

Millewa Community Plan 2023-2027



DRAWINGS IN THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN
PRODUCED BY WERRIMULL
P-12 STUDENTS.



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INTRODUCTION

This is the third Millewa Community Plan covering the period from 2023-2027 outlining the community goals and priorities for Lake Cullulleraine, Werrimull, and Meringur.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Millewa Community Plan was developed in Partnership with Millewa Advisory Group and Mildura Rural City Councils Community Development Department.

Millewa Advisory Group and Mildura Rural City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, which now comprises the Mildura Rural City municipality. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate and respect their continuing cultures and acknowledge the memories of their ancestors.



THE MILLEWA PAST

The north-west Victorian Mallee country was settled under the Closer Settlement Scheme. There were 708 grain properties planned, with roads running north/south and east/west, a railway line due west from the soldier settlement of Red Cliffs and a system of open channels (and pumping stations) to deliver Murray River water to townships and annually to farm dams.

The railway line had stations every six miles, which developed into small settlements as the line progressed and settlers took up their allotments. The two biggest towns were Werrimull and Meringur. There were nearly 40 schools in the district because the first settlers were mostly family men with children.

Many schools closed after several years although the majority continued to function for longer. In 1946 Werrimull was made a Modified Consolidated School, and after buildings were moved to Werrimull students from those schools were conveyed on buses. In 1949 the first secondary classes were introduced. Meringur also became a consolidated school with disused schools transported there. In 1967 there were 192 students at Werrimull, sixty-nine of them in secondary classes. All district secondary students came by bus to Werrimull. Meringur was the only other school and in September 1978 a new open plan building was opened. On 19 December 1997, the Meringur School closed. All students in the district attend Werrimull P-12 now.

The Werrimull Bush Nursing Hospital was opened in Werrimull in July 1927. Hundreds of babies were born there. The first doctor was Dr Davis, then Dr Buxton, Dr Phillips, Dr Zeeher, and Dr Holland. In 1945 it became a bush Nursing Centre with a nurse in charge, but late in 1947 it closed. The Werrimull police station now occupies the site.

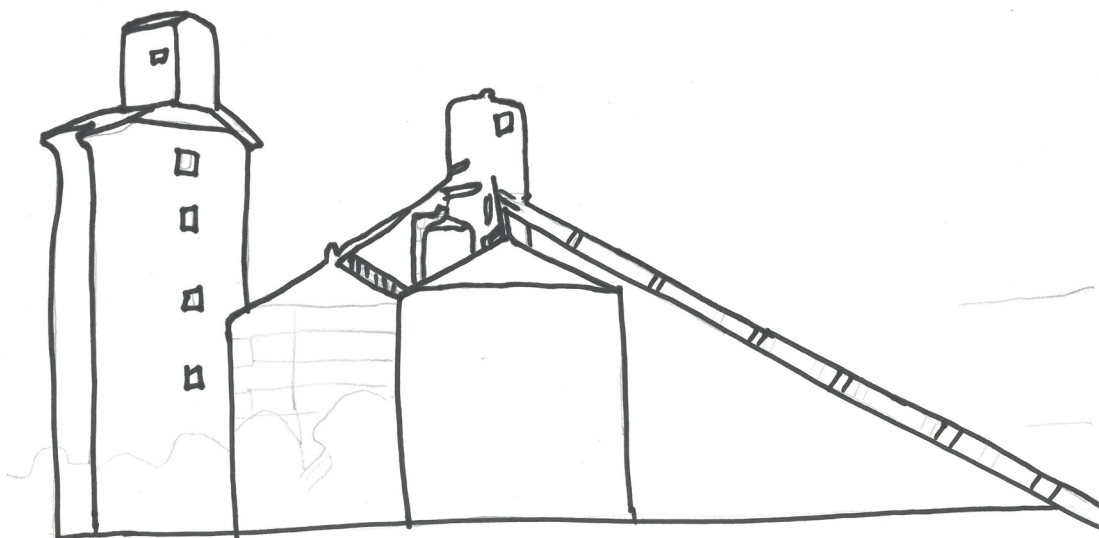
The Health Centre started in 1950. By the mid-1930s many of the original settlers had left because they could not manage to make a living. After the severe drought of 1943-45, a fact-finding committee in 1946 decided the farms were too small.

The district was divided into 118 lots. As there were 200 survivors, 82 accepted compensations to leave. Since the re-allocation, farmers have been allowed to sell to neighbours, so the number of property owners continues to fall, and, consequently, fewer goods and services are required. Agricultural activities include grain growing, sheep and cattle.

The State Electricity Commission held a switch-on ceremony in the Werrimull Hall in 1959 and over the next 10 years or so living standards of Millewa people improved, as more people were connected, and the power lines were upgraded. By 1974 the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission had replaced all channels with a pipeline system, the first in Victoria.

As it has always done mail from Red Cliffs comes by road every day. Werrimull had many tradesmen, several shopkeepers, a hotel, an ice works, and a boarding-house, and it was also the centre of government services such as the S.R.&W.S.C, the Grain Elevators Board, the Lands Department, the Forest Commission and Police Station. Werrimull became the largest town on the line. Since the Millewa recreation area, with tennis courts and football/cricket ovals, was established at Cullulleraine, all sport is played there.

Traditional Owners of the Millewa area are the Latji, Nyeri and Ngintait (Nintay). Their Country lines the area of the northwest of Victoria through to south of the Murray River traveling along the Mallee Highway, and west from the Calder Highway to the South Australian border, including the Murray-Sunset National Park.



MILLEWA PRESENT

The Millewa today consists of three small towns: Werrimull, Cullulleraine & Meringur population off all three towns are 248 according to 2021 Australian census data. Still operating in the Werrimull area is the Werrimull Post office, Local Police Station, Parks Victoria office, Werrimull Hotel and the P-12 School there is also the Werrimull Hall and Viteria Grain receival facility still functioning. Located in Werrimull is an historic limestone Catholic Church, built in 1933 in which they still conducting local services. Across the road from the Werrimull Hotel lies the Mandala Culture and Nature Trail, this area was constructed in 2004 by a group of local community residents consisting of Werrimull teachers and students this project was to record the community's history.

Cullulleraine is located on the Sturt Highway and provides the community with a post office/shop/fuel outlet, garage, two caravan parks (one of which houses permanent residents), two football/cricket ovals, two netball courts, multiple tennis courts and a tourist trail around Lake Cullulleraine. Located on the edge of Lake Cullulleraine is the RSL Camp which features a large dining room and dormitory style accommodation and is available for school groups to hire. Based beside Lake Cullulleraine is the Ski Club and the Lake Cullulleraine Yacht Club. The ovals are shared by the Werrimull and Meringur Football & Netball Teams which they use as their home grounds. The agricultural industries of almond and wine grape plantations and Golden Grain Mills - Grewal Farms circle the town.

Meringur presently has a population of approximately 67 people. Graincorp grain receival facility and the historic Lutheran Church are based within the township area. The old Meringur school building is now owned by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and is the base for the volunteers of the CFA. This complex is also used as a Community Centre. The Millewa Pioneer Park contains many local historical documents and buildings and is open daily and maintained by local volunteers.

Other tourist sites include Lindsay Island and Ned's Corner Station, on the banks of the Murray River, originally a sheep station owned by the Kidman empire, now owned and managed by the Ngintait traditional owners

As small communities in the Millewa area, these towns face many challenges in the future but would like to maintain and expand their tourist opportunities while still preserving their sporting, cultural business and clubs despite their shrinking populations.



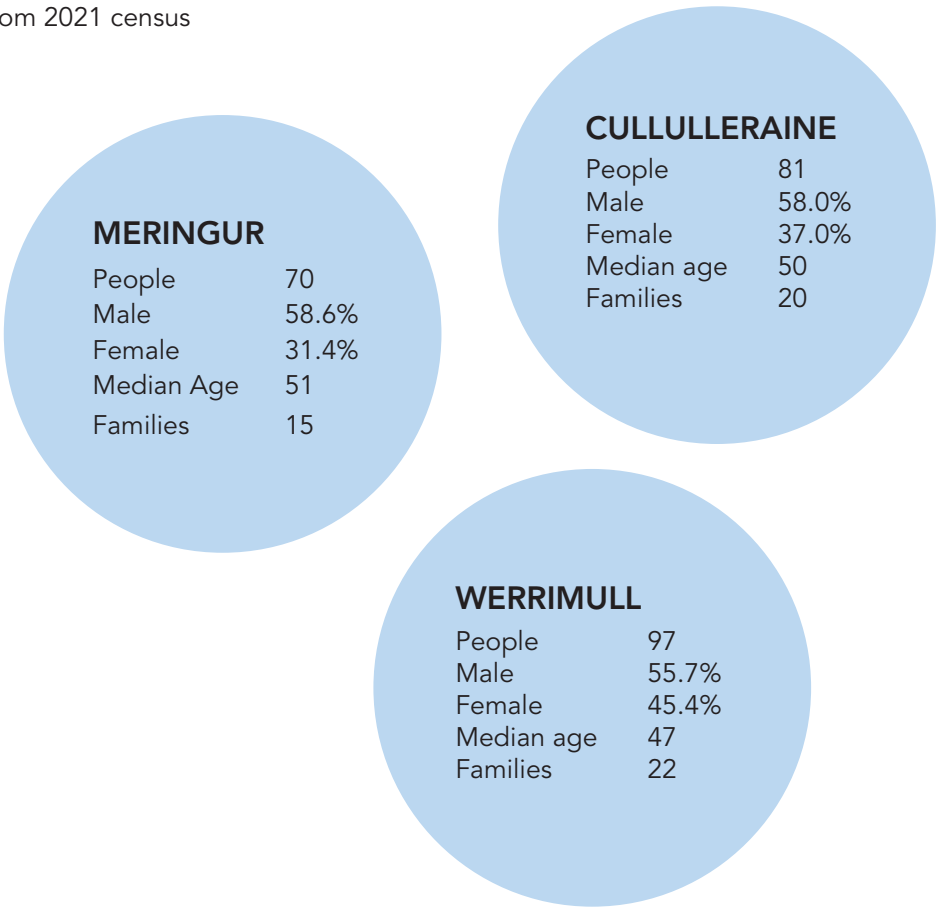
MILLEWA CLIMATE

The average rainfall for the Werrimull & Millewa area would be 271 mean annual, but some farms in the Millewa area may only receive 28mm during the year, these farms struggle to produce a crop. During the drought year of 1944-45 only 105mm of rain was recorded.

The Millewa community experiences temperature of 25-30°C throughout the year and humidity is generally low, although temperatures can soar well over 40°C in summer. Winter nights are cool and frosty; however, the weather is often sunny throughout the day .

POPULATION

Data from 2021 census



In 2022 the population has now reduced to 248, with a significant amount of the Millewa farming families moving from the family farm and living in the Mildura area but traveling to work on the farm.

The agriculture industry is the main source of employment in the Millewa area (59.5%) according to the state of Mildura report. Other area of employment horticulture, tourism, transport operators, hospitality, state government (education and parks Victoria)

MILDURA RURAL CITY COUNCIL

Community Plans are developed by the community for the community. The first initial step for the Millewa Community Plan was to inform residents that their Millewa Community Plan was about to go through a review. This gave the Millewa Community an opportunity to have input into their consultation process and how they would like to get the rest of the Millewa Community involved in having input into their Community Plan.

The residents in the Millewa area were involved in the development of this Community Plan, by participating in various visioning sessions that took place at different locations throughout the Millewa area. These sessions gave residents an opportunity to have input into the community planning process, sessions took place throughout February 2022, Council also used a few different methods to obtain community feedback. Methods used included, one-on-one conversations, discussion with various community groups, online surveys as well as emails and local advertising through the community's newsletter Millewa News and social media.

From these sessions Council received 93 responses from various means of feedback through local community, sporting groups, school children, Millewa Advisory Group members, residents and business owners in the Millewa area.

Feedback from the community sessions saw themes and actions emerging. After discussions with the community, it was felt that some of the actions from the previous plan be kept and continue in the new plan. These categories were then converted into themes, this ensured the information could be logically collated. Proposed actions were then identified under the themes for the new Community Plan. These actions have now been reflected from ideas presented by community members.

The construction of a Community Plan highlights a desire from the whole community to connect & focus on the aspirations and priorities for the community's future. Once the plan is completed, it is then presented to Mildura Rural City Council, by the Millewa Advisory Group members, for endorsement. This helps Councilors gain an understanding of the needs of small communities to plan for future facilities, services and projects.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Our Vision

Millewa's community vision is to have a family-friendly community with strong population growth and economic development, focusing on advancing tourism opportunities in the area.

Our Values

Millewa residents value their rural lifestyle, with its inviting landscape and mixture of unique native flora and fauna.

Our Aspirations

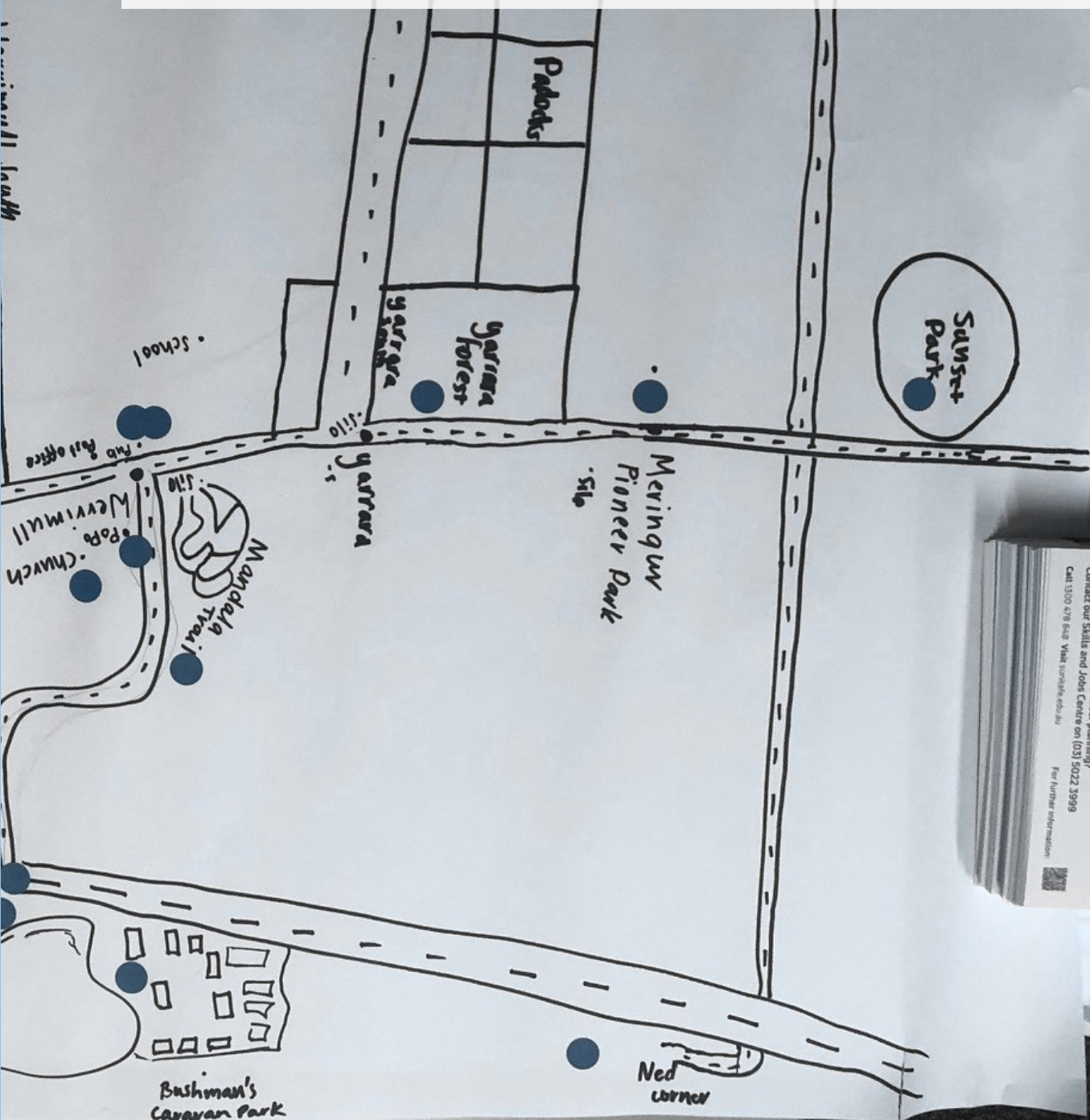
Millewa community would like to increase opportunities in working more cohesively within the three towns of Werrimull, Meringur & Cullulleraine. Millewa residents also spoke about the importance of retaining local history sites and increasing tourism.

THE KEY REFERENCE GROUP

The Millewa Advisory Group participated in the community planning process to determine the relevance of previous findings and to determine if there were any new or emerging trends.

ABOUT MILLEWA ADVISORY GROUP

The Millewa Advisory Group is a voluntary Incorporated community organisation. The group is made up of farmers, local business owners, teachers & residents who are elected individuals who bring a range of views and skills to the development and social infrastructure of the Millewa community. The Millewa Advisory Group will be working towards establishing a Centenary committee for all three towns in Millewa area. Once the group is created the main focus will be working towards the planning and development of their upcoming celebrations of the Millewa 2025 centenary.



THE PURPOSE OF THE MILLEWA ADVISORY GROUP IS:

- To support other organisations in the Millewa community to develop and implement the initiatives identified in this Community Plan
- When required, form partnerships with other organisations in order to achieve community goals
- To promote the Community Plan within the Millewa community
- To provide a report to the community to inform them of continuing actions and projects
- Address issues of current and future concerns
- Strive to provide opportunities for all residents to be involved in the delivery of actions within the Millewa Community Plan
- Millewa Advisory Group will work with Mildura Rural City Council by acting as an Advisory and Liaison body between Council and the local community, individuals, clubs, and organisations.



OUR 4 KEY THEMES

The Community Plan is developed under four key themes



**PLACE
AND
PEOPLE**



PROMOTION



ENVIRONMENT



INFRASTRUCTURE



PLACE AND PEOPLE

OBJECTIVE: MILLEWA RESIDENTS TO WORK COHESIVELY TOGETHER IN IMPROVING COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE AND INCREASING POPULATION GROWTH.

ACTIONS	NEXT STEP	PARTNERS
Attract and support local businesses in the Millewa area.	To advocate and support small local businesses in the Millewa area.	Mildura Regional Development, Millewa business operators, MRCC.
Promote community assets and relaxed lifestyle to families and visitors.	Investigate using a social media company to develop the social media presence of the Millewa to attract families, visitors, and investors to the Millewa region.	MRCC grants, State and Federal Funding grants.
Review the Actions in the Millewa Community Plan annually	Millewa Advisory Group Committee.	Millewa Advisory Group.
Promote community events to enhance social connection	Ongoing consultation with community groups to ensure funding opportunities are available and to promote local events.	MRCC grants, State and Federal Funding grants.
Investigate and explore activities that enhance and retain the Millewa History.	Form partnerships with local groups to investigate grant funding.	MRCC grants, State and Federal Funding grants, Local History Grants Program, Millewa Pioneer Park Group.

PROMOTION

OBJECTIVE: TO ATTRACT NEW AND ESTABLISH EVENTS AND INVESTIGATE PROMOTING TRADITIONAL RURAL LIFESTYLE TO VISITORS.

ACTIONS	NEXT STEP	PARTNERS
Look at the opportunity to support current and new events (e.g., Trail of Lights Project, Portable Silo Art Project, music events, Millewa Centenary celebrations etc)	Investigate the development of a tourism strategy for the Millewa area, highlighting new and emerging attractions.	Mildura Regional Development, MRCC grants, State and Federal Funding, Millewa community.
Recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of the Millewa's history and heritage through community events. (e.g., Millewa Centenary Celebrations, Millewa Memorial Wall, Local landmarks and historical sights etc)	Explore all grant opportunities to celebrate Millewa history.	MRCC grants, State and Federal Funding, Millewa community, Local History Grants Program.
Investigate availability of potential residential development for families.	Explore opportunities for residential development through MRCC Cullulleraine Structure Plan 2006.	MRCC, State and Federal Funding.
Explore the opportunity to locate a RV site and RV dump point in Millewa area.	Investigate the feasibility of establishing RV facilities	MRCC Community Plan Support Fund, MRCC grants, State and Federal Funding, Campervan and Motorhome Club of Aust.





ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE: SUPPORT PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS.

ACTIONS	NEXT STEP	PARTNERS
Investigate, implement and support environmentally friendly programs (e.g., revegetation, pest, plant and animal control projects on Crown or Council land and cleaning up programs etc)	Secure Council support for pest plant and animal removal control programs. Identify opportunities for community environmental grant programs.	MRCC Environmental Grants, State and Federal Funding grants, Millewa residents, Millewa-Carwarp Landcare Group
Support environmental open space projects in the Millewa area.	Mildura Councils Parks and Gardens teamwork with residents in the Millewa area on public green space projects.	
	Investigate grant funding relating to environmental projects.	
	MRCC Roads Management Team work with residents in the Millewa area on roadside pest plant and animals and roadside revegetation projects.	



INFRASTRUCTURE

OBJECTIVE: TO IMPROVE AND OPTIMISE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MAXIMUM COMMUNITY BENEFIT THROUGHOUT THE MILLEWA COMMUNITY

ACTIONS	NEXT STEP	PARTNERS
Investigate improvements and upgrade to existing Tourist and Public Open space areas (e.g., gazebo and seating at Lake Cullulleraine, playgrounds etc)	MRCC Council Plan 2013-2017, Open Space Strategy, Johansen Reserve Master Plan, State and Federal grant funding, MRCC Community Plan Support Fund.	State and Federal grant Funding, MRCC grants, Government's Drought Communities Program, Millewa residents.
Investigate opportunities to support road network improvements throughout the Millewa area.	Millewa residents advocate to MRCC and Vic Roads on upgrades and maintenance of local roads.	State and Federal grant Funding, Vic Roads, MRCC grants
Investigate improvements and upgrades to existing Tourist and Public Open space areas at Lake Cullulleraine and in the Millewa. (e.g., public toilets, women's change rooms, Lake Cullulleraine Community Complex)	MRCC Council Plan 2021-2025 Open Space Strategy, Johansen Reserve Master Plan, Federal Government's Drought Communities Program.	MRCC grants, Millewa Football and Netball League, Federal Government's Drought Communities Program, Millewa residents.
Investigate improvement and upgrade to local tourist signage	Explore funding options, MRCC Township Entrance Signage Guidelines, community consultation on the design and layout of signage.	State and Federal grant funding, MRCC Community Plan Support Fund.

MOVING FORWARD

It is envisaged that the Millewa Advisory Group (MAG) will become the lead group to assist other groups in the Millewa area to complete actions within the reviewed Millewa Community Plan 2022-2026. Any community group in the Millewa area may work on a particular action within the Community Plan but must consult with the lead group MAG.

A Community Plan is an important community document which helps a community prioritise community needs, sets out a list of activities for a community and assists Local, State and Federal Governments understand what the needs are for communities. This is an opportunity for everyone to be involved in shaping our community for the future.

Mildura Rural City Council will offer ongoing support to these groups who will meet on an 'as required' basis.

**THIS IS AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR
EVERYONE TO BE
INVOLVED IN SHAPING
OUR COMMUNITY FOR
THE FUTURE.**



PARTNERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mildura Rural City Council

EDUCATION

Millewa Pre-School

Werrimull P-12 School

FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT

Department of Environmental, Land, Water and
Planning

Parks Vic

Vic Police

Vic Roads/Regional Roads Victoria

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Meringur & Werrimull Country Fire Authority

Millewa Advisory Group Inc

Millewa/Carwarp Landcare Group

Millewa Community Pioneer Park & Historical
Society Inc

Millewa News

Millewa Vintage Machinery Club

Werrimull & Meringur Cemetery Trust

Working for Werrimull Inc

SPORTING CLUBS

Lake Cullulleraine Yacht Club

Meringur Football & Netball Club

Millewa Powerboats

Werrimull Football & Netball Club

APPENDIX

GRANT/FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- www.mildura.vic.gov.au - Mildura Rural City Council
- <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au>
- www.dpcd.vic.gov.au - Department of Community Development and Planning
- <https://www.lmw.vic.gov.au/>
- <https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/enabling-tourism-fund>
- <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/grants/>
- <https://www.awe.gov.au/about/assistance-grants-tenders>
- <https://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/>
- <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/families-and-children>
- <https://www.dss.gov.au/grants>
- <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-safety-programs/vicroads-community-road-safety-grants-program>
- <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries-and-crematoria/cemetery-grants>
- <https://creative.vic.gov.au/>
- <https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs>

REFERENCES

- Australia Government Bureau of Meteorology Climate Statistics, Walpeup Research Station, Summary Station
- Millewa Community Pioneer Park & Historical Society Inc
- <https://trustfornature.org.au/news->



**This community plan was developed by the
community of the Millewa in collaboration with**



Mildura Rural City Council