



# Broken Hill Cultural Plan Background Report

Final  
1 July 2021

Prepared by:





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Background Report

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Cover image: John Dynon Gallery (source: [experiencebrokenhill.com.au](http://experiencebrokenhill.com.au))



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# Introduction

# Background and purpose

## Purpose of the Cultural Plan

There is a growing understanding of the benefits that creative facilities and industries make to the economic prosperity, community vibrancy and overall liveability of a place.

The recent scoping and development of the new library precinct in Argent Street has highlighted the need for an all-encompassing Cultural Plan for the City that can guide Council's allocation of resources toward the achievement of key economic, social, environmental and community aspirations.

The *Broken Hill Cultural Plan* will represent a significant progression towards developing a more co-ordinated, efficient, and streamlined approach to cultural infrastructure planning and provision.

This planning process will also represent a shift towards cultural infrastructure planning in collaboration between local, state and federal governments. (This includes the new *NSW Government Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+* which provides the strategic framework for how the NSW Government will invest in and support cultural infrastructure across the state until 2025 and beyond.)

Importantly the Cultural Plan will establish a decision-making framework to enable the delivery of arts/cultural infrastructure to be realised and coordinated through Council's strategy/ policy development and capital works program. These priorities will inform future investment and business case development for cultural infrastructure projects and programs across the City.

The Plan will provide an overarching framework and strategic direction for the delivery of cultural programs, services and facilities in the City of Broken Hill for the next 20 years. It will help embed cultural infrastructure into the larger program of city-shaping infrastructure planning by the City of Broken Hill.

Recent work with the development of draft business plans for both the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery (BHRAG) and the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (Geo-Centre) and the precinct planning for the new Cultural Precinct and Library and Archives project has highlighted that the community and cultural sector are demanding adaptive reuse and making existing facilities fit for purpose; with the need for more affordable, and flexible spaces to support the work of its various creatives; and the role of cultural infrastructure in supporting cultural tourism and the cultural practice and economic empowerment of Aboriginal communities.

The Plan will be used to inform Council's budgeting process and provide input into Council's operating and delivery plans.

The Plan will also position Council to:

- pursue collaborative partnerships with other levels of government and other key stakeholders (including the private sector) to attract funding for new cultural infrastructure;
- facilitate better use of existing facilities and services, and
- increase investment in local programs and service delivery.

## Purpose of this report

This report provides the background information and research which will underpin the production of the *Broken Hill Cultural Plan* incorporating an infrastructure needs strategy for 2020-2040.

## Role of Council

Broken Hill City Council plays an important role in strengthening the local cultural life of our City by providing cultural leadership and advocacy, developing cultural policies and plans and delivering and managing cultural infrastructure and services.

However, with limited resources and capacity and a declining rate base, Council needs to work in close partnership with other levels of government, the community, private sector and other stakeholders to deliver sustainable outcomes.

This Plan outlines a framework for Council, community and partners to work together to achieve our shared vision for the future of culture in Broken Hill. It outlines opportunities for improved collaboration and coordination, recognising that we all have a role to play in enhancing the cultural life of our City.

# Culture, arts and creativity in Broken Hill

DIY COMMUNITY



MARKETS



WORKSHOPS /  
MAKER SPACES



ABORIGINAL LIVING  
CULTURE



PROGRAMS



PUBLIC ART



ART GALLERIES &  
MUSEUMS



traditions & customs > the way we live our lives > who we are > how we express ourselves > memories > ancestry



PUBLIC SPACES,  
STREETS AND PARKS



CREATIVE PLACES  
TO WORK



HERITAGE



PERFORMANCE &  
MUSIC



CULTURAL  
FESTIVALS



LIBRARIES AND  
COMMUNITY CENTRES



CREATIVE  
INDUSTRIES

# Snapshot of Broken Hill's cultural landscape

The Wilyakali people have occupied the lands around Broken Hill for thousands of years well before the mineral wealth that led to the establishment of Broken Hill was unlocked.

The Wilyakali people and their Darling River neighbours, the Barkindji, had and continue to have, a close and intensely spiritual relationship with the land. Evidence of their cultural life exists north-east of the City at Mutawintji in the form of hand stencils and rock engravings in the caves and sheltered overhangs that honeycomb the area.

Arts, culture, and heritage remain an intrinsic part of Broken Hill; valued for its contribution to people's life- long learning and wellbeing, as well as the city's identity and economy.

Broken Hill has a significant place in the Australian cultural landscape and imagination, and the City imbues many national symbols and values of Australian life. This has resulted in Broken Hill becoming a destination experience for the Australian 'outback' and its rich mining heritage.

Broken Hill's unique status as the first heritage listed city on Australia's National Heritage List reflects its deep natural and cultural values. It is challenging, however, to define a single cultural narrative for Broken Hill. Recent insights reveal that "culture in Broken Hill means different things depending on whom you ask". From a recognition of locals defining that "the landscape, the earth and the sky as part of the place's culture" to tourists/visitors who remain intrigued and attracted to the distinctiveness of the City and its depiction across art through the varying lenses of its landscape, mining, and social history.

In modern times, the City's progression of mining and its proud heritage of the local labour movement; (defined by collective relationships between members of the community, trade unionism and socialism) have germinated many of Broken Hill's cultural icons. This included the establishment of NSW's first regional art gallery in 1904, followed in 1907 by the first regional public library, and subsequent major collections of art, mineralogy and social history archives.

Part of the City's cultural storyline has also come to symbolise the challenges and remoteness of living in the Australian outback and further defined in part by the "Brushmen of the Bush" movement (including Pro Hart) from the early 1970's and the area being made 'famous' by classic Australian films including Mad Max 2, and the Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert. This symbolism and the City's unique place in Australian society have drawn artists, writers, painters, poets, and film makers to the area. Artists have been attracted to the City by the mix of opportunity to enjoy the lower-than-city costs of accommodation, the quality of light, the proximity to the 'Outback' and industrial landscapes, and to seasonal tourist markets.

The "community of artists" represents a diversity of the population and reveals a broad range of cultural practice and engagement. Community organisations as varied as the Broken Hill Civic Orchestra Inc, the Cameron Hill Pipe Band and the Sufi Bookshop provide opportunities for arts participation among artists and the community. These groups are ably supported by a strong band of volunteers, though sustainability remains a key issue given particularly the ageing population of the City and the ability of these art's organisations to maintain a 'critical mass' of support.



Aboriginal rock art at Mutawintji to the north-east of the city (source: Destination Broken Hill)



The Brushmen of the Bush (L-R) John Pickup, Jack Absalom, Hugh Schulz, Eric Minchin, and Pro Hart (source: ABC)

Cultural spaces and resources are a vital part of the ecosystem that supports Broken Hill's creative economy.

Currently around thirty art galleries, museums and other cultural attractions and experiences, as varied as the Living Desert State Park, the Big Picture at the Silver City Mint and the Sulphide Street Railway & Historical Museum provide a unique blend of cultural assets and enterprise.

Non-government organisations like the volunteer run Broken Hill Art Exchange Inc. and West Darling Arts play a part in facilitating the arts and other sectors to engage in artistic practices across the City and region.

The mainstay of cultural infrastructure in Broken Hill remains Council's owned/managed facilities including the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre), Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery and the City Library along with the newly refurbished multipurpose Civic Centre which offers a fulfilling and diverse range of arts and cultural experiences.

These facilities have focused:

- engagement to support the participation, vibrancy and resilience of residents; and
- developing a quality visitor experience in support of the activation of Broken Hill as a major regional cultural destination.

Regional, state, and national exposure of culture in the City has come through the Art Gallery's growing reputation to deliver unique wide-ranging exhibitions and programs such as:

- the 'Pro Hart Outback Art Prize', artist- in-residence program ;

- industry awards for capacity building and sustainability programs including 'Fresh Bark' (an initiative promoting young Indigenous Artists living in Far West NSW) ; and
- a leading two-year project to digitise the remarkable City owned art and mineral collections.

Other exposure has resulted from the establishment of major cultural events developed by independent cultural producers like the 'Perfect Light Film Festival' and the 'Broken Hill Festival' that have aimed to capture the spirit, history, diversity, and character of the City.

A recent focus has turned to the renewal of resources (driven by Council) that has included new strategic plans and policy development for the Art Gallery, GeoCentre and public art, along with the development of the proposed new Cultural Precinct and Library and Archive in Argent Street.

The future of 'culture' in Broken Hill will be defined by its ability to:

- continue to be a resilient place that can adapt to changing conditions, issues, opportunities, and local needs
- further embrace the City's unique heritage architecture and creative interpretations that recount the diversities of the City's past to define its sense of place;
- continue to redefine the City's remote context in a positive light – recognising that geographic limitations are diminishing through wider educational aspirations and that digital connectivity opportunities are improving;
- recognise that new prioritised cultural investment will further drive regional growth and economic development;

- recognise that creative arts and activity promotes innovation, entrepreneurship and has the ability to attract new business, residents, and visitors to the City.



Broken Hill heritage walk tour - Australia's first heritage listed city (source: Destination Broken Hill)



Pro Hart Outback Art Prize 2017 finalist (Source: Sally West Art)

## Timeline

### FIRST NATION'S PEOPLES



The Wilyakali people have occupied the lands around Broken Hill for thousands of years well before the mineral wealth that led to the establishment of Broken Hill was unlocked. The Wilyakali people and their Darling River neighbours, the Barkindji, had and continue to have a close and intensely spiritual relationship with the land.

*Since time immemorial  
(50,000+ years and continuing)*

### ESTABLISHMENT OF SILVERTON



Silvertown (25km north-west of Broken Hill) is established after the discovery of silver and lead deposits. It reaches its peak population of approximately 3,000 by the end of 1885.

1883

### BROKEN HILL TRANSPORT



The first train arrives in Broken Hill from South Australia (via Silvertown) and Broken Hill is proclaimed a municipality.

1888

### FIRST TRAIN FROM SYDNEY



The first train arrives in Broken Hill from Sydney after 40 years of campaigning for the route.

1927

### 1835 EXPLORERS



The first European, surveyor and explorer Major Thomas Mitchell, visits the area.

### 1885 BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY



Mining the ore body in Broken Hill sets the newly formed Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited (BHP) on a path to become Australia's richest company.

### 1915 WW1



Broken Hill is the scene of the only enemy attack on Australian soil in WWI. Only four months before the ANZACs fight the Turks at Gallipoli, a Silvertown-bound train is fired on by two men in an ice cream cart flying the Turkish flag. Today a replica cart can be seen at White Rocks at the northern end of Broken Hill.

Population peaks at approximately 35,000.

“ Broken Hill has a significant place in the Australian cultural landscape and imagination, and the City imbues many national symbols and values of Australian life that has resulted in Broken Hill becoming a destination experience for the Australian ‘outback’ and its rich mining heritage. ”

1942  
CONSTRUCTION OF  
MUNITIONS ANNEXE



A munitions annexe is constructed, employing 300 women and 84 men, producing 637,606 nose cones for shells until the end of WWII.

QUEEN VISITS  
BROKEN HILL



Queen Elizabeth visits Broken Hill and broadcasts a message to outback listeners linked with the Flying Doctor base.

1954

1970  
LOCATION FOR FILMS



Since 1968, more than 50 feature films and television series have been made in the Far West Region including classic Australian films such as Mad Max 2, and the Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert.

LIVING DESERT RESERVE



The Living Desert Reserve comprises 12 sandstone artworks that were completed in 1993 by artists from around the world.

1993

LIVING DESERT  
SANCTUARY



The Living Desert Sanctuary opens and encompasses the existing Sculpture Symposium.

2002

2001  
MINERS  
MEMORIAL



The Miners' Memorial is opened and recognises the lives lost during the city's mining operations.

2015  
NATIONAL  
HERITAGE CITY



Broken Hill becomes the first city in Australia to be included on the National Heritage List.

MINING



After more than 130 years of mining a 300-million-tonne mineral system, the 7.5km-long, 1.6km-deep Line of Lode still supports mining, making Broken Hill one of the longest continual mining towns in the world.

PRESENT

2

## About Broken Hill





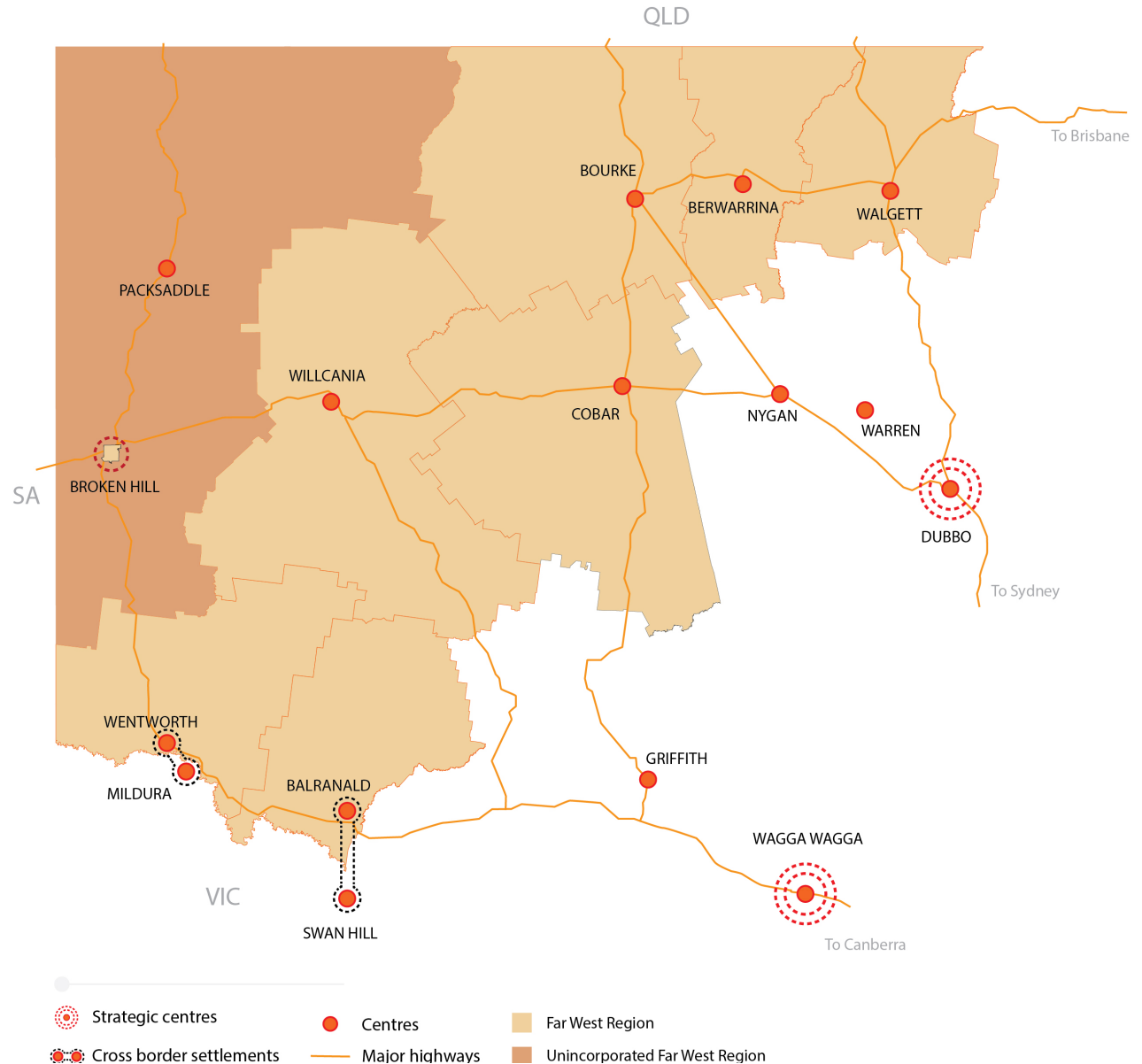
## The Far West Region

The Far West Region covers 40% of the land area of NSW. It consists of 9 LGA's including Broken Hill which is located geographically within the Unincorporated Far West Region as shown in the adjacent map. The region consists of Barwon-Darling river system, one of the longest in Australia, connecting communities along its path.

Historically, mining has been one of the top occupations in the region and it is currently the top industry in the region by economic contribution, followed by agriculture, forestry and fishing. The food processing industry is emerging in the area along with the arts, culture and tourism industries.

## Unincorporated Far West Region

With a population of 1,056 people (ABS, 2016), the Unincorporated Far West region has a land area of 93,300 sq.km. The community of Silverton near Broken Hill, belongs to this region. The Unincorporated Far West Region is not part of any local government area. (Broken Hill is situated within the Unincorporated Far West Region but is not part of it.)



## Broken Hill LGA

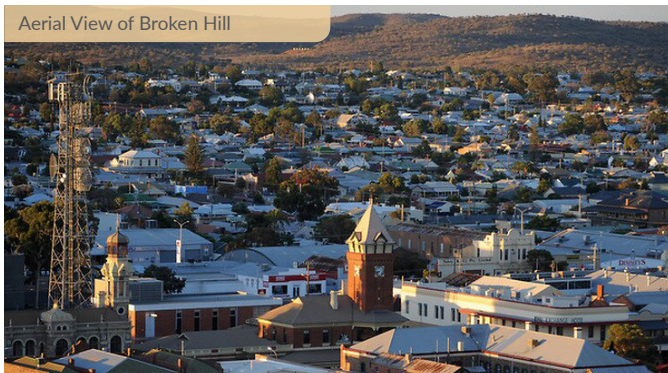
The Broken Hill LGA has a population of 17,814 (ABS, 2016) with 99% of people living within the city of Broken Hill. The local government area is a popular tourist destination and a film location.

The Broken Hill railway station has a weekly train service to Sydney and daily services to Dubbo, with coach connections to Bourke and Lightning Ridge. Two bus routes operate within the LGA to service the parts of North and South Broken Hill.

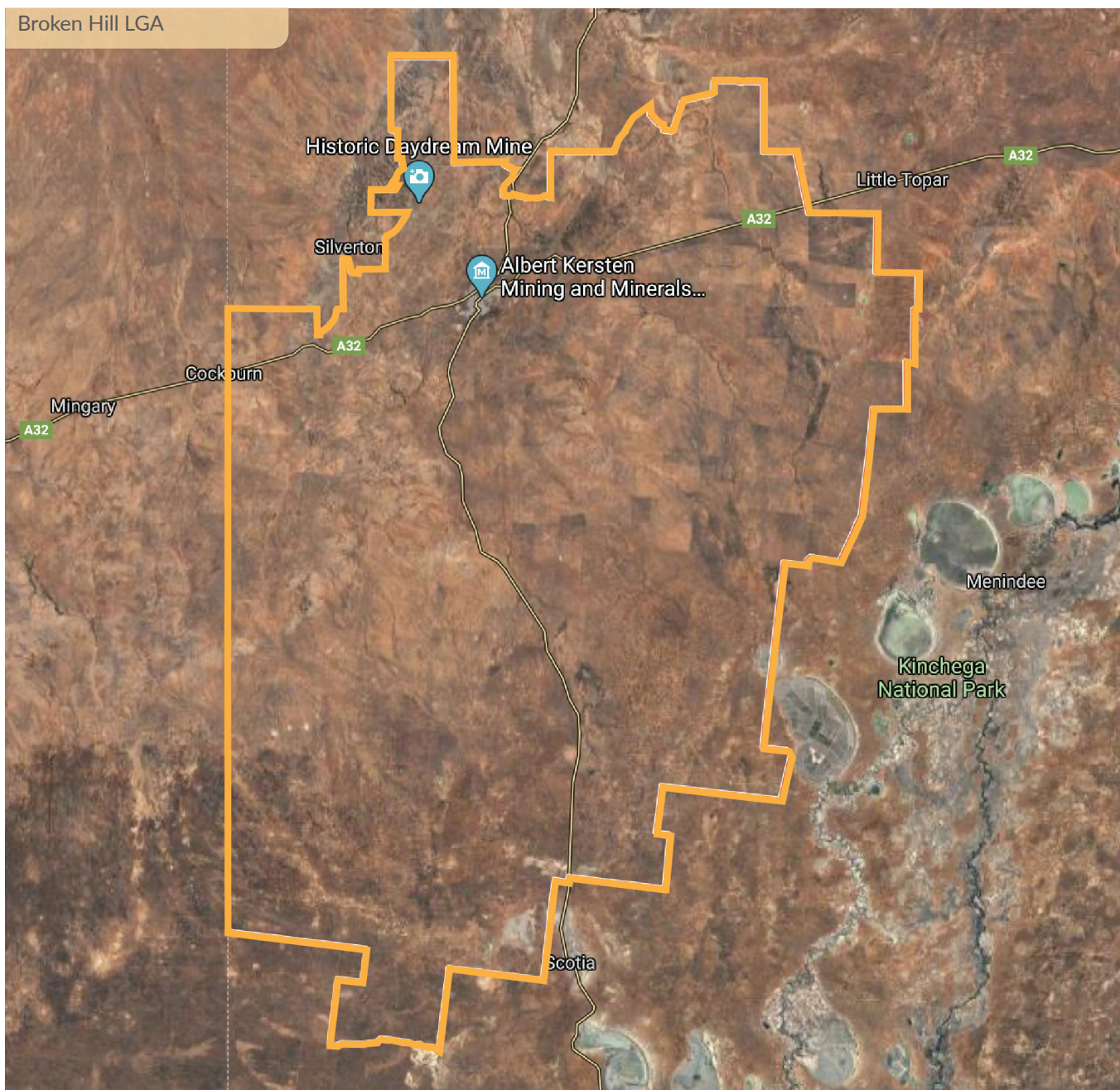
Since the discovery of the world's richest source of silver, lead and zinc, Broken Hill has been the longest-settled mining resource in Australia. The Day Dream Mine at Silverton, located 33 kms from Broken Hill gives the opportunity for tourists to experience the tough working conditions of mining.

Broken Hill lies within an arid land zone with a hot desert climate with maximum temperatures above 43°C. The hottest month is January with an average high-temperature of 32.3°C. There is little rainfall over the year, the mean number of days with rainfall >1mm is 34.6 days. Overall, the average annual temperature is 17.3°C.

Aerial View of Broken Hill



<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/aug/15/documents-reveal-500m-broken-hill-pipeline-built-for-benefit-of-irrigators>





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## Strategic policy drivers

# Strategic alignment

The *Broken Hill Cultural Plan* will sit within Council's integrated planning and reporting framework and will provide a roadmap for cultural outcomes for delivery by Council, other levels of government and community partners.

The Plan will connect with and support a whole of Council approach through the integration of strategies across departments.

In 2009, the NSW Local Government implemented an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF). This framework allows NSW councils to draw their various plans together, to understand how they interact and to get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically for the future.

The framework includes the development of a Community Strategic Plan and a four year Delivery Program with the associated Resourcing Strategy comprising asset management, work force and long term financial plans.

This integrated reporting framework recognises that the council plans and policies should not exist in isolation on a 'policy island'.

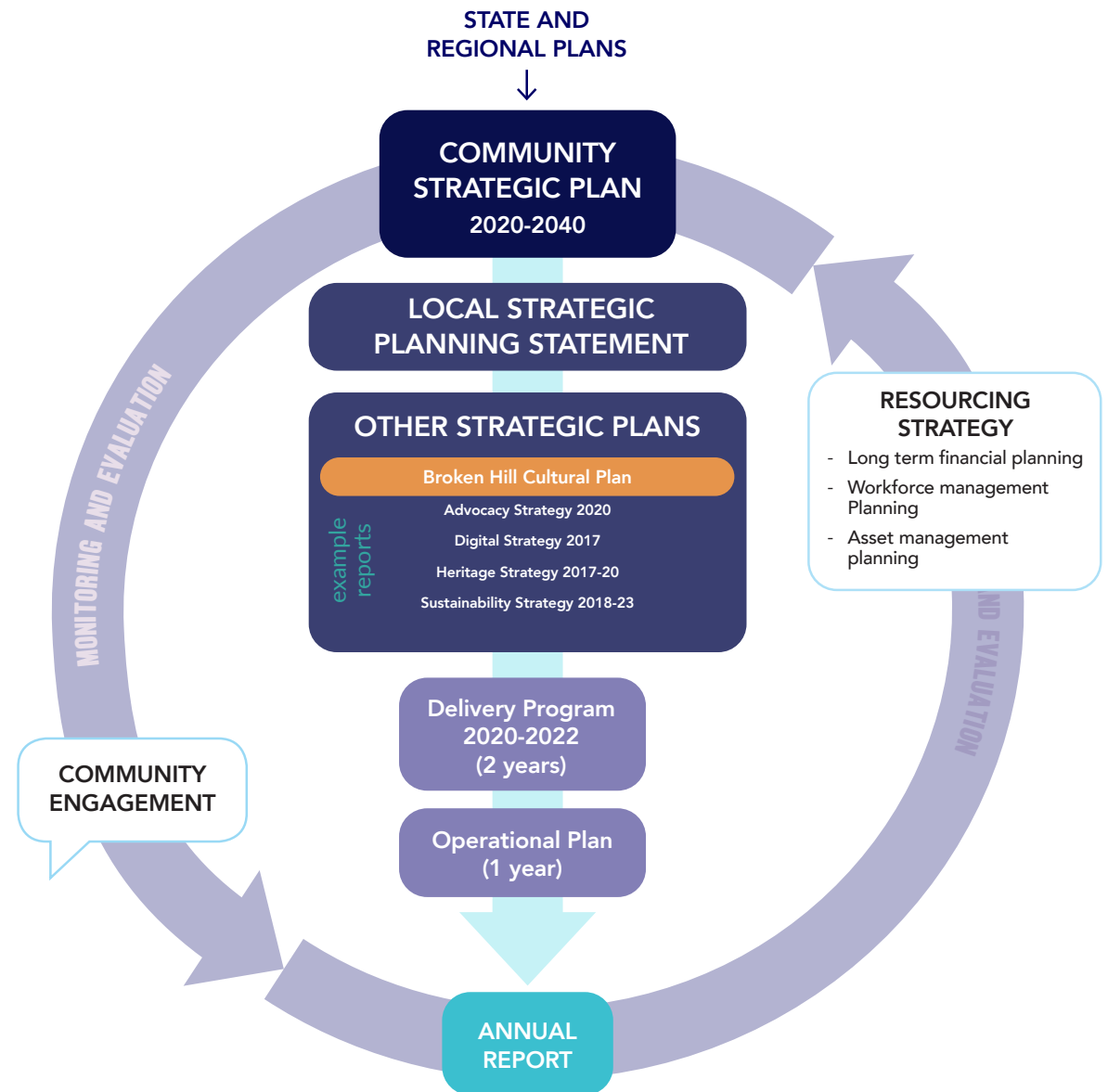


Figure 1 - Broken Hill Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

# Policy landscape

*This section provides a summary of the cultural context at the Australian Government, State, regional and local level that could influence and impact on cultural planning, programs and activations in Broken Hill.*

## International

### UNESCO

The adoption of the *2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* was a milestone in international cultural policy. Through this historic agreement, the global community formally recognised the dual nature, both cultural and economic, of contemporary cultural expressions produced by artists and cultural professionals.

### United Nations

The United Nations *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was adopted in 2015 and acknowledges, for the first time, the key role of culture, creativity and cultural diversity to solving sustainable development challenges and to advance economic growth and foster social inclusion.

### UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The *UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was adopted in 2007. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to Indigenous peoples.

## National

### Australia Council for the Arts

#### *Draft Strategic plan, 2020-2024*

The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government's principal arts funding and advisory body. The Council is currently developing a new strategic plan for 2020-2024, with draft strategic priorities including:

- *Memorable arts experiences for everyone*, including initiatives to target new and existing audiences nationally and internationally, expand opportunities to engage with the arts and promoting arts experiences in everyday life.
- *Our arts reflect us*, including initiatives to connect communities through the arts, supporting diverse artists and a diverse workforce in the arts.
- *First Nations arts and cultures are cherished*, including initiatives to strengthen and embed First Nations arts and culture, and empower First Nations-led decision-making and practitioners.
- *Arts and creativity are thriving*, including initiatives to support viable careers and business models, support experimentation and developing partnerships.
- *Arts and creativity are valued*, including initiatives to advocate for the public value of arts and culture, lead public discussions about the importance of arts and creativity and develop evidence that increases understanding of the arts.

## NSW

### Create NSW

Create NSW is the NSW Government's arts and cultural driver, which brings together arts, screen and culture functions in an integrated entity, and includes cultural infrastructure.

### *NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework, 2015-25*

This is a ten-year policy framework for the arts, cultural and screen sectors, guiding arts funding, future investment and the development of strategic initiatives to achieve the Government's vision for the arts, including increased cultural participation. The vision for the Framework is: "NSW will be known for its bold and exciting arts and culture that engage our community and reflect our rich diversity."

Ambitions for the Framework are:

- *Excellence*, including actions around innovation, leadership, Aboriginal arts and culture, international connections and revitalising infrastructure.
- *Access*, including actions around participation and arts for young people.
- *Strength*, including actions around professional development, business sustainability, networks and partnerships, and research and evaluation.

### Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy, 2015-18

The vision for the *Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy* is: “Connection, Culture, Pathways will deliver a strong, contemporary multi-disciplinary Aboriginal arts and cultural sector in NSW and increased employment opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples at all stages of their artistic practice.”

Its three strategic directions are:

- *Connection* - Aboriginal artists and arts and cultural organisations broaden and deepen their engagement with the people of NSW and the world.
- *Culture* - Employment of Aboriginal Peoples in the arts is based on individual connection to Country, mob, Language, cultural identity and multiart form practice.
- *Pathways* - Partnerships across all tiers of government and the creative industries build Aboriginal creative leadership.

### NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+

The *Cultural Infrastructure Plan* provides a framework for planning and delivery of cultural infrastructure across New South Wales. A key priority of the plan is supporting the delivery of cultural infrastructure that strengthens communities and local economies.

Strategic priorities include:

1. Cultural infrastructure supports strong communities and economies in New South Wales. Goals include:
  - Integrating cultural infrastructure planning with land use and precinct planning.
  - Improving cultural infrastructure and precinct design to create better spaces.
  - Understand and maximise social and economic benefits of cultural infrastructure.

2. Access to space for community participation in culture. Goals include:
  - Increase access to cultural infrastructure
  - Use digital technology to expand reach and meet community demands
  - Support the economic and social participation of Aboriginal communities.
3. Cultural infrastructure for a collaborative and thriving cultural sector. Goals include:
  - Increase making space through adaptive re-use, expansion and maintenance of existing infrastructure
  - Invest in new infrastructure for the cultural sector
  - Support and invest in sustainable cultural infrastructure.
4. Creating impact through partnerships and capacity building. Goals include:
  - Embed cultural infrastructure with other portfolios
  - Build capacity for planning, funding and delivery of cultural infrastructure in an integrated way
  - Reduce barriers to private delivery and funding for cultural infrastructure.

### Regional NSW cultural infrastructure priorities

*Geographic Priority 2* outlines a vision for the future in which creativity and access to culture thrives in Regional New South Wales through a strategic and coordinated approach to cultural infrastructure planning:

- Support regional economic and social development:
  - Rejuvenating towns and increasing opportunities for regional tourism and the visitor economy.
  - Supporting training, development and professional pathways and networks for artists and cultural workers in the regions.
  - Providing the community with places to gather, make and create.

- A coordinated approach to local and regional cultural infrastructure planning:
  - Provide investment, advice and capacity building that supports the delivery of regionally significant cultural infrastructure and clusters in regional NSW
  - Work with local government through regional joint organisations of councils to identify regional cultural infrastructure priorities and connect projects with expertise and investment opportunities.

### Implementing a Regional ‘Hub & Spoke’ Model

The NSW Government’s *Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+ (2018)* recommended the adoption of a Cultural Infrastructure Investment Framework that favours implementing a ‘hub and spoke’ approach to cultural infrastructure planning and investment in regional New South Wales. This is a shift in approach which aims to boost regional cities and increase access to cultural infrastructure for surrounding communities. Outcomes of this strategy focus on key opportunities to:

- to help in the rejuvenation of towns and increasing opportunities for regional tourism and the visitor economy;
- supporting training, development and professional pathways and networks for artists and cultural workers in the regions; and
- providing regional communities collective places to gather, make and create.

*“Supporting a culture of creativity is essential for NSW to succeed, but for culture to truly flourish it needs a home – places where it can be created, shared and enjoyed”*

- CIP 2025+

### ***Far West cultural infrastructure priorities***

The *Cultural Infrastructure Plan* outlines region specific opportunities for the Far West, including investigating opportunities to:

- Support regional cultural tourism;
- Improve connectivity between creative communities in and outside of the region;
- Support Aboriginal economic enterprise and cultural practice; and
- Establish a Broken Hill cultural cluster. Findings from consultation for this region include that:
- Industry is a vital contributor to cultural infrastructure in the region, especially the resources sector;
- Infrastructure is needed to help manage extreme heat, including air-conditioning and shaded outdoor event spaces;
- Access between regional hubs including Wilcannia, White Cliffs and Broken Hill is challenging;
- Cultural heritage is a regional strength;
- There is a desire for greater support of Aboriginal artists and cultural heritage, noting that the natural landscape is particularly important to Aboriginal communities;
- Small, affordable, multi-use spaces are needed for local creative workers;
- Better approaches to and support for maintenance of existing venues, not just the construction of new infrastructure are needed;
- There are challenges with adapting existing buildings to meet planning and regulatory requirements including fire safety and disability access standards; and
- Recognition of the integral role of local government: in particular Broken Hill.

### ***Destination NSW***

#### ***Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan, 2017-2020***

Visitor statistics show that domestic participants in Aboriginal tourism in NSW are three times more likely to also engage in bushwalking, visiting a national park and/or visiting a museum/gallery on their trip compared to the average domestic visitor. Product bundling and the incorporation of Aboriginal themes into these offerings could assist operators to reach visitors with a predisposition to participate in Aboriginal tourism experiences.

A primary challenge for many regional NSW destinations is accessibility; Aboriginal tourism can help attract visitors to regions where the journey is part of the experience.

The *Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan* includes the following goals:

- Continue to build consumer awareness of Sydney and Regional NSW as destinations where Aboriginal culture is strong, vibrant and diverse;
- Increase the inclusion of export-ready experiences in travel trade distribution networks and marketing programs;
- Develop new sustainable market-ready and export-ready Aboriginal cultural tourism products and events; and
- Build on the success of cross-cultural exchange between NSW Aboriginal cultural tourism, Government and the Destination Networks;

### ***Museums & Galleries of NSW***

#### ***Development of a NSW Museums Strategy***

Over the past four years there has been a call from the museum sector and from bodies such as the NSW Local Government Association for the development of an NSW Government led *Museum Strategy*. The sector see this Strategy as essential to guide the prioritisation of infrastructure developments, projects, and resources to make museums sustainable and able to provide vibrant programming.

## Far West

### Far West Regional Plan 2036

The NSW Government's vision for the Far West is to create a diverse economy, supported by the right infrastructure, an exceptional natural environment and resilient communities.

To achieve this vision the Government has set three goals for the region:

- A diverse economy with efficient transport and infrastructure networks;
- Exceptional semi-arid rangelands traversed by the Barwon-Darling River; and
- Strong and connected communities.

Under Direction 5, the *Far West Regional Plan* identifies potential tourism attractions for the Far West such as heritage trails, a Far West Sculpture trail and promoting Broken Hill City Council's film studio precinct.

Under Direction 25, the Plan aims to protect the region's rich Aboriginal and European cultural heritage recognising it as integral to the identity and character of the Far West. Actions outline opportunities to support councils to:

- undertake and implement heritage studies;
- consult with Aboriginal people and the broader community to identify heritage values at the strategic planning stage;
- increase the protection of heritage items and the revitalisation of main streets and town centres; and
- recognise and conserve heritage assets that have Aboriginal or European cultural significance.

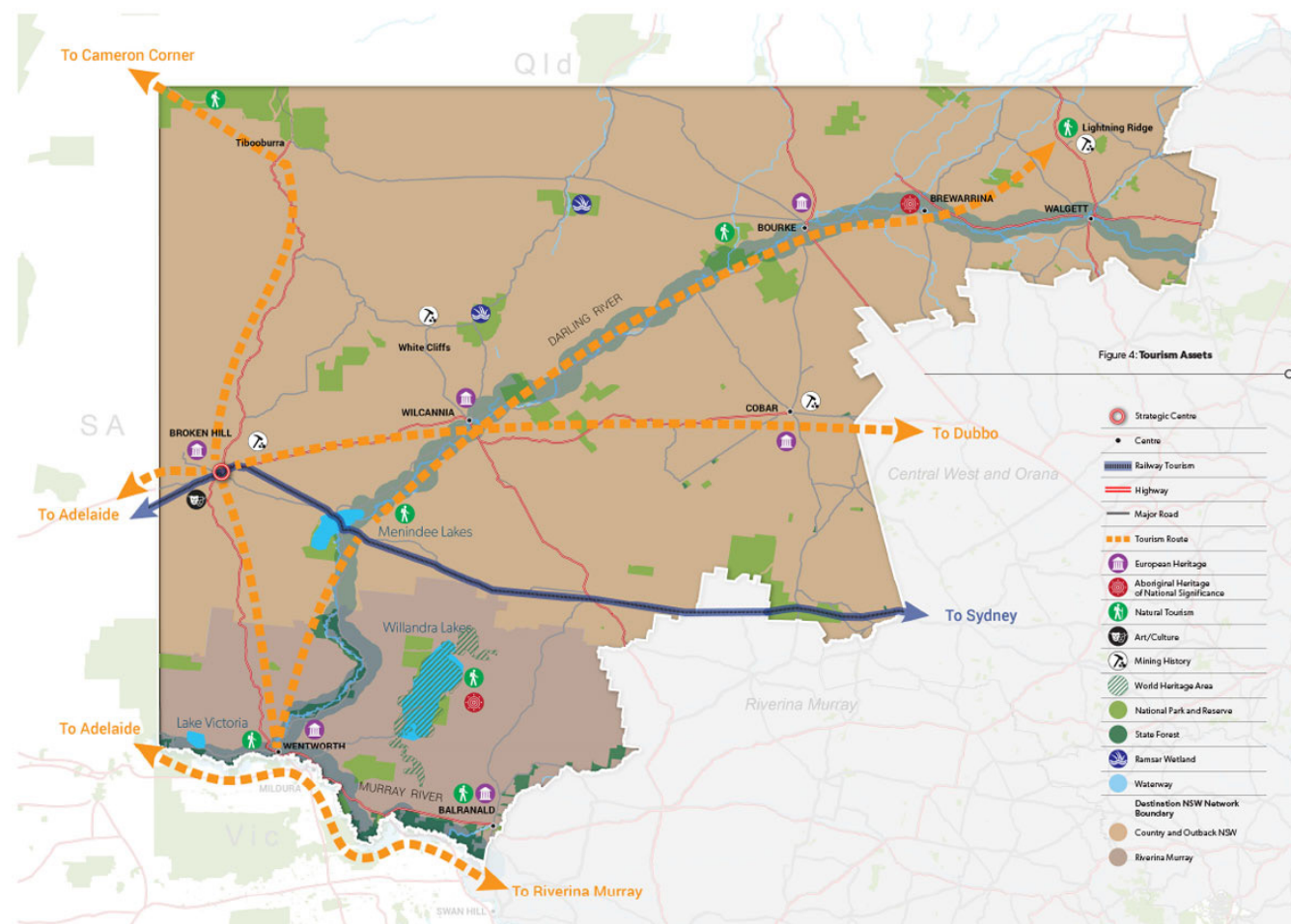


Figure 2 - Far West Regional Plan, tourism assets map

## Far West Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022

The Far West Regional Economic Development Strategy was developed to identify economic development opportunities that capitalise on the Far West's endowments and industry specialisations.

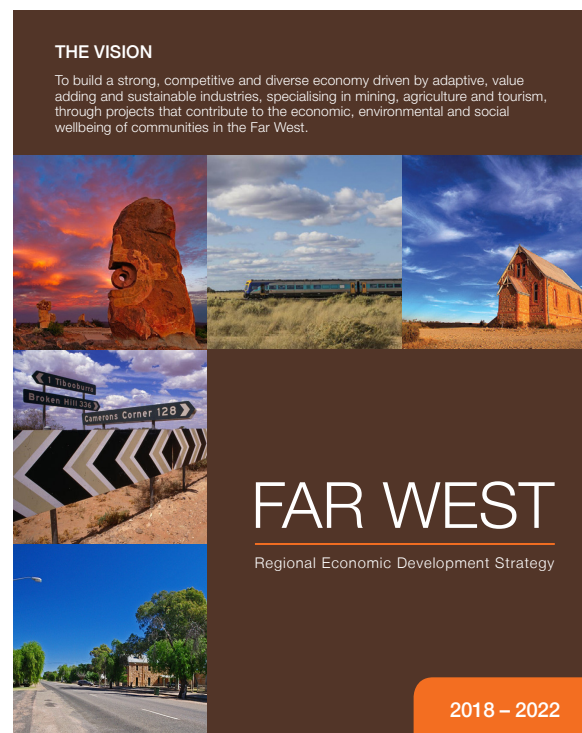
The strategy outlines the following heritage and cultural endowments for the Far West Region:

- Broken Hill is Australia's only National Heritage Listed city;
- The area has rich Aboriginal heritage, including the traditional lands of the Malyangaba, Bandjigali, Wandjiwalgu, Wiljali, Danggali, Barkindji, and Barindji peoples;
- The Region is the birthplace of BHP and has a long history in industrial commerce.
- Since 1968, more than 50 feature films and television series have been made in the Region, as well as many commercials. This draws temporary workers and visitors to the Region.
- The Region attracts artists of both Aboriginal and European styles due to its amazing light and landscapes.

Amongst other objectives, the Strategy aims to grow the film and television industry and visitor economy by capitalising on the Region's heritage, cultural, seasonal and natural endowments and recommends the following activities:

- Investment in the refurbishment of the Broken Hill Regional Airport and roads;
- Refurbishment and revitalisation of facilities and signage to Aboriginal, outback, mining and film and television heritage sites and attractions;

- Enhanced management of visitors to the Region;
- Supporting the development of a Film School; and
- Supporting the development of tourist assets, local flagship events, festivals, and conventions.



Developed with the support of the NSW Government as part of the Regional Economic Development Strategies program to assist local councils and their communities in regional NSW.



## Broken Hill

### Community Strategic Plan

Broken Hill 2033 is a long term plan that identifies where the community would like to be in the next 10 years and beyond, and what strategies Council should focus on to get there.

It outlines the following vision:

*"Broken Hill will be a self-reliant, strong regional community with services and facilities to support an active, vibrant residential population, valuing and sharing the region's unique natural and built environment with regional, national and international visitors....."*

It also outlines the following community values:

*Awe-inspiring. Open. Original. Humanity. Fearless.*

The plan clearly positions arts, culture and creativity as central to achieving the community's vision for social and economic outcomes for Broken Hill.

Under Key Direction 1: Our Community, the plan outlines a number of objectives and actions that focus on how the Broken Hill community can work together to retain a sense of identity, social inclusion and connectedness.

Objective 1.2 Our community works together, includes actions to celebrate community achievements, encourage volunteering, and develop partnerships and opportunities to support participation and inclusion.

Figure 3 - Far West Regional Economic Development Strategy

*Objective 1.3 Our history, culture and diversity is embraced and celebrated*, includes actions to provide cultural services and facilities that celebrate history; sustain and grow local arts and culture; raise awareness of events that celebrate cultural diversity; increase public events; and increase awareness of Broken Hill's heritage and history.

*Objective 1.4 Our built environment supports our quality of life*, includes actions to provide social and recreational opportunities; address the impact of changing population on local facilities and services; and maintain the character of the history of the City through good design.

Under *Key Direction 2: Our Economy*, the plan outlines relevant objectives including:

*Objective 2.1 Our Economy is strong and diversified and attracts people to work, live and invest*, including actions to increase economic activity, retain residents, pursue new industry investment including creative industries.

*Objective 2.2 We are a destination of choice and provide a real experience that encourages increased visitation*, including actions to support and grow tourism by positioning Broken Hill as a significant outback destination in Australia.

### **Broken Hill Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) 2020 - 2040**

The *Broken Hill Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)* sets the framework for the economic, social and environmental land-use needs of Broken Hill over the next 20 years (2040).

The LSPS notes the importance of the CBD as a major tourism drawcard to increase overnight visits to Broken Hill, focusing on the activation of key sites in the CBD, such as the proposed new Broken Hill Cultural Precinct and Library and Archives and benefits for commercial and retail businesses. Relevant planning priorities include:

- Undertaking the construction of the Broken Hill Cultural Precinct and Library and Archives as a key activation project for the Broken Hill CBD.
- Undertaking the installation of the Broken Hill Projection and Lighting Project as a key activation project for the Broken Hill CBD as well as Sturt Park.

The LSPS notes that tourism brings a huge economic boost to Broken Hill, and supports tourism as a key growth industry and highlights a number of initiatives to grow the visitor economy, including the film and television industry and capitalising on the areas' heritage, cultural, seasonal and natural endowments like National Parks and famous film locations. It includes the following relevant planning priorities:

- Continuing the program of upgrade and maintenance of tourist assets owned/controlled by Council.
- Continuing to support the upgrade and maintenance of local tourist assets, local flagship events, festivals, and conventions.
- Supporting the development of a Film School at Broken Hill.

- Implementing activation actions in the Broken Hill CBD, including the development of the Broken Hill CBD Masterplan, Broken Hill Cultural Precinct and Library & Archives Project and the Broken Hill Projection and Lighting Project.
- Refurbishing/revitalising visitor facilities and signage to Aboriginal, outback, mining and film and television heritage sites and attractions.

Relating to heritage, the LSPS notes the need to increase awareness and appreciation of heritage in Broken Hill and to manage local and State heritage within Broken Hill in a positive manner. It includes the following relevant planning priorities:

- Promoting Broken Hill as an asset of outstanding heritage value to the nation.
- Continuing the program of heritage incentive funding
- Reviewing the Broken Hill Local Environmental Plan 2013 heritage listing and heritage conservation areas.
- Developing guidelines and publications to protect, enhance, and manage Broken Hill's National Heritage Values

### Heritage Strategy 2017-2020

The *Broken Hill Heritage Strategy* focuses on the built heritage within the City and does not include Aboriginal heritage. The purpose of the Strategy was to comply with the requirements of the New South Wales Heritage Office three-year funding agreement to support local government management of Broken Hill built heritage. The strategy includes nine recommendations for implementation across 2017-2020 that include:

- Continuing to identify, list, and legally protect heritage items across the Broken Hill Local Government Area
- Appointing a Heritage Adviser to assist the Council, community and owners in the protection and management of heritage items
- Proactively manage heritage and urban design within Broken Hill.
- Continuing a Local Heritage Incentives Fund to Provide Small Grants to encourage local heritage projects.
- Raising community awareness and appreciation through education on heritage related issues and management within Broken Hill and promoting cultural heritage and museum development opportunities.

### Advocacy Strategy 2018

The *Broken Hill Advocacy Strategy* (first devised in 2018 – updated 2020) provides a vision to guide the advocacy activities of Council for the achievement of new urban designed spaces, technology, art, events, and enterprises and identifies interventions that will place the City in an optimal position to attract new visitors, residents, businesses, and industries.

The advocacy strategy identifies the priority areas and strategies that create an environment that gives the Broken Hill community a voice to influence decisions at a State and Federal level to improve the liveability and economic sustainability of the City.

Key advocacy focus areas for the Strategy include:

- Promoting (through a new global marketing package) the City as an essential Australian experience and as an asset of outstanding heritage value to the nation
- Advocating for the capital investment for the proposed new Broken Hill Cultural Precinct and Library and Archives
- Enhancing the City's cultural offering including in creative arts and film and television by capitalising on the Region's heritage, cultural, seasonal, and natural endowments.
- Revitalising the City Centre to stimulate economic activity and encourage residents and visitors to spend more time in the CBD and heritage and cultural precincts
- Achieving 100% renewable status for the City of Broken Hill by 2030.

### Public Art Policy (2020)

The *Public Art Policy (2020)* supports Council's broader strategic priorities of creating a vibrant community that openly expresses the City's distinctive character and identity. The policy aspires for public art to be an everyday experience for the City that expresses the community's unique attributes, culture, heritage, and people. The policy also recognises that contemporary public art practice includes a diverse range of styles and practices and that public art can be a positive way the City imagines and experiences place in a new way. Guiding principles in the policy aim to encourage conversation, aid engagement with the social and cultural histories of Broken Hill and guide artists in the initiation and development of public art across the City.

The Public Art Policy also recognises that public art has a vital role in enlivening and animating public space and will be used as an active placemaking tool in the City's regeneration. This supports the NSW's Government recent focus in supporting, creating, and sustaining well-designed places for regional communities into the future. The Government Architect's Urban Design for Regional NSW (2019) recognises that changes to local population, industries, the nature of work and social connections and increasing climate extremes and natural hazards influence how places like Broken Hill must plan and adapt to ensure their ongoing prosperity and resilience.

### Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2021-24

The *Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2021-2024* outlines key strategies to help raise the profile of the Art Gallery, to broaden its reach, to deepen its influence, and to assert its relevance to local, regional, and state audiences.

The Plan formulates a pathway to increase the Art Gallery's capacity to deliver and to measure the impact of its programs across the City and region. It also aims to consolidate and make sustainable current programs and activities, while allocating increased resources to collection management, undertaking further creative development, artist, and community support.

The Plan seeks to ensure that Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery (BHRAG) contributes in the long-term to aspirations of the community but also delivers positive results in the short and medium term by:

- Widening the Art Gallery's reach with more focused audience development initiatives and new technologies
- Developing a stronger capability for the Gallery to be both an active arts presenter and producer
- Improving the Art Gallery's positioning and marketing to target audiences
- Assisting the Art Gallery to measure its inputs and outcomes (results) more accurately.

### Geocentre Strategic Plan 2021- 24

The *Geocentre's Strategic Plan* outlines the broader context and operating environments for the GeoCentre both internally and externally and contained an organisational self-assessment; a rewrite of the museum's purpose and guiding principles. It records that the GeoCentre still has a strong place in the City; not only through presenting mining & minerals in their international, social, technological, environmental, cultural, and economic context but also preserving and promoting Broken Hill's mining and broader social heritage for current and future generations.

The Plan advocates for the GeoCentre to not only continue its key role as a preserver and storyteller of the memory of Broken Hill's rich mineral and energy endowment but to also contribute as an instigator for debate and ideas into the future. It encourages the GeoCentre find its position of being a place of discovery, empowerment, and the nurturing of ideas. Strategies include:

- Enhancing the overall visitor experience with improvements to the building and surrounds that will support its place as the City's 'gem' in cultural tourism.
- Redeveloping and further promote opportunities for the niche market of geo-tourism in Broken Hill.
- Embracing new technology to enable improved access to collections, establishment of new audiences and increased reach.



Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery



Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre)

# Funding for arts and culture

## State Funding to Local Government for Arts & Culture

In November 2019, Create NSW released new guidelines for their *Arts and Cultural Funding Program 2019/20*. It included a new dedicated fund - the Local Government Authorities Arts and Cultural Programs (multi-year funding).

In September 2020, it was announced that 29 Councils successfully demonstrated arts and cultural outcomes over the program guidelines across galleries, theatre, museum and other artforms including music and literary arts.

Reduction of support was obvious in some areas such as the public gallery sector across NSW. Just 22 of the 62 local government run regional galleries were slated to receive funding, and of those, half would receive funding for only one-year, despite applying in a multi-year-round. This has effectively placed pressure on the majority of local government Councils to make up the shortfall.

It is understood that decisions were made by the Create NSW Artform Advisory Board to fund Councils for one, two, or three years dependent on the merit and impact for each year of activity. NSW Government support has focused on evidence of 'excellence in arts and cultural outcomes for the communities of NSW'.

## State Funding to Regional Arts NSW

A discussion paper was released by Create NSW into the NSW Regional Arts Network (September 2020) with the purpose of reviewing the current structure of the Network and considering new models for supporting its ongoing sustainability and relevance for the next 10 years.

The review identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of the current funding and operational model in relation to the changing arts and cultural landscape and increasing demand on resources across Regional NSW. The paper outlined alternative models of governance including a self-governing Network, that could "better respond to the unique characteristics of each region...and engender within its membership a new model of strategic leadership, featuring constructive inter-dependencies and supports for capacity building."

Following further consultation and feedback, the NSW Government later announced (November 2020) the withdrawal of funding from Regional Arts NSW (RANSW) (the peak Sydney body for regional arts development) within two years. Essentially the decision will see the redistribution of the core funding to Regional Arts NSW dispersed to its 14 partner organisations (the RADO network) - including Outback Arts, Arts Mid North Coast, Arts Upper Hunter, and Western Riverina Arts etc.

It is understood via a message from its board, that RANSW will continue business as usual throughout 2021, though the likely outcome is that Create NSW will provide a coordination role for RADOs, effectively decentralising funding from CBD to the regions.

## Federal Inquiry into Australia's creative and cultural industries and institutions

Australia's cultural and creative industries and institutions are currently the focus of a Parliamentary Inquiry (announced August 2020). The Australian Government House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts is inquiring into Australia's creative and cultural industries and institutions including, but not limited to, Indigenous, regional, rural, and community-based organisations. The Committee is considering:

- The direct and indirect economic benefits and employment opportunities of creative and cultural industries and how to recognise, measure and grow them
- The non-economic benefits that enhance community, social wellbeing and promoting Australia's national identity, and how to recognise, measure and grow them
- The best mechanism for ensuring cooperation and delivery of policy between layers of government
- The impact of COVID-19 on the creative and cultural industries; and
- Avenues for increasing access and opportunities for Australia's creative and cultural industries through innovation and the digital environment.

The Inquiry received 351 submissions and has conducted 4 public hearings. It has not yet delivered its final report.

## Australia Council – ‘What Next’ National Review

In September 2020, the Australia Council released a discussion paper titled *Re-imagine: What next?* to elicit dialogue on a national view of “What do we want the arts and cultural industries to look like in 2030?”

The discussion paper invited the arts/culture industry to acknowledge the current situation of the sector, to identify its strengths, and understand the opportunities for change. Importantly it asked:

- What can the arts and cultural industries learn from the COVID pandemic experience to build its readiness for future crises?; and
- How can the arts/culture industry play a vital role in the nation’s recovery post COVID?

## NSW Government’s Rescue and Restart package (Arts and Culture)

Stage 2 of the Create NSW *Rescue and Restart* package was announced in November 2020 to help the recovery of over 160 arts and cultural organisations, including significant investment for 60 organisations across regional NSW, with more than \$24.2 million in funding to immediately kickstart their programs.

The Stage 2 funding allocation focused on Create NSW multi-year and annually funded organisations as “they have the greatest capacity to stimulate the not-for-profit arts and cultural sector”. Funding amounts were based on average turnover from 2018 and 2019 and capped to a maximum of \$750,000 per company to ensure a wide funding distribution. The funding was not allocated to local government managed facilities or programs.

\$2.5 million was allocated to support sector specific initiatives, including contemporary music, literature and writing as well as to support a regional residency program for individual artists across a wide range of artforms.



Figure 4 - Wildlife tourism (source: Broken Hill LSPS)

# 4

## Sector issues & trends



# Overview of emerging sector issues and trends

*Increasingly interrelated global, national, and local trends (climate change, shifting demographics, geopolitics, digital transformation) are changing the way we live, how we work and our economic opportunities, as well as our wellbeing, social connections, and the way we participate and consume 'culture'. In turn, these trends influence our future infrastructure needs and expectations.*

This section of the report provides a snapshot of emerging sector trends – how artists are responding to societal changes, as well as exploring what purpose art/culture serves, both now and in the future. Essentially, Art has become increasingly more diverse, more collective, and experiential, the creative economy remains on the rise and the ability to respond to 'disruption' has become an essential factor.

This decade has begun with considerable change and disruption. People, including curators, writers, collectors, and the public, have begun to question traditional ways of showing, viewing, and thinking about art. It has also revealed that arts facilities like museums, galleries and theatres that are open to experimenting with alternative approaches and new partnerships are better equipped to thrive through creative strategies that diversify business models and cater to the needs of the audiences of the future.

## Snapshot of the COVID impact on the arts/culture sector

Over the past five years regional Australia has been particularly hard hit by drought, bush fires, floods and now the coronavirus (COVID-19) has had a significant impact on the Australian cultural landscape. The direct result has been a loss of employment and audiences and programs for venues. It has also had flow on impacts for regional cities in terms of lost tourism activity. The core business of engagement between artists, performers, audiences has been restricted by the national, state and regional responses to COVID-19. The general free flow of goods and services across Australia has hampered touring and creative development.

In particular COVID-19 has further revealed the vulnerabilities of the arts/cultural sector in reliance on presentation venues, spaces for audiences and participation. Necessary restrictions have resulted in the large closure of venues and the cancellation or postponement of events and programs.

Regional centres like Broken Hill have been particularly hit hard by COVID-19 restrictions. Local governments across NSW have made significant cutbacks to funding support to the sector. This has resulted in many regional NSW libraries, galleries, theatres, and art spaces reducing their hours of operations, community services and staffing (including redeployment to other roles within local government).

Additionally, the viability of some small-to-medium organisations has been threatened due to the financial impact of long-term closures caused by COVID-19. This is

particularly true for volunteer-run organisations reliant on visitors through their doors for income. COVID has also highlighted the sector's reliance on volunteers – many volunteers are reluctant to return, have lost motivation, or moved onto other roles whilst arts/cultural facilities have been closed to the public. For council-run facilities, in many cases their COVID plans, insurance or other restrictions have not permitted volunteers to return to the workforce – placing significant additional workloads on paid staff. Other issues have resulted from the need to maintain the protection of collections whilst venues remain closed or with limited staffing.

However, there is evidence of artists and arts organisations having pivoted to digital content to attract audiences, including streaming live performances, creating virtual galleries, and delivering online classes and tutorials. Since the onset of the pandemic, creatives have played an active role in helping communities make sense of the loss from COVID and fostering unity and resilience. In addition, creatives have sought to bridge physical distancing with creative responses to combat social isolation and support mental and physical wellbeing.

To better understand creative and cultural engagement in Australia during the COVID-19 lockdown, the Australia Council recently published the findings of a commissioned research report. The results indicated that more than four in ten Australians had changed their engagement habits with the arts since the initial lockdown (March-April). 19% indicated they had engaged more than they normally would, 24% saying their engagement had not changed, and 25% saying they had engaged less.

Creative participation in art making indicated that more than a quarter of Australians say their creativity has increased since the initial lockdown with 27% feeling more creative than before COVID. The primary reasons for arts engagement during COVID were given as “entertainment and having fun”, followed by “a way of passing the time” and “improving their wellbeing”.

Whilst there is clear evidence that COVID-19 forced arts and cultural organisations to adapt, pivot or completely reimagine existing programs and activities to take advantage of new digital and remote workplace and delivery initiatives, it also highlighted the digital inequality or the difficulties many regional or remote communities face in terms of insufficient bandwidth. Without sustainable support in this area, it is difficult to ascertain whether these new initiatives will remain an ongoing part of cultural programming.



Reasons for engaging in arts and creativity during COVID (source: Australia Council)

## ‘Visitor economy and creative tourism’

Cultural and heritage tourism is particularly relevant to the ongoing social and economic wellbeing of Broken Hill. It is the ability to use the cultural and historical capital of the city and region as a potential way of replacing the traditional resource-based industries.

Destination NSW reports indicate that ‘data from Tourism Research Australia shows that visiting history and heritage buildings, sites or monuments is the most popular cultural and heritage activity undertaken by international visitors, followed by going to museums or art galleries, and attending cultural events’.

For regional NSW, it’s been identified that cultural tourism represents an opportunity for growth and economic stimulus. Cultural tourism means increased audiences for local events, more visitors to local galleries and museums, and greater support for local arts practitioners. Tourism also presents the potential to engender a greater understanding and appreciation of the diversity and richness of Aboriginal culture among non-Aboriginal people.

Whilst Cultural tourism has been on a rapid and consecutive rise for decades, there has recently been several state and national reports investigating intrinsic links between the visitor economy, creative industries, and cultural programs. What is emerging is “creative tourism” – a new vein of cultural tourism where the experience is more one-on-one and is anchored in local culture. Creative tourism is therefore defined as travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and how it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and creates a living culture.

A big feature of creative tourism is intangible cultural heritage – learning and experiences that can’t be bought off the shelf like a souvenir. Creativity has also become a strategy in the making of places and has been used in placemaking in tourism destinations through different design strategies. The emphasis of this approach is that content development stimulates local communities to use artistic and storytelling skills to develop engaging and participative experiences.

## Creativity at a ‘intersection’

The creative economy and the arts still have huge potential to contribute to economic, cultural, and social wellbeing.

Recent approaches have seen a high degree of cross-form transformations of cultural practice. There is an increasing trend for artists to undertake creative work in more than one art form. Artists and creatives are also increasingly focusing on generating income through their work in other industries as part of interdisciplinary teams. In fact, Australia Council research shows there has been a significant increase in the number of artists applying their artistic skills in other industries. Half of all professional Australian artists are now applying their creative skills outside the arts. These include contributing to the design of architecture and public space, online gaming and graphic design.

This intersection of Creativity and other disciplines has also been driven by other strategies like the recent focus on 'STEAM' education that involves an approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. Inquiry, collaboration, and an emphasis on process-based learning are at the heart of the STEAM approach. This approach is viewed as the basis for developing 21st century skills, as future workforces are likely to be characterised by less conventional industry boundaries requiring all workers to problem solve and collaborate in innovative ways and learn transferable skills.

## Unique and immersive 'experiences'

'Art is intrinsically bound up with the viewer's experience.' Throughout the last 5-8 years, cultural venues such as museums and galleries have been leaning into experiential programming, and viewers have now become conditioned to expect them. Touching artworks, putting on headsets, lounging on furniture – anything beyond simply standing and looking has become a staple of programming.

It has therefore created an 'art experience economy' that is centred on the consumption of creative experiences. This approach has delivered concepts like 'Immersive art' that is centred around exploration and play, and providing a full sensory experience of sight, touch, and sound.

Technology is also changing how creative workers produce art and services through advancements like 3D printing, augmented reality, and virtual reality. Artists have jumped at the opportunity to push boundaries, to explore combinations that had never previously been considered.

This 'economy' therefore draws its vitality from engagement in new and novel experiences; the consumption of new symbols and meanings. In terms of active engagement or participation there is a fundamental relationship between people's need for new and novel sources of fun, enjoyment and lifestyle and the creative drive to write, paint, draw, dance and perform. The public's adulation for social media-worthy viewing experiences has also contributed to its popularity.

It is not only art venues that have explored this creative opportunity, with the public domain increasingly being used for large scale events, opened up to audiences who wouldn't normally go to a traditional art environment. Art 'popups' and a trend of art installations are growing across urban environments. Recent examples include Vivid Sydney, White Night Melbourne and the 'Van Gogh Alive' a multi-sensory, interactive exhibition that has shown in 50 cities worldwide and attracted more than 6 million visitors.

One consequence of the expanding the art experience economy is however the blurring of the line between consumption and entertainment.

## A Return to the 'bespoke'

In recent years, trends such as doing things yourself, appreciating traditional manual skills, artisanal products, hyperlocality, and environmental awareness have risen in popularity. The past decade has witnessed the rise and rise of craft and making. Against a rapidly changing technological backdrop we have seen a return to the handmade, the remarkable expansion of 'maker-culture' and a real revolution in forms of production and consumption.

This has produced a sector trend (sub-culture) to revisit the handmade, bespoke, locally produced, and artisanal.

This 'maker movement' has driven the way we now see the convergence of the roles of 'cultural producer' and 'consumer'. Makers represent a growing community of builders and creators – engineers, scientists, artists, and hobbyists of all ages, interests, and skill levels who engage in experimentation, collaboration, and innovation based on open-source principles.

The availability of affordable constructive technology and the ability to share online has fuelled this movement. The rise of platforms like 'Etsy' has seen tailoring and handmade re-emerge at the forefront of fashion once again as sustainable practices gain momentum. The result is that 'makers' can be producers in the sharing economy, creating entrepreneurship outcomes.

5

## Value of arts and culture



# The value of arts and culture

Beyond their intrinsic value, arts and culture have a range of social, economic and health benefits for regional communities. Broken Hill's Cultural Plan can help drive each of these, complementing and contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of the City.



## Community identity & connection

Engagement in culture and creativity has been linked to an increased sense of community identity, cohesion and belonging, more inclusive communities and a reduction in social isolation.

Arts activities and projects can re-define regional, rural and remote locations in new and positive ways, providing both residents and visitors with a strong sense of a community's unique identity. For example, The First Coat mural festival and project in Toowoomba has been credited with reducing vandalism from tagging and graffiti, changing the nature of the CBD, attracting tourists and bringing the region to national and international attention.

**ENGAGEMENT IN CULTURE AND CREATIVITY HAS BEEN LINKED TO AN INCREASED SENSE OF COMMUNITY IDENTITY, COHESION, BELONGING, AND MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES AND A REDUCTION IN SOCIAL ISOLATION.**

## Regional development

Governments contribute to regional development by supporting employment and wealth generating economic activities. Regional development funding for arts projects can revitalise a local area – a rural town, an urban precinct or an abandoned industrial site.

Developing, operating and maintaining physical infrastructure creates jobs. For example, when \$8.5M was invested in the Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre it created 130 jobs during construction and now employs about 38 locals in full and part time positions.

**REGIONAL JOBS IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES INCREASED BY 21% (TO 95,660) BETWEEN 2011 AND 2016.**

## Resilient local economies

Studies show that a vibrant cultural and creative ecosystem can help drive local economic prosperity and growth, including through attracting visitors, creating jobs, attracting and retaining businesses, and revitalising places<sup>1</sup>.

In regional areas the arts provide a means of income for artists and art workers, and for owners and employees of local businesses and services. Investment in the arts provides opportunities for improvement to the local economy, generating arts-based employment, arts-based cultural tourism, event-based spending and construction of arts infrastructure.



**INTERNATIONAL ARTS TOURISTS  
ARE MORE LIKELY TO VISIT  
REGIONAL AUSTRALIA THAN  
INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS OVERALL.**

## Health and wellbeing

Studies have found that people who participate in a creative or cultural activity are more likely to report good health compared to those who do not, and that participation in arts activities may increase cognitive abilities and may have a positive impact on specific health conditions such as dementia and depression.

A 2013 study in Scotland found that people who had participated in a creative or cultural activity were 38% more likely to report good health compared to those who did not; and for those who participated in dance, the figure rises to 62%<sup>1</sup>.

**PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN A  
CREATIVE OR CULTURAL ACTIVITY  
ARE MORE LIKELY TO REPORT GOOD  
HEALTH.**

## Liveability & attractiveness

Regional areas with cultural infrastructure or creative clusters are attractive to people seeking to relocate from cities.

Having a range of arts organisations and events is critical to attracting and retaining professionals to a region, including doctors, nurses or teachers together with people employed in architecture, design, media and entertainment or local professional artists.

Arts events attract visitors who may otherwise have limited awareness of the area. Arts events and venues such as galleries or performing arts centres contribute to a perception of a unique destination, thus increasing the attraction of places. Places with cultural attractions and creative industries can attract particular demographic groups with disposable income, either as visitors or new residents.



**PLACES WITH A HIGH PROPORTION  
OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES JOBS ARE  
LARGELY PLACES WHERE  
PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE.**

<sup>1</sup> See for example *Measuring the Economic Benefits of Arts and Culture*, Arts Council England, 2010.

<sup>1</sup> Leadbetter, C. and O'Connor, N. *Healthy Attendance? The Impact of Cultural Engagement and Sports Participation on Health and Satisfaction with Life in Scotland*, Scottish Government Social Research, 2013.

# Economic analysis

SGS Economics and Planning was engaged to provide early stage economic and demographic analysis of the Broken Hill economy to support the development of the Cultural Plan.

**This report can be read in full in the appendix.**

## Key insights

### *Broken Hill has an older population profile.*

Nearly 30% of the population of Broken Hill is over 60, up from 24% in 2006. This suggests a high number of retirees and/or people moving into the region at retirement age. This cohort may not work in the creative and cultural sectors but are likely to engage in it through hobbies and as consumers.

The decline in population over the ten years to 2016 is likely to have come from families leaving, as there is evidence that Broken Hill has a lower than average (for Regional NSW) number of 0-19 year olds and 30-49 year olds – key family household age brackets.

Local cultural and creative investment therefore should take into account the needs of this specific older population profile of Broken Hill.

### *There is a strong Indigenous community.*

In 2016, 8.5% of Broken Hill residents identified as Indigenous, compared to 5.9% for the rest of NSW and 2.8% across Australia. This creates an opportunity to work with local indigenous groups and businesses to build on their cultural heritage as a way of celebrating Broken Hill's diverse physical and cultural landscape.

### *Mining is the standout industry specialisation.*

Mining dominates the economy of Broken Hill, accounting for 11% of employment. Many of the other industries in Broken Hill serve the general population or support the mining industry.

### *The creative and cultural sector is small.*

As a consequence of the singular focus of the Broken Hill economy, the creative and cultural sector is small, accounting for just 2.8% of jobs. Of this, most are retail-related or directly linked to the regional newspaper. This could make it challenging to build on an established cultural or creative specialisation.

### *COVID-19 is likely to keep Australian tourists in Australia.*

Travel restrictions across the globe, coupled with Australia's (to date) strong management of the pandemic is likely to mean that domestic tourism is a focus for economic development across Regional Australia during the next few years.

### *Aligning tourism with culture is an opportunity.*

Therefore there is a need to align cultural and creative sector development with the tourism industry.

These two dual streams could expose Broken Hill to as diverse a range of domestic tourists as possible.

The age profile of Broken Hill's residents and the general age profile of many Australian's embarking on trans-national road trips (the 'Grey Nomad' cohort) present an opportunity to consolidate Broken Hill's status on such journeys by supporting the creative industries that appeal to this older cohort.

Concurrently, the increased awareness of and interest in Australia's indigenous culture, particularly in younger Australians, presents an opportunity to leverage the strong Indigenous community of Broken Hill and establish it as a destination that also appeals to a younger audience. Younger tourists (<39 years old) currently make up a very small share of outback tourists, however COVID's curtailing of international travel is likely to change this.

### *A cultural tourism strategy requires partnering with other jurisdictions.*

Broken Hill's remoteness means however that any desire to attract visitors must be done in concert with other jurisdictions to 'join the dots' along a journey that may traverse vast distances and be covered in weeks and months, rather than days. This approach can also work with the different age cohorts being targeted. Towns with strong cultural and creative industries may form one type of journey that include Broken Hill, while another could link sites of important Indigenous significance to Broken Hill and beyond.

6

# Cultural participation



# Trends in regional cultural participation, attendance and attitudes

*This section provides a summary of key trends in cultural participation and attendance trends in Regional Australia and Broken Hill.*

## Regional Australia cultural participation

The Australia Council for the Arts regularly conducts research into Australians' engagement with arts and creativity in their daily lives, and provides insight into cultural participation and attendance trends as well as how people value the arts\*.

As shown in Figure 8, findings from the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey show that the majority of Australians engage with the arts in some way or another, and this is equally true for people living in regional Australia. In fact, residents of regional Australia are as likely to creative participate in the arts as residents of metropolitan Australia.

In 2019:

- Nearly two in three (64%) regional Australians had attended a live art form such as music, theatre, dance, festivals or First Nations arts; and
- Over one in four (26%) regional Australians participated in visual arts and craft. ( This was higher than Metropolitan residents at 24%).

\*The 2019 National Arts Participation Survey was conducted in November–December 2019, not long before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the cultural and creative industries and brought cultural participation and attendance to a near stand-still. As such, the findings in this chapter reflect participation and attendance trends prior to the pandemic.

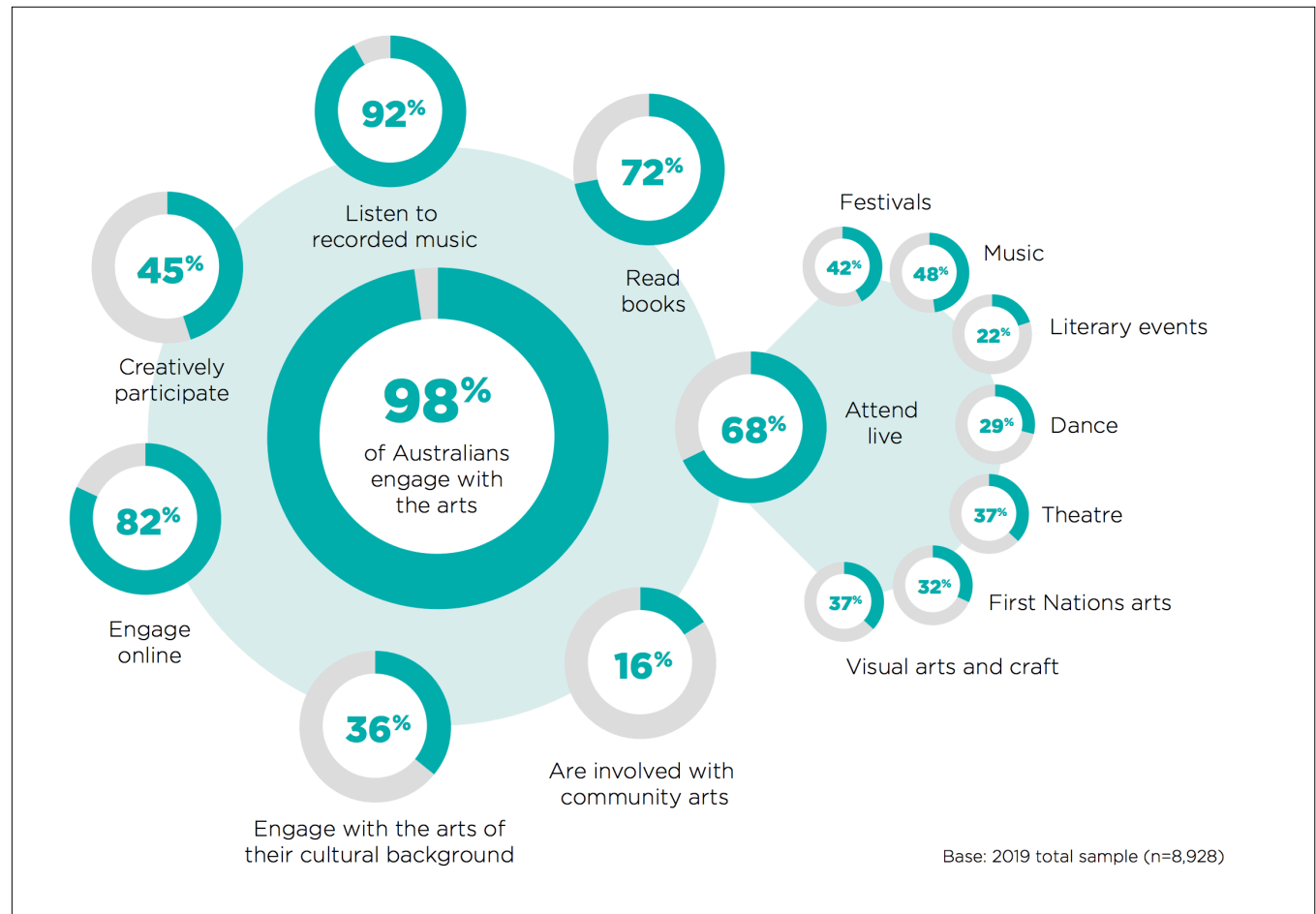
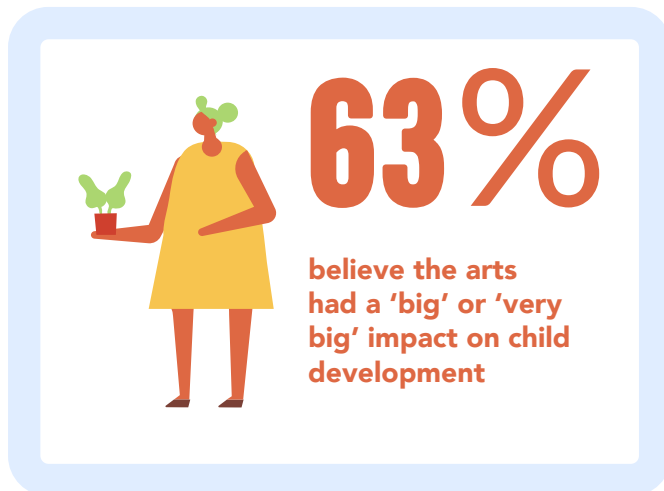
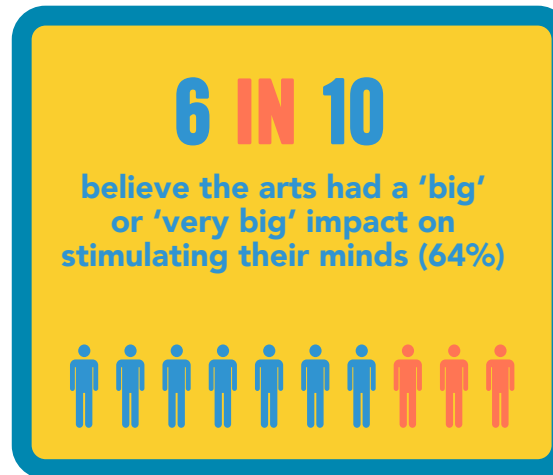
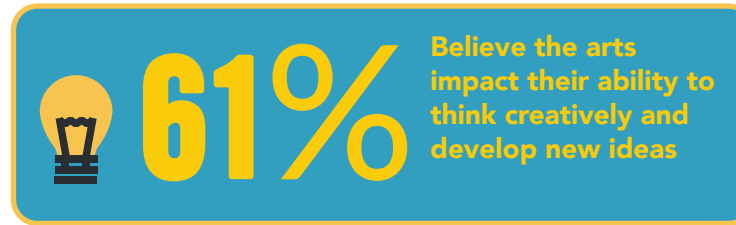


Figure 5 - Australians' arts engagement 2019 National Arts Participation Survey, Australia Council for the Arts

## Regional attitudes to arts and culture

Research from the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey shows that the vast majority of regional Australians have positive attitudes about the value of the arts. They believe the arts reflect and contribute to society, to cultural identity, and to Australia's international reputation.



# Parkes NSW Electorate cultural participation

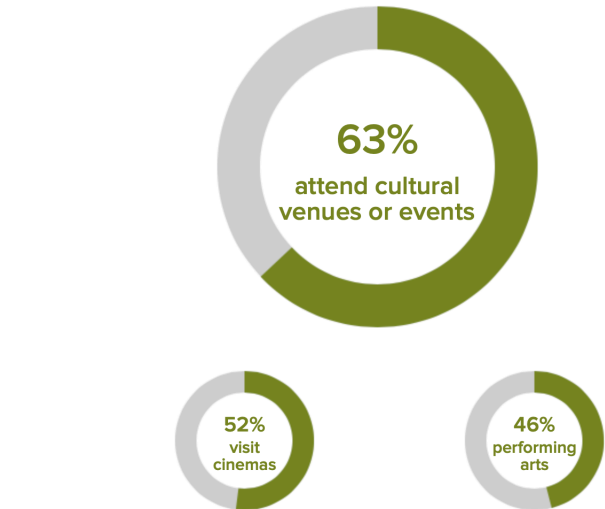
The Australia Council for the Arts produces cultural and arts engagement snapshots annually. Broken Hill is located in the Parkes Electorate, which includes other centres such as Wilcannia, Dubbo, Moree, Narrabri, Bourke and Lightning Ridge. The most recent snapshot found that:

Regional NSW residents value the arts:

- 78% agree that First Nations arts are an important part of Australia’s culture
- 77% agree that they feel proud when Australian artists do well overseas
- 76% agree that artists make an important contribution to Australian society

Parkes Electorate residents attend cultural events:

- 63% attend cultural venues or events
- 4.3% more tickets bought to arts events in the electorate than the national average
- 8.3% fewer sales of tickets to sporting events compared to the national average



\* Data should be interpreted with caution due to the variability of estimates.

## Engagement with arts and culture in Parkes

People in Parkes aged 15 years and over are engaged with arts and culture. In 2017-18 they attended a range of venues and events including theatre, dance and music performances as well as cinemas, arts galleries and museums.

**\*12%** were involved in creative activities themselves, such as performing, singing or playing a musical instrument, dancing, writing, visual art and craft.

## What does this measure?

The average number of TEG tickets purchased by ticket-buyers in 2018-19 (electorate average compared to the national average).

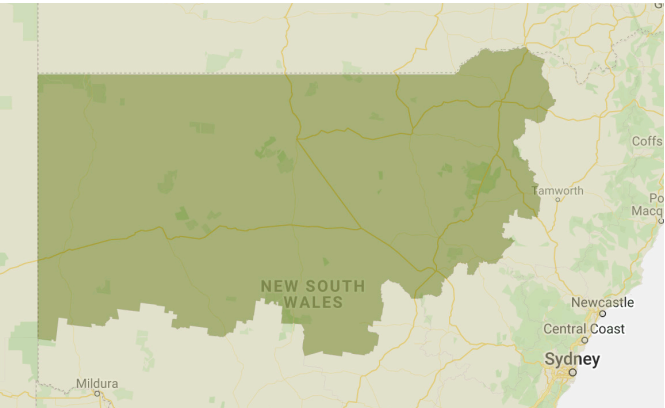


Figure 6 - Map of Parkes Electorate (Source: Australia Council for the Arts)

Of people who purchased tickets for:		This electorate	National avg.	Difference, electorate to national avg.
Arts events	Avg. no. tickets	3.7	3.5	+4.3%
Sport events	Avg. no. tickets	4.4	4.7	-8.2%
Any event, arts or sport	Avg. no. tickets	4.3	4.5	-4.5%
BOTH arts and sport events	Avg. no. tickets	9.2	9.8	-6.3%

7

## Community profile & groups



# Community profile

*This section provides a summary of Broken Hill's community characteristics today and projected demographic changes and the implications of these for cultural planning.*

Broken Hill is a unique regional community. It is important to consider the demographic characteristics of a community when planning for cultural and arts outcomes. Demographic factors such as age, income, English proficiency and family composition give some indication of the types of activities, services and facilities required to meet a community's needs.

The following pages provide an overview of Broken Hill's demographic characteristics based on:

- 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data, with comparisons to Regional NSW where relevant.
- Forecast population projections from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (2019).

## Who lives in Broken Hill?

In 2016, the Estimated Resident Population of Broken Hill City was 18,114 people, a decrease of 831 people (4.2%) since 2011, with significant out-migration of young people (12-24yr olds).

Like other regional cities, the Broken Hill population has been steadily declining since the 1970s, and retaining and attracting residents to the area is a key priority for Council. The local arts and cultural offering can play an important role in this endeavour.

Key demographic characteristics of Broken Hill residents compared to Regional NSW include:

- Median age is 45 years.
- Aging population - 29% of residents aged over 60 years.
- A larger proportion of residents are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (8.5% compared to 5.5%).
- A much higher proportion of lone person households (33% compared to 26%).
- Much lower Internet connection rates (65.8% compared to 73.1%).
- Relatively low educational attainment (8.6% with a bachelor or higher degree compared to 14.5%).
- Relatively higher levels of socioeconomic disadvantage (901 SEIFA compared to 971) and a lower median weekly household income (\$972).
- A slightly higher disability rate (8% compared to 6.3%).
- A lower proportion of couple with children households (19% compared to 25%).
- Lower cultural diversity, with 4% born overseas compared to 11%.

## Creative workers

212 Broken Hill City residents (3%) worked in 'creative' industries such as Arts and Recreation (0.9%) and Manufacturing (2.1%) in 2016.

In contrast, 1,260 Broken Hill City residents (18.3%) worked in Health Care and Social Assistance occupations<sup>1</sup>. This was identified as the largest industry of employment in the area in 2016, followed by Retail Trade (829 workers, 12%), and Mining (746 workers, 10.8%).

It is important to understand that this data is sourced from census jobs data and does not reflect the hobbies, vocational pursuits or volunteer work that the residents of Broken Hill City may be involved in.

## How are we going to change?

According to the Broken Hill Local Strategic Planning Statement:

"The latest Estimated Residential Population (ERP) projections undertaken by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in 2019 suggest that if current trends were to continue, Broken Hill will have a population of approximately 13,650 by the year 2040. This population is significantly less than the current population post 2016 Census."

<sup>1</sup> Count of usual residents and workers in Cumberland (A) by SA2, by selected occupations. Prepared by .id (the population experts) using data supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics consultancy service

## IF BROKEN HILL WAS 100 PEOPLE ...

9 

people are Aboriginal  
or Torres Islander

45

is the Median  
Age

20 

are aged under  
18 years

29 

people are aged  
over 60 years

5 

people are  
born overseas

23 

have a  
vocational  
degree

9 

have a bachelor  
degree or  
higher

8 

people need help in their  
day-to-day life due to  
disability

18 

people volunteer

3 

people work in creative  
industries, such as Arts  
and Manufacturing

## IF BROKEN HILL WAS 100 HOUSEHOLDS ...

33 

lone person  
households

19 

couples with  
children households

25 

couples without  
children households

13 

one parent  
households

6 

medium and high  
density dwellings

\$972

median household  
income

40 

household owned  
outright

20 

households are renting  
privately, while 3 are  
social housing

66 

houses have an internet  
connection at home

9

# Cultural Asset network



# Destinations

The *Broken Hill Cultural Framework and Synopsis Report* (2019) mapped the city destinations and identified that:

- the Argent Street precinct hosts a large number of the city's community and tourist destinations. It remains the heart of Broken Hill despite the significant draw of the newer supermarkets at Westside Plaza and Broken Hill Village Shopping Centre, that are supported by large shaded carparks;
- airports are gateways, particularly for remote centres like Broken Hill;
- Broken Hill Hospital is a medium-scaled regional and teaching hospital. Located on an axis with Sturt Park it is a significant city facility;
- schools continue to be important community destinations, and are supported by local bus and cycle routes;
- Patton Village in South Broken Hill is a tiny commercial centre with few daily support services; and
- South Broken Hill is challenged by its position south of the Line of Lode.

Further observations include:

- the city park network is relatively evenly distributed;
- Sturt Park, adjoining the Argent Street Precinct, functions as a village green – a space for community to gather, celebrate and attend events such as the annual Broken Hill Christmas Pageant and Perfect Light Film Festival; and
- Argent Street can be closed and used as a large event space – such as the Town Square for the main Broken Hill Drag In Drag street parade.

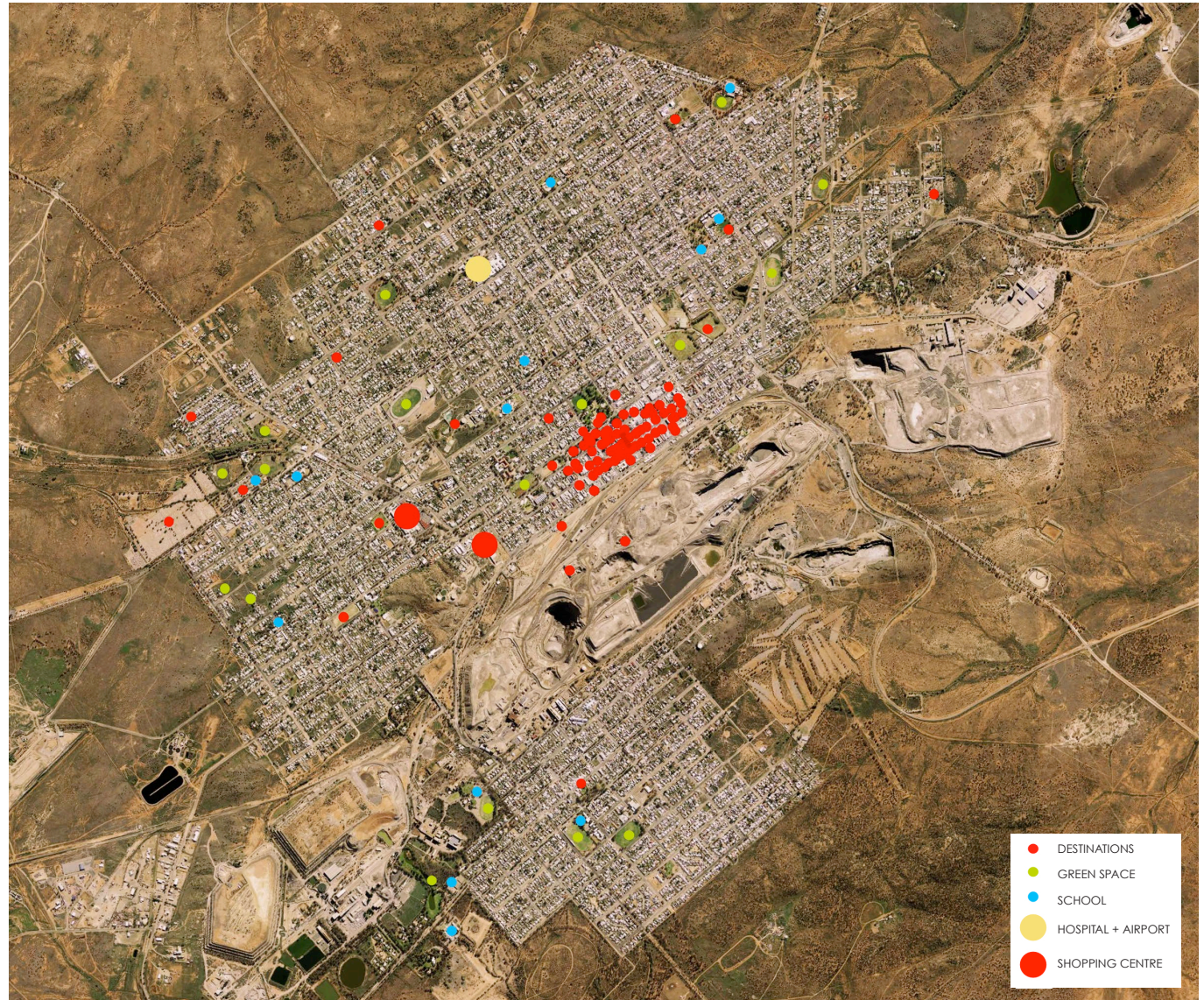


Figure 7 - Broken Hill's Destinations (source; Broken Hill Cultural Framework and Synopsis Report)

# Cultural facility network

## What are cultural facilities?

Cultural facilities are generally 'hard' or physical infrastructure such as arts, cultural and creative venues, as well as businesses and peak bodies, broadly categorised as follows:

### *Performance and exhibition spaces*

These are spaces where audiences go to watch art performances.

For example: major performing arts venues, live music venues (like, hotels, bars, cafes and clubs), museums, arts galleries, art centres, heritage and discovery centres, comedy clubs, arena entertainment venues, drama and dance theatres

### *Community and participation spaces*

These are community spaces people and groups use to create art.

For example: makerspaces, First Nations-led Keeping Places and multipurpose community centres that offer arts workshop spaces, or support creative hobby groups and arts organisations.

### *Practice, education and development spaces*

These are spaces that support art development and professional creative practices.

For example: rehearsal rooms, writers rooms, artist studios, studio and workshop spaces, relevant education providers (including art, theatre, dance, music and film schools), co-working spaces, not-for-profit artist-run centres or galleries, digital media arts production (film, video, music, gaming), not-for-profit arts organisations and peak bodies, First Nations artist-led initiatives and cultural venues.

### *Commercial and enterprise spaces*

These spaces belong to creative businesses.

For example: artists, creative manufacturing (eg glass, jewellery, ceramics), creative publishing, creative digital media, music recording studios, film and video production, post production and distribution, cinemas, radio, television, web broadcasting, creative retailing (commercial art gallery, art or craft supply shops, music instruments shops, book and record stores, antique goods, performing arts companies)

### *Festival, event and public spaces*

These are spaces for temporary, unplanned or 'special event' cultural uses.

For example, heritage assets including those that can be adaptively reused, parks, gardens, halls, market spaces, privately owned public spaces, public art, pop-ups, and 'unusual' spaces like rooftops, backyards, cafes.

In Broken Hill, parks and streets are a major outdoor venue for events and celebrations.

## What do we have?

There is a concentration of cultural infrastructure around the 'cultural precinct' on Argent Street. Currently within Broken Hill LGA, there are approximately:

- 27 x art galleries - including the Council owned Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery (7 solo artist galleries)
- 11 x museums
- 3 x community centres
- 1 x library
- 1 x civic/performance centre
- 1 x theatre
- 1 x cinema
- 1 x visitor information centre
- 3 x live music venues (excl. pubs)
- 4 x other venues for hire
- 9 x parks for hire

See Appendix 1 for detailed audit.

## Everyday culture

The City's historic patterns of development have created a unique layout to the City that continues to define its streetscapes, public spaces, and places. A mix of diverse streetscapes and heritage buildings, the very visible evidence of historic and contemporary industries and the region's extraordinary natural landscape presents a range of distinctive physical and spatial conditions.

The Argent Street precinct (CBD) hosts a large number of the City's community and tourist destinations. It remains the heart of Broken Hill and has a strong commercial role as the main street of the city. Framed by grand buildings, Argent Street is wide and scaled. It also is home to many public institutions, a major park (Sturt Park) and the town square approaching the railway station.

Visually, the CBD area has a noticeable absence of street tree planting and needs a revitalisation of public areas. Other public areas like parks/reserves, buildings like the Palace Hotel and Sufi bakery are dotted with either memorials and/or public art including sculptures and murals. Currently these provide a varied experience of the visible public culture of the City.

A new focus on integrating design thinking and problem solving in planning, project formation, and building processes in Broken Hill has a key role in reducing social isolation and retaining local residents and attracting visitors, enabling them to feel welcome, included, and connected to the life of the City. This has led the City to undertake exploratory temporary place initiatives such as the artist-in-residence projects and the more recent pop-up arboretum and shared space in a section of the Art Gallery carpark.



Argent Street (and festival/celebration space)



Sturt Park (festival and celebration outdoor venue e.g. Perfect Light Film Festival)



Pop-up Play and Stay Arboretum in the art gallery carpark fronting on to Argent Street.



Limited tree canopy cover in the wide and often hot city streets

# Broken Hill cultural programs and events calendar

Programs and events are some of the main ways in which locals engage with arts and culture in Broken Hill City, and are also an important attractor for visitors to the area.

Council, in collaboration with the community and local partners, delivers and facilitates a number of programs and events that support culture, arts and creativity. There are also a wide range of events and programs that are community-led and delivered, where Council may currently provide promotional, venue or other support.

Events and programs provide opportunities for social connection, fostering a sense of pride and identity and community resilience, as well as for personal expression and skill development, fostering satisfaction and wellbeing outcomes.

This section provides an overview of recurring or recent events, festivals and programs identified through council or other public event noticeboards. It is important to note that most of these listed events occurred over the course of 2020-2021, with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting much of the City's ability to run traditionally larger events due to social distancing requirements.

## Library Programs

- Art displays
- Rhyme Time
- Family storytime and STEAM

## Markets

- Broken Hill Community Market
- Broken Hill Twilight Market

## Arts Gallery Programs

- GAARA: Framed (Through the window)
- HSC Showcase
- John Hart: Sample
- Max Berry: Monument
- Project: MMIAA
- 2020 MMIAA: Official Opening and Prize Announcements
- Baaka Stories Exhibition Opening
- Works from Tibbooburra and District Exhibition Opening
- Aboriginal Arts stall
- Exhibition Opening
- Country Art Support Program (CASP) grant information session
- Annette Minchin | Artist Talk & Conversation
- Indulge - an exhibition of textile works by Glenis Beaumont
- Broken Hill: Goldheist & James Needham
- Gaara Arts Exhibition Opening
- Threads of Our Community - Exhibition Opening
- Official Opening of the Broken Hill Print Collective's 'What Is Print' Inaugural Exhibition
- Wide open' - official opening of the exhibition of shane vink
- Wilcannia Artists Exhibition Opening
- Stones in his Pockets
- the makers' - Exhibition
- Gara Arts Exhibition Opening
- Exhibition Opening 'I Love You Darling' by Jade Millard
- Arts NSW Samantha Wild

## Meeting events, festivals and online events

- Broken Hill Heritage Festival
- Cinema Under the Stars
- Ding Dong merrily Online
- The Perfect light Film Festival
- Ian Moss - Macthbook 30th Anniversary Tour Solo & Acoustic
- Australian Women Pilots' Association National Conference
- Files Family/ hzel Dell Centenary Reunion
- World of Musicals presented by Rokitz Entertainment
- New Years Eve Celebration
- Broken Heel Festival in Broken Hill
- St Pat's Race Day
- A Taste of Ireland - Broken Hill
- Silver City Cup Races
- Agfair
- Cats Fundraiser
- 2020 Pro Hart Outback Art Prize: Digital Opening And Prize Announcements
- Lino Print Workshop for the Aboriginal Community
- Kaput! - Comedy for all ages.
- Discussion Session with the Australian Council for the Arts re the future of Aboriginal Arts
- Big Screen Film Festival - Touring Regional Australia 7 - 9 November 2014 Broken Hill
- West Darling Arts Short+Sweet Play Festival

# Collections

The city's many varied collections hold significant industrial, social, cultural and historic items and objects that document the evolution of Broken Hill. This includes the Broken

Hill Outback Archives, a regional archive centre for State Archives and Records NSW, the Art Gallery, Geocentre and other civic collections. These include a range of delicate objects, mineral specimens, artworks and documents of significant cultural and heritage value to the city.

The issue of long-term collection storage is a challenge faced by all museums, galleries, libraries and archives. In recent years, Council has proactively undertaken planning and assessments to the management systems and preventative care for collections with initiatives such as the regional museum's advisor and the purchase of a collections content management system. It has also digitised some 3,200 objects from collections of the Art Gallery and Geocentre.

Council is currently undertaking a two-year project to digitise the full permanent collection at the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery and at the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum. This project has been funded by Create NSW via the NSW Government Regional Cultural Fund.

## Art Gallery Collection

Since its inception in 1904, Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery has acquired, through donation, gift or purchase a collection of national importance. The Gallery manages more than 2000 colonial, modern and contemporary Australian artworks, predominantly paintings and works on paper, by artists including Rick Amor, Charles Blackman, Arthur Boyd, Noel Counihan, Liz Cumming, George Gittoes, Barbara Hanrahan, Mandy Martin, Clifton Pugh, Lloyd Rees, Gary Shead & Tim Storrier.

The Gallery has a strong representation of leading Aboriginal artists including Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Michael Nelson Tjackamarra, William Sandy, David Malangi, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Susan Marrawarr, Gordon Hookey and Badger Bates.

It also possesses an authoritative collection of the artworks narrating the history of Broken Hill. This includes works by JC Goodhart, Sam Byrne, Robert Emerson Curtis, May Harding, Hoppy Hopgood and Pro Hart.

## Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum Collection

Some of the world's rarest and most valuable geological specimens form part of this museum's widely acclaimed mineral collection which gives a unique insight into Australia's natural heritage. This includes an irreplaceable 42kg silver nugget, and the much-loved iconic Broken Hill Silver Tree.

The basis of the collection is the 'Centenary Collection' which is comprised of minerals purchased in the 1960's from the 'Flossie' Campbell collection and those of the Roy Waldren collection (purchased 1983). Three further collections and numerous donations of select mineral specimens have added strength to the original collection.

The collection now numbers some two thousand specimens and contains numerous world class specimens and two specimens of extreme rarity. In 2002 two new minerals were discovered in Broken Hill; Hoganite & Pacheite. Only six specimens are known to exist and the GeoCentre was presented with one of them. The others are held by Museum Victoria, Australian Museum, and the Western Sydney University.

## Broken Hill Outback Archives

The Archives is a regional archive centre for State Archives and Records NSW. The collection holds records from a range of public offices such as Schools, Police and Local Courts, State government agencies. The collection is also made up of significant industrial, social, and historic documentation of Broken Hill and surrounding districts such as Silverton, White Cliffs, Menindee, and Wilcannia.

It holds a significant photographic collection relating to Broken Hill and the region dating from the 1880's. Formats include glass negatives, positive prints, negatives, postcards, posters, slides, videos and DVDs.

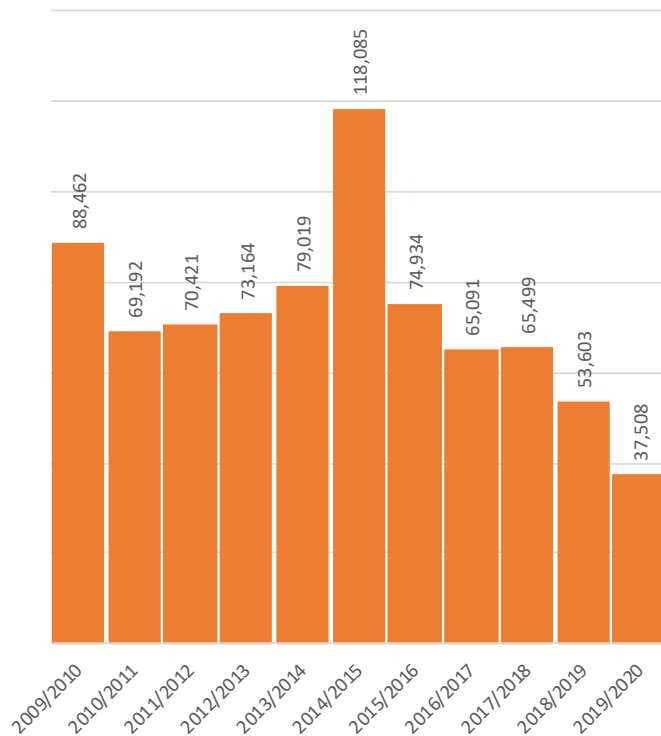
## Private collections

There are a number of state and nationally significant historical items that are in community and private ownership that risk being lost or damaged by being stored in less than ideal conditions.

# Facility utilisation

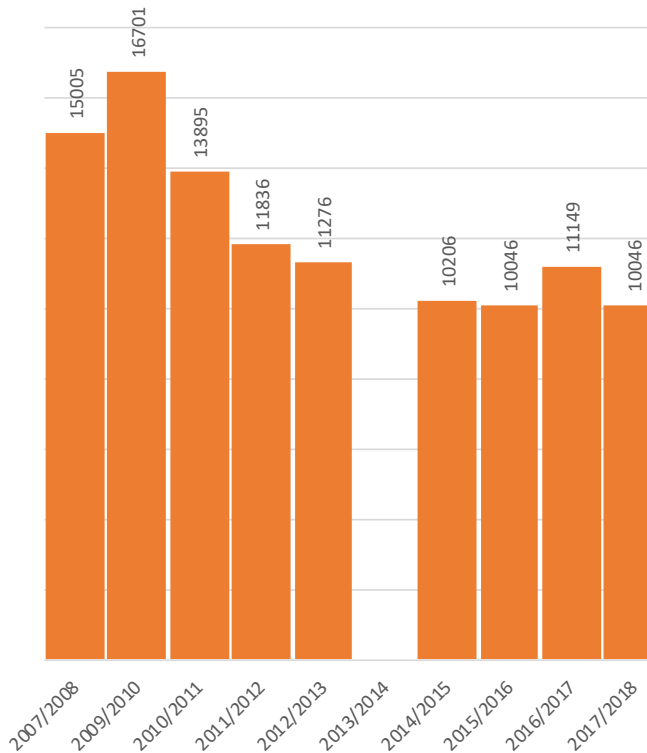
## Library visitation

With the exception of 2014/15, there appears slight downward trend in library visitation from 2010 to now.



## Geo Centre visitation

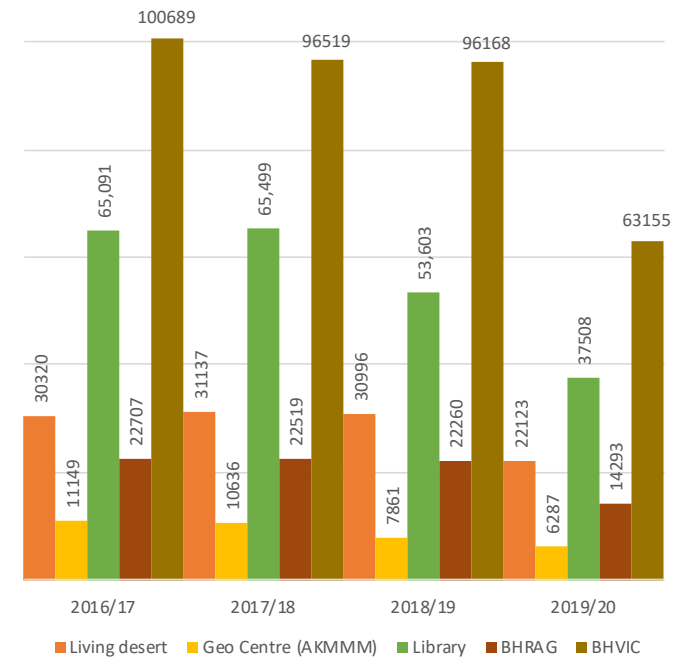
Similarly to the library visitation, there appears to be a downward and plateauing trend in visitation to the GeoCentre.



## Visitor numbers comparison

Broken Hill Council manages five of Broken Hill's top attractions: The Living Desert, GeoCentre, Library, Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery and the Visitor Information Centre (VIC). The graph below clearly illustrates that the VIC receives the most amount of visitors each year, followed by the Library, and then Living Desert/BHRAG.

Visitation number across all of these venues is displaying a slight downward trend in visitation numbers across the four years.



# 10 Strengths & challenges



# Our strengths and challenges

*These strengths and challenges for culture in Broken Hill express the needs and aspirations of Broken Hill residents and reflect findings from our research and community feedback.*

## *Leveraging our National Heritage Listing*

Broken Hill's dramatic desert landscape, its unique character and remarkable industrial and geological heritage was acknowledged in 2015 when it became the first (and remains) the only entire Australian city or town on the National Heritage List.

There is a strong need to work in partnership across levels of government to further define, promote and leverage the opportunities that this listing brings to our city, including cultural tourism and ongoing preservation of our unique local cultural assets. In particular, there is a need to advocacy for increased financial support to support the ongoing maintenance and management of heritage assets.

## *Acknowledging and sharing Aboriginal cultures*

The Broken Hill local government area (LGA) is on the land of the Wilyaki People and their Darling River neighbours, the Barkindji, who have cared for Country for thousands of years. The strength, resilience, and contributions of the Wiljakali people continue to be intrinsic to Broken Hill's identity. Broken Hill today is home to Aboriginal people from across several language groups and Aboriginal nations, with 8.5% of the population identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (Census 2016).

The Broken Hill community has expressed strong support for increasing visibility, celebration, and sharing of Aboriginal cultures in Broken Hill, including through events and activities, signage and interpretation, and public artworks incorporated into the landscape.

Council's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and this Strategy will seek to align with and complement the directions of the RAP.

## *Attracting and retaining residents*

Community engagement participants told us they love living in Broken Hill because of its friendly and creative community and beautiful natural environment. Unfortunately, Broken Hill's population is declining, driven in large part by a reduced mining workforce and representing a significant challenge to maintaining community infrastructure and services as our rate base declines. There are opportunities to further promote and enhance our cultural offer and leverage creative industries to help attract and retain residents to Broken Hill.

## *Diversifying our local economy*

Broken Hill's local economy has long been shaped by mining, however expansion and contraction of this industry requires us to think creatively about opportunities for diversification to remain sustainable. Regional cultural tourism is on the rise and represents a significant growth and economic development opportunity for Broken Hill, with a need to strategically promote our existing and unique offering, improve the visitor experience and explore new avenues, such as self-determined Aboriginal cultural tourism,

participatory creative learning and outback nature-based experiences.

## *Sustaining and supporting our volunteer base*

Broken Hill is home to many passionate and driven volunteers that initiate and sustain our City's cultural facilities, programs and events. It is important to support our volunteers and recognise their invaluable contribution to our cultural landscape. Unfortunately, as our population continues to age so does our volunteer base, and many cultural organisations and groups do not have clear succession planning in place to ensure sustainability into the future. There are opportunities to further connect groups to resources and information and encourage young people to get involved in volunteering.

## *Promoting our cultural offering*

Broken Hill already has a lot going on when it comes to culture, including a large number of galleries and museums and cultural events, programs and festivals that bring the community together. Community members told us that it can be hard to find out about what's on and identified a need to improve and coordinate promotion to support residents and visitors to participate. People suggested various communication channels including websites, social media and newsletters, and also emphasised that word of mouth is still important.

### *Increasing collaboration and coordination*

Broken Hill is home to many community groups, local businesses and privately run museums and galleries that contribute to our local cultural offering. However, many of these organisations operate independently with limited collaboration and partnership. This Plan represents a first step towards providing an overarching framework that can support increased collaboration towards a shared vision for culture in Broken Hill. Increasing opportunities for networking, sharing information and resources and shared initiatives will contribute to the sustainability of our cultural landscape.

### *Operating as a regional hub*

As the largest community in a wide geographical area, Broken Hill is a regional centre for health, retail and community services for smaller communities across the Far West; including the Central Darling Shire towns of Wilcannia, Menindee, White Cliffs, Silverton and Ivanhoe. Broken Hill is a popular cultural and outback destination for visitors and tourists, along with surrounding towns, and its isolation is as much a strength as it is a challenge to cultural tourism.

### *Collecting and sharing our stories*

Broken Hill residents are proud of their culture and history and everyone has a story to tell about their City. There is a strong desire in the community to increase opportunities to collect, exchange and preserve these special and diverse stories, including those of Aboriginal peoples, waves of immigrants, mine workers, union heroes and women and children.

### *Preserving our collections*

Broken Hill is a treasure trove of historical artifacts and collections reflecting our rich social and mining history. While some of these collections are stored in our museums and in the Broken Hill Outback Archives, many are privately owned and stored in less-than-ideal circumstances. In the long-term, there is a need to ensure a sustainable and strategic approach to managing and preserving our significant collections which have both local and national heritage significance. This will require significant resource investment from all levels of government.

### *Encouraging participation for young people*

Research shows that cultural participation has developmental and educational benefits for children and young people. Community members told us that they want to see more opportunities for young people to engage in arts and culture in Broken Hill, especially for those who are not interested in sport and for teenagers. It is important that initiatives are easily accessible and affordable to support young people to participate.

### *Advocating for resources and funding*

Advocating to State and Federal governments and private industry for cultural funding and investment will be of the utmost importance to realising our vision for the future of culture in Broken Hill. With a declining rate base however significant cultural assets of regional, state and national significance, acquiring funding will be fundamental to ensuring ongoing sustainable management and preservation.

### *Upgrading and maintaining cultural assets*

Broken Hill has great cultural assets however many, including both private and Council-owned facilities, are in need of an upgrade and refresh in order to keep up with contemporary industry standards as well as audience interests and expectations. There are also many unused spaces and shopfronts in Broken Hill that could have cultural uses if they were to be upgraded. This opportunity would require significant investment and resourcing to achieve.

### *Placemaking and activation*

There is a growing trend in regional towns for public art, heritage interpretation and creative wayfinding that reflects local identity and culture, tells local stories and enlivens and activates streets and public spaces. Community engagement participants told us they think there are opportunities for more public art in Broken Hill's streets and villages, for example reflecting local mining and social history. In recent years Council has been undertaking planning for the Broken Hill Cultural Precinct and Library and Archives as a key activation project for the Broken Hill CBD.

### *Developing local creative industries and skills*

Whilst creative industries currently make up only a very small proportion of the Broken Hill economy (2% of people employed), there is a need to connect local creatives and businesses to resources, information and networks to support skill development (e.g. grant writing).

Community members also told us they would like to see more opportunities for creative industries training and employment in Broken Hill, for example leveraging film production in the region, and in particular for young people.

### *Encouraging film production in Broken Hill*

Broken Hill welcomes film makers from across the globe. The City is the engine-room for film-makers who are often filming on the outskirts and the fringes of the City but require a base for accommodation, production space, technology linkup and easy access to transport. There have been more than 35 movies filmed in Broken Hill and surrounds including Mad Max 2, The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert, Last Cab To Darwin and Mission Impossible II. Baz Luhrmann also filmed a section of Australia in Broken Hill. There are opportunities to further encourage film production in Broken Hill and connect local people to film-based skill development and employment.

### *Diverse cultural experiences day and night*

There is already a lot going on in Broken Hill, however there are limited cultural experiences available at night time and at certain times on the weekend. Community members and visitors told us that they would like more opportunities to engage with culture and creativity at night time, including live music and comedy at local businesses and street festivals.





# A1 Appendix 1 Audit

The following audit is based on desktop research undertaken in May 2021.

Facility type	Name	Hierarchy	Volunteer run?	Address	Facilities & uses
Art gallery	Absalom's Gallery	Local	Yes	638 Chapple Street	Gallery space
	Art Confessions	Local	No	24 Comstock Street	Gallery space
	Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery	Regional	No	404-408 Argent Street	Large exhibition spaces, arts education centre
	Bush 'N' Beyond	Local	No	4 Argent Street	Exhibition space, studio gallery
	Eric McCormick Gallery	Regional	No	367 McCulloch Street	Gallery space
	Julie Hart	Local	No	65 William Street	Gallery space
	Paces Mineral Art Centre	Local	No	323 Wilson Street	Gallery space
	Pro Hart Gallery	Regional	No	108 Wyman Street	Gallery space
	Potters Society	Local	Yes	407 Wyman Street	Studio and sheds with kilns
	The Homestead Gallery	Local	No	377 Chloride Street	Gallery space
	Willy Nilly Art	Local	No	415 Argent Street	Gallery space
	Silver City Mint & Art Centre	Local	No	66 Chloride St, Broken Hill	Gallery space, exhibition space Ando's Big Picture of Broken Hill
	Jarah Mosaics	Local	No	169 Chapple Street	Gallery space
	Len Vodic Gallery - Closed until further notice	Local	Closed	280 Bromide Street	Gallery space
	John Dynon's Silverton Art Gallery	Local	No	2 Stuart Street, Silverton	Gallery spacew
	Outback Lodge / Lodge Outback Motel	Local	No	252 Mica Street	Accommodation, gallery space
	Spirit of the Outback Gallery	Local	No	662 Argent Street	Gallery space
	Wayne Williams Gallery	Local	No	81 Harris Street	Gallery space

Facility type	Name	Hierarchy	Volunteer run?	Address	Facilities & uses
Art gallery	West Darling Arts	Regional	No	256 Argent Street	Film screenings, gallery spaces, cinema, bookclub
	Willyama Visual Arts Centre	Local	No	24 Bromide Street	Gallery, museum, art supply shop
	Broken Hill Art Exchange / The Kitchen Gallery Heritage Courtyard	Local	Yes	313 Argent Street	Live-in residencies, exhibition and workshop spaces, consultancy services, events and project management
	Amanya Mitha Indigenous Arts	Local	No	76 Gypsum St, Broken Hill"	Gallery space, art exhibition space
	Howard Steer Art - Flying Doctor Artist	Local	Yes	721 Williams St, Broken Hill, New South Wales 2880 Australia	Gallery space, shed exhibition and art shop
	Aboriginal Art & Craft Gallery (closed)	Local	Yes	309 Argent Street	Gallery space, art exhibition space
	The Silly Goat	Local	No	425 Argent St	Gallery space
	McCarthur's Arts & Minerals	Local	No	303 Argent St	Gallery space, arts & boutique shop
	Silver City Mint & Art Centre	Local	No	66 Chloride St	Gallery space, art exhibition space, arts shop
	Tanya Marie Reeves	Local	No	24 Comstock Street	Art sales

Facility type	Name	Hierarchy	Volunteer run?	Address	Facilities & uses
Museums	Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre)	Local	No	Beryl & Buck Streets, Broken Hill, New South Wales 2880 Australia	Museum spaces and large exhibition space for community gatherings, artists/ professional talks, events
	Bells Milk Bar and Museum	Local	No	160 Patton Street	Retail space and small museum with small outdoor space for events
	Broken Hill Mosque Museum (Afghan Mosque)	Local	Yes	William Street	No toilet, small museum space, enclosed yard
	Royal Flying Doctor Service Outback Experience	Local	Yes	Broken Hill Airport	Interpretive Centre and Museum
	Sulphide Street Railway and Historical Museum	Local	Yes	Blende Street	Railway station and museum rooms housing exhibits and trains
	Synagogue of the Outback Museum	Local	Yes	165 Wolfram Street	Synagogue and meeting rooms
	West Darling Machine Preservation Society	Local	Yes	Crystal Street	Building and sheds for educational events, meetings, storage
	Whites Mineral Art and Mining Museum	Local	No	1 Allendale Street	Museum
	Silverton School Museum	Local	Yes	Loftus St	Museum
	Silverton Gaol Museum	Local	Yes	Burke Street, Silverton	Museum
	Mad Max Museum	Local	Yes	9 Stirling Street, Silverton	Museum
Community centres	Centre for Community (Broken Hill Community Inc)	Local	Yes	200 Beryl Street	Meeting rooms, yard space for markets, Landcare activities, Seating capacity 100
	South Community Centre Library	Local	Yes	Patton Street	Library and community meeting
	Senior Lounge	Local	Yes	North Mine Park Hall	Community garden, meeting space for older people
Library	Broken Hill City Library and Broken Hill Outback Archives	Regional	No	Blende Street	Small library and upstairs archives  Small gathering spaces (under 20 ppl)

Facility type	Name	Hierarchy	Volunteer run?	Address	Facilities & uses
Civic/ performance space	Broken Hill Civic Centre	Regional	No	Chloride Street	Auditorium, function room, main foyer, Upstairs function rooms and lounge.  Commercial kitchen, bar, performances events, multiple separate spaces, outdoor plaza area for events and placemaking activation
Theatre	Theatre 44	District	Yes	Wills Street	Theatre (seat 150)
Cinema	Silver City Cinema	Regional	No	Oxide Street	Cinema (seat 400)
Visitor information centre	Broken Hill Visitors Information Centre (VIC)	Regional	No	Cnr Bromide and Blende Streets	Offices, open space, retail space, café (lessee), Small industry events, retail space, large paved outdoor area, shared (tenanted) office and cafe spaces
Venues for hire	Aged Persons Rest Centre (Silver City Quilters Club)	Local	Yes	254 Blende Street, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Aged care, hireable venue
	The Council Chambers	Local	No	240 Blende St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Council meeting space, hireable venue
	Broken Hill Regional Events Centre	Local	No	Broken Hill Racecourse	Hireable function spaces
	Broken Hill Musicians Club	Local	No	276 Crystal Street	Hireable function spaces

Facility type	Name	Hierarchy	Volunteer run?	Address	Facilities & uses
Parks for hire	The Sculpture site and Living Desert Picnic Site	Local	No	Nine Mile Rd, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Outdoor picnic site
	Town Square	Local	No	325 Argent Street St	Town centre civic space
	Sturt Park	Local	No	Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue, BBQ, playground, memorial garden and stand
	Patton Park	Local	No	147 Patton St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue, playground
	AJ Keast Park	Local	No	64 Gypsum St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue
	Joe Keenan Lookout	Local	No	Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue
	Queen Elizabeth Park	Local	No	197 Brazil St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue
	Duke of Cornwall Park	Local	No	26 Argent St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue
	Duff Street Park	Local	No	161 Duff St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Hireable venue
Live music & performance venues	Broken Hill Musicians club	Local	No	276 Crystal St, Broken Hill NSW 2880	Performance stage, function & event rooms, bar space
	Broken Hill Sturt Club	Local	No	321 Blende St, Broken Hill, NSW 2880	Performance stage, function & event rooms, dining facility
	Barrier Social Democratic Club (The Demo Club)	Local	No	218 Argent Street	Performance stage, function & event rooms, dining facility

