



WENTWORTH/DARETON COMMUNITY WORKING PARTY

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

MARCH 2022



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Document history

Revision No	Revision/Action	Date	Authorised
1	Draft endorsed subject to minuted amendments	12 th Dec 2021	KC
2	Draft amended to incorporate CWP comments of 12 th December 2021	16 th Dec 2021	KC
3	HEHP amended to update property schedule	28 th Mar 2022	KC
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WORKING PARTY**

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

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HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

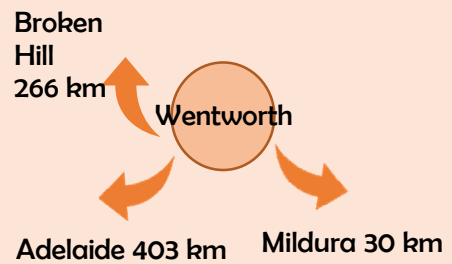
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wentworth Dareton

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 Sunraysia Aboriginal communities. 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 Wentworth/Dareton CWP's 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 Sunraysia Aboriginal communities

Where we are to be found?



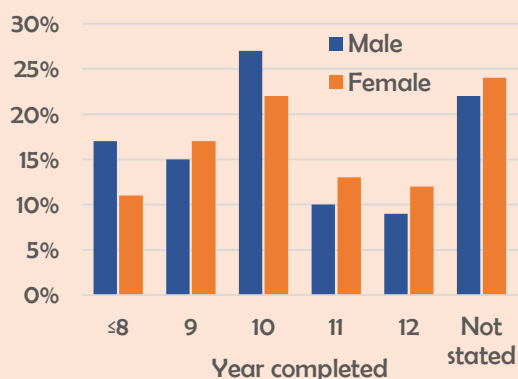
The Wentworth climate is warm, semi-arid. The number of days with temperatures >35°C is predicted to increase by 20-30 days by 2070

About the community:

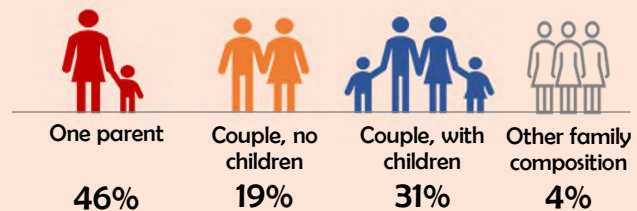


Aboriginal population = 10% of total population of 6,600 persons

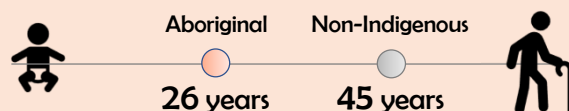
Highest year of schooling, all Aboriginal adults



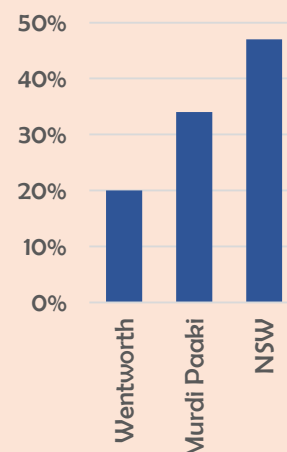
Family household composition



Median age of the population



Employment to population ratio



30% of the Aboriginal population is aged under 15 years



Wentworth Dareton HEHP

Tenure type (from Census)

- Owners
- Private renters
- Social housing renters
- Other

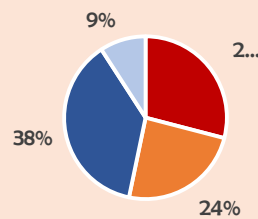


2.9 2.4
Average household size

Facts about housing in our community:



On Census night, 13% of all private dwellings were not occupied



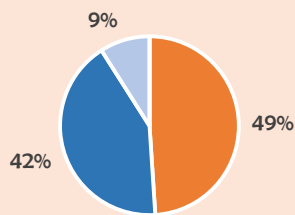
Existing Aboriginal social housing

	Bedrooms			
	2	3	4	5+
Owner	2	3	4	5+
Dareton LALC	9	35	4	1
MPRHC	-	21	4	-
AHO	9	29	14	-
Total dwellings	18	85	22	1

54% of households lived in the same house 5 years before the ABS Census 2016

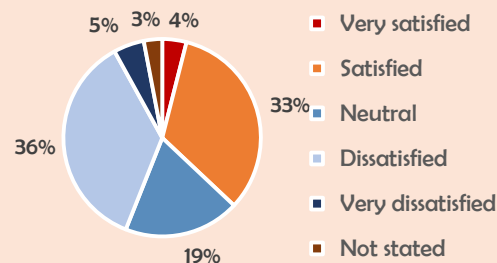


Social housing manager(s)

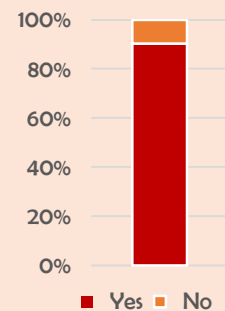


- Local ACHP
- Regional ACHP
- Out of Region ACHP
- Community housing manager
- Public housing manager

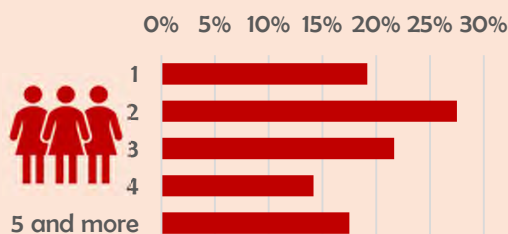
Satisfaction with housing manager



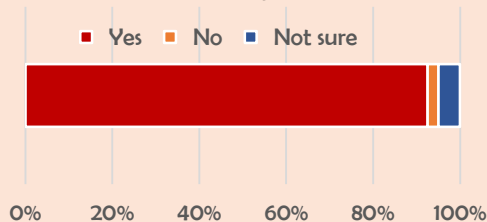
Feeling safe



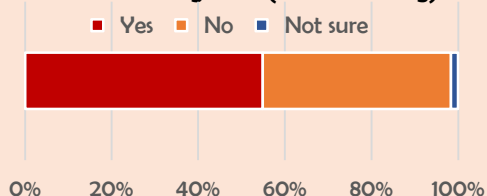
Occupancy (number of persons per house)



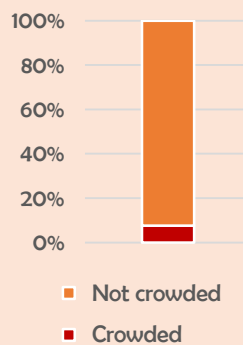
Tenants with a tenancy agreement



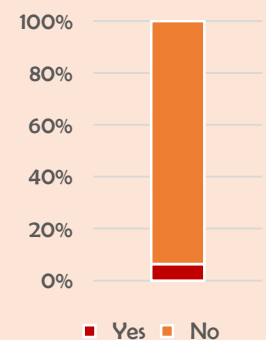
Tenants claiming CRA (Social housing)



Social housing households crowded



All households giving shelter to homeless persons



Reasons respondents gave for living in Sunraysia:

- To be close to family and relations - 85%
- Family has been here a long time - 80%
- Likes house respondent is living in - 66%
- Because its close to a regional centre - 52%



MASTER PLAN - HOUSING

ESTIMATE OF HOUSING NEED

Predicted housing need

	Bedrooms			
	2	3	4	5
Families	2	7	1	1
Older persons	3	-	-	-
Young persons	19	-	-	-
Homeless families	4	-	-	-
Total dwellings	28	7	1	1

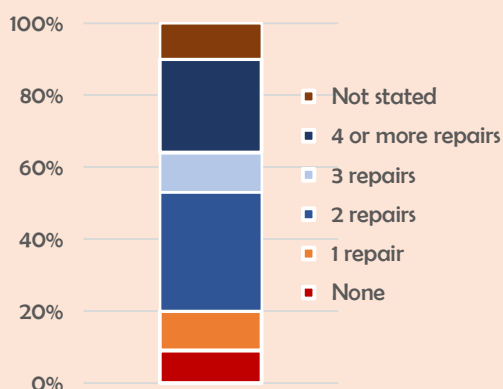
Home modifications

Required	12
Completed	7
To be completed	5

Extra bedrooms

	Bedrooms		
	1	2	3
Extra bedrooms	1	2	3
Estimated need	1	1	-

Tenant reported condition (Social housing)



Housing repairs

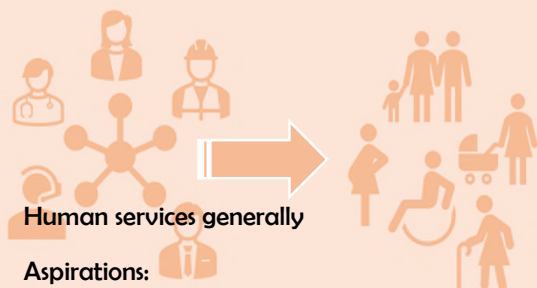
(Number of properties)

Degree of work	Number
↗	10
↗ ↗	81
↗ ↗ ↗	14
↗ ↗ ↗ ↗	9
↗ ↗ ↗ ↗ ↗	12

- Rearrange social housing management services to be delivered through the Murdi Paaki regional provider
- Foster a strong working relationship between the housing manager, CWP, LALC, community and tenants
- Revisit rent levels in view of housing quality and cost of living
- Replace Housing Pathways portal with a local application and allocation process which preferences Sunraysia applicants
- Ensure 'at risk' tenants have access to TSEP services and improve take up of Commonwealth Rent Assistance
- Support initiatives to promote home ownership
- Increase housing supply to match demand
- Priorities are smaller units for young people and the elderly, with larger homes for families
- Provide for people who are homeless
- Explore spot purchase of suitable houses for social housing to ensure earliest access to additional housing for those in greatest need
- Engage the CWP in the planning and design process for new housing
- Repair existing housing to a standard acceptable to the community and make safe and secure
- Upgrade existing housing to restore the level of amenity, functionality and comfort to the standard enjoyed by the broader community
- Extend crowded houses and modify homes of tenants with a disability
- Build a transition house for offenders leaving the criminal justice system
- Determine the need for a refuge or other form of emergency accommodation for people and families in crisis
- Improve thermal performance of homes
- Provide all social housing properties with energy efficient heating and cooling
- Maintain the role of MP TSEP in supporting tenants at risk of breach to retain their tenancies, and facilitating access to human and other services necessary to support good physical and mental health and social and economic stability

Wentworth Dareton HEHP

MASTER PLAN - HUMAN SERVICES



Aspirations:

- Improve cultural safety, coordination and integration among service providers to achieve accessible, higher quality services
- Involve the CWP in the human services selection and performance review processes to ensure that services delivered are effective and the community is receiving value for money
- Increase the number of Aboriginal people employed in delivering human services to the community as a means of improving cultural safety
- Make sure that service funding is allocated based on our population of 804 persons (Estimated Resident Population) and not the lower ABS 2016 Census count of 668 persons

Wellbeing services

Aspiration:

- Advocate for access to much needed local Aboriginal alcohol and other drug residential and counselling services, including developing the infrastructure to support the services



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. The actions written into this Executive Summary are shorthand versions of the actions in the Plan itself

Children's and young adults services

Aspirations:

- Increase engagement opportunities for young people such as projects and diversionary initiatives
- Improve the ability, capacity and resourcing of local primary health care providers to deliver early intervention services in response to significant and identified childhood development challenges
- Promote the role of Aboriginal Allied Health Assistants to strengthen cultural safety and provide continuity of care

Education, training and employment

Aspirations:

- Encourage and provide young people with the opportunities to develop youth leadership skills
- Increase skills base of the community through development of training pathways and transitions to employment using a strategic approach which ensures that participants are supported to succeed at every stage of the process
- Build capacity in business with a particular focus on developing skills in financial management

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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
ACHIF	Aboriginal Community Housing and Infrastructure Fund
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
AHD	Australian Height Datum
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
CHAC	Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation
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
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence
DLALC	Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
FWLHD	Far West Local Health District
HCP	Home Care Package
HEHP	Housing and Environmental Health Plan
HIPP	Health Infrastructure Priority Projects
HLP	Healthy Living Practices
IBA	Indigenous Business Australia
IFD	Intensity Frequency Duration
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LDM	Local Decision Making
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statement
MLAHMC	Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Management Co-operative
MPRA	Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly
MPRHC	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation
MPRH&BC	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium
MPS	Murdi Paaki Services Limited
MP TSEP	Murdi Paaki Tenant Support and Education Programme
NAHS EHP	National Aboriginal Health Strategy Environmental Health Programme
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme

NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSHS	National Social Housing Survey
N-W NSW IREG	North-West NSW Indigenous Region
NSWALC	New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council
OCHRE	Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment
OOHC	Out of Home Care
PHN	Primary Health Network
RAHLA	Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly
SA1	Statistical Area Level 1 (Finest scaled division of ABS geography for which data are released)
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SSC	State Suburb
TAFE	Technical and Further Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan has been prepared by the Wentworth/Dareton Community Working Party with the help of Murdi Paaki Services Ltd. The Wentworth/Dareton 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.

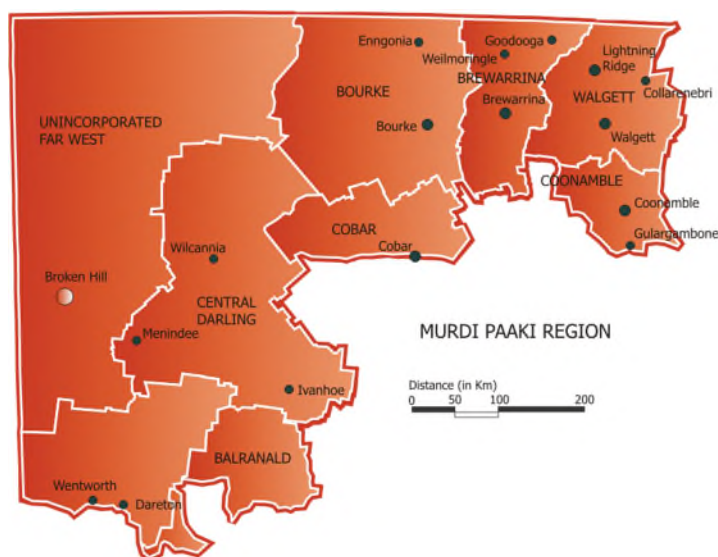
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan (HEHP) is prepared by the Aboriginal community of Wentworth/Dareton in western NSW. The Wentworth/Dareton community is one of sixteen larger communities within the Murdi Paaki Region as shown in Figure 1.1. The Wentworth/Dareton community includes the settlements of Wentworth, Dareton, Buronga, Gol Gol and Trentham Cliffs, the more distant villages of Euston and Pooncarie, and the discrete settlement of Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee.

- To the extent possible, report on the condition of Aboriginal social housing assets;
- Give an assessment of 'wrap-around' human services;
- 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 the Sunraysia communities.

Figure 1.1: Murdi Paaki Region



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;
- Describe the current situation in relation to housing Aboriginal individuals and families in Wentworth/Dareton;

1.2 Governance arrangements

HEHPs are an initiative of the Murdi Paaki Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly (RAHLA), a partnership of the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly (MPRA) and the NSW Government created through the OCHRE Local Decision-Making (LDM) 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 Aboriginal 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 Wentworth/Dareton 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 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:

- Reinstat e 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 property portfolios;
- 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;
- Provide greater opportunity for Aboriginal persons and families to engage with employment and education support that enables housing independence; and
- Establish the level of financial investment in respect of capital and recurrent costs to ensure sector viability.

2. BRIEF HISTORY

2.1 Snapshot

The traditional owners of the lands upon which the Sunraysia settlements developed after colonisation are the Baakantji people, referred to as 'river people' (formed from *baaka* 'river' and *ntji* meaning 'belonging to'). Baakantji people occupied large tracts of the lower Darling River from Bourke down to the confluence with the Murray River at Wentworth. Baakantji lands included Menindee Lakes and features both desert and riverine environments.

The Baakantji way of life was devastated by the arrival of Europeans in the region. Over a period of less than twenty years, between 1828 and 1845, and following exploration by explorers Captain Charles Sturt and Major Thomas Mitchell, the region was settled by Europeans. The effects of European settlement had, however, already been felt by Aboriginal people in the region in advance as highly infectious, often deadly diseases such as smallpox, tuberculosis and influenza, spread along the Murray Valley before European explorers reached the lower Darling River.

Aboriginal people managed to ensure that seizure of the land along the Darling River was temporary until the 1850s, but eventually, most of the land was taken for grazing. Aboriginal people were able to gain employment as stockmen and shepherds for a time, particularly during the 1850s when most non-Indigenous labourers had deserted the stations to go to the goldfields, until, in the 1870s, the availability of cheap drawn fencing wire meant that paddocks could be fenced. Shepherds and stockmen became redundant. Misguided closer settlement policies pursued by successive NSW governments led to further employment problems for Aboriginal people.

Baakantji people defended their land and safeguarded their laws to the best of their ability. Problems arose where the invading Europeans flouted those laws, and Aboriginal people acted in accordance with their law. The Europeans' response to the Aboriginal people's action tended to be murder on a colossal scale, and massacres

are known to have occurred at Wentworth, at Lake Victoria and at other localities within the traditional lands of Baakantji peoples.

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 to this day.

The effect of the Act, and subsequent legislation, was that Aboriginal people were made wards of the state, and lost autonomy to make decisions about the way they lived. Aboriginal people were denied 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. The Protector of Aborigines established 'Reserves' and government ration stations for Aboriginal people in the 1880s.

Over the years of last century, Baakantji people were progressively displaced from their traditional country by the actions first of the Aborigines Protection Board (APB), then of the Aborigines Welfare Board (AWB). Despite the disruption to traditional life, Baakantji people of the Sunraysia region have retained strong ties with other communities upstream along the River Darling and River Murray systems.

2.2 Aboriginal ownership

The history of Aboriginal occupation of the area extends back through at least forty millennia, and probably more. Evidence of Aboriginal ownership from 32,000 years ago is found in the burial of Mungo Woman at Lake Mungo, about 110 km north-east of Dareton, and burials which are even older have been found at Lake Victoria, a shallow lake adjacent to the River Murray, situated about 60 km downstream of the town of Wentworth. Lake Victoria was inhabited by the Maraura people, a sub-group of the Baakantji Nation. The burials are the oldest ritual burials ever discovered and point to Aboriginal people having a highly evolved culture.

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 practiced a form of agriculture. The Baakantji people who lived along the river in the red gum and black box woodlands had access to different resources from the Parintji (scrub) people who lived in the dry scrub away from the river. Each had an intimate knowledge of the landscape, well developed methods for managing plant resources, and survival techniques for when the times turned harsh.

Lake Victoria was traditionally one of a half dozen places in the Baakantji lands where hundreds of Aboriginal people gathered for large ceremonies, feasting and dancing, due to the seasonal availability of ample food resources. Lake Victoria and the Rufus River are also highly significant for cultural, spiritual and archaeological reasons. The Baakantji traded goods across wide distances, therefore the junction of the Darling and Murray Rivers was an important meeting place for trading with tribal groups from other areas.

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. These were part of a strict moral code which defined the way people would behave towards one another.

As the land along the river was occupied by Europeans, the land available to Aboriginal people dwindled. By the 1890s, there was a large group of people living on Mallara Station at Pooncarie. Parts of Mallara and Tarcoola Stations, including the camp on Mallara, were gazetted as reserve in 1909, and again in 1913. A school was provided in 1929. Evidence of settlement remains in the form of stumps from the school building and remnants of stockyards. As well as the Pooncarie Reserve, several Baakantji people were living at the majority-Ngiyampaa reserve at Carowra Tank, north-east of Ivanhoe.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the APB initiated a policy whereby the plethora of small reserves which had been gazetted from the late 19th century to the 1930s were progressively withdrawn, and their Aboriginal populations forcibly moved to larger managed stations. In September 1933, on the pretext of failure of the water supply at Carowra Tank, the APB closed Carowra Tank and loaded its 270 or so residents onto cattle trucks, burned their houses, and removed them to the railway platform at Conoble, where they were put on a train to Menindee. At the same time, the APB removed the Aboriginal residents of Pooncarie Reserve, numbering about 30 people, about 10 people from Menindee town and about another 10 from Wilcannia to the new Menindee Aboriginal Station, located about 11 km from Menindee on the Baaka/Darling River. Housing provided was of sheet metal and had no windows. The houses had been built on a sandhill and dust continually blew in. The sandhill was the site of ancient burials; bone dust was an ingredient of a potent traditional poison. Within the first year of occupation, many deaths occurred, largely because of respiratory illness and the environmental health conditions at the Station. For people originally from Pooncarie and Wilcannia, the risk of death at Menindee was a far worse prospect than returning to country they knew and having their rations cut off, so many walked up-river to Wilcannia and established camps.

The APB was reconstituted as the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1940. In 1949, without warning, the AWB closed the Menindee Government Station and relocated the population to Murrin Bridge, located on Wiradjuri country near Lake Cargelligo. Many Baakantji declined to move and returned to their traditional country along the Baaka/Darling River.

In the years since 1949, many of the people who moved to these localities, and their family members and descendants, returned to traditional lands, and there are now strong linkages between Wentworth, Dareton, Menindee, Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Ivanhoe, and other communities upstream along the Darling River. Aboriginal people who moved to the Sunraysia region in the period from 1949 onwards settled in several locations, either finding housing in the town areas,

or camping adjacent to the towns, notably the shoreline of Lake Merinee. Many of these people had spent years visiting the Sunraysia area annually to obtain casual work picking fruit before finally deciding to settle in the area.

Namatjira Avenue to the east of Dareton was first settled in the 1960s by Aboriginal people who were relocated by Wentworth Shire Council from the site of the Dareton tip; having previously been moved to the tip site from an area known as the Sandhills on the road to Pooncarie. Some people also moved from Fletchers Lake, where there are still a few self-build dwellings. Residents of Namatjira report no affiliation with the Namatjira site prior to the 1960s, and no culturally significant sites of greater antiquity on Namatjira have been discovered.

In the early 1990's, the Namatjira community was assessed as being amongst the most disadvantaged Aboriginal communities in NSW. While previous developments by the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) had contributed up to 10 houses clustered on the small lot at the entrance to Namatjira Avenue and subsequent building of brick veneer dwellings increased the number of houses to thirty-seven, too many residents still lived in self-built structures and endured a serious lack of public health infrastructure such as filtered drinking water, sewerage and drainage. The absence of ground cover allowed dust generation in windy conditions. In recognition of these unsatisfactory living conditions, Namatjira Avenue received a major upgrade under the Health and Infrastructure Priority Projects (HIPP) scheme, subsequently the National Aboriginal Health Strategy Environmental Health Programme (NAHS EHP) administered through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), which added fourteen mud brick and brick veneer houses to community assets, largely in the development of the New Merinee precinct immediately to the east of Namatjira Avenue. Filtered water reticulation was laid to Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee and the area was seweraged. Internal roads were constructed and upgraded, and street lighting provided. Facilities provided included a training shed and sports oval. The work was programmed to allow fourteen apprentices to become qualified variously in carpentry, bricklaying and landscaping.

Subsequent initiatives, including the Aboriginal Communities Development Programme (ACDP), funded an additional nine dwellings to the social housing portfolio, mainly in town areas.

3. Geography

3.1 Location

Wentworth, Dareton, Namatjira, Buronga, Gol Gol, Trentham Cliffs, Euston and Pooncarie are referred to collectively in this HEHP as Sunraysia communities. Communities are located along the north bank of the Murray River which forms the border between New South Wales and Victoria while Pooncarie is situated on the eastern side of the Darling River north of Wentworth on the road to Menindee. Wentworth is the westernmost of the communities located at the confluence of the Murray River and Darling River. Mildura, on the Victorian side of the border opposite Buronga, is the region's main service centre.

The location of the grouping of Sunraysia communities relative to the Region is shown in Figure 3.1 and the position of communities along the River Murray in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.1: Locality



Communities are within Wentworth Local Government Area (LGA) except for Euston which is within the Balranald LGA boundary.

Figure 3.2: Sunraysia communities



3.2 Access

All communities are connected by sealed highway or rural road. The Silver City Highway provides a sealed link to Broken Hill 266 km north of Wentworth and the Sturt Highway connects the communities to Adelaide, 403 km distant, via Mildura. Euston is 76 km to the east of Buronga on the Sturt Highway. Pooncarie is 118 km to the north of Buronga via unsealed rural road.

There is no direct rail service to any Sunraysia community other than a thrice daily V/Line rail and coach service between Melbourne and Mildura or an overnight coach service between Melbourne and Mildura. A coach service, operated by NSW TrainLink, connects Wentworth to Broken Hill twice weekly. All communities between Wentworth and Gol Gol are linked by CDC Victoria local bus services and Public Transport Victoria operates a service from Mildura to Euston, and Robinvale. Pooncarie is not serviced by public transport.

Air services to and from Mildura are reasonably frequent. Regional Express flies the Mildura - Adelaide and Broken Hill routes three times per week and the Melbourne route daily while QantasLink flies to Melbourne twice daily and Sydney three times a week.

3.3 Topography

The topography of the region is very much defined by the presence of two major river systems, the River Darling and River Murray: river channels, anabranches, floodplains, backplains, swamps, lakes and lunettes, fringing low rises.

Wentworth is situated on the flood plain at the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers. The country immediately around the township of Wentworth has little topographic relief, the landscape is flat with river channels, streams and floodplains the primary characteristics. The elevation of the township is 37 m above Australian Height Datum (AHD).

The communities of Dareton, Buronga, Gol Gol, Trentham Cliffs and Euston are located on the northern bank of the Murray River and the landscape is undulating with a change in elevation of 10 -30 m above the river. The more isolated village of Pooncarie is on the eastern bank of the Darling River.

Most residential areas are on slightly elevated ground which rises to 60 m AHD surrounding swamp country and lakes which are at an elevation of about 30 m AHD.

3.4 Soils

The Sunraysia communities are located on the extended riparian corridors of the Riverina and Darling Riverine Plains Bioregions that follow the courses of the Murray River and Darling River to intersect at the confluence of the two rivers at Wentworth. The boundaries which delineate the extent of the dominant Murray Darling Depression Bioregion are located some kilometres from the river channels.

Wentworth is located on the northern bank of the Murray River and on both sides of the Darling River and is part of the Riverina bioregion. Soils are heavy clays typical of the Darling River and the Riverina bioregion with sandy soils associated with old channels, dunes and lunettes. To the east of Wentworth, the settlements of Dareton, Buronga and Gol Gol have residential areas in both the

Riverina and Murray Darling Depression bioregions. The bioregion boundary is marked by a change in soils from heavier highly reactive grey clays of the river corridor to the less reactive, sandier red-brown soils of the Murray Darling Depression. Red-brown soils are found at the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct.

Euston is located within the Riverina bioregion and exhibits predominantly dark heavy clay soils.

3.5 Flora and fauna

The occurrence and types of vegetation communities are influenced by past sedimentation and later flooding regimes, and more recently by intensive agricultural and horticultural activity. Remnants of the Southern Riverine Woodlands vegetation community are characterised by black box and river red gum species along the river corridors with an understorey of river cooba, and goosefoot and grasslands of Warrego summer grass and saltbush. To the north of the River Murray corridor the landscape opens out into belah and bluebush on the undulating sandier soil plains and then mallee scrub.

Depressions are dominated by black box and support a range of wetland species including lignum and old man saltbush with some cane grass.

The bioregions support a depleting range of amphibian, reptile, bird, mammal and marsupial species. The composition and structure of vegetation and animal communities has been altered because of grazing by stock, encroachment of feral animals, and changed fire regimes. The resulting habitat loss and encroachment has depleted species range and number of smaller mammals to the point that some are no longer to be found in the area. For example, wombats are thought to be extinct in the region. Similarly, a decline is evident in fish species and numbers upon which the Aboriginal population relied heavily as a food source.

3.6 Climate

The climate of the Sunraysia district is described as warm, semi-arid. Climate data has been recorded

continuously at several gauging stations in the district: from 1868 at Wentworth Post Office, at Mildura Post Office from 1889, and Mildura Airport commencing more recently in 1946. The range of data recorded at Wentworth was reduced in 1967 so the station does not capture more recent climate changes. Data recorded at Mildura Airport (076031) is then used to inform this Plan.

Mean monthly temperatures, and highest and lowest temperatures, are shown in Figure 3.3. Mean daytime temperatures range between highs of 32°C in summer and 15°C in winter.

Figure 3.3: Temperatures

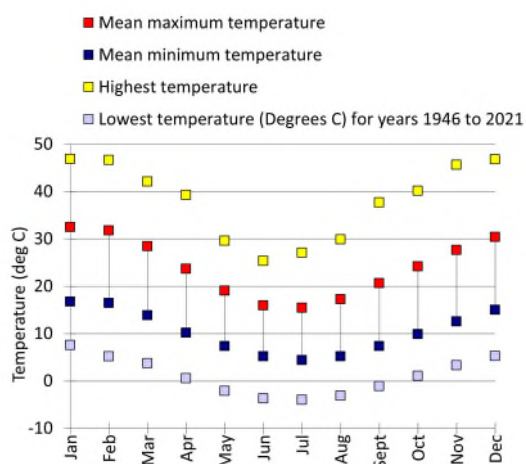


Figure 3.4: Trend in highest monthly temperature

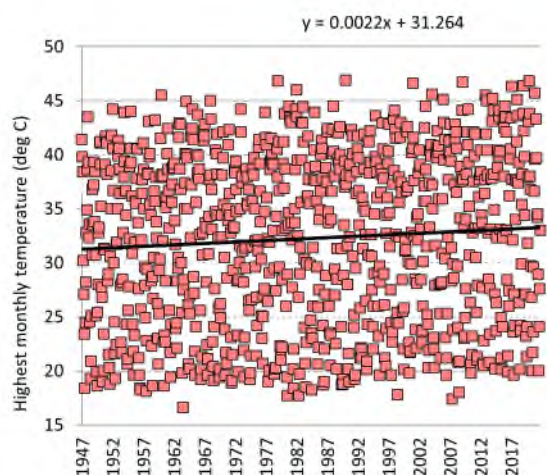


Figure 3.5: Mean number of hot days

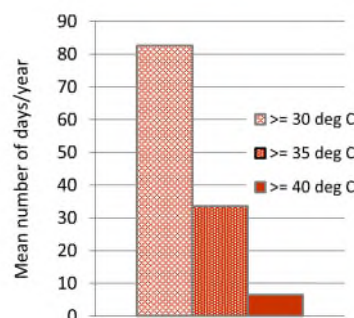
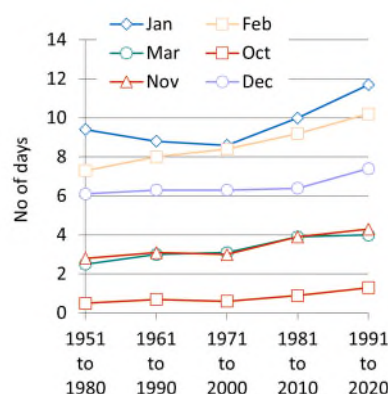


Figure 3.4 indicates that highest monthly temperatures experienced in the Sunraysia district have slowly increased over the period of record. As shown by Figure 3.5, the mean number of days per year already exceeding $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ is 34. The NSW Office of Environment & Heritage is projecting in its summary report, *Far West Climate Change Snapshot*, November 2014, the annual mean number of days with temperatures greater than 35°C to increase by between 20 and 30 by 2060-2079. This is over and above the corresponding mean of 39 days for the period 1991 to 2020. The inevitable conclusion is that the district can expect hotter temperatures for longer with further exaggerated extremes and a consequent effect upon the ability of residents to live and work productively for longer periods of the year.

Figure 3.6: Number of days with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$

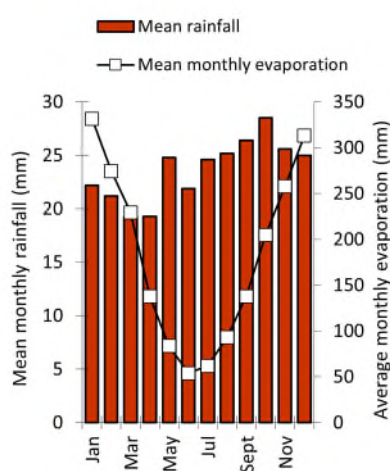


This projection is reinforced by Figure 3.6 which illustrates an increase in the mean number of days

with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ for all summer months for progressive 30-year time periods.

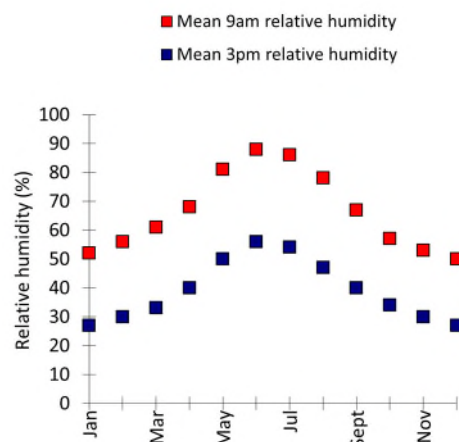
Mean annual rainfall calculated from 75 years of record at Mildura Airport between 1946 and 2021 is 285 mm. Monthly rainfall distribution is shown at Figure 3.7. Average monthly pan evaporation estimated from the Bureau of Meteorology is well in excess of the mean monthly rainfall throughout the year.

Figure 3.7: Rainfall and monthly pan evaporation



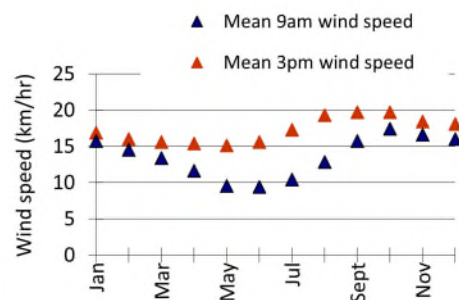
Change in relative humidity is shown in Figure 3.8. Mean humidity is typically above 40% in the morning, the threshold accepted as ideal for human health and comfort, for all of the year, but reduces to below 40% into the afternoon in the summer months.

Figure 3.8: Relative humidity



Wind is predominantly from the south in the morning trending south-east, veering to between south and westerly in the afternoon. Mean wind speeds are shown in Figure 3.9.

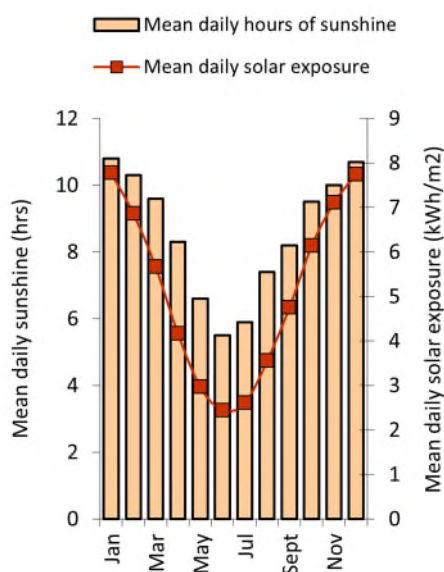
Figure 3.9: Wind speeds



Maximum wind gust speed recorded is 145 km/hr.

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 2.4 kWh/m² in winter to a high of 7.8 kWh/m² at the height of summer.

Figure 3.10: Sunshine and solar exposure



3.7 Flooding and drainage

The Murray-Darling River system catchment covers a large area of south-eastern Australia: most of NSW west of the Great Dividing Range, southern Queensland, the ACT and northern Victoria.

The occurrence of floods in Wentworth Shire from February to April generally is a consequence of summer monsoonal rainfall collected by the northern tributaries of the Darling River which drain the southern parts of Queensland. Since much of any floodwater finds its way into overbank storage and/or is intercepted by the Menindee Lakes water conservation project managed as part of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority water distribution, flood events at Wentworth attributable to flows in the upper Darling are rare. More normally, river flows in the Darling at Wentworth are low to no flow. The frequency of floods in July and August is generally caused by high winter flows in tributaries draining the central and northern parts of New South Wales.

Flows in the River Murray are managed by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to provide irrigation water to New South Wales and Victoria, and parts of South Australia. Control of river flows for irrigation purposes is exercised through a system of major storages and a series of weirs.

While these control measures have the capacity to mitigate some flood waters, the nature of the drainage basin is such that the possibility of major flooding remains, particularly when very large storm systems develop over south-eastern Australia. This was the weather condition that triggered the last major flood event, thought to be about a 1 in 100-year occurrence, at Wentworth in 1956. The river level at Mildura remained above "normal" for about four months after the event.

Very severe flooding of low-lying areas can occur when high flows occur in the Rivers Murray and Darling, compounded by high flows in the Murrumbidgee. Wentworth is protected from flooding by three levee systems; an earth embankment ring levee protecting the main area west of the Darling river, a U-shaped levee system protecting the area east of the Darling river and a ring levee system protecting the Hospital. Levee crest is set to provide 900 mm freeboard above the 1956 flood level. The Silver City Highway remains open during major floods.

Dareton and villages are, for the most part, essentially flood-free. Much of Buronga is on high ground but approximately 40 lots within the village are partly or wholly flood liable. Developments along the Sturt Highway from the centre of Buronga to the Murray Bridge are potentially at risk. Gol Gol, with its riverfront location and the absence of protective works, may be subject to road closures during more severe floods. New developments in the Shire are required to be sited above the 1% flood level, on filled ground where necessary, so the prospect of property loss is much reduced. Pooncarie, being on high ground, has not been inundated by floodwater. The risk of isolation which occurred in 1974, 1976 and 1977 has been reduced as a result of road raising.

Flood levels at key sites are given in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Gauge heights and flood classification				
Gauge site	Gauge number	Flood classification		
		Minor	Moderate	Major
River Darling				
Pooncarie	425005	6.8	7.6	8.7
River Murray				
Euston Weir	414991	9.1	9.8	10.3
Mildura	414202	36.0	37.5	38.5
Wentworth Weir (Lock 10)	425992	7.3	7.9	9.1
	AHD	32.1	32.7	33.9

Source: Wentworth Shire Local Flood Plan

As to local rainfall events, Table 3.2 provides the highest daily rainfall on record for Mildura and the year of occurrence for each month while rainfall intensity-frequency-duration (IFD) values are shown at Table 3.3.

Table 3.2: Highest daily rainfalls (mm) (076031)						
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
62.8	155	91.2	60.0	46.4	33.3	
2011	2011	1969	2015	1990	1957	
Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
29.2	44.7	41.1	43.2	65.5	68.0	
1955	1973	1964	1993	1958	1992	

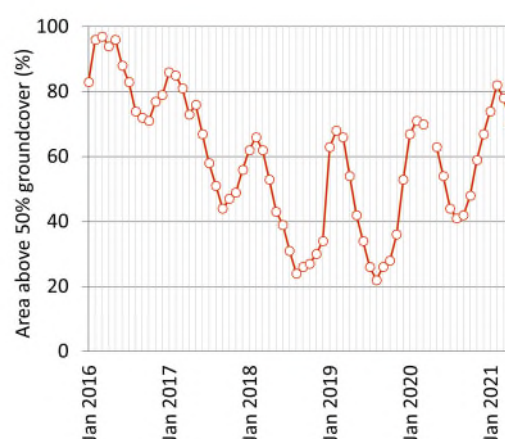
Table 3.3: Rainfall IFD (mm)				
Duration	Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)			
	10%	5%	2%	1%
1 min	2.91	3.61	4.65	5.55
2 min	4.94	6.17	7.99	9.57
3 min	6.72	8.37	10.8	12.9
4 min	8.27	10.3	13.3	15.8
5 min	9.62	11.9	15.4	18.4
10 min	14.5	18.0	23.2	27.6
20 min	20.2	25.1	32.3	38.4
30 min	23.7	29.4	37.9	45.2
1 hour	29.7	37.0	47.8	57.0
2 hour	36.2	44.9	57.9	69.1
6 hour	48.2	59.1	75.1	88.9
12 hour	57.1	69.2	86.8	102
18 hour	62.6	75.4	93.7	109
24 hour	66.4	79.8	98.5	114
48 hour	75.0	89.5	109	124

Table 3.3: Rainfall IFD (mm)				
Duration	Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)			
	10%	5%	2%	1%
72 hour	79.0	93.9	114	129
96 hour	81.2	96.3	116	132
120 hour	82.5	97.7	118	134

3.8 Dust

The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage collects data related to dust, including the hours of dust haze and storms and the extent of ground cover through its DustWatch programme in the Western Natural Resource Management (NRM) Region. Figure 3.11 highlights the change in the amount of groundcover > 50% over time. The DustWatch programme revealed that dust storms occurred with record-breaking frequency in 2019 in the Western NRM Region. January 2019 was the dustiest month recorded across the Region since measuring commenced but Buronga and Euston experienced highest dust levels for 186 hours and 144 hours respectively during November of that year. October 2020 was the third dustiest month across the region since 2005.

Figure 3.11: Seasonal variation in the land area with groundcover exceeding 50%, Western NRM Region, to Aug 2021

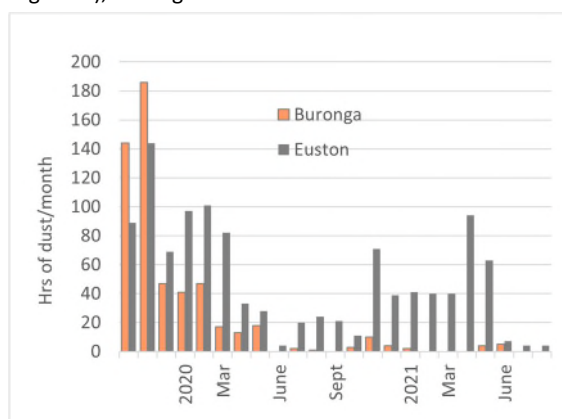


Dust particles can be harmful to human health. There is strong evidence of long-term exposure to fine particles (PM_{2.5}) in the air contributing to adverse respiratory conditions. This is of particular

concern at Namatjira-New Merinee where vegetation cover is sparse.

Figure 3.12 shows the prevalence of dust at the Buronga and Euston recording stations for the period 2020. The cause of dust generation is a combination of very low groundcover resulting from prolonged dry conditions (Figure 3.11), high temperatures and increased hours of strong winds (> 40km/h) associated with the passage of cold fronts bringing with them north to north westerly winds.

Figure 3.12: Indicative hours of dust (Oct 2019 to Aug 2021), Buronga and Euston



Note: One dust hour is achieved if the hourly average concentration of particles up to PM₁₀ size exceeds 25 µg/m³

3.9 Native title

In 2015, the Barkandji Traditional Owners were granted Native Title rights over parts of western NSW (NNTT Number: NCD2015/001). The area over which rights were granted includes lots in Wentworth and Dareton, and the villages of Buronga and Gol Gol, as well as the Coomealla district more generally. A subsequent determination (NCD2017/001) granted exclusive rights to further lots in the vicinity of Wentworth, Buronga and Trentham Cliffs.

In summary, the determination granted Native Title rights over:

- Parcels of land in and around Wentworth including recreational areas, river frontage and flood prone lands;

- Parcels of land in and around Dareton including recreational areas and river frontage;
- Isolated parcels of land in and around Buronga including watercourses and wetlands, and recreational areas and the botanic gardens;
- Isolated parcels of land in and around Gol Gol including river frontage and Gol Gol Creek; and
- Parcels of land in and around Pooncarie including the site of the former Pooncarie Mission.

Areas affected by the 2015 determination within Dareton and Wentworth town boundaries are shown in Figures 3.13 and 3.14.

3.10 Sites of cultural significance

The Murray River corridor and the junction with the Darling River is rich with sites of cultural significance. A preliminary search of the Heritage NSW Aboriginal Heritage Management Information System (AHIMS) for sites of cultural significance within the rectangle formed by co-ordinates 34.1989, 141.9609 and 34.0545, 142.1895 indicates the existence of a very large number of recorded Aboriginal sites in and around the towns and villages although none have been identified at the Namatjira Avenue community.

Figure 3.13: Developed areas of Dareton subject to Native Title



Figure 3.14: Developed areas of Wentworth subject to Native Title



Source:

http://www.nntt.gov.au/searchRegApps/NativeTitleRegisters/Pages/NNTR_details.aspx?NNTT_Fileno=NCD2015/001

The region contains some of the most significant Aboriginal heritage and cultural sites in Australia, including the UNESCO listed Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area which encompasses Lake Mungo.

In the interests of sites preservation, and as a condition of accessing the data, no details of sites of significance are included in this Plan other than to note their existence.

3.11 Economic geography

Agriculture is the principal land use in Wentworth LGA and the largest contributor to economic output with emphasis on dryland cropping, pastoral farming and irrigated horticulture. The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector contributes about \$261M in gross revenue annually or nearly 22% of total Shire-based economic output. This sector is also the biggest employer with 790 jobs, representing 28% of total employment within the region. Of the main contributors, irrigated horticulture generates more than 80% of the gross value of this sector.

Irrigation supports extensive citrus and nut production and viticulture in Pomona, Curlwaa, Coomealla, Buronga, Gol Gol and Trentham Cliffs or on blocks adjacent to the Darling and Murray Rivers. Value-add businesses such as food and

beverage processing have been established along the Sturt and Silver City Highways to link to national and export markets by way of the national road transport network.

Council has identified in its Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) three key trends in the agriculture industry: an increase in new irrigated horticulture plantings; continued consolidation of landholdings; and transfer of water entitlements into non-traditional irrigation developments. Maintaining and growing the sector is a priority for Council. The protection and expansion of agricultural activities, irrigated horticulture and related value-added manufacturing accords with the NSW Government strategic land use directions in the Far West Regional Plan 2036. Council is also encouraged to capitalise on economic growth in Mildura.

Tourism is strong within the Mildura/Wentworth region with a focus on sustainable, cultural and experiential ventures. Environmental experiences centre on the two river systems and national parks, while Aboriginal cultural heritage and pioneering define pre- and post-contact settlement. Food, accommodation and agritourism are contributors but opportunities are somewhat dwarfed by Mildura-based hotel and dining operations. The Far West Regional Plan 2036 identifies a role for Wentworth as part of a regional tourism trail starting at Balranald, through Mungo, Menindee, Broken Hill and Silverton, to Tibooburra, Mutawintji and Wilcannia.

River-based tourism is popular with much of the region's tourism driven by recreational and whole of river experiences along the River Murray. Overall, the Accommodation and Food Services industry sector contributes about \$35M in gross revenue annually to the local economy.

The Mining industry sector is also strong, contributing about \$220M in gross revenue annually through extraction of mineral sands such as ilmenite, leucosene and zircon in the vicinity of Pooncarie. Processing is carried out in Broken Hill.

Wentworth LGA is one of several local government areas in the Murdi Paaki Region identified as

having capacity for high renewable energy generation, both solar and wind. Development of large-scale projects will be facilitated by access to the proposed interconnector between South Australia and NSW through a TransGrid connector at Buronga.

3.12 Design influences

This Chapter focusses on a range of environmental and economic issues which bear upon the living conditions that the next generation of community members can expect to encounter over their lifetime and which help to define design criteria for new housing and other facilities. Any design decisions made now must recognise the more challenging environmental conditions predicted to occur within the serviceable life of a structure built in the near future.

Uppermost of the challenges is that presented by climate change and, in particular, the longer periods of temperatures > 35°C as modelled by the former NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and discussed in the *Far West Climate Change Snapshot, 2014* which flags an additional 5-10 days of high temperatures in the period 2020 – 2039, increasing to 20-30 additional days of high temperatures by 2070. Separate bodies of work by Healthabitat and by NSW Health at Weilmoringle to assess the impacts of passive thermal control interventions verify that measures which reduce thermal gain result in much lower internal temperatures and make the active thermal controls such as air conditioning more effective and cost-efficient.

Retro-fitting improvements to existing housing is not easily accomplished although, by this time, all houses should have roof spaces fully insulated as a very minimum. Aboriginal social housing owned by Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) is scheduled in 2022 to be retrofitted with reverse cycle air conditioning and grid connected 5.0 kW solar systems and, similarly, the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) is thought to be installing, or to have installed, rooftop solar and air conditioning to its housing but details have not been disclosed. Such measures and more will become standard features of housing design into the future.

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 TableBuilder.

'Sunraysia' is the collective name for 22 SA1s along the Murray River from Wentworth to Gol Gol plus the SA1s of Pomona and Euston. The ABS did not enumerate any Aboriginal people in Pooncarie at the time of the 2016 Census.

Table 4.1: Aboriginal population, Sunraysia communities

Wentworth	138
Curlwaa	5
Dareton	193
Namatjira Ave and New Merinee	133
Buronga	98
Trentham Cliffs	0
Gol Gol	25
Euston	39
Pomona	0
Rural remainder	35
Total	668

Table 4.2: Total population, Sunraysia communities

6,600	persons
Change from 2011 Census	+278

Table 4.3: Aboriginal population %, Sunraysia communities

10%	n=668
Murdi Paaki Region	23%
New South Wales	3%

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 Census 2016, based

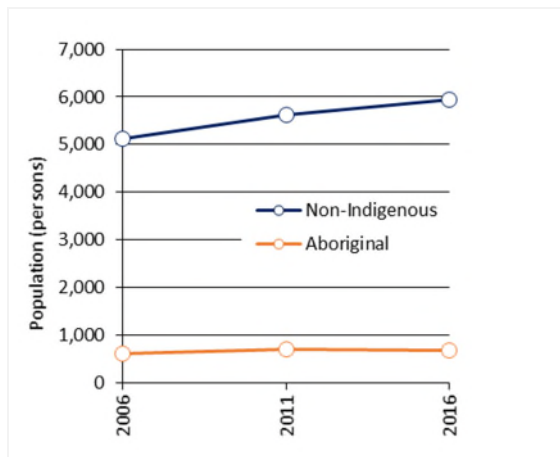
on comparison with the ERP, the Aboriginal population of Wentworth Shire was undercounted by 19%, and the non-Indigenous population by 11%. The Aboriginal ERP for Wentworth Shire at 30th June 2016 was 804.

Census data in this Chapter are generally for the Sunraysia communities. These SA1s were selected as they extend along the River Murray where the Aboriginal population mostly live. Pomona and Euston were added for completeness, Euston having a known Aboriginal population. The Wentworth-Buronga SA2 (which excludes Pomona or Euston), Indigenous area (IARE) and Local Government Area (A) geographies have been used where SA1 data are unavailable, as indicated in the table heading. IARE data also includes the community living in Balranald town, which is not located within the Murdi Paaki Region.

Data for the Sunraysia communities indicate that the ABS has imputed populations for 225 dwellings which were thought to be occupied on Census night but which returned no census form. Imputation is a statistical process for predicting values where no response was provided. The ABS imputes values for four variables: sex, age, place of usual residence and registered marital status, but not for Aboriginality. It does this by locating a 'donor record' and copying the relevant responses to the record requiring imputation. The donor record will have similar characteristics, will have the required variables stated, and will be located geographically as close as possible to the location of the record to be imputed. For the Sunraysia communities, the ABS imputed a total of 601 persons (326 male and 275 female) to the 225 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 225 dwellings 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, based on the undercount, likely that a greater proportion of these dwellings house Aboriginal households.

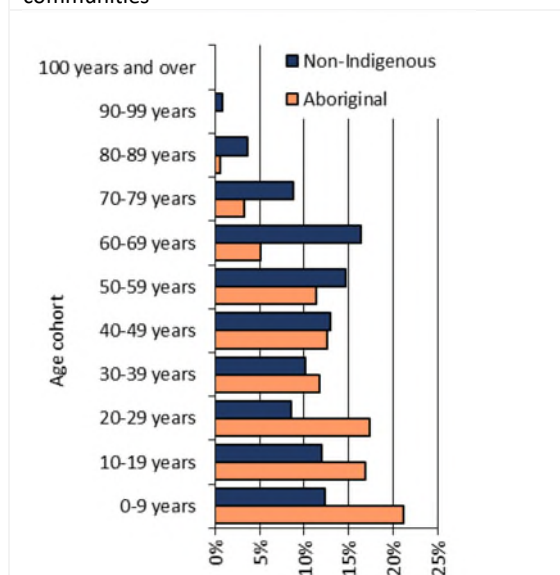
Where possible, the Murdi Paaki Region comparison geography used in this Plan is the aggregated 154 SA1s that approximate the Region. For variables where SA1 level data are not published, either the 8 LGAs approximating the Region or the NW-NSW IREG has been adopted.

Figure 4.1: Population change, 2001 to 2016, Sunraysia communities



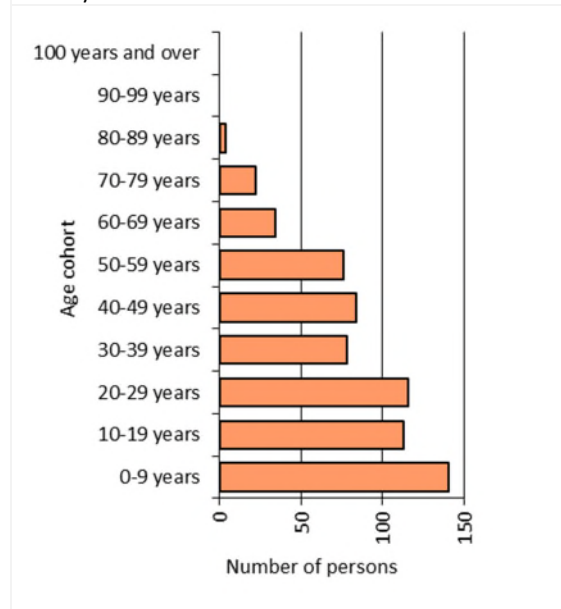
The Aboriginal population has remained fairly constant since 2006 while the non-Indigenous population increased steadily, as shown in Figure 4.1. The population age structure given by Figure 4.2 indicates a younger Aboriginal population compared to a much older non-Indigenous population.

Figure 4.2: Population age distribution, Sunraysia communities



Population numbers by age cohort for the Aboriginal community are given by Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Aboriginal population age distribution, Sunraysia communities



KEY FINDINGS

- The total population of the Sunraysia communities enumerated in the ABS 2016 Census was 6,600 of which 668 were Aboriginal. The Aboriginal ERP for Wentworth Shire at 30th June 2016 was 804;
- Since 2006, the Aboriginal population in the Sunraysia communities has increased by 0.77% on average each year. This would be higher were it not for drift to Mildura;
- The median age of the Aboriginal population of the Balranald-Wentworth IARE, at 26 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 smaller than both the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole, and for NSW, but is almost twice the population fraction for the non-Indigenous population of the Sunraysia communities;
- Non-Indigenous households are almost one and a half times as likely to comprise a person living alone as an Aboriginal household;

- When compared with a non-Indigenous family, Aboriginal families living together in a household are four times as likely to be a single parent family;
- Aboriginal adults are just over 30% less likely to be in a couple relationship than non-Indigenous adults, perhaps reflecting the younger population age structure;
- Aboriginal households containing multiple families comprise 2% of all Aboriginal households compared to no multi-family households in the non-Indigenous population; and
- Aboriginal households have a higher proportion of resident non-dependent children than non-Indigenous households. The fraction in both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous households was less than both the Murdi Paaki Region and NSW.

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.4: Median age of persons (years) (Balranald-Wentworth (IARE))		
	26	45
Murdi Paaki Region	26	46
New South Wales	22	38
Table 4.5: Population aged under 15 years, Sunraysia communities		
	n=200	n=1,105
Of population fraction	30%	19%
Murdi Paaki Region	32%	16%
New South Wales	34%	18%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.6: Social marital status, Sunraysia communities (Persons aged 15 years and over)		
Registered marriage	14%	54%
De facto marriage	19%	11%
Not married	67%	35%

Table 4.7: Lone person households, Sunraysia communities		
	n=46	n=585
	20%	28%
Murdi Paaki Region	21%	36%
New South Wales	15%	24%

Table 4.8: Family household family composition, Sunraysia communities		
One parent	46%	11%
Couple, no children	19%	48%
Couple, with children	31%	40%
Other family	4%	1%
One parent families:		
Murdi Paaki Region	43%	15%
New South Wales	36%	15%

Table 4.9: Multi-family households, Sunraysia communities (of all family households)		
	n=3	n=9
Multi-family households	2%	1%
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	1%
New South Wales	4%	2%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.10: Families with resident non-dependent children (Wentworth-Buronga SA2)		
	n=43	n=232
Families with resident non-dependent children	23%	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 4.11: Educational institution attended by the Aboriginal population, Sunraysia communities	
	n=276
Preschool	16
Infants/primary – Government	83
Infants/primary – other non-Government	5
Secondary – Government	52
Secondary – Other Non-Government	4
University or other Tertiary Institution	14
Other educational institution	8
Not stated	94

KEY FINDINGS

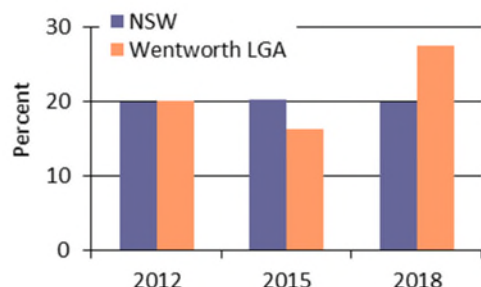
- Three quarters of Aboriginal four-year olds enumerated in the Census appeared to attend pre-school compared to almost two-thirds of the non-Indigenous children. No Aboriginal three-year old child attended pre-school;
- On Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) indicators, children commencing their first year of full-time schooling in the Wentworth 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 34% (Dareton PS) and 87% (Pomona PS) for all children at the eight schools in the Sunraysia district;
- Educational attainment at schools in the Sunraysia district is mostly below the average of all Australian students;
- None of the Aboriginal young people aged 15-19 years in the Sunraysia communities who had left school had completed year 12. Of the non-Indigenous young people who had left school 47% had completed Year 12;
- Only one third of the Aboriginal persons aged 17 or 18 years were engaged in training or learning;
- Non-Indigenous adults were almost twice as likely as Aboriginal adults to hold a post-school qualification at any level. The Aboriginal population aged over 15 years in the Sunraysia communities had a lower proportion with a post-school qualification compared to both the Murdi Paaki Region and NSW.

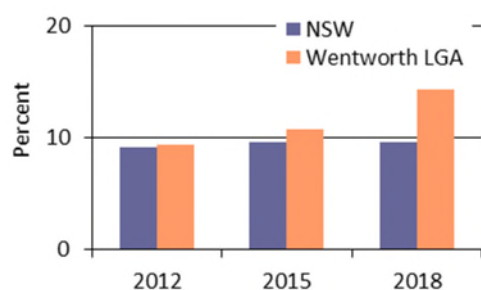
Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.12: Pre-school attendance, Sunraysia communities		
	n=11	n=70
Children 3 years old	0%	46%
Murdi Paaki Region	41%	50%
New South Wales	52%	49%
	n=11	n=70
Children 4 years old	74%	67%
Murdi Paaki Region	82%	79%
New South Wales	72%	72%

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

One or more domains:



Two or more domains:



Aboriginal children (n=18 or 19% of 96)

Table 4.13: AEDC vulnerability indicators

	Vuln 1	Vuln 2
Wentworth LGA	27.5%	14.3%

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

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

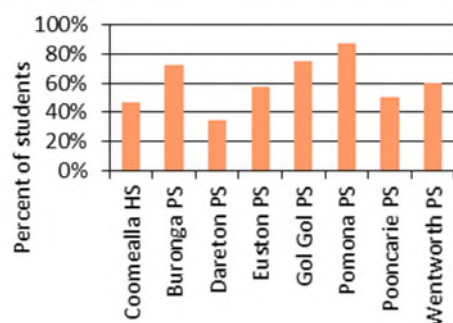


Table 4.14: Educational attainment, NAPLAN, School average when compared with all Australian students

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3					
Buronga PS	5	5	5	5	5
Dareton PS	5	5	5	5	5
Euston PS	5	5	5	5	5
Gol Gol PS	2	2	3	2	2
Pomona PS	2	2	3	4	4
Wentworth PS	5	5	5	5	5
Year 5					
Buronga PS	5	5	5	5	5
Dareton PS	5	5	5	5	5
Euston PS	5	3	4	4	4
Gol Gol PS	4	4	4	4	4
Pomona PS	5	5	5	5	5
Wentworth PS	5	5	5	5	5
Year 7					
Coomealla HS	5	5	5	5	5
Year 9					
Coomealla HS	5	5	5	5	5
Legend					
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, Sunraysia communities

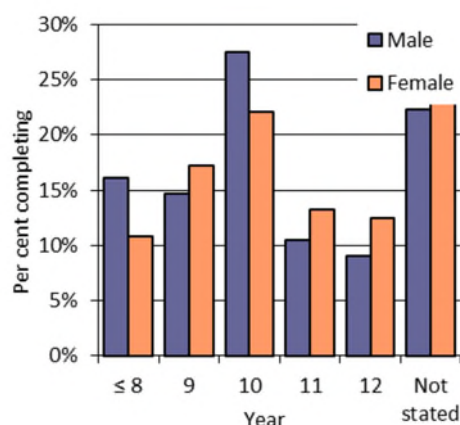
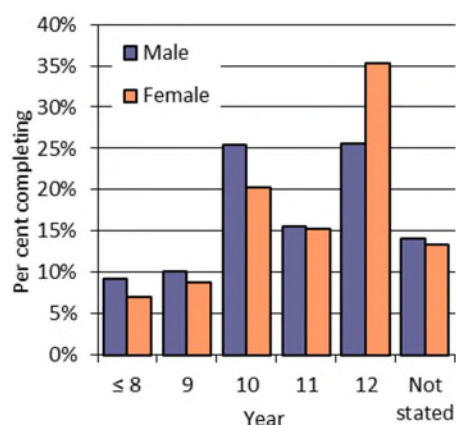


Figure 4.7: Highest year of schooling, all non-Indigenous adults, Sunraysia communities



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.15: Percentage of students completed Year 12, Sunraysia communities (Persons aged 15 to 19 who have completed schooling and are no longer at school)		
	n=7	n=129
Percentage of students completed Year 12	0%	47%
Murdi Paaki Region	20%	48%
New South Wales	33%	51%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.16: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a vocational qualification, Sunraysia communities		
	n=55	n=937
Cert I-IV	12%	19%
Murdi Paaki Region	18%	26%
New South Wales	25%	20%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.17: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with an undergraduate diploma, Sunraysia communities		
	n=19	n=382
Diploma and Advanced Diploma	4%	8%
Murdi Paaki Region	5%	7%
New South Wales	7%	10%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.18: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a tertiary qualification, Sunraysia communities		
	n=16	n=407
Degree and higher	3%	8%
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	12%
New South Wales	8%	27%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.19: Engagement of persons aged 17 and 18 years in employment, education and training, Sunraysia communities		
Fully engaged	35%	75%
Murdi Paaki Region	49%	74%
New South Wales	62%	84%

4.3 Economic participation

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.20: Labour force status, Sunraysia communities (Percent of labour force)		
	n=126	n=2,672
In full-time or part-time work	75%	95%
Unemployed, looking for work	25%	5%
Murdi Paaki Region	76%	94%
New South Wales	85%	94%
31% of those employed worked part-time		
Table 4.21: Participation in the labour market, Sunraysia communities (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=396	n=4,306
In labour force	32%	62%
Not in labour force	68%	38%
Murdi Paaki Region	44%	61%
New South Wales	56%	64%
Table 4.22: Employment to population ratio, Sunraysia communities (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=95	n=2,535
Employment to population ratio	20%	53%
Murdi Paaki Region	34%	57%
New South Wales	47%	60%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.23: Occupation of all persons employed, Sunraysia communities		
Managers	8%	19%
Professionals	21%	14%
Technician/trades	10%	14%
Community service workers	21%	10%
Clerical/admin workers	16%	11%
Sales workers	7%	9%
Machinery operators	0%	8%
Labourers	16%	14%

KEY FINDINGS

- With an unemployment rate five times that of the non-Indigenous population, and a low labour force participation rate, the employment to population ratio for Aboriginal people implies that only one in five adults are in any form of employment. This ratio is only one in two for the non-Indigenous population fraction;
- Investigation of the age structure of the Aboriginal population through calculation of the dependency ratio (57.2 for Sunraysia communities – less than for the Murdi Paaki Region, at 61.6) indicates that Aboriginal people of working age resident in Sunraysia have a low workforce participation;
- Aboriginal workers are more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be employed in health care and social assistance or education and training but less likely to be employed as a manager, sales worker or machinery operator;
- The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector employs the largest proportion of the total workforce, followed by Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade;
- About 47% of the Aboriginal persons employed are working in the Health Care and Social Assistance, and Education and Training industry sectors, and
- Data for Wentworth LGA indicate a decline over time in the number of businesses.

Table 4.24: Industry of employment – Sunraysia communities

Industry	Aboriginal		Non-Indigenous	
	No employed	% of total employed	No employed	% of total employed
Health Care and Social Assistance	29	28%	261	10%
Education and Training	20	19%	206	8%
Retail Trade	9	9%	230	9%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	8	8%	385	15%
Accommodation and Food Services	8	8%	200	8%
Public Administration and Safety	5	5%	146	6%
Manufacturing	5	5%	135	5%
Arts and Recreation Services	5	5%	28	1%
Administrative and Support Services	4	4%	103	4%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	4	4%	57	2%
Construction	0	0%	189	7%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	0	0%	131	5%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	0	0%	65	3%
Wholesale Trade	0	0%	59	2%
Financial and Insurance Services	0	0%	41	2%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	0	0%	32	1%
Mining	0	0%	27	1%
Information Media and Telecommunications	0	0%	17	1%
Other Services	4	4%	91	4%
Inadequately described/not stated	4	4%	131	5%

Table 4.25: Number of Aboriginal workers employed in the public and private sectors, Sunraysia communities

Australian Government	0
NSW Government	16
Local Government	3
Private sector	72
Not stated	0

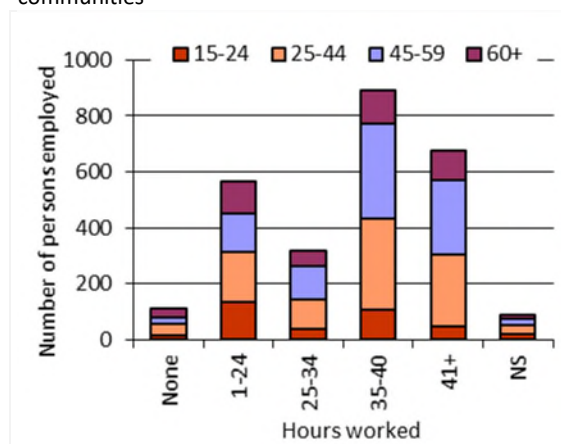
Table 4.26: Total number of businesses, Wentworth LGA, at 30th June 2019

No of employees	No of businesses
Nil	445
1-4	193
5-19	77
20 or more	24

Table 4.27: Business entries and exits, Wentworth LGA, at 30th June 2019

Year	Change in number
2015	-
2016	-15
2017	10
2018	-8
2019	-15

Figure 4.8: Hours worked by age group, Sunraysia communities



4.4 Income

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.28: Median total household income (Balranald-Wentworth (IARE))		
\$/week	\$768	\$1,120
N-W NSW IREG	\$907	\$1,013
New South Wales	\$1,214	\$1,498

Table 4.29: Estimates of personal income, total population, Wentworth LGA

Median employee income (\$) (2017)	\$31,623
Income share of top 10% of earners (excl. government payments)	35%
FW and Orana SA4	\$44,418
New South Wales	\$49,256

Figure 4.9: Average annual change in median employee income, 2014-2017, Wentworth LGA

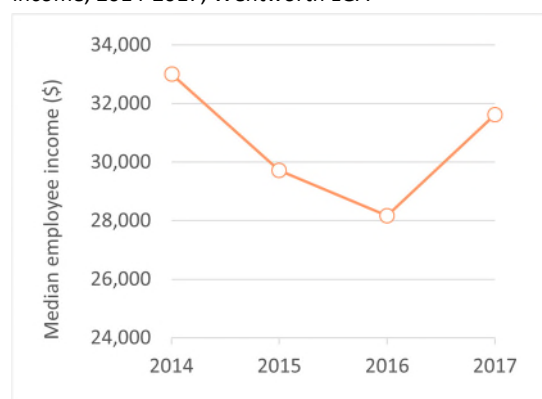


Table 4.30: Sources of income support Wentworth LGA

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

Age pension (n=905)	16%
Carer payment (n=136)	2%
Disability support pension (n=316)	6%
Newstart allowance (n=320)	6%
Parenting payment, single (n=95)	2%
Family tax benefit A (n=486)	9%
Family tax benefit B (n=375)	7%
Commonwealth rent assistance (n=475)	9%

4.5 Measure of socio-economic disadvantage

Table 4.31: SEIFA Index of disadvantage, Wentworth LGA 2016

SEIFA Index (IRSD) – Wentworth LGA	957
Rank in NSW	81 st of 130
Murdi Paaki Region:	
Highest (Cobar)	968
Lowest (Brewarrina)	757

KEY FINDINGS

- The median weekly income for Aboriginal households is lower than other households, lower than for Aboriginal households in the Region generally, and much lower than the median for Aboriginal households in NSW;
- The median weekly individual income for all employees is 30% lower than for the Far West and Orana region and 36% lower than for NSW as a whole;
- It is well established that the Murdi Paaki Region suffers the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage in NSW. Wentworth LGA is ranked the second least disadvantaged LGA in the Murdi Paaki Region, being ranked 81st in NSW on the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD).

5. THE HOUSING LANDSCAPE

5.1 Housing generally

Table 5.1: All dwellings by community, Sunraysia

Wentworth	666
Curlwaa	208
Dareton	348
Namatjira Ave / New Merinee	42
Buronga	514
Trentham Cliffs	123
Gol Gol	393
Euston	211
Pomona	73
Rural residue	508
Total	3,086

Table 5.2: All dwelling types, Sunraysia

Total number	3,086	
Separate houses	2,675	87%
Terraces, town houses	57	2%
Apartments	165	5%
Other dwelling types	189	6%

Table 5.3: Private dwellings unoccupied on Census night, Sunraysia

	n=3,086	
	414	13%
Change since 2011	n=294	+120
Murdi Paaki Region		19%
New South Wales		9%

430 people were counted elsewhere on Census night

Table 5.4: Households counted in a dwelling on Census night, Sunraysia

Resident households	2,343
Visitor households	126
Non-classifiable	218

Table 5.5: Number of bedrooms per dwelling, Sunraysia

0 or 1 bedrooms	176	7%
2 bedrooms	369	16%
3 bedrooms	1,159	49%
4 bedrooms	562	24%
5 bedrooms and more	92	4%

Figure 5.1: Dwelling size by number of bedrooms, Sunraysia

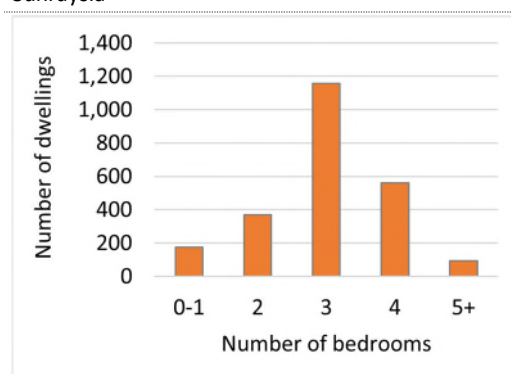


Table 5.6: Building approvals, 2019 (Wentworth (A))

Total building approvals	37
Private sector houses	37
Private other dwelling	-
Other dwelling units	-

Table 5.7: Median residential property price (Wentworth (A))

June quarter 2021	\$405,000
No of transfers	-
Source: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/facs.statistics/viz/Rentandsales_15565127794310/Rent	

5.2 A statistical comparative snapshot

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.8: Average household size (Balranald-Wentworth (IARE))		
Persons	2.9	2.4
N-W NSW IREG	3.0	2.1
New South Wales	3.1	2.6

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
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Table 5.9: Average number of persons per bedroom (Balranald-Wentworth (IARE))

Persons	1.0	0.8
N-W NSW IREG	0.9	0.7
New South Wales	1.0	0.9

Table 5.10: Households enumerated, Sunraysia

One family household	177	1,465
Multiple family household	7	16
Non-family household	48	632
Non-classifiable	0	0
Not applicable	0	0

Table 5.11: Occupancy, Sunraysia

One person	46	585
Two people	66	819
Three people	52	261
Four people	34	257
Five people and greater	42	182

Table 5.12: Proportion of all households renting, Sunraysia

Proportion of all households	68%	18%
Real estate agent	23%	38%
NSW housing authority	21%	0%
Community housing provider	32%	4%
Other private	11%	39%
Other	13%	19%

Murdi Paaki Region	62%	24%
New South Wales	56%	32%

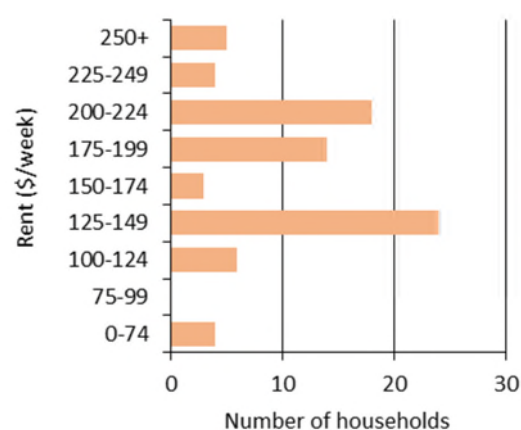
Table 5.13: Median rent (Balranald-Wentworth (IARE))

\$/week	170	150
N-W NSW IREG	160	150
New South Wales	270	390

Table 5.14: Percentage of all households with rent equal to or greater than 30% of household income (2016) (Wentworth (A))

Renting	7.4%
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Figure 5.2: Weekly rent payable by Aboriginal households, social housing rentals, 2016, Sunraysia



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
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Table 5.15: Home ownership (including owned with a mortgage), Sunraysia

	n=67	n=1,651
Proportion of all households	28%	67%
Murdi Paaki Region	38%	76%
New South Wales	44%	68%

Table 5.16: Change in Aboriginal home ownership, Sunraysia communities

	2016	2011
Proportion of all Aboriginal households	28%	22%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.17: Persons accommodated in non-private dwellings (Wentworth-Buronga SA2)		
Hotel, motel, B&B	0	73
Nursing home	0	52
Staff quarters	0	10
Public hospital	0	12
Table 5.18: Number of persons homeless in Lower Murray SA3		
(After Chamberlain and MacKenzie)		
Marginally housed		16
Tertiary homeless		0
Secondary homeless		18
Primary homeless		9
Living in crowded conditions		21

5.3 Population mobility

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.19: One-year residential mobility, Sunraysia		
	n=221	n=2,019
Residents in the household aged one year and over with a different address one year ago		
All residents	10%	11%
Some of the residents	8%	3%
No resident	82%	86%
Murdi Paaki Region		
	12%	10%
New South Wales		
	16%	13%
Residents in the household aged five years and over with a different address five years ago		
All residents	33%	31%
Some of the residents	9%	4%
No resident	58%	64%

Data from the 2011 and 2016 ABS Censuses suggest that, overall, over the ten-year period from 2006 to 2016, Aboriginal migration into and out of Wentworth Shire was almost balanced, with 188

people relocating into the Shire from other local government areas across Australia, and 191 people moving from Wentworth Shire. Closer examination of the data indicates that there is substantial net outmigration from Wentworth Shire to the Mildura City LGA. Between 2006 and 2016, 126 Aboriginal people relocated from Wentworth to Mildura; only 70 moved in the opposite direction. The net outmigration in the period 2011-2016 equated to over 9% of the Aboriginal population of Wentworth as at 2011. It is not possible to identify from the census data the reason for flow of population to Mildura: employment opportunities, access to services, and availability of housing are three possible reasons but these would need to be investigated further through discussion with people who have moved. Population inflows from LGAs other than Mildura consistently exceed population outflows to LGAs other than Mildura.

Table 5.20: Number of Aboriginal persons with a different address at stated location 1 year ago and five years ago, Sunraysia

Place of residence	1 year ago	5 years ago
Within Wentworth LGA	506	381
Balranald LGA	34	27
Elsewhere in the MPR	4	15
Elsewhere in NSW	10	36
Other	5	3

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.21: Access and mobility, Sunraysia communities		
No motor vehicles	29%	4%
One motor vehicle	32%	26%
Two motor vehicles	21%	37%
Three motor vehicles	7%	11%
Four or more motor vehicles	3%	7%
Not stated	8%	15%

5.4 The local housing market

House prices in Sunraysia vary markedly depending on the quality of construction and building age, size and condition. There were 144 sales in 2020.

For the 2 years 2019 and 2020 information is available for 261 sales; sale prices have been disclosed for 242 of these. The median price was \$264,000 and the range was \$52,000 for a very dilapidated dwelling outside of Dareton to \$2.5M for modern 6-bedroom brick home on the waterfront at Gol Gol. At the time of writing, there are 25 houses on the market with asking prices between \$130,000 (Euston) and \$3.2M (Gol Gol).

Table 5.22 provides an indication of market rent.

Table 5.22: Market rent, Wentworth LGA, Sept 2021	
	Rent/week
1 st quartile	284
Median	315
3 rd quartile	398
Source: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/facs.statistics/viz/Rentandsales_15565127794310/Rent	

5.5 Building activity

The number and value of building approvals issued by Wentworth Shire Council for FY 2020-21 are given in Table 5.23. The average value of residential new builds is \$430,270.

Table 5.23: Wentworth Shire building approvals		
Residential development	Number	Value (\$)
New single dwellings	89	38,294,000
Alterations and additions	21	4,292,000
Other	-	-

This level of new building activity, which equates to 3% of total residential holdings, suggests a degree of confidence that the local economy continues to offer opportunities for growth.

6. ABORIGINAL SOCIAL HOUSING

6.1 Ownership and management

Ownership of Aboriginal social housing rests with three Organisations: Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council, Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation (MPRHC) and the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office. MPRHC manages its own properties and those of the AHO while an Out-of-Region (OoR) provider, Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Management Co-operative (now Mlahmc), manages housing on behalf of Dareton LALC. Total holdings are summarised in Table 6.1 and a schedule of housing mix at Table 6.2

Table 6.1: Ownership of Aboriginal social housing, Sunraysia

Owner	Manager	Number
Dareton LALC	Mlahmc	49
MPRHC	MPRHC	25
Aboriginal Housing Office	MPRHC	52
Total		126

Table 6.2: Housing mix by number of bedrooms

Owner	Bedrooms				Total
	2	3	4	5	
Dareton LALC	9	35	4	1	49
MPRHC	-	21	4	-	25
AHO	9	29	14	-	52
				18	85
				22	1
				Total	126

Property details for each asset owner are listed in Tables 6.3 to 6.5 inclusive and an aerial view of the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee settlement is shown at Figure 6.1.

Table 6.3: Cadastral information for Dareton LALC (DLALC) residential properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered Proprietor	Street Address	Community	Property Type	Number of Bedrooms
Managed by Mlahmc							
877		756961	DLALC	72 Pitman Avenue	Buronga	Cottage	3
880		756961	DLALC	37 Melaleuca Street	Buronga	Cottage	3
876		756961	DLALC	70 Pitman Avenue	Buronga	Cottage	3
6	18	758338	DLALC	35 Matong Street	Dareton	Cottage	2
7	18	758338	DLALC	33 Matong Street	Dareton	Cottage	2
8	16	758338	DLALC	16 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
990		756961	DLALC	1 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
990		756961	DLALC	3 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	5 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
990		756961	DLALC	6 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	12A Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	12B Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	16 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	4
1119		43565	DLALC	17 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	18 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	4
1119		43565	DLALC	19 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3

Table 6.3: Cadastral information for Dareton LALC (DLALC) residential properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered Proprietor	Street Address	Community	Property Type	Number of Bedrooms
1119		43565	DLALC	20 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	21 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	22 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	23 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	24 Namatjira Avenue (damaged)	Namatjira	Cottage	2
1119		43565	DLALC	25 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	26 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	27 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	2
1119		43565	DLALC	29 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	31 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	2
1119		43565	DLALC	32 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	33 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	34 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	2
1119		43565	DLALC	39 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Cottage	2
1119		43565	DLALC	3A Silver City Highway	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	3B Silver City Highway	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	14B Silver City Highway	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	35 Silver City Highway	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1119		43565	DLALC	36 Silver City Highway	Namatjira	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	6 Merinee Road	New Merinee	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	7 Merinee Road	New Merinee	Cottage	2
1180		820175	DLALC	13 Merinee Road	New Merinee	Community hub	
1180		820175	DLALC	1 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	2 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	5
1180		820175	DLALC	3 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	2
1180		820175	DLALC	5 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	8 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	2
1180		820175	DLALC	10 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	11 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	15 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	4
1180		820175	DLALC	16 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	4
1180		820175	DLALC	17 Pooncaira Court (damaged)	New Merinee	Cottage	3
1180		820175	DLALC	20 Pooncaira Court	New Merinee	Cottage	3
Under construction							
7	7	758338	DLALC	19 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
Vacant land							
990		756961	DLALC	13 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Vacant	
990		756961	DLALC	14 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Vacant	
990		756961	DLALC	15 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Vacant	

Table 6.3: Cadastral information for Dareton LALC (DLALC) residential properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered Proprietor	Street Address	Community	Property Type	Number of Bedrooms
1119		43565	DLALC	28 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Vacant	
1119		43565	DLALC	30 Namatjira Avenue	Namatjira	Vacant	
1180		820175	DLALC	Pooncaira Court (2 infill sites)	New Merinee	Vacant	
904		756961	DLALC	14 Friel Street (for demolition)	Buronga	Vacant	
1	22	758851	DLALC	41-43 Tarcoola Street	Pooncarie	Vacant	
3		725320	DLALC	53-55 Tarcoola Street	Pooncarie	Vacant	

Table 6.4 Cadastral information for MPRHC residential properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered Proprietor	Street Address	Community	Property Type	Number of Bedrooms
Managed by Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation							
679		756961	MPRHC	1 Pooley Street	Buronga	Cottage	3
906		756961	MPRHC	10 Friel Street	Buronga	Cottage	3
905		756961	MPRHC	12 Friel Street	Buronga	Cottage	3
27		830876	MPRHC	42 Crane Drive	Buronga	Cottage	3
863		756961	MPRHC	44 Pitman Avenue	Buronga	Cottage	3
1		714076	MPRHC	12 Avoca Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
21	11	758338	MPRHC	19 Devonport Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
1090		43269	MPRHC	20 Riverview Drive	Dareton	Cottage	3
1091		43269	MPRHC	22 Riverview Drive	Dareton	Cottage	3
5	17	758338	MPRHC	35 Devenport Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
17	8	758338	MPRHC	57 Mitchell Avenue	Dareton	Cottage	3
7	15	758338	MPRHC	6 Mitchell Avenue	Dareton	Cottage	3
12	7	758338	MPRHC	82 Tapio Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
13	3	758338	MPRHC	13 Millie Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
4	16	758338	MPRHC	8 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
7	6	758402	MPRHC	14 Maher Street	Euston	Cottage	3
27	6	758402	MPRHC	15 Nixon Street	Euston	Cottage	4
133		592017	MPRHC	8 Selwyn Street	Euston	Cottage	4
1		583145	MPRHC	83 Wood Street	Gol Gol	Cottage	3
27		804914	MPRHC	14 Shannon Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
1		575880	MPRHC	155 Adams Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
4		662670	MPRHC	29A Adelaide Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
4		662670	MPRHC	29B Adelaide Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
162		756994	MPRHC	38 William Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
11		616408	MPRHC	97 Wilkes Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3

Table 6.5: Cadastral information for AHO residential properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered Proprietor	Street Address	Community	Property Type	Number of Bedrooms
Managed by Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation							
895		756961	AHO	15 Friel Street	Buronga	Cottage	3
31		830879	AHO	10 Tower Court	Buronga	Cottage	3
6		264142	AHO	2 Crane Drive	Buronga	Cottage	3
7		825883	AHO	38 Crane Drive	Buronga	Cottage	3
6		825883	AHO	40 Crane Drive	Buronga	Cottage	3
12		702012	AHO	5 Morris Place	Buronga	Cottage	3
1010		756961	AHO	66B Silver City Highway	Buronga	Cottage	3
1008		756961	AHO	70 Silver City Highway	Buronga	Cottage	3
30		830879	AHO	8 Tower Court	Buronga	Cottage	3
39		830879	AHO	9 Tower Court	Buronga	Cottage	3
4		702012	AHO	10 Crane Drive	Buronga	Cottage	4
896		756961	AHO	13 Friel Street	Buronga	Cottage	4
2		622571	AHO	1, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	2, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	3, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	4, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	5, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	6, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	7, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	8, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
2		622571	AHO	9, 16 School Road	Dareton	Unit	2
7	16	758338	AHO	14 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
12	16	758338	AHO	24 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
13	19	758338	AHO	29 Riverview Drive	Dareton	Cottage	3
3	18	758338	AHO	41 School Road	Dareton	Cottage	3
1		240559	AHO	45 School Road	Dareton	Cottage	3
3	16	758338	AHO	6 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	3
11	7	758338	AHO	84 Tapio Avenue	Dareton	Cottage	3
19	4	758338	AHO	13 Neilpo Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
10	7	758338	AHO	25 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
11	18	758338	AHO	25 Matong Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
13	16	758338	AHO	26 Hawdon Street	Dareton	Cottage	4
2		240559	AHO	43 School Road	Dareton	Cottage	4
6	21	758402	AHO	59 Maher Street	Euston	Cottage	3
2		739784	AHO	45 Perry Street	Euston	Cottage	4
1		700342	AHO	138 Wood Street	Gol Gol	Cottage	3
1		560168	AHO	82 William Street	Gol Gol	Cottage	3
1	6	759074	AHO	101 Cadell Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
12		785358	AHO	104 Darling Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
28		804914	AHO	12 Shannon Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3

Table 6.5: Cadastral information for AHO residential properties

Lot	Section	DP	Registered Proprietor	Street Address	Community	Property Type	Number of Bedrooms
2		205245	AHO	125 Darling Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
11	34	759074	AHO	140 Darling Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
25		804914	AHO	18 Shannon Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
5		25674	AHO	34 Arthur Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
1		590321	AHO	37 Armstrong Avenue	Wentworth	Cottage	3
30		804914	AHO	8 Shannon Street	Wentworth	Cottage	3
23		238062	AHO	141 Adams Street	Wentworth	Cottage	4
5	43	759074	AHO	194 Adams Street	Wentworth	Cottage	4
23		804914	AHO	2 Ruby Street	Wentworth	Cottage	4
33		804914	AHO	31-33 Gunn Street	Wentworth	Cottage	4
18		25674	AHO	41 Helena Street	Wentworth	Cottage	4
10		25674	AHO	92 Wilkes Street	Wentworth	Cottage	4

Figure 6.1: Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee



Source: <https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/>

6.2 Housing assets

Aboriginal social housing is spread across a large geographical area and embraces a range of styles, forms of construction and age. The properties featured in Figures 6.2 and 6.3 are illustrative of lightweight stud framed housing, with suspended floor on piers. Both have fibre cement cladding, one plank, the other sheet mostly likely containing asbestos. Roofs are profiled steel sheet. Figure 6.4 shows a more recent house of brick veneer construction on concrete slab with metal roof.

Figure 6.2: Steel framed houses, Wentworth



Figure 6.3: Older timber framed dwelling, Buronga



Figure 6.4: Brick veneer on concrete slab with metal roof, Dareton



The National Aboriginal Health Strategy, Health Infrastructure Priority Project funded a major programme of work at the former Reserve of Namatjira Avenue. The focus of the project was the development of the site of self-built structures or humpies at the adjacent New Merinee. A complete package of infrastructure works was delivered and, as part of a skills development initiative, fifteen new dwellings were constructed, most of mud brick as illustrated by Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5: Mud brick house 20 years old, New Merinee



The balance of dwellings were of brick veneer form on slab on ground which matches the construction of the houses built around Namatjira Avenue.

6.3 MPRH&BC household survey

A data gathering exercise was undertaken in 2016-2017 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 including 155 households, or 66% of all Aboriginal households, across the Sunraysia communities. As well as tenants living in social housing, owner occupiers, private renters, people staying in caravans and self-built structures contributed to the survey. The findings of the survey in respect of the Sunraysia communities are outlined below:

Figure 6.6: Housing mix (All households)

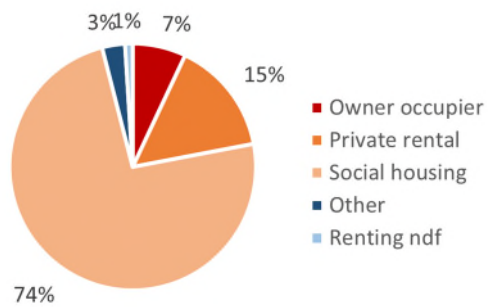


Figure 6.7: Managing organisation (Social housing tenants)

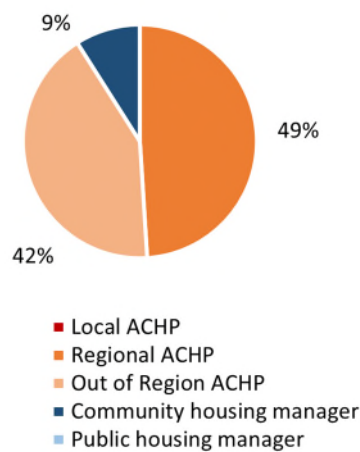


Figure 6.8: Level of satisfaction with manager

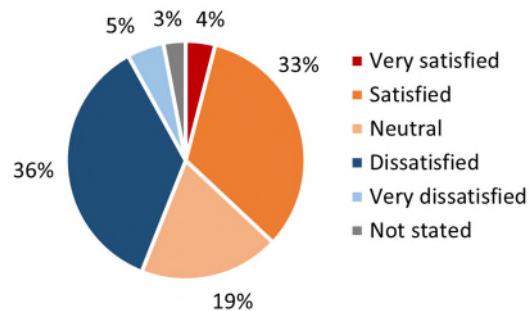


Figure 6.9: Preferred manager of Aboriginal social housing (Social housing tenants)

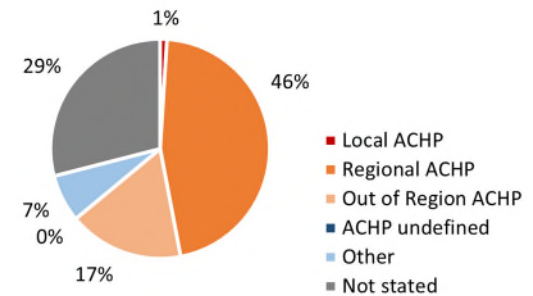


Figure 6.10: Social housing tenants with a tenancy agreement

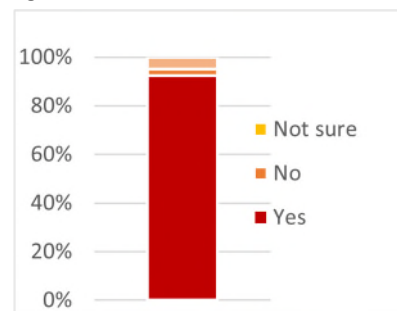


Figure 6.11: Social housing tenants claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

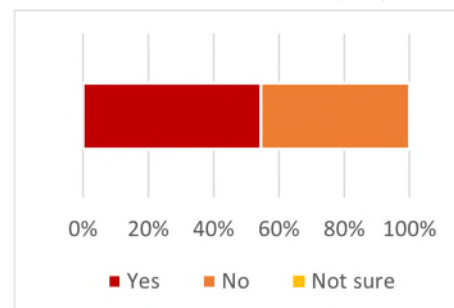


Figure 6.12: Rent levels (2016-17)



Figure 6.13: Household size range (All households)

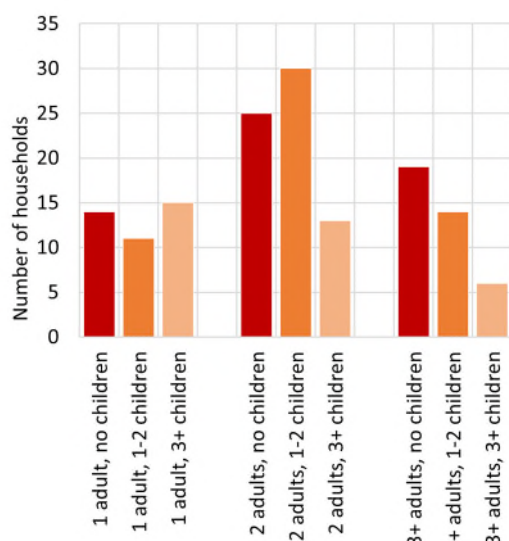


Figure 6.14: Address of household 5 years ago

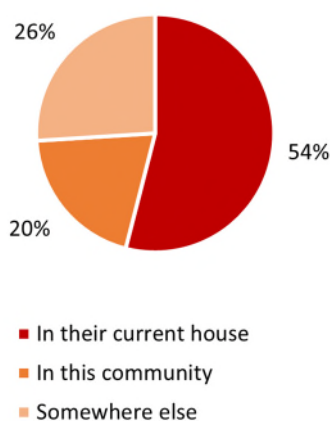
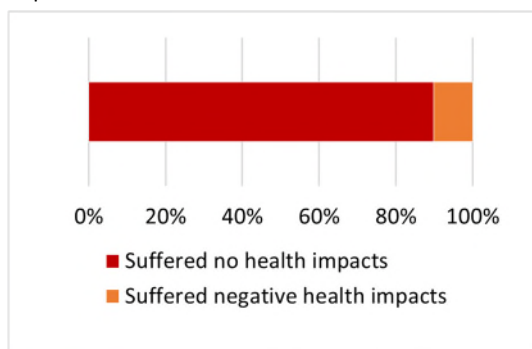


Figure 6.15: Respondents reporting a negative health impact



KEY FINDINGS

- Over three quarters of respondents to the survey were renting social housing while 15% were renting privately. 11 owner occupiers were captured by the survey. Three further respondents could be classified as homeless;
- Of social housing tenants, 92% rented through either of the two Aboriginal community-controlled housing managers while 8% of tenants lived in housing managed by a non-Indigenous community housing manager;
- 37% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with their housing manager, while a similar number (41%) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. 19% were neutral. Those not stating a view accounted for the balance of 3%;
- When asked to nominate a preferred housing manager, 46% of respondents stated a choice for a regional Aboriginal community-controlled provider, 17% were satisfied to have an OoR housing manager. 29% of social housing tenants did not advise a preference;
- Nearly all respondents held a formal residential tenancy agreement;
- 55% of tenants stated they were claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance;
- Under half of all respondents (39%) stated their households were composed of adults only. Households with one or two children accounted for another 37%, while 23% of households reported 3 or more children. Single parent households made up 27% of all households;
- 54% of respondents stated they were living at the same address five years ago. One in five respondents said they had moved but only within the district in the same period; and
- Approximately 11% of social housing respondents reported that their living arrangements impacted adversely on their health but the reasons appeared to be related to unstable tenancies rather than property condition.

6.4 Experiences of owner occupiers

Eleven owner occupiers responded to the survey and all were purchasing or had purchased a

detached house. Three were purchasing with the aid of a loan from a bank, building society or credit union, three were purchasing under a rent to buy scheme, one had sourced loans from another institutions. Three respondents said they were purchasing with the aid of a loan from Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) and three were purchasing using their own savings.

Of those who responded to the question, eight owners were satisfied with their decision to purchase, one was indifferent about their decision and one was unhappy. In most instances, owners had long-standing attachment to the community, having been born in the area or, more commonly, through a lengthy family residency. Being on Country was not a strong influence in respondents' decision to live in the community but living close to family and relations, and friends, were important considerations. Only three respondents referred to employment as a motivating factor.

There was little evidence of mobility amongst owners: all respondents were living at the same address one year prior to the survey and nine reported they were living at the same address five years previously.

Most owners valued ownership for economic reasons such as *"not paying dead money for rent"*. Not having to answer to a landlord was important as was the freedom to make changes to their house. Three owners stated that leaving a legacy for their families was important and one respondent valued the sense of ownership and security that home ownership brought.

Three respondents saw no disadvantages of home ownership, three said affordability and responsibility of repairs and maintenance were issues while, for four, a disadvantage was the obligation to meet municipal rates and utilities charges. In respect of essential services, 64% of respondents said they had trouble paying electricity bills. Respondents were not asked to disclose the value of monthly mortgage repayments.

Of owners who provided occupancy details, one would be eligible under the Canadian Occupancy

Standard (CNOS) methodology for assessing crowding for an additional bedroom, one to two extra bedrooms and two to three or more extra bedrooms.

Three households reported a visitor staying for longer than a week and one had a visitor staying for less than a week. Six reported feeling crowded in their home: three felt a bit crowded, one felt quite crowded and two were very crowded. This gave rise in four respondents to feelings of being often or constantly stressed because of crowding.

Four owners reported that one or more persons in their household had experienced homelessness in the three years prior to the survey while nearly 50% of all owner respondents reported that they were giving shelter to a person or persons who would otherwise be homeless at the time of the survey.

6.5 The experience of private renters

The MPRH&BC household survey captured twenty-three households in private rentals and one household in employer-provided housing. All but one had entered into a formal tenancy agreement. Of those responding to the question, most were happy with their housing manager and none quoted dissatisfaction with their housing manager's attitude.

The reasons for living in the community were similar to those provided by owners: lengthy familial association with the community; closeness to family and relations, and to friends, but differed in respect of a more pronounced work-related influence and proximity to a major regional centre. Up to half of households reported visitors staying at the time of the survey with 20% of households having accommodated a visitor(s) for longer than one week. Despite this, crowding did not appear to be perceived to be an issue and only two respondents said they were often or always stressed because of feeling crowded.

Two households had experienced homelessness in the three years preceding the survey, affecting a total of six people. These people had found themselves variously rough sleeping, couch surfing

and in emergency accommodation. At the time of the survey, no respondent stated they were giving shelter to someone who would otherwise be homeless but one stated they were part of a multi-family household. Unstable living arrangements and the fear of being made homeless contributed to adverse health status mentioned by three respondents.

Four respondents said they had applied and been approved for housing in another community.

Eighty seven percent of respondents were aware of the financial support available to renters through the Commonwealth Rent Assistance scheme but only 56% of all respondents in private rentals were in receipt of assistance. Rent paid, as indicated by Figure 6.12 was on a par with rents paid by tenants of Aboriginal social housing but 87% considered the rent to be higher than it should be for the properties they were living in. Median rent was highest in Wentworth.

Financial stress may be inferred from the over 60% of respondents who reported difficulty in meeting energy costs.

Of twenty-two respondents, nine were living at a different address one year before the survey and four had moved more than once in that twelve-month period. Only two respondents were at the same address five years prior to the survey. Nearly all respondents said they would move if their circumstances changed.

6.6 The experience of renters of Aboriginal social housing

The MPRH&BC household survey interviewed 122 Aboriginal households living in social housing in the Sunraysia communities. Of these, ten occupied homes managed by Homes Out West. The remainder were in properties managed by the Regional or OoR ACHP. The Namatjira Avenue /New Merinee precinct yielded 41 responses.

As shown by Figure 6.10, 92% of tenants had signed a formal residential tenancy agreement and most knew of the limit on occupancy. Awareness of Commonwealth Rent Assistance was high (79%)

although only 55% reported receiving the benefit. The range of weekly rents paid at the time of the survey is shown at Figure 6.12: most tenants were paying within the range \$151-\$250/week. In comparison, the median market rent as shown by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Rent and Sales Report for December 2016 was \$180 for a two-bedroom dwelling and \$210 for a three-bedroom dwelling. Only 17% of respondents considered their rent to be a fair rent with greater proportion indicating a fair rent to be \$50/week lower than charged.

Underlying evidence of financial stress was reflected in 56% of tenants responding to the question reporting difficulty in paying their electricity bills. The size of house did not appear to be a material factor in contributing to the difficulty tenants had in meeting energy costs.

Median waiting time for Aboriginal social housing ranged from three to twelve months depending upon community, Dareton having the longest waiting time. Of 119 respondents to the question, 106 or 89% were living at the same address as twelve months prior to the survey while 65% were living at the same address five years prior to the survey. About half of all respondents indicated they would consider moving if their needs changed. Generally, the median period of occupancy five and seven years but this increased for tenants living at Euston to ten years.

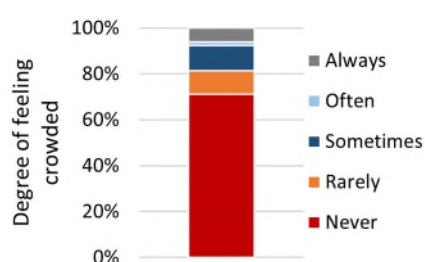
An overwhelming number of respondents stated the reason they rented Aboriginal social housing was that it was the only housing available to them and that, it was the most affordable housing available. Over 40% indicated they did not want to become owners while another 14% felt that they could not afford to purchase.

Motivations for living in Sunraysia were varied with closeness to family and relations, and a lengthy period of residency, being the most mentioned. Two-thirds liked the house they rented. About half of all respondents were influenced by the proximity of a major regional centre but not many cited work prospects as a reason.

At the time of the household survey, twenty-five young people put their names forward for their own accommodation. Nine had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house. Three older persons interviewed also sought separate accommodation but none had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house. In contrast, the NSW Housing Register gives the current waiting list as twenty-six general applicants and five priority applicants but this includes applications from the non-Indigenous community. The published waiting time for 3-, 4- and larger bedroom properties is between 2 and 5 years.

Of those tenants responding to the question, 89% indicated a preference for Aboriginal social housing tenancies to be passed on within the family.

Figure 6.16: Respondent's reporting feeling crowded



Crowding does not appear to be a serious mental-health issue based on the findings of the MPRH&BC household survey. Figure 6.16 refers. The sense of being crowded, and the stress induced, was limited to no greater than one in ten households, this despite up to 35% of households accommodating one, and principally more, visitors during the week of the survey. Only four households were giving shelter to one or more people who would otherwise be homeless at the time of the survey. Figure 6.17 provides a representation of all households participating in the survey which stated the presence of person(s) who would otherwise be homeless.

Table 6.6 describes the degree of utilisation of existing dwellings as reported by respondents to the survey where sufficient information is available to calculate occupancy levels. Numbers stated do not account for visitors or family reformations. In

the balance of dwellings, all bedrooms would be occupied.

Occupancy was assessed against the Canadian National Occupancy Standard for crowding. At the time of the survey, twenty dwellings exceeded the threshold criteria and required additional bedrooms although this number may be an underestimate as some responses were not sufficiently descriptive to allow full assessment.

Table 6.6: Number of bedrooms occupied by permanent residents only

Size of house	Number of households using				
	1	2	3	4	5
bedrooms					
2-bed	3	-	-	-	-
3-bed	13	18	-	-	-
4-bed	4	4	8	-	-
5-bed	-	-	1	1	-
6-bed	-	-	-	-	-
All	20	22	9	1	-

Canadian National Occupancy Standard

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

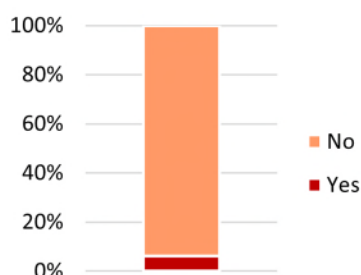
- There should be no more than 2 persons per bedroom;
- Children less than 5 years of age of different sexes may share a bedroom;
- Children 5 years of age or older of opposite sex should have separate bedrooms;
- Children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may share a bedroom;
- Single household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

Of the twenty dwellings, sixteen were assessed to require one extra bedroom and four to require two extra bedrooms.

One in ten respondents contributed an adverse health outcome to renting social housing. Figure 6.15 refers. Interestingly, very few attributed this to a physical issue with the property itself but rather to stress cause by an unstable living arrangement and the threat of eviction and homelessness. Why this should be so was not explored by the survey. Suitability or otherwise of

the property from a cultural perspective was not a factor.

Figure 6.17: Households providing shelter to one or more people who would otherwise be homeless



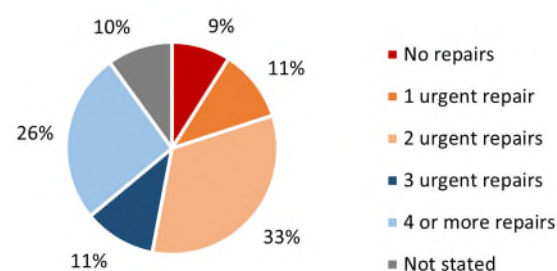
The survey sought comment on the reasons for dissatisfaction with housing management services reflected by Figure 6.8. While eighteen respondents felt their housing manager was providing a professional service, this number was far outweighed by those who were critical of the providers attention to rectifying reported housing defects. This, perhaps, explains why the rent versus quality imbalance was raised unsolicited by many of the respondents. It is unsurprising that, when asked how housing management services could be improved, half the respondents focussed on ensuring urgent and cyclical maintenance was carried out competently in a timely manner.

6.7 Asset condition

The MPRH&BC household survey invited private and 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 6.18.

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 and facilities condition.

Figure 6.18: 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 over-crowding (treated separately in this Plan)
- HLP 6: Reducing the negative effects of animals, insects and vermin
- HLP 7: Reducing the health impacts of dust
- HLP 8: Controlling internal temperature
- HLP 9: Reducing hazards that cause trauma

The household survey sought to establish observance of the practices using the indicators shown in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7: 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 one divergence from the NSHS methodology adopted in this project is to increase the number of working 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.

Table 6.8 itemises the defects used to classify structural and major services faults.

Table 6.8: 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 6.9 for communities where sufficient information was provided. Classification in this way might be considered somewhat arbitrary in that a single major structural problem could render the dwelling uninhabitable but it is to be expected that, if serious faults were present at the time of the household survey, the property would have been vacant and not included.

The principal deficiencies recorded in the quality of social housing are noted in Table 6.10 and the assessment against Housing for Health safety and healthy living practices are shown in Table 6.11. As might be expected from comments captured by the MPRH&BC household survey, most properties are perceived by their tenants to require repair and maintenance effort to some degree. The condition of properties in the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct appear to require more work than properties in the towns. Housing at Namatjira Avenue is of brick veneer construction on concrete slab on ground and reasonably resilient but, being over thirty years old, is ageing. Evidence of inattention to repair and maintenance is illustrated by the high percentage of non-functioning facilities, particularly, sanitary fixtures. Some properties in Buronga are older still and, being of fibro clad lightweight construction, are suffering the effects of prolonged use.

Table 6.9: Social housing condition as expressed by tenants, by community (%)

Condition	Wentworth	Dareton	Namatjira	Buronga	Euston
No structural problems, and 7 working facilities	6%	6%	10%	18%	0%
No more than 2 structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	76%	66%	46%	64%	100%
3 or more structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	12%	13%	15%	9%	0%
None, 1 or 2 structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	0%	9%	10%	9%	0%
3 or more structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	6%	6%	18%	0%	0%

Table 6.10: Social housing principal faults, by community (%)

Problem area	Percentage of houses affected				
	Wentworth	Dareton	Namatjira	Buronga	Euston
Moving foundations	18%	18%	18%	7%	0%
Uneven floors	12%	36%	20%	14%	0%
Cracks in wall and/or ceiling	29%	45%	55%	29%	14%
Termite damage	6%	9%	10%	0%	0%
Roof leaking inside	47%	24%	33%	21%	14%
Major electrical faults	6%	6%	25%	7%	0%
Major plumbing faults	0%	9%	25%	7%	0%
Major air conditioning problems	6%	3%	0%	7%	0%
Septic/sewerage problems outside	12%	6%	20%	7%	14%
Non-functional facilities					
Kitchen stove/oven	6%	13%	26%	9%	0%
Electric hot water heater	0%	4%	5%	0%	0%
Kitchen sink	6%	9%	13%	9%	0%
Shower	6%	9%	8%	9%	0%
Toilet	0%	6%	23%	0%	14%
Laundry tub	0%	19%	5%	0%	0%
Air conditioning	18%	22%	0%	17%	0%

Table 6.11: Meeting Healthy Living Practices, social housing, by community (%)

Practice		Meeting the standard				
		Wentworth	Dareton	Namatjira	Buronga	Euston
HLP 1	Washing people	94%	94%	95%	82%	86%
HLP 2	Washing clothes and bedding	100%	81%	95%	100%	100%
HLP 3	Wastewater disposal	88%	94%	77%	93%	86%
HLP 4	Improving nutrition	94%	88%	74%	91%	100%
HLP 6	Pest control	53%	36%	3%	71%	86%
HLP 7	Reducing impact of dust	88%	79%	38%	86%	100%
HLP 8	Temperature control (heating)	88%	63%	62%	91%	86%
HLP 8	Temperature control (cooling)	53%	22%	3%	45%	100%
HLP 9	Free of electrical hazards	94%	94%	75%	93%	100%

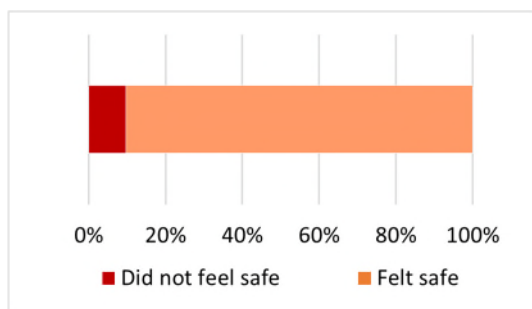
Whereas Table 6.10 indicates the proportion of installed systems, appliances and fixtures which are non-functional, Table 6.11 captures households which do not have the benefit of some appliances, primarily wood or electric heaters or air conditioners. For example, thirty of 146 households reported they had neither a wood heater or electric heating and seventy-seven

households stated their properties were not provided with any means of cooling.

Tenants across all communities also reported other minor defects such as fractured verandah decking, no working clothesline and the like. An inability to secure the house because entry and/or back doors could not be closed or locked was reported by respondents in Dareton and Buronga, contributing

to the feeling of insecurity mentioned by some tenants and shown in Figure 6.19.

Figure 6.19: Respondents reporting feeling unsafe at home



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 was almost 100%.

6.8 Asset condition methodology

Unlike the original HEHPs of the late 1990s and early 2000s, scoping of properties to prepare a schedule of repair has not been carried out so this Plan relies on tenant responses to the survey to generate profiles of asset condition. The MPRH&BC *Social Housing Providers and Assets Audit Report* commented on the serious omission of a requirement under the AHO Build and Grow head leasing arrangements for a managing ACHP to carry out planned maintenance during the lifetime of the Agreement so a backlog of higher value maintenance work is to be expected.

In the absence of detailed scopes of work, this Plan adopts an analysis of previous repair and maintenance projects to derive an 'order of probable cost' to apply to tenant-reported asset condition¹. Median estimates for the five bands

used to categorise condition are listed in Table 6.12. Costs are to September 2020.

Table 6.12: Property repair and maintenance, median estimates (\$)

Band	Wentworth and Dareton	Buronga and Euston
One	7,320	6,980
Two	22,260	21,250
Three	34,420	32,860
Four	51,450	49,110
Five	77,070	73,560

The median values for repair and maintenance stated in Table 6.12 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; replacement of kitchens, bathrooms and/or laundries; replacing appliances, fixtures and fittings where these are no longer serviceable; and ensuring, for example, roofing, gutters and downpipes are reinstated to a satisfactory condition.

To develop an accurate assessment of the scope and costs of repair and maintenance works required, a detailed asset inspection is necessary to provide current information on the condition of all houses, extent of works required and associated costs required to complete upgrades and to model the expected lifespans of existing housing and environmental health infrastructure. This data will allow detailed and accurate asset management planning and more mature benefit cost analysis and decision-making in respect of major upgrades or replacement.

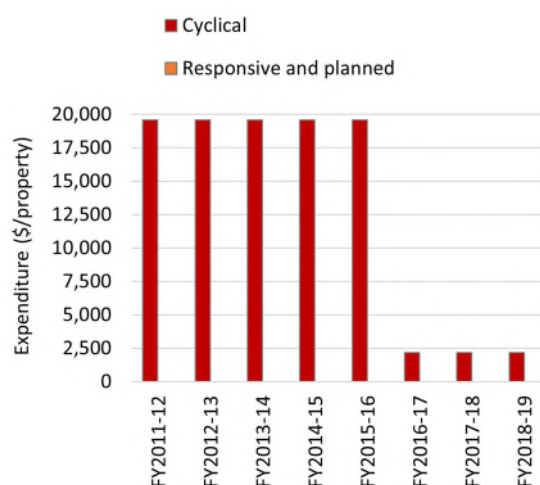
¹ The sample totalled 98 properties spread across seven communities in the Region, large and small, and includes properties requiring little or no work to those in need of major refurbishment. The sample is grouped into five bands (quintiles) of increasing scope to generate median values for

each band. 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.

6.9 Asset preservation cost estimate

The AHO has advised that, between FY2011-12 and FY2018-19, it funded repair and maintenance costs to an average of between 40 and 47 properties each year. Figure 6.20 provides a summary of expenditures. It is not known whether these were AHO, Dareton LALC or MPRHC properties.

Figure 6.20: AHO repair and maintenance expenditures



The higher expenditure occurred in the period immediately prior to carrying out the MPRH&BC household survey and so it would be reasonable to assume that properties would be in reasonably good condition at that time.

To derive an order of probable cost for repair of all properties, 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. Table 6.13 refers.

Table 6.13: Adjustment factors for estimating total cost of asset preservation

Community	Total number of properties	Number of properties participating in the survey	Factor
Wentworth	21	17	1.235
Dareton	34	32	1.063
Namatjira	43	39	1.103
Buronga	20	11	1.818
Gol Gol/Euston	8	7	1.142

Table 6.14: Housing repair and maintenance estimated costs, Aboriginal social housing, September 2020

	Severity of condition					
	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Total
Wentworth						
Number of properties from survey	1	13	2	0	1	17
Total number of properties for repair	1	17	2	0	1	21
Probable order of cost (\$)	7,300	378,400	68,800	0	77,100	531,600
Average cost/property = \$25,314						
Dareton						
Number of properties from survey	2	21	4	3	2	32
Total number of properties for repair	2	23	4	3	2	34
Probable order of cost (\$)	14,600	512,000	137,700	154,400	154,100	972,800
Average cost/property = \$28,612						
Namatjira						
Number of properties from survey	4	18	6	4	7	39
Total number of properties for repair	4	19	6	5	9	43
Probable order of cost (\$)	29,300	422,900	206,500	257,300	693,600	1,609,600
Average cost/property = \$37,433						

Table 6.14: Housing repair and maintenance estimated costs, Aboriginal social housing, September 2020

Table 10-10 Housing Repair and Maintenance Estimated Costs, All Original Social Housing, September 2020						
	Severity of condition					
	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Total
Buronga						
Number of properties from survey	2	7	1	1	0	11
Total number of properties for repair	3	14	2	1	0	20
Probable order of cost (\$)	20,900	297,500	65,700	49,100	-	433,200
Average cost/property = \$21,660						
Gol Gol and Euston						
Number of properties from survey	0	7	0	0	0	7
Total number of properties for repair	0	8	0	0	0	8
Probable order of cost (\$)	-	170,000	-	-	-	170,000
Average cost/property = \$21,250						

The aggregated expenditure required across these communities is \$ 3,717,200 which equates to approximately \$ 29,500 per property.

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. As identified in Table 6.14, up to 21 properties fall into Bands 4 and 5 and are assessed as requiring major refurbishment. Two Namatjira properties are badly damaged and, as allocated to Band 5, fall into this category.

MPRHC are funded to carry out refurbishments of twenty-five Sunraysia properties under the Aboriginal Community Housing and Infrastructure Fund (ACHIF) but these are targeted to specific works and will not address general wear and tear. The nature and value of work to be undertaken with ACHIF monies are shown in Table 6.15. Average allocation is \$59,242 per property. This allocation does reinforce the validity of the order of cost given above and, perhaps, suggests it might be an underestimate.

6.10 Replacement housing

No properties have been identified by MPRHC for replacement but Dareton LALC has indicated that two properties at Namatjira Avenue are damaged

to the extent they are not fit for occupation. The Plan assumes these are salvageable and no allowance is made for replacement but scoping may demonstrate otherwise.

Table 6.15: ACHIF allocations to Sunraysia communities

Works	Allocation (\$)
Property replacement	0
Roof replacement	962,500
External painting	184,800
Shed replacement	110,750
Evaporative cooler replacement	212,500
Scoping	10,500
Total	1,481,050

6.11 Home modifications

Twelve households flagged a need for their home to be modified for someone with special mobility needs. Of these, seven had been completed at the time of the survey with five waiting for the service. Four respondents estimated that they had been waiting over six months after being approved and work had yet to start.

6.12 Evaluation of housing need

From the MPRH&BC household survey, unadjusted housing need gauged from responses to targeted questions are summarised in Table 6.16.

Table 6.16: Reported need for new housing: Private and social housing renters

	Number
Total number of households renting	145
Households responding to the question	120
Young people requesting own housing	25
Older people requesting own housing	3
Multi-family households	9

A reliable estimate of need for new housing has been derived from the stated desire of individuals or couples to move out of the family home, an assessment of housing composition and potential family reformation by considering each individual survey return. The estimate relates to households occupying social housing and excludes any need arising from crowding in owner occupier or private rental households. The need derived from the homeless cohort has been accepted in full. Primary and secondary homeless persons are assigned a 2-bed unit. Multi-family households, composed variously of couples only and couples with children, are allocated housing of a size commensurate with family composition in accordance with the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS).

Numbers shown in Table 6.17 are refined through this process of examination of the circumstances of individual households to produce the revised and more realistic assessment of need shown in Table 6.17. An allocation is made for individuals and/or families living in crowded conditions in owner occupier and private rental households, in social rentals and classified as homeless.

Table 6.17: Housing need as assessed from MPRH&BC household survey for Aboriginal social housing renters and homeless persons and families

	Bedrooms				
	2	3	4	5	6
Families	2	7	1	1	-
Older persons	3	-	-	-	-
Young persons	19	-	-	-	-
Homeless persons, families	4	-	-	-	-
Total	28	7	1	1	-

The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) on behalf of Dareton LALC has secured

funding under ACHIF in the amount of \$361,670 to build one new house, thereby satisfying demand from one family.

In contrast to Table 6.17, the AHO advised in mid-2019 the numbers waiting for AHO and DCJ housing in Dareton and Wentworth to be as Table 6.18.

Table 6.18: Social housing waitlist numbers by bedroom category, AHO and DCJ housing, mid-2019

Studio/1 bedroom	-
2 bedrooms	-
3-bedrooms	24
4+ bedrooms	4
Not specified	19
Total	47

DCJ, in its NSW Housing Register dashboard for June 2020, quotes the combined number of approved Aboriginal and non-Indigenous applicants shown in Table 6.19 which, without the benefit of the detail given by Table 6.18, 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.

Table 6.19: Applicants approved for social housing, NSW Housing Register as of 30th June 2020

	Applicants	
	General	Priority
Coomoalla	< 5	< 5
Dareton/Wentworth	26	5
Euston	< 5	< 5

Waiting time for a house is between 2 and 5 years

The Murdi Paaki Tenancy Education and Support Programme (MP TSEP) team reinforces the often-stated criticism from community that the DCJ Housing Pathways application process is exceedingly difficult to navigate on several fronts. This barrier, and the widely held view within the community that the lack of rental properties discourages application, point to Tables 6.18 and 6.19 being under-estimates of real demand for Aboriginal social housing.

7. THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

7.1 Council strategic interests

The Sunraysia communities fall within Wentworth LGA. Historically, the relationship between Wentworth Shire Council and the Aboriginal community has been repressive but the strategic planning framework set out in the NSW Government's *Far West Regional Plan 2036* is forcing a change in attitude through requiring of Council a higher level of engagement with representative Aboriginal organisations although this is not yet visible in Council's latest Community Strategic Plan (CSP) which outlines community priorities and aspirations, and describes the strategic framework, founded in social justice principles, proposed to give effect to them. The plan documents issues of concern to the broader community; issues which appear to be coded in such a way as to target the Aboriginal community:

disengaged young people; domestic violence and family abuse; public drunkenness; isolation and boredom; lack of educational opportunities; lack of recognition of the traditional custodians.

A degree of frustration can be read into other community inputs to the planning process beyond the Aboriginal community which reflect a declining political, social and economic environment as the population shrinks and ages, the contribution of critical horticultural industries diminishes, major infrastructure elements deteriorate, governments fail to engage with Council effectively; and regional representation is weak. Undaunted by these negativities, Council's answer is optimistic: it can achieve its vision of:

A thriving region, supported by a robust economic base, distinctive open spaces, and strong local governance and leadership.

Engagement with the Aboriginal community is neither structured nor productive, and the CSP does not provide any encouragement to believe that the situation will change. There is no specific

reference to cooperation around common strategic interests other than:

- Action 4.4 - Encourage the self determination of the Aboriginal Community; and
- Action 4.7 - Promote the celebration of the region's rich cultural and social heritage.

These might be described as loose, and peripheral to the real task of supporting the Aboriginal community to achieve social and economic wellbeing. The CSP does not mention the Wentworth-Dareton CWP and appears unaware of the requirements or even the existence of the Murdi Paaki Engagement Protocol.

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement, which defines the strategic framework within which land use is to be assessed, prioritised and designated in the medium term, is a little more engaging of the Aboriginal community. The LSPS, guided by the Directions documented in the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) *Far West Regional Plan 2036*, proposes three drivers of population and economic growth: changes to agriculture and horticulture, increased participation in tourism, and further investment in residential development; areas of endeavour Council has committed to actively support.

To be effective and assured, land use planning must involve the Aboriginal community through Dareton LALC and the traditional owners, Barkandji Native Title Group Aboriginal Corporation, since some land use proposals will intersect with Native Title, and others may be affected by rights granted under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (ALRA), and/or be sites of Aboriginal significance. It will thus be in the interests of all parties to establish a positive working relationship that is sufficiently robust and enduring to carry the non-Indigenous community beyond the shallow ambition of the CSP to achieve tangible progress in the wellbeing of the Aboriginal community. A strategic collaboration between the CWP, Land Council and Council could be the vehicle to effect this transformation.

The planning instrument at Planning Priority 6 – Sustainable Settlements envisages residential

growth offering a range of housing choices in all urban centres in the Shire, principally focused on Buronga and Gol Gol as growing satellite communities to Mildura, but with managed expansion in other communities sufficient to sustain a range of basic economic and community services. The nature, scale and purpose of development will be captured in a series of sustainable town and rural living strategies. Council stipulates that new urban and rural residential development should not encroach on productive agricultural, employment and environmentally sensitive lands, and particularly the irrigation areas, but be confined to designated locations. Demand for additional housing is anticipated to arise from an increase in seasonal workforce because of expansion of irrigated agriculture and horticulture, and from mine workers employed in mineral sands extraction.

As noted at Planning Priority 2 – Grow tourism and in the associated commentary, cultural tourism forms a plank of Council's tourism growth strategy, focused as it is on the environmental values of the region. This will only be achieved with Council working in partnership with the community as reinforced at Planning Priority 5 – Aboriginal economic self-determination, under which Council again expresses a desire to enhance the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities and to collaborate and partner with Aboriginal communities. Planning Priorities 8 and 11 give a commitment to respect, preserve and Aboriginal cultural promote heritage. It is reasonable to infer from the LSPS that Council, some 25 years after taking a seat at the Community Working Party table, has yet to determine how to engage with the Aboriginal community and communicate matters on which it needs community input.

7.2 Council involvement in the Aboriginal social housing sector

According to MPRHC, Council has little technical involvement with ACHPs in respect of asset management.

7.3 Planning controls

Land use and permissible forms of development are described in Council's Local Environment Plan (LEP). The varying character of the communities and nature of their local economic activities give rise to a full spectrum of residential, industrial, environmental and other zonings.

Zonings relating to areas of potential residential development are shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Land zonings

Wentworth	RU5-Village
Pomona	C4-Environmental Living
Dareton	RU5-Village
Namatjira Avenue precinct	SP1-Special Activities
Buronga	RU5-Village
Gol Gol	RU5-Village
Gol Gol	R5-Large Lot Residential
Pooncarie	RU5-Village

Euston is subject to the planning controls of Balranald Shire Council. Relevant zoning is RU5-Village.

Zone RU5-Village permits residential development in the Shire's town and village urban areas while zone R5-Large Lot Residential allows residential development outside of the urban area subject to environmental controls. Construction of dwelling houses is permitted in these zones with consent. Zone SP1-Special Activities applying to the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct:

- Provides for special land uses that are not provided for in other zones;
- Provides for sites with special natural characteristics that are not provided for in other zones; and
- Facilitates development that is in keeping with the special characteristics of the site or its existing or intended special use, and that minimises any adverse impacts on surrounding land.

The building of roads and water reticulation systems in zone SP1-Special Activities are permitted without consent, while aquaculture and

any other purpose shown on the land zoning map, including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to development for that purpose, is permitted with consent. Any other development is prohibited. Strangely, although the precinct is clearly used by the Dareton LALC for residential purposes and consent to individual developments applied for and approved, this is neither mentioned on the land zoning map or planning objectives.

Requirements relating to the physical character of residential development are set out in the Wentworth Shire Local Environmental Plan 2011 and Development Control Plan 2011.

7.4 Municipal rates and charges

Council is permitted by legislation to levy a different municipal rate across its towns and villages. Rates relating to the residential category and service charges for 2021/22 are shown in Table 7.2 and Table 7.3.

Table 7.2: Ordinary rate (2021/22)

General rate	Base rate	Ordinary rate (\$ in the \$)
Wentworth	240.00	0.00413652
Buronga	260.00	0.00377232
Gol Gol	260.00	0.00403215
Gol Gol East	360.00	0.00454088
Pooncarie	190.00	0.01366098
Dareton	190.00	0.01611174

Table 7.3: Water and sewer charges (2021/22)

Water	
Filtered water access, 20 mm	\$300.00
Water cost: 0-250 kL	\$1.25/kL
Water cost: over 250 kL	\$2.80/kL
Raw water access, 20 mm	\$165.00
Water cost: 0-700 kL	\$0.45/kL
Water cost: over 700 kL	\$1.10/kL
Sewerage	
Sewerage access	\$820.00
Waste management	
Domestic waste urban	\$246.00

Table 7.4 provides an indication of the spread of unimproved land values across properties owned by MPRHC in communities from Wentworth to Gol Gol. Included are the unimproved land values for the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct. Lot 990 DP 756961 at the junction with the Silver City Highway is notionally subdivided and individual lots assigned areas of 910 m² and an unimproved land value of \$5,000 each.

Table 7.4: Typical land values

Community	Property	Area (m ²)	Unimproved value (\$)
Wentworth	97 Wilkes St	809	33,000
Dareton	13 Millie St	1,012	9,500
Buronga	12 Friel St	1,145	46,800
Gol Gol	83 Wood St	1.012	105,000
Namatjira Avenue (Lot 990)		910	5,000/lot
Namatjira Avenue (Lot 1119)		40.2 ha	117,000
New Merinee (Lot 1180)		50.0 ha	115,000

Typically, a lowly rated residential lot of 1,012 m² in Dareton in 2021/22 will incur a rate charge of \$343.06 and service charges totalling \$1,531.00, for a total annual bill of \$1,874.06. For Gol Gol, the rate charge increases to \$683.38 while the service charge is unaltered, giving a total annual bill of \$2,214.38.

Table 7.5: Number of developed residential lots subject to Council rates and charges

Buronga	20
Dareton	34
Euston	5
Gol Gol	3
Namatjira Avenue/New Merinee	43
Pooncarie	-
Wentworth	21

7.5 Hydraulic services to Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee

The HIP/NAHS EHP project provided filtered water and sewerage reticulation to the Namatjira Avenue/New Merinee precinct. This infrastructure remains the responsibility of Dareton LALC. Council provides a water supply and sewerage

service to a private connection at the boundary of the precinct, charging as a bulk supply. System maintenance is funded by DPIE and carried out by plumbing contractor BHC Plumbing under contract.

8. COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE

8.1 Summary

‘Sunraysia communities’ is the collective name for the string of Aboriginal communities that lie along, or are near, the Murray River in the very far south-west of NSW. Both the Wentworth and Balranald Shires are ‘outer regional’ or ‘moderately accessible’ on all remoteness scales. Balranald and Wentworth are two of four local government areas in the Far West Local Health District, which also includes the Unincorporated Far West. Quantitative data for the district is not readily available due to its unique geography so, to describe the health of the area, this Plan uses a mixed-methods approach.

In 2019, 71.7% of Far West LHD residents who participated in the annual NSW Population Health Survey reported excellent, very good, or good health¹. Combined methods show that even though the Aboriginal community of Wentworth Shire is reasonably healthy, the Sunraysia communities have been impacted significantly by the social determinants of health. Overall, the underlying risks of poorer health are evident: risky birth outcomes, historically poorer access to educational opportunities, higher rates of admission to hospital, poorer health behaviours (like smoking and drinking) and more likely chronic condition diagnoses leading to death caused by these chronic conditions.

8.2 Health status – qualitative assessment

Qualitative evidence was gathered by interviewing local health care providers to assess the perceived health status of the Sunraysia communities. Evidence indicates that the health of the Aboriginal population is poor and the community’s health is mostly impacted by the social determinants of health, access to drugs and alcohol and the consequences of movement of a very mobile community in and out of the district. Interviewees made the following observations:

- There are very few presentations to the local health facilities for skin infections, head lice or ‘gastro-type’ diseases. Improved access to health services and the community’s honest appraisal of their health in terms of these conditions has led to a decrease in presentations over the last few years;
- Lifestyles, however, have not changed. Poorer diets, lack of exercise and access to drugs and alcohol have all increased and there does not seem to be an effort or willingness in the community to address or improve outcomes;
- As a result of the poorer lifestyles, there has been an observed increase in the number of uncontrolled diabetics and those with kidney disease progressing to dialysis. There is a poor uptake of insulin to improve diabetes outcomes as this is perceived as a death sentence;
- There has also been a marked increase in the number of younger people (less than 40 years) being diagnosed with chronic diseases and the risk factors for them (like high blood pressure);
- However, respect for the health service has improved since the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID) pandemic began: the community has relied on local staff to help with birth certificates to get border permits. This is an unexpected consequence but one service providers have used to improve their engagement with the community;
- An increase in money in town (mostly due to increased welfare payments from COVID) has led to increases in gambling and the availability and use of drugs and alcohol. The Elders have noted their concerns on the negative impact this has made to the community;
- There are many employment opportunities in the area but many jobs go unfilled. This is due in part to people wanting to work in Mildura where there are more opportunities. As has been experienced throughout Australia, many farm work jobs are available but are not being taken up by locals;
- Crowded Aboriginal households are evident. While these pressures are unavoidable, children and young people are being exposed to a risky environment in which the consumption of drugs and alcohol is viewed as normal;

- Much of the crowding is being attributed to transient people from outside the area visiting and staying longer in a household than just a few days;
- The current water quality is good, however blue green algal alerts are frequent. Responses to poorer water quality are well managed and the community is aware of precautionary measures to take in these instances;
- The number of dogs at the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct is of concern. It is not known whether the local Council is addressing this issue.

8.3 Health status – quantitative assessment

8.3.1 Comparison geography

Data for the Wentworth Shire, Far West Local Health District, the region covered by Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation and NSW as a whole is presented to describe the health status of the population.

8.3.2 Mother and baby health²

In far western NSW, compared to all women:

- There is a higher proportion of younger Aboriginal women aged 10-19 having a baby;
- More Aboriginal women are having their first antenatal visit early;
- Aboriginal women are almost 10 times more likely to smoke during pregnancy;
- Aboriginal women are almost 4 times more likely to have a baby with a low birthweight (<2,500g); and
- Aboriginal women are 3 times more likely to have a baby prematurely (<37 weeks gestation).

8.3.3 Growth and development of children and young people²

In far western NSW, compared to all children:

- There is a higher proportion of Aboriginal children who are fully immunised at 9 months and again at 5 years;
- The percentage of Aboriginal children 4 years of age attending preschool has increased by 16% in the last 5 years;
- Aboriginal children in Year 5 are 2 times more likely to have a lower standard of reading assessment in the NAPLAN test; and
- Almost 40% of Aboriginal young people who complete Year 10 stay at school until they are in Year 12 – an increase of almost 5% in the last 5 years.

8.3.4 Morbidity

Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in the Balranald and Wentworth SA3 are significantly more likely to present to the Emergency Department for all reasons.

- Overall, Aboriginal people in the Balranald and Wentworth SA3 are over forty percent more likely to present to the Emergency Department compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia (89,332.4 per 100,000 people compared to 62,109.4 per 100,000 people)³;
- In 2016/17 there were, on average, more than 12,000 admissions to hospital by Far West LHD residents, of whom 17% were Aboriginal people, who form 11% of the total LHD population⁴;
- The leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people in the Far West LHD is dialysis (45%) then injury and poisoning (7%) and respiratory disease (7%)⁴;
- The proportion of Aboriginal people in the Far West LHD admitted to hospital for dialysis is more than the three times that of the proportion expected based on comparison with the NSW Aboriginal population⁴;
- Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in the Balranald and Wentworth SA3 are significantly more likely to be admitted to hospital for mental health-related conditions, chronic airways disease and chronic kidney disease (which is different to dialysis);
- There are significantly fewer admissions for infectious and parasitic diseases, endocrine,

- nutritional and metabolic disease, diabetes, skin diseases and musculoskeletal diseases³;
- Conversely, the admission rate for all people in the Far West LHD for skin infections is significantly higher than the rate in NSW (569.4 per 100,000 people compared to 355.3 per 100,000 people)⁵;
- The rate of potentially avoidable admissions in Wentworth Shire is not significantly different to NSW (2,458.4 per 100,000 admissions compared to 2,160.7 per 100,000 admissions)⁶;
- The leading cause of potentially avoidable admission in the Far West LHD is iron deficiency anaemia followed by chronic airways disease (COPD) and cellulitis; and
- Aboriginal people in Balranald and Wentworth SA3 are no more likely to be admitted to hospital for a potentially preventable condition compared to all Aboriginal Australians (5,526.1 per 100,000 people compared to 5,395.2 per 100,000 people)³.

8.3.5 Mortality

In 2018, there were 298 deaths of people who lived in the Far West LHD. For people who lived in the Far West LHD, the all causes death rate was significantly higher than the rate for all of NSW (634.6 per 100,000 people compared to 506.4 per 100,000 people)⁷.

- For all Aboriginal people in the Balranald and Wentworth SA3, the median age at death is 56.0 years compared to 61.0 years in NSW³. By comparison the median age at death for all people who live in Wentworth Shire is 76.0 years compared to 82.0 years for all NSW residents⁸;
- The leading age-adjusted death rate for 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)⁹;
- In contrast, in the Far West LHD, the leading cause of death is malignant cancers (27.6% of all deaths)¹⁰;
- In Wentworth Shire in 2016-2018, the death rate from injury and poisoning was

significantly higher than in NSW (55.8 per 100,000 population compared to 35.6 per 100,000 population)¹¹;

- 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 diseases¹²;
- The rate of potentially avoidable deaths in Wentworth Shire is not significantly different to NSW (132.1 per 100,000 population compared to 99.4 per 100,000 population)¹³; and
- Aboriginal people in Balranald and Wentworth SA3 are significantly more likely to die prematurely from cancer compared to all Aboriginal Australians (144.4 per 100,000 people compared to 72.1 per 100,000 people)³.

8.3.6 Health risk factors

In NSW, 26.4% of the Aboriginal population smoked cigarettes daily. In the Far West LHD this proportion was 18.6%; by comparison the proportion of the NSW population who are smokers was 11.2%¹⁴.

In NSW, 48.7% of the Aboriginal population drank alcohol at levels that posed a long-term risk to health. In the Far West LHD, this proportion was 38.3%; by comparison the proportion of the NSW population which comprises at-risk drinkers was 32.8%¹⁵.

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

Table 8.1: Cause of presentation to Emergency Departments, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Balranald and Wentworth SA3, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Balranald and Wentworth SA3	NSW	Australia
All causes	89,332.4*	71,135.8	62,109.4
Infectious and parasitic disease	5,676.0*	3,393.1	3,293.9
Mental health and related conditions	8,089.8*	3,649.3	3,636.7
Circulatory system diseases	1,595.1	1,274.2	1,570.1
Respiratory system diseases	10,608.3*	7,153.7	6,340.7
Digestive system diseases	6,211.8*	3,972.5	3,500.8
Musculoskeletal system diseases	4,638.0*	3,936.2	2,910.1
Urinary system diseases	2,913.6	2,364.4	2,263.4
Injury, poisoning and external causes	18,450.7*	16,420.0	14,458.8
Other factors requiring contact with the health system	3,045.9#	5,889.1	4,664.0
Other reasons	28,069.4*	23,097.0	19,471.0

* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

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 8.2: Leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people, FWLHD, 2016-17

	% admissions: Aboriginal people in FWLHD	All NSW Aboriginal % admissions	All NSW % admissions
Dialysis	45%	27%	13%
Injury & poisoning	7%	7%	7%
Respiratory diseases	7%	7%	5%
Maternal, neonatal & congenital disorders	7%	10%	7%
Digestive system diseases	6%	7%	10%
Mental disorders	6%	5%	5%
Symptoms & abnormal findings	4%	7%	8%
Other factors infl. health	4%	7%	11%
Circulatory diseases	3%	3%	5%
Nervous & sense disorders	2%	4%	7%
Genitourinary diseases	2%	4%	5%
Skin diseases	2%	2%	2%
Musculoskeletal diseases	2%	3%	5%
Endocrine diseases	1%	2%	2%
Infectious diseases	1%	2%	2%
Malignant neoplasms	1%	2%	4%
Other neoplasms	1%	1%	2%
Blood & immune diseases	0%	1%	1%
Other causes	0	1%	0%

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, Balranald and Wentworth SA3, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Balranald and Wentworth SA3	NSW	Australia
Infectious and parasitic disease	647.6 [#]	759.9	1,093.5
All cancers	1,120.5	926.1	983.8
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	611.4 [#]	704.9	1,101.0
- Diabetes	192.5 [#]	319.0	420.9
Mental health and related conditions	4,361.6 [*]	2,515.3	2,626.5
- Mood affective disorders	176.7	351.3	355.6
Nervous system diseases	779.4	807.1	916.5
Eye and adnexa diseases	447.3	465.4	531.6
Ear and mastoid process diseases	223.1	336.1	423.4
Circulatory system diseases	1,891.5	1,389.5	1,822.7
- Ischaemic heart disease	861.8	473.7	652.8
- Heart failure	247.9	163.4	238.4
Respiratory system diseases	3,967.4	2,659.0	3,373.8
- Asthma	248.7	280.6	300.4
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	1,556.5 [*]	548.3	594.9
Digestive system diseases	3352.7	2,843.6	3,099.5
Skin diseases	778.7 [#]	821.0	1,370.0
Musculoskeletal system diseases	827.5 [#]	1,415.0	1,446.0
Urinary system diseases	1627.2	1,460.8	1,696.2
- Chronic kidney disease	618.2 [*]	252.7	387.3
Pregnancy and childbirth	13,214.7	12,749.2	14,700.7
Congenital conditions	162.2	215.0	210.3
Injury, poisoning and external causes	3,721.3	3,305.9	4,364.1

* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

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, FWLHD and NSW, 2018-19

	FWLHD total population			NSW	
	Ave # deaths per year	Rate per 100,000	% deaths	Aboriginal % deaths	Total % deaths
Malignant cancers	86.0	179.0	27.6	25.3	28.3
Circulatory diseases	65.0	130.2	20.8	21.8	27.6
Respiratory diseases	32.5	70.4	10.4	11.6	9.8
Mental and behavioural disorders	29.5	56.9	9.5	6.7	6.9
Endocrine diseases	22.5	44.2	7.2	6.4	4.2
Injury and poisoning	76.5	192.7 ^b	24.5	13.6	5.9
All other causes				14.6	17.3
All causes	312	673.5			

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, Balranald and Wentworth SA3, NSW and Australia 2013-2017

	Balranald and Wentworth SA3	NSW	Australia
Deaths from cancer	144.4 [*]	56.3	72.1
Deaths from diabetes	Not reported ^c	10.0	23.4
Deaths from circulatory system diseases	106.6	46.1	69.8
Deaths from respiratory system diseases	Not reported	22.4	26.9
Deaths from external causes	110.6	41.5	58.1

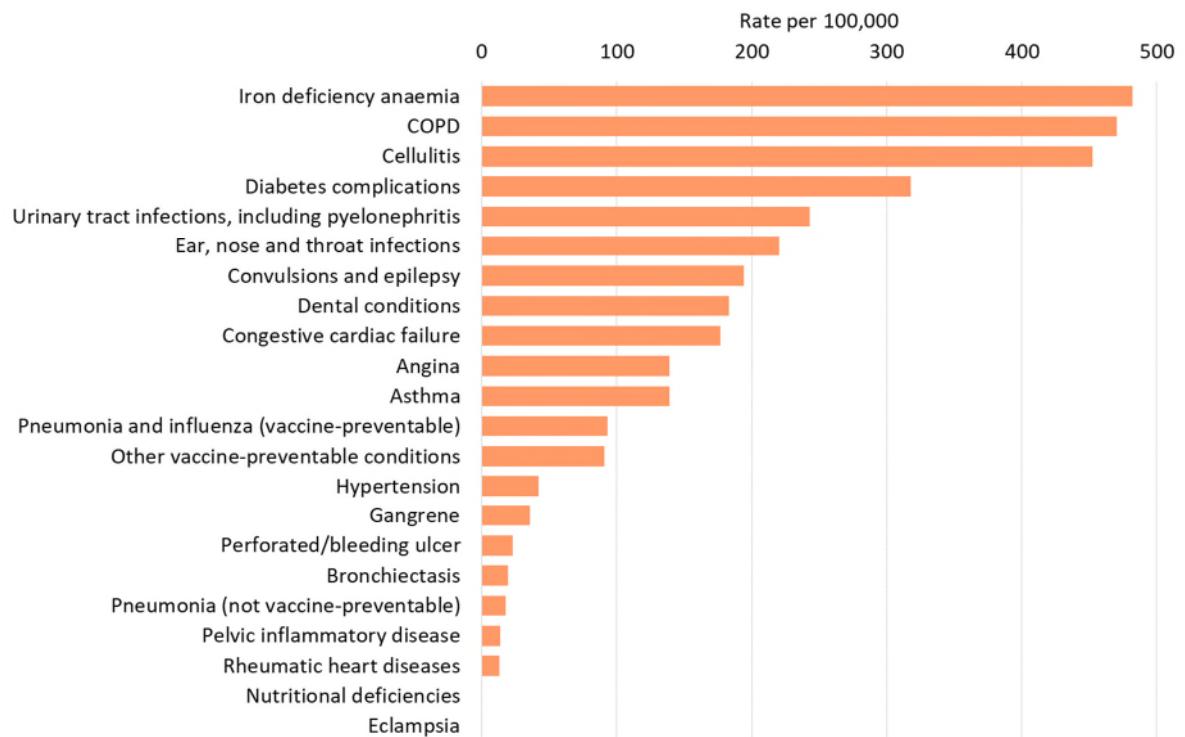
* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

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

^b Due to small numbers the data for deaths due to 'injury and poisoning' in the Far West LHD has been combined with 'other causes'. Injury and poisoning deaths data for the Local Government Area is included in the text.

^c Data for this indicator is not reported for Balranald and Wentworth SA3 as the actual number of deaths is between 1 and 4 and this is too small to make any accurate assessments.

Figure 8.1: Potentially avoidable admissions (rate per 100,000), total population FWLHD, 2018-19



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

8.4 Available health services

Health services in the Sunraysia district are provided by the Far West Local Health District (FWLHD), Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC) and Murray Primary Health Network (PHN).

The Dareton Primary Health Service (FWLHD) reaches throughout the Wentworth and Balranald Shires and provides a hub for a diverse range of services for the broader community: Aboriginal and non-Indigenous. The clinic provides a primary health care service only and operates Monday to Friday during business hours. Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation is an Aboriginal community-controlled health service based in Dareton. The service is open Monday to Friday from 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

The Far West Local Health District provides:

- Primary health nurses
- Aboriginal health workers
- Palliative care specialist nurse
- Continence nurse
- Diabetes educator
- Chronic, complex and aged-care service
- Community midwife
- Child and family health
- Women's health
- Mental health and drug and alcohol team
- Psycho-oncology counsellor
- Social worker
- Dental (child, adult, outreach dental van)
- Early intervention educator
- Administration support
- Access to visiting allied health (physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist and dietitian)
- Access to medical specialists (in Mildura).

CHAC provides:

- General practitioners
- Primary health nurses
- Aboriginal health workers
- Midwife
- Dietitian
- Transport

- Social emotional wellbeing support
- Assistance to access Centrelink and Work Development Orders.

Murray PHN provide services through the Robinvale Allied Health Service:

- Dietitian
- Podiatrist
- Speech pathologist (who visits the local schools).

8.5 Future development

The NSW Government and the Barkandji Traditional Owners have entered into an agreement whereby the government will build an integrated HealthOne facility in Buronga on lands subject to Native Title. The HealthOne facility will provide a range of community-based, integrated primary and allied health services. The development comprises a new hub health centre at Buronga with outreach services at Dareton, Wentworth and Balranald.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 Infrastructure accessibility

The Sunraysia communities have access to a range of municipal and other services not readily available to other communities in the Murdi Paaki Region. Wentworth Shire Council has a greater capacity through its diversified and stronger rate base, higher level of economic activity and availability of qualified personnel to manage and maintain its infrastructure to a higher standard. In consequence, an assessment of the availability and performance of municipal and other services is not required for this Plan. Table 9.1 summarises the range of services communities can access.

As mentioned at §7.5, the internal hydraulic services: filtered and raw water reticulation and sewerage, to Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee are owned, operated and maintained by Dareton LALC. Roads, streetlighting and general environmental management is also the

responsibility of the Land Council. Funding is available for the on-going operation of the water and wastewater systems but maintenance of other infrastructure assets, including the Land Council office and workshop at New Merinee, is at the organisation's cost. Layout of hydraulic services as completed by the NAHS EHP project are included at Figures 9.1 to 9.4.

Water management relating to Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee are included in Council's *Drinking Water Management Strategy* and the management of site sewerage, including pumping station, is the subject of a stand-alone *Sewerage Management Plan*.

Dust management is an on-going issue at the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct because of the low level of ground cover and disturbance by vehicles. Table 9.2 provides a recent snapshot of air quality for the monitoring station at Buronga.

Table 9.1: Service accessibility

Service	Responsibility	Communities					
		Buronga	Dareton	Gol Gol	Pooncarie	Wentworth	Euston
Reticulated filtered water supply	Wentworth Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reticulated raw water supply	Wentworth Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reticulated sewerage	Wentworth Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
On-site wastewater management	Wentworth Shire Council	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Solid waste disposal – bulky items	Wentworth Shire Council	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Solid waste disposal – kerb collection	Wentworth Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
Animal control	Wentworth Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Electrical power	Essential Energy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Streetlighting	Essential Energy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobile telephone	Telstra	5G	4G	5G	4G	4G	4G
	Optus	4G	4G	4G	4G	4G	4G
NBN		FTTN	FW	FTTC	Sat	FTTN	FTTN

Table 9.1: Service accessibility							
Service	Responsibility	Communities					
		Buronga	Dareton	Gol Gol	Pooncarie	Wentworth	Euston
TV satellite	Viewer Access Satellite TV (VAST)	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Fire fighting	NSW Fire and Rescue	-	-	-	-	✓	-
	NSW Rural Fire Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓

Table 9.2: Air quality index (2020 and 2021 Jan – Nov) (Buronga)				
Air quality	Air pollution level PM _{2.5}			
			Good	Moderate
			Unhealthy	
	No of days of record 2020	352	341 days	10 days
	No of days of record 2021	321	321 days	-
Daily AQI is based on the 24 hours average of hourly readings Good: Air quality is considered satisfactory and air pollution poses little or no risk Moderate: Air quality is acceptable but some pollutants may be of concern to people unusually sensitive Unhealthy: Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects https://aqicn.org/city/australia/nsw/western-ls/buronga/				

Figure 9.1: Namatjira water supply augmentation – Namatjira Avenue

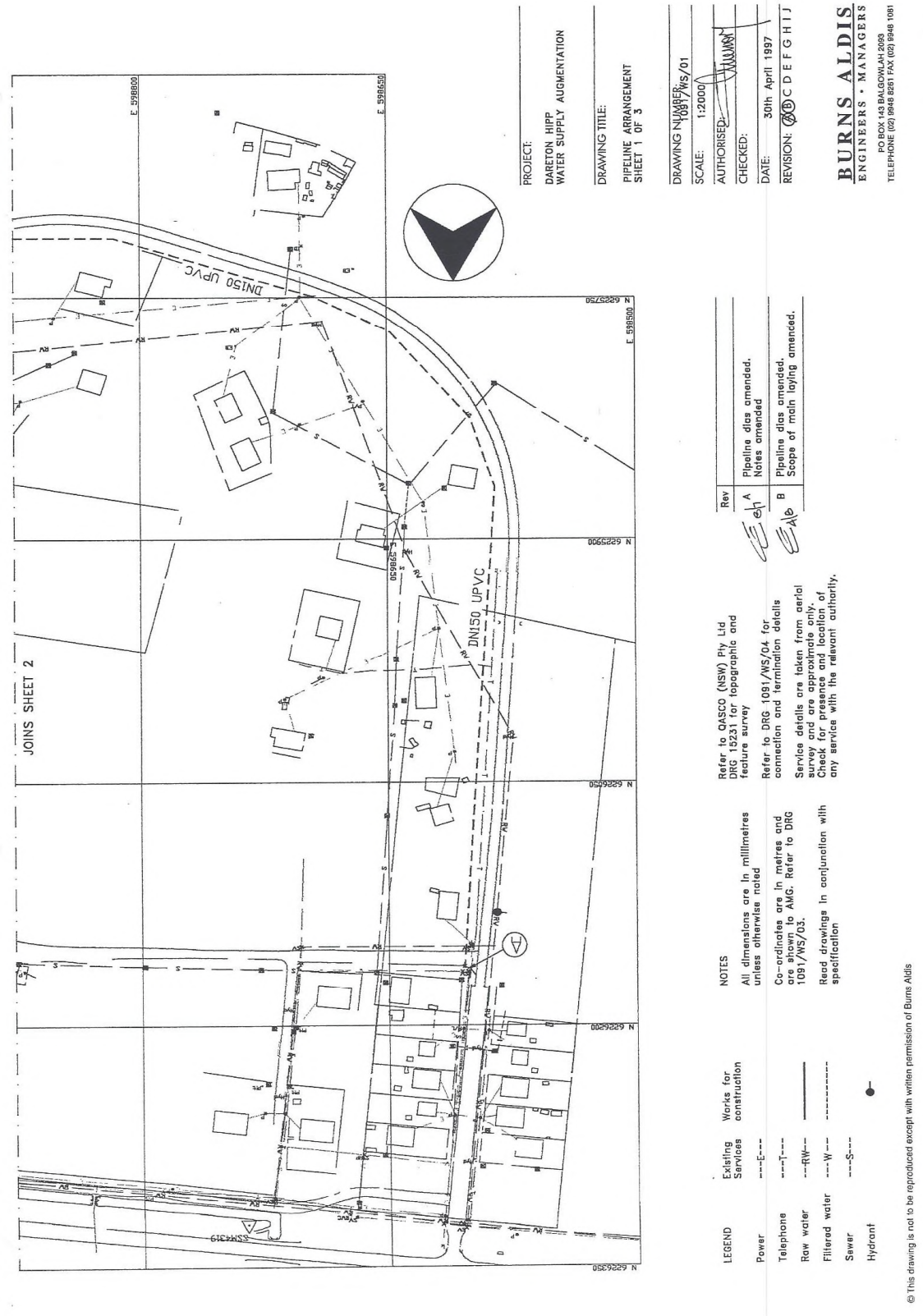


Figure 9.2: Namatjira water supply augmentation – Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee junction

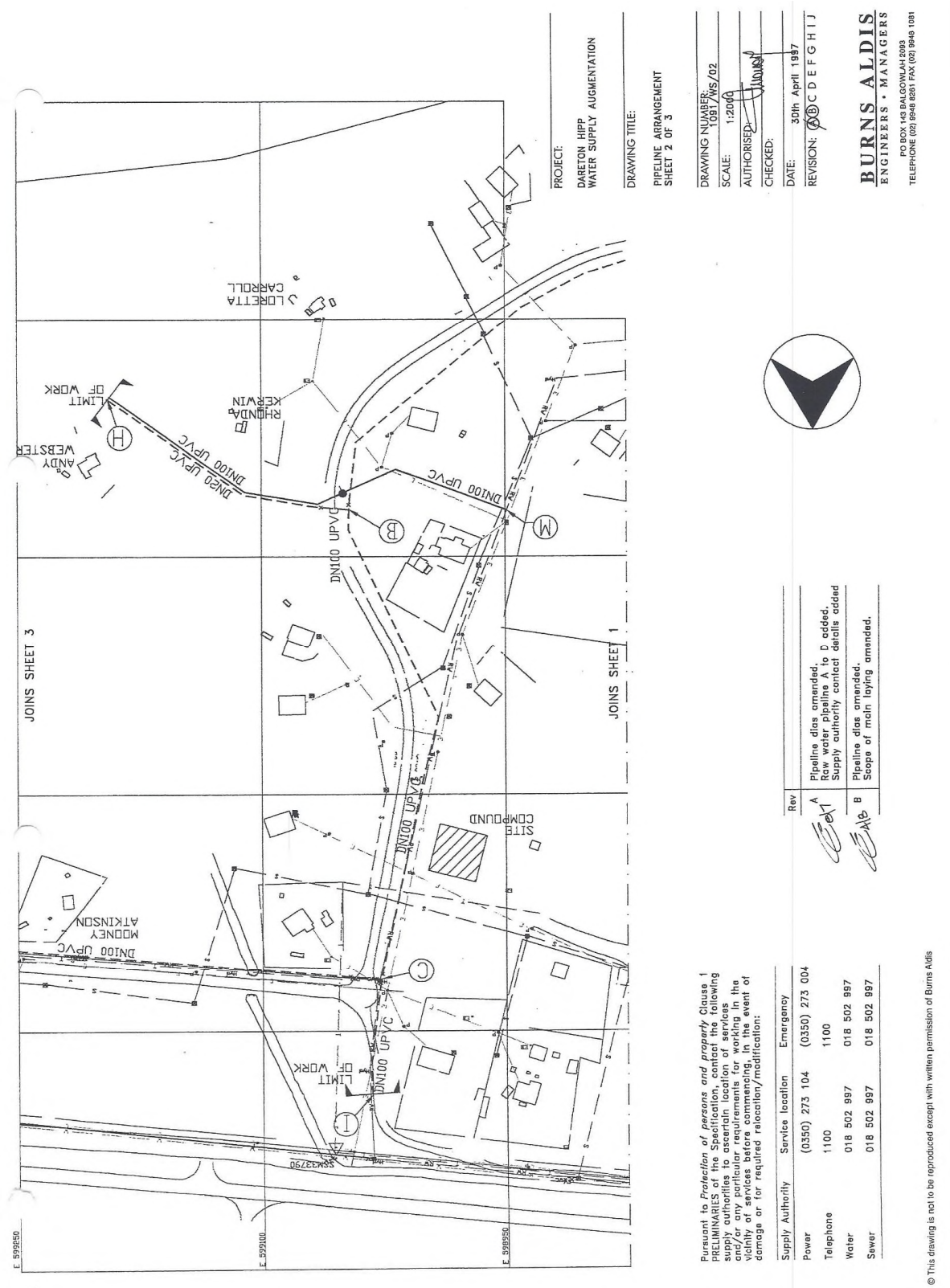


Figure 9.3: Namatjira water supply augmentation – New Merinee

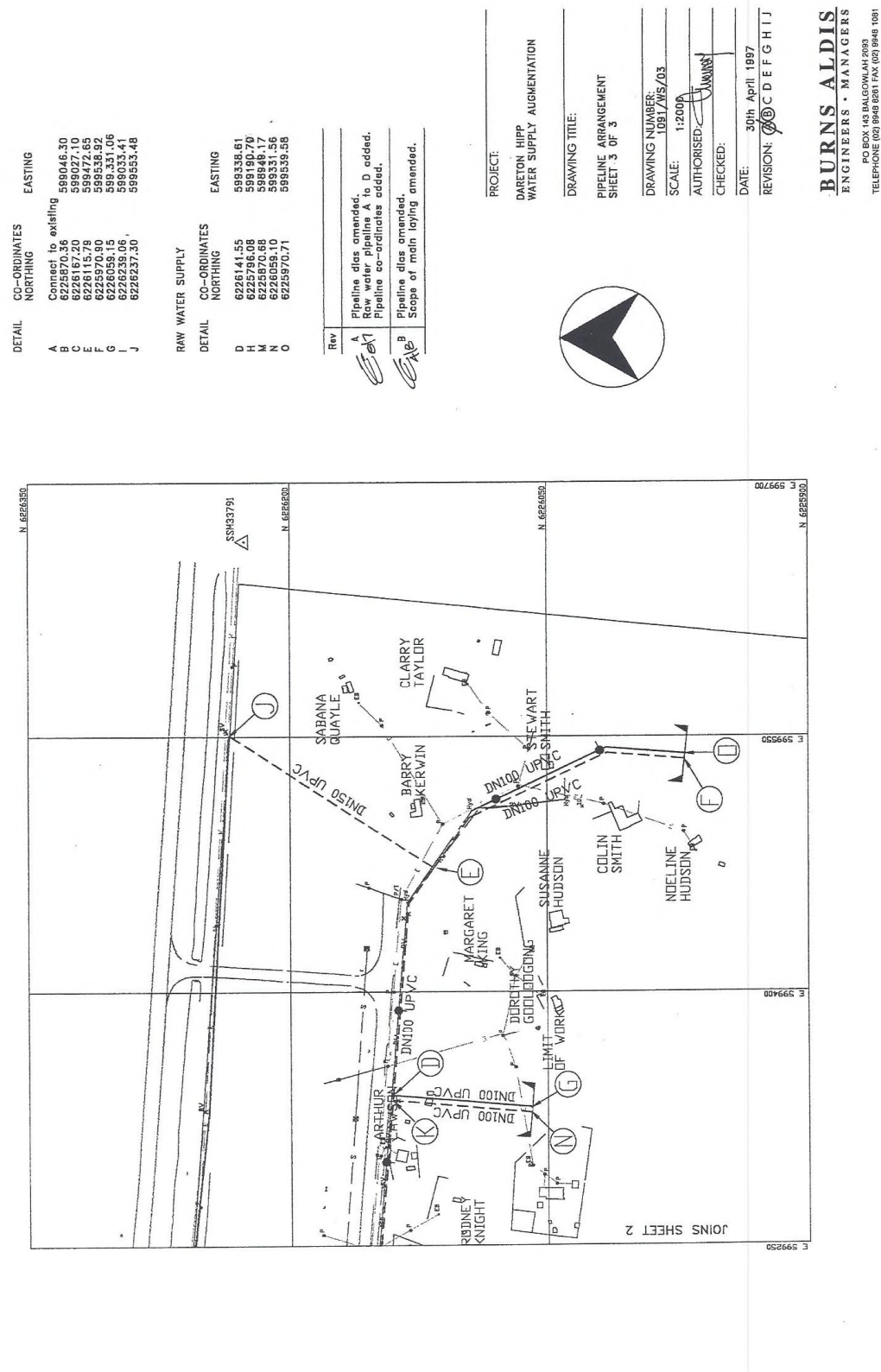
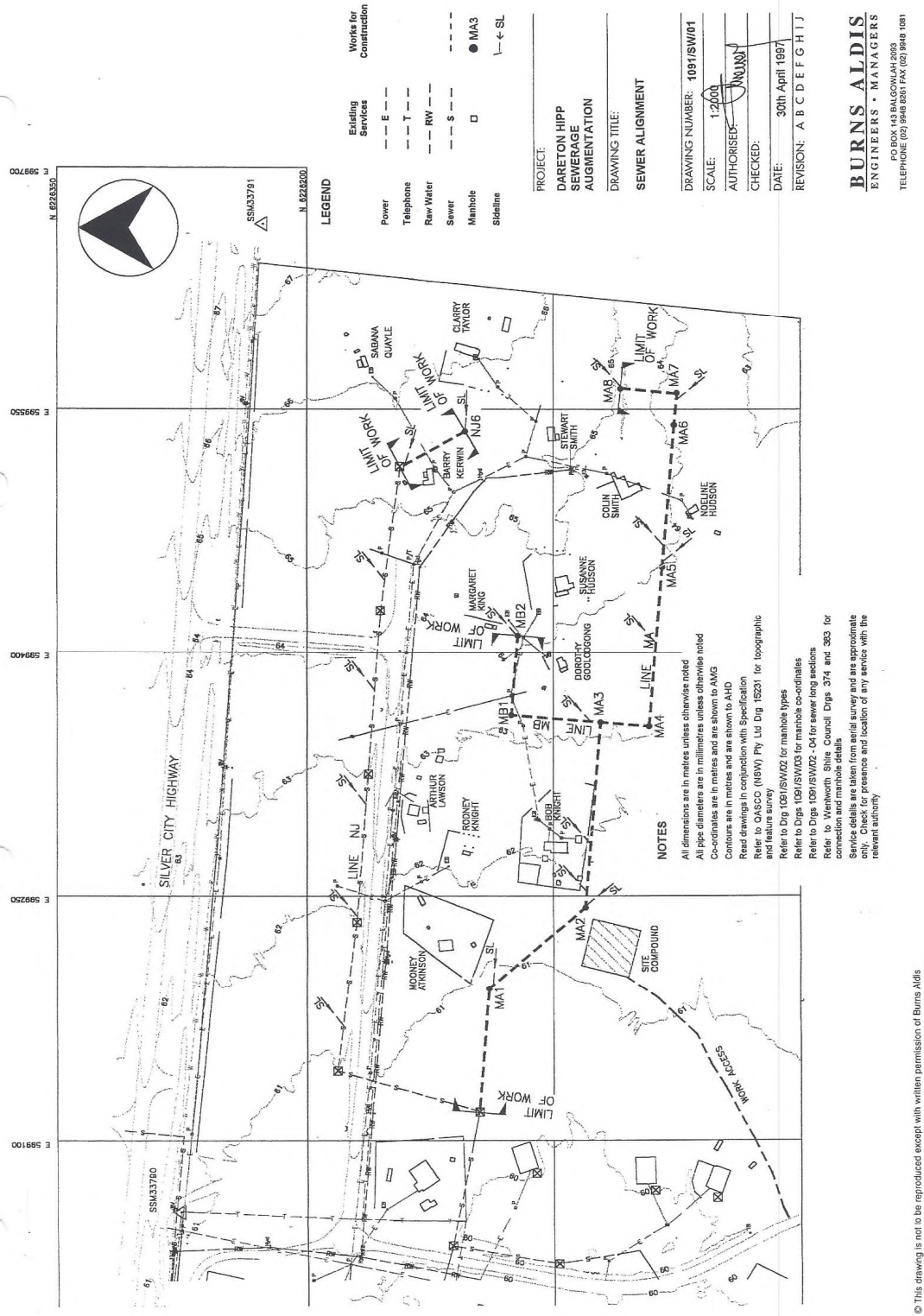


Figure 9.4: Namatjira sewerage augmentation – New Merinee



10. HUMAN SERVICES

10.1 Human services target population

The sectors of the Aboriginal population which would be expected to be the target of human services are identified in Table 10.1 together with the corresponding population numbers. The figures are for 2016.

Table 10.1: Service age groups, 2016					
Total persons (Usual residence)	Aboriginal		Non-Indigenous		
Service age group (years)	Number	%	Number	%	Ratio
Babies and pre-schoolers (0-4)	74	11.2%	321	5.9%	1.9
Primary schoolers (5-11)	100	15.2%	512	9.4%	1.6
Secondary schoolers (12-17)	69	10.5%	376	6.9%	1.5
Tertiary education and independence (18-24)	67	10.2%	370	6.8%	1.5
Young workforce (25-34)	103	15.6%	507	9.3%	1.7
Parents and homebuilders (35-49)	112	17.0%	966	17.7%	1.0
Older workers and pre-retirees (50-59)	73	11.1%	803	14.7%	0.8
Empty nesters and retirees (60-69)	31	4.7%	882	16.2%	0.3
Seniors (70-84)	31	4.7%	604	11.1%	0.4
Elderly aged (85 and over)	0	0%	119	2.2%	0.0
Total	660	100.0%	5,460	100.0%	-
Source: ABS Tablebuilder with age classifications as .id Consultants					

10.2 Human services in the community

Human services available to the Aboriginal community to cater for a range of needs are shown at Table 10.4 and the features of home care services are described at Table 10.5. Table 10.6 lists the NSW government principal agencies providing services.

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 10.2: Core activity need for assistance		
	n=561	n=5,366
Of cohort population	7.8%	6.1%
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 10.2, together with the non-Indigenous population for comparison. The age range of the Aboriginal population fraction is given at Table 10.3.

Table 10.3: Core activity need for assistance by age group, Aboriginal community		
Age cohort	Census	NDIS participants
0-9 years	3	-
10-19 years	11	-
20-29 years	6	-
30-39 years	4	-
40-49 years	5	-
50-59 years	7	-
60-69 years	6	-
70-79 years	4	-
80-89 years	6	-
90+ years	0	-
Total	52	28

Note: Values against individual age cohorts are distorted by small cell counts

Table 10.4: Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Health services	Far West NSW Local Health District	Wentworth Health Service – First aid, inpatient acute care, Transitional Aged Care Programme	Wentworth	General population	-
	Far West NSW Local Health District	Dareton Primary Health Centre – Primary health nursing and AHW services; referrals	Dareton	General population	-
	Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation	Primary health care including GP, AHP, allied health, chronic disease management, mental health and SEWB	Dareton, Wentworth	Aboriginal community	-
	Outback Division of General Practice	Chronic Disease Management and Prevention Programme	Bourke	General population aged 15+	WNSW PHN
	Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation	Integrated Team Care Marrabinya	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	WNSW PHN
	Western NSW Primary Health Network	Telehealth in Residential Aged Care Facilities	Dubbo	Residential aged care clients	WNSW PHN
	Western NSW Primary Health Network	ISBAR Effective Clinical Handover Education Programme	Dubbo	General population	WNSW PHN
Mental health services	Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation	SEWB, mental health, suicide prevention	Dareton, Wentworth	Aboriginal community	WNSW PHN
	Catholic Care Wilcannia-Forbes	National Psychosocial Support Services	Broken Hill	General population	WNSW PHN
	ProCare Mental Health Services	GP Psychiatry Support Line		General population	WNSW PHN
	Marathon Health	Strong Minds Western NSW, New Access	Dubbo	General population	WNSW PHN
	Headspace	Mental health services	Mildura	Young people aged 12-25 years	-
Public housing services	Mid Lachlan Aboriginal Housing Management Corp	Aboriginal social housing (DLALC and AHO owned)	Dubbo	Aboriginal community	AHO
	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation	Aboriginal social housing	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	NSWALC
	Department of Communities and Justice	Public housing	Griffith	General population	-
Tenant support	Murdi Paaki Services Ltd	Tenant education and support (MP TSEP)	Cobar	Aboriginal community	DPIE/AHO
	Western Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service	Tenant advocacy and representation	Dubbo	Aboriginal community	Fair Trading

Table 10.4: Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Homelessness services	Mallee Accommodation & Support Program (MASP)	Wentworth Homelessness and Housing Support Service	Wentworth	General population	DCJ
	Mission Australia	Far West Homeless Youth Assistance Program	Broken Hill	Young people aged 12 - 18	DSS
Early childhood services	Mission Australia	Orana Far West Early Intervention Programme: Brighter Futures	Dareton	Young children generally	DCJ
	Mallee Family Care	SaCC Playgroup	Dareton	Young children generally	-
	Gyndarna Preschool	Pre-school education	Dareton	Young children aged 3-4 years	NIAA
	Robinvale District Health Services	Speech Pathology Early Intervention	Robinvale	Young children generally	-
Family support services	Mission Australia	Family Preservation Service – Orana	Dareton	General population	
	Mallee Family Care Inc	Mallee Family Preservation	Dareton, Wentworth	Young Aboriginal children	DCJ
	Mallee Family Care Inc	Mallee Family Care OOH Services	Dareton, Wentworth	Young children 4-6 years	DCJ
	Mallee Family Care Inc	Family counselling	Dareton	General population	
	Mallee Family Care Inc	Child Youth and Family Support	Dareton	Parents and children	DCJ
Children's and youth services	Mission Australia	Dareton Youth Engagement	Dareton	Young people generally	DCJ
Domestic and family violence (DFV) services	Mallee Sexual Assault Unit/Mallee Domestic Violence Services	Domestic Violence Response	Mildura	General population	-
Employment services	OCTEC	Employment services	Wentworth, Dareton	General population	-
	MADEC	Employment and training services	Wentworth	General population	-
	Summit Employment and Training	Employment and training services	Wentworth	General population	-

Table 10.4: Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
	Max Employment	Employment services	Wentworth	General population	-
Residential aged care services	Murray House Wentworth Aged Care Ltd	Residential aged care facility	Wentworth	General population	ACFI
Home care and home support services	Australian Unity Home Care Service		Wentworth	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Australian Unity Home Care Service – Aboriginal Home Care	Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and Home care packages (HCP), Levels 1 to 4 Refer to Table 10.5	Dareton	Aboriginal community	HCP/CHSP
	LiveBetter Community Services – Wentworth		Wentworth	General population	HCP/CHSP
	LiveBetter Community Services – Mildura		Mildura	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Far West LHD, Dareton Primary Health Centre	Nursing	Dareton	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Far West LHD, Transition Aged Care	Transition care	Wentworth	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Wentworth District Meals On Wheels	Meals and other food service	Wentworth	General population	HCP/CHSP
Cultural services	Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council	Culture and heritage, land management	Dareton	Aboriginal community	NSWALC
	Barkindji Maraura Elders Environment Team	Land management and employment	Dareton	Aboriginal community	NIAA
	Barkindji Maraura Elders Environment Team	Schooling projects	Dareton	General population	NIAA
Disability services	LiveBetter	Plan development, support coordination, home modifications and support services	Wentworth, Dareton	General population	NDIS
	Amber Baird Speech Pathology	Early childhood supports	Wentworth	Children	NDIS
	Murray House Wentworth Aged Care Ltd	Daily tasks/shared living	Wentworth	General population	NDIS
	North-West Health Care	Personal care, transport, household tasks	Curlwaa	General population	NDIS
	PDS Plan Management	Plan management	Gol Gol	General population	NDIS
	Jeder Institute	Support coordination, behaviour intervention	Wentworth	General population	NDIS
Legal services	Murray Mallee Community Legal Services	Legal information, assistance and advocacy	Mildura	General population	-
	Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT)	Legal information, assistance and advocacy	Broken Hill	Aboriginal population	-

Table 10.5: Home care 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
Australian Unity Home Care Service - Wentworth		Y				Y	Y	Y	Y							
Australian Unity Home Care Service - Aboriginal Home Care - Dareton	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y						
LiveBetter Community Services - Wentworth	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y			
Dareton Primary Health											Y					
NSW Health Transition Aged Care Far West LHD Wentworth																Y
Wentworth District Meals On Wheels		Y	Y													

Table 10.6: NSW Government agencies

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	Dareton
Treasury and Finance	Service NSW	Customer services: primary access point to government services; registration and licensing; working with children checks	Wentworth
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

11. COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

11.1 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 and this has adversely impacted management services, enfranchisement of tenants, and asset condition and preservation.

The integrity of physical infrastructure on former Reserves such as the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct has declined and self-determination compromised as housing management services moved from Local Aboriginal Land Councils to third party ACHPs without adequate provision for recurrent expenditure. 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 ACHPs that are not headquartered in the Region. Dareton LALC points to the omission of an effective mechanism for communication and reporting between the asset owning ACHP and the managing provider in the coercive AHO head lease/sub-lease agreement which rendered the Land Council powerless to have a say in the management of its own assets.

The CWP is solid in its view that housing management services be returned to Regional and local ACHPs 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.

11.2 Community priorities

The Wentworth/Dareton CWP has set out its aspirations and priorities for improved community wellbeing in its Community Action Plan (CAP), advocating for improved service delivery across the

full spectrum of health and human services. The CAP priorities and key actions which relate to this Plan are set out in Table 11.1 and the issues which give rise to the action areas are summarised in Table 11.2.

11.3 Community observations

Respondents to the MPRH&BC household survey were quite clear in their views on the management and condition of Aboriginal social housing in the Sunraysia communities; consistently:

Of the managers:

“They never come around to see us”

“Fix the things that need to be done”

Of condition, of the three top things that the housing manager(s) can do to improve its services to tenants:

“Repairs”

“Provide adequate heating and cooling”

“Reduce the rent”

As suggested by Table 6.14, the scale of repair and maintenance is moderate with perhaps up to twelve properties in poor shape. While comment about the need for repairs was frequent, the pressing issue for respondents centred on the need for efficient cooling appliances that adequately mitigated the summer heat.

Some respondents elaborated on the reasons their social housing property was contributing to adverse health outcomes:

“Just stress out because no repairs been done to the house”

“The house just feels like it’s going to fall in”

“Neighbours play loud music, due to us working causes us lack of sleep and, having a health issue from two strokes, loud music stresses me out”

“People breaking into the house”

A handful of people are still camped at Fletchers Lake in tin humpies or caravans and have not been adequately housed. These individuals and families

are a priority as, if the input of tenants is accepted, are young families. Table 11.2 aggregates contributions from the MPRH&BC household survey in relation to housing and the CAP with subsequent advice from the CWP. Similarly, there being no feedback in the MPRH&BC household survey on the presence and performance of other human services, or need for additional services, so Table 11.3 draws on the observations of the CWP.

Table 11.1: Community Action Plan (CAP) objectives and actions

Goal	Objective
2	To provide safe, affordable and quality housing to the Aboriginal community of Wentworth/Dareton in all mediums of housing opportunity
2.1	Work with housing providers to improve accessibility and quality of housing for the Aboriginal Community
2.2	Increase Aboriginal home ownership in the Shire
3	To support community members to become strong and connected and forward from survival mode
3.1	Increase the provision and quality of localised services in the community
3.2	Build capacity and understanding of the Aboriginal community in engaging with service providers
3.3	Increase engagement opportunities for our youth such as projects and diversionary initiatives
3.4	Ensure offenders successfully reintegrate into their community
4	To increase initiatives that provide and support sustainable economic development opportunities
4.1	Build the capacity of the Aboriginal community to participate in economic development opportunities
5	To ensure our children and young people have the best possible education
5.1	Support schooling strategies that give our children a greater chance at success in school
6	To improve opportunities in training and employment for Aboriginal communities
6.1	Build partnerships with employment providers and businesses to link training to employment

Table 11.2: Summary of housing and housing-related issues

Issue	Description
Housing management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a communication channel which allows information flow to the CWP and owning ACHP(s) on managing ACHP(s) performance and emerging tenancy and asset management issues, including reporting on current asset condition Localise housing management services for improved services and accountability Housing Pathways application and allocation processes are difficult to navigate, disadvantaging Aboriginal individuals and families in need
Housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of social housing properties available for rent is insufficient and the housing mix does not cater for larger families Occurrences of crowding are common because of a lack of suitable housing The CWP has prepared an estimate of need as of December 2021 as set out in Table 12.3
Housing repair and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More routine Inspections of social housing properties, including termite inspections, are required to determine the extent of all work necessary to restore structural soundness, functionality, amenity and safety Most houses are in need of moderate maintenance Kitchens and bathrooms require upgrading Houses are inadequately insulated and are hot in summer Water and sewerage house connections require upgrading
Housing affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rents are too high for the quality of housing provided

Table 11.2: Summary of housing and housing-related issues	
Issue	Description
Home ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants are paying rent their whole lives but not achieving ownership. Serious consideration should be given to rent-to-buy options as a means to increased home ownership
Safe and healthy communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of ABS Census demographics, not ERPs, is suspected of leading to human services underfunding Additional traffic management measures are needed in main streets and at schools to improve safety for pedestrians The dog control programme should be re-introduced Improved local transport, health and substance abuse services are required to support individuals and their families live better lives More broadly, communication of human service purpose and availability is weak, leading to a lack of awareness of, and access to, services
Associated infrastructure and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single long term strategy is required to assist the Namatjira Avenue community to maintain critical infrastructure and recreational facilities in the interests of community security, safety and general wellbeing Children are drinking untreated water Dust is presenting an environmentally-derived health hazard and having an impact on amenity in the home
School engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home environment does not contribute to childrens' ability to study
Emergency accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reintegration programme, including transition accommodation, is required to support people leaving custody

Table 11.3: Summary of human services-related issues	
Issue	Description
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many human service providers are located across the border in Victoria making it difficult to know when services are in town and how to make connections Poor communication and coordination between providers and with the community leads to a lack of awareness of human services available and barriers to access Cultural safety is an issue with mainstream providers Assistance is required for community members who are not digitally literate to access support to complete online forms, liaise with Service NSW and deal with myGov sign-in, and the like
Community capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community does not have adequate business and financial skills to take advantage of enterprise opportunities, including those arising from rural properties granted through Native Title The infrastructure and focused implementation of the NSW Government School to Work Programme is required to support students to transition from school to post school education, training and employment
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young and older adults find it difficult to gain employment Government funded employment and training services – job readiness services relating to meaningful employment – do not reach Wentworth and Dareton from Mildura Employers are not provided with sufficient incentive to employ Aboriginal people Aboriginal employees find it difficult to move beyond low paid positions
Youth services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient after-school options to keep young persons occupied
Children's services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for comprehensive child and maternal health services as well as early intervention programmes to response to significant childhood development challenges
Mental and physical health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to residential alcohol and other drug services and an Aboriginal-specific counselling service is a lottery

Table 11.3: Summary of human services-related issues	
Issue	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An after hours mental health support service is seriously lacking With hub services being located in and funded for Victorian residents in Mildura, there are no services readily available in any of the Sunraysia communities for Aboriginal men and women in crisis, whether through DFV, homelessness or post-release
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus services between Wentworth, Dareton and Mildura are inadequate

12. MASTER PLAN

12.1 Aspiration

Development of this HEHP for the Sunraysia communities, marks the culmination of the second round of the MPRA's approach to sector strategic planning at a community scale. The HEHP provides clarity on the order of sector investment; makes transparent the core demand drivers that are affecting the sector; and documents an evidence base of the community's housing assets. 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. Yet a long-term strategic approach is challenged by uncertainties, be they political, financial, social, technical or environmental. And 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 collected and synthesised, the community is optimistic that informed policy-setting and decision-making will lead to positive change.

12.2 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 and guided by the developmental work of the Dareton CWP, 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, CWPs 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 CWPs as the local decision-making body. The Regional and local governance structures remain in place and CWPs 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.

12.3 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 is conducted.

The Wentworth/Dareton CWP Master Plan is set out at Table 12.1. It brings together the modest 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 likely take years. 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 12.1: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
WD01 CAP2.1	6.6 6.12 11.1 11.3 12.8	Housing management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prior to termination of the AHO/Dareton LALC headlease agreement, ensure a full scoping of properties to determine the scale of repairs required to restore asset condition, and negotiate a matching funding allocation with the AHO ▪ Following termination of the AHO/Dareton LALC headlease agreement, transfer management of DLALC properties to MPRHC in line with community preferences for a local managing ACHP and the aspirations of MPRA to rationalise management services ▪ As part of the MPRH&BC project, co-design application and allocation processes which are simple, equitable and preference local applicants ▪ Establish a line of regular and formal communication which allows information flow to the CWP and owning ACHP(s) on managing ACHP(s) performance and emerging tenancy and asset management issues, including reporting on asset condition 	<p>The MPRH&BC household survey and discussions with the CWP have raised concerns about the quality of tenancy and asset management services: in particular, accessibility and visibility of the managing ACHP(s), lack of communication, and lack of urgency in carrying out asset repairs and maintenance, and deteriorated condition of assets. The community expressed a preference for a local or Regional ACHP as manager. With further restructuring of the Aboriginal social housing, and stronger ACHP compliance requirements, MPRHC is the only regionally based managing ACHP able to satisfy the community's aspirations</p> <p>Some actions proposed by the CWP, as documented in the CAP, sit within a Regional context and should be referred to MPRA for a Regional response. Review and revision of the application and allocation processes fall within this category</p>
WD02 CAP2.1	6.6 11.3	Housing affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As part of the MPRH&BC project co-design process, conduct a rent review which accounts for housing condition, level of amenity and high costs of living ▪ Install residential solar PV panels to all dwellings not currently provided with solar power and include associated energy saving measures 	<p>Review and revision of rent setting sits within a Regional context and should be referred to MPRA for a Regional response within the RAHLA co-design process</p> <p>Energy poverty is experienced in communities across the Region, including Sunraysia communities. Previous energy affordability measures have not addressed the needs of all Aboriginal social housing tenants so this proposal is a step to ensure that all households benefit from a reduction in electricity bills</p>
WD03 CAP2.1	6.12 11.3 12.4	Housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The number of social housing properties available for rent is insufficient and the housing mix does not cater for larger families. Advocate for supply to be increased by the number and mix of properties stated at Table 12.3 as a minimum ▪ Ensure that the impacts of crowding are adequately and progressively addressed in the assessment of need and allocation process ▪ Engage the CWP in planning and design processes for all new developments consistent with the principles of self-determination, self-management and the aim of OCHRE to grow local Aboriginal leaders' and communities' capacity to drive their own solutions 	<p>This HEHP provides the evidence of need for increased social housing supply and mix. The MPRH&BC household survey identified eight families, 26 young people and three older persons requesting accommodation which, when factored to reflect need across the whole community, amounted to a total of 37 dwellings. This number is below the 2019 waiting list provided by the AHO and, as such, may be taken to be realistic. Demand appears to be for smaller dwellings. The CWP arrived independently at a similar number of dwellings but with a revised mix. Options for development of vacant lots are confined to the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct, a single lot in Buronga with a structure requiring demolition, and the village of Poocarie so increasing supply will involve further land acquisition and/or spot purchase</p>

Table 12.1: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
WD04 CAP2.1	6.7 6.8 6.9 9.1 11.2 11.3 12.6	Asset condition and serviceability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned to WD01, arrange with managing ACHP(s) to determine the extent of all work necessary to restore structural soundness, functionality, amenity, safety and security to social housing properties, secure adequate investment, and carry out Assess the need for roof drainage to earth-built dwellings and install if considered desirable Upgrade house hydraulic services Where practical, reduce the permeability of properties to reduce dust penetration Carry out modifications and extensions as detailed in Table 12.4 and Table 12.5 Further, replace kitchens and bathrooms where found to be in need of upgrading Provide all social housing with adequate heating and energy efficient cooling appliances where absent and ensure all houses are sufficiently insulated to maximise the benefits Assess the adequacy, serviceability and safety of spaces for study and upgrade if found deficient 	<p>Small-scale development at Pooncarie can be considered</p> <p>The Dareton CWP pioneered the community driven HIPP/NAHS EHP model of housing and human services delivery in the Region and aspires to take the lead in the roll out of any future project informed by this HEHP</p> <p>Tenants reported on asset condition as at the time of the MPRH&BC household survey with reports ranging from acceptable to poor. Response time and quality of repairs were bones of contention. Under the head leasing regime, asset condition has deteriorated despite investment by the AHO and the risk of incrementally worsening ACHP asset condition and tenant health and wellbeing is present unless a major refurbishment programme is carried out</p> <p>The calculated need for extra bedrooms/extensions assumes that the required number of new dwellings will be met. If this is not the case, the number of extra bedrooms will be as stated in §6.6: sixteen one-bedroom and four-two-bedroom extensions</p> <p>Five respondents required assessment and/or installation of aids</p> <p>The MPRH&BC household survey established that 24% of Aboriginal social housing dwellings had no heating appliances and 60% were without a cooling appliance. With the duration of high temperatures increasing, it is essential for reasons of personal health and general wellbeing for air conditioning to be provided to each property</p> <p>Housing is a key determinant of childhood education. Poor housing and living environment negatively affect the ability of children to study so effort requires to be directed to providing a safe, stable and properly serviced home</p> <p>Acceptance of MP TSEP by the community is allowing tenants and others in need to access much needed housing support services. The team is building an impressive capability to work across a wide range of human services and tackle barriers to housing on behalf of applicants, including the current online application process</p> <p>There is no emergency accommodation available to Aboriginal individuals and families in crisis. Domestic violence related assaults are 2.27 times higher in Wentworth LGA compared to NSW while alcohol related DFV sexual offences are 2.29 times higher. NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data states a total of</p>
WD05 CAP2.1	6.12 12.8	Tenant support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the role of MP TSEP in supporting tenants at risk of breach to retain their tenancies, and facilitating access to human and other services necessary to support good physical and mental health and social and economic stability Significantly increase the proportion of tenants claiming CRA 	
WD06 CAP3.4	11.3 12.7	Emergency accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an assessment of the need for emergency accommodation: refuge/crisis accommodation, transit housing and/or short-term accommodation and, if demand is established, prepare a feasibility study and advocate for building Advocate with MPRA for an evaluation of the need for further 	

Table 12.1: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			Aboriginal-specific residential alcohol and other drug services and counselling services in the Region with a view to developing a strategy and the infrastructure to address unmet need	41 Aboriginal-identified victims of a DFV assault in 2020 Access to alcohol and other drug services, particularly early intervention and prevention services, for Aboriginal people living in far western NSW is problematic. There are no residential services within sensible reach and counselling services are primarily delivered by visiting mainstream providers. Border issues arise when trying to access services in Mildura. Service providers in the justice space, in particular, cite lack of culturally safe alcohol and other drug services as a barrier to permanent exit from the criminal justice system
WD07 CAP2.2	11.3 12.9	Home ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange with AHO and/or IBA to deliver community information workshops in support of home ownership 	There is an extensive waiting list for social housing and limited options for private rental. As Sunraysia has a functioning real estate market with affordable properties in Dareton and Wentworth, the opportunity exists for aspiring working homeowners and existing social housing tenants to enter the market. Providing the community with a full briefing on options, processes, advantages and pitfalls will allow community members to make an informed judgement as to whether purchase is a possibility for them Renewed interest has been expressed in the re-introduction of a rent-to-buy scheme(s) and this opportunity should be developed as part of this strategy
WD08	11.3	Infrastructure and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a strategic collaboration with Wentworth Shire Council to address issues of concern to the community 	As a result of high-level strategic planning as documented in the Far West Regional Plan 2036 and Council's community and land management plans, the opportunity exists for a close collaboration around issues of common interest. Subject to negotiation, there is no reason why this cannot extend from small-scale initiatives around facilities management at Namatjira Avenue and traffic calming on town streets, for example, to much broader projects relating to land use matters of the Aboriginal estate, say. There is advantage to all parties if Council is able to deploy its expertise, resources and relationships to work with the Aboriginal community to an agreed development agenda
WD09 CAP3.1 CAP3.2	11.3	Continuing service improvement, reach and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that service funding is allocated based on the Estimated Resident Population and not the most recent ABS Census figure (for 2016 ERP = 804, ABS Census 2016 = 668) 	The CWP has observed that service funding is incorrectly calculated and allocated on the basis of the census count which underestimates the Aboriginal population by 19%. In the eyes of the CWP, this is not

Table 12.1: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Foster a closer relationship between the CWP and all tiers of government to drive improvements in human services including a tighter focus on provider cooperation, service integration and performance▪ Evaluate and review the role and operational objectives of the proliferation of human services providers in across all sectors. Address barriers and fill service gaps	an equitable practice. CWP input indicates that community awareness of availability of various human services, and of the presence of some providers, is patchy at best. Service providers of long standing in the community report having observed interagency forums and collaborative arrangements between organisations break down as procurement decisions by governments have resulted in arrangements for service delivery becoming atomised. The CWP sees this as a barrier to community being able to access culturally safe services.
WD010 CAP3.4 CAP4.1 CAP6.1	11.3	Sustainable employment and economic development <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Obtain support to strengthen business skills to take full advantage of the potential of lands acquired through Native Title▪ Equip young and not so young adults with the skills to take positions in the health and human services sectors▪ Develop and foster networks with employment services providers to increase opportunities for training and/or transition to work, including for individuals returning from the criminal justice system▪ Establish the infrastructure and negotiate implementation of the NSW Government School to Work Programme to support students to transition from school to post school education, training and employment	Build the capacity of the community to participate in employment and economic development activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Obtain support to strengthen business skills to take full advantage of the potential of lands acquired through Native Title▪ Equip young and not so young adults with the skills to take positions in the health and human services sectors▪ Develop and foster networks with employment services providers to increase opportunities for training and/or transition to work, including for individuals returning from the criminal justice system▪ Establish the infrastructure and negotiate implementation of the NSW Government School to Work Programme to support students to transition from school to post school education, training and employment	The CWP aspires to improve the economic position of the community by increasing the level of active participation in the labour market and business. Based on self-assessment, the CWP acknowledges a skills deficit in key areas of operating a business: work planning, project management, financial management, marketing, people management and technology, for example. The CWP would like to address this deficit so that the benefits arising from land acquisitions can be maximised The employment to population ratio for Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over as at the ABS Census 2016 was only 37% that of the non-Indigenous population, and only 35% of 17- and 18-year-olds were engaged in either employment, education or training compared with 75% of the non-Indigenous population of the same age. Work opportunities exist but there are clearly barriers to employment. Some are structural, others social but each requires to be removed if progress is to be made. Table 4.23 suggests employment in trades and machinery operation is below parity as is representation at managerial level
WD011 CAP5.1	11.3	Child and maternal health services <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Improve the ability, capacity and resourcing of local primary health care providers to deliver early intervention services in response to significant childhood development challenges flagged in §4.2▪ Promote the role of Aboriginal Allied Health Assistants to strengthen cultural safety and provide continuity of care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Improve the ability, capacity and resourcing of local primary health care providers to deliver early intervention services in response to significant childhood development challenges flagged in §4.2▪ Promote the role of Aboriginal Allied Health Assistants to strengthen cultural safety and provide continuity of care	The community is concerned about the difficulties gaining access to diagnosis, early intervention and intensive support for children with learning and development difficulties in light of growing vulnerabilities as evidenced at Figure 4.4. Excessive wait times are impacting upon children attaining development milestones and achieving at school
WD12 CAP3.3	11.3	Encourage participation of young people in recreational and diversionary activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Confer with DCJ over the lack of children’s services in the Sunraysia communities with a view to identifying gaps and the means of addressing these	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Confer with DCJ over the lack of children’s services in the Sunraysia communities with a view to identifying gaps and the means of addressing these	Over one third of the Aboriginal population is aged between five and 24 years. Organised recreational and leadership development opportunities designed to engage young people, and transport

Table 12.1: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with young people in the community, develop and implement a youth strategy, design and deliver youth programmes and diversionary initiatives 	<p>services which increase accessibility, are few. For example, the Dareton Youth and Community Drop-in Centre operated by Global Mission Partners is open only for three hours in the afternoon four days a week. The lack of facilities is identified in Wentworth Shire Council consultations around the Community Strategic Plan “Have a youth centre, activities for youth, and a place for non-sporting kids” which translated, in the final CSP into sporting facilities as a key item of importance</p>

12.4 Defining need for growth

12.4.1 Expressed need for new housing

The total number of Aboriginal social housing dwellings across the Sunraysia communities, including Euston in Balranald LGA, is 126, two-thirds of which are 3-bedroom cottages.

The MPRH&BC household survey conducted in late 2016 and early 2017 illustrated the scale of housing need for Aboriginal social housing in the communities. Twenty-eight respondents stated a desire for their own home. The Aboriginal social housing waiting list for May 2019 totalled 47 approved applicants. The estimates of housing need shown in Table 12.2, 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, tends to suggest an unmet need of between thirty and forty dwellings. With family formation, demand for Aboriginal social housing will continue to grow but, given the draw of Mildura, slowly.

New housing need is derived from analysis of answers to direct questions asked by the MPRH&BC household survey in relation to preferences of individuals and families to move into their own accommodation if it were available. Movement comprises individuals wishing to leave their family home, individuals or families wishing to leave extended family or multi-family households, and persons and families who are classified as homeless. The analysis examined the family circumstances of each household including those in private rentals and owner occupiers who reported crowding and an assessment made of likely eligibility for social housing.

The age profile is such that the majority of those in search of their own housing are single young people or couples without children. A couple or sole parent with child(ren) is allocated a house of size commensurate with family composition. It is notable that the survey only captured two larger families or multi-family households requiring a house of four bedrooms or larger, one living in a private rental and one living with an owner-occupier.

Table 12.2: Unmet demand for new Aboriginal social housing, number of dwellings

		From MPRH&BC household survey				Factored for whole community			
		Number of bedrooms				Number of bedrooms			
Tenure type	Ratio	2	3	4	5	2	3	4	5
Owner occupier	72/11	6	-	1		1	-	1	-
Private rental	74/23	4	-	-	1	4	-	-	1
Homeless	228/159	3	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Social housing renters	126/122	18	7	-	-	19	7	-	-
Employer	-/-					-	-	-	-
Not defined	-/-					-	-	-	-
Total						28	7	1	1

Note: Ratio is derived from the AHO total number of Aboriginal social housing properties and the total number of properties enumerated in the MPRH&BC household survey by tenure type, excluding those 'not stated'. For the homeless category, the total for all tenure types has been adopted

The number of new dwellings required and enumerated in Table 12.2 is more than the number of total applicants accepted onto the DCJ Housing Register for the Aboriginal and non-Indigenous population combined of 26 general applicants and 5 priority applicants.

Feedback received from the community and summarised in Table 12.3 reinforces the need for additional housing on the scale but with a different mix. The CWP has extended enquiries beyond the community to reach those living elsewhere and who are unable to return because of a shortage of housing to rent. The estimate also refines the

structured approach adopted to produce Table 12.2 in being more readily able to identify likely family compositions.

Table 12.3: CWP estimate of need, December 2021

Number of bedrooms	Number of houses
2	10
3	10
4	5
5	10
Total	35

Spot purchase may be part of the solution in the Sunwaysia communities as there are several 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom properties for sale in the \$180,000 - \$350,000 price range although the recent increased demand for regional housing during the COVID pandemic and subsequent lockdowns has significantly increased demand and price. Some applicants may express a preference for living in town rather than at the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct but neither Dareton LALC, AHO or MPRHC have vacant lots available for development in an urban area other than a single lot in Buronga and two Dareton LALC lots at Pooncarie. Several vacant sites are located around Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee.

Small scale development at Pooncarie is an attractive prospect to the CWP.

There are vacant blocks of land for sale in the Wentworth/Dareton region currently and recent land sales indicate that residential blocks are selling for between \$65,000 and \$180,000 including legal fees and other statutory charges depending on location and size.

Table 12.4 puts an order of cost against increased supply based on new builds enumerated in Table 12.3 and suggests that, given the costs for new builds and land acquisition, spot purchase is an option to be considered. Estimated costs associated with scope defined in Table 12.3 is higher than scope assessed in Table 12.2.

Table 12.4: Estimated cost of new builds (GST excl)

Number of bedrooms	GFA (m2)	Unit cost (\$/m2)	No	Estimate
2	120	3,470	10	\$4,164,000
3	160	2,850	10	\$4,560,000
4	185	2,850	5	\$2,636,250
5	200	2,850	10	\$5,700,000
Total				\$17,060,250

12.4.2 Replacement housing

No dwellings are recommended for replacement as stated in \$6.10. The MPRH&BC household survey did not record any social housing tenant respondents describing their properties as 'condemned' or 'unliveable', only that asset repair and maintenance work needed to be accelerated, so this HEHP takes the position that scoping of existing social housing properties is unlikely to identify many houses which are beyond economic repair that will require a determination on ongoing serviceability.

12.3.3 Housing extensions and modifications

The expressed need for housing extensions projected on the same basis as Table 12.2, is stated in Table 12.5. A budget of \$35,000/extension is allowed for extension and \$3,000 for home modification.

Table 12.5: Requirement for housing extensions and modifications

Extensions	Number of bedrooms		
(Factor: 1.00)	1	2	3
Number of extensions	1	1	-
Total number of bedrooms	1	2	-
Modifications			
Number of dwellings	5		

Estimated budget to attend to extensions and modifications quantified in Table 12.5 is given in Table 12.6.

Table 12.6: Estimated budget for housing extensions and modifications

	Estimate (\$)
Extensions	\$105,000
Modifications	\$15,000
Total	\$120,000

The number of extensions required is dependent upon the scale of new build programme. As noted in §6.6, the initial assessment was that sixteen dwellings required one bedroom and four two extra bedrooms. The number is reduced as individuals and families are relocated from crowded households to new builds. The final assessment shown in Table 12.5 is for one 1-bedroom extension and one 2-bedroom extension.

12.5 Community-owned infrastructure

Maintenance and upgrading of water supply and sewerage infrastructure at Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee is being managed by DPIE as part of the Aboriginal Communities Water and Sewerage Programme (ACWSP). The Department declined to provide detailed information on any proposed works other than to advise replacement of the raw water reservoirs and pump station and upgrading the sewerage pumping station.

Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct has been included in an extended Roads to Home programme, again administered by DPIE, although scope is still to be identified. As a minimum, the Land Council can expect to benefit from resurfacing of internal roads and provision of street lighting. The possibility of subdivision of the precinct may be investigated, allowing access to municipal services.

12.6 Asset preservation

Estimated costs for repair and maintenance required to attend to immediate restoration and asset preservation as discussed in §6.9 are summarised in Table 12.7. Average spend/property varies between \$21,250 for Gol Gol and Euston to \$37,400 in round figures for Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee properties.

Table 12.7: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost

Responsive and planned maintenance	Cost
Wentworth	531,600
Dareton	972,800
Namatjira Avenue/New Merinee	1,609,600
Buronga	433,200
Gol Gol and Euston	170,000
Particular repairs	
As Table 6.15	ACHIF funded
Total	\$3,717,200

12.7 Emergency accommodation

Individual and families finding themselves in crisis have access to no facilities in the Sunraysia communities and limited access to women's or men's refuges or emergency accommodation across the NSW/Victorian border in Mildura. Services are available which aim to keep victims in their own homes but this is unlikely to be a practical solution in the Aboriginal community. For the purposes of this HEHP, the CAP recommendation to support people in crisis requires transit housing in the form of two 4-bedroom share houses, as a minimum. It is proposed the accommodation be under the management of MPRHC. Preliminary costing is provided at Table 12.8.

Table 12.8: Emergency accommodation

Number of bedrooms	GFA (m2)	Unit cost (\$/m2)	No	Estimate (\$)
Land				\$300,000
4-bed house	185	2,850	1	\$527,250
4-bed house	185	2,850	1	\$527,250
Total				\$1,354,500

12.8 Tenant support and education

The Murdi Paaki Tenant Support and Education Programme has become an essential and valued support service in the social housing space in the Sunraysia communities. The MP TSEP team plays a key role in supporting community members to establish and maintain tenancies, negotiate the Housing Pathways application process and

leverages partnerships with human services providers to deliver wrap-around services. The service also plays an increasingly strategic role in supporting CWP and MPS community development initiatives such as the Murdi Paaki Alternative Energy Project. Given the complexity of the housing and related human services landscape from a community perspective, the ongoing work of MP TSEP is considered critical to optimum sector performance.

12.9 Home ownership

Eleven respondents to the MPRH&BC household survey were owner occupiers. Most were satisfied with their decision to purchase their house and for many the advantages over renting related to personal autonomy and household economics. Considering the relative affordability of housing in the Wentworth LGA and the existence of a real estate market with prospects for capital gain and future sale, there might be interest in ownership amongst tenants, particularly those in stable employment who have an attachment to the district. To facilitate greater awareness, this HEHP contains a recommendation for an information session for those tenants who might wish to consider this option further.

12.10 Probable order of cost

Probable order of cost for each strategy is shown in Table 12.9. The estimates were prepared on the following basis:

- Costs for building-related work are derived from industry standard cost information and/or project costs for similar work in the Murdi Paaki Region;
- Prices are current to September 2020;
- An index appropriate to locality is applied;
- Costing assumes the scale of works set out in Table 12.3. The differential between Table 12.2 and Table 12.3 is \$1,111,800;
- 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;
- 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;

- Estimates are stated as GST exclusive.

Table 12.9: Probable orders of cost, housing and environmental health infrastructure

Strategy	Description	Order of cost (\$)
Housing		
	Planning and development	200,000
	Land acquisition (nominal)	1,500,000
	Infrastructure (nominal)	200,000
	New house building	17,060,250
	Replacement housing	-
	Housing extensions	120,000
	Repair and maintenance	3,717,200
	Emergency accommodation	1,354,500
	Sub-total	24,151,950
	Unquantified risk allowance (5%)	1,207,600
	Project management (12.5%)	2,806,500
	Programme admin (3%)	724,600
	Total for housing and infrastructure	28,890,650

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 the Accord should be brought to bear on areas of underperformance.

12.11 Funding sources

Funding for the projects identified by the Master Plan 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 sufficiently robust financial position to contribute to these extraordinary costs from revenue derived from property rents and subsidies and is dependent upon grant funding from governments. Table 12.10 is a notional income/expenditure statement for social housing properties based on typical property information for FY2021-22, Council charges as shown at

Table 7.2, and an average unimproved land value of \$20,100 has been assumed. The calculation optimistically assumes 100% rent collection.

Table 12.10: Notional income and expenditures relating to managing Aboriginal social housing in the community

		Amount (\$)
Income	Rents	1,443,757
	Subsidy	347,550
	Total revenue	1,791,307
Outgoings	General rate	106,269
	Service charges	192,906
	Administration	315,000
	Property costs	945,693
	Other costs	201,600
	Total outgoings	1,761,469
Balance		29,838

Although the estimates shown in Table 12.10 are notional, a fair assessment would be that housing managers would be at or close to breakeven with the current financial structure. The sustainability and growth of the Aboriginal social housing sector is subject to the on-going financial support in the form of AHO subsidies and investment in capital works. Alternative financial investment models such as social impact investing may provide solutions to funding capital and/or recurrent costs but proving social benefit might be problematic in an Outer Regional location.

12.12 Staging of works

There are no priorities attaching to the improvements listed in Table 12.9. All works may be classified as immediate. Repair and maintenance work can be programmed to proceed as one integrated contract on a community basis 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. Building extensions should be included within the scope of any repair and maintenance contract.

Key to rolling out new building work at any scale may be resolution of planning and land acquisition

matters. The Land Council advises that sites are only available at the Namatjira Avenue and New Merinee precinct and at Pooncarie, but the number is insufficient to build new housing on the scale outlined and, in any event, some eligible households will not favour moving to Namatjira Avenue or the remote village of Pooncarie. Detailed planning for future works will necessarily follow once the level of investment is identified.

12.13 Value-adding initiatives

Given the scale of development outlined in Table 12.9, a substantial employment and training programme is possible. Such an initiative has previously been successfully implemented in Dareton in the past at scale in conjunction with Victorian vocational education and training providers.

For example, under the National Aboriginal Health Strategy project at Namatjira Avenue in Dareton, the Mildura and District Educational Council (Australia) and Sunraysia Institute of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) were contracted to coordinate and deliver accredited competency-based on-the-job training in specified trades and other areas of endeavour to nominated apprentices, trainees and others within a training framework centred on a planned succession of building and infrastructure projects. 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 in the same manner as previously should be CWP consider this an overriding factor in determining timeframes for roll out of building programmes.

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