

Central Darling Shire Council

Work planned under Roads to Recovery

A number of road projects will occur in the Shire under the Roads to Recovery Program (2024 – 2025). The projects were adopted at the July Council meeting.

Four unsealed roads within the Shire will be sealed. The work is being conducted for road safety

reasons. It will also assist nearby residents experiencing issues associated with unsealed roads. The road sealing projects to be completed are:

- Adams Street, Wilcannia
- Wilson Street, Wilcannia
- Johnston Street, White Cliffs
- The Blocks, White Cliffs

In Sunset Strip two road projects will be undertaken for stormwater mitigation purposes. Kerb and gutter work will be included to help reduce stormwater issues.

The work will be carried out at the following locations:



Lakeview Ave, Sunset Strip - drainage, kerb and road reconstruction.

- Kingfisher Ave, Sunset Strip - drainage, kerb and road reconstruction.

Roads to Recovery is funded by the Australian Government.

Baaka Centre receives grant

The Baaka Cultural and Art Centre in Wilcannia has received a \$50,000 grant from the Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal. The funding will be used to fit out the art centre.

The art centre is part of the \$9.5 million Baaka Cultural and Art Centre project which is currently under construction.

The Centre Operations Manager, Gail Russell, welcomed the funding and said the money would be used to purchase equipment,



storage, work benches, materials and resources.

Ms Russell said the art centre would be a place for the whole community to gather and produce works that reflect the rich cultural heritage of Wilcannia.

Residents to benefit from high speed internet

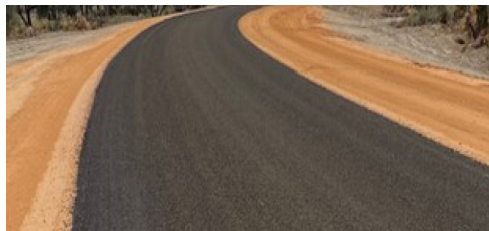
More than 800 homes and businesses across Menindee and Gulargambone will be eligible for a fibre internet connection, with premises along Menindee Lakes Sunset Strip also set to benefit. It is part of the NSW Government's \$250 million investment in digital infrastructure for regional areas. The new fibre network replaces the unreliable and limited internet currently available. Planning and design for the fibre network will commence in the coming months, with construction expected to start in late 2025.

Pooncarie Road - sealing finished

The \$39.6 million Pooncarie Road project is coming to an end. All the sealing work is now finished in the three-year project. Work has seen 61-kilometre of road sealed between Menindee and the southern edge of the Shire towards Pooncarie. It will improve road safety and enable Council to keep the road open during wet conditions.

Works such as guardrail installations, scour protection works, signs and sidetrack remediation works will be completed.

Pavement damage sustained during the floods in 2023 are also nearing



completion. Once this has been finished all line marking can be finalised and the travelling public can enjoy the benefits of this important joint project between Wentworth Shire Council and Central Darling Shire Council.

The project is funded by the Australian and NSW Governments.

Plans for floodplain management

As part of floodplain management plans the terms of reference for a committee were adopted at the July Council meeting. A dedicated committee with both community and specialist input, means Council can ensure floodplain management is given the attention and expertise it needs to protect the community and the environment.

The future for Central Darling Shire

In July 2024 the NSW Government announced plans to bring Central Darling Shire Council out of Administration. As part of the process the NSW Government will introduce a new council model. Central Darling Shire will become a 'Rural and Remote Council' made up of three locally elected councillors from the community and three councillors appointed by the NSW Government with relevant expertise to support the stable and effective operation of the Council.



Minister for Local Government, Ron Hoenig MP speaking about the future for Central Darling Shire.

The information provided in this newsletter is summarised from information provided by the NSW Government. More information, including about Council wards, can be found on the Council website.



Central Darling Shire as a Rural and Remote Council



Questions answered

Why does Central Darling need a different type of council?
Central Darling Shire Council has been in administration since 2013 because of significant financial and governance issues. The shire's large size and small populations make it difficult to provide services under the typical local government model. This change to the Council's structure will give communities a voice and ensure they have an effective and stable council that can provide important local services into the future.

Will the new model be permanent, or will Central Darling return to a traditional model of local government in the future?

Central Darling Shire Council is one of the state's largest councils by area, with one of the smallest populations and rate bases, creating serious financial challenges. The new model will reduce costs for the Council and increase its financial sustainability. It is being introduced as a long-term solution for the next 10 years. After this period the Council may remain as a Rural and Remote Council or return to the traditional local government model.

The next steps

A Bill will be introduced shortly to NSW Parliament to change local government laws to create the new Rural and Remote Council model. Once new laws and regulations are in place, elections will be held in the first half of 2025 for the community to elect three councillors. The NSW Government has provided a grant of \$477,782 to Central Darling Shire Council to help with the transition to the new model.

Further information

For more information visit www.olg.nsw.gov.au Contact the Office of Local Government on 02 4428 4100.

July 2024
New Regional and Rural Council model announced

Late 2024
New laws introduced to Parliament

First half of 2025
Elections to be held and appointments made