



MENINDEE COMMUNITY WORKING PARTY

MENINDEE HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

May 2021



**MURDI PAAKI
REGIONAL
ASSEMBLY**

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**MENINDEE HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



Menindee Community Working Party

MENINDEE HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

May 2021

INTRODUCTION

Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly are asking all communities in the Region, through their CWPs, to prepare Housing and Environmental Health Plans (HEHPs) to create the evidence necessary to direct high level policy-setting and decision-making in respect of Aboriginal housing. The Plans set out the needs of the community across all aspects of housing and of related human services.

THE CENSUS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data for the Menindee community indicated that:

- The Aboriginal population has grown steadily over time, with a total of 204 Aboriginal people counted at the 2016 Census; the non-Indigenous population goes up and down;
- The Aboriginal population has a young age structure compared to the non-Indigenous population, with 27% of Aboriginal people aged under 15 years;
- Most Aboriginal households are family households, with only 12% lone person households;
- The proportion of Aboriginal families which are single-parent families is on a par with the NSW average;
- Post-school qualifications are few;
- Participation in the labour market is weak;
- Menindee experiences a high level of socio-economic disadvantage.

THE MURDI PAAKI HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

The survey, carried out in 2016-17, showed:

- The number of identified properties for rent by Aboriginal households to be 49;

- Five Aboriginal household rented privately;
- Menindee LALC held title to a total of nine dwellings and an additional 17 residential lots;
- There are 40 Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) dwellings including one that is uninhabitable. AHO also own four vacant lots;
- Mixed views about satisfaction with management services through Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation;
- Substantial unmet demand for Aboriginal social housing, particularly for young people wanting to move out of the family home, older people seeking purpose-built units, and large households experiencing crowding;
- Tenancies to be stable and long-term;
- A need for a repair and maintenance programme to restore property condition.

Community engagement conducted through the Menindee CWP in the period December 2020 to April 2021 confirmed and expanded on the findings of the Household Survey.

THE ENVIRONMENT

A look at the environmental factors affecting the community indicated:

- Climate change is leading to a noticeably greater number of days with temperatures over 35°C;
- Mismanagement of Baaka/Darling River flows is causing water quality issues.

THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY

To the extent that the data allows, it appears:

- That the Aboriginal community of Menindee experiences relatively poor health;



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- Housing and infrastructure-related environmental health issues are contributing to incidence of gastroenteritis, skin rashes and head lice infestations;
- Lifestyle-related conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and tobacco use, especially among younger people, are causing concern.

HUMAN SERVICES

An appraisal of human services indicated:

- A variety of providers are delivering a range of services targeted towards meeting needs for health, housing, early childhood, school education, out-of-home care support, youth, training, employment, income support, tenancy support, and aged care services;
- The community sees much room for improvement, including in relation to awareness of service availability;
- Training is adequate but there are no job opportunities after completion;
- There are no facilities for people escaping family violence or needing emergency accommodation;
- Services provided through the Rural Transaction Centre are greatly appreciated but privacy is problematic for people seeking Centrelink services;
- Energy-related poverty arises from energy-intensive housing and high power prices;
- Gaps exist in services provided to young people, and the community has expressed need for a youth centre, school holiday programmes, sporting facilities and co-ordination;
- The pre-school requires extra support;
- The community wishes to work with Maari Ma and NSW Health to develop a better targeted model of service, especially

relating to staffing, and mental health and counselling services;

- The community aspires to higher levels of attainment in school education;
- The community is often not aware of services available in Menindee.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The community has access to the full range of municipal services except that the town is not sewered. Points of note are:

- Work is progressing on sealing local roads – about 90% are sealed now but unsealed shoulders, lack of kerb and gutter and potholes are problematic;
- Dust created by vehicles travelling on unsealed roads is a problem;
- Streetscape plantings are few, and amenity is affected by the barren appearance of the town.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Feedback from the community identified a broad range of priority areas requiring action. For the purposes of planning, these have been divided into two categories: housing and infrastructure, and human services. All items identified by the CWP have been addressed in the Master Plan, together with the three priority areas identified in Menindee CWP's Community Action Plan:

- Health and wellbeing: Action 1.1 – Develop an Aboriginal health and well-being strategy for Menindee;
- Housing and infrastructure: Action 2.1 - Establish a special housing and infrastructure committee of the CWP to drive housing and infrastructure improvements; and
- Community safety initiative: Action 5.1 - Negotiate the development of a Menindee Safe Community Strategy.

MASTER PLAN

The HEHP proposes several measures to improve housing, environmental health infrastructure and human services in the community. These may be summarised as:

MASTER PLAN: Community Action Plan priorities

Strategy

Aboriginal health and wellbeing

Host a facilitated meeting/workshop of all health service providers to initiate the development of a Menindee Aboriginal Health Strategy

Housing and infrastructure

Establish a broad-based Housing and infrastructure subcommittee of the CWP to guide the implementation of this HEHP

Community safety

Conceptualise, plan, design and deliver a Menindee Safe Community strategy

MASTER PLAN: Housing and infrastructure

Strategy

Land acquisition

- Negotiate access to Lot 1 and Lot 2, Section 2, DP758669 (Perry Street) for development for older persons accommodation
- Progressively purchase up to 22 additional individual lots in all locations in the urban area for development for individuals and families

Demolition

Two existing dwellings require to be demolished to allow redevelopment

New housing

Thirty new dwelling units are proposed, mainly two-bedroom dwellings for young people and either individual dwellings or a unit complex for elders

Replacement housing

Two replacement houses are proposed

MASTER PLAN: Housing and infrastructure

Strategy

Housing extensions

One additional bedroom is proposed to each of two dwellings. Alternatively, additional space may be provided in the form of a granny flat where circumstances warrant

Housing repair and maintenance

Roll out a housing repair and maintenance programme to restore a healthy home environment for tenants

Housing repair and maintenance

Deliver a programme of defined works to attend to serious defects to several dwellings, restore visual amenity and improve environmental health

Energy affordability

Deliver a programme of installation of solar PV panels to all dwellings not currently provided with solar power and associated energy saving measures

Infrastructure

Provide or negotiate with CDSC and utilities to provide:

- Roadworks and drainage to new subdivision
- Water supply to new subdivision
- Electrical power to new subdivision

Home ownership

Arrange with AHO and IBA to deliver community information workshops on support for home ownership

Housing affordability

Review social housing rental costs in Menindee in relation to private sector rent as a surrogate for market rent, and adjust the rent cost structure in response

Services affordability

Discuss with Essential Water measures which reduce the burden of excessive water consumption costs and which lead to improved water quality

MASTER PLAN: Proposed actions – Human services
Strategy
Human services generally
Seek MPS assistance in conjunction with TSEP housing staff to arrange topic-specific workshops with service providers
Economic participation
With MPS support, negotiate a package of economic initiatives relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transition from school to work and further learning ▪ Targeted training and related employment initiatives ▪ Support to transition to small business start-ups ▪ Development of tourism industry infrastructure and promotion
Community safety
Seek MPS support to advocate for provision of a safe house, refuge or secure emergency accommodation and related support services in Menindee
Provide a community emergency telephone number as an effective alternative to 000 to summon assistance from the Police and other emergency services
Income support services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate to CDSC for physical reorganisation of Menindee Rural Transaction Centre to improve privacy and confidentiality for Centrelink client access ▪ Negotiate with CDSC the employment of an Aboriginal staff member
Youth facilities and services
Advocate for access to a youth centre, school holiday programmes, sporting facilities and youth services co-ordination
Children's facilities and services
Secure additional funding and support for children's services delivered through the Pre-school

MASTER PLAN: Proposed actions – Human services
Strategy
Health services
Work with Maari Ma and NSW Health to expand service scope in Menindee, through provision of five additional local positions: three Aboriginal health practitioners, a social worker, and a transport worker; and through development of a model of mental health and counselling service provision that meets community needs
Transport
Advocate for a community transport service

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Purpose of the Plan	1
1.2	Governance arrangements	1
1.3	Respecting Land Council autonomy	2
1.4	The bigger picture.....	2
2	BRIEF HISTORY.....	3
2.1	Snapshot	3
2.2	Aboriginal ownership.....	3
2.3	Aboriginal people and the town of Menindee	4
3	GEOGRAPHY	6
3.1	Location	6
3.2	Access	6
3.3	Topography.....	6
3.4	Soils.....	6
3.5	Flora and fauna.....	6
3.6	Climate.....	7
3.7	Flooding and drainage	8
3.8	Dust.....	9
3.9	Native title	10
3.10	Sites of cultural significance	10
3.11	Economic geography	10
4	THE POPULATION	11
4.1	Population profile	11
4.2	Educational status	13
4.3	Economic participation.....	16
4.4	Income	18
4.5	Measure of socio-economic disadvantage	19
5	COMMUNITY HOUSING PROFILE	20
5.1	Menindee housing generally	20
5.2	A statistical comparative snapshot.....	20
5.3	Population mobility	22
5.4	The local housing market.....	22
5.5	Building activity	22
5.6	Cadastral.....	23
5.7	Housing assets	28
5.8	Planning controls	28
5.9	Findings of the household survey	29
5.10	Asset condition	34
5.11	Experiences of local government	35
5.12	Utilities.....	36
6	COMMUNITY HEALTH	37
6.1	Community health profile summary.....	37
6.2	Health status – qualitative assessment	37
6.3	Health status – quantitative assessment.....	38
6.4	Available health services	42
7	HUMAN SERVICES	44
7.1	Human services in the community	44
7.2	Community services and facilities	44

8	COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES	48
8.1	Community priorities.....	48
8.2	Community consultation	48
9	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE	51
9.1	Infrastructure asset schedules.....	51
9.2	Infrastructure improvements	56
10	MASTER PLAN.....	58
10.1	Cultural influences on decision-making.....	58
10.2	Development proposals.....	58
10.3	Asset preservation	60
10.4	Home ownership	60
10.5	Probable order of cost	65
10.6	Funding sources.....	65
10.7	Staging of works	65
10.8	Value-adding initiatives	66

GLOSSARY

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACDP	Aboriginal Communities Development Programme
ACHP	Aboriginal Community Housing Provider
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Management Information System
AHO	Aboriginal Housing Office
ALT	Aboriginal Lands Trust
ALRA	Aboriginal Land Rights Act
APB	Aborigines Protection Board
AWB	Aborigines Welfare Board
CAP	Community Action Plan
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CDSC	Central Darling Shire Council
CNOS	Canadian Occupancy Standard
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
CWP	Community Working Party
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
EW	Essential Water
FWLHD	Far West Local Health District
HEHP	Housing and Environmental Health Plan
IFD	Intensity Frequency Duration
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
MLALC	Menindee Local Aboriginal Land Council
MMAC	Mirrimilyi Muurpa-nara Aboriginal Corporation
MPRA	Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly
MPRH&BC	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium
MPS	Murdi Paaki Services Limited
NAHC	Nyampa Aboriginal Housing Corporation
NAHS	National Aboriginal Health Strategy
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSHS	National Social Housing Survey
N-W NSW IREG	North-Western NSW Indigenous Region
OCHRE	Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment (NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs Plan)
PHN	Primary Health Network
RAHLA	Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
SA1	ABS Statistical Area Level 1
SAMP	Strategic Asset Management Plan
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SSC	State Suburb
TAFE	Technical and Further Education

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan was developed by the Menindee Community Working Party (CWP) in conjunction with Murdi Paaki Services Ltd. The Menindee CWP would like to acknowledge 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: those of the Barkandji and Ngiyampaa Nations and those of other Nations who have found their home in Menindee. 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.

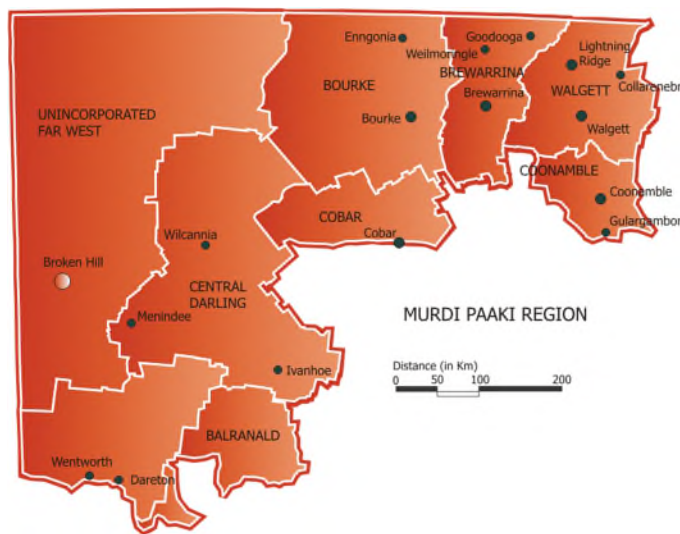
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

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

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, and responses to environmental risk;
- Describe the current situation in relation to housing Aboriginal individuals and families in Menindee;
- Gauge interest in home ownership;
- To the extent possible, report on the condition of Aboriginal social housing assets;
- Give an assessment of 'wrap-around' human services;

- 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, including where practical, new forms of investment;
- 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 Menindee.

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

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 policy and directed by the Ministerial *Agreement to improve Aboriginal social housing outcomes in the Murdi Paaki Region*. The RAHLA sees the preparation of HEHPs in all Murdi Paaki communities as a priority project under the Agreement and has authorised Murdi Paaki Services Ltd (MPS) to carry out the project to begin the process of developing the evidence base for regional policy setting and decision making as a vital step in rebuilding the social housing sector and the social and economic capabilities of the Region.

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

1.3 Respecting Land Council autonomy

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

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

1.4 The bigger picture

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

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

Put together, it is hoped the HEHPs will:

- Reinststate and strengthen the capacity of Murdi Paaki regional and local Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) to ensure that all Aboriginal people living in Aboriginal social housing are able to receive culturally safe and professional 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, mix and quality of ACHP 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 in order to sustain their tenancies;
- Provide greater opportunity for Aboriginal persons and families to engage with employment and education support that improve prospects for housing independence;
- Establish the level of financial investment in respect of capital and recurrent costs to ensure sector viability; and
- Set the foundation for procurement practices and value add initiatives which respond to the 'failed market' environment and benefit the community.

2 BRIEF HISTORY

2.1 Snapshot

This chapter draws heavily on the work of Dr Sarah Martin, published as *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage of the Menindee Lakes Area: Part 1 – Aboriginal Ties to the Land*, which itself is extensively informed by interviews with Aboriginal people with traditional and historical associations with Menindee and the Baaka/Darling River.

Menindee is situated within country belonging to the Baakantji Nation. The town sits adjacent to a complex of lakes and associated riparian landforms belonging to the Darling River. Because of these characteristics, Menindee has always been a focal point for Baakantji and, from time to time, their neighbours, and is important both ceremonially and as a key element of the traditional economy.

This existence was disrupted in the hostile colonisation phase of the mid-1800s by white settlement. Relationships between Baakantji and the early overlanders were characterised by mutual aggression which constituted an ongoing frontier war over alienation of Baakantji land and resources in the area of the Darling River around Menindee and Wilcannia from the 1830s to 1860.

Pastoral activity replaced Aboriginal stewardship of Country and the river became the highway for the transport of wool and other agricultural produce. The Menindee (Maiden's) Hotel dates from 1853, marking Menindee as the oldest European settlement in western NSW. During the following twenty years, the infrastructure of commerce (post office, telegraph station, wharf, police station) developed and Menindee became a port servicing steamer traffic on the Baaka/Darling River. The railway arrived in 1919, providing a link, and the means of the bulk transfer of water, to Broken Hill.

Completion of the Menindee Lakes Scheme in 1968 made possible the development of horticultural industry around the Menindee Lakes; however, recent protracted drought has had a dire impact on the health of the Baaka/Darling River, primary production and the wellbeing of the town.

2.2 Aboriginal ownership

Menindee is located centrally within the lands of the Baakantji people. The Baakantji Nation derive their name from Baaka, the river which is at the core of identity. Baakantji Country extends from near Bourke to Wentworth, taking in the lower end of the Paroo and Warrego rivers and back country extending outwards from the Baaka/Darling. The Nation, although sharing a common language, comprises distinct dialect groups with ownership of specific Country and resources. The dialect sub-group centred on Menindee and Pooncarie does not have a remembered name and is known as Southern Baakantji.

Land was held under a tenure system which operated at a range of scales, with small land tenure units conferring inalienable rights to specific estates which others could only enter, and use resources, with permission. It appears that these small land tenure units held land through patrilineal descent. The land around Menindee is a rich narrative landscape, and dreamtime stories of the creation of Country by ancestral beings abound.

As the pastoral industry expanded through the study area, the Aboriginal economy changed as a consequence of the difficulty in maintaining traditional practices. A transition had occurred in Aboriginal interaction with country, and ongoing pastoral expansion, the establishment of towns and, most significantly, the introduction of protection policy, would continue to alter the way Aboriginal people lived in and moved across their land.

By the early years of the twentieth century, as camping on the pastoral properties became less viable as a way of life, the NSW Government had begun to reserve parcels of land for use by Aboriginal people. Baakantji people had been camping at Pooncarie, downstream from Menindee since time immemorial, and their camping place is adjacent to important Ngatyi sites. The arrangement was formalised (in a European sense) in 1909 when an area of 640 acres was reserved. Pooncarie Reserve was never a managed station; education was provided by

neighbouring landowners in a small school built on the Reserve, but Baakantji were able to speak Language and follow a traditional way of life. Another reserve was gazetted at Carowra Tank, north-east of Ivanhoe, where mainly Ngiyampaa people camped, together with some Wiradjuri and Wayilwan, and Baakantji people.

In 1933 the water supply at Carowra Tank failed, and the Aborigines Protection Board (APB), operating under a new policy of concentration, opened a new reserve at Menindee. On 29th September 1933, the 270 or so residents of Carowra Tank were loaded onto cattle trucks, their houses and shelters were set alight and the Carowra residents taken to the railway platform at Conoble, where they were put onto the train to make the journey to Menindee. At the same time, the APB removed the Baakantji people living along the Darling River from Wilcannia to Pooncarie to the new Menindee Government Station, located about 11 km from Menindee on the Darling River. Menindee was a managed station. Housing provided was built of sheet metal and had no windows. The houses had been built on a sandhill and dust continually blew in.

The Ngiyampaa and Baakantji peoples did not traditionally have much in common, but made a life together over the ensuing years, and the two Nations became interconnected through marriage. The morbidity and mortality rates at Menindee were high, with a high incidence of respiratory illnesses including tuberculosis. Much of this illness was attributed to the proximity of the tin hut housing provided to ancient, eroding burial sites: bone dust was believed to be a potent poison. Living conditions at Menindee Mission were poor and environmental health issues took their toll, as did the sorrow of living in exile from Country. The stealing of children and their removal to children's homes, and the slave labour scheme by which young people were forced to travel to be 'apprenticed out', compounded the anguish of both Ngiyampaa and Baakantji peoples.

During this period, most Aboriginal men were able to continue with pastoral work on stations in the area, travel to Wentworth-Dareton for seasonal fruit-picking work, cut wood or labour on the railway. Those who were employed in pastoral

industry did not necessarily receive the pay they were entitled to. People who did not have independent employment would be required to work at Menindee Mission in exchange for rations.

In 1949, the Aborigines Welfare Board (AWB), as the APB had been reconstituted in 1940, closed Menindee Mission without warning and moved the residents to Murrin Bridge at Lake Cargelligo. This is not in either Ngiyampaa or Baakantji country, but is in traditional Wiradjuri lands, and much further away from the Menindee residents' original homes than Menindee was. Most of the Carowra Tank people made the move from Menindee to Murrin Bridge; most of the Baakantji moved to Menindee town or Wilcannia. Of the people who stayed at Menindee, most related to the Kelly and Webster families. Those who stayed built huts on the Reserve near the railway bridge, on the eastern side of the Baaka/Darling River. Other families soon began returning from Murrin Bridge. By the 1950s and 1960s, families had started to move into town to live. In the 1970s, a large flood drove the people living at the Viaducts Reserve to a new campsite by the railway water tower across the river, known as the 'Sandhill'. During the 1970s, most families moved into town. Connections between those who stayed or moved back to Menindee and those who left for Murrin Bridge or other destinations have remained strong.

2.3 Aboriginal people and the town of Menindee

At the time of the repeal of the Aborigines Protection Act and the abolition of the AWB, many Aboriginal people already lived in town. Over the succeeding period, many of the pastoral and railway work opportunities disappeared. The completion of the Menindee Lakes Storage Scheme resulted in some of these roles being replaced by horticultural employment; the National Parks and Wildlife Service has also provided some Field Officer and Ranger roles at Kinchega National Park.

Nyampa Aboriginal Housing Company Ltd (NAHC) was registered in 1974; it provided Aboriginal social housing, health services, and owned and operated East Bootingee, a small grape-growing property. It was wound up in 2013; East Bootingee

was sold, and housing assets were transferred to the Aboriginal Housing Office in 2015.

In 1969, following the 1967 Referendum, the AWB was disbanded. In 1972 as the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT), took over the remaining Aboriginal reserves. Menindee Mission passed into the ownership of the Lands Trust and, ultimately, was made over to the Menindee Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) with the introduction of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act (ALRA) in 1983. Menindee LALC also owns Appin Station, a pastoral property, and several residential properties in Menindee township.

In 2001, the Menindee CWP was established. The CWP provides for the Aboriginal community of Menindee to promote its strategic interests on an equal footing with other, often larger communities in the Murdi Paaki Region. Since its inception, the Menindee CWP has been proactive in representing the needs and aspirations of the community through the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly, and directly to governments. Meetings are well-attended, and the Menindee CWP maintains traditional, cultural ways of doing business.

3 GEOGRAPHY

3.1 Location

Menindee is located in the far west of New South Wales, nearly 1,000 km to the west of Sydney by way of unsealed and sealed road. The nearest and only service centre of any size accessible by sealed road is Broken Hill, 114 km to the west. The location of Menindee is shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Locality



A satellite settlement, Sunset Strip, is located 20 km to the north of the town on the banks of Lake Menindee.

3.2 Access

Menindee is located at the intersection of the unsealed roads from Wilcannia to the north east (155 km), Ivanhoe to the east (205 km), Wentworth and Pooncarie to the south (122 km), and sealed road from Broken Hill. Plans are in train to seal the gravel section of the Pooncarie Road which will provide an assured link to the Silver City Highway at Buronga and to Mildura. All unsealed roads are impassable in wet weather.

The main east-west railway passes through Menindee. The transcontinental Indian Pacific

passenger service operates weekly between Sydney and Perth but does not stop at Menindee. The only stopping service is the Broken Hill Outback Explorer weekly service between Sydney and Broken Hill.

Menindee airfield to the north west of the town is a non-controlled aircraft landing area, not being registered or certified by CASA. The longest runway is 1,280 m in length, north south, and is bitumen surfaced. An unsurfaced runway is of 915 m length.

3.3 Topography

The country around Menindee has little topographic relief: the landscape is flat with river channels, streams and floodplains the primary characteristics. Falls in ground level occur generally in a southerly direction towards the Darling River to the east of the urban area but overall grades are shallow. Elevation in the centre of town is approximately 60 m above sea level.

3.4 Soils

Menindee is located in the Darling Riverine Plains bioregion, a narrow corridor with its boundaries close to the river. The town is adjacent to the Menindee Lakes Storage Scheme which is formed of four major controlled storages, including the largest, Lake Menindee. Sandy soils line older stream channels with, in places, dunes at stream edges. Most of the plains are of heavy dark-coloured clay deposits which crack extensively. Clay soils are also associated with the numerous swamps and depressions which are almost always permanently wet.

3.5 Flora and fauna

The occurrence and types of vegetation communities are influenced by past sedimentation patterns and later flooding regimes. River red gums are prominent on riverbanks while black box, old man saltbush, tall perennial grasses and lignum are found at billabongs and on floodplains. Dunes feature belah, the lower growing prickly wattle and narrow-leaf hopbush, and bluebushes. Common

reed and cumbungi are associated with areas of permanent standing water.

The bioregion supports many amphibian, reptile, bird and mammal species including predatory birds, water birds, parrots and emus; larger mammals such as the red kangaroo, western grey and eastern grey kangaroo and common wallaroo. Although largely uncleared, the composition and structure of vegetation and animal communities has been altered as a result of grazing by stock, introduction of feral animals, and changed fire regimes. The resulting habitat loss and encroachment has depleted the species range and number of smaller mammals to the point that some are no longer to be found in the area.

3.6 Climate

Menindee's climate may be described as hot, dry semi-arid. Data has been recorded continuously at Menindee Post Office (047019) from 1876 to date. The following climate data is for the Post Office recording station using rainfall data from 1876 onwards and temperature data from 1907, with more comprehensive datasets recorded from 1959.

Figure 3.2: Temperatures

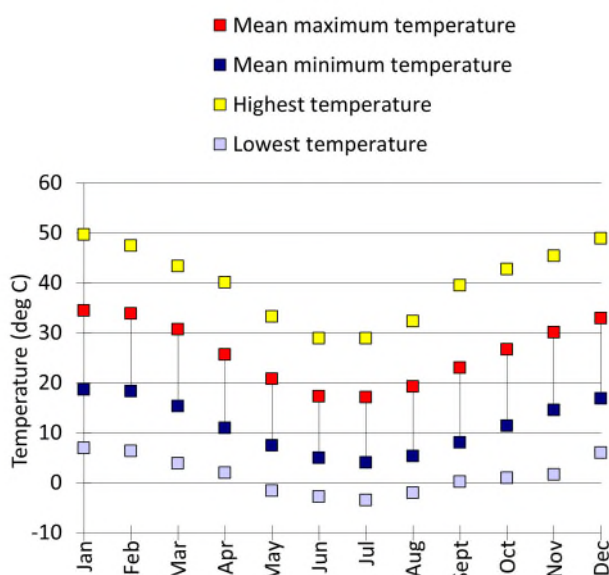


Figure 3.3 suggests that the highest monthly temperatures experienced in Menindee have

remained largely unchanged since records began. The mean number of days with higher temperatures shown in Figure 3.4 is increasing.

Figure 3.3: Increase in highest monthly temperatures

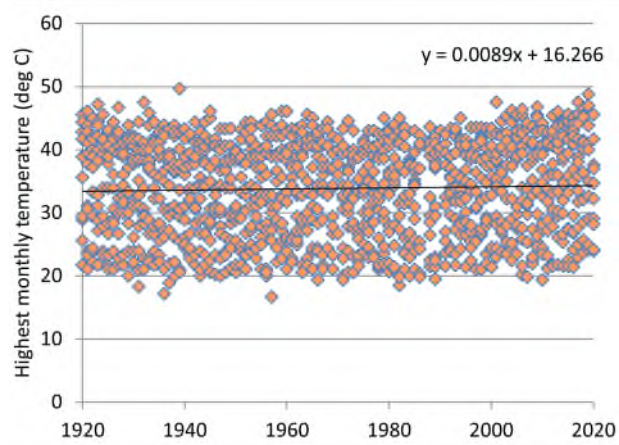


Figure 3.4: Days with extreme temperatures, 1957 to date

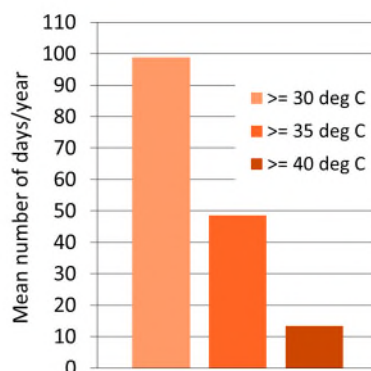


Figure 3.5: Mean number of days with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$

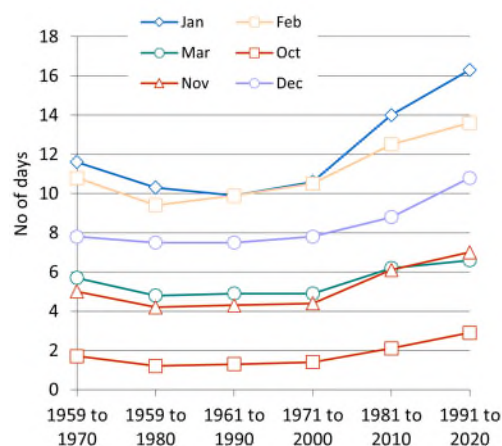


Figure 3.5 indicates that, while temperatures have stayed relatively constant, the mean number of days with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ over the warmer months of the year from 1959 has risen noticeably. If this trend continues, the community can expect to live with the more extreme temperatures for longer.

Mean annual rainfall calculated from 71 years of record between 1947 and 2018 is 253.6 mm. Monthly distribution is shown in Figure 3.6. Average monthly pan evaporation estimated from the Bureau of Meteorology evaporation mapping is well in excess of rainfall throughout the year.

Figure 3.6: Rainfall and monthly pan evaporation

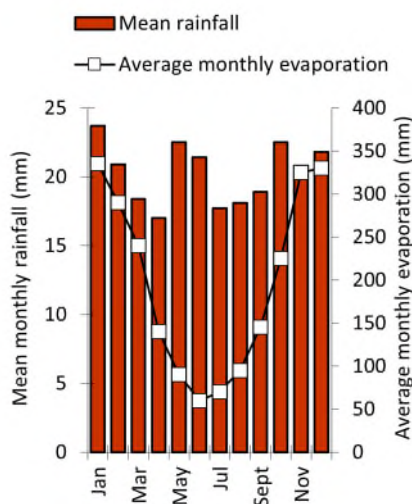
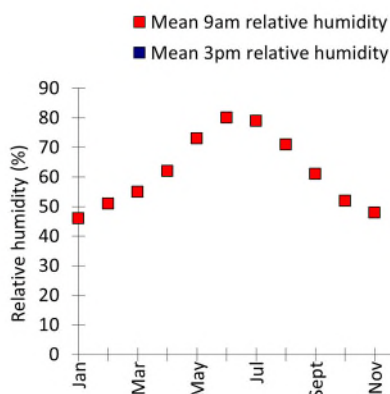


Figure 3.7: Relative humidity



Afternoon humidity, wind conditions and hours of sunshine (Figure 3.9) are not recorded.

Wind is predominantly from the south in the morning (9.00 am) generating monthly mean wind speeds shown in Figure 3.8. No recordings are taken in the afternoon.

Figure 3.8: Wind speed

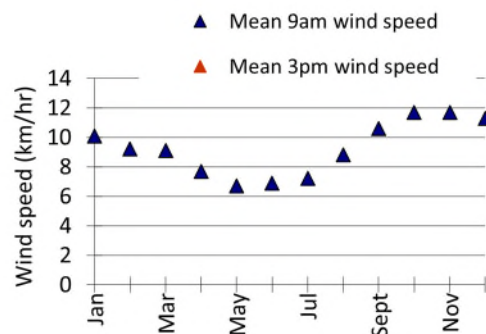
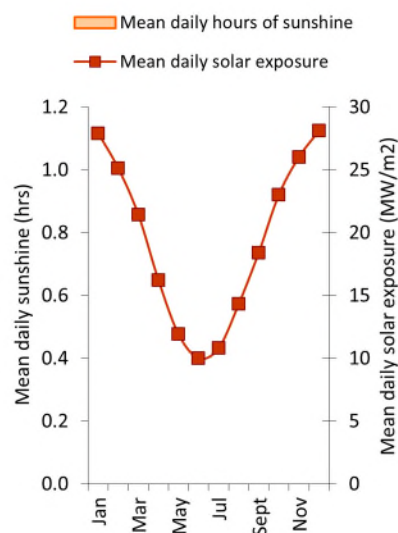


Figure 3.9: Sunshine and solar exposure



A record of mean daily hours of sunshine has not been kept so Figure 3.9 is incomplete.

3.7 Flooding and drainage

Although the Darling River catchment upstream of Menindee reaches into southern Queensland and drains most of New South Wales west of the Great Dividing Range, rarely does the entire catchment contribute to significant flow in the Darling River. Characteristics of flows are high variability and lengthy channel travel times. Between flood

events and/or over sections of river, drying occurs when there is little or no inflow.

The Menindee Lakes Storage Scheme has modified the natural regime and is able to regulate flows except for large floods which can occur at any time of the year but most frequently, depending upon the location of major rainfall events, in March and from July to September.

Table 3.1 notes the highest daily rainfall on record and the year of occurrence for each month.

Table 3.1: Highest daily rainfalls (mm) (047019)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
129.6	100.8	96.6	66.0	45.0	63.5
1993	2000	1989	1974	1919	1923
Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
60.7	38.9	63.0	69.3	150.6	80.0
1886	1920	2016	1938	1933	1887

Rainfall intensity-frequency-duration (IFD) values are shown at Table 3.2.

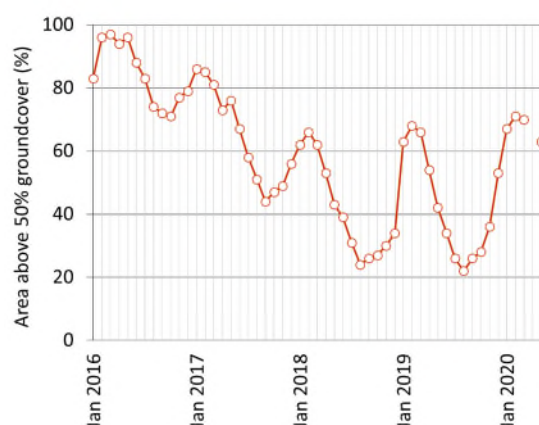
Table 3.2: Rainfall IFD (32.3875 S, 142.4375 E)

Duration	Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)			
	10%	5%	2%	1%
Design Rainfall Depth (mm)				
1 min	3.00	3.73	4.80	5.70
2 min	5.03	6.27	8.11	9.68
3 min	6.92	8.61	11.1	13.3
4 min	8.6	10.7	13.8	16.4
5 min	10.1	12.5	16.1	19.2
10 min	15.6	19.4	24.9	29.6
20 min	21.9	27.3	35.1	41.7
30 min	25.8	32.0	41.2	49.1
1 hour	32.3	40.2	51.8	61.7
2 hour	39.2	48.5	62.4	74.3
6 hour	52.1	63.9	81.2	95.8
12 hour	62.3	75.7	95.0	111
18 hour	68.8	83.4	104	121
24 hour	73.6	89.0	110	127
48 hour	84.8	103	126	144
72 hour	90.5	110	134	153
96 hour	94.0	115	140	160

3.8 Dust

Data collected by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage Rural Air Quality network DustWatch programme in the Western Natural Resource Management (NRM) Region is shown at Figure 3.10.

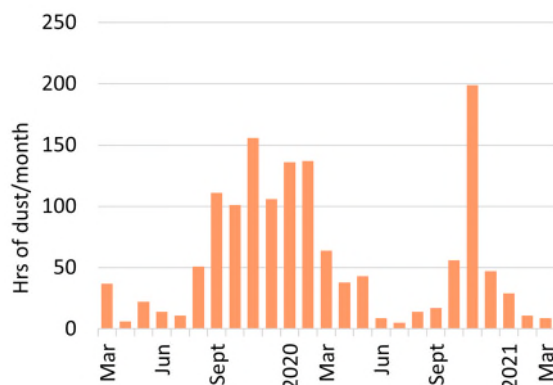
Figure 3.10: Seasonal variation in the land area with groundcover exceeding 50%, Western NRM



The cause of dust generation is a combination of very low groundcover resulting from prolonged dry conditions, 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 3.8, which indicates mean wind speeds in the range 6-12 km/hr, suggests that Menindee should be less prone to dust events than some other communities in the Murdi Paaki Region but Figure 3.11, showing the duration of dust at Coomba Station south west of Menindee for the two year period to March 2021, contradicts this perception. Residents are likely then to exhibit adverse health effects of fine particle pollution associated with dust generation:

- A worsening of existing health conditions among at-risk groups: the very young, the elderly and those with respiratory conditions such as asthma;
- A greater level of hospitalisation; and
- An increase in mortality.

Figure 3.11: Prevalence of dust at Coomba Station, south west of Menindee, 2019-2021



3.9 Native title

In 2015, the Barkandji Traditional Owners Group representing Barkandji and Malyangapa People were granted Native Title rights over a large part of western NSW (NNTT Number: NCD2015/001). The claim area included the town of Menindee and the determination encompassed several parcels of land in the town, including residential lots. A subsequent determination (NCD2017/001) granted rights to other lots around Menindee but not in the developed area.

3.10 Sites of cultural significance

The Darling River corridor 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 latitudes 32.417°S to 32.375 S and longitude 142.384°E to 142.426 E, (approximately 4 km x 4 km with the township at the centre), indicates the existence of a number of recorded Aboriginal sites in or near the above location. In the interests of sites preservation, and as a condition of accessing the data, no details are included in this Plan other than to note their existence.

Kinchega National Park is the site of much archaeological material from pre-colonisation times: middens, hearths, stone implements and evidence of animals now extinct. The Old

Menindee Mission is a painful reminder of the active period of dispossession and suppression. Menindee Mission is a gazetted Aboriginal Place under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

3.11 Economic geography

Menindee has limited facilities: two hotels, a motel, post office, service station and a supermarket. The town relies heavily on tourism borne out of its role in early exploration, Aboriginal and European heritage, notably Kinchega National Park, and the Menindee Lakes ecosystem.

Menindee is a producer of table grapes, rock melons, apricots, citrus, tomatoes, and other fruit and vegetables supported by irrigation from the Menindee Lakes storages and the Darling River. Cotton farming was practised at Lake Tandou prior to the onset of prolonged drought in the region. Imports and production from new varieties have eroded the market position of table grape producers to the extent that many grape producers have ceased to operate. The lack of water for irrigation purposes has adversely impacted all agribusiness more generally.

Pastoral activity on the marginal rangelands is predominantly sheep production while tourism is the largest non-agricultural pursuit, with recreational fishing being a large part of that market in good years. Prosperity is heavily dependent upon the wellbeing of the river system so recent years of drought have been accompanied by depressed economic conditions.

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 for Locality (L) and State Suburb (SSC) geographies.

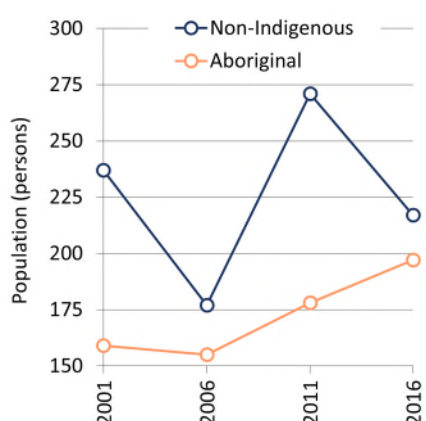
Table 4.1: Total population, Menindee (L) and Sunset Strip (SSC)

414+83=497	persons
Change from 2011 Census (Menindee (L) only)	-30
Source: ABS 2016 Census	

Table 4.2: Aboriginal population %, Menindee (L) and Sunset Strip (SSC)

41%	n=204
Murdi Paaki Region	23%
New South Wales	3%
Source: ABS 2016 Census	

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



The most accurate count of the population is the Estimated Resident Population (ERP); however, the

finest scale at which this is available is by local government area. At the ABS 2016 Census, on the basis of comparison with the ERP, the Aboriginal population of the Central Darling Shire was undercounted by 20%, and the non-Indigenous population by 11%.

Apart from Tables 4.1 and 4.2, census data in this chapter are for the Menindee locality, excluding Sunset Strip. The Aboriginal population of the Sunset Strip State Suburb was enumerated as 10 persons at the ABS 2016 Census. It is not practical to generate cross-tabulations for so small a population, nor is it sensible to add data for this cohort to the Menindee locality population. It is reasonable to assume that socio-economic and demographic characteristics for this group are similar to those for the Menindee locality, except that the age structure of the Sunset Strip population is older, and the median household income is lower.

Census data for the Menindee locality indicate that the ABS has imputed populations for 17 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 Menindee, the ABS imputed a total of 37 persons (18 male and 19 female) to the 17 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 17 households could equally house the population imputed to it on the basis of the composition of the donor record household, or a group household of unrelated 80-year-old pensioners. It is, however, on the basis of the undercount, likely that a greater proportion of these dwellings house Aboriginal households.

Where possible, the Murdi Paaki Region comparison geography used in this Plan is the aggregated 154 SA1s (ABS Statistical Area Level 1) that approximate the Region. For variables where SA1 level data are not published, either the 8 Local Government Areas (LGAs) approximating the Murdi Paaki Region or the North-Western NSW Indigenous Region (N-W NSW IREG) has been adopted.

KEY FINDINGS

- The total population of Menindee and Sunset Strip recorded on Census night 2016 was 497 of which 204 were of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
- Of all those counted in Menindee on Census night 2016, 13 (10 non-Indigenous and three Aboriginal) were in a non-private dwelling (hotel or motel).
- Since 2001, the Aboriginal population has been increasing by an average annual rate of 1.43%.
- The median age of the Aboriginal population, at 27 years, is just under half that of the non-Indigenous population but is slightly higher than for the Murdi Paaki Region on average, and for NSW.
- The Aboriginal population aged under 15 years is slightly lower than for the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole, and for NSW, but is still over three times the population fraction for the non-Indigenous population of Menindee.
- Non-Indigenous households are more than five 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 twelve times as likely to be a single parent family.
- Aboriginal adults were almost 30% less likely to be in a couple relationship than non-Indigenous adults, perhaps reflecting the younger population age structure.
- There were no multi-family households recorded in either the Aboriginal or the non-Indigenous population fractions.
- Aboriginal households were between three and four times as likely to have resident non-

dependent children than non-Indigenous households.

Figure 4.2: Population age distribution

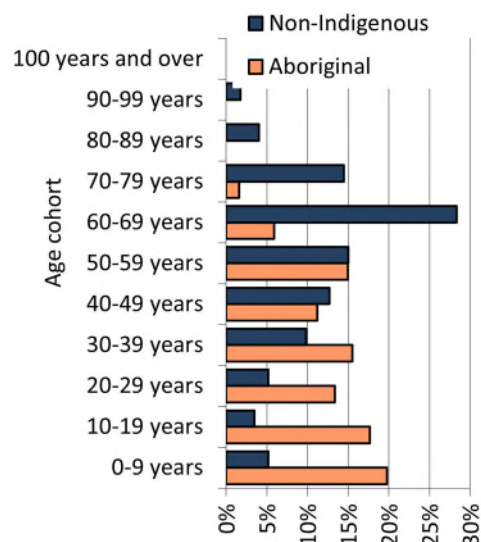
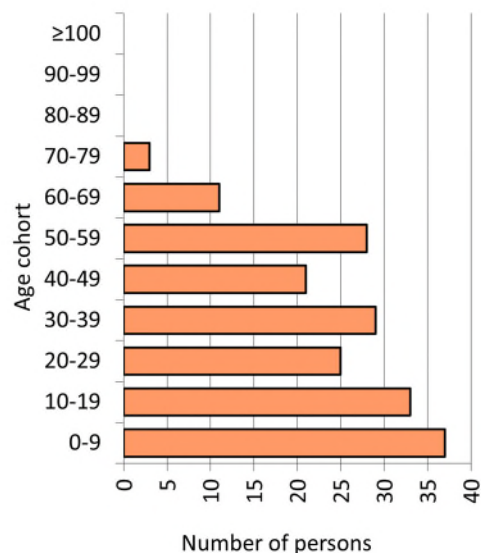


Figure 4.3: Aboriginal population age distribution



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.3: Median age of persons (years)		
	27	55
Murdi Paaki Region	26	46
New South Wales	22	38
Table 4.4: Population aged under 15 years (2016)		
	n=197	n=217
Of population fraction	27%	8%
Murdi Paaki Region	32%	16%
New South Wales	34%	18%
Table 4.5: Social marital status (Persons aged 15 years and over)		
Registered marriage	10%	36%
De facto marriage	26%	15%
Not married	64%	49%
Table 4.6: Lone person households		
	n=74	n=92
	12%	63%
Murdi Paaki Region	21%	36%
New South Wales	15%	24%
Table 4.7: Family household family composition		
One parent	36%	3%
Couple, no children	16%	29%
Couple, with children	28%	4%
Other family	19%	63%
One parent families:		
Murdi Paaki Region	43%	15%
New South Wales	36%	15%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.8: Multi-family households (of all family households)		
	n=92	n=74
	0%	0%
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	1%
New South Wales	4%	2%
Table 4.9: Families with resident non-dependent children		
	n=62	n=34
	32%	9%
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 4.10: Educational institution attended by the Aboriginal population of Menindee (L), ABS 2016 Census	
	n=194
Preschool	3
Infants/primary - Government	12
Secondary - Government	27
Secondary – Other Non-Government	4
University or other Tertiary Institution	4
Not stated	18

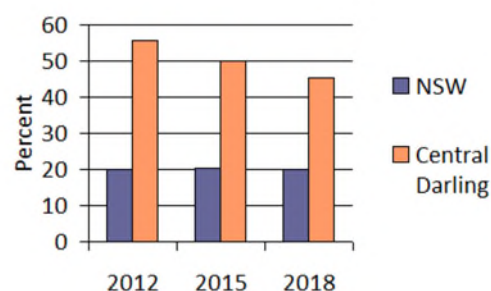
KEY FINDINGS

- There were no three-year-old and very few four-year-old children enumerated in the ABS 2016 Census, but all Aboriginal four-year-old children appeared to be enrolled in pre-school.
- On Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) indicators, children commencing their first year of full-time schooling in the Central Darling LGA have not reached the same stage of early childhood development as their counterparts in NSW, but the gap has narrowed.
- Student attendance level (the proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time) lags that of non-Indigenous students by a substantial margin at Menindee Central School.
- Educational attainment at Menindee Central School is below or well below the average of all Australia students.
- Only 30% of Aboriginal people aged 15 to 19 years who had left school had completed Year 12. The few non-Indigenous people in that age cohort were still at school, so a direct comparison is not possible; however, the completion rate for Menindee residents was 50% higher than for the Region.
- Aboriginal persons aged 17 or 18 years were fully engaged in learning or learning – twice the proportion for the Region.
- Aboriginal adults were slightly less than half as likely as non-Indigenous adults to hold a post-school qualification at any level. The Aboriginal population aged over 15 years has a lesser proportion of adults with a post-school qualification than for the Murdi Paaki Region generally or for the Aboriginal population of NSW.

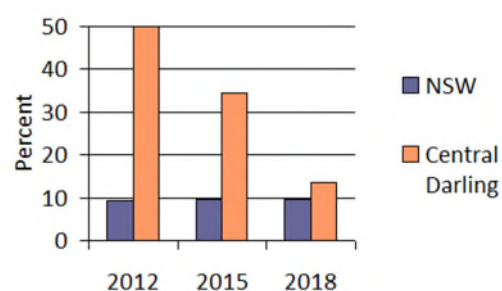
Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.11: Pre-school attendance		
	n=4	n=0
Children 3 years old	-	-
Murdi Paaki Region	41%	50%
New South Wales	52%	49%
	n=4	n=0
Children 4 years old	100%	-
Murdi Paaki Region	82%	79%
New South Wales	72%	72%

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

One or more domains:



Two or more domains:



Aboriginal children (n=16 or 57% of 28)

Note: Includes Menindee, Ivanhoe, Wilcannia, White Cliffs and Tilpa

Table 4.12: AEDC vulnerability indicators

	Vuln 1	Vuln 2
Central Darling	45.5%	13.6%

Source: Australian Early Development Census, Community Profile 2018, Far West NSW

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

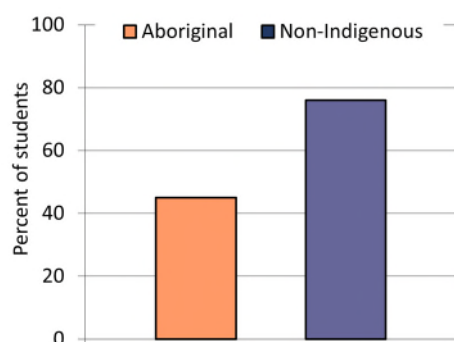


Table 4.13: Educational attainment, NAPLAN, Menindee Central School average when compared with all Australian students

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	5	5	5	5	5
Year 5	5	5	4	5	5
Year 9	5	5	5	5	5
Legend					
Above average	2	Close to			3
Below average	4	Well below			5

Source: acara MySchools website

Figure 4.6A: Highest year of schooling, all Aboriginal adults

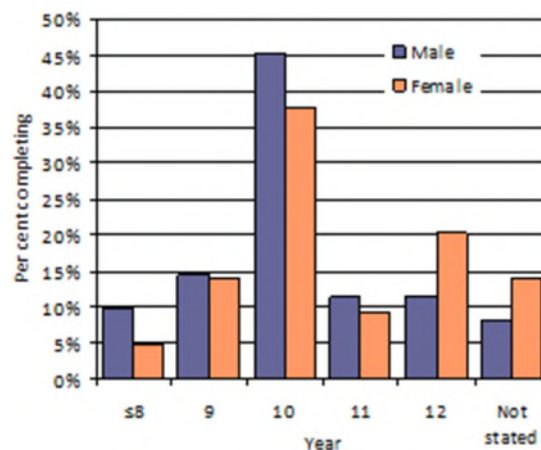
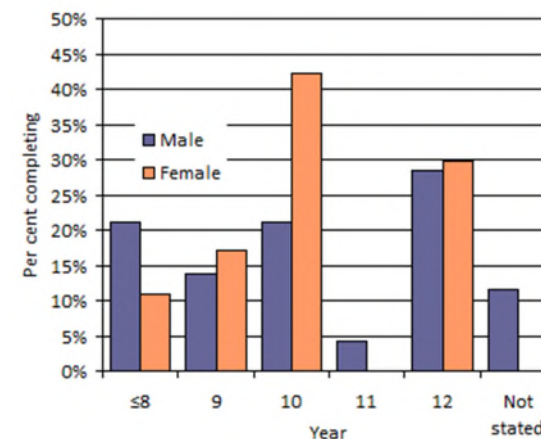


Figure 4.6B: Highest year of schooling, all non-Indigenous adults



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.14: Percentage of students completed Year 12 (Persons aged 15 to 19 who have completed schooling and are no longer at school)		
	n=19	n=0
	30%	-
Murdi Paaki Region	20%	48%
New South Wales	33%	51%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.15: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a vocational qualification		
	n=138	n=161
Cert I-IV	10%	22%
Murdi Paaki Region	18%	26%
New South Wales	25%	20%
Table 4.16: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with an undergraduate diploma		
	n=138	n=161
Diploma and Advanced Diploma	6%	5%
Murdi Paaki Region	5%	7%
New South Wales	7%	10%
Table 4.17: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a tertiary qualification		
	n=138	n=161
Degree and higher	0%	9%
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	12%
New South Wales	8%	27%
Table 4.18: Engagement of persons aged 17 and 18 years in employment, education and training		
Fully engaged	100%	-
Murdi Paaki Region	49%	74%
New South Wales	62%	84%

4.3 Economic participation

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.19: Labour force status (Percent of labour force)		
	n=34	n=68
In full-time or part-time work	68%	84%
Unemployed, looking for work	32%	16%
Murdi Paaki Region	76%	94%
New South Wales	85%	94%
17% of those employed worked part-time		
Table 4.20: Participation in the labour market (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=123	n=152
In labour force	28%	45%
Not in labour force	72%	55%
Murdi Paaki Region	44%	61%
New South Wales	56%	64%
Table 4.21: Employment to population ratio (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=123	n=152
Employment to Population ratio	19%	38%
Murdi Paaki Region	34%	57%
New South Wales	47%	60%

Table 4.22: Industry of employment – Total population

Industry	Aboriginal		Non-Indigenous	
	No employed	% of total employed	No employed	% of total employed
Education and Training	11	40.7%	15	20.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	-	-	15	20.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	6	22.2%	5	6.9%
Public Administration and Safety	4	14.8%	9	12.5%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	3	11.1%	4	5.6%
Other Services	-	-	6	8.3%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	-	-	5	6.9%
Administrative and Support Services	-	-	4	5.6%
Construction	-	-	3	4.2%
Retail Trade	-	-	3	4.2%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	-	-	3	4.2%
Inadequately described or not stated	3	-	-	-

Table 4.23: Occupation of all persons employed

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Managers	9.7%	12.0%
Professionals	12.9%	20.0%
Technician/trades	12.9%	10.0%
Community service workers	29.0%	18.0%
Clerical/admin workers	9.7%	6.0%
Sales workers	0.0%	14.0%
Machinery operators	9.7%	10.0%
Labourers	16.1%	10.0%

KEY FINDINGS

- With an unemployment rate twice that of the non-Aboriginal population, and a low labour force participation rate, the employment to population ratio for Aboriginal people in Menindee implies that slightly less than one in five adults are in any form of employment. This ratio is low, too, for the non-Indigenous population fraction.
- Investigation of the age structure of the Menindee Aboriginal population through calculation of the dependency ratio (57.4 for Menindee – lower than for the Murdi Paaki Region, at 61.6) indicates that this is not the

cause of the very low employment to population ratio. It is simply that Aboriginal people of working age resident in Menindee have a very low workforce participation rate.

- Aboriginal workers are more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be employed as community/personal service workers or as a technician or tradesperson or a labourer but less likely to be employed as a manager, professional or sales worker.
- The education and training industry sector employs the largest proportion of the workforce, followed by health care and social assistance, and accommodation and food services; no Aboriginal workers are employed in primary business activities of agriculture and accommodation and food services.
- Data for Central Darling LGA as a whole indicate a slow decline over time in the number of businesses. There was no Aboriginal engagement as proprietors of businesses, whether sole traders, employing or incorporated enterprises enumerated in the ABS 2016 Census.

Figure 4.7: Hours worked by age group

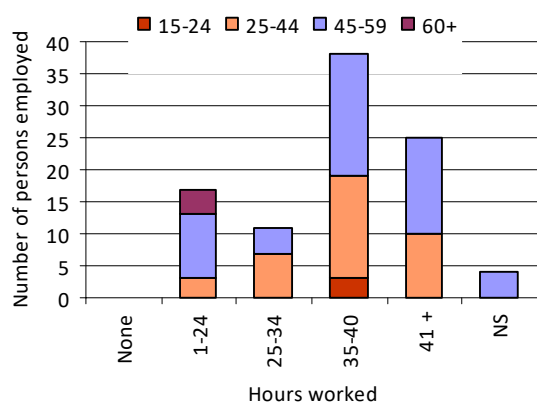


Table 4.24: Number of Aboriginal workers employed in the public and private sectors

Australian Government	-
NSW Government	8
Central Darling Shire Council	3
Private sector	17
Not stated	-

Table 4.25: Total number of businesses, Central Darling LGA

At 30th June 2018

No of employees	No of businesses
Nil	101
0-4	42
5-19	4
20 or more	3

Table 4.26: Business entries and exits, Central Darling LGA

At 30th June 2018

Year	Change in number
2015	-3
2016	2
2017	-2
2018	-2

4.4 Income

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.27: Median total household income		
\$/week	840	747
N-W NSW IREG	907	1,013
New South Wales	1,214	1,498

Table 4.28: Estimates of personal income, total population, Central Darling LGA

Median employee income (\$) (2016)	36,876
Income share of top 10% of earners (excl. government payments)	33.3%
FW and Orana SA4	44,418
New South Wales	49,256

Figure 4.8: Average annual growth in median employee income, 2013-2016, Central Darling LGA

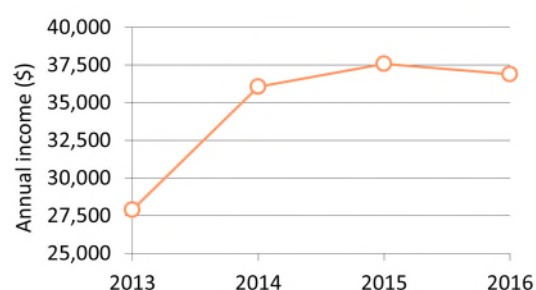


Table 4.29: Sources of income support, Central Darling LGA

In 2016, percentage of total population aged 15 and over receiving:

Age pension (n=200)	11%
Carer payment (n=31)	2%
Disability support pension (n=133)	7%
Newstart allowance (n=150)	8%
Parenting payment, single (n=59)	3%
Family tax benefit A (n=163)	9%
Family tax benefit B (n=140)	8%
Commonwealth rent assistance (n=122)	7%

KEY FINDINGS

- Although the median weekly income for Aboriginal households exceeds that for other households, the Aboriginal median weekly individual income is slightly over 20% lower than for non-Indigenous persons. The disparity between individual and household incomes reflects higher average Aboriginal household size.
- It is well established that the Murdi Paaki Region suffers the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage in NSW. Central Darling LGA is placed second lowest in NSW in the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) ranking. While rankings are not available for individual localities, the IRSD for the Menindee SA1 is even lower than for the LGA as a whole as indicated by Table 4.30.
- The status of Aboriginal people in Menindee is compounded by the fact that no Aboriginal person was enumerated as being employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing or in accommodation and food service in what is predominantly a rural (grazing and horticultural) and tourism economy.

4.5 Measure of socio-economic disadvantage

Table 4.30: SEIFA Index of disadvantage 2016

SEIFA Index (IRSD) – Menindee (SA1:2109802)	759
SEIFA Index (IRSD) – Central Darling LGA	817
Rank in NSW	129 th of 130
Murdi Paaki Region:	
Highest (Cobar)	968
Lowest (Brewarrina)	757

5 COMMUNITY HOUSING PROFILE

5.1 Menindee housing generally

The total number of dwellings, 359, comprises 214 in the Menindee township and 145 at Sunset Strip. Sunset Strip has been excluded from further investigation because on Census night 2016, 100 of the 145 dwellings were unoccupied and only 74 of the 91 individuals enumerated were residents, suggesting that most of these dwellings may be holiday homes, not permanent residences.

Table 5.1: Dwelling types, Menindee (L) and Sunset Strip (SSC)

Total number	359	
Separate houses	331	92%
Terraces, town houses	14	4%
Apartments	10	3%
Other dwelling types	4	1%

Table 5.2: Private dwellings unoccupied on Census night (Menindee (L))

	n=214	
	24	11%
Change since 2011	n=39	-15
Murdi Paaki Region		19%
New South Wales		9%

35 people were counted elsewhere on Census night

Table 5.3: Households counted in a dwelling on Census night

Resident households	164
Visitor households	5
Non-classifiable	16

Table 5.4: Number of bedrooms per dwelling

0 or 1 bedrooms	13	9%
2 bedrooms	76	26%
3 bedrooms	183	41%
4 bedrooms	124	21%
5 bedrooms and more	30	4%

Figure 5.1: Dwelling size by number of bedrooms

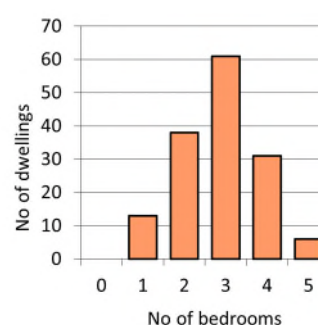


Table 5.5: Building approvals, 2018, Central Darling (A)

Total building approvals	1
Private sector houses	1
Private other dwelling	-
Other dwelling units	-

Source: ABS Data by Region, 2011-18, Economy and Industry

Table 5.6: Median residential property price, Central Darling (A)

In 2018	\$51,500
No of transfers	23

Source: ABS, Data by Region, 2011-18, Economy and Industry

5.2 A statistical comparative snapshot

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
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Table 5.7: Average household size

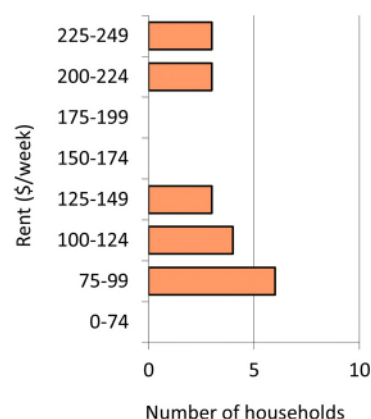
Persons	2.8	1.5
N-W NSW IREG	3.0	2.1
New South Wales	3.1	2.6

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.8: Average number of persons per bedroom		
Persons	0.9	0.7
N-W NSW IREG	0.9	0.7
New South Wales	1.0	0.9
Table 5.9: Households enumerated		
One family household	58	36
Multiple family household	0	0
Non-family household	9	55
Non-classifiable	0	0
Not applicable	0	0
Table 5.10: Occupancy		
One person	9	58
Two people	27	30
Three people	14	4
Four people	11	0
Five people and greater	9	0
Table 5.11: Proportion of all households renting		
Proportion of all households	74%	25%
Real estate agent	-	-
NSW housing authority	60.0%	35.0%
Other private	20.0%	15.0%
Other	20.0%	50.0%
Murdi Paaki Region	62%	24%
New South Wales	56%	32%
Table 5.12: Median rent		
\$/week	140	60
N-W NSW IREG	160	150
New South Wales	270	390

Table 5.13: Percentage of all households with rent equal to or greater than 30% of household income

Renting	4.5%
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Figure 5.2: Weekly rent payable by Aboriginal households, Menindee, social housing rentals



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.14: Home ownership (including owned with a mortgage)		
	n=14	n=60
Proportion of all households	22%	67%
Murdi Paaki Region	38%	76%
New South Wales	44%	68%
Table 5.15: Change in Aboriginal home ownership		
	2016	2011
Proportion of all Aboriginal households	22%	24%
Table 5.16: Persons accommodated in non-private dwellings		
Hotel, motel, B&B	3	10

Table 5.17: Number of persons homeless in Far West SA3, including Broken Hill

(After Chamberlain and MacKenzie)

Marginally housed	9
Tertiary homeless	24
Secondary homeless	34
Primary homeless	9
Living in crowded conditions	97

5.3 Population mobility

5.3.1 Characteristics of movement

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.18: Residential mobility		
	n=70	n=88
Residents in the household aged one year and over with a different address one year ago		
All residents	9%	10%
Some of the residents	6%	0%
No resident	86%	90%
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	30%	24%
Some of the residents	5%	5%
No resident	64%	72%

Table 5.19: Number of Aboriginal persons with a different address at stated location 1 year ago and five years ago

Place of residence	1 year ago	5 years ago
Within Central Darling	6	24
Broken Hill	6	14
Elsewhere in the MPR	0	0
Elsewhere in NSW	1	6
Other	4	8

5.3.2 Transport

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.20: Access and mobility		
No motor vehicles	20%	6%
One motor vehicle	39%	45%
Two motor vehicles	16%	26%
Three motor vehicles	0%	6%
Four or more motor vehicles	0%	5%
Not stated	15%	13%

5.4 The local housing market

House prices in Menindee vary markedly depending on the quality of construction and building age, size and condition. Information for only two sales in the last twelve months is available; price information has not been disclosed. During the period from 1st January 2017 to date, information is available for 17 sales; sale prices have been disclosed for 11 of these. The median price was \$75,000 and the range was \$30,000 for a small, older-style dwelling to \$240,000 for a recent 3-bedroom brick veneer slab on ground dwelling. Three houses are on the market at the time of writing; these are two three-bedroom dwellings of lightweight construction at Sunset Strip (asking prices \$85,000 and \$87,000) and a one-bedroom house in Menindee (asking price \$60,000).

The NSW Valuer General has assessed the unimproved value of residential lots for rating purposes as between \$1,600 and \$3,010.

5.5 Building activity

Only one building approval for a new residential building was issued by Central Darling Shire Council in the period 2019-2020. The value attaching to this approval was \$120,000. The total value of alterations and additions, including conversions, to residential buildings was reported as \$1,471,000. The value of non-residential building for the same period was \$1,150,000. It is not known in which communities these expenditures occurred but it is clear that building activity is subdued.

5.6 Cadastre

One Aboriginal organisation and one NSW Government agency own land and housing in Menindee: Menindee Local Aboriginal Land Council and the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) respectively.

MLALC is titleholder and custodian of the former Menindee Mission and also owns Appin Station on the Pooncarie Road. The Land Council office is located at 21 Yartla Street (L4 S25 DP758669). MLALC is also the holder of a water licence and a number of rural blocks not suited to residential development. These are not listed in Table 5.21 below.

Land holdings transferred from Nyampa Aboriginal Housing Corporation Pty Ltd to the AHO in August 2014 following the winding up of the former are listed in Table 5.22. In addition to developed lots, the AHO also have title to four undeveloped blocks, plus the former office of NAHC located at 23B Yartla Street (L3 S25 DP758669) and the adjacent laundromat, 25 Yartla Street (L2 DP450046). A small rural property, East Bootingee, was sold when NAHC was wound up.

A visual representation of their respective residential land holdings in the town area is shown at Figure 5.3 and an aerial view of the town at Figure 5.4.

Table 5.21: Cadastral information for MLALC residential properties

Lot	Section no.	Deposited Plan no.	WLL	Registered Proprietor	Area (m ²)	Location	Vacant or developed
Housing Manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation							
11	10	758669	✓	MLALC	1,012	14 Menindee St	D
11	24	758669	✓	MLALC	1,012	4 Paringa St	D
12	25	758669	✓	MLALC	1,012	16 Paringa St	D
12	34	758669	✓	MLALC	968	38 Holding St	D
10	38	758669	✓	MLALC	1,012	3 Maiden St	D
3	40	758669	✓	MLALC	1,012	40 Henley St	D
1	-	907731	✓	MLALC	1,012	2 Yartla St	D
Housing Manager: Menindee Local Aboriginal Land Council							
6	10	247152	-	MLALC	-	94 Lakeview Ave	D
8	9	247155	-	MLALC	-	74 Lakeview Ave	D
Vacant lots							
3	-	46639	-	MLALC	-	15 Paringa St	V
1	2	758669	-	MLALC	-	16 Perry St	V
2	2	758669	-	MLALC	-	18 Perry St	V
10	24	758669	-	MLALC	-	14 Paringa St	V
1	31	758669	-	MLALC	-	17 Paringa St	V
2	31	758669	-	MLALC	-	17 Paringa St	V
14	35	758669	-	MLALC	-	14 Holding St	V
16	35	758669	-	MLALC	-	10 Holding St	V
17	35	758669	-	MLALC	-	8 Holding St	V
18	35	758669	-	MLALC	-	6 Holding St	V
19	35	758669	-	MLALC	-	4 Holding St	V
20	35	758669	-	MLALC	-	2 Holding St	V
15	38	758669	-	MLALC	-	10 Henley St	V
12	-	705029	-	MLALC	-	105 Lakeview Ave	V

Lot	Section no.	Deposited Plan no.	WLL	Registered Proprietor	Area (m ²)	Location	Vacant or developed
13	-	705029	-	MLALC	-	107 Lakeview Ave	V
14	-	705029	-	MLALC	-	109 Lakeview Ave	V
15	-	705029	-	MLALC	-	111 Lakeview Ave	V

Table 5.22: Cadastral information for AHO properties

Lot	Section no.	Deposited Plan no.	WLL	Registered Proprietor	Area (m ²)	Location	Vacant or developed
Housing Manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation							
4	-	650438	-	AHO	-	7 Menindee St	D
8	-	722936	PL	AHO	-	26 Paringa St	D
13	-	722936	PL	AHO	-	22A/B Paringa St	Dx2
14	-	722936	-	AHO	-	24 Paringa St	D
8	-	722937	PL	AHO	-	10 Paringa St	D
12	-	722937	PL	AHO	-	8 Paringa St	D
8	-	722938	PL	AHO	-	10 Yartla St	D
12	-	722938	PL	AHO	-	8 Yartla St	D
3	-	722938	PL	AHO	-	11 Menindee St	D
7	-	722939	PL	AHO	-	50 Menindee St	D
11	-	722939	PL	AHO	-	48 Menindee St	D
10	10	758669	PL	AHO	-	12 Menindee St	D
6	17	758669	PL	AHO	-	4 Yartla St	D
3	25	758669	-	AHO	-	23A Yartla St	D
11	24	758669	PL	AHO	-	6 Paringa St	D
6	25	758669	PL	AHO	-	18 Paringa St	D
1	34	758669	-	AHO	-	39 Henley St	D
2	34	758669	PL	AHO	-	35-37 Henley St	D
3	34	758669	PL	AHO	-	35-37 Henley St	D
7	17	758669	-	AHO	-	6A/B Yartla St	Dx2
6163	-	769008	PL	AHO	-	8 Menindee St	D
2	-	806399	-	AHO	-	9 Paringa St	D
4	-	806399	-	AHO	-	5 Paringa St	D
5	-	806399	-	AHO	-	3 Paringa St	D
6	-	806399	-	AHO	-	1 Paringa St	D
9	-	806399	-	AHO	-	6 Pruella St	D-U/F
10	-	806399	-	AHO	-	8 Pruella St	D
11	-	806399	-	AHO	-	10 Pruella St	D
12	14	758669	-	AHO	-	24 Nora St	D
9	17	758669	-	AHO	-	12 Yartla St	D
33	-	1195414	-	AHO	-	53A/B Yartla St	Dx2
1	10	758669	-	AHO	-	15A/B Candilla St	Dx2
9	24	758669	-	AHO	-	12 Paringa St	D

Lot	Section no.	Deposited Plan no.	WLL	Registered Proprietor	Area (m ²)	Location	Vacant or developed
Housing Manager: Compass Housing							
9	39	758669	-	AHO	-	23 Maiden St	D
Vacant lots							
2	17	758669	PL	AHO	-	13 Menindee St	V
7	24	758669	PL	AHO	-	6 Paringa St	V
1	-	806399	-	AHO	-	11 Paringa St	V
7	-	806399	-	AHO	-	2 Pruella St	V
12	-	806399	-	AHO	-	12 Pruella St	V

Note: PL = Perpetual lease

Figure 5.3: Property ownership



Figure 5.4: Menindee (Courtesy of LandsSix, NSW Government, Department of Customer Services, Spatial Services)



MLALC blocks are subject to restrictions on dealing in accordance with Section 40 of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983.

5.7 Housing assets

Figure 5.5 is illustrative of the general form of housing construction: suspended timber floor on piers, lightweight fibro clad construction with metal roof.

Figure 5.5: Typical form of construction



The original dwellings situated at 24-26 Paringa Street have been demolished and replaced with new houses.

The property at 6 Pruella Street is unfit for habitation and a decision is awaited on whether the AHO will renovate the house or knock down and rebuild. The house has been vacant for 4 years during which time MPRHC advises that it has continued to pay Council rates.

The level of accommodation provided by Aboriginal social housing is noted at Table 5.23.

Table 5.23: Housing assets				
No of bedrooms				
Studio/1	2	3	4+	Total
Owner: Menindee Local Aboriginal Land Council				
Manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation				
-	2	5	-	7
Owner: NSW Aboriginal Housing Office				
Manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation				
-	4	20	13	37
Owner: NSW Aboriginal Housing Office				
Manager: Compass Housing				
-	-	-	1	1
Total				45

Note: Details for 5 dwellings not able to be verified

5.8 Planning controls

Areas within Menindee are utilised for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. Council's Local Environmental Plan zones the developed area of Menindee and the small settlement of Sunset Strip, as RU5 Village with the objectives of:

- Providing for a range of land uses, services and facilities that are associated with a rural village;
- Retaining and facilitating expansion and redevelopment of the existing central business district of Menindee and to further strengthen the core commercial functions; and
- Ensuring that development retains and enhances the existing village character.

Within this zoning, building of dwelling houses is permitted with consent. Development controls such as building setbacks, height and floor to space ratio are set out in State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008; Council not having a separate Development Control Plan. Minimum lot size is 1,000 m².

The rail corridor to the northern part of Menindee is zoned SP2, Infrastructure while Lot 2, Section 27, DP 758669 (Maiden's Hotel, Yartla Street) and the

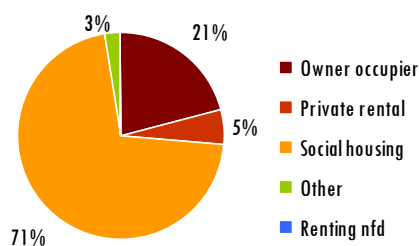
Old Wharf (on Crown Land to the east of Chisholm Street) are zoned as items of heritage significance.

5.9 Findings of the household survey

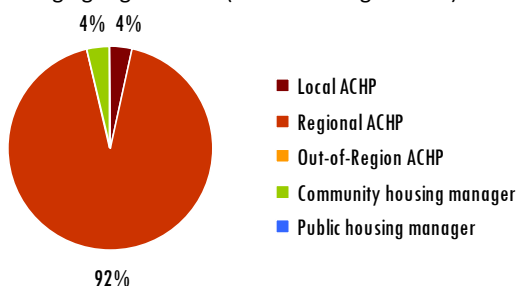
5.9.1 Overview

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 38 households in Menindee. As well as tenants living in social housing, homeowners, private renters, people staying in refugees and/or couch surfing contributed to the findings of the survey. The contribution from Menindee is presented below.

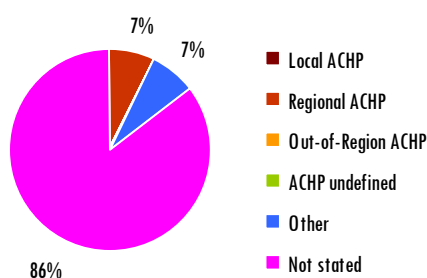
Housing mix (All households participating in the survey)



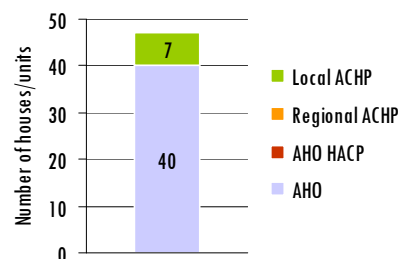
Managing organisation (Social housing tenants)



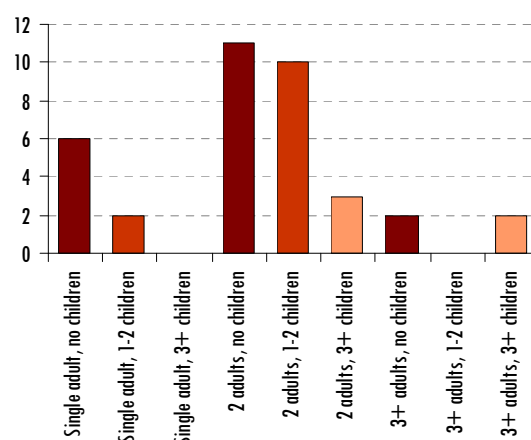
Preferred Manager (Social housing tenants)



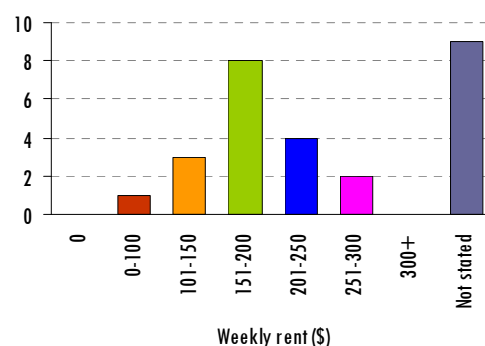
Ownership of social housing



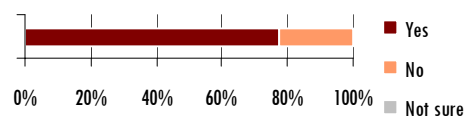
Household size (All households)



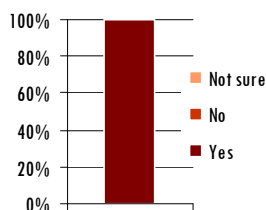
Rent levels (Social housing tenants)



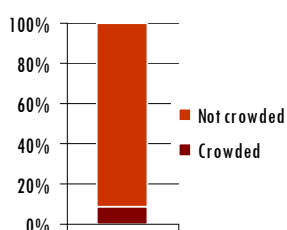
Social housing tenants claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)



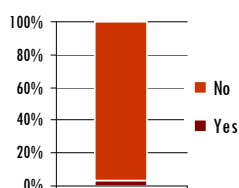
Social housing tenants with a tenancy agreement
(Social housing tenants)



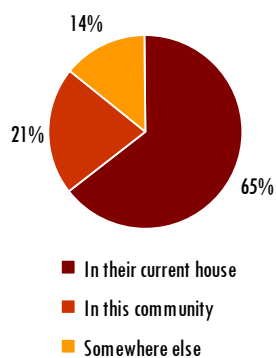
Households crowded



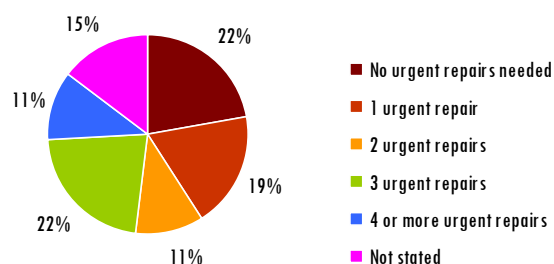
Households giving shelter to homeless people



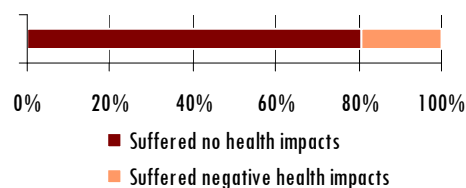
Where tenants lived 5 years ago



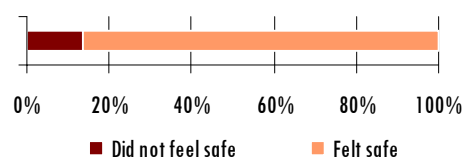
Need for urgent works (As reported by social housing tenants)



Negative impacts from living conditions



Feeling safe at home



5.9.2 The situation of homeowners

Eight homeowner households responded to the survey. All owners were purchasing or had purchased detached houses: five out of eight were purchasing and, of these, three said that they were purchasing under a rent buy scheme. Two households had purchased or were purchasing with the aid of loans from a bank, building society or credit union, two had sourced loans from other lending institutions and three had relied on their own savings. Of those who responded to the question, six owners were satisfied with their decision to purchase while one was undecided. In most instances, homeowners had long-standing attachment to the community, through having been born in Menindee or through a lengthy family residency. Living on Country was an important consideration, as was being close to other family, relations and to friends. There was little evidence of mobility in homeowners: all respondents were living in the same house one year ago while seven reported they were living in the same house five years ago.

Overwhelmingly, owner respondents valued the sense of ownership that home ownership brought: the independence, autonomy and freedom to modify their living environment to suit needs. Disadvantages of home ownership were said to be the cost required to maintain the home, physical inability to carry out repairs and maintenance, and affordability of local government rates and charges. Two owners said they had trouble in paying their power bills but the remaining six

owners did not respond to the question. Respondents were not asked to disclose the value of monthly mortgage repayments.

Of the four homeowners who provided occupancy details, none required additional bedrooms. One household reported a visitor staying for longer than a week and another a visitor staying for less than a week. Only two reported feeling crowded in their home: a bit crowded in the case of one and quite crowded in the case of another. Five out of seven respondents said they were never stressed from crowding, one said they were rarely stressed and another said they were sometimes stressed as a result of crowding. In the three years prior to the survey, no home owning had had any members experience homelessness, and none was giving shelter to a person or persons who would otherwise have been homeless at the time of the survey.

Condition reports suggested owner occupied housing did not exhibit the same range of structural, enclosure and facilities problems as do other houses built on expansive soils in the Murdi Paaki Region. While structural problems were noted, these tended to be few and isolated to one particular type of defect.

5.9.3 The situation of tenants

The household survey captured approximately 50% (n=30) of Aboriginal households living in rented accommodation. Only three tenancies were not in Aboriginal social housing. Social housing tenants rented either NSW Aboriginal Housing Office-owned housing (n=38) or housing owned by the Menindee LALC (n=7). AHO properties are managed by Compass Housing Services (n=1) and Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation (n=38), while MLALC properties are managed by Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation under the Build and Grow Policy head lease/sub lease arrangement.

All social housing tenants had a signed tenancy agreement as did one tenant who was renting from his/her employer. Neither tenant in a private rental had a signed tenancy agreement. Most

social housing tenants were aware that a limit on occupancy was imposed by the agreement.

The mix of house sizes in Aboriginal social housing is stated in Table 5.24.

Table 5.24: Number of bedrooms				
Number of houses with				
Studio/1	2	3	4+	
bedroom(s)				
-	6	25	13	

Note: Details for 5 dwellings not able to be verified

The weekly rent paid by all tenants for three-bedroom dwellings was higher than for four-bedroom dwellings: the median rents were \$150 for a two-bedroom house, between \$181 and \$190 for a three-bedroom house, and \$171 and \$180 for a four-bedroom house. Tenants were of the opinion that actual rents were in excess of a fair rent but renting in the Aboriginal social housing sector was the only option available. Affordability was not, then, an issue which influenced a tenant's decision to rent. Only one respondent stated that they could not afford to buy their own home suggesting, perhaps, there was little interest among other tenants in this alternative. Two tenants did express interest in a rent-buy scheme.

Underlying evidence of financial stress was reflected in 73% of tenants responding to the question reporting trouble 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.

At the time of the household survey, there were ten young persons wanting their own accommodation but only two had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house in Menindee. One young person had applied for a house or unit in another community. Four older persons interviewed were seeking aged accommodation and one older person had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house in Menindee. No older person was seeking to move out of the community into rented accommodation elsewhere. The waiting time for a unit or house could not be reliably determined but

was assessed to exceed 24 months because tenancies were stable and opportunities rare.

Later information indicates three households have applied for, been assessed and are on the waiting list for a four-bedroom house, or larger, while another five have applied but requirements were not known. MPRHC has recommended that any mix of new housing include at least two 5-bedroom dwellings for larger families.

The majority of tenants indicated they did not have any intention of moving if their circumstances changed; only five indicated they might consider relocating if their needs changed. Tenants were relatively stable; only four of thirty households had moved into the community in the five years prior to the household survey. Twenty-four households were living in the same house one year previously. The median duration of a tenancy was 10 years but a large minority had remained in the same house for 20 years and longer. No interviewee stated that someone in their household was paying rent on another property they rented elsewhere. Of those tenants who responded to the question, 90% indicated a strong preference for social housing tenancies to be passed down within the family.

Two respondents indicated they had applied for a private rental in the three years prior to the survey. One tenant was satisfied with the way their application was processed; the other tenant was less so.

Crowding was a frequent stressor for five tenants who said they were often or always stressed by the number of occupants in their house. Five tenants reported having visitors staying for longer than one week at the time of the household survey. Three tenants said that their house always felt crowded. In the three years prior to the survey, two tenants had given shelter to one or more persons who would otherwise have been homeless while one tenant was giving shelter to a person who would otherwise have been homeless at the time of interview.

Occupancy levels were assessed against the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS) for crowding. At the time of the survey, one dwelling

exceeded the threshold criteria for additional bedrooms and required extension. Two survey responses could not be adequately assessed because of a lack of information.

Canadian National Occupancy Standard				
The Canadian National Occupancy Standard adopts the following criteria to determine the number of bedrooms required by a household:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 				

Table 5.25 sets out the number of households requiring 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms to accommodate permanent residents based on household occupancy as recorded by the survey. The numbers stated do not account for visitors or family reformations.

Table 5.25: Number of bedrooms required to accommodate permanent residents only				
Size of house occupied	Number of households using			
	1	2	3	4
No of bedrooms	bedroom(s)			
2	2	3		
3	6	4	-	-
4	1	2	9	3 ⁽¹⁾
All	9	9	9	3

Note 1: Household assessed by CNOS to require an extra bedroom

When asked about their reasons for living in Menindee, tenants stated that they were either born in Menindee or their families had been resident for a long time. As for homeowners, living on Country was an important consideration; there is a strong feeling of belonging. Employment as a factor for living in Menindee rated only one mention by all tenants and proximity to Broken Hill as a regional centre was not mentioned at all.

Of the twelve tenants who responded to the question, nine stated their dwelling met their cultural needs. Of those that said their accommodation did not meet their cultural needs, the reason was that the design of the house and/or external areas did not create spaces conducive to cultural practice. Of twenty-three respondents, five tenants stated that their accommodation impacted negatively upon their health. Four tenants reported structural and/or facilities deficiencies as the reason for feeling negatively impacted while two said that environmental pollution created a hazard to their health.

Ensuring urgent repairs and planned maintenance was scheduled and carried out competently in a timely manner was uppermost in the minds of most respondents when asked how management services could be improved. Equity in rent setting was an issue for one tenant.

Four households stated a prior need for home modification and three of these had been completed. The wait for assessment was reported to be between six and twelve months, with a similar duration after assessment for work to be carried out.

Some tenants offered thoughts on the need for additional services in the community. Access to a tenant support and education service was the most mentioned. Two tenants had sought the help of a social support and advocacy service in the twelve months prior to the survey.

When invited to make comment on matters not specifically raised by the survey, twenty-three stated a wish for rooftop solar as a means of addressing high energy costs. Three respondents remarked on the need for additional affordable housing designed to suit the prevailing climatic conditions.

5.9.4 Aboriginal social housing assets

A method of analysis similar to that employed by the National Social Housing Survey (NSHS) frequently conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has been used to characterise asset condition on the basis of information self-

reported by tenants about dwelling condition, defects and facilities. 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 include those comprising 'health hardware' in the Housing for Health terminology: cooking stove and oven, bath or shower, toilet, kitchen sink, hot water heater and laundry tub. The single divergence from the NSHS methodology adopted in this project is to increase in number of working specified facilities to seven through the addition of air-conditioning which MPRA considers 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 not included.

Problems of a structural nature

Rising damp or water ponding under the house
Sinking/moving foundations
Uneven/sagging floors
Major cracks in wall and/or ceiling
Termite damage
Roof leaking inside
Major electrical problems
Major plumbing problems
Major air-conditioning problems
Malfunctioning on-site wastewater treatment system

The results of the evaluation of tenant responses are shown at Table 5.26. Classification in this way might be considered somewhat arbitrary in that a single major structural problem could objectively render the dwelling uninhabitable.

Table 5.26: Social housing condition as expressed by tenants

Condition	
No more than 2 structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	60%
3 or more structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	32%
None, 1 or 2 structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	4%
3 or more structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	4%

The principal deficiencies recorded in the quality of social housing are noted in Table 5.27. It is noted that seven householders reported no defects, either structural or non-functional facilities.

Table 5.27: Social housing principal structural, electrical, plumbing and facilities problems (%)

Problem area	Houses affected
Sinking/moving foundations	40%
Major air-conditioning problems	30%
Major plumbing problems	27%
Cracks in wall and/or ceiling	23%
Non-functional facilities	
Toilet/cistern	15%
Air-conditioning	12%
Wood/gas heater	12%

All tenants reported other minor defects such as damaged flyscreens and the like. An inability to secure the house because entry and/or back doors could not be closed or locked was noted by greater than one household in ten. Four tenants stated that their rainwater tanks were not functional which, given the poor quality of the water supply, presents a health risk.

5.10 Asset condition

5.10.1 Methodology for budgeting

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

The *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 HEHP relies on an analysis of previous repair and maintenance projects to derive an 'order of probable cost'. The sample totals 121 properties spread across eight communities in the Region 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. Properties have been allocated to a band based on the number and nature of reported faults. No adjustment of medians 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.

5.10.2 Median values

For Menindee, band medians are listed in Table 5.28.

Table 5.28: Median values for property repair and maintenance, Menindee

Band	Median value (\$)
One	1,400
Two	14,560
Three	32,550
Four	55,870
Five	96,320

5.10.3 Repair and maintenance budget

Based on tenant response to the questions relating to property condition, the probable order of cost for routine repairs and maintenance is given by Table 5.29. Information about any expenditures between the time of the household survey and the preparation of this HEHP which might influence cost projections is not available.

The total number of properties requiring repair and maintenance work has been factored up in the inverse of the ratio of household survey respondents providing detailed information on asset condition to total number of social housing properties; in the case of Menindee, the factor is 47/25 or 1.88.

Table 5.29: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost

Band	Number of properties assessed in band from survey	Total number of properties for repair	Probable order of cost (\$)
One	4	8	11,200
Two	11	21	305,800
Three	8	16	520,800
Four	1	2	111,700
Five	1	1	96,300
Total	25	49	1,045,800

5.10.4 Particular works

Several properties have been assessed as requiring specific repairs as scheduled in Table 5.30. These are additional to the estimated costs for routine repair and maintenance as identified in Table 5.29.

Table 5.30: Particular works budget

Major work	Number of properties assessed	Unit cost (\$)	Probable order of cost (\$)
Replace roof covering with metal roof including providing insulation in roof space, and gutter and downpipe replacement	4	33,000	132,000
External and internal painting	5	5,300	25,500
Replacement of evaporative coolers	4	8,500	34,000
Replacement of septic tanks and trenches	5	12,800	64,000
Replacement of verandah decking	4	5,400	21,600
Total (\$)			277,100

5.10.5 Planned maintenance

The probable order of costs for repair and maintenance quoted in Table 5.29 does not allow for planned maintenance: replacement of floor coverings, kitchens, appliances and the like, for replacement of bathrooms, or cleaning of septic tanks. The need for these will be identified through scoping by the property manager and

incorporated into each Property Management Plan as part of the asset management function with due allowance for the cost of the activity.

5.10.6 Replacement

The probable order of cost for repair and maintenance quoted in Table 5.29 does not include for the replacement of two aged and worn dwellings the continued restoration of which does not represent value for money. The properties are 4 Paringa Street and 16 Paringa Street.

5.11 Experiences of local government

5.11.1 Municipal rates

Central Darling Shire Council strives to provide municipal services from a very low rate base. The Shire is the largest in NSW and but has the smallest population. Rates levied in 2020/21 are shown in Table 5.31.

Table 5.31: Municipal charges (2020/21)

General rate	
Base amount	\$130.00
And variable rate based on unimproved capital value of property (currently 6.125838c/\$1.00 land value)	
Waste management	
Domestic occupied land	\$633.00
All unoccupied land	\$300.00

Typically, a residential lot of 1,012 m² in Menindee will incur a rate charge of \$170 approximately.

5.11.2 Financial assistance grants

The Australian Government's grant funding is incorporated into Council's general revenue. Council advise that services provided across the Shire, including Menindee, are provided on an agreed priority basis apart from those services (waste, street lighting, parks, reserves, public toilets, road maintenance and construction, for example) which are provided at an appropriate service level. It is Council's view that the Aboriginal community is its most significant demographic and as such benefits significantly from the services provided.

5.11.3 Involvement in Aboriginal social housing

Council reports that it has little involvement with ACHPs in respect of asset management and property inspections are not undertaken unless specifically requested. An issue of concern to Council is that of the impact of poorly maintained dwelling exteriors and yards on streetscape. While acknowledging that fostering a sense of civic pride is challenging with some renters, Council suggests some effort be directed to improving the presentation of properties.

5.11.4 Council strategic interests

To a large extent, the interests of Central Darling Shire Council and the Menindee community intersect. At its December 2020 Ordinary Meeting, Council flagged several areas of strategic interest which might also align with the aspirations of the Community Working Party as defined in the Community Action Plan (CAP) and this HEHP. The areas of strategic interest are:

- Water policy;
- Local governance;
- Economic development and employment;
- Tourism;
- Health services;
- Aboriginal health, housing, education, and employment;
- Telecommunications;
- Local service provision; and
- Rural and remote location.

Council is in the process of renewing its Community Engagement Policy and, with the renewal of the Central Darling Shire Council (CDSC) Community Strategic Plan, the development of town and village plans, and preparation of strategic plans for tourism and disability inclusion, the opportunity exists for a partnership to advance the CWP's own agenda.

5.12 Utilities

Water service is provided in Menindee by Essential Water (EW). Charges are set out in Table 5.32.

Table 5.32: Utilities charges (2020/21)	
Annual water supply service charge	
Properties connected:	
Filtered water	\$339.24
Water charges (Charge per kilolitre used)	
Properties connected:	
Filtered water	\$1.86/kl

Households are charged a water rate (base charge) where a water service is available close to the property plus a metered per kilolitre charge for all water consumed. How much a householder pays is entirely dependent on the amount of water used. Accounts are issued on a quarterly basis.

No sewerage charges are levied since Menindee properties are serviced by septic systems.

6 COMMUNITY HEALTH

6.1 Community health profile summary

The community of Menindee is one of four large communities in the Central Darling Shire. The Central Darling Shire is considered remote and very remote on all remoteness scales. It is one of five local government areas in the Far West Local Health District.

Quantitative data for the Menindee community is not available due to its small size. A mixed-methods approach to describe the health of the community has been used.

Combined methods show that even though the Aboriginal community of the Central Darling Shire is reasonably healthy the Menindee community has 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.

6.2 Health status – qualitative assessment

Qualitative evidence was gathered by interviewing local health care providers to assess the perceived health status of the Menindee community. Evidence indicates that the health of the Aboriginal population is considered to be poor. Even though there are few childhood illnesses and the older adult population is considered to be managing well, the environmental and social impacts of poorer quality water, overcrowded houses and limited social opportunities have impacted on the health of the community.

- Overcrowded Aboriginal households are evident in the township;

- Those that are not financially able to purchase bottled water have been drinking and washing in the poorer-quality bore water; however, this has improved lately with fresher water entering the Menindee Lakes system;
- There has been an increase in the presentations to the clinic for non-infected, itchy, dry skin and rashes and the frequency of these presentations has increased as the quality of the bore water has deteriorated;
- There are very few incident cases of contagious skin infections such as school sores; however, there has been an increased incidence of head lice;
- Education is lacking in the treatment of head lice; while the incident case is well treated the extended household is not, nor is extensive household cleaning undertaken;
- In the recent past there have been a few cases of hand, foot and mouth disease but when found these cases are managed and the spread is minimal;
- There has been an increase in gastroenteritis infections; a consequence of overcrowded houses has meant that everyone in the house has been more likely to develop symptoms;
- Younger people are being diagnosed with chronic diseases like diabetes and risk factors like hypertension;
- There are very high rates of smoking, particularly in the younger people;
- The number of people gambling and the amounts they are spending has increased markedly in the past year, particularly since the re-opening of venues as COVID-19 restrictions have eased;
- The most common cause of local death is cancer, accidents and heart disease; and
- The elderly community are living well with their chronic conditions – accessing the GP services regularly and seeking education and care between those visits from the local clinic staff.

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.

6.3 Health status – quantitative assessment

Data for the Central Darling 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.

6.3.1 Mother and baby health

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).

6.3.2 Growth and development of children and young people

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 4-year-old children 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.

6.3.3 Morbidity

- Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far

West SA3 are significantly more likely to present to the Emergency Department for all reasons. Overall Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are almost two times more likely to present to the Emergency Department compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia (109,107.6 per 100,000 people compared to 62,109.4 per 100,000 people)².

- 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 population.³
- 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%).³
- 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 population.³
- Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are significantly more likely to be admitted to hospital for eye diseases, asthma and chronic airways disease. There are significantly fewer admissions for infectious and parasitic diseases, endocrine, nutritional and metabolic disease, nervous system diseases, heart failure, skin diseases, musculoskeletal diseases, urinary diseases, chronic kidney disease (which is different to dialysis), childbirth and babies with malformations².
- 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).⁴
- The rate of potentially avoidable admissions in the Central Darling Shire is significantly higher than in NSW (2,977.0 per 100,000 admissions compared to 2,160.7 per 100,000 admissions)⁵.
- The leading cause of potentially avoidable admission in the Far West LHD is iron deficiency anaemia followed by chronic airways disease and cellulitis.
- Aboriginal people in Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are significantly less likely to be admitted

to hospital for a potentially preventable condition compared to all Aboriginal Australians (4,896.0 per 100,000 people compared to 5,395.2 per 100,000 people)².

6.3.4 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)⁶.
- For all Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3 the median age at death is 64.0 years compared to 61.0 years in NSW². By comparison the median age at death for all people who live in the Central Darling Shire is 63.0 years compared to 82.0 years for all NSW residents⁷.
- The leading cause of death 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)⁸.
- In contrast, in the Far West LHD the leading cause of death is malignant cancers (27.6% of all deaths)⁹.
- In the Central Darling Shire in 2016-2018 the death rate from injury and poisoning was significantly higher than in NSW (54.2 per 100,000 population compared to 35.6 per 100,000 population)¹⁰.
- 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 diseases¹¹.
- The rate of potentially avoidable deaths in the Central Darling Shire is significantly higher than in NSW (128.1 per 100,000 population compared to 99.4 per 100,000 population)¹².
- Aboriginal people in Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are significantly more likely to die prematurely from respiratory diseases compared to all Aboriginal Australians (83.3 per 100,000 people compared to 26.9 per 100,000 people)².

6.3.5 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 smokers in NSW was 11.2%¹³.
- 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 at-risk drinkers in NSW was 32.8%¹⁴.

6.3.6 Healthy living practices

- Menindee was one 12 Aboriginal communities in NSW that participated in the Housing for Health program in 2012/13 to 2013/14. Data from the program of works across all 12 communities showed that after initial inspection and subsequent fix, 7 of the 11 indicators of 'Healthy Living Practices' had increased to above 97% fully met¹⁵.

Tables 6.1 to 6.5 and Figure 6.1 provide detailed information of the health statistics for the region.

Table 6.1: Cause of presentation to Emergency Departments, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Far West SA3, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Far West SA3	NSW	Australia
All causes	109,107.6*	71,135.8	62,109.4
Infectious and parasitic disease	4,939.8*	3,393.1	3,293.9
Mental health and related conditions	5,127.4*	3,649.3	3,636.7
Circulatory system diseases	2,242.0*	1,274.2	1,570.1
Respiratory system diseases	12,178.5*	7,153.7	6,340.7
Digestive system diseases	6,273.1*	3,972.5	3,500.8
Musculoskeletal system diseases	5,710.7*	3,936.2	2,910.1
Urinary system diseases	3,037.5*	2,364.4	2,263.4
Injury, poisoning and external causes	27,940.2*	16,420.0	14,458.8
Other factors requiring contact with the health system	5,660.1*	5,889.1	4,664.0
Other reasons	36,081.0*	23,097.0	19,471.0

* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

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

Table 6.2: Leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people, Far West Local Health District (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 6.3: Cause of admission, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Far West SA3, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Far West SA3	NSW	Australia
Infectious and parasitic disease	716.2 [#]	759.9	1,093.5
All cancers	1,005.0	926.1	983.8
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	733.8 [#]	704.9	1,101.0
- Diabetes	334.4	319.0	420.9
Mental health and related conditions	2,598.3	2,515.3	2,626.5
- Mood affective disorders	373.2	351.3	355.6
Nervous system diseases	638.0 [#]	807.1	916.5
Eye and adnexa diseases	696.8 [*]	465.4	531.6
Ear and mastoid process diseases	317.0	336.1	423.4
Circulatory system diseases	1,830.6	1,389.5	1,822.7
- Ischaemic heart disease	791.5	473.7	652.8
- Heart failure	126.0 [#]	163.4	238.4
Respiratory system diseases	3,551.2	2,659.0	3,373.8
- Asthma	487.1 [*]	280.6	300.4
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	947.2 [*]	548.3	594.9
Digestive system diseases	3,141.6	2,843.6	3,099.5
Skin diseases	1,031.7 [#]	821.0	1,370.0
Musculoskeletal system diseases	933.2 [#]	1,415.0	1,446.0
Urinary system diseases	1,087.7 [#]	1,460.8	1,696.2
- Chronic kidney disease	57.6 [#]	252.7	387.3
Pregnancy and childbirth	10,411.5 [#]	12,749.2	14,700.7
Congenital conditions	109.5 [#]	215.0	210.3
Injury, poisoning and external causes	4,264.7	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 6.4: Leading cause of death, FWLHD and NSW, 2018-19

	FWLHD			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 ^a	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

^a 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.

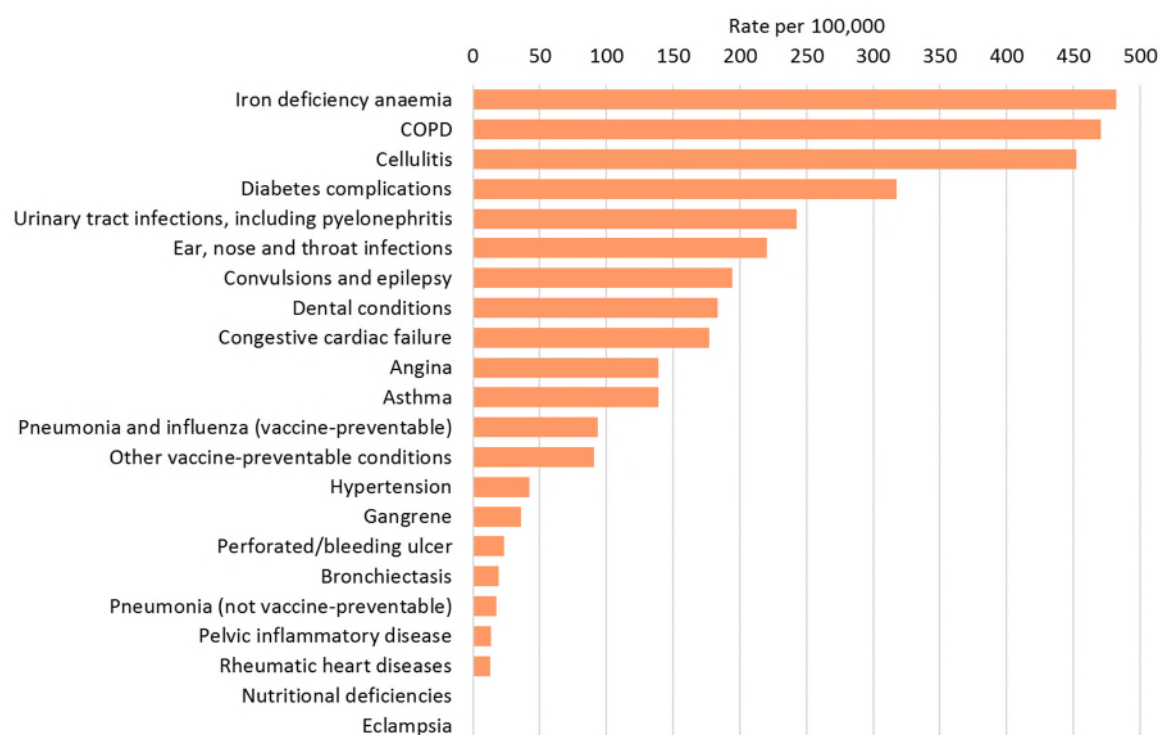
Table 6.5: Premature deaths, Aboriginal people aged 0-74 years, rate per 100,000, Far West SA3, NSW and Australia 2013-2017

	Far West SA3	NSW	Australia
Deaths from cancer	97.4	56.3	72.1
Deaths from diabetes	37.6	10.0	23.4
Deaths from circulatory system diseases	88.2	46.1	69.8
Deaths from respiratory system diseases	83.3*	22.4	26.9
Deaths from external causes	55.7	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

Figure 6.1: 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

6.4 Available health services

Menindee Health Service is a primary health care facility and outpatient clinic. It is open Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.00pm. There is a registered nurse on call at all times for emergencies outside the normal opening hours.

Health services in Menindee are provided by the Far West LHD, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation, Western NSW Primary Health Network (PHN) and some other, standalone providers.

The Far West LHD provides:

- Registered nurses;

- Aboriginal Health Practitioner;
- Administration support;
- Security and domestic services;
- Psychiatrist;
- Sexual health;
- Women's health;
- Physiotherapist;
- Access to other allied health services from Broken Hill on request; and
- Access to medical specialists (in Broken Hill).

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) provides:

- GP (doctor);
- Dentist;
- Medical specialists (dermatology, ophthalmology, ENT);
- Drug and alcohol and mental health workers; and
- Aboriginal Health Practitioner.

Maari Ma provides:

- GPs (specialising in Aboriginal Health and Chronic Disease care);
- Aboriginal Health Practitioners and trainees;
- Dietitian;
- Child dental;
- Transport; and
- Access to visiting medical and allied health specialists (endocrinology, renal medicine, cardiology, ENT, psychiatry, pain medicine, respiratory medicine, ophthalmology, echocardiography, smoking cessation, optometry).

The Western NSW PHN provides:

- Podiatry (from University of South Australia).

Other, standalone providers include:

- Audiology (Hearing Australia).

7 HUMAN SERVICES

7.1 Human services in the community

The sectors of the population which may be the target of human services are identified in Table 7.1 together with the corresponding population. The figures are for 2016.

The facilities provide additionally for tennis while the Menindee Golf Club offers 9-hole sand greens with little to no grass fairways.

CDSC also owns and/or manages the Menindee Civic Hall and six community housing dwellings.

Table 7.1: Service age groups for Aboriginal clients

Total persons (Usual residence)				
Service age group (years)	Menindee	Sunset Strip	Total	%
Babies and pre-schoolers (0-4)	23	0	23	11%
Primary schoolers (5-11)	20	0	20	10%
Secondary schoolers (12-17)	29	0	29	14%
Tertiary education and independence (18-24)	21	0	21	10%
Young workforce (25-34)	26	0	26	13%
Parents and homebuilders (35-49)	32	6	38	19%
Older workers and pre-retirees (50-59)	28	0	28	14%
Empty nesters and retirees (60-69)	11	0	11	5%
Seniors (70-84)	3	0	3	1%
Elderly aged (85 and over)	4	0	4	2%
Total	197	6	203	

Source: ABS Tablebuilder with age classifications as .id Consultants

Human services available to the Aboriginal community are shown at Table 7.2 and the features of these services, as identified by the community, are described at Table 7.3

7.2 Community services and facilities

Facilities in Menindee for use by the community owned and/or managed by CDSC are:

- Burke and Wills Park: sports oval and swimming pool, including toddlers wading pool;
- Crick Park: public recreation;
- Menindee Common Reserve: camping;
- Menindee Racecourse;
- William Murray Memorial Park: recreation.

The public swimming pool is old and requires ongoing works to keep operational.

Table 7.2: Human service providers and service mix

Aboriginal Community Controlled Service		Aboriginal-identified service		Mainstream service
Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation	HS			NSW Health Remote Clinic
Primary health care				Accident and emergency health care
All Aboriginal community members				All Menindee community members
				Royal Flying Doctor Service
				Primary health care, patient evacuation
				All Menindee community members
				Lifeline
				Telephone counselling services
				All community members
		ED		Menindee Central School
				School education K-12
				All Menindee community members
		ED		Menindee Children's Centre
				Early childhood education and development
				Menindee children aged 3 to 5
RED.E	TE			Technical and Further Education NSW
Training and employment services				Vocational training
All Aboriginal adults				All Menindee community members
				Summit Employment and Training
				Employment and recruitment agency
				All adults
Mirrimalpa Muurpa-nara AC	CFS			Broken Hill Family Support Service
Out of Home Care (DCJ)		CFS		Child and family services
All Aboriginal children and families				All Menindee family members
Murdi Paaki Services Ltd	TS			
Murdi Paaki TSEP				
All Aboriginal social housing tenants				
		OHS		Lifestyle Solutions
				Youth support workers
				Children and young people generally
		OHS		Central Darling Shire Council
				Menindee Rural Transaction Centre

Table 7.2: Human service providers and service mix

Aboriginal Community Controlled Service		Aboriginal-identified service				Mainstream service			
						Centrelink portal and community services			
						All Menindee community members			
					OHS	Mission Australia			
						Far West Homeless Youth Assistance Program (DCJ)		OHS	
						All Menindee community members			
						LiveBetter Services Ltd			
						National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) social support services		OHS	
						All community members with disabilities			
						Hammond Care			
						NDIS Disability Services		OHS	
						Community members with disabilities			
Joining In The Dreaming Aboriginal Corporation						Redsands Takeaway			
Meals on Wheels and community centre	HC				HC	Meals on Wheels		HC	
All community members requiring support						All community members requiring support			
Menindee LALC									
Cultural services and land management	CS								
All Aboriginal people									
C	Crisis accommodation	AC	Residential aged care	TS	Tenancy support service	HS	Health-related service	OHS	Other human service
S	Short term accommodation	HC	Home care services	HR	Housing-related human service	CFS	Child and family services	ED	Education
Me	Medium term accommodation							TE	Training and employment
L	Long term accommodation							CS	Cultural services

Table 7.3: Human service providers and service mix

Human service expected	Quality of human service received	Measures to bring about improvement
Employment and training services	Extensive training provided with satisfactory levels of attainment but this is not leading to employment outcomes because of an absence of job opportunities after completion	Targeted training and related employment initiatives Support to transition to small business start-ups Development of tourism industry in Menindee including CDSC initiative to improve identity, amenity and facilities
Community safety	No facilities for persons escaping family violence	Provision of safe house/refuge/secure emergency accommodation and related support services in Menindee
Income support services	Centrelink services available through Menindee Rural Transaction Centre but privacy is problematic	Reorganisation of Menindee Rural Transaction Centre to improve privacy and confidentiality
Adequate housing at affordable rent	Existing houses are energy intensive and contribute to household poverty and poorer health conditions	Rooftop solar to reduce energy costs
Youth facilities and services	Services for young people are provided but gaps exist in relation to facilities and programmes	Advocate for access to a youth centre, school holiday programmes, sporting facilities and co-ordination
Children's facilities and services	Pre-school service provided but requires additional support and funding	Source additional funding and resources
Health services	Services provided are valued but community would welcome a greater local presence Mental health and counselling services are inadequate	Request Maari Ma and NSW Health to establish five local positions: three Aboriginal health practitioners, a social worker, and a transport worker Work with Maari Ma and NSW Health to develop a model of service provision that works for the local community
Education	Concern exists around educational outcomes Pathways for school leavers do not exist because of an absence of local employment opportunities	Advocate with Murrumbidgee Regional Assembly to review educational attainment and develop a higher-level strategy aimed at measurably improving education outcomes at every level of schooling Advocate for the creation of pathways from school to TAFE and into sustainable employment
Human services generally	Community is often not aware of the presence of service providers in the community or of services and programs offered	Seek MPS assistance in conjunction with TSEP housing workers to mount a multi-service expo with representation from all service providers

8 COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

8.1 Community priorities

8.1.1 Framework for Progress

The Menindee CWP, in common with all other CWPs, prepared a Community Action Plan (CAP) (2019) to inform external agencies of the priorities of the Menindee Aboriginal community and to provide the foundation for improved services across the full spectrum of health and human services. The CAP is in draft form pending negotiation of practical strategies to apply to stated objectives. A formal Engagement Protocol exists at Regional level to guide interactions between agencies, CWPs and broader Aboriginal community and this protocol is to be observed in addressing CAP aspirations.

At a service level, relationships with NSW Government agencies are paramount and the CWP is firm in its expectation that the following key principles drawn from the OCHRE Murdi Paaki Local Decision-Making Accord Mark II be honoured:

- Aboriginal leaders and Elders understand their own community needs, and have the drive and ability to develop their own solutions (2.1.2);
- Regional and local solutions for regional and local problems, with ideas and help from outside when, where and in the form in which requested (2.1.5);
- A genuine commitment on the part of government and community to developing transformative rather than transactional relationships, with a renewed focus on developing innovative and holistic solutions and on considering different, more equal approaches to partnership (2.1.10); and
- Optimising returns on investment through better targeted, more efficient, effective and equitable forms of programme and service delivery (2.1.11).

8.1.2 Community Action Plan

The Menindee CWP has identified five priority areas for action and specific goals are stated in the

CAP. All areas are weighted equally in their importance to the community. Of these priority areas, the following three are most relevant to this Plan:

- Health and wellbeing: Action 1.1 – Develop an Aboriginal health and well-being strategy for Menindee;
- Housing and infrastructure: Action 2.1 - Establish a special housing and infrastructure committee of the CWP to drive housing and infrastructure improvements; and
- Community safety initiative: Action 5.1 - Negotiate the development of a Menindee Safe Community Strategy.

8.2 Community consultation

8.2.1 Engagement

Several meetings have been held with the Menindee CWP, tenants and other community members to obtain community perspectives on human services delivery to the Menindee community. It is clear from discussions that the Menindee community is resourceful and self-sufficient and values its autonomy.

Notwithstanding this, there are several service and programme areas the community has identified as requiring additional resourcing.

8.2.2 Advice on housing and housing services

CWP members were direct in asserting need in respect of housing and housing related services:

- There is not enough housing in Menindee for young people so the housing mix must include smaller two-bedroom units or dwellings;
- Some of the houses are too small to accommodate the families currently living in them so the housing mix should extend to larger five-bedroom houses;
- Housing options, including purpose-built accommodation, should be available for the elderly; and
- Asset utilisation should be improved to ensure that dwellings are aligned with family needs.

Overcrowding remains a pressing issue: the shortage of Aboriginal housing, especially for younger people, results in higher occupancy levels and places strain on household members.

The community were particularly vocal about the on-going disregard for established engagement protocols with much criticism being levelled at the Aboriginal Housing Office over its failure to consult openly and constructively with the community and tenants over the air-conditioning programme. In the opinion of the CWP, the split systems are very small and installed in the wrong locations, and so represented a poor investment. Organisations and services which deliver programmes into the community must involve all Aboriginal tenants in decision-making, not just selected pockets.

The low standard of workmanship exhibited by some contractors engaged to carry out maintenance work, and use of substandard materials, were raised as matters of concern and housing providers were urged to use fully qualified contractors under competent supervision to ensure asset condition did not suffer and/or tenants were exposed to harm. Examples quoted related to pest control and the design and fabrication of ramps which were not accessible by ambulance trolleys. The time taken to undertake repairs needed to be greatly reduced; it was not uncommon for tenants to be waiting months, and CWP members were keen to see the roll-out of a major programme of renovations as it had been at least five years since the last.

In light of the high proportion of older houses, the CWP questioned whether the funding bodies would decline to undertake additional works to these properties: upgrades, extensions, carports, and provision of rainwater tanks and the like, or whether tenants could expect to experience a gradual decline in the condition and amenity of their homes.

Some interest was expressed in exploring home ownership but it was said more effort needed to be made by Government agencies to inform the community about this alternative.

The CWP drew a parallel between low household income and diminishing mental wellbeing, reporting that the challenge of managing a household budget in the face of high rents (> \$500/fortnight), excessive costs of water and power, and the increased cost of food in a remote location, was placing undue stress on families. Affordability of rent is a very real issue for all Aboriginal tenants, especially the younger ones. In this context, the situation of water management was raised with a request that the pricing structure imposed by Essential Water be investigated. The massive water bills being received by all households were not sustainable, particularly when the expected level of service could not be provided during the drought.

8.2.3 Advice on human services

CWP aspirations for economic development centre around the establishment of community-based enterprises which utilise existing attributes and the training necessary to support employment in these enterprises. The river frontage is seen as a strength which can be used as the basis for development of tourism infrastructure leading to community employment. The CWP aims to have CDSC develop river frontage recreation areas including landscaping for passive recreation, walking paths and meeting places, and to promote tourism through signage at the outskirts to Menindee welcoming visitors to Baakantji country.

In conjunction with the AHO, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) NSW provided training in 2018, through its mobile unit to some Menindee residents in basic construction technology to Certificate II level which provided participants with the competencies to obtain a minor maintenance licence. This can logically form the basis for development of a local enterprise for provision of 'handyman' services for day-to-day maintenance of all housing in the community. The community expressed a desire for better connections generally between TAFE training delivered and employment outcomes.

The Menindee Rural Transaction Centre provides access to local government services, a Centrelink agency, computers for community use, other

office-based services, communications, library services, advocacy and acts as centre for community events. The community values these services highly and speaks positively about the support provided by the CDSC employee who staffs the centre. There is, however, some concern about the physical arrangements of the centre in relation to privacy of the Centrelink portal and suggestions the centre needs to be rearranged to provide for Centrelink client confidentiality. Community members were also concerned about weak CDSC follow-up in relation to general enquiries.

Some children's services are provided in the community but, apart from the Menindee Children's Centre, awareness of services is patchy. It is possible that Mission Australia is offering the Brighter Futures Safe Care Program. Mirrimilyi Muurpa-nara Aboriginal Corporation (MMAC) is a newly established agency for Aboriginal children in out-of-home care and is still in the process of creating its internal systems and processes. MMAC is aiming for accreditation as a Permanency Support Provider with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian. The community is aware of Kutanya Cultural Camps and supports the concept but indicated that local children are excluded from participation.

Menindee Children's Centre operated by the Menindee Pre School Association provides centre-based care for children of preschool and kindergarten age four days a week and after school care. The centre is approved for 20 places which, by reference to Table 7.1, would appear to be insufficient to meet community needs. The CWP identified a need for additional support and funding for the preschool and for transition programmes to ensure that children are ready for school.

The community expressed grave concern about levels of educational attainment by children at Menindee Central School. NAPLAN results indicate that children at Menindee Central School perform well below average in all skill areas at each stage of assessment, and that fewer than 50% of Aboriginal children attended school 90% of the time or more in semester one 2019. The CWP identifies this as a systemic problem which requires a strategic

solution. The CWP also aspires to the development of clear pathways to support the transition beyond school into work or skills development with TAFE.

Limited youth services are provided by Mission Australia in collaboration with the local REDI.E worker (youth homelessness) and Lifestyle Solutions (support to children and young people). The community has identified an unmet need for youth facilities and programmes and would like CDSC to repurpose and fit out the big yellow shed at the oval as a multi-purpose youth centre, employ a youth worker and sports coordinator, and provide regular sporting and social programmes, including school holiday programmes.

Maari Ma was acknowledged for work in community. The community had previously expressed concerns about staffing and Maari Ma has, in response announced new traineeship positions starting in 2021. Health service staff based in Menindee aspire to have Maari Ma and NSW Health base 4 or 5 staff permanently in the community: 3 Aboriginal Health Practitioners, a social worker and a fulltime transport officer. The community identified a need for additional mental health counselling services and noted that outreach services are not currently working well for the community.

In-home aged care services in Menindee are provided by Uniting Care Miraga, Joining In The Dreaming Aboriginal Corporation, Live Better Community Services and Australian Unity's Aboriginal Home Care Ngangana Branch Wilcannia-Menindee. Community knowledge of some of these services is sketchy.

The CWP is aware that LiveBetter Services provides the local NDIS social support service; however, community members are unsure what services are delivered in the community.

9 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 Infrastructure asset schedules

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE					
9.1 WATER SUPPLY			Responsible Authority: Essential Water		
Location: Menindee					
Baseline Data					
For Menindee as a whole (2019-20)			Weighted median for NSW as a whole		
Annual residential water supplied (potable): 96ML			Average annual residential water supplied (potable):		
Average day water supplied: 262kL			159.6/kL/prop		
Peak day water supplied: 570kL			Peak day water supplied: 1,300 L/d/prop		
Average daily consumption over peak week divided by average daily consumption: 186%			Average daily consumption over peak week (ML/d) divided by average daily consumption: 143%		
Water quality complaints: < 1.0/1,000 properties			Water quality complaints: 2.68/1,000 properties		
Works	Item	Specification	Condition	Comments	
Headworks	River water inlet	Menindee pumping station: 2 ML/day maximum	-	Principal water supply from the Darling River offtake, Menindee Lakes Scheme. High electrical conductivity (EC) and organics in drought	
	Borehole		-	Menindee common bore drilled in 2015/16 for emergency use. Only used in periods of low river flow or high river salinity. Yield ±3.0ML/week	
Treatment	Treatment plant - potable	2.0 ML/day plant with pre-treatment oxidation for removal of metals, clarification, microfiltration, activated carbon for algal management, UV, chorine and fluoride dosing	New	Replacement for existing 1.25 ML/day WTP to be commissioned in June 2021 to serve Menindee and Sunset Strip. Sunset Strip micro-filtration WTP decommissioned on completion of new WTP	
Storage	Potable storage	High level circular steel tank 120kL capacity	10 years old	Corner of Candilla and Bourke Streets. WTP clear water pumps able to pump to reticulation in the event of loss of tank storage (said to be ±24 hours)	
Distribution	Reticulation	AC and upvc distribution generally DN150 to DN100	-	New pipeline from Menindee WTP to Sunset Strip and Caravan park	
	Services	Generally, DN20 metered supply to residential properties	-		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action			Estimated Cost
		No action required			-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE				
9.2 SEWERAGE		Responsible Authority: Central Darling Shire Council		
Location: Menindee				
Works	Item	Specification	Condition	Comments
On-site Treatment	Septic tanks	Generally concrete and grp tanks of 3,000L capacity.	-	Aerated systems
	Absorption trenches	Gravel filled absorption trench sections with IOs at inlet and termination	-	Some evapotranspiration beds
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action		Estimated Cost
		No action required		-
Performance standard				
Design Standards: On-site sewage management for single households, 1998, NSW Health et al, AS/NZS 1546.1 – 2008 and AS/NZS 1547 – 2012				

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.3 STORMWATER DRAINAGE		Responsible Authority: Central Darling Shire Council	
Location: Menindee			
Works	Comments		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Trunk drainage	There is no formalised trunk drainage but a gross pollutant trap is installed as a pollution control measure		
Local drainage	Table drains		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.4 ROADS AND DRAINAGE		Responsible Authority: Central Darling Shire Council	
Location: Menindee			
Works	Comments		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Internal roads	Sealed carriageway, 8.0 m surfaced width with graded gravel shoulders with some kerb and guttering. Road reserves generally 30.0 m wide. Work in progress to seal the remaining 10% of local roads		
Speed limit	50 km/hr		
Black spots	Nil		
Footpaths	Extensive network in the built-up area (1,300 m)		
Drainage	Table drainage is adequate, some nuisance flooding occurs which affects local roads and property access		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required of this HEHP although deficiencies exist: unsealed shoulders, potholes and kerb and guttering	\$5.0M

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.5 ENVIRONMENTAL AMENITY		Responsible Authority: Central Darling Shire Council	
Location: Menindee			
Works	Comments		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Streetscape	Barren with few street plantings		
Public spaces	As for streetscape		
Dust	Problematic for residents adjacent to unsealed roads		
Air quality	Not monitored		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
Streetscape		Action to vegetate verges desirable but exercise would require lengthy commitment to establish and maintain plantings	-
Public spaces		-	-
Dust		-	-
Air quality		-	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.6 FIRE CONTROL		Responsible Authority: Rural Fire Service	
Location: Menindee			
Works	Comments		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Service	Information not available		
Fixed plant			
Mobile plant			
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.7 POWER AND STREET LIGHTING		Responsible Authority: Essential Energy	
Location: Menindee			
Works	Comments		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Service	Supply from TransGrid’s 220/22kV substation in Broken Hill, 66kV supply to Mt Gipps and Sunset Strip substations, then to 66/22/3.3 kV zone substation in Menindee. Pole mounted cabling distributed throughout developed area of town; LV distributed as single and three phase power		
Connection	All dwellings are connected via aerial cabling		
Outage	Frequency and duration not known		
Street lighting	Pole mounted luminaries		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required	

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.8 COMMUNICATIONS		Responsible Authority: Telstra	
Location: Menindee			
Works	COMMENTS		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Digital service	Telstra 4G service with a 3 km range south from the centre of Menindee, north to Copi Hollow		
Public call box	Located adjacent to Post Office		
NBN	Sky Muster satellite service		
TV satellite	Digital TV broadcast tower, 7km north of Menindee on Menindee-Broken Hill Road		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.9 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL		Responsible Authority: Central Darling Shire Council	
Location: Menindee			
Works	COMMENTS		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Collection	Kerbside via 240L wheelie bins weekly		
Disposal	To landfill at an unmanned, 24-hour waste depot approximately 1.0 km from the town		
Recycling	Voluntary separation of large wastes: scrap metal, tyres, green waste, timber products, and concrete products		
Clean up	Annual event. Littering and illegal dumping of waste is a problem		
Safety	-		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
9.10 ANIMAL CONTROL		Responsible Authority: Central Darling Shire Council	
Location: Menindee			
Works	COMMENTS		
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:			
Domestic pets	Are problematic. Unwanted animals are surrendered, or seized if dangerous.		
Veterinary	Ad-hoc by independents such as NSW RSPCA and Universities		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated Cost
		No action required	-

9.2 Infrastructure improvements

9.2.1 Responsibilities

Environmental health infrastructure services in the town are the responsibility of Essential Water, Central Darling Shire Council, Essential Energy or Telstra, as relevant. No infrastructure elements are owned, operated or maintained by any local Aboriginal community organisation. Council employs up to four Aboriginal workers in labouring and administrative roles.

9.2.2 Services generally

Residents of Menindee have the benefit of a full range of municipal and utility services, except that Menindee is not sewered. The nature and extent of each service has been investigated and analysed where appropriate to determine the current level of serviceability. In general, there are no recommendations put forward by the HEHP for improvement but the CWP supports CDSC in its efforts to complete road sealing throughout the town.

9.2.3 Water supply

This HEHP does not involve itself in the broader conflicts surrounding the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and the management of the Menindee Lakes. But it must raise as a matter of concern the issue of the quality and reliability of Menindee's drinking

water supply. At the time of writing, the storage behind Weir 32 from which the town abstracts its water is subject to a red alert for toxic blue-green algae blooms and residents are being asked to avoid contact with the water. Following on from years of drought and, in the eyes of the Aboriginal community, unreliability of supply and consistently poor quality, it is reasonable to invite Water NSW to explain its proposals for the longer-term security of supply to the community.

Essential Water reports quarterly that water quality meets Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and, while the publicly released data confirms this to be so, the results published are only a few of the range of tests EW states it carries out. The frequency of testing for colour and turbidity appears to be low and, notwithstanding the absolute health impacts of bacteriological and chemical water quality, it is these so-called 'aesthetic' measures which provoke immediate concern at a consumer level. For small and remote communities such as Menindee, regular monitoring of water quality is cost-prohibitive and logistically difficult and greater emphasis is placed on a preventive approach rather than testing for physical, chemical and bacteriological markers. Implementing a planned monitoring regime in Menindee is complicated by having three different sources of supply which are used interchangeably. Nevertheless, it would be reassuring to have confirmation that the potential additional risks posed by contaminants associated with:

- Septic waste from on-site wastewater systems; and
- Agricultural pesticides and fertilisers

are negligible as evidenced by compliance with health-based guideline values.

The Local Water Utility Performance Monitoring Data and Reports published by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) indicate that Essential Water received very few complaints in the reporting years to 2018-19. An elevated number of complaints for the 2018-19 reporting year was attributed to a switch in supply to poorer quality raw water from Copi Hollow, since decommissioned. EW advise the level of complaints has reduced to near zero following restoration of river flows.

The weighted median for twenty-five major regional suppliers was 2.68 water quality complaints per 1,000 properties serviced in the latest reporting year, 2018-19.

10 MASTER PLAN

10.1 Cultural influences on decision-making

The NSW Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Programmes Implementation Manual, an initiative of MPRA and the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs (as was) flowing from the successful Australian Government National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) projects, written in 1999, placed the concept of effective community management of capital works and associated housing and infrastructure projects onto a practical footing. CWP, working with a community-selected Project Manager, had 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, and the agreed negotiated system of rules governing projects roll out was formal acknowledgement of the ongoing position of CWP as the local decision-making body. The Regional and local governance structures remain in place and CWP are still well positioned to bring their local knowledge and cultural perspectives to inform the shape and substance of housing and infrastructure developments. This Master Plan evidences this decision-making in practice.

10.2 Development proposals

10.2.1 Current status

Census data analysis indicates that the Aboriginal community of Menindee, in terms of most variables, is not unlike those of other settlements within the Murdi Paaki Region. The Aboriginal population fraction is 41% of the total population, and rising. In relation to housing, there is a lower proportion of single person households compared to the rest of the Region, and nearly one third of families have resident non-dependent single adult children residing with them. Aboriginal adults in Menindee have low levels of labour market participation and the proportion of all adults in employment is only about one in five. Private sector activity is weak, with most employment in human services, including health care and education. The SEIFA Index of Relative

Socioeconomic Disadvantage places Menindee below the average for Central Darling Shire and as very highly disadvantaged relative to the rest of NSW.

Of all households in Menindee (excluding Sunset Strip), almost three quarters were renting. This figure is almost three times as high as for the non-Indigenous Menindee population, and higher than for the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole. The proportion of owner occupier Aboriginal households reduced slightly between 2011 and 2016. The majority of Aboriginal households renting in Menindee were tenants of social housing. The median rent for Aboriginal households was well over twice that for non-Indigenous households. If rents paid in the open market are taken as an indicator of local market rent, then Aboriginal households were on average, at the time of the ABS 2016 Census, paying more than market rent. Median Aboriginal household size was slightly lower than for the ABS North-West NSW Indigenous Region but almost twice that for non-Indigenous households in Menindee. Tenancies are stable; the Census recorded relatively low rates of residential mobility at the one year and five-year horizons, with most movement being internal to the Central Darling Shire and from Broken Hill. In terms of day to day movement, one in five Aboriginal households had no motor vehicle.

10.2.2 Expressed need for new housing

The total number of Aboriginal social housing dwellings in Menindee, including Sunset Strip, is 49. The Aboriginal Housing Office stated a figure of 47 at June 2018, falling to 44 in June 2020. No growth has occurred in the Aboriginal social housing estate in Menindee since 2016, despite the increasing population. Existing households are generally situated in close proximity in the central south-eastern part of town.

From the investigations and consultations carried out, the need for significant new development at Menindee has been established. At the time of the household survey there was a waiting list for social housing in the community across all age groups. The estimates shown in Table 10.1 are derived by

extrapolating the findings of the household survey across the whole Aboriginal population to capture those that did not participate. With family formation, demand for social housing is expected to continue into the future.

Table 10.1: Unmet demand for new Aboriginal social housing				
	Number of bedrooms			
	2	3	4	5+
Young persons	15	-	-	-
Families	-	-	5	2
Aged persons	8	-	-	-
Total	23	-	5	2

The number of new dwellings required exceeds the number of applicants accepted onto the NSW Housing Register for the reason that, with little prospect of securing a tenancy, individuals and families in need do not apply. Feedback received from the community and summarised in §8.2.2 reinforces the need for additional housing on the scale proposed. Spot purchase is not proposed as a solution in view of negligible market activity and poorer quality of private housing likely to be offered for purchase so most, if not all, projected need must be met by new building.

Table 10.2: Estimated cost of new builds (GST exclusive)				
Number of bedrooms	GFA (m ²)	Unit cost (\$/m ²)	No	Estimate (\$)
2	120	3,240	23	8,942,000
3	160	2,660	-	-
4	175	2,660	5	2,327,000
5	195	2,660	2	1,037,000
Total				12,306,000

The AHO has no undeveloped sites outside of the current area of Aboriginal population concentration while MLALC has two larger urban lots, L1 and L2, S2 DP758669, suitable for subdivision to nine 2,024m² lots. Being located immediately across from the Menindee Health Clinic, Lot 2 would ideally suit a purpose-designed older persons' accommodation development. These lots are not serviced and would require road access and utilities to be provided. Remaining new builds should be 'salt and peppered' across the

urban area on currently vacant lots acquired for the purpose, noting that not all areas of Menindee are fully serviced. Land purchases are assumed to total \$15,000 including legals and other statutory charges.

10.2.3 Replacement housing

Two Paringa Street dwellings are recommended for replacement as indicated in §5.10.6.

Table 10.3: Estimated cost of replacements (GST exclusive)				
Number of bedrooms	GFA (m ²)	Unit cost (\$/m ²)	No	Estimate (\$)
2	120	3,410	-	-
3	160	2,790	2	892,800
4	175	2,780	-	-
5	195	2,760	-	-
Total				892,800

10.2.4 Housing extensions

The expressed need for housing extensions, projected on the same basis as Table 10.1, is stated in Table 10.4. A budget of \$25,000/extension is allowed.

Table 10.4: Requirement for housing extensions			
	Number of bedrooms		
	1	2	3
Number of dwellings	2	-	-
Total number of bedrooms	2	-	-

10.2.5 Infrastructure

Residential development on the scale envisaged will exceed the extent of the existing road network and utilities, requiring augmentation of municipal and essential infrastructure. It also questions the adequacy of the existing method of wastewater management and poses the question of whether the town as a whole has reached the point of requiring piped sewerage and centralised treatment and effluent disposal. Based on current demand projections, the new water treatment plant will have sufficient capacity.

For the purposes of this HEHP, it is assumed that all lots are serviced except for those opposite the Menindee Health Clinic. This will require approximately 450 m of road construction, water and electrical services. The cost structure associated with servicing is estimated as Table 10.5.

Table 10.5: Additional infrastructure associated with new developments

Infrastructure element	Estimated cost (\$)
Road	202,000
Water	48,000
Electrical power	174,000
Total	424,000

10.3 Asset preservation

All social housing properties except three are managed by Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation and are subject to planned inspection cycles. Under its Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP), MPRHC will prepare and keep current effective plans for planned maintenance so there is a clear programme and scope of work for each property. Responsive maintenance for time-critical repairs will continue to be undertaken on an 'as needed' basis to reinstate a property or appliance to a safe or functional level of service.

The established Tenant Support and Education Programme (TSEP), delivered by Murdi Paaki Services, is assisting tenants to maintain their tenancies, including complying with the terms of tenancy agreements. This service contributes to improved understanding by tenants of the need to use their properties appropriately, including reducing the potential for defects to go unreported and the scope of restoration to mount. The presence of TSEP satisfies the concerns raised by the CWP in §5.9.3.

Financial constraints limit the scope of work which can be carried out, and MPRHC relies on project funding to attend to repairs of a more substantial nature. This being the case, it remains a challenge for MPRHC at times to comply with health and safety, legislative and duty of care obligations. It is anticipated that MPRHC's integration into the MPRH&BC management framework will provide a

more assured and sustainable financial footing and offer tenants greater certainty that their properties will be maintained in good condition.

Estimated costs for routine repair and maintenance required to attend to immediate restoration and preservation given in Table 5.29 and estimated costs for particular works in Table 5.30 are summarised in Table 10.6.

Table 10.6: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost

Routine repairs	1,045,800
Particular repairs	277,100
Total	1,322,900

10.4 Home ownership

Although a small number of respondents to the householder survey were owners, there was not strong interest in transitioning to home ownership among social housing tenants. The CWP has not expressed any great enthusiasm for pursuing this form of tenure on behalf of tenants but this HEHP does contain a recommendation for an information session for those few tenants who might wish to consider this option further.

Table 10.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
CAP-01	8.1.2	Aboriginal health and wellbeing	Host a facilitated meeting/workshop of all health service providers to initiate the development of a Menindee Aboriginal Health Strategy	The Menindee Aboriginal community expect to live a long, healthy and rewarding life but this aspiration is hampered by an absence of regular, integrated health services and a history of ill-conceived and poorly administered services and programmes. Where services do exist, they are provided haphazardly, irregularly and often as a reactive response to adverse events
CAP-02	8.1.2	Housing and infrastructure	Establish a broad-based Housing and infrastructure subcommittee of the CWP to guide the implementation of this HEHP	The project in its entirety is major and requires consistent and informed decision-making to achieve the best outcomes. The proposed project management structure echoes the successful NAHS/ACDP governance arrangements
CAP-03	8.1.2	Community safety	Conceptualise, plan, design and deliver a Menindee Safe Community strategy	Safety and security are paramount considerations for any community, especially those which want their members to enjoy the full richness of life and the freedom to live happy and healthy lifestyles. The prevention of crime and the creation of a safe and harmonious community environment are of paramount concern to the Menindee Community Working Party in light of the revelation that one in eight households indicated they do not feel safe in their own homes
MEN-01	10.2.2	Land acquisition	Negotiate access to Lot 1 and Lot 2, Section 2, DP758669 (Perry Street) for development for older persons accommodation Progressively purchase up to 22 additional individual lots in all locations in the urban area for development for individuals and families	Development of vacant AHO and MLALC residential lots further concentrates Aboriginal households into one precinct and is to be avoided. Sufficient vacant lots exist elsewhere to satisfy unmet demand but some require to be serviced
MEN-02	5.10.6 10.2.3	Demolition	Two existing dwellings require to be demolished to allow redevelopment	All existing dwellings except two are habitable. There are no unoccupied dilapidated dwellings requiring clearance for health and safety reasons
MEN-03	5.10.3 10.2.2	New housing	Thirty new dwelling units are proposed, mainly two-bedroom dwellings for young people and either individual dwellings or a unit complex for elders	There is significant unmet demand manifest in census data and in need expressed through the MPRH&BC Housing Survey, as confirmed by community consultation
MEN-04	5.10.6 10.2.3	Replacement housing	Two replacement houses are proposed	Further to Strategy MEN-06, existing dwellings are, or can be made, serviceable except for two Paringa Street dwellings which

Table 10.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
MEN-05	5.9.3 10.2.4	Housing extensions	One additional bedroom is proposed to each of two dwellings. Alternatively, additional space may be provided in the form of a granny flat where circumstances warrant	are at the end of their useful life Required to ease crowding as established through CNOS
MEN-06	5.10.4	Housing repair and maintenance	Roll out a housing repair and maintenance programme to restore a healthy home environment for tenants	Respondents to the MP Household Survey flagged deficiencies to their properties. Almost all households stated a need for repairs, some urgent. This strategy is intended to restore a healthy and safe living environment for tenants, extend serviceable life of assets and reduce ongoing maintenance costs. It is also directed at rectifying non-compliant access arrangements for those tenants with a disability. Need confirmed by scoping in February 2021
MEN-07	5.10.4	Housing repair and maintenance	Deliver a programme of defined works to attend to serious defects to several dwellings, restore visual amenity and improve environmental health	Inspections have revealed a need for the proposed works in order to avert more major work in the case of rusted roof sheeting, painting to preserve asset condition and new evaporative coolers to replace aged units and obtain most benefit from the proposed solar power/split system installations
MEN-08	5.9.3	Energy affordability	Deliver a programme of installation of solar PV panels to all dwellings not currently provided with solar power and associated energy saving measures	Energy poverty is rife in communities across the Region, including Menindee. Previous energy affordability measures have not addressed the needs of all Aboriginal social housing tenants
MEN-09	10.2.5	Infrastructure	Provide or negotiate with CDSC and utilities to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roadworks and drainage to new subdivision ▪ Water supply to new subdivision ▪ Electrical power to new subdivision 	Essential services are required to allow development of the Perry Street subdivision for residential lots
MEN-10	8.2.2	Home ownership	Arrange with AHO and IBA to deliver community information workshops on support for home ownership	The MPRH&BC Consortium Household Survey and the CWP identified some interest in home ownership, requesting further information
MEN-11	8.2.2	Housing affordability	Review social housing rental costs in Menindee in relation to private sector rent as a surrogate for market rent, and adjust the rent cost structure in response	The apparent disparity in rent paid by Aboriginal tenants in social housing and all renters in private sector housing is demonstrated by the Census and the MPRH&BC Household

Table 10.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
MEN-12	8.2.2	Services affordability and quality	Discuss with Essential Water measures which reduce the burden of excessive water consumption costs and which lead to improved water quality	Survey. The CWP has expressed concern about cost of living pressures in Menindee; housing- and services-related poverty is a serious concern in the community, particularly since Aboriginal tenants on fixed income have no other options
MEN-13	Table 7.3	Human services: Generally	Seek MPS assistance in conjunction with TSEP housing staff to arrange topic-specific workshops with service providers	CWP input indicates that community awareness of availability of various human services, and of the presence of some providers, is patchy at best
MEN-14	8.2.3	Human services: Economic participation	With MPS support, negotiate a package of economic initiatives relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition from school to work and further learning Targeted training and related employment initiatives Support to transition to small business start-ups Development of tourism industry infrastructure 	Levels of economic participation among Aboriginal adults in Menindee are low and cost of living pressures are not sustainable. The CWP aspires to improve the economic situation of the community in an holistic and integrated way by increasing the level of active participation in the labour market
MEN-15	8.1.2	Human services: Community safety	Seek MPS support to advocate for provision of a safe house, refuge or secure emergency accommodation and related support services in Menindee Provide a community emergency telephone number as an effective alternative to 000 to summon assistance from the Police and other emergency services	There are currently no options in Menindee to accommodate and support individuals or families escaping violence or otherwise requiring emergency accommodation
MEN-16	Table 7.3 8.2.3	Human services: Income support services	Advocate to CDSC for physical reorganisation of Menindee Rural Transaction Centre to improve privacy and confidentiality for Centrelink client access and provide an employment opportunity for a member of the local Aboriginal community	Client confidentiality is potentially compromised due to lack of privacy when using the Centrelink portal
MEN-17	8.2.3	Human services: Youth facilities and services	Advocate for access to a youth centre, school holiday programmes, sporting facilities and youth services co-ordination	The CWP indicated that services for young people are provided but that critical gaps exist in infrastructure and personnel availability for the delivery of services and programmes
MEN-18	8.2.3	Human services: Children's facilities and services	Secure additional funding and support for children's services delivered through the Pre-school	The CWP is concerned that the support and resourcing needs of the Pre-school are not currently being met
MEN-19	8.2.3	Human services: Health services	Work with Maari Ma and NSW Health to expand service scope in Menindee, through provision of five additional local positions: three Aboriginal health practitioners, a social worker, and a transport worker; and through development of a model of	Services provided are valued but the CWP has indicated that the community would welcome a greater local presence. In particular, mental health and counselling services are seen as inadequate. The CWP suggest that a case can be made for two

Table 10.7: Master Plan				
Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			mental health and counselling service provision that meets community needs	local mental health support workers, one male and one female
MEN-20		Human services: Transport	Advocate for a community transport service	The School bus is the only means of transport for those community members requiring to access services in Broken Hill. The bus is not always available

10.5 Probable order of cost

Probable orders of cost for each strategy are shown in Table 10.8. The estimates were prepared on the following basis:

- Costs for building-related work are derived from industry standard cost information and/or for project costs for similar work in the Murdi Paaki Region;
- Prices are current to September 2020;
- An index appropriate to locality is applied;
- Building costs assume that construction takes place in accordance with MPS procurement practice. Projections may need to be re-evaluated if training schemes are integrated;
- 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 10.8: Probable orders of cost, housing and environmental health infrastructure

Strategy	Description	Order of cost (\$)
Housing		
	Planning and development	125,000
	Land acquisition	330,000
	Infrastructure	424,000
	New house building	12,306,000
	Replacement housing	892,800
	Housing extensions	50,000
	Repair and maintenance	1,322,900
	Sub-total	15,450,700
	Unquantified risk allowance	750,000
	Project management (10.0%)	1,500,000
	Programme admin (3%)	450,000
	Total for housing and infrastructure	18,150,700

No costs have been assigned to improvement in and extension of human services for the reason that these services are already the subject of government programme planning and resource allocation processes. Performance monitoring of government services is a key area of focus under the OCHRE Murdi Paaki LDM Accord II and Accord

processes should be brought to bear on areas of underperformance.

10.6 Funding sources

Funding for the project will need to be negotiated through the RAHLA as the principal decision-maker on matters of Aboriginal social housing in the Region. As noted previously, MPRHC is not in a sufficiently robust financial position to contribute to these high-order costs from revenue derived from property rents and subsidies and is dependent upon grant funding from governments. Table 10.9 is a notional income/expenditure statement for Menindee based on average per property information for 2020 and assuming 100% rent collection. Any actual surplus is used to cross-subsidise losses experienced in other communities.

Table 10.9: Notional income and expenditures relating to Menindee Aboriginal social housing

		Amount (\$)
Income	Rents	512,540
	Subsidy	92,550
Outgoings	Total revenue	605,090
	Rates/charges	13,840
	Administration	109,190
	Property costs	305,830
	Other costs	68,360
	Total outgoings	497,220
	Balance	107,870

Viability of the service to the Menindee community is subject to the on-going financial support in the form of government grants and subsidies from the Aboriginal Housing Office. Alternative financial investment models such as social impact investing appear hypothetical solutions to funding capital and/or recurrent costs in the context of Aboriginal social housing in the Murdi Paaki Region.

10.7 Staging of works

There are no priorities attaching to the improvements listed in Table 10.7. All works may be classified as immediate. Repair and maintenance work should be programmed to proceed as one integrated contract, subject to

local building sector capacity, with building extensions included within the scope of the contract.

10.8 Value-adding initiatives

For a small community such as Menindee, integrating training initiatives with building activity is problematic as works tend to be short duration but, given the scale of development and maintenance outlined in Table 10.7, and documented community aspirations for integrated employment and training outcomes, a substantial employment and training programme is not only possible but essential. Such initiatives have been successfully implemented in the Region in the past at scale in conjunction with Western Institute of TAFE. The Institute was under contracted arrangements 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 building and infrastructure projects. Murdi Paaki Services Ltd has the capacity to work with the CWP to develop a suitable employment and training framework, and negotiate its implementation.

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