

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 'WARREN SHIRE 2022'



**WARREN SHIRE
COUNCIL**



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Message to Residents

A new integrated planning and reporting framework for NSW Local Government has been introduced and a requirement of this framework is to prepare a long-term Community Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy.

This document is Warren Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan. The Plan is a working document that identifies the main priorities, objectives and goals for the future of the Warren Shire local government area over the next 10 years.

Our 'Warren Shire 2022' Plan sets out the social, environmental, economic and civic leadership goals for the future of our community. Therefore, it is a **community plan**, not just a Council plan. The Council will however be responsible for the Plan's implementation and the ongoing updates to the Plan in the coming years.

The Plan has been developed through community stakeholder workshops, a survey and careful analysis of the findings from both. The Plan will be delivered as a partnership between Council, State agencies, community groups and individuals and addresses a broad range of issues that are relevant to the whole community.

Our Councillors support the Plan, believe that it reflects the priorities of our community and look forward to seeing its development and delivery over time.

Regards,

NRF (Rex) Wilson OAM
Mayor
Warren Shire Council

An introduction to Warren Shire

The Warren Shire is located in Central Western NSW and covers an area of 10,860 square kilometres. The total estimated population for the Shire as at 2010 is 2,845 (ABS) and the population in Warren is approximately 1,645 (ABS – Census 2006).

Warren Shire is composed of the town of Warren and the villages of Nevertire and Collie. The main centre of Warren is situated on the banks of the Macquarie River and is located 120km from the regional centre of Dubbo and 540km from Sydney.

The Shire is economically dependent on agriculture, particularly sheep and cattle grazing, as well as wheat, oat and cotton growing. Aside from those directly employed by the agriculture industry, there are also significant flow-on economic benefits from this industry to other related enterprises.

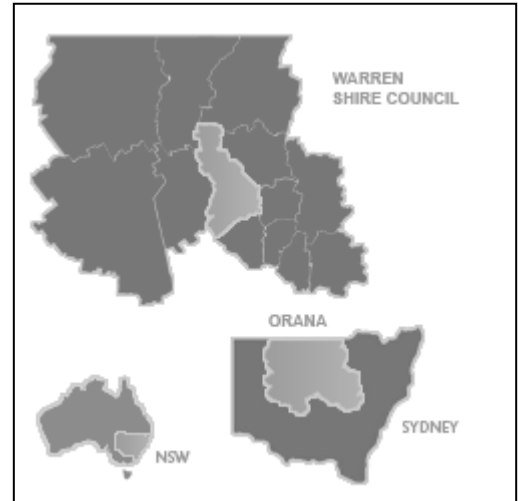
The first European settlers moved into the area in the early 1830s taking up land, or “squatting” in the surrounding district, and Warren was gazetted as a town in June 1861. Prior to this settlement the sole owners and occupants had been the traditional custodians of the country, the Wayilwan / Weilwan tribe.

The area covered by the Warren Shire sits at the convergence of the territories of two Aboriginal language groups, the Wiradjuri to the southeast and the Wayilwan/Weilwan to the north and northwest. Prominent features within the landscape usually defined tribal boundaries and an area from within the Barwon River to the north, the Bogan River to the west and the Castlereagh River to the east is regarded as the Wayilwan territory. Smaller local groups of the Wayilwan lived within the region, including the Waiabara, who lived near the Barwon River and the Kamwabari/ Kawambarai who lived in the area south of Quambone extending towards the Castlereagh River.

In the 2006 Census 12.4% of people in the Warren Shire were identified as being indigenous. This is an increase in the percentage of indigenous people from the last Census in 2001 (11.8%).

In the 2006 Census the age structure for Warren Shire was as follows:

Age group	Warren (%)	NSW (%)
0 – 4 years	8.2	6.4
5 – 14 years	14.6	13.4
15 – 24 years	8.0	13.3
25 – 54 years	41.0	42.0
55 – 64 years	12.7	11.0
65 – 84 years	13.9	12.1
85 years and over	1.7	1.7



Local Government Area Map

At the time of writing, the 2011 Census data had not been distributed. This statistical data should be available in June 2012. The statistical information contained within the Plan should be updated upon its release.

Warren Shire 2022

Local Councils in NSW are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005.

A new planning and reporting framework for NSW Local Government has been introduced. These reforms replace the former Management Plan and Social Plan with an integrated framework. It also includes a new requirement to prepare a long-term Community Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy.

Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework



A Community Strategic Plan is a working document that identifies the main priorities, objectives and goals for the future of the Warren Shire local government area.

In doing this, the planning process considers the issues and pressures that may affect the community and the level of resources that will realistically be available to achieve its goals.

The Plan must:

- Have a long term focus – minimum of 10 years.
- Address key issues – social, environmental, economic and civil leadership.
- Provide for a resourcing strategy – including how community assets will be used for the future, how the council workforce will be managed to deliver up the desired plan outcomes and a financial plan to spell out how aspects of the plan will be funded.
- Outline how progress in implementing the plan will be measured and monitored.
- Provide for the council to progressively report to the community on progress and achievements.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Community consultation and engagement are integral aspects of Council's every day activities. Engagement is not an 'add-on' activity. When Council has a good relationship with the community, it is more likely to understand the range of needs and aspirations of the community and to ultimately make better informed decisions.

The Engagement Strategy encourages the community to be informed and to participate in decision-making processes that guide the development of shire-wide service provision.

The Community Engagement Strategy outlines how Council will engage with its community and relevant stakeholders in developing and finalising the Community Strategic Plan. Over time it will be reviewed to outline how Council will ensure regular engagement and discussion with our community about their needs and aspirations for the town.

Identified Audiences

The following groups could be included in Council's consultation processes:

- Youth, including schools
- Farmers and industry groups
- Community and sporting organisations
- Aboriginal groups
- Council staff
- Councillors
- Aged persons
- The Warren Liquor Accord
- NSW and Federal government departments and Regional Development Australia (RDA) – Orana
- The Warren Interagency
- Chamber of Commerce
- Utility providers
- Health organisations
- Neighbouring councils and Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC)
- Service clubs
- Council facilities users

Community Consultation

Council's Community Engagement Strategy was adopted by Council on the 27th of October 2011. Community consultation for the development of the Community Strategic Plan commenced in February 2012, with Council staff conducting eight forums and consultation meetings across the Shire, involving 113 people. These included:

- Warren Interagency meeting – 16 February 2012
- Council staff workshop – 20 February 2012
- Macquarie Local Aboriginal Land Council meeting – 20 February 2012
- Warren Chamber of Commerce – 23 February 2012
- Collie community – 27 February 2012
- Marra community – 28 February 2012
- Nevertire community – 29 February 2012
- Warren community – 5 March 2012

In addition, a survey was conducted via both hard copy and online means and regular information updates were provided via a variety of communication channels (e.g. local newspapers, Council website, Warren Shire Council Facebook page.) 320 responses were received in response to the Community Strategic Plan survey (results summary can be found in the Appendix, document). Of these 320 responses, 71 were from local school students, who completed the survey during school hours.

The development of 'Warren Shire 2022' was also actively informed by recent community engagement activities including:

- 'Socio-Economic Study of LMV: Climate, Policy, Water – Narromine and Warren Shires the Imperatives and Adaptation May 2011.'
- 'Warren Community Capacity Assessment – May 2010' – 33 community members engaged in a series of focus groups.

The Plan was released for a 28-day period from 23rd March 2012 through until 25th April 2012.

State and Regional Plans

The development of 'Warren Shire 2022' has taken into account the NSW State Plan, 'NSW 2021 – a Plan to Make NSW Number One' and the Regional Plan developed by Regional Development Australia – Orana (RDA Orana) – 'Regional Plan Orana NSW 2010 – 2020'.

Some of the issues considered in these plans have been taken into consideration in Warren Shire's Community Strategic Plan including areas such as the economy, infrastructure, health, education, transport and tourism.

Transport Infrastructure

Rural roads are a key area of concern for the Warren Shire Community. A priority identified in the RDA Orana Plan is to “upgrade and seal various roads within the region to create a better service link” (p.29), and to work towards “improvements to rail infrastructure” (p.30) This is also aligned to the NSW State Plan Goal 19 – “Invest in Critical Infrastructure” with targets including to improve the quality of urban and rural state roads and enhance rail freight movement.

New Tourism Developments

The need to market the Macquarie Marshes and/or the Macquarie River was raised by a number of community members as an idea to improve our community.

This is aligned with the Orana RDA’s Plan to “develop new eco-tourism ventures which focus on river systems, the Macquarie Marshes and other natural assets” (p.34), which in turn aligns to the NSW State Plan Goal 3 to “Drive Economic Growth In Regional NSW”.

Key issues and Challenges for our Community

Values -

- Provide a safe and attractive working and living environment that will attract skilled people and help boost the population.
- Continue to support and develop agriculture and other existing industries, but reduce reliance on the agriculture industry via development of alternative income sources.
- A Shire that has quality and well-maintained infrastructure.
- A place that encourages vitality and leadership in the community.
- A Council that provides quality and cost-effective services, and that partners with the community in decision-making.
- A community that is inclusive and encourages the development of it’s young people.

Key issues

Community consultation identified key challenges affecting Warren Shire.

- The hollowing out of the population – trend toward increases in older, less skilled, more welfare dependent population. Need to boost the population (and skill levels) by attracting and retaining working families and employed young adults.
- Need to attract new industry and enterprises to reduce reliance on agriculture industry and help boost employment.
- Provision of community services and facilities, such as health services and law enforcement, to service existing residents and attract new residents.

- Infrastructure and services across the Shire need to be of an adequate standard to support local business and the community – e.g. local and rural roads, water supply, waste management and drainage.
- Need to support the youth of the community and encourage their development, education and ensure there are adequate facilities and services to meet their needs.

These issues will be addressed under the following categories:

- Social
- Economic
- Infrastructure
- Environmental
- Governance

1. Social

Significant community challenges and issues that have influenced the composition of the community's Social strategies include:

- Lack of employment opportunities, decline in quality of essential services/infrastructure such as health, education and housing. These factors mean that it is difficult to attract and retain working families and employed young adults.
- Decline in population levels and the relative ageing of the community, involving increases in older community members and the exit of school-aged and post-secondary youth.
- Challenge of maintaining essential local services and ensuring these services continue to be provided locally rather than as out-reach services.
- The need to support young people and encourage their development.

Our Community's 2022 Social Strategies:

Objective 1.1: Improve social well-being to offer a competitive lifestyle and attract and retain working families				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
1.1.1	Local access to essential services and less out-reach services, particularly for essential services.	Council	Community	Ongoing
1.1.2	Maintain high levels of community cohesion and community spirit	Community	Council	Ongoing
1.1.3	Provide leadership and coordination of the Warren Shire Interagency group	Council, Interagency	Community	Ongoing
1.1.4	Ensure a high standard of education for Shire residents	Schools, TAFE, Department of Education and Training	Council	Ongoing
1.1.5	Retain and develop housing for skilled people	Government and local businesses	Community	Ongoing
1.1.6	Co-ordinate and support community groups to promote events and activities within the local community such as: Australia Day	Council	Community	Ongoing

Objective 1.2: Support young people and encourage their development				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
1.2.1	Provide leadership and coordination of the 'Warren Youth sub-committee' – an organisation which coordinates action to assist all youth	Council, Interagency	Community	Ongoing
1.2.2	More accessible facilities for youth and a greater range of youth activities are organised and coordinated	Community	Council, Youth sub-committee	Ongoing
1.2.3	Development of traineeship programs to retain youth and provide with new skills	Council, local business community	Community	Ongoing

Objective 1.3: Improved health outcomes for the community				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
1.3.1	Provide appropriate levels of health care and aged care within the Shire	Government	Council	Ongoing
1.3.2	Advocate for Dentist and Doctors available in Warren to meet community's needs	Private enterprise	Council, Government	Ongoing

Objective 1.4: A safe and clean community				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
1.4.1	Provide animal control services to meet the demands of the community	Council	Community	Ongoing
1.4.2	More visible police presence	NSW Government	Community, Council	Ongoing
1.4.3	Provide adequate protection from fires, other natural disasters and other risks to public health and safety	Council & Emergency Management Services	Community, NSW Government	Ongoing
1.4.4	Help ensure safe and sustainable development	Council	Community, NSW Government	Ongoing
1.4.5	Maintain high standards of street cleanliness, vacant block management	Council	Community	Ongoing
1.4.6	Maintain town streets and footpaths	Council		Ongoing

2. Economic

The 2011 study entitled Socio Economic Study of Lower Macquarie Valley: Climate, Policy and Water – Narromine and Warren Shires states:

“The Warren community is economically dependent on agriculture. Aside from those directly employed by the agriculture industry, there are also significant flow on economic benefits from this industry to other related enterprises. Climate change will impact on all agricultural industries, while water policy will directly affect irrigated industries. Under policy changes the cotton industry is the most severely affected due to its dependence on

irrigation water for production and dry land grain production is also vulnerable to adverse affects under a drying climate.”

Significant economic challenges and issues that have influenced the composition of the community’s Economic strategies include:

- The need to strengthen Shire’s key industry agriculture.
- Investigation of and encouragement of other potentially viable industries such as tourism.
- Decline in population and corresponding reduction in the amount of skilled labour and businesses in the Shire – need to boost population levels and employment.
- Impact of climate change.
- Impact of water policy – including the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

Our Community’s 2022 Economic Strategies

Objective 2.1: Strengthening agriculture and existing local industries and exploring other options				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
2.1.1	Co-ordinate Stage 2 of Socio-Economic Study of the LMV – implementing Economic adaptation activities	Council	NSW Government, Community	Ongoing
2.1.2	Implement Economic Development Strategy	Council	NSW Government, Community	2012-2013
2.1.3	Undertake a skills audit of local economy	Council	Local business	2012
2.1.4	Assist and encourage the development of new business	Council, NSW Government, Chamber of Commerce, local businesses	Regional Development Australia, local businesses	Ongoing

Objective 2.2: Enhance the experience of visitors to Warren Shire				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
2.2.1	Implementation of Streetscape Masterplan and Town Improvement Committee activities – upgrade streetscape including landscaping, gardens and street furniture, empty shop fronts displays	Council	Community	Ongoing
2.2.2	Development of a Tourism strategy – including marketing of the region	Council		Ongoing

3. Infrastructure

Significant challenges and issues that have influenced the composition of the community's Infrastructure strategies include:

- Need for good transport networks including Shire roads – the maintenance of this important asset is a key challenge.
- The need for the introduction of long-term planning into asset management procedures to ensure that future needs can be planned for and current infrastructure is supported.

Our Community's 2022 Infrastructure Strategies

Objective 3.1: Good quality transport infrastructure				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
3.1.1	Ensure local roads and bridges are maintained/constructed to acceptable community standards in a cost effective, efficient and safe manner	Council, Government	Government, Community	Ongoing
3.1.2	Ensure regional main roads and highways are maintained to acceptable community standards	Roads and Maritime Services	Government, Council	Ongoing
3.1.3	Maintain and enhance the local aerodrome and promote its use	Council	Government	Ongoing

Objective 3.2: Good quality community infrastructure and facilities				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
3.2.1	Maintain parks, gardens and reserves in a safe and attractive condition	Council	Community	Ongoing
3.2.2	Monitor pool management and implement maintenance and upgrades	Council	NSW Government, Community	Ongoing
3.2.3	Provide a high quality library service that meets the needs of the community	Council	Community	Ongoing
3.2.4	Maintain community facilities to an appropriate standard (e.g. Sporting Complex)	Council	Community	Ongoing
3.2.5	Maintain and service the villages of Collie and Nevertire	Council	Community	Ongoing
3.2.6	Construction of Heavy Vehicle Inspection Station and upgrade existing Council Works Depot	Council		2012-2014
3.2.7	Upgrade and refurbishment of Warren Shire Council Chambers to comply with legislation	Council		2012-2016

4. Environmental

Significant challenges and issues that have influenced the composition of the community's Environmental strategies include:

- The potential impacts of climate change and water policy.
- Management of waste in the Shire with no recycling program currently in place.
- Need for ongoing management of water supply, drainage and sewerage in Warren, Nevertire and Collie.

Our Community's 2022 Environmental Strategies

Objective 4.1: Management of the local environment				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
4.1.1	Monitor Warren Shire Council LEP	Council	NSW Government	Ongoing
4.1.2	Maintain high levels of maintenance and services in the area of public Cemeteries	Council		Ongoing
4.1.3	Management of noxious plants	Castlereagh Macquarie County Council, Council	NSW Government, Landowners	Ongoing
4.1.4	Maintain involvement and support of Catchment Management Authority	Council	Central West CMA	Ongoing

Objective 4.2: Resource use, waste disposal and management				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
4.2.1	Reduce rate of landfill through waste management, minimisation and collection methods	Council	Community	Ongoing
4.2.2	Ensure the efficient and cost effective operation of Council's road making materials (e.g. Mount Foster Quarry and gravel pits.)	Council		Ongoing

Objective 4.3: Management of water/wastewater				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
4.3.1	Manage environmentally responsible drainage works in accordance with Council program	Council	NSW Government	Ongoing
4.3.2	Provide Warren and villages of Collie and Nevertire with an adequate and safe water supply that is appropriately priced for all consumers	Council	NSW Government	Ongoing
4.3.3	Provide Warren and village of Nevertire with an adequate and environmentally acceptable sewerage scheme that is appropriately priced for all consumers	Council	NSW Government	Ongoing

5. Governance

Significant challenges and issues that have influenced the composition of the community's Governance strategies include:

- The hollowing out of the population (trend toward increases in older, less skilled, more welfare dependent population) resulting in an increased burden on existing community leaders and stock of volunteers.
- Ensuring the Council continues to remain strong and financially sound and is proactive in the promotion and improvement of the community through sound and responsible leadership working as partners with the community in decision-making.
- Long term governance and community leadership is vital for the future of Warren Shire. Leadership skills need to be fostered to encourage the development of future community leaders and volunteers within the community.

Our Community's 2022 Civic Leadership Strategies

Objective 5.1: A community that partners with Council in decision making				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
5.1.1	Implementation of Council's Community Engagement Strategy	Council	Community	Ongoing
5.1.2	Youth Sub-Committee – ensure active involvement by the youth of Warren Shire	Youth Sub-Committee	Council, Community	Ongoing

Objective 5.2: A Council that provides quality service to ratepayers and residents and delivers cost-effective services to these customers				
Strategies		Responsible	Support	Timing
5.2.1	Quality customer service focus by Council staff	Council	Community	Ongoing
5.2.2	Timely and accurate reporting for efficient management and accountability	Council	Community	Ongoing
5.2.3	Effective staff training and development processes in place	Council	Community	Ongoing

Appendix

Community Survey Data

Level of satisfaction with the delivery of current Council services

	No Opinion	%	Very Satisfied	%	Satisfied	%	Needs some improvement	%	Dissatisfied	%
Sportsgrounds and Facilities	30	10%	135	45%	92	30%	32	10%	16	5%
Function Facilities (eg. Complex)	27	9%	126	42%	108	36%	23	8%	16	5%
Library Facilities	33	11%	150	50%	93	31%	12	4%	12	4%
Swimming Pool	36	12%	99	34%	110	37%	35	12%	16	5%
Parks and playground facilities	22	7%	104	35%	98	32%	47	16%	30	10%
Health services	15	5%	77	26%	94	31%	84	28%	30	10%
Garbage services	51	17%	62	21%	118	40%	41	14%	23	8%
Rural roads	20	7%	24	8%	99	33%	110	37%	43	15%
Town approaches and Main Street	17	6%	46	15%	132	44%	80	27%	24	8%
Town streets and footpaths	19	6%	37	14%	99	33%	110	37%	31	10%
Street cleaning	23	8%	68	23%	142	48%	36	12%	27	9%
Drainage and stormwater	34	11%	37	12%	121	41%	77	26%	29	10%
Water supply	38	13%	60	20%	143	49%	34	12%	19	6%
Sewerage services	59	20%	52	18%	148	51%	15	5%	19	6%

	No Opinion	%	Very Satisfied	%	Satisfied	%	Needs some improvement	%	Dissatisfied	%
Cemeteries	44	15%	60	21%	124	42%	46	16%	18	6%
Animal control	35	12%	40	14%	105	35%	78	26%	39	13%
Youth services	64	22%	16	6%	80	27%	83	29%	48	16%

Average visitation/use of facilities and services

	Never	%	Weekly	%	Monthly	%	Yearly	%	Occasionally	%
Sportsgrounds Facilities	38	13%	69	23%	47	16%	18	6%	125	42%
Function Facilities (eg. Sporting Complex)	47	16%	48	16%	44	15%	26	9%	128	44%
Library Facilities	63	21%	72	25%	62	21%	25	8%	73	25%
Swimming Pool	100	34%	61	21%	23	8%	29	10%	80	27%
Parks and playground facilities	52	18%	56	19%	36	12%	29	10%	119	41%
Health services	40	14%	33	11%	102	35%	22	7%	97	33%
Youth Zone	194	70%	12	4%	12	4%	11	4%	49	18%
Cemetery	79	27%	17	6%	42	13%	35	12%	124	42%