

MERRIWA DISTRICT PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS

We interviewed 66 pedestrians outside the Merriwa Bakery, and 37 people completed the on-line survey via Survey Monkey. The answers collected are shown below.

1. What brings you to Merriwa?

Travelling through	Touring	Visiting family	Live in Merriwa	Other
46	15	18	13	7

2. What have you seen or done in Merriwa?

Bakery	17	Parkland	8	Town walk	8	Festival of Fleeces	4
Coffee shops	21	Shops	7	Trinity Markets	2	Everything	3
Farmland	2	Silos	14	Visitors Information Centre	4	Other	30
Food	10	Toilets	12	Welcoming Centre	11	Accommodation	3
Pool	3	Pub/Clubs	3	Fuel	2	Museum	2

Two interviewees had stayed at accommodation in town. Other activities included: Battery Rock, butchers, campdraft, Cassilis, Dubbo, family, fun run, Lake Glenbawn, Merriwa Show, Pony Club, railway station, IGA, Scone, and The Drip.

3. What do you like or dislike about Merriwa?

People liked: caravan access, fuel prices, and Merriwa being handy to the coast, plus those below.

Bakery	10	Everything	6	Quiet	3	Toilets	5
Coffee shops	3	Food	3	Shops	7	Town appeal	26
Clean	4	Friendly	20	Silo art	5	Other	6
Welcoming Centre	2	Parks	3	History	1		

Those interviewed disliked: caravan park not easily accessible; shops not open due to covid; more seats; not enough interesting eateries; no seat in garden bed on street; busy; need more signage to welcome visitors; and the weather. Others said disliked 'nothing' about Merriwa. Respondents on-line disliked: river walking trail too short; shops close too early on the weekend; inadequate public facilities; reverse parking; potholes around service station; not much to see or do; limited accommodation for larger groups; Flaggs Road not maintained; main street dangerous with kids and fast trucks; more info re history; pool open more often; need a bigger caravan park off the highway; improved access to silos and town mural.

4. How often do you visit or stop in Merriwa?

Live here	Monthly	2 monthly	6 monthly	Yearly	2 years +	First time
13	19	19	21	8	14	12

5. What is your mode of travel?

Car	71	Car + caravan	14	Campervan	2	Motorbike	11
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6. How did you find the parking and amenities?

Of all the respondents, 78 said the parking and amenities were either excellent, great, very good, good, easy, okay or fine. Some other comments included: lack of amenities in the main street; toilets needed a good clean; toilets need updating and were undersized for the holiday traffic. Some found parking hard to find (eg: Could be better; Crap; Not enough).

7. Did you use the camping ground of dump-point facilities?

Only three of the respondents had stayed in the caravan park. Five others proposed to do so in the future. Others used the free camping behind the RSL Club. Comments regarding the caravan park included: Too open, too small and too close to the highway; facilities mostly clean, good and spotless; and needs to be bigger and not right on the main road.

8. If you are travelling with children - what aspects do you find are child-friendly, and what can be improved?

Only 26 of respondents were travelling with children. Their comments included: Parks are nice; no problems; all good; no improvements needed; lots of parks; parks and playground; the new park;

playgrounds are great for stopping; AND food choices; great main street but danger with trucks; footpaths very uneven, could do with new concreting, lots of trip hazards; new park and amenities; parks are friendly > improve playground; A1; the high street and the van park; all aspects are great; local parks are good; should be larger facilities like Scone. Others said: parks, new amenities and water refill station are great; amenities need to be improved with a dedicated parents room that fits a pram; lack of shade; and trucks racing through the main street is a concern.

9. Have you felt welcome in Merriwa?

Overwhelmingly, (all but one) respondents indicated they felt welcome in Merriwa and said the local businesses were friendly. Additional comments included: great service; good service; people are nice; charming town and people - big hearts; love the vibe; friendly staff in shops; people are friendly; very lovely people; helpful and friendly; friendly country hospitality; travellers also good; friendly and courteous; lovely people; five star service for a five star town; everyone has been friendly and pleasant; shops are friendly; people are eager to help; people are generally friendly and say hello.

10. Do you have any suggestions on what you think can be improved in the Merriwa area to make it more inviting to visitors such as yourself?

Only 41 of respondents offered suggestions on how to improve Merriwa.

- Viewing platform at silos - maybe 50 metres away
- More signage for caravan parking
- Cycling or MTB trail, walkways along river, bush camping areas
- Clear tourist office and hours
- Movie theatre
- Signs and viewing platform for silo art, street art to describe the history of the town
- More street seating
- More shops to buy antiques
- Memorial to General Ivan Docherty 7 Div AIF WW2
- Cafes could be better
- Seats in street, street market
- More to do, cafes, bring in more tourists, internet access
- River amenities not noticeable
- Street art
- Caravan parking, public toilet signage
- Easier Council DA application, more support for business
- More pathways to connect river to rest of town
- A large park for kids
- Street seats, art
- Water play (area), better access to river, signage for old buildings
- Parking signage
- Main street makeover / beautification
- More street lights, gardens. trees, street seating, bike path, music playing in business hours
- Swimming pool amenities need upgrading badly
- Contact Slim Dusty Museum
- Maybe another takeaway shop
- Tip vouchers for locals
- Pool hours need to be open longer
- More motor bike parking (4 respondents)
- Bands, live music events
- Viewing platform to enhance photo opportunity (silo art)
- More shops
- More facilities for everyone
- Heavy haulage bypass
- More service stations / 98 fuel somewhere (BP ran out of fuel)
- Rallies
- Country festival
- More electric barbecue area to encourage people to stay
- Visitor billboard maps in local parks

- More promotion of what's for offer
- More funds from Upper Hunter Shire Council towards community improvement
- Restaurants
- Disappointed both Clubs closed (Monday / Tuesday)
- More / improved local activities (eg: karaoke, pool competitions, community barbeque, outdoor movie nights)
- More / better sporting opportunities (eg: morning yoga, pilates, runs, group classes in a bigger gym)
- More adult swimming pool time without any kids about
- Events to encourage people to stay (eg: folk music, outdoor art, stationary engine rally, sculpture walk)
- More outdoor seating on footpaths
- Outdoor fans
- More areas to sit back and relax in the shade
- Local arts and craft shop run by volunteers
- Better petrol station / fuel services
- Upgraded amenities on Golden Highway
- Better mobile reception along the Golden Highway
- Front-in parking would make it easier to park and reduce stopping
- Fix Willow Tree Road so it is again passable to more vehicles
- More / interesting shops
- Better campground
- Better access to the silos for photo opportunities
- Festival of the Fleeces - more events after the running of the sheep to keep people in town longer. More advertising of events at Showground after the running
- More festivals (eg: Merry Merriwa Festival)
- Tourist drives
- Safer main street - either a detour for trucks or slowing traffic further
- Promotion of the surrounding environment

11. What is the Postcode where you live?

Postcodes given have been grouped into regional areas.

Sydney	4	Upper Hunter	18	South Coast	3
Central Coast	4	Tamworth	7	Orange	1
Greater Newcastle	19	Warrumbungles	6	Central West	15
Lower Hunter	7	Mid-North Coast	3	Parkes/Forbes	5
North Coast	1	Tablelands	1	Queensland	3
Canberra	1				

12. What is your age?

This question was only asked in the on-line survey, of which only 36 of the 58 respondents replied.

18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 +
3	5	5	7	11	5	0