

PUBLIC ART MASTERPLAN



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Master Plan Purpose

This Public Art Master Plan has been prepared to assist the Warren Shire community to look towards the future and to develop public art spaces, walking trails and to create improved livability for residents and attract tourists to the area.

This Master Plan is designed to activate the community ownership of public art and to undertake planned development, expansion and enhance community engagement with the arts.

This Master Plan proposes a number of areas in which the Council can lead the community and to form an active partnership in which to develop tourism and social opportunities to grow public art, to provide community based training and to work together to promote Warren Shire as an art aware area.

1.2 Public Art Comes in Many Forms

Public art and art generally is a very important aspect of rural communities and allows rural residents an opportunity to participate, develop and enjoy the local arts.

Public art comes in many forms and this Master Plan has been prepared to introduce these for review by the community and the Council.

The most reported forms include:

- Murals (internal and external)
- Landmark structures and sculptures
- Sculptures, statues or structural art
- Street art
- Urban art
- Commercial art
- Monument or Memorial and
- Festivals or events.

It is a combination of public art forms that generate conversation, regional recognition and opportunity for tourism.

Public art is an important element to tourism and Council should ensure that it takes a lead role in the promotion of the arts and the development of events and programs. To ensure promotion Council and its committees should look to develop;

- Public art trails
- Cultural art and historic trails
- Community art competitions, and community festivals and events.

2.0 Existing Art Forms in the Community

Warren Shire has existing art facilities in the community, which over several years have developed, closed and new venues established to meet the local demand for art, culture and community interaction.

The community has several facilities that have been and are being used for art shows and meeting places. These have ranged from central main street areas, to the Warren Show, and the current art venue being the WoW Centre (Windows on the Wetland Centre) leased from Council by RiverSmart.



Cultural Art Display at WoW Centre. <https://www.warren.nsw.gov.au/discover/window-on-the-wetlands-centre>.

The Warren art scene appears to be strong and the community has its own Arts Committee (the Warren Arts Council), Council has established a Public Arts Committee and art displays are being held in Warren on a regular basis by local and regional artists.

This Master Plan is to assist the community to look at further development of existing local initiatives and to investigate all art forms. The implementation of the Master Plan will help the community grow local arts content, and to draw on the tourism sector and regional arts community in the development of a strong arts trail. Further developing arts in the community will be complimented by the other social, environmental and sporting attractions that the Warren Shire community already enjoy.

2.1 Developing Public Art

In Master Planning for public art, a community must agree to accept that change is required to its thinking of what forms art can be developed and understand that each viewer will have different reactions to the art displayed. These concepts are discussed further below.

Art comes in many forms and can be visual, sensory and acoustic.

A heavy metal concert or a piano recital is appealing to various groups who may conclude that one or the other is not art. A sculpture may depict aspects that are appealing to one viewer but confusing or dismissive to another. A sight, sound and smell display may trigger emotions differently across members of the public.

It is important that there is acknowledgement by the community that not all art forms will appeal to everyone. This will help generate information and it will assist to attract other people to take part in public art.

2.1.1 Murals (Internal and External)

How you see a mural will depend on what you believe should happen in your social areas. Many murals have developed from being painted on walls, rail carriages or as antisocial graffiti. Some of these areas of graffiti are now protected by law or can be worth large sums of money, due to the fact that they depict a political or social aspect of community life at that time or the artist e.g. Banksy has developed a reputation across the world.

***Banksy** displays his art on publicly visible surfaces such as walls and self-built physical prop pieces. **Banksy** no longer sells photographs or reproductions of his street graffiti, but his public "installations" are regularly resold, often even by removing the wall they were painted on.*
Wikipedia, October 2020.



Banksy, Girl with Balloon. Photo by Dominic Robinson, via Flickr. <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-6-iconic-works-banksy>.

Images have been painted on buildings in Warren as shown below that represent both murals and landmark art forms. The visual appearance of a building can be changed by taking a blank wall and creating an artwork that represents the organisation or community.



Mural painted on Block B at Warren TAFE – using artwork to brighten a plain brick wall.



Emu Painted on what was once an art gallery and soon to be museum building

2.1.2 Landmark Structures and Sculptures

The most visual aspect of landmark sculptures is relative to the size of the artwork. Landmark sculpture will include the painting of water towers and silos, painting of buildings or it may include crop patterns as shown below in the Hunter Valley.

The painting of silos and water towers has started to attract tourists looking for tourism experiences into rural areas. The quality of visual works has developed to a much higher degree over the past ten years and high-quality artwork is being undertaken by professional artists.



The community has requested for Warren Shire for many years to paint its water towers as art features. These requests have varied in art content and recently Warren Shire Council through its public Arts Committee have agreed to contract a professional artist to undertake the painting of the Stratford Street water tower in Warren to depict the sporting themes of the Carter Oval Recreation Precinct.

Temporary art forms such as crop circles or images can be part of a large-scale art project and although it has a finite life, it can be used to attract tourists and residents.



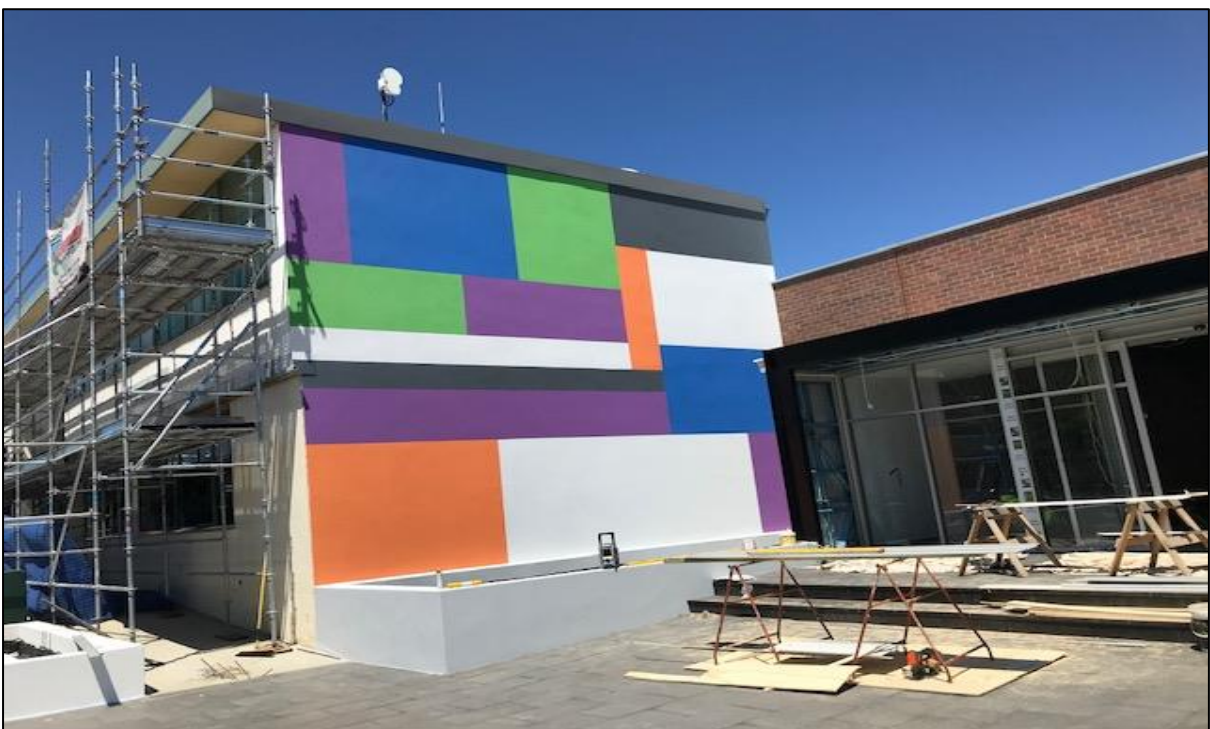
A crop circle in the Hunter Valley. Its design represents the position of the planets at the exact moment of our winter solstice in 2014. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/architect-who-became-top-authority-on-mysterious-crop-circles-20200720-p55dqj.html>

Landmark art works include place recognition and can include images, architectural designs and colours to attract attention and draw the visitor or resident into an area. Landmark art dominated the local landscape within the Wayilwan Nation prior to European arrival. The traditional Wayilwan people created public art in the form of carved trees. The complex designs, involved skill and strength and held unique and significant meaning for ceremonies and the commemoration of esteemed people within the nation who had passed away. There were thousands of such carved trees prior to European arrival. Examples of such local public art are held at the Warren Local Aboriginal Land Council.





Warren Shire Council has utilised colour to attract attention to its Administration building and although unusual for a rural centre, has developed a geometric pattern using its corporate colour palette, that is prominent in the streetscape.



2.1.3 Sculptures, Statues or Structural Art

Although sculptures have been around for thousands of years, in Australia we have looked at sculptures as an item to celebrate a person and placed these in parks and gardens or used them as iconic symbols representing events as in war memorials.

Wayilwan inspired structural art could contribute significantly to Warren Shire's public art projects. Such unique and rare designs have the potential to attract local and international visitors. Many traditional Wayilwan designs were abstract in nature, with unique geometrical patterns. Tree carving designs were also inspired by the astronomy of the Wayilwan people and their neighbouring nations, while other designs were inspired by the native fauna of the Wayilwan nation. Local Wayilwan artists have painted designs inspired by traditional tree carvings. Such art, however, is yet to be fully harnessed as inspiration for future public art projects.



Table Tennis Table Sculpture by Damian Plunkett in the Victoria Park Precinct, Warren.



Rural sculpture at Gulargambone NSW, bringing local history alive in a rural village.

Cultural change has been developing over many years and progressive communities have been developing sculpture competitions that attract art works of many varying types that are displayed, promoted and used to enhance economic development.

The 'Sculpture By The Sea' competition (Bondi, NSW) is now an Australian known event and attracts very high-level competition. The types and forms of sculpture or structural art can bring thousands of people to view the art works.



Utes in the Paddock at Condobolin.

The Warren community has an ability to develop a sculpture by the river event. This event would use the accessible footpath from Carter Oval through to Macquarie Park and around the river to the Warren Multipurpose Centre.



<https://www.weekendnotes.com/im/009/07/art-beaches-free-fun-things-to-do-bondi-tamarama-n1.jpg>.

2.1.4 Street Art

Street Art can come in many forms and can range from street performers such as buskers, speaker's lectern, chalk sidewalk artists, permanent and static art works through to sculptures placed along the street areas.



Hippo at Dubbo – TripAdvisor 2020.

Street art is one of the most vibrant forms of art and allows social activity in areas that may have become dormant and business like.



<https://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/north-coast/coffs-harbour-area/coffs-harbour/events/coffs-harbour-international-buskers-and-comedy-festival>.

Many street art works are static displays and are permanent sculptures placed along street areas to give an appearance of town history, to attract tourism interactions such as the Big Bogan at Nyngan or to draw people towards other activity areas such as museums, art galleries or shopping precincts.

In Warren, art works have been used to repair windows and to mend a shop front that is prominent as shown in the photo below. This has allowed a visual history and association of art that reflects how the town has developed whilst performing a beautification role. Photography as public art will be considered.



Street artworks include fixed items such as sculptures. These are visual attractants used to draw attention to a streetscape and they may be used as a unique visual feature such as the Dog and Rabbit statue in Forbes or they may be used to highlight past activities such as the butcher, baker, etc.



Dog and rabbit statue - Forbes Shire Council.

Other more irregular street art can include items such as a speaker's box or step from which people may regularly present their opinions, their beliefs or as a place to talk to a community. This is a performing arts outlet and has a long history in arts performance and political circles.

Many Councils have requirements for buskers to ensure that the quality of presentations or performance are at a reasonable standard and that footpaths, malls or other public spaces are free for pedestrian use and that people are not harried by the performer. Coffs Harbour Council has an annual Busker festival and have turned this form of street art into a tourist attraction.

2.1.5 Urban Art

Rural urban art is an art form like mural painting but with an outcome that beautifies or provides a message to people. This form of art has been used to improve the appearance of electricity boxes, to improve the appearance of fences, toilet blocks and private buildings and in some communities such as Quambone, to enhance a main street through colour and vibrancy.



The green fence is very unattractive and brings down the visual appeal of the main street area. Warren Shire identified these fences in its main street upgrade plans, but timing and resources have not allowed the fences to be painted as an attraction.

Rural urban art is generally a community co-operative project, where in partnership of a landowner, the Council or other group, a community project to improve facilities are undertaken and a message is supported. These messages may be around numerous themes such as sport, Aboriginal heritage, youth support or landscape design.

Many examples are available and community partnerships especially with youth groups or organisations are the best return for a community.

Public art on private property will be considered in accordance with Council's Public Art – Design and Commissioning Policy and with appropriate rules that requires agreement by the property owner and taking into account the process to renew, risk assessment, use of removable mounting boards and structures, quality, structural integrity of the art and mounting board, warranty and the content, etc. Public art on private property should always have the ability for the public art to be removed to allow renewal.



Graffiti in Warren along the proposed River sculpture trail.

Artwork developed and delivered by community organisations allow the community to make a difference to the town appearance, whilst providing valuable art training and skill development. Warren Shire is a sporting Shire but not all youth or adults are sports participants and struggle to fit within the sporting community. Alternate art forms such as urban art allows community participation.



A plain electricity box outside Warren TAFE versus An electricity box in Tamworth. The rural urban art has turned an unattractive box into an artwork in the middle of a community space.

2.1.6 Commercial Art

Commercial art is based around brand names and or brand activities to draw people towards a product or service.

In rural communities, this type of art form was associated with the corner store or within small commercial centres that had available wall space to paint billboard type art works.

This form of art is now a tourist attraction and compliments a town or village area when integrated with other art forms such as painted silos or water towers or where a traditional town atmosphere historically remains.

Caution should be made in replication of these art forms across a commercial area, at it moves from a traditional feel to a manufactured feel with no historical background or vibrancy.



Bushell sign repainted at Moonbi NSW on a traditional store building.

2.1.7 Monument or Memorial

These forms of public art are developed to represent the historical position or feelings towards actions, campaigns or events that have occurred which made a substantial impact on the community.

Many rural monuments or memorials are based around events of war. These memorials are sacred to a community and a nation and the sculptures or statues developed are part of the community beliefs.

It is important when creating these monuments that it is respectful of the community feeling and can be a focus for the whole of the community.

2.1.8 Festivals or Events

Festivals and events are a key part of public arts performance and opportunities for viewing the arts. These forms of events attract locals and if the event is a key attractant can bring many thousands of people to a region.

Many community facilities are underutilised and therefore can be used to host festivals and events beyond the traditional uses, such as local agricultural show or market days.

Warren township has high quality park areas, ovals and facilities that can be used to host small events such as music in the park, to local bands being able to set up at the skate park, through to opera in the paddock or movies under the stars.

Warren has held Christmas events, that are a cultural and artistic event where performing arts and music was delivered by locals for the enjoyment of the families and friends. In addition to these performances, commercial music was delivered through professional artists hired to perform at the event.

Although the festival and events can be at a every high level, a small event such as a street Christmas party can attract more tourists and locals than may attend a specialised event.

Festivals and events should be targeted as much towards local residents as it is to attract tourists to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in public arts events and seek enjoyment from the event.



Music in Dubbo Street December 2018

3.0 Public Art for the Future

3.1 Public Art Trails

The village of Nevertire and Warren township have an ability to develop public art trails that could attract tourists or slow people down in their travels to look at unique urban art, commercial art, landmark sculptures, and take part in festivals and events.

Nevertire being at the intersection of the Mitchell and Oxley Highways offers an opportunity to develop the village as a stopping point and utilize the present parks, toilets and structural features to visually break the long journeys north and south and east and west.

Nevertire has a large water tower that if painted would be visible as a landmark structure. This if combined with commercial art on the old corner shop, the café and the hotel would provide a firm basis to attract tourists.

Nevertire village also has a historic hall with war memorial material. Further events such as the Nevertire Rodeo could be developed to bring in other art forms that include music performances, photo competitions, etc.

Warren Township is a unique area that can develop public art to a high level that would include public art trails to undertake a main street walk that includes all art forms, the development of a river side art trail to view sculptures and the development of festivals and events that draw together all art forms including static art displays, sculpture competitions, performance art and large scale visual art works.

Warren presently has art venues such as the WoW Centre that is developing as an art center and hosts many displays by local artists annually. The Wow Centre, the Warren Sporting Centre and parks and ovals have been used for visual and performing arts.

Warren may develop other art sites that include the Carter Oval area for murals or urban art forms, performance stages or sculptures along footpaths.

The potential to link a trail via sculptures, sight and sound and to better utilize the sporting and cultural aspects ensures a greater community integration and social responsibility towards safety and security.



3.2 Cultural Art and Historic Trails

Warren township has a good network of footpaths that are used regularly by locals. One footpath leads from the WoW Centre out to the Beemunnel site being an Aboriginal site of significance and a site that has developed for cultural tourism and local recognition.

The footpath runs past environmental areas and sculptures, or information boards can be developed to tell the stories leading to the Beemunnel site.

The Beemunnel site can be developed by the Aboriginal community and over time it could allow for an interpretation center, art gallery and sales site.

Other walkways can be developed over time to add art features that make walking these long walkways an experience.





3.3 Community Art Competitions, and Community Festivals and Events

To accelerate the development of public art, the Shire community should look at the development of community art competitions and link these to education, training and artist workshops. Further that festivals and events can be created that develop art forms including music, dance or competitions such as eisteddfods.

Councils have been active in these areas for many years and work with their communities to develop, support and deliver regional and local events that bring about change across all art forms.

It is important to provide an educational outcome from a competition or event to assist new artists to develop skills and competencies. It also allows the community to showcase the directions that it has taken as a community that can embrace all forms of social activity.

To attract people as visitors or future residents, a community must have a range of community-based activities. The best way to show case the community is to develop and support art.



https://www.google.com/search?q=grafton+art+festival&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUK EwivPjrrsLsAhVUxzgGHSbADqQQ_AUoAXoECAYQAw&biw=1680&bih=907

4.0 Recommendations - Public Art Committee

The following areas are recommended for consideration by the community.

Art Items to be Explored	Recommendation	Time frame
Murals		
Sculptures		
Urban Art		
Art Trails		
Cultural Trails		
Photographs as Public Art		