

Community Report

Burren Junction – Community Achievement, Tourism and Public Infrastructure

Overview

Burren Junction is a small but active rural community whose residents and volunteers continue to invest considerable time, effort and resources into preserving the town, developing tourism opportunities and improving community facilities.

There have been some significant positive developments, including the restoration and continued use of the School of Arts Hall, the opening of the Burren Junction Museum, the development of the Historic Bicycles Walk, a successful Art Show and a community-led project to preserve and restore the town's almost 100-year-old Anglican Church for use by the wider community.

At the same time, residents have serious concerns regarding the ongoing management, maintenance and completion of several important public assets and infrastructure projects.

These include:

- The Burren Junction Artesian Bore Baths
- The Burren Junction Sports Precinct and its failed bore
- The Town Pool and deteriorating boundary fence
- Former tennis facilities and ageing sporting infrastructure
- Three bus shelters – installation works commenced 1 October 2026
- The replacement town welcoming sign
- The school crossing outside Burren Junction Public School
- The future and capability of the Burren Junction airstrip

The community believes these issues affect tourism, local business viability, recreation, public safety, emergency access and community wellbeing.

The community is not simply identifying problems. Residents are actively pursuing grants, undertaking projects, restoring facilities and seeking practical solutions.

It is this contrast between strong community initiative and unresolved public infrastructure that is at the heart of the community's concern.

A Community Investing in Its Own Future

Despite the infrastructure concerns outlined in this report, Burren Junction has experienced several significant positive developments.

Local volunteers, organisations and residents have worked hard to restore, improve and promote the town rather than simply waiting for others to do it.

School of Arts Hall

The historic School of Arts Hall has been restored and returned to active community use.

The Hall now provides an important venue for community events and activities and has become a focal point for several of Burren Junction's newest initiatives.

[Link to the School of Arts Hall](#)

Burren Junction Museum

A local museum has now been established, preserving and displaying the history and stories of Burren Junction and the surrounding district.

The museum represents considerable volunteer effort and provides another reason for travellers to stop and spend time in the town.

Historic Bicycles Walk

The community has also developed the Historic Bicycles Walk, a unique tourism initiative featuring 29 locations around Burren Junction.

Coloured bicycles, historical information and QR codes encourage visitors to walk or drive around the town, discover its history and explore places they might otherwise never see.

The project was developed through community involvement and volunteer effort and is designed to encourage visitors to stay longer and experience more of Burren Junction.

[Link to the Historic Bicycles Walk](#)

Art Show and Community Events

The community has also successfully staged a local Art Show, together with events associated with the opening of the Museum and launch of the Historic Bicycles Walk.

These activities demonstrate that Burren Junction is actively creating new cultural and tourism opportunities rather than accepting the decline often associated with small rural communities.

Despite formal invitations, no representatives from Walgett Shire Council attended the recent Museum and Historic Bicycles Walk opening, which was disappointing to community members who had worked for an extended period to bring the projects to fruition.

[Link to the Art Show News Story](#)

Preserving the Historic Anglican Church

Another group of residents has come together to secure the future of Burren Junction's almost 100-year-old Anglican Church.

Originally donated to the community and cared for by generations of local people, the building is now entering a new chapter.

The group is raising funds to preserve, restore and maintain the historic church while opening it to the entire community — as a place to gather, celebrate, reflect and connect, whether for worship, community events or life's milestones.

The aim is to ensure this important historic building remains part of Burren Junction for generations to come and is welcoming to everyone.

The church project is another example of residents taking responsibility for preserving Burren Junction's heritage while finding new ways for important community buildings to remain useful into the future.

Together, these projects demonstrate that Burren Junction is not a community simply asking for problems to be fixed.

Residents are investing their own time, skills and resources into creating a stronger future for their town.

[Link to the Video of the mission of the Community Church](#)

Tourism and the Artesian Bore Baths

A Vital Tourism Asset

The Burren Junction Artesian Bore Baths have long been one of the town's most important tourism assets and a recognised stop for travellers exploring the Artesian Bore Trail.

For two years, the Bore Baths were managed by a dedicated caretaker whose work helped make the facility a significant tourism drawcard.

During the peak tourist season from Easter to October, the Bore Baths regularly attracted large numbers of caravans and campers.

During busy periods, the camping area was packed, with 60 or more caravans and recreational vehicles staying at the facility and throughout the surrounding camping areas.

The community has photographic evidence, including aerial and ground-level photographs, showing the extent of this visitation.

The images provide a clear record of how important the Bore Baths have been to Burren Junction's visitor economy when the facility was being properly maintained and managed.

Visitors did not simply use the Bore Baths.

They stayed in Burren Junction, purchased meals, refreshments, fuel and supplies and supported local businesses including the Waterloo Café, Junction City Hotel and other local services.

Many travellers stayed for several nights, with some remaining for a week or more.

Concerns During 2026

During 2026:

- A dedicated caretaker was not appointed
- The overnight camping fee increased from \$5 to \$10
- Residents have raised concerns about the level of regular cleaning and maintenance
- Visitors and residents have reported:
 - Toilets left dirty and at times without toilet paper
 - Overgrown grounds
 - Problems with the cleanliness and temperature of the bath water
 - Slippery steps and concerns about safe access
 - General deterioration and inadequate basic maintenance

Community members say these issues persisted through the winter tourist season despite concerns being raised.

There is also concern about arrangements during the warmer months.

The community is sourcing continued maintenance and sufficient water flow to ensure facilities, including showers used by campers and travellers, remain operational.





Impact on Tourism and Local Businesses

Local businesses and residents have observed a reduction in caravan traffic and visitor numbers compared with previous peak seasons.

Travellers who previously stayed overnight or for several days can instead continue to other destinations along their route, including Pilliga, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge.

For a small town such as Burren Junction, losing even a portion of this visitor traffic has consequences for businesses and services that rely on travellers stopping in town.

It also works against the considerable volunteer effort currently being invested in creating new attractions specifically designed to encourage visitors to stop, stay and explore Burren Junction.

Community Safety and Essential Infrastructure

Sports Precinct and Failed Bore

The Bore Baths are not the community's only infrastructure concern.

The bore servicing the Burren Junction Sports Precinct has failed and is now producing only a trickle. Existing water-storage arrangements provide some assistance but are not a long-term replacement for a reliable bore.

A dependable water supply is essential for maintaining the sportsground and associated community facilities and protecting important community infrastructure.

Rather than simply waiting for the problem to be resolved, Burren Progress Inc has actively pursued external funding for a replacement bore. A grant application has now been submitted to Whitehaven Coal, supported by quotations and relevant documentation. The community continues to work with Walgett Shire Council to establish a reliable long-term water supply and provide a foundation for the future restoration and improvement of the Sports Precinct.

The community wants to work constructively with Council to establish a reliable long-term water supply and provide a foundation for future restoration and improvement of the Sports Precinct.

Update – 1 October 2026

As a temporary measure, a water tank has now been connected to supply the public toilets at the Sports Precinct while the bore continues to produce only a trickle. This is a useful interim step; however, the hand basin is not currently connected to the water supply, so visitors are unable to wash their hands at the facility.

On 1 October 2026, water pooling was also observed near the former tennis-court area after the storage tanks had filled. The source of this water has not been confirmed and the community is seeking Council investigation of the apparent leak or discharge.



Town Pool and Boundary Fence

The Burren Junction Community Pool is another important public asset requiring attention.

Of particular concern is the ageing boundary fencing and entrance gate.

Sections consist of old tennis-style mesh fencing, with visibly leaning and deteriorating posts and supports.

Community members have raised concerns about the condition and security of the fencing and entrance surrounding a public swimming facility.

Burren Progress has raised the need for replacement fencing with Council and is seeking either Council action or Council support to pursue external funding for the work.

Current photographs taken in September 2026 document the condition of the pool fencing and entrance.



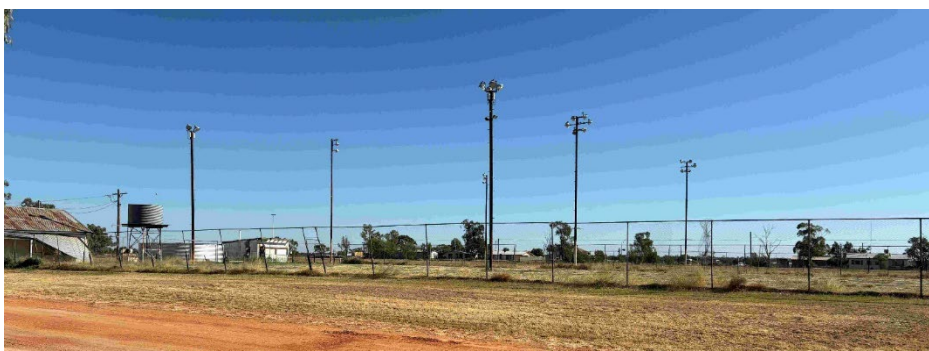
Tennis and Sporting Infrastructure

There are also deteriorating structures associated with former tennis facilities at the Sports Precinct.

The community has sought discussions with Council about removing obsolete infrastructure so that the area can be cleaned up and progressively improved.

The objective is not simply to identify problems but to establish a clean and functional precinct that

the community can progressively improve as funding becomes available.



Other Unresolved Community Infrastructure

Three Bus Shelters

Three new bus shelters supplied for Burren Junction had remained incomplete and uninstalled. On 1 October 2026, work commenced on their installation, with reinforced concrete foundations prepared at the shelter sites. The community welcomes this progress and looks forward to completion of all three shelters.

This is a positive development since the September 2026 photographs in this report, which recorded the shelter components sitting partially assembled and in pieces.

The photographs below show installation works underway on 1 October 2026.

The commencement of these works is acknowledged as welcome progress on an issue previously raised by the community.



Post Office Access Ramp

A small but important maintenance issue was also documented on 1 October 2026 at the access ramp outside the Burren Junction Post Office. The centre handrail/upright has separated from the steel ramp frame at its base and requires repair or re-welding.



Park Lighting

A solar light in the park adjacent to the playground has not been operational and has been reported to Council over approximately eight weeks. As at 1 October 2026, it remains unrepaired. The community is seeking repair so that lighting is restored to this public recreation area.

Solar park light adjacent to the playground, photographed 1 October 2026.



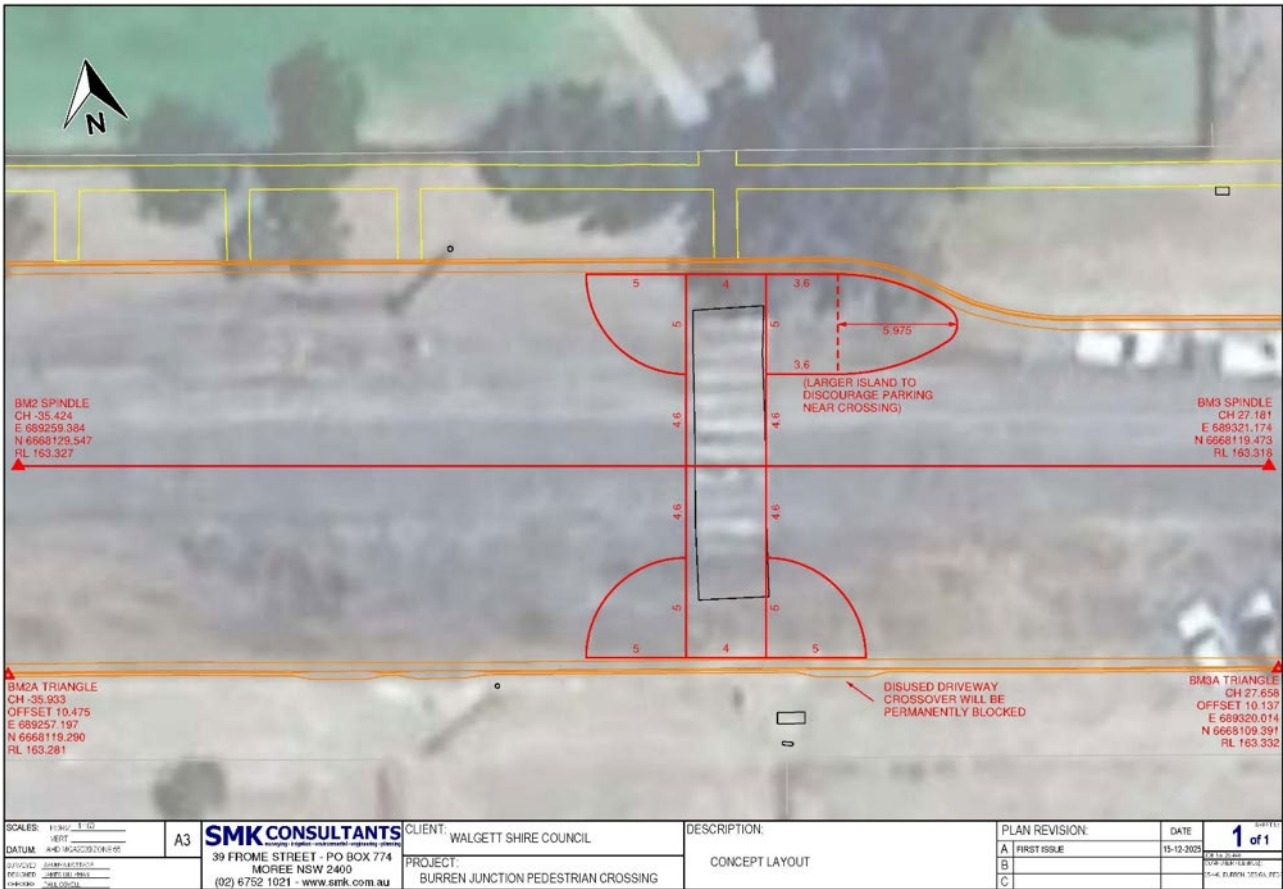
School Crossing – Documented Since 2022

Concerns about the pedestrian crossing and bus area outside Burren Junction Public School have been formally documented since at least March 2022. At that time, the school wrote to Walgett Shire Council following discussions with Transport for NSW, identifying a faded crossing that no longer extended fully across the road, missing and illegible signage, a rough and uneven road surface, and concerns about traffic and student safety.

The matter has continued to be raised with the relevant authorities. There has been some positive progress, including the installation of new school crossing signage, which the community acknowledges and appreciates.

In December 2025, a formal concept layout for a new Burren Junction pedestrian crossing was prepared for Walgett Shire Council by SMK Consultants. The design includes a defined pedestrian crossing, traffic-island treatments intended to discourage parking near the crossing and permanent closure of a disused driveway crossover.

The school was subsequently advised that the crossing works would be undertaken in conjunction with the planned drainage works. Drainage works have since commenced in Burren Junction; however, as at September 2026, the pedestrian crossing works shown in the December 2025 concept plan have not been completed. The community welcomes the progress from the concerns formally documented in 2022 to a completed engineered concept design and is now seeking completion of the planned crossing works.



Town Welcoming Sign

Burren Junction has also been waiting for replacement of its town welcoming sign.

The community has been advised that the sign will be replaced but continues to wait for the project to be completed.

A welcoming sign may appear to be a relatively minor item, but for a community actively working to attract tourists and encourage travellers to stop, the presentation and identification of the town are important.



Burren Junction Airstrip and Emergency Access

The community has also continued to advocate for improvements to the Burren Junction airstrip.

For an isolated rural community, access to a suitable local airstrip is more than a convenience.

Burren Junction is a considerable distance from larger regional centres, making reliable emergency and aeromedical access particularly important.

The community would like to see the airstrip improved so that it can better support emergency services and aeromedical operations when required.

The airstrip forms part of a broader discussion about the essential infrastructure needed to support the long-term safety and resilience of Burren Junction and its surrounding farming district.

A Pattern of Unfinished or Delayed Works

Individually, some of these issues may appear relatively minor.

However, when considered together — the Bore Baths, failed Sports Precinct bore, deteriorating pool fence, ageing sporting infrastructure, school crossing, bus shelter completion, replacement welcoming sign, Post Office access-ramp repair, park lighting and airstrip needs — residents believe they demonstrate a broader pattern of maintenance, delayed works and infrastructure requiring attention. The commencement of bus shelter installation on 1 October 2026 is welcomed as positive progress. This is particularly frustrating when compared with what community organisations and volunteers are achieving with limited resources.

Community Initiative and Partnership

Burren Progress Inc and other local groups have continued to:

- Restore and maintain community facilities
- Operate and develop the local museum
- Create and promote the 29-stop Historic Bicycles Walk
- Hold community events and the Art Show
- Preserve and seek funding for the restoration of the historic Anglican Church
- Pursue grants for community infrastructure
- Seek quotations for major projects
- Advocate for improvements to the Sports Precinct
- Raise road-safety concerns
- Promote Burren Junction as a tourism destination

At the same time, Burren Progress has continued communicating with Walgett Shire Council, raising infrastructure concerns formally and seeking practical solutions.

Council representatives and councillors have also been invited to meet with the community in Burren Junction to discuss these matters.

The community does not expect Council to do everything.

Nor does it want the positive work that has occurred to be overlooked.

Where improvements have been made — such as installation of the new school crossing signage and commencement of the bus shelter installation works — those improvements are acknowledged.

What residents are seeking is a constructive partnership in which community initiative is matched by appropriate maintenance, completion of agreed works, clear communication and support for infrastructure that sits outside the community's control.

What the Community Is Seeking

The community is seeking:

- Appropriate remediation and ongoing maintenance of the Artesian Bore Baths.
- A suitable caretaker or management arrangement during the main tourist season.
- Regular cleaning and maintenance standards for public facilities.
- A long-term solution for the failed Sports Precinct bore.
- Completion of the temporary toilet water connection so the hand basin has a functioning water supply, and investigation of the water pooling observed near the former tennis courts.
- Action on the deteriorating Town Pool boundary fence and entrance.
- Removal or remediation of obsolete and deteriorating sporting infrastructure.
- Repair or re-welding of the separated handrail/upright on the Post Office access ramp.
- Repair of the non-operational solar light adjacent to the playground.
- Completion of installation works for the three bus shelters.

- Completion of the replacement town welcoming sign.
- Completion of the planned Burren Junction pedestrian crossing works in accordance with the December 2025 concept design.
- Continued consideration of improvements to the Burren Junction airstrip for community and emergency access.
- Clear and transparent communication about maintenance, responsibilities and future works.
- Council support for community-led grant applications capable of attracting external funding into Burren Junction.
- Recognition and support for volunteer-led initiatives that are preserving heritage, creating tourism opportunities and improving community facilities.

Why This Matters

This is not simply about toilets, fences, sporting fields, road paint, bus shelters or signs.

It is about:

- Tourism viability
- Local business sustainability
- Public and road safety
- Emergency access
- Maintaining essential rural infrastructure
- Preserving local heritage
- Community pride
- Supporting volunteer effort
- The long-term future of Burren Junction

Burren Junction has demonstrated what can be achieved when a small community works together.

The restoration and continued use of the School of Arts Hall, opening of the Museum, creation of the Historic Bicycles Walk, Art Show and work to preserve the historic Anglican Church demonstrate a community that is actively investing in its own future.

The community believes there is a real opportunity to build on this momentum and encourage more people to stop, stay, explore and support Burren Junction.

Residents are asking for a genuine partnership with Walgett Shire Council and other responsible authorities so that:

Community initiative and public infrastructure can work together to build Burren Junction's future.