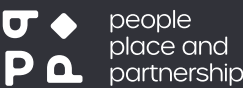


REAL COUNTRY DESTINATION STRATEGIC PLAN



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JASMAX

Real Country.
COONAMBLE / GILGANDRA / WARRUMBUNGLE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the authors and contributors to the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, extend our deepest respects to the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands encompassing Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle Councils. We honour the wisdom and enduring stewardship of the Gamilaraay, Weilwan, and Wiradjuri peoples, whose profound ties to these territories resonate through time.

Their cultural and spiritual relationship with this Country forms the bedrock of our strategy. We acknowledge the Elders who have walked these lands before us, those who tread upon them now, and the emerging leaders who will guide future generations. In the spirit of reconciliation, we recognise their contributions to our shared history and the enduring impact of their cultures on our society.

The Gamilaraay, Weilwan, and Wiradjuri peoples view the land, sky, water, and all living things as inseparable elements of a singular, vibrant ecosystem. It is through their eyes we seek to understand that when we nurture the land, the land nurtures us in return.

From the flowing waters of the Castlereagh River to the ancient formations of the Warrumbungles, each

site is steeped in millennia of Aboriginal lore, culture, and knowledge. These places are living classrooms from which we all can learn the virtues of guardianship, respect, and sustainable living.

It is here, within the heart of the Gamilaraay, Weilwan, and Wiradjuri nations, that our Place Strategy takes root. Inspired by the principle that the land is our most faithful ally, we commit to uphold the values of conservation and community intrinsic to Aboriginal teachings.

We embrace the lore of the local Aboriginal groups, which tells us of creation, of harmony, and of living in accordance with the laws of the natural world. Through song, dance, and ceremony, they have expressed their connection to Country, and it is in this tradition that we move forward, guided by a vision that honours the past, enlivens the present, and safeguards the future.

As we prepare to implement this strategy, let it be known that our work is a testament to the Aboriginal heritage that has shaped, and will continue to shape, the identity of Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle. We stand together on this Country, committed to a legacy that fosters unity, celebrates diversity, and champions the spirit of place that is uniquely Australian.



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYORS

As Mayor of Coonamble Shire, I am excited to collaborate with our sister communities in Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shires to build and promote our region as a single, regional tourism destination.

Currently, our local economies are solely reliant on the agricultural industry. These agricultural pursuits are prone to more extreme weather events on what seems to be a more frequent cycle. With local economic reliance being placed solely on an industry whose prosperity fluctuates seasonally, it is imperative that we build a tourism industry that attracts visitors to our region to spend on 'real country' experiences, of which we have plentiful potential and which is not dependent on a 'good' season and subject to the vagaries of the weather.

Our Shires are literally connected by the course of the Castlereagh River, and it is this sinew that binds our 'Real Country' collaboration. We have consulted our communities and custodians of Weilwan, Gamilaraay and Wiradjuri Country to develop a strategy that capitalises on current opportunities and which proposes infrastructure to draw visitors to our region to stay here longer. We have also engaged with the community to identify catalyst infrastructure projects that provide regional complementarity and that stimulates private sector entrepreneurship. We are 'Real Country' people working together to solve our common challenge, and

like 'Real Country' people, we plan on offering genuine hospitality to our guests.

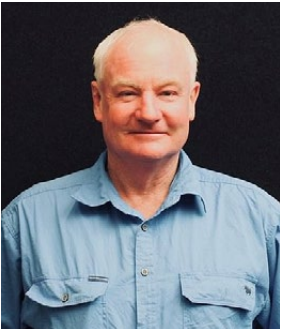
The 'Real Country' strategy and the business cases developed for our priority infrastructure projects underpin a growing tourism industry that will further support our local economies and help develop our resilience.



Tim Horan
Mayor of Coonamble
Shire Council



Doug Batten
Mayor of Gilgandra
Shire Council



Ambrose Doolan
Mayor of Warrumbungle
Shire Council



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan is a visionary blueprint designed to transform the Gilgandra, Coonamble, and Warrumbungle local government areas into a leading destination for travellers seeking authentic Australian Real Country experiences. At the heart of this strategy is a commitment to sustainable tourism that celebrates the region’s natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and the enduring spirit of its communities.

Nature, River's Pulse, And Regional Tapestry

A crucial element of the strategy is to capture the vibrancy of the river network and foster stronger local and regional ties to elevate experiences and attractions. This strategy carefully integrates the Real Country brand into the collective efforts of Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle, merging natural landscapes, culture, and economic aspirations into a unified visual tapestry. This approach is designed to captivate and delight visitors, painting a collective portrait of regional prosperity and appeal.



Cultivating Core Character

The strategy positions the Castlereagh River as a key component of the tourism experience, transforming it into a pathway of discovery with bespoke experiences that narrate the land's story. This vision encompasses the town centres and villages, seen as dynamic centres for cultural exchange and economic collaboration. The aim is to weave local tradition with innovative tourism offerings, generating an impact that extends beyond local confines and establishes Real Country as a prime destination for investment and rural rejuvenation.

Strategic Direction and Pillars

The strategic approach is founded on key pillars, including the nurturing of river health, honoring First Nations' legacy, promoting environmental and cultural stewardship, and fostering the agricultural heritage. Additionally, it emphasises enriching community spaces with local narratives and improving spaces with targeted infrastructure and connectivity. A strong focus is on elevating the authentic visitor experience through targeted marketing and the development of signature events and activations calendar. The aim is to bolster and sustain regional synergy and interweave the regional tapestry through effective governance.

Catalyst Infrastructure Projects

The strategy identifies several catalyst infrastructure projects, each designed to enhance the physical experiences along the Castlereagh River. These projects are not merely about improving the aesthetics or functionality of the riverbanks; they are about creating a more intimate connection between the river and the town centres and villages it traverses. By upgrading leisure, activation, and recreation spaces, each council—Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle—aims to weave the river into the fabric of community life. This interconnected approach is expected to yield significant benefits, from increased visitor engagement to economic uplift for local businesses, attractions, and accommodations. The strategy envisions a seamless blend of natural beauty with urban convenience, ensuring that the riverfront becomes a hub of vibrant activity and a cornerstone of the visitor experience in Real Country.

Catalyst Marketing Projects

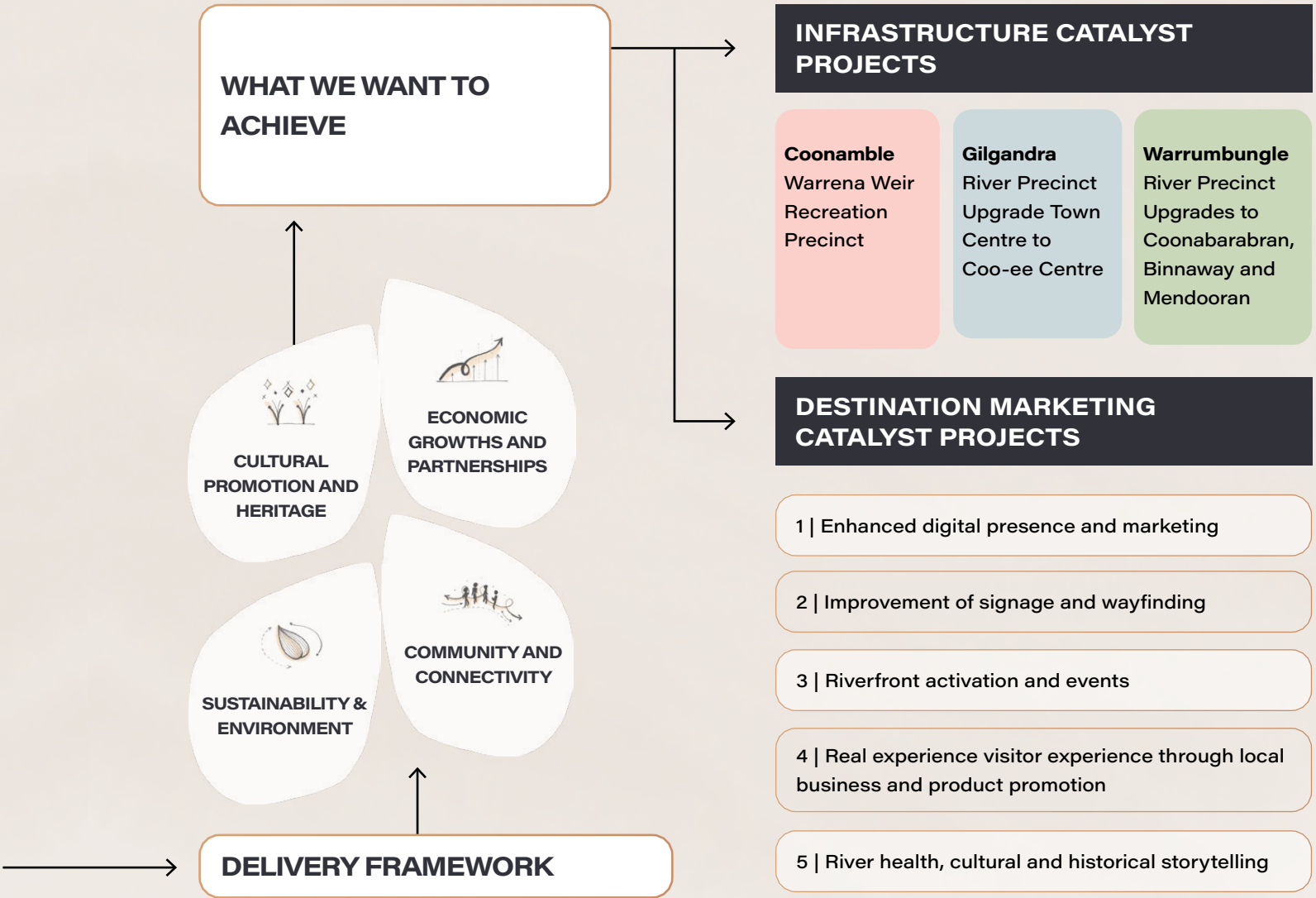
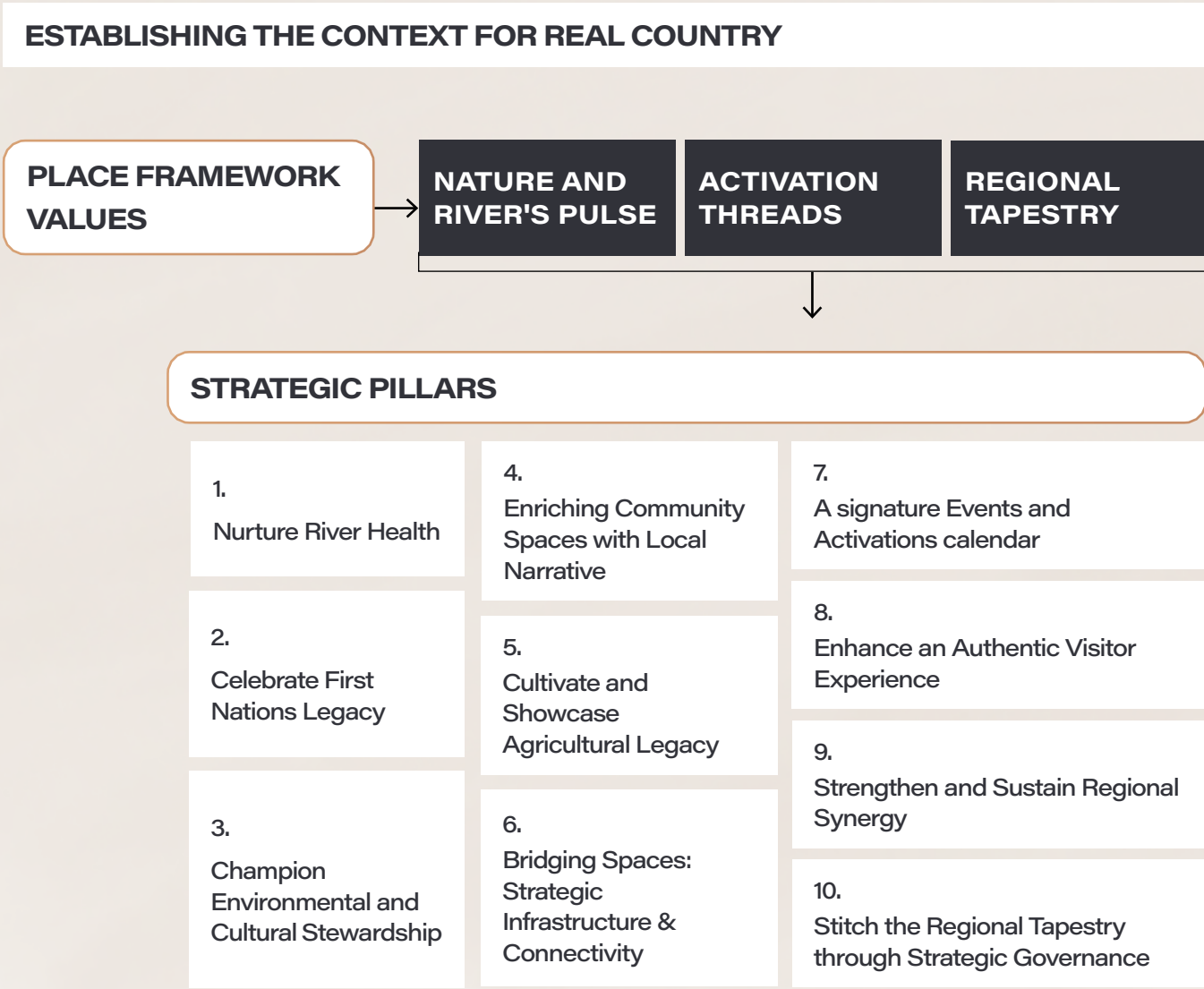
In conjunction with these infrastructure enhancements, the strategy emphasises destination marketing initiatives focused on bolstering the digital presence. Real Country is set to rejuvenate its online profile, ensuring its digital representation is as captivating as the in-person experience. Enhancements in signage and wayfinding will intuitively guide visitors, making their exploration both straightforward and enriching. Events and activations along the riverfront will act as lively platforms to highlight the region's distinct offerings. Central to this marketing drive is promoting an authentic visitor experience – showcasing local businesses and products, celebrating the river's health, and conveying the rich cultural and historical tales that define Real Country. These marketing efforts are meticulously planned to not only draw visitors but to deeply engage them with the region's true essence.

Together, these infrastructure and marketing initiatives are crucial to the strategy's success, enhancing both the tangibility of the region's offerings and the stories they tell. The ultimate goal is to create a holistic and immersive Real Country experience, where every element, from the physical to the digital, resonates with the heart and soul of this remarkable part of NSW.

This strategy encapsulates the Real Country ambition to revitalise the region, focusing on sustainable development, cultural respect, and community engagement to establish Real Country as a distinctive, regionally recognised destination. The strategy combines a deep respect for the region's natural and cultural assets with a forward-looking approach to tourism and economic development, aiming to create a sustainable, vibrant, and prosperous future for Central West NSW.



Destination Strategic Plan Delivery Framework



SECTION A

CREATING A COORDINATED VISION FOR REAL COUNTRY

1.0 / VISION FOR REAL COUNTRY

1.1 / Overview of the Shared Vision

The vision of the project seeks to grow Real Country region into a regional experience destination, provide economic support outside of the agricultural industry, engage with communities, enhance natural assets, drive community and visitor access, increase visitation and overnight stays, increase education, provide cultural experience and wellbeing opportunities, improve space for events, and leverage natural assets with initiatives of activities, art and scapes.

Cultivating Core Character with the Castlereagh River as a Tourism Beacon

The Castlereagh River is envisaged as the centrepiece of an authentic tourism experience, attracting visitors to the heart of Real Country. The strategy envisions transforming the river into a journey of discovery, featuring curated experiences that narrate the story of the land. This approach invites travellers to immerse in the region's living heritage and natural beauty, simultaneously boosting local economies and celebrating environmental treasures.

Forging Future Pathways with Town Centres and Villages as Economic Hubs

Town centres and villages in the area are envisioned as vibrant hubs for cultural exchange and economic synergy. They represent a fusion of local charm with broader appeal, where the allure of country life sets the stage for regionally significant festivals, events, and gatherings. By weaving local traditions with innovative tourism offerings, there's an aspiration to create a buzz that resonates beyond the immediate region, positioning Real Country as a focal point for investment and a centre for rural rejuvenation.

Seeding Tomorrow's Legacy with Destination Marketing and Catalyst Projects

This strategy positions each town centre, village, and the Castlereagh River as chapters in a broader narrative shared beyond local boundaries. Strategic destination marketing highlights Real Country's unique attractions, from eco-tourism adventures along the river to the distinctive charm of its villages. The physical tourism catalyst projects are more than just developments; they're experiences that leave lasting impressions, fostering sustainable growth and elevating Real Country's profile regionally.

2.0 / PLACE FRAMEWORK

2.1 / Definition of the Place Framework the 3 clear goals of the Place Strategy

NATURES AND RIVER'S PULSE

Capturing the local river's vitality and prospects for public space vitality.

ACTIVATION THREADS

Weaving stronger local connections to enhance experiences, local attractions, town and village centres.

REGIONAL TAPESTRY

Crafting the Real Country Experience

Carefully integrate the Real Country brand into the local government areas of the three councils, merging natural landscapes, culture, heritage, and economic ambition into a unified visual that captivates and delights visitors. This strategy forges a collective representation showcasing the region's prosperity and appeal.

3.0 / STRATEGIC DIRECTION

3.1 / Strategic Pillars

1 / Nurture River Health

Prioritise river rehabilitation and conservation projects to improve water quality, biodiversity, and ecological resilience, ensuring the river remains the vibrant lifeblood of the region. Acknowledge, celebrate and prioritise the role of First Nations in ensuring a healthy river in alignment with their connection to Country.

2 / Celebrate First Nations Legacy

Commit to a deep and respectful integration of First Nations wisdom, ensuring that the stewardship of land and cultural practices is not only recognised but also cherished within the Real Country narrative, allowing their stories and perspectives to enrich and guide the region's identity and development. This celebration of heritage will intertwined from educational programs to tourism experiences, fostering a sense of place and history.

3 / Champion Environmental and Cultural Stewardship

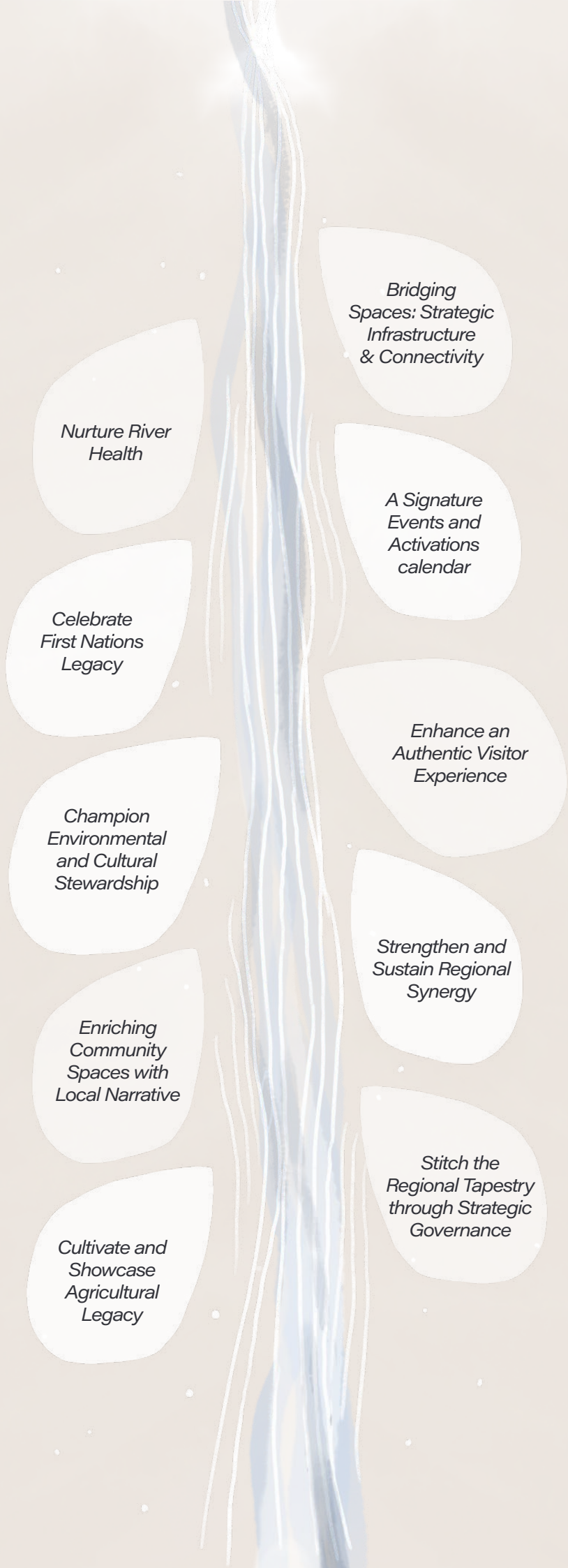
Implement sustainable practices that protect and showcase the region's natural landscapes and cultural heritage, with a focus on environmental education and ethical tourism and a balance between ecological integrity, community needs and visitor enjoyment.

4 / Enriching Community Spaces with Local Narrative

Transform the town centre and river areas into vibrant hubs of public life that foster community gatherings, cultural showcases, and seasonal festivities. By enhancing these spaces with thoughtful amenities and clear signage, we create welcoming environments for shared learning and connection. Simultaneously, by weaving in the Real Country's unique cultural, historical, and ecological stories, public spaces will contribute to the visitor experience, spark community pride and ensure that each space not only serves a functional purpose but also becomes a living celebration of the Real Country's story.

5 / Cultivate and Showcase Agricultural Legacy

Develop and promote attractions and experiences that bring to life the narrative of the land. Create educational pathways that allow visitors and locals alike to engage with the agricultural journey, from seed to table, reinforcing the connection between the community, the environment, and the food we consume. By integrating agritourism with cultural storytelling, the Real Country will offer a holistic view of the region's agricultural evolution, celebrating the past, present, and future of farming as a cornerstone of the Real Country's identity and economy.



6 / Bridging Spaces: Strategic Infrastructure and Connectivity

Deliver infrastructure and connectivity projects through a holistic strategy that intertwines the various threads of physical, technological, and community infrastructure, maximising connectivity across the Real Country by facilitating access, stimulating economic vitality, and improving living standards. Accommodate for growth regarding infrastructure and accessibility provision will not only create a cohesive and accessible network but also support the provision of essential services and facilities, ensuring that every aspect of the region's infrastructure contributes to a seamless, connected, and robust fabric.

7 / A Signature Events and Activations calendar

Shape, curate and implement a strategic events and activation calendar that elevates the Real Country's profile, weaving the rich cultural fabric and natural landscape into each event and activation. This approach aims to attract visitors, serve the local community, and promote local businesses, with the riverfront serving as the dynamic stage for a series of engaging, culturally inclusive, and memorable experiences that bolster community spirit and drive tourism.

8 / Enhance an Authentic Visitor Experience

Elevate the Real Country's identity through strategic marketing that showcases the region's unique offerings and authentic character. Capitalise on the Warrumbungle National Park's Dark Sky status to anchor astro-tourism and nocturnal adventures, while weaving the rich cultural narratives of First Nations heritage throughout the visitor experience, ensuring that every visit is an encounter with the genuine heart and soul of Real Country.

9 / Strengthen and Sustain Regional Synergy

Fortify the social and economic fabric of the Real Country by nurturing local partnerships and regional networks that enhance locally-led experiences and attractions while supporting and promoting local businesses. Support the heart of town centres and village precincts, encouraging initiatives that catalyse economic growth and community wellbeing. Drive investment into business ventures that align with the region's tourism and ecological ethos, bolstering employment opportunities and ensuring economic resilience.

10 / Stitch the Regional Tapestry through Strategic Governance

Cultivate a governance dynamic that reinforces the partnership among the three Councils, engaging frequently with state and federal government bodies and key stakeholders to co-create a cohesive regional identity and direction. This strategic partnership will be guided by integrated planning. Together, this will craft a unified regional alignment that highlights the unique and genuine character of the Real Country, ensuring its sustainable and long term prosperity.

SECTION B

IMPLEMENTING THE FRAMEWORK TO DELIVER REAL COUNTRY

4.0 / STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

As we embark on the journey to realise the vision of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, it is imperative to have a clear and actionable framework. This section of our strategy, "Implementing the Framework to Deliver Real Country", is dedicated to translating our ambitious goals into tangible actions. It outlines the crucial initiatives, delineates the timeframes for execution, identifies the responsibilities, and allocates the necessary budget for each action. This structured approach ensures that our vision for Real Country is not just aspirational but achievable, with clear accountability and resource allocation.

Initiatives: A Roadmap of Strategic Actions

Each initiative under this framework has been carefully curated to align with the overarching goals of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan. These initiatives range from enhancing local tourism and cultural experiences to improving infrastructure and community engagement. They represent the building blocks of our strategy, each contributing uniquely to Real Country's future.

Timeframe: Setting Milestones for Success

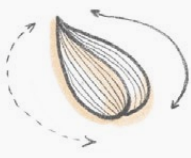
For each initiative, we have defined a realistic yet ambitious timeframe. This timeline provides a roadmap for implementation, ensuring that progress is both steady and measurable. Short-term, medium-term, and long-term milestones are identified to maintain momentum and allow for adjustments as needed, ensuring adaptability in our approach.

Responsibility: Defining Roles and Ownership

Clear assignment of responsibilities is key to the success of our strategy. For each initiative, specific councils or teams are designated as responsible. This clarity in ownership ensures that each part of the strategy is driven forward with focus and expertise, fostering a culture of accountability and collaboration.

Budget: Financial Planning and Allocation

A crucial aspect of our action plan is the budget allocation. For each initiative, a detailed budget has been earmarked, reflecting a thoughtful allocation of resources. This financial planning is grounded in feasibility and aimed at maximising the impact of every dollar spent. It balances ambition with practicality, ensuring the financial sustainability of the strategy.



SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

- Nurture Nature & Regenerate the River
- First Nations Collaborations



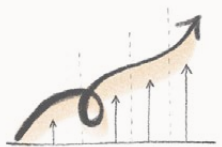
COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIVITY

- Engage the Local Community
- Improve Infrastructure & Accessibility Provision



CULTURAL PROMOTION AND HERITAGE

- Amplify Marketing Initiatives
- Enhance the cultural offering focused on the First Nations, Agriculture, Army Heritage and Dark Sky core attractors



ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Advocate for the Region & Establish Productive Partnerships
- Celebrate Events, Attractions & Experiences

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Real Country's enduring beauty and rich ecological tapestry are the cornerstones of its identity and tourism appeal. The Sustainability and Environment theme underscores the commitment to preserving these natural assets for future generations. This theme encapsulates a dual focus on nurturing the intrinsic value of the region's landscapes and waterways, ensuring they remain pristine, and embedding First Nations' perspectives and practices in environmental stewardship, thereby fostering a sustainable relationship with the land.



Nurture Nature & Regenerate the River

Real Country is committed to safeguarding its environmental heritage, a key asset for both tourism and the community. Initiatives to protect and promote this heritage will include projects aimed at regenerating the river systems, enhancing biodiversity, and ensuring ecological resilience. These efforts are vital as they not only preserve the natural beauty of Real Country but also enhance the quality of experiences for visitors and locals alike.

Nurture Nature & Regenerate the River Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in River Regeneration Projects			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prioritise First Nations expertise and River connection in planning for regeneration projectsConduct workshops and meetings to gather traditional knowledgeImplement joint projects, such as planting native vegetation and restoring natural river flows	● ● ●	Facilitate with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Environmental Groups	\$\$\$
Enhance and Promote Natural Trails and Recreation Areas			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Survey and select areasDevelop signage and wayfinding facilitiesIntegrate local storytelling	● ● ●	Leader Partner with Tourism sector	\$\$\$
Activate river foreshore year-round			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Audit existing events, activities and practices.Provide training on environmental impacts at a local levelExplore the creation of River Activation Guidelines to assist manage events and activities	● ● ●	Facilitate with local businesses, community groups and volunteers	\$\$\$
Implement Sustainable Tourism Practices			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Audit existing practicesProvide training on environmental impacts at a local levelWork with any local businesses or suppliers to educate and advocate for sustainable practices	● ● ●	Partnering with Tourism Operators and Environmental Consultants	\$\$\$
Promote and enhance birdwatching experiences			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Birdwatching trails and viewing platformsOrganise guided tours and educational programs, self guided walksCollaborate with local birdwatching groups for know how and experience	● ● ●	Partner with Tourism sector and community groups	\$\$\$

First Nations Collaboration

First Nations best practice is integral to Real Country's vision, ensuring that the stewardship of the land and cultural practices is deeply respected and interwoven into the fabric of the region's narrative. Actions will be taken to develop cultural experiences that honour First Nations' legacy, enriching the region's identity and contributing to a sustainable and culturally informed future.

First Nations Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Promote Aboriginal Leadership in Regional Development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage First Nations leaders for key roles in regional planning and decision-makingFacilitate leadership training and capacity-building workshops for First Nations membersEnsure First Nations perspectives are central in regional development projects and policiesCreate communication channels for regular dialogue	● ● ●	Leader Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils	\$\$\$
Support and Promote Aboriginal Art Galleries and Exhibition			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide funding and support for local Aboriginal artists exhibitionsFacilitate events and openings that celebrate Aboriginal art and culture.	● ● ●	Leader Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils	\$\$\$
Develop Educational Programs on Aboriginal Connections to the Native Flora and Fauna			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support First Nations groups in the development of educational content, namely for schools and visitorsDevelop interactive and engaging materials, such as guided walks, talks, and online resources.	● ● ●	Facilitate with Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups	\$\$\$
Involve Aboriginal Communities in Intergenerational Initiatives			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Design and implement projects that bring together elders and youth from Aboriginal communities.Focus on initiatives that allow for the sharing of stories, traditions, and knowledge across generations.	● ● ●	Facilitate with Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups	\$\$\$
Collaborate with Local Aboriginal Land Councils for Culturally-Informed Infrastructure Development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Incorporate Aboriginal art and storytelling into wayfinding and design elements of new infrastructureEngage with Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the early stages of infrastructure planning	● ● ●	Leader Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils	\$\$\$

COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIVITY

At the heart of the Real Country ethos lies the belief that robust communities are fundamental to a flourishing destination. The Community and Connectivity theme embodies this concept, underscoring the importance of involving local residents in the region's development and improving infrastructure to unify Real Country. This approach aims to foster an interconnected community where both the social and physical infrastructure work in harmony, each enhancing and reinforcing the other.



Engage the Local Community

The heart of Real Country's strategy lies in its people. Engaging the local community in planning and development is crucial, ensuring that residents are not merely spectators but active participants in the region's evolution. This engagement is expected to drive forward initiatives that resonate with local values and meet community needs.

Engage the Local Community Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Foster Community Volunteer Programs			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a range of volunteer opportunities that support local projects and initiativesCreate a platform for easy registration and matching of volunteers with suitable tasksOrganise regular training and appreciation events for volunteers	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Establish Mentorship Programs between Elders and Youth			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify and engage community Elders willing to share their knowledge and experiencesConnect these elders with local youth through schools, clubs, and community groupsDesign structured activities, including storytelling, skill-sharing sessions, and joint community projectsMonitor and evaluate the impact of these programs	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Facilitate community forums and workshops			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Invite experts, community leaders, and local residents to lead and participate in these eventsEnsure forums are accessible to all community members and encourage active participationUse feedback from these events to inform local policies and initiatives	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Advocate for Seasonal Development Initiatives with Local Businesses			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify seasonal opportunities and trends that local businesses can capitalise onProvide business owners with resources and support for marketing, event planning, and other relevant areasCreate a network for businesses to share best practices and collaborate on seasonal initiatives	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Support local businesses in integrating and enhancing the Real Country experience			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct workshops and training sessions for local businesses on how to incorporate the Real Country brand and ethosOffer consultation and support for businesses to develop experiences or products that align with the Real Country branding and strategic directionsMonitor and showcase successful stories as case studies to inspire and guide other local businesses	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$

Improve Infrastructure & Accessibility Provision

Developing infrastructure that supports community well-being and seamless connectivity is a strategic priority. The focus is on enhancing transport networks, digital connectivity, and access to key services, thereby improving the overall quality of life and ensuring that Real Country is a connected and accessible destination for all.

Improve Infrastructure & Accessibility Provision Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Upgrade Regional Entry Signage and Art Installations			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Large scale gateway signage on major roads entering into Real Country RegionIntegrate Cultural and Historical Information into Wayfinding	● ● ●	Leader Partner with local artists	\$\$\$
Improve parking provision			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate and enhance provisions for free camping, caravans, and RVs, exploring pilot trials where necessary.Improve parking provision at tourist spotsInvestigate opportunities to install EV Chargers in more town and village centres	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Develop Consistent Signage for Navigation between Town Centres and Villages			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create community-led artistic wayfinding initiatives for town centres and villages.Adhere to and capitalise on Real Country branding across all signage, wayfinding and access improvements.	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Enhancing Accessibility Across the Real Country Region			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct comprehensive accessibility audits in public spaces, town centres and villages.Collaborate with the community to ensure modifications address local and visitor needs.	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Continuously Elevating Visitor Centre Experience in Real Country Actions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continually refine and enhance visitor centres, focusing on improving physical spaces, displays, food offering and technology for greater visitor engagement.Implement ongoing training for staff in Real Country visitor opportunities, experience and extensive local knowledge.	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$

CULTURAL PROMOTION AND HERITAGE

The tapestry of Real Country is woven with rich narratives and legacies that span from ancient First Nations' history to contemporary rural life. The Cultural Promotion and Heritage theme is dedicated to amplifying these stories through marketing initiatives and enhancing the cultural offerings. This theme is not just about preserving the past; it's about enlivening the present and inspiring the future through a celebration of Real Country's unique cultural assets.



Amplify Marketing Initiatives

Marketing initiatives are set to amplify Real Country's position as a sustainable cultural destination. The region's rich tapestry of stories will be showcased through targeted campaigns, highlighting its unique landscapes, cultural richness, and authentic rural experiences, attracting visitors from across the NSW and Australia.

Amplify Marketing Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Deliver a Unified Branding and Messaging Strategy			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhance the Real Country website as a first point of contact with visitors and a portal for the community to engage withAlign all communications with branding and identity developed for the Real Country Region	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Leader	\$\$\$
Develop a Regional Travel and Itinerary Planner			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement a user-friendly travel and itinerary planner using the Elafent tool in the Real Country websiteEnsure planner is updated with events, places of interest and activities	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Consultant	\$\$\$
Engage local influencers and bloggers			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Leverage volunteers to identify and connect with local content creatorsCollaborate on content creation that includes Aboriginal stories and perspectiveUtilise these partnerships to reach a broader audience and enhance digital content	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Create a loyalty or rewards program for visitors			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Design a loyalty or rewards program that incentivises repeat visits and longer staysPartner with local businesses to offer discounts, special offers, or unique experiencesRegularly review and adjust the program based on visitor feedback and participation rates	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Leverage digital content and interactivity in local events			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Integrate digital elements such as live streaming, interactive filters, or social media campaigns into local eventsDevelop content that enhances the event experience, such as behind-the-scenes footage, interviews, or virtual toursUse digital platforms to extend the reach of events and engage with a wider audience	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Leader	\$\$\$

Enhance the Cultural Offering

Focusing on core attractors such as First Nations, agriculture, army heritage, and dark sky experiences, Real Country will enhance its cultural offerings. These initiatives will celebrate the region's heritage and contemporary arts, creating a diverse and dynamic cultural landscape for visitors to explore.

Enhance the Cultural Offering Initiatives

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Establish a Signature Annual Dark Sky Event			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore niche opportunities around this theme such as stargazing-themed events and activitiesOrganise night tours and activitiesAlign the event with key initiatives from Actions "Celebrate Events, Attractions and Experiences"	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Leader	\$\$\$
Develop agri-tourism experiences			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partner with local farms and agricultural businesses to create tourism experiences.Develop tours, workshops, farm-to-table and hands-on activities that showcase the region's agricultural heritage and practicesMarket these experiences to both local and international tourists, highlighting the unique aspects of Real Country's agriculture.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Promote local heritage sites and museums			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborate with site managers to improve visitor experienceEngage with local schools and community groups to increase local visitation and awareness	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Support and promote rodeos and horse racing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify and partner with local rodeo and horse racing eventsProvide support in terms of marketing, logistics, and infrastructureDevelop packages that include these events as part of a broader Real Country experience	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Develop Eco-Tourism Packages with Accommodation Providers			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborate with local accommodation providers to create eco-tourism packages.Facilitate communication between accommodation providers and tourism businesses to ensure compatibility regarding market needs	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Facilitator	\$\$\$

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PARTNERSHIPS

Real Country's vision of prosperity is not just measured in economic terms but also in the quality of partnerships and community well-being. The Economic Growth and Partnerships theme is about leveraging the region's collective strengths to build a resilient economy. It's an acknowledgment that strategic alliances, advocacy, and a celebration of the region's diverse events and experiences are pivotal in crafting a prosperous and vibrant Real Country.



Advocate for the Region and Establish Productive Partnerships

Real Country recognises the power of collaboration. Advocating for the region and establishing productive partnerships are key actions that will drive economic growth. By forming strategic alliances and advocating for supportive policies, Real Country will bolster its economic foundations and foster a prosperous future.

Advocate for the Region and Establish Productive Partnerships

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Develop and Promote Investment Attraction Packages			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Design comprehensive investment packages that highlight the Real Country’s potential and opportunitiesPromote these packages to potential investors, both domestically and internationallyOrganise investment summits or meetings to directly engage with interested parties	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Establish Strong Relationships with Regional Development Australia (RDA) & Destination NSW Outback			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain regular communication with RDA and Destination NSW OutbackExplore joint initiatives that benefit the Real Country regionLeverage these relationships to gain insights, support, and resources for regional projects	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Engage in Regular Dialogue with State and Federal Agencies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss regional needs, challenges, and opportunities in these dialoguesAdvocate for policies and funding that support the Real Country region's developmentBuild a network of supportive policymakers and influencers	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Establish a Regional Tourism Advocacy Group for Real Country			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Form a group comprising local tourism operators, business leaders, and community representativesUse this group to collectively promote and advocate for the Real Country region's tourism interests	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Advocate for Joint Funding Opportunities for Real Country			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify potential funding sources for regional projects, including government grants, private investments, and partnershipsPrepare and submit compelling applications or proposals for these funding opportunitiesCollaborate with regional stakeholders to present a united front in funding applications	● ● ●	Advocate	\$\$\$



Celebrate Events, Attractions and Experiences

Events, attractions, and experiences serve as catalysts for economic activity and regional branding. Celebrating these elements is essential for creating memorable experiences that not only draw visitors but also stimulate the local economy and enhance the region's reputation as a vibrant and engaging destination.

Celebrate Events, Attractions and Experiences

Initiatives	Timeframe	Responsibility	Budget
Collaborate on regional events calendar			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a comprehensive regional events calendarEnsure the calendar is aligned with the Real Country Strategy and the events are inclusive and accommodate both community and visitor needs	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Collaborate on Seasonal Events and Experiences with Local Businesses			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage businesses to create unique offerings that align with the region's seasonal themesAgricultural harvest festivals, exclusive seasonal menus and First Nations initiatives can enhance the seasons of the Real CountryWork with businesses to develop a series of outdoor adventure and nature-based events that coincide with the region's natural cycles, such as guided nature walks, star-gazing nights, or wildlife spotting tours during specific seasonsCollaborate with local aviation groups at the Arthur Butler Memorial Aerodrome in Tooraweenah to formalise and organise local meets, festivals, and events, enhancing the aviation enthusiast community and attracting visitors to the region.	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Develop Joint Promotions and Experiences			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore potential partners for joint promotions, such as local attractions, accommodation providers, and tour operatorsDevelop bundled experiences that offer added value to visitors and support businesses return on investment	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$
Enhance facilities for art and cultural events			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plan and implement upgrades or new developments to enhance event precincts, art exhibitions and cultural offeringsWork with local artists and cultural groups to ensure facilities meet their needsInitiate a collaborative arts and crafts market that features local artisans, with a focus on showcasing products and crafts that reflect the cultural heritage and seasonal variations of the region, potentially including workshops or demonstrations from local artists and craftspeople.	● ● ●	Leader	\$\$\$
Establish a Regional Rail Trail			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Form a dedicated working group to thoroughly investigate and advance the concept of a regional rail trail. This group would focus on the potential to connect the region through a multi-use trail suitable for walking, cycling, horse riding, and dirt bike riding, evaluating feasibility, route options, and community benefits.Develop a comprehensive plan for the rail trail, outlining stages of implementation, funding strategies, and community engagement processes. This plan should encompass detailed design aspects, environmental impact assessments, and potential partnerships for the trail's development and maintenance.	● ● ●	Facilitator	\$\$\$

4.1 / Responsibilities and Timeframes for Implementation

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, is proudly championed by the Councils of Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle. These councils, as the curators of the strategy each bring a unique approach to the implementation of the strategy’s key actions. The commitment of the councils is multifaceted, as they embody roles of leaders, facilitators, advocates, and partners across various initiatives. This flexibility ensures that each action within the strategy is approached with the most effective and context-specific methodology, leveraging the strengths and resources of each council to maximise impact.

In this collaborative journey, the councils as leaders, will spearhead catalyst initiatives, setting directions and mobilising resources. When acting as facilitators, they create platforms for collaboration, ensuring that all voices are heard and synergies are formed. As advocates, they champion the causes and projects central to the strategy, rallying support and awareness. In their role as partners, they join hands with stakeholders, sharing responsibilities and successes alike. Additionally, the strategy acknowledges the need of consultants and contractors, appointed by the councils, to bring specialised expertise to certain actions. This multi-dimensional approach is foundational to the successful realisation of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, ensuring that each action is not just executed, but also reflects the collective community spirit and shared vision of the councils.

Stakeholders of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan

In the dynamic landscape of regional development, stakeholders play a pivotal role in shaping and driving initiatives forward. In the context of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, stakeholders are those groups or entities with a vested interest in the successful implementation and outcomes of the strategy. They are integral to the process, each bringing unique perspectives, resources, and capabilities to the table. Understanding who these stakeholders are and their roles is crucial to aligning efforts and achieving the strategy's overarching goals.

COUNCILS

- Each local council is at the forefront of the strategy, responsible for spearheading collaborative projects aimed at regional development.
- Their role involves aligning various initiatives with broader objectives like economic growth, employment generation, and the development of key industries.
- They are instrumental in boosting the visitor economy, supporting small businesses, and fostering an environment conducive to entrepreneurship.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Government agencies contribute through regional economic development strategies, such as the Castlereagh REDS and Western Plains REDS, focusing on building economic resilience and fostering growth.

BUSINESS SECTOR

- The local business community is a key stakeholder, driving economic activity and investment in the region.
- Businesses play a crucial role in leveraging the region's economic strengths for niche market development and overall economic growth.
- Their involvement is aligned with the strategic vision of the Real Country initiative, ensuring that local businesses thrive in tandem with the strategy’s objectives.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- The local community's involvement is central to the strategy, with an emphasis on reflecting community values and ensuring ownership of the initiatives.
- Strengthening community ties, expanding business opportunities, and enhancing the overall impact of the area are fundamental aspects of this stakeholder group's contribution.
- The strategy seeks to foster local resilience and active participation in the decision-making process, ensuring that initiatives are grounded in the needs and aspirations of the community.



4.2 / Implementing A Series of Phased Outcomes of the Strategy

The implementation of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan is planned across short, medium, and long-term horizons, ensuring a dynamic and responsive approach to regional development.

Short-Term Outcomes:

- In the immediate phase, the focus is on initiating catalyst infrastructure and marketing projects. This includes enhancing the physical and digital presence of the region, improving connectivity and access, and continuing the promotion of local narratives and cultural heritage.
- Immediate actions also involve community engagement and consultation processes to ensure that the initiatives resonate with local values and aspirations.

Medium-Term Outcomes:

- In the medium term, objectives focus on the further development and consolidation of strategic pillars, including environmental stewardship, nurturing river health and the celebration of First Nation's legacy. This phase also prioritises securing funds and developing catalyst infrastructure projects to enhance each of the town and village centres
- The medium-term phase of the strategy is aimed at achieving a significant improvement in the visitor experience, boosting tourist numbers, and increasing community involvement in regional initiatives, alongside the advancement of key infrastructure projects.

Long-Term Outcomes:

- The long-term vision encompasses the complete embodiment of the Real Country identity, featuring a sustainable, flourishing tourism economy, strong community engagement, and well-maintained natural and cultural heritage. This includes the refinement of catalyst infrastructure designs, along with the design, delivery, and implementation of these projects.
- The ultimate aim is to position the region as a premier Australian destination for Real Country experiences, marked by a seamless union of natural splendour, cultural depth, and economic vibrancy, underpinned by the continuous development and enhancement of infrastructure projects.

Through these phased approaches, the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan aspires to elevate the region's stature as a premier tourist destination while simultaneously enriching the economic, social, and environmental tapestry of the communities involved. This journey is about crafting a legacy that cherishes the unique essence of the Real Country, ensuring that each step taken today resonates with a sustainable and flourishing future. The focus is on creating synergies that enhance community life, promote cultural and natural preservation, and drive economic prosperity, all aligned under the visionary scope of the strategy.

4.3 / Funding and Budget

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan involves a significant financial commitment to bring its visionary projects to fruition. The budget and funding aspects are central to the successful implementation of this comprehensive plan.

The delivery of the strategy requires a tailored approach, considering the specific context of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan and the resources available to the councils. There is a need to diversify funding sources and leveraging the unique strengths of their region, the councils can create a solid financial foundation for the successful implementation of their vision.

Budget and Funding Overview
Engagement and Advocacy for Funding
Regular dialogues with state and federal agencies to discuss regional needs and advocate for policies and funding support.
Establishing a Regional Tourism Advocacy Group, comprising local tourism operators, business leaders, and community representatives, to promote and advocate for the region's tourism interests.
Identifying potential funding sources, including government grants, private investments, and partnerships, and preparing compelling applications for these opportunities

Government Grants and Funding Programs
Actively seek out and apply for state and federal government grants specifically designed for regional development, tourism enhancement, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation.
Stay informed about new grant programs and changes in funding criteria to maximise chances of successful applications.

Corporate Sponsorship
Targeted Sponsorship Packages: Develop targeted sponsorship packages for different components of the strategy. These can range from high-visibility projects like major events or infrastructure developments to smaller, community-focused initiatives.
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Alignment: Approach corporations whose CSR objectives align with the strategy's goals. Emphasise how sponsoring these initiatives will help these corporations fulfil their CSR mandates and improve their public image.
Marketing and Publicity: Offer corporate sponsors marketing and publicity opportunities. This could include featuring logos in promotional materials, acknowledging them in public events, or providing them with opportunities for positive media exposure.

Philanthropic Foundations and Donors
Reach out to philanthropic foundations that focus on regional development, conservation, cultural heritage, and community building.
Present compelling cases for how the strategy aligns with the foundations' missions and goals.

Advocacy and Lobbying
Engage in consistent advocacy and lobbying efforts with state and policymakers to secure support and funding for regional projects.
Build a network of supportive policymakers and influencers to champion the region's development needs.

Implementing this funding approach requires a focus on grant writing, partnership development, and corporate relations. Regular meetings to assess progress, adapt strategies, and respond to new opportunities will be crucial. It's also important to maintain transparency and keep the community informed about the sources of funding and how they are being utilised, ensuring ongoing support and trust in the council's efforts.

This strategic allocation of resources and active pursuit of funding opportunities reflects the comprehensive and collaborative nature of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan. It underscores the commitment to transforming the region into a vibrant and sustainable destination, leveraging its unique cultural, natural, and economic assets.



5.0 / CATALYST PROJECTS

LOCAL ACTIVATION INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1 / Introduction

Over the past 12 months, a series of infrastructure projects have been developed for each of the three Councils, underpinned by collaborative discussions and engagement with each local community. These projects, created with the aspirations and insights gathered from these communities, reflect a series of strategic directions for the future. This collaborative approach has ensured that the projects not only address the unique needs and characteristics of each area but also align seamlessly with the strategic objectives of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan.

Strategic Integration

- **Alignment with Place Strategy Goals:**
The infrastructure projects are intricately aligned with the key goals of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan. This means each project contributes to overarching objectives such as enhancing local tourism opportunities, preserving and showcasing cultural heritage, and fostering sustainable economic development.
- **Contribution to Regional Real Country Vision:** Each project is instrumental in realising the region's Real Country vision of enhancing opportunities to explore and celebrate the unique natural and cultural identity of the region.

Implementation Goals

- **Local Facility Enhancement:** Designed to directly benefit visitors and the local communities, these projects aim to improve the quality of local river experiences, introduce new amenities, or enhance existing facilities.
- **Economic Development:** Stimulating local economies is a key goal, with a focus on job creation, tourism attraction, and local business growth.
- **Sustainability and Environment:** Emphasising sustainable practices, these projects aim for environmental preservation and long-term ecological balance within the Castlereagh River and the surrounding natural landscapes.

Strategic Pillars and Vision

- **Community Engagement:** Projects encourage active community involvement, ensuring that projects reflect the desires and aspirations of local residents.
- **Cultural and Heritage Preservation:** Central to these projects is a focus on celebrating and preserving the region's unique cultural and historical assets.
- **Innovative and Sustainable Solutions:** The emphasis on innovation and sustainability in project design and execution supports the vision of a forward-thinking, resilient region.

A detailed Business Case utilising the template from the 'Strategy Development Fund Regional Infrastructure Business Case Template' has been prepared to supplement the Real Country Strategic Destination Plan, inclusive of a Cost Benefit Analysis, financial appraisal and risk assessment

[To view this report click here](#)

5.2 / Business Case vs. Masterplan Projects

The projects in each local government area are identified within a series of Focus Areas and further as either Business Case projects (Stage 1) or Masterplan and future delivery projects (Stage 2).

Detail Cost Benefit Analysis

The Business Case has analysed the data (both in the Issues Paper, REMPLAN and other Tourism statistics) to understand what aspects of the tourist market in the Orana Region can benefit from the Real Country Strategy and projects.

It has been shown that the quality, authentic and well-designed nature of the projects will attract a higher-spending visitor which in turn will improve tourism industry profitability, employment growth and numerous indirect other market segments.

Business Case Approach:

These projects involve

- **Transformational Impact:** Chosen for the potential to positively impact the region, these projects aim for economic revitalisation, community development, and environmental sustainability.
- **Exemplifying Regional Aspirations:** Each project is a tangible representation of the region's aspirations, embodying commitments to innovation, community-centric development, or ecological stewardship.
- **Detail Cost Benefit Analysis:** Focusing on economic viability and potential returns to secure funding and demonstrate financial feasibility.

Masterplan Approach:

These projects involve

- **Spatial Planning:** Focusing on spatial planning and aesthetic design, these projects are crucial for ensuring the long-term vision of the area's development.
- **Future engagement:** Comprehensive approaches to future infrastructure development, shaped by community input and aligned to the Real Country vision, sets a solid foundation for the sustainable and inclusive growth of tourism recreation across the region, reflecting its unique character and aspirations.

Warrena Weir
Recreation
Precinct

5.3 / Coonamble

Coonamble town centre is well positioned to take advantage of its proximity to the Castlereagh River, sitting at the heart of the ‘wishbone’ created by the river and the Warrena Weir. This allows the town to be activated by nature-based infrastructure and water recreation activities along much of its perimeter. The Real Country project has established three key focus areas for investment to support local economic resilience and encourage repeat visitation across the seasons. Several strategic projects have been identified that align to tourism driven outcomes whilst also enhancing the amenity of Coonamble for its local population.

1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT

Objective
Activate Warrena Creek, offering diverse recreational experiences to residents and visitors.

Approach
The masterplan encompasses a two-stage development, starting with public access enhancements, amenities upgrade, and water-based recreational infrastructure. Stage 2 envisions further expanding these offerings, adding eco-stay cabins, a landmark viewing tower, and extended walking trails.

The intention for this business case project is to enable greater public accessibility to Warrena Creek and a broader diversity of recreational experiences for both Coonamble residents and visitors. The project seeks to renew the area adjacent the existing weir and install infrastructure to enable delivery of a safe and dedicated public swimming area. Other upgrades and activation opportunities proposed in Stage 1 of this project include a new amenities building, a café/kiosk, designated zone for RVs and overnight camping, picnic shelters and barbecue facilities, and two floating pontoons to allow swimming and the launching of kayaks and stand-up paddle boards. Stage 1 would also look to deliver an accessible path from Coonamble town centre out to the weir and along the eastern side of Warrena Creek, supporting walking and cycling and encouraging engagement with the natural landscape. The pathway would be complemented by additional planting, interpretations, and wayfinding to deepen people’s knowledge of indigenous stories and practices while nurturing an appreciation for local flora and fauna. Stage 2 of the project would seek to further expand the activation opportunities for the precinct as a regional destination, including the potential for eco-stay cabins, a landmark viewing tower, and additional connections to broader walking trails.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Recreational Activation
Varied activities including swimming, kayaking, and stand-up paddleboarding.

Commercial Development
Facilities for RVs, camping, and eco-stays.

Cultural and Environmental Engagement
Enhanced pathways with educational elements about local indigenous culture and natural history.



Main Street revitalisation projects; Macdonald Park and Aquatic Centre Upgrade

FOCUS AREA 2

2

1

FOCUS AREA 1

New Business Case Project

FOCUS AREA 3

3

Strategic Project being developed under another funding grant

4

FOCUS AREA 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.

1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT



- 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)



1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT



Art Impression: Coonamble View 1 - View looking east from the Warrena Wier with new public swimming zone with picnic shelters and pontoon.

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

WARRENA WEIR RECREATION PRECINCT



Art Impression: Coonamble View 2 - New river leisure craft activities area with pontoon and picnic shelters looking west along the eastern bank.

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

2

STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECTS

THE "TOWN BEACH" PRECINCT

Objective
Elevate the town centre's connectivity and recreational appeal.

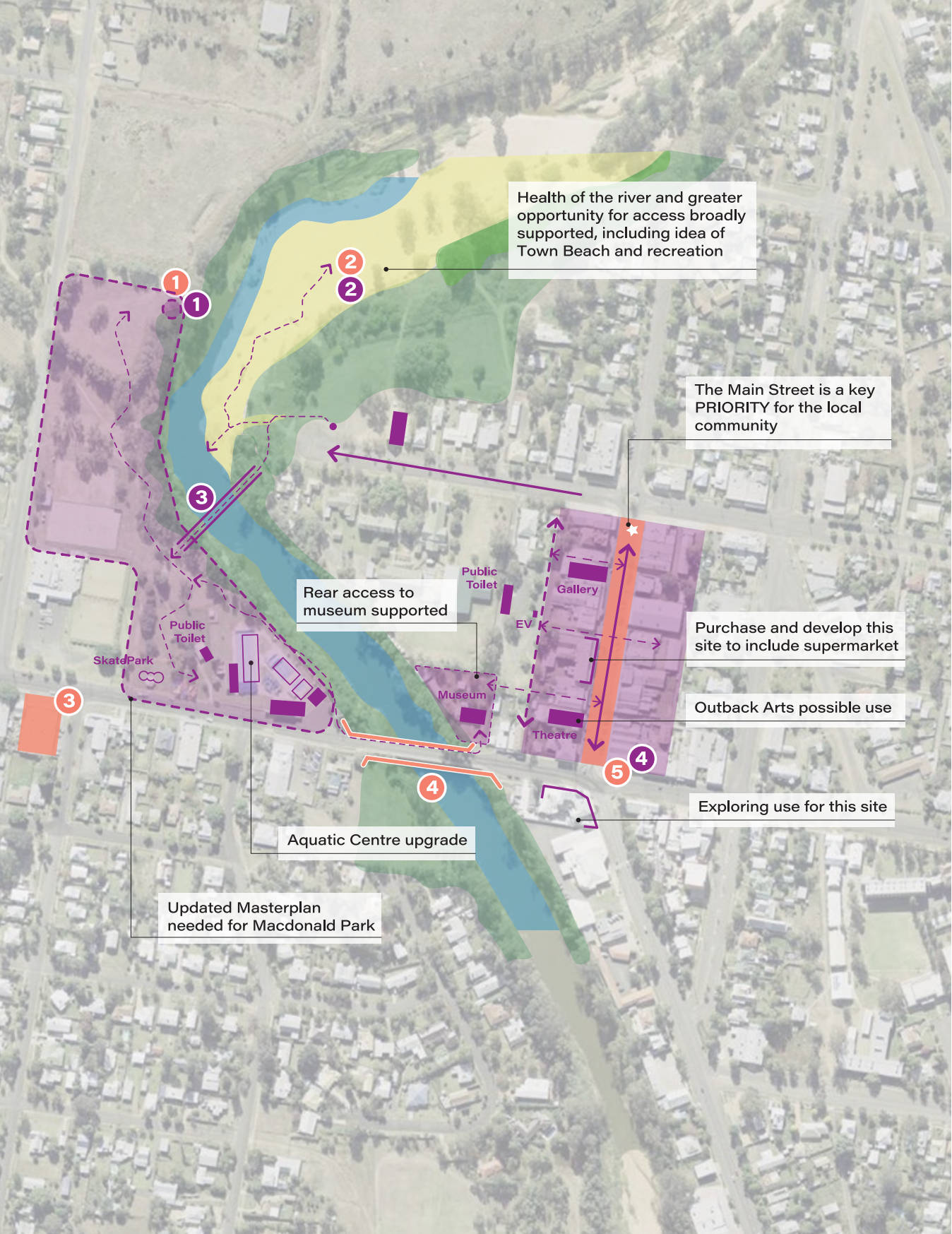
Approach
The strategy proposes creating physical and cultural links across the river, into the town centre and integrating heritage and natural beauty into the visitor experience.

This project centres around several infrastructure project opportunities Council is already actively pursuing, including catalyst projects to revitalise the main street and upgrades to public recreation facilities in MacDonald Park and the aquatic centre. Additionally, the Real Country project has identified the importance of promoting and caring for the natural ecology of the river. At the Town Beach (located at the end of Tooloon Street) there is an opportunity to allow locals and visitors to actively engage with the ecology of the river both physically and through education of river health through a first nations lens. The goal on this focus area is to capture all these projects and initiatives in a holistic vision through a strategic masterplan that sets a framework for the delivery of a vibrant town centre precinct that is connected to and celebrates its natural assets.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Enhanced Connectivity
Establishing stronger connections, including a pedestrian bridge.

Recreational and Cultural Integration
Focusing on the town's heritage and ecological preservation.



3

STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECTS

THE VISITOR CENTRE PRECINCT

Objective
Transform the precinct into a key destination for engagement and exploration.

Approach
Develop facilities like playgrounds, cafes, and viewing platforms, complemented by interactive and educational elements, to enrich visitor experiences.

The recently developed Coonamble Visitor Centre at the northern end of Smith Park is the area for this catalyst project. Paired with the painted water tower, the two structures frame a recognisable gateway for locals and visitors. The visitor centre stands as a key destination and the ideal starting point for visitors to connect with the town, discover its unique charm, and explore local experiences. The Real Country project views this as a chance to enhance activation, adding infrastructure that promotes extended visits and deeper engagement. Various possibilities, including a river walk with interpretive elements, nature play areas, a café/kiosk, and an event space, have been contemplated for inclusion in a new masterplan for Smith Park.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Precinct Activation
A series of enhancements aimed at increasing visitor dwell time.

Immersive Experience
Nature play, interpretive wayfinding, and public art that narrate the town's story.



5.4 / Gilgandra

The town centre of Gilgandra is located on the elevated bend of the Castlereagh River, offering views over the water. To the south, the Coo-ee Heritage Centre and cultural precinct are connected to the town via the Windmill Walk, a formal path tracing the elevated riverbank between them. The town centre has begun implementing a strategy to connect public spaces and retail experiences from Miller Street (Castlereagh Highway) to the river. Building on this strategy's success, there's a chance to draw locals and visitors nearer to the river by extending the Windmill Walk, including pathways to the river's eastern bank, which is currently isolated from the town centre. A similar strategy to consolidate activities in and around the cultural precinct could create a more extensive 'connected loop' from north to south along both riverbanks.

1 FOCUS AREA 1

TOWN CENTRE PRECINCT

Objective
Strengthen the synergy between the main street businesses and the riverfront, enhancing public engagement.

Approach
Capitalising on the dual frontages of businesses towards the river, the strategy involves integrating key community assets - the new Gilgandra Library & Community Hub, its adjoining plaza, and the Windmill Walk - to improve river accessibility and engagement.

The revitalisation of Gilgandra's main street, ongoing for the last 3 years, has included a key focus on businesses maximising their unique dual frontages. This strategic approach has been geared towards opening up towards the river, thereby creating new public engagement and activity opportunities. The recent unveiling of the Gil Library & Community Hub and its adjacent public plaza has greatly strengthened the connection between the main street and the river. The Real Country project plans to further this burgeoning relationship, aiming to integrate complementary infrastructure that connects key community assets – the library, plaza, and Windmill Walk. Additionally, Stage 2 presents an opportunity for a strategic masterplan focusing on CBD public domain upgrades. This initiative is aimed at improving accessibility, amenities, interaction with the river, seamlessly blending the town's natural beauty with its vibrant community and business life.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Business Frontage Enhancement
Encouraging businesses to utilise river-facing aspects.

Infrastructure Integration
Linking the library, plaza, and Windmill Walk for cohesive public space and a detailed masterplan for the CBD.

2 FOCUS AREA 2

CULTURAL & HERITAGE PRECINCT

Objective
Showcase Gilgandra's rich cultural and historical narrative.

Approach
Utilising the Coo-ee Heritage Centre and Gilgandra Museum as focal points, the project aims to create a high-quality cultural precinct that highlights the region's heritage.

The recently refurbished and expanded Coo-ee Heritage Centre provides an in-the-round visitor destination within this precinct that offers a diversity of amenities and opportunities for obtaining knowledge of the region's natural features, cultural richness, and heritage fabric. This tapestry Gilgandra's legacy is further showcased in the adjacent Gilgandra Museum, with its grand collection of historical agricultural machinery and farming practices through the years. This precinct is also home to several popular local events and offers a relaxed high-amenity setting overlooking the Castlereagh River.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Cultural Centre and Open Space
Enhancing the Coo-ee Heritage Centre's role as an immersive visitor destination, with upgrades to the music rotunda, gardens, playground and connected pathways.

Museum Integration
Linking the museum's historical agricultural collection to the broader cultural narrative.



1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

STAGE 1

Objective
Enhance recreational offerings and engagement with the Castlereagh River.

Approach
Implementing a new pathway along the eastern riverbank, connecting existing trails and creating a comprehensive loop. Additionally, developing recreational areas such as a beach and a timber boardwalk.

The Real Country project has identified a range of priority infrastructure elements to strengthen the activation and recreation offerings in Gilgandra to further encourage and support visitation and dwell time. The focus of these works is enabling greater engagement with the river – in particular enabling accessibility to the water’s edge. The project proposes a new section of pathway along the eastern bank of the river connecting to the existing Windmill Walk via the Jack Renshaw Bridge and a new level ford crossing to connect back to the Coo-ee Heritage Centre. This new pathway will close the loop on a 3km accessible walking and cycling trail with integrated lighting and interpretative wayfinding signage. Two other key activation nodes to be developed in the scope of this project are: a new designated beach area adjacent the existing caravan park on the eastern side of river to enable water recreation, and a new timber boardwalk and viewing platform overlooking the river on the western bank connecting back to the town centre and terminating to align with the new public plaza of the Gil Library and Community Hub, so as to draw people across the street to the water’s edge and allow them to engage with the natural ecology of the Castlereagh River.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Pathway Expansion
Completing a 3km accessible walking and cycling trail.

Recreational and Activation Nodes
Establishing a beach area and a viewing platform to facilitate river interaction.



Art Impression: Gilgandra View 1 - New viewing platform opposite the Gil Hub overlooking river towards the Jack Renshaw Bridge.

2

STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECT

STAGE 2

Objective
Diversify and enrich the offerings around the Cultural & Heritage Precinct.

Approach
Developing a masterplan to harmonise the Coo-ee Heritage Centre and Gilgandra Museum with the surrounding landscape, incorporating additional amenities, interactive playground and artistic elements.

Gilgandra Shire Council has ambitions to further enhance the diversity of offerings and activation opportunities in and around its established Cultural & Heritage Precinct. This is proposed to be explored through the development of a new masterplan for the precinct. The Coo-ee Heritage Centre and the Gilgandra Museum sit as strong anchors in this park setting. However, the masterplan is an opportunity to better stitch these two cultural buildings together in their landscape and embed additional amenities within the precinct including an improved space for local events, a generous nature play installation that integrates artefacts of industry (eg. former agricultural machinery linking to museum), and additional landscaping and planting embedded with local artworks and interpretations.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Landscape Integration
Enhancing the precinct's setting with landscaping, nature play installations and local artworks.

Amenity Enhancement
Upgrading event spaces and integrating cultural and historical narratives.

These strategic initiatives in Gilgandra aim to not only improve infrastructure but also to deepen the connection between the community and its natural and cultural heritage, aligning with the overarching goal of enhancing the town's charm and visitor appeal.

1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT & STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECT

STAGE 1 & 2



A Windmill Walk extension

Windmill Walk extension from memorial precinct behind Miller Street shops to Court Street (return loop down Miller Street, 'figure 8' walk)

B Static signage

Static signage along the accessible pathways

C Digital signage

Digital signage in GIL plaza accessible pathways

D Viewing area extension

Viewing area extension over Castlereagh river from the GIL plaza

F Artwork under bridge

G Walk Connection

Walk connection to Gilgandra Caravan Park

I Accessible cycle/ walkway loop

Accessible cycle/walkway loop from CHC river crossing to Jack Renshaw Bridge (underneath)

E Boardwalk in this area

Boardwalk in this area (mix accessible – timber look/mesh – core concrete)

H Town Beach Activation Area

Town Beach activation area - including picnic tables and carparking near Jack Renshaw Bridge

J Solar Lighting

Solar lighting on southern cycle/ walkway

L River Crossing

CHC River crossing - pedestrian, accessible, concrete

M Ground levelling, turf and irrigation

N Adventure Playground

Adventure playground connection with Gilgandra Museum

K Walk Connection

Walk connection to Golf Club and Racecourse

P Sound Shell

Sound shell – 32amp three-way phase power access

O Viewing Platform

1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

STAGE 1



Art Impression: Gilgandra View 2 - New town beach below the existing Jack Renshaw Bridge

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

1

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

STAGE 1



Art Impression: Gilgandra View 3 - View of new Castlereagh River crossing looking towards the Coo-ee Heritage Centre

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

5.5 / Warrumbungle

Coonabarabran sits as the primary gateway to the Warrumbungle National Park, famous for its unique rugged landscape and expansive dark skies. This adventurer’s playground caters to visitors from the region, as well as domestic and international travellers who come specifically to immerse themselves in the natural wonders of this special place. The town centre of Coonabarabran sits to the south of the Castlereagh River, with the Oxley Highway forming its main street. This presents a challenge, as the town’s spine is a high traffic corridor for vehicles moving through the region. At the southern end of the main street sits the existing visitor centre and aquatic centre, while the northern edge of town is framed by the river and parklands to both sides of the bank (including a sports precinct to the northern side).

1

2

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT

Objective
Create a nature-based adventure park showcasing the region's natural wonders.

Approach
Building upon existing path networks and community infrastructure, the vision involves developing activation nodes within the park.

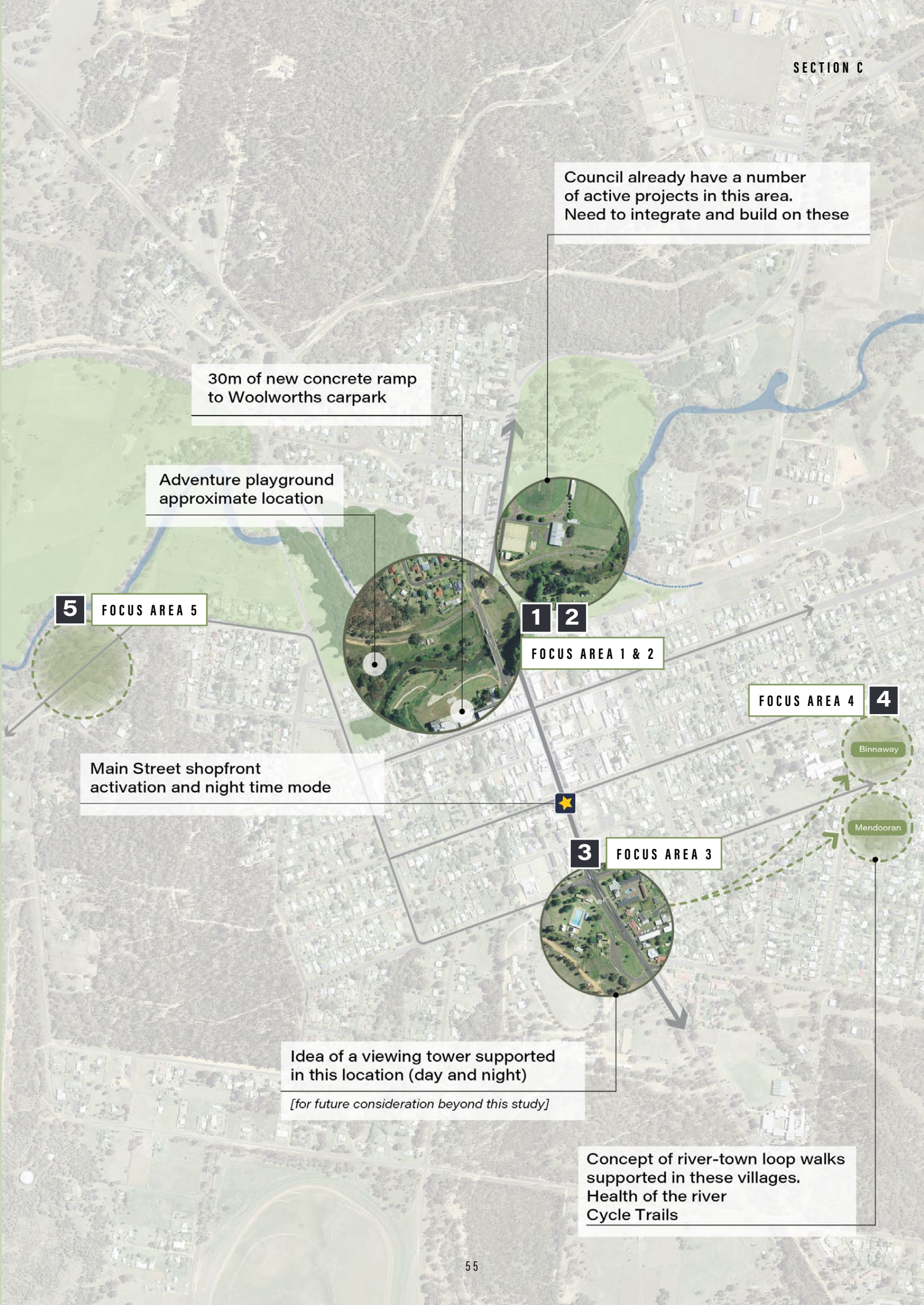
The intention for this business case project is to build on the work Council have already undertaken in delivering upgraded path networks and community infrastructure within the park areas south of the river. There is an opportunity through the Real Country project to explore the masterplanning of this precinct as a nature-based adventure park, offering a taste of the possibilities that await visitors to the Warrumbungle National Park. The vision for this precinct is to develop (in stages) a number of key activation nodes within the park that support walking, cycling, mountain biking, a treetop adventure circuit, and river experiences. Stage 1 of this project incorporates a series of new feature elements, such as an amphitheatre by the river, interactive public art and play installations, and bank stabilisation landscaping works to enable greater accessibility to and enjoyment at the water’s edge. Additional pathways to allow walking and cycling across the park, including new connections across the river to stitch to the railway line and the sports precinct have also been integrated into the project scope. The project explores the repurposing of the existing rail bridge and creation of an adventure rail trail, helping to unlock activation opportunities north of the river in future stages. A cohesive interpretation and wayfinding strategy will be developed with this masterplan, providing an intuitive and enriching experience for visitors that embeds knowledge of Country and understanding of the natural ecologies.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

New Recreational Features
Introducing elements such as access to the rivers edge, an amphitheatre, interactive art, play installations and landscaping for improved river access.

Pathway Expansion
Enhancing connectivity across the park, including new river crossings and repurposing the existing rail bridge for future activation opportunities.

Interpretation and Wayfinding
Implementing a strategy to enrich visitor experience with local knowledge and environmental understanding through a series of wayfinding and interpretive signage.



12

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT



A Outdoor Amphitheatre

A dedicated space for performances and community gatherings.

B Night time Experience

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

C River Access Solutions

Infrastructure to improve public accessibility to the river.

Reference Image

D Connecting Pathways to Visitor Information Centre

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

Reference Image

E Wayfinding Elements

Comprehensive signage to guide residents and visitors.

Reference Image

F Neilson Park Connectivity

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

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

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

J Acoustic Infrastructure

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

K Adventure playground approximate location

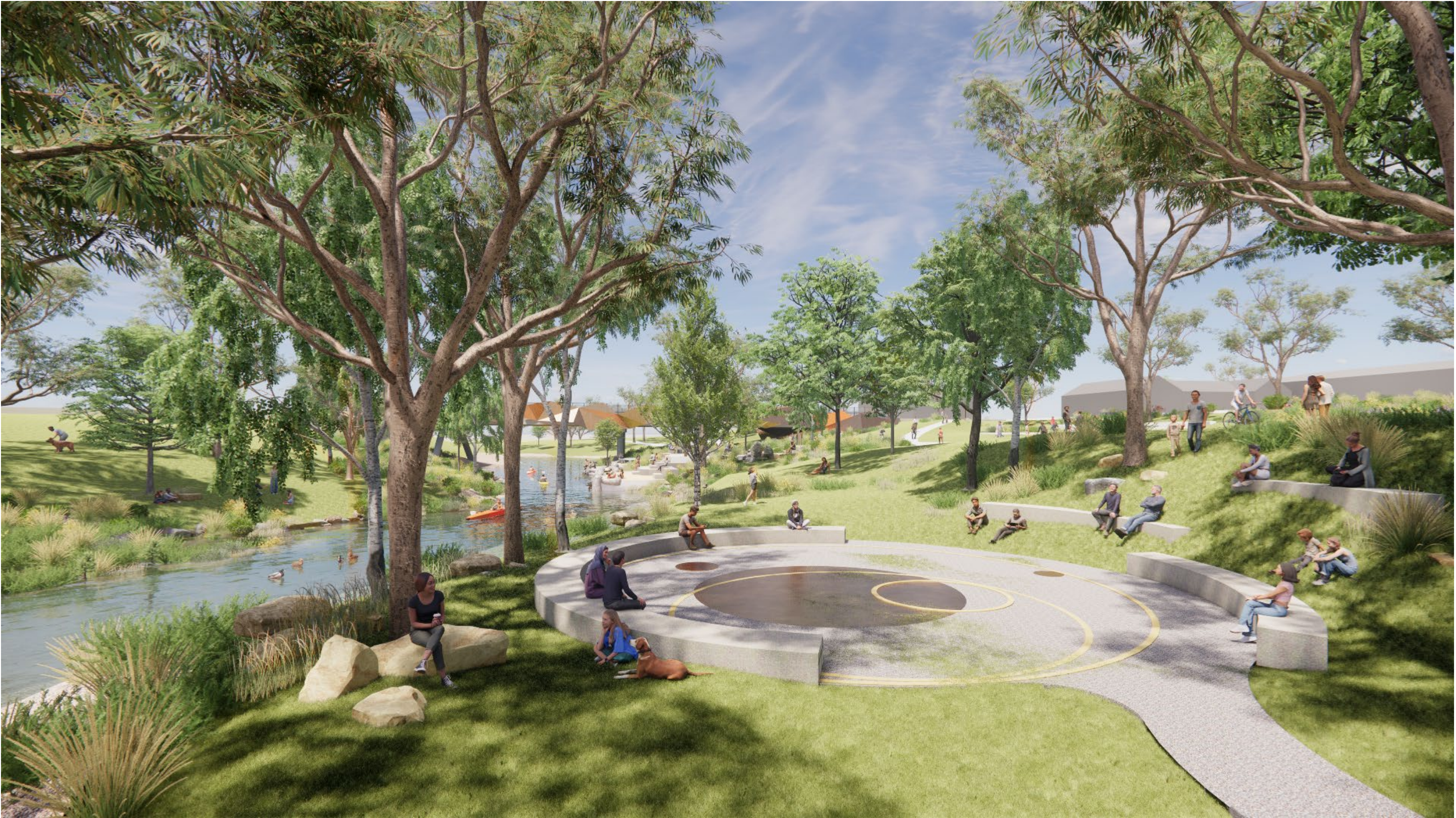
L 30m of new concrete ramp to Woolworths carpark

1

2

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT



Art Impression: Coonabarabran View 1 - New riverfront amphitheatre looking towards the Mary Jane Cain Bridge

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

1

2

BUSINESS CASE PROJECT

THE ADVENTURE PRECINCT



Art Impression: Coonabarabran View 2 - New river's edge activation adjacent to the Mary Jane Cain Bridge with new acoustic treatments

Prepared by Jasmax and PP&P for the Real Country Project

3

STRATEGIC MASTERPLANNING PROJECTS

THE VISITOR CENTRE PRECINCT

Objective
Strengthen Coonabarabran's tourism trail, to include the local main street, the natural landscapes alongside the cultural and heritage narrative.

Approach
Revisiting the mainsheet upgrade works and more broadly future plans for the visitor centre precinct to connect this asset more cohesively with the town centre and the river, possibly through a cultural heritage walk.

Located at the southern gateway to Coonabarabran, the existing visitor information centre sits at the high end of the main street but is situated a short walk down the main street to the river. There is an opportunity through the Real Country project to revisit mainstreet beautification works to explore stitching the information centre with the town centre and the river via a cultural heritage walk. Strengthening this connection provides an opportunity to engage directly with existing local businesses and some of the significant cultural and heritage building fabric along the main street, creating new pockets of activation, and telling a cohesive narrative of Coonabarabran's rich local character. This project should also examine opportunities for night-time activation, including a potential viewing tower within the precinct.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Enhanced Cultural Connection
Creating wayfinding and interpretation signage creating new activation points along the main street, integrating the town's cultural and historical essence.

Night-Time Activation
Exploring potential features like lighting (sensitive to the policy requirements) as well as a viewing tower for the "Dark Sky" to enrich the precinct's appeal.



4

FOCUS AREA 4

THE VILLAGES OF BINNAWAY AND MENDOORAN

Objective
Enhance tourism infrastructure in Binnaway and Mendooran, aligning with regional development goals.

Approach
Delivering a strategic response focusing on connecting Binnaway and Mendooran villages to the Castlereagh River and enhancing recreational access and opportunities.

This project seeks to develop a strategic masterplan for delivering additional tourism infrastructure to the villages of Binnaway and Mendooran. These initiatives would align with the objectives of the Real Country project, focusing on connecting to the Castlereagh River and providing opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with and obtain a greater appreciation for the unique natural assets of the region. The works would seek to deliver on ideas for upgraded walking and cycling pathways, interpretations and wayfinding, and opportunities for on water recreation.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Infrastructure Development
Upgrading walking and cycling paths along the rivers edge, wayfinding signage, adding interpretative elements, and creating opportunities for water-based access and recreation.

5

FOCUS AREA 5

NANDI CREEK RESERVE

Objective
Increase the capacity and amenity of visitation to this area.

Approach
Nandi Creek Reserve holds strategic and cultural importance and is considered a future project opportunity. The potential includes future infrastructure development to improve accessibility and engagement with the river.

Nandi Creek Reserve, which is located west of Coonabarabran's town centre, has an opportunity to be integrated into the Coonabarabran town centre projects. The area is of strategic and cultural significance, particularly in regard to increasing the capacity and amenity of visitation to the region. The area currently operates as a local camping ground and sits adjacent to the river, offering opportunities to provide future infrastructure to enable accessibility too and engagement with the water and create awareness of its natural ecologies.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

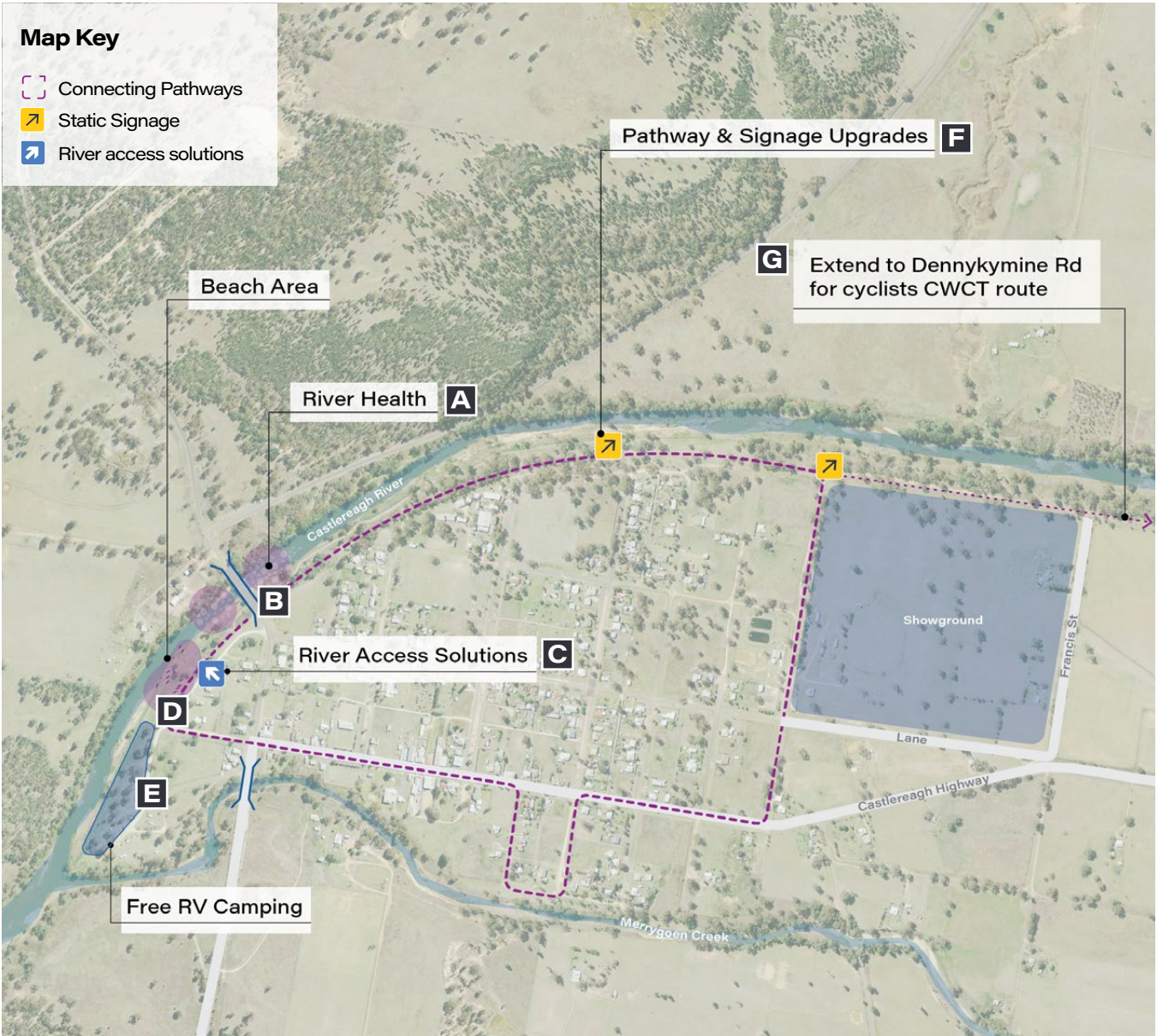
Recreational Enhancement
In the future developing the reserve to offer more camping and water engagement opportunities, coupled with environmental awareness.

These strategic initiatives for Warrumbungle aim to seamlessly integrate the centres within Coonabarabran, Binnaway and Mendooran with the natural environment, enriching the local and visitor experience while celebrating the region's unique character and ecological diversity.

4

FOCUS AREA 4

THE VILLAGE OF MENDOORAN



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**

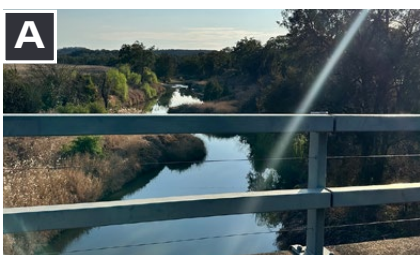
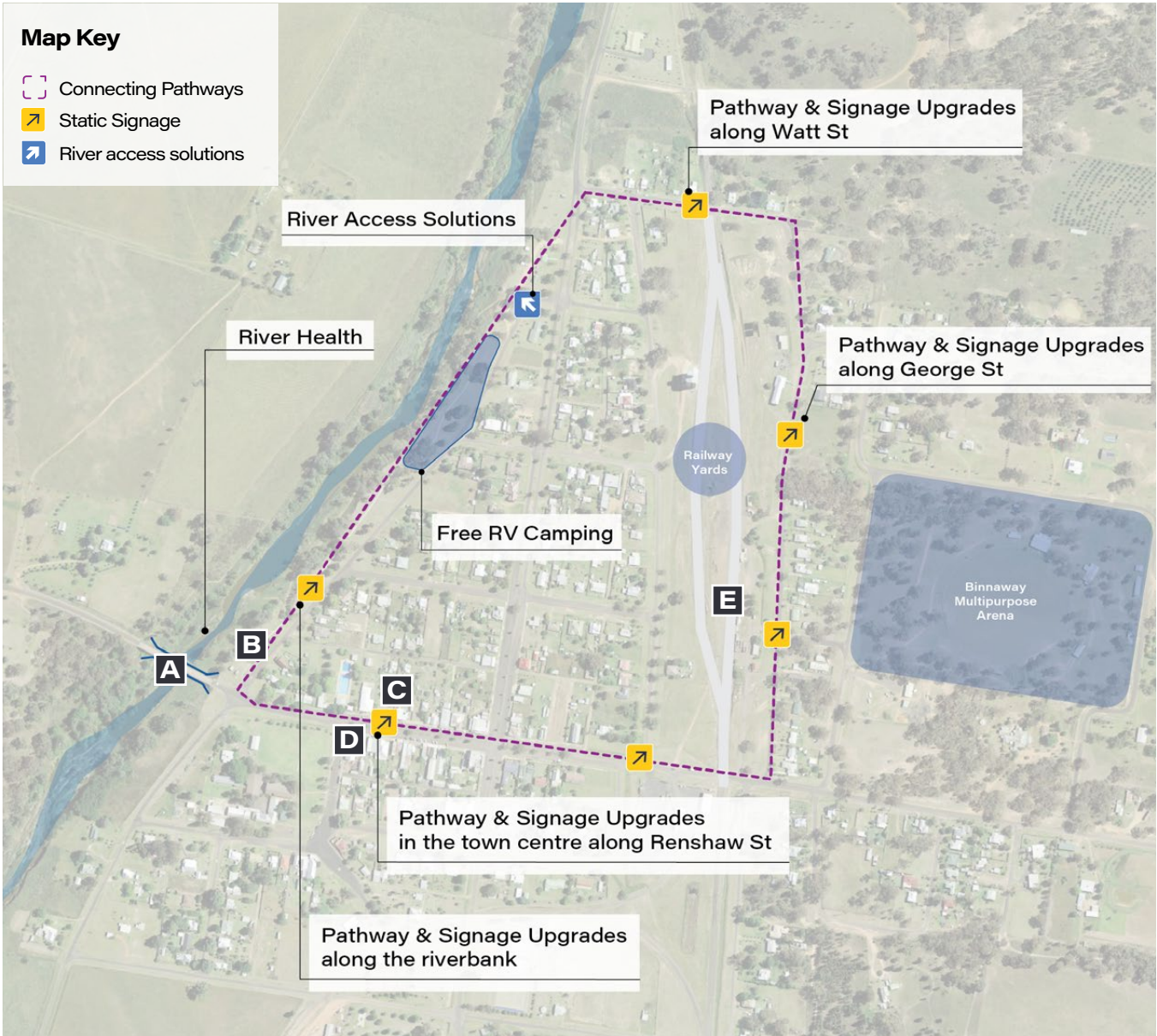
Improvement of existing pathways and informative signage.

G **Cycleway**

4

FOCUS AREA 4

THE VILLAGE OF BINNAWAY



6.0 / CATALYST PROJECTS

DESTINATION AND MARKETING

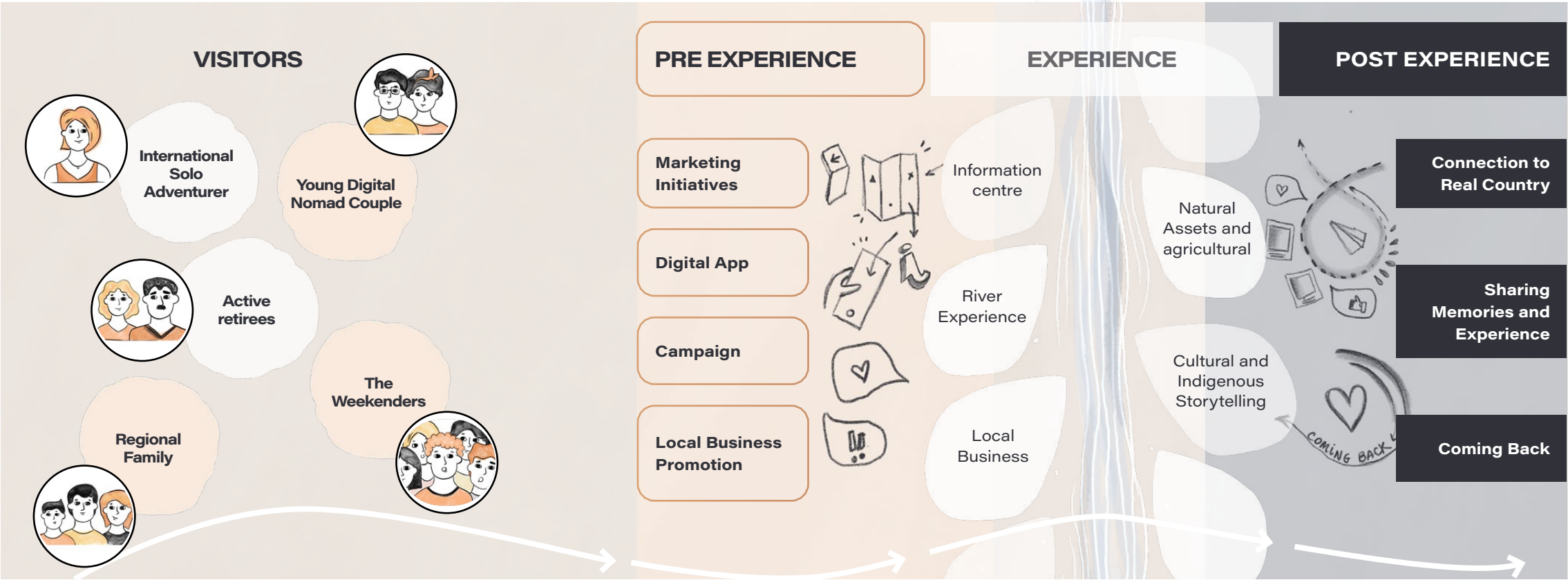
6.1 / Catalyst Marketing Initiatives Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of destination marketing, the art of storytelling is pivotal to the Real Country's strategy. Gone are the days when traditional advertising alone could draw visitors. Today, the narrative we weave, rooted in the authenticity of experiences and told through the lens of local colour, is what sparks genuine word-of-mouth promotion and social sharing. Our task is to curate and share the Real Country's tales, creating a tapestry of stories that resonate deeply with our visitors, fostering an emotional bond with the region.

Real Country's narrative is rich with rugged landscapes, star-filled skies, and the spirit of the bush. These stories, when shared, have the power to transport visitors into the heart of our community, inviting them to not just observe but to participate in the region's living heritage.

Real Country's marketing initiatives aim to harness the power of storytelling, utilising various channels to develop and communicate experiences that captivate our target markets. Our visitor centres are more than just information hubs; they are the stages where first impressions are crafted, and the region's narrative begins for our guests. Here, the local people become the storytellers, and through their knowledge and warmth, they offer a personal connection to Real Country, enriching the visitor experience with authenticity.

The strategy visualised in the diagram underscores this flow from developing experiences to communicating them effectively, ensuring that each visitor's journey through Real Country becomes a story in itself, one they are eager to share and relive.



6.2 / Visitor Experience

Real Country Visitor Experience approach is our comprehensive way to guiding visitors from dreaming to sharing their adventures. Our strategy encompasses not just the physical aspects of their journey but also the narratives and memories they carry back.

Dreaming, Planning & Booking:

At the heart of Real Country's Visitor Experience Plan is a story-centric approach where residents become ambassadors, or "hosts", creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for visitors. We extend this hospitality through a range of unmanned information points, including photo and selfie spots, that encourage post-trip interactivity. Our aim is to not only educate and inform our hosts but also to shift mindsets and behaviours, instilling a strong sense of civic pride.

Engagement & Sharing:

From the initial dreaming phase to the booking and planning, our digital strategy includes a comprehensive range of services like the Real Country visitor guide, maps, and toolkits. This is supported by rural and wayfinding signage that directs visitors throughout their journey in Real Country, whether they're staying in local accommodation, finding their way along scenic routes, or exploring our quaint town centres or villages and local points of interest.

Integrated Digital Strategy:

Our online presence is reinforced by a solid digital strategy, featuring our own website and extending to national and third-party sites, effectively reaching both domestic and international visitors. Our engagement is specifically tailored to a variety of visitor groups, including digital nomads, regional families, active retirees, along with outdoor adventurers, eco-travellers, and those seeking cultural experiences.

Welcome & Information Centres:

Upon arrival, visitors are welcomed by face-to-face services at our visitor information centres, where the human connection is celebrated and nurtured. Throughout their stay, visitors are encouraged to engage with and share experiences through our social media strategy and to take home a piece of Real Country with our carefully curated local products.

Destination Marketing:

Our destination marketing is characterised by impactful media coverage and campaign exposure that transcends the usual. We see destination management as an integrated system of visitor information and servicing, delivering timely and relevant touch-points that accompany the visitor throughout their journey — as they dream, research, select, plan, book, travel to and through our destination, return home, and become storytellers of their Real Country experience.

6.3 / 5 Key Projects for the Marketing Catalysts Projects

1
ENHANCED DIGITAL PRESENCE AND MARKETING

Rationale

Enhancing our digital presence and marketing efforts is paramount in an increasingly interconnected world. Real Country boasts a treasure trove of unique regional events and attractions that deserve the spotlight. As we continue to witness the evolving landscape of consumer behaviour, it's evident that an updated website, active social media engagement, and targeted digital advertising are key to reaching a broader audience. Furthermore, our community's express need for promoting these regional gems cannot be ignored. A robust digital strategy is the vehicle to deliver our message effectively and elevate our presence on a bigger scale.

Community Connections

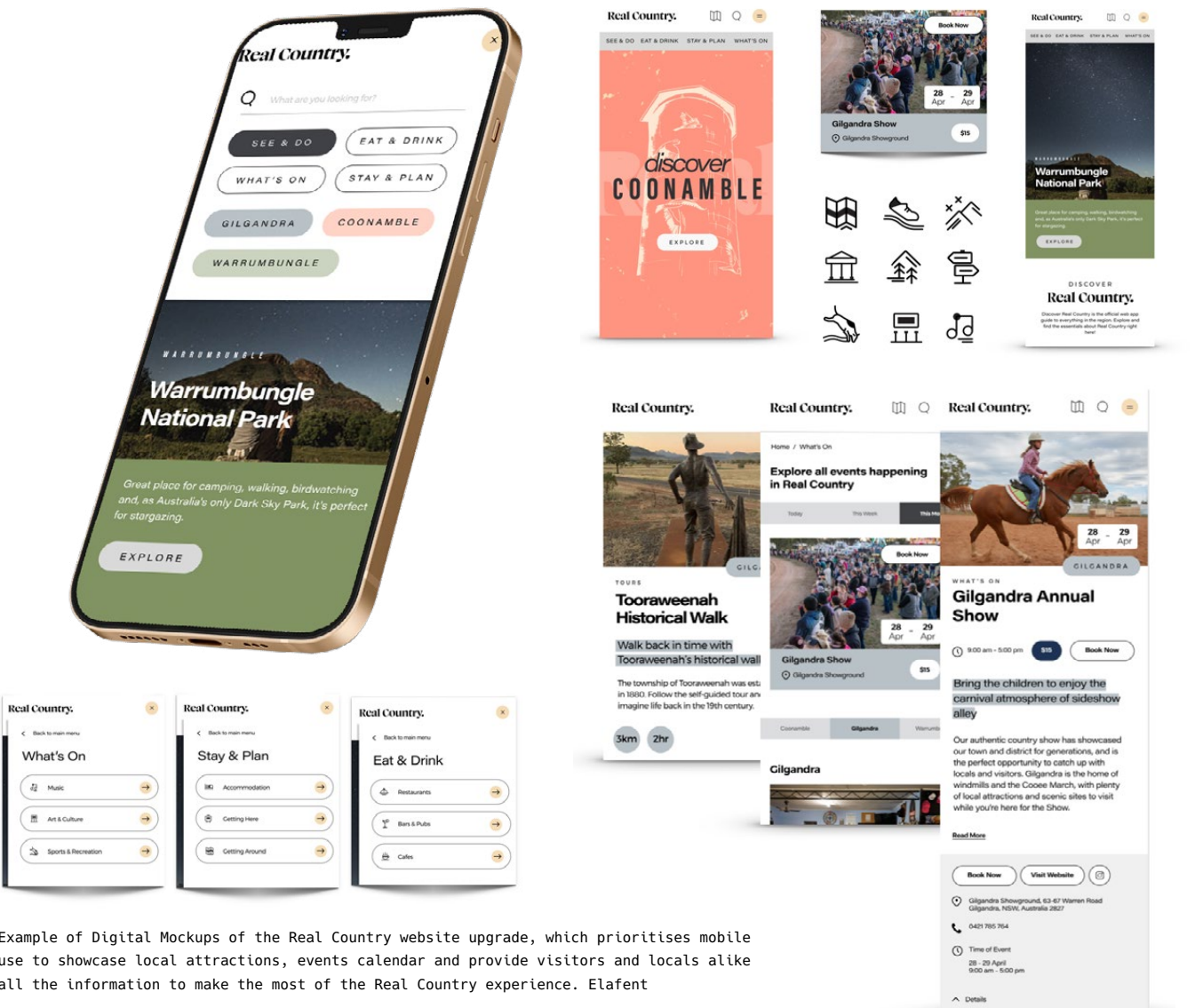
This initiative closely aligns with the community's desire to actively promote regional events and leverage online platforms for strategic marketing purposes.

Estimated Budget

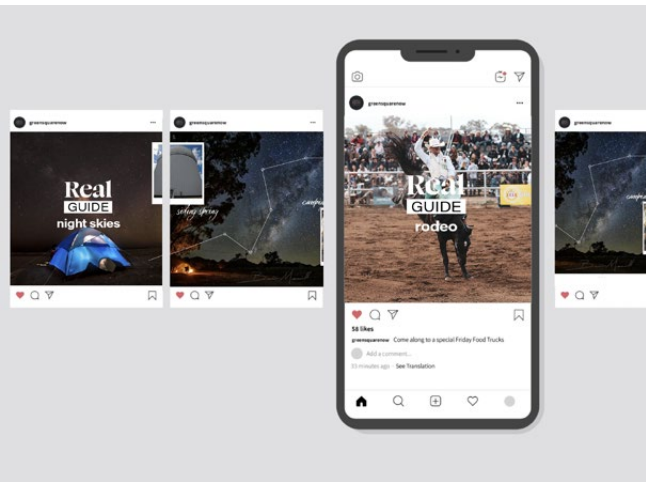
\$100,000 - \$150,000

Initiatives

- Develop a user-friendly upgrade to the Real Country website that not only showcases all the towns and villages in Real Country but also highlights key attractions while providing up-to-date information on events that can adapt to various devices.
- Integrating into the Real Country Website a do-it-yourself travel itinerary utilising the Elafent Technology Platform that provides engaging content formats, including a range of map views of galleries, museums, and regional attractions, streamlined booking functionality and adding more interactivity to previous static resources.
- Create on the Real Country Website a blog or news section for storytelling, updates, and feature articles on local businesses, events, and attractions.
- Promoting events in an integrated approach, aligned with packaged itineraries and in a map view form so visitors can plan their stay around events they are attending.
- Building on the social media campaigns for Real Country to engage with potential visitors, fostering a sense of community and excitement.
- Implement targeted advertising campaigns to capture the attention of potential visitors actively seeking unique experiences.
- Use data analytics to track user engagement and tailor content to the interests of visitors.



Example of Digital Mockups of the Real Country website upgrade, which prioritises mobile use to showcase local attractions, events calendar and provide visitors and locals alike all the information to make the most of the Real Country experience. Elafent



Example of social media posts which are coined by authenticity, genuine love for the region, and local stories. Followers can not only stay updated about events, activities and latest Real Country news, but get a digital glimpse of what the Real Country Experience is all about.



Example of video content that shares local stories, promoting local businesses and local personalities alike so that viewers can start creating deep connection with the Real Country region and its people even before their journey begins.

2
IMPROVEMENT
OF SIGNAGE AND
WAYFINDING

Rationale

Signage and wayfinding might seem like functional elements, but they play a pivotal role in shaping the first impression of Real Country. Upgrading our physical signage and infusing artistic elements at strategic entry points and town centres is more than just aesthetics; it's about creating an inviting and memorable experience. Visitors should feel not just welcomed but also inspired by the distinctiveness of our region. As we aim to foster a sense of identity, aesthetics, town character, and improved infrastructure become crucial factors in achieving this vision.

Community Connections

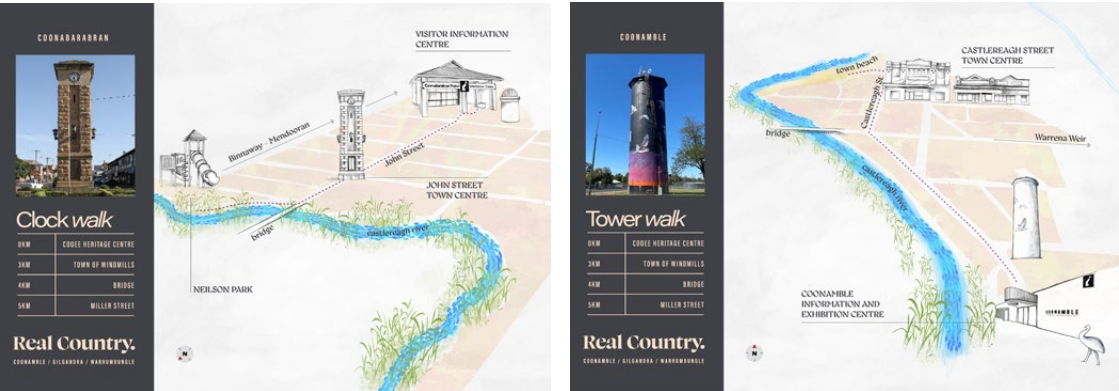
This initiative directly addresses the community's feedback concerning the importance of wayfinding, directional signage, aesthetics, town character, and the necessity for improved accessibility.

Estimated Budget

Identified in each Council's Infrastructure delivery projects

Initiatives

- Launch a comprehensive region-wide signage strategy to standardise and enhance wayfinding, including clear directions from all major roads to key attractions, towns and villages, tourist attractions and essential amenities.
- Consider interactive digital signage in each centre of Coonamble, Coonabarabran and Gilgandra that can provide coordinated real-time information and multilingual support to cater to a diverse audience.
- Infuse local art and cultural elements into wayfinding and interpretive signage designs to reflect the uniqueness and vibrancy of the community, ultimately attracting attention and fostering a sense of identity.
- Explore partnerships with local artists to create gateway distinctive, Instagram-worthy large interactive installations that encourage visitors to share their experiences online.



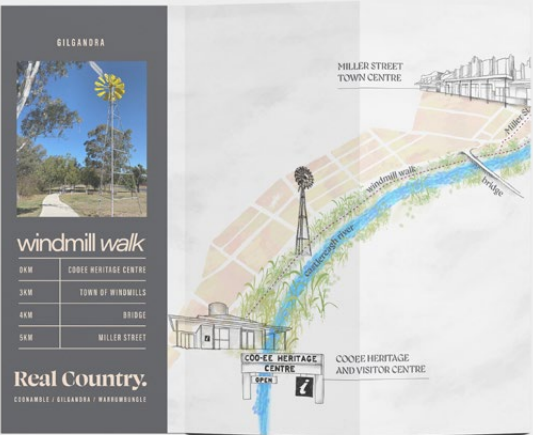
Example of information centre collateral that aligns with the Real Country identity and branding, maximising information transfer and brand recognition.



Example of wayfinding facilities that are infused with the Real Country's essence and not only deepen the connection to place, but reinforce recognition and minimise feelings of confusion, resulting in longer stays and happier visitors. These are example mockups that would undergo further research and development including an in-depth analysis of location considerations, primary, secondary and tertiary levels of information and material studies.



Travel badge mockup examples that could be delivered in local businesses, attractions and hidden gems to further strengthen the regional tapestry concept by leading visitors in their own journey of finding the Real Country's various threads and stories.



Example of information centre collateral that aligns with the Real Country identity and branding, maximising information transfer and brand recognition.



Example of large Instagramable gateway signage to be installed on major roads entering into Real Country Region

3

RIVERFRONT ACTIVATION AND EVENTS

Rationale

Our river is not just a geographical feature; is a significant asset for Real Country. Its potential to serve as a magnet for visitors and a hub for community gatherings is immense. Developing and activating our riverfront areas for recreation and events is a core strategic direction. It aligns with our commitment to offer unique experiences and showcases the natural beauty that defines our region. By collaborating with each local council and communities, we are not only enhancing our tourism offerings but also ensuring that our riverfront remains a sustainable and accessible resource for generations to come.

Community Connections

This initiative harmonises with the community's emphasis on maximising the river's potential for recreational activities and events.

Estimated Budget

\$50,000 - \$150,000

Initiatives

- Forge collaborative partnerships with local organisations and communities to co-create inviting riverfront spaces designed for public enjoyment.
- Organise a diverse range of events along the riverfront, spanning cultural festivals to outdoor activities, thereby catering to various visitor interests.
- Develop a signature annual event that highlights the riverfront and becomes an annual drawcard for visitors.
- Introduce eco-friendly and sustainable practices in all development and activation of riverfront areas to align with environmental conservation goals.



Example of interactive on-water activation events



Example of community engagement activation for drought periods



Example of Real Country event lineup poster



Example of art installations

Example of interactive art installation, The Big Picture, that people can interact and share their moments with

4

REAL EXPERIENCE
VISITOR EXPERIENCE -
PROMOTION OF LOCAL
BUSINESSES AND
PRODUCTS

Rationale

At the heart of every thriving community are its local businesses. Supporting and promoting these enterprises, particularly those intertwined with tourism, agriculture, and the arts, is not just an economic imperative but a cultural one. Our local businesses are the backbone of Real Country, embodying the essence of our region in their products and services. By strengthening the local economy through collaborative marketing initiatives, we create a ripple effect, fostering a vibrant community that resonates with both residents and visitors. This initiative isn't just about business; it's about nurturing our community's identity and shared prosperity.

Community Connections

This initiative underscores the community's collective aspiration to support small businesses and promote the distinctive products that define our region.

Estimated Budget

\$50,000 - \$80,000

Initiatives

- Develop an all-encompassing local business directory to provide visitors with comprehensive information about the diverse array of local products and services available.
- Create engaging promotional materials that effectively showcase the unique offerings of our local businesses, tourist attractions, accommodation options, events and tourism experiences.
- Encourage collaboration among local businesses to undertake joint marketing initiatives that amplify our collective impact.
- Create experiential packages that combine offerings from various local businesses to provide a holistic experience, such as agri-farm tours, local arts, and crafts workshops.
- Implement a Real Country loyalty program to encourage repeat visitation and foster a sense of community among visitors and residents.



Example of communication collateral for local stories campaign to be used during the pre-visit phase of the visitor journey



Example of communication collateral to be used around the region to be leveraged through events and digital presence



Example of video content that shares local stories, promoting local businesses and local personalities alike so that viewers can start creating deep connection with the Real Country region and its people even before their journey begins.



Example of Real Country tourist attractions brochure
Example of Real Country loyalty program

5

RIVER HEALTH,
CULTURAL AND
HISTORICAL
STORYTELLING

Rationale

Real Country is not just a place on the map; it's a living tapestry of stories, cultures, and histories. Showcasing the depth of our cultural and historical heritage isn't merely an option; it's a unique selling point that sets us apart. As visitors explore our region, they should be immersed in a narrative that enriches their experience. Our commitment to river health, biodiversity preservation, and cultural engagement is at the core of this initiative. By proactively overseeing the health of the river ecosystems while inviting local Aboriginal groups to share their stories and traditions, we are ensuring that Real Country remains not just a destination but an unforgettable journey through time and culture. This is about more than tourism; it's about preserving our legacy for future generations to cherish and learn from.

Community Connections

This initiative directly addresses the community's desire to ensure the health of the Castlereagh River while actively involving local Aboriginal groups in the promotion of natural and cultural tourism, preserving our rich heritage for generations to come.

Estimated Budget

\$60,000 - \$100,000

Initiatives

- Collaborate closely with the Coonamble, Gilgandra, and Warrumbungle Councils to develop a comprehensive River Health Action Plan. This collaborative effort aims to proactively oversee the health of the river ecosystems while promoting tourism and preserving local flora and fauna.
- Engage with local Aboriginal Land Councils and community groups to create immersive cultural trails, captivating storytelling installations, and guided tours.
- Seamlessly integrate these cultural elements into our overarching marketing strategy to showcase our commitment to natural and cultural tourism.
- Develop augmented reality experiences that bring to life the stories and histories of the First Nations and the local heritage for visitors as they explore.
- Set up QR codes at points of interest that lead to multimedia content, including videos, recordings and/or interviews with local elders, historians, and cultural narratives.



Example of River activation that highlights the leading role of First Nations in river health and regeneration, artistic connection to place and storytelling



Example of small scale kids activation initiatives for River storytelling



Interactive augmented reality experiences

7.0 / GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY PRIORITIES

7.1 / Governance Approach

The governance model for the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to the collaboration between the three councils, is centred around a structured, cooperative approach that leverages the strengths and resources of each council to achieve common goals. This model is crucial for ensuring that the strategy is implemented effectively and benefits the broader region. A breakdown of the governance model and the inter-council relationship is provided below:

Joint Strategic Framework

At the heart of the governance model is a jointly agreed-upon strategic framework by the three councils. This framework sets out the shared vision, objectives, and key focus areas, forming the backbone of all collaborative efforts and ensuring alignment towards common goals.

Collaborative Decision-Making

A key feature of the model is collaborative decision-making, involving regular meetings, joint planning sessions, and collective problem-solving. By pooling their knowledge and expertise, the councils make informed decisions that benefit the broader region.

Resource and Information Sharing

A crucial part of the governance approach is the sharing of resources and information. This includes exchanging data, research findings, best practices, and pooling resources for specific projects, leading to more efficient use of resources and fostering innovation.

Integrated Project Implementation

The councils work together closely in implementing projects under the strategy. This integrated approach ensures that projects not only benefit individual council areas but contribute to the overall regional development, sharing responsibilities and risks fairly.

Regular Communication and Reporting

Transparency is a key element of the model, requiring regular communication and transparent reporting among the councils. This ensures updates on project progress, challenges, and milestones achieved are shared, fostering trust and accountability.

Community Engagement and Feedback Incorporation

Actively engaging community members across the councils' areas is vital. The governance model ensures that community feedback is actively sought and incorporated into planning and implementation, reflecting local needs and aspirations.

Adaptive Governance

The model is inherently adaptive, allowing for adjustments based on ongoing evaluations, changes in circumstances, or new opportunities. This flexibility is key to effectively responding to regional dynamics and evolving community needs.

Efficient Resource Sharing and Procurement Efficiencies

The governance model focuses on efficient resource sharing and procurement efficiencies. This includes strategic resource allocation, joint procurement strategies, shared expertise and capacity building, coordinated investment planning, and performance monitoring with shared accountability. These measures ensure maximised efficiency, cost savings, and high-quality outcomes.

Strategic Resource Allocation

The councils strategically allocate resources such as funding, manpower, and equipment to maximise efficiency and minimise duplication. Pooling resources allows for more impactful and larger scale projects.

Joint Procurement Strategies

By combining purchasing power, the councils can negotiate better terms with suppliers, leading to cost savings and higher quality resources. This approach also aids in standardising equipment and services across the region.

Shared Expertise and Capacity Building

The model encourages sharing of expertise and capacity building among the councils, leveraging each other's strengths for enhanced capability and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Coordinated Investment Planning

Coordinated investment planning aligns budgeting and investment decisions to support shared priorities and avoid conflicting investments, ensuring individual budgets contribute to broader regional objectives

Performance Monitoring and Shared Accountability

Regular reviews of resource allocation and usage ensure effective utilisation for intended purposes. Shared accountability fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the collective initiatives.

This comprehensive governance model, characterised by collaboration, shared responsibility, and adaptive planning, is integral to the effective and sustainable implementation of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, optimising resource use and reinforcing the cooperative spirit crucial for successful regional development.



7.2 / Summary of Delivery Priorities

This summary outlines the key delivery priorities for catalyst infrastructure projects across each of the local councils, aimed at enriching the tourism appeal of river towns and villages, and details the marketing catalyst projects designed to elevate the profile of Real Country's unique experiences.

INFRASTRUCTURE CATALYST PROJECTS	DESTINATION MARKETING CATALYST PROJECTS
Coonamble / Warrena Weir Recreation Precinct	Enhanced digital presence and marketing
Gilgandra / River Precinct Upgrade Town Centre to Coo-ee Centre	Improvement of signage and wayfinding
Warrumbungle / River Precinct Upgrades to Coonabarabran, Binnaway and Mendooran	Riverfront activation and events
	Real experience visitor experience through local business and product promotion
	River health, cultural and historical storytelling

The Real Country Destination Strategic Plan outlines several governance and delivery priorities across different areas, each reflecting the unique needs and aspirations of the local communities.

A summary of the priority actions for each Council area:

Coonamble	Gilgandra
<div><div>1. River Restoration and Conservation:</div><div>Prioritising the repair and conservation of the river, addressing carp and weed infestations, and improving access to riverbanks.</div></div> <div><div>2. Weir Enhancement and Family-Friendly Spaces:</div><div>Enhancing the weir area for family recreation, including water activities and nature engagement for children.</div></div> <div><div>3. Main Street Revitalisation and Accommodation:</div><div>Increasing accommodation options for tourism and events, and revitalising the main street, including preserving historical assets and supporting businesses.</div></div> <div><div>4. Community Engagement and Unity:</div><div>Emphasising community engagement and collaboration among shires to create a strong regional identity.</div></div>	<div><div>1. Town Centre and River Crossing Design:</div><div>Reevaluating the town centre design and the potential for a new river crossing.</div></div> <div><div>2. River Health and Conservation:</div><div>Emphasising the maintenance of river health and relocating the town beach to a more accessible location.</div></div> <div><div>3. Cultural Inclusivity and First Nations Identity:</div><div>Promoting cultural inclusivity and celebrating First Nations contributions.</div></div> <div><div>4. Promotion of Primary Industries and Rural Strength:</div><div>Highlighting Gilgandra's rural strength and heritage.</div></div> <div><div>5. Enhancement of Public Spaces:</div><div>Developing public spaces for greater community engagement and recreation, and advocating for regional collaboration.</div></div>



Coonabarabran, Binnaway, Mendooran	Ongoing engagement with stakeholders: the priorities:
<div><div>1. Amphitheatre Design and Seasonal Considerations:</div><div>Acknowledging climate seasonality and rethinking amphitheatre design.</div></div> <div><div>2. River Health and Ecological Preservation:</div><div>Prioritising river health and ecological balance across the region.</div></div> <div><div>3. First Nations Engagement and Cultural Identity:</div><div>Recognising the significance of First Nations communities and their contributions to cultural identity.</div></div> <div><div>4. Promotion of Arts and Vibrancy:</div><div>Emphasising art and creativity to infuse vibrancy into town and river precincts.</div></div> <div><div>5. Dark Sky and Unique Celestial Views:</div><div>Celebrating unique celestial views for nighttime events and stargazing experiences.</div></div> <div><div>6. Community-Driven Maintenance and Tourism:</div><div>Focusing on community engagement, promoting local businesses, and enhancing river access and health.</div></div>	<div><div>Emphasis on tourism efforts focusing on cultural, historic, seasonal, and nature-based activities.</div></div> <div><div>Exploration of niche opportunities like nature-based adventures, agri-tourism, dark sky observation and leveraging technology as a communication, engagement and place interaction.</div></div> <div><div>Need for improved accessibility and connectivity, particularly for town connections and river accessibility.</div></div> <div><div>Priority on business support to ensure diverse accommodation offerings and a vibrant local economy.</div></div> <div><div>These stakeholder priorities reflect an ongoing opportunity for dialogue and collaborative approach to enhancing the Real Country's appeal as a destination. Working alongside local stakeholders will seek to preserve and enhance the natural environment, cultural heritage and fostering community involvement and economic growth in tourism activities for the region.</div></div>

7.3 / Measuring for Success

Evaluating success and monitoring key performance indicators are crucial components in ensuring the effectiveness of our strategic plan. These metrics provide valuable insights, enabling us to assess and refine our actions across various initiatives to facilitate the best outcomes.

1. Google Analytics
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand visitor interaction with the websiteIdentify the most popular contentMeasure the effectiveness of the websiteIdentify where visitors are coming fromGauge visitor engagement with the website
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Website traffic www.realcountry.com.auUser behaviorConversion ratesReferral sourcesEngagement metrics
2. Social Media Analytics
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess social media campaign effectivenessMonitor growth of social media followingUnderstand audience preferences on social mediaGain insights into the social media audience
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engagement rates for Instagram and FacebookFollower growthMost popular contentDemographic information
3. Customer Satisfaction Surveys
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gather direct feedback from visitorsIdentify areas for enhancing the visitor experienceMeasure visitors' willingness to recommend the destination
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor satisfactionAreas for improvementLikelihood to recommend

4. Tourism Visitor Surveys
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand visitor characteristicsAssess the duration of visitors' visitsIdentify popular tourist activitiesGauge visitors' overall satisfaction with the destination
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">DemographicsLength of stayActivities participated inOverall experience

5. Online Reviews and Ratings
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitor feedback and reviews on online platformsAssess destination's performance based on ratingsIdentify specific areas for improvement
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor reviewsRatingsFeedback on attractions/services

6. Local Economic Indicators
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Measure the volume of visitorsMeasure economic impact
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor numbersRevenue from tourism-related activities

7. Economic Impact Studies
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the economic contributions of tourismAssess the impact on job opportunities and growth in the region
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Visitor expenditureJob creation

8. Media Coverage Tracking
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate PR effortsUnderstand how the destination is portrayed in the mediaMeasure the reach of media coverage
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantity and quality of media coverageKey messages conveyedAudience reached

9. Event Attendance and Feedback
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess event success and popularityGather insights for event improvementMeasure media attention and promotion of events
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of attendeesParticipant feedbackMedia coverage

10. Competitor Analysis
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Benchmark performance against competitorsIdentify competitive advantagesUnderstand market dynamics
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Marketing strategiesPromotionsVisitor numbers of competitors

11. Investment Tracking
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Track investments attracted to the regionMeasure infrastructure development
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Private and public investmentInvestment in tourism-related infrastructure

12. Business Growth and Development
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess the impact of destination marketing on new businessesMeasure growth of businesses in tourism and hospitality sectors
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">New businesses establishedGrowth of existing businesses



Performance Indicators

13. Employment Statistics
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the impact of tourism on employment and livelihoodsUnderstand the impact of tourism on employment and livelihoods
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jobs created primary tourism industryJobs created secondary tourism industry

14. Event Impact Assessment
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantify the economic benefits of events and festivalsAssess the frequency and impact of eventsMeasure event participation and popularityUnderstand the financial impact of eventsAssess local business participation in events
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Economic impact of eventsNumber of events heldAttendance figuresRevenue generatedLocal business involvement

15. Tourism Expenditure Tracking
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand visitor spending patternsAssess visitor spending habitsIdentify where visitors are spending money in the region
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total expenditure by touristsAverage spend per visitorSpending patterns

16. Hotel and Accommodation Stats
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Measure hotel and accommodation performanceAssess room pricing and revenue generationUnderstand the efficiency of accommodation facilitiesTrack growth in accommodation options
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Occupancy ratesAverage daily ratesRevenue per available roomNew accommodation developments

17. Transportation and Connectivity Metrics
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess transport visitationEvaluate connectivity and whether visitors travelled to 1, 2 or 3 of the Real Country DestinationsMeasure accessibility to key destinations
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicle, caravan, motorobike plate readings from outside regionsImprovements in wayfinding signage infrastructureConnectivity to key attractions

18. Property Development and Real Estate Values
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Growth in property developmentChanges in real estate values in commercial and residential
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess the impact of tourism on property marketsUnderstand property value fluctuations

19. Retail Sales and Commercial Activity
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess impact on businesses annually and trends year on yearUnderstand the performance of tourist-oriented businesses
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sales figures from retail and commercial businesses based on a rangeTourism Attractions Visitation Numbers

20. Visitor Impact Monitoring
Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand how tourism is impacting the river environment and identify areas where management actions may be needed to mitigate negative impacts.
Data to Collect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of visitors to river-based attractions, impacts on vegetation, wildlife disturbance.

Regularly collecting and analysing data from these tools will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Real Country Destination Strategic Plan, allowing for data-driven decisions and continuous improvement.



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