

COOBER PEDY AFFIRMED

AS THE HUB OF FAR NORTH SA

A RESIDENTS' VISION FOR RECOGNITION, CONNECTION AND POSSIBILITY

A WORLD ICON. A REGIONAL LIFELINE. A PLACE TO BUILD FROM.

WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF COOBER PEDY.

We live in a place found nowhere else in the world - a town carved into the earth, shaped by opal, country, distance and the people who chose to make a life here.

We love this place. We know its challenges. We also know its value. Coober Pedy is the Opal Capital of the World, a South Australian icon, a home of extraordinary cultural diversity, and a practical centre for surrounding communities, stations, visitors and workers.

OUR VISION IS SIMPLE AND BOLD

COOBER PEDY AFFIRMED AS THE HUB OF FAR NORTH SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Affirmed in policy. Enabled in practice. Reflected in every agency that serves the Far North.

A WORLD ICON

Underground homes, ancient landscapes and one of the world's most famous opal regions.

A REGIONAL LIFELINE

A practical service, access and workforce centre for stations, the APY Lands, remote communities, tourism routes and major work sites.

A PLACE TO BUILD FROM

A platform for stronger services, tourism, industry, culture and opportunity.

COOBER PEDY DOES NOT NEED TO BE INVENTED AS A HUB. IT NEEDS TO BE AFFIRMED - AND ENABLED TO SERVE THE WIDER FAR NORTH, WITH THE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT IT NEEDS TO DO SO.

AFFIRMATION MUST CHANGE HOW THE STATE SEES AND SERVES THE FAR NORTH

A HUB IS NOT A TITLE.

It is a place with enough capability, continuity, authority and connection to serve its own residents and link a wider region. Formal affirmation must therefore change the way South Australia plans for the Far North.

THE POLICY DECISION

SOUTH AUSTRALIA FORMALLY AFFIRMS COOBER PEDY AS THE HUB OF FAR NORTH SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Once affirmed, every department and agency should test whether its staffing, service hours, regional coverage, outreach, infrastructure, workforce supports, housing assumptions and decision-making arrangements are equal to the role the State has recognised.

01

SEE THE WHOLE PLACE

Police, health, education, governance, airport access, housing, tourism and industry are parts of the same community - not isolated portfolio problems.

02

DESIGN FOR REMOTE REALITY

Distance, climate, cultural diversity, regional reach and a changing visitor and workforce population must shape service models and staffing decisions.

03

BUILD WITH LOCAL PEOPLE

Residents, Coober Pedy Together and its action teams, Umoona Community Council, AMYAC, the local authority, surrounding communities, local organisations, businesses and volunteers must be part of decisions from the beginning.

04

START FROM STRENGTH

Opal, country, tourism, culture, resources, renewables, ingenuity and community leadership are assets to build from - not footnotes to a deficit story.

WHAT AN AFFIRMED HUB FEELS LIKE

Connection, Belonging, and Safety. Help available when it is needed. Children and young people supported to thrive. Families confident to stay. Older people able to age at home. Visitors welcomed. Industries valued. Local voices heard.

THE TEST FOR EVERY AGENCY: ARE OUR CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS EQUAL TO THE HUB ROLE?

STAFFING

Enough permanent capability to carry a genuine regional role.

HOURS & ACCESS

Help available when need occurs - not only when a visiting service is in town.

REGIONAL REACH

Coober Pedy able to connect stations, the APY Lands, remote communities, tourism routes, work sites, workers and visitors.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF A WORKING FAR NORTH HUB

A hub is proven in ordinary life: whether people can feel safe, reach support, learn well, find a home, age well and imagine a future without leaving the place they love.

01 GOVERNANCE THAT WORKS FOR THIS PLACE

After more than seven years under administration, and sincere efforts by successive governments of different political persuasions, Coober Pedy still needs an enduring answer. Establish a sustainable hybrid model that restores trusted local voice, brings community, Aboriginal and statutory leadership together, and ensures a District Council or local authority is fairly and equitably supported to deliver local services and the regional responsibilities of the Far North hub.

02 24/7 POLICE & EMERGENCY SERVICES HUB

A permanent, coordinated 24/7 base for Coober Pedy and the wider Far North, bringing together South Australia Police, SA Ambulance Service, Country Fire Service (CFS), State Emergency Service (SES) and Mine Rescue. It must provide the staffing, facilities, equipment, communications, joint training and continuing support these services need to respond safely and confidently across a vast remote region, at any hour.

03 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING

Create a community-led action plan for children, young people and families, built from strengths, culture, belonging and opportunity. Link a high-quality Children's Centre with an Area School equipped with modern laptops and technology, substantial building renewal, and access to music, art, cooking, languages and available Department programs. Attract experienced teachers prepared for remote and culturally responsive practice, with local educators shaping recruitment and induction. Expand tutoring, alternative learning, Indigenous-led programs, a girls' engagement pathway such as Shooting Stars, and positive attendance supports developed with families, so every young person can belong, learn and imagine a future here.

04 COMMUNITY, WELLBEING & HEALTHY AGEING HUBS

Bring allied health, mental health, perinatal and RFDS outreach together with two visible community anchors. A Community and Collaboration Hub: a neutral home for services, local action teams, meetings, wellbeing and connection. A Healthy Ageing Hub, already being shaped locally: helping older residents stay active and independent, with practical support and a long-term pathway to supported accommodation so people can age well in Coober Pedy - their home.

05 A COOBER PEDY AIRPORT FIT FOR THE FAR NORTH

The airport is the first practical test of affirmation. Act urgently on a safe, reliable upgrade and sustainable long-term operating model. It is essential infrastructure for residents, essential workers, RFDS, emergency response, visiting services, tourism, opal, resources, freight and investment. A hub must also house the people who keep it running: advance CPT's work with 1835 Property on 43 new two- and three-bedroom homes for essential workers. Access and housing cannot be allowed to limit the Far North hub.

THE FAR NORTH IS MEASURED IN HOURS, NOT SUBURBS - ACROSS STATIONS, THE APY LANDS, REMOTE COMMUNITIES, TOURISM ROUTES, MINES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES.

THE OPPORTUNITY ONLY COOBER PEDY CAN CREATE

The Far North does not need a copy of somewhere else. It needs the confidence to build from what is already here - and Coober Pedy gives South Australia a story and platform found nowhere else.

06 TRAINING & PATHWAYS FOR THE FAR NORTH

Make the Coober Pedy TAFE campus a Far North training and pathways hub for people of all ages. Link courses, work placements, apprenticeships and enterprise to tourism and hospitality, resources and renewables, opal mining, cutting, polishing and jewellery, emergency services, health and community services, trades and small business. Training should lead somewhere: a job, a business, a qualification or a reason to stay.

07 OPAL CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

Opal is not simply Coober Pedy's history. It is a living South Australian industry, culture and international story. Strengthen prospecting and mining, cutting, polishing, jewellery, training, provenance, trade and market development. Support Fire & Rainbow 2027 - the South Australian Opal, Gem and Minerals Show being developed with the South Australian Museum - to connect the Opal Capital of the World with industry, education, tourism and public wonder.

08 SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S OUTBACK & REMOTE TOURISM DESTINATION

Back Coober Pedy as South Australia's signature outback destination through a multi-day festival of food, music and culture; Drive-In redevelopment; destination-level experiences; the Opal Way tourist drive to Andamooka; and stronger support for remote operators. Adelaide Fringe is now part of Coober Pedy's cultural calendar - delivered in 2025 and 2026 and returning in 2027. Build on that momentum: SA Film Corporation is supporting CPT to create a local film and production framework. Give people a reason to stop, stay, dig deeper and return.

09 RESOURCES, RENEWABLES & REGIONAL INDUSTRY

Use Coober Pedy as a support base for exploration, mining, renewable energy and essential work across the Far North. Harness sun and wind in ways that create enduring local benefit, skills, income and stronger energy security. Build practical partnerships linking regional projects with local jobs, training, business participation, essential-worker housing, airport access and stronger supply chains.

10 LIVEABILITY: A TOWN PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE IN

A hub cannot just fly people in for a roster; it must be a town where people can build a life in, honour culture and leadership, back sport, recreation, arts, clubs, volunteers, family and all-age social activities, community events and the places where people gather. People need something to do, somewhere to meet and reasons to connect, belong and be proud of home. Coober Pedy Together Inc. connects local ideas and action teams with government and partners - ready to lead locally, with that circle standing behind the community.

FROM AFFIRMATION TO ACTION

The next step is a regular rhythm of connection, communication and meetings between CPT, Government and key partners, with clear contact points and a shared, timed action plan - built with local people - that turns these ten foundations into practical, visible progress.

WE ARE NOT ASKING SOUTH AUSTRALIA TO RESCUE COOBER PEDY.

We are asking it to look deeper, recognise the strength and capability already in the community, to provide the support and resources it needs, and to stand beside the people ready to make it stronger.

AFFIRM COOBER PEDY. BACK THE HUB. LET THE FAR NORTH GROW FROM HERE.

COOBER PEDY TOGETHER
Creating Connection, Unearthing Possibility
www.cooberpedytogether.com.au