MERRIWA
TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

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by Studio GL

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1-1 Foreword

1-2 Merriwa Town Centre

1-3 Background

Chapter 2: Consultation & Analysis

2-1 Community Engagement Strategy

2-2 Engagement Process

2-3 Key Comments and Feedback

2-4 Vision for Merriwa

2-5 Technical Analysis Summary

Chapter 3: Strategic Direction

3-1 Principles

3-2 Illustrative Masterplan

3-3 Components of the Plan

Chapter 4: Implementation

4.1 Revitalisation Strategy

4.2 Components

4-3 Action plan

01 Introduction

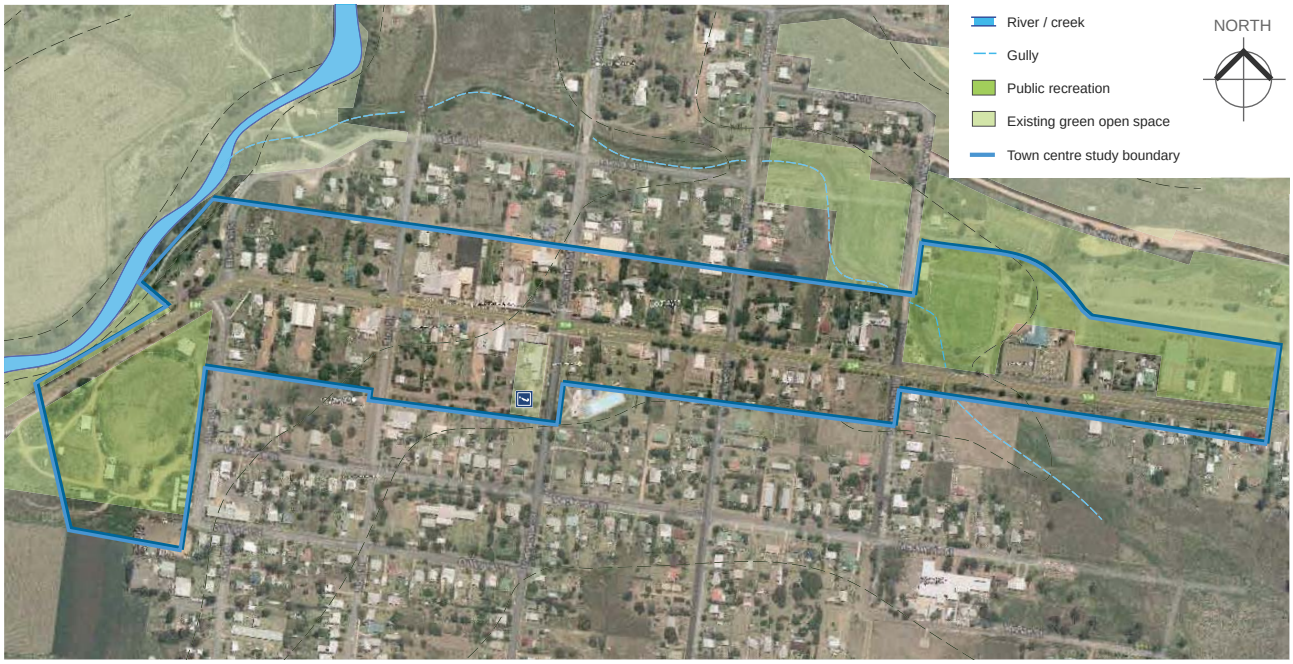
1-1 Foreword

The Merriwa Town Centre lies at the 'heart' of the local community. It is a shared place that not only provides for the day to day needs of the community but is also a place for people to come together for events and social activities. Ensuring that the town centre is attractive and flourishing provides benefits not only for businesses in the centre but also for the wider community throughout the region.

This document, the Merriwa Town Centre Masterplan, outlines a strategic framework to revitalise the town centre and establish the key direction for the town over the next 15+ years, with the aim of creating a safe, attractive and thriving town centre well into the future.

The purpose of this Masterplan is to provide Council and the community with a roadmap for positive change. It identifies the key components and implementation steps needed to realise the vision.

1-2 Merriwa Town Centre



Aerial photo source: googlemaps.com 2015

Figure 1 Aerial map of Merriwa Town Centre

The township of Merriwa is located on the Golden Highway approximately 270 km north west of Sydney (approx 3 hrs), 195 km east of Dubbo (approx 2.5 hrs) and is half way between Newcastle and Dubbo. In 2011, Merriwa had a population of 1,790.

Merriwa serves as the town for the local rural population and provides a range of services including a Multi Purpose Service (or small Hospital), a Library, a Post Office, an Aged Care Hostel and a range of Auto Services. There is also a variety of retail outlets.

There are two schools within the town, including the Merriwa Central School, a public K-12 facility spread across two campuses and a Catholic primary school. There are three operational churches.

The urban grid structure is based on a 200m by 200m grid set out from the Highway which runs east-west.

Merriwa plays host to the 'Festival of the Fleeces' over the June long weekend, this is an event that celebrates 'Everything Australian' and includes a parade down the main street involving up to 200 sheep in red woollen socks.

1-3 Background

History

Upper Hunter Shire Council resolved to prepare 'Town Centre Revitalisation' plans for the centres of Murrurundi, Scone, Aberdeen and Merriwa in mid 2015. Each Masterplan seeks to provide a framework that encourages investment and supports the revitalisation of the relevant centre. Council was keen for each local community to be involved in creating 'their' plan in order for it to reflect a unified vision for each town.

Methodology

The first stage of community consultation and engagement occurred at the end of October 2015 and included workshops, drop in sessions and online feedback through an online engagement tool. The community was asked to share what they thought about their town centre and their ideas for any improvements. Many people were actively involved in the first stage of the consultation, both in person and online, and their ideas, comments and aspirations were gathered and formed the basis of the materials for Stage 2.

The second stage of community consultation and engagement occurred at the end of November 2015. During this time the community was asked to provide feedback on draft design options and strategies that were starting to emerge for each centre. Once again the process included workshops, drop in sessions and online feedback through the online engagement tool.

The feedback collected from the engagement process has been used to assist the further refinement of design ideas and influenced this draft Masterplan which is currently on public exhibition for comment. It is anticipated that following further refinement the final Masterplans will be adopted by Council towards the middle of 2016.

The community engagement process and design refinement was supported by a technical review of the issues and constraints impacting on each town centre undertaken through mapping, analysis and a review of key planning policy documents. To access the detailed documentation of this work, please refer to the *Merriwa Town Centre Revitalisation Masterplan Background Report.*

Objectives

The objectives of all four Upper Hunter Town Centre Masterplans are:

- To undertake a community engagement process that ensures all stakeholders are provided with an opportunity to actively participate; resulting in Masterplans that are truly representative of the interests and goals of the whole community.
- To provide high quality, inclusive and realistic Masterplans for the revitalisation of each town centre.
- To ensure the plans encourage economic activity and investment that support the sustainability and viability of each town centre.
- To provide a clear strategy to implement the Masterplans.

Purpose

The purpose of the Masterplans is not to define in detail the exact solution for a road intersection or the design of a park. Instead, a Masterplan identifies the key challenges for a place and provides a vision that illustrates how the overlapping components that form the town centre can be strengthened so these work well together.

A town centre is composed of its physical design (hard infrastructure), how the place is managed and governed (soft infrastructure) and the experiences of the people who use the centre.

The revitalisation of a town centre occurs through changes to the physical structure of the town, its buildings, road and parking alignments - and the location of key cultural and community infrastructure. It also requires changes to the way the centre is planned and managed, and through the encouragement of social networks and community engagement into the future.

02 Consultation & Analysis

2-1 Community Engagement Strategy

Effective community engagement allows residents and stakeholders to become involved in the decision-making regarding the future of their towns and neighbourhoods. It shows good governance and informed decision-making on behalf of the local government and shares stewardship of place with the local community.

Upper Hunter Council was keen to undertake a community engagement process that provided all stakeholders with an opportunity to actively participate throughout the masterplanning process. The engagement strategy was designed to maximise the opportunities for involving the community in determining the future of the town centres and to integrate unique insider perspective from local experts on each town centre: its assets, strengths and weaknesses. It also generated interest in the community about the Upper Hunter Town Centre Masterplans.

The Stakeholders

A critical step early in any community engagement process is stakeholder identification. Studio GL worked with Council to identify individuals, groups and organisations to include in the conversation as the project progressed. The stakeholder groups for the Upper Hunter town centres included decision makers like Councillors and Council officers; NSW Road and Maritime Services (RMS); people with financial interests like property owners, tenants, business owners; people of different age groups, including school students; as well as regular and occasional users; visitors; and groups that are active in all or one of the four towns.

Engagement Activities

The engagement for the Upper Hunter Town Centre Masterplans was conducted in three phases: two community engagement sessions and a formal public exhibition of the draft Masterplans. During the consultation a variety of engagement activities were carried out to encourage input from a broad range of stakeholders and the wider community.

To introduce the project and to ensure maximum awareness about the community consultation process, a detailed media release was distributed to the local newspaper. This release was also published on the Upper Hunter website, Upper Hunter Facebook page and issued to other local social media outlets.

A number of printed brochures were posted in local shopfronts and community areas. A representative from the local newspaper, The Scone Advocate, attended a drop-in session during Stage 1 consultation and a workshop during Stage 2 consultation, which were both subsequently written up in the newspaper. Diana Griffiths from Studio GL also did a radio interview with ABC Newcastle.

Stage	Engagement Activity
Consultation Preparation	Media releases, advertising, posters, social media
Consultation Stage 1	Stakeholder workshop Community drop-in session Targeted focus meeting Placecheck mapping Idea Post-it Boards Visioning Exercise Online Feedback
Consultation Stage 2	Stakeholder workshop Community drop-in session Ideas & Options Boards Online Feedback
Consultation Stage 3	Public Exhibition of draft Masterplans

2-2 Engagement Process

Community Engagement Stage 1

For the first stage of community engagement, community members in Merriwa were invited to participate and share their thoughts about Merriwa Town Centre. Community members were actively involved in the consultation, both in person and online and their ideas, comments and aspirations were collected by the project team.

Community workshop & Drop-in session

A two-hour long drop-in session held outside the pharmacy allowed people passing by to provide their input and ideas. A number of people provided detailed input during this event and many more were given brochures for the Social Pinpoint website to submit their comments. A stakeholder workshop at the Merriwa Sports Club provided an opportunity to discuss specific issues and develop a vision for Merriwa through a variety of exercises and activities including placecheck mapping, ideas post-it boards and a visioning exercise.

Online feedback

In addition to the in-person consultation an interactive online mapping tool was used as an alternate method for gathering community comments. On this website people could identify places and features they like or dislike, as well as share their ideas for improving the town centre.

Community Engagement Stage 2

Following on from the first stage of Community engagement, the second stage followed a similar process. The ideas and comments collected at the first engagement were used to generate draft design options and strategies for the towns and the community was then asked to provide feedback on those ideas.

The ideas and options were presented as eight detailed design interventions along with additional ideas referenced on the town centre map. Community members were given the opportunity to express their opinion with green dots (●) for 'like' and red dots (●) for 'dislike'. Not all community members chose to use the dots and some members of the community used more dots than others. While the dots are not a comprehensive measure, they give an understanding of the 'pulse' of the community. The community were also asked to share any additional ideas they might have or any variations to the suggested design options they felt would be more effective.

Community workshop & Drop-in session

The drop-in session held during the Merriwa Markets allowed for people passing by to give their input and their ideas. Some people stopped to give detailed input during this event and many others were given brochures for the Social Pinpoint website.

The stakeholder workshop at the Merriwa RSL Hall provided a more focussed platform for the community to give specific feedback on the ideas and options, and discuss alternatives or variations.

Online feedback

For Stage 2 of the community consultation, the interactive online mapping tool was used again, this time to gather community feedback and responses to the proposed design ideas & options for Merriwa Town Centre. The community responded to the ideas with 'likes' and 'dislikes' or specific comments. There was also an opportunity to provide additional ideas.

For a more detailed documentation of the comments from the consultation, please refer to the *Merriwa Town Centre Revitalisation Masterplan Background Report.*

Community Engagement Stage 3
Public Exhibition

The third and final stage of community engagement was a public exhibition of the draft Merriwa Masterplan and a community presentation on the masterplan ideas.

The draft Merriwa Masterplan was available for viewing at Council Chambers, Council offices & libraries and on Council's website www.upperhunter.nsw.gov.au for an extended period of time. This gave the community an opportunity to review the draft masterplan document in detail and provide their feedback via online surveys and written submissions. In Merriwa, the presentation by Council took place at the Merriwa RSL Club.

Council received 18 survey responses, out of which 7 strongly supported, 9 supported, 1 was neutral and 1 strongly opposed the masterplan. In addition, there were two written submissions from community members along with comments from RMS. The projects the community identified that they would like to see implemented in the next three years are: slowing traffic and better pedestrian environment, toilet facilities at Rotary Park, public art on silos and blank walls and the park outside the Welcome Centre.

Suggestions and comments from these responses have resulted in minor amendments and additions being made to the final Merriwa Masterplan Report.

2-3 Key Comments and Feedback

Community Engagement Stage 1

During the community engagement comments and ideas gathered through the online map, targeted meetings, workshops and discussions at the drop-in sessions were mainly concerned with the character, safety and aesthetics of Bettington Street, with a special focus on improving the safety at pedestrian crossings in the town centre and improving the pedestrian environment & amenity along the main street.

The key themes that emerged during the first stage of the community engagement for Merriwa Town Centre are summarised below.

Key themes and outcomes from Stage 1
Strengthening the existing brand around the sheep industry with new and exciting ways to celebrate the town that is known for its 'Festival of Fleeces'.
Making the main street safer for pedestrians using traffic calming, improved pedestrian crossings with better visibility and streetscape improvements.
Creating a 'town park', with access to toilets, other amenities, landscaping and improved connectivity.
Adding colour to the buildings and landscape along main street through the installation of more public art.
Preserving the heritage buildings and updating building façades and awnings on the main street.
Providing a gathering place for the community along Bettington Street.
Updating Bettington Street with improved parking & footpaths along with pedestrian amenities like seating and shade.
Improving signage and gateways into the town by provision of clearer wayfinding and installation of a town map with information on local history, important destinations & local events.
Creating a cycle track to connect destinations in town and establishment of a 'Rail Trail' to Sandy Hollow & Denman along the old railway line.

Community Engagement Stage 2

Of the ideas and options presented to the community through the workshop, drop-in session and the online map, most were favourably received. The community responded enthusiastically to the idea of public art. Creating public art murals on blank side walls had very strong support. Some community members also suggested a number of other blank walls that could be similarly updated. The idea of painting the silos referencing Merriwa's branding & identity was also very well received by the community.

The idea to create identifiable entries to Merriwa using flags and landscaping was strongly received. There was also general support for the proposed use of rosemary for streetscape planting. There was strong support from the community for the idea of town maps, signage and general upgrade for improving wayfinding in the town centre. Some community members indicated that the signage should pay particular attention to highlighting the town's various existing assets.

The idea of establishing a town park was positively received. However, the initial proposed location in front of the library was seen as being on the edge of the town, and not an appropriate spot for the town park, which needs to be more centrally located. There was strong support for integrating the town park with the Welcoming Centre. Although the idea of consistent historic colour scheme throughout town centre was favourably received, some community members raised concerns that a limited colour palette could be restrictive for new business (thus deterring investment) and could be perceived as overtly heritage. The preference was that the streetscape needs to be a bit modern and colourful, with more pop!

Other ideas that were well-received included relocating the Driver Reviver rest stop to an area near No 1 Oval, with additional toilet facilities with longer operating hours, installing flags adjacent to the war memorial and outside the Welcoming Centre, and the creation of cohesive branding that continues to expand on Merriwa's rural history (such as the wool industry). Related ideas that emerged from the discussions included creative ways of using names of local shearing sheds as a part of the streetscape and using stencilling to reference wool bales on elements like garbage bins.

2-4 Vision for Merriwa

Visioning exercise at the workshop

During the Stage 1 community workshop, the community were asked to share their vision for Merriwa. For this visioning exercise the participants were asked to express their vision for the town using words and images.

The following word cloud is a snapshot of the community's vision. The residents continue to be proud of their existing branding as a part of the wool industry, and would like to see it embraced and expanded upon in creative ways. The vision for Merriwa celebrates its character as a friendly, rural town that is centrally located and accessible. The community members would like to see the city's heritage, parks, culture and local history feature more prominently in order to develop its identity as a vibrant, friendly town which attracts thousands of visitors for the annual 'Festival of Fleeces'.

2-5 Technical Analysis Summary

The recommendations in this masterplan are also based on a technical analysis of the physical constraints impacting on Merriwa, including analysis of access and movement, built form, heritage, vegetation, topography, activity and land use.

The Golden Highway experiences a high volume of vehicles, including large trucks.

The rich history of Merriwa is reflected in its quality heritage buildings which help create the centre's unique character

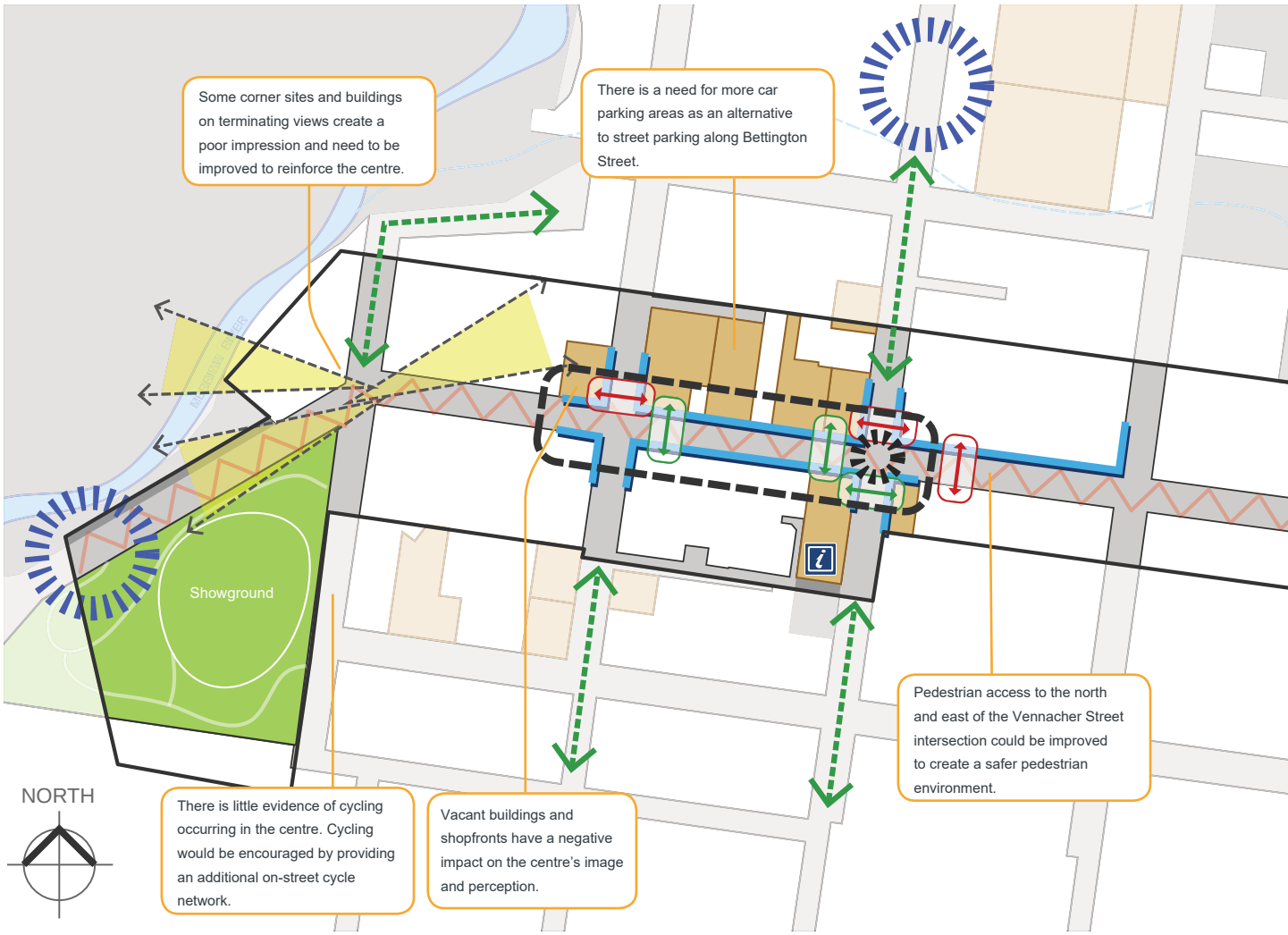
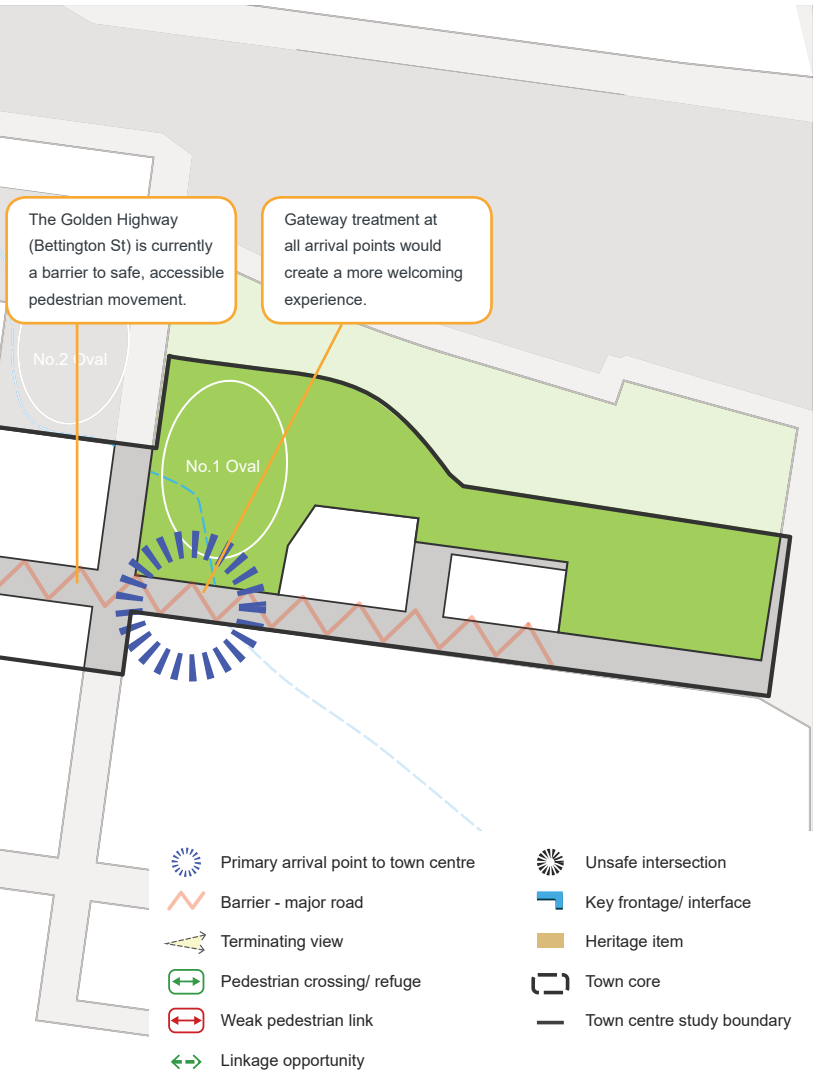


Figure 2 Opportunities and constraints map

Merriwa has good examples of public art i.e. at the Welcoming Centre, which creates a positive local character.

Community feedback indicated that a number of the pedestrian crossings feel unsafe and should be improved.

Merriwa has a number of public facilities, for example the recently built children's playground near Quigley St.



More detail on this analysis can be found in the Merriwa Town Centre Background Report, which considered the existing planning policy context and identified key impacts of these documents.

A key challenge/ opportunity for Merriwa is the Golden Highway which passes through the centre of the town. While this brings visitors and tourists through the town, it also brings a lot of traffic and large trucks through the centre of Merriwa. This creates a barrier to safe pedestrian movement across the highway and discourages outdoor dining and other footpath activities.

Other issues identified in the analysis included the advantage that Merriwa is a compact and attractive town centre but that there are some empty and/or poorly maintained shops.

The purpose of the masterplan is to build upon the town's strengths and manage and respond to spatial weaknesses and constraints. The adjacent diagram highlights key factors which help define potential opportunities for future improvements.

03 Strategic Direction

3-1 Principles

Town centres play an important role in regional life from meeting day to day needs to providing a place for the local community to gather. Centres are also places that are 'contested' with many competing needs that they are required to serve. Successful town centres are driven by a plan for the future that balances public benefit, local character, heritage considerations, commercial return and opportunities for future adaptation. This plan for the future of the Merriwa Town Centre, the 'Strategic Direction', is based on the following principles:

Welcoming: A successful town centre attracts people by creating a welcoming experience for locals and visitors during the day and into the evening. It is important that the town presents itself and 'greets' those arriving in a polite, courteous and friendly manner.

Vibrant: Vibrant places are places that display life and activity. One key to vibrancy is attracting people at different stages of life and another is ensuring the vibrancy inside buildings 'spills out' to the street to create visible activity.

Comfortable: The experience of a centre is generally formed by walking around it. Human scaled streets, well maintained buildings, attractive shop fronts, wide footpaths, awnings, trees and protection from the weather make a centre comfortable to use and visit.

Safe: A good centre provides a safe environment for everyone including the elderly, children and teenagers. Low vehicle speeds, frequent places to cross and few barriers to pedestrian movement are key to success. Good lighting and evening activities add to the safety for all not just during the day but also well into the night.

Memorable: Locals and visitors have a choice about engaging and supporting any one town centre. Memorable places have a clear identity, promote their specialist functions and are easily remembered. They provide compelling reasons to visit the town centre and reasons to return.

Diverse: Diverse centres mix retail and commercial uses with entertainment (i.e. a theatre) and civic and cultural facilities (i.e. community facilities or art galleries). Clustering allows smaller shops to benefit from activity generated by a retail anchor (i.e. a supermarket) or a civic anchor (i.e. a library).

Attractive: An attractive centre is durable and distinctive, expressing the aspirations of the local community. It is also adaptable to changing needs over time. High-quality design including street furniture, landscaping, public art, paving and open spaces all contribute to an attractive place.

Accessible: Centres are destinations. An accessible centre is well connected to surrounding areas and within the centre itself. It needs to provide an efficient road layout that allows people and goods to easily access the centre, and sufficient parking without compromising the quality of the pedestrian environment.

3-2 Illustrative Masterplan

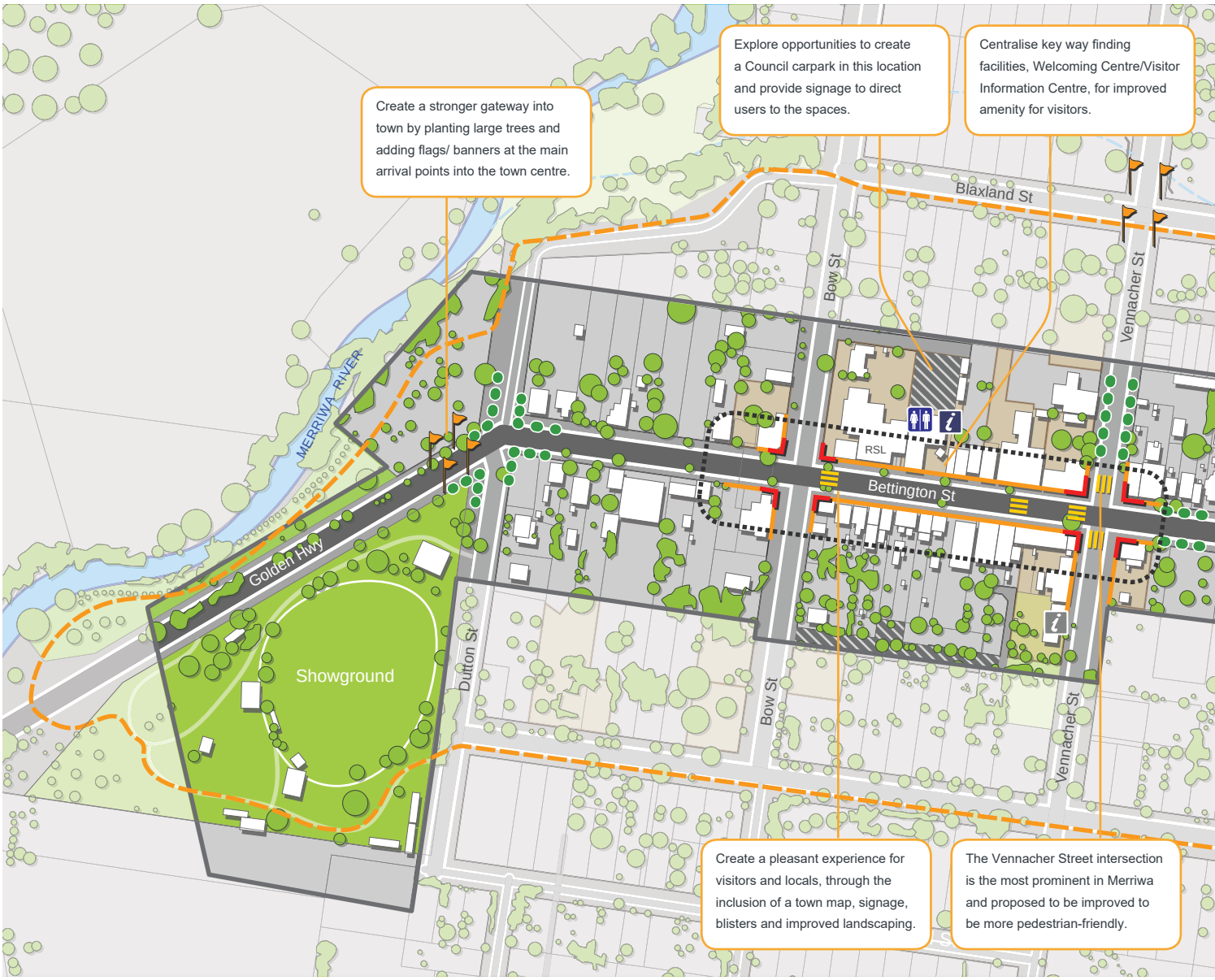
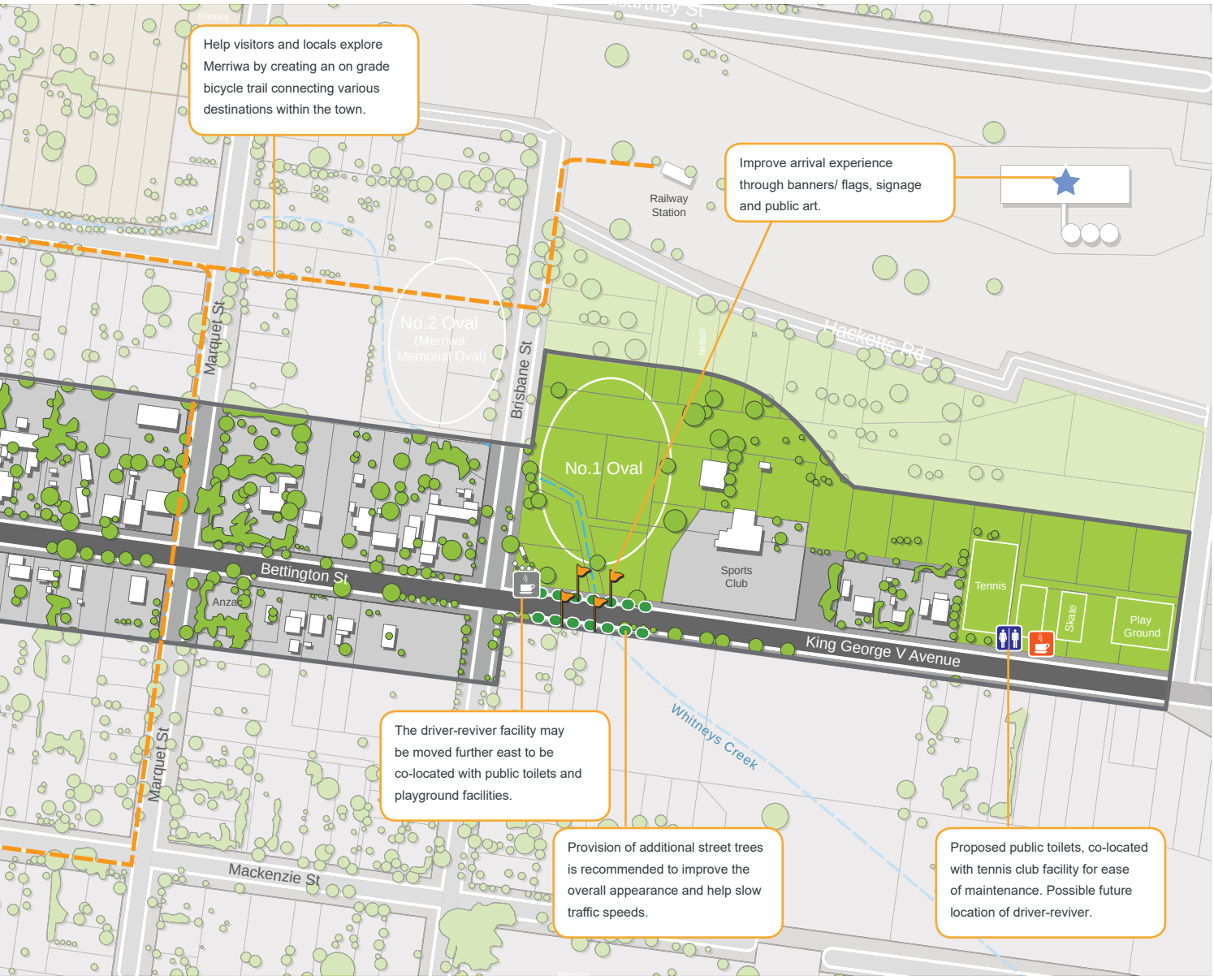


Figure 3 Illustrative masterplan drawing

NORTH



- Existing pedestrian crossing/ refuge
- Proposed signage & flags
- Priority zone for additional trees
- Potential location of Visitor Information Centre
- Proposed RV/ trailer parking area
- Proposed bicycle trail
- Proposed public toilet(s)
- Potential location of driver reviver facilities
- Proposed public art location
- Highly visible street corner
- Desired continuous urban edge
- Existing heritage item
- Existing vegetation
- Existing public recreation area
- Existing indicative built form
- Town centre core (see detail plan)
- Town centre study boundary

3-3 Components of the Plan

This section contains the components 'catalogue' for the successful revitalisation of the Merriwa Town Centre.

Each component is described and supported by carefully selected imagery, including photos, sketches and/ or plans. When and how to deliver the proposed improvements is outlined in the Implementation Action Plan (Chapter 4).

The components are organised in five categories and an overview is provided adjacent.

"Key Interventions"

C-01 Vennacher St Intersection

C-02 'Town Heart'

C-03 Silo Art

"Welcoming & Memorable"

C-04 Town Centre Branding

C-05 Upper Hunter Branding

C-06 Colours & Materials

C-07 Heritage & Landmarks

C-08 Public Art

C-09 Signage & Town Map

C-10 Blank wall treatment

C-11 Gateways & Entries

C-12 Amenities & Facilities

"Vibrant & Diverse"

C-13 Attractions for everyone

C-14 Clustering of uses

C-15 Events & Pop Ups

C-16 Outdoor dining & interactions

C-17 Civic facilities

Comfortable & Attractive

C-18 Green streetscapes

C-19 Pedestrian priority

C-20 Footpath upgrades

C-21 Street furniture

C-22 Awning & Corner elements

C-22 Facades & Shopfronts

Safe & Accessible

C-23 Safety & Security

C-24 Low-speed environment

C-25 Car parking

C-26 Cycling

C-01 Vennacher St Intersection

The Royal Hotel, a large, prominent historic hotel, is located on the intersection of Vennacher and Bettington Street

The Merriwa Post Office

Vennacher Street is currently a wide road

Kerb blisters and central medians narrow the road and make it easier for pedestrians to cross. Goulburn, NSW.

The provision of safe pedestrian crossings is critical to activity in a town centre. At the time of writing this masterplan the RMS was planning to upgrade the two pedestrian crossings on Bettington Street but was not upgrading the intersection of Vennacher and Bettington Street.

This is a significant crossroad in the town, where traffic from Scone and Willow Tree intersects with traffic from Denman, Muswellbrook and Dubbo.

The current intersection design is wide making it difficult for pedestrians to safely cross the road. This is exacerbated by the current location of the pedestrian crossing as turning vehicles often do not see pedestrians until after entering the corner.

This key intersection is important for pedestrian movement in town, linking the chemist and supermarket with the bank and post office.

C-01 Vennacher Intersection

Banners & flags indicate the centre of a town, indicating important place for visitors and tourists. Boorowa, NSW.

Recommendations

It is recommended that this intersection is upgraded to improve the safety and amenity of the area, through the construction of landscape blister treatments on the corners, which would encourage slower traffic speeds and improve the pedestrian experience. This redesign would also move the pedestrian crossing closer to the corner.

Upgrading this intersection would help reinforce a 'green entry' into the main street and provide an opportunity to locate street furniture such as flags, bins and outdoor seating.

Also recommended is the planting of large evergreen trees at key intersections and extending the footpath width in the area adjoining pedestrian crossing points.

Signage for a historic town centre in Canowindra, NSW

Widening the footpath is recommended at pedestrian crossing points

Kerb blisters can also create attractive seating

Example of a landscaped kerb blister in Dulwich Hill, NSW.

Signage in a town can include town centre maps or information on the history of key buildings. This example is from Orange in NSW.

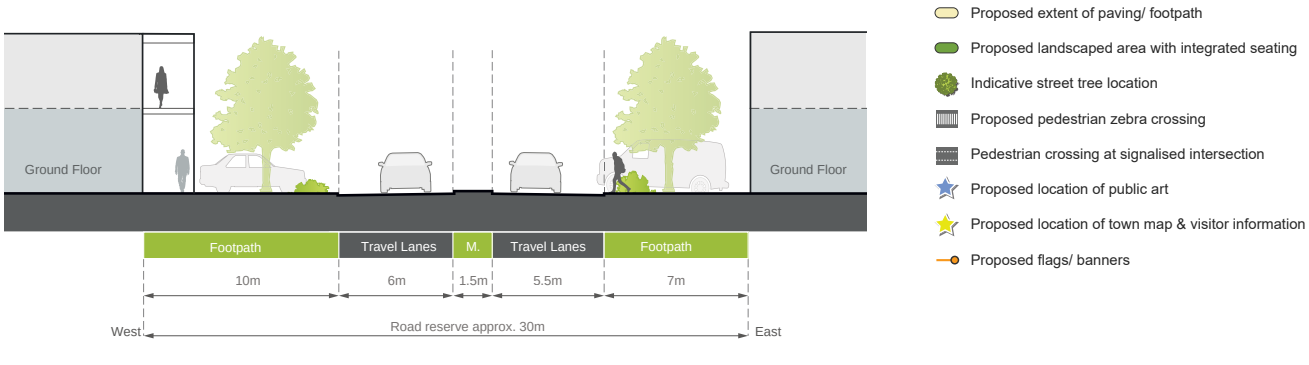


Figure 4 Streetscape section through Vennacher Street

Figure 5 Indicative streetscape concept

Figure 6 Artist's impression

01 Landscape treatments at street corners and threshold treatments improve the 'look & feel' of the street.

02 New street trees to enhance amenity of the town centre between Vennacher Street & Bow Street.

03 Kerb blisters to increase width of footpath and make it easier for pedestrians to cross the road.

04 Additional 45 degree parking along Vennacher Street as an alternative to parking on Bettington Street.

02
04
03
01

C-02 'Town Heart'

The existing courtyard outside the Welcoming Centre

Public spaces in a town centre create a focus and place for the community to socialise and are a setting for events including markets, concerts, and performances. The community owned Welcoming Centre is centrally located in the main street and provides a venue for local arts and crafts.

When the community was consulted about a town square there was overwhelming feedback that the area around the Welcoming Centre was considered the 'heart' of the town and was the logical place for this sort of facility.

It is recommended that Council negotiate with the owners to make this space more accessible to the public. Although comparably small, the space outside the centre could be opened up so that it is more prominent and provides a more welcoming 'look and feel'.

There is also the opportunity to showcase the existing public art in this centre and to provide additional displays on the history of the town on the blank walls leading to the entry to the centre.

Council may also want to consider negotiating moving the tourist information centre (currently in Vennacher St) to this location. While this would require Council to lease space it would focus tourist facilities in the centre of town. Lease negotiations would need to include public access to the new town square, use of toilet facilities and the parking area at the rear of the property.

If Council is unable to reach an agreement an alternate location for a small town square is the council owned land on the corner of Vennacher and Bettington Street in front of the current Library.

Rear carpark for the Welcoming Centre

Figure 7 Sketch of a more open “town heart” outside the Welcoming Centre on Bettington Street

The courtyard outside the Welcoming Centre has a number of attractive small trees and edge landscaping.

The current design does not encourage people to linger or rest in the space and the tall landscaping screens access around the square and creates areas of concealment.

A more open design with low landscaping and new benches would be recommended to encourage people to use the space more intensively. “The Hut” is an attractive historical feature within this space.

Another key advantage of Council negotiating shared use of the Welcoming Centre is the existing large, level carpark at the rear of the site with direct access to Bettington Street. This site is suitable for use by large vehicles including RV’s.

An urban park with a mix of hard and soft landscape elements

Attractive public art at the Welcoming Centre

C-03 Silo Art

View of the current silos in Merriwa

A indicative rural image shown over the current silos in Merriwa

Merriwa has large silos located to the north east of the town centre which are clearly visible when entering the town from the east and from the large and popular children's playground on the corner of King George V Ave and Quigley Ave.

Using these silos as a canvas for a large work of public art would create an attractive and eye catching marker for the town, if owners consent can be obtained.

These silos are located near the alignment of a former railway line and the silo art work could support plans by the Merriwa Railway Society to restore the Station and Yard at Merriwa and Council's proposal for a "Rail Trail", a pedestrian / cycle link between Merriwa and Sandy Hollow (with a possible extension to Denman) that is currently under consideration.

Plan of the north east corner of Merriwa showing the prominent location of the silos

3-3 Components of the Plan *"Welcoming & Memorable"*

C-04 Town Centre Branding

Festival of the Fleece (Photo credit: www.abc.net.au)

Branding differentiates and helps people to remember one place over another. Merriwa is a country town, with historic and enduring links to a rural way of life.

Merriwa has a distinct personality based on its history and the cultural roots of the community and while there are a number of aspects that express the vision of the community, sheep have become a prominent part of the brand. Wool brands could be considered as a graphic for use on garbage bins and other elements, such as those used in the Quirindi footpath.

To complement this rural image, other elements, such as the towns heritage buildings, could be used to strengthen the town identity.

C-05 Upper Hunter Branding

Regional branding helps to tie an area together. The 'Upper Hunter Country' branding of Aberdeen, Denman, Merriwa, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook and Scone is a joint strategy between Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook Councils to increase the region's profile and help tap into the popularity of the nearby Hunter Valley.

A range of 'Upper Hunter Country' branded temporary street furniture such as outdoor umbrellas and 'A-frames' would be a quick way to reinforce this strategy and increase the visual presence of the regional brand.

Proposed cohesive umbrella design incorporating the regional brand

C-06 Colours & Materials

Re-painting some facades will dramatically improve the overall appearance of the centre. The use of a consistent colour palette strengthens the sense of place and identity.

The proposed palette is based on neutral colours with strong contrasting accent colours which could be used to highlight heritage features and articulate facades.

C-07 Heritage & Landmarks

Heritage and landmark buildings at prominent locations play an important role in defining the character of a town. These can be showcased through information boards, night-time lighting of facades and by improving the adjacent public domain.

The tight scale of the Merriwa Town Centre means that corner buildings are key elements in creating a memorable place, so it is worthwhile encouraging the active use of each one.

Existing prominent landmark building

Prominent corner heritage buildings

Heritage building currently empty (under renovation)

C-08 Public Art

Public art, Berry NSW

Welcoming Centre art piece

Example of refurbished bin

Public art plays an important role in establishing a town's local character. It can tell a story about the local history, contribute to a sense of local pride and become an attraction for passing visitors.

Merriwa has a prominent and attractive example of public art next to the Welcoming Centre. This would be better showcased by setting it off against a darker backdrop, either through the use of a different paint colour, or by sheeting the wall behind.

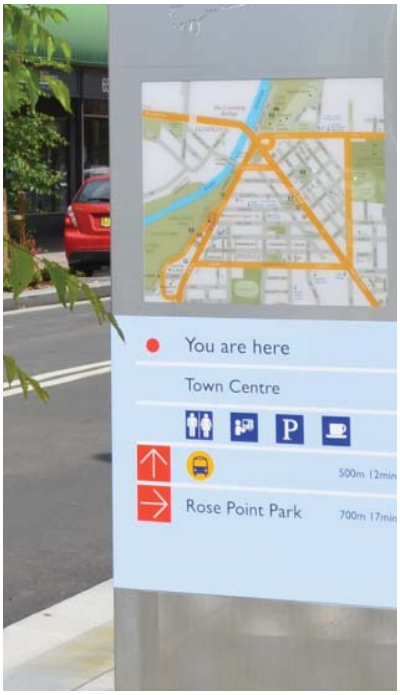
Possible locations for additional public art include the entries at the edge of town, the silos near the eastern gateway park (refer to C-03), various blank walls in the town centre (refer to C-10) and refurbishing of bins.

C-09 Signage & Town Map

Modern technology allows people to easily access information about a town, including maps and tourist information, however it is not always easy for people to know where they are currently located and how to find key facilities such as public toilets.

New town centre maps, similar in style to that shown in Singleton, are recommended for the Welcoming Centre and adjacent to the Showground. Along with signage indicating available parking, especially for large vehicles.

Signage to key facilities



Town map in Singleton, NSW.

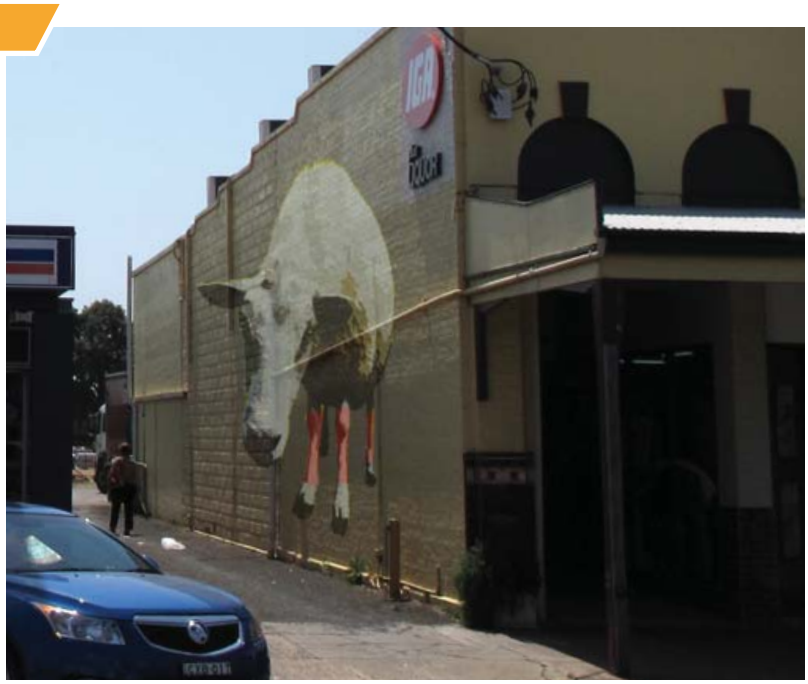
C-10 Blank wall treatment

In many regional and rural town centres it can be difficult to have attractive and active frontages along streets and facing car parks and corners.

Blank facades, especially those located in prominent locations, can play a significant role in defining the character of a place. Public art murals on these walls can be a cost effective way to introduce life into a centre.

Merriwa has a number of walls that could be used for this form of public art, including the wall of the IGA (as indicated in the adjacent mock up), the wall of the RSL facing Bettington Street and the wall of the building located on the Bettington and Bow Street intersection, facing the Merriwa CWA.

To be most effective these installations should be professional art pieces, that reference the town's history and reinforce its identity.



Artist impression of potential wall art on the side of the IGA in Merriwa

An example of street wall art from The Rocks

An example of street wall art from Nowra

A side wall in Merriwa that could have street wall art that relates to the RSL

C-11 Gateways & Entries

An example of gateway treatment, Boorowa NSW

Avenue of trees used as a gateway treatment, Mudgee NSW

Gateways create a sense of welcome and arrival into a town. They also indicate the location of the town centre, providing a visual sign that you are moving from a 'path' (such as a highway) into a 'place' where there is more likely to be activity and people moving about, which encourages vehicles to slow down. Gateways and entries can be marked through a variety of ways including public art, flags and street trees.

The three primary gateways to Merriwa which are to be highlighted include the area near the Showground to the west of town, the eastern end of town near the Oval and the Vennacher Street entry terminating the route from Scone. Gateway treatments need to be considered in conjunction with speed zone signage locations.

C-12 Amenities & Facilities

Facilities in a town centre that are often sought by tourists can vary. Short term visitors are generally seeking toilets, picnic shelters, BBQ facilities, tourist information, drinking water, signage, a children's playground and quick food and beverage options. These facilities need to be attractive, clustered together and easy to see and access from the main routes through town.

Self contained toilet facilities, Mudgee NSW

The majority of these amenities are located adjacent to No. 1 Oval, where a Driver Reviver station is established during holiday periods.

The relocation of the public toilet facility to a safer location adjacent to the tennis courts will result in a relocation of this facility as well. This will also provide improved access to the children's playground for families taking a break in their journey.

Existing children's playground facility

Filtered water fountain

3-3 Components of the Plan *"Vibrant & Diverse"*

C-13 Attractions for everyone

A range of seating options, Mudgee, NSW

To attract a diversity of people in to the town centre it is necessary to provide attractions and facilities for a variety of needs. Streets and squares need to provide safe environments, interactive and informative public art and seating for individuals, families and the elderly.

The town centre of Merriwa would benefit from an increase in comfortable public seating (well located, shaded and with arm rests and backs) and from public art that is attractive and engaging for children and adults alike.

C-14 Clustering of uses

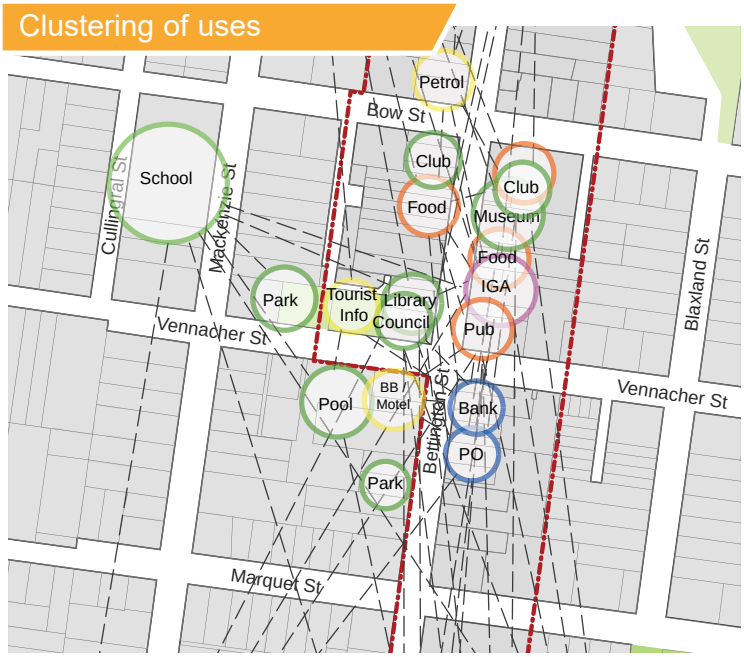


Figure 8 Clustering of uses and points of interest in Merriwa

Some uses in a town centre are core activity generators (such as supermarkets) or regularly visited (like bakeries or newsagents) or linked with other uses (such as a pharmacy and a doctor). Some uses typically generate daytime activity (such as a hardware store) while others generate night-time activity (such as a pub or restaurant).

The primary clustering of services in Merriwa occurs at the Bettington and Vennacher Street intersection. This cluster is emphasised by the prominent buildings that occupy this location.

The provision of the 'town heart' (refer to C-02) in close proximity will serve to reinforce this cluster.

C-15 Events & Pop Ups

Events including markets, festivals and live music concerts, food and beverage fairs, combined with encouraging local performers, artists and creatives helps to bring people into town.

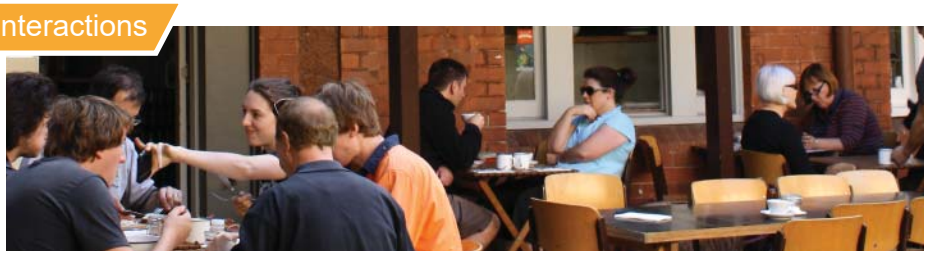
Merriwa already has a well established monthly market, held in the open space adjacent to the RSL Club. This space is ideally located, being adjacent to, but removed from, the main street.

The monthly market in Merriwa attracts people to the town centre.

Another annual event is the 'Festival of the Fleeces', which occurs over the June long weekend. This event involves closing Bettington Street for a period of time for the sheep parade. Regular events are also held at the Showground throughout the year.

All these events draw people into the area, the challenge is to bring these visitors into the town centre. Creating an attractive town centre, that is welcoming for visitors, and that provides the services and facilities that they require would greatly improve the likelihood of this occurring.

C-16 Outdoor seating & interactions



An active food venue

Side entry into cafe in Mittagong, NSW

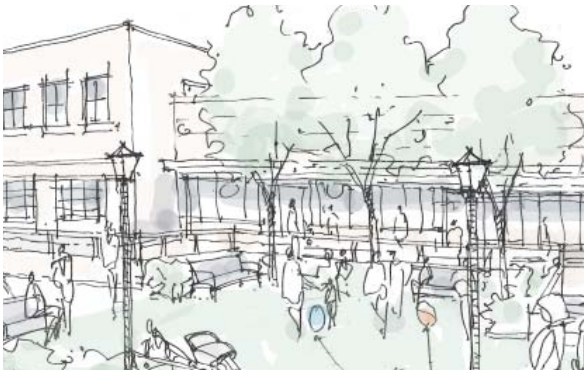
Cafe and bread shop, Adelaide

People enjoy 'people watching' and a key to successful town centres lies in encouraging opportunities for people to interact directly with the action along the street.

This is made possible through outdoor dining and, of more relevance to Merriwa, encouraging shops to open up to the main street, side streets, links and open space areas through the use of large opening doors and windows.

C-17 Civic Facilities

The existing Council building



Sketch of possible works outside the former Council Chamber building

A simple bench facing the space with a narrow landscaped area against the wall

Successful town centres contain a mix of retail and other services including entertainment, education and civic facilities.

The former Council Chamber building in Merriwa now operates as a mixed civic facility, providing access to a range of council services, including the Library and Information Centre, along with a wide range of NSW Government services.

This facility is an important generator of employment for the area and anchors the cluster of activities that occur at this intersection. Any changes to the uses provided in this building need to consider the services currently offered and the activity generated on the main street.

This area was considered as an option for the 'town park', but general community support was for this facility to be located at the Welcoming Centre. Upgrading this area by removing the pergola and providing new trees and benches would make a dramatic difference. Provision of free WiFi in this area, and at the Welcoming Centre, would activate these spaces further.

3-3 Components of the plan *"Comfortable & Attractive"*

C-18 Green streetscapes

Public seating in a landscaped setting, Orange NSW

Rosemary as a landscape element in Merriwa

Flowers, Quirindi NSW

The use of 'greening' elements, both low level landscaping and street trees, in the streetscape creates a buffer to traffic and increases the comfort of pedestrians.

A consolidated streetscape palette of plant species should be developed to reinforce the 'look and feel' of the centre. The use of perennials and a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees would also ensure that the landscaping is 'green' year round .

The use of rosemary in the landscaping would build on the theme of 'rosemary for remembrance' in Merriwa. Where possible sustainable urban drainage (SUD) features such as rain gardens and permeable pavers should be used to minimise runoff.

C-19 Pedestrian priority

An attractive town centre places a priority on the pedestrian experience. This can be achieved through the careful use of blisters to manage the interactions at road crossing locations.

Blisters should be large enough to contain landscaping as well as seating and other street furniture items (such as bins). These blisters indicate a safe location for pedestrians to cross the street, lessen the width of the road to be crossed and identify to motorists that pedestrians may be present.

Use of landscaping in street blisters will be subject to Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) guidelines, which aim to reduce the risk of line of sight being obstructed. On-going maintenance and upkeep is required of all landscaping elements installed in the streetscape, as overgrown plants pose a risk to visibility, and dead or unhealthy plants are visually unappealing .

Well landscaped streetscape blisters

Good use of street trees including solid tree guards that provide 'protection' to seating

C-20 Footpath upgrades

Asphalt footpath, with brink paving inserts, Yass NSW

A mix of concrete and brick paving detailing can create a higher quality look.

The quality of the pedestrian environment is critical to the success of a centre. Poorly maintained footpaths discourage activity and create a negative impression of the entire town.

In Merriwa the core of the town centre is located on either side of Bettington Street between Vennacher Street and Bow Street. It is recommended that footpaths are replaced within this block and landscaping is provided within the blisters at intersections. To create a cost effective option, footpaths could be concrete with detailed inserts of brick to improve the 'look and feel' of the town.

C-21 Street Furniture

Street 'furniture' includes a wide range of components and elements such as benches, bins, bollards, bicycle stands and signage. A coordinated streetscape design ensures consistency in the 'look and feel' of the centre.

Street furniture needs to be of high aesthetic quality, contemporary, well-proportioned and located where it does not clutter the footpath. It is recommended that a heritage style light fitting, combined with a banner, be used in the upgrade.

Comfortable bench design with timber slats

Heritage style light fitting, Mudgee NSW

Modern options for street furniture

C-22 Awning & Corner Elements

Attractive awning treatment in Willow Tree, NSW

Well designed side view in Canowindra, NSW

Side view of a coffee shop in Nowra, NSW

The side view of street awnings can play an important role in the streetscape character. Upgrading of the awnings along a street can have a significant impact on the 'look and feel' of a street.

Buildings on corner locations or where the awnings are not continuous and the side of the building and awning is visible from the street, should be designed to 'turn the corner'. This can be a simple as extending the paint scheme.

C-23 Facades & Shopfronts

The quality of the pedestrian environment is a critical part of the 'look and feel' of a centre. The use of A-frames, flags, bunting and outdoor seating are all ways of indicating that shops are open, encouraging passing traffic to stop.

Allowing retailers, especially those with attractive displays such as florists, to 'spill out' onto the footpath, would further enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment.

Empty shopfronts should be 'activated', possibly through the installation of displays for businesses located outside the town centre.

Florist display spilling out onto the street, Scone NSW

A-frames encourage people to stop

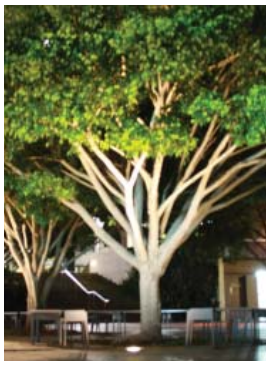
Empty shop displaying produce for a nursery

Shopfront in Canowindra designed to catch the eye

3-3 Components of the plan *"Safe & Accessible"*

C-24 Safety & Security

A safe pedestrian crossing location, Boorowa NSW



Effective tree uplighting

Lighting from inside buildings is a good way to add a sense of security

The success of a town centre is often linked to an individual's perception of safety and security. Providing a safe pedestrian environment where people can cross the road safely is a fundamental requirement for a sense of safety.

Providing sufficient lighting is another requirement for a safe environment. Lighting of the centre, including the uplighting of trees, heritage buildings and public art is an effective way to create a pleasant atmosphere, coupled with a sense of security.

C-25 Low-speed environment

In the Upper Hunter region the speed of traffic through the town centres, combined with the significant number of large trucks, is a barrier to safe access to the facilities of the town centres, especially for children and the elderly.

To slow the traffic speeds a number of interventions, including narrowing the visual and physical width of the road and increasing the visibility of pedestrian crossings and pedestrian refuges, is recommended.

A slow-speed environment is essential for a centre

It is also suggested that Council explore options to expand the area covered by the 50 speed limit along the highway, to encompass from the bridge to the west (near the Showground) to just beyond the Oval to the east.

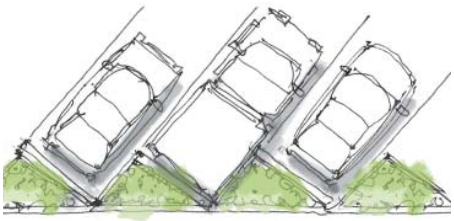
Truck speed in particular needs to be slowed

The median provides a safe 'stepping-stone'

This will provide an encouragement for traffic to slow down as the distance is greater and there will be less tendency, for trucks in particular, to only drop their speed slightly.

C-26 Car parking

45º parking (rear to kerb) with rear wheel stops in Cowra, NSW .



Wheel stops could also be combined with landscape and SUD

45 degree rear to kerb parking is popular in the Upper Hunter. The use of rear wheel stops and additional white line marking would help to formalise the parking and reduce the chance of cars hitting the footpaths.

It is proposed that in co-ordination with the proposed relocation of the information centre Council reaches an agreement to formalise use of the parking to the rear of the Welcoming Centre. This is ideally located due to its central position and level access to the main street.

If the parking at Sollys Lane was to be upgraded to meet this additional need, significant redesign would be required and provision of a direct pedestrian link to Bettington Street would be essential.

C-27 Cycling

The proposed creation of a 'Rail Trail' from the former Merriwa Railway Station to Denman, via Sandy Hollow, would significantly increase the presence of a diverse range of cyclists in the town centre.

A link from the town centre to the trail head would enable users to access the town facilities and would encourage visitors to explore the area more widely.

A proposed cycle loop around the town would support a healthier lifestyle for locals as well.

Off-street cycle paths attract a range of users

An eye catching option for bicycle parking

Off-street cycle paths and "rail trails' attract a wide range of different groups to an area

04 Implementation

4-1 Revitalisation Strategy

Background

People are the core of every town centre. Successful places focus on what people need from their centre, in order to increase economic activity or spend more time in the town centre.

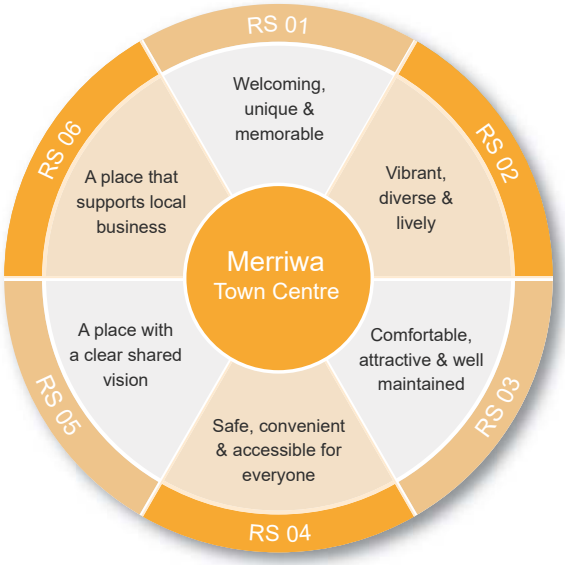
Successful town centres are lively places which encourage a variety of activities and provide for people at all stages of life from the very young to the very old. They identify ways to encourage activity all day, into the evening and over the weekend.

Implementing the masterplan

A masterplan is a way of working towards a shared vision for a town centre. It illustrates an agreed way forward, a direction to inspire and provide a focus for development and investment. To be successful a masterplan, or revitalisation strategy, needs to identify changes that will improve the quality of the town in order to help ensure the financial viability of the town for the long term.

The resources of any town are usually finite. The implementation strategy is a way of ensuring that all the resources available to effect change (natural, financial, material, built and social) are used efficiently and effectively.

As any strategy only becomes effective when it is implemented, once the community has agreed on a direction, action and change need to be encouraged and fostered to motivate the community to get behind the vision. At its essence, revitalisation is dependent on the level of commitment of the wider community, combined with the support and encouragement provided by Council's policies.



Six point plan

The revitalisation strategy is an 6 Point Plan. It identifies strategies that influence both the physical design (hard infrastructure) and how the place is managed, governed and experienced (soft infrastructure). It identifies a broad range of strategies, from easy wins to inspiring long term fundamental changes.

6 Point Plan	
RS - 01	A welcoming, unique & memorable place
RS - 02	A vibrant, diverse & lively place
RS - 03	A comfortable, attractive clean & well maintained place
RS - 04	A safe, convenient & accessible place for everyone
RS - 05	A place with a clear shared vision
RS - 06	A place that supports local business

4-2 Components

'Key interventions'	
C-01	Vennacher St Intersection
C-02	'Town Heart'
C-03	Silo Art
'Welcoming & Memorable'	
C-04	Town Centre Branding
C-05	Upper Hunter Branding
C-06	Colours & Materials
C-07	Heritage & Landmarks
C-08	Public Art
C-09	Signage & Town Map
C-10	Blank wall treatment
C-11	Gateways & Entries
C-12	Amenities & Facilities
'Vibrant & Diverse'	
C-13	Attractions for everyone
C-14	Clustering of uses
C-15	Events & Pop Ups
C-16	Outdoor seating & Interactions
C-17	Civic facilities

'Comfortable & Attractive'	
C-18	Green streetscapes
C-19	Pedestrian priority
C-20	Footpath upgrades
C-21	Street furniture
C-22	Awning & Corner elements
C-23	Facades & Shopfronts
'Safe & Accessible'	
C-24	Safety & Security
C-25	Low-speed environment
C-26	Car parking
C-27	Cycling

Table

Actions identified in the masterplan have been consolidated into tables using the following categories

Priority:*(Considers impact & benefit)* - high/medium/low

Cost: *(Estimated cost range)* - Low $ = <10K, Medium $$ = 10K - 100K, High $$$= 100K - 500K, Significant $$$$= 500K - 1 Mil, Major $$$$$=>1 Million

Timeframe: Short term (1-2 years), Medium term (3 - 5 years), Long term (6 - 20 years)

Responsibility: *(Organisations and stakeholders)* - i.e. Council, community groups, government bodies/ authorities

Quick win: Less complex changes that are achievable in the short-term with comparably low investment

4-3 Action Plan

RS - 01 A welcoming, unique & memorable place

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
C-02	Negotiate relocation of Information Centre to Welcoming Centre. Arrangement to include use of forecourt as a 'town park', public access to toilets and associated facilities and public use of car parking at rear of property.	high	$$	Short term	Council, community and property owners
C-02	Undertake detailed design for Welcoming Centre forecourt, for use as 'town park'.	high	$	Short term	Council, consultants including Architect and Landscape Architect
C-02	Complete landscaping works required for 'town park', including installation of street furniture	high	$$	Short term	Council
C-02	Design and carry out modifications required for Welcoming Centre to house Information Centre	high	$$	Short term	Council, consultants including Architect, Interior Designer
C-03	Negotiate owners consent for painting of Silos	high	$	Short term	Council and property owners
C-03	Commission art work for silos. Artist to undertake consultation with community in order for piece to reflect town vision	high ***"Quick win"***	$$	Short term	
C-04	Create a Branding Strategy for Merriwa that builds on its strong rural feel and also capitalise on its history with the sheep industry and its heritage.	high	$	Short Term	Council
C-05	Source and commission a range of 'Upper Hunter Country' branded high quality, temporary street furniture such as outdoor umbrellas (black with white logo) and A Frames.	medium	$	Short Term	Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook Councils
C-06	Prepare a co-ordinated palette of external materials and colours and signage.	medium	$	Short Term	Council, Consultants including Architect, Colour and Heritage Consultant
C-21	Build on the existing public domain design palette of paving and landscape treatments. Increase variety of seating options and provide drinking fountains and upgrade rubbish bins (and recycling bins if possible).	medium	$	Short Term	Council
C-07	Develop heritage information boards/online map that provides information about heritage buildings and the history of the town.	medium	$	Short term	Council / Local heritage societies/ specialist groups (ie rail)
C-07	Identify attractive buildings that can be lit at night to improve the quality of the adjacent public domain.	low	$$	Long term	Council and property owners
C-07	Encourage completion of renovation works and activation of prominent heritage building at intersection of Bettington and Bow Streets.	medium	$	Short term	Council and property owner

RS - 01 A welcoming, unique & memorable place

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
C-08	Highlight art piece adjacent to the Welcoming Centre, through the use of darker back drop.	medium	$	Short term	Council and property owner
C-07	Provide a consultant heritage advisor (monthly) to give free advice on proposed listings of sites or practical matters relating to maintaining or repairing heritage/ character buildings. (Refer to Cabonne Council for case study)	high	$	Short term	Council
C-08	Encourage public art works that bring life and identity to the town. Develop a public art strategy for Merriwa that will manage and protect existing art, foster creative and cultural life, support local artists, ensure high quality temporary and permanent public art and reflect the history of the town and its people including its indigenous history. It should also identify sources of public and private funding.	medium	$	Short term	Council
C-09	Commission the design and construction of two town maps to be installed at the Welcoming Centre and near the Showground. Maps are to show the town core and the location of key local facilities such as parking areas, tourist information and public toilets.	high	$	Short term	Council
C-11	Mark the gateways and key locations in the centre of the town with flags/banners. A few large flags grouped together have a greater impact than smaller flags widely spaced. Provide flags at: the eastern entry near No 1 Oval, the western entry near the Showground and bridge and the northern entry near the intersection of Vennacher and Blaxland Streets (bridge over Whitney's Creek). The flag design can celebrate the town, reinforce the brand or highlight a key event. Gateway treatments need to be considered in conjunction with speed zone signage locations.	medium	$$	Short term	Council
C-12	Provide drinking fountain at the Welcoming Centre and near the new public toilets adjacent to the tennis courts	high	$	Short term	Council
C-10	Identify blank walls suitable for blank wall treatment. Negotiate with property owners for access, Council to seek funding as a public art installation.	high	$	Short to medium term	Council and property owners
C-15	Consider opportunities to 'theme' town centre to connect to events being held in the town or at the Showground.	high ***"Quick win"***	$	Short term	Council
C-15	Provide printed copies of town map as part of the information provided to attendees at all events being held in the town or at the Showground.	high ***"Quick win"***	$	Short term	Council

RS - 02 A vibrant, diverse & lively place

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
C-21	Provide different seating options along Bettington Street (between Vennacher and Bow Streets) including seats with backs and arm rests (provides support for the elderly) and benches (that allow people to sit facing different directions). Provide a variety of shaded and non shaded seating and protect the back of the seat (ie by a tree).	high	$	Short term	Council
C-08	Ensure public art is attractive and engaging for both children and adults. Install public art in the town that provides humour and delight.	medium	$$	Medium term	Council
C-17	Explore the provision of free Wi-Fi (with extended hours say 7am-10pm) around key public buildings in the town centre such as outside the public library / former Council Chambers and the Welcoming Centre. Provide tables/chairs and trees/ umbrellas to encourage use.	high	$	Short term	Council
C15	Encourage business and shop owners/tenants along Bettington Street to extend opening hours into the evening, i.e every Thursday and longer opening hours on a Saturday/Sunday once a month. Link longer opening hours with events/ festivals/ markets.	high	$$	Short term	Council and local business organisation.
C-15	Explore the use of pop-up events to utilize vacant premises.	high	$	Short term	Council, property owners/ tenants, local business organisation
C-15	Investigate opportunities to activate empty shopfronts with temporary exhibitions, historic displays and/or displays for businesses outside the centre.	high ***"Quick win"***	$	Short term	Council, property owners/ tenants, Chamber of Commerce
C-15	Explore additional opportunities that could be added to along the main street (ie music, food trucks) during existing events	high	$	Short term	Council
C-16	Encourage outdoor dining through active marketing, speeding up DA approvals and/or granting rent-free periods (1-2 years) for outdoor seating.	high	$	Short term	Council, local business organisation
C-23	Run a training workshop for local businesses on how to create attractive shopfront displays.	high ***"Quick win"***	$	Short term	Council with local business organisation
C-21	Upgrade existing garbage bins utilising "sheep branding" graphics as a theme.	medium	$	Short term	Council

RS - 03 A comfortable, attractive, clean & well maintained place

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
C-18	Develop a consolidated 'soft' design palette of plant species to reinforce the 'look and feel' of the centre. The use of hardy, low maintenance perennials is recommended to provide colour and a green base and deciduous / flowering trees for seasonal colour.	medium	$	Medium term	Council, consultants including landscape architect and traffic engineer, in coordination with RMS
C-18	Create a funded strategy for the maintenance of public assets and the management and removal of graffiti.	high	$$	Medium term	Council
C-18	Where possible incorporate sustainable urban drainage (SUD) features such as rain gardens and permeable paving.	medium	$$	Medium term	Council & consultants including landscape architect, civil engineer (stormwater)
C-18	Organise regular community "clean up your town" days and identify projects such as repainting bins and benches, and/or new streetscape planting that would create a dramatic improvement. Explore street closures, food stalls etc to create a fun community building event.	high ***"Quick win"***	$	Short term	Council, local community, local business organisation
C-18	Develop a detailed design concept for additional landscape along on Bettington Street (between Vennacher & Bow Streets) with a preference for tall deciduous trees & non deciduous trees on intersections. The choice of plantings will also need to consider sight requirements for cars and pedestrians at high-risk locations. Consultation with RMS will be required.	medium	$$	Medium term	Council with consultants including landscape architect, civil engineer (stormwater) and traffic engineer.
C-18	Plant street trees at gateways and in locations indicated on masterplan and in accordance with detailed design.	high	$$	Short term	Council in consultation with RMS
C-12	Relocate Driver Reviver facility location and provide a public toilet adjacent to the tennis courts and No 1 Oval at the eastern entry to town. (The community were divided on the relocation issue. Any relocation is unlikely to be in the short to medium term".)	medium	$$	Medium term	Council in consultation with RMS
C-21	Develop a 'hard' design palette for street furniture including benches and rubbish bins, footpaths, information displays, signage, materials and colours to create consistent 'look and feel' for the public domain.	high	$	Short term	Council & consultants including landscape architect.
C-21	Review the number and location of garbage bins and explore the cost of co-locating recycle bins alongside standard bins in the town centre core.	medium	$	Medium term	Council
C-17	Establish specific uses in the Council Building following relocation of the Information Centre. Consider expansion or relocation of Library, Business Centre and encourage use of former library as a cafe.	high	$	Short term	Council
C-18	Create a funded maintenance program for upkeep and upgrading of landscape elements as required.	high	$	Short term	Council

RS - 04 A safe, convenient & accessible place for everyone

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
C-01	Prepare detailed streetscape designs for the transformation of the Vennacher Street intersection. This is to include identification of footpath upgrades, street furniture, street tree locations, species and height, lighting etc. The choice of plantings will also need to consider sight requirements for cars and pedestrians at high-risk locations.	high	$	Short term	Council and consultants including landscape architect, traffic engineer. Any changes to the management or function of the highway will require RMS concurrence.
C-20	Upgrade footpath both sides of Bettington Street, between Vennacher and Bow Streets, in accordance with detailed design.	high	$$	Short term	Council
C-01	Undertake works for the transformation of the Vennacher Street intersection. Funding needs to be sought from RMS for works to this intersection.	medium	$$$$	Medium term	Council, Road and Maritime Services (RMS)
C-24	Uplight trees outside the Welcoming Centre and at the Vennacher Street intersection. Encourage lighting of heritage buildings.	low	$$	Short term	Council, consultants including landscape architect, lighting engineer
C-25	Encourage a slower traffic speed along Bettington Street through kerb extensions and increased visibility of pedestrian crossings. Reduce vehicular speeds by planting additional street trees and utilizing flags to attract attention to pedestrian activity.	high	$$$	Medium term	Council and consultants including landscape architect, civil engineer (stormwater) and traffic engineer. Any changes to the management or function of the highway, including pedestrian upgrades, would require RMS concurrence.
C-25	Explore options to ensure enforcement of existing speed limits at all times in the centre, through use of fixed or mobile speed cameras.	high	$	Short to medium term	Council, NSW Police
C-20	Create safe and convenient walking routes around the town with wide, level, footpaths that are free from obstructions. Maintain the footpath surface and consider footpath continuity treatments across existing driveways and threshold treatments at intersections.	high	$ to $$$$	Short to medium term	Council
C-25	Request extension of 50 speed limit zone to edges of town centre. From eastern entry adjacent to bridge to western entry at Showground.	high	$	Short term	Council in consultation with RMS. Any changes to the management or function of the highway, including changes to speed zones, would require RMS concurrence.

RS - 04 A safe, convenient & accessible place for everyone

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
C-27	Formalise connection from town centre to the trail head of the 'Rail trail'. Identify this link on maps provided as part of the information relating to the 'Rail trail'.	high	$	Medium term	Council
C-27	Create cycle parking at key locations in the town centre, adjacent to the Welcoming Centre, near the Library, Post Office etc	high	$	Medium term	Council
C-26	Investigate establishment of a clearly signed, public carpark located behind the Welcoming Centre, as part of the creation of a relocated Information Centre. Install signage around town centre to bring awareness about available parking options.	medium	$$	Medium term	Council and adjacent land owners
C-26	Explore opportunities for creation of a pedestrian link from the existing Sollys Lane parking to Bettington Street.	low	$	Long term	Council and property owners
C-26	Install signage highlighting the location of Council carparks including proposed area behind the Welcoming Centre and the area at Sollys Lane.	high	$	Short term	Council
C-01	Create a safer intersection at Vennacher Street. Redesign and realign this intersection using kerb blisters.	See C-01 Vennacher St Intersection under RS - 04			
C-27	Increase the amount of visible and convenient cycle parking near key destinations such as the public library, supermarket, shops and other key facilities.	high	$	Short term	Council

RS - 05 A place with a clear & shared vision

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
	Adopt the masterplan for the Merriwa Town Centre	high *"Quick win"*	$	Short term	Council
	Prepare and adopt a street tree masterplan for the Merriwa Town Centre	high	$	Short term	Council
	Prepare and adopt a public domain manual for all street furniture and street treatments in the town centre.	high	$	Short term	Council
	Review and update LEP/DCP controls to support the masterplan for the town centre	high	$	Medium term	Council
	Prepare and adopt a public art strategy for the Merriwa Town Centre.	high	$	Short term	Council
	Encourage community involvement in activation and upgrade projects (ie working bee)	high	$	Short term	Council and local community

RS - 06 A place that supports local business

	Actions	Priority	Cost	Time	Responsibility
	Increase match funding for painting of facades and shopfronts if the business agrees to use the approved colour palette (potentially up to $3000) . Match funding to be usable for modifications to facades, for example installation of new larger openings and operable doors etc	high	$	Short term	Council with local community and local Chamber of Commerce.
	Simplify DCP controls for new signage, A frames and outdoor merchandise	high	$	Short term	Council
	Identify a planner within Council who will have the explicit role of helping businesses get all relevant approvals for establishment and / or upgrade of existing business premises.	high *"Quick win"*	$	Short term	Council

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