

Newcastle Waters Historic Township

# Master Plan



# Executive Summary

Newcastle Waters Historic Township has an incredible story to share. From ancient landscapes, Aboriginal creation and ceremony, precious habitats and native wildlife, European exploration, pastoral stations, a crossing point for stock routes, World War II and the Wave Hill Walk Off. The township has a rich and vibrant history, remembered by many today as a town that connected Australia.

Newcastle Waters Historic Township is situated 715 km south of Darwin and 789 km north of Alice Springs, geographically making it a central point of the Northern Territory. Today, the whole of the township is a heritage listed with mixed land tenures. It consists of vacant lots, occupied and unoccupied buildings in a range of conditions. To the north of the town is the Marlinja Aboriginal community, to the south the Newcastle Waters pastoral station.

The Barkly Region Visitor Experience Master Plan 2019, identified the Newcastle Waters Historic Township as core opportunity for the region by enhancing the ‘Explorer’s Way’ drive journey, offering engaging storytelling experiences and providing regional and community benefits.

In 2019, in consultation with Marlinja Aboriginal Community members, Newcastle Waters Station, the Barkly Regional Council and other core stakeholders, a Newcastle Waters Historic Township Concept Plan was developed. This Master Plan has grown and expanded on the concept plan, informed by further consultation,

site assessments, architectural and economic evaluation.

The Master Plan has identified several exciting opportunities that can deliver on tourism commitments of the Northern Territory Government, offering unique and rewarding visitor experiences, protecting and presenting important historical, cultural and natural values and aligning with the tourism aspirations of the Marlinja Aboriginal Community.

## Vision:

*Newcastle Waters Historic Township is celebrated for its role in making the Territory what it is today. It’s a place where history comes alive, and ongoing cultural and natural values are shared and respected.*

## Goals:



Protecting and enhancing the presentation of the values of Newcastle Waters Historic Township and surrounds



Sharing stories – enhancing visitor experiences with immersive visitor interpretation, guided experiences, activities and events



Working together – multiple beneficial partnerships driving the success of the township and region



A vibrant hub – training, and employment, improved liveability, increased visitation and satisfaction, sustainable economic development and growth.

## Game changing projects:

- Sense of welcome and arrival, orientation and visitor interpretation, seamlessly linking the Newcastle Waters Historic Precinct experience
- Adaptive use of the Junction Hotel as a commercial space with basic dining, retail, accommodation reservations, tour bookings and visitor interpretation
- A unique 'night in a small historic town' experience with small campground facilities and basic accommodation including budget rooms, glamping and the potential for a unique stay in one of the restored historic homes
- A cultural hub enabling local Marlinja Community members to produce, showcase and sell traditional arts and crafts and share culturally appropriate stories
- Adaptive use of the Jones Store as a celebration of Newcastle Waters history. A place to share stories of Traditional Landowners, explorers, pastoralists, drovers, business owners, residents and the unforgettable characters that contributed not only to the township, but the identity of the Northern Territory
- Nature based experiences including walkways to Newcastle Creek, featuring visitor interpretation and guided experiences that showcase the natural and cultural values of the area
- Visitor facilities including amenities, vehicle parking (RV friendly) and picnic facilities.

