

# Central Darling Shire

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## LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT





*The Darling (Baaka) River at Wilcannia*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Council wishes to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Barkandji and the Ngiyaampaa people.

# 1 FORWARD

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The Central Darling Shire is an exciting area of Australia to live, encompassing vast lands, rich cultural and social heritage and a strong rural character.

However, the practical reality is such that there have been considerable difficulties experienced over recent years by our communities and local institutions, including the Shire Council and government services. Central Darling Shire Council was placed in administration by the NSW Office of Local Government, in 2013 following a Public Inquiry. Council is due to come out of administration and return to an elected council in September 2024.

Despite the challenges posed by a remote location and a harsh environment, the Shire's history and future has strengths in primary production, renewables energy, cultural and social diversity. The aim is to grow the Central Darling Shire as a tourist destination for the Western NSW Region.

Our community has developed under sometimes difficult and challenging circumstances. In order to keep meeting these challenges, and continue the progress made by our forebears, a pragmatic vision for the future is required.

The community has developed and voiced a strong desire for improvement in a broad range of areas including housing, health, infrastructure, education, commercial activity, tourism, employment and access to services. To achieve this will require cooperation, collaboration and commitment from all sectors including our partner organisations, community and all levels of government.

## 2 WHAT DOES THIS STRATEGY DO?

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This Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets the framework for the economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years. The LSPS has also taken account of land use planning in adjacent Councils. It also works with council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and Local Environmental Plan (LEP). The LSPS gives effect to the Far West Regional Plan and Regional Economic Development Strategy, implementing the directions and actions at a local level.

The LSPS planning priorities, directions and actions provide the rationale for decisions about how we will use our land to achieve the community's broader goals. The Far West Regional Plan Directions and Actions relevant to Central Darling are found on page 9.

This LSPS has been prepared in accordance with clause 3.9 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act). The LSPS brings together and builds on the planning work found in Council's other plans, studies and strategies, such as the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The LSPS also gives effect to the Far West Regional Plan 2036, implementing the directions and actions at a local level. The LSPS planning priorities and actions provide the rationale for decisions about how we will use our land to achieve the community's broader land use vision.



**Figure 1:** Alignment of the LSPS to other strategic planning documents

## 3 MONITORING

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Council will monitor, review and report on its LSPS annually to ensure that its planning priorities are being achieved. Council will use the existing Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework under the *Local Government Act 1993* for the purpose of monitoring implementation of the LSPS.

## 4 THE FAR WEST REGION

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The focus for the future of the Far West is to capitalise its competitive advantages and unlock the potential for new economic opportunities. With vast distances, small populations and challenges across government and regional boundaries, all tiers of government and the region's service providers face significant challenges.

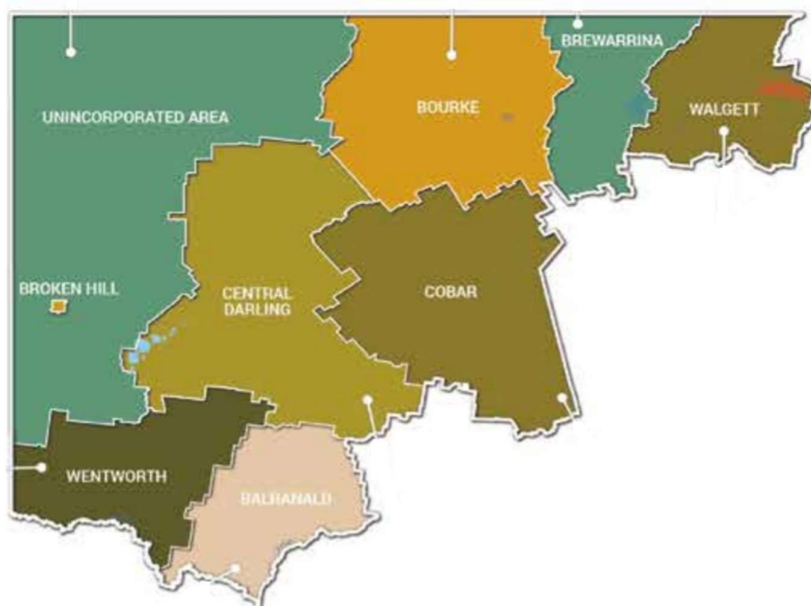
The western area comprises the Broken Hill and Central Darling local government areas and the Unincorporated Area. It is known for its isolation, mining heritage and as the birthplace of the world's largest mining company, BHP Billiton. The area is home to approximately 46 per cent of the Far West population. Of this, 85 per cent of people live in Broken Hill, the largest centre in the Far West. Broken Hill and Wilcannia provide business, office and retail services, and complementary activities such as arts, culture, recreation and entertainment to support the social needs of the community. Strong cross-border relationships with Adelaide and Mildura give residents access higher-order health, education, retail, commercial and transport services. Broken Hill is the headquarters of the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Major transport and freight links include the Barrier, Silver City and Cobb highways and the Sydney to Adelaide rail route. These link to Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Passenger flights from Broken Hill to Dubbo and Mildura connect to Sydney and regular flights are available to Adelaide.

Broken Hill and Wilcannia, and to a lesser extent Menindee, Ivanhoe and White Cliffs, provide ancillary service industries to support agriculture and mining. Diverse and unique tourist attractions include the historic mining and European heritage sites, Aboriginal heritage sites, Mutawintji and Kinchega national parks, Menindee Lakes, art and film production sites at Silverton, and outback tourist routes to Cameron Corner and the Darling River Run. Arts and culture-related tourism is an emerging opportunity.

The area contains diverse landscapes and environmental features, arid and semi-arid desert areas, inland freshwater lake systems at Menindee, and the Darling River and its associated floodplains and tributaries.

The traditional owners of this land are the Barundji, Karenggapa, Wadilgali, Malyangaba, Bandjigalia, Wandjiwalgu, Wiljali, Danggali, Barkindji, Barindji, Ngiyaampa and Wongaibon people, 44 who celebrate their connection to country through cultural heritage sites and experiences.



*The Far West Region*



## 5 OUR SHIRE

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Central Darling Shire covers an area of almost 53,000 square kilometres, making it the largest Local Government Area (LGA) in New South Wales. It covers an area about the size of the main island of Tasmania and has diversity in geography, cultures and economic bases.

Population figures for the Shire are one of the lowest in NSW with less than 2,000 residents dispersed throughout the communities of Ivanhoe, Menindee, White Cliffs and Wilcannia, pastoral properties and the localities of Darnick, Mossgiel, Sunset Strip and Tilpa. The Shire is geographically isolated with Wilcannia, the main population centre, located approximately 200 kilometres east of Broken Hill.

The impacts of variable climate and natural hazards are experienced across the Shire, with temperature and rainfall extremes projected to increase into the future, along with the rest of NSW. Rainfall is low and highly variable; summers are hot and winters are mild. The semi-arid environment and high summer temperatures result in high evaporation rates.

The Parro-Darling National Park is located north of Wilcannia with a proportion of the park situated on the Darling River. Kinchega National Park, home to the Menindee Lake system. Between these parks there is more than 3,330 km<sup>2</sup> of significant natural environments in the Shire.

The Darling River traverses the Shire as well as the Paroo River, with the prominent catchment area being from Queensland. Because the catchment is exposed to a harsh and arid climate prolonged drought occur throughout, resulting in extended periods of no flow in the Darling River.

The Shire has a small and declining population. Major issues confronting the shire are:

- Water security
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Access to health
- Education
- Public order and safety
- Transport
- Communications
- Housing
- Lack of community services such as recreation facilities.

The principal economic activities are agriculture: pastoral grazing; opal mining and remote area tourism. Large pastoral properties are the dominant land use in the Shire.

A key priority for Council is to maintain and improve levels of service and amenity for residents and visitors while looking to expand the economic and employment base.

### 5.1 OUR HISTORY

Australia has been inhabited by the Aboriginal people for some 40,000 years. Lake Mungo to the south of Wilcannia and Mutawintji to the north-west give evidence of long occupation. Because of this, the Aboriginal people have a unique place in our Australian society. The Central Darling area around Wilcannia was held by the Barkindji tribe (from Barka meaning a river). Many of the Aboriginal people living in Wilcannia today belong to the Barkindji tribe.

Captain Charles Sturt was the first European to map the Murrumbidgee River and the Murray River to its mouth in 1830. In 1835 Major Thomas Mitchell followed the Bogan and Darling Rivers down to Menindee. He named Mt Murchison on the Darling. Settlement commenced prior to 1850 along the Darling, but it was 1855 before the Central Darling runs were consolidated. Captain Francis Cadell's Steamer Albury entered the Darling on 27 January

1859 and reached Mt Murchison in 8 days. Later the name was changed to Wilcannia meaning 'a gap in the bank where flood waters escape'.

The township of Wilcannia was notified on 26 June 1866. In 1880 it had a population of 3000 with 13 hotels and was known as 'The Queen City of the West'. Wilcannia became one of the major ports of the Murray Darling system and the paddle steamer trade flourished for 70 years. In 1887 218 steamers and their barges unloaded stores weighing 36,170 tons, and 222 loaded wool and other produce weighing 26,552 tons at the port of Wilcannia. At one time there were 30 steamers loading or unloading. There were 90 steamers plying the Darling in 1890. The total distance from Wilcannia to Goolwa at the mouth of the Murray is 1110 river miles. Eventually rail and road transport killed the river boats and Wilcannia lost its former glory. Many fine buildings from the era remain in good condition making Wilcannia one of the best preserved historic towns in Australia.

The name 'White Cliffs' seems to have come from the smudgy white cliffs easily seen by passengers travelling the road from the river port of Wilcannia and the Mt Brown gold fields. From the first there were problems with lack of water and extreme heat in summer. These conditions made for considerable hardship in the opal fields and led to the town's iconic underground dwellings, not the first in Australia but the first on any opal field.

Over 100 businesses catered to their needs. There were five places of worship, a public school whose first schoolmaster was the father of famous cricketer Bill (Tiger) O'Reilly, a convent, a hospital, two doctors, a pharmacy, seven stores, five pubs, five eating houses (one underground), five guest houses, four billiard rooms, four well stocked libraries, a local newspaper, four bands and four halls where dozens of clubs and societies met and where local and overseas companies entertained regularly. At the turn of the century, a population of some 4,000 people lived in an incredible assortment of over 500 dwellings in the town as well as other homes up behind the mullock heaps.

Ivanhoe was originally situated on a well-used route across flat, western New South Wales between Wilcannia and both Balranald and Booligal. The town was a change station (where coach horses were changed) for Cobb & Co. by 1884. The arrival of the railway in 1925, and the completion of the line from Sydney to Broken Hill in 1927, was a definite boost to the town.

Menindee's history is full of colour and characters. It was 'discovered' by the aborigines of the Barkindji Tribe. Their fossilised skeletons remain in the dry sand dunes around the Menindee lakes and have provided some of the most prolific and consistently early remnants of human existence anywhere in the world. Thus far archaeologists have positive evidence of occupation dating back 26,000 years - not much younger than the now famous neighbouring site, Lake Mungo.

## 5.2 WILCANNIA

Wilcannia, the administration centre of the Shire, has a history of the Darling River heritage having once been the main port for the shipping of wool for the entire western district of NSW. Founded in 1866 as a port on the upper Darling River, Wilcannia is a community in Far West New South Wales with unique and deep history and culture. Wilcannia became an important river port in the 1800's when the paddle steamers from South Australia transverse the Darling River.

The, locally quarried sandstone buildings that were built during the 1880's remain a dominant reminder of the link to the historic thriving port economy. The local police station and court house remain, iconic Colonial buildings designed by James Barnet. The post office and London Standard Chartered Bank (1883) are also prominent buildings within the town. The 1896 Wilcannia Bridge is a centre-lift bridge that has been recognised by the National Trust as an example of the bridges built over the western rivers to allow barges loaded high with wool to pass through.

The Barkandji people still inhabit the land with which they have a long-standing history, connection and association. The town is also significant its role in the brewery industry. Edmund Resch, a pioneer in brewing beer in Australia, opened the Red Lion Brewery in 1883 in Wilcannia, producing Resch's Draught and Pilsner. With gold and opals being discovered in the area as well as the establishment of the Red Lion Brewery and strong port

economy, Wilcannia was a thriving community in the 1800's. Today, the community is also recognised for its strong ties to traditional Aboriginal culture.

### **5.3 WHITE CLIFFS**

White Cliffs' establishment in 1890 is attributed to exploration that has led to an extensive mining history which still continues today. The community's commercial opal field is considered to be the first of its kind in Australia. It is not uncommon to find locals or visitors fossicking for opal, in fact White Cliffs welcomes visitors to fossick for the gems, so as long as the claims that they are searching are not active.

The community is also recognised for its underground dwellings, 'dugouts' where visitors can stay the night or enjoy a variety of activities that the community has on offer. White Cliffs is the gateway to the Paroo Darling National Park which has a rich cultural and environmental history. The community hosts many annual events, including the White Cliffs Underground Arts Festival, Australia outback Rally and the Rodeo. These events allow visitors to experience a unique part of Far West NSW.

### **5.4 IVANHOE**

Located approximately 200 kilometres east of Menindee along the Cobb Highway, Ivanhoe is a small township named after the Sir Walter Scott's historical fiction novel. The township was once situated as a coach and stock route. Today, the community offers both locals and tourists the opportunity to experience the Great Australian Outback acting as a railhead and service centre for the surrounding pastoral industry. The Ivanhoe Heritage Trail offers tourists an introduction to the town's history and the inviting hospitality provided by the local businesses provides comfort to travellers. It is the centre of a traditional pastoral area and remains a prominent agricultural sector in the Shire, particularly sheep grazing.

### **5.5 MENINDEE**

Menindee is recognised as one of the oldest European settlements in western New South Wales. The community is of great significance to the Barkandji people and was a base for Burke and Will's expedition across Australia. Menindee's thriving environment fosters an enormous variety of wildlife, supporting up to 222,000 water birds, and provides the ideal climate for ripening stone and citrus fruits. The nearby Menindee Lakes, a catchment of lakes along the Darling River, has the capacity to hold three and half times as much water than that of Sydney Harbour when full. This destination provides the perfect setting for recreational activities such as fishing and camping. Menindee is a growing tourism destination.

### **5.6 TILPA**

The origin of the name "Tilpa" may be found in the Barkandji word "thulpa", which means "floodwaters", for it is in the vicinity of Tilpa that the Darling River floods up to seventy kilometres wide in major floods. Tilpa was once an important river port, carrying supplies up-stream by paddle steamers and returning laden with bales of wool and, like Louth, they also relied on a punt to allow sheep, horses and people to cross the river safely (for a fee) until the mid-1960's.

Tilpa may well have a population of about 3, however it lays claim to have the shortest Heritage Walk in Australia, two signs on opposite sides of the main street. The Tilpa Cemetery is the only one in Australia, if not the world, to have no one buried in it. State Governors and Premiers have visited Tilpa but the most important people in the Tilpa district are the "locals" who make Tilpa the village and district that it is. There is accommodation in the village and several local properties also have "farm stay" facilities.

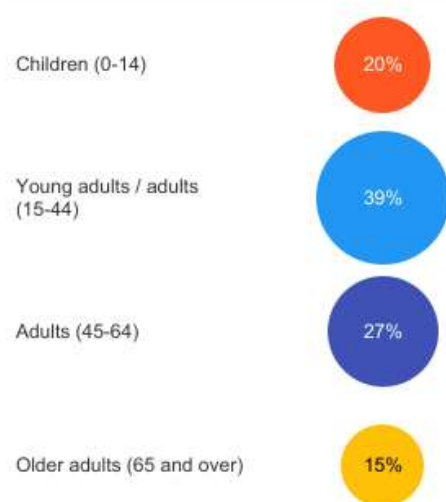


## 6 CENTRAL DARLING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

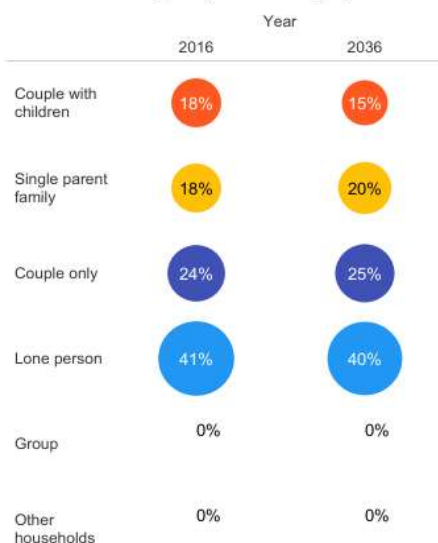
Central Darling Shire is a rural and remote area which has been impacted by population decline and its rate of unemployment is also higher than is common for rural areas of NSW, being 11.2% compared to the NSW average of 4.4%.

Aboriginal and Torres Islander population is as high as 31.1% much higher than the state average and the average for rural NSW of 37%. 34.7% of the Aboriginal and Torres Islander population is under 14 years. The population has significantly high unemployment rates and lower full time employment. Central Darling Shire's unemployment rate is 25.5%.

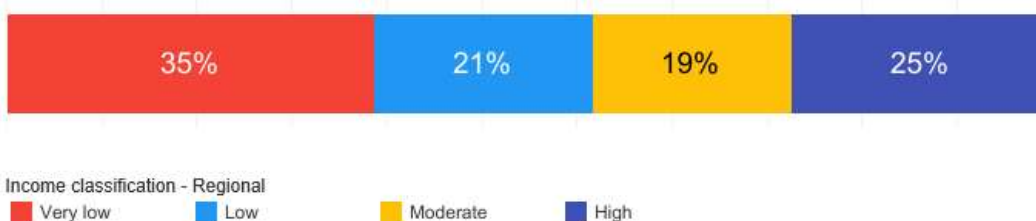
Percentage of all people in age group (2016)



Household type (percentage)



Household income range (2016)



## 7 VISION

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Central Darling Shire will be a great place to live and work as well as being a unique remote destination for tourists in Far West NSW. We aim to preserve and celebrate our history, communities and culture of our shire. Our towns have suffered as a result of many long-term residents moving off grazing properties and out of the towns.

The community seeks through its Community Strategic Plan, better social, economic and environmental outcomes for the Shire. To achieve this will require cooperation and commitment from all of us and our partner organisations in government and the community.

Cultural heritage is of great significance to those living in the region as well as providing opportunities for tourism development. The Shire has a rich Aboriginal heritage as well as a heritage from non-aboriginal settlement associated with the pastoral industry and riverboat trade in the 19th Century.

The built heritage is an important historical reminder of these developments and provides a tourism opportunity as part of a cultural and heritage experience of the region. A number of strategies are identified in this plan to protect and upgrade heritage buildings as part of overall improvements to streetscapes.

The natural environmental assets of the Central Darling Shire include the Darling River, Menindee Lakes, Paroo Darling and Kinchega national parks and the unique landscape of White Cliffs. This underlines the importance of appropriate management and protection measures that involve the Council, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Community and all Levels of Government.

To further expand the regional economy, a targeted approach to infrastructure investment that provides optimal support to businesses and the community needs to be achieved. Priority areas include roads, telecommunications, accommodation, water quality and supply.

The provision of appropriate and high-quality education, health and other community services is paramount to the overall well-being of the community. Investment in these areas will address the issues of declining population, isolation, transportation and communication, as well as issues relation to education, health, public order and safety, and general lack of employment opportunities.

Tourism will continue to play an important role in the Shire's productivity and employment with key attractors being national parks, remote tourist experiences, connection to outback NSW as well as cultural heritage.

Employment will be based around primary production, tourism, and provision of community administration and community services. Potential opportunities include renewable energy generation, mining and agricultural value adding being realistic potential opportunities.

To Achieve this vision will requires the ongoing funding assistance from the State and Federal Government to local government as the low rate base and capacity to pay by residents makes local investment in infrastructure difficult if not impossible.



## 8 INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY

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### 8.1 AGRIBUSINESS

Central Darling Shire has a rich agricultural history, founded on wool production and pastoral livestock grazing and in more recently goats. These industries remain the main sectors in agriculture in the Shire.

New opportunities in kangaroo harvesting have been identified by locals with kangaroos being harvested locally, stored in chillers and then transported to processing plants for domestic consumption and export. Supporting a processing plant in the Shire could be a future opportunity for investigation. Another new opportunity that has been identified is a fish hatchery in Menindee along with product diversification in new fruit markets. The fish hatchery will aim to replenish native fish populations that were decimated during the 2019 summer fish kills in the Darling River at Menindee. The facility will create local employment and incorporate local expertise, especially from the local Indigenous population.

Opportunities for diversification of activities within rural areas (including rural industries and tourism related uses) are encouraged, provided that the productive capacity of the land is not significantly altered.

### 8.2 TOURISM

Tourism is a prominent industry in the Shire and there are opportunities for future development across the sector including the future development of a cultural centre in Wilcannia, local art gallery, improved connectivity between our regions National Parks as well as cultural experiences sharing our strong Aboriginal and European history.

The remote location of the area offers an opportunity to be a service centre for travelers, travelling further afield. Attracting people on the way through to other parts of Australia by offering an opportunity to restock supplies as well as refuel before travelling further to more remote areas is an opportunity for the area to further capitalise on.

Our local tourist attractions include being on the Menindee Lakes, Darling River Run, unique underground experience in White Cliffs, farm stays, and the Nationally significant White Cliffs solar farm.

Council will support additional employment opportunities and new businesses to our region, particularly those which build on outback tourism opportunities or provide local services. New development will contribute to the character and identity of our communities and be appropriate for the capacity of local infrastructure. There are opportunities to leverage promotions for the Far West Region with adjoining Local Government Areas and Tourism bodies.

### 8.3 EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Ensuring current education and health services remain in each town is essential to the region. Supporting the ongoing funding of Wilcannia and Menindee TAFE will also provide local students with opportunities for tertiary study. The region relies heavily on the services provided by the Royal Flying Doctors Service, with no full-time doctors in the Shire. Council maintains aerodromes across the shire that provide important landing opportunities for the RFDS. Aged care is not provided, nor are disability services. Our severe isolation offers an opportunity for our communities to be leaders in the remote delivery of services as new technologies become available.

## 8.4 OTHER INDUSTRIES

It is important to highlight other industries in the region which include the Gypsum and ilmenite sand which is mined in the Balranald Local Government Area and then road transported to rail head at Ivanhoe for onward transportation. There are active opal mining licenses in White Cliffs.

The correctional centre is the prominent industry in Ivanhoe however its closure will present a new opportunity to repurpose the facility. Council will work with the State government to explore opportunities.

Future areas of investigation include the development of renewables, particularly solar and wind power. The industry is currently limited by the capacity of the grid to transfer power to larger centres. As technology and connectivity continues to improve there could be an opportunity for renewable energy development in our Shire that take advantage of our close proximity to South Australia.

Shopping, office, community and civic uses will continue to be consolidated within the main streets of each town, making best use of existing buildings and shopfronts.

## 8.5 SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Council is focused on investing in community infrastructure renewal and management for the long-term sustainability of essential town services. Key projects include new waste and sewer treatment plants, investigating water treatment options to better utilise wastewater, improving telecommunications connectivity and upgrading key passenger and freight routes. Critical to this investment will be funding from central government as the local capacity to pay does not exist.

Major transport corridors and infrastructure, including highways and major roads, are protected from encroachment by development which would detract from their safety or operational efficiency.

# 9 HEALTHY AND COHESIVE COMMUNITY

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## 9.1 OUR CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC

We recognise that our population has fluctuations due to the demographic, but generally the population is in overall decline (last 20 years). This can be attributed to the change in agricultural practices and ancillary industries significantly reducing staff numbers due to efficiencies in technology.

A large proportion of our aging population, who have the means to move away, do so to access higher order services. This however is not the case in White Cliffs, which is often a seasonal retreat for members of the older population.

A Strong local government is essential for our community. Whilst Council is in administration it continues to provide all the essential services and advocacy an elected Council provides. A focus is to build a sustainable and robust organisation to support the return to an elected body

## 9.2 HOUSING

The large proportion of zoned land in Wilcannia consists of deceased estates. Council is working closely with Government agencies to determine how to manage the growing number of uninhabitable, deceased estates or vacant dwellings in Wilcannia and Menindee. Improving the state of housing stock across the Shire is a key priority for Council to improve community wellbeing and increase visitor experiences.

Housing is predominantly in the form of detached dwelling houses. New growth and development will be located in the existing urban footprint to assist in consolidating communities. This will help strengthen the identity of the community, enhance heritage, maintaining the viability of infrastructure and services, avoiding natural hazards

and reducing pressure on water and land resources. A sufficient supply of suitable land exists within the zoned area to accommodate growth over the next 20 years. No additional rural residential development is intended over the next 20 years.

### **9.3 PROTECT OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

#### **9.3.1 Increase resilience to climate change and natural hazard risks**

Our communities are exposed to the severity and variability of our climate. Improving water security and better equipping our communities to manage extended drought periods will continue to be a focus area for Council. Each of our communities are vulnerable to unprecedented water shortages due to the flow levels of the surrounding river system. The town's raw water relies on storages in the Darling River weir pools. Other sources also include bore fields which produce enough water to supply the town with filtered water only. Council will continue to work with the NSW State and Federal Government and relevant agencies to put in place long-term solutions, such a new weir for Wilcannia, installing additional bores and treatment systems, delivering packaged.

New development or the intensification of uses in areas potentially affected by flooding or bushfire will be avoided, other than where development that can be designed or sited to minimise risk to people, property and the environment. We recognise our community is susceptible to extreme temperatures and will ensure our current and future developments are adapted to maintain our resilience to temperature variability.

Any future development will consider the potential for extreme weather events and wherever possible is located and designed to suit the local climate, particularly by reducing reliance on non-renewable energy and water consumption, especially during times of drought

#### **9.3.2 Protect and manage environmental assets**

The Darling River meanders through New South Wales from its origins in Queensland's Darling Downs till it meets the Murray River at Wentworth. It is a significant landmark in Outback Australia. Much of the pioneering history of the region has centred on the river, and it remains vital for agriculture, horticulture and town life. Following the Darling River will take you through the traditional lands of the Ngemba and Barkindji peoples, who regard the river as an integral part of their lives and lifestyle.

Protecting our natural environment is paramount to everything we do. Within the next 20 year it is expected that Menindee will be declared a Ramsar Wetland which will provide international recognition of the significance of the area across the world. The Menindee Lakes are located on the Darling River, about 200 km upstream of the Darling River's junction with the River Murray. The town of Menindee is close to the lakes. The lakes were originally a series of natural depressions that filled during floods. As the flow receded, the water in the natural depressions drained back into the Darling River. Periods of drought and extended low flow can cause the lakes to run dry. Modifications to make use of the lakes for water conservation and regulation along the lower Darling River were undertaken during the mid-20th century. The lakes are owned by the New South Wales Government and operated by Water NSW.

The Darling River catchment upstream of Menindee is immense and comprises southern Queensland and most of New South Wales west of the Great Dividing Range — an area of 574,200 km<sup>2</sup>. It is only during significant floods that the greater part of this area contributes to the flow in the Darling River. The Darling River is fundamental to Wilcannia and Menindee and will continue to be protected and enhanced as a key asset and focal point.

Council will work with the NSW Government and Basin Authorities to develop the water resource sharing plans to ensure a healthy connected darling river along its course.

Protecting our unique vegetation is a concern for council. The Indigenous and European cultural heritage is also of significance to the Region and state of NSW. Any future development will avoid and be buffered from areas of environmental significance and protect the integrity and viability of habitat and biodiversity values, and biophysical and ecological processes.



## 9.4 CELEBRATE HERITAGE ASSETS

Significant local heritage underpins the character of our communities. The main historic themes relating to the settlement and growth of Wilcannia evolve out of the spread of remote rural pastoral and mining activities in NSW during the 1860s-1890s, leading to the rise of the river steamer transportation as an essential part of the economic growth of the region and the creation of a government administration centre as the population of the region increased. Wilcannia became one of the major ports of the Murray Darling system and the paddle steamer trade flourished for 70 years. The town of White Cliffs, situated in northwest NSW, was Australia's first viably commercial opal field and was first discovered in 1884. Menindee is the oldest European settlement in western New South Wales, and the first town to be established on the Darling River. Ivanhoe was proclaimed a village in 1890. The arrival of the railway in 1925, and the completion of the line from Sydney to Broken Hill in 1927, was a definite boost to the town. Future development will not impact on areas and items of cultural heritage significance within the natural environment and rural landscape.



## 10 OUR FOR ACHIEVING OUR VISION

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### PRIORITIES -

#### 10.1 LIVEABILITY

- 10.1.1 Advocate and provide a range of facilities and services to meet community needs
- 10.1.2 Supporting a diverse housing choice where possible using existing infrastructure and building stock
- 10.1.3 Protect and enhance the towns and villages with tree planting /landscaping in streets and community spaces such as the riverbanks and open spaces to increase amenity and protection from the impacts of climate change
- 10.1.4 Work with and support local Aboriginal groups to achieve
  - Structural, social, emotional and physical wellbeing
  - Culture of success
  - Economic independence and sustainability
  - Devolved decision making and community autonomy
  - Citizenship and political engagement
  - Integrated service delivery

#### 10.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

- 10.2.1 Advocate for existing and new development to be supported by infrastructure
- 10.2.2 Actively seek out and advocate for new infrastructure to facilitate investment in new industries such as renewables and agricultural value adding
- 10.2.3 Advocate and work with government agencies to bring enhanced telecommunications to the LGA to facilitate better connections and health, education outcomes.

#### 10.3 PRODUCTIVITY

- 10.3.1 Improve access to and from the LGA
- 10.3.2 Provide for opportunities for local employment

#### 10.4 SUSTAINABILITY

- 10.4.1 Protect, manage and respect cultural heritage assets
- 10.4.2 Proactively, protect and manage environmental assets
- 10.4.3 Engage with Government and natural resource managers to ensure a connected and healthy Darling River
- 10.4.4 Continue to rebuild the Central Darling Shire so that it provides sustainable leadership for the region

## 10.5 TOURISM

10.5.1 Support tourism providers in enhancing the towns and villages with green spaces and opportunities to experience the various forms of heritage etc

10.5.2 Work with the Barkindji people to protect and conserve natural and cultural heritage of LGA

## 11 ACTIONS

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Central Darling Shire council will deliver through actions taken by Council over the commencing years and will include advocacy, preparation of plans, strategies or policies

Implementation of specific projects will depend on budgets and Council will monitor and report on actions, though the Central Darling Shire Community Strategic Plan and its 4-year Delivery Program. This approach is consistent with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework under the *Local Government Act 1993*, which recognises that council plans and policies are interconnected.

## 12 FAR WEST REGIONAL PLAN DIRECTIONS

Focus	Alignment with Policy	Strategic Outcome	Description
Tourism	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 5	Promote and diversify local tourism market	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote local indigenous cultural opportunities in tourism, including river walks, art workshops and a cultural centre.</li> <li>Ensure experiences are available throughout the year to accommodate seasonal fluctuations</li> <li>Work with National Parks to expand operations into the tourism sector</li> <li>Work with neighbouring regional councils/JO to develop a tourism strategy</li> </ol>
Infrastructure	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 4	Diversify energy supply through renewable energy generation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate small-scale renewable energy projects using bioenergy, solar, wind, small-scale hydro, geothermal or other innovative storage technologies through local environment plans.</li> </ol>
	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 8	Enhance access to telecommunication s	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify options to improve access to shared telecommunication and internet services, including public access to services at community centres and schools.</li> </ol>
Changing Demographic	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 20	Plan for a changing demographic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare management strategies for declining populations</li> </ol>
Housing	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 27	Sustainably manage residential development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure any future residential development is located on land that is currently zoned and serviced.</li> <li>Work with agencies to clear uninhabitable housing stock to improve visual amenity and experience in Wilcannia and Menindee.</li> </ol>
Protect our Natural Environment	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 26	Deliver long-term water security	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that potable and raw water supplies are provided within designated water districts of Ivanhoe and Wilcannia</li> <li>Maintain the consistency of water supply to the White Cliffs community and investigate and improve the provision of a potable supply as a matter of urgency</li> <li>Construct the new water treatment plant and associated infrastructure to ensure improved water supply for White Cliffs, Wilcannia and Ivanhoe</li> </ol>
	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 15	Manage land uses along river corridor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a management strategy that considers and assesses the potential impacts of new development on biodiversity along the River corridor.</li> </ol>
	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 16	Increase resilience to climate change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate the findings of the Far West Enabling Regional Adaptation project to inform land use and planning decisions.</li> </ol>
	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 17	Manage natural hazard risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate the best available hazard information in local plans consistent with current flood studies, flood planning levels, modelling and floodplain risk management plans.</li> </ol>
Celebrate Heritage Assets	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 18	Respect and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect, manage and respect Aboriginal objects and places in accordance with legislative requirements.</li> </ol>
	Far West Regional Plan – Direction 19	Conserve and adaptively re-use European heritage assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare, review and update heritage studies in consultation with the community to recognise and conserve heritage assets and items and include appropriate local planning controls.</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to redevelop and enhance streetscapes and entrances to all towns</li> </ol>