



## **COONAMBLE WAN-GALI COMMUNITY WORKING PARTY**

### **HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN**

**APRIL 2022**



**MURDI PAAKI  
REGIONAL  
ASSEMBLY**

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## **COONAMBLE WAN-GALI COMMUNITY WORKING PARTY**

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN



**COONAMBLE WAN-GALI COMMUNITY WORKING PARTY**

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





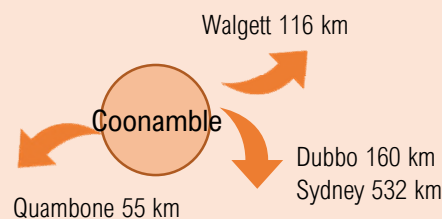
# Coonamble and Quambone

## Housing and Environmental Health Plan

### Executive Summary

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan provides a Master Plan for housing, infrastructure and housing-related human services for the Aboriginal communities of Coonamble and Quambone. The Master Plan is based on a body of evidence outlined in this Executive Summary. Much community input is drawn from the Household Survey organised by Murdi Paaki Services, and from the Coonamble Wan-Gali CWP Community Action Plan. This Plan describes the current situation and proposes measures to improve the state and supply of housing, the way it is allocated and managed, and what needs to be done in the future to meet community needs for housing, wrap-around services and economic development. The Executive Summary begins with some facts about the community, looks at the housing situation, then presents the key points of the Master Plan. The Plan belongs to the Aboriginal community of Coonamble and Quambone

Where we are to be found?



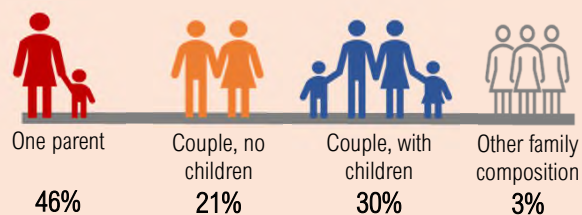
The Coonamble climate is hot and dry. The number of days with temperatures  $>35^{\circ}\text{C}$ , already 54 days, is predicted to increase by 30-40 days each year by 2070

#### About the communities:

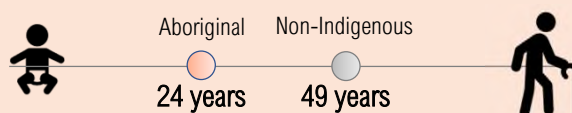


Aboriginal population = 37% of total population of 2,575 persons

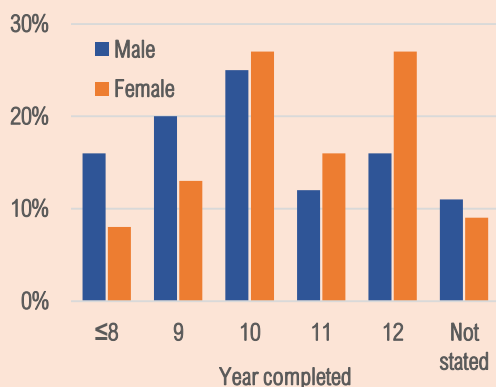
#### Family household composition



#### Median age of the population



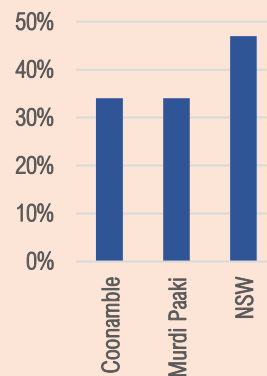
#### Highest year of schooling, all Aboriginal adults



35% of the Aboriginal population is aged under 15 years



#### Employment to population ratio



# Coonamble and Quambone

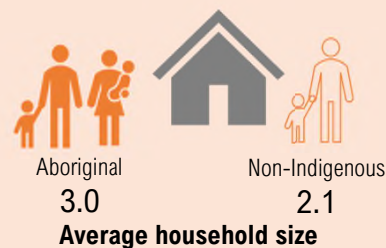
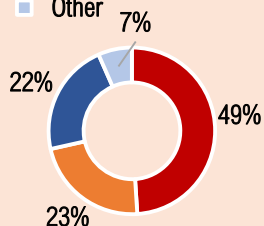
## Facts about housing in our community:



On Census night, 15% of private dwellings were not occupied

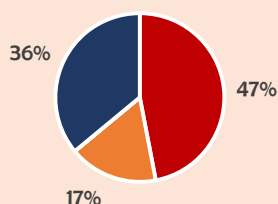
## Tenure type (from Census)

- Owners
- Private renters
- Social housing renters
- Other



Existing Aboriginal social housing					
Ownership	Bedrooms				
	1	2	3	4	5+
Coonamble LALC	5	2	21	15	3
MPRHC	1	2	12	2	2
AHO	-	7	20	12	2
LAHC	-	-	1	-	-
NSWALC	-	-	3	-	-
Total dwellings	6	11	57	29	7

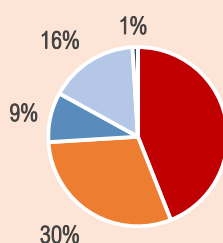
## Social housing manager(s)



- Local ACHP
- Regional ACHP
- Out of Region ACHP
- Community housing manager
- Public housing manager

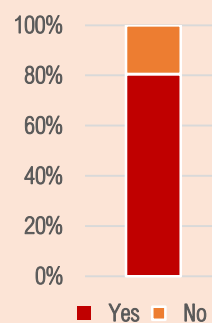
41% of households lived in the same house 5 years before the MRH&BC

## Satisfaction with housing manager

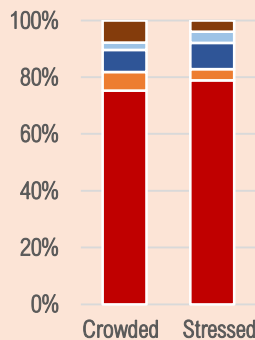


- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not stated

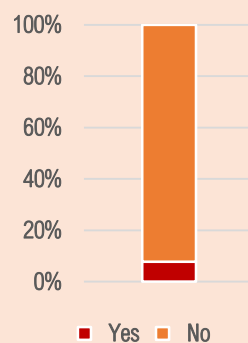
## Feeling safe



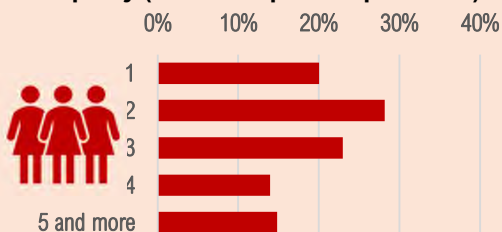
## Households feeling



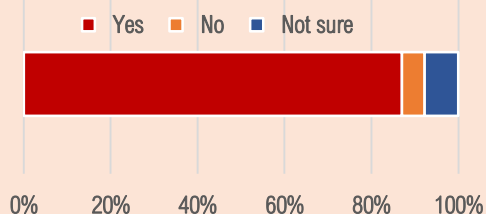
## Households giving shelter



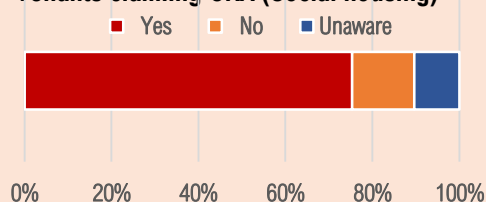
## Occupancy (number of persons per house)



## Tenants with a tenancy agreement



## Tenants claiming CRA (Social housing)



## REASONS FOR LIVING IN COONAMBLE

To be close to family and relations

79%

To be close to friends

69%

My family has been here a long time

64%

# Coonamble and Quambone

## ESTIMATE OF HOUSING NEED

### Predicted housing need

	Bedrooms			
	2	3	4	5
Families	11	1	2	1
Older persons	10	-	-	-
Young persons	8	-	-	-
Homeless families	8	-	2	-
Total dwellings	37	1	4	1

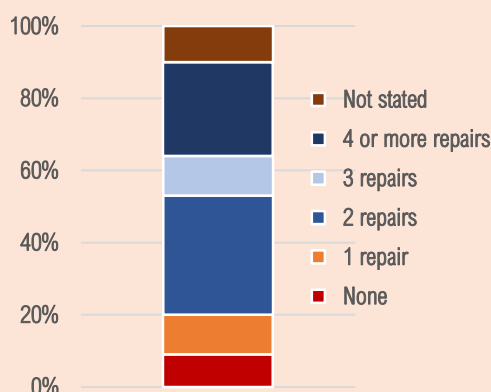
### Home modifications

Required	17
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### Extra bedrooms

	Bedrooms		
	1	2	3
Estimated	10	-	-

### Tenant reported condition



### Housing repairs

(Number of properties)

Degree of work	Number
↗	7
↗ ↗	63
↗ ↗ ↗	37
↗ ↗ ↗ ↗	1
↗ ↗ ↗ ↗ ↗	2

## MASTER PLAN - HOUSING



- Re-design the DCJ Housing Pathways application and allocation processes, and the transfer procedure, to ones that are simpler to navigate, remove unreasonable evidence barriers, and meet the realities of living in remote communities. Build into the system a way of reflecting the real need as recorded by ACHPs
- Request housing managers to jointly develop a replacement strategy and procedure for older and/or unsuitable housing and incorporate the results of the analysis as an item of the Property Management Plan for each house
- Involve the CWP in the allocation, planning and design of new houses to ensure the location, style and mix is adequate for tenant household composition and cultural practices, is affordable and provides choice
- Increase supply to meet demand arising from young persons wishing to live independently, young couples at family formation stage, individuals and families living in crowded households, older persons wishing to move to accessible housing for health-related reasons, and individuals and families who would otherwise be homeless
- Extend existing houses judged to be crowded with the addition of bedrooms and bathrooms
- As a matter of urgency, identify property condition for all Aboriginal social housing, secure funding for repair, maintenance and upgrades, and undertake works to restore structural soundness, functionality, amenity, safety and security
- Where repair does not provide value for money, demolish and replace
- Ensure that all homes are equipped with energy efficient air conditioning with sufficient capacity to deal with rising temperatures and with roof mounted-solar PV systems to reduce energy bills
- Ensure our Elders and those with a disability are adequately supported to live independently in their homes
- Arrange with the housing manager(s) to negotiate with the ACAT, registered Home Modifications providers, and funding body where necessary, to expedite home modification work on houses occupied by a household with a resident member with a disability
- Maintain the role of MP TSEP to support tenants at risk and to link with human and other services to support good physical and mental health and social and economic stability

# Coonamble and Quambone

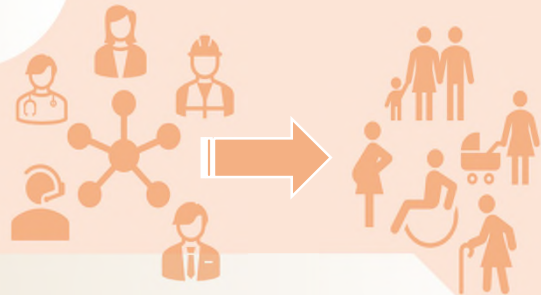
## MASTER PLAN - INFRASTRUCTURE



Advocate with Coonamble Shire Council and other responsible agencies for:

- Connection of on-site septic systems to town sewerage
- Kerb and guttering to those parts of town, sealing of Dubbo Lane, and improvement in town stormwater drainage systems to reduce the incidence of ponding
- A regular bulky waste collection service community-wide
- A dust mitigation strategy to reduce the risk of respiratory and other diseases and illnesses, and the burden of maintaining a clean home

The Master Plan sets out the actions the CWP has adopted to secure a better future for the community. The actions come from the contributions of the community and from analysis of the gaps which prevent people from living healthy, prosperous and comfortable lives in Coonamble and Quambone. The actions written into this Executive Summary are shorthand versions of the actions in the Plan itself



## MASTER PLAN - HUMAN SERVICES

- Engage with MPRA, DCJ and other agencies to advance the actions in the Community Action Plan in conjunction with the Housing and Environmental Health Plan
- Foster a closer relationship between the CWP and all tiers of government, including Council, to drive improvements in human services including a tighter focus on provider cooperation, service integration, performance and cost-effectiveness. Audit and review the role and operational objectives of all human services providers across all sectors with a view to lifting performance and value for community
- Work with DCJ and DSS to ensure that appropriate services are available to all community members who need disability care and packaged aged care, that assessments are conducted quickly, and to design and put in place accountability measures for service providers with regular feedback to MPRA and the CWP
- Develop a transport solution which will allow community members without a vehicle to attend to their daily household tasks and personal business, and to attend health appointments locally, and in regional centres
- Review the performance of employment services to determine whether the community is receiving an efficient service which results in Aboriginal people being job ready and finding work
- Negotiate with MPS for the creation of a Region-wide employment strategy which centres on the development of a local skills base with the capability to carry out housing-related projects
- In conjunction with MPS, DCJ and the NSW Police Force develop, resource and action a strategic response in the form of a Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan to the unacceptable level of social disturbance and crime





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## GLOSSARY

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACDP	Aboriginal Communities Development Programme
ACHP	Aboriginal Community Housing Provider
ACFI	Aged Care Funding Instrument
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Management Information System
AHO	NSW Aboriginal Housing Office
ALRA	Aboriginal Land Rights Act
ALT	Aboriginal Lands Trust
APB	Aborigines Protection Board
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AWB	Aborigines Welfare Board
CAP	Community Action Plan
CSC	Coonamble Shire Council
CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Programme
CNOS	Canadian Occupancy Standard
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
CWP	Community Working Party
DCJ	NSW Department of Communities and Justice
DCP	Development Control Plan
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
HCP	Home Care Package
HEHP	Housing and Environmental Health Plan
HLP	Healthy Living Practices
IBA	Indigenous Business Australia
IFD	Intensity Frequency Duration
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statement
MLAHMC	Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Management Cooperative
MPRA	Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly
MPRH&BC	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium
MPRHC	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation
MPS	Murdi Paaki Services Limited
MP TSEP	Murdi Paaki Tenant Support and Education Programme
NAHS	National Aboriginal Health Strategy
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NSHS	National Social Housing Survey
N-W NSW IREG	North-Western NSW Indigenous Region
NSWALC	New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council
OCHRE	Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment (NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs Plan)

RAHLA	Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly
REDI.E	Regional Enterprise Development Institute Ltd
SA1	ABS Statistical Area Level 1
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SOMIH	State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing
SSC	State Suburb
TAFE NSW	Technical and Further Education NSW
VET	Vocational Education and Training

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan has been prepared by the Coonamble-Wan-Gali Community Working Party with the help of Murdi Paaki Services Ltd. Coonamble-Wan-Gali Community Working Party acknowledges the contributions of all community members and others who participated in the development of this plan through offering their advice, knowledge and encouragement.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge and respect the efforts of those community members seeking to improve the wellbeing of all Aboriginal families and individuals living in our community.

For the purposes of this Plan, an Aboriginal person is a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (person) and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.

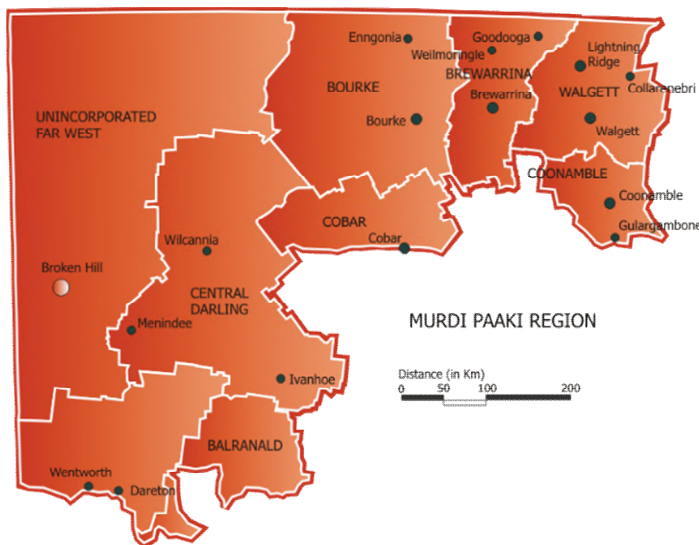


# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of the plan

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan (HEHP) is prepared by the Aboriginal community of Coonamble, in western NSW. The Coonamble community is one of sixteen larger communities within the Murdi Paaki Region shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Murdi Paaki Region



- Determine the need for and form of tenant support and education services;
- Contribute to a review of requirements for financial wellbeing of the Aboriginal social housing sector;
- Provide an informed basis for planning for future housing need and development, and associated value-adding initiatives; and
- Describe a high-level community-led approach to project master planning to shape the future of Aboriginal housing and related human services in Coonamble.

The Plan describes the aspirations of Aboriginal people living in Coonamble and outlines a strategic approach to achieving the community's goals. Planning is the necessary first step in a programme aimed at achieving better housing and environmental health outcomes by building and improving housing and environmental health infrastructure, together with related services and amenities in the community. The Aboriginal community of Coonamble, and particularly existing and prospective tenant households, will benefit directly through having the foundation of a more strategic, informed and innovative approach to resourcing and managing the Aboriginal social housing sector in the community.

The purpose of the HEHP is to:

- In conjunction with data collected through the Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium (MPRH&BC) project and described in the *Social Housing Providers and Assets Audit Report*, establish an evidence-base to guide the way in which housing policy is set and decisions are made in respect of Aboriginal social housing provision and management, and responses to environmental risk;
- Describe the current situation in relation to housing Aboriginal individuals and families in Coonamble;
- Gauge interest in home ownership;
- To the extent possible, report on the condition of Aboriginal social housing assets;
- Give an assessment of 'wrap-around' human services;

## 1.2 Governance arrangements

HEHPs are an initiative of the Murdi Paaki Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly (RAHLA), a partnership of Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly (MPRA) and the NSW Government created through the OCHRE Local Decision-Making policy and directed by the Ministerial Agreement to improve Aboriginal social housing outcomes in the Murdi Paaki Region.

The RAHLA sees the preparation of HEHPs in all Murdi Paaki communities as a priority project under the Agreement and has authorised Murdi Paaki Services Ltd (MPS) to carry out the project to begin the process of developing the evidence base for regional policy setting and decision making as a

vital step in rebuilding the social housing sector and the social and economic capabilities of the Region.

The Agreement sets a framework for the active participation of Murdi Paaki communities, through elected representative peak bodies, in the development and delivery of better services, and the building of individual and organisational capacity to raise skills, knowledge and competencies. In this regard, the Agreement recognises the status of the Coonamble Wan-Gali Community Working Party (CWP) as the principal point of contact for conducting business within the Aboriginal community and for leading the development of the HEHP planning process at community level.

### 1.3 Respecting Land Council autonomy

The roles and functions of Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) are defined in the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1982 (ALRA). Land Councils play a vital role in maintaining cultural practice, conserving Aboriginal heritage and recovering land alienated by European colonisation. This land may be used for cultural or economic purposes consistent with the aspirations of the LALC. LALCs also operate Community Benefit Schemes which may include Aboriginal social housing provision. In the Region, most LALCs are housing owners; some also manage their own housing and hold an inalienable right to make decisions in relation to their assets in accordance with the processes and constraints set out in the ALRA.

The Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly has made it a policy not to involve itself in matters of heritage and culture which are rightly the domain of the LALCs. Similarly, the Assembly recognises the autonomy of LALCs to make their own decisions in relation to their land and property. This Housing and Environmental Health Plan does not in any way impinge on the LALC's autonomy as a sovereign decision-maker in relation to its assets. In the interests of achieving maximum benefit for the community, the CWP invites Coonamble LALC to join its voice and hands in unity to advocate for and implement the change agenda set out in the Master Plan.

### 1.4 The bigger picture

This HEHP is intended to supplement the work undertaken to date through the MPRH&BC project with more detailed and targeted enquiry at community level.

Plans have been produced to a similar degree of detail for all communities across the Murdi Paaki Region, providing the opportunity for the MPRA to assess communities' strengths and needs both as individual communities and comparatively, in relation to each other. The Plans acknowledge the reality of the experiences of Aboriginal people living in far western NSW and form a resource for intelligent leadership and an integrated, creative response which places communities, to the greatest extent possible, as the principal drivers of sustainable local action.

Put together, it is hoped the HEHPs will:

- Reinststate and strengthen the capacity of Murdi Paaki regional and local Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) to ensure that all Aboriginal people living in Aboriginal social housing in the community can receive culturally appropriate, professional and sustainable tenancy and asset management services from ACHPs which themselves are viable and supported;
- Increase access, opportunity and choice in affordable, healthy and safe housing for Aboriginal persons and families living in Murdi Paaki communities through growing the size and mix of the ACHP asset base;
- Work to ensure that assets are maintained in good condition in the long term;
- Ensure that tenants most at risk of a tenancy breach can access the services they need to sustain their tenancies;
- Establish the level of financial investment in respect of capital and recurrent costs to ensure sector viability; and
- Set the foundation for procurement practices and value add initiatives which respond to the 'failed market' environment and benefit the community.

## 2 BRIEF HISTORY

### 2.1 Information sources

Material in this Chapter is drawn from a variety of sources, including Norman Tindale's *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia* (1974); Heather Goodall's doctoral dissertation (*A History of Aboriginal Communities in New South Wales, 1909-1939*) and her 1996 publication, *Invasion to Embassy*; the Powerhouse Museum's *Sharing a Wailwan Story Education Kit* (1999) and the related 1896 paper by R.H. Mathews entitled *The Burbung of the Wiradthuri Tribes*; the *Coonamble Shire Thematic History* and the *Report on the Community Based Heritage Study of the Coonamble Shire* prepared by prepared by Ray Christison of High Ground Consulting in 2009 and 2010 respectively; *Aboriginal Cultural Values of the Macquarie Marshes and Gwydir Wetlands – Oral History Component* prepared by Waters Consultancy for the New South Wales Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water in 2010; and the MA dissertation by William Rutherford entitled *Remembering Tin Town: Identifying and valuing Aboriginal reserve sites of New South Wales* (2019). Various editions of the *NSW Government Gazette* have been mined for information about Aboriginal reserves; as have the country and parish maps of the Land Registry Service Historical Land Records.

### 2.2 Snapshot

Coonamble is situated on the banks and floodplain of the Castlereagh River; the town extends eastwards towards Warrana Creek. Tindale places Coonamble close to the boundary between the Wailwan and Gawambaraay peoples. The town of Quambone is located right on the boundary of Wailwan and Gawambaraay land, to the west of Quambone and on the eastern fringe of the Macquarie Marshes.

The first European explorer to pass in the vicinity of latter-day Coonamble and Quambone was John Oxley, in 1818. Traditional affiliations to place were disrupted in the hostile colonisation phase of the mid-1800s by the influx of European pastoralists, and the Aboriginal traditional owners' access to country was increasingly constrained.

Enormous pastoral runs were occupied by European squatters, their cattle and sheep, and later, cultivation of field crops commenced.

The Coonamble waterhole at the confluence of the Castlereagh River and Warrana Creek was a significant site for Aboriginal people, and it formed the nucleus for the foundation of the town of Coonamble from 1855, when the Crown reserve for the settlement was declared, onwards. The focus of development initially was on the eastern side of the Castlereagh River but later moved to the western side. The arrival of the railway in 1902 accelerated the pace of development.

Land for the village of Quambone was reserved; lots set aside for public buildings, recreation and commonage; and the village was proclaimed, on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1894. The Quambone pastoral run had, though, functioned as a service centre for surrounding properties to the east of the Macquarie Marshes for over twenty years prior to that date, with a postal service having commenced on Quambone Station (then Merri) as early as 1861.

From the 1880s onwards, an increasingly draconian regime of 'protection' policy and practice constrained Aboriginal people's ability to make choices about their lives, and effectively imprisoned and enslaved most Aboriginal people who came within the orbit of first the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) then, from 1940, the Aborigines Welfare Board (AWB). Reserves were gazetted and, increasingly, limitations were placed upon Aboriginal people's rights to choose where they lived.

Segregation was a continuing theme through the narrative of Aboriginal/white relations in Coonamble into the second half of the twentieth century. Coonamble was, for example, distinguished by the local council's protracted opposition to approaches by the AWB to purchase land for construction of Aboriginal housing within the town boundaries. In 1960, this issue split the town; the conflict attracted widespread media coverage well beyond western NSW. In the succeeding decades, the Aboriginal Land Rights movement has led to communal Aboriginal

ownership of land and cultural continuity; Aboriginal community-controlled organisations have been established to meet needs within the community, and an enduring representative framework has evolved to amplify Aboriginal people's voices to decision-makers.

### 2.3 Aboriginal ownership

The town of Coonamble and the village of Quambone are both situated close to the boundary between the Wayilwan people, a dialect group of the Ngiyampaa Nation, and the Gawambaraay people, a dialect group of the Gamilaroi Nation. Tindale described Wayilwan country as extending from the "southern side of Barwon River from Brewarrina to Walgett; south along Marra Creek and the Castlereagh, Marthaguy, and Macquarie rivers; south to Quambone and to near Coonamble. His description of Gawambaraay country as the "Upper Castlereagh River, the middle Macquarie River, and part of Liverpool Plains south to near Dubbo." Both language groups are represented in the contemporary Coonamble Aboriginal community.

Evidence of pre-contact Aboriginal society indicates that different language groups lived in different ways; either moving through their own country on a path which took them to certain places at particular times, or as fairly settled communities who practised a form of agriculture. Country was divided in such a way that boundaries and localities could be readily identified by the practice of naming of landscape features. Aboriginal language groups had very complex kinship systems which controlled the way people were able to marry, and shaped formal relationships between family members and others.

Alienation of Aboriginal land for pastoral purposes began in the 1830s and 1840s, following the relaxation of restrictions against squatting beyond the "settled areas" in 1836. Through the 1830s and 1840s, massacres occurred in the region as the struggle over resources, and conflict over the abduction and sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women by white colonists, ensued. The history of the Waterloo Creek and Myall Creek massacres which occurred well to the east of Coonamble in

1838 is well known. In 1845, a punitive expedition against people described as the "Mole Tribe"<sup>1</sup> occurred when mounted police rode along the Macquarie River downstream from Warren into country west of Quambone to capture six people sought for property offences. The group resisted, with one police officer being injured; ten to twelve of the "Mole Tribe" were shot and killed by the police but the others escaped. Over the following two decades, though, as pastoral industry became entrenched, employment for Aboriginal people and the creation of camps on pastoral runs such as Wingadee, Quambone Station, Tonderburine, Murraiman, Tooloon, Sandy Camp and Ringorah, meant that ties to places of significance could be maintained for the time being. The presence of these camps reflected the labour needs of the properties. Housing was not provided to the Aboriginal workers; they constructed their own huts from whatever materials were available; through the early days of the camps, these tended to be traditional shelters built from traditional materials.

For Wayilwan, Gawambaraay and their neighbours, traditional cultural practices extended well into the period of colonisation. Surveyor and amateur anthropologist R.H. Matthews described two ceremonial occasions which took place on or close to Bulgeraga Creek in 1893 and 1898. The second of these was photographed by Charles Kerry, with the permission of the participants. The photographs, narrative and oral history form the basis of the touring exhibition and accompanying educational material *Telling a Wayilwan Story*. Matthews's description of the event indicate that about 200 people took part, coming from locations as far away as Brewarrina, Trangie, Dubbo and "Conkapeak" (Coronga Peak, west of Byrock?), that nine young men were initiated, and that the ceremonies took place over a period of at least three months. Matthews's identification of the ceremonies as rites of Wiradjuri people is clearly incorrect. The educational resources imply that the ceremonies were convened within the

<sup>1</sup> The "Mole Tribe" were Gawambaraay according to Tindale but Christison says Wayilwan, and Wayilwan seems far more likely given the number of locality names ending in '-bone' – the Wayilwan Ngiyampaa *puwaan*, meaning 'having'

Quambone pastoral run; however, Mathews's description of the place where the 1893 ceremony took place makes it clear that both ceremonies were located on Bulgeraga Creek within the Wallamgambone run; the first about two miles upstream of the Mole Reserve on the left bank of the creek, and the second just north of the Mole Reserve on the right bank (see below). The fact that the APB was providing rations over the course of both ceremonies further suggests proximity to the reserve.

Later in the 19th century, the original pastoral runs were broken up, with approximately half of each property resumed and reallocated. Closer settlement initiatives continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century; these had a severe impact on employment prospects for Aboriginal people who were dependent upon pastoral and domestic work on the pastoral runs, and on an ongoing economic association with these properties for the ability to continue to live in station camps on traditional Country. Even so, small family groups continued to live and work on pastoral stations in the Macquarie Marshes up to the mid twentieth century. The larger community settlements, though, had disappeared as Aboriginal people were forced off Country. As Bertie Bartholomew noted in an interview at Quambone in 2007 for the *Aboriginal Cultural Values of the Macquarie Marshes and Gwydir Wetlands* project: "The reason why a lot of people moved is because they put them on trucks and moved them out. And when they moved them out they burnt a lot of their original graves and scarred trees they had out there in the Marshes. A lot of them were burnt. Also white people didn't want them out there, so they moved them off. ... They moved them into Quambone here and into Coonamble, Brewarrina, Bourke ... and a lot of the property owners wouldn't allow them to come back."

In 1882, the Aborigines Protection Act passed through the NSW Parliament, and a Protector of Aborigines was appointed. This had ramifications for Aboriginal people which lasted directly until the 1960s, and which still affects the way Aboriginal families live their lives. The effect of that Act, and particularly of subsequent amendments, was that Aboriginal people were made wards of the state, and lost autonomy to make decisions about the

way they lived their lives. Aboriginal people were robbed of the right to decide where to live, whom and when to marry, how to raise their children, what jobs to take, and every other facet of existence which anyone else would take for granted. The ironically named Protector of Aborigines commenced the establishment of reserves and government ration stations for Aboriginal people in the 1880s.

Both Coonamble and Quambone have seen a succession of Aboriginal reserves and informal camps. The first reserve in the Coonamble area was proclaimed on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1893 (R.17,576 and 17,577). This reserve, with an area of 15 acres (about six hectares) was located within the resumed area of the Wingadee pastoral run, on Terembone Creek, about 42 km direct distance north of Coonamble, and was known variously as Terembone or Redbank Mission as shown in Figure 2.1. On 20<sup>th</sup> October 1900, the area of the reserve was increased to 65 acres (26 ha) (R. 31,713 and 31,714). This reserve was revoked on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1922 as the property was broken up post-World War I for soldier settlement. A second reserve, also within the revoked area of Wingadee Holding, was reserved from sale on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1900 (R.31,811) and from lease on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1901 (R. 32,170). This reserve, with an area of 40 acres, was situated close to the confluence of the Castlereagh River and Mowlma Creek, about 18 km north-north-west of Coonamble. Figure 3.2 shows the location. It was revoked on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1931. On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1909, a third reserve was gazetted in the Coonamble area (R. 43,948 and 43,949). This parcel of land, with an area of 20 acres, was only 4 km north of the town, on the Castlereagh River as indicated by Figure 2.3. It was revoked on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1921. A fourth reserve (R.86,570), details of which are included at Figure 2.4, was gazetted on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1967, within the town boundary. The best-remembered discrete settlement was not a formal reserve at all. Tin Town, located at the confluence of the Castlereagh River and Warrana Creek, was an informal camp which survived from the early years of the twentieth century (or perhaps even before) until the 1970s. Also called "The Island", it was floodprone; located on an area between Warrana Creek and a flood channel which would have been cut off during periods of high flow. Figure 2.5

refers. Tin Town was demolished when the ring levee was constructed in 1975, and the remains bulldozed into the adjacent tip and burned. William Rutherford, in his MA thesis, explored the history and meaning of this area for the Coonamble community.

The first reserve in the vicinity of Quambone was The Mole, gazetted originally with an area of 1,200 acres (486 ha) on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1897 (R. 25,955 and 25,956). The site was within the leasehold area of the Wallamgambone holding as shown at Figure 2.6, about 28 km directly west-north-west from Quambone and, given its proximity to the bora ground and other ceremonial landscape features described by Mathews, was almost certainly a camping area of long standing. Then, on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1901, the reserve was revoked and a new reserve gazetted to the south (R. 32,750) with a much reduced area (60 acres, or about 24 hectares). Figure 2.7 refers. This reserve was then revoked on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1922. A further reserve, an area of 43 acres (about 17 ha) within the village, was gazetted on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1931 (R. 63,088 and 63,089). It was situated immediately to the south of Cooma Street. On 17<sup>th</sup> September 1943, the same area was gazetted again as an addition to the town common without the original reserve having been revoked; then, on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1960, both earlier reserves were revoked, and a smaller area of 4 acres was reserved (R. 82,413) – this appears on the charting map as a “reserve for use by Aborigines” but no specific use is identified in the Gazette. An erratum published on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1960 excludes the 4 acre area from the revocation. The reserve was finally revoked on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1975.

Bertie Bartholomew observed in an interview at Quambone in 2007 for the *Aboriginal Cultural Values of the Macquarie Marshes and Gwydir Wetlands* project that there had been another Quambone reserve: “When they moved the Aborigines out of the Marshes into Quambone, this is where they moved them to. And this is where they scarred the trees back then. This is just out on the ... about two mile out of Quambone here on the Merri\_Merri [Creek] just out here ... Yeah, that was a reserve ... An Aboriginal reserve

that was on private land ... It was about 2,000 acres ... They built their own humpies out there and they engraved trees there. But they moved them off there into Quambone here. They went out and burnt the trees, the property owners. That was back in the ‘50s or ‘60s.” It has not been possible to find any reference to such a reserve in the NSW Government Gazette or on Land Titles Office charting maps, and it seems likely that this was an informal camp. It was from this camp that people were relocated to the reserve in Cooma Street identified in Figure 2.8.

Through the years that the protection regime operated, Aboriginal people continued to live in pastoral camps on properties where they could. When the camps on Wingadee were broken up in the 1920s, residents moved to Coonamble or Walgett (where their children could attend the mission school at Namoi Bend), or to the Pilliga Aboriginal Station so that their children were able to attend the “special” school which had opened there in 1912. There was much justifiable fear about the APB removing children who were not attending school, but segregation operated in several public schools through this period, so a move to Pilliga was the least worst option for many of these families.

The Great Depression impacted heavily on people who had been dependent upon pastoral work in the Quambone area. Aboriginal people were provided with APB rations only, and not State Food Relief. They were forced to work for the APB rations: in Quambone, people were reduced to fencing the police station to receive rations. Rations were cut off if people refused to work on pastoral properties at under-award wages. Reporting of the situation led to an APB focus on Quambone and, during the first half of 1925, about twenty people from Quambone and the Sandy Camp property to the west were forcibly trucked to the Brewarrina Aboriginal Station, causing great misery. Within two years, most people (except for one woman who married in Brewarrina) walked back to Quambone, or to Warren or Dubbo.

Figure 2.1: Terembone or Redbank Mission

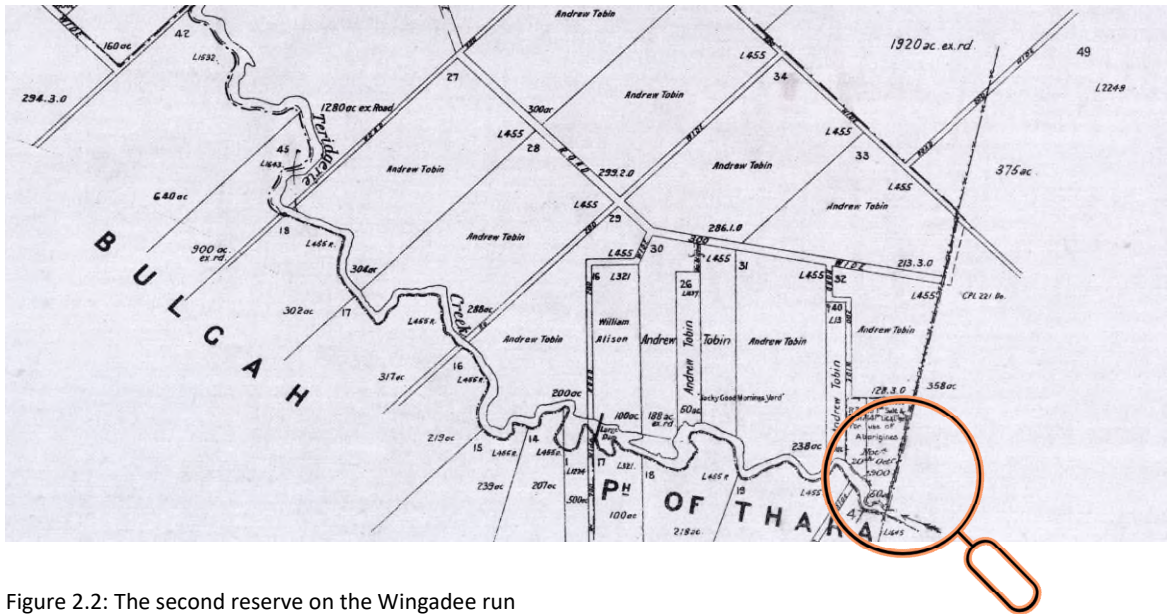


Figure 2.2: The second reserve on the Wingadee run

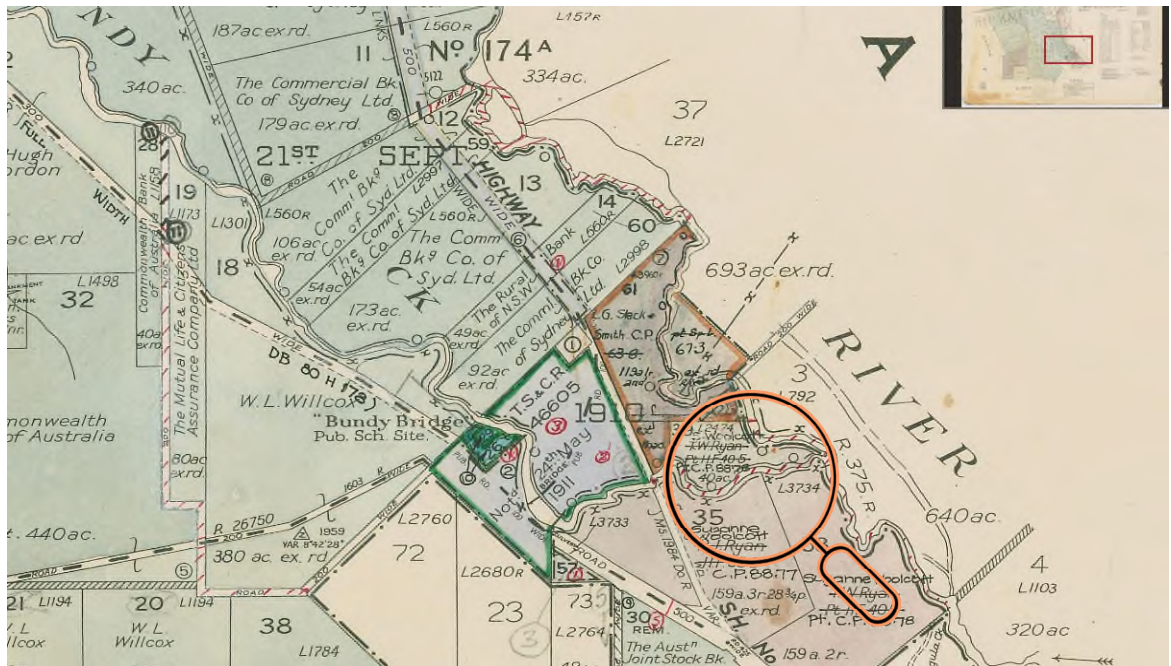


Figure 2.3: The third reserve, just north of Coonamble

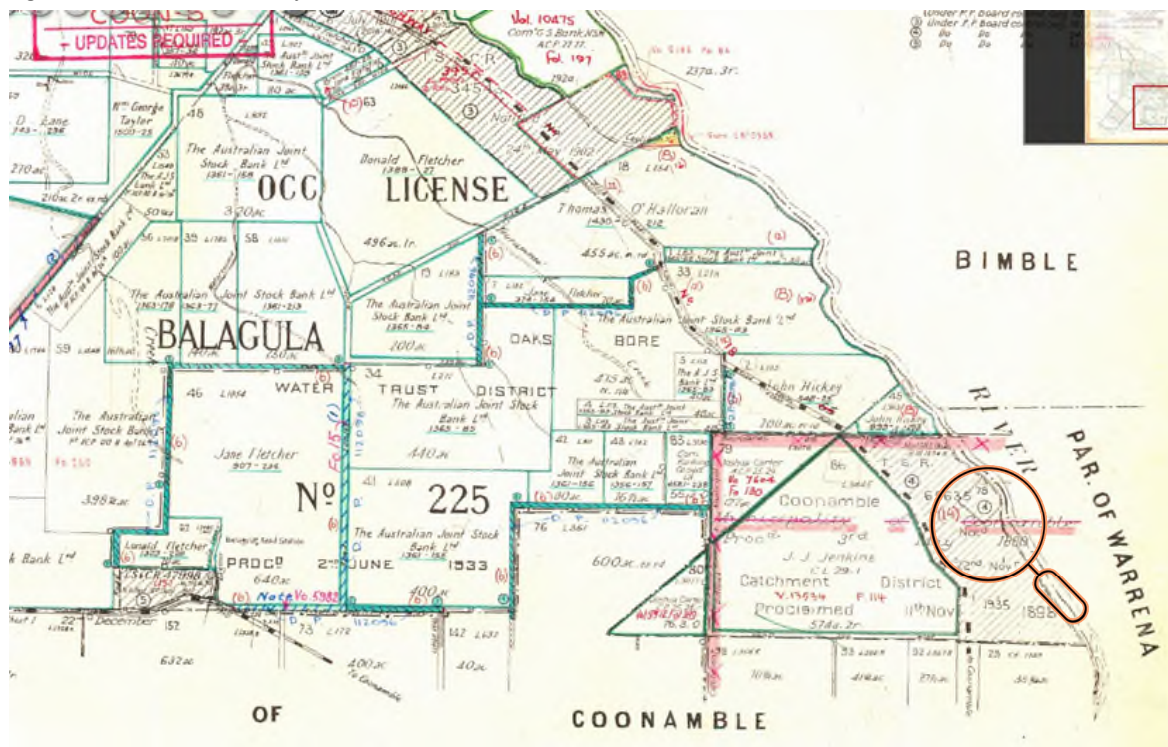


Figure 2.4: The fourth reserve, within the town boundary

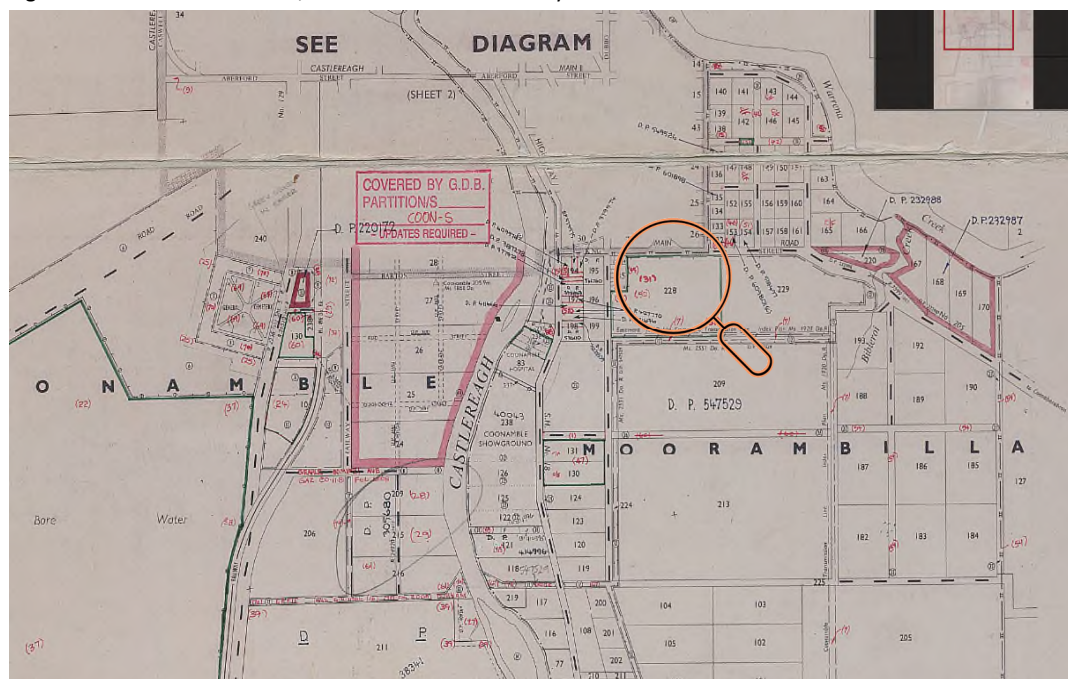


Figure 2.5: The approximate location of “Tin Town”, or “The Island”



Figure 2.6: The original “Mole Reserve” on Bulgeraga Creek

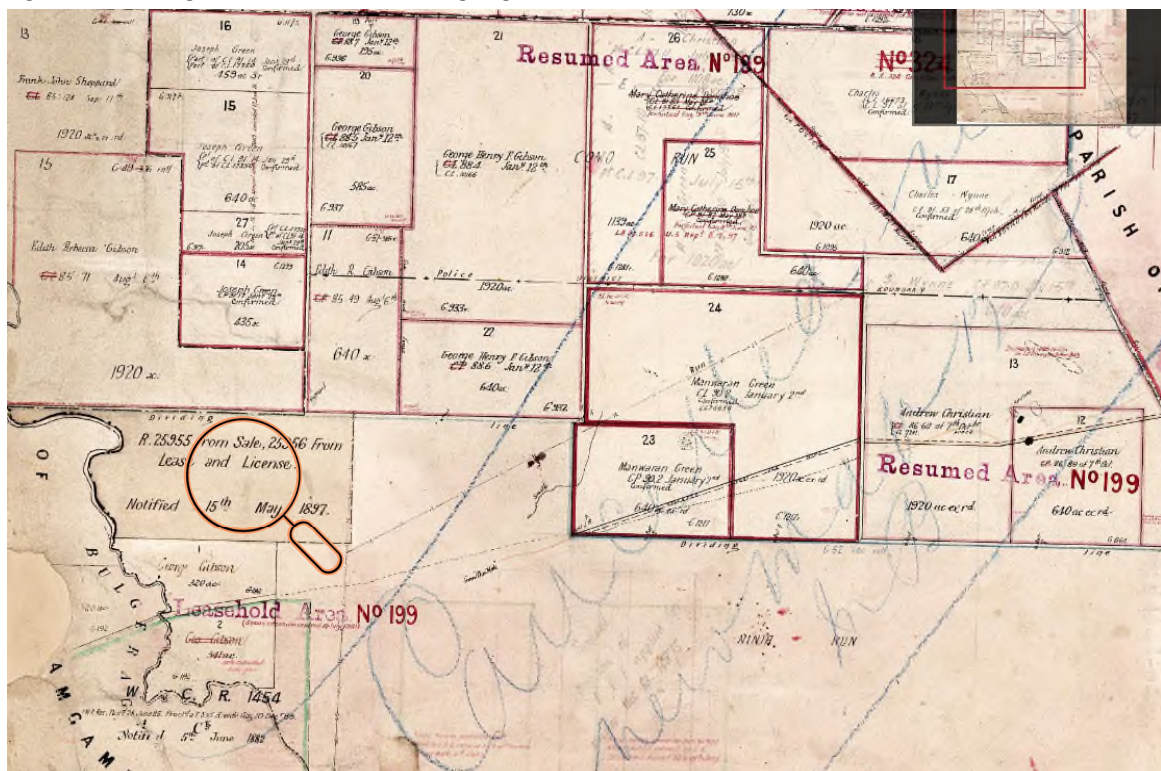


Figure 2.7: The second, and smaller, Mole Reserve, upstream (south) from the original 1897 reserve

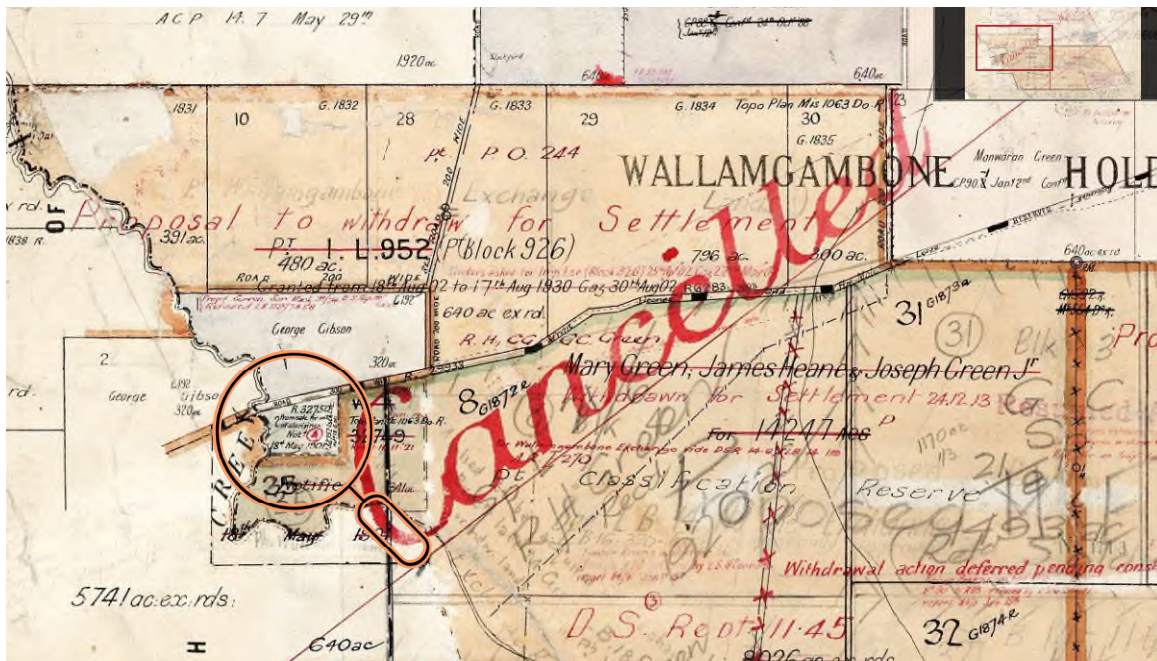
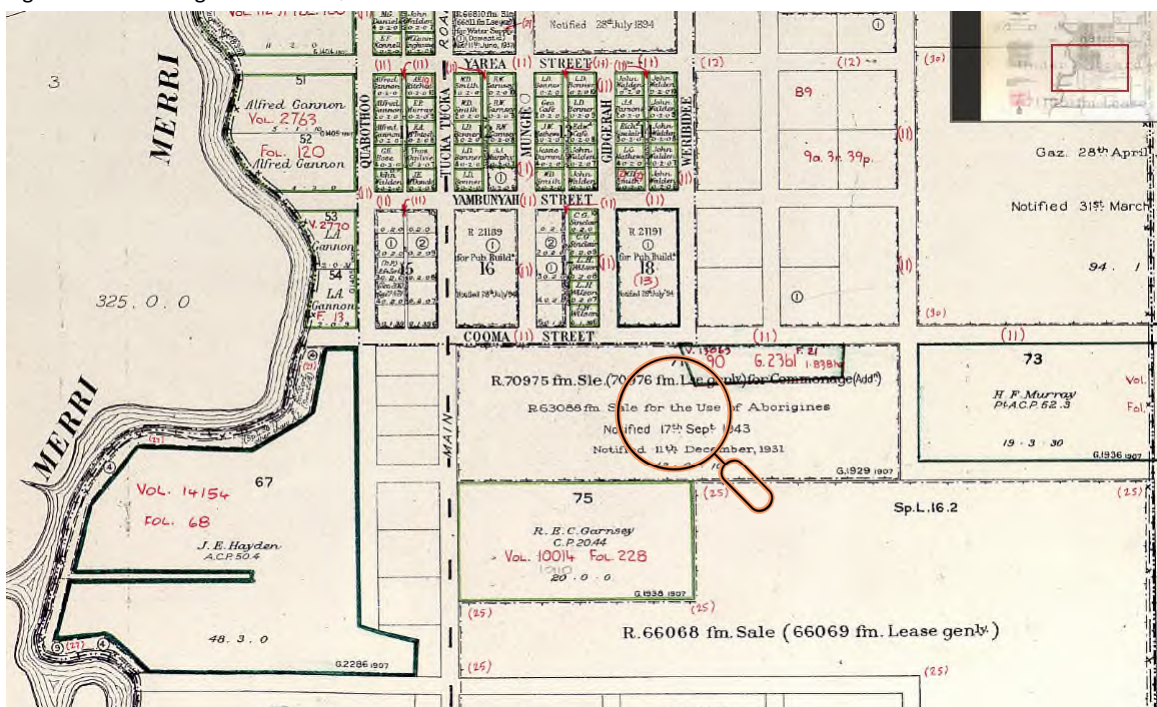


Figure 2.8: The village reserve in Quambone



Source all: NSW Land Registry Service Parish and Historical Maps

## 2.4 Aboriginal people, the town of Coonamble and the village of Quambone

Life in Coonamble, well into the 1960s, was characterised by rigid, entrenched segregation. Aboriginal people were not permitted to live within the town area. In other towns during the 1950s and 1960s, the AWB, which had replaced the APB in 1940, had begun to create reserves 'for use of Aborigines' within town boundaries. In 1960, according to Heather Goodall, a protracted stand-off took place between elements in the white community, the Coonamble Municipal Council and the AWB over whether land in town was to be made available for Aboriginal housing. Council, on several occasions, refused AWB requests to make land available for purchase to house families selected from Tin Town. Then, several sympathetic white residents formed the "Aboriginal Welfare Association" (AWA) and one member quietly purchased three lots from a Council sale for unpaid rates. The purchaser then informed Council that the lots would be transferred to the AWA and thence to the AWB. Council initially agreed but, following receipt of representations from 117 residents of the town, revoked approval. A furore ensued; Aboriginal people within the town felt a real apprehension of danger, with racist slurs and threats a daily occurrence. Then, Council held a public meeting. Aboriginal people were not invited but five women attended nonetheless, and Mrs Kathleen Boney spoke on behalf of the community. The initial vote, which the Aboriginal women did not participate in, was tied; these women did participate in a second vote, and the transfer to the AWB followed. Eventually, four houses were built but most families remained in Tin Town for the time being.

Following the repeal of the Aborigines Protection Act, provision of Aboriginal-identified housing changed. Housing which had been owned by the AWB was transferred to the NSW Housing Commission and then, in 1975, to the NSW Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) (it was at this point that remaining reserves were revoked). Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1984, in parallel with

proclamation of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act and, in turn, received the assets which had been held by the ALT.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the focus turned to land rights and civic engagement and, as a result, to the development of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to meet the needs of the community. Dennewan Housing Aboriginal Corporation was established prior to 1978, and provided housing, social infrastructure and economic programmes. Then, in 1986, Castlereagh Housing Aboriginal Corporation was registered. As well as housing, this organisation also provided CDEP services under the name Ellimatta CDEP, and the name of the organisation was changed to Ellimatta Housing Aboriginal Corporation in 1993. Coonamble Aboriginal Health Service Ltd commenced operations in 2017 and was incorporated as an association in NSW in 2020. In 2020, Ngarranggarni Ltd (Dreamtime Housing) was incorporated; Dreamtime Housing is now a member of the Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium. In Quambone, Macquarie Marshes Aboriginal Corporation was registered in 2009; it undertakes heritage, cultural and economic activities on behalf of the community.

In 1990, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) came into being. Coonamble initially elected two representatives to the ATSIC Wirrawongam Regional Council but, following the amalgamation of ATSIC regions in 1993, was not directly represented on the Murdi Paaki Regional Council.

Following the successful commencement of major housing and infrastructure projects in Dareton and Wilcannia, funding was allocated in 1997 to Coonamble under the National Aboriginal Health Strategy to address housing need and infrastructure issues in the community. Then, in May 1998 the NSW Government announced an allocation of \$200M over the following seven years to Aboriginal housing and infrastructure projects. This initiative, labelled the Aboriginal Communities Development Programme (ACDP), involved allocation of capital works funding to most communities in the Murdi Paaki Region, including Coonamble, designated a 'priority community'. In parallel with allocation of capital works funding under the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS), the Coonamble Community Working Party

was created in 1997 to govern the roll-out of NAHS and other development projects. Quambone was not included in either NAHS or ACDP; consequently, it has never had a CWP of its own, but is able to raise its issues and aspirations through the Coonamble CWP.

The first Coonamble Housing and Environmental Health Plan prepared flowed from allocation of funding, establishment of the CWP and appointment of a project manager. This Plan documented housing and infrastructure needs within the community, and the works were carried out over the following few years. Then, in the mid-2000s, the Murdi Paaki COAG Trial led to preparation by the CWP of a Community Action Plan (CAP). The most recent CAP was prepared in 2019. The Coonamble CWP emerged from these projects with a highly developed governance capacity.

With the destruction of ATSIC in 2005, arrangements for provision of CDEP came to an end, thus eroding the capacity of the community to undertake independent economic development. However, creation of the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly provided the opportunity for Coonamble to be represented at the Assembly table on the same basis as each other community in the Region, by the CWP Chair. This it has done diligently.

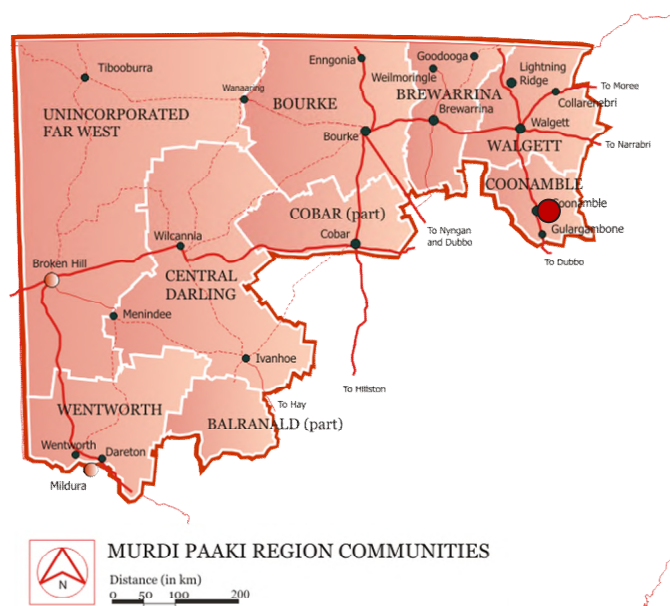


### 3 GEOGRAPHY

#### 3.1 Location

Coonamble is located in western New South Wales, 532 km to the north-west of Sydney. The town is the largest settlement in Coonamble Shire servicing the villages of Gulargambone and Quambone. The nearest regional centre is Dubbo, 160 km to the south. The location of Coonamble is shown in Figure 3.1. Of the villages, Gulargambone and Quambone have discrete Aboriginal populations as evidenced by the presence of separate Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs). The Gulargambone community is preparing its own HEHP while the small Quambone community, 55 km due west of Coonamble, is included within the scope of this HEHP.

Figure 3.1: Locality



Lightning Ridge. The highway north of Coonamble is susceptible to being cut by overtopping of the Castlereagh River and overland flow. A single lane rural road connects Coonamble to Coonabarabran to the east. Quambone is accessed by way of the sealed Quambone Road.

Coonamble aerodrome (YCNM) to the south-west of the town adjacent to the Castlereagh River is a CASA-certified aerodrome with a bitumen runway 1,530 m long x 30 m wide, aligned north-east to south-west, and a shorter natural runway 580 m in length designated 12/30. The aerodrome is owned and operated by Coonamble Shire Council. The aerodrome is licensed for Regular Public Transport services but there are currently no scheduled flights. Use is mainly by the local aero club.

A branch of the Main West Line extends from Dubbo to Coonamble. The rail passenger service between the two towns ended in the 1970s but the line is still operational for the seasonal carriage of freight; mainly grain.

The only daily public transport service available to Coonamble residents is the Trainlink rail service between Sydney and Dubbo, with coach service onward to Coonamble and then Lightning Ridge. Total travel time from Sydney is about 9 hours. A twice weekly bus service operates between Dubbo and St George in Queensland via Coonamble and Lightning Ridge. There is no public transport service of any form to Quambone.

a passenger service between Dubbo and Coonamble This ended in the 1970s

#### 3.2 Access

Coonamble is a regional agricultural hub on the central-western plains. The town is on the Castlereagh Highway which commences at Lithgow at its junction with the Great Western Highway and continues in a north-westerly direction through the regional centre of Mudgee, then Dunedoo and Gilgandra to cross the Queensland border north of

#### 3.3 Natural environment

The country immediately around Coonamble has little topographic relief, the landscape is flat with the ephemeral Castlereagh River and tributary creeks the primary features. There are no distinct hills or ridges. Elevation of the town centre is 183 m above sea level and the country falls very gradually to the north.

Coonamble is located at the eastern edge of the Darling Riverine Plains bioregion. Soils are predominately heavy grey clays, often cracking, with localised areas of brown clays. Smaller areas of red sandy loam soils occur usually along the outer edges of floodplains or between old watercourses. The bed of the Castlereagh River is of yellow sands. Surface geology immediately to the east of Coonamble transitions from alluvial soils to erosion-derived unconsolidated sediments deposited downslope from the Warrumbungles.

Extensive clearing of the district for agricultural purposes has removed much of the native vegetation. Where native vegetation remains, floodplain clays typically support open coolibah and black box woodlands with myall woodlands on portions more prone to severe cracking. The vegetation of the sandy lenses is typically poplar box and, in places, white cypress pine. Moderate to dense stands of river red gum and paper bark woodlands line the Castlereagh River.

Grasslands and shrublands have been heavily impacted by invasive weed species. Remaining native grasses are dominated by mitchell grass, neverfail, and other species such as windmill grass and coolah grass.

Habitat loss through clearing for agriculture and encroachment by feral animals have depleted the range of fauna species and numbers supported by these woodland communities. Still, the NPWS Wildlife Atlas records sightings of a wide range of amphibians and reptiles, water birds, nectar- and insect-eating birds, parrots, birds of prey, kangaroo and wallaby species, bats and species of small tree and ground-dwelling mammals in the vicinity of Coonamble. The red kangaroo population is estimated by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) to be a quarter of that estimated in 2017 while the grey kangaroo population has fallen to 37% of the 2014 estimate.

Quambone is located adjacent to Merri\_Merri Creek. The village is at an elevation of 156 m and

is on lenses of red brown earths surrounded by heavier grey brown clays. The country has been extensively cleared and remaining native vegetation, visible in Figure 3.2, is open myall woodland. The village is 18 km from the

Figure 3.2: Quambone village and immediate surrounds



Source: Image©2021 Maxar Technologies  
Macquarie Marshes.

### 3.4 Climate

Coonamble's climate may be described as hot, dry semi-arid. Weather data has been recorded at Coonamble from 1878. The Coonamble Comparison site (051010) collected some weather data for the years 1878 to 2010, with additional data from 1965, to be superseded by the Coonamble Airport station (051161) for years from 1997. For the purposes of this Plan, climate data for Coonamble Airport has been used to generate climate characteristics. A weather station has been operational at the Quambone Station site (051042) 49 km from Coonamble since 1900 but the range of observations is limited and not complete.

Temperature-related information is shown from Figure 3.3 to Figure 3.5. Mean monthly temperatures range from a low of 4°C to a high of 35°C with the highest temperature recorded being 47.6°C in 2014. Figure 3.4 indicates that temperatures above 30°C are recorded for a mean

of 132 days each year and above 35°C for 54 days each year.

Figure 3.5 investigates the trend in highest monthly temperature over the relatively short period of record of Coonamble Airport. The graph points to a gradual rise in higher temperatures over the time of record. If this trend continues, the community can expect to live with more extreme temperatures for longer.

In November 2014, the former NSW Office of Environment and Heritage released its *Central West and Orana Climate Change Snapshot* which provided predictions based on modelling of changes in climate for NSW. The projected impact for residents of Coonamble is an increase in the number of days with temperatures over 35°C of 10-20 days in the period 2020–2039, increasing to 30-40 additional days by 2070.

Figure 3.3: Temperatures

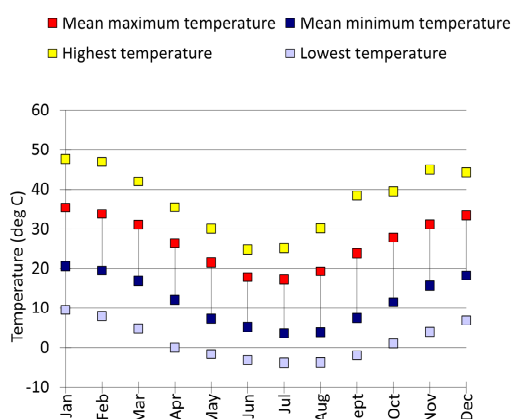


Figure 3.4: Mean number of hot days

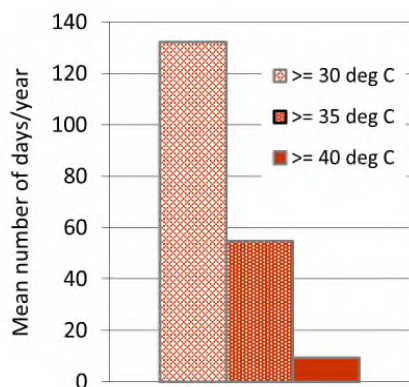
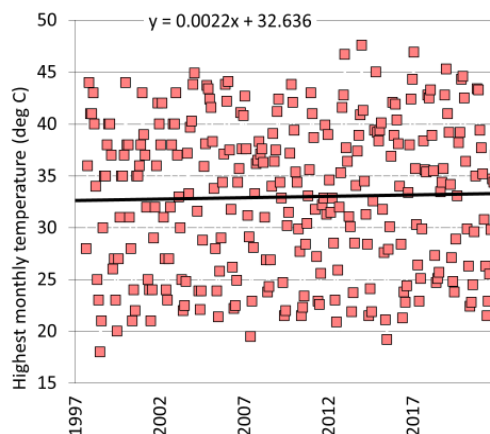
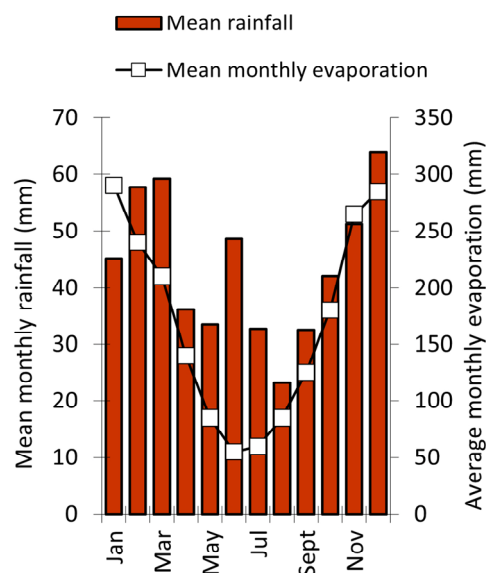


Figure 3.5: Trend in highest monthly temperatures



Mean annual rainfall calculated from 21 years of records at Coonamble Airport between 1997 and 2001 is 527.7 mm. Highest rainfall occurs during the summer months. Monthly rainfall distribution and average monthly pan evaporation are shown in Figure 3.6. Average monthly pan evaporation estimated from Bureau of Meteorology mapping is well in excess of the mean monthly rainfall throughout the year.

Figure 3.6: Rainfall and monthly pan evaporation



Change in relative humidity over the year is shown in Figure 3.7. Mean humidity is typically above

40% in the morning, the threshold accepted as ideal for human health and comfort, for all the year, but reduces to below 40% into the afternoon in the summer months.

Prevailing winds are from the north-east in the morning, moving to south-westerlies in the afternoon. Mean morning and afternoon wind speeds are shown in Figure 3.8. Maximum wind gust speed for the years 2003 to 2021 recorded at Coonamble Airport is 113 km/hr as indicated by Figure 3.9.

Figure 3.7: Relative humidity

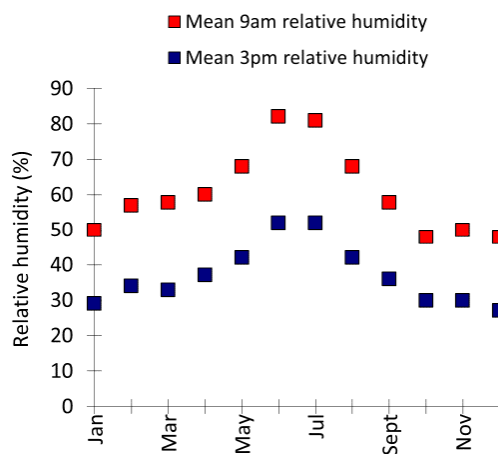


Figure 3.8: Wind speed

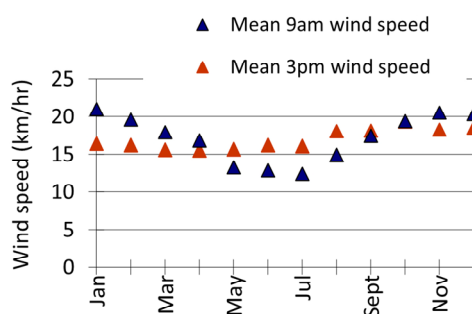
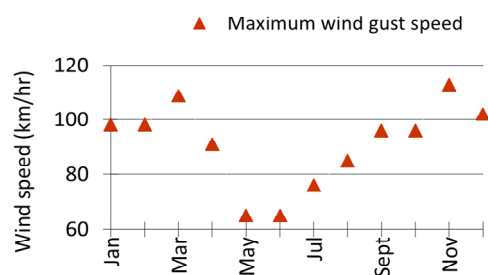
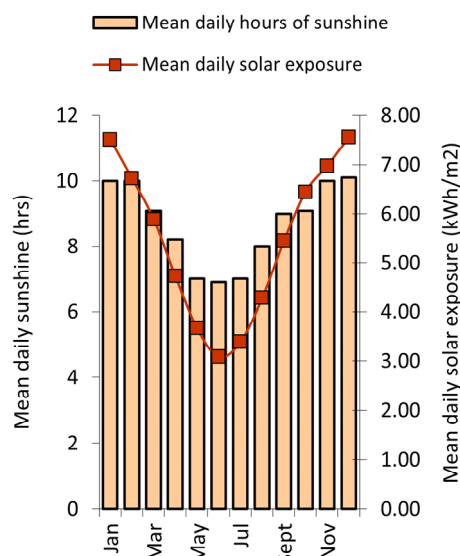


Figure 3.9: Maximum wind gust



Mean daily hours of sunshine and solar exposure is given by Figure 3.10. Solar energy available to residential solar PV installations varies from a low 3.0 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> in winter to a high of 7.6 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> at the height of summer.

Figure 3.10: Sunshine and solar exposure



### 3.5 Flooding and drainage

Coonamble sits on the Castlereagh River which rises on the eastern slopes of the Warrumbungle Range in Coonabarabran Local Government Area (LGA). The river passes through Gilgandra, Gulargambone and Coonamble before joining the Macquarie and Barwon Rivers west of Walgett to become part of the Barwon-Darling River system. Flows in the Castlereagh are augmented by flows in numerous tributaries rising on the western

slopes of the Warrumbungles. River systems in the Barwon-Darling catchment, in conjunction with their tributaries, form a complex network of channel and overbank flow patterns during times of flood, with patterns depending very much on the origins and timing of flow in discrete river and creek catchments, topography and vegetation. Coonamble is most likely to experience floods during summer months. Since 1950, most floods classified as moderate have occurred between October and April. Flood classification adopted by the NSW State Emergency Service for Coonamble is shown at Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Flood classification

Flood classification	Gauge height (m)		
	Minor	Moderate	Major
Coonamble gauge	-	4.9	5.2
Quambone gauge	No gauge installed		

Source: Coonamble Local Flood Plan, 2013, NSW State Emergency Service

Within Coonamble LGA, the Castlereagh has formed natural levees higher than the banks and adjacent floodplain so overbank flows, when they do occur, can inundate very large areas and hold back flows in tributaries. East Coonamble, at the confluence of the Castlereagh River and Warrana Creek, is protected from flooding by a composite levee comprising an earth embankment with two sections of reinforced concrete retaining wall. Crest design level has been set at a Coonamble gauge height of 5.3 m plus 0.6 m freeboard. Gauge zero is RL 175.169 m AHD. West Coonamble has no levee but earth embankments have been constructed at low spots to contain floodwaters within the main channel.

Past flooding events occurring before the construction of the current levee and Warrana Creek Weir have resulted in major evacuations from East Coonamble and inundation of properties up to a depth of 1.2 m above floor level.

The *West Coonamble Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan*, 2021, prepared by Jacobs Group (Australia) Pty Ltd for Coonamble Shire Council, quotes the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood gauge height as 5.65 m or RL 180.82 m AHD. By way of definition, a 1% AEP

flood is a flood that has a 1% chance of occurring, or being exceeded, in any one year. The gauge height that would be reached by an extreme or Probable Maximum Flood has been calculated to be 5.7 m or RL 180.87 m AHD. The flood of record is 5.65 m or RL 180.82 m AHD.

Access along the Castlereagh Highway north and south is possible up until floodwaters reach a Coonamble gauge height of 5.1 m at which level closure may be necessary because debris and loss of visibility of the carriageway. Closure may last for only two to three days or, in severe events, a week, depending on the extent of damage to the carriageway.

Quambone, although not on a major watercourse, is close to the Macquarie Marshes and can be isolated as unsealed roads are cut by flooding from Merri\_Merri Creek to the west or other creeks to the east of the village located along the Coonamble Road. When this road and the Quambone to Carinda Road are cut, the only access to Quambone is by way of Warren. Flooding is usually only for short periods although a small number of houses could be inundated in major flood events.

The *Quambone Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan*, 2021, also prepared by Jacobs Group (Australia) Pty Ltd for Coonamble Shire Council, advises that the village has experienced more than 12 flood events since 1950. Modelling by Jacobs suggests that flooding will impact the village in a 5% AEP event to a depth of up to 2.0 m on Quabothoo Street and central parts of the village while extensive flooding of the entire village is predicted to occur in the 1% AEP event with areas being submerged a depth of up to 2.0 m. The Floodplain Risk Management Plan proposes a range of planning and construction-related measures in response.

Table 3.2 provides an indication of the highest daily rainfall on record and the year of occurrence for each month for the Coonamble Airport station.

Table 3.2: Highest daily rainfall total, (mm), 051161

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
121.4	122.9	108.5	73.7	87.9	92.6
1984	1890	1894	1990	1980	2016
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
70.9	51.8	66.5	73.7	97.8	171
1998	1971	1906	1973	1950	2007

Rainfall intensity-frequency-duration (IFD) values are shown at Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Rainfall IFD (-30.9625, 148.3875)

Duration	IFD Design Rainfall Depth (mm)			
	Annual Exceedance Probability			
	10%	5%	2%	1%
1 min	3.84	4.48	5.35	6.05
2 min	6.73	7.87	9.39	10.6
3 min	9.23	10.8	12.9	14.5
4 min	11.4	13.3	15.9	17.9
5 min	13.3	15.5	18.6	20.9
10 min	20.5	23.9	28.6	32.3
20 min	29.0	33.9	40.6	45.9
30 min	34.4	40.2	48.2	54.5
1 hour	43.8	51.3	61.5	69.6
2 hours	53.8	62.9	75.3	85.0
6 hours	71.6	83.5	99.6	112
12 hours	85.4	99.5	119	134
18 hours	94.7	110	132	148
24 hours	102	119	141	160
48 hours	119	140	167	189
72 hours	129	152	182	206
96 hours	136	159	191	216
120 hours	140	163	196	222

### 3.6 Native title

Gomeri peoples lodged a Native Title claim (NC2011/006) in 2011 over Country extending from the Upper Hunter to the Queensland border, incorporating the New England North West and parts of the Central West, and including parts of Coonamble. The area of claim is approximately 111,320 km<sup>2</sup>. A determination is yet to be made by the Federal Court.

In 2012, the Ngemba, Ngiyampaa, Wangaaypuwan and Wayilwan peoples lodged a Native Title claim (NC2012/001) over Country bounded by the towns of Bourke, Brewarrina, Gilgandra, Nyngan and Hillston and the locality of Baden Park, including the remaining part of Coonamble and Quambone. The area of claim is approximately 95,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Again, a determination has yet to be made by the Federal Court.

### 3.7 Sites of cultural significance

The Castlereagh River is rich with sites of cultural significance as it forms a boundary between different Aboriginal language groups: Gamilaraay and Wayilwan peoples. A preliminary search of the Heritage NSW Aboriginal Heritage Management Information System (AHIMS) for sites of cultural significance within the rectangle formed by latitude and longitude -30.9688, 148.3549 and -30.9327, 148.4119 indicates the existence of recorded Aboriginal sites in or near Coonamble. In the interests of sites preservation, and as a condition of accessing the data, no details are included in this Plan other than to note their existence.

The publicly available *Report on the Community Based Heritage Study of the Coonamble Shire*, 2010, prepared by High Ground Consulting, listed the Coonamble waterhole and Tin Town camp site as places of significance.

The site of The Mole Reserve, west of Quambone, and the vicinity upstream and downstream on both banks of Bulgeraga Creek, are rich in sites of significance, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2. Given the historical evidence for cultural practice in this area, and the density of significant sites, it appears likely that sufficient justification would exist for declaration of an Aboriginal Place should the community desire to pursue it.

### 3.8 Economic geography

Coonamble is a highly productive region with agricultural activities: dryland grazing and broadacre cropping, dominant. The district relies heavily on the agricultural and rural industry sector

for employment and revenue. The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector represents 38% or \$160 M of total Shire annual economic output. Agricultural activities are supported by a range of professional and specialist services such as a rural transaction centre, rural supplies, mechanical repairs, workshops and fuel outlets and skilled trades. The contribution of these services is reflected in the significant contribution of the Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services and Construction industry sectors to economic output.

The contribution of extractive industry is small.

The export of agricultural products dwarfs exports from all other sectors. Inevitably, the value of intermediate goods and services imported into Coonamble LGA to support the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector exceeds the imports of all other sectors.

Tourism supports an estimated 45 jobs, in largely non-employing or businesses employing one to four persons, across the Shire or about 3% of total employment. Total economic output is approximately \$14 M. The largest sub-sector is Accommodation and Food Services with 27 jobs supported by tourist expenditure. Value added by tourism is estimated at about \$3.9 M or 1.8% of total value added by all industries. It is likely that the focus of this sector is on environmental tourism given the presence of the Macquarie Marshes, the Warrumbungle National Park and Pilliga Forest, and work-related stays. No data is available in the Local Government Area Profiles published by Tourism Research Australia for international visitors but Coonamble Shire received 52,000 domestic overnight visitors in 2019, with 42,000 being visitors from within NSW. Average stay was three nights. The data indicates that half of domestic overnight visitors were aged 55 years and over.

Table 3.4: SEIFA Index of disadvantage, IRSD, Coonamble LGA, 2016

SEIFA Index – Coonamble	<b>869</b>
Rank in NSW	126 <sup>th</sup> of 130
Murdi Paaki Region:	
Highest (Cobar)	<b>968</b>
Lowest (Brewarrina)	<b>757</b>

It is well established that the Murdi Paaki Region suffers the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage in NSW. Despite the apparent prosperity derived from economic activity, Coonamble LGA is ranked the fifth most disadvantaged LGA in the Murdi Paaki Region, coming in at number 126 in NSW for the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) ranking as evidenced by Table 3.4.

## 4 THE POPULATION

### 4.1 Population profile

The statistical information set out in this chapter has been derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS 2016) Census using data available from ABS Table Builder. Coonamble is the combined area of Coonamble locality (L) and Quambone State Suburb (SSC). Indigenous area (IARE) and Local Government Area (A) geography has been used where locality and suburb data are unavailable, as indicated in the table heading.

Table 4.1: Aboriginal population, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Coonamble	917
Quambone	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>950</b>

Table 4.2: Total population, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

persons	<b>2,575</b>
---------	--------------

Source: ABS 2016 Census

Table 4.3: Aboriginal population %, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

	n=950
Aboriginal proportion of population	<b>37%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	23%
New South Wales	3%

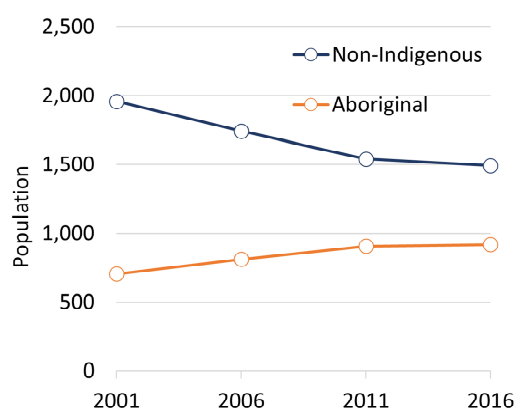
Source: ABS 2016 Census

Table 4.4: Notional resident population, 2016, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Aboriginal	1,211
Non-Indigenous	1,722
Aboriginal population as percentage of total population	<b>41.3%</b>

Recent trend in population, as enumerated by the last three censuses is shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Population change, 2001 to 2016, Coonamble (L)



The most accurate count of the population is the Estimated Resident Population (ERP); however, the finest scale at which this is available is by local government area. At the ABS 2016 Census, based on comparison with the ERP, the Aboriginal population of the Coonamble Shire was undercounted by 24%, and the non-Indigenous population by 13%. Notional populations based on the ERPs for the areas of interest are given by Table 4.4.

Data for Coonamble indicate that the ABS has imputed populations for 172 dwellings which were thought to be occupied on census night but which returned no census form. Using a standardised process, the ABS imputed a total of 419 persons (213 male and 206 female) to the 172 dwellings. These people form the great majority of the cohort for whom Aboriginality is not stated in the census tables. It is not possible to know how many of these dwellings housed Aboriginal households. Indeed, given the arbitrary nature of the process, any one of the 172 households could equally house the population imputed to it based on the composition of the donor record household, or a group household of 80-year-old pensioners. It is, however, on the basis of the undercount, likely that a greater proportion of these dwellings house Aboriginal households.

Where possible, the Murdi Paaki Region comparison geography used in this Plan is the aggregated 154 SA1s (ABS Statistical Area Level 1) that approximate the Region. For variables where SA1 level data are not published, either the 8 LGAs

approximating the Murdi Paaki Region or the North-Western NSW Indigenous Region (N-W NSW IREG) has been adopted.

## KEY FINDINGS

- According to the ABS 2016 Census, the combined population of the Aboriginal population of Coonamble and Quambone on census night was 950 persons or 37% of the total population. Based on the ERPs, the Aboriginal population at the time was closer to 1,211 persons or 41% of the total population;
- Of all those counted in Coonamble on the night of the census, 70 people (4 Aboriginal, 66 non-Indigenous) were in a non-private dwelling including hotel, motel, hospital or retirement village;
- Since 2006, the Aboriginal population in Coonamble has increased by 1.78% on average each year and for the non-Indigenous population the average annual decrease has been 1.81%;
- The median age of the Aboriginal population of the Coonamble IARE, at 24 years, is lower than that of the non-Indigenous population, the same as the Murdi Paaki Region on average, and higher than the median age of Aboriginal people in NSW;
- The Aboriginal population aged under 15 years is larger than both the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole, and for NSW, and is almost three times the population fraction of the non-Indigenous population of Coonamble;
- Non-Indigenous households are almost two and a half times as likely to comprise a person living alone as is an Aboriginal household;
- When compared with a non-Indigenous family, Aboriginal families living together in a household are three times as likely to be a single parent family;
- Aboriginal adults were 20% less likely to be in a couple relationship than non-Indigenous adults, perhaps reflecting the younger population age structure;
- One percent of Aboriginal households contained multiple families compared to no multi-family households in the non-Indigenous population;
- Aboriginal households have a higher proportion of resident non-dependent children than non-

Indigenous households. The fraction in Aboriginal households is the same as both the Murdi Paaki Region and NSW as a whole.

Figure 4.2: Population age distribution, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

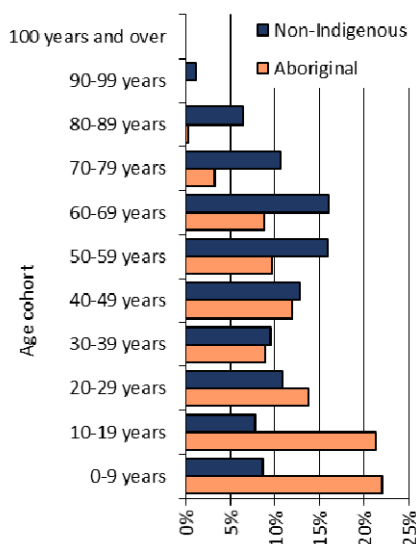
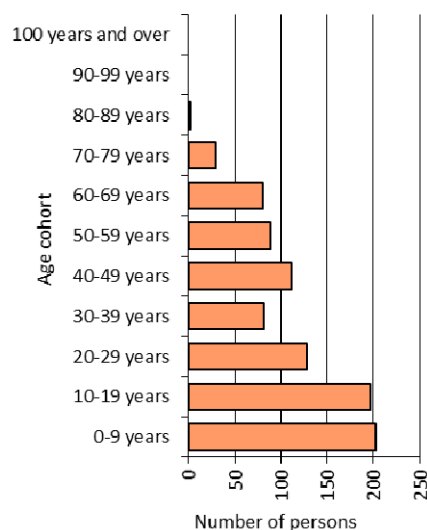


Figure 4.3: Aboriginal population age distribution, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.5: Median age of persons (years) (Coonamble (IARE))		
Median age (years)	24	49
Murdi Paaki Region	26	46
New South Wales	22	38
Table 4.6: Population aged under 15 years, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
	n=323	n=201
Of population fraction	35%	12%
Murdi Paaki Region	32%	16%
New South Wales	34%	18%
Table 4.7: Social marital status, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC) (Persons aged 15 years and over)		
Registered marriage	19%	42%
De facto marriage	15%	13%
Not married	66%	44%
Table 4.8: Lone person households, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
	n=69	n=251
Lone person households	20%	47%
Murdi Paaki Region	21%	36%
New South Wales	15%	24%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.9: Family household family composition, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
One parent	46%	13%
Couple, no children	21%	54%
Couple, with children	30%	30%
Other family	3%	3%
One parent families:		
Murdi Paaki Region	43%	15%
New South Wales	36%	15%
Table 4.10: Multi-family households, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC) (of all family households)		
	n=4	n=0
Multi-family households	1%	-
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	1%
New South Wales	4%	2%
Table 4.11: Families with resident non-dependent children (Coonamble (IARE))		
	n=91	n=92
	25%	17%
Murdi Paaki Region	25%	18%
New South Wales	25%	21%
A non-dependent child is a natural, adopted, step or foster child of a couple or lone parent usually resident in the household, who is aged 15 years and over and is not a full-time student aged 15-24 years, and who has no identified partner or child of his/her own usually resident in the household		

## 4.2 Educational status

**Table 4.12: Educational institution attended by the Aboriginal population, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)**

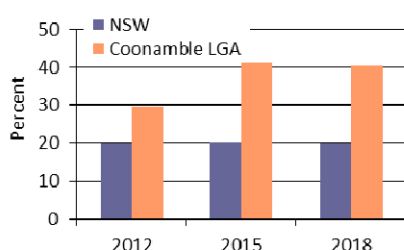
	n=357
Preschool	35
Infants/primary – Government	109
Infants/primary – other non-Government	28
Secondary – Government	87
Secondary – Other Non-Government	4
University or other Tertiary Institution	23
Other educational institution	0
Not stated	71

**Table 4.13: Preschool attendance, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)**

Population fraction	Aboriginal n=28	Non-Indigenous n=15
Children 3 years old	39%	20%
Murdi Paaki Region	41%	50%
New South Wales	52%	49%
Children 4 years old	n=17	n=11
Children 4 years old	65%	55%
Murdi Paaki Region	82%	79%
New South Wales	72%	72%

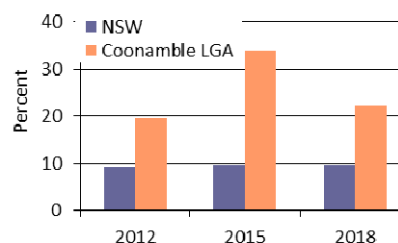
**Figure 4.4: AEDC summary indicator of developmental vulnerability (all children)**

One or more domains:



**Figure 4.4: AEDC summary indicator of developmental vulnerability (all children)**

Two or more domains:



Aboriginal children: n=34 or 56% of 61

**Table 4.14: AEDC vulnerability indicators**

	Vuln 1	Vuln 2
Coonamble LGA	40.7%	22.2%

Source: Australian Early Development Census, Community Profile 2018, Coonamble LGA

### KEY FINDINGS

- Almost two thirds of the Aboriginal four-year olds enumerated in the census appeared to attend preschool compared to just over half of non-Indigenous children. Forty percent of the Aboriginal three-year olds attended preschool;
- On Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) indicators, children commencing their first year of full-time schooling in Coonamble LGA have not reached the same stage of early childhood development as their counterparts in NSW;
- Student attendance level for children (the proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time) is between 36% (Coonamble HS) and 91% (Quambone PS) for all children attending the four schools in the Coonamble area;
- Educational attainment at the schools in the Coonamble area is mostly about the same or below the average of all Australian students;
- About a quarter of the Aboriginal young people aged 15-19 years in Coonamble who had left school had completed year 12. Of the non-Indigenous young people who had left school 35% had completed Year 12;
- Almost 60% of the Aboriginal persons aged 17 or 18 years were engaged in training or learning;

- Non-Indigenous adults were one and half times more likely as Aboriginal adults to hold a post-school qualification at any level. The Aboriginal population aged over 15 years in Coonamble had a lower proportion with a post-school qualification compared to both the Murdi Paaki Region and NSW.

Figure 4.5: Student attendance level (proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time), 2019 Semester 1

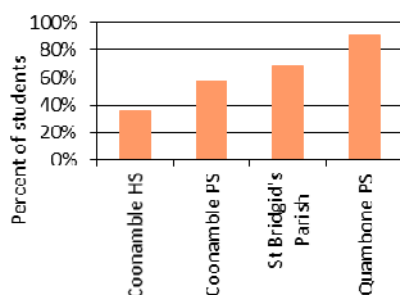


Table 4.15: Educational attainment, NAPLAN, School average when compared with all Australian students

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
<b>Year 3</b>					
Coonamble PS	5	5	5	5	5
St Brigid's Parish	2	2	2	1	1
<b>Year 5</b>					
Coonamble PS	5	5	5	5	5
St Brigid's Parish	2	1	2	1	1
Quambone PS	4	1	3	2	2
<b>Year 7</b>					
Coonamble HS	5	4	5	5	5
<b>Year 9</b>					
Coonamble HS	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Legend</b>					
Well above	1				
Above average	2			Close to	3
Below average	4			Well below	5

Source: acara MySchools website

Figure 4.6: Highest year of schooling, all Aboriginal adults, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

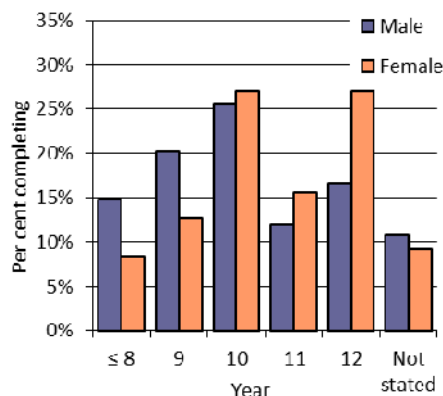
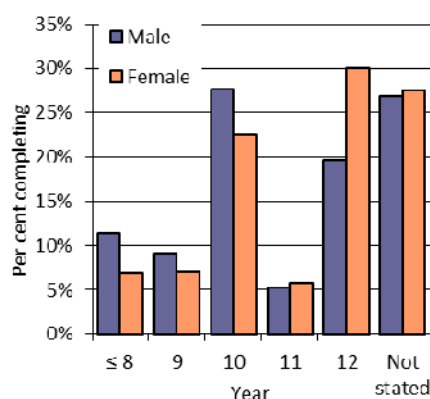


Figure 4.7: Highest year of schooling, all non-Indigenous adults, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.16: Percentage of students completed Year 12, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC) (Persons aged 15 to 19 who have completed schooling and are no longer at school)		
	n=43	n=17
Percentage of students	23%	35%
Murdi Paaki Region	20%	48%
New South Wales	33%	51%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.17: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a vocational qualification, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
	n=71	n=198
Cert I-IV	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	18%	26%
New South Wales	25%	20%
Table 4.18: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with an undergraduate diploma, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
	n=23	n=68
Diploma and Advanced Diploma	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	5%	7%
New South Wales	7%	10%
Table 4.19: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a tertiary qualification, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
	n=9	n=113
Degree and higher	<b>1%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	12%
New South Wales	8%	27%
Table 4.20: Engagement of persons aged 17 and 18 years in employment, education and training, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
Fully engaged	<b>58%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	49%	74%
New South Wales	62%	84%

### 4.3 Economic participation

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.21: Labour force status, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC) (Percent of labour force)		
	n=282	n=654
In full-time or part-time work	<b>73%</b>	<b>96%</b>
Unemployed, looking for work	27%	4%
Murdi Paaki Region	76%	94%
New South Wales	85%	94%
26% of those employed worked part-time		
Table 4.22: Participation in the labour market, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC) (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=581	n=1,084
In labour force	<b>49%</b>	<b>60%</b>
Not in labour force	51%	40%
Murdi Paaki Region	44%	61%
New South Wales	56%	64%
Table 4.23: Employment to population ratio, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC) (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=205	n=626
Employment to population ratio	<b>34%</b>	<b>44%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	34%	57%
New South Wales	47%	60%

## KEY FINDINGS

- With an unemployment rate seven times that of the non-Indigenous population, and a lower labour force participation rate, the employment to population ratio for Aboriginal people in Coonamble implies that one in three adults are in any form of employment. This ratio is slightly more than one in two for the non-Indigenous population fraction;
- Investigation of the age structure of the Coonamble Aboriginal population through calculation of the dependency ratio (64.4 for Coonamble – slightly more than for the Murdi Paaki Region, at 61.6) indicates that Aboriginal people of working age resident in Coonamble have a reasonable workforce

participation rate;

- Aboriginal workers are more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance and the Education and Training industry sectors but less likely to be employed as a manager or professional;
- The health care industry employs the largest proportion of the workforce, followed by agriculture and education;
- Data for Coonamble LGA as a whole indicate an increase over time in the number of businesses.

Table 4.24: Industry of employment – Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Industry	Aboriginal		Non-Indigenous	
	Number employed	% of total employed	Number employed	% of total employed
Health Care and Social Assistance	48	23%	98	16%
Education and Training	35	17%	69	11%
Public Administration and Safety	17	8%	56	9%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	16	8%	108	17%
Retail Trade	12	6%	63	10%
Accommodation and Food Services	12	6%	29	5%
Construction	11	5%	45	7%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	10	5%	32	5%
Administrative and Support Services	5	2%	18	3%
Financial and Insurance Services	5	2%	8	1%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	4	2%	3	0%
Wholesale Trade	0	0%	21	3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	0	0%	17	3%
Information Media and Telecommunications	0	0%	7	1%
Manufacturing	0	0%	3	0%
Other Services	13	6%	22	4%
Inadequately described/not stated	17	8%	24	4%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.25: Occupation of all persons employed, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)		
Managers	4%	16%
Professionals	7%	16%
Technician/trades	14%	14%
Community service workers	26%	12%
Clerical/admin workers	11%	13%
Sales workers	5%	7%
Machinery operators	12%	7%
Labourers	21%	14%

Figure 4.8: Hours worked by age group, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

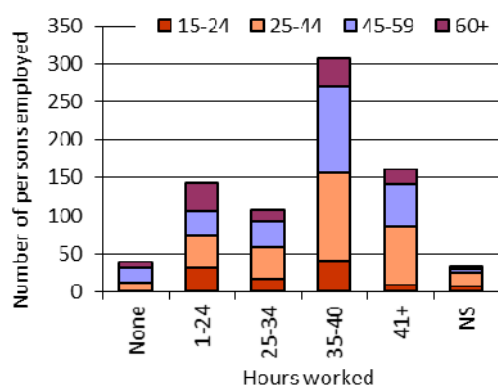


Table 4.26: Number of Aboriginal workers employed in the public and private sectors, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Australian Government	5
NSW Government	28
Local Government	19
Private sector	139
Not stated	14

Table 4.27: Total number of businesses, Coonamble LGA, at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019

No of employees	No of businesses
Nil	363
1-4	153
5-19	58
20 or more	4

Table 4.28: Business entries and exits, Coonamble LGA, at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Year	Change in number
2015	-
2016	2
2017	-6
2018	15
2019	9

## 4.4 Income

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.29: Median total household income (Coonamble (IARE))		
\$/week	863	1,034
N-W NSW IREG	907	1,013
New South Wales	1,214	1,498

Table 4.30: Estimates of personal income, total population, Coonamble LGA

Median employee income (\$) (2017)	39,261
Income share of top 10% of earners (excl. government payments)	40%
FW and Orana SA4	44,418
New South Wales	49,256

Figure 4.9: Average annual growth in median employee income, 2014-2017, Coonamble LGA

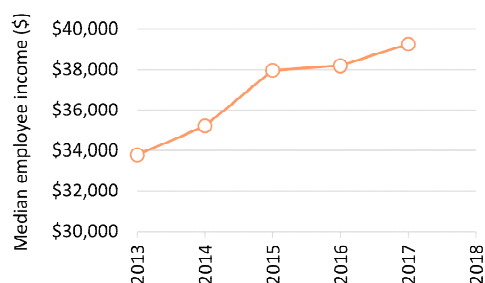


Table 4.31: Sources of income support Coonamble LGA

In 2019, percentage of total population aged 15 and over receiving:

Age pension (n=423)	14%
Carer payment (n=107)	3%
Disability support pension (n=232)	7%
Newstart allowance (n=262)	8%
Parenting payment, single (n=133)	4%
Family tax benefit A (n=366)	12%
Family tax benefit B (n=313)	10%
Commonwealth rent assistance (n=292)	9%

## KEY FINDINGS

- The median weekly income for Aboriginal households is lower than other households; the Aboriginal median weekly individual income is 28% lower than for non-Indigenous persons;
- Forty percent of income was shared by the top 10% of earners;
- Centrelink Rent Assistance was being claimed by 9% of the total population aged 15 years and older.

## 4.5 Quambone: A summary

Table 4.32: Total population, Quambone SSC

persons	151
Change from 2011 Census	-77

Source: ABS 2016 Census

Table 4.33: Aboriginal population %, Quambone SSC

n=20	
Aboriginal population as a proportion of total population	13%
Murdi Paaki Region	23%
New South Wales	3%

Source: ABS Census 2016

Figure 4.10: Aboriginal population age distribution

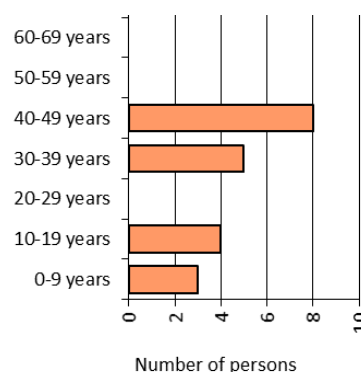


Table 4.34: Aboriginal population aged under 15 years

n=22	
Of population fraction	17%
Murdi Paaki Region	32%
New South Wales	34%

Table 4.35: Social marital status (Aboriginal persons aged 15 years and over)

Registered marriage	0%
De facto marriage	36%
Not married	64%

Table 4.36: Lone person Aboriginal households

	n=8
Lone person households	<b>62%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	<b>21%</b>
New South Wales	<b>15%</b>

Table 4.37: Aboriginal family household family composition

One parent	0%
Couple, no children	0%
Couple, with children	100%
Other family	0%

One parent families:

Murdi Paaki Region	<b>43%</b>
New South Wales	<b>36%</b>

Table 4.38: Multi-family households (of all Aboriginal family households)

	n=0
Multi-family households	<b>-%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	<b>4%</b>
New South Wales	<b>4%</b>

Table 4.39: Educational institution attended by the Aboriginal population

	n=15
Preschool	0
Infants/primary - Government	5
Infants/primary – other non-Govt	0
Secondary - Government	6
Secondary – Other Non-Government	0
University or other Tertiary Institution	0
Other educational institution	0
Not stated	4

Figure 4.11: Highest year of schooling, all Aboriginal adults, Quambone

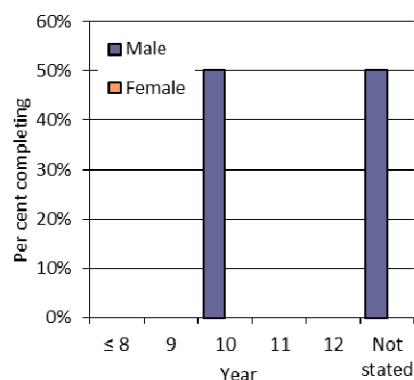


Table 4.40: Percentage of Aboriginal persons aged 15 years and over with a qualification (Cert III and above)

	n=22
Any qualification	<b>18%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	<b>18%</b>
New South Wales	<b>25%</b>

Table 4.41: Labour force status (Percent of labour force)

	n=6
In full-time or part-time work	<b>100%</b>
Unemployed, looking for work	0%
Murdi Paaki Region	<b>76%</b>
New South Wales	<b>85%</b>

Table 4.42: Participation in the labour market (Percent of Aboriginal population aged 15 and over)

	n=18
In labour force	<b>33%</b>
Not in labour force	67%
Murdi Paaki Region	<b>44%</b>
New South Wales	<b>56%</b>

## KEY FINDINGS

- Of a total population of 151 persons, 13% or 20 people declared their Aboriginality. According to the ABS 2016 Census, the population had declined by one third over the preceding five years;
- Population is concentrated in the 30 to 49 years of age cohort, there being no older persons recorded. The population fraction under the age of 15 years is about half that of the Murdi Paaki Region generally, and NSW;
- Lone person households account for almost two-thirds of all Aboriginal households and all other households are occupied by a couple with children. No household was recorded as being occupied by more than one family;
- Half of census respondents had completed schooling to Year 10 level, all men. The remaining half did not disclose a level of educational attainment. Qualifications at Vocational Education and Training (VET) level and above was on a par with the Region generally;
- One third of the adult population was in the labour market. All those wishing to work were in employment although the nature of employment could not be defined because of small cell counts.

## 5 COMMUNITY HOUSING PROFILE

### 5.1 Housing in Coonamble

Data used in this Chapter is drawn from the ABS 2016 Census. Data is for Coonamble Locality (L) and Quambone State Suburb (SSC). Where locality and suburb data are unavailable, Indigenous Area (IARE) and Local Government Area (A) geographies have been used, as indicated in the table heading.

Table 5.1: Dwellings by community, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Coonamble	1,174
Quambone	116
Total	1,290

Table 5.2: Dwelling types, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Total number	1,290
Separate houses	1,169 91%
Terraces, town houses	3 0%
Apartments	97 8%
Other dwelling types	21 2%

Table 5.3: Private dwellings unoccupied on Census night, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

	n=1,290	
Unoccupied dwellings	199	15%
Change since 2011	n=220	-21
Murdi Paaki Region	19%	
New South Wales	9%	

143 people were counted elsewhere on census night

Table 5.4: Households counted in a dwelling on census night, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Resident households	890
Visitor households	31
Non-classifiable	173

Table 5.5: Number of dwellings by bedrooms, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

0 or 1 bedrooms	58	7%
2 bedrooms	179	20%
3 bedrooms	411	47%
4 bedrooms	199	23%
5 bedrooms and more	33	4%

Figure 5.1: Dwelling size by number of bedrooms, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

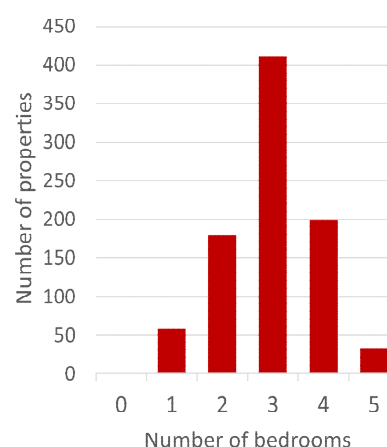


Table 5.6: Average household size (Coonamble (IARE))

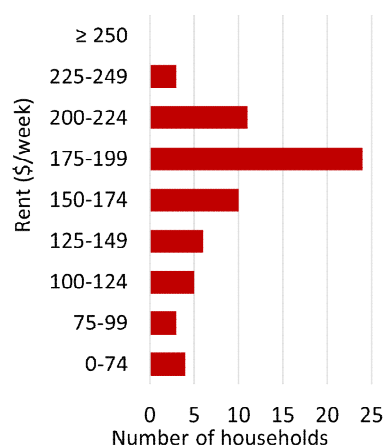
Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Persons	3.0	2.1
N-W NSW IREG	3.0	2.1
New South Wales	3.1	2.6

Table 5.7: Average number of persons per bedroom (Coonamble (IARE))

Persons	1.0	0.7
N-W NSW IREG	0.9	0.7
New South Wales	1.0	0.9

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
<b>Table 5.8: Households enumerated, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)</b>		
One family household	260	277
Multiple family household	7	4
Non-family household	78	264
Non-classifiable	0	0
Not applicable	0	0
<b>Table 5.9: Occupancy, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)</b>		
One person	69	261
Two people	97	192
Three people	79	47
Four people	48	34
Five people and greater	51	20
<b>Table 5.10: Proportion of all households renting, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)</b>		
Proportion of all households	<b>48%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Real estate agent	20%	8%
NSW housing authority	32%	4%
Community housing provider	11%	2%
Other private	24%	50%
Other	13%	37%
Murdi Paaki Region	62%	24%
New South Wales	56%	32%
<b>Table 5.11: Median rent (Coonamble (IARE))</b>		
\$/week	<b>\$175</b>	<b>\$100</b>
N-W NSW IREG	160	150
New South Wales	270	390
<b>Table 5.12: Percentage of all households with rent equal to or greater than 30% of household income (2016) (Coonamble (A))</b>		
Renting	<b>7.3%</b>	

Figure 5.2: Weekly rent payable by Aboriginal households, social housing rentals, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
<b>Table 5.13: Home ownership (including owned with a mortgage), Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)</b>		
	n=172	n=398
Proportion of all households	<b>46%</b>	<b>53%</b>
Murdi Paaki Region	38%	76%
New South Wales	44%	68%
<b>Table 5.14: Change in Aboriginal home ownership, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)</b>		
	2016	2011
Proportion of all Aboriginal households	<b>46%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Table 5.15: Persons accommodated in non-private dwellings, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)</b>		
Public hospital	4	11
Aged accommodation (not nursing home)	0	30
Hotel, motel, B&B	0	18
Hostel for disabled	0	7

Table 5.16: Number of persons homeless in Bourke-Coonamble-Cobar SA3

(After Chamberlain and MacKenzie)

Marginally housed	14
Tertiary homeless	7
Secondary homeless	45
Primary homeless	294
Living in crowded conditions	167

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
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Table 5.17: One-year residential mobility, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

	n=326	n=504
Residents in the household aged one year and over with a different address one year ago		
All residents	11%	13%
Some of the residents	5%	2%
No resident	84%	85%
Murdi Paaki Region	12%	10%
New South Wales	16%	13%

Table 5.18: Number of Aboriginal persons with a different address at stated location 1 year ago and five years ago, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

Place of residence	1 year ago	5 years ago
Within Coonamble LGA	79	69
Elsewhere in the MPR	0	0
Elsewhere in NSW	23	20
Other	8	3

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
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Table 5.19: Access and mobility, Coonamble (L) and Quambone (SSC)

No motor vehicles	13%	8%
One motor vehicle	37%	32%
Two motor vehicles	30%	22%
Three motor vehicles	7%	8%
Four or more motor vehicles	5%	4%
Not stated	8%	27%

Table 5.20: Quambone snapshot

Dwelling details (on census night)		
Total number of dwellings	116	
Separate houses	116	
Private dwellings unoccupied	36	31%
Households counted in a dwelling		
Resident households	58	
Non-classifiable	9	
Number of bedrooms per dwelling		
2 bedrooms	12	19%
3 bedrooms	25	40%
4 bedrooms	16	26%
5 bedrooms and more	9	15%
Aboriginal specific statistics		
Households enumerated		
One family household	6	
Non family household	9	
Household occupancy		
One person	8	
Two people	6	
Proportion of all households renting		59%
Renting through		
CHP		0%
Other private		54%
Other		46%
Home ownership (including owned with a mortgage)		
Proportion of all households		41%
Residents aged one year and over with a different address one year ago		
All residents		0%
Residents aged five years and over with a different address five years ago		
All residents		0%

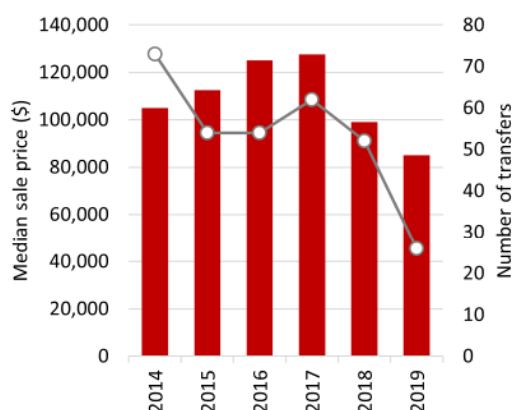
Table 5.20: Quambone snapshot

Access and mobility	
One motor vehicle	44%
Two motor vehicles	33%
Three motor vehicles	22%

## 5.2 Real estate market

House sales in Coonamble averaged about thirty-five a year over the period 2017 to 2020. Thirty-four sales occurred in 2020. For the four years to 2020, 143 purchases saw a median price of \$104,000. At the time of writing, seven houses were on the market in Coonamble with prices between \$69,000 and \$345,000 while Quambone had none.

Figure 5.3 indicates level of activity in the real estate market although the number of transactions is for Coonamble LGA including Gulargambone.

Figure 5.3: Median residential property price, to year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June, (Coonamble (A))

Source: ABS, Data by Region, 2011-19, Economy and Industry

New residential building activity in Coonamble LGA for FY2020-2021 is summarised at Table 5.21.

Table 5.21: New residential building work, 2020-2021, (Coonamble (A))

Type	Number	Value
New houses	5	\$1,794,000
New other residential building	4	\$2,00,000

The average estimated value is \$ 358,800 per new house.

## 5.3 Aboriginal social housing assets

Several Aboriginal organisations and NSW Government agencies own land and residential properties in Coonamble and Quambone: Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation (MPRHC) and the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO). The NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) have title to one property. Ownership of Quambone LALC properties has been transferred to the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC). Full property schedules are included at Table 5.25 to Table 5.29 inclusive and vacant lots are noted at Table 5.30.

Responsibility for Aboriginal social housing management rests with Coonamble LALC, Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation and the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. Quambone properties are managed by Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Management Cooperative (Mlahmc).

Table 5.22: Asset portfolios

Asset owner	Housing manager	Number of dwelling units
Coonamble LALC	Coonamble LALC	46
MPRHC	MPRHC	19
AHO	Coonamble LALC	23
AHO	DCJ	18
LAHC	Coonamble LALC	1
NSWALC	Mlahmc	3
Total		110

Table 5.23: Housing mix by number of bedrooms

Asset owner	Bedrooms					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Coonamble LALC	5	2	21	15	1	2
MPRHC	1	2	12	2	1	1
AHO	-	7	20	12	2	-
LAHC	-	-	1	-	-	-
NSWALC	-	-	3	-	-	-
Total	6	11	57	29	4	3

Table 5.24: Number of properties by location

Location	Bedrooms					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Coonamble	6	11	54	29	4	3
Quambone	-	-	3	-	-	-
Total	6	11	57	29	4	3

Locations of properties are shown at Figure 5.4 and Figure 5.5.

Table 5.25: Properties owned by Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
Housing manager: Coonamble LALC							
2		507442	Coonamble LALC		5, 5 Arthur Street	Unit	1
2		507442	Coonamble LALC		4, 5 Arthur Street	Unit	1
2		507442	Coonamble LALC		3, 5 Arthur Street	Unit	1
2		507442	Coonamble LALC		1, 5 Arthur Street	Unit	1
2		507442	Coonamble LALC		2, 5 Arthur Street	Unit	1
C		332099	Coonamble LALC		18 Aberford Street	Cottage	2
5		239261	Coonamble LALC		22 Ross Street	Cottage	2
2		594527	Coonamble LALC		5 Mudooren Street	Cottage	3
11		350589	Coonamble LALC		7 Maule Lane	Cottage	3
12		4918	Coonamble LALC		36 Nebea Street	Cottage	3
12		4918	Coonamble LALC		33 Hickey Street	Cottage	3
53		253888	Coonamble LALC		33 Railway Parade	Cottage	3
1		397639	Coonamble LALC		39 Nash Street	Cottage	3
3		238281	Coonamble LALC		15 Limerick Street	Cottage	3
2		238281	Coonamble LALC		13 Limerick Street	Cottage	3
8		219867	Coonamble LALC		26 Barton Street	Cottage	3
241		633931	Coonamble LALC		45 Wilga Street	Cottage	3
25		659018	Coonamble LALC		28 Railway Lane	Cottage	3
1		305361	Coonamble LALC		30 Tooloon Street	Cottage	3
2		818252	Coonamble LALC		18 Auburn Street	Cottage	3
11	45	758282	Coonamble LALC		59 Dubbo Lane	Cottage	3
2	45	758282	Coonamble LALC		14 King Street	Cottage	3
1	45	758282	Coonamble LALC		12 King Street	Cottage	3
1		818252	Coonamble LALC		20 Auburn Street	Cottage	3
19		4918	Coonamble LALC		22 Limerick Street	Cottage	3
19		4918	Coonamble LALC		20 Limerick Street	Cottage	3
12		864354	Coonamble LALC		9 Auburn Street	Cottage	3
2		355845	Coonamble LALC		3 Dubbo Lane	Cottage	3
12		845179	Coonamble LALC		7 Hickey Street	Cottage	4
4		1078661	Coonamble LALC		8 Coonamble Terrace	Cottage	4

Table 5.25: Properties owned by Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
24		235676	Coonamble LALC		2 Coonamble Terrace	Cottage	4
16	5	758282	Coonamble LALC		32 Namoi Street	Cottage	4
41		580486	Coonamble LALC		9 Tooloon Street	Cottage	4
1		238281	Coonamble LALC		18 Calga Street	Cottage	4
2		378099	Coonamble LALC		11 Maule Lane	Cottage	4
12		3386	Coonamble LALC		19 Hickey Street	Cottage	4
12		3386	Coonamble LALC		21 Hickey Street	Cottage	4
11		516035	Coonamble LALC		5 Aberford Street	Cottage	4
4	45	758282	Coonamble LALC		18 King Street	Cottage	4
10	45	758282	Coonamble LALC		65 Dubbo Lane	Cottage	4
14		864354	Coonamble LALC		13 Auburn Street	Cottage	4
13	13	758282	Coonamble LALC		10 Aberford Street	Cottage	4
3		818252	Coonamble LALC		2A Dubbo Lane	Cottage	4
B		336428	Coonamble LALC		15 Pages Terrace	Cottage	5
2		323820	Coonamble LALC		13 McCullough Street	Cottage	6
3	45	758282	Coonamble LALC		16 King Street	Cottage	6

Table 5.26: Properties owned by Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
Housing manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation							
19		4918	MPRHC		24-26 Limerick Street	Cottage	1
4		238281	MPRHC		2, 11 Limerick Street	Unit	2
4		238281	MPRHC		1, 11 Limerick Street	Cottage	2
54		253888	MPRHC		33 Wilga Street	Cottage	3
3		831880	MPRHC		17 Hickey Street	Cottage	3
2		340084	MPRHC		2 Floyd Street	Cottage	3
1		831881	MPRHC		40 Barton Street	Cottage	3
1		213765	MPRHC		54 Nash Street	Cottage	3
5		831881	MPRHC		48 Barton Street	Cottage	3
2		831881	MPRHC		42 Barton Street	Cottage	3
100		793573	MPRHC		8 Macquarie Street	Cottage	3
3		831881	MPRHC		44 Barton Street	Cottage	3
12		516035	MPRHC		12 Auburn Street	Cottage	3
A		391471	MPRHC		7 Aberford Street	Cottage	3
1		831880	MPRHC		16 Nebea Street	Cottage	3
4		831880	MPRHC		15 Hickey Street	Cottage	4
17		4918	MPRHC		30 Nebea Street	Cottage	4
2		744345	MPRHC		20 Dubbo Street	Cottage	5
2		831880	MPRHC		18 Nebea Street	Cottage	6

Table 5.27: Properties owned by the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
Housing manager: Coonamble LALC							
2		367349	AHO		9A Pages Terrace	Villa	2
2		367349	AHO		9B Pages Terrace	Villa	2
39		227240	AHO		2, 14 Greene Avenue	Villa	2
39		227240	AHO		1, 14 Greene Avenue	Villa	2
3		624669	AHO		2, 7 Herrmann Street	Villa	2
21		235676	AHO		28 Bimble Street	Cottage	3
A		391570	AHO		42 Tooloon Street	Cottage	3
43		255181	AHO		27 Zoccoli Street	Cottage	3
1		207285	AHO		9B Mundooren Street	Cottage	3
1		207285	AHO		9A Mundooren Street	Cottage	3
6		35188	AHO		34 McCullough Street	Cottage	3
3		624669	AHO		3, 7 Herrmann Street	Villa	3
3		624669	AHO		1, 7 Herrmann Street	Villa	3
102		621033	AHO		14 Nebea Street	Cottage	3
1		367349	AHO		11 Pages Terrace	Cottage	4
E		21477	AHO		3 Polins Lane	Cottage	4
9	23	758282	AHO		32 Warrena Street	Cottage	4
523		607514	AHO		31 Wilga Street	Cottage	4
19		624941	AHO		24 Broad Street	Cottage	4
271		700286	AHO		5 Zoccoli Street	Cottage	4
51		875759	AHO		9 Mundooren Street	Cottage	4
1		376476	AHO		14 Nash Street	Cottage	5
103		621033	AHO		13 Hickey Street	Cottage	5
Housing manager: NSW Department of Communities and Justice							
F		371507	AHO		20B Eurimie Street	Cottage	2
F		371507	AHO		20A Eurimie Street	Cottage	2
71		594366	AHO		15 Aberford Street	Cottage	3
6		219867	AHO		60 Wilga Street	Cottage	3
21		234681	AHO		8 Smith Street	Cottage	3
B		371508	AHO		6 Wilga Street	Cottage	3
40		255181	AHO		21 Zoccoli Street	Cottage	3
5		35658	AHO		23 Townsend Street	Cottage	3
1		501996	AHO		4 Nebea Street	Cottage	3
3		501996	AHO		8 Nebea Street	Cottage	3
9	27	758282	AHO		7 King Street	Cottage	3
16		1043171	AHO		22 Edward Street	Cottage	3
8		740608	AHO		7 Cullen Place	Cottage	3
10		650508	AHO		138 Aberford Street	Cottage	4
4		624669	AHO		5 Herrmann Street	Cottage	4
34		239276	AHO		28 Hickey Street	Cottage	4

Table 5.27: Properties owned by the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
2		740608	AHO		3 Forgione Street	Cottage	4
1		555645	AHO		104 Aberford Street	Cottage	4

Table 5.28: Properties owned by NSW Aboriginal Land Council

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
Housing manager: Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Management Cooperative							
90		753474	NSWALC		11 Cooma Street	Cottage	3
90		753474	NSWALC		5 Cooma Street	Cottage	3
90		753474	NSWALC		7 Cooma Street	Cottage	3

Table 5.29: Properties owned by NSW Land and Housing Corporation

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
Housing manager: Coonamble LALC							
1		509967	LAHC		14 Auburn Street	Cottage	3

Table 5.30: Vacant properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered proprietor	WLL	Property address	Property type	Bedroom type
12		740608	AHO		42 Bertram Street	Vacant	-
13		864354	LAHC		11 Auburn Street	Vacant	-
			MPRHC		Railway Lane	Vacant	-
7		831881	MPRHC		52 Barton Street	Vacant	-
6		831881	MPRHC		50 Barton Street	Vacant	-

Figure 5.4: Location of Aboriginal social housing in Coonamble



Source: Google Earth, image © 2022 CNES/Airbus

Legend




-  Properties owned by NSW Aboriginal Housing Office
-  Properties owned by Murdi Paaki Housing
-  Properties owned by Coonamble Land Council

Figure 5.5: Location of Aboriginal social housing in Quambone



Source: Google Earth, image © 2022 CNES/Airbus



Properties owned by NSWALC

#### 5.4 Forms of housing construction

Residential buildings shown in Figure 5.6 are illustrative of the forms of framed housing construction which form the greater part of the Aboriginal social housing portfolio in Coonamble. Typically, houses are either of timber frame on suspended floor construction with fibre-cement sheet or Hardiplank style cladding and metal roof, or masonry veneer on concrete slab with metal roof.

Figure 5.6: Typical forms of Aboriginal social housing





## 5.5 MPRH&BC household survey in summary

A major data gathering exercise was undertaken in 2016 and early 2017 under the guidance of the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly to provide the evidence for reform of the Aboriginal social housing sector in the Murdi Paaki Region. Over 1,400 households took part: tenants living in social housing, homeowners, private renters, people staying in refuges and/or couch surfing all contributed to the findings. The contribution from 175 households in Coonamble and Quambone is presented below.

Figure 5.7: Housing mix (All households participating in the survey)

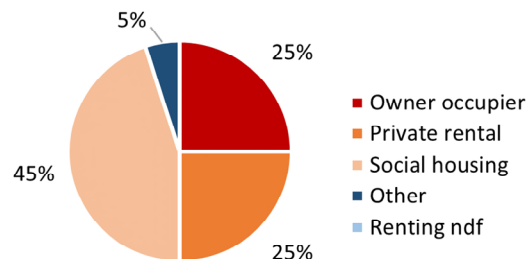


Figure 5.8: Managing organisation (Social housing tenants)

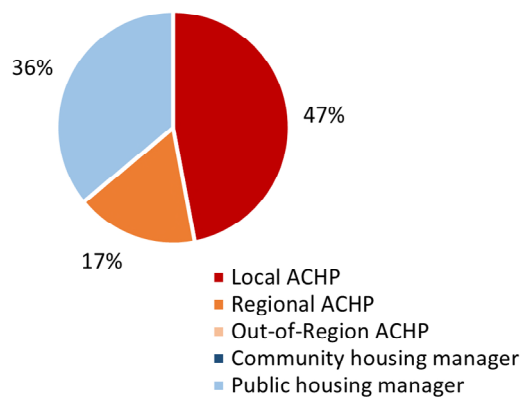


Figure 5.9: Level of satisfaction with housing manager

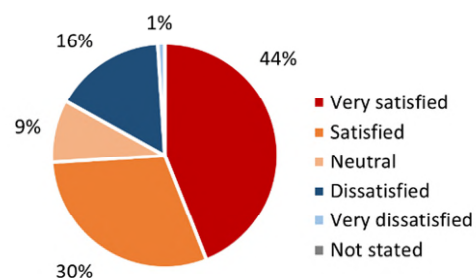


Figure 5.10: Preferred manager of Aboriginal social housing (Social housing tenants)

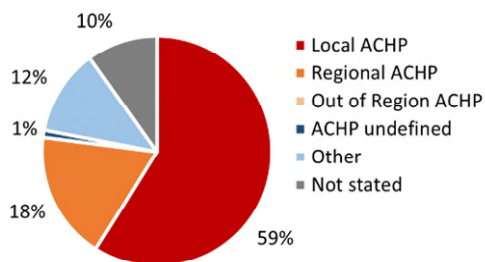


Figure 5.11: Social housing tenants with a tenancy agreement

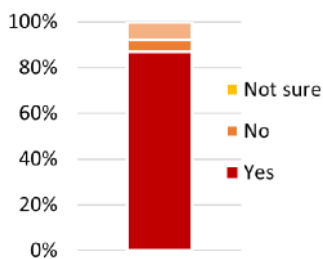


Figure 5.12: Social housing tenants claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance

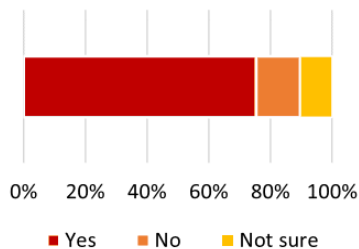


Figure 5.13: Rent levels 2016-2017

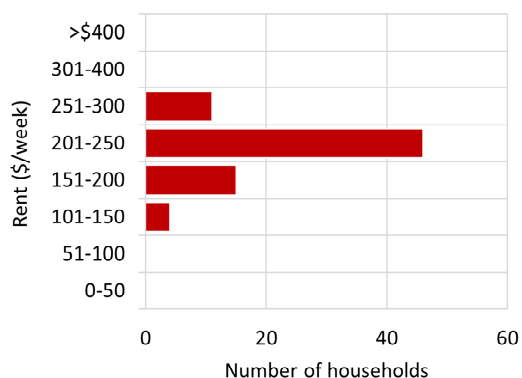


Figure 5.14: Respondents view of a fair rent

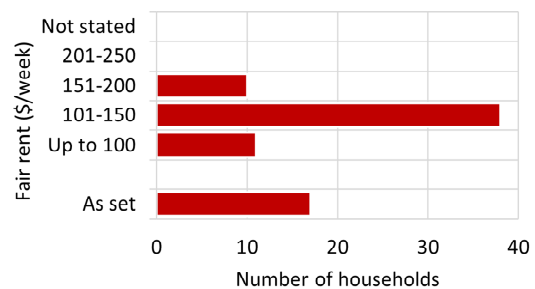


Figure 5.15: Household size range (All households)

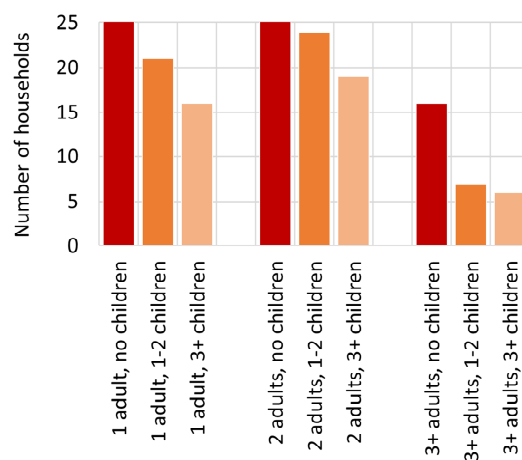


Figure 5.16: Address of household 5 years ago

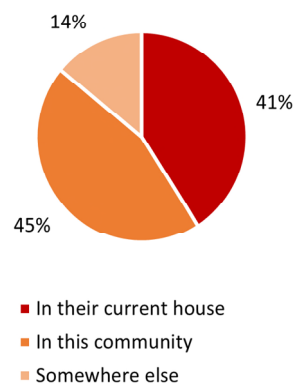


Figure 5.17: Households feeling crowded

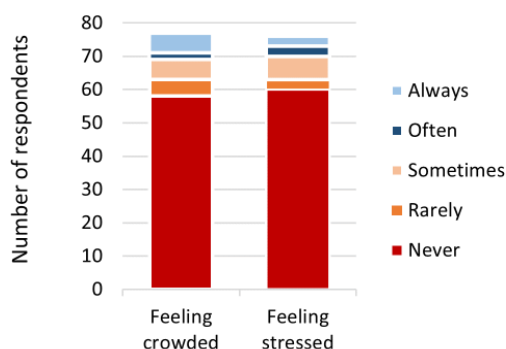


Figure 5.18: Households providing shelter to one or more homeless persons

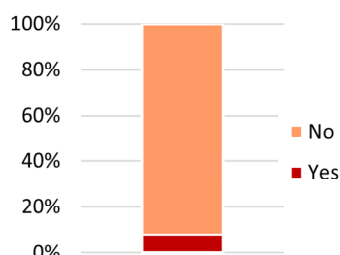


Figure 5.19: Tenants feeling unsafe at home

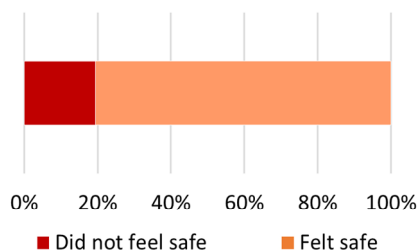
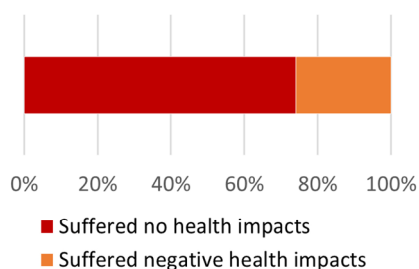


Figure 5.20: Tenants experiencing negative health impacts



## KEY FINDINGS

- A quarter of respondents to the survey were homeowners, another quarter rented privately and 45% rented Aboriginal social housing. Six respondents reported being homeless and two lived in employer provided accommodation. In contrast to other Murdi Paaki communities, the Coonamble Aboriginal community clearly has a more active engagement with the local real estate market;
- Of Aboriginal social housing tenants, 46% rented through Coonamble LALC and 22% rented through the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). Of the remainder, 16% stated their housing manager as Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation. Management responsibilities for nine properties, recorded by the survey to be AHO properties, could not be determined;
- The level of satisfaction with housing managers was high with nearly three quarters of respondents satisfied or very satisfied (74%) with services provided. Only 17% of respondents said they were dissatisfied. Of those dissatisfied, respondents were critical of the services of the two lead housing managers;
- The principal reasons for dissatisfaction appeared to be a lack of urgency on the part of the housing managers to attend to repairs or repairs not being carried out at all;
- Over half of Aboriginal social housing respondents (59%) stated a preference for a local ACHP as housing manager. Of the remainder, 18% favoured a Regional ACHP. One in ten households surveyed declined to answer the question;
- Of the 73 households that responded to the question, 54 respondents (74%) said that Aboriginal social housing was the most affordable housing available to them. A significant number of respondents (42%) said they were renting Aboriginal social housing because they could not afford to buy their own house. The number of respondents who expressly said they did not wish to purchase was negligible. Few respondents stated that they rented Aboriginal social housing because it was the only housing available;
- When asked about their reasons for living in

Coonamble, most Aboriginal social housing respondents stated that they wanted to be close to family and relations, and to friends. Being born in the community or having a lengthy family connection were also important factors. Being able to find work rarely rated a mention;

- Most social housing renters had entered into a formal tenancy agreement and over half of respondents reported being aware of the limit on occupancy imposed by the agreement;
- At the time of the MPRH&BC household survey, social housing tenants indicated rent levels to be principally in the range \$201-\$250/week. A small proportion thought this rent to be fair but most respondents felt that rents levels were \$50 to \$100/week too high. The connection between rent and quality was raised by few tenants in response to open ended questions;
- Three quarters of respondents reported they were claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA);
- Under half of households (46%) stated they were adult households without children;
- Four of five households reported their house never or rarely felt crowded. Of those that indicated feeling crowded at times, six said that crowding was often or always a stressful experience;
- Six households in Aboriginal social housing were providing shelter at the time of the survey to one or more persons who would otherwise be homeless. Three households in private rental accommodation and three homeowners reported providing shelter to persons who would otherwise be homeless;
- Evidence exists of short-term mobility within the community. Thirteen out of 77 Aboriginal social housing respondents were living at a different address 1 year prior to the household survey and 43% had a different address 5 years prior. Median duration of a tenancy was 5 years. Relocation tended to occur within the community;
- Three quarters of Aboriginal social housing tenants (73%) had no intention of moving if their circumstances changed. The balance of respondents thought they might consider relocating if their needs changed;
- Many social housing tenants (71%) reported

trouble meeting their electricity bills;

- Of those tenants who responded to the question (n=75), only a minority (n=30) indicated a preference for social housing tenancies to be passed down within the family;
- Suggested service improvements concentrated the need for greater responsiveness to carrying out repair and maintenance work;
- As to additional services in the community, respondents did not offer any suggestions.

### ADDITIONAL FINDINGS - OWNERS

- Forty-three homeowners responded to the survey and all but one were purchasing or had purchased detached houses;
- Most owners had purchased or were purchasing with the aid of a loan from a financial institution or from their own savings. Few were purchasing with the aid of a loan from Indigenous Business Australia (IBA);
- Only one owner was dissatisfied with his/her decision to purchase;
- In most instances, owners had long-standing attachment to Coonamble, having been born in the town or had family living in town for a long time. Being close to family and relations, and to friends were important considerations. One in five quoted a work-related reason for living in the community;
- Tenure was relatively stable. All respondents were living in the same house one year prior to the household survey and 84% of owner respondents five years prior;
- Median period of ownership was 16 years;
- Respondents viewed ownership in terms of a financial investment, not paying dead money, and valued the freedom to do as they wished;
- Disadvantages of ownership, where they existed, were said to be the burden of Council rates and charges;
- One in two owners reported trouble in paying power bills;
- Crowding did not appear to be problematic with only five owner respondents saying that their house felt crowded often or always. Three households were accommodating one or more persons who would otherwise be homeless. Using the Canadian National

Occupancy Standard (CNOS) measure, five dwellings would be eligible for bedroom extensions because of crowding, three with the addition of one bedroom and two with the addition of two bedrooms. Several dwellings were occupied by between six and eight people.

### ADDITIONAL FINDINGS – PRIVATE TENANTS

- Forty-three households living in private rental accommodation responded to the survey. Most households were single family households living in 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings but seven provided shelter to two or more families;
- Two respondents stated they had been accepted onto a waiting list in another community and ten younger residents said they wanted to live independently from the rest of the family. Six young persons had applied for and were approved for housing in Coonamble. Three older persons were seeking to live independently;
- Four out of five private rental households reported having a tenancy agreement and two-thirds of tenants reported they were receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance;
- Rent charged, where disclosed, appeared to be slightly lower than rents for social housing although house size tended to be smaller;
- Longer term mobility was relatively high with just over half of respondents stating that they lived at the same address one year prior to the household survey but only 14% of tenants were at the same address five years prior to the survey. Seven households had moved more than once in the twelve months prior to the household survey. Median duration of tenancy was one year;
- When asked about their reasons for living in Coonamble, most respondents stated that they were either born in the community or their families had been resident for a long time. A strong feeling of wanting to be close to family and relations, and to friends, were important considerations. Employment was not a significant factor;
- As would be expected from the degree of mobility discussed above, many private

renters had applied for a private rental in the three years prior to the survey. Experiences were generally positive with only six of the cohort reporting a negative experience as a result of finding the process difficult and stressful. In the same period, eight respondents had been homeless and had variously slept rough, couch surfed and resorted to emergency accommodation;

- Crowding was said to be present in a handful of households renting privately, creating higher levels of stress in those affected;
- One quarter of private renters felt unsafe, principally because of living in an unsafe locality or feeling threatened by neighbours;
- One in five private renters suffered negative health impacts because of having to live in the dwelling rented for reasons of stress associated with worrying about personal safety;
- The opportunity to comment on the standard of service received from their housing manager generally elicited a favourable response although some considered that repairs and maintenance were not being carried out in a timely manner.

### ADDITIONAL FINDINGS – SOCIAL HOUSING TENANTS

- At the time of the household survey, twelve-year young people were seeking their own accommodation, two had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house in Coonamble. Waiting time generally appeared to be more than six months;
- Eight older persons were seeking their own accommodation, none had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house;
- Seven respondents had tried to rent privately;
- Ten households were two family households but none reported as three family households;
- Three households had applied for a house or unit in another community;
- Several respondents reported a wait greater than three months for assessment and a further period of six months and longer for modification of the house for person(s) requiring mobility aids;

- A few respondents said their house failed to meet cultural needs, mainly on the grounds that outdoor spaces did not support cultural activities;
- Nearly one quarter of respondents stated their accommodation impacted negatively upon their health, quoting stress from living in an unsafe environment, dust and accessibility as the primary reasons;
- One in five respondents said they did not feel safe in their home for reasons of being unable to secure the house, being in an unsafe neighbourhood, and/or being threatened by neighbours or others. Two respondents had been the victims of home invasion.

## 5.6 Unmet housing need

From the MPRH&BC household survey, unadjusted responses from households living in Coonamble and Quambone to questions of housing need are summarised in Table 5.31.

Table 5.31: Need for new housing as recorded by the MPRH&BC household survey

	Number
Homeowners:	(n=43)
Young people requesting own housing	8
Older people requesting own housing	10
Multi-family households	2
Persons/families homeless given shelter	3
Private renters:	(n=43)
Young people requesting own housing	10
Older people requesting own housing	3
Multi-family households	7
Persons/families homeless given shelter	3
Aboriginal social housing renters:	(n=77)
Young people requesting own housing	12
Older people requesting own housing	8
Multi-family households	10
Persons/families homeless given shelter	6
Homeless persons and families	(n=6)
Persons experiencing homelessness	10

Clearly, need for additional housing exists across all tenure types and age cohorts. Establishing priorities will depend upon setting a suite of

evaluation criteria: crowding, homelessness, family composition, existing property condition, tenancy record, to name a few but, for the purposes of this Plan, assessment of need addresses the circumstances of multi-family households and individuals and families experiencing homelessness living in homeowner and private rental dwellings in addition to households renting Aboriginal social housing. To arrive at a nuanced and realistic estimate, each individual survey return has been examined and equitable allocation made based on expressed need, existing household composition, crowding, homelessness and potential family formation. The results, as determined against a set of preliminary criteria, are shown at Table 5.32.

The methodology assumed that:

- Young single persons are allocated a 2-bed unit, one-bedroom units not being preferred because of their inability to accommodate household sizes up to couple families with two small children: reduced utility;
- As a minimum, younger couples are allocated a 2-bedroom dwelling in the expectation that family size will increase;
- Older couples are allocated a 2-bedroom unit in the expectation they will move out of the family home. In some instances, older persons or couples have been allocated a new 2-bedroom unit where it frees a larger house for younger members of an extended family;
- Unrelated persons living in the same house have not been relocated unless indicated;
- Multi-family households, composed variously of couples only and couples with children, are allocated housing of a size commensurate with family composition as the Canadian National Occupancy Standard, the methodology for which is included later in this Chapter;
- Primary and secondary homeless persons as recorded are assigned a 2-bed unit except where a family is in a state of homelessness in which case a dwelling of appropriate size is allocated;
- Where feasible and household composition permits, existing dwellings are extended by adding one or more bedrooms
- Persons seeking a replacement home because of the condition of the existing will remain in

place on the assumption that the existing dwelling will be fully renovated.

Table 5.32 indicates unmet housing need for individuals and families living in Coonamble and Quambone assessed as eligible for housing at the time of the MPRH&BC household survey. The assessment is empirical in nature and requires to be refined with each household at the time of housing becoming available. Total need is derived by the ratio of the whole population cohort to those that participated in the household survey.

DCJ, in its NSW Housing Register dashboard for June 2021, quotes the combined number of approved Aboriginal and non-Indigenous applicants shown in Table 5.34 which, without the benefit of the detail given by Table 5.33, suggests a sizeable demand exists but further interrogation of more recent data may be required to determine housing mix with a greater degree of precision.

Comments to the Murdi Paaki Tenancy Support and Education Programme (MP TSEP) field officer by tenants indicate that the NSW Housing Pathways application process is exceedingly

Table 5.32: Assessed unmet housing need

				From MPRH&BC household survey				Factored for whole community			
				Number of bedrooms				Number of bedrooms			
Coonamble											
Tenure type	Ratio			2	3	4	5	2	3	4	5
Owner occupier	172	/	43	7	-	-	-	7	-	-	-
Private rental	79	/	44	5	1	-	-	9	-	2	-
Homeless	344	/	172	5	-	1	-	10	-	2	-
Social housing rental	107	/	77	7	-	-	1	10	-	-	1
Employer	-	/	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not defined	-	/	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quambone											
Social housing rental	3	/	3	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
Total				25	2	1	1	37	1	4	1

Note: The numerator for each tenure type is derived generally from the ABS 2016 Census except for social housing rentals. For social housing rentals, the numerator is the total number of Aboriginal social housing properties advised by the AHO and the total number of properties enumerated in the MPRH&BC household survey. 'Numbers for 'not stated' responses are excluded. For the homeless category, the total for all tenure types as recorded by the ABS 2016 Census has been used. The denominator is from the MPRH&BC household survey

In contrast to Table 5.32, the AHO advised in mid-2019 the numbers waiting for AHO and DCJ housing in Coonamble to be as Table 5.33.

Table 5.33: Social housing waitlist numbers by bedroom category, AHO and DCJ housing, mid-2019	
Studio/1 bedroom	8
2 bedrooms	2
3-bedrooms	1
4+ bedrooms	-
Not specified	5
Total	16

difficult to work through, creating a deterrent to application. MP TSEP staff have been assisting tenants with this, but too often applicants do not have supporting documentation, including a recognised confirmation of Aboriginality. A widely held view within the community is that there are no rental properties available locally so why bother to apply.

Table 5.34: Applicants approved for social housing, NSW Housing Register as of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

	Applicants	
	General	Priority
Coonamble	19	<5
Waiting time for a 2-bedroom house is between 2 and 5 years and up to 2 years for a 3-bedroom house and larger		

The findings stated in Table 5.32 then will likely underestimate need. Every attempt was made to ascertain actual household composition at the time of the MPRH&BC survey but household populations may be greater than recorded, and likewise demand. It is a requirement of the tenancy agreement that a tenant notify the housing manager of any change in the number of residents housed. Observing this process is likely to lead to a rent increase which, for obvious reasons, tenants are eager to avoid and so, although this places a tenant in breach, non-disclosure of all occupants is common.

Data obtained from the MPRH&BC household survey in respect of utilisation by permanent residents is summarised in Table 5.35. From the sample, if representative, it would appear that most households would have one bedroom spare, if not two. It is unlikely that many rental properties would become available if attempts were made to rationalise utilisation by relocation of willing individuals and families.

Table 5.35: Number of bedrooms required to accommodate permanent residents only

House size (Number of bedrooms)	Number of households using				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Bedroom(s)				
2	6				
3	7	10			
4	1	3	10		
5	-	-	-	1	
6	-	-	-	-	1
All	14	13	10	1	1

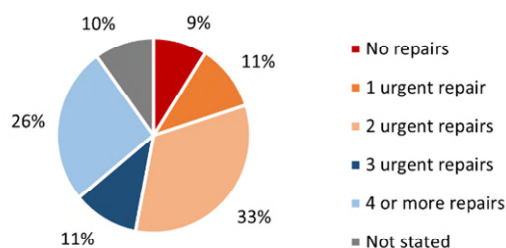
## 5.7 Asset condition

The MPRH&BC household survey invited social housing tenants to advise about the need for urgent repairs as a general indicator of housing

manager responsiveness to critical defects and, subsequently in the survey, to provide a more detailed appreciation of condition. Responses from social housing tenants to the first enquiry are shown in Figure 5.21.

A method of analysis similar to that employed by the National Social Housing Survey (NSHS) conducted by AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018) has been used to characterise asset condition on the basis of information self-reported by tenants about dwelling condition, defects and facilities.

Figure 5.21: Respondents reporting need for urgent repairs



The basis of this assessment is the judgment that a house is deemed to be of acceptable standard if it has no more than two major specified structural, electrical and/or plumbing problems and has at least six working facilities. In this context, facilities are those comprising 'health hardware' in the Housing for Health terminology which characterise safety and nine healthy living practices (HLPs):

- HLP 1: Washing people
- HLP 2: Washing clothes and bedding
- HLP 3: Removing wastewater safely
- HLP 4: Improving nutrition – the ability to store, prepare and cook food
- HLP 5: Reducing the negative impacts of crowding
- HLP 6: Reducing the negative effects of animals, insects and vermin
- HLP 7: Reducing the health impacts of dust
- HLP 8: Controlling the temperature of the living environment
- HLP 9: Reducing hazards that cause trauma

The household survey sought to establish observance of the practices using the indicators shown in Table 5.36.

Table 5.36: Indicators for meeting safety and HLPs	
Practice	Represented by functional:
HLP 1	Bath or shower, and hot water heater
HLP 2	Laundry tub
HLP 3	Toilet and wastewater disposal/septic
HLP 4	Cooking stove and oven, kitchen sink
HLP 6	Flyscreens and site drainage
HLP 7	Glazed windows
HLP 8	Heating and cooling devices
HLP 9	Electrical installations

The single divergence from the NSHS methodology adopted in this project is to increase the number of working specified facilities to seven through the addition of air-conditioning which MPRA and HLP 8 consider to be essential to managing the health of residents at risk from heat, particularly children, older people and those with long term health conditions. A means of heating the home is also included.

Classification of structural and major services faults
Sinking/moving foundations
Uneven/sagging floors
Major cracks in wall and/or ceiling
Termite damage
Roof leaking inside
Major electrical faults
Major plumbing faults
Major air-conditioning problems
Malfunctioning on-site wastewater treatment system

The results of the evaluation of tenant responses are shown at Table 5.37.

Table 5.37: Social housing condition as expressed by tenants	
Condition	
No structural problems, and 7 working facilities	7%
No more than 2 structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	57%
3 or more structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	34%
None, 1 or 2 structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	0%
3 or more structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	2%

The principal deficiencies recorded in the quality of social housing are noted in Table 5.38.

Table 5.38: Social housing principal structural, electrical, plumbing and facilities problems (%)	
Problem area	Houses affected
Moving foundations	45%
Uneven floors	19%
Cracks in wall and/or ceiling	41%
Termite damage	9%
Roof leaking inside	16%
Major electrical faults	24%
Major plumbing faults	19%
Major air conditioning problems	22%
Septic/sewerage problems outside	9%
Non-functional facilities	
Kitchen stove/oven	5%
Electric hot water heater	2%
Kitchen sink	0%
Shower	3%
Toilet	5%
Laundry tub	2%
Air conditioning	7%

The results of the assessment against the Housing for Health safety and healthy living practices are reported in Table 5.39. Whereas Table 5.38 indicates the proportion of installed systems, appliances and fixtures which are non-functional, Table 5.39 captures those households which do not have the benefit of some appliances, primarily wood or electric heaters or air conditioners.

Table 5.39: Social housing observance of the HLPs

Practice	Meeting the standard
HLP 1	Washing people 98%
HLP 2	Washing clothes and bedding 98%
HLP 3	Wastewater disposal 91%
HLP 4	Improving nutrition 95%
HLP 6	Pest control 64%
HLP 7	Reducing impact of dust 84%
HLP 8	Temperature control (heating) 81%
HLP 8	Temperature control (cooling) 81%
HLP 9	Free of electrical hazards 76%

Tenants also reported other minor defects such as fractured verandah decking (16%), no working clothesline (12%), missing flyscreens (36%), broken windows (16%) and the like. An inability to secure the house because entry and/or back doors could not be closed or locked was noted by one household in four, contributing to the feeling of insecurity mentioned by some tenants and reflected by Figure 5.19

In respect of HLP 2 and HLP 4, provision of whitegoods is a tenant responsibility. The percentage of household survey respondents stating access to a working washing machine and fridge were 83% and 84% respectively.

Tenants of NSWALC-owned Aboriginal social housing at Quambone reported that, while housing was in reasonable condition, no installed cooling appliances were working. Attention was required to plumbing and electrical defects.

## 5.8 Asset preservation

As discussed above, and in answer to a series of objective, closed questions, tenants reported a range of structural, building fabric and facilities defects in response to the household survey. Unlike the original HEHP investigations of the early 2000's, no independent scoping of properties has been carried out to determine the scale of repairs needed to restore properties to a fully serviceable state and develop a schedule of planned maintenance. This Plan relies on the household survey to generate a profile of asset condition.

In the absence of detailed scopes of work, this HEHP adopts an analysis of previous repair and maintenance projects to derive an 'order of probable cost'. The sample totals 98 properties spread across seven communities in the Region, large and small, and includes properties requiring little or no work to those in need of major refurbishment. The sample is grouped into five bands (quintiles) of increasing scope to generate median values for each band. Band medians are listed in Table 5.40. No adjustment has been made for the average age of properties or type of construction, but values have been revised to account for remoteness as per Rawlinsons cost guide. Costs are to September 2020.

The median values for repair and maintenance quoted in Table 5.40 allow for minor routine works or responsive works in the case of Band 1 and Band 2 properties progressing through Band 3 to Bands 4 and 5 which include elements of works categorised as planned: cyclical and life cycle (preventative) maintenance, but which have not been attended to, by and large, under the *Build & Grow* policy regime. Band 4 and Band 5 works would include internal and external repainting; replacement of floor coverings, kitchens, bathrooms and/or laundries; replacing appliances, fixtures and fittings where these are no longer serviceable; and ensuring roofing, gutters and downpipes are brought to a satisfactory condition.

Table 5.40: Median values for property repair and maintenance

Band	Median value (\$)
One	7,980
Two	24,280
Three	37,550
Four	56,130
Five	84,070

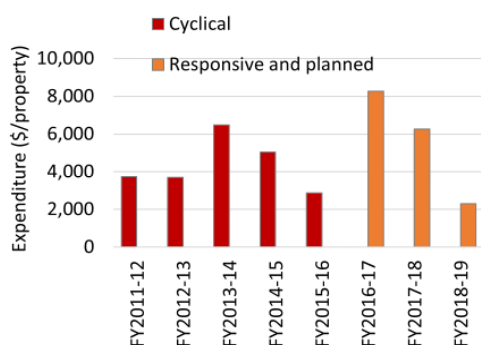
The values quoted in Table 5.40 are median values so it is possible that repairs on the more distressed properties could exceed \$100,000 at which point the value question arises as to whether it is more cost effective to replace rather than refurbish.

Based on tenant response to the questions relating to property condition posed in the MPRH&BC

household survey, the probable order of cost for repairs and maintenance is given by Table 5.41.

The AHO has advised that, between FY2011-12 and FY2018-19, it funded repair and maintenance costs to an average of 20 to 25 properties each year in Coonamble LGA. Figure 5.22 provides a summary of expenditures. It is not known whether these were AHO, Coonamble LALC or MPRHC properties, or in which communities this expenditure occurred.

Figure 5.22: AHO repair and maintenance expenditures



The higher expenditure occurred after carrying out the MPRH&BC household survey and so is not reflected in tenant responses.

To derive an order of probable cost for all repairs and maintenance, the number of properties has been factored up in the inverse of the ratio of household survey respondents providing detailed information on asset condition to the total number of social housing properties in the community; in the case of Coonamble, the factor is (107/58) or 1.84. The total number is an aggregate of Coonamble LALC, MPRHC, AHO and LAHC properties. The denominator of 58 is the number of reliable returns on which a projection could be based. All tenants responded at Quambone so no adjustment is required.

Table 5.41: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost

Band	Number of properties assessed in band from survey	Total number of properties for repair	Probable order of cost (\$)
<b>Coonamble</b>			
One	4	7	58,887
Two	33	61	1,478,150
Three	20	37	1,385,466
Four	0	0	0
Five	1	2	155,095
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>3,077,597</b>
Average spend/property = \$28,763			
<b>Quambone</b>			
One	0	0	0
Two	2	2	48,600
Three	0	0	0
Four	1	1	56,100
Five	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>104,700</b>
Average spend/property = \$34,900			

It is stressed that the cost projections are based on tenant responses to the MPRH&BC household survey and the actual scale of repair and maintenance work will be identified through scoping once regional priorities have been established. From the data analysis and as identified in Table 5.41, two Coonamble properties would appear to require major refurbishment and may require replacement.

## 5.9 Replacement

No properties have been identified at this stage for replacement. As noted above, two properties are judged to be in poor condition and may, on scoping, be recommended for replacement. In consequence, no houses are proposed in this Plan at this stage for demolition and rebuilding pending inspection.

## 5.10 Extension and modification

The presence and scale of crowding, as reflected by the MPRH&BC household survey, was determined against the CNOS threshold criteria shown below. Some responses could not be adequately assessed for want of information so this number is likely to underestimate actual need.

### Canadian National Occupancy Standard

CNOS adopts the following criteria to determine the number of bedrooms required by a household:

- There should be no more than 2 persons per bedroom;
- Children less than 5 years of age of different sexes may share a bedroom;
- Children 5 years of age or older of opposite sex should have separate bedrooms;
- Children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may share a bedroom;
- Single household members 18 years or older should have a separate bedroom; and
- Couples share a bedroom.

Results of the assessment are shown at Table 5.42.

Table 5.42: Eligibility for additional bedrooms

Extra bedrooms	Number from MPRH&BC household survey
1	7
2	-
3	-
Not sufficiently defined	-

The assessment shown at Table 5.42 assumes that household composition remains as was at the time of the household survey and no new housing or tenancies are available to address crowding and undersupply. If the number of new dwellings estimated by Table 5.32 is delivered, then the need for extensions drops to the number shown in Table 5.43.

Table 5.43: Eligibility for additional bedrooms as revised

Extra bedrooms	Number from MPRH&BC household survey	Factored across whole community
1	7	10
2	-	-
3	-	-
Total number of extra bedrooms		10

Need for home modifications for persons with a disability is shown by Table 5.44. The total time waiting for initial assessment and, then, for work to be carried out would seem to exceed six to nine months as the norm.

Table 5.44: Need for home modifications

Requiring modification	Number of dwellings		Factored
	Modified	Remaining	
17	8	9	17

## 5.11 Entrenched structural inequity

The 2015 report *Demand and Supply of Aboriginal Housing in Remote and Outer Regional NSW*, prepared on behalf of the AHO, sought to explore the “unexpressed demand” for remote Indigenous housing in twenty-two remote, very remote and outer regional communities across central, western and far west NSW. The focus of this study was to gain an understanding of the factors that contributed to homelessness and crowding in these communities and the attitude towards home ownership.

A range of policy and practice measures relating to the application process, housing and asset management, human service delivery, and planning, design, implementation and control of works programmes was proposed. Despite the wide-ranging findings and actions recommended in this report, the MPRH&BC household survey data, and subsequent consultation with the Community Working Parties in 2021, found little evidence of these actions being implemented or delivered on.

Coonamble was excluded from the project because, with Cobar and Dareton, the community had participated in the project pilot<sup>2</sup> which established that:

- “Homelessness and overcrowding were nominated as a problem in all three communities, however, the issues which were manifesting as a result differed in both nature and severity, and this was not evident from the [existing] data.
- ABS Census data should not be wholly relied upon as an indicator of either absolute numbers or trends, as there appear to be numerous barriers to accurate collection.
- Discrepancies were also noted between AHO waitlist data and what the Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) reported. This would suggest that a desktop approach is inadequate... as a sole basis for making strategic decisions about allocations of new supply and that on-the-ground confirmation of information is essential to correctly assess need.
- Chronic lack of supply is leading to several urgent issues, including domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse, which, now that they are established, will not be fully resolved solely through the provision of new supply as currently programmed.”

<sup>2</sup> McLachlan Lister (2013). *Pilot Study- Structured Stakeholder Engagement. Demand and supply assessment for new housing in remote communities in NSW*

## 6 THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### 6.1 Council strategic interests

Coonamble Shire Council's *Coonamble Shire 2032 Community Strategic Plan* (CSP) outlines key challenges confronting the community and the community's aspirations to maintain and strengthen an economic and socially sustainable, cohesive community.

The CSP focuses effort on:

- Creating a living environment which sustains the wellbeing, expectations and lifestyles of individuals and families and their children, irrespective of their circumstances;
- Maintaining a safe and secure environment;
- Achieving long-term economic prosperity through diversification, optimised use of natural advantages, and education;
- Protection and improvement of natural places, waterways and wetlands;
- Access to a greater range of quality services and facilities, and the infrastructure required to support social and commercial activities; and
- Strong and confident leadership at community level.

These action areas address the aspirations of the Aboriginal community as expressed in the Coonamble Community Action Plan which emphasises the practical issues of adequate and affordable housing, higher levels of educational attainment, and nurturing of children and young people as well as strengthening cultural identity and practices which sustain the life and wellbeing of the Aboriginal community. The CSP envisages a greater role for the Aboriginal community in civic leadership and encourages equitable representation on Council.

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), which defines land-related medium-term economic, social and environmental development proposals, including guiding any amendment and/or enhancement of Council's Local

Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP), accommodates the expressed wish of the Aboriginal community to be involved in defining the Shire's cultural character with an invitation to contribute to strategic and place-based planning. By definition, this could include investigating and actioning land use opportunities stemming from Land Council land holdings. It also might extend to developing a business case for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre and associated heritage trails as an element of an Aboriginal enterprise and employment strategy. Clearly, there are areas of common interest which are given weight by the Directions in the NSW Government *Far West Regional Plan 2036*, to which the LSPS responses, and Council's *Economic Development Strategy – 2021* setting out concrete proposals in respect of cultural tourism for consideration.

### 6.2 Planning controls

Coonamble Shire Council LEP 2011 sets out the planning controls applicable to residential development in the Shire, and the Development Control Plan (DCP) further requirements in relation to planning and design. Key controls are shown at Figure 6.1 which identifies zoning and Figure 6.2 which indicates a minimum lot size of 750 m<sup>2</sup> for the general residential zone (R1) in the urban area of Coonamble. Figure 6.3 identifies zoning of Quambone as RU5 Village and Figure 6.4 indicates a minimum lot size of 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> for all developments in the village.

### 6.3 Municipal rates and charges

Council is permitted by legislation to levy a different municipal rate for Coonamble and for the villages. Rates relating to the residential category and service charges for 2021/22 are shown in Table 6.1 and Table 6.2.

Table 6.1: Ordinary rate, residential (2021/22)

General rate	Base rate	Ordinary rate (\$ in the \$)
Coonamble	485.00	0.015713
Quambone	470.00	0.012800
Gulargambone	480.00	0.012800

Table 6.2: Water and sewer charges (2021/22), Coonamble

<b>Water</b>	
Filtered water access, 20 mm	\$360.00
Water cost (kL) to 450 kl	\$1.15/kL
Water cost (kL) over 450 kl	\$1.85/kL
Raw water access, 20 mm	-
<b>Sewerage</b>	
Sewerage access	\$615.00
<b>Stormwater drainage</b>	
Drainage levy	-
<b>Waste management</b>	
Domestic waste management, collection	\$280.00

places Coonamble Shire as a low-cost supplier in NSW.

Table 6.3 provides an indication of the spread of unimproved land values across properties owned by the AHO and ACHPs in Coonamble.

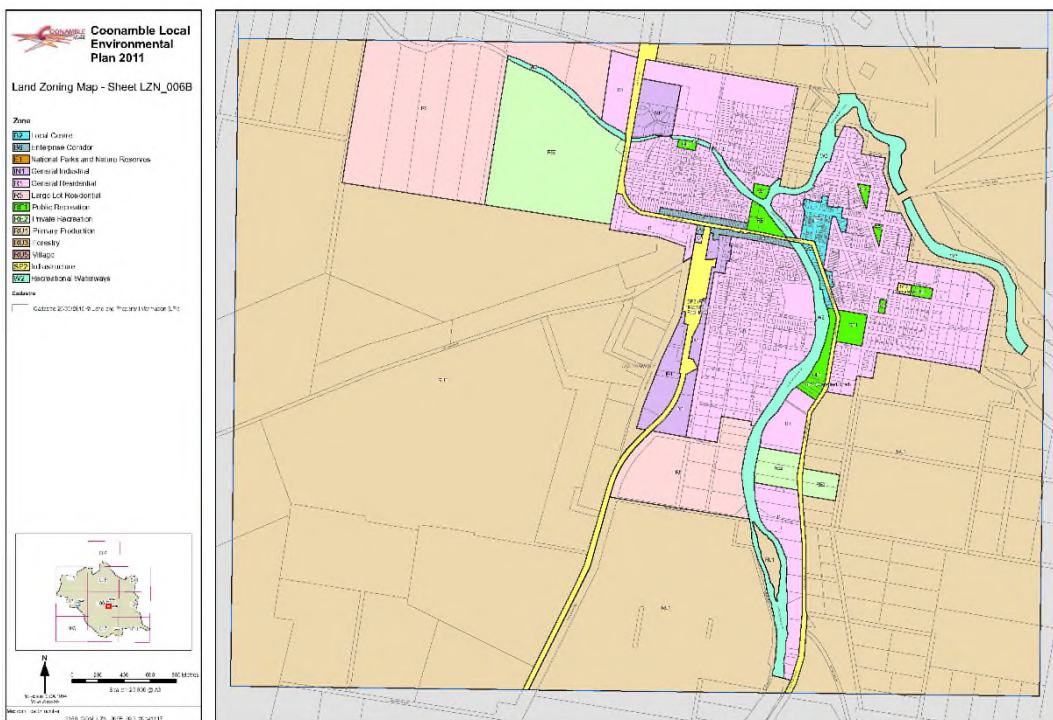
Table 6.3: Typical land values

Property	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Unimproved value (\$)
<b>Coonamble</b>		
13 Hickey Street	1,157	18,900
21 Zoccoli Street	711	25,500
104 Aberford Street	765.1	18,000
18 Nebea Street	1,068	17,400
<b>Quambone</b>		
11 Cooma Street	1,012	720

Typically, in 2021/22, residential lots of about 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> in Coonamble will incur an annual rate charge of between say \$760 and \$890 and service charges totalling in the order of \$1,700, for a total annual bill of between \$2,500 and \$2,600 depending upon individual circumstances.

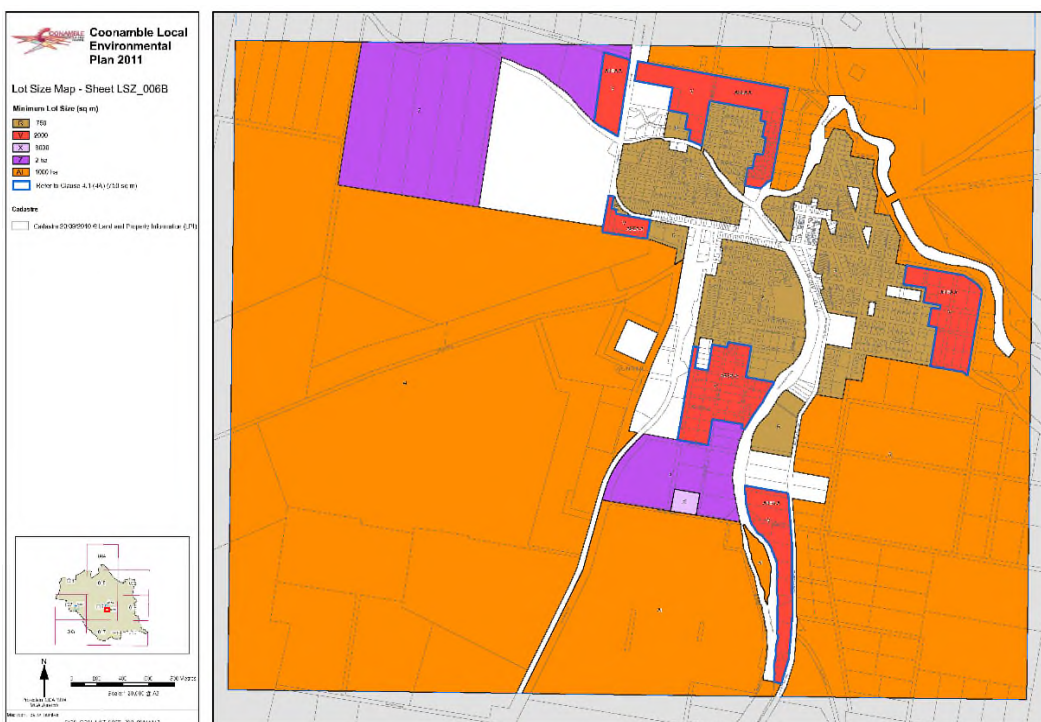
Water use, normally charged to the tenant, if assumed to be 800L/person/day applied to the average household size stated at Table 5.7, could typically amount to about \$1,300. The NSW Industry Local Water Utility performance monitoring data dashboard indicates a typical residential bill for water and sewerage in 2019-20 in Coonamble to be in the order of \$1,127 per connected property. This is below the weighted median of \$1,414 for all water utilities in NSW and

Figure 6.1: Land zoning map - Coonamble



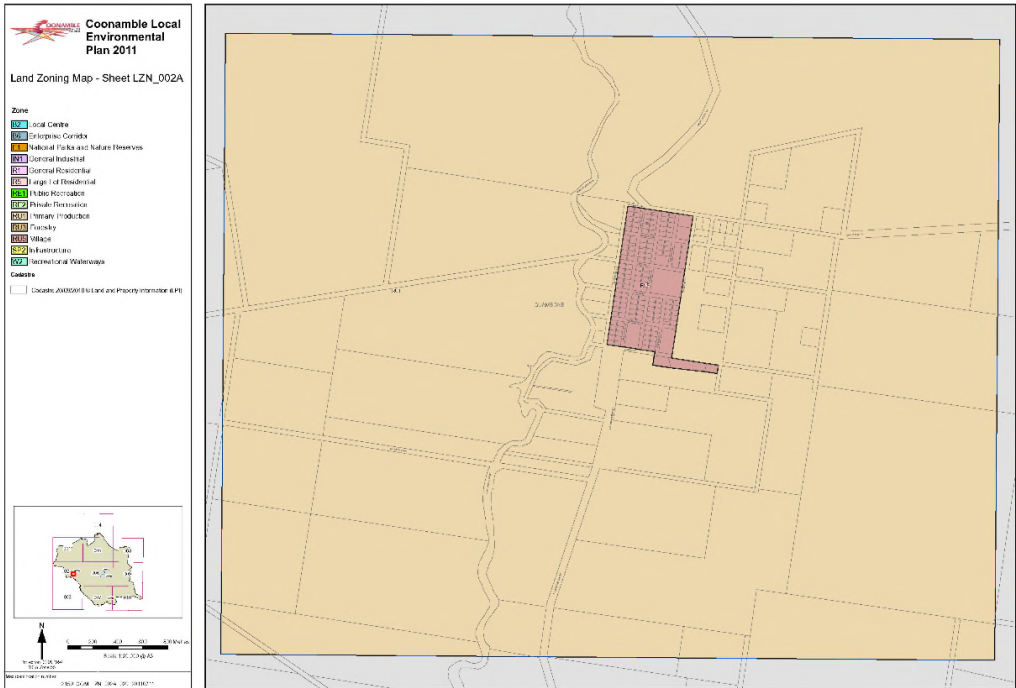
Source: Coonamble LEP 2011, 2150\_COM\_LZN\_006B\_020\_20141117

Figure 6.2: Minimum lot size - Coonamble



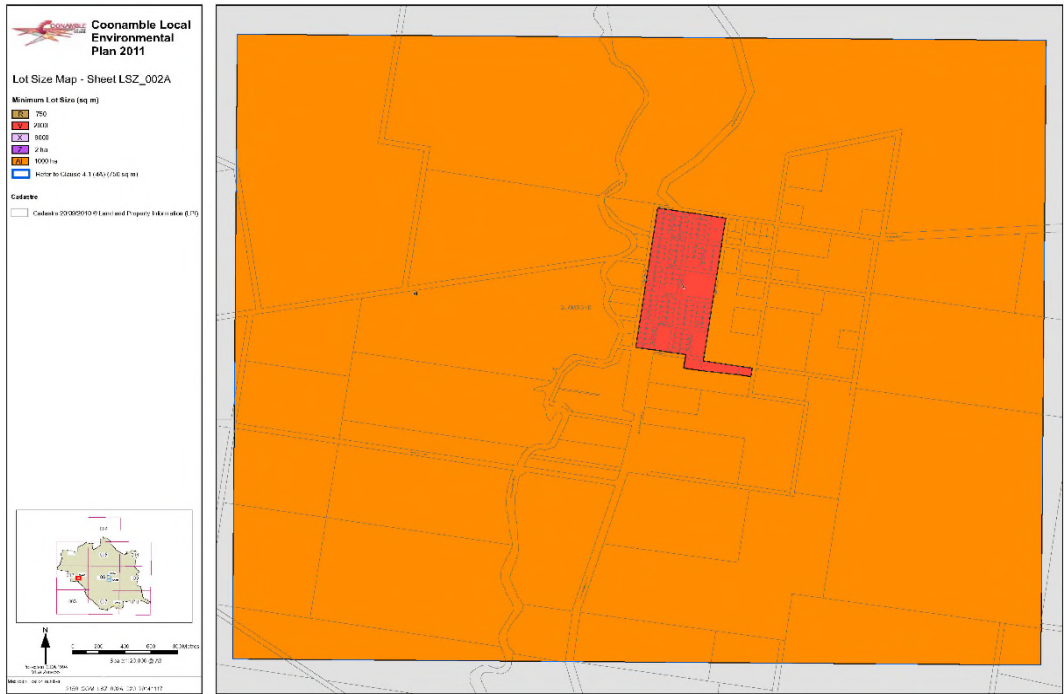
Source: Coonamble LEP 2011, 2150\_COM\_LSZ\_006B\_020\_20141117

Figure 6.3: Land zoning map - Quambone



Source: Coonamble LEP 2011, 2150\_COM\_LZN\_002A\_020\_20141117

Figure 6.4: Minimum lot size - Quambone



Source: Coonamble LEP 2011, 2150\_COM\_LSZ\_002A\_020\_20141117

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

### 7.1 Infrastructure accessibility

Residents of Coonamble and Quambone have access to a full range of municipal and other services as summarised in Table 7.1 but, as utilities including Council face the challenges common to smaller regional and remote communities, these may only be provided to a minimum functional standard.

### 7.2 Infrastructure improvements

Inevitably, the community questions the processes by which works are prioritised and the slow pace of improvement. It is appreciated that Council operates within financial constraints partly reliant on government grant funding but community members are ratepayers and feel obliged to speak out if municipal and other services are thought to be wanting. This HEHP flags areas of potential improvement suggested by the Aboriginal community of Coonamble and Quambone in the hope that Council can acknowledge and address the infrastructure issues identified by the CWP at Table 7.2 with permanent technical and operational improvements.

Table 7.1: Service accessibility, Coonamble and Quambone

Service	Responsibility	Availability	Service level	Coonamble			Quambone		
				To community expectations					
Reticulated potable water supply	Coonamble Shire Council	✓	-	Green			Green		
Reticulated raw water supply	Coonamble Shire Council	-	-						
Reticulated sewerage	Coonamble Shire Council	✓	-	Green					
On-site wastewater management	Coonamble Shire Council	-	-		Yellow		Green		
Stormwater	Coonamble Shire Council	✓				Red	Green		
Roads and drainage	Coonamble Shire Council	✓				Red	Green		
Solid waste disposal – bulky items	Coonamble Shire Council	✓	-	Green					
Solid waste disposal – kerb collection	Coonamble Shire Council	✓	-			Red			
Animal control	Coonamble Shire Council	✓	-	Green			Green		
Environmental amenity	Coonamble Shire Council	✓				Red	Green		
Electrical power	Essential Energy	✓	-	Green			Green		
Streetlighting	Essential Energy	✓	-	Green			Green		
Mobile telephone	Telstra	✓	5G/4G	Green			Green		
	Optus	-	4G	Green					
NBN	Satellite to Quambone	✓	FTTN	Green				Yellow	
TV satellite	Viewer Access Satellite TV	✓	-	Green			Green		
Fire fighting	NSW Fire and Rescue	✓	-	Green					
	NSW Rural Fire Service	✓	-	Green			Green		

Table 7.2: Community expressed service improvements

Service	Improvement
On-site wastewater management	Progressively connect all houses with on-site systems to town sewerage
Solid waste disposal – bulky items	Negotiate with Council for a four-monthly bulky items kerbside collection service so that residents can keep their yards clean and free of waste
Roads and drainage	Programme construction of kerb and guttering to properties not yet serviced, seal Dubbo Lane, and improve stormwater management so that standing water is removed quickly to eliminate the inconvenience and health risks: the school drop off location needing improved drainage
Environmental amenity	Accelerate environmental improvement works to reduce dust generation during drier months of the year from unsealed roads and rural properties, and encourage a collaborative project between Council and housing providers to revegetate yards of Aboriginal social housing

## 8 COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE

### 8.1 Community health profile summary

Coonamble, the largest community in the Coonamble Local Government Area, and the village of Quambone are included in this profile. Coonamble Shire is considered remote on all remoteness scales. It is one of twenty-three local government areas in the Western NSW Local Health District (LHD).

Quantitative data for the Coonamble community is not available due to its small size so a mixed-methods approach has been used to describe the health of the community. Qualitative evidence was gathered by interviewing local health care providers to assess the perceived health status of the Coonamble community. Evidence indicates that the health of the Aboriginal population is considered to be good although the influences of the underlying social determinants of health are visible. In general terms this mirrors the findings of the NSW Population Health Survey carried out in 2019 in which 77.8% of Western NSW LHD residents reported excellent, very good, or good health<sup>1</sup>.

The quantitative assessment involves a comparison of data from a range of sources.

### 8.2 Health status – qualitative assessment

Qualitative evidence was gathered by interviewing local health care providers to assess the perceived health status of the Coonamble community. Evidence indicates that the health of the Aboriginal population is considered to be reasonable but the community's health is affected by the social determinants of health: weak education participation, an ambivalence to work, and consumption of illicit drugs and alcohol. Environmental factors such as quality of treated water, the lack of adequate housing and crowding are impacting greatly on the community. The following observations were noted in interviews:

- While not resulting in hospital presentations, incidents of boils, impetigo (school sores) and head lice are prevalent in school aged children. Conditions are managed by a nurse who visits the schools regularly;
- Many Aboriginal people in the community have a chronic disease: diabetes or a heart disease, but access to complication screening is sufficiently good that conditions can be managed in home;
- Most of the community will not drink town water. The quality continues to be poor with concentrations of calcium and iron being at the threshold level for drinking water supplies;
- The incidence of gambling, particularly with increased Government benefits and allowances, and the availability and use of illicit drugs and alcohol are taking a toll on the social and emotional wellbeing of the community. Overdoses have been fatal in some cases.
- Concern exists that greater drug use is leading to an increase in crime within the town;
- Access to mental health and social and emotional wellbeing services in Coonamble is limited. A psychologist visits 1.5 days per week but crisis presentations are managed via virtual assessment, resulting in many patients returning immediately to the community with little or no intervention;
- The community has observed an increase in cancer diagnosis. Treatment for most patients requires extended travel to Dubbo, Orange or Sydney, presenting worries of affordability and displacement, and creating fear for patients and their families;
- Attendance officers at schools are ensuring children are presenting at school but disruptive and disengaged behaviours of some children are not adding to educational attainment. The Clontarf (boys) and National Aboriginal Sporting Chance (girls) Academies are having success in encouraging young people to stay at school;
- Employment opportunities exist in the Coonamble area but the level of Government financial support reduced the appeal of earning. Machinery, abattoir, grain and labour jobs are available and are not being filled;

- Aboriginal social housing properties are not well maintained and are subject to the impacts of crowding;
- Crowding is being made worse by a small rental market; aspiring tenants are unable to find accommodation where there are no properties to rent;
- It is suspected that the number of people sleeping rough is increasing although this has not reached the point at which homelessness is visible;
- The town is kept reasonably tidy by Council. Young boys from the Clontarf Academy participate in 'Clean Up Australia Day' which brings a sense of pride to the community.

### 8.3 Health status – quantitative assessment

Data for Coonamble Shire, Western NSW LHD and NSW as a whole is presented to describe the health status of the population.

#### 8.3.1 Mother and baby health

- The proportion of babies born to teenage mothers in Western NSW LHD is 2.5 times higher than to teenage mothers in NSW<sup>2</sup>;
- Almost two-thirds of Aboriginal mothers in Western NSW LHD had their first antenatal visit before 14 weeks gestation (65.4%), lower than for all NSW Aboriginal mothers (75.3%) and all NSW mothers (79.6%)<sup>3</sup>;
- By comparison, 70.6% of all women in Coonamble Shire had their first antenatal visit before 14 weeks, significantly lower than the proportion of all women in NSW<sup>4</sup>;
- Aboriginal women in Western NSW LHD are almost 6 times more likely to smoke during pregnancy (49.5% compared to 8.8%)<sup>5</sup>;
- Compared to all Aboriginal women in Australia, Aboriginal women in Coonamble Shire are more likely to smoke during pregnancy (54.4% compared to 47.3%)<sup>6</sup>;
- All women in Coonamble Shire are significantly more likely to smoke during pregnancy compared to all women in NSW (69.0%)<sup>7</sup>;
- Aboriginal women in the Western NSW LHD are almost 2 times more likely to have a baby with a low birthweight (<2,500g)<sup>8</sup>;

- Aboriginal women in the Western NSW LHD are 1.5 times more likely to have a baby prematurely (<37 weeks gestation)<sup>9</sup>.

#### 8.3.2 Growth and development of children and young people

- Compared to all NSW 1-year olds, there are more Aboriginal 1-year olds fully vaccinated in the Western NSW LHD (95.2% compared to 94.2%)<sup>10</sup>;
- Children in Western NSW LHD had significantly more decayed, missing and filled deciduous (baby) teeth (dmft) compared to all NSW children (average of 2.4 dmft in Western NSW LHD children and 1.53 dmft in NSW children). The average number of decayed, missing and filled permanent (adult) teeth (DMFT) in Western NSW LHD children is about the same as all NSW children (average of 0.87 DMFT in Western NSW LHD children and 0.74 DMFT in NSW children)<sup>11</sup>;
- The average number of dmft and DMFT for all Aboriginal children in NSW are both significantly higher than the NSW comparison (3.04 average dmft and 1.17 average DMFT)<sup>12</sup>;
- Children in Western NSW LHD are significantly less likely to have no caries in their baby teeth (dmft=0) compared to all NSW children (47.7% for Western NSW LHD children and 61.2% for NSW children);
- The proportion of Western NSW LHD children with no caries in their adult teeth (DMFT=0) is not significantly different to the proportion of NSW children (58.4% of children in Western NSW LHD with DMFT=0 and 65.4% in NSW children)<sup>13</sup>;
- The proportions of Aboriginal children who are caries free in their baby and adult teeth (dmft=0, DMFT=0) are both significantly lower than the NSW comparison (35.2% with dmft=0 and 53.6% with DMFT=0)<sup>14</sup>;
- Children in the Western NSW LHD are significantly less likely to eat the recommended number of serves of vegetables compared to all NSW children (2.8% of Western NSW LHD children and 5.5% of NSW children);
- The proportion of children in Western NSW LHD eating the recommended number of serves of fruit is not significantly different to

the proportion in NSW (67.7% of Western NSW LHD children and 62.7% of NSW children)<sup>15</sup>.

### 8.3.3 Morbidity

- Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in Coonamble Shire are significantly more likely to present to the Emergency Department for all reasons. Overall, Aboriginal people in Coonamble Shire are 1.8 times more likely to present to the Emergency Department compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia (111,333 per 100,000 people compared to 62,109.4 per 100,000 people)<sup>6</sup>;
- In 2016/17, admissions to hospital numbered more than 110,000 by Western NSW LHD residents, of whom 14% were Aboriginal people, who form 13% of the total LHD population<sup>16</sup>;
- The leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people in the Western NSW LHD is dialysis (27%) then maternal health, childbirth and neonatal issues (9%) and symptoms and signs of illness (8%)**Error! Unknown switch argument.;**
- The proportion of Aboriginal people in the Western NSW LHD admitted to hospital for dialysis is more than twice that of the proportion expected based on comparison with the NSW (total) population**Error! Unknown switch argument.;**
- Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in Coonamble Shire are significantly more likely to be admitted to hospital for diabetes, eye diseases, circulatory system diseases, ischaemic heart disease, heart failure, respiratory system diseases and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD);
- Compared to all admissions in Australia, there are significantly fewer admissions for mental health and related conditions, mood affective disorders, asthma, chronic kidney disease and injury or poisonings<sup>6</sup>;
- Conversely, the admission rate for all people in the Western NSW LHD for skin infections is significantly higher than the rate in NSW (493.4 per 100,000 people compared to 355.3 per 100,000 people)<sup>17</sup>;

- The rate of potentially preventable hospitalisations in Coonamble Shire is significantly higher than in NSW (2,970.6 per 100,000 admissions compared to 2,160.7 per 100,000 admissions)<sup>18</sup>;
- The leading cause of potentially preventable hospitalisation in the Western NSW LHD is cellulitis followed by dental conditions and ear nose and throat infections<sup>19</sup>;
- Aboriginal people in Coonamble Shire are significantly more likely to be admitted to hospital for a potentially preventable condition compared to all Aboriginal Australians (7,099.6 per 100,000 people compared to 5,395.2 per 100,000 people)**Error! Unknown switch argument..**

### 8.3.4 Mortality

- In 2018, there were 2,467 deaths of people who lived in the Western NSW LHD. For people who lived in the Western NSW LHD, the all causes death rate was significantly higher than the rate for all of NSW (610.1 per 100,000 people compared to 506.4 per 100,000 people)<sup>20</sup>;
- For all Aboriginal people in Coonamble Shire, the median age at death is 66.0 years compared to 61.0 years in NSW**Error! Unknown switch argument..** By comparison, the median age at death for all people who live in Coonamble Shire is 79.0 years compared to 82.0 years for all NSW residents<sup>21</sup>;
- The leading age adjusted cause of death of all Aboriginal people in NSW is circulatory disease (189.0 per 100,000 population) which is significantly higher than the rate of circulatory disease death in all of NSW (144.6 per 100,000 population)<sup>22</sup>;
- Similarly, in the Western NSW LHD, the leading cause of death is also circulatory disease (28.1% of all deaths)<sup>23</sup>;
- In Coonamble Shire in the period 2016 to 2018, the death rate from injury and poisoning was significantly higher than in NSW (51.7 per 100,000 population compared to 35.6 per 100,000 population)<sup>24</sup>;
- In NSW, 6.9% of all deaths in outer regional and remote areas are due to injury and

poisoning and 1.5% are due to infectious and parasitic diseases<sup>25</sup>;

- The rate of potentially avoidable deaths in Coonamble Shire is not significantly different to the rate in NSW (125.8 per 100,000 population compared to 99.4 per 100,000 population)<sup>26</sup>;
- Compared to all Aboriginal Australians Aboriginal people in Coonamble Shire are significantly more likely to die prematurely from diabetes (57.6 per 100, 000 people) and external causes (149.2 per 100,000 people)**Error! Unknown switch argument..**

#### 8.3.5 Health risk factors

- In NSW, 26.4% of the Aboriginal population smoked cigarettes daily<sup>27</sup>. In the Western NSW LHD, 12.4% of the total population aged 16 years and over smoked daily; the proportion of smokers in NSW was 11.2%<sup>28</sup>.
- In NSW, 48.7% of the Aboriginal population drank alcohol at levels that posed a long-term risk to health<sup>29</sup>. In the Western NSW LHD 35.9% of the total population aged 16 years and over drank alcohol at levels that posed a long-term risk to health; the proportion of at-risk drinkers in NSW was 32.8%<sup>30</sup>.

Tables 8.1 to 8.5 and Figure 8.1 provide detailed information of the health statistics for the community.

Table 8.1: Cause of presentation to Emergency Departments, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Coonamble Shire, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Coonamble Shire	NSW	Australia
All causes	111,333.0*	71,135.8	62,109.4
Infectious and parasitic disease	7,398.4*	3,393.1	3,293.9
Mental health and related conditions	2,795.4	3,649.3	3,636.7
Circulatory system diseases	3,167.4*	1,274.2	1,570.1
Respiratory system diseases	8,511.9*	7,153.7	6,340.7
Digestive system diseases	6,419.4*	3,972.5	3,500.8
Musculoskeletal system diseases	7,075.8*	3,936.2	2,910.1
Urinary system diseases	4,748.8*	2,364.4	2,263.4
Injury, poisoning and external causes	25,864.5*	16,420.0	14,458.8
Other factors requiring contact with the health system	3,803.3	5,889.1	4,664.0
Other reasons	41,125.7*	23,097.0	19,471.0

\* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

Data source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Health Atlas of Australia.  
Public Health Information Development Unit, Torrens University Australia

Table 8.2: Leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people, Western NSW LHD, 2016-17

	% admissions		
	Aboriginal people in Western NSW LHD	Aboriginal people in NSW	All NSW admissions
Dialysis	27%	27%	13%
Maternal, neonatal & congenital disorders	9%	10%	7%
Symptoms & abnormal findings	8%	7%	8%
Respiratory diseases	8%	7%	5%
Digestive system diseases	7%	7%	10%
Injury & poisoning	7%	7%	7%
Other factors infl. health	6%	7%	11%
Nervous & sense disorders	4%	4%	7%
Circulatory diseases	4%	3%	5%
Genitourinary diseases	4%	4%	5%
Mental disorders	4%	5%	5%
Musculoskeletal diseases	3%	3%	5%
Skin diseases	2%	2%	2%
Infectious diseases	2%	2%	2%
Malignant neoplasms	2%	2%	4%
Endocrine diseases	2%	2%	2%
Blood & immune diseases	1%	1%	1%
Other neoplasms	1%	1%	2%

Data source: NSW CAPED, ABS (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health

Table 8.3: Cause of admission, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Coonamble Shire, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Coonamble Shire	NSW	Australia
Infectious and parasitic disease	908.2	759.9	1,093.5
All cancers	815.2	926.1	983.8
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	1079.1	704.9	1,101.0
- Diabetes	603.4*	319.0	420.9
Mental health and related conditions	1118.1#	2,515.3	2,626.5
- Mood affective disorders	173.0#	351.3	355.6
Nervous system diseases	874.9	807.1	916.5
Eye and adnexa diseases	719.4*	465.4	531.6
Ear and mastoid process diseases	285.5	336.1	423.4
Circulatory system diseases	3156.3*	1,389.5	1,822.7
- Ischaemic heart disease	1377.9*	473.7	652.8
- Heart failure	392.0*	163.4	238.4
Respiratory system diseases	4900.9*	2,659.0	3,373.8
- Asthma	104.2#	280.6	300.4

Table 8.3: Cause of admission, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Coonamble Shire, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Coonamble Shire	NSW	Australia
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	1902.9*	548.3	594.9
Digestive system diseases	2689.0	2,843.6	3,099.5
Skin diseases	1445.6	821.0	1,370.0
Musculoskeletal system diseases	1210.5	1,415.0	1,446.0
Urinary system diseases	1381.8	1,460.8	1,696.2
- Chronic kidney disease	193.2 <sup>#</sup>	252.7	387.3
Pregnancy and childbirth	13253.9	12,749.2	14,700.7
Congenital conditions	124.3	215.0	210.3
Injury, poisoning and external causes	3558.8 <sup>#</sup>	3,305.9	4,364.1

\* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

<sup>#</sup> Significantly lower than the rate for Australia

Data source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Health Atlas of Australia.

Public Health Information Development Unit, Torrens University Australia

Table 8.4: Leading cause of death, Western NSW LHD and NSW, 2018-19

	Western NSW LHD total population			NSW	
	Ave # deaths per year	Rate per 100,000	% deaths	Aboriginal % deaths	Total % deaths
Circulatory diseases	714.5	169.2	28.1	21.8	27.6
Malignant cancers	659.5	167.9	26.0	25.3	28.3
Respiratory diseases	305.5	73.9	12.0	11.6	9.8
Injury and poisoning	147.0	47.5	5.8	13.6	5.9
Mental and behavioural disorders	147.0	33.6	5.8	6.7	6.9
All other causes	567.5	142.2	22.3	21.0	21.5
All causes	2,541	634.2			

Data source: NSW COC URF, ABS (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health

Table 8.5: Premature deaths, Aboriginal people aged 0-74 years, rate per 100,000, Coonamble Shire, NSW and Australia 2013-2017

	Coonamble Shire	NSW	Australia
Deaths from cancer	57.5	56.3	72.1
Deaths from diabetes	57.6*	10.0	23.4
Deaths from circulatory system diseases	61.3	46.1	69.8
Deaths from respiratory system diseases	Not reported <sup>c</sup>	22.4	26.9
Deaths from external causes	149.2*	41.5	58.1

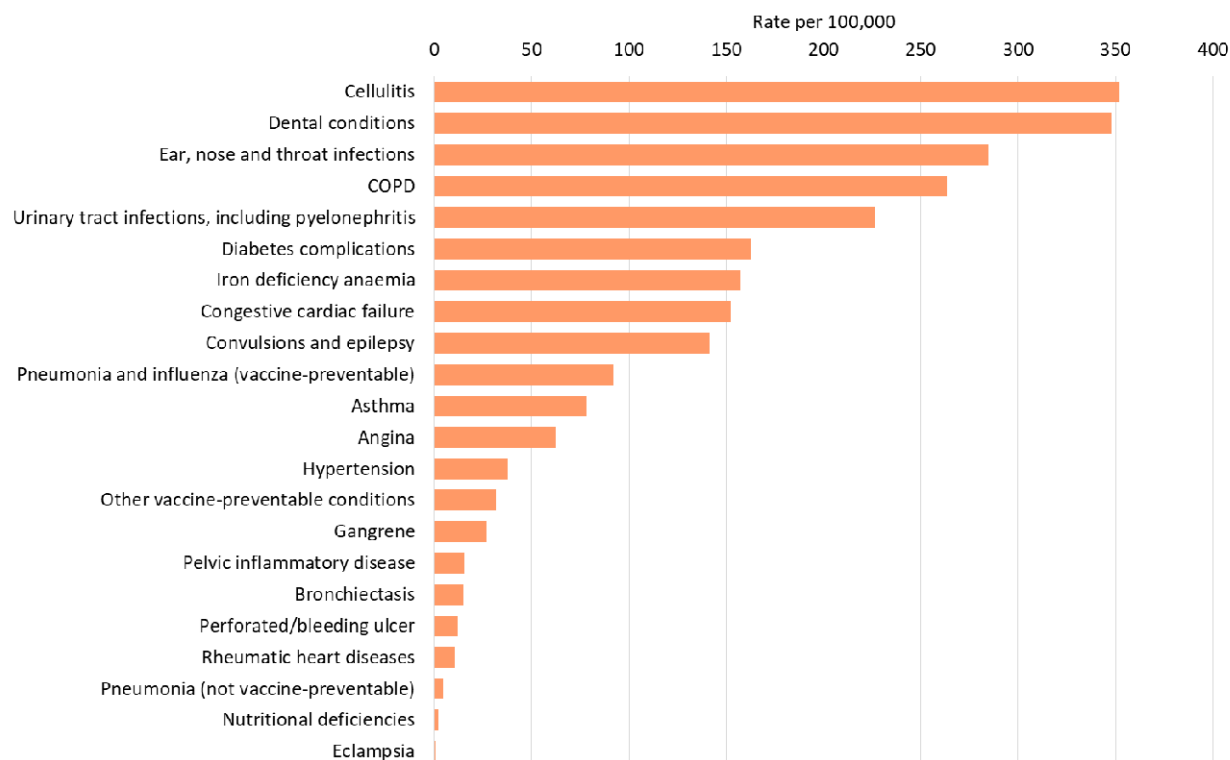
\* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

Data source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Health Atlas of Australia.

<sup>c</sup> Data for this indicator is not reported for Coonamble Shire as the actual number is between 1 and 4.

Public Health Information Development Unit, Torrens University Australia

Figure 8.1: Potentially preventable hospitalisations (rate per 100,000), total population Western NSW LHD, 2018-19



Data source: NSW CAPED, ABS (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health

#### 8.4 Available health services

Coonamble Multi-Purpose Health Service is a small rural health service offering primary health care on weekdays as well as providing a 24-hour emergency service with on call general practitioner services. The facility has eight acute care beds and eighteen aged care beds and two beds used for respite care. Recent expansion creates additional space and amenities for the community health team, for clinicians and for visiting specialist and allied health services.

In addition, primary health care needs of the Aboriginal community are met by the Coonamble Aboriginal Health Service (CAHS) established in 2007. CAHS is open weekdays between 8.30 am and 5.00 pm.

Health services in Coonamble are provided by the Western NSW LHD, CAHS, Marathon Health and some private providers.

The Coonamble Health Service operated by the Western NSW LHD provides:

- Registered nurses
- Administration support
- Security and domestic services
- Community health nurses and follow-up service
- Aboriginal health workers
- Community midwife
- Child and family health nurse
- Early childhood nurse
- Care navigator
- Drug and alcohol counsellor
- Sexual assault worker
- Physiotherapists

- Visiting gynaecologist, psychiatrist
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Palliative care

CAHS provides:

- GPs
- Practice nurses
- Aboriginal Health Workers
- Child and maternal health nursing
- Women's health
- Access to chronic disease complication screening (diabetes educator, optometrist, podiatrist, dietitian)
- Social and emotional wellbeing services (psychologist, counsellor and social worker)
- Audiologist
- Pharmacist
- Visiting medical specialists (dermatologist, cardiologist)
- Administration and health service coordination
- Transport to local services

Marathon Health provides:

- Dietitian
- Diabetes Educator

Other providers servicing Coonamble include:

- Ochre Health providing General Practitioners
- Hearing Australia
- Outback Therapy Services providing allied health services
- Jaimee Brent Podiatry

## 9 HUMAN SERVICES

### 9.1 Human services target population

The sectors of the Aboriginal population which should be the target of human services are identified in Table 9.1 together with the corresponding population numbers. The figures are for 2016.

Table 9.1: Service age groups, 2016

Total persons (Usual residence) Service age group (years)	Aboriginal		Non-Indigenous		Ratio
	Number	%	Number	%	
Babies and pre-schoolers (0-4)	103	11.1	54	4.4	2.2
Primary schoolers (5-11)	144	15.5	52	4.3	3.6
Secondary schoolers (12-17)	122	13.1	45	3.7	3.5
Tertiary education and independence (18-24)	103	11.1	73	6.0	1.9
Young workforce (25-34)	98	10.6	157	12.9	0.8
Parents and homebuilders (35-49)	155	16.7	188	15.4	1.1
Older workers and pre-retirees (50-59)	85	9.2	202	16.5	0.6
Empty nesters and retirees (60-69)	82	8.8	193	15.8	0.6
Seniors (70-84)	31	3.3	197	16.1	0.2
Elderly aged (85 and over)	5	0.5	60	4.9	0.1
Total	928	100.0	1,221	100.0	-

Source: ABS Tablebuilder with age classifications as .id Consultants

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 9.2: Core activity need for assistance		
	n=897	n=1,183
Of cohort population	10.3%	10.1%
Murdi Paaki Region	7%	7%
New South Wales	8%	6%

The proportion of the Aboriginal population requiring assistance in the core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication because of disability, long term health condition or old age is identified at Table 9.2, together with the non-Indigenous population for comparison. The age range of the Aboriginal population fraction requiring assistance is given at Table 9.3.

### 9.2 Human services in the community

Human services available to the Aboriginal community to cater for a range of needs are shown at Table 9.4 and the features of home care services are described at Table 9.5. Table 9.6 lists the NSW government principal agencies providing services to the Coonamble community.

Table 9.3: Core activity need for assistance by age group, Aboriginal population	
Age range	Number of persons
0-9 years	5
10-19 years	10
20-29 years	8
30-39 years	5
40-49 years	9
50-59 years	17
60-69 years	19
70-79 years	14
80-89 years	3
90+ years	0
Total	90

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is funding a total of 50 NDIS packages across Coonamble LGA as a whole. Total Aboriginal population requiring assistance across Coonamble LGA is 107 persons

Table 9.4: Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Health services	Royal Flying Doctor Service	Primary health care, retrieval plus visiting specialists	Broken Hill	General population	-
	Coonamble Aboriginal Health Service	Primary health care clinic and A&D service	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	NIAA
	Western NSW Local Health District (LHD)	Coonamble Multi-Purpose Service	Dubbo	General population	-
	Ochre Health	Primary health care	Coonamble	General population	DCJ
	NSW Outback Division of General Practice	General practice	Bourke	General population	-
Aboriginal social housing services	Orana Haven Aboriginal Corporation	Drug and Alcohol service	Gongolgon	Aboriginal community	-
	Dreamtime Housing	Aboriginal social housing	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	-
	Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council	Aboriginal social housing	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	NSWALC
Tenant support	Murdi Paaki Services Ltd	Tenant education and support programme	Cobar	Aboriginal community	DPIE/AHO
	Western Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service	Tenant advocacy and representation	Dubbo	Aboriginal community	Fair Trading
Homelessness services	CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes	Youth at risk of homelessness	Coonamble	Youth population	DCJ
	Mission Australia	Warrumbungle homelessness and housing support, Coonamble Homelessness and Housing Support	Coonamble	General population	DCJ
	Veritas House	Premiers Youth Initiative	Dubbo	Youth population	DCJ
	MacKillop Family Services Ltd	Reconnect programme	Coonamble	Youth population	-
Early childhood services	Mission Australia	Parent Next programme	Coonamble	Young Aboriginal children	DCJ
	MacKillops Family Services Ltd	Indigenous Parenting Support Service	Coonamble	Young Aboriginal children	-
	Coonamble Preschool Association	Community Engagement Project	Coonamble	Young Aboriginal children	NIAA
Youth services	Regional Enterprise Development Institute	Indigenous Youth Support programme	Coonamble	Young people	NIAA

Table 9.4: Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Family support services	NSW Outback Division of General Practice	Did Ya Know program	Coonamble	General population	-
	CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes Ltd	FamilyCare Service	Coonamble	General population	DCJ
	Mackillop Family Services Ltd	Family Strengthening Service	Coonamble	General population	DCJ
	Mission Australia	Targeted Early Intervention	Coonamble	General population	DCJ
Employment services	REDI.E	Community Development Program	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	NIAA
	REDI.E	Jobactive employment service	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	DESE
Social support	REDI.E	Centrelink service	Coonamble	General population	-
Legal services	Legal Aid NSW	Civil law services to disadvantaged people	Coonamble	General population	Australian Government
	Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT)	Criminal, family, care and protection law, and tenancy services	Walgett	Aboriginal community	
Residential aged care services	Koonambil Aged Care Limited	Residential aged care,	Coonamble	General population	ACFI/HCP
	Australia Unity	Aged care	Coonamble	General population	-
	Live Better Services Ltd	Intensive Residential Care Transition	Coonamble	General population	-
Home care and home support services	Australian Unity Home Care – Aboriginal Home Care	Home care packages community services	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	HCP/CHSP
	Live Better Services Ltd	Aboriginal home care services	Coonamble	General population	NDIS
Cultural Services	Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council	Culture and heritage, land management	Coonamble	Aboriginal community	NSWALC

Table 9.4: Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Disability services	Lifestyle Solutions (Aust) Ltd	Plan development, support coordination and support services	Walgett	General population	NDIS
	Flourish Australia		Walgett	General population	NDIS
	Live Better		Lightning Ridge	Aboriginal population	NDIS
	Wellways		Coonamble	General population	NDIS

Table 9.5: Home care and home support services

Services	Transport	Meals	Other food services	Home maintenance	Home modifications	Social support	Individual	Flexible respite	Personal care	Domestic assistance	Social support group	Nursing	Centre-based respite	Specialised support services	Allied health and therapy services	Assistance with care and housing	Transition care
	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Australian Unity Home Care – Ngangana Community Options	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Live Better Services Ltd	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Table 9.6: NSW Government agency representation in Coonamble

Cluster	Principal department and agencies	Responsibilities	Service access
Stronger Communities	Department of Communities and Justice	Families, communities and disability services; public housing and homelessness services; law and justice; child protection; sport, seniors and veterans	Coonamble
Customer Service	Department of Customer Service	Customer services: primary access point to government services; registration and licencing; payment of fines	Coonamble
	NSW Office of Fair Trading		
	Revenue NSW		
Planning, Industry and Environment	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment	Urban and regional planning; water and natural resources; industry; environment, energy and science; Aboriginal and social housing; and Aboriginal heritage and land use	Dubbo
	National Parks and Wildlife Service		

## 10 COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

### 10.1 Authority for change

The way Aboriginal social housing is managed has changed markedly since the first Murdi Paaki HEHPs were produced; that change being very much to the detriment of the Region. There has been a sustained centralisation of decision-making and depreciated scope of authority and autonomy within Regional and locally managed ACHPs. This has adversely impacted management services, enfranchisement of tenants, and asset condition and preservation.

Self-determination has been compromised as a consequence of changes in Aboriginal social housing policy and funding arrangements. Across the Murdi Paaki Region, housing management services have generally moved from local ACHPs and LALCs to third party, out-of-Region ACHPs without adequate provision for recurrent expenditure. Coonamble has been less badly affected in this regard than many other Murdi Paaki communities: Coonamble LALC has been managing its own assets and some AHO and NSW LAHC assets; MPRHC has been managing its own assets and one AHO property so a degree of autonomy has been retained. In Quambone, Mlahmc manages the three NSWALC properties. In general, across the Region, the head leasing policy has led to dysfunction in housing funding and management. The relative contribution of the AHO *Build and Grow* policy within Murdi Paaki has been the increased fragility of local services, marked decline in the condition of community housing assets, and feeble tenancy support from out-of-Region ACHPs. Aboriginal social housing tenants in Coonamble have experienced variable quality of service from their housing managers: the most pressing management issues relate to delays in housing repairs and maintenance, including urgent repairs which are heavily dependent upon Government funding for making good. On the whole, though, nearly three quarters of tenants in both State owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH) and Aboriginal community-owned housing in Coonamble who responded to the MPRH&BC household survey were either

satisfied or very satisfied with the service received from their housing manager.

The CWP is firm in its view that housing management services be undertaken by Regional and local ACHPs, supported by Region-specific policy and practice, clear accountability and compliance measures, and adequate levels of funding, as this is the only way in which service design can reflect the needs and be driven primarily by the best interests of the community, taking account of cultural norms and desire to become self-reliant.

### 10.2 Community priorities

Communities in the Murdi Paaki Region prepare a Community Action Plan as the basis for community action in response to shared goals, including advocacy for improved service delivery. The Coonamble/Wan-Gali CWP does not, at present, have a current, endorsed Community Action Plan. The previous CAP identified five action areas: culture and heritage, education, health, healthy homes, and law and justice. The broad strategic agenda identified for each of these action areas is reproduced in Table 10.1, and the issues which give rise to the action areas are summarised in Tables 10.2 and 10.3, to the extent that they relate to housing and environmental health, and related human services.

### 10.3 Community observations

Critical housing and human service issues covered in this HEHP continue to be at the forefront of planning and advocacy by the CWP. Issues related to housing condition were raised frequently by tenants who participated in the MPRH&BC household survey; human services availability was also mentioned often; but the most commonly expressed issue was fear of crime in the Coonamble community. Quambone residents did not mention human services in their comments.

Social housing tenants who participated in the survey had variable experiences with their housing managers; overall, AHO and MPRHC tenants found their housing managers easiest to communicate with, but tenants of all managers expressed

frustration with slow response to repair and maintenance requests, and quality of work. The comments which follow reflect the experiences of AHO, MPRHC and Land Council tenants:

*"They're not fixing things, they're average repairs, and the wait time on repairs is ridiculous."*

*"They're not fixing my house up, paying rent and get nothing. The carpet was disgusting when I moved in – I asked them to fix it; still waiting."*

*"The house needs repairs – the shed door fell on my car, the bathroom is too slippery ... they're not doing requested repairs, not listening to me."*

*"They promise but don't deliver, slow at fixing things. I have to go and see them; they don't come to me."*

The CWP indicated that most repairs are completed by local tradesman and are regarded as being of good quality, with emergency repairs being completed within 24 hours. It was reported that while most repairs are done well, a recent roofing project resulted in several houses having chimneys roofed over, although fireplaces remained in situ. This was viewed as an urgent safety issue caused by sloppiness.

Lack of access to home modifications for older people and people with disabilities is an intractable problem although the CWP acknowledges that the Land Council does what it can:

*"I need work which I can't get. I have a disabled daughter and need bathroom renos and front access to the yard. The bathroom is too small for my daughter to shower."*

*"I'm an elderly woman and having trouble climbing the stairs in my home. I need a house with no stairs but they won't listen to me about housing issues. I need a better house with no stairs."*

Survey responses suggest that Coonamble does not experience the uniform lack of access to private sector rental housing which exists in many communities although feedback from the CWP suggests that private rentals for Aboriginal people

are few and far between. Some real estate agents were reported to be helpful and supportive; others are racist:

*"They're easy to talk to ... It was very easy to get a house."*

*"He is a really good property manager – easy to contact, listens to me, not racist."*

*"The housing manager is very rude, slow at maintenance, won't answer my calls. Very bad experiences – I'm trying to get another house."*

Even the agents who were well-regarded for their ability to communicate with tenants, though, were criticised for slow response to repair and maintenance requests. Crowding is a major issue with some 2-bedroom houses having nine or more people living in them.

Quambone tenants, whose housing is managed by an out-of-Region provider, wished to see regular visits by their housing manager, and speedier attention to requests for urgent repairs. Plumbing and electrical works were a priority.

The CWP has expressed its desire to secure housing that better meets the needs of the community. There is concern about inadequacy of housing supply: waiting lists are extensive, and crowding can be problematic. In particular, a serious shortage of small houses to meet the needs of younger people at the point of household formation, and for older people seeking purpose-built accommodation. The household survey revealed a concerning incidence of homelessness in the community:

*"I need to find accommodation ASAP, and a job. I'm stressed. I need help getting housed – I've applied for private housing – it's hard."*

*"I have no home. I sleep anywhere I can get a bed. I'm stressed from having nowhere to live – I've applied for housing, they were racist to me, won't rent me a house. There needs to be more Aboriginal housing for younger people."*

This experience is supported by a segment in an edition of the Coonamble Times published in August 2018 which reported a conversation with the Project Leader for Indigenous Youth Justice who worked with young people in Coonamble and Gulargambone at the time:

*"It's bigger than people realise. We've had clients sleeping rough in cardboard boxes under the main bridge in town and the bridge on the Baradine Road, it's a lot more common than people think in small communities. A lot of kids couch-surf, which is a form of homelessness, but we've had a number of clients over time who were completely homeless. We see a lot of short-term homeless kids because of drug and alcohol abuse – but not their own. Home becomes an unsafe environment so they hit the road. I know a lot of people who comment about the kids being out on the streets and in the park late at night but a group of kids together in the park is a safer place for them".*

Waiting times for applicants on Housing Pathways are excessive. A service provider cited the example of an applicant who was 40<sup>th</sup> on the waiting list for a house in Coonamble; ultimately, she and her daughter were forced to accept a one-bedroom house in Gulargambone because there was nothing suitable available locally.

Inability to obtain housing is compounded by unemployment. Crowding in Aboriginal social housing is a consequence: the tenant of a four-bedroom house with nine occupants, for example, indicated a direct causal relationship between lack of employment for young people and inability to move out to live independently. This tenant wished to see the Land Council supply larger houses for crowded households as well as affordable accommodation for single young adults.

Service providers lamented the absence of emergency housing and shortage of permanent rental housing in the community. Mission Australia is funded to provide homelessness services for homeless people and people at risk, and to provide two domestic violence programmes. MacKillop Rural Community Services are not funded to provide housing services but nonetheless are often called upon to do so; staff indicated that they have

nowhere to send people who are homeless, and often house people in motels, sometimes for several months. On occasions when people are housed, it is not possible for service providers to arrange free furniture to support them as would be the case in metropolitan centres. It was observed:

*"Vinnies doesn't work here like other towns do"*

The CWP is seeking a greater commitment to community consultation regarding housing and development options to assist with housing choice in the community. Vacant blocks are available for new housing construction; some houses built on double blocks may, in the view of the CWP, present opportunities for additional rooms and small units, or subdivision.

Housing affordability is a cause of anxiety within the community. Service providers expressed concern for the wellbeing of elderly people who have retired, with a consequent reduction in income, struggling with bill payments and unable to access advice or support locally. Some tenants indicated that they regard the rent they pay as too high for the quality of housing provided:

*"It's too dear rent for a house that needs a lot of work. After paying the rent, I struggle to make ends meet."*

At the time of the household survey, there was reported to be no consistent practice within the Land Council in relation to issuing of rent receipts, and tenants expressed concern about inability to ensure their payments were not in arrears.

Owner occupiers who responded to the survey were generally satisfied with their decision to purchase, and welcomed the independence and stability it provided. There was a clearly expressed appreciation of the economic benefit of owning an asset:

*"The house is always here for me and my kids. They always have a home."*

The disadvantages of home ownership were seen as the cost of council rates and maintenance costs;

a few participants also saw home ownership as a constraint on mobility:

*"I can't go anywhere until I sell."*

*"I can't move easily."*

The CWP wishes to see home ownership more proactively promoted to the local Aboriginal community. Potential purchasers should be made aware of options for funding, and financial planning implications.

*"A lot of people have the means of getting a mortgage and actually owning a home but lack the knowledge and confidence, but with the right support they could become homeowners."*

The concern most frequently articulated by survey participants was risk of crime; specifically break-and-enter offences and street drug offences. This issue affects homeowners and tenants equally; fear of crime was the most mentioned cause of stress and of feelings of lack of safety:

*"I don't feel safe – too many break and enters."*

*"They stole my fridge and washing machine – I'm scared from break and enters."*

*"There's a lot of riff raff and break and enters. I need sensor lights; have to lock my fence with padlocks."*

*"All young kids hanging around the streets doing break and enters. Hanging around in the dark."*

*"This is a drug area; I've been broken into already. It makes me want to do drugs again as it's all around me. Neighbourhood disputes. We need drug and alcohol services in the neighbourhood."*

This last tenant was seeking to transfer to another house in a different area of Coonamble or to Dubbo to escape from the problem. Other survey participants reported that fear of crime was affecting their ability to interact socially:

*"it's a bad location; the house is insecure so we stay home. There's inadequate lighting, no surveillance. It's a dusty lane way too close to the silos. I need to move but can't get another house, my health is declining and they won't help me out. Find me another house."*

Awareness of human services scope and availability in Coonamble is patchy. Organisations with staff established in the community tend to have a greater likelihood of being services the community is aware of and accessing. Mission Australia's homelessness and domestic violence services, the Community Neighbourhood centre and MacKillop Family Services all have a profile in the community but other homelessness services listed at Table 9.4 were not readily known.

Service providers have indicated that scope of services in Coonamble is insufficient; potential clients who do not meet programme criteria are unable to receive a service and referral pathways do not exist. Service shortages are experienced in:

- Youth services: there are no services available for teenagers other than Regional Enterprise Development Institute (REDI.E), and support for young people at risk of homelessness is not provided;
- Counselling services for patients with mental health and social and emotional wellbeing issues;
- Support services and training programmes for foster parents.

In addition, service providers are not adequately funded to provide consistent, ongoing assistance to community members who require financial support to access emergency food supplies or school uniforms and shoes for children.

Health services including the Coonamble Aboriginal Health Services and WNSWLHD are well patronised, and community members understand the services available, and access and referral pathways. However, transport to medical appointments away from Coonamble is problematic. TrainLink coach schedules do not allow patients to travel to meet appointment times; patients cannot afford an overnight stay in

Dubbo or Orange, and often need to be home the same day to care for children. Not all specialist appointments are bulk billed. Patients are often required to pay at the time of the appointment and seek a Medicare rebate. Unbudgeted health care expenses result in other household expenditure forgone (including for food and electricity bills); alternatively, referrals for specialist care are not taken up.

Concerns are held within the community for the adequacy and sustainability of the Meals on Wheels services; it has been reported to be struggling financially. Aged care services for local Aboriginal community members are of concern to the CWP: the Koonambil residential facility appears to be neither well suited to the needs of Aboriginal people, nor widely affordable. Aged and disability care services delivered by providers such as

LiveBetter are reported not to be meeting local needs.

Aboriginal employment provider REDIE was reported by the CWP to be “barely functioning”. Scope exists for service improvements to contribute to higher levels of economic engagement within the community.

The CWP aspires to a better working relationship with Coonamble Shire Council. Additional investment in social infrastructure and programme support for youth services has been identified as a priority. Improved infrastructure, in the form of a fully featured youth centre operating extended hours and a PCYC, has been flagged by the CWP as a pressing need.

Table 10.1: Community Action Plan 2015 Action Areas

1	Lead a process of cultural renewal focussing on Aboriginal language, heritage, and cultural traditions and practices
2	Work with stakeholders to find solutions to long housing waiting lists and overcrowding, and work collaboratively to bring about improvements in the quality, safety and condition of housing stock
3	Implement community-developed initiatives aimed at reducing the incidence of engagement of young people with the justice system. Continue to develop and maintain relationships with all service providers in the Law and Justice sector to help gain positive outcomes to crime and provide the Aboriginal community with projects and localised solutions as per its requirements
4	Encourage the introduction of more intensive support measures for children attending local schools, including enabling higher rates of retention, positive participation in class, mentoring, teaching of Aboriginal studies as a means of reinforcing culture and identity, and providing pathways into employment and tertiary education
5	Continue to support the Combined Coonamble Health Service but advocate for improved co-ordination and range of health services with a specific focus on AoD detox, counselling and support services

Table 10.2: Summary of housing and housing-related issues

Issue	Description
Housing management	Housing managers must continue to be based in Coonamble More accessible, transparent and culturally relevant processes are required for housing application and allocation MP TSEP services are well regarded and ongoing access is viewed as important
Housing repair and maintenance	Quambone tenants indicated that routine inspections by the property manager do not take place. A pressing need is to determine the extent of work necessary to restore and maintain structural soundness, functionality, amenity and safety Some Coonamble houses are in need of repairs and maintenance; timeframes for actioning requests may be too long The condition of several houses points to replacement as the only option Air conditioning is to be provided to all houses as part of an upgrade package
Housing affordability	Some people struggle to pay power bills due to high energy consumption, especially in the hotter months A minority of households was not accessing CRA at the time of the household survey; eligible households should be assisted to apply and to maintain their eligibility

Table 10.2: Summary of housing and housing-related issues

Issue	Description
Housing need	<p>Demand for additional housing arises mainly from the needs of young people at the stage of household formation, older persons wishing to downsize to a purpose-designed dwelling, households accommodating multiple families, and homeless people who may be couch-surfing or sleeping rough</p> <p>Provision of new housing should take into account tenant requirements relating to cultural preferences and practices, as well as household size and family relationships</p> <p>Access to emergency housing is required to assist households whose homes have been destroyed or are being repaired, people escaping domestic violence, and homeless persons</p> <p>More accessible homelessness services, including for young people, are needed</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the circumstances of tenants affected by unsociable behaviour and criminal activity</p>
Home ownership	<p>Some homeowners find it difficult to meet the costs of council rates and R&amp;M</p> <p>Briefing sessions for households aspiring to home ownership could assist in more informed decision-making by interested tenants</p>
Specific housing needs of Elders and people with a disability	<p>Lack of access to the Home Modifications and Maintenance Service was reported, and has mobility and safety implications for older community members</p>
Safe and healthy communities	<p>Property crime (especially break, enter and steal offences) and drug-related crime have severe and widespread health and safety impacts in the community and seriously diminish residents' capacity for quiet enjoyment of their homes</p> <p>Bulky waste collection services are requested to maintain general amenity</p> <p>Dust generation arising from unsealed roads and lack of vegetation cover is problematic, particularly during times of drought</p> <p>Improvements to municipal services including sewer connections, stormwater management and kerb and gutter are required</p>

Table 10.3: Summary of human services-related issues

Issue	Description
Accountability and accessibility	<p>The CWP requires greater accountability from service providers, and seeks closer relationships to ensure community engagement in service planning, better awareness of services and improved understanding of provider roles and capabilities</p> <p>A formal analysis of service gaps is needed to ensure that individuals and families in need of assistance who do not fit programme criteria can have their needs identified and adequately responded to</p> <p>Improvements are sought in the working relationship between the CWP and Coonamble Shire Council to action areas of common interest</p> <p>A co-ordinated approach is required around specific projects, including youth diversion programmes, support services for survivors of domestic violence, AoD programmes and services, youth development, and crime prevention</p>
Elders' services	<p>Care and support services for older people are inadequate and require to be reviewed</p> <p>Home care and other aged care community-based programmes should be established locally</p> <p>Barriers to access to the Koonambil residential aged care facilities should be investigated and dismantled</p> <p>Measures are required to ensure the sustainability of the Meals on Wheels service</p>
Service needs for people with disabilities	<p>Access to NDIS services, even for eligible potential clients, is very difficult</p>

Table 10.3: Summary of human services-related issues

Issue	Description
Youth services	<p>The CWP holds grave concerns regarding the continuing high incidence of interaction of young people in Coonamble with the criminal justice system</p> <p>Relationships with all service providers in the Law and Justice sector must be developed and maintained as a pathway to development of Coonamble-relevant projects and localised solutions to criminal justice issues</p> <p>A fully featured youth centre operating extended hours and a PCYC have been identified by the CWP as priorities</p>
Training, employment and enterprise	<p>Training and employment services provided by REDIE are viewed by the CWP as inadequate; engagement is required to ensure service planning and delivery is targeted to the needs of the community</p>
Health	<p>Need has been identified for better access to specialist health services within the community</p> <p>Better strategies are required to enable community members to obtain medical specialist assessment and intervention without financial hardship</p> <p>Access to mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, and alcohol and other drug services is inadequate</p>
Transport	<p>Transport services, especially to meet the needs of older people and people with a disability, are inadequate</p> <p>More flexible arrangements for travel to regional centres to access specialist medical services are required</p>

## 11 MASTER PLAN

### 11.1 Aspiration

Development of this HEHP ends the second round of MPRA's approach to sector strategic planning at community scale. The HEHP makes clear the core demand drivers that are affecting the sector; documents an evidence base of the community's housing and infrastructure needs; and estimates the magnitude of sector investment. The lead time and long lifetime of housing infrastructure requires a long-term view so identifying, planning and prioritising a package of measures to ensure the sector delivers sustainable long-term outcomes for the community is vital.

Interdependencies between the housing and human services sectors add to complexity and uncertainty in the strategic planning process, particularly in a cultural context. Learning lessons is a central part of any project so with the RAHLA now firmly established and evidence provided, the community expects informed policy-setting and decision-making to lead to positive change.

### 11.2 Cultural influences on decision-making

The *NSW Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Programmes Implementation Manual* was an initiative of MPRA and the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs (as was) flowing from the successful Australian Government National Aboriginal Health Strategy projects. Written in 1999, the manual placed the concept of effective community management of capital works and associated housing and infrastructure projects into a more practical local context. Working with a community-selected professional Project Manager, CWP's demonstrated ample capacity to set community objectives, and to control and co-ordinate overall programme delivery on behalf of, and in the best interests of, their communities. The agreed negotiated system of rules governing projects roll out was formal acknowledgement of the ongoing position of CWP's as the local decision-making body. The Regional and local governance

structures remain in place and CWP's remain uniquely positioned to bring their local knowledge and cultural perspectives to inform the shape and configuration of housing and infrastructure developments. This Master Plan evidences this decision-making in practice.

### 11.3 Master plan

The master planning process adopted by this HEHP aims to create an integrated process of change at community level, arching across the built environment, and social and economic issues within a cultural context. The Plan is about taking the initiative in terms of planning for, and design of, improvements to the living environment, job creation, and coordination and integration of a raft of human services. It aims also to give renewed life to the principles of self-determination and self-management. This approach challenges stakeholders to be open and willing to change the way business with the community is conducted.

The Coonamble Wan-Gali CWP Master Plan is set out at Table 11.1. It brings together the relevant aspirations as documented in the CAP and the views of the community as derived from a structured survey and direct consultation. The proposed actions are those which matter to people.

Implementation will take time. Ongoing engagement between the community through the CWP, stakeholders and decision makers is vital to ensure the strategic focus is maintained throughout the course of the project. Change will happen and, with this expectation, there is a need to foster a strong collaboration between all parties to ensure that the ultimate objective of bringing about positive improvement in the lived experiences of Aboriginal people is achieved.

Table 11.1.: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
CWG-01		Housing management	<p>Re-design the DCJ Housing Pathways application and allocation processes, and the transfer procedure, to ones that are simpler to navigate, remove unreasonable evidence barriers, and meet the realities of living in remote communities. Build into the system a way of reflecting the real need as recorded by ACHPs</p> <p>Request housing managers to jointly develop a replacement strategy and procedure for older and/or unsuitable housing and incorporate the results of the analysis as an item of the Property Management Plan for each house</p>	<p>Housing applicants find the application process opaque, intrusive, difficult to negotiate, and culturally alienating. Waiting times are excessive, and concern exists in relation to applicants from elsewhere being allocated housing in preference to local people. Coonamble residents have limited access to private sector rental housing.</p> <p>Assets are ageing; a comprehensive R&amp;M programme is required to provide for tenant health, safety and amenity and to preserve asset value, but some properties will also be approaching the end of their service life and planned replacement is necessary to ensure that housing continues to be available to meet tenant needs.</p>
CWG-02		Housing need	<p>Involve the CWP in the allocation, planning and design of new houses to ensure the location, style and mix is adequate for tenant household composition and cultural practices, is affordable and provides choice</p> <p>Increase supply to meet demand arising from young persons wishing to live independently, young couples at family formation stage, individuals and families living in crowded households, older persons wishing to move to accessible housing for health-related reasons, and individuals and families who would otherwise be homeless</p> <p>As an alternative to upgrading existing housing to be accessible, consider building several new smaller units for the elderly and disabled to allow existing houses to be reallocated to families</p> <p>Extend existing houses judged to be crowded with the addition of bedrooms and bathrooms</p>	<p>CWP involvement in planning for new and replacement houses is essential because of the CWP's detailed knowledge of the characteristics and needs of the community, and the importance of cultural 'fit' of assets.</p> <p>The Aboriginal population of Coonamble is growing, and is experiencing structural ageing – the median age increased from 17 to 24 years between 2001 and 2016. Demand exists for purpose-built smaller dwellings to accommodate young people at the point of household formation, and older people for whom living in the family home is no longer desirable for and access and mobility reasons. Crowding in existing houses is a potential cause of ill-health, increases the maintenance burden for property managers, and contributes to homelessness. The private sector rental market does not provide a practical alternative for community members in need of housing.</p>
CWG-03		Asset condition and serviceability	<p>As a matter of urgency, identify property condition for all Aboriginal social housing, secure funding for repair, maintenance and upgrades, and undertake works to restore structural soundness, functionality, amenity, safety and security</p> <p>Where repair does not provide value for money, demolish and replace</p> <p>Ensure that all homes are equipped with energy efficient air conditioning with sufficient capacity to deal with rising temperatures and with roof mounted-solar PV systems to reduce energy bills</p>	<p>Properties are dilapidated as a result of time elapsed since the most recent major R&amp;M programme; and issues with quality of workmanship, materials and inclusions arising from a poorly conceived R&amp;M programme undertaken at the commencement of Build and Grow. Assets are ageing; a comprehensive R&amp;M programme is required to provide for tenant health, safety and amenity and to preserve asset value, but some properties will also be approaching the end of their</p>

Table 11.1.: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
CWG-04		Accessibility	Ensure our Elders and those with a disability are adequately supported to live independently in their homes Arrange with the housing manager(s) to negotiate with the ACAT, registered Home Modifications providers, and funding body where necessary, to expedite home modification work on houses occupied by a household with a resident member with a disability	service life and replacement needs to be planned. Access to home modifications is challenging for community members with mobility issues and other disabilities and for their families. Delays are experienced in securing ACAT and OT assessments and in arranging for prescribed home modifications to be carried out. Availability of funding to ACHPs is a further challenge.
CWG-05		Tenant support	Assist the small number of Aboriginal social housing tenants not claiming CRA to take advantage of the benefit Foster an enduring partnership between MP TSEP, housing provider(s) and homelessness services which ensures that vulnerable Aboriginal members of the community are able to receive the support needed to remain safe and healthy. Support any proposals by others to purpose-build emergency accommodation in the community Maintain the role of MP TSEP in supporting tenants at risk of breach to retain their tenancies and assisting with access to human services	A minority of tenants indicated in response to the household survey that they were receiving CRA. If no arrangements are in place for claiming CRA, then eligible tenants' incomes are adversely impacted. Homelessness is an intractable issue for the community. Lack of emergency housing coupled with permanent housing shortage means that such homelessness services that are available in the community are usually unable to support clients into a permanent tenancy. Sustainability of tenancies is adversely impacted by, among other things, the obligation on tenants to support family members who are homeless.
CWG-06		Infrastructure	Advocate with Coonamble Shire Council and other responsible agencies for: Where technically possible, connection of on-site septic systems to town sewerage Kerb and guttering to those parts of town with natural shoulders Sealing of Dubbo Lane Improvement in town stormwater drainage systems to reduce the incidence of ponding A regular bulky waste collection service community-wide A dust mitigation strategy to reduce the risk of respiratory and other diseases and illnesses, and the burden of maintaining a clean home	Alignment exists between Coonamble Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan and the Aboriginal community's aspirations as set out in the CWP's most recent Community Action Plan. Each of the infrastructure improvements identified by the CWP is intended to address environmental health issues which impact on the health of the community. Support of Coonamble Shire Council (CSC) in implementing these improvements will contribute to cementing a collaborative relationship with the CWP and the broader community.
CWG-07		Human services improvement, reach and accessibility	Engage with MPRA, DCJ and other agencies to advance the actions in a finalised Coonamble-Wan-gali CWP Community Action Plan in conjunction with this Housing and Environmental Health Plan Foster a closer relationship between the CWP and all tiers of government to drive improvements in human services including a greater focus on provider	Need for human services within the community is not currently met; in particular, unmet need exists for responsive, culturally safe services is experienced in the health, aged care, youth services and justice sectors. Identification and quantification of service gaps and formulation of strategy

Table 11.1.: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			<p>cooperation and coordination, service integration, performance and cost-effectiveness</p> <p>Establish a working relationship with Council to ensure that local community input and feedback is received and acted upon by Council on projects which affect the Aboriginal community</p> <p>Audit and review the role and operational objectives of human services and human services providers across all sectors to ensure that services promised are being received, that gaps are identified and can be addressed, and protocols established which increase transparency and accountability</p> <p>Work with DCJ and DSS to ensure that appropriate services are available to all community members who need disability care and packaged aged care, that assessments are conducted within a reasonable timeframe, and to design and put in place accountability measures for service providers with regular feedback to MPRA and the CWP</p> <p>Develop a transport solution which will allow community members without a vehicle to attend to their daily household tasks and personal business, and to attend health appointments at the AMS and hospital, and specialist services locally and in regional centres</p>	<p>requires a collaborative approach between the CWP and all tiers of government. Services will continue not to meet need without community engagement in service planning, better awareness of services, and improved understanding of provider roles and capabilities. A formal analysis of service gaps is needed to ensure that individuals and families who require support but who do not fit programme criteria can have their needs identified and adequately responded to, and protocols for service providers to report meaningful measures of service delivery and outcomes to the CWP are required to satisfy community expectations around provider accountability</p> <p>Coonamble Shire Council's CSP envisages a greater role for the Aboriginal community in civic leadership and encourages equitable representation on Council, so an appetite clearly exists for inclusion and equity. Improvements are sought in the working relationship between the CWP and CSC to action areas of common interest</p> <p>Community feedback makes it clear that a co-ordinated approach is required around specific projects, including aged and disability care, community transport, youth diversion programmes, support services for survivors of domestic violence, AoD programmes and services, youth development, and crime prevention</p>
CWG-08		Health services	Advocate through MPRA for a comprehensive review of Aboriginal alcohol and other drug residential and counselling services across western NSW with a view to developing a strategy and the infrastructure to address the unmet need for services in the Region and locally	Access to alcohol and other drug services is compromised by distance and by limited service capacity. Substance misuse within the community is contributing to widespread concern about lack of personal safety, as well as poor health outcomes for individuals and families directly affected
CWG-09		Employment	<p>Review the performance of employment services to determine whether the community is receiving an efficient service which results in Aboriginal people of working age being job ready and taking up employment positions across all industry sectors</p> <p>If a local employment strategy is to be part of a programme of building work, negotiate with MPS for the creation of a Region-wide employment strategy which centres on the development of a local skills base with the capability to</p>	<p>The unemployment rate for Aboriginal people in Coonamble is seven times that of the non-Indigenous population, and with a lower labour force participation rate, the employment to population ratio for Aboriginal people in Coonamble implies that one in three adults are in any form of employment. While the employment to population ratio is on a par with the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole, it is well below that for the</p>

Table 11.1.: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			carry out housing-related projects	non-Indigenous population. The CWP is concerned that employment service providers are not achieving the outcomes sought by the community. Implementation of the extensive housing construction programme recommended in this HEHP can be structured to provide training and employment to broaden employment and business opportunities for community members.
CWG-10		Social infrastructure and activities	In conjunction with MPS, DCJ and the NSW Police Force develop, resource and action a strategic response in the form of a Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan to the unacceptable level of social disturbance and crime Advocate with Council for improved youth services and facilities	Fear of crime has been a recurring theme in the community's CAP, CWP consultations and household survey responses. Young people within the community are particularly vulnerable to entanglement in the criminal justice system. A negotiated, strategic response to the problem which considers cultural protocols, as well as a response to marginalisation, is required to improve the situation

## 11.4 Defining need for growth

The total number of Aboriginal social housing dwellings in Coonamble was 107 in June 2020 as detailed in the AHO property schedule, having increased by two from a total of 105 as of June 2018.

At the time of the MPRH&BC household survey, there was a waiting list for Aboriginal social housing across all adult age groups. The estimate of housing need shown at Table 5.32 and Table 11.2 is derived by extrapolating the findings of the MPRH&BC household survey across all Aboriginal households and tenure types to

estimate need arising from those that did not participate.

The number of new dwellings enumerated in Table 11.2 is more than the number of approved applicants shown on the DCJ Housing Register for the total population: 19 general applicants and fewer than 5 priority applicants. No indication of the size is given. The CWP reports a total of 54 approve applicants are on the waiting list at the time of writing, greater than the estimate derived from the MPRH&BC household survey.

Table 11.2: Housing need

				From MPRH&BC household survey				Factored for whole community			
				Number of bedrooms				Number of bedrooms			
Coonamble											
Tenure type	Ratio			2	3	4	5	2	3	4	5
Owner occupier	172	/	43	7	-	-	-	7	-	-	-
Private rental	79	/	44	5	1	-	-	9	-	2	-
Homeless	344	/	172	5	-	1	-	10	-	2	-
Social housing rental	107	/	77	7	-	-	1	10	-	-	1
Employer	-	/	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not defined	-	/	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quambone											
Social housing rental	3	/	3	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
Total				25	2	1	1	37	1	4	1

A breakdown of social housing waiting list by bedroom capacity in mid-2019 provided by the AHO is shown at Table 11.3 for comparison purposes, giving a total of sixteen.

Table 11.3: Waiting list, number of dwellings by bedroom size, 2018

Number of bedrooms						
	1	2	3	4+	NK	Σ
Waiting list	8	2	1	-	5	16

Table 11.4 puts an order of cost against increased supply based on new builds and suggests that

given the costs for new builds, and land, that purchasing mainstream housing is an option to be considered.

Table 11.4: Estimated cost of new builds (GST excl)

Number of bedrooms	GFA (m2)	Unit cost (\$/m2)	No	Estimate (\$)
2	120	3,470	37	15,406,800
3	160	2,850	1	456,000
4	185	2,850	4	2,109,000
5 and more	200	2,850	1	570,000
			Total	18,541,800

## 11.5 Replacement housing

The MPRH&BC household survey did not record any social housing respondents describing their properties as 'condemned' or 'unliveable' but two dwellings were identified as potentially being in poor condition and, on scoping, may be found to be beyond economic repair. The CWP is of the view that there are houses which will need to be replaced. For the purposes of this HEHP, it is assumed that properties in poor condition can be restored at a sensible cost to a serviceable condition but acknowledges that demolition and rebuild may be warranted in one or more instances.

## 11.6 Housing extensions and modifications

Expressed need for extensions projected on the same basis as Table 11.2, is stated in Table 11.5. A budget of \$35,000/extension is allowed for extension and \$3,000 for each home modification.

Table 11.5: Requirement for housing extensions and modifications

Extensions (Factor = 107/77)	Number of bedrooms		
	1	2	3
Number of extensions	10	-	-
Total number of bedrooms	10	-	-
Modifications			
Number of dwellings	17		

Estimated budget to attend to extensions and modifications listed in Table 11.5 is given in Table 11.6.

Table 11.6: Estimated budget for housing extensions and modifications

	Estimate (\$)
Extensions	350,000
Modifications	51,000
Total	401,000

## 11.7 Asset preservation

Estimated costs for routine repair and maintenance including planned maintenance, and

for any particular works such as roof replacement, foundation packing and releveling if any, required to attend to immediate restoration and asset preservation are summarised in Table 11.7. Average unit expenditure is approximately \$28,770 per property for Coonamble and \$34,900 per property for Quambone.

Table 11.7: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost

	Cost (\$)
Property repair, maintenance and upgrade:	
Coonamble	3,077,600
Quambone	104,700
Particular works	-
Total	3,182,300

All properties are, or should be, subject to regular and planned inspection and, where under head lease, as per an AHO housing management agreement. Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation has secured funding through the AHO Aboriginal Community Housing Investment Fund (ACHIF) programme for property repair and maintenance: reroofing, external painting, evaporative coolers and sheds. Table 11.8 details the AHO allocations for upgrades totalling \$540,320.

Table 11.8: Aboriginal Community Housing Investment Fund allocation

Organisation	Estimate (\$)
Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation	
New supply	-
Upgrades	540,320

Assuming all funding is efficiently directed to building work, a potential shortfall of \$2,642,000 in round figures remains.

## 11.8 Infrastructure

Table 7.2 itemises infrastructure elements raised by the CWP as potential areas of improvement. All areas are the responsibility of Council and are itemised at Table 11.1 for action. No cost is attached to any of these in this HEHP.

## 11.9 Probable order of cost

Probable order of cost for each strategy are summarised in Table 11.9. The estimates were prepared on the following basis:

- Costs for building-related work are derived from industry standard cost information and/or for project costs for similar work in the Murdi Paaki Region;
- Prices are current to September 2020;
- An index appropriate to locality is applied;
- Building costs assume that construction takes place in accordance with MPS procurement practice. Projections may need to be re-evaluated if training schemes are integrated;
- Additional lots are acquired on the open market, assuming each property is built on its own lot;
- Allowance for project management has been assumed to be generally between 10% and 15% of the construction budget depending upon the nature of the work involved and the degree of investigative work required; and
- Estimates are stated as GST exclusive.

Table 11.9: Probable orders of cost, housing and environmental health infrastructure

Description	Order of cost (\$)
Planning and development	129,000
Land acquisition	1,140,000
Site infrastructure (nominal)	190,000
New housing supply	18,541,800
Replacement housing	0
Housing extensions	350,000
Housing modifications	51,000
Repair and maintenance	3,182,300
Sub-total	23,584,100
Unquantified risk allowance (5%)	1,106,300
Project management (12.5%)	2,765,600
Programme admin (3%)	663,800
Total	28,119,700

No costs have been assigned to improvement in and extension of human services because these services are already the subject of government programme planning and resource allocation

processes. Performance monitoring of government services is a key area of focus under the OCHRE Murdi Paaki LDM Accord II and Accord processes should be brought to bear on areas of underperformance. With consistent themes emerging across the Murdi Paaki Region, many recommendations will have regional application and universal application locally.

## 11.10 Funding sources

Funding for works and measures proposed by Table 11.1 and Table 11.9 will need to be negotiated through the RAHLA as the principal decision-maker on matters of Aboriginal social housing in the Region. Neither ACHP is in a financial position to contribute to these extraordinary costs from revenue derived from property rents and subsidies so realising a solution is dependent upon grant funding from governments. As noted, the AHO has contributed some funding to maintain property condition almost on an annual basis but amounts have been sufficient to attend to responsive maintenance.

## 11.11 Staging of works

The priority expressed by the CWP is for new and “appropriate” housing for young, elderly and disabled residents and need may be classified as immediate. The community wishes to be involved through meaningful participation in decision-making relating to the location, design and allocation process for new housing and, at the time, will propose a programme of works.

Engagement must take place prior to commencing land acquisition so that the physical and social aspects of neighbourhood living important for quality of life can be integrated as factors for evaluation. The CWP indicates that the AHO has built several houses on double blocks and these might be subdivided to provide additional lots for development or extension of existing dwellings by building small flats for extended family in yards.

Spot purchase may be a solution to adding to the housing portfolio in Coonamble as several 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom properties are advertised for sale throughout the town in the \$150,000 - \$350,000 price range but the criteria for location and

condition should be determined firstly in conjunction with the CWP. There are few vacant blocks of land for sale in Coonamble currently and recent land sales indicate that residential blocks are selling for between \$15,000 and \$50,000 depending on location and size.

Repair and maintenance work can be programmed to proceed following scoping. Programming may be subject to building sector capacity which can be mobilised locally and/or using the work as a vehicle for an Aboriginal apprentice training scheme. Again, the form and programme are to be the subject of discussion with the CWP. Local building capability is more than adequate to form the nucleus of a small building team so a value-add proposal is a possibility. Such initiatives have been successfully implemented in the Region in the past at scale in conjunction with Technical and Further Education NSW (TAFE NSW) providers. Murdi Paaki Services Ltd has the capacity to work with the CWP and providers to develop a suitable employment and training framework and negotiate its implementation should the CWP request.

### 11.12 Tenant support and education

The MP Tenant Support and Education Programme has become an essential and valued support service in the social housing space in all communities across the Region. Team members play a key role in supporting community members to establish and maintain tenancies, negotiate application and compliance processes and leverage partnerships to deliver wrap-around services as required by the principal objectives of the programme:

- Increase community knowledge of the Aboriginal housing sector among both tenants and service providers;
- Increase awareness and accessibility of services for vulnerable groups who may be at risk of homelessness or living in overcrowded situations;
- Increase the number of tenants engaged with support services;
- Increase knowledge of housing application processes; and

- Increase housing stability through case management.

Relationships have been established with all Community Working Parties, many community organisations and human services support providers, and through this network, MP TSEP is gaining further valuable insights into the internal dynamics of each community. This knowledge allows MP TSEP to step beyond local politics and mechanisms of control to play an increasingly strategic role in supporting CWPs and MPRA initiatives. Given the complexity of the housing and related human services landscape from a community perspective, the role of MP TSEP is critical to ensuring equity to tenants in service delivery.

A MP TSEP client will often require several case management interventions before housing-related assistance can begin. Typically, these external supports delivered through partner organisations might include:

- Arranging a repayment plan for rental arrears, power bill arrears, and fines and debts with State Debt Recovery Office;
- Referral to health and wellbeing services, mental health and addiction services;
- Assistance to obtain childcare; and
- Referral to DCJ in relation to child and family matters, help to negotiate the justice system, and support for victims of domestic and family violence.

In respect of housing, MP TSEP provides direct assistance to the community through:

- Arranging for identification documents and working with an applicant through the Housing Pathways process;
- Helping tenants to apply for Commonwealth rent assistance and/or are receiving this assistance through Centrelink;
- Intervening when tenants are in danger of breaching their tenancy agreements and, as above, arranging a repayment plan when tenants fall behind with their rent; and

- Generally supporting tenants at risk to sustain tenancies and reduce the risk of homelessness.

This Master Plan acknowledges the valuable contribution of MP TSEP to help maintain stability in the Aboriginal social housing sector and acting as the link between tenants in need of support and the human services responsible for providing that support.

### 11.13 Home ownership

Forty-three respondents to the MPRH&BC household survey were owners and all except one were satisfied with their decision to purchase. This cohort provides a local example of the benefits of home ownership compared with renting.

Discussion with the AHO and/or Indigenous Business Australia about options would be a useful starting point. Considering the relative affordability of housing in Coonamble and the existence of a mainstream real estate market with prospects for capital gain and future sale, more tenant education and information on housing ownership options is warranted, particularly for current tenants who are in stable employment and have indicated their desire to remain in Coonamble. The CWP has expressed a wish to see more accessible pathways for Aboriginal people to own their own homes. In response, this HEHP contains a recommendation for an information session to be delivered by Indigenous Business Australia or the AHO for those tenants who might wish to consider this option further, perhaps as part of an extended service provider expo.

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