

# ADVOCACY PLAN



2022



CENTRAL  
DARLING  
SHIRE COUNCIL

## Acknowledgement of Country

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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Country within the Central Darling Shire and their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the ongoing connection that Aboriginal people have to this Country, especially water and recognise Aboriginal people as the original custodians of this land. We thank them for their generosity in sharing their aspirations for the future and hope that these plans will affect change for communities of the shire.



# Introduction

Central Darling Shire Council has developed a suite of plans to guide and inform the council, its communities and other government and non-government agencies. Together, these plans provide a comprehensive long term vision for the future of the shire and its communities.

These plans also provide a detailed account of local issues and priorities that require address to ensure the long term wellbeing of the shire and its communities in social, environmental, economic and governance contexts.

The following diagram provides an account of how these plans and associated processes work together.



## About this Advocacy Plan

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The Central Darling Shire Council Advocacy Plan identifies primary issues and inequities experienced by communities within the Shire, that are beyond the responsibilities of NSW local government or beyond the capacity of Central Darling Shire Council alone to address.

This Advocacy Plan complements the Central Darling Shire Community Strategic Plan and Town & District Improvement Plans in identifying critical shortfalls and inequities in the provision of essential services needed by shire communities.

The plan will assist Central Darling Shire Council and its communities in maintaining a clear and effective advocacy agenda in their discussions and negotiations with relevant agencies.

The primary issues and inequities detailed in this plan may be defined within the following categories:

- Housing
- The wellbeing of children and young people
- Services and facilities for older people
- Governance and representation
- The Baaka (Darling River)
- Training and employment opportunities for young people
- Access to goods and services
- Telecommunications and electricity supply
- Local and regional roads

The term 'inequities' is used in this plan to highlight the disparity in the quality, reliability and levels of service and support allocated to Central Darling Shire and its communities by state, federal and non-government agencies in comparison to most other communities throughout NSW and Australia as a whole.

## Advocacy principles

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In developing this plan, Central Darling Shire believes that observation of the following principles is essential in planning and delivery of services to shire communities by all government and non-government agencies.

- Uphold human rights and social justice
- Provide equitable access to services, infrastructure and economic opportunities
- Enhance the cultural and environmental sustainability of the shire and its communities
- Provide accountable, transparent, inclusive governance to Shire communities
- Work in partnership with other service providers to plan and deliver appropriate services that meet community needs
- Inform, listen to and engage with communities

We also acknowledge the principles listed in the document titled: *“ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE: Barkandji Lore”* Principles and Protocols for Engagement with the Aboriginal community of Wilcannia, NSW. This document also provides valued guidance in advocating for Aboriginal communities in Central Darling Shire. These principles are as follows:

1. Recognition of and respect for our Barkandji lore and culture
2. Respect for our people’s right to self-determination and self-management
3. Respect for the human rights of all our families in our town including the particular rights of our children
4. Respect for the international principles on Cultural and intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples
5. Recognition of every community member’s right to live in a secure, safe and peaceful environment
6. Relationships built on trust, dignity, pride, respect, and honesty
7. Local and ongoing ownership of the development process
8. Accountability to our community for social behaviour and delivery of quality services
9. Responsibilities to strengthen not weaken our community unity through shared learning

# The focus of our advocacy

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## OUR VISION FOR ADVOCACY:

**We will influence the planning and decision-making of government at all levels and non-government agencies, to ensure the adequate and equitable provision of services and support to communities of the Central Darling Shire.**

Our purpose in developing this plan, and defining our advocacy vision and priorities, is to pursue specific outcomes for our communities. These outcomes address issues in areas of human rights, social equity, quality of life, health and wellbeing, and opportunities and prosperity.

Central Darling Shire Council will pursue the following outcomes in advocating for the quality of life and wellbeing of local communities:

### OUTCOME 1: GOVERNANCE AND REPRESENTATION

Governance of Central Darling Shire is based on sound principles and practices and is representative of community needs, interests and priorities. Aboriginal communities and agencies within the shire have an equitable role in designing and delivering local governance systems and processes.

### OUTCOME 2: HOUSING

There is an adequate supply of diverse, well-built and well-maintained housing across the shire that is appropriate for local environmental conditions and reflect the needs of our communities through all stages of life. Our Aboriginal communities need greater opportunities to purchase their homes or to secure long term tenure in rental accommodation at reasonable prices.

### OUTCOME 3: THE BAAKA (DARLING RIVER)

The importance of the Baaka (Darling River) as a source of food and drinking water, a place of cultural significance and a site for active and passive recreation, is recognised and cultural flow is maintained accordingly.

### OUTCOME 4: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We have a range of local services and facilities that contribute positively to the mental and physical wellbeing of people of all ages. Our communities have access to a range of organised and team sports and well maintained sporting and recreational facilities.

### OUTCOME 5: SERVICES AND FACILITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

We have a range of local services and facilities that meet the needs of older people.

### OUTCOME 6: TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

People living in the shire have access to appropriate local training options and employment opportunities in public, private and non-government sector agencies.

### OUTCOME 7: ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

Communities across the shire have local access to affordable fresh produce and choice in local retail outlets.

## OUTCOME 8: TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Local telecommunications and electricity infrastructure is state-of-the-art, well maintained and able to provide comprehensive, reliable services to communities across the shire.

## OUTCOME 9: LOCAL AND REGIONAL ROADS

Our road network enables safe and reliable access between local and regional population centres.

The following tables describe the primary issues that form the focus of Central Darling Shire's advocacy activities. These issues have been identified by local communities with the support of Central Darling Shire Council.

# 1. Governance and representation

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### 1.1 SHIRE COMMUNITIES HAVE LIMITED DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION UNDER ADMINISTRATION

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	The shire has improved systems and mechanisms to enable democratic representation and participation of local communities in planning and decision-making	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Office of Local Government Department of Regional NSW

### 1.2 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES LACK SELF-DETERMINATION AND INPUT IN DECISION-MAKING THAT AFFECTS THEM

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee Ivanhoe	Aboriginal communities and agencies within the shire have an equitable role in designing and managing local governance systems and processes.	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Office of Local Government NSW Dep't of Aboriginal Affairs Department of Regional NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils – Wilcannia and Menindee Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly and Community Working Parties

## 2. Housing

### 2.1 THERE IS A LACK OF HOUSING IN URBAN AREAS TO RENT OR BUY

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee Ivanhoe	Land is identified and available to facilitate the establishment of new housing development	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment  Aboriginal Housing Office  National Indigenous Australians Agency  Local Aboriginal Land Councils - Wilcannia and Menindee  Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly  Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Co-Op  Banking industry

### 2.2 MANY HOUSES ARE PERMANENTLY OVERCROWDED

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee	There is an increase in the supply of social and community housing for Aboriginal communities to reduce the incidence and negative impacts of over-crowding	Aboriginal Housing Office  National Indigenous Australians Agency  Local Aboriginal Land Councils - Wilcannia and Menindee  Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly  Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Co-Op

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**2.4 THERE IS AN INADEQUATE MIX OF HOUSING TO REFLECT THE NEEDS AND LIVING SITUATIONS OF FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS (FROM GRANNY FLATS AND SMALL HOUSES TO LARGER FAMILY HOMES)**

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee Ivanhoe	There is greater diversity in local dwelling types to address the needs of Aboriginal communities and individuals through all stages of life	Aboriginal Housing Office National Indigenous Australians Agency Local Aboriginal Land Councils - Wilcannia and Menindee Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Co-Op

**2.5 HOME OWNERSHIP IS VERY DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE FOR MANY ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND HOME LOANS ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN BASED ON POST-CODE**

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee Ivanhoe	Increased rates of home ownership Reduction in the level of finance required for a home loan deposit	Aboriginal Housing Office National Indigenous Australians Agency Local Aboriginal Land Councils - Wilcannia and Menindee Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Co-Op Banking industry Australian Financial Complaints Authority Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

### 3. The Baaka (Darling River)

#### 3.1 THE LOSS OF WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND FLOW IN THE DARLING (BAAKA) RIVER HAS CREATED A LOSS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY, A SOURCE OF FOOD AND DEPENDABLE DRINKING WATER AND A FOCUS FOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee Ivanhoe	Local Aboriginal communities and agencies are better able to participate in and influence decision-making on issues that affect them in relation to the Baaka (Darling River)	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Office of Local Government NSW Dep't of Aboriginal Affairs Local Aboriginal Land Councils – Wilcannia and Menindee Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly and Community Working Parties

#### 3.2 BAAKA (DARLING RIVER) WATER IS TOXIC AT TIMES DUE TO BLUE-GREEN ALGAE AND AN OVER-CONCENTRATION OF LEACHED FERTILISERS AND CHEMICALS

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee Tilpa	There is a decrease in the incidence of blue-green algae and other toxins in the Baaka/Darling River	Water NSW NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Essential Water Murray Darling Basin Authority NSW Department of Primary Industries Central Darling Shire Council Murray Darling Association Australian Floodplain Association Barkindji Native Title Group Aboriginal Corporation

## 4. Community health and wellbeing

### 4.1 THERE IS LIMITED LOCAL ACCESS TO HEALTH, LEGAL AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	There are increases in visitation and presence within the shire, of state, federal and non-government service providers to ensure a comprehensive understanding of local issues, build positive relationships with local communities and address longstanding social and community issues	Department of Regional NSW NSW Department of Health Resilience NSW Maari Ma Health Aboriginal corporation National Indigenous Australians Agency Regional Development Australia Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly

### 4.2 THERE IS A LACK OF SERVICES TO SUPPORT THE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	Local services are increased to better support and improve the lives of children and young people within the shire  There is a reduction in the involvement of young people in crime and antisocial behavior within the shire  There is a reduction in reported mental health issues in children and young people within the shire	NSW Department of Sport and Recreation NSW Department of Family and Community Services NSW Department of Education and Training NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs National Indigenous Australians Agency NSW Department of Health Royal Flying Doctor Service Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation NSW Police Catholic Care Uniting Care REDI

4.3 THE IS AN INADEQUATE RANGE AND QUALITY OF LOCAL SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	There is a diverse range of high quality, well maintained sporting and recreational facilities and equipment to meet the needs local communities	NSW Department of Sport and Recreation NSW Department of Family and Community Services NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs National Indigenous Australians Agency NSW Department of Health NSW Police

4.4 LOCAL COMMUNITIES HAVE ENCOUNTERED A DECLINE IN ORGANISED AND TEAM SPORTS		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Menindee	There are increased options in the range of organised and team sports available locally  There is increased community participation in local organised and team sports	NSW Department of Sport and Recreation NSW Department of Family and Community Services NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs National Indigenous Australians Agency NSW Department of Health NSW Police

## 5. Services and facilities for older people

5.1 THERE IS A LACK OF LOCAL ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	There are increased local accommodation options and home support services to meet the needs of older people	NSW Department of Family and Community Services NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs National Indigenous Australians Agency NSW Department of Health Royal Flying Doctor Service Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation Catholic Care Uniting Care

## 6. Training and employment opportunities for young people

### 6.1 PROVISION OF LOCAL TRAINING COURSES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO MATCH LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	Interagency collaboration is increased to identify and pursue appropriate local training and employment opportunities for young people  Vocational training courses provided within the shire are aligned with local employment opportunities	NSW Department of Education and Training TAFE NSW National Indigenous Australians Agency Regional Development Australia Local Aboriginal Land Councils – Wilcannia and Menindee Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly REDI Robinson College

### 6.2 THERE ARE VERY LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	There are Increases in the number of local people employed in local agriculture, construction, maintenance and administrative roles	National Indigenous Australians Agency Regional Development Australia Local Aboriginal Land Councils – Wilcannia and Menindee Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly REDI.E

## 7. Access to goods and services

### 7.1 THERE IS LIMITED LOCAL ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD AND OTHER PRODUCE AND GROCERIES INCLUDING ESSENTIAL HOUSEHOLD ITEMS ARE EXPENSIVE THROUGH LOCAL RETAIL OUTLETS

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	There is an increase in the local availability, choice and affordability of fresh produce	Department of Regional NSW National Indigenous Australians Agency Regional Development Australia Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly Resilience NSW Outback Stores

### 7.2 THERE IS LIMITED LOCAL ACCESS TO TRADESPEOPLE – E.G. MOTOR MECHANIC, BUILDER, ELECTRICIAN, ETC.

LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Wilcannia Ivanhoe Menindee	There are local training and employment opportunities and incentives to grow the local availability of trades and services	National Indigenous Australians Agency Regional Development Australia Nsw Department of Education Training Services Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly TAFE NSW REDI.E

## 8. Telecommunications and electricity supply

8.1 INTERNET SERVICE AND RECEPTION ACROSS THE SHIRE ARE POOR QUALITY		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	<p>Telecommunications infrastructure enables adequate internet coverage in all urban and rural locations within the Shire</p> <p>NBN services are provided locally to support internet access for domestic, commercial, community and government activities</p>	<p>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications</p> <p>Resilience NSW</p> <p>Telstra</p>

8.2 MOBILE PHONE RECEPTION IS POOR AND UNRELIABLE AND THERE IS A PREDOMINANCE OF BLACK SPOTS THROUGHOUT THE SHIRE		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	<p>Telecommunications infrastructure enables adequate mobile and coverage in all urban and rural locations within the shire</p>	<p>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications</p> <p>Resilience NSW</p> <p>Telstra</p>

8.3 COSTS OF ACCESS TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY ARE HIGH		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	<p>Pricing of mobile telecommunications addresses the low income levels and high dependency on mobile services throughout most communities in the shire</p> <p>Shire communities have access to choice in local providers of communications services and electricity</p>	<p>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications</p> <p>Resilience NSW</p> <p>Telstra</p>

8.4 MOST TOWNS AND LOCALITIES WITHIN THE SHIRE ARE SUBJECT TO FREQUENT POWER OUTAGES		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	<p>Electricity infrastructure across the shire is improved and well-maintained to minimise power outages and ensure dependable service at all times</p>	<p>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications</p> <p>Essential Energy</p>

## 9. Local and regional roads

9.1 UNSEALED ROADS THROUGHOUT THE SHIRE ARE DANGEROUS AND/OR IMPASSABLE DURING AND AFTER RAINFALL (10MM OR MORE)		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	Unsealed roads are adequately maintained to facilitate dependable, safe transit throughout the shire in all weather conditions	Transport for NSW (Roads and Waterways) Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications Resilience NSW

9.2 CAPACITY FOR GROWTH IN TOURISM AND THE TRANSPORT OF GOODS INTO AND OUT OF THE SHIRE IS RESTRICTED BY POOR ROAD CONDITIONS		
LOCATION(S)	RESOLUTION TARGETS	ACCOUNTABILITIES
Whole of Shire	Road maintenance and upgrade programs for the shire are designed and costed with the intent to seal all roads connecting all significant local and regional population centres	Transport for NSW (Roads and Waterways) Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications Resilience NSW





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