARD

- The importance of supporting local businesses
- Ensuring tourists are accommodated for, particularly regarding accommodation offering during events as well as car and RV parking

### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Connectivity with the town centre
- Public access and use of the Town Beach
- The aquatic park has very useful uses, and the participants would like to see the pool redeveloped
- Upgraded town centre

### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Larger scale events, such as the rodeo greyhound, which boost the economy and act as destination events for visitors
- Farm and hands-on tours, for example "creepy tours" that feature old haunted pubs and graveyards
- Sculptures in the sand

### WHAT DID WE LEARN THAT PROVIDES FURTHER REFINEMENT TO THIS FOCUS AREA?

Coonamble's community is highly engaged and has a very strong desire to see good things happen in the town, the future development of the Town Beach precinct could provide the revitalisation needed in the area.





### 1.3 Coonamble Focus Area 3: Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct

**GROUP DISCUSSION  
ON STRATEGIC  
MASTERPLANNING  
PROJECT**

The Weir is a water oriented place for families and community members to cherish nature, bringing together visitors and locals.

**KEY IDEA**



#### WHAT WE HEARD

- There is a need to analyse seasonal users to better understand the precinct's uses throughout the year
- Understand the duality of boat usage and its impacts on swimming, with some participants stating boats should still have the right of way

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Enhanced accessibility
- Photography exhibitions
- A cleaner river walk
- Toilets

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Raising the wall Weir
- Ensuring the integrity of Weir and Warren Creek regarding flood risk

#### WHAT DID WE LEARN THAT PROVIDES FURTHER REFINEMENT TO THIS FOCUS AREA?

- A detailed Plan of Management is needed for the precinct, including insurance and membership considerations
- The delivery of the project should be done in two stages: Stage 1 should include the walkway and footpath, amenities and cafe as well as the headwater of the Weir, dedicated swimming area and RV camping area. Stage 2 should focus on the look out infrastructure as well as the cabins for commercialisation and ownership

### 1.4 Coonamble Visitor Profile

During engagement we asked for insights regarding the visitor profiles from participants:

#### ARE THEY USUALLY:



Families

#### WHERE DO THEY USUALLY COME FROM?

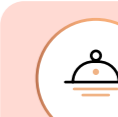
**30%**  
Locals

**30%**  
Regional

#### WHAT DO THEY TYPICALLY DO DURING THEIR STAY?



Nature Based Tourism



Local Pubs



Local Events

#### AT WHAT TIME DO PEOPLE USUALLY COME?

**DAY TIME  
ACTIVITIES**

**WEEKEND  
EVENINGS**

\*Insights provided by consulting with local businesses, accommodation providers and event organisers.

### 1.5 Coonamble Engagement with Aboriginal Land Council

The strong community bond with the Castlereagh River was highlighted as a central theme.

The river, historically essential for bathing and sustenance, was celebrated for its unique attributes, although challenges such as bamboo and carp infestations were raised. Preserving the river's health was deemed vital, with the understanding that "water is life" for the community.

Community involvement was another significant focus, particularly in the context of small towns like Coonamble. Initiatives like the ongoing Community Bush Garden project demonstrated the community's desire to shape its own future actively. Success stories like the Give Back Day event at Smith Park underscored the community's enthusiasm for engagement.

Warrena Creek garnered attention, with discussions revolving around project ideas and safety concerns related to a ski club's priority. Calls for public access, a Cultural Water Theme Park, and the installation of totem poles and interpretative markers reflected a desire to rejuvenate this natural asset.

Tin Town, a historically significant site, was discussed, emphasising its ongoing cultural importance and the need for preservation.

Cultural knowledge, including an understanding of the natural ecosystem and indigenous practices, was highlighted. Revitalising the river's health, connected to the Great Artesian Basin, was paramount.

Sharing Aboriginal Bush Tucker knowledge, exploring yabby farming and export opportunities, and connecting indigenous wisdom to local businesses were topics of interest, showcasing the rich cultural tapestry of the community.



## 1.6 Coonamble Key Themes

### 1. TOURISM AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Gauging the likes and dislikes of grey nomads and visitors from southern regions
- Upgrading the visitor information centre with improved services and accessibility
- Sorting out challenges related to accessing the museum and making it more accessible
- Crafting strategies to market Coonamble as a must-visit destination
- Looking into options like Air BNB, farm experiences, and creating an appealing "wheat story" for Coonamble
- Developing and promoting country pub crawls, and considering the prospect of ghost tours
- Showcasing the unique aspects of Marshes, Quambone, and Gular to lure visitors
- Figuring out how to position Coonamble as a stopover between Dubbo and Lightning Ridge

### 2. CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ASSETS

- Reactivating the theatre and assessing its potential benefits to the community
- Safeguarding and promoting historical assets like Sons of the Soil and the historic streetscape
- Strategies to expand events such as rodeos and greyhound racing
- Teaming up with event organisers to develop a comprehensive events calendar
- Making museums accessible and addressing the availability of volunteers

### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

- Kick-starting a caravan parking trial to accommodate travellers
- Investigating opportunities for cafes and public spaces, taking into account operating days and hours
- Prioritising investment in the main street for economic stimulation
- Understanding the broader impact of the Tooraweenah road investment across multiple councils
- Tackling the need for parking facilities at various tourist spots
- Opening up additional lanes and museum spaces for both cultural and economic growth
- Improving signage to assist visitors and involve shop owners in local development efforts

### 4. SAFETY AND WATER MANAGEMENT

- Handling safety concerns related to swimming and boating, particularly in connection to yabbying
- Crafting a detailed plan for managing water-based activities
- Clarifying the council's position and commitment to proposed initiatives
- Gauging the accommodation needs for healthcare professionals like nurses
- Focused efforts and initiatives on River Health

### 5. BUDGET AND MAINTENANCE

- Thoughtfully allocating budgets for planned projects
- Estimating long-term upkeep costs and designating responsible parties
- Drawing insights from other councils' experiences to inform decision-making

### 6. ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT

- Assessing the need for various types of lodgings and identifying target groups
- Examining the feasibility of housing nurses and healthcare staff
- Analysing the potential economic benefit of investing in accommodation
- Balancing short-term lodging for visitors with long-term housing for locals
- Collaborating with local businesses and property owners to diversify accommodation options
- Scouting for funding sources and taking into account budget considerations for accommodation projects
- Creating maintenance plans to keep the accommodation facilities in top shape

### 7. FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

- Acknowledging the potential need for ongoing community engagement and feedback collection



# B.2

## KEY FINDINGS

### 2.1 Updating and Refocusing the Infrastructure Projects to align with Council, Community and Stakeholder Input

These brief summary points reflect the feedback from local stakeholders in Coonamble and provide guidance for refining infrastructure focus areas:

#### River Restoration and Conservation

- Prioritise repair and conservation of the river, emphasising its cultural significance as a source of life and the heart of the Coonamble town centre.
- Address the issues related to carp and weed infestations that are negatively impacting the river's health and seek to improve access to the riverbanks.
- Recognise the cultural importance of Tin Town as a legacy, representing the past, present, and future of the community.

#### Weir Enhancement and Family-Friendly Spaces

- Focus on enhancing the weir area as a water-oriented public space, catering to families and providing recreational opportunities.
- Develop a recreational focal point for walking (creating a loop), swimming, boating and watercraft
- Consider the creation of activities for children to engage with nature, promoting a sense of connection with the environment.

#### Main Street Revitalisation

- Prioritise the revitalisation of the town centre, with a strong emphasis on the main street, addressing issues such as vacant shops.
- Balance the allocation of parking spaces for cars and RVs, ensuring adequate space for tourists.

#### Accommodation and Housing

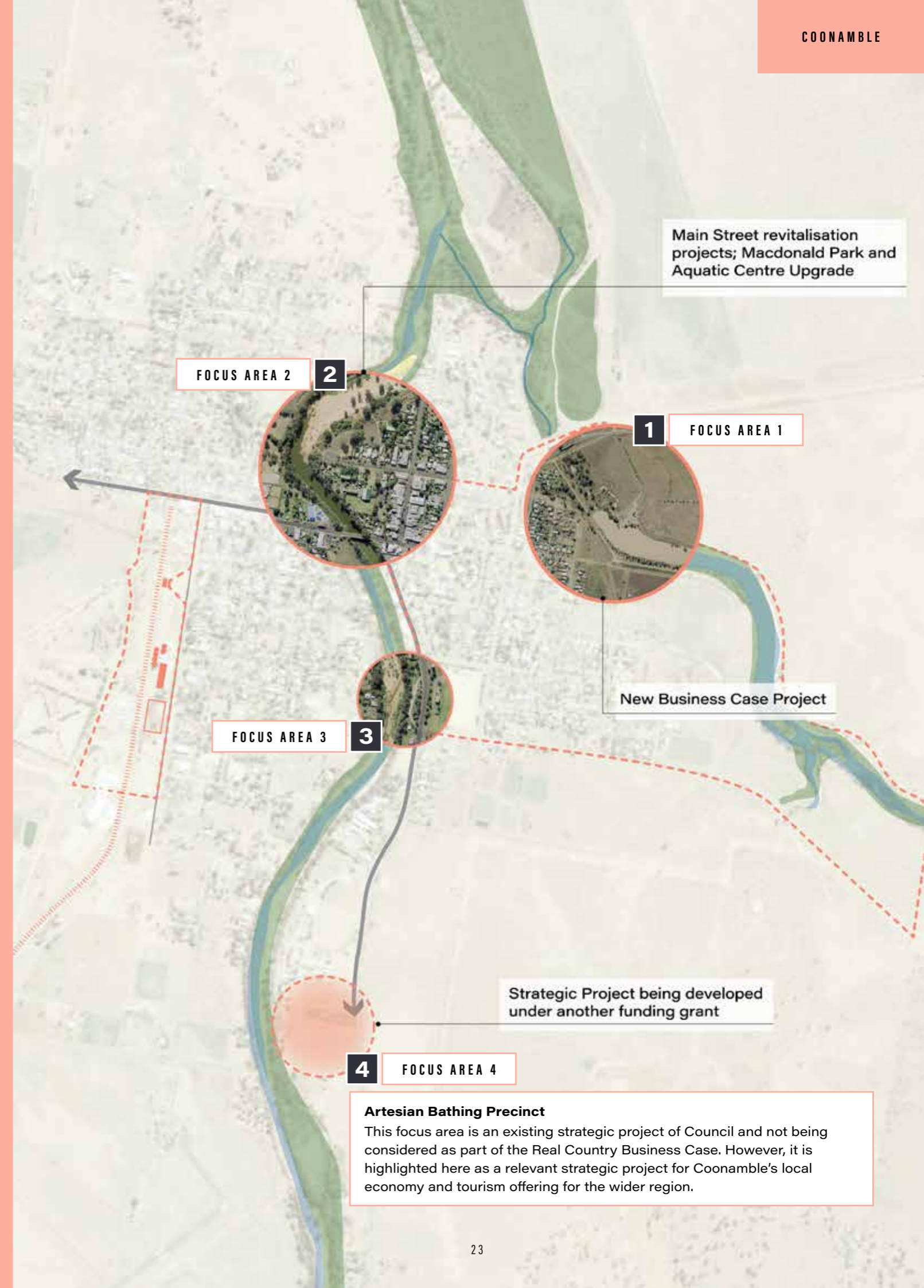
- Acknowledge the need for increased accommodation options to cater to events and tourism.
- Consider providing housing for essential workers, including nurses, to meet the community's needs.

#### Historical Asset Preservation

- Recognise the historical significance of the main street and assess the feasibility of preserving the hotel facade.
- Address economic challenges in the town centre, supporting businesses and filling empty shops.

#### Community Engagement and Unity

- Highlight the community's high level of engagement and the sense of urgency to see positive developments.
- Support a united front, fostering collaboration among the three shires to create a strong regional identity and enhance offerings.



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.

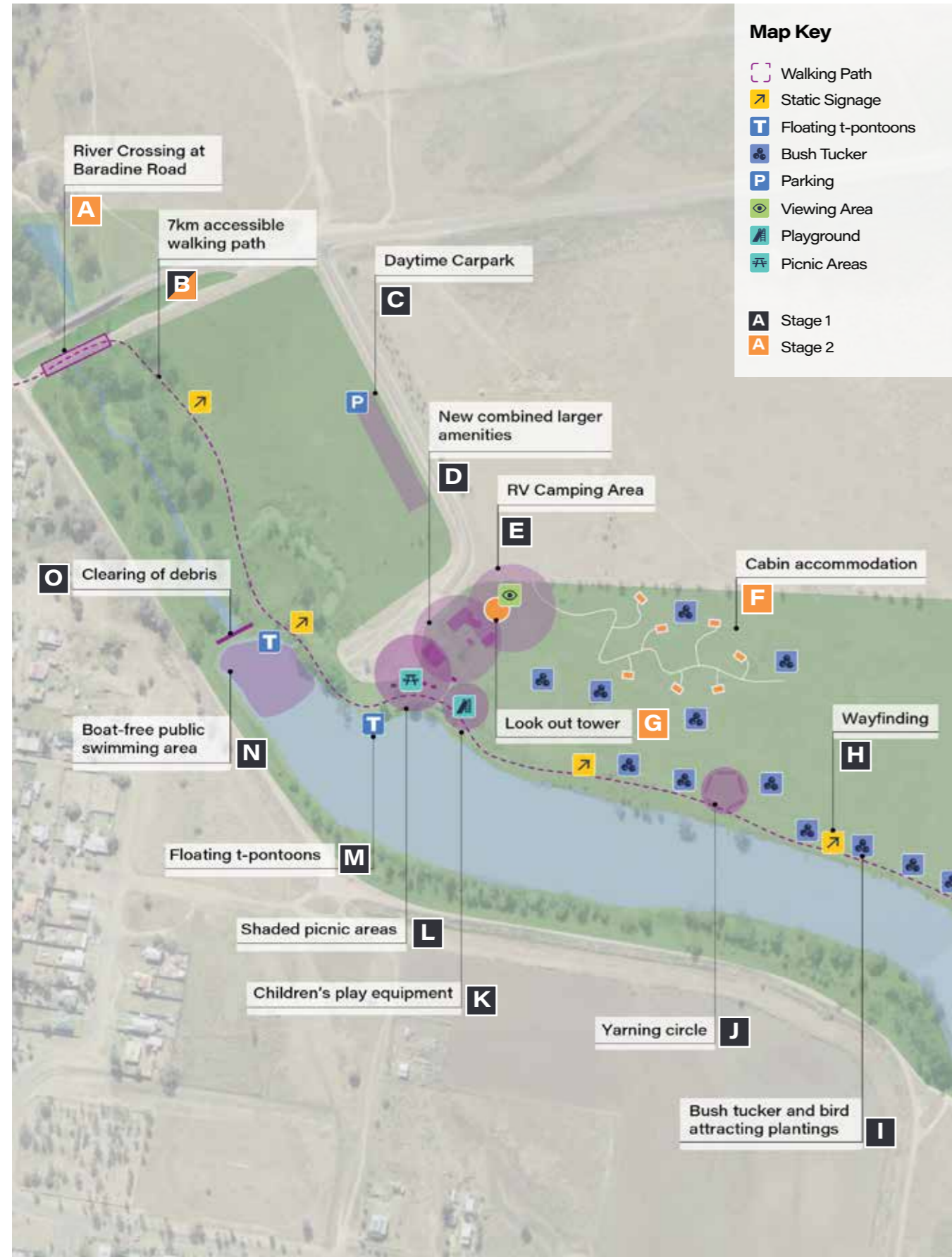
## 2.2 Focus Area 1: Coonamble Business Case Project

### 2.2.1 Existing Conditions Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct

EXISTING CONDITIONS



2.2.2 Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct Updates



**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)



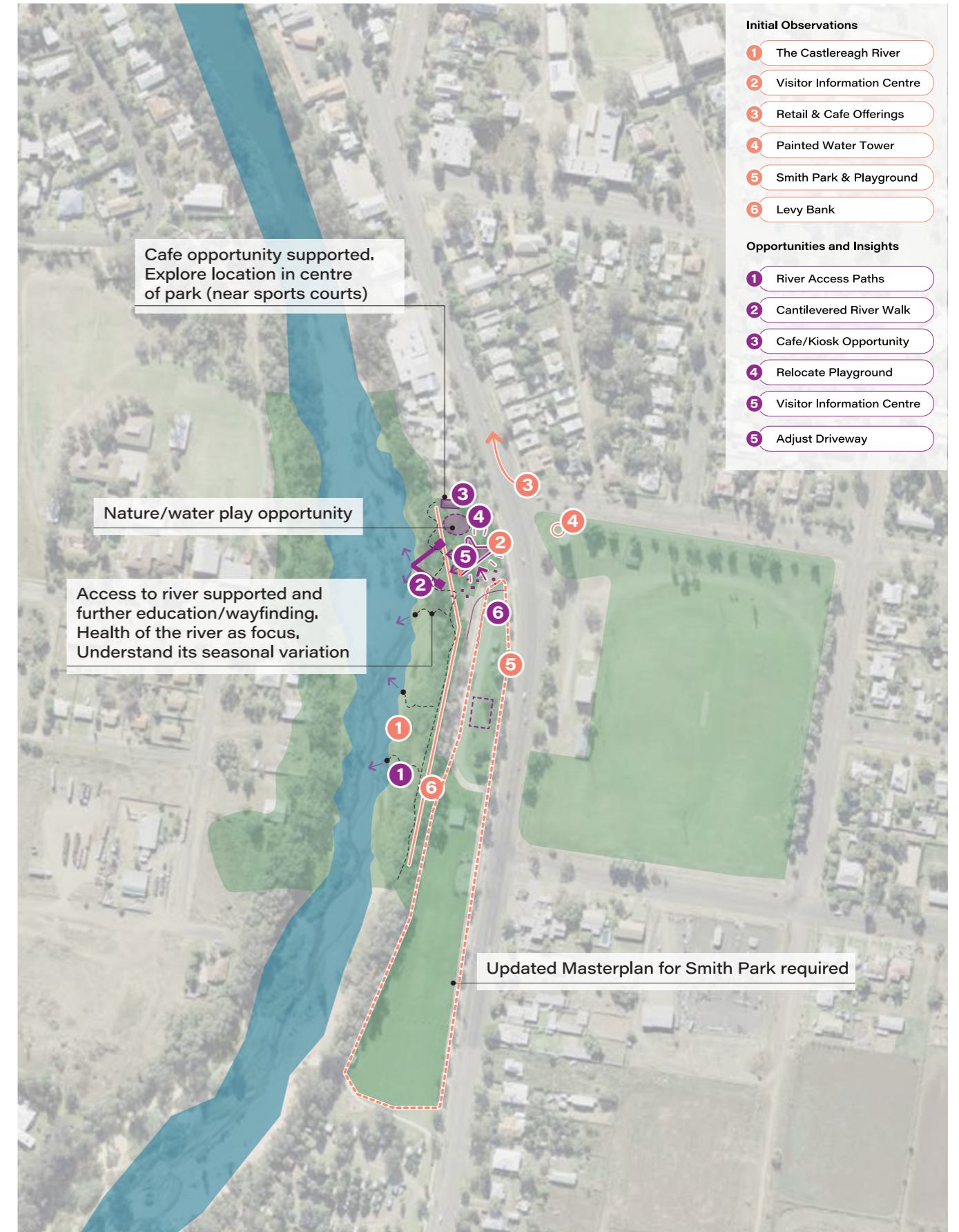
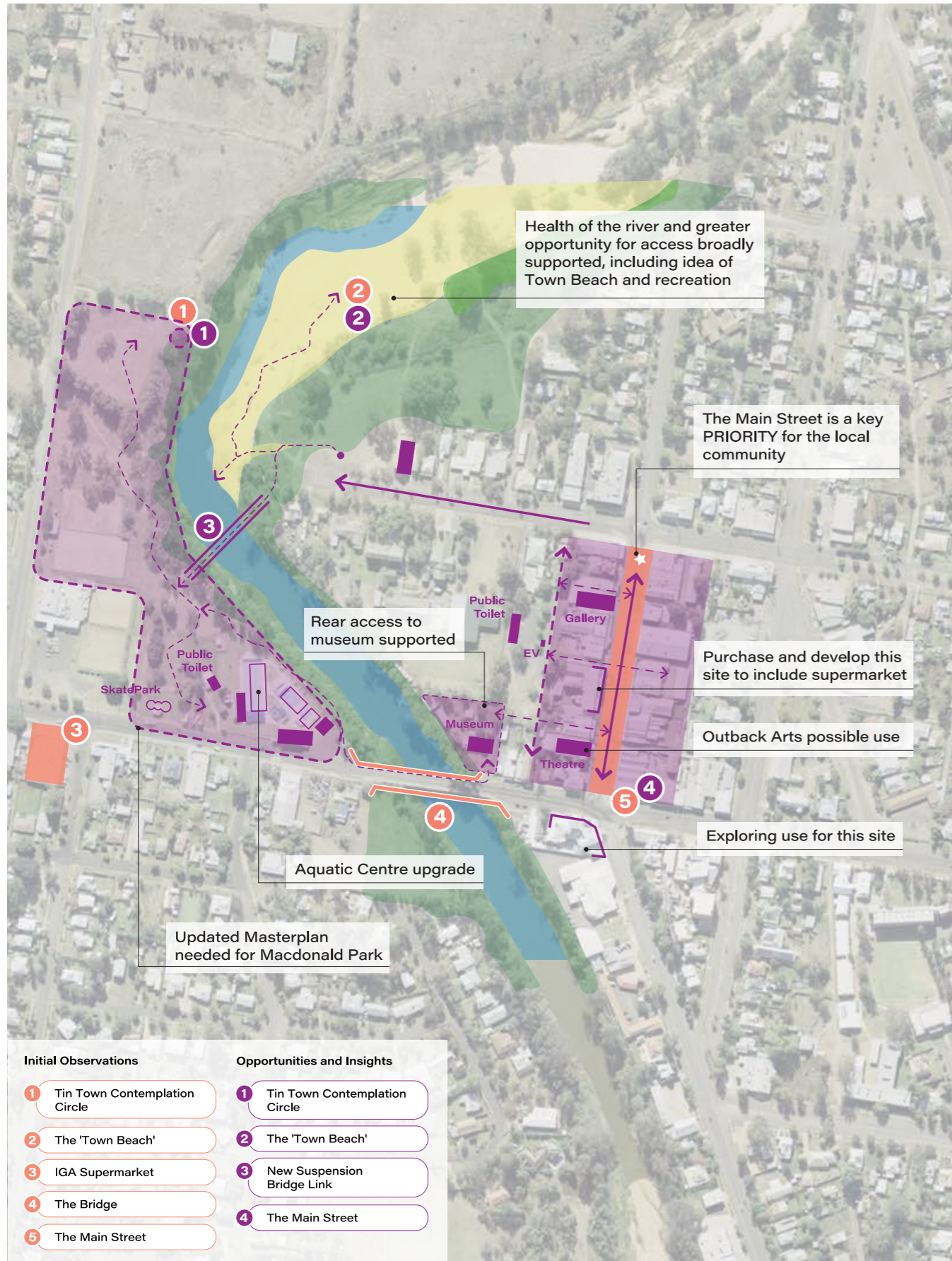
**N Public Swimming Area**  
Demarcated boat-free public swimming area near weir wall

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



**2.3 Focus Area 2: Coonamble Strategic Masterplanning Project**  
The "Town Beach" Precinct

**2.4 Focus Area 3: Coonamble Strategic Masterplanning Project**  
Visitor Centre Precinct



SECTION C

# GILGANDRA

## C.1

### ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS



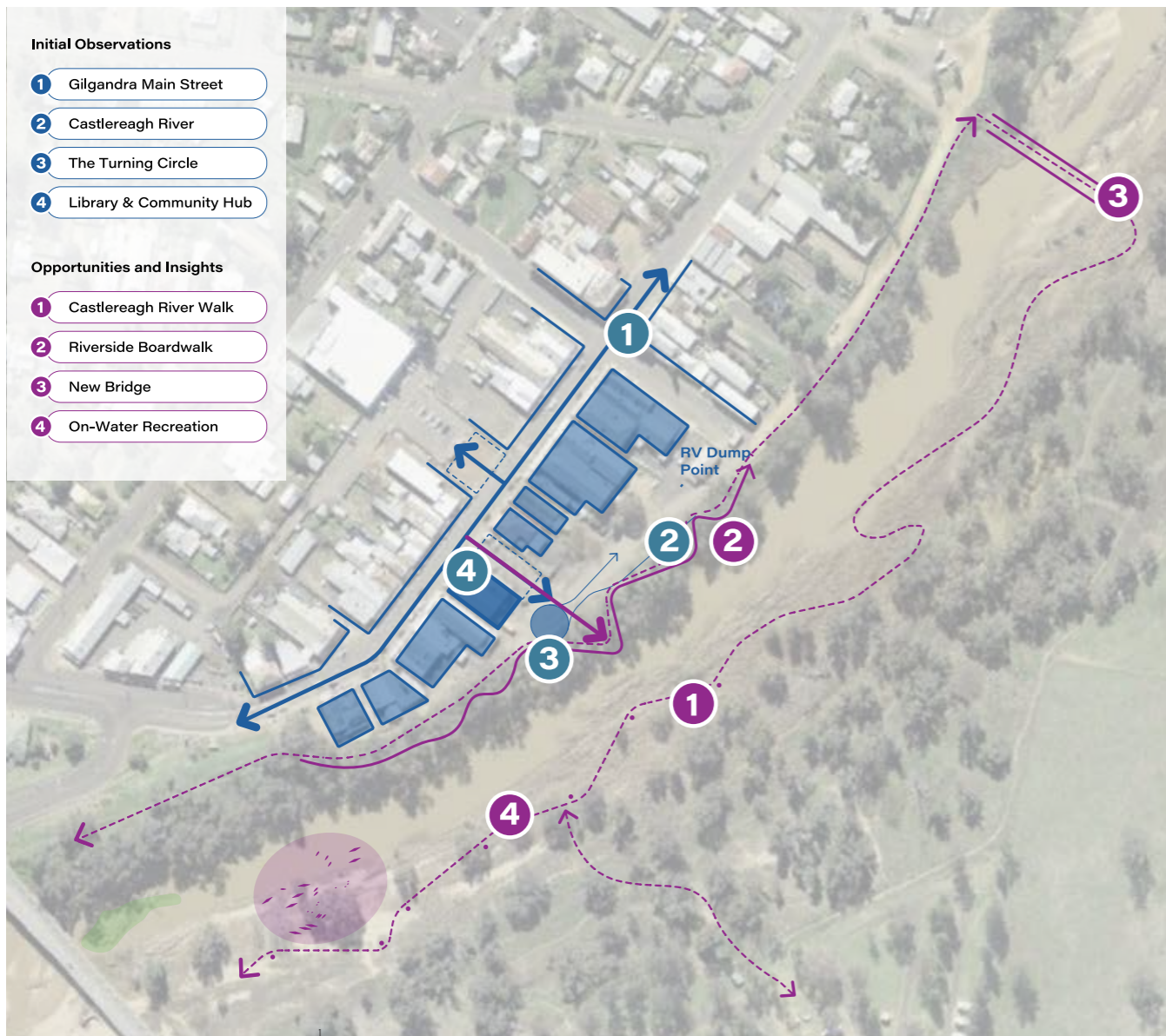


1.1 Focus Area 1: Town Centre Precinct

GROUP DISCUSSION ON BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

There are two key themes in Gilgandra: stories and infrastructure. Participants want to appropriately promote the town through its stories - Gilgandra has always been a meeting place where different Aboriginal communities came for sharing. The town is deeply connected to the river system, the fauna and the flora. These stories can be passed on through educative and technological experiences, particularly for younger generations. Gilgandra's story lines are carried through generations - participants noted a strong need to share this ongoing cultural and heritage connection with the world. There are substantial recordings of Gilgandra history, intertwined with its Aboriginal connection, that can be leveraged for education-based tourism.

KEY IDEAS  
Stories and Infrastructure



WHAT WE HEARD

- Need to consider families and kids when planning for the future, as well as maintenance and operational needs
- Integrate community members to share their stories, value and network to contribute to the project and collaborate between the three Shires
- Increased parking provision as well as walkability
- Encourage a diverse business mix

WHAT DID WE LEARN THAT PROVIDES FURTHER REFINEMENT TO THIS FOCUS AREA?

- That there would be value in moving the proposed river crossing in the town centre to be at Court St to better enhance the length of the potential loop created
- That the accessible beach area of the river is located closer to the Jack Renshaw Bridge
- That the viewing platform and boardwalk needs to provide clear link along the foreshore towards Jack Renshaw Bridge

WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- See economic opportunities in the CBD, ability for business to 'turn around', connection points between spend and activations
- Leverage key investments in the areas including laneways project, two plazas, GIL Library Hub and upcoming Miller st (main) beautification projects.
- Bird watching
- Showcase the beautiful trees, particularly the River Gumtree which is 500 years old
- Photography exhibitions
- The GIL Library Hub
- Expanding the sandy area near the river for kids activities to take place
- Promoting Gilgandra as a place of reconnection to the Australian cultural heritage
- Drone river footage
- CBD activation, that is generated by visitors and locals
- Accessibility to the water with trails

WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Water activities in the river - fishing, kayaking
- Farm experiences
- Differentiated kids activities
- Education-based tourism
- Share local history, particularly the strong connection to Aboriginal communities, to younger generations, not only as place promotion but to further strengthen the information transfer of the local history and heritage.
- NAIDOC celebrations, supporting and promotion Aboriginal businesses
- Walking and cycling tracks along the riverside

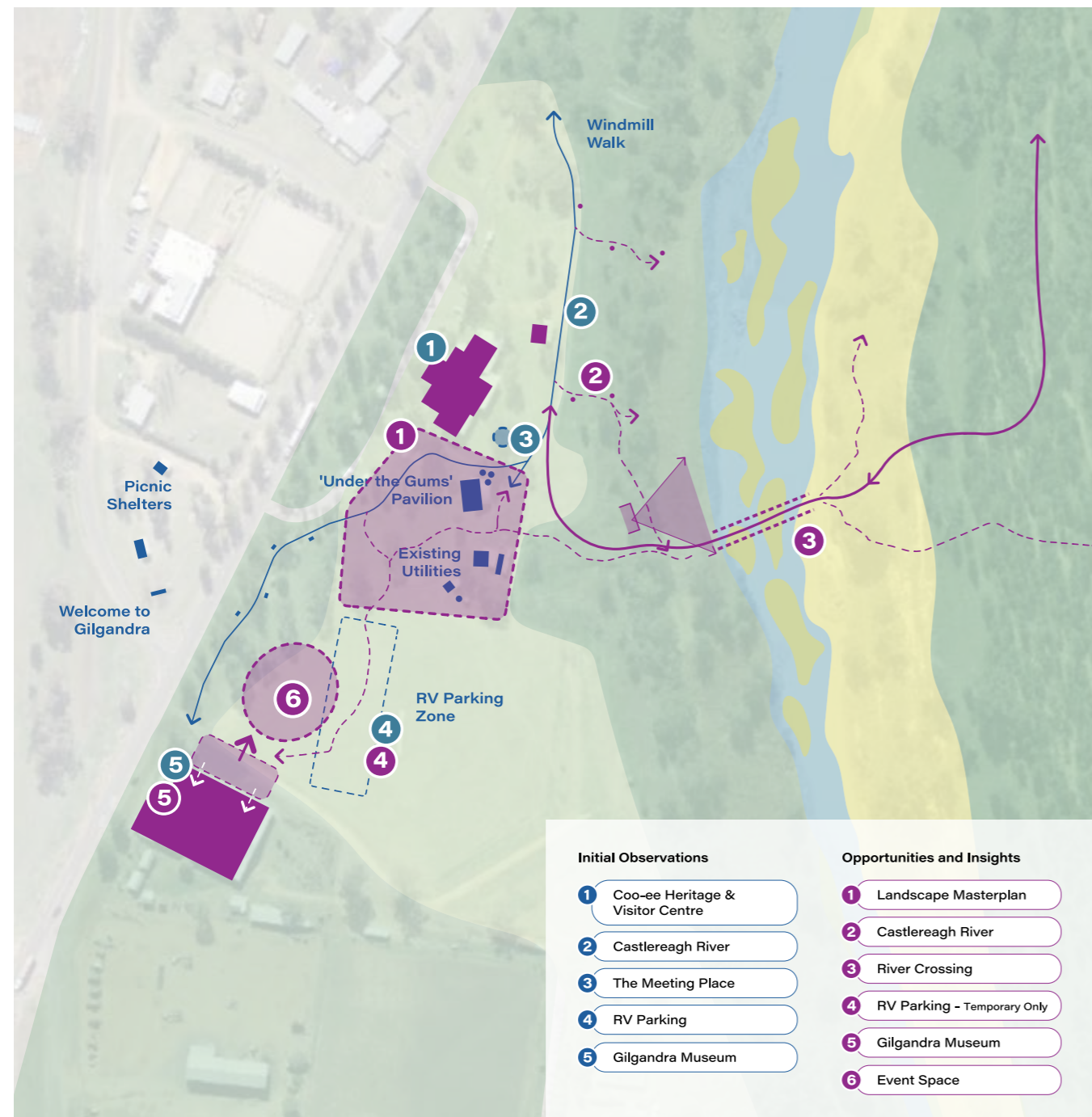


## 1.2 Gilgandra Focus Area 2: Cultural & Heritage Precinct

### GROUP DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECT

The expanding Coo-ee Cultural Precinct presents an exciting opportunity for Gilgandra's tourism growth, catering to families, cultural and event visitors. By aligning with this cultural hub, Gilgandra can shift from a mere stopover to a vibrant destination. This not only attracts local and regional visitors but also broadens its appeal, increasing visitor numbers and enhancing the town's economy and cultural vibrancy. Further enhancing physical infrastructure improvements within this Gilgandra Cultural Precinct invites exploration of its unique blend of nature, river walks, heritage, art, and events, fostering a deep connection and engagement within the area and extending visitors stays.

### KEY IDEAS



### WHAT WE HEARD

- Emphasising agriculture and Agri-tourism leveraging Gilgandra's agricultural industry as a central element of the tourism strategy. Ideas for promoting different seasons of agriculture, exploring agri-tourism opportunities, creating playground that are themed
- Promoting the river's natural attributes, considering regenerative practices for river health, and creating a wide track for walking and riding along the river, providing opportunities to venture into nature.
- Art, Culture, and Dark Sky Promotion: promoting arts and culture within Gilgandra. This included integrating infrastructure with art, promoting the "dark sky" and emus in the sky story, and creating sensory experiences for children in naturalised playgrounds.
- Art and culture were seen as important elements in attracting tourists and enhancing the visitor experience
- - Ideas included the connections to the Gilgandra Museum walkway and machinery/ play.

### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Wayfinding and signage that showcase the history, heritage, and traditions of Gilgandra and the Castlereagh River
- Introduction of an agricultural playground for visitors.
- Upgrade to the events amenities
- The Gilgandra Museum integrated into the space
- Open green space

### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Create a nature-based agricultural playground
- Integrate the history and natural landscape through an interpretive walk

### WHAT DID WE LEARN THAT PROVIDES FURTHER REFINEMENT TO THIS FOCUS AREA?

- That there is a need for the walking and cycle path to be accessible for all users for the full loop from Cooee Cultural Precinct to the Windmill Walk and into the town centre
- That there are well known Australian poems and songs that could be introduced in the wayfinding signage and an upgraded play space
- That there needs to be consideration to additional landscaping and pathway network between the Gilgandra Museum, the proposed river walk and the Windmill Walk



### 1.3 Gilgandra Visitor Profile

During engagement we asked for insights regarding the visitor profiles from participants:

#### VISITOR PROFILE:

**Truck stops and Caravan parks:**  
the tourism market has a high percentage of passing trade with variable visitation numbers

#### ARE THEY USUALLY:

Elderly Travellers Families Camping, RV's, Caravans

#### WHERE DO THEY USUALLY COME FROM?

Regional NSW

Visitors doing the North/South (or reverse) trip from QLD/VIC

#### WHAT DO THEY TYPICALLY DO DURING THEIR STAY?

Nature Based Tourism Town Centre Events and Cultural Tourism

#### AT WHAT TIME DO PEOPLE USUALLY COME?

DAYTIME ACTIVITIES

\*Insights provided by consulting with local businesses, accommodation providers and event organisers.



### 1.4 Gilgandra Cultural Precinct Vision and three key themes

#### 1. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

- Highlighting the town's vibrant community spirit through stories
- Recognising local heroes and community leaders
- Fostering community-driven projects and initiatives that encourage ownership

#### 2. ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Expanding the local economy with a diverse business offering
- Implementing environmental conservation and protection measures that showcase the unique fauna and flora
- Encouraging eco-friendly business practices

#### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Upgrading local infrastructure to meet modern standards
- Encouraging residents to participate in town development
- Ensuring all community segments have a voice
- Enhance river connection with the town centre

#### 4. COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

- Building a collaborative relationship with the council
- Ensuring the community's needs are prioritised
- Working together on town development and conservation projects

#### 5. TOURISM AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Promoting Gilgandra's unique attractions
- Capitalising on the town's cultural and historical significance
- Collaborating with nearby towns to boost regional tourism

### 1.5 Tooraweenah Community Workshop SWOT Analysis

#### STRENGTHS

- Geotrail
- Emu Farm
- The local community is friendly and welcoming to tourists and visitors
- Pub provision
- Caravans and camping
- Warrumungles, accommodation, town services and groceries
- Easter show, endurance ride
- Proximity and accessibility to Warrumbungle National Park

#### WEAKNESSES

- Poor mobile phone coverage
- Need for improved infrastructure provision, particularly regarding public amenity such as public toilets
- Lack of seasonal events

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Build on existing events which already hold a reputation, such as the fly-ins in May and September, as well as Easter
- Car rally's and vintage car exhibitions
- Dirt and motor bike trails
- Promote the geo-trails through events as Treasure Hunts and improved accessibility

#### THREATS

- The region was highly impacted in recent years by a sequence of threat: the Covid-19 pandemic, the mice plague and extreme drought



3.4.2 Tooraweenah Community Workshop See and Do

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Improve signage, particularly directing people in Gilgandra from surrounding towns and within the National Park
- Marketing strategies that include digital elements such as QR codes with updated information
- Increased amenity and link to Warrumbungles

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Pet-friendly trails that allow animals on bikes
- Emu Hunts for experience-based tourism
- Historic walks and bushwalking
- Trail run/rides, stay, refuel



### 1.6 Tooraweenah Community Workshop Key Themes

#### 1. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

- Promoting Tooraweenah's unique identity
- Recognising the role of volunteers in the community
- Strengthening local social groups and events
- Easter Show and Endurance Ride

#### 2. ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Strengthening local businesses and trade
- Diversifying the town's economic base
- Addressing environmental challenges, such as droughts and bushfires
- Promote the proximity to Warrumbungle National Park, local accommodation, town services and groceries

#### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Revitalising local landmarks and public spaces
- Promoting inclusive community planning and decision-making
- Increased amenity, signage and links to Warrumbungle National Park

#### 4. COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

- Establishing clearer communication channels with the council
- Council support for local initiatives
- Collaborating on infrastructure projects and environmental conservation

#### 5. TOURISM AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Capitalising on Tooraweenah's historical and cultural significance
- Developing local attractions and promoting tourism
- Collaborating with regional stakeholders to boost tourism

# C.2

## KEY FINDINGS

### 2.1 Updating and Refocusing the Infrastructure Projects to align with Council, Community and Stakeholder Input

These brief summary points reflect the feedback from local stakeholders in Gilgandra and Tooraweenah Village provide guidance for refining infrastructure focus areas:

#### Town Centre and River Crossing Design

- Reevaluate the design of the town centre viewing platform and the potential river crossing connection.
- Explore the possibility of relocating the river crossing further north to align with the northern section of the town centre, considering the reduced elevation and potential for an at-grade crossing.
- Take into account the location of powerlines and stormwater outlets during planning.

#### River Health and Conservation

- Recognise the critical importance of maintaining and enhancing the health of the river, emphasising its ecological significance.
- Relocation of the town beach to under the existing Jack Renshaw Bridge taking advantage of access and shade.

#### Cultural Inclusivity and First Nations Identity

- Promote cultural inclusivity and initiatives that celebrate the contributions of First Nations people.

#### Promotion of Primary Industries and Rural Strength

- Emphasise the promotion of primary industries, showcasing Gilgandra's rural strength and heritage.
- Explore strategies to effectively present the museum and rural strengths to the public within Focus Area 2.

#### Enhancement of Public Spaces

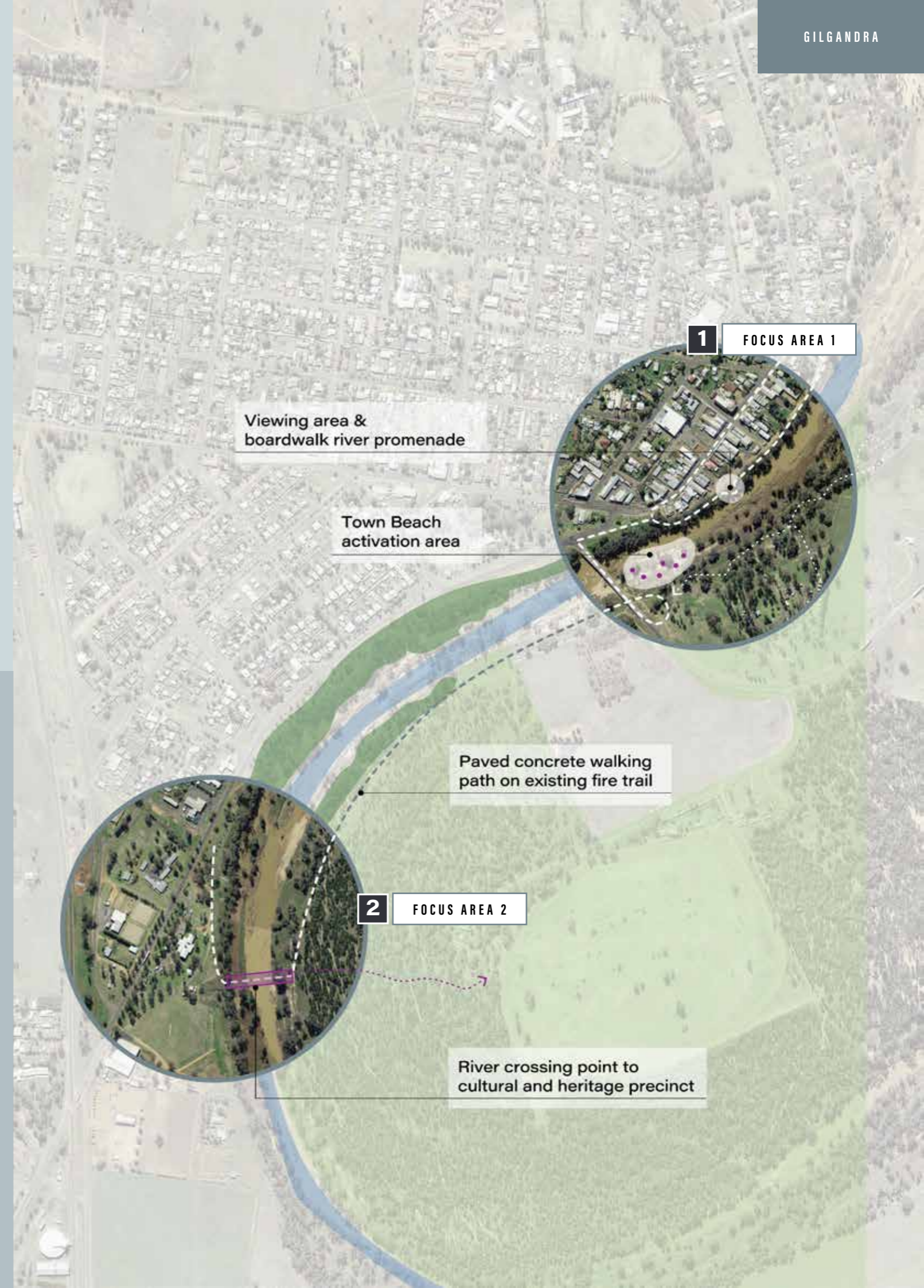
- Support the development of an approx 5km of existing fire trail (dirt track) at grade all access walking track that will facilitate creating a loop walk from river crossing to river crossing connecting Focus Area 1 and 2, this will encourage access to the reserve park and racecourse area, to encourage greater public utilisation.
- Maximise the potential of these public spaces for community engagement and recreation.

#### Regional Collaboration and Identity

- Advocate for a united front among the three shires, fostering a sense of strong regional identity and offerings that collectively benefit the communities.

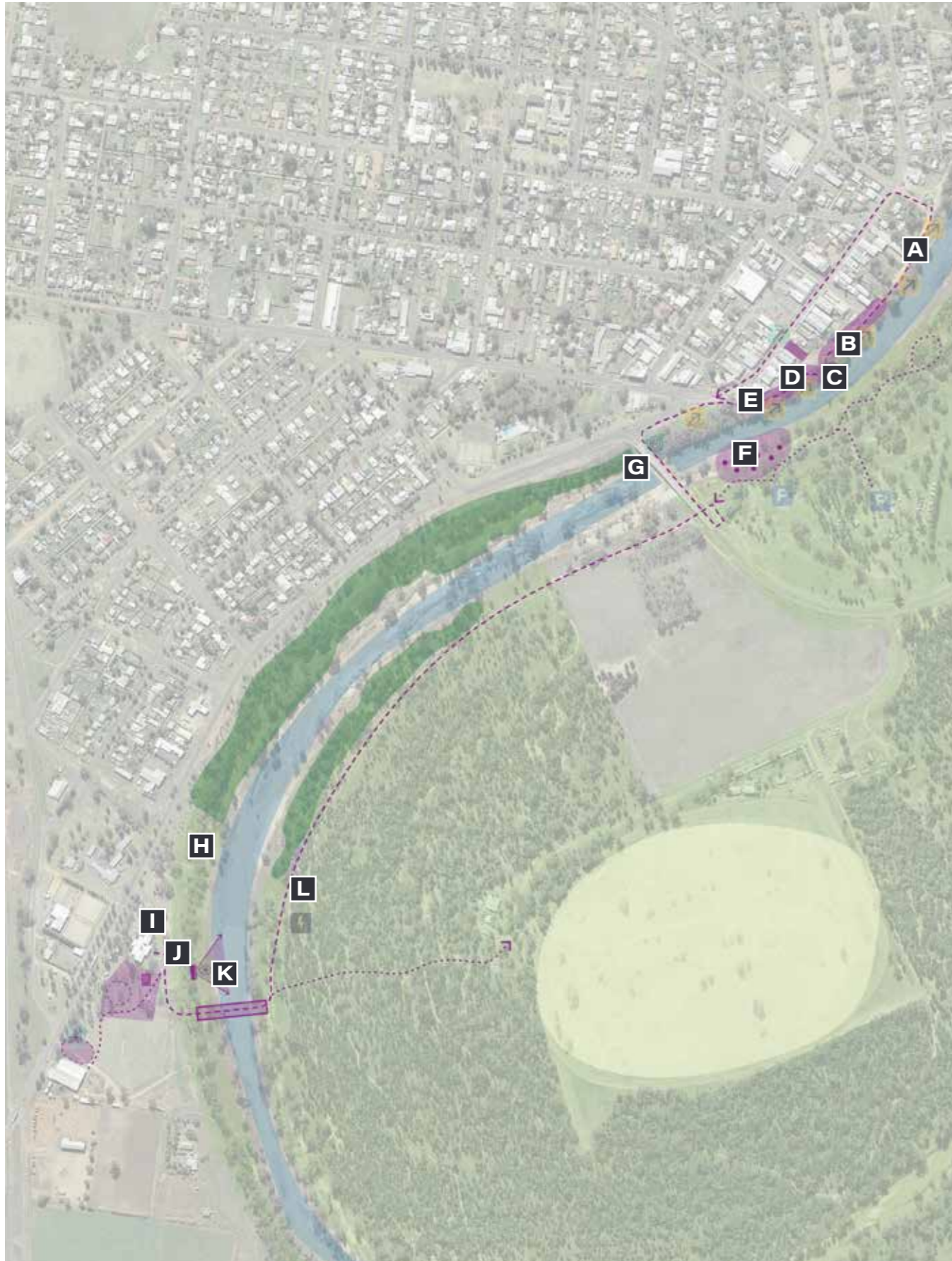
#### Tooraweenah Village Engagement Summary

Opportunities to leverage aviation events, promote natural attractions, the Tooraweenah Showground and the proximity to Warrumbungle National Park. As part of the Strategic Marketing Program - Tooraweenah Village seeks to develop digital tools and improve communication with council, while adventure biking and EV charging offer growth prospects. Attention to road naming, signage, and navigation is vital, along with expanding initiatives like a Local Village Walk, exploring geo-caching opportunities and providing local business support to promote tourism and the wider region.

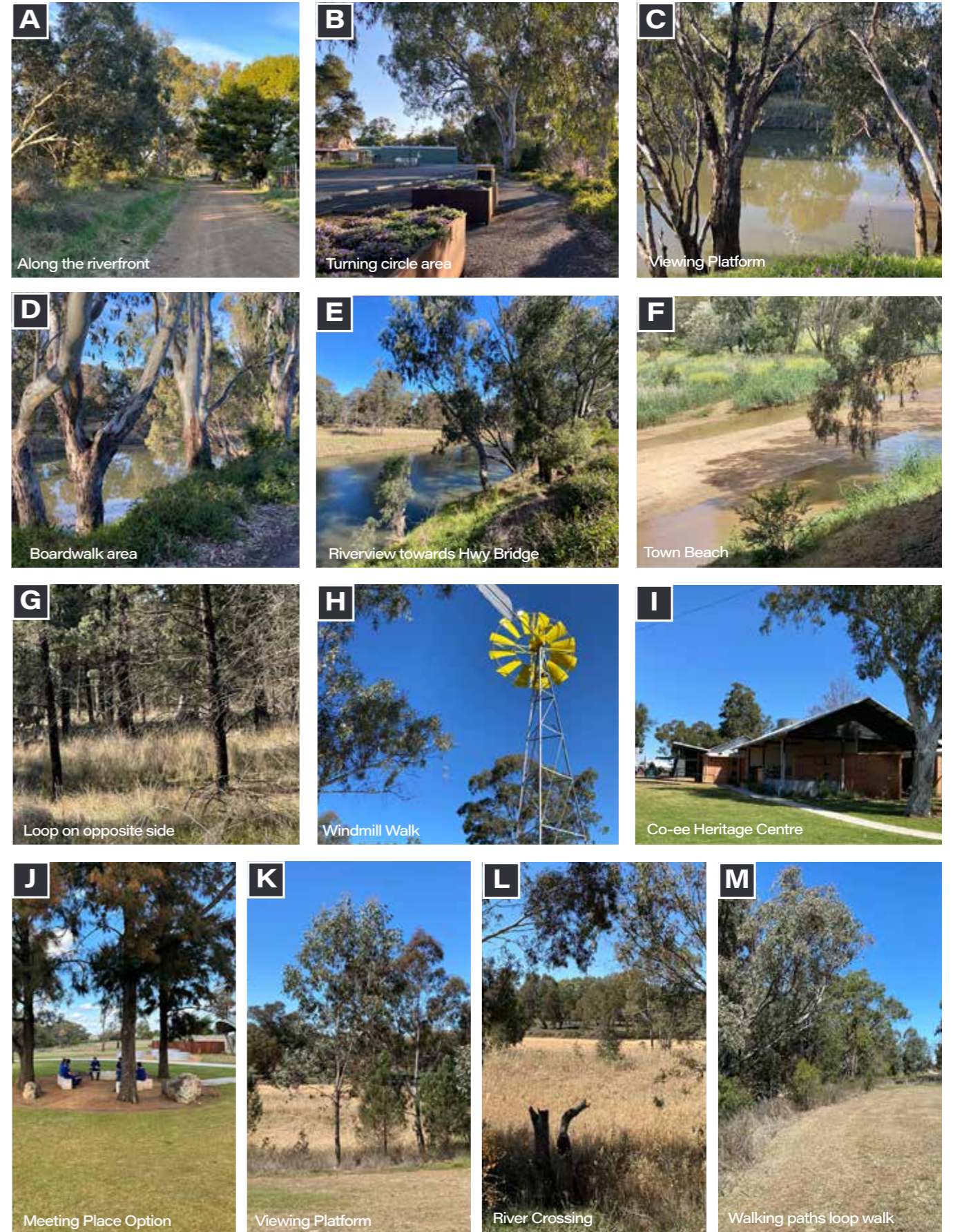


2.2 Focus Area 1 & 2: Gilgandra Business Case Project

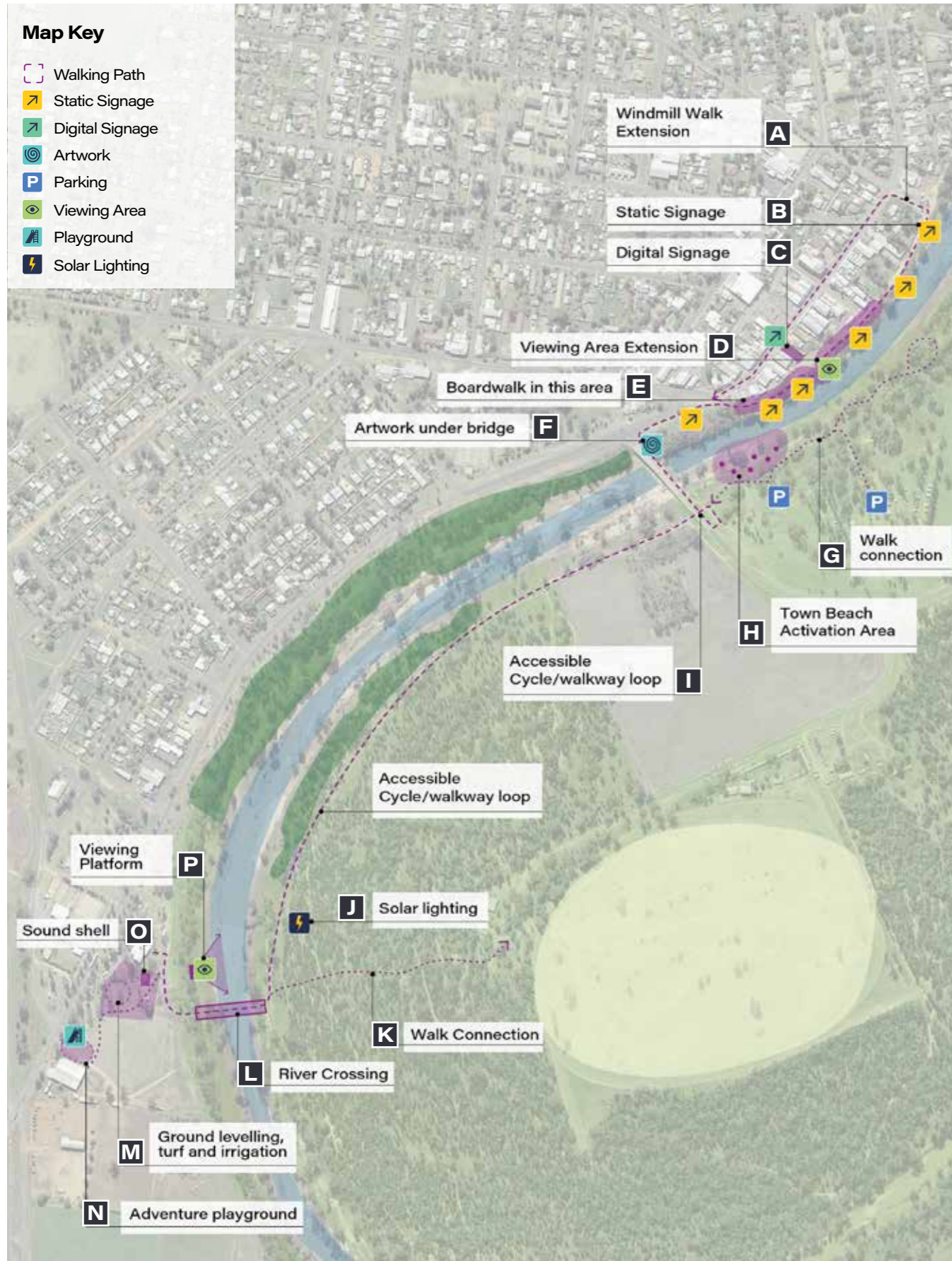
2.2.1 Existing Conditions Town Centre Precinct



SECTION C / GILGANDRA



2.2.2 Town Centre Precinct Updates



SECTION C / GILGANDRA

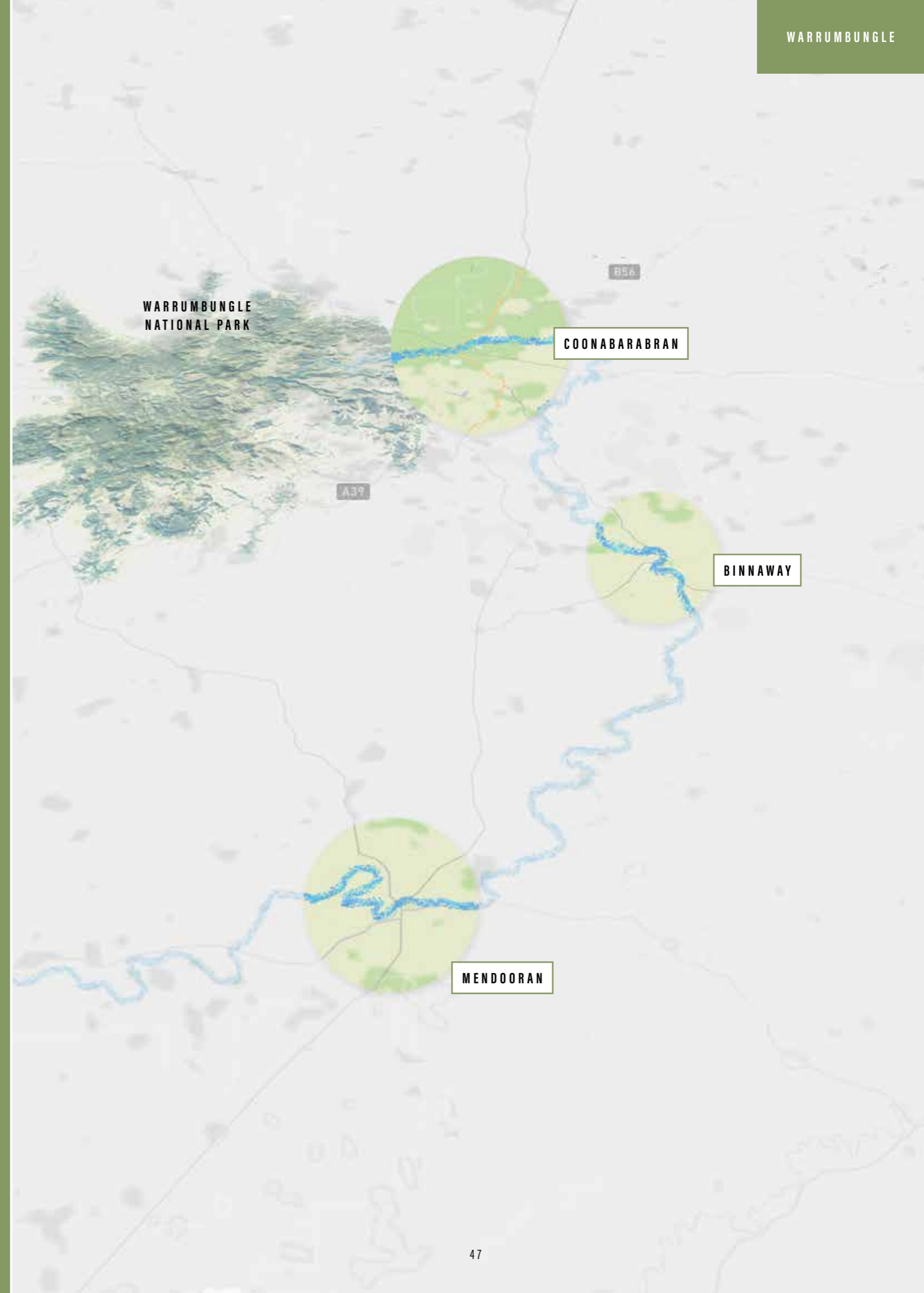
<p><b>A Windmill Walk extension</b> Windmill Walk extension from memorial precinct behind Miller Street shops to Court Street (return loop down Miller Street, 'figure 8' walk)</p> <p>Reference Image</p>	<p><b>B Static signage</b> Static signage along the accessible pathways</p> <p>Reference Image</p>	<p><b>C Digital signage</b> Digital signage in GIL plaza accessible pathways</p> <p>Reference Image</p>
<p><b>D Viewing area extension</b> Viewing area extension over Castlereagh river from the GIL plaza</p>	<p><b>F Artwork under bridge</b></p>	<p><b>I Accessible cycle/walkway loop</b> Accessible cycle/walkway loop from CHC river crossing to Jack Renshaw Bridge (underneath)</p>
<p><b>E Boardwalk in this area</b> Boardwalk in this area (mix accessible – timber look/mesh – core concrete)</p> <p>Reference Image</p>	<p><b>G Walk Connection</b> Walk connection to Gilgandra Caravan Park</p>	<p><b>H Town Beach Activation Area</b> Town Beach activation area - including picnic tables and carparking near Jack Renshaw Bridge</p> <p>Reference Image</p>
<p><b>J Solar Lighting</b> Solar lighting on southern cycle/walkway</p>	<p><b>L River Crossing</b> CHC River crossing - pedestrian, accessible, concrete</p>	<p><b>M Ground levelling, turf and irrigation</b></p>
<p><b>K Walk Connection</b> Walk connection to Golf Club and Racecourse</p>	<p><b>P Sound Shell</b> Sound shell – 32amp three-way phase power access</p>	<p><b>N Adventure Playground</b> Adventure playground connection with Gilgandra Museum</p>
<p><b>O Viewing Platform</b></p>		

SECTION D

# WAR RUM BUN

D.1

## ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS





### 1.1 Focus Area 1 & 2: The Adventure Precinct

#### GROUP DISCUSSION ON BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

Community engagement for the Coonabarabran River Frontage Infrastructure Project revealed key insights. The local climate, with 4 distinct seasons and highway noise, challenges the idea of an open amphitheatre. Preserving the river health and respecting First Nations stories are paramount. Celebrating art to invigorate the town and highlighting the main street's beauty are shared goals. The main street's role as a connector between the information centre and the park is vital. The region's unique dark sky, visible from both town and park, is a standout feature deserving nighttime celebrations.

#### KEY IDEAS



#### WHAT WE HEARD

- Consider the climate and seasonal nature of the region for project planning
- Preserve the health and ecology of the river in the development
- Emphasise the importance of First Nations stories and identity
- Promote the celebration of art to bring vibrancy to the river frontage
- Highlight the beauty of the main street as a significant feature
- Acknowledge the uniqueness of the dark sky, visible from town and park
- Ensure to include acoustics feedback, sound, accessibility and appropriate use of any proposed amphitheatre

#### WHAT DID WE LEARN THAT PROVIDES FURTHER REFINEMENT TO THIS FOCUS AREA?

We have learned valuable insights that will shape the design. The mountainous, seasonal climate with only three favourable months suggests an open amphitheatre may not be suitable, instead, we should prioritise gathering spaces, with shade and nice public amenity. Noise from the highway road must also be considered. Preservation of the river's health and ecology is essential, acknowledging the significance of First Nations stories and identity.

The celebration of art can infuse vibrancy, emphasising the beauty of the main street, which serves as a connector from the information centre to the river foreshore. Furthermore, the dark, expansive sky, a world-renowned feature, should be celebrated at night, offering unique opportunities for engagement.

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Enjoy riverfront spaces that are designed for seasonal variations
- Experience a development that provides access to the water, with watercraft activities and maintains the health of the river
- Participate in art-related events and activities that enhance the riverfront appeal
- Take part in nighttime celebrations under the unique dark sky

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Sustainable project planning considering the climate, noise and maintenance
- A riverfront development that respects and preserves the river's health and ecology
- A culturally sensitive approach, including the celebration of First Nations stories
- A vibrant town with a focus on art and the enhancement of the main street
- Nighttime celebrations and activities that utilise the unique dark sky
- Connection of the Rail Trail across the river to provide a new crossing point



## 1.2 Coonabarabran Community Workshop Insights

### COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Another common recurrent theme across workshop sessions was the noted pride and care of the community members, who are ready and willing to be part of the Real Country project and want to contribute to the future of the region, engage and take ownership of the actions being implemented.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Project delivery must ensure that infrastructure and activation delivery is accompanied by provision of public amenity with adequate maintenance, accommodation offering and business support. Leverage entry points in towns for adequate signage and way finding provision.

### COMMUNITY STUDIO

New not for profit area to bring together the creative community in the Real Country to support creative professionals and offer business incentive, providing an alternative to the main street which can have high rents and limited availability. The community studio can also provide a range of kids activities as well as training as well as an alternative shopping destination for locals and visitors.

### MARKETING INITIATIVES

- Auditing existing Council websites for information flow improvements and updated information
- Promote niche tourism industries and tap into identified demographics
- Networking events that bring together the 3 shires for community and stakeholder members to collaborate and contribute to the project's delivery and success
- Promote different experiences across seasons, creating resilience throughout the year

### NICHE TOURISM SECTORS

New niche tourism opportunities were identified during engagement, namely:

- Bird watching tourism initiatives that can include bird routes and educational experiences
- Experience-based tours such as in-farm, hands-on experiences for visitors, particularly coming from major cities and out of state.
- Cater to larger groups of tourists, and consider linking annual event program in all 3 Council areas to encourage large tours.
- Leverage the Real Country Agricultural connection



## 1.3 Coonabarabran Community Workshop Key Themes

### 1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

- Developing strategies to promote Coonabarabran's "Colours of Autumn" and increase visitor numbers.
- Exploring options to monetise and place economic value on local assets, including the agricultural production
- Promoting First Nations tourism and cultural experiences to attract diverse visitors
- Identifying opportunities for the growth of the town as a tourist destination
- Engaging different age groups in community development initiatives to cater to various interests
- Recognising the transformative power of design and aesthetics for community regeneration
- Leveraging the unique character of historic buildings to enhance tourism
- Discussing the economic benefits of art in attracting tourists and supporting local businesses

### 2. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SPACES

- Expanding on the idea of transforming infrastructure into art, including the Mary Jane Caine bridge pedestrian access
- Highlighting the cultural significance of meeting places like Caine and Croxons and their potential for tourism
- Balancing priorities between medical and cultural needs, especially regarding the LALC Land Claim at the old Police building
- Addressing the space requirements for touring performance organisations and considering potential venues
- Evaluating the feasibility and location of an amphitheatre for cultural events
- Discussing concerns related to noise pollution and accessibility due to the proximity to the national highway
- Exploring solutions for addressing heat-related issues during Coonabarabran's summer events
- Ensuring easy equipment access and sufficient parking space for various activities and events
- Examining sound and heat issues for current community events and proposing solutions

### 3. RIVERFRONT ENHANCEMENT

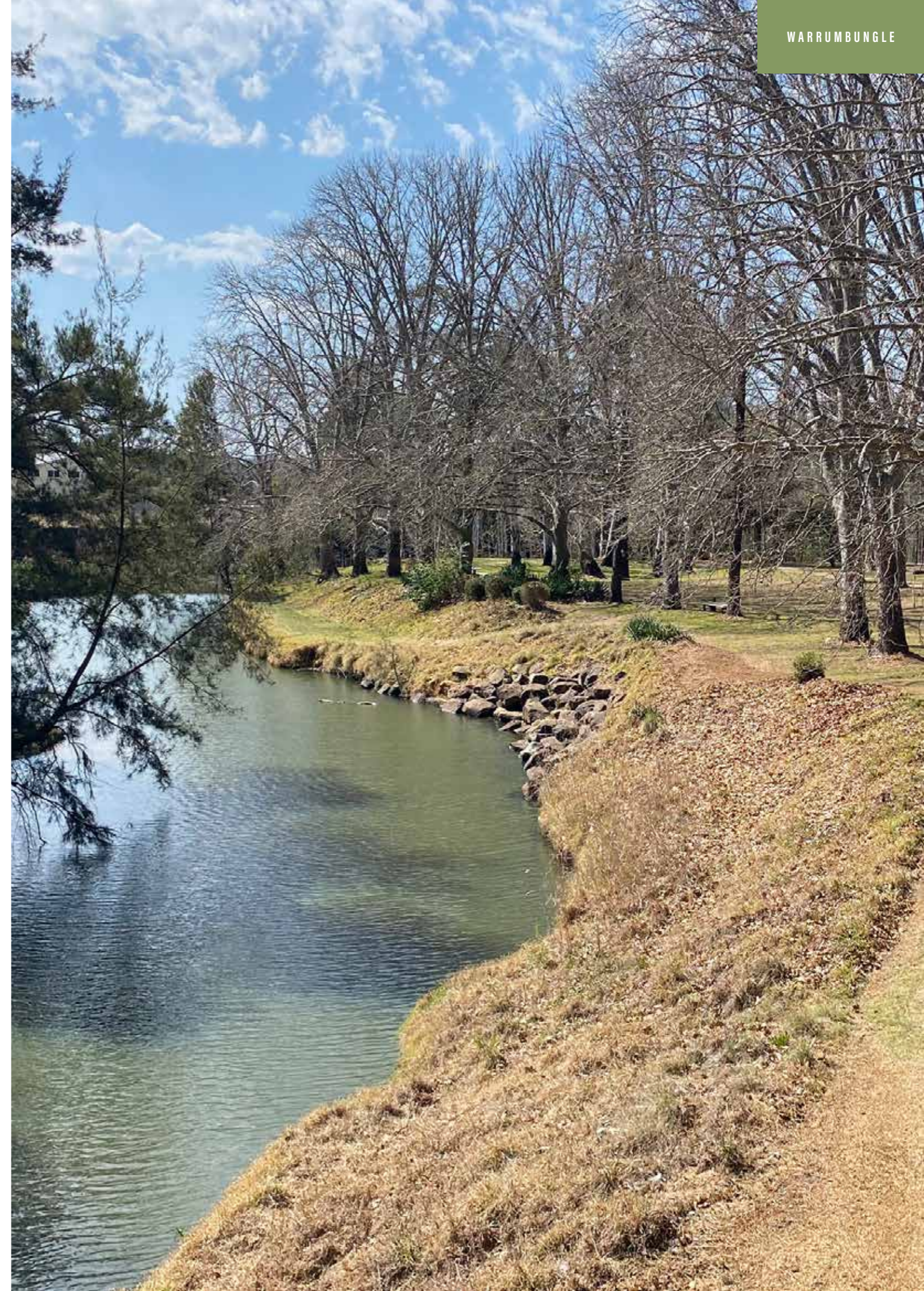
- Expanding on the idea of enhancing the riverfront with shade structures, mature trees, and eco-friendly features
- Distinguishing between the river space and the surrounding environment to create distinct and attractive areas
- Exploring opportunities for hosting cultural events like OzOpera and creating family-friendly playgrounds
- Promoting multi-purpose use of riverfront areas, including night activities, and scenic walking routes
- Focusing on the health and accessibility of the river, considering the impact of federal funding and baseline species testing
- Developing comprehensive walking and active loops along the river to encourage outdoor activities
- Activating the rail as a cycle railway while preserving its identity as part of the dark sky park

### 4. MAIN STREET REVITALISATION

- Expanding on ideas to enhance the evening experience along the main street, including entertainment options
- Exploring innovative engagement activities such as motion sensor astronomy experiences
- Creating a distinct point of difference through window decorations, creative lighting, and visual displays
- Establishing open-air night theatre events during the summer months to attract visitors
- Improving connections between key areas like the Visitor Information Centre (VIC), CBD, river, and bridge
- Utilising plaques, QR codes, or digital guides to share historical information along shopfronts
- Encouraging local businesses to cater to the morning walker crowd with creative offerings

### 5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

- Promoting active community involvement in various initiatives, including volunteer efforts
- Encouraging training programs in window decoration, arts, and cultural endeavours
- Exploring opportunities for markets, street events, and local art exhibitions to engage residents and visitors
- Supporting painting initiatives for local businesses to enhance the visual appeal of the town
- Considering long-term future planning and development projects to ensure sustainable growth
- Exploring potential infrastructure projects, such as paths over the weir, Nandi Park enhancements, and expanded walking tracks



### 1.4 Mendooran Community Workshop SWOT Analysis

#### STRENGTHS

- Existing community has strong ties and loves getting together to contribute to the town's future
- Autumn season, with the orange tones in the trees and leaves can be leveraged from a tourism point of view
- Grain and timber industry and rail connections to Brisbane and Newcastle
- Bird watching niche for tourism
- Free camping area with river access

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental threats, particularly drought and bushfires
- Small town mindset may hinder vision for the future
- Heavily reliant on volunteer work, particularly on maintaining the free camp ground and toilets
- Improving accommodation offer
- Leveraging the good tourism reputation, catering for returning visitors

#### WEAKNESSES

- Disconnection between Council and community
- Lack of online information flow

#### THREATS

- Opportunity for reigniting the connection between Council and community members based on community's priorities and implementation of an action plan encompassing businesses, community groups such as religious groups and families, and youth
- Improvement of Council's website
- Signage in high traffic intersections
- Cycle tracks connecting Binnaway, Mendooran and Dunedoo
- Bird watching itineraries curated for niche tourism
- Strengthen the connection to the river

### 3.6.2 Mendooran Community Workshop See and Do

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Improved information flow from Council to community, namely through digital channels
- A loop walk that includes the town's main attractions, food venues and stretches along the river

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Cycle tracks
- Bird watching routes



### 1.5 Mendooran Community Workshop Key Themes

#### 1. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

- Celebrating Mendooran's rich heritage
- Building on the strength of community cohesion and volunteerism
- Local projects for community benefit

#### 2. ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Supporting local businesses through grants and incentives
- Addressing environmental challenges with proactive measures
- Sustainable agriculture and water management

#### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Modernising town infrastructure and amenities
- Enhancing community participation in town planning
- Facilitating community events and forums
- Improve amenity provision to accommodate growth and tourism potential

#### 4. COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

- Reinforcing a productive relationship with the council
- Lobbying for adequate resources and funding for town projects
- Ensuring transparent decision-making processes
- Reduce red tape to leverage the community's willingness to activate the area

#### 5. TOURISM AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Developing Mendooran as a cultural hub
- Promoting the town as a destination for heritage tourism
- Establishing annual events and festivals

### 1.6 Binnaway Community Workshop SWOT Analysis

#### STRENGTHS

- Community-driven maintenance and beautification efforts
- Rare occurrence of flooding
- Active grain and timber railcards within the village centre
- Free Camping along the river foreshore run by volunteers
- Potential for silo art on massive silos near the village oval
- Committed local resident that undertake local town maintenance
- Underutilised resources with potential
- Central West Cycle Trail extension possibility

#### WEAKNESSES

- Limited online presence
- Disconnected council-community relationship
- Lack of signage to redirect visitors to Binnaway from any of the main highways
- Limited food and accommodation options
- Lack of council ownership and engagement
- Insufficient resources, cooperation, and organisation
- Limited access to the river and waters edge
- Need for maintenance of Aboriginal cultural tourism signage

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Silo art project
- Extension of the Central West Cycle Trail
- Increasing awareness of horse events and trails
- Collaboration with the Community Action Plan 2022-2026
- Utilising resources for further town development
- Council-community partnership improvement
- Development of more Binnaway events
- Encouraging continuity of travel through the Shire

#### THREATS

- Environmental threats (Bushfires, Drought, Mouse Plague)
- Future impacts (REZ, Transmission lines)
- Lack of council ownership of amenities
- Lack of resources, cooperation, and organisation with council



#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO

- Participate in silo art project
- Explore extended Central West Cycle Trail
- Engage in horse-related activities and trails
- Attend Binnaway events
- Enjoy the natural beauty of the area
- Experience Aboriginal cultural tourism opportunities

### 3.7.2 Binnaway Community Workshop See and Do

#### WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE

- Enhanced signage to guide visitors
- Expanded food and accommodation options
- An annual Binnaway events calendar
- Continuity of travel through the Shire
- Increased river access and wayfinding signage

### 1.7 Binnaway Community Workshop Key Themes

#### 1. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

- Highlighting the predominantly volunteer-driven nature of maintenance and beautification efforts in Binnaway including the volunteer-run Free Council Camping Area
- Recognising the community's proactive approach to town upkeep
- Discussing the town's resilience and involvement of the Progress Association
- Recognising the involvement of livestock farmers in the community

#### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Discussed the historical importance of Grain and Timber Rail in the area acknowledging that there is the presence of active rail operations.
- Noting limited online presence and digital engagement
- Explore the need for improved wayfinding signage and digital communication
- Exploring the possibility of utilising the massive silos near the oval for silo art
- Highlighting the lack of council ownership and maintenance of amenities
- Address the need for maintenance and cleanliness in the community

#### 5. TOURISM AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Exploring the potential for silo art as a tourist attraction
- Recognising the importance of the Central West Cycle Trail with potential for extension
- Discussing the need for more food and accommodation options with proper signage
- Exploring opportunities for activation of the Binnaway Barracks and its heritage significance
- Highlighting the annual Race Day and the desire for more Binnaway events
- Encouraging continuity of travel through the Shire to promote regional tourism

#### 2. ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Highlighting the extensive Drought Funding Plan with strong engagement of local advocacy of initiatives
- Identifying various environmental threats, including bushfires, drought, mouse plagues, and resilience strategies to assist in times of stress
- Considering future impacts such as the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and transmission lines over landowners' property
- Recognising the success of Castlereagh River as a tourism opportunity is highly dependant on the health of the river

#### 4. COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

- Discussed a perceived disconnect between the Council and the Binnaway community
- Noting a lack of resources, cooperation, and organisation with the Council
- Highlighting the need for improved engagement and communication with the council
- Suggesting collaboration with actions identified in the Drought Community Action Plan 2022-2026

#### 6. RIVER ACCESS AND CULTURAL TOURISM

- Addressing limited access to the river
- Exploring opportunities for Aboriginal cultural tourism
- Noting concerns about signage maintenance, particularly King Togee's Headstone

# C.2

## KEY FINDINGS

### 2.1 Updating and Refocusing the Infrastructure Projects to align with Council, Community and Stakeholder Input

These brief summary points reflect the high level feedback from local stakeholders in Coonabarabran, Binnaway & Mendooran and provide guidance for refining infrastructure focus areas:

#### Coonabarabran Engagement Summary

##### Amphitheatre Design and Seasonal Considerations

- Acknowledge the climate, characterised by seasonality due to its mountainous terrain, with only three favourable months for outdoor activities, however recognising 4 distinct seasons.
- Consider alternatives to an open amphitheatre, that are more focused on seating, recognising its limited usability and potential noise issues from the nearby highway.

##### River Health and Ecological Preservation

- Prioritise the preservation and enhancement of the river's health, emphasising the importance of maintaining its ecological balance and diversity across the Real Country Town Centres and Villages.

##### First Nations Engagement and Cultural Identity

- Recognise the significance of First Nations communities in the area, valuing their stories and contributions to the town's and river precinct cultural identity.

##### Promotion of Arts and Vibrancy

- Emphasise the potential of celebrating art to infuse vibrancy into the town/ river precincts fostering creativity and local culture.

##### Main Street as a Connector

- Highlight the central role of the main street as a connector between the information centre and the river, emphasising its significance in the town's layout.

##### Dark Sky and Unique Celestial Views

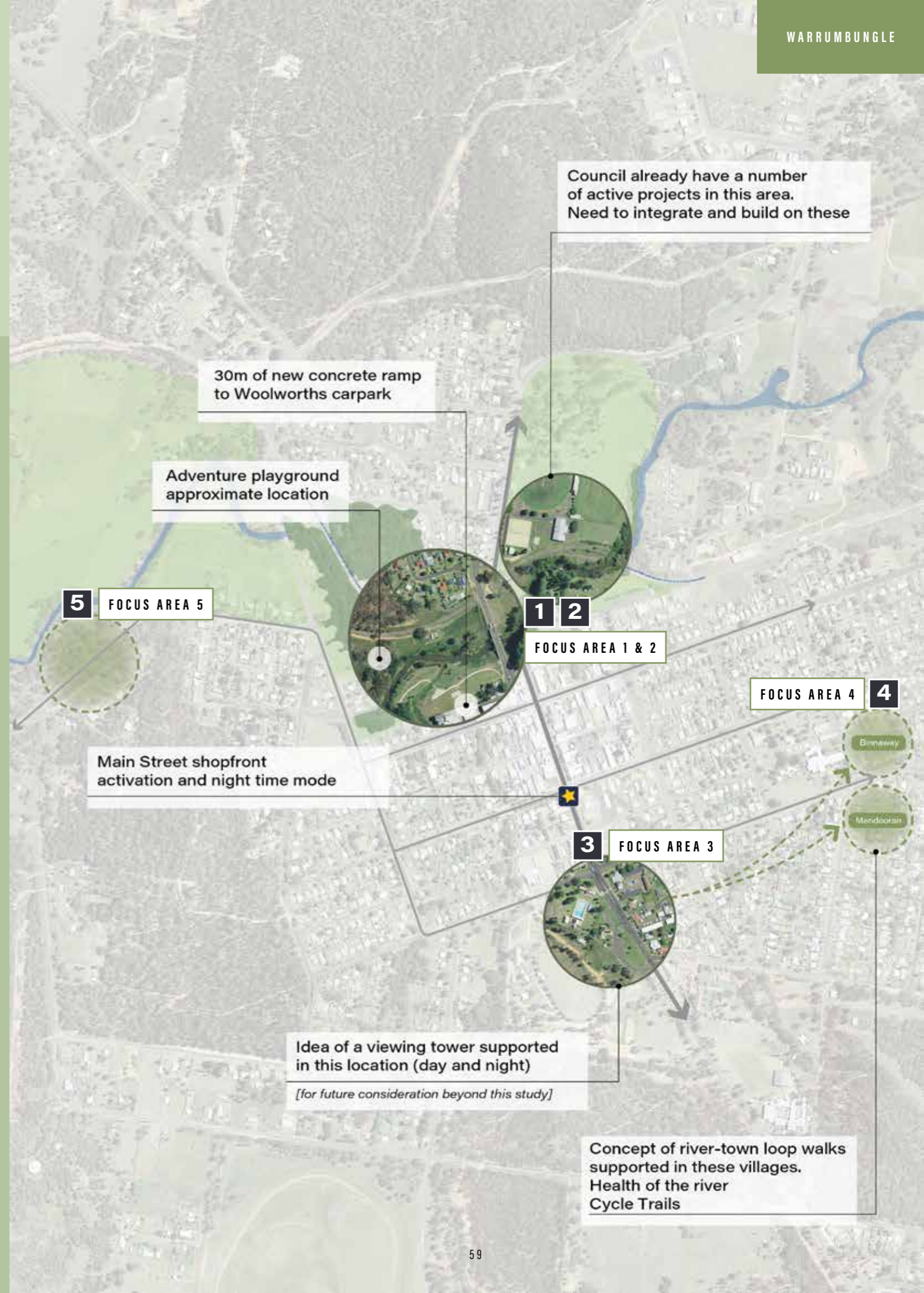
- Celebrate the unique dark sky, vast celestial views, positioning it as a standout feature in the world, while exploring opportunities for night time celebrations and stargazing experiences in both the town, river precinct and the town parks.

#### Binnaway Village Engagement Summary

An historical gem, thrives on community-driven maintenance and faces minimal flooding. It has Grain and Timber Rail industry, environmental challenges like bushfires and drought. Underutilised resources and potential exist, such as extending the Central West Cycle Trail, improved council engagement, wayfinding signage, bird watching, along with promoting events like an Annual Race Day and fostering tourist travel through the Shire and region. Enhancing river health, Aboriginal cultural tourism, and alignment with the Community Action Plan are key priorities.

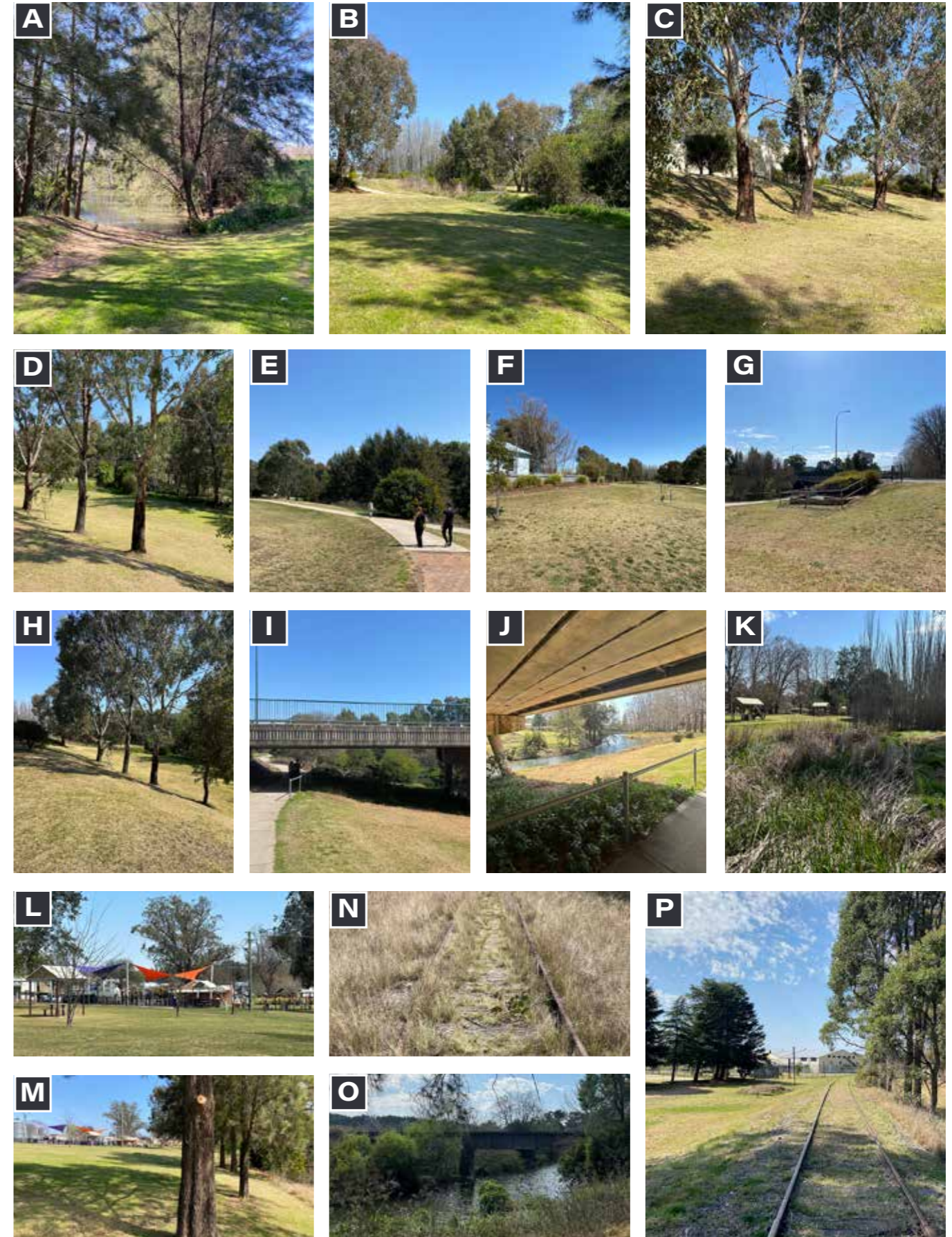
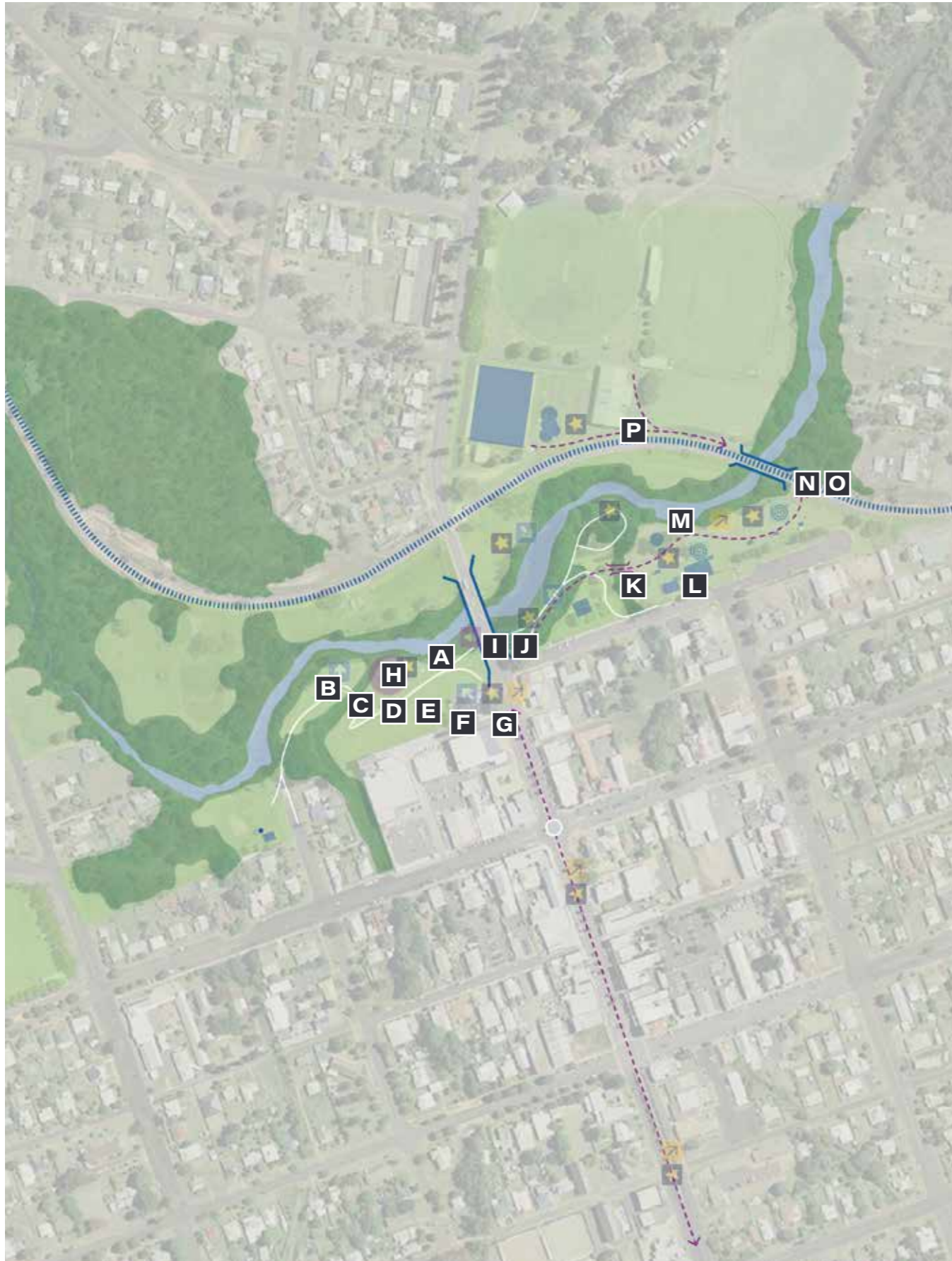
#### Mendooran Village Engagement Summary

Mendooran, renowned for its vibrant murals, picturesque countryside vistas, and the local cheese shop. Opportunities to enhance river access, promote free camping, promote local businesses, address approval challenges for initiatives, and engage cycling enthusiasts. Focus needs to be on the river health, local character, promotion and sustainable practices for the community.



## 2.2 Focus Area 1 & 2: Warrumbungle Business Case Project

### 2.2.1 Existing Conditions The Adventure Precinct



2.2.1 Existing Conditions Town Centre Precinct



SECTION D / WARRUMBUNGLE

**A Outdoor Amphitheatre**

A dedicated space for performances and community gatherings.

**D Connecting Pathways to Visitor Information Centre**

Walkways and signs that link the Visitor Information Centre to the Main Park seamlessly.

Reference Image

**G Additional Pathways and Signage Across Neilson Park**

Expansion of pathways and informational signage on the opposite side of the river.

Reference Image

**H Gateway to Warrumbungles Art/Wayfinding**

Creative installations that are both artistic and functional for public use.

Reference Image

**B Night time Experience**

Initiatives to leverage the unique dark sky fortnight time activities and celebrations.

**E Wayfinding Elements**

Comprehensive signage to guide residents and visitors.

Reference Image

**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

Reference Image

**C River Access Solutions**

Infrastructure to improve public accessibility to the river.

Reference Image

**F Neilson Park Connectivity**

Introduction of a new crossing to enhance accessibility within the park.

**J Acoustic Infrastructure**

Installation of noise-reduction measures near the main bridge or proposed amphitheatre.

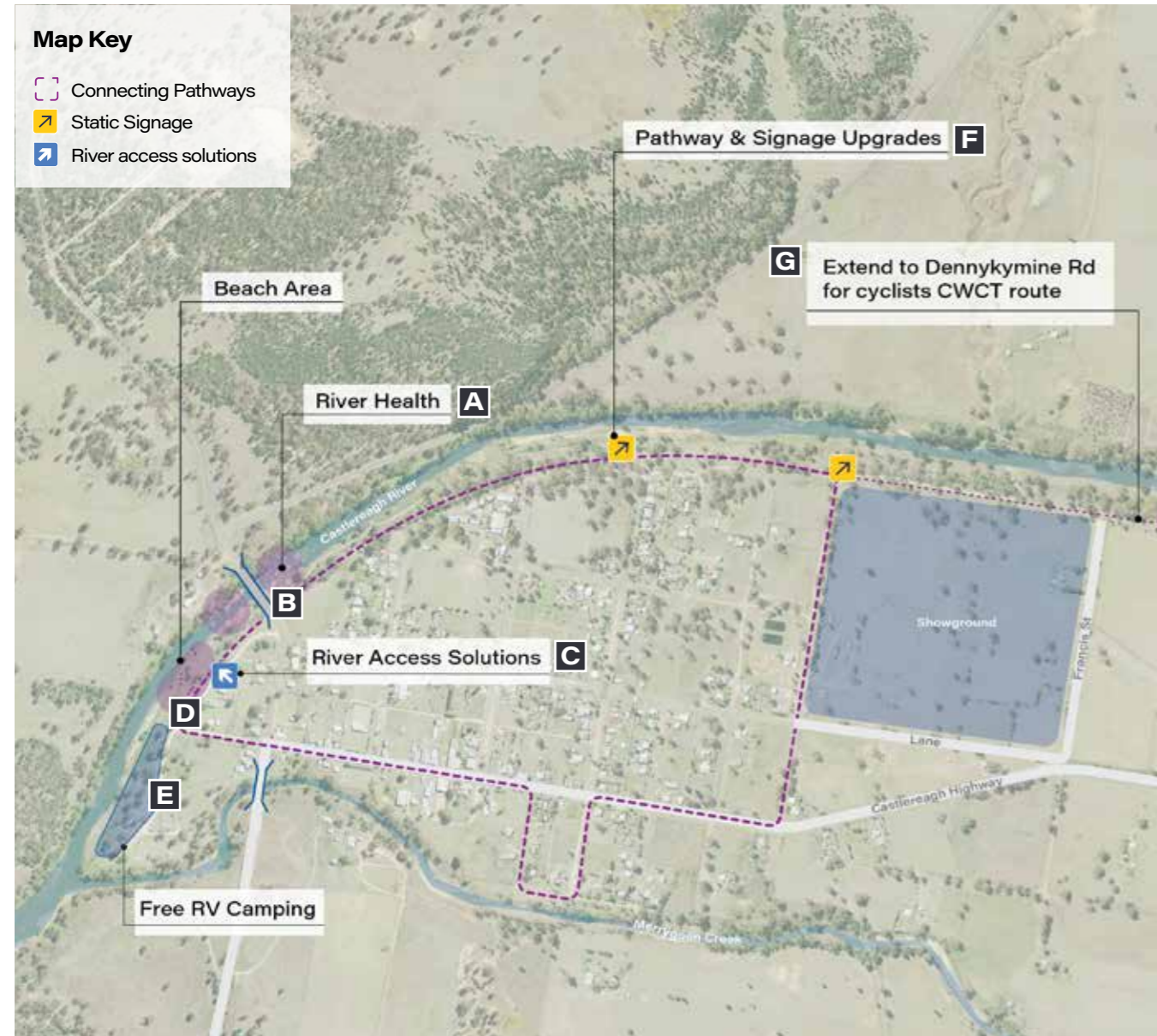
**K Adventure playground approximate location**

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



## 2.3 Mendooran

### 2.3.1 Existing Conditions and upgrades



#### 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

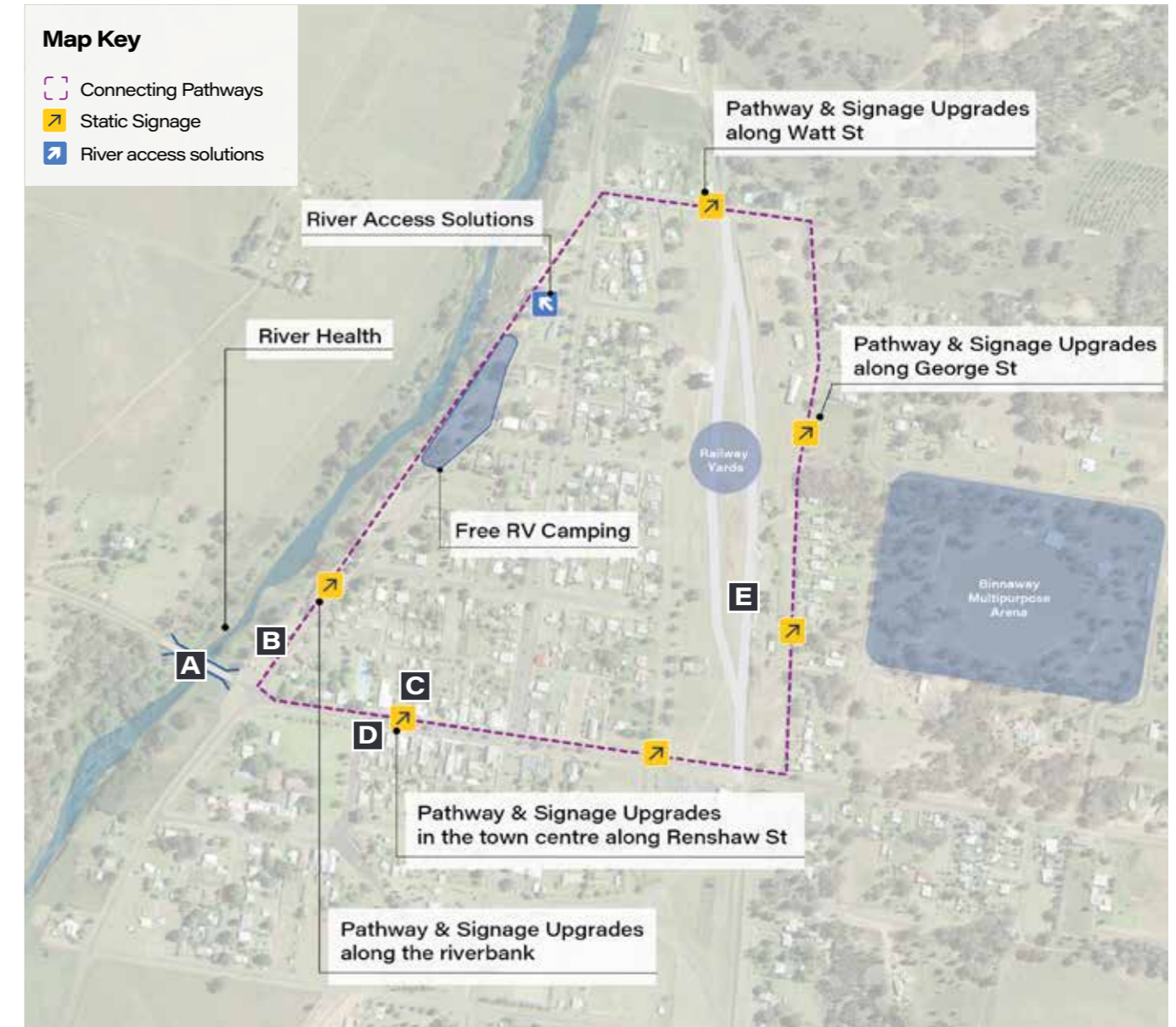
Improvement of existing pathways and informative signage.

#### G Cycleway



## 2.4 Binnaway

### 2.4.1 Existing Conditions and upgrades



SECTION E

E.1  
**IMPLICATIONS AND  
 CONSIDERATIONS  
 FOR PROJECT  
 PROCESS**

SECTION E

**1.1 Implications and Considerations for the Marketing Strategy**

**1.1.1 Key Findings and insights shared at community engagement sessions**

An overview of what we heard for the Strategic Marketing Plan and considerations for each location.

IDEAS FROM THE COONAMBLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**

**Targeted Tourism Promotion**

- Target "Grey nomads" and southern visitors
- Promote natural attractions like marshes in Quambone and Gular.
- Emphasise Coonamble as a stopover destination between Dubbo and Lightning Ridge
- Re-activate the local theatre for cultural events
- Invest in rodeos and horse racing events
- Collaborate on a regional events calendar
- Encourage cafe opportunities and support local businesses
- Ensure safety and access for swimming and activities along the river
- Promote Coonamble's riverside natural environment

**THEME 2**

**Accessibility and Infrastructure Enhancement**

- Improve accessibility of the visitor information centre
- Enhance and maintain the River Walk
- Prioritise infrastructure investments
- Improve parking facilities at tourist sites
- Enhance accessibility to museums and open up laneways with artwork
- Collaborate on the activation of the river foreshore all year-round

**THEME 3**

**Cultural and Historic Emphasis**

- Explore attractions like the Catholic church, riverfront, main street, and wheat bunkers
- Highlight the historic streetscape and buildings
- Encourage local shop owners to contribute to tourism

**THEME 4**

**Unique Experiences and Events**

- Consider Air BNB and farm tours highlighting Coonamble's wheat story
- Organise country pub tours and ghost tours
- Promote Coonamble's riverside natural environment
- Collaborate on a regional events calendar
- Conduct trials and data collection, e.g., caravan parking trial
- Consider compromise with the ski club for public access

IDEAS FROM THE GILGANDRA COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**  
**Agriculture and Agri-Tourism**

- Emphasise agriculture in the tourism strategy
- Explore agri-tourism opportunities and connections with the local agricultural industry
- Promote the different seasons of agriculture and harvesting
- Introduce an agricultural playground for visitors
- Establish a standard of experience across the Castlereagh River environment

**THEME 2**  
**River Health and Nature**

- Focus on regenerative practices for river health
- Create a wide track for walking and riding
- Provide the ability to venture into nature off the fixed track
- Incorporate botanical names of trees into signage
- Include the story of the "upside-down river"
- Promote the flow speed and characteristics of the river
- Highlight the unique of flows in the Castlereagh River

**THEME 3**  
**Tourism Promotion**

- Take advantage of the Newell Highway to attract visitors
- Promote the advantages of the Newell Highway for attracting visitors

**THEME 4**  
**Dark Sky and Local Stories**

- Highlight the dark sky and emus in the sky story
- Incorporate Lawson poems and the concept of "the meeting place"

**THEME 5**  
**Family and Children's Experiences**

- Create sensory experiences for children in naturalised playgrounds

**THEME 6**  
**Museum and Cultural Attractions**

- Seek to provide ongoing upgrades to the visibility, signage and integration of the Museum into the precinct

IDEAS FROM TOORAWEEAH COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**  
**Diverse Tourism Opportunities**

- Explore arts events and arts trails
- Promote aviation events and aviation tourism
- Collaborate with motorbike groups and rallies
- Utilise back roads for tourism
- Promote the Arthur Butler events when scheduled
- Focus on adventure bikes and older riders
- Enhance facilities for travellers, permanent fuel option and EV charging
- Attract Dubbo day-trippers and regional visitors.
- Seek to upgrade wayfinding signage on all access opportunities into and out of Tooraweenah
- Work to promote future accommodation opportunities within the heritage village (ie Air bnb and Bed and Breakfast)

**THEME 2**  
**Natural and Cultural Attractions**

- Promote the Warrumbungles as a key attraction
- Improve awareness of playgrounds and amenities
- Explore raising awareness of golf and tennis facilities Expand the birdwatching experience
- Seek ways to promote agri-tourism

**THEME 3**  
**Introduce digital awareness of the village**

- Explore the potential of arts events, such as "Emu Logic Arts in the Garden"
- Create geo-coding trails through the historic village
- QR codes and digital experiences to ensure awareness and sustainable

IDEAS FROM THE COONABARABRAN COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**  
**Seasonal and Nature-Based Activities**

- Explore the colours of autumn as a theme
- Transform the town through amenity and regenerative design
- Promote water security and healthy water practices
- Activate the rail as a cycle railway as a cycle and pedestrian path/trail
- Align activations with the seasons and promote seasonal initiatives
- Extend footpaths and add art installations to promote pedestrian activity
- Promote the connection from the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) to the river and CBD
- Encourage walkers along the river in the morning with coffee afterward
- Explore a rail trail and loop
- Consider adding a viewing platform/lookout tower to provide panoramic views

**THEME 2**  
**Cultural and Historical Emphasis**

- Monetise and place economic value on assets
- Consider First Nations tourism opportunities
- Emphasise the character of buildings
- Explore cultural history related to Caine and Croxons meeting areas
- Utilise plaques, history, headsets, and QR codes for visitor engagement

**THEME 3**  
**Infrastructure and Connectivity Improvement**

- Focus on the growth of the town
- Improve connections from the Visitor Information Center (VIC) to the CBD, river, and bridge
- Link the village management plan and drought resilience plan discussions
- Explore opportunities for Community Gardens
- Seek to provide a formalised link to Nandi Park

**THEME 4**  
**Community Engagement and Multi-Generational Involvement**

- Involve different age groups in community initiatives
- Explore opportunities to work with the LALC regarding the old police station site and future initiatives for this space
- Assess the need for a venue for touring performances
- Encourage businesses to participate in town beautification and window decorations
- Explore markets and streetscape painting for businesses
- Focus on future planning, including cutting over the weir and continuing the loop

**THEME 5**  
**Arts and Culture Promotion**

- Promote art as a means to attract tourism and economic support
- Integrate infrastructure with art, e.g., Mary Jane Caine bridge pedestrian access
- Explore open-air night theatre in the summer

**THEME 6**  
**River Regeneration and Accessibility**

- Research the activation of river edges and focus on ecology and rehabilitation
- Utilise federal funding for river regeneration and accessibility
- Conduct baseline testing of species in the river
- Create loop opportunities for walking and active pursuits
- Ensure multi-use of areas and maintain the identity of the dark sky park

IDEAS FROM MENDOORAN COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**  
**Utilisation of Natural Resources**

- Utilise the well-developed Coolah River Walk
- Explore bike trails to attract visitors
- Highlight the uniqueness of the river and its flows
- Promote "secret spots" and encourage sharing among visitors
- Capitalise on the starry skies in the region
- Promote farm visits and trails

**THEME 2**  
**Tourism Promotion**

- Promote the town as a hub for travellers
- Establish connections with satellite villages
- Explore marketing to adventure bike enthusiasts
- Promote the region to day-trippers and regional travellers

**THEME 3**  
**Sustainability and Collaboration**

- Maintain a balance between growth and quaintness
- Address issues like petrol availability during the week
- Consider volunteer groups for maintenance
- Collaborate with Central West Cycle Trail

IDEAS FROM BINNAWAY COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**  
**Leveraging Historical and Cultural Assets**

- Explore the potential of the Binnaway Barracks
- Explore opportunities with grain and timber rail history
- Engage in active rail tourism
- Highlight that Binnaway rarely floods
- Consider using silos for silo art
- Extend birdwatching and bird routes
- Promote annual race days

**THEME 2**  
**Community Engagement and Maintenance**

- Emphasise volunteer-driven community maintenance
- Develop a drought funding plan
- Continue community-driven maintenance
- Involve Landcare in maintaining and replanting
- Improve communication between council and the community
- Raise awareness of Binnaway's offerings
- Promote local events and tourism

**THEME 3**  
**River Regeneration and Accessibility**

- Address environmental threats like bushfires, drought, and resilience
- Consider the impact of the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)
- Address ownership issues for access
- Address technology and EV charger issues

**THEME 4**  
**Tourism Promotion and Infrastructure**

- Improve food and accommodation options
- Encourage continuity of travel through the Shire

IDEAS FROM ONLINE WORKSHOP

**THEME 1**  
**Arts and Culture Promotion**

- Promote arts and culture
- Support local arts, culture, and businesses during the process

**THEME 2**  
**Connectivity and Collaboration**

- Emphasise connections between villages along the river
- Collaborate with neighbouring towns and councils

**THEME 3**  
**Tourism Development**

- Encourage accessibility to the water
- Utilise the river and its natural space to attract longer stays
- Define the target market and consider multi-day trips
- Explore niche markets like aviation and trail runners
- Highlight the strengths of the region, including Warrumbungle National Park, Emu farm, aviation, and local events
- Acknowledge and promote First Nations culture

**THEME 4**  
**Business Support and Development**

- Support the opening of new businesses, wine bars, and new places within towns
- Explore the potential of more Air BNB's in the region
- Address weaknesses like technology and EV chargers

**THEME 5**  
**Technology and Digital Initiatives**

- Be aware of threats like changes in communication technology
- Consider digital initiatives like QR codes and a tourism website

### 1.1.2 An overview of themes comparatively across all workshop locations

This table presents a identified themes and ideas from the community engagement workshops, along with the workshop locations where each theme or idea was mentioned.

THEMES AND IDEAS	COONAMBLE	GILGANDRA	TOORAWEEAH	COONABARABRAN	MENDOORAN	BINNAWAY	ONLINE
<b>UTILISE AND ENHANCE RIVER RESOURCES</b>							
<p><b>Coonamble:</b> Emphasised the use of the river for recreational activities, such as swimming and picnics.</p> <p><b>Gilgandra:</b> Mentioned the Castlereagh River as an asset for promoting tourism.</p> <p><b>Tooraweenah:</b> Emphasised the importance of the Castlereagh River and its potential for events.</p> <p><b>Coonabarabran:</b> Discussed access to the river and its utilisation for various activities.</p> <p><b>Mendooran:</b> Highlighted the development of a river walk and promoting its natural beauty.</p> <p><b>Binnaway:</b> Talked about the importance of the river and potential silo art.</p>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
<b>PROMOTE ARTS AND CULTURE THROUGHOUT THE REAL COUNTRY AREA</b>							
<p><b>Coonamble:</b> Suggested promoting a "wheat story" for the town and the importance of art.</p> <p><b>Gilgandra:</b> Discussed the potential for an agricultural playground and creating a standard of experience.</p> <p><b>Tooraweenah:</b> Talked about the Emu Logic Arts in the Garden event and arts trail opportunities.</p> <p><b>Coonabarabran:</b> Emphasised the role of art in attracting tourism.</p> <p><b>Mendooran:</b> Mentioned the use of art in the Coolah River Walk.</p> <p><b>Online Workshop:</b> Highlighted the importance of arts and culture in villages along the river.</p>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES		YES
<b>EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIRST NATIONS TOURISM</b>							
<p><b>Coonabarabran:</b> Focused on First Nations tourism and acknowledging cultural history.</p> <p><b>Online Workshop:</b> Discussed the importance of cultural tourism and signage within towns.</p>	YES						YES
<b>ENHANCE THE TOWN CHARACTER OF TOWN CENTRES AND VILLAGES ALONG THE CASTLEREAGH RIVER</b>							
<p><b>Coonamble, Gilgandra, Tooraweenah and Coonabarabran:</b> Highlighted the importance of town character and aesthetics.</p> <p><b>Online Workshop:</b> Mentioned the importance of amenity in the main street.</p>	YES	YES	YES	YES			YES
<b>IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TOURISM AMENITIES</b>							
<p><b>All workshops</b> emphasised infrastructure improvements, including roads, signage, EV charging stations, signage and more.</p>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>SUPPORTIVE OF THE ABILITY TO PROMOTE REGIONAL EVENTS UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF REAL COUNTRY</b>							
<p><b>All workshops</b> discussed promoting regional events and activities.</p>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>CONNECT COMMUNITIES THAT ARE ALONG THE CASTLEREAGH RIVER</b>							
<p><b>All workshops</b> focused on connecting communities and promoting collaboration.</p>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

THEMES AND IDEAS		COONAMBLE	GILGANDRA	TOORAWEEAH	COONABARABRAN	MENDOORAN	BINNAWAY	ONLINE
<b>EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE NATURE-BASED RECREATION</b>								
<b>Gilgandra, Mendooran, Binnaway, Tooraweenah, Online Workshop:</b> Emphasised the importance of nature-based recreation and outdoor activities.			YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
<b>A COMBINED FOCUS ON HEALTH OF THE RIVER</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> discussed the health and revitalisation of the Castlereagh River.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES IN ALL OF THE REAL COUNTRY REGION</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> emphasised supporting small businesses.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>EXPAND TOURISM FACILITIES, ATTRACTIONS AND ITINERARIES</b>								
<b>All Workshops</b> focused on expanding tourism facilities.		YES	YES	YES	YES			YES
<b>IMPLEMENT WAYFINDING SIGNAGE FOR REAL COUNTRY AND WITH IN ALL WALKING TRAILS</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> discussed the importance of signage.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCES TO ENSURE THEY ARE REPEAT VISITORS TO THE REGION</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> emphasised enhancing visitor experiences.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>UTILISE AND IMPROVE OUTDOOR SPACES AND THE RIVER FORESHORE</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> discussed utilising outdoor spaces for various activities.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>GENERATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL SEASONAL INITIATIVES</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> emphasised seasonal initiatives and events.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>SUPPORT THE REGIONAL COLLABORATION CONCEPTS BEING PROMOTED BY REAL COUNTRY</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> discussed the need for collaboration among communities, businesses and tourism operators		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES</b>								
<b>Gilgandra, Mendooran, Binnaway, Tooraweenah, Online Workshop:</b> Highlighted sustainability initiatives.			YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
<b>OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE REAL COUNTRY REGION</b>								
<b>Coonabarabran, Binnaway, Tooraweenah, Online Workshop:</b> Focused on improving accessibility.				YES	YES		YES	YES
<b>ENSURE THAT THE MARKETING STRATEGY FOCUSES ON THE UNIQUE SELLING POINTS OF EACH OF THE TOWNS, VILLAGES THE CASTLEREAGH RIVER AND WARRUMBUNGL NATIONAL PARK</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> discussed unique selling points for their areas.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>PROMOTE AGRICULTURE AS A TOURISM OPPORTUNITY</b>								
<b>Gilgandra, Coonabarabran:</b> Emphasised the promotion of agriculture and agri-tourism.			YES		YES			
<b>EXPLORE REGENERATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CASTLEREAGH RIVER</b>								
<b>Gilgandra, Coonabarabran, Tooraweenah:</b> Mentioned regenerative opportunities and river health.			YES	YES	YES			
<b>OTHER THEMES/IDEAS</b>								
<b>All workshops</b> had various other themes and ideas unique to their discussions.		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

### 1.1.3 Marketing and Promotional Ideas

This table identifies some specific marketing and promotional Ideas provided at the engagement sessions:

PROMOTIONAL IDEAS	COONAMBLE	GILGANDRA	TOORAWEEAH	COONABARABRAN	MENDOORAN	BINNAWAY	ONLINE
Develop eco-tourism packages	YES	YES	YES				
Promote nature-based activities				YES	YES	YES	
Introduce an Agricultural playground		YES					
Create a standard of experience for all 3 of the Council areas		YES	YES			YES	
Regenerative opportunity in river health		YES			YES		
Wide track for walking/ride track		YES					
Botanical names on wayfinding signage		YES					
Dark sky and emus in the sky story signage		YES					
Sensory experiences in playgrounds		YES					
Safety measures for lookout areas		YES		YES			
Highlight the uniqueness of the river the "upside down river"		YES		YES			
Incorporate river velocity and flood information		YES					
Acknowledge and promote cultural history	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Improve access to the river	YES			YES	YES		
Upgrade the River Walk	YES						
Utilise historic streetscape	YES						
Enhance rodeos and racing events	YES						
Collaborate on events calendar across all 3 councils	YES			YES			
Improve visitor information centres	YES	YES					
Support more cafe opportunities	YES			YES			
Activate public spaces	YES			YES			
Develop a rail trail system	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	
Promote bike trails	YES			YES	YES	YES	
Collaborate with businesses to align trading hours to seasonal events calendar	YES	YES		YES			
Attract aviation enthusiasts to stay and experience Real Country			YES				
Develop an arts trail			YES				
Geo-caching tourist trail			YES				
Promote niche markets			YES				
Recognise First Nations culture	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Improve accessibility to water	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Support arts, culture, and businesses							YES
Utilise digital signage	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Encourage longer stays and exploration	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Develop itineraries	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Collaborate with other towns	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Enhance amenities and shade	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Tap into VFR market	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Collaborate with Landcare for eco-friendly initiatives							YES
Explore opportunities for cycling, aviation, and horse niche tourist markets	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

## 1.2 Implications and Considerations for the Infrastructure Project

### 1.2.1 Overview Of Key Findings

#### 1. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

##### Design Prioritisation:

- **Prioritise natural environment in all designs:** The project team will use a "light footprint" when reimagining design ideas and continue to prioritise, where possible, existing natural spaces and important ecological areas along the riverfront.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Ensure that each Focus Area project is a place for everyone on the land and waterways that prioritise resident and visitor accessibility, inclusion, and diverse needs.

##### View Preservation:

- **Preserve and enhance the views:** The project team will work to preserve the natural beauty of the river foreshore and enhance existing features such as the beautiful viewpoints surrounding each of the focus area sites.

##### River Interaction:

- **Improve the ability of users to touch the water:** The design team will incorporate multiple spaces and ways for visitors to get into and touch the water.

##### Natural Integration:

- **Integrate more natural features:** The project team will ensure that the design features ample plant species and opportunities to enjoy nature.

##### Water Appreciation:

- **Create spaces to appreciate the water:** The project team will include spaces and viewpoints throughout the River Foreshore areas where users can enjoy the natural beauty of the Castlereagh River and seek to improve overall river health.

##### Access Enhancement:

- **Improve access to the river:** The project team will provide different opportunities through a variety of spaces to access the water in a safe manner and enjoy its beauty.



#### 2. ACTIVITIES CONSIDERED FOR THE FOCUS AREA DESIGNS

##### Recreation Spaces:

- **Incorporate spaces for recreation opportunities:** The project team will create spaces in each focus area site that facilitates different recreational opportunities both along pathways and in designated locations for people of all ages and abilities.

##### Water Connection:

- **Enhance ability to touch and see the water:** The project team will include design elements that have the potential to connect users to the water visually and physically while balancing user safety and diverse needs.

##### Enhanced Walkability:

- **Increasing walkability throughout the Castlereagh River:** The project team will design quality trails and pathways that are accessible, connected, and easy to navigate connected by a series of way-finding measures.

##### Rest and Relaxation:

- **Incorporate places to rest and relax:** The project team will integrate places for people of all abilities to stop, rest, and enjoy the natural beauty of the Castlereagh River as it moves through each of the 3 Council's LGA.
- **Include many places to stop and rest:** The project team will include a variety of seating options through the focus area concepts that are made of appropriate materials and incorporate age-friendly design principles.

##### Natural Beauty Celebration:

- **Celebrate natural beauty:** The project team will use the existing natural features to inspire the designs. Each focus area project will be a place for users to connect with nature and enjoy its tranquility and beauty all year.

##### Aquatic Recreation:

- **Facilitate spaces for aquatic recreation:** The project team will maintain and enhance, where feasible, safe access for a variety of aquatic recreational opportunities along the waters edge.

##### Town Centre Business Opportunities:

- **Provide opportunities for businesses:** The project team will consider how to support integration of the concepts into each town centre to increase visitation opportunities in the town centres all year-round.

##### Inclusive Play Spaces:

- **Provide play spaces that work for everyone:** The project team will explore how to include play opportunities in the park for people of all ages and abilities.

##### Active Recreation:

- **Incorporate active recreation opportunities for play:** The project team will work to incorporate a wild play recreation course areas that aims to enhances play and recreation opportunities. "wild play" is where the play infrastructure is purposefully designed within the natural setting.

##### Safety Enhancement:

- **Enhance safety:** The project team will prioritise resident and visitor safety in each focus area by improving lighting, enhancing sight-lines of the river foreshore, and facilitating easier access by all users.
- **Ensure safe river foreshore experiences:** The project team will work to incorporate river foreshore accessibility into the design that is safe for both users and viewers alike.

##### Year-Round Activation:

- **Activate the river foreshore all year-round:** The project team will contemplate the ways in which the design can continue to support existing uses and enhance the experience of the river foreshore in all seasons.



**3. INFRASTRUCTURE + RESILIENCY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DESIGNS**

**Floodplain Planning:**

- **Place infrastructure outside the floodplain:** The project team will provide concepts that plan infrastructure and servicing investments at higher elevations, where possible, in the river foreshore outside of the high flood levels.

**River Health Enhancement:**

- **Enhance resiliency of the river health:** The project team will provide a series of interventions that will assist with the revitalisation of the river edges whilst the longer term strategy will seek the future collaboration of each Council to put long term strategies in place to monitor and improve river health.

**Natural Area Protection:**

- **Protect and enhance existing naturalised areas:** The project team will ensure the enhancement of any naturalised areas has minimal impact on existing settings while enhancing the areas' abundance of trees and shrubs.

**Flood Resiliency Balance:**

- **Balance infrastructure investments with flood resiliency:** The design team will consider how best to provide utility and infrastructure servicing to the site while upholding best practices for design in flood prone areas.

**4. CONSIDERATIONS IN THE PROJECT PROCESS:**

**Balance design elements for all concepts**

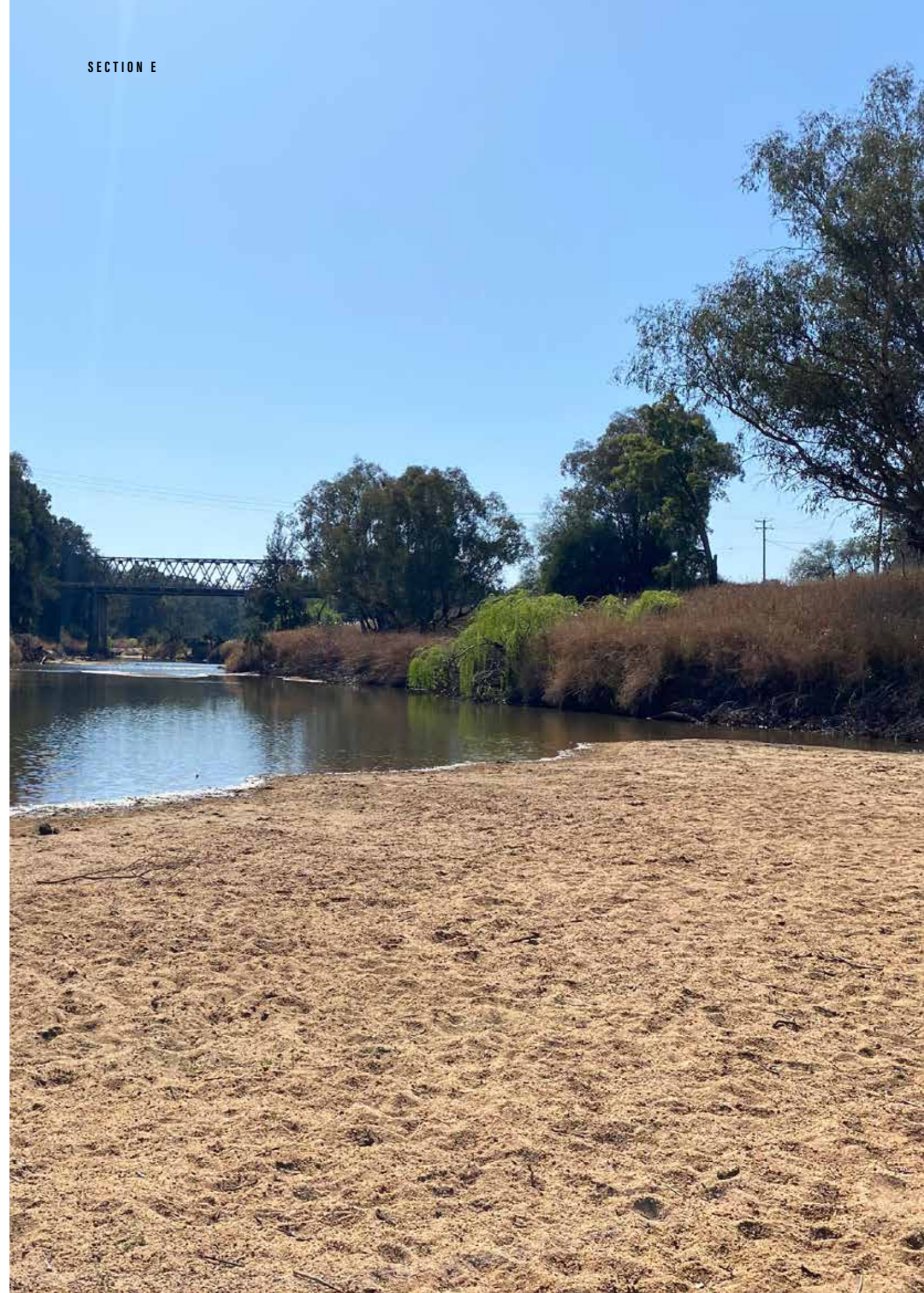
The project team will explore how to blend design elements to create enhancements that meets the needs of the community, respects the past, and looks to the future, which will ultimately connect the Real Country experience across the 3 Council areas.

**Design with country in mind**

The project team will provide a cohesive concepts with distinct spaces that connect with one another and provide opportunities where possible to incorporate principles of design with country.

**Work with community members across the 3 Councils**

The project team understands the need to continue to ongoingly engage members of the community in locations along the river foreshore and its catchment. The Real Country Leadership Team will work closely with these community members, and the Initiatives outlined in the Real country Strategic Package and aim to listen and learn from people experiencing the Castlereagh River.



### 1.2.2 Accessible Walking Paths

From our recent engagement sessions with community and stakeholders there was a clear pattern across all the town centres and local villages – all expressed a desire for a walking loop path that connected the town to the river. The other reoccurring theme across the region was the importance to respect, promote, and preserve the distinct natural assets, most critically the health and resilience of the Castlereagh River. In keeping with this ambition, the design team has referenced several nature-based walking trail projects across Australia/ New Zealand and around the world which provide a fully accessible walking pathway that is complementary of its natural setting.

Materiality is a strong indicator of project drivers, and for this Real Country project where the focus is encouraging visitation through local amenity and unique nature-based tourism experiences there is an opportunity to explore materials in addition to concrete to create these path networks. The examples attached highlight this potential, noting a need to factor in durability, accessibility, and cost. We seek to examine this opportunity in the design (and through discussions with our structural engineer and QS) to articulate point of interest or dwell moments along the path, and/or along sections of the path that warrant a more immersive nature-based experience.



TIMBER BOARDWALK



STEEL MESH / FIBRE GLASS REINFORCED POLYMER (FPR)



REBAR / CORTEN STEEL MESH



**1.2.3 River Crossings**

Across the different Focus Areas in each Town Centre there are a number of potential river crossings proposed. We understand that in some instances these crossings are perceived as lightweight suspension bridges (for pedestrians and cyclists), and these would need to sit clear of the 1 in 100-year flood water level. However, from our recent discussions (particularly in Gilgandra) there was some interest in exploring at grade crossing points in the riverbed where typical water levels and the topography make this possible. The attached provide some examples of both at grade and low-level river crossings that would provide an accessible pathway, as well as some lightweight suspension bridges.



**AT GRADE / FORD CROSSING**



**LOW BRIDGE CROSSING**



**ELEVATED SUSPENSION BRIDGE CROSSING**



### 1.2.4 Health of the River

In our discussions with the community and local stakeholders about the Real Country project, one of the key priorities raised was ensuring the long-term health and wellbeing of the Castlereagh River. The river serves as the life blood of these regional communities, and its seasonal fluctuation runs to the extremes of drought and flood. The Castlereagh River is unique – it flows east and west, turning back on itself and is described as an upside-down river (with more water running below than above the ground). There is a desire to see the cultural flow of the river return, and for the current ecological stresses of overgrown vegetation (including bamboo) and the infestation of European carp to be addressed. Hence, we seek to integrate river health and revitalisation initiatives within the design development of these infrastructure projects and masterplans – including opportunities for engagement and activation of the river to help promote and educate visitors on the history of the river and the unique sensitivities of its natural ecosystems.



WATER QUALITY



HABITAT & ECOLOGY



ENGAGEMENT & ACTIVATION



### 1.2.5 Nature Play

The introduction of Nature Play along the Castlereagh River aims to seamlessly blend recreational opportunities with the natural environment. This concept revolves around providing children and families with immersive and interactive play experiences inspired by the river's surroundings. These experiences include activities like water play, which allows children to engage with the river in a safe and enjoyable way, as well as thematic play that mirrors the region's natural beauty and local industries, creating a sense of connection to the area's heritage. Nature Play doesn't just offer fun and entertainment; it also promotes sensory exploration, allowing children to interact with the environment through touch, sight, and sound. By introducing Nature Play along the Castlereagh River, the goal is to foster a deeper appreciation for nature while providing a unique and engaging recreational experience for all to enjoy.



WATER RECREATION



WATER-BASED PLAY



NATURE-BASED PLAY



### 1.2.6 Interpretations and Wayfinding

The Interpretations and Wayfinding strategy in the context of the Castlereagh River project is designed to facilitate meaningful storytelling and engagement with the rich ecological, cultural, and historical characteristics of the region. It serves as a bridge between visitors and the essence of the place, unveiling unique features and guiding individuals on a journey of discovery. Through well-crafted interpretations and wayfinding elements, visitors are not only informed about the location, direction and what is on offer they are also drawn into understanding the significance of the area and encouraged to immerse themselves in nature-based experiences. This strategy offers an invaluable opportunity for learning and exploration, fostering a deeper connection between people and the environment. Ultimately, it seeks to transform the visitor into a captivating narrative, inviting all to become active participants in the vibrant natural setting of the Castlereagh River's story.

The Interpretations and Wayfinding strategy not only enables storytelling and engagement with the ecological, cultural, and historical characteristics of the Castlereagh River region but also serves as a locational tourism route guiding visitors throughout the Real Country region. This comprehensive approach ensures that visitors can seamlessly navigate their way to the various towns, villages, tourism key attractions, and local sites, enhancing their overall experience. Moreover, the wayfinding signage aligns with the overarching branding of the Real Country marketing program, creating a cohesive identity that unmistakably signals to travellers that they are entering a region where collaborative and enriching experiences await.

Examples provided here show the different styles and approaches for Interpretations and Wayfinding in other localities.



WAYFINDING



INTERPRETATIONS



PUBLIC ART



# F.1 APPENDIX

## 1.1 Display Boards

### 1.1.1 Coonamble Boards

#### COONAMBLE PROJECT SITES

**FOCUS AREA 1  
Visitor Centre Precinct**

Opportunity to further enhance and increase activation of the adjacent park.

Opportunity to include playground upgrades, a skate park, exercise equipment and commercial viewing platform over the river.

**FOCUS AREA 2  
The "Salute to Land" Precinct**


Opportunity to provide stronger connections to and across the town, and increase recreational amenity for locals and visitors.

Opportunity to include pedestrian bridge connecting to Macdonald Park and Warrena Creek.

**FOCUS AREA 3  
Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct**

Opportunity to activate and promote amenity of water recreation area at Warrena Creek.

Opportunity to include commercialisation opportunities - for example, running, cross-country, mountain biking, kayak / SUP, fishing, along with cultural trails with interpretive storytelling to Local and Sea Country.



**Connection to Water**

- Installation of a cantilevered river viewing platform and development of a Masterplan for Smith Park.
- Redevelopment of the Warrena Creek Reserve at the Warrena Weir for Recreational Vehicle (RV) camping.
- Construction of a pedestrian suspension bridge across the Castlereagh River from Tooloon St to Macdonald Park.

**Connection to Land**

- Construction of a 20m to 30m-high lookout tower as an art piece depicting local land use as a 'Salute to Land'.
- Construction of a Tin Town Contemporary Circle to commemorate cultural history and heritage.
- Planting of both sides of the town's Site 16 St, and development of viewing area on Bank Gulch Road.
- Installation of a 7m concrete walking and cycling path connecting the Castlereagh River and Warrena Weir.

**Connection to People**

- Purchase and refurbishment of the Coonamble Railway Station and installation of 'Steam Generation' display.
- Cultural and heritage trail through the installation of an additional 3.7km of concrete walking and cycling path connecting Smith Park with the Tin Town Contemporary Circle, Steam Generation display and Site Art - along which informational bollards will be placed, with QR codes to connect with audio interviews of local people telling of their experiences and recollections.

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#### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT Focus Area 1 - Visitor Centre Precinct

**INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

- The Castlereagh River**
  - Awareness of the river in this area is not sufficient.
  - The bank is quite steep and vegetation dense enough to limit view of the river to fenced glimpses.
  - Big opportunity here to enable stronger engagement with the river and accessibility to the river.
- Visitor Information Centre**
  - Beautiful new building and high amenity asset for providing tourism experiences in the local area.
  - Strong presence to the street.
  - Turns its back on the river and doesn't provide intuitive awareness of its proximity or encourage engagement.
- Retail & Cafe Offerings**
  - Only a short walk up the road to cafe/gift shop Mink & Lila - opportunity for other offerings.
- Painted Water Tower**
  - Strong gateway marker upon entry into Coonamble - co-location with Visitor Information Centre is positive.
- Smith Park & Playground**
  - Playground located within an isolated island of green surrounded by roads and disconnected from the Visitor Information Centre.
  - Amusement building in need of upgrade/replacement.
- Levy Bank**
  - Continuous concrete upstream along path edge to protect against severe flooding to be maintained.

**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- River Access Paths**
  - Examine most suitable locations for 'soft' path trails from the park down the bank to the water - providing opportunities for direct engagement.
- Cafe/Kiosk Opportunity**
  - Activate and increase dwell time within the precinct through development of cafe/kiosk (with amenities) facing into the park and new playground.
- Visitor Information Centre**
  - Open up the rear of the Visitor Centre to improve engagement with River - allow the building to be porous and operate from all sides.
- Relocate Playground**
  - Explore opportunity to better locate the playground within the park, co-locating it with the Visitor Centre and future cafe/kiosk and engaging more with the River.
- Adjust Driveway**
  - Explore opportunity to increase the footprint space in front of the Visitor Centre - possibility of sculpture park and heritage artefacts (eg. carriage horse museum).

#### STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECT Focus Area 3 Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct



**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- The Tower**
  - Examine activation opportunities for the proposed 'Salute to Land' viewing tower.
  - Assess the requirement of scale and height to ensure good visibility of the Warrena Weir and as a distinct landmark on the horizon.

**INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

- Existing Facilities**
  - The existing facilities are limited and have been installed in a piecemeal way that doesn't cater to a diversity of needs.
  - Locked off for use by the public and not open or utilised all year round.
  - Opportunity to improve and provide additional amenities that promote local and visitor engagement with the Creek both on land and on the water.
- Warrena Creek**
  - Generous body of calm and tranquil water with strong natural aesthetics and abundance of bird and aquatic life.
  - Opportunity for increased utilisation for water recreation activities including swimming, kayaking, stand-up paddleboards, and water skiing, as well as fishing and nature trails around its perimeter with interpretive signage.
- On Water Recreation**
  - Provide additional amenities and support infrastructure to accommodate use of the Creek by both locals and visitors, including hire of water skills, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing equipment.
  - Open the Precinct year round for public use of picnic/camping facilities and nature trails.
- Eco-Stay Cabins**
  - Explore commercialisation opportunity for integration of profit, eco-tourism short stay accommodation by the water.
  - Connected by a series of elevated boardwalks and seawalls to provide privacy and capture landscape views.
  - Would require additional on-site amenities.
- Nature Trails**
  - Waterside nature trails along both sides of the Creek to allow for visitors to wander and enjoy the scenery - including interpretive markers for identifying flora and fauna and sharing knowledge of Country.

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#### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT Focus Area 1 - Visitor Centre Precinct



**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- Relocate Playground**
  - Explore opportunity to better locate the playground within the park, co-locating it with the Visitor Centre and future cafe/kiosk and engaging more with the River.
- Adjust Driveway**
  - Explore opportunity to increase the footprint space in front of the Visitor Centre - possibility of sculpture park and heritage artefacts (eg. carriage horse museum).

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#### STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECT Focus Area 2 Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct



**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- The Tower**
  - Examine activation opportunities for the proposed 'Salute to Land' viewing tower.
  - Assess the requirement of scale and height to ensure good visibility of the Warrena Weir and as a distinct landmark on the horizon.

**INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

- Existing Facilities**
  - The existing facilities are limited and have been installed in a piecemeal way that doesn't cater to a diversity of needs.
  - Locked off for use by the public and not open or utilised all year round.
  - Opportunity to improve and provide additional amenities that promote local and visitor engagement with the Creek both on land and on the water.
- Warrena Creek**
  - Generous body of calm and tranquil water with strong natural aesthetics and abundance of bird and aquatic life.
  - Opportunity for increased utilisation for water recreation activities including swimming, kayaking, stand-up paddleboards, and water skiing, as well as fishing and nature trails around its perimeter with interpretive signage.
- On Water Recreation**
  - Provide additional amenities and support infrastructure to accommodate use of the Creek by both locals and visitors, including hire of water skills, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing equipment.
  - Open the Precinct year round for public use of picnic/camping facilities and nature trails.
- Eco-Stay Cabins**
  - Explore commercialisation opportunity for integration of profit, eco-tourism short stay accommodation by the water.
  - Connected by a series of elevated boardwalks and seawalls to provide privacy and capture landscape views.
  - Would require additional on-site amenities.
- Nature Trails**
  - Waterside nature trails along both sides of the Creek to allow for visitors to wander and enjoy the scenery - including interpretive markers for identifying flora and fauna and sharing knowledge of Country.

### 1.1.2 Gilgandra Boards

#### GILGANDRA PROJECT SITES

**FOCUS AREA 1 - The Town Centre Precinct**

Updated Masterplan to create stronger connections to and across the River, and increase recreational amenity for locals and visitors.

Opportunities to include landscaped and seating platforms, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing at the end of Bridge Street, and area for safe public on-water recreation (swimming, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing), along with nature trails on the eastern side.

**FOCUS AREA 2 - Cultural & Heritage Precinct**

Updated Masterplan to further enhance and increase activation of the adjacent park space between the Co-see Heritage & Visitor Centre and the Gilgandra Museum.

Expansion to include further opportunities to engage with the River (eg. wayfinding and interpretive markers off the path) and a potential crossing point, further activation around the Museum, an outdoor event space, and options to stabilising and/or river amenities.

#### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

##### Focus Area 1 - Town Centre Precinct

**INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

- Gilgandra Main Street**
  - Thriving and active Main Street with strong diversity of shops, amenities and community/cultural infrastructure.
  - Proximity of the street frontages enables some intuitive connections through to the River.
  - Ongoing work with current/new businesses to generate themselves to both the Street and River - including The Shed and new cafe bar venue.
- Castlereagh River**
  - Stunning views from the Wheelmill Walk over the Castlereagh River.
- The Turning Circle**
  - Observed as a possible future conflict with the opening of the new Library & Community Hub.
  - Understand the need for RVs to easily park short-term to network, supplies and engage with businesses along the Main Street.
  - Frequency of use around 10 vehicles per day.
- Library & Community Hub**
  - Under construction - including a new forecourt space adjacent which will provide a generous public place connecting the Main Street to the River.
  - Opportunity to build on this with subsequent projects to further improve experience of the river for both locals and visitors.

**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- Castlereagh River Walk**
  - Explore opportunities to encourage activation and use of the eastern side of the River.
  - Opportunity for informal nature trails (walking and mountain biking) on the bank with interpretive wayfinding and knowledge of local flora/fauna to look out for and cultural narratives.
  - Possibility to extend off the way along the River to the Visitor Centre and Cultural Precinct.
- Riverside Boardwalk**
  - Explore opportunity to establish the existing walking path by creating a raised meandering boardwalk with viewing platforms and interpretive wayfinding to connect with the River.
  - Integrate with the existing quays and respond to the soft flowing lines of the River.
  - Serve as a destination point for the new public plaza.
- New Bridge**
  - Reimagine a pedestrian and cycle bridge link over the River at the end of Bridge Street to allow access to the eastern side.
- On-Water Recreation**
  - Explore opportunity to enable an accessible area along the river for the public to engage directly with the River and touch the water.
  - Examine infrastructure requirements needed to provide safe on-water recreation opportunities for locals and visitors (including swimming, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing).

### 1.1.2 Warrumbungle Boards

#### WARRUMBUNGLE PROJECT SITE

**Project Site**

Based on our initial site visit and follow up face to face visits the following projects have been identified for exploration in Warrumbungle Shire Council for the Real Country Project.

In our visit to Coonabarabran we noted that the town has developed on both sides of the Castlereagh River, with the main centre located to the south.

Between these two zones sits a generous green corridor with the River as its spine. This should be the project focus to enhance work already done to improve amenity and accessibility to the River. Part of this next phase should explore further opportunities to attract the two sides of the town together through additional bridge links and make this precinct the key destination for both locals and visitors.

**FOCUS AREA 1 - The Adventure Precinct**

Masterplan to create stronger connections to and across the River, and increase recreational amenity for locals and visitors.

Opportunities to include landscaped and seating platforms, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing at the end of Bridge Street, and area for safe public on-water recreation (swimming, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing), along with nature trails on the eastern side.

**FOCUS AREA 2 - Visitor & Information Centre**

Limited of the gateway to town, but a long way removed from the River. Potential to connect with existing public engagement with the town centre via outdoor furniture, public play Street, opportunities for meeting from visitors that are a point of reference to each location.

**FOCUS AREA 3 - Linking to the Villages along the Castlereagh River**

Existing need to connect the Real Country destination to the smaller villages of Stratacra and Murrumbidgee through interpretive signage.

#### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

##### Focus Area 1 & 2 - The Adventure Precinct

**INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

- Park Entry**
  - Very narrow approach to Park at end of Main Street conflicting with heavy vehicle (truck) traffic on bridge.
  - Signage hierarchy is confusing and doesn't provide access to the River and walking trails.
- Rail Bridge**
  - Disused timber rail bridge over the River offers possibility for second crossing link from Halsbury Park to sports precinct.
- Park Extension Zones**
  - Existing walking path ends in quite residential street, with no intuitive link back to the Main Street Council.
  - Land available to extend park and walking path further, but area looks into residential backyards.
- Accessible Walking Path**
  - 2.5m wide concrete footpath through the park provides accessible access, but doesn't encourage people to 'step off the path' and engage with the River (new backlink to park to bank east of wooden box).
- Halsbury Park**
  - High amenity park setting for locals and visitors overlooking the River.
  - Open green space and good canopy cover for hot summer - with stunning colours in autumn.
  - No opportunity to engage and/or cross over the River (except via road bridge).

**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- Stage 1 - Park & River Activation**
  - Integrate a new landscaped amphitheatre space into the existing fabric to enable gathering and community events within the Park.
  - Create opportunities for locals and visitors to directly engage with and dwell by the River, including seating platforms and steps down to the water's edge, and explore the possibility of on-water recreation.
  - Integrate interpretive wayfinding along existing path networks and create opportunities for including public art and sustainable play elements.
  - Explore opportunities for seasonal night time activation within the Park and connection to the unique dark sky offering of the Warrumbungle NP.
- Stage 2 - Bridge Link & Activation Node**
  - Create a new activation node within the heart of the Precinct to unlock further nature play opportunities and service the proposed rail trail.
  - Explore whether this position could incorporate a lookout tower offering views of the Castlereagh River, horizon views of the Warrumbungles and offer a safe accessible astronomical viewing experience within the town centre.
  - A new pedestrian and cycling bridge connection over the river to link the new position/zone to the existing river walk infrastructure.
  - Close the loop with additional accessible pathways on the northern side of the river with interpretive wayfinding.

#### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

##### Focus Area 1 - Town Centre Precinct

These conceptual images are illustrative only and highlight equally the opportunity of this project. Your thoughts and ideas will inform a future detailed design process subject to approval and funding pathways.

#### STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECT

##### Focus Area 2 - Cultural & Heritage Precinct

**INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

- Co-see Heritage & Visitor Centre**
  - Provides the ideal first stop for visitors to the region - operating beyond the primary function of information Centre to include exhibitions/interpretation about local culture and heritage.
  - Proves building that works 'to-the-round' to allow activation of the surrounding park landscapes.
- The Meeting Place**
  - A parking circle sits adjacent the Visitor Centre and communicates the three local Aboriginal groups of the area - the Wiradjeri, Kamilaroi, and Walbun nations.
- Gilgandra Museum**
  - Featuring a rich and diverse collection of historic agricultural plant machinery and equipment.
  - Opportunity to further integrate the Museum into the Precinct - connecting it back to the Visitor Centre.
- RV Parking**
  - This use may pose a conflict for trying to increase connectivity of the Museum to the rest of the Precinct - opportunity to explore additional activation strategies in this area.
- Castlereagh River**
  - Formal footpath sits a long way back from the River - you are drawn off the path to wander down the grassy hill to get a better look.
- RV Parking - Temporary Only**
  - Explore an alternative location in the long term (possibly north of the Visitor Centre).
- Gilgandra Museum**
  - Explore opportunity for a stronger connection back towards the Visitor Centre.
  - Examine possibility of delivering a new forecourt space adjacent that the Museum could open up to, activating the park and revealing its unique collection.
- Event Space**
  - Explore this area as a large scale event space, with the Museum as the backdrop and surrounding gardens providing F&B shade.

**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- Landscape Masterplan**
  - Develop an updated Landscape Masterplan for the Precinct to improve amenity and utilisation of the park area south of the Visitor Centre.
  - Stage 1 should incorporate the area highlighted - encouraging connection towards the Museum and addressing integration of existing utility structures (to be maintained).
  - This includes proposed murals/landscaping to conceal utilities.
- Castlereagh River**
  - Explore the addition of a raised River viewing platform, interpretive markers and wayfinding elements to encourage visitors to 'step off the path' and venture down towards the River.
- River Crossing**
  - Explore opportunity for an at grade River crossing to connect into existing nature trails through to the golf course and along the River back to the new bridge crossing in the Town Centre Precinct.

#### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

##### Focus Area 1 - The Adventure Precinct (Stage 1)

These conceptual images are illustrative only and highlight equally the opportunity of this project. Your thoughts and ideas will inform a future detailed design process subject to approval and funding pathways.

#### STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECT

##### Focus Area 1, 2, 3 & 4 - The Adventure Precinct, Visitor Centre Precinct, & River Experiences

**The Adventure Precinct Masterplan**

Delivery of the key activation node and a dedicated pedestrian bridge connection across the river will act as catalyst projects within a comprehensive Masterplan for the Adventure Park project in Coonabarabran. During this phase, we will strategically identify the vision, purpose, and priorities for these projects, aligning with tourism research and key objectives. The local public works a Precinct Masterplan to create a new regional destination, featuring a gateway entry, expansion along the railway line, mountain biking course, tractor circuit, walking trails, and wayfinding markers.

This will assist for further work in the future on commercial opportunities and feasibility to be undertaken. The plan will strategically identify future nature trails, on-water recreation, and pedestrian bridges to enhance the Riverside links experience.

**Visitor Centre Precinct**

The Visitor Centre serves as the starting point of a potential local cultural and heritage walk that flows through the Main Street and ends visitors down to the River.

**Villages River Experiences**

In parallel to the development of these strategic masterplans for Coonabarabran complementary interventions within the other local villages along the River will further enhance the visitor offering of the region.

**OPPORTUNITIES & INSIGHTS**

- Adventure Play**
  - Explore the staged expansion of the Precinct along the railway line towards this pocket of natural wilderness.
  - Opportunity to include a mountain-bike course through the trees, a swinging bridge and trestle circuit off the railway line, and walking trails that allow locals and visitors to explore and immerse themselves in nature.
  - Include continuity in wayfinding and interpretation markers.
- River Experience**
  - Examine opportunity to install additional pedestrian and bicycle friendly bridge links along the River within the Park.
  - Explore opportunity for future nature trails following the River further north (link up to the canyon park and beyond).
  - Examine possibility for enabling on-water recreation activities in the River - including kayaks, SUPs, and fishing.



# 1.3 Catalyst Project Summary Sheets

## 1.3.1 Coonamble

### REAL COUNTRY CATALYST SITES REFINEMENT COONAMBLE

**Project Sites**  
Based on our initial site visit, follow up face to face visits the following projects have been identified for exploration in Coonamble Shire Council for the Real Country Project. We have identified 3 focus areas or Precincts to help target the investment and build on the work already completed and underway within the town centre.

**FOCUS AREA 1 - Visitor Centre Precinct**  
- Masterplan to further enhance and increase activation of the adjacent park.  
- Exploration to include playground upgrades, a cafe/kiosk, riverside boardwalks and cantilevered viewing platform over the River.



**FOCUS AREA 2 - The 'Town Beach' Precinct**  
- Masterplan to create stronger connections to and across the River, and increase recreational amenity for locals and visitors.  
- Exploration to include pedestrian bridge crossing to Macdonell Park and Aquatic Centre.

**FOCUS AREA 3 - Warrens Wir Recreation Precinct**  
- Masterplan to activate and promote diversity of active recreation uses at Warrens Creek.  
- Exploration to include commercialisation opportunities - 'RV parking', camping, on-site accommodation, skiing/kayak/SUP, fishing, along with cultural trails with interpretations spanning to Land and Sky Country.

**BUSINESS CASE PROJECT 1**  
**Visitor Centre Precinct**  
We are now in a crucial step in embarking and developing a transformative project that will seek to attract visitors to dwell longer in Coonamble town centre.

During this phase, we will initiate the preparation of the Business Case, carefully considering the catalyst project, Visitor Information Precinct, for inclusion in the Business Case, reviewed by the QIP.

Offering opportunities to discover and directly engage with the river from the diversity of the new Visitor Centre. An elevated viewing platform that looks out over and offers unobstructed views of the river, interpretive signage, interpretive wayfinding, public art, storytelling, and engagement opportunities with the river to activate a waterfront and generate sense of place upon arrival in Coonamble.

**Relocate Playground**  
- Explore opportunity to better locate the playground within the park, re-locating it with the Visitor Centre and future cafe/kiosk and engaging more with the site.

**Cantilevered River Walk**  
- Explore opportunity for a new cantilevered walkway and viewing platform to extend out over the River and provide clear views in both directions.

**River Access Paths**  
- Examine most suitable locations for self-guided trails from the park along the bank to the water - providing opportunities for direct engagement.

**Cafe/Kiosk Opportunity**  
- Activate and increase dwell time within the precinct through development of cafe/kiosk (with amenities) facing into the park and new playground.

**Visitor Information Centre**  
- Open up the rear of the Visitor Centre to improve engagement with River - across the building to be porous and open to all sites.

**Adjusted Driveway**  
- Examine opportunity to increase the footpath space in front of the Visitor Centre - possibility of sculpture park and heritage artefacts (e.g. carriage from museum).

**STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECT 2**  
**The 'Town Beach' Precinct + Warrens Wir Recreation Precinct**  
During this phase, we will encompass strategic master-planning initiatives for 2 key focus areas: The 'Town Beach' Precinct and Warrens Wir Recreation Precinct. We will identify the vision, purpose, and priorities for these projects, strategically aligning to the tourism research and identifying key objectives for linking to Council's key projects already underway within the town centre.

With these projects we aim to create spaces that celebrate the town's heritage, embrace its natural beauty and enrich the experience for visitors.

**Town Centre Contemplation Circle**  
- Project underway by Council to commemorate local history and heritage.

**The 'Town Beach'**  
- Explore local management strategies to address amenity challenges of the River (e.g. trap disposal bins).  
- Adventure trails and interpretive signage/markers that connect visitors to on Country stories and cultural practices specific to this place.  
- Explore opportunities to activate and of Tailor Street (e.g. Chuck Hall) and connection back to Main Street.

**New Suspension Bridge Link**  
- Explore the opportunity for a new pedestrian and cycling bridge connection over the River - linking the 'Town Beach' to Macdonell Park and the Aquatic Centre.

**The Main Street**  
- Establish a revitalisation strategy for the Main Street and examine reactivation of cultural heritage assets (e.g. Palmer Theatre).  
- Explore new public domain connections between existing cultural infrastructure and links towards the River and 'Town Beach' precinct along potential walking trails.

**Nature Trails**  
- Waterside nature trails along both sides of the Creek to the Creek to allow for visitors to wander and enjoy the scenery.  
- Including interpretive markers for identifying flora and fauna and sharing knowledge of Country.

**The Tower**  
- Examine activation opportunities for the proposed 'Sculpture to the Land' viewing tower. Assess the requirements of local authorities to ensure good visibility of the Warrumbungle NP and as a distinct landmark on the horizon.

**Sea-Stack Cabins**  
- Explore commercialisation opportunity for integration of private on-water short stay accommodation by the water.  
- Connected by a series of elevated boardwalks and scullered to provide privacy and capture landscape views.  
- Would require additional on-site amenities.

**On Water Recreation**  
- Provide additional amenities and support infrastructure to accommodate use of the Creek by both locals and visitors, including hire of water skis, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing equipment.

## 1.3.3 Warrumbungle

### REAL COUNTRY CATALYST SITES REFINEMENT WARRUMBUNGLE

**Project Sites**  
Based on our initial site visit and follow up face to face visits the following projects have been identified for exploration in Warrumbungle Shire Council for the Real Country Project.

**Focus Area 1 & 2 - The Adventure Precinct**  
Masterplan to create stronger connections to and across the River, and increase recreational amenity for locals and visitors.  
Exploration to include land and water recreation opportunities, nature play amenities, walking and biking trails, and additional bridge link connections over the River.



**Focus Area 3 - Visitor & Information Centre**  
Located at the gateway to town, but a long way removed from the River, examine how to connect and encourage visitor engagement with the town centre via cultural heritage walk along Main Street. Opportunity for viewing tower markers that are a point of reference in each location.

**Focus Area 4 - Linking to the villages along the Castlereagh River**  
Exploring ways to connect the Real Country initiatives to the smaller villages of Boreen and Macdonell through interpretive signage.

### BUSINESS CASE PROJECT The Gateway to the Warrumbungles

We are now in a crucial step in embarking and developing a transformative project that will seek to attract visitors to dwell longer in Coonamble town centre.

During this phase, we will initiate the preparation of the Business Case, carefully considering the catalyst project, The Adventure Precinct, for inclusion in the Business Case, reviewed by the QIP.

In this project the focus will be to promote and protect the beautiful beauty of Coonamble's natural park and enable further engagement with the water and surrounding landscape. A new bridge link to connect across the river to unlock new activation opportunities within the Precinct and provide a diversity of uses - walking paths, interpretive wayfinding, nature play, public art and a taste of what can be discovered within the Warrumbungle National Park.

**STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECTS**  
**The Adventure Precinct & River Experiences**  
Delivery of the key activation nodes and a dedicated pedestrian bridge connection across the river will act as catalyst projects within a comprehensive landscape for the Adventure Precinct in Coonamble. During this phase, we will strategically identify the vision, purpose, and priorities for these projects, aligning with tourism research and key objectives.

The local points include a Precinct Masterplan to create a new regional destination, featuring a gateway entry, expansion along the railway line, mountain biking course, tractor circuit, walking trails, and wayfinding markers.

This will assist for further work in the future on commercial opportunities and feasibility to be undertaken. The plan will strategically identify future nature trails, on-water recreation, and pedestrian bridges to enhance the Riverside Walk experience.

The Masterplan aims to develop a strong unifying narrative that realises the Warrumbungle Shire as a regenerative and nature-immersive destination that encompasses the Warrumbungle National Park and links its villages.

**Key Activation Nodes**

- A new destination within the heart of the Precinct to serve as the second anchor on a cultural walk along the main street from the existing Visitor Centre.
- Develop a pavilion and lookout tower that serves as a trail head shelter (following the railway line or other nature trails) and views of both the town centre, Castlereagh River and horizon views of the Warrumbungles.
- Provide seasonal and night time activation opportunities including viewing platforms and interpretations for an accessible ecological experience.

**Park Connections & Activation**

- A new pedestrian and cycling bridge connection over the river to link the new pavilion tower to the existing river walk infrastructure.
- Closing the loop with additional accessible pathways on the northside of the river with interpretive wayfinding.
- Activation with nature play and public art installations within the park, that might also provide night time and seasonal event opportunities with possible night time activation (seasonal event).

**Adventure Play**

- Explore the staged expansion of the Precinct along the railway line towards the point of natural wilderness.
- Opportunity to include a mountain biking course through the trees, a walking bridge and viewing platform along the railway line, and walking trails that allow locals and visitors to explore and immerse themselves in nature.
- Include continuity in wayfinding and interpretive markers.

**River Experiences**

- Examine opportunity to install additional pedestrian and bicycle friendly bridge links along the River within the Park.
- Explore opportunity for future nature trails following the River further north (link up to the caravan park and beyond).
- Examine possibility for enabling on water recreation activities in the River - including kayaks, SUPs, and fishing.

## 1.3.2 Gilgandra

### REAL COUNTRY CATALYST SITES REFINEMENT GILGANDRA

**Project Sites**  
Based on our initial site visit, follow up face to face visits the following projects have been identified for exploration in Gilgandra Shire Council for the Real Country Project.

**FOCUS AREA 1 - The Town Centre Precinct**  
- Updated Masterplan to create stronger connections to and across the River, and increase recreational amenity for locals and visitors.  
- Exploration to include boardwalks and viewing platforms, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing at the end of Bridge Street, and exploring ways to experience water within the area, along with nature trails on the eastern side.

**FOCUS AREA 2 - Cultural & Heritage Precinct**  
- Further enhance and increase activation of the adjacent park space between the Coopers Heritage & Visitor Centre and the Gilgandra Museum.  
- Exploration to include further opportunities to engage with the River (e.g. wayfinding and interpretation markers off the path) and a potential crossing point, connection to Museum entry, an outdoor event space, and upgrades to landscaping and visitor amenities.



In both these areas the foundational work is already underway (guided by the Gilgandra Activation Blueprint) to establish these areas as vibrant and thriving points of interest and dwell time for visitors to Gilgandra. Our intention would be to build on this existing momentum and investment, by examining further opportunities to enhance the amenity and place experience for both local residents and visitors to the area. This strategic work will link to the CEO masterplan, Growing Strategic DMAP and future funding opportunities.

**BUSINESS CASE PROJECT 1**  
**Town Centre Precinct**  
We are now in a crucial step in embarking and developing a transformative project that will seek to attract visitors to dwell longer in Gilgandra CBD.

During this phase, we will initiate the preparation of the Business Case, carefully considering the catalyst project, Gilgandra Town Centre Precinct, for inclusion in the Business Case, reviewed by the QIP.

Key elements to realise this catalyst project, work on the Riverside Boardwalk, Castlereagh River Walk, and the reinstatement of a pedestrian and cycle bridge link over the River at the end of Bridge Street, will emerge through exploration. Additionally, our analysis will encompass strategies to establish water experiences for visitors along the walk.

Creating a civic destination on the river and completing the public living realm established by the new commercial hub and plaza, including connection and engagement with the river via a boat house, amongst the trees, bridge link and series of nature trails with interpretive wayfinding and stories of Country, completing the loop between the Town Centre and Cultural Precinct.

**Riverside Boardwalk**  
- Examine opportunity to establish the existing walking path by creating a raised, elevated boardwalk with viewing platforms and interpretive wayfinding to connect with the River.  
- Integrate with the existing gumsheds and respond to the south facing view of the River.  
- Serve as a destination point for the new public plaza.

**Castlereagh River Walk**  
- Explore opportunities to encourage visitation and activation of the eastern side of the River.  
- Opportunity for informal nature trails (walking and mountain biking) on the sand with interpretive wayfinding and knowledge of local flora/fauna to look out for and cultural narratives.  
- Possibility to extend all the way along the River to the Visitor Centre and Cultural Precinct.

**New Bridge**  
- Reimagine a pedestrian and cycle bridge link over the River at the end of Bridge Street to allow access to the eastern side.

**On-water Recreation**  
- Explore opportunity to create an accessible area along the river for the public to engage directly with the River and touch the water. Examine infrastructure requirements needed to provide safe on-water recreation opportunities for locals and visitors (including swimming, kayaks, SUPs, and fishing).

**STRATEGIC MASTER-PLANNING PROJECT 2**  
**Cultural & Heritage Precinct**  
During this phase, we will encompass strategic master-planning initiatives. Our team will identify the vision, purpose, and priorities for these projects, strategically aligning to the tourism research and with key objectives.

One of the focal points will be the development of a Landscape Masterplan for the Precinct, aiming to enhance the park area's amenity and activation south of the Visitor Centre. This will encompass all open up opportunities for walking cultural experiences and living events.

Furthermore, we will explore possibilities to seamlessly integrate the Gilgandra Museum into the precinct, ensuring its harmonious coexistence with other amenities. Expanding visitor experience of the Castlereagh River, achieved through wayfinding techniques and extensions to walking paths, ultimately seeking to create a more cohesive, seamless connectivity and accessibility of the entire area. These strategic master-planning projects will be pivotal in shaping the future of the Real Country Project, ensuring a well-rounded and comprehensive approach to the development of Gilgandra.

**Landscape Masterplan**  
- Develop an updated Landscape Masterplan for the Precinct to improve amenity and activation of the park area south of the Visitor Centre.  
- Stage 1 should incorporate the area highlighted - encouraging connection towards the Museum and addressing integration of existing walking structures (to be maintained).  
- This includes proposed murals/ landscaping to connect visitors.

**Gilgandra Museum**  
- Explore opportunity for a stronger connection back towards the Visitor Centre.  
- Examine possibility of delivering a new town-centre space adjacent that the Museum could open up to, activating the park and revealing its unique collection.

**Castlereagh River**  
- Explore the addition of a raised River viewing platform, interpretive markers and wayfinding elements to encourage visitors to 'step off the path' and venture down towards the River.

**River Crossing**  
- Explore opportunity for an at-grade River crossing to connect into existing nature trails along its eastern sand banks and through the golf course and new track.

**Event Space**  
- Explore this area as a large scale event space, with the new Museum extension as the backdrop and surrounding gumsheds providing NW shade.

**RV Parking - Temporary Only**  
- Explore an alternative location in the long term (possibly north of the Visitor Centre).

## 1.4 Promotional Advertising

### 1.4.1 Social Media Call to Action

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT	
	<p>Attention all community members!</p> <p>Are you passionate about shaping the future of our beautiful region? The Real Country Project, a collaboration between Gilgandra Shire Council, Coonamble Shire Council, and Warrumbungle Shire Council, invites YOU to join us for an engaging face-to-face workshop!</p> <p>Workshop Locations: Coonamble, Coonabarabran, Gilgandra - there will be a workshop in each LGA</p> <p>Date and Time: [Date and Time for Each Workshop]</p> <p>Venue: [Venue for Each Workshop]</p> <p>This is your opportunity to have a direct impact on the Real Country Strategy and Business Case, focusing on enhancing our visitor experience, promoting the Real Country experience, and supporting economic initiatives and local infrastructure projects. Your insights matter, and we want to hear from you!</p> <p>What to Expect:</p> <p>Engaging discussions on unique attractions and strengths of our region.</p> <p>Collaborative brainstorming sessions on enhancing the Real Country experience.</p> <p>Sharing your thoughts on potential infrastructure projects and investment opportunities.</p> <p>Let your voice be heard and contribute to our vibrant Real Country community. Secure your spot now by RSVPing at [Insert RSVP Link].</p> <p>Don't miss out on this opportunity to shape the Real Country region. Mark your calendars and spread the word!</p> <p>#DiscoverRealCountry #CommunityEngagement #ShapeOurFuture                      #RealCountry #VisitCoonamble #gilgandra_region #coonabarabran                      #warrumbungles #gilgandra #coonamble #warrumbunglenationalpark                      #visitrealcountry</p>

### 1.4.2 Letter to key stakeholders

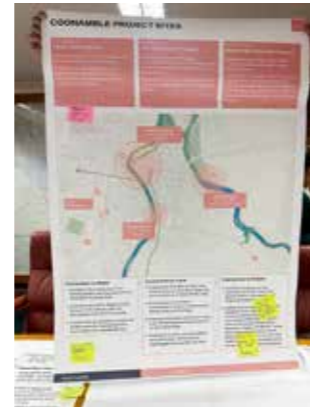
LETTER	
	<p>Subject: Join us for Real Country Project Engagement Workshops!</p> <p>Dear [Recipient],</p> <p>The Real Country Project, a collaboration between Gilgandra Shire Council, Coonamble Shire Council, and Warrumbungle Shire Council, invites you to participate in our upcoming engagement workshops. Your valuable input will shape the Real Country Strategy and Business Case, focusing on attracting tourism, enhancing natural assets, and promoting regional experiences.</p> <p>Include a brief video/message from the Real Country project team here, explaining the importance of participation and the project's objectives.</p> <p>To RSVP and secure your spot, visit &lt;insert web link&gt;. Your insights will help us create a vibrant and prosperous Real Country region for all to enjoy.</p> <p>We look forward to your valuable contribution!</p> <p>Sincerely,                      [Your Name]                      Real Country Project Team</p>

## 1.5 Workshop Raw Data

### 1.5.1 Coonamble Project Sites

PINK STICKY NOTES	
1	Attractions: Church; Wheat Bunker; River; Main Street; Farm Trucks

YELLOW STICKY NOTES	
1	PRIORITY FA 3 WEIR
2	Housing needs; Essential Workers; XXX
3	Indigenous Procurement. Ready cards for report. Other investment avenues
4	Flood Plain mnmt plan XXX
5	Pools, pedestrian walking bridge
6	Need 4 WD (high) to go to Macquarie marshes. ? Tours
7	How can council help with accommodation for workers
8	Main St needs to be our priority



### 1.5.2 Coonamble Focus Area 1

PINK STICKY NOTES	
1	Info Centre Increased; Museum Artefacts
2	Events...calendar build on this... largest rodeo in Aus. Dog and racing. Drinking. Bus service.

YELLOW STICKY NOTES	
1	Eco farm tourism; Work with farmers; (stay) shed tour
2	Smith park: activations and experiences; Test and trials: infrastructure is permanent.



### 1.5.3 Coonamble Focus Area 1 - Visitor Centre Precinct

PINK STICKY NOTES	
1	Structural integrity of viewing platform; Levy bank stability; Concrete structural element, anchored to concrete; Any design to consider levy bank

YELLOW STICKY NOTES	
1	VISITOR CENTRE: Café; Tables/Chairs; Shade; 7 Days?
2	Business Growth: Collaboration among st business



### 1.5.4 Coonamble Focus Area 2 - Town Beach Precinct

PINK STICKY NOTES	
1	BUSINESS: Staff problems; Can't stay open
2	Photography of the main st historical set
3	Pit stop: not a destination; Lightning ridge; Dubbo encourage; sculptures in the sand; Marshes
4	Creepy tours; old pubs (ghosts); really old graveyard
5	Wheat story. Now it started; Farm tours: school; sit on the tractor
6	XX

YELLOW STICKY NOTES	
1	Emerging town; unlock museum access for rvs; carp issues
2	parking
3	Gilgandra visitor centre 100 ppl per day 30% local; Buying coffee; visit museum; 32 k visitors pa
4	Free camping parking; fully contained
5	Events rodeo greyhound = \$\$ into the community; increase to destination events for longer (XX)
6	RV's families
7	TIN town; MacDonald park; aquatic park; main street priority



### 1.5.5 Coonamble Focus Area 3 - Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct

PINK STICKY NOTES	
1	River walk needs to be cleaned up; need more accessibility
2	Photography; little XX along the river

BLUE STICKY NOTES	
1	Boats vs swimming; need to examine seasonal users



1.5.6 Coonabarabran Project Sites

PINK STICKY NOTES	
1	Heat - shutdowns
2	Look up! (stars)
3	Dwell time/play; Sport precinct loops; Connection - existing walkways
4	Drought - focus area 1+2 can look terrible on drought; Water restrictions; area needs to be water-wise
5	Light show
6	Community garden - timing to get parcel of land near western side of river (on map area - utilities building)
7	Dark sky - when designing area 1 - try to keep dark so night time viewing can be done without light pollution (switches for lighting)
8	Heavy vehicle bypass; Street lights too bright
9	UNDERPASS BRIDGE; Connecting the kids are to public school; Mary Jane Caine Bridge west with XX at the bridge
10	QR Code for live tours and history; Connect Nandi XX to main Park - Nelson Park through the XX lands along path
11	River edge retreats; Pet friendly areas
12	Nature walks; River activities (community); Inclusivity for all; Art pieces - sculptures
13	Seasons: artist town, beautification, -16 to 10 degrees - mountains town
14	First Nations Tourism - caves river, cultural centre

BLUE STICKY NOTES	
1	ECONOMICS TOURISM; Amenity integration; Available; health or river vegetation; Business incentives

YELLOW STICKY NOTES	
1	Yellow belly; perch; evidence of health; nitrates health; native trees
2	regenerative river practice; must have healthy river; carp - school testing DNA purple spotted; COD
3	Arts/Theatre; Net ideal; Sound/heat; shade structure; gathering



1.5.7 Binnaway Community Engagement Session

SWOT NOTES	
STRENGTHS	Pool love
	Wendooran Shire Region
	Continuity of travel through the Shire
	Ideas from other towns
	Barracks
	Working bee, volunteers doing it all
	Community, people, locals, skills - all existing
	Autumn - colours, orange, leaves
	Silos
	Does not flood
	Grain, timber - rail to Brisbane, Newcastle
	Campground
	Bird watching, bird tours, twitches
	OPPORTUNITIES
Tourist trains	
Council - tree issues	
Sign at the junction - digital and events	
Sparkies - pay for materials	
Moving	
Locals	
Leaky Tap	
Sparky Jobs	
Drought funding plan - 400 members	
Extensive, online	
Trees / Orchards	
\$3200 Mans shed - maintain everything	
Branding - Digital Itineraries	
Events - Annual Race day, EDT	

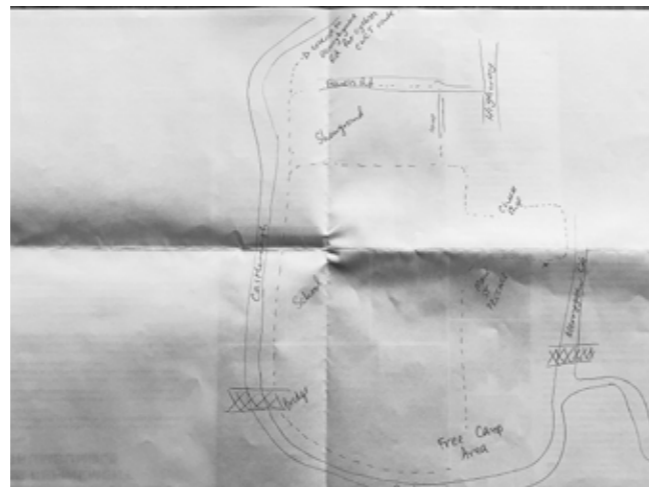


SWOT NOTES	
THREATS	Small community way of doing things
	Train drivers
	8-15 friends
	camp
	showers/toilets
	Long term travellers
	women travelling
	housing crisis
	cost of living
	volunteers - wheat, hemp, grain
	Land prices are low
	Lookup to Gilgandra - work with them to encourage Warrabungle Shire Airport
	Disconnect with Council
	30 hours day = Busy
WEAKNESSES	WOM - Nomads - Online referrals
	Environmental threats - bush fires, drought, resilience
	Cooperation, organisation of skill: resource
	Council disconnect with community in Binnaway
	Irrespective responses from authorities
	Hesitant on representation
THREATS	Community website - notices; use this for communication
	Information flow needs to be clearer - available on Council/regional website

### 1.5.8 Mendooran Community Engagement Session

KEY ATTRACTORS FOR VISITORS	
1	Cycling tours (Central West Cycle Trail)
2	Free Camping Area – with river access
3	Currently 2 x AirBnBs (run by Leah – a community coordinator based in Coolah)
VISITATION	
1	20-30 vans accommodated in the free camping site – this is a huge factor for a small town (incl. dump point)
2	Strong reputation and lots of returning visitors
3	Returning visitors feel a sense of connection and that they are part of the community (notice when things change)
4	Cycling track – several thousand people have gone through town as a result of the cycling trail group
5	Trail is better known outside the region than within (7,000 facebook group members – mostly coastal residents)
6	Eg. group from the US is coming out for 7 days
7	Little towns are the highlight on the trail
8	Scope for events – or more formalised experience (address some of the choke points on the trail, bypass the highway with a riverside section and private land access)
9	Need to adapt/reinvent ourselves again in the post covid era – cycling groups are now venturing overseas again instead of touring in Australia
10	Mendooran is a stop on way to Lightning Ridge or Walgett for those driving through
11	A safe, quaint town – you can leave your keys in your car
THE RIVER	
1	Locals who grew up here lived and played in the river as kids
2	Easy and safe access to the water for visitors is important – intuitive and gives permission to explore
3	The river is special – it flows past its place of origin (this is unique)
4	Health of the River is critical – recently lost 7 cows to green cestrum (poisonous shrub)

THE TOWN	
1	Underutilised potential with limited amenities - Can't buy petrol at the moment (but this is being resolved)
2	Maintenance strategy – currently this is a balance between community volunteer resources and council. This has insurance complications (Note: Landcare are keen to expand, had a recent workshop in Dubbo)
3	Dubbo river repair bus – OzFish (also volunteers)
4	Opportunity for a loop walk – including showground, main street, creek and river
5	Opportunity to introduce people to the food of the region (eg. Cheese Shop)
6	Visitor – "where is this from?" Debbie – "oh that's Jane's, she lives up the road."
INTANGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE	
1	Desire and the will to do things is strong amongst the community
2	Permission is the problem (less so than the funding) - Eg. permission to use the rail corridor and put up signage for cycle trails, permission to put a bike on a bus or train (if coming from the urban centres)



**COONAMBLE**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

**GSC**  
GILGANDRA  
SHIRE COUNCIL

  
warrumbungle  
SHIRE COUNCIL

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