

The Barkly is the Territory's third largest region and extends along the Stuart Highway from Tara to Elliott and east across the Barkly Tablelands to Queensland. The region is made up of small communities separated by long distances and is home to about 6,140 people, of whom around 71% are Aboriginal. Tennant Creek is the main centre with a population of about 3,300 people. A high proportion of people living in the region are young, with about 39% aged 24 years and under, and about 7% aged 65 or older.



Major industries in the region include government services, agriculture, construction, and mining. The Barkly and Tennant Creek pastoral district accounts for a substantial proportion of the Territory's total cattle industry. The Territory Government is also investing to develop Tennant Creek as a mining and mineral services centre.

Solar energy

The Territory's renewable potential has been recognised by Sun Cable's \$30 billion Australia-Asia Power Link project. Australia-Asia Power Link is a world first, transformational renewable energy project providing a pathway to a new export industry. With its solar farm to be located in the Barkly region, it involves developing infrastructure and systems to deliver renewable electricity to Darwin and Singapore via a 5,000 kilometre high voltage direct current transmission system and subsea cable. It is estimated the project has the potential to provide up to 15% of Singapore's electricity needs from 2027, and abate 8.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.

Barkly Regional Deal

Implementation of initiatives under the \$78.4 million Barkly Regional Deal is well underway. The 10-year deal includes \$45.4 million from the Commonwealth, \$30 million from the Territory Government and \$3 million from Barkly Regional Council.

The deal is focused on working with Barkly communities and Aboriginal homelands to design and deliver a range of initiatives that aim to improve the productivity and liveability of the Barkly region by stimulating economic growth, improving social outcomes and supporting local Aboriginal leadership. Progress to date includes:

Barkly Business Hub

Commencement of the \$2.2 million transformation of the Barkly Business Hub, with the Territory Government contributing an additional \$1.4 million, to deliver a 'one-stop-shop' to support local business and skills development. Completion of works is anticipated in late 2022.

Supporting our youth

Construction of the Barkly youth justice accommodation facility began in October 2021. The \$3.6 million facility, supported by ongoing operational funding of \$2 million each year, will provide an alternative to detention for young people in the region, and aims to reduce reoffending through engagement in education, vocational education and training, and health and wellbeing services. Construction is expected to be completed in early 2023.

Also, the delivery of trauma informed care training and workshops to community service providers and organisations in the Barkly over a two-year period has started. \$3 million has been committed to provide support to ensure responses to the needs of children and young people in the Barkly region are provided in ways that recognise intergenerational trauma.

Boarding facility

Following an initial infrastructure commitment of \$9.7 million in 2019, the Commonwealth has recently committed an additional \$6.3 million to construct the Barkly student boarding facility. Detailed design of the facility to provide accessible and suitable accommodation for secondary school children is being progressed following community consultation across the Barkly region. Construction is expected to start in 2023.

Tennant Creek Visitor Park

Approvals have been secured for construction of the Tennant Creek Visitor Park and planning processes and procurement of a design and construct contractor are currently being progressed. The Barkly region will also be supported to develop an initial scope for procurement of a service operator, including service model. Funding of \$9.5 million has been committed to construct and operate the park, which will provide a range of safe accommodation options for transitional and seasonal visitors to Tennant Creek from outlying communities.

Local Community Projects Fund

Community-identified infrastructure is being delivered in communities and Aboriginal homelands across the Barkly under the \$6 million Local Community Projects Fund. Upgrades to community sporting and recreational amenities, enhanced community safety through street lighting and better electricity reliability have been supported through the fund.

Housing investment

Budget 2022 invests in public housing for the Barkly to reduce overcrowding, including 10 new one-bedroom units at Peko Road in Tennant Creek and further builds in Elliott.

Other builds include:

- 22 new government employee houses (GEH) in Tennant Creek
- 13 homes for current GEH tenants who are transferring from existing GEH dwellings. The 13 former GEH homes will transfer to public housing stock to reduce the public housing waitlist in Tennant Creek
- 9 homes for new recruits and existing GEH tenants who are residing in other GEH dwellings leased from the private sector, which will free up rental stock in the private market.

Tennant Creek multi-modal logistics hub

The Territory and Commonwealth governments are working in partnership to develop a rail/road multi-modal hub in Tennant Creek.

The proposed hub would service a potential rail connection between Tennant Creek and Townsville.

The Territory Government is also progressing planning work to establish Tennant Creek as a logistics and mining hub to boost jobs and export activity, including a rail loop/siding, utilities and roads for a shared industrial precinct.

Major works overview

	Capital works
	\$000
Transport	47 563
Housing and community amenities	4 989
Economic affairs	11 600
Recreation, culture and religion	10 499
Health	3 175
Public order and safety	3 398
Social protection	2 043
Education	494
Total Barkly	83 762