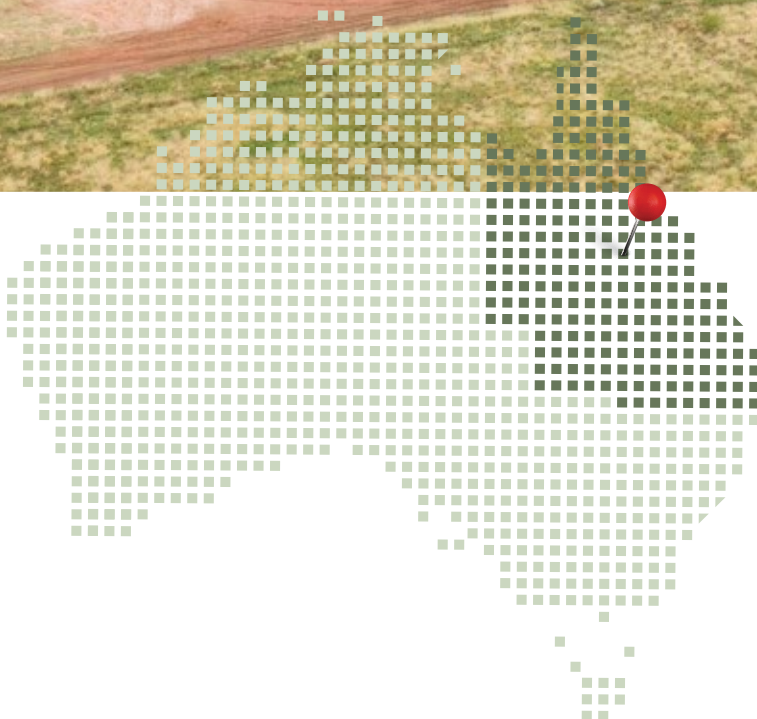
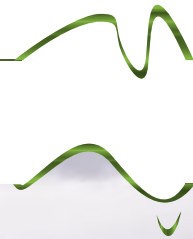


# Aramac

## Community Development Action Plan



**March 2025**

# Foreword



Nestled in the heart of Central West Queensland, Aramac is one of the region's oldest towns, rich in history and community spirit. Originally named Marathon, the town was later renamed in honor of Robert Ramsay Mackenzie, the first explorer to traverse the area, whose initials 'R.R.MAC' were carved into a tree discovered by William Landsborough. Thus, the name Aramac was born.

Historically, Aramac's wool industry established it as one of Australia's largest wool suppliers, driving prosperity for many years. However, when wool prices declined, the town faced a population decrease as shearers sought opportunities elsewhere. Today, Aramac has diversified; while sheep remain part of our agricultural landscape, cattle and goats now contribute to the local economy.

Nature lovers will find Aramac to be a birdwatching paradise, especially at Lake Dunn, where the diverse birdlife attracts enthusiasts from near and far. The town's rich ecological surroundings complement its historical significance, making it a unique destination.

Visitors will want to explore the Aramac ANZAC War Memorial, a tranquil spot for reflection, particularly at sunset when the light casts a stunning glow on the large metal structure. Look for the 13 iconic white bulls scattered throughout town — each

one adds to Aramac's charm. The Harry Redford Interpretive Centre delves into local lore, showcasing the life of Harry Redford, known as Captain Starlight, whose legendary adventures are a key part of our heritage.

The Tramway Museum provides a glimpse into our railway history with exhibits like the Aunt Emma RN28 rail motor and other memorabilia from the early years of European settlement.

Though once the largest local government district in Queensland, Aramac remains a thriving community today, with ten babies born this year — a testament to the vibrant life that continues here.

Aramac invites you to explore its captivating blend of history, nature, and community. We welcome you to experience the unique charm that makes our town a true gem of Central West Queensland.

The Aramac community is extremely excited and grateful for the opportunity to work with the team from Rural Aid and learn from the invaluable knowledge of Peter Kenyon as we establish the Aramac Community Development Plan. Our small group of passionate volunteers is dedicated to ensuring that Aramac continues to shine and thrive for future generations.



# Our Story



Welcome to Aramac, a captivating gem located in the geographic centre of Queensland, where the rugged beauty of the Outback meets a rich tapestry of history and culture. Our town of Aramac is located 1,280 kilometres northwest of Brisbane and 68 kilometres west of Barcaldine. With a population of 372 residents, we are a small yet vibrant and can-do community renowned for our stunning natural landscapes, deep historical roots and amazing cultural creativity.

Aramac is surrounded by the vast expanse of the Queensland Outback; the town is framed by majestic ranges and open plains that stretch toward the horizon. Our climate, characterised by warm summers and mild winters, adds to the town's appeal.

Aramac's historical significance is a rich narrative woven into the fabric of Queensland's pioneering past. Originally known as Marathon, the town was later renamed after Robert Ramsay Mackenzie, the first European explorer to the area who carved his name (R.R.MAC) on a tree. The tree was found by the explorer William Landsborough and the name Aramac was born.

Founded in 1869, our town and district was one of the largest wool producers in Australia but it is the history of our local cattle industry that has made us famous as a key pastoral centre. The Aramac Tramway Museum houses a fascinating collection of

artifacts and exhibits that chronicle the town's evolution from its early days. Aramac stories are reflected in its visible creativity like the collection of 13 white bull Adorabulls located around the town which are related to Harry Redford (Captain Starlight) the cattle rustler and portrayed with humour with 'bull' words.

Aramac's can-do and enterprising spirit is reflected in many initiatives throughout the years. More than a century ago, the town was denied a railway connection to Barcaldine by government, so the locals borrowed 66 thousand pounds and built and operated their own tramway until 1975. Aunt Emma, the Tram found in the Tramway Museum, represents that ingenuity and determination of the Aramac community. More recently, local artist, Milynda Rogers, had the vision of a 200km sculpture trail and proceeded to design and construct the Lake Dunn Sculpture Trail, comprising 40 stunning metal sculptures. The Lake Dunn Sculpture Trail holds the Guinness World Record for the longest outdoor sculpture exhibition in the world and was the bronze winner of 'Best Sculpture Park or Trail' in the Australian Street Art Awards for 2020.

With its blend of natural beauty, historical richness, and cultural vibrancy, Aramac offers a unique and enriching experience for both residents and visitors. Whether one is drawn by the stunning landscapes, the captivating stories of its past or the warmth of its community, Aramac is a community that promises to leave a lasting impression and sense of connection.

# Our Vision

A Vision Statement is a vivid description of what our community aspires to become, without its current barriers, but tied to what we value as a community.

The statement below is our intended outcome:

A welcoming, united and inspired community, valuing country and heritage, working together for the future of our people and lands.

# Our Guiding Values

**Guiding values are the fundamental, moral, and ethical beliefs that we share as a community. They represent core principles and capture what our community considers important. They help foster trust, respect, collaboration, and unity.**

The following seven guiding values and attitudes provide the context for our community's identified actions and initiatives, namely:

- **Sense of Community** – Ensuring all our community members experience a deep sense of connection, inclusion, and contribution.
- **Resilience** – Ensuring positive and can-do attitudes and behaviours to deal with adversity and change.
- **Respect for Heritage** – Appreciating our unique heritage, stories and traditions, and their importance in community and economic development.
- **Rural Town Lifestyle** – Retaining our unique sense of country way of life, local connections, small town charm and rural landscapes.
- **Safety** – Maintaining high levels of community safety with low rates of crime and anti-social behaviours.
- **Pride** – Encouraging pride and times of celebration relating to our heritage, uniqueness, and achievements.
- **Community Inclusiveness, Connection, Unity and Engagement** – Valuing the involvement and contribution of all our community residents and organisations; and appreciating and respecting the diversity of all cultures, opinions, and ideas.





# Our Goals

**Community goals are broad statements of intent that direct our efforts towards accomplishing our vision in line with our guiding principles.**

Below are the six community goals which guide our community aspirations, namely:

- To retain families in the town and district by continually strengthening our livable rural lifestyle and local employment opportunities.
- To actively promote and showcase our community as a great place to stop, stay, experience, and reside, especially through a vibrant and welcoming town centre.
- To support, promote and celebrate active community participation and volunteerism.
- To preserve, maintain and strengthen our community assets and heritage.
- To create an environment where our young people feel involved, supported and empowered, and will consider returning to our community for work, business, family and lifestyle opportunities.
- To encourage greater use of our parks, natural features and open spaces by both residents and visitors.

# Our Challenges

**Like many small inland rural communities, our community needs to respond creatively to a series of demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges. These issues include:**

- Volunteer fatigue and declining numbers
- Impact of the drought
- Ageing population
- Lack of early childhood services and childcare
- Business and service gaps
- Limited health services and capabilities
- Lack of livable and affordable housing
- Limited sports clubs/groups
- Lack of 24-hour truck stop with amenities
- Tourism challenges, especially seasonal nature and limited tourist product
- Bland main street
- Isolation and distance from other centres
- Connectivity
- Road conditions
- Decline in the wool industry and loss of shearers



# Our Assets

## Culture, Stories & Sources of Pride

- Oldest Tram Carriage in Queensland, Tramway & Tramway story
- 200km Aramac Lake Dunn Sculpture trail
- ANZAC memorial
- Harry Redford Connection, Adorabulls collection
- Pastoral heritage, Equestrian culture
- Nat Buchanan
- Tramway Museum, History Room
- Interpretative signage
- Connection to John Jarrett (actor)

## People

- Playgroup, Kids, Youth Clubs
- Passionate Locals
- Professionals - Health Workers
- Farmers, Shearers, Graziers, Contractors
- Senior Citizens
- History of our town
- Council
- Trucks - Ferguson's
- Chappy

## Institutions

- Barcaldine Regional Council: Council offices, Library, Information Centre
- Aramac School
- Aramac Primary Health Care Centre
- Police station
- Emergency services: Ambulance, SES, Fire
- RTC, Post office
- Government housing
- Bank of Queensland



# Our Assets

## Physical

- Parks: Memorial, Freedom, Town Common
- Recreation Facilities: Gym/Squash centre, Bowling Club and greens, Racetrack, ACDA Hall, Aquatic Centre,
- Facilities: Showground and Viewing Pavilion, Freedom of Choice Park, RTC, Cemetery, Caravan Park, Library, Aerodrome, Harry Redford Community Centre, Mobile Home Waste Dump Point, Toilets
- Physical Features: Lake Dunn, Aramac Creek, Lake Buchanan, Lake Galilee, Gray Rock, Healing Circle, Horsetailer's Gorge
- Soldier Monument, Adorabulls collection, 'Welcome to Aramac' sign
  - Proximity to other tourism centres
    - Flora and fauna, Birdwatching

## Economic

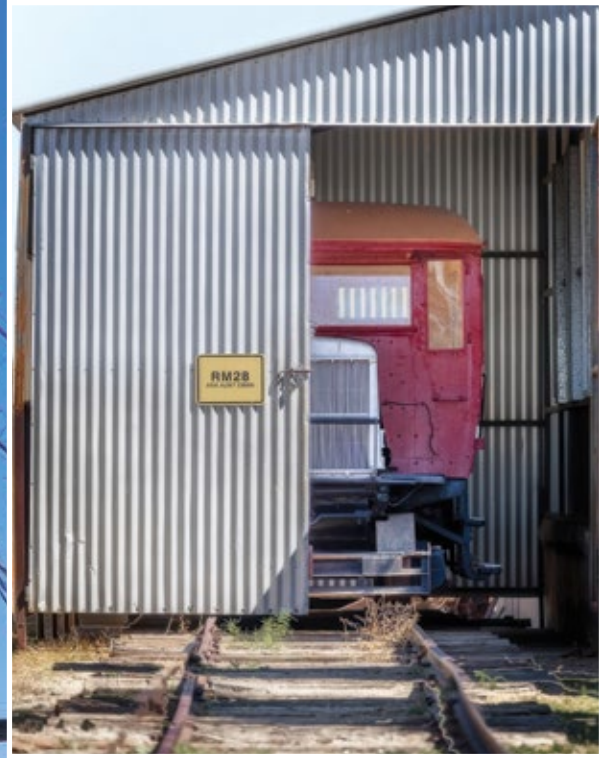
- Accommodation and Hospitality Businesses: Hotel, Travellers Rest Motel, Campground, Caravan Park, Shandonvale Station Stayz, Lake Dunn cabins, Freedom of Choice Park
- Retail Businesses: Post office, Chemist, Thrift shop, Butchery, Grocery shop
- Services: Bank, Elders
- Agricultural industry - sheep/cattle
- Macro Oids
- Transport, BP fuel station
- Churches x2
- Community enterprises: RTC, Showgrounds, Caravan Park, Swimming pool
  - Geocaching

## Social Networks

- Sporting and Recreation: Darts, Social Tennis, Gym/Squash, Bowls Club, Race Club, Rec Club, Swimming Lessons, Muay Thai, Online Dance Lessons, Horse Events
- Community: Senior Citizen Club, Youth clubs, Playgroup
- Churches: St George's Anglican and St John's Catholic
- P&C
- B4AC
- Desert Rec











# Our Strategies & Actions

## Theme One

## Building a Strong and More Connected Community

### ACTIONS

1

1. **Strengthen the Aramac Community Development Association (ACDA)** by:
  - a. Actively promoting membership and inviting resident involvement through Task Teams
  - b. Instigating an ACDA website and Facebook site
  - c. Registering as a member of the Town Teams Movement (TTM)**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
2. **Promote volunteering and community engagement** through:
  - a. Continually inviting community members to voice ideas, suggestions and actively volunteer
  - b. Recognising and celebrating community volunteers, through media exposure and an annual 'Volunteer Appreciation Event'
  - c. Seeking support from Queensland Volunteering and utilising their resources**Timeframe: Short - Immediate and Ongoing**
3. **Form a Welcome to ACDA Task Team** who develop and distribute a 'Welcome Kit' and coordinate an annual 'Welcome to Aramac' event.**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
4. Identify a volunteer to coordinate the **promotion of positive messages of the Aramac community** through radio, print and social media.**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
5. Instigate a **calendar of events that connect residents and build community relationships** e.g. Rural Family Fun Day, Good Neighbour Day, 'Loud Shirt Day', street parties, reunions, Christmas event in main street, social touch football games, etc.**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**

### LEAD GROUPS

ACDA

### POTENTIAL PARTNERS

BRC  
Aramac community and sporting groups  
RDAEWQ  
Queensland Volunteering



# Our Strategies & Actions

## Theme Two

## Improving the Physical Appeal of Aramac

### ACTIONS

2

1. Undertake **Town Beautification**.
  - a. Form a Town Beautification Task Team
  - b. Undertake an audit of existing town appearance, especially main street
  - c. Seek ideas and suggestions from Aramac residents and businesses
  - d. Create prioritised beautification options
  - e. Seek support especially from TTM
  - f. Implement opportunities
  - g. Participate annually in the Queensland 'Tidy Towns Awards'

**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**

2. Form an **Adorabulls Task Team** to identify and implement initiatives that enhance the appeal of the 'Adorabull's statues, including the following actions:
  - a. Researching the initiatives of the town of Bulls, New Zealand
  - b. Creating links with Bulls, New Zealand
  - c. Identifying funding options to grow the number of Adorabulls
  - d. Identifying ways to enhance the 'selfie' potential

**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**

3. Implement **festival lights in the main street**.

**Timeframe: Immediate**

### LEAD GROUPS

ACDA  
BRC  
Town Beautification Task Team  
Adorabulls Task Team

### POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Aramac businesses  
RDAP  
TTM  
KABQ  
HRIC  
RDAEWQ



# Our Strategies & Actions

## Theme Three

### Enhancing Opportunities for our Children and Young People

#### ACTIONS

3

1. Form a **Child and Day Care Task Team** to research, design and implement a child and day care service, that enhances local employment, volunteering and greater young family socialisation.  
**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
2. Explore ways to **increase youth recreation activities**, especially new sporting and cultural options.  
**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
3. Maintain **regular contact with young people after they leave the community** via social media, regular newsletter and organisation of a calendar of school and sporting reunions.  
**Timeframe: Short-Term and Ongoing**
4. **Identify and support progressive young leaders** through linking them to regional, state and national leadership development experiences.  
**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
5. Advocate for **longer swimming pool hours and season**, and more pool-based facilities and activities.  
**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**
6. Explore community interest in forming a **Pony Club**.  
**Timeframe: Short-Term**

#### LEAD GROUPS

ACDA  
BRC  
ASS

#### POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Aramac community and sporting groups  
Queensland Government youth funding





# Our Strategies & Actions

## Theme Four

### Enhancing the Lifestyle Appeal of Aramac

#### ACTIONS

1. Advocate for the attraction of **more local medical and hospital services.**  
**Timeframe: Short-Term and Ongoing**
2. Encourage and coordinate **services to help seniors better navigate health and ageing options.**  
**Timeframe: Short-Term and Ongoing**

#### LEAD GROUPS

APHCC  
BRC

#### POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Queensland Health  
RAPAD  
RDAEWQ

## Theme Five

### Expanding Tourism and Business Options

#### ACTIONS

1. Develop an **Aramac Tourism Strategy** through the formation of a **Tourism Strategy Task Team** that:
  - a. Audits current tourism attractions, facilities, events, trails and initiatives including the town's key events and the Lake Dunn Sculpture Trail
  - b. Reviews regional tourism links, activities and trails
  - c. Identifies opportunities to enhance existing products and offerings especially the Lake Dunn Sculpture Trail and ways it could be better identified with Aramac
  - d. Identifies opportunities to create new Indigenous tourism products
  - e. Recommends ways to enhance marketing, customer service, community storytelling and operator networking**Timeframe: Immediate to Medium-Term**
2. Explore and implement actions to enhance town and district's connection with the **Harry Reford** story through:
  - a. Designing and implementing a Harry Redford Festival
  - b. Reintroducing the annual Cattle Drive
  - c. Placing interpretation signage at Maree, South Australia that links that town's Harry Redford connection with Aramac**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**

# Our Strategies & Actions

## Theme Five

## Expanding Tourism and Business Options

### ACTIONS

5

- 3. Undertake an **Aramac and district Signage Audit** and implement improvements, including out-of-town advertising, town entry statements and directional signage.
  - a. Form Signage Task Team
  - b. Develop assessment tool
  - c. Undertake audit
  - d. Review and determine recommendations for improvement
  - e. Identify improvements to the town entrance signage
  - f. Share impressions and suggestions with BRC and the Aramac community

**Timeframe: Short-Term**

- 4. Form a **New Museum Task Team** to explore the feasibility of a new museum and tourism centre in the main street.

**Timeframe: Short-Term**

- 5. Identify and advocate for the implementation of **improvements to the Aramac Caravan Park and Freedom of Choice Park** including more accommodation, improved facilities, weekly ‘Happy Hour’ and tourism information.

**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**

- 6. Identify, negotiate and promote **local ‘selfie’ locations**.

**Timeframe: Medium-Term**

- 7. Instigate an **entrance sign** targeting our town’s need and opportunity for specific trades.

**Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing**

- 8. Investigate the potential to create a **rest area for heavy transport** including amenities.

**Timeframe: Medium-Term**

### LEAD GROUPS

ACDA  
BRC  
HRIC  
Tourism Strategy Task Team

### POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Aramac businesses  
TEQ  
AHM  
RDAEWQ  
RAPAD  
BBRF

RDAP  
RTC  
FRRR  
RA  
BOI



# Abbreviations

<b>ACDA</b>	<b>Aramac Community Development Association</b>
<b>AHM</b>	<b>Aramac Historical Museum</b>
<b>APHCC</b>	<b>Aramac Primary Health Care Centre</b>
<b>ASS</b>	<b>Aramac State School</b>
<b>B4AC</b>	<b>Barrels 4 A Cause</b>
<b>BBRF</b>	<b>Building Better Regions Fund of the Australian Government</b>
<b>BOI</b>	<b>Bank of I.D.E.A.S.</b>
<b>BRC</b>	<b>Barcaldine Regional Council</b>
<b>FRRR</b>	<b>Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal</b>
<b>HRIC</b>	<b>Harry Redford Interpretative Museum</b>
<b>ICPA</b>	<b>Isolated Children and Parents Association</b>
<b>KABQ</b>	<b>Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland</b>
<b>P&amp;C</b>	<b>Parents and Citizens</b>
<b>RA</b>	<b>Rural Aid</b>
<b>RAPAD</b>	<b>Central Western Queensland Remote Area Planning and Development Board</b>
<b>RDAEWQ</b>	<b>The Regional Development Australia Eastern and Western Queensland Committee Inc</b>
<b>RDAP</b>	<b>Regional Arts Development Fund</b>
<b>RTC</b>	<b>Rural Transaction Centre</b>
<b>SES</b>	<b>State Emergency Service</b>
<b>TEQ</b>	<b>Tourism and Events Queensland</b>
<b>TTM</b>	<b>Town Teams Movement</b>

# Acknowledgements



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The formulation of the Plan was undertaken by Peter Kenyon from the Bank of I.D.E.A.S. with assistance from Steph Walsh and Sarah Ferriday from Rural Aid, along with Paul Gravett.



Special thanks to so many passionate community members who gave so generously of their time, wisdom and experiences.

# Aramac

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