



# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLANNING *Community Consultation* *Q & A*

MARCH 2022



# ROADS

## **Q. Does Council have a rural road grading program?**

**A.** Council has an ongoing road maintenance program across the Shire. Extreme weather conditions in the first half of this financial year have presented a significant challenge. Council is currently reviewing its Road Hierarchy plan and drafting its road maintenance program for 2022/23.

## **Q. Can Council look at the Gundeia road culvert crossing as it needs work?**

**A.** This will be lodged as a customer request and included for consideration in Council's road maintenance program.

## **Q. Were road contractors paid when East Coonamble Road and National Park Road were not finished?**

**A.** Yes, contractors were paid for the works. Council acknowledges the difficulties with delivering these works due to wet weather hampering the process.

## **Q. Is Council seeking a road reclassification for Tooraweenah Mendooran Road (203 south) to a regional road?**

**A.** Yes, Council has made an application, however the NSW Government has given no indication that this will be supported.

## **Q. Who should I talk to about problems with RMS roadworks on the Highway between Gilgandra and Tooraweenah?**

**A.** You should log your concerns direct with Transport for NSW at the following link [www.roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://www.roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au).

## **Q. What has Council done with the Flood damage (NDRRA grant)?**

**A.** This flood and storm disaster recovery funding from the Federal and NSW State Government has allowed Council to do significant work to bring its roads back to pre-disaster condition.



# ROADS

**Q. Has the road maintenance budget increased over the years?**

**A.** The road maintenance budget has increased significantly since the special rate variation was applied in 2013/14. The budget allocation for 2013/14 was \$1.5m with the 2021/22 allocation \$2.52m.

**Q. Can farmers help with works in road reserves for Council?**

**A.** Council, as the local roads authority, does not allow farmers to carry out work on road reserves due to risks and associated liability,

**Q. Can Council speak to people who live on the rural road before they get there to do roadworks?**

**A.** Council uses digital communications to engage with rural ratepayers around proposed roadworks including timing.

**Q. Gular Rail Road held up well during harvest- A Thank you to Council.**

**A.** This thank you will be recorded in Council's customer request system.

**Q. Any chance of more gravel on Mahers Hill road?**

**A.** This will be lodged as a customer request. You can also discuss your concerns by contacting Council on 6817 8800.

**Q. The flora reserve waterway and restoration is not satisfactory- it needs fixing.**

**A.** This will be lodged as a customer request. You can also discuss your concerns by contacting Council on 6817 8800.

**Q. Flora reserve road is not suitable for road trains and needs bitumen.**

**A.** This will be lodged as a customer request. You can also discuss your concerns by contacting Council on 6817 8800.

**Q. Can maintenance be carried out on Tooraweenah Mendooran Road?**

**A.** This will be lodged as a customer request. You can also discuss your concerns by contacting Council on 6817 8800.

# ROADS



**Q. Has Council considered buying a gravel crusher?**

**A.** Yes, Council's Director of Infrastructure has considered and determined it would not be viable.

**Q. How are timber bridge renewals funded?**

**A.** Partly by Council and partly by external government funding.



# INLAND RAIL



**Q. Is the Inland Rail Worker Accommodation Facility proposed for the Aero Park Residential Subdivision permanent or temporary?**

**A.** It is planned as a temporary arrangement for the period of construction, estimated at five years. When the facility is decommissioned, the service infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer infrastructure would remain to service future residential housing requirements.

**Q. How long until the Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility is established?**

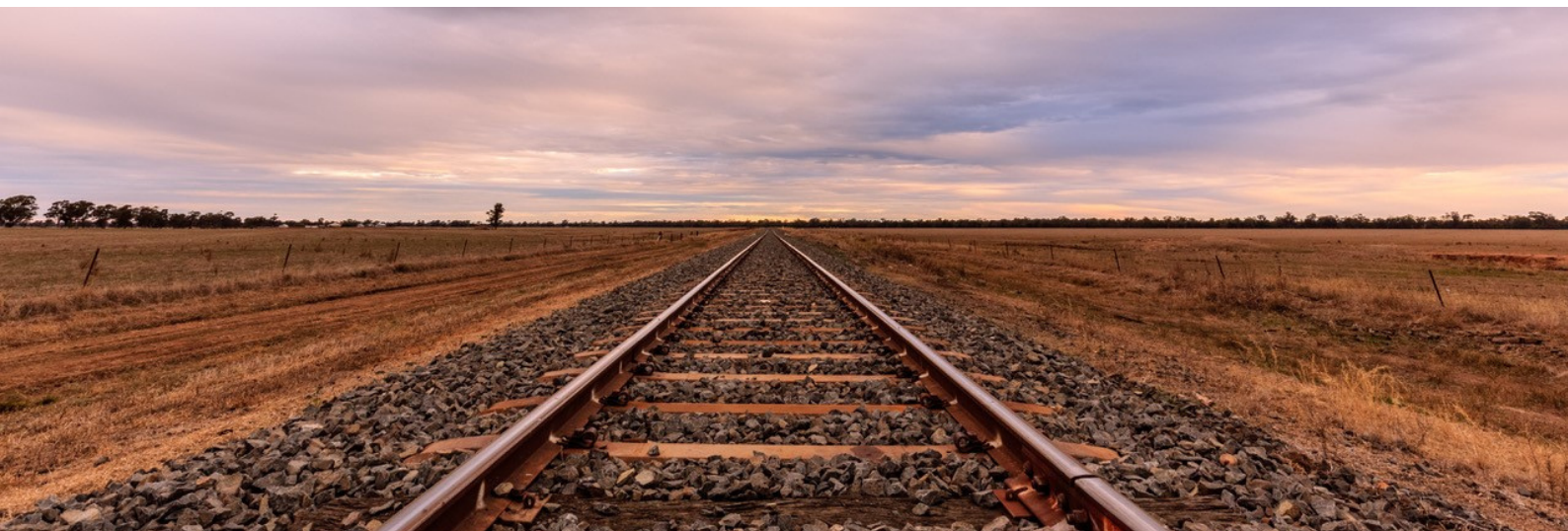
**A.** The Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility is likely to be required by the contractor within the next twelve months to two years.

**Q. Are there any more additional bores to be installed other than the ones for Inland Rail as water for road works is an issue?**

**A.** The current project is funded to explore and hopefully commission four deep aquifer high production bores. These bores are spread across the length of the Shire meaning that post Inland Rail construction they are positioned well to meet future needs such as road works or fire fighting. Additional bores may be developed by Inland Rail and their contractors but these have not been discussed with Council and are not part of the current project.

**Q. Where is the money for the Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility coming from?**

**A.** Costs associated with the work camp construction will be met by the contractor. Council is meeting the cost of the Development Application and infrastructure design. There will be a commercial lease in place for the site location of the Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility. This lease will ensure the development costs are recovered in addition to a commercial return.



# INLAND RAIL



**Q. Is Council going to build the Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility for the Inland rail?**

**A.** Council will seek Development Approval for the Aero Park subdivision and make the land available for the Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility. The costs associated with constructing the camp will not be met by Council.

**Q. Who is paying for the Inland Rail water bores?**

**A.** Council has a funding agreement in place with ARTC Inland Rail and they will meet the cost of the drilling and infrastructure for the bores.

**Q. What is the timeframe around the rail interface at Curban?**

**A.** The timing of construction of the connection between Inland Rail and the NSW State Government Line, Country Regional Network, is yet to be announced. It is a priority of both State and Federal Governments to commission parts of the rail network as soon as possible.

Council is the proponent of a Federal Government Interface Improvement Program that undertakes a business case for the development of rail access facilities at the Curban location. It is anticipated this work will be completed this year.

**Q. Do we need to upgrade the water system to help with pressure/flow?**

**A.** Council is currently planning for the staged renewal of its ageing water infrastructure.

**Q. Are you permitted to start drilling bores before Inland Rail commences construction?**

**A.** Yes, drilling has commenced in Curban. Council applied for and was granted approval for test drilling by the Natural Resource Access Regulator. The approval of the bores is not related to the Inland Rail State Significant Infrastructure approval process and timings.

**Q. What is going to happen with rates if Inland Rail splits up rural land?**

**A.** Rates are based on land values provided by the Valuer General. If the splitting of lands results in a revalue by the Valuer General this may affect individual landowners' rate levies. Council raised this issue in its submission to the Inland Rail Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

# INLAND RAIL



## **Q. Can the Curban to Gilgandra Rail Line be upgraded?**

**A.** Gilgandra and Coonamble Councils are joint proponents of a project under Round One of the Federal Government's Interface Improvement Program which is focused on the existing line between Gilgandra and Coonamble. This project is well advanced and likely to be completed in the next three to six months.

The project examines the upgrade of the Country Regional Network track to a twenty-five Tonne Axle Load (same operating weight as Inland Rail facilitating interoperability between the two networks) and four-way connectivity at Curban.

## **Q. How long will construction of Inland Rail in Gilgandra Shire take?**

**A.** Inland Rail estimates a construction period of approximately five years, to commence in late 2022 to mid-2023.

## **Q. How many units are in the workers' camp?**

**A.** The Temporary Worker Accommodation Facility has been designed to house up to 500 workers.

## **Q. Increase in general traffic due to Inland Rail- can signage be looked at to warn about this on the road to the waste facility?**

**A.** Council will monitor any impacts that any increased traffic will have and take appropriate actions.

## **Q. Will there be restaurants and other facilities in the work camp at Curban?**

**A.** Council is not aware of any proposal to have a work camp or any associated facilities at Curban.

## **Q. What impacts will the rail facility have at Curban on Council's infrastructure?**

**A.** Council has a focus on ensuring that it maximises the benefits of Inland Rail construction while ensuring that its transport infrastructure assets are not negatively impacted.

## **Q. Why didn't Council buy Berakee quarry?**

**A.** Council considers quarry operation is a business best operated by the private sector.

## **Q. Is Berakee quarry going to be used for inland rail?**

**A.** The use of Berakee quarry is a decision of its owners.

# ACTIVATION



**Q. There is a massive tourism opportunity to recognise the Arthur Butler history at the Tooraweenah Aerodrome - can Council support the current proposal?**

**A.** Council has had discussions with the proponents and asked for a detailed business case to be prepared.

**Q. Is Council doing anything to promote the Warrumbungles as a tourist destination?**

**A.** Gilgandra, Coonamble and Warrumbungle Shire Councils are working together on a regional tourism campaign which features the Warrumbungles. Watch this space!

**Q. Is Council taking account of activation opportunities in the village of Tooraweenah?**

**A.** The second version of the Activation Blueprint is being drafted and will include opportunities across the Gilgandra region.

**Q. Council only seems to support physical businesses but they can miss the online ones?**

**A.** Council is committed to supporting and encouraging the growth of all businesses including online businesses in our region. For example, the Christmas Shop Local promotion includes all businesses in the shire automatically regardless of physical or digital location. If we have missed making contact with any online businesses we encourage you to make contact with Council to discuss how we can assist.





# ACTIVATION



**Q. Is Grain Corp South Industrial Subdivision on Council's website?**

A. Not at this stage, but as the concept is developed it will be made available on Council's website.

**Q. How difficult is it to get approval for the Castlereagh River Restoration project?**

A. Council has undertaken a Pre-Feasibility Study for the project which provided an indication of the approval pathways. The Castlereagh River Restoration project has a number of elements and will require close consultation with Crown Lands and a range of government agencies to secure approval and the necessary licenses. Council is in the early stages of this process.

**Q. Is the Castlereagh River Restoration project on Council's website?**

A. Not as of Friday, 6 May 2022, but as the concept is developed it will be made available on Council's website.

**Q. How much did the Armatree Tree project cost?**

A. The Armatree project including the tree, history boards and landscaping cost \$139,377 and was fully funded by way of State and Federal Government grants.

**Q. Do you think you are spending too much at Armatree and Tooraweenah?**

A. Council is committed to providing services and assets across the region including Tooraweenah and Armatree. Expenditure in both villages is considered by Council as part of the annual budgeting process.

**Q. Is the entrance for Grain Corp South the same as the highway entrance?**

A. Yes.

**Q. Where is the proposed smart weir with the Castlereagh River Restoration project located?**

A. The concept plan shows it at the eastern end of Bridge Street where the initial bridge across the river was located.

**Q. Will Gil get a clothing store in town again?**

A. Gilgandra currently has a number of businesses that offer a range of clothing and this has grown since the Target closure. Council will continue to encourage existing and new businesses.

# ACTIVATION

**Q. How did you go with the government regarding environmental issues and river works?**

**A.** Council has undertaken a Pre-Feasibility Study for the project which provided an indication of the approval pathways. The Castlereagh River Beautification project has a number of elements and will require close consultation with Crown Lands and a range of government agencies to secure approval and the necessary licenses. Council is in the early stages of this process.

**Q. Why is it taking so long to get the Cooee Heritage Centre open again?**

**A.** There have been a number of factors including Covid, supply issues, and subcontractors' availability that have delayed the construction element of the project. We are now aiming for a mid-year 2022 opening.

**Q. We need more jobs for youth in Gilgandra. Could we run a mentoring program at the youth centre?**

**A.** Council will be considering developing a youth strategy as part of its current planning review and will take into account your suggestion.

**Q. Gilgandra Council is punching above their weight and Gilgandra is a great place to live!**

**A.** Thank you, your compliment will be recorded in Council's customer request system.



# ACTIVATION



**Q. Will hot desks be available in the GIL Library Hub?**

A. Yes, the Library Hub will provide activation spaces including hot desks and a business incubator.

**Q. Why start the GIL Library Hub before re-opening the Cooe Heritage Centre?**

A. It is important to keep both projects progressing to meet community expectations and grant funding timeframes. While the overlap is not ideal it was not able to be avoided.

**Q. What is happening with the street stall?**

A. The street stall building is to be demolished as part of the plaza upgrade works. A space for street stall users with services will be made available adjacent to the new Library Hub entrance off Miller Street.

**Q. Have you spoken to the caravan park owners about the Overnight Parking Trial?**

A. Caravan Park owners were consulted when the overnight parking area was proposed. Further consultation will take place prior to implementing the trial.

**Q. Are the number of sites in the Overnight Parking Trial limited?**

A. Yes, limited to an initial ten sites, which would only vary following stakeholder consultation.

**Q. Is there an opportunity to review the Overnight Parking Trial earlier than the two year period?**

A. Council has resolved to have a two year trial period and will monitor and review the trial throughout this period

**Q. How will you deal with late-night travellers in the Overnight Parking Trial?**

A. Council is currently working through the details of how the overnight parking area will operate including a permit system, length of stay policing of guidelines etc, and this issue will be taken into account.

# ACTIVATION



**Q. Is a 50-metre pool included in the proposed Hunter Park Sports Centre?**

**A.** Yes.

**Q. Do we need two basketball courts in the proposed Hunter Park Sports Centre?**

**A.** The concept includes two basketball courts to replace the undersized indoor court and the outdoor court at the existing Youth Club. During the consultation, the local Basketball Association's input was that this is a minimum requirement.

**Q. How are mothers and kids catered for at the pool?**

**A.** A Learn-to-Swim and toddlers' wading pool is incorporated into the design of the Hunter Park Sports Centre.

**Q. Is the homelessness service to be included in the new Sports Centre?**

**A.** No, it was considered that this service is better serviced from another location.

**Q. Was an indoor or heated pool considered?**

**A.** Yes, both options were considered but ruled out on a cost vs benefit basis. A solar boosted pump system is included as part of the design with the intention to extend the shoulder seasons but not make the pool an all-year-round facility.



# HOUSING

**Q. Can a portion of the housing in the residential subdivision be for low-income earners?**

**A.** The subdivision will make available serviced land at market price for those looking to build a new home. The blocks will be of different sizes to meet different demands and budget.

**Q. Can community housing availability be addressed in Council's Housing Strategy?**

**A.** Council owns and manages four community housing properties. A recommendation from the Gilgandra Housing Strategy is to investigate developing a Residential Property Strategy and Management Plan for Council owned residential properties.

# MEDICAL

**Q. How will the medical facilities cope as we are already down Doctors in town?**

**A.** Services in all areas will be a challenge given the increase in workers in Gilgandra during Inland Rail construction. Council will continue to work with providers to ensure that health and medical services are available locally to meet this challenge. In addition, the issue of a range of services will be discussed with Inland Rail as part of their social performance in delivering the project.

**Q. Does Council play a role in keeping medical centres/GP's in Town?**

**A.** Council operates three medical centres and is in regular contact with the operators with a view to retaining these services and associated GP's.



# GENERAL



**Q. Tooraweenah CWA is going to apply for funding under the Queen's Jubilee Funding Program for an avenue of trees between the viewing platform and the village. Can Council assist with the application?**

**A.** Yes, Council's Marketing and Communications team assist community groups with the preparation of grant applications.

**Q. There are horses getting into the Tooraweenah Cemetery. Can Council stop this from happening?**

**A.** This will be lodged as a customer request. You can also discuss by contacting Council on 6817 8800.

**Q. Can a big thank you be passed on to Brendon Schembri he is doing a wonderful job maintaining the Tooraweenah village?**

**A.** This thank you has been passed on to Brendon.

**Q. There have been some issues with Council communications getting to landholders in the Tooraweenah area. Can Council look at this?**

**A.** Council acknowledges this difficulty for a couple of areas in the Shire and is constantly reviewing the best way to ensure communications reach these areas.

**Q. Can Council consider a sign at the Highway intersection to direct visitors to Tooraweenah?**

**A.** Council's Marketing and Communications team will investigate possible options.

**Q. There are some concerns around clashes with community events for example: Under the Gums/ Endurance ride. Can this be avoided?**

**A.** Council does consider local event clash of dates when planning its events. Whilst this clash was unfortunate, we hope A Night Under The Gums did not have a major impact on any other event held at the same time. A Night Under The Gums had a very limited window of available dates due to grant funding guidelines.

# GENERAL



**Q. The earthworks have sunk along the water pipe at Tooraweenah. Can this be looked at?**

A. A customer request will be lodged and Council's Infrastructure Department will investigate.

**Q. Can bins be placed on the highway at the Tooraweenah crossroads?**

A. The Transport for NSW make the decisions for the highway. You can log your concerns directly with them by visiting the following link [www.roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://www.roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au).

**Q. Can Council consider a footpath to the toilets in the park in Tooraweenah?**

A. A customer request will be lodged and Council will investigate this possibility.

**Q. What is the future of the Tooraweenah management committee?**

A. Council is reviewing its committee structure and the best way to get community input into future plans. A management plan for the Tooraweenah village will form part of this consideration.

**Q. Is the Trainee Concreter position advertised by Council competing with local contractors?**

A. Council and the community struggle to get tradespeople in a number of areas. Our traineeships are designed to address Council's needs and provide an opportunity for additional jobs and tradespeople to be fostered locally.

**Q. The Council projects and plans appear Gilgandra centred while rural ratepayers pay over 70% of rates?**

A. Council's plans consider services, assets and activation across the entire community. Gilgandra needs to be a vibrant, active service centre to support the needs of agribusiness.

**Q. Why did you move the Visitor Information Centre to Community Care?**

A. This was a decision made after exhausting other options. It is a short term arrangement with the Visitor Information service to move back into the Cooe Heritage Centre as soon as it re-opens.

# GENERAL



**Q. In the Community Survey, why did people think Development Approvals were poorly handled?**

**A.** The Development Application process can be very challenging for applicants who have no previous experience in the area. The requirements and associated costs for commercial developments can be significant, particularly around such things as fire safety requirements, associated with water pressures and flows not meeting minimum standards in Gilgandra

**Q. The coffee shops/cafes in the main street are not open on weekends.**

**A.** The opening hours of coffee shops/cafes in Gilgandra has been highlighted to Council by many visitors and locals. While Council can flag these concerns it is ultimately a decision of the business owners around opening hours. We will continue to support and promote the local businesses.

**Q. We haven't heard about these meetings. How are you advertising them?**

**A.** To promote these meetings we have used flyers to households, social media, WarFM, the Gilgandra Weekly newspaper and Council's website.

**Q. Can the Shire Hall be upgraded?**

**A.** The Shire Hall has had significant renewal works carried out over the last 12 months including an upgrade of toilet amenities and new heating and cooling. It is difficult to justify major additional upgrades based on a low level of demand.

**Q. How much impact will large projects have on rates?**

**A.** There is no plan to apply for an increase in rates above annual State Government rate pegging limits.

**Q. Can the Council meetings be streamed live?**

**A.** Council currently makes available an audio recording of its Council meetings, and there is no plan to change this practice.

**Q. Are the Council Nursing scholarships available for any age?**

**A.** Yes