



**Notice is given that a Meeting of Council will be held on:**

**Date: Tuesday, 27 August 2024**  
**Time: 3.00pm**  
**Location: Loddon Shire Council Chambers, Wedderburn**

# **AGENDA**

## **Council Meeting**

## Order Of Business

<b>1</b>	<b>OPENING AFFIRMATION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>PREVIOUS MINUTES</b> .....	<b>6</b>
5.1	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.....	6
<b>6</b>	<b>COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS</b> .....	<b>7</b>
6.1	RECORD OF COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS .....	7
<b>7</b>	<b>REVIEW OF ACTIONS</b> .....	<b>10</b>
7.1	REVIEW OF ACTIONS .....	10
<b>8</b>	<b>MAYORAL REPORT</b> .....	<b>18</b>
8.1	MAYORAL REPORT.....	18
<b>9</b>	<b>COUNCILLORS' REPORT</b> .....	<b>19</b>
9.1	COUNCILLORS' REPORTS .....	19
<b>10</b>	<b>DECISION REPORTS</b> .....	<b>22</b>
10.1	PA 5979 - RE-SUBDIVISION OF FOUR LOTS INTO TWO NEW LOTS AT 24-32 WILSON STREET, WEDDERBURN .....	22
10.2	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.....	42
10.3	LODDON SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY .....	82
10.4	TABLING OF PETITION - KERB AND CHANNEL IN GODFREY STREET, BOORT .....	180
10.5	DRAFT LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY.....	211
10.6	LODDON PLANNING SCHEME - UPDATE AMENDMENT AUTHORISATION REQUEST.....	422
10.7	HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM - FUNDING APPLICATION ENDORSEMENT .....	496
10.8	GOVERNANCE RULES REVIEW .....	499
<b>11</b>	<b>INFORMATION REPORTS</b> .....	<b>501</b>
11.1	ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN DEFECT RECTIFICATION COMPLIANCE REPORT .....	501
11.2	TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT .....	504
11.3	QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT- STATUTORY PLANNING .....	512
11.4	PUBLIC HEALTH QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT .....	518
11.5	ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM 2023-2024 QUARTERLY UPDATE AND FLOOD PROGRAM UPDATE.....	521
11.6	LOCAL LAWS AND PLANNING COMPLIANCE QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT .....	530
11.7	QUARTERLY BUILDING SERVICES ACTIVITY REPORT .....	534



11.8	LIBRARY SERVICES QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT.....	538
11.9	LODDON SWIMMING POOLS – END OF SEASON REPORT 2023-2024 .....	542
<b>12</b>	<b>COMPLIANCE REPORTS.....</b>	<b>545</b>
	Nil	
<b>13</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS .....</b>	<b>545</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS .....</b>	<b>545</b>
	Nil	



**OPENING COMMENT**

This meeting is being recorded and audio streamed via the Council website and Facebook.

**1 OPENING AFFIRMATION**

“We, the Councillors of the Loddon Shire, declare that we will carry out our duties in the best interests of the community, and through collective leadership will maintain the highest standards of good governance.”

**2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

“The Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered and pays its respects to their Elders both past and present.”

**3 APOLOGIES****4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**5 PREVIOUS MINUTES****5.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**File Number:** FOL/19/45615  
**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance  
**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirm the Minutes of the following meetings as previously circulated to Councillors:

1. Council Briefing of 23 July 2024
2. Council Meeting of 23 July 2024
3. Council Forum of 13 August 2024.

**REPORT**

This report seeks Council confirmation of Minutes from the July 2024 Council Briefing and Council Meeting, and the August 2024 Council Forum as previously circulated to Councillors.

**6 COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS****6.1 RECORD OF COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS**

**File Number:** 02/01/001  
**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance  
**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirm records of the following as detailed within this report:

1. Council Briefing 23 July 2024
2. Council Forum 13 August 2024.

Rule 35 of Council's Governance Rules requires a record of meetings conducted under the auspices of Council to be presented to the next available scheduled Council meeting for confirmation that must include:

- a) a record of which Councillors and officers attended the meeting;
- b) a summary of the matters considered in the meeting; and
- c) a record of any conflicts of interest disclosed by Councillors and officers and any Councillors or officers that left the meeting whilst a matter that their conflict of interest related to was being discussed.

Section 3 of the Governance Rules defines meetings conducted under the auspices of Council to mean a meeting of the kind described in section 131(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 and includes a meeting which:

- a) is schedule or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- b) is attended by a majority of Councillors;
- c) is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- d) is not a Council meeting or delegated committee meeting.

This report seeks confirmation of the following Council auspiced meetings as detailed within this report:

1. Council Briefing 23 July 2024
2. Council Forum 13 August 2024.

Meeting details	Briefing
Date	23 July 2024
Councillor Attendees	Cr Holt (Mayor) Cr Beattie Cr Jungwirth Cr Murphy Cr Straub
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Steven Phillips, Director Operations Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate Christine Coombes, Executive Services Officer
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review of Final Draft 2024-25 CEO Performance Plan</li> <li>2. Review of Council Meeting Agenda</li> <li>3. Heritage Loan Policy</li> <li>4. Advocacy for Newbridge Water and Sewerage</li> <li>5. 2024 Council Election Update</li> <li>6. Intention to Sell Properties Listed for July 2024 Council Meeting</li> <li>7. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing 2025 Victorian transmission plan</li> <li>• Water buy backs</li> <li>• Newbridge Connectivity</li> <li>• Crowd Strike</li> <li>• Letter of Condolence to Bendigo City Council on the passing of Cr Rod Fyffe</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/ officer making disclosure	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer declared a material conflict of interest in relation to Agenda item 3.1 (item 1 above)
Councillor/officer left room	The Chief Executive Officer joined the meeting for the commencement of Agenda item 3.2 (item 2 above)

Meeting details	Forum
Date	13 August 2024
Councillor Attendees	Cr Holt (Mayor) Cr Straub Cr Beattie Cr Murphy Cr Jungwirth
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Steven Phillips, Director Operations Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate Lisa Clue, Manager Governance David Stretch (Manager Tourism and Economic Development) – Items 1 – 4 below Phil Burne and Steve Crow (Virya Energy Pty Ltd) and Neil Lehmann (Landowner) – Item 1 below Nick Byrne (REMPPLAN) – Item 2 below Christine Coombes (Executive Services Officer) – Item 4 below Carolyn Stephenson (Senior Strategic Planner) and Glenn Harvey (Manager Development and Compliance) – Item 5 below Deanne Caserta (Manager Financial Services) – Item 6 below Brad Drust, Camille White and Sean Morgan (NCCMA) – Item 7 below Orrin Hogan (Manager Community Partnerships), Laura Naughton (Recreation Officer) and Bianca Hendry (Aquatic Support Officer) – Items 9 and 10 below
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Virya Energy – Meering West Wind Farm Presentation</li> <li>2. Economic Development Strategy Project – Draft EDS Presentation</li> <li>3. Tourism and Economic Development – Quarterly Activity Report</li> <li>4. Wedderburn Housing Estate – Update, funding application</li> <li>5. Loddon Planning Scheme – Update Amendment</li> <li>6. Section 181 Sales Update – Sale of properties for unpaid rates and charges</li> <li>7. North Central Catchment Management Authority Presentation</li> <li>8. Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria – Final Report</li> <li>9. Loddon Swimming Pools – End of Season Report 2023-24</li> <li>10. Draft Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy</li> <li>11. Draft Social Infrastructure Strategy</li> <li>12. Priorities 2024</li> <li>13. Governance Rules Review</li> <li>14. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAV State Council Motion</li> <li>• Draft Model Councillor Code of Conduct, Internal Resolution Procedure and Training Outline to Mandatory Induction Training</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/ officer making disclosure	Nil
Councillor/officer left room	

**7 REVIEW OF ACTIONS****7.1 REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

**File Number:** 02/01/002  
**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance  
**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** 1. Resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council Meeting

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meetings as attached to this report.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**REPORT**

A document containing the status of actions from July Council meeting resolutions is attached to this Agenda report.

There were no outstanding actions from Council meeting resolutions prior to July 2024.

All actions from the July Council meeting resolutions have been acted upon.



**Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting**

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Carroll, Reece Stedman, Michelle	Confidential Items	2024-2025 CEO Performance Plan
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/86</b>			
Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie			
That Council endorse the 2024-2025 Chief Executive Officer Performance Plan as detailed in the attachment to this report <i>with the following amendments</i> :			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deletion of KRA4 - Success Measure: "Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (early 2024 commencement subject to release of a new code of practice late 2023)"</li> <li>• Amendment of KRA 2 - Success Measure: Complete the PH Streetscape to read: "Complete the Pyramid Hill Streetscape"</li> <li>• Amendment of KRA 2 - Success measure: Stage 1 of the community centre to read: "Stage 1 of the Pyramid Hill Community Centre"</li> <li>• Amendment of KRA 2 - Success Measure: Continue to see funding for stage 2 of the community centre to read: "Continue to seek funding for stage 2 of the Pyramid Hill Community Centre"</li> </ul>			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>14 Aug 2024 11:51am Carroll, Reece - Completion</b>			
Amendments in the resolution have been incorporated into the CEO Performance Plan. This has now been completed.			

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Caserta, Deanne Stedman, Michelle	Decision Reports	Review of the Kerbside Waste and Recycling Policy v4
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/96</b>			
Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy			
That Council adopts the Kerbside Waste and Recycling Policy v4.			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>25 Jul 2024 5:45pm Caserta, Deanne - Completion</b>			
Completed by Caserta, Deanne (action officer) on 25 July 2024 at 5:45:56 PM - Updated and sent to Governance for finalisation and publishing to the website.			

**Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting**

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Colls, Renae Fitzgerald, Lincoln	Decision Reports	2024 Council Meeting Schedule Amendment
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/91</b>			
Moved: Cr Dan Straub			
Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie			
That Council			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. bring forward the date of the September Council meeting to Monday 16 September 2024 commencing at 3pm; and</li> <li>2. provide public notice of the change of date for the September Council meeting in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.</li> </ol>			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>25 Jul 2024 2:21pm Colls, Renae - Completion</b>			
Completed by Colls, Renae (action officer) on 25 July 2024 at 2:21:39 PM - Public notice has been given in accordance with Section 14 of the Governance Rules			

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Colls, Renae Fitzgerald, Lincoln	Decision Reports	GOLDFIELDS LIBRARY TRANSITION
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/97</b>			
Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth			
Seconded: Cr Dan Straub			
That Council			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. commits to establishing and transitioning service to a new Library Service Beneficial Enterprise under section 110 and 111 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>; and</li> <li>2. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to progress the relevant legal and financial steps required; and</li> <li>3. delegate the Goldfields Library Corporation Board to undertake the necessary steps to progress the relevant legal and financial steps required; and</li> <li>4. instructs the Goldfields Library Corporation to develop the following key documents:                         <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a draft constitution for the new entity</li> <li>b) a draft library agreement for Councils to review</li> <li>c) a draft transfer of business agreement</li> <li>d) a risk assessment of business transition; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. note that a further report will be presented to Council seeking to endorse the new Beneficial Enterprise constitution.</li> </ol>			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>15 Aug 2024 10:40am Colls, Renae - Completion</b>			
Completed by Colls, Renae (action officer) on 15 August 2024 at 10:40:40 AM - Email sent to GLC CEO per resolution. Council note a further report will be considered in 2025.			

Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Coombes, Christine Fitzgerald, Lincoln	Decision Reports	Intention to sell - Kurraca
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/93</b>			
Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy			
Seconded: Cr Dan Straub			
That Council:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide public notice of Council's intention to sell Lot 1 TP587250 and Lot 1 TP20444, Township of Kurraca, Parish of Kurraca, Logan-Wedderburn Road, Kurraca West, as one lot;</li> <li>2. Undertake community engagement in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>;</li> <li>3. If no objections are raised during community engagement, authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sell, Lot 1 TP587250 and Lot 1 TP20444, Township of Kurraca, Parish of Kurraca, Logan-Wedderburn Road, Kurraca West, as one lot, within 10% of the independent valuation price as attached to this report; and</li> <li>4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to complete the sale.</li> </ol>			
			<b>CARRIED</b>
<b>05 Aug 2024 12:09pm Coombes, Christine - Completion</b>			
Completed by Coombes, Christine (action officer) on 05 August 2024 at 12:09:42 PM - Public notice and community engagement of intention to sell property is currently being undertaken, and closes on 22 August 2024. Administration of submissions and/or sale proceedings will be undertaken by the CEO following this period.			

**Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting**

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Coombes, Christine Fitzgerald, Lincoln	Decision Reports	Intention to sell - properties located in Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn and Woodstock
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/92</b>			
Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy			
Seconded: Cr Dan Straub			
That Council:			
1. Provide public notice of Council's intention to sell:			
a) Lot 1 TP407668 Little Albert Street Pyramid Hill			
b) Allot. 38 Sec. 5 Parish of Wedderburne, Gregsons Road Wedderburn			
c) Lot 1 TP951905 Newbridge Road Woodstock on Loddon			
2. Undertake community engagement in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and the Local Government Act 2020;			
3. If no objections are raised during community engagement, authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sell, the individual properties listed above, within 10% of the independent valuation price for each property as attached to this report; and			
4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to complete the sales.			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>05 Aug 2024 12:09pm Coombes, Christine - Completion</b>			
Completed by Coombes, Christine (action officer) on 05 August 2024 at 12:09:23 PM - Public notice and community engagement of intention to sell property is currently being undertaken, and closes on 22 August 2024. Administration of submissions and/or sale proceedings will be undertaken by the CEO following this period.			

**Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting**

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Fitzgerald, Lincoln Fitzgerald, Lincoln	Compliance Reports	Notice of Motion - Amendment to Governance Rules
<p><b>RESOLUTION 2024/98</b></p> <p>Moved: Cr Dan Straub Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie</p> <p>That Council receive a report to the August Council meeting to consider amending the Governance Rules following a period of community engagement.</p> <p>The proposed change is:</p> <p>That Council amends Division 2 – Standards of conduct, item 30. Addressing the meeting, to include an additional line (4), the use of Mr or Mrs or Miss or Madam is permitted in addressing persons, with established prior consent.</p> <p>(1) Any person addressing the Mayor should refer to the Mayor as Mayor ... [surname].</p> <p>(2) All Councillors, other than the Mayor, should be addressed as Cr .... [surname].</p> <p>(3) All officers should be addressed as Officer ... [surname] or by their official title.</p> <p>(4) The use of Mr or Mrs or Miss or Madam is permitted in addressing persons, with established prior consent. Eg; Mr Mayor, Madam Mayor, Mr, Mrs, Miss ... [surname]</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>13 Aug 2024 10:51pm Clue, Lisa - Completion</b> Completed by Clue, Lisa on behalf of Fitzgerald, Lincoln (action officer) on 13 August 2024 at 10:51:06 PM - Community engagement on the proposed amendment to the Governance Rules has been undertaken and a report prepared for the August Council meeting.</p>			

**Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting**

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Fitzgerald, Lincoln Fitzgerald, Lincoln	Decision Reports	Murray River Group of Councils Advocacy Position - Water Buy Backs
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/95</b>			
Moved: Cr Neil Beattie			
Seconded: Cr Dan Straub			
That Council endorses the Murray River Group of Council's (MRGC) water advocacy position, specifically that the MRGC:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Maintains</b> its strong opposition to open tender voluntary water purchase programs (buy backs) in the southern connected basin due to the long term social and economic damage such programs do to our communities;</li> <li>2. <b>Stresses</b> that the Federal Government has grossly underestimated the detrimental socio-economic realities of open market water buy backs;</li> <li>3. <b>Notes</b> the Victorian Government's draft response to the Federal Government's 'Restoring Our Rivers' Act, titled "Planning Our Basin Future Together: A prospectus to safeguard Victoria's environments and communities in the Murray-Darling Basin";</li> <li>4. <b>Endorses</b> the four principles for water recovery contained within the prospectus as a better option for delivering the amended Basin Plan targets as opposed to open market water buy backs, as follows:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle 1 - Demonstrated environmental benefits in and for Victoria</li> <li>• Principle 2 - Minimised impact on water availability for towns, industries and agricultural production</li> <li>• Principle 3 - Proactive structural change to support a sustainable future for irrigators and communities</li> <li>• Principle 4 -Support progress towards Traditional Owner self-determination in water access and management;</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. <b>Supports</b> the completion of the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Projects (VMFRP) to deliver environmental outcomes to critical wetlands in the MRGC region; and</li> <li>6. <b>Stresses</b> the need to mitigate the socio-economic impacts on communities as a result of further water recovery through identification of strategic local economic investments in areas from where water is recovered.</li> </ol>			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>25 Jul 2024 2:56pm Colls, Renae - Completion</b>			
Completed by Colls, Renae on behalf of Fitzgerald, Lincoln (action officer) on 25 July 2024 at 2:56:45 PM - MRGC Executive Officer and other Councils advised of Loddon Shire Council's position. Further advocacy discussion to occur at next MRGC meeting early September.			

**Council resolutions acted upon since the July 2024 Council meeting**

Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject
Council 23/07/2024	Stephenson, Carolyn Phillips, Steven	Decision Reports	Heritage Loan Policy and Procedure
<b>RESOLUTION 2024/94</b>			
Moved: Cr Dan Straub			
Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie			
That Council adopts the Heritage Loan Policy and Procedure			
<b>CARRIED</b>			
<b>29 Jul 2024 12:33pm Stephenson, Carolyn - Completion</b>			
Completed by Stephenson, Carolyn (action officer) on 29 July 2024 at 12:33:07 PM - Forwarded to Exec and Corp Services for signature, registration and website			

**8 MAYORAL REPORT**

**8.1 MAYORAL REPORT**

**File Number:** 02/01/001  
**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance  
**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

**REPORT**

Mayor Holt will present a verbal report at the meeting.

<b>Loddon Campaspe Councils</b>	
<b>Municipal Association of Victoria</b>	
<b>Murray River Group of Councils</b>	
<b>Rural Councils Victoria</b>	
<b>Audit and Risk Committee</b>	
<b>Section 65 Community Asset Committees:</b>	
Donaldson Park	
Hard Hill Tourist Reserve	
Wedderburn Community Centre	
Wedderburn Engine Park and Market Square Reserve	
Wedderburn Mechanics and Literary Institute Hall	
<b>Other Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>



**9 COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

**9.1 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

**File Number:** 02/01/001  
**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance  
**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

**REPORT**

Each Councillor will present a verbal report at the meeting.

**Cr Beattie**

<b>Rail Freight Alliance</b>	
<b>Section 65 Community Asset Committees:</b>	
Boort Aerodrome	
Boort Memorial Hall	
Boort Park	
Korong Vale Mechanics Hall	
Korong Vale Sports Centre	
Little Lake Boort	
Yando Public Hall	
<b>Other Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>

**Cr Straub**

<b>North Central Local Learning and Employment Network</b>	
<b>Section 65 Community Asset Committees:</b>	
East Loddon Community Centre	
Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall	
<b>Other Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>

**Cr Jungwirth**

<b>Australia Day Committee</b>	
<b>Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance</b>	
<b>Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee</b>	
<b>North Central Goldfields Regional Library</b>	
<b>Other Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>

**Cr Murphy**

<b>Calder Highway Improvement Committee</b>	
<b>Local Government Women’s Charter</b>	
<b>Healthy Minds Network</b>	
<b>Section 65 Community Asset Committees:</b>	
Campbells Forest Hall	
Inglewood Community Sports Centre	
Inglewood Community Elderly Persons Units	
Inglewood Town Hall Hub	
<b>Other Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>

**10 DECISION REPORTS****10.1 PA 5979 - RE-SUBDIVISION OF FOUR LOTS INTO TWO NEW LOTS AT 24-32 WILSON STREET, WEDDERBURN****File Number:****Author:** Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator**Authoriser:** Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance

- Attachments:**
1. **Decision Report 5979**
  2. **Proposed Plan of Subdivision**
  3. **Objection - Confidential**

This attachment is designated as confidential in accordance with Section 3(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

**(under separate cover)**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987, requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 5979 for the re-subdivision of four lots into two new lots at 24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn subject to the following conditions:

**FORMAL PLAN OF SUBDIVISION**

1. The formal plan of subdivision lodged for certification must be in accordance with the approved plan and must not be modified except to comply with statutory requirements or with the further written consent of the Responsible Authority.

**Reticulated Services**

2. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity and gas services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

**Easements**

3. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing or required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

**Certification**

4. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988* must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

**Drainage**

5. The whole of the subject land, including landscaped and paved areas, must be graded and drained to the satisfaction of the council as the responsible drainage authority so as to prevent the discharge of water from the subject land across any road or onto any adjoining land.

**VEHICLE CROSSING**

6. The proposed vehicle crossovers are to be constructed to the satisfaction and requirements of Council. No impending or redirection of existing surface flow is allowed to occur as a result of these works. Any redundant crossover must be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority
7. Prior to the commencement of any works on the road reserve the owner/applicant must submit a Works in a Road Reserve application and be issued a permit to occupy the road for works.
8. All existing road reservation assets are to be protected and maintained throughout the works including all utilities and services. Any damage is to be restored prior to issuing of statement of compliance
9. All drainage and crossover works constructed or carried out as required by conditions 5 & 6 above must be completed to a standard satisfactory to Council prior to the issuing of Statement of Compliance.

**TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES**

10. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
  - a telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
  - a suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:

- a telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- a suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunication facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

**Powercor**

11. This letter shall be supplied to the applicant in its entirety.
12. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988 shall be referred to the Distributor in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.
13. The applicant shall provide an electricity supply to all lots in the subdivision in accordance with the Distributor's requirements and standards. **Notes:** Extension, augmentation or rearrangement of the Distributor's electrical assets may be required to make such supplies available, with the cost of such works generally borne by the applicant.
14. The applicant shall ensure that existing and proposed buildings and electrical installations on the subject land are compliant with the Victorian Service and Installation Rules (VSIR). **Notes:** Where electrical works are required to achieve VSIR compliance, a registered

electrical contractor must be engaged to undertake such works.

### Coliban Water

15. The owner is required to provide reticulated water and sewerage services to each of the lots within the subdivision and comply with any requirements arising from any effect of the proposed development on Coliban Water assets.

Services are to be provided and where necessary, amendments to the existing services, will be required in accordance with our specifications.

16. All Coliban Water assets within the subdivision, are to be protected by an easement in favour of Coliban Region Water Corporation.

17. Applications through our Consent to Connect Process are required prior to water supply services and property service drains (sewerage) being amended and/or connected to Coliban Water assets and complying with our conditions.

Agreement is required to be reached with Coliban Water to verify that a property service drain side-line (sewerage connection point) has been constructed from the Coliban Water sewer main which traverses this development site into the boundaries of Lots 1 & 2. Each sideline must be constructed on the sewer main terminating in locations within each of the lots and clear of the required easements also providing full lot control to each of the proposed lots in accordance with our specifications.

All private works for water supply and sanitary drainage must be constructed in accordance with the National Plumbing and Drainage Code of Australia being AS 3500, the MRWA Water Metering & Servicing Guidelines 2022 and or any relevant requirements of Coliban Water.

18. Prior to Coliban Water issuing our compliance for this subdivision:

Evidence to the satisfaction of Coliban Water will be required to verify that each of the lots have their own property service drain connection point with an inspection shaft constructed to the finished surface, which is required to be protected with an approved cover for its location and these are contained within the boundaries of Lots 1 & 2.

Evidence to the satisfaction of Coliban Water will be required to verify that each of the exist water meters are located within the boundaries of Lots 1 & 2, ensuring that the water supply service pipes have been amended where necessary and do not cross the proposed new lot boundaries.

19. Please note Under section 165(5) of the Water Act (1989), Coliban Water is not required to ensure that the water pressure is adequate for firefighting. It is important to note that Coliban Water does not guarantee fire flows.

20. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must make payment to Coliban Water of New Customer Contributions (NCCs). These contributions are based upon the number of additional allotments connected (or to be connected) to Coliban Water's water, sewer or recycled water networks. A quote will be supplied to the owner on the referral of the Certified plan of subdivision.

### EXPIRY

21. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
- the plan of subdivision is not certified within two (2) years of the issue date of this permit.
  - the subdivision is not completed within five (5) years of the certification of the plan of subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988.

The Responsible Authority may extend the periods referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or within six months afterwards.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

There have been no previous Council discussion on this Planning Application.

**BACKGROUND**

The application was lodged on the 11 June, 2024 proposing to re-subdivide four lots into two new lots at 24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn.

The application was advertised to surrounding landowners; including a notice on the land and one objection has been received.

The application was referred internally to the Councils Asset Management Coordinator with external referrals to Coliban Water & Powercor (Sec 55 referral).

Issues raised in the objection include the future use of the land as an Ambulance Station and the impact from noise from this future use on the existing residential area.

The application is for the re-subdivision of the existing lots and does not include the use of the land.

The application is considered to accord with the state and local provisions of the Loddon Planning Scheme as demonstrated in the report.

Officer recommendation is to issue a notice of decision to grant a planning permit.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) the Minister of Planning delegates a municipal council power to become the planning authority for any planning scheme in force in its municipal district.

A municipal council is obligated to enforce and administer the relevant Planning Scheme and must use the scheme to determine applications. The Loddon Planning Scheme is the relevant Planning Scheme for Council. An application is referred to Council for determination, which:

- receive one or more objections, and/or
- are to be recommended for refusal by the Planning officer.

Pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, notices were sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land. Council has received one objection as the result of the public notification and as such, the matter is being brought to Council for determination. A decision report detailing this application has been prepared and can be found in attachment 1, the plans can be found at attachment 2. The objection is included in the decision report with the personal information removed. Attachment 3 is the same objection with the personal information intact.

The objection has been included twice, once without any personal information and a second time in confidential items including the personal information. This is to insure Council complies with its obligations for handling personal information under the *Privacy and Data Protections Act 2014*. A complete copy of the objection can be made available to the public via an appointment.

**COST/BENEFITS**

There are various costs associated with having a delegated Planning officer consider an application and make a recommendation as well as with the time of the Councillors to consider this recommendation.

The benefits associated with this report is the ability of Council to fulfil its requirement under law and provide the community with a statutory service that delivers well-managed and appropriate development.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

The risks of Council not fulfilling its statutory obligation under the Act include:

- inappropriate use and development which could endanger life and property
- Council's reputation as a Responsible Authority
- breaches of the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* requiring compliance action.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Refer to the decision report (attachment 1) for further detail on the application.



# LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

## **DECISION REPORT 5979 – Re- subdivision of four lots into two lots at 24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn.**



## CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>6</b>
	2.1 The Site & Locality .....	6
	2.2 Site History .....	7
	2.3 Proposal .....	7
	2.4 Loddon Planning Scheme .....	8
	2.4.1 Zone.....	8
	2.4.2 Overlay.....	9
	2.4.3 Relevant Particular Provisions.....	9
	2.4.4 Permit trigger.....	10
	2.4.5 Restrictive Covenant .....	10
	2.4.6 Planning Policy Framework .....	10
	2.4.7 Local Planning Policy Framework.....	10
	2.5 Referrals .....	11
	2.6 Public Notification .....	11
<b>3</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b> .....	<b>12</b>
	3.1 Planner assessment .....	12
<b>4</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Appendix 1:</b> .....	<b>14</b>
	5.1 Objection 1 .....	14

## SUMMARY

<b>Application Number:</b>	5979
<b>Applicant:</b>	Price Merrett Consulting Pty Ltd
<b>Subject Land:</b>	24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn
<b>Owner:</b>	Loddon Shire Council
<b>Zone:</b>	Township Zone
<b>Overlay(s):</b>	Heritage Overlay HO230 (part)
<b>Existing use:</b>	Vacant Land
<b>Proposal:</b>	Re-subdivision of four lots into two lots

The following dot points provide a summary of the application:

- The application was lodged on the 11 June, 2024 proposing to re-subdivide four lots into two new lots at 24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn.
- The application was advertised to surrounding landowners; including a notice on the land and one objection has been received.
- The application was referred internally to the Councils Asset Management Coordinator with external referrals to Coliban Water & Powercor (Sec 55 referral).
- Issues raised in the objection include the future use of the land as an Ambulance Station and the impact from noise from this future use on the existing residential area.
- The application is for the re-subdivision of the existing lots and does not include the use of the land.
- The application is considered to accord with the state and local provisions of the Loddon Planning Scheme as demonstrated in the report.
- Officer recommendation is to issue a notice of decision to grant a planning permit.

## 1 RECOMMENDATION

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987, requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 5979 for the re-subdivision of four lots into two new lots at 24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn subject to the following conditions:

### FORMAL PLAN OF SUBDIVISION

1. The formal plan of subdivision lodged for certification must be in accordance with the approved plan and must not be modified except to comply with statutory requirements or with the further written consent of the Responsible Authority.

### Reticulated Services

2. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity and gas services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

### Easements

3. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing or required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

### Certification

4. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988* must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

### Drainage

5. The whole of the subject land, including landscaped and paved areas, must be graded and drained to the satisfaction of the council as the responsible drainage authority so as to prevent the discharge of water from the subject land across any road or onto any adjoining land.

### VEHICLE CROSSING

6. The proposed vehicle crossovers are to be constructed to the satisfaction and requirements of Council. No impeding or redirection of existing surface flow is allowed to occur as a result of these works. Any redundant crossover must be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority
7. Prior to the commencement of any works on the road reserve the owner/applicant must submit a Works in a Road Reserve application and be issued a permit to occupy the road for works.
8. All existing road reservation assets are to be protected and maintained throughout the works including all utilities and services. Any damage is to be restored prior to issuing of statement of compliance

9. All drainage and crossover works constructed or carried out as required by conditions 5 & 6 above must be completed to a standard satisfactory to Council prior to the issuing of Statement of Compliance.

#### TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

10. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
- a telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
  - a suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:

- a telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- a suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunication facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

#### Powercor

11. This letter shall be supplied to the applicant in its entirety.
12. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988 shall be referred to the Distributor in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.
13. The applicant shall provide an electricity supply to all lots in the subdivision in accordance with the Distributor's requirements and standards. **Notes:** Extension, augmentation or rearrangement of the Distributor's electrical assets may be required to make such supplies available, with the cost of such works generally borne by the applicant.
14. The applicant shall ensure that existing and proposed buildings and electrical installations on the subject land are compliant with the Victorian Service and Installation Rules (VSIR). **Notes:** Where electrical works are required to achieve VSIR compliance, a registered electrical contractor must be engaged to undertake such works.

#### Coliban Water

15. The owner is required to provide reticulated water and sewerage services to each of the lots within the subdivision and comply with any requirements arising from any effect of the proposed development on Coliban Water assets. Services are to be provided and where necessary, amendments to the existing services, will be required in accordance with our specifications.
16. All Coliban Water assets within the subdivision, are to be protected by an easement in favour of Coliban Region Water Corporation.
17. Applications through our Consent to Connect Process are required prior to water supply services and property service drains (sewerage) being amended and/or connected to Coliban Water assets and complying with our conditions.

Agreement is required to be reached with Coliban Water to verify that a property service drain side-line (sewerage connection point) has been constructed from the Coliban Water sewer main which traverses this development site into the boundaries of Lots 1 & 2. Each sideline must be constructed on the sewer main terminating in locations within each of the lots and clear of the required easements also providing full lot control to each of the proposed lots in accordance with our specifications.

All private works for water supply and sanitary drainage must be constructed in accordance with the National Plumbing and Drainage Code of Australia being AS 3500, the MRWA Water Metering & Servicing Guidelines 2022 and or any relevant requirements of Coliban Water.

18. Prior to Coliban Water issuing our compliance for this subdivision:  
Evidence to the satisfaction of Coliban Water will be required to verify that each of the lots have their own property service drain connection point with an inspection shaft constructed to the finished surface, which is required to be protected with an approved cover for its location and these are contained within the boundaries of Lots 1 & 2.  
Evidence to the satisfaction of Coliban Water will be required to verify that each of the exist water meters are located within the boundaries of Lots 1 & 2, ensuring that the water supply service pipes have been amended where necessary and do not cross the proposed new lot boundaries.
19. Please note Under section 165(5) of the Water Act (1989), Coliban Water is not required to ensure that the water pressure is adequate for firefighting. It is important to note that Coliban Water does not guarantee fire flows.
20. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must make payment to Coliban Water of New Customer Contributions (NCCs). These contributions are based upon the number of additional allotments connected (or to be connected) to Coliban Water's water, sewer or recycled water networks. A quote will be supplied to the owner on the referral of the Certified plan of subdivision.

#### **EXPIRY**

21. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
  - the plan of subdivision is not certified within two (2) years of the issue date of this permit.
  - the subdivision is not completed within five (5) years of the certification of the plan of subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988.

The Responsible Authority may extend the periods referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or within six months afterwards.

## **2 DISCUSSION**

### **2.1 The Site & Locality**

The land comprises four existing parcels, Lot 1 TP 575842, Lot 1 TP555062 & Crown Allotments 3 & 7 Section V, Township of Wedderburn. The land has a 63.57m frontage along Wilson Street, 112.25m length along its eastern boundary and 53.01m frontage along Ridge Street having a total area of 6623sqm. The land is vacant with the exception of two small sheds and scattered vegetation and is generally flat. There is an existing access on the Wilson Street frontage and through the Community House entry on Chapel Street.

The adjoining land to the east on the corner of Wilson and Chapel Street is developed with the Wedderburn Community House and Tourist Information Centre. There are dwellings adjoining the land to the west and the east. Opposite the land in both Wilson and Ridge Street are

existing dwellings. The land is located within the Township Zone as is surrounding land under the Loddon Planning Scheme.



Image: Aerial photo of subject site showing existing lots-Source- Applicants submission

## 2.2 Site History

The land is vacant land owned by the Loddon Shire.

## 2.3 Proposal

The proposal seeks to re-subdivide four existing lots into two new lots as follows:

- Lot 1 – 1849sqm – 43m x 43m – shown with the red boundary.
- Lot 2 – 4774sqm - Balance of the land -frontage to both Wilson and Ridge Streets





Image: Proposed Lots Source- Applicants submission

Access to Lot 1 would be via an existing access from Wilson Street, within the north western corner of the lot. The application does not result in the removal of vegetation. The Applicants submission states the proposed two lot subdivision is to accommodate the new Wedderburn Ambulance Station. This application does not include any use or development of the land at this location, other than the re-subdivision of existing lots as described above.

In relation to the requirement for a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, under the provisions of the [Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006](#) and the [Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018](#), a CHMP is required for an activity if:

- all or part of the activity area for the activity is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity; and
- all or part of the activity is a high impact activity.

The subdivision of the land into Two (2) lots is not a high impact activity and the land is not located an area of cultural heritage sensitivity therefore a CHMP is not required.

**2.4 Loddon Planning Scheme**

**2.4.1 Zone**

Township Zone- The land falls within the Township Zone and as such, a permit is required for subdivision pursuant to Clause 32.05-5 of the Planning Scheme.

The purpose of the zone includes:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.*
- *To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.*



- *To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.*

The lots will be connected to reticulated sewerage and water.

#### 2.4.2 Overlay

##### Heritage Overlay –HO230

The site is partly affected by Heritage Overlay HO 230 (part of proposed Lot 2) –referring to Wilson Street Precinct Area, a heritage precinct in this area of Wilson Street. A permit is required for subdivision pursuant to Clause 43.01-1.

The area has local significance and is not included on the Vic Heritage Register. The objectives of the Heritage Overlay include:

- *To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.*
- *To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.*

The considerations relevant to subdivision include (Heritage Overlay Guidelines – Subdivision and Consolidation -Heritage Victoria)

- *Ensure that the subdivision or consolidation complements and supports the significance of the Heritage Place*
- *Ensure that development that might result from a subdivision or consolidation does not adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the Heritage Place*

Part of the property is covered by precinct overlay HO230 – the land is vacant and contains scattered vegetation. There are no trees controls for this precinct, therefore does not appear to be significant heritage fabric or vegetation on the site. The proposed Lots, whilst larger than adjoining, have a frontage width that is similar to the pattern of lots in the immediate area and could support development that aligns with the existing built form and pattern of subdivision and is respectful of the character and appearance of both Wilson and Ridge Streets.

#### 2.4.3 Relevant Particular Provisions

##### Clause 52.01 – Provision of open space

This Clause refers to the public open space contribution and provides that a person who proposes to subdivide land must make a contribution to the council for public open space in an amount specified in the schedule to this clause, which is not specified in this instance unless a subdivision is exempt from a public open space requirement, if:

- *The subdivision of a building used for residential purposes provided each lot contains part of the building. The building must have been constructed or used for residential purposes immediately before 30 October 1989 or a planning permit must have been issued for the building to be constructed or used for residential purposes immediately before that date.*
- *It subdivides land into two lots and the council considers it unlikely that each lot will be further subdivided.*

As no new lots are being created, provision for public open space contribution is not required.

Clause 56 – an assessment against Clause 56 is retained on file. The subdivision would meet the objectives and standards of Clause 56.

The proposed lots are considered to accord with the prevailing street pattern of lots in this area, as they both have street frontage to either Wilson or Ridge Streets and both lots would be able to provide a building envelope that would ensure any future development is consistent with the prevailing development in this area that would maintain setbacks to all boundaries.

#### 2.4.4 Permit trigger

Under clause 32.05-5 of the Township Zone, a permit is required to subdivide land.  
Under Clause 43.01-1 of the Heritage Overlay, a permit is required to subdivide land.

#### 2.4.5 Restrictive Covenant

No restrictive covenants exist on this site.

#### 2.4.6 State Planning Policy Framework

##### Clause 11.01-1L Settlement Strategies

- Direct development to areas serviced by all-weather roads, reducing pressure on the Shire to maintain roads.
- Consolidate residential areas in Wedderburn.

##### Clause 11.02-2S Structure Planning

Its objectives includes :

- *To facilitate the orderly development of urban areas.*

This is achieved by the preparation of a hierarchy of precinct structure plans that:

- *Take into account the strategic and physical context of the location.*
- *Provide the broad planning framework for an area as well as the more detailed planning requirements for neighbourhoods and precincts, where appropriate.*
- *Provide for the development of sustainable and liveable urban areas in an integrated manner.*
- *Assist the development of walkable neighbourhoods.*
- *Facilitate the logical and efficient provision of infrastructure and use of existing infrastructure and services.*

The subject site is located within the defined township boundary of Wedderburn where infill opportunities exist.

Clause 15.01-3 Subdivision design, seeks to ensure the design of subdivisions achieves attractive, safe, accessible, diverse and sustainable neighbourhoods.

The proposed re- subdivision of four lots into two new lots is considered to achieve the above outcomes within the township of Wedderburn.

##### Clause 19.03-2S Infrastructure design and provision

Objectives and strategies outlined within this clause have the purpose of ensuring appropriate physical infrastructure is provided during the development of land and that infrastructure meets recognised standards.

#### 2.4.7 Local Planning Policy Framework

The following section gives consideration to be the relevant sections of the Local Planning Policy Framework for this application.

##### Clause 02.02 Council's Vision

The Shire's vision as articulated in the Council Plan 2017-2021 is to "be a prosperous, vibrant and engaged community." The land use and development priorities for the Shire include:

- Maximising urban growth and development in existing settlements and building viable small communities with strong links to regional centres.
- Improving the presentation and amenity of the townships to attract and retain residents.

Clause 02.03-1 Strategic Directions – Settlement.

There is no one dominant urban centre of the Shire, rather the Shire has a number of small centres serving the surrounding rural areas. The key service centres are Boort, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn. These townships provide retail, health, community and education facilities. The installation of reticulated sewerage disposal systems in the larger towns of the Shire introduced opportunities for additional urban development and improved the amenity of the towns. Lots that were previously unable to be developed, because they were too small for septic tank disposal, have now become available for in-fill development.

Council’s strategic directions for settlement are to:

- Direct urban development to key service centre townships.

Direct development to areas with no or lower vegetation values

**2.5 Referrals**

Table 6: External referrals – Section 55

Coliban Water	Conditional consent
Powercor	Conditional consent

The application was internally referred to Council’s Infrastructure Coordinator who do not raise any concerns in relation to the site.

**2.6 Public Notification**

The application is not exempt from the notice requirement. Pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, the following forms of advertising were undertaken:

- Notices were sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land (including opposite and surrounding).
- A notice was placed on the Wilson Street frontage of the site

One objection was received in response to the application. The matters raised in the objection are summarised below and with Officers response in italics:

- We object to the proposed 2 lot subdivision without knowing what the intended use of the land is for and whether this will affect our current tranquil living conditions or not. We have heard that the proposed use of the land was to include an aged care facility and an ambulance station. If this were to be the case we would have great concern due to the impact on mental health that the noise would create in a relatively quiet residential area. In light of this we do not wish for this subdivision to proceed.

*Officers did forward information to the objectors regarding future use of the land as described in the application for an Ambulance Station. The application for Council consideration is for the re-subdivision of four lots into two new lots. The objection relates to the future use of the land which is not being considered as part of this application. The land is zoned Township Zone under the Loddon Planning Scheme and allows for many as of right uses including a dwelling, community care accommodation, medical centre, place of worship and residential aged care facility. The purpose of the Township Zone includes to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns to serve local community needs.*

### 3 ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 Planner assessment

##### Does the proposal respond to its zoning and policy context?

The proposal is supported by a wide range of policy within the Loddon Planning Scheme which recognises the need for subdivision to respond to neighbourhood character and to accommodate future populations and actively encourages urban consolidation and infill development in Wedderburn, a key service town.

Clause 02.03-1 Council's strategic directions for settlement include:

- Directing urban development to key service centre townships.
- Provide land for a range of urban uses in the townships.

Clause 11.02-1S requires the supply of urban land needs to consider opportunities for the consolidation, redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas.

The State Planning Policy Framework at Clause 15.01-1S Urban Design also requires development to respond to its physical context and to achieve good quality environments through creating urban environments that are functional and contribute to a sense of place and identity. Design strategies require developments to respond to its context in terms of character, natural features, surrounding landscape and facilitate accessibility.

The application is supported by Clause 15.01-3, Subdivision design, of the State Planning Policy Framework. The policy in this clause offers broad guidelines for the design of urban areas, including new subdivisions. Relevant policy aims and strategies seek to ensure subdivision locations have ready access to local services and that the design creates a strong sense of place. Subdivision should be designed to respond to its context in terms of character, natural features and surrounding landscape and provide a range of lot sizes to suit a variety of dwelling and household types to meet the needs of different groups of people.

The decision guidelines at Clause 32.05-14 of the Township Zone require consideration of the pattern of subdivision and its effect on the spacing of buildings as appropriate. The proposed two lots are of a sufficient size to allow any future development to provide setbacks from boundaries and balance built form and vegetation at this location. The size, dimensions and orientation of the lots allows consistency with the existing subdivision pattern and built form at this location in Wilson and Ridge streets.

The application for a re-subdivision of four lots into two new lots is considered to accord with the relevant policy in the state and local sections of the Loddon Planning Scheme relating to urban consolidation and infill policy. The design of the subdivision has responded to the existing neighbourhood character by providing lot sizes that integrate with the adjoining lots, are of a sufficient size that would enable the future development with good solar access and private open space and reinforce the existing subdivision pattern in this section of Wilson and Ridge Streets.

##### Clause 56

Clause 56.03-5 requires subdivisions to be designed to respond to neighbourhood character. Standard C6 of this clause state that subdivisions should:

- Respect the existing neighbourhood character or achieve a preferred neighbourhood character consistent with any relevant neighbourhood character objective, policy or statement set out in this scheme.

- Respond to and integrate with the surrounding urban environment.
- Protect significant vegetation and site features.

The subject site is located within an established residential area and has existing infrastructure capable of accommodating the two lots. The layout and design of the subdivision is considered to achieve the existing neighbourhood character and would achieve the prevailing built form in this section of Wilson and Ridge Streets. The proposed subdivision and layout of lots on the land, including one access driveway on the Wilson Street frontage would allow any future development of these lots to reflect the prevailing subdivision pattern and built form existing in the area.

### 3 CONCLUSION

The application for the re-subdivision of four lots into two lots at 24-32 Wilson Street, Wedderburn is considered to accord with the relevant policy in the state and local sections of the Loddon Planning Scheme relating to subdivision and urban infill policy. The design of the subdivision layout is considered site responsive and would and reinforce the existing subdivision pattern in this section of Wilson and Ridge Streets.

Officer recommendation is for the application to be approved, subject to conditions listed in Section 1 of this report.

## 5 Appendix 1:

### 5.1 Objection 1

We object to the proposed 2 lot subdivision without knowing what the intended use of the land is for and whether this will affect our current tranquil living conditions or not. We have heard that the proposed use of the land was to include an aged care facility and an ambulance station. If this were to be the case we would have great concern due to the impact on mental health that the noise would create in a relatively quiet residential area. In light of this we do not wish for this subdivision to proceed. Can you please inform us of any proposed developments for this proposed subdivided land?



**10.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY****File Number:****Author:** David Stretch, Manager Tourism and Economic Development**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Draft Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the Draft Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy (2025-2029)

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

REMPPLAN and the Manager of Tourism and Economic Development presented the Draft Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy to Council at the August Forum Meeting, with time provided for discussion.

**BACKGROUND**

In March 2024 economic and demographic specialist REMPLAN was engaged to lead the generation of the Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy (2025-2029).

The development of new strategic work during calendar year 2024 involves the delivery of the Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy (project timeline April to end August 2024) and the Loddon Shire Visitor Economy Strategy (project timeline July to early 2025).

Economic development aims to increase the economic capacity of an area, which, in turn, seeks to improve the wellbeing of local communities. An economic development strategy provides a framework for the future growth and prosperity of a particular region.

Loddon Shire Council is committed to working toward realising the community's vision for a Loddon where everyone has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.

The Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029 outlines a comprehensive plan to foster economic growth and resilience in the region.

This strategy is the product of a suite of work including the Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029: Strategic Directions Paper and a range of stakeholder engagement activities.

The strategy, identification of economic objectives and priority actions has been developed with the support of the nominated Project Advisory Group, Chaired by the Loddon Shire Mayor and consisting of industry leaders, business stakeholders and Loddon Council project team.

The strategy includes an implementation plan detailing specific projects and initiatives to be undertaken, with a focus on achieving the outlined strategic objectives and contributing to a sustainable and prosperous future for Loddon Shire.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The draft strategy is attached to this report. To deliver upon this strategy Councillors are being asked to adopt:



- Vision, strategic objectives and priorities
- Implementation Plan, priority actions and timelines
- Outcomes and measurement of success
- Role of Council in Loddon Shire's economic development

These items as outlined in the strategy are proposed to clarify what Loddon and our partners want to achieve, how we will do it, the order of priority and how we will measure if we are successful.

### **COST/BENEFITS**

Project costs are borne within the operational budget of the Economic Development Unit.

The strategy prioritises several objectives, including optimising the agricultural sector, promoting housing development as a catalyst for growth, positioning the Council as a collaborative partner, enhancing community liability, and fostering innovative and diverse industries.

Cost implications for actions indicated in the draft strategy are yet to be finalised, but it is accepted that certain actions or directions in the strategy may require or be contingent on third-party funding support and/or resourcing.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Development of this strategy is consistent with Council's strong desire for economic success. At its Scheduled Council meeting of January 2024 Council adopted its Risk Appetite Statement which includes:

Council has a high appetite for pursuing activities that promote economic and social sustainability of our communities.

Council understands the strength of our communities is through social connections and economic success of our businesses and conducts activities and implements services and programs to support the community.

Not developing an economic development strategy could limit Loddon Shire's ability to adapt to changing economic conditions, address demographic shifts, and manage environmental and infrastructure needs effectively, thereby challenging economic growth and community well-being.

Risks that could hinder growth include:

- Economic stagnation due to lack of investment, business attraction, falling employment.
- Population decline.
- Lack of community vitality, township viability.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement activities included surveys, workshops, round-table meetings and one-on-one interviews with Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation, Regional Development Victoria, Loddon Shire Township Progress and Development Committees, Township representatives, industry leaders, elected members of Loddon Council, Council Executive, Management and Officers.

Project consultants REMPLAN, together with Council Officers, established a Project Advisory Group (Chaired by Mayor Holt) to facilitate consultation and engagement with key Loddon Shire businesses and major employers across key industry sectors, between April and July 2024.

Attendees at Project Advisory Group workshop and meetings:

- Loddon Shire Council Mayor, Cr. Gavan Holt (Chair)
- Drew Chislett (Corian Park Earthmoving / Advanced Energy Tech)
- Peter Wardell (Southern Stockfeeds)
- Donna Doyle (Boort District Health)

- Graham Nesbit (Victorian Farmers Federation)
- Martin Szakal (Dja Dja Wurring Aboriginal Clans Corporation)
- Patricia Scott (Bio Gro)
- Lincoln Fitzgerald (CEO, Loddon Shire Council)
- David Stretch (Manager Tourism and Economic Development, Loddon Shire Council)

Direct Interview engagement:

- Stephen Van Sheik (Bio Gro)
- Sydney Muller (George Weston Foods)
- Ruth Sutherland (Cobram Estate)
- Tony Girgis (Hazeldenes)
- Tracey Ling (Hazeledenes)
- Tom Smith (Kia-Ora Piggery / Hexcore Hemp)

# Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025 - 2029

DRAFTV3.16.08.24



# Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025 - 2029

This project has been conducted by REMPLAN on behalf of Loddon Shire Council.

Month 2024 (Adopted month 2024)

DRAFTV3.16.08.24



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# Contents

<b>Loddon Shire Council Acknowledgement of Country and Partnership Statement</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Loddon Shire</b>	<b>1</b>
Overview .....	2
Economic Context .....	3
Economic Opportunities .....	4
<b>Economic Development Strategy in Context</b>	<b>5</b>
Policy Context.....	6
Economic Development in Local Government .....	7
The role of Council in Economic Development .....	8
The role of the Economic Development Strategy.....	9
<b>The Strategy</b>	<b>10</b>
The Economic Vision.....	11
Strategic Objectives .....	12
Loddon Economic Development Strategy Overview.....	13
<b>Detailed Objectives and Priorities</b>	<b>14</b>
Optimised Agricultural Sector .....	15
Housing: A catalyst for growth.....	16
Council: An advocating & collaborative partner.....	17
Liveable & Resilient Communities .....	18
Innovative & Diverse Industries .....	19
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	<b>20</b>
Action Plan .....	21
Implementation Timeframe .....	29
Measuring our success .....	30





# Loddon Shire Council Acknowledgement of Country and Partnership Statement

*Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land comprising the Loddon Shire Council area. Council would like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present. Council also recognises the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the Shire who make up the vibrant communities to which our organisation provides services.*

Loddon Shire Council is committed to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups in the region.

Council recognises these Traditional Custodians as the rights holders of the land and water, not just stakeholders. We value their knowledge, culture, and aspirations, and seek to support them in achieving their goals.

Loddon Shire Council is proud to support the Recognition and Land Use Agreement process with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. This process aims to recognise the rights and interests of the Dja Dja Wurrung people in the land and water, and to establish a framework for joint management of natural and cultural resources. We support the journey to self-determination for Djaara people and acknowledge their contribution to the environmental and economic wellbeing of the region.

Loddon Shire Council recognises the scope of the project and opportunity that the Recognition and Land Use Agreement presents for the Shire and its communities. We see this as a chance to strengthen our relationship with the Traditional Custodians, to learn from their wisdom and experience, and to collaborate on initiatives that benefit both parties. We are open to exploring new and innovative ways of working together, such as co-design, co-delivery, and co-evaluation of programs and services.

Loddon Shire Council supports the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises in the region, and the opportunities they could take up in various sectors, such as tourism, agriculture, forestry, arts, and education. We are keen to facilitate the growth and sustainability of these enterprises in the local economy, and to promote their products and services to the wider market. We believe that these enterprises can enhance the diversity and resilience of the local economy and create employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Loddon Shire Council aligns its policies and strategies with the principles and objectives of self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Council is guided by the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework, the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy, the Victorian Forest Policy, and other relevant policies and plans.

Loddon Shire Council is keen to build a relationship with Traditional Custodians and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups to inform its key initiatives for economic development.

The principle of 'walking together' underpins the approach that Council seeks to take in building a relationship and building momentum for positive regional economic development outcomes.

Council believes future economic development initiatives can be enhanced and enriched by the involvement and participation of the Traditional Custodians and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups, and that they will create mutual benefits for all.

# Executive Summary

## Purpose

Economic development aims to increase the economic capacity of an area, which, in turn, seeks to improve the wellbeing of local communities. An economic development strategy provides a framework for the future growth and prosperity of a particular region.

Loddon Shire Council is committed to working toward realising the community's vision for a Loddon where everyone has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.

The Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029 (Strategy) outlines a comprehensive plan to foster economic growth and resilience in the region.

## Strategy Development

This Strategy is the product of a suite of work including the *Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029: Strategic Directions Paper* and a range of stakeholder engagement activities. Engagement activities involved Township representatives, industry leaders, elected members of Loddon Council, Loddon Leaders (Council management),

The Strategy, identification of economic objectives, and priority actions has been developed with the support of the nominated Project Advisory Group, which consists of industry leaders and Loddon Council project team.

The Strategy prioritises several objectives, including optimising the agricultural sector, promoting housing development as a catalyst for growth, positioning the Council as a collaborative partner, enhancing community liability, and fostering innovative and diverse industries.

## Implementation

The Strategy includes an implementation plan detailing activities and initiatives to be undertaken that focus on achieving the outlined strategic objectives, contributing to a sustainable and prosperous future for Loddon Shire. The implementation plan includes some recommended projects, the delivery of which may be subject to third party funding.

Review and reporting of Council's progress in implementing the Strategy is essential not only to monitor progress but to ensure key priority areas remain relevant as Council work toward achieving the community's economic aspirations.



### Optimised Agricultural Sector

An optimised agricultural sector that promotes collaboration and innovation among producers, enhancing productivity, resilience, market responsiveness, and the region's capacity to attract investment, new businesses, and talent.



### Housing: A catalyst for growth

A diverse and sustainable housing supply which supports economic growth by attracting and retaining residents and workers, while strengthening existing townships.



### Council: An advocating & collaborative partner

Council actions that foster a growing and prosperous Loddon Shire by collaborating with businesses and industry partners, and government entities to attract investment, and promote sustainable economic growth and job creation.



### Liveable & Resilient Communities

Loddon will be known for its lifestyle and opportunities, offering equitable access to services and employment, celebrated through a strong regional identity that attracts people and investment, comprised of townships that foster a sense of place and culture.



### Innovative & Diverse Industries

A diverse and innovative industry base that has capabilities to respond to emerging industry, economic and policy trends, leveraging regional supply chain opportunities while value adding to the local economy.







## Overview

Loddon Shire is situated 200km north of Melbourne, close to the major town centres of Bendigo, Kerang and Echuca. Home to almost 7,800 residents, the Shire spans 6,700 km<sup>2</sup>, featuring rolling hills, forests, granite outcrops, premium agricultural land, and the Loddon River, which services industry, people, tourism, and lifestyle.

The Shire is a 'community of communities', comprising many small towns including Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn, Korong Vale, Dingee, Mitiamo, Serpentine, Newbridge, Tarnagulla, Laanecoorie, Eddington, Boort, Pyramid Hill and other surrounding towns and communities.

Key infrastructure includes the Calder Highway and South West Loddon Pipeline, which provides a reliable water supply for agricultural activities and potential future business ventures.

Major employers in Loddon Shire include Laucke Flour Mills, Hazeldene's Chicken Farms, Boundary Bend Olives, Water Wheel Vineyards, Southern Riverlands Poultry, Southern Stockfeeds, ASQ Allstone Quarries, Cobram Estate Olives, George Weston Foods, Corian Park Earth Moving and Kia-Ora Piggery.

Agriculture is the Shire's primary industry, accounting for half of all employment and economic output and almost three-quarters of all regional exports. Activities include dairy, horticulture, viticulture, cropping, lamb and intensive poultry and pig farming. An increasing number of agriculture producers are investing in intensive production facilities for pigs and chickens.

Loddon Shire's economy and workforce benefit from neighbouring municipalities like Gannawarra, Campaspe, Buloke, and Northern Grampians. Greater Bendigo, the major regional centre, provides employment for one in five Loddon Shire residents.

As surrounding economies diversify, so too does demand for goods and services, providing various opportunities for Loddon industries, provided there is an adequate workforce and housing. Increased investment in neighbouring regions, such as the establishment of the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct (BREP), Marong, presents significant value-add opportunities for Loddon's primary production and agriculture.



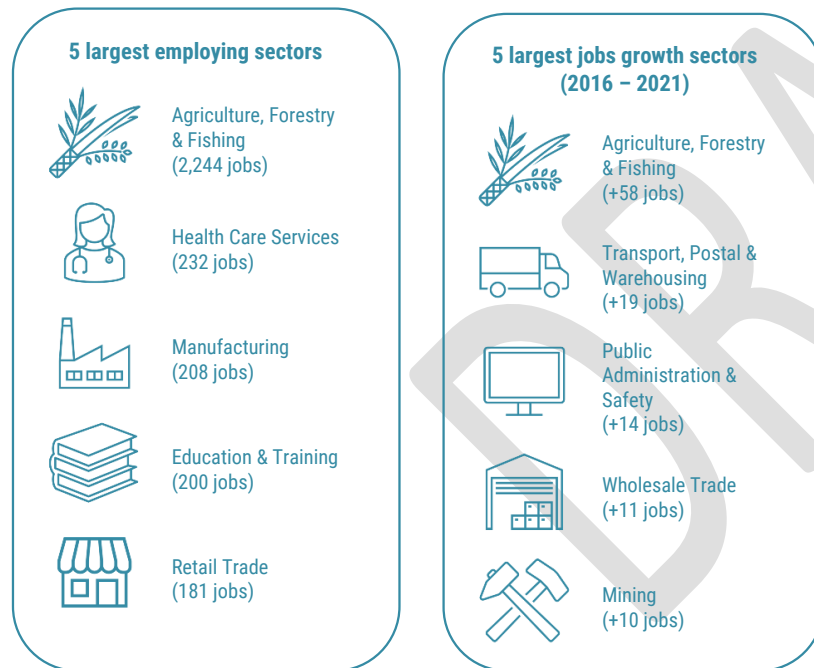
# Economic Context

Loddon Shire’s gross regional product (GRP) is estimated at \$586.7 million, supporting an estimated 2,770 jobs. Employment is concentrated in the five largest industries (agriculture, health care, manufacturing, education and retail), which employs three quarters of Loddon’s workforce. Agriculture accounts for almost half of all economic activity and local jobs.

Between 2016 and 2021, jobs growth was concentrated in agriculture, and transport and warehousing, reflecting the Shire’s primary industries and strategic location in terms of logistics and transportation.

Local expenditure within Loddon is estimated to be \$221.8 million and reflects local industry demand for locally sourced inputs into production. More than half of this local expenditure is generated by the agriculture sector.

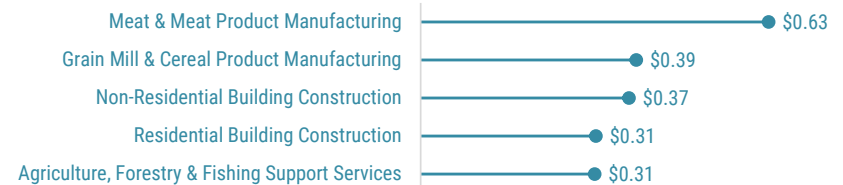
When local industries with strong links to local business expand, so too do the local supply chains. Sectors with the highest ratio of local spend compared revenue include meat production, grain milling, building construction and agricultural services. For every \$1.00 of gross revenue generated by the Meat & Meat Product Manufacturing sector, \$0.63 is spent on local inputs into production.



Note: Economic context data sourced from REMPLAN Economy.

### 5 sectors with highest ratio of local expenditure to revenue (2023)

(local spend for every \$1.00 of revenue)

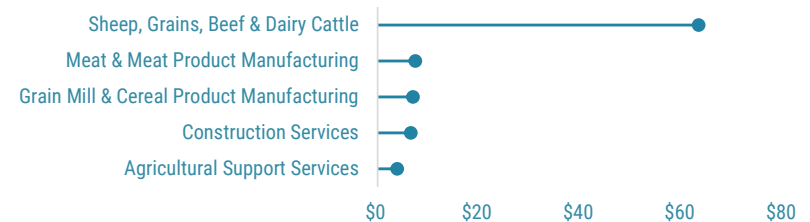


Change in value-added (a major component of GRP) highlights sectors which are key drivers of economic growth. Much of Loddon’s economic growth over the past decade has been in sectors associated with agriculture, food manufacturing and trades (construction services).

### Drivers of economic growth

#### Top 5 sectors for growth in value-added (2013 - 2023)

(value-added (\$M))



## Economic Opportunities

Loddon’s natural endowments and strong economic foundations present a range of opportunities for economic growth. By capitalising on these opportunities, the Shire can attract investment in new-age industry and technology, and high-value workers to the region.

### Agriculture

Agriculture and food production continue to be an inherent comparative advantage of the Loddon Shire’s economy due to an abundance of productive land and water assets. The region also has created economic strengths by investing in infrastructure that connects local producers to nearby key markets, processors, and national distributors.

The agricultural sector continues to grow and with significant investment into expansion of intensive agricultural production and establishment of value adding processes, in addition to diversification into energy production and carbon capture.

### Housing

Housing supply and diversity facilitate population growth, and workforce attraction and retention. This, in turn, enables businesses to access the talent they require to operate and grow, making housing supply intrinsically linked to economic growth.

A continual focus on housing availability influences local investment, as residents generate demand for local goods and services. Sufficient housing supply also contributes to resident stability, allowing people to establish roots in the community, creating a vibrant environment for current and future residents.

### Renewables

Energy is a key consideration for the longer-term planning of businesses and households. Renewable energy contributes to Australia’s Net Zero targets and enhances the competitive advantage of regional economies and local businesses. Loddon Shire, with its abundant sunshine and open spaces, is well-suited for renewable energy production.

Businesses in the Loddon Shire are investing in various forms of renewable energy, from traditional solar and wind infrastructure to advanced bioenergy production. These investments attract new capital and high-valued jobs to the region.

### Industry Trends

Industry 4.0 has revolutionised traditional primary production industries through digital technology, enabling businesses to increase their productivity, improve process efficiency through automation, and diversify revenue streams with new products. Embracing these innovations across these major economic opportunities positions Loddon Shire as a leader in modern, sustainable industry practices.

In the agriculture and food production sector, investments in technology are driving diversification into new, circular economy products like biofuels and fertilisers, and risk mitigation infrastructure to protect against disasters such as flooding and energy insecurity. By integrating these emerging technologies, Loddon Shire is ensuring long-term economic resilience and growth.







# Economic Development Strategy in Context

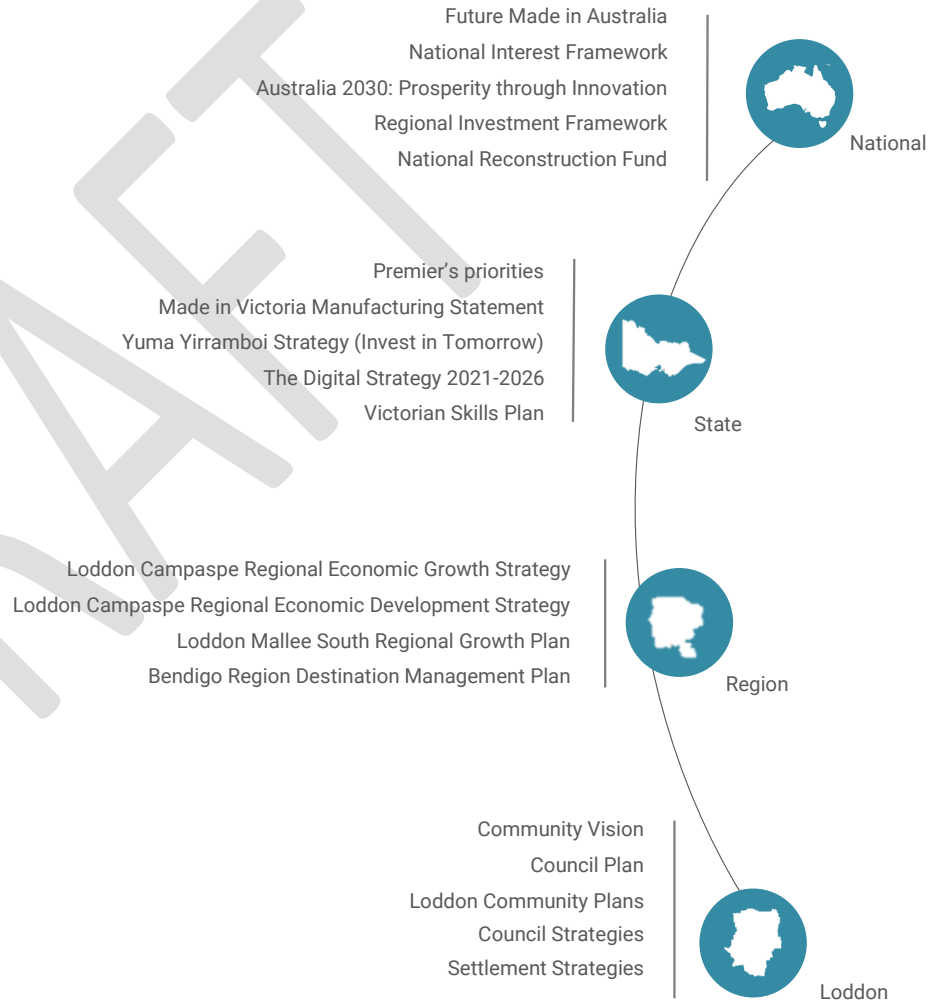
# Policy Context

Economic development in local government forms part of a broader strategic and legislative framework that guides and regulates local government actions. The Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy (EDS) fits within a hierarchy of government priorities that influence changes in legislation, policies, strategies, and initiatives. As priorities of other levels of government change, the response at a local level must adapt accordingly, while still maintaining a clear line of sight our local aspirations.

Economic development in local government plays an important role in collaboration with local partners to promote the interests of the region, while the Victorian Government and Australian Government play significant roles in progressing economic development at broader regional and national scales.

At a regional level, Loddon Shire forms part of the Loddon Campaspe economic region, which is a sub-region within the broader Loddon Mallee region in Victoria. It encompasses several local government areas, including the City of Greater Bendigo, Mount Alexander Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire and Loddon Shire.

While national, state and regional strategies, such as the Loddon Campaspe Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS), provide overarching direction, it is at the local level that actions specific to the Loddon Shire are identified. Understanding Loddon Shires’ role in the wider region and contributing to regional outcomes is critical in realising local opportunities.



# Economic Development in Local Government

Local economic development aims to increase the economic capacity of a local area which, in turn, improves the well-being of local communities. In this way, economic development is ultimately about progressing outcomes that benefit the local community.

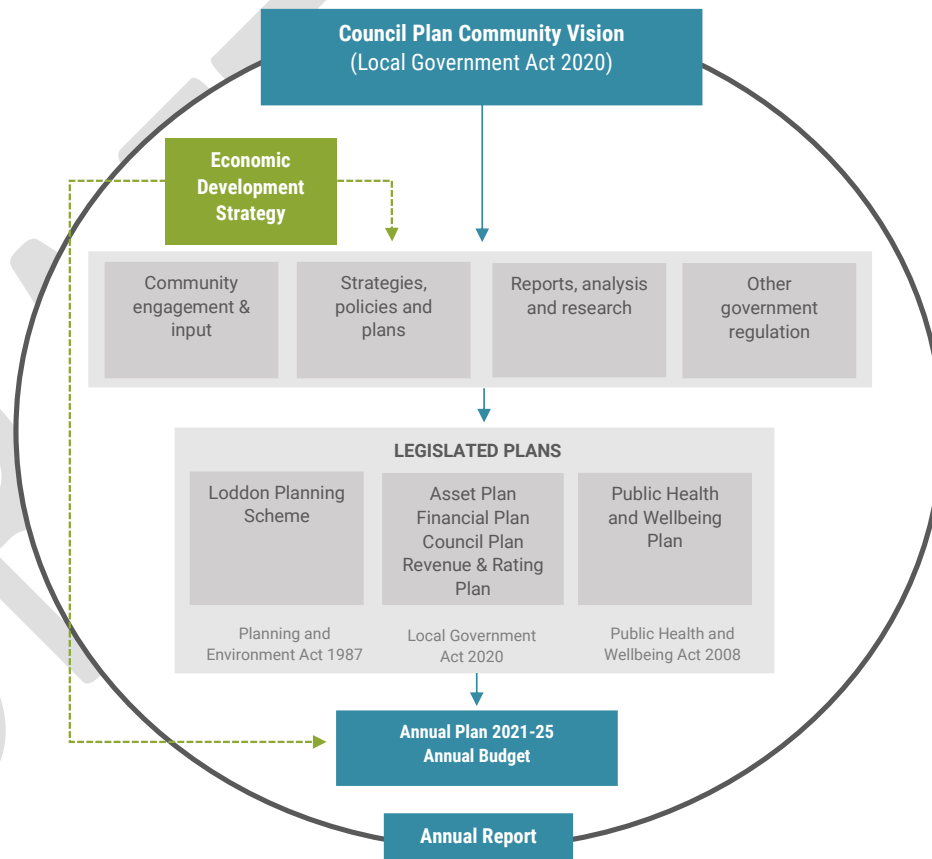
The Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is one of the strategies that is formally adopted by Loddon Shire Council which aligns with engagement activities and priorities identified in the Loddon Shire Council Plan (2021-2025).

The Local Government Act 2020 defines the powers and responsibilities of local government in Victoria. In fulfilling its role, Council adheres to a set of overarching governance and supporting principles. These principles are designed to ensure the best long-term outcomes for the municipal community.

In summary, the development of strategic plans is a crucial part of the planning framework that guides Council's plans and resources, outlining how they aim to achieve agreed community objectives. The adjacent figure illustrates how an EDS informs the Council's long-term direction while guiding annual planning and resource allocation.

The EDS outlines Loddon Shire Council's vision, commitment, strategic directions, and key actions for the next 4 years. While this is a 4-year strategy, the outcomes will be driven by intentional prioritisation and capacity, annual action plans and funding availability.

Loddon Shire planning and reporting framework





# The role of Council in Economic Development

The private sector is the primary driver of economic development through investment, business growth and local employment.

Work within the control of Council includes investment attraction and business development, infrastructure projects, land development, strategic planning, localised data provision, marketing and advocacy.

Loddon Shire Council has an important role to play by creating suitable conditions for positive economic development outcomes through its core economic development functions.

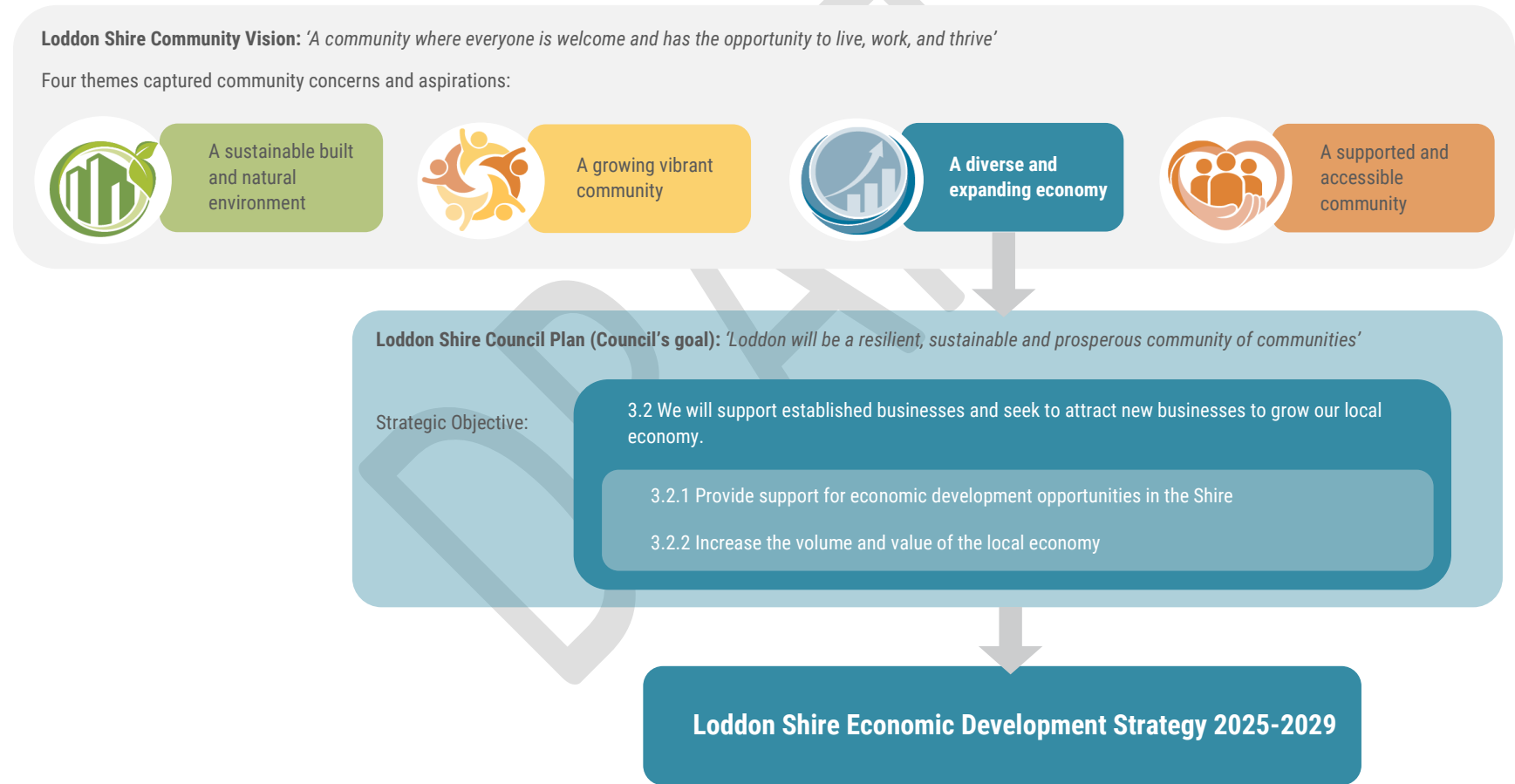
Repeatedly through engagement activities undertaken as part of the preparation of this Economic Development Strategy, participants indicated Council is most effective in 'Facilitation', 'Planning' and 'Investment Attraction' as a means to achieve local economic development outcomes.

Council's core functions and their relationship to economic development



# The role of the Economic Development Strategy

The Community Vision 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 reflect the Council's commitment to listen to the community's vision for the future and deliver a progressive and future-focussed plan that will see the Shire continue to grow and prosper. Building on the foundations of the Loddon Shire Community Vision, the Economic Development Strategy enacts Council strategies to achieve the economic objective.







## The Economic Vision

Over 2020 and 2021 Council delivered a major community engagement project, The Loddon Project, the outcome of which was to develop our Community Vision and Council Plan (2021), which are integral documents in our strategic planning framework. The Loddon Project was designed to develop Council's strategic direction. The engagement process identified four themes which are to serve as priority areas of focus for Council, one of the themes being "A diverse and expanding economy".

The expansion of the economic theme to become Loddon Shire's economic vision attempts to reflect the values, objectives and aspirations of the people of Loddon Shire and is the foundation for the preparation of the economic development strategy.

The economic vision, as determined through the Loddon Project (2021), for Loddon Shire is:

### A diverse and expanding economy

Loddon will have a growing and sustainable economy that supports established and new businesses, has a skilled workforce and attracts business, industry, and people to our area.



# Strategic Objectives

Five strategic directions were identified as areas of focus for Council’s economic development efforts following a review of key strategy and policy documents, in conjunction with, a series of engagement sessions with Council members, Council executive and senior staff, the nominated Project Advisory Group, Regional Development Victoria, local business leaders and First Nation representatives.

Following development of the Economic Development Strategy Strategic Directions Paper, further stakeholder engagement was undertaken to identify objectives and actions to provide clear direction for implementation of the strategy and focus Council efforts to unlock opportunities.

## Loddon Shire Strategic Objectives



### Optimised Agricultural Sector

An optimised agricultural sector that promotes collaboration and innovation among producers, enhancing productivity, resilience, market responsiveness, and the region's capacity to attract investment, new businesses, and talent.



### Housing: A catalyst for growth

A diverse and sustainable housing supply which supports economic growth by attracting and retaining residents and workers, while strengthening existing townships.



### Council: An advocating & collaborative partner

Council actions that foster a growing and prosperous Loddon Shire by collaborating with businesses and industry partners, and government entities to attract investment, and promote sustainable economic growth and job creation.



### Liveable & Resilient Communities

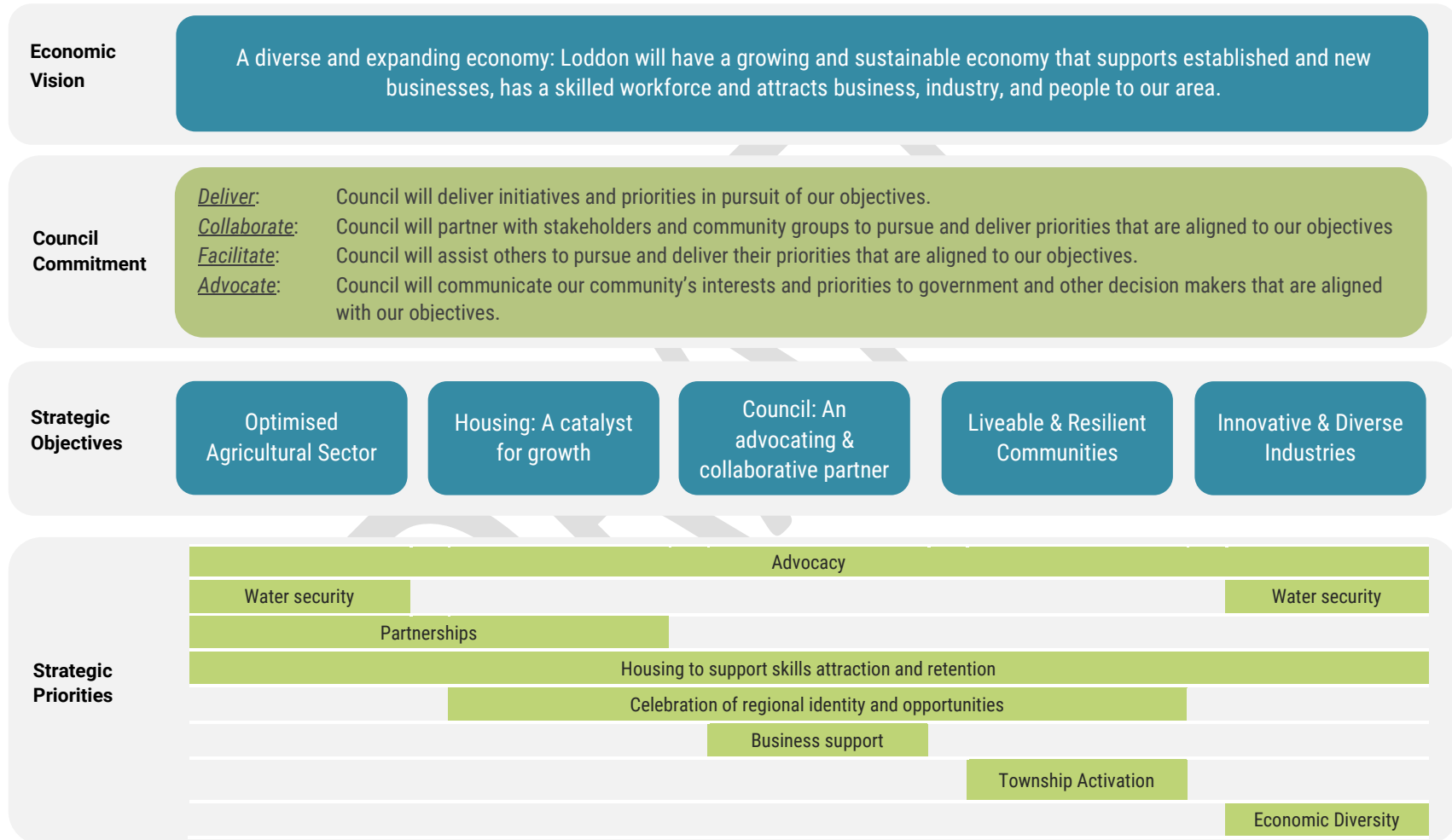
Loddon will be known for its lifestyle and opportunities, offering equitable access to services and employment, celebrated through a strong regional identity that attracts people and investment, comprised of townships that foster a sense of place and culture.



### Innovative & Diverse Industries

A diverse and innovative industry base that has capabilities to respond to emerging industry, economic and policy trends, leveraging regional supply chain opportunities while value adding to the local economy.

# Loddon Economic Development Strategy Overview







# Optimised Agricultural Sector

## Objective

*An optimised agricultural sector that promotes collaboration and innovation among producers, enhancing productivity, resilience, market responsiveness, and the region's capacity to attract investment, new businesses, and talent.*

An optimised agricultural sector connects producers, fostering collaboration and the exchange of innovative farm and land management practices. Adoption of innovative techniques and business practices will boost productivity in Loddon's most important industry sector. An optimised agricultural sector demonstrates resilience to economic and environmental change and agility in market responsiveness while showcasing Loddon's capacity to service supply chain demands and attract investment, new businesses, and talent.

## Challenges and opportunities

Agriculture and food product manufacturing are cornerstones of Loddon Shire's economy. Vast productive land and access to water has allowed agriculture to flourish. While the integral role of agriculture in Loddon's economy presents certain risks, it also highlights the region's inherent comparative advantage.

The agriculture sector faces challenges such as climate change impacts, water security issues, and more frequent flooding events. Additionally, inadequate housing supply and poor mobile connectivity constrains business growth and technology adoption.

Loddon Shire boasts a skilled agricultural workforce, fertile land, the South West Loddon Pipeline, and the Loddon River. These assets, along with extensive irrigation infrastructure, support a high-quality water supply with proximity to value-adding processors.

Opportunities include modernising agriculture enterprises, partnering with First Nations groups for land management, investing in water security and flood mitigation, and improving road and telecommunications infrastructure to support logistics and technology adoption.

## Priorities

### Partnerships

- Support self-determination for First Nations businesses through closer working relationships for land management practices and food production opportunities which leverage natural endowments.
- Work with producers and supply chain businesses to strengthen networks, identify clusters, share information, and assist in the identification of supply chain gaps and local supply chain capacity.

### Sustained water security

- Enhance strategic oversight and application of water reform policy to improve the economic, environmental and social outcomes for irrigators, upstream and downstream businesses, and local communities.
- Realise the benefits associated with the South West Loddon Pipeline, a critical water asset for Loddon, and assist industry in leveraging the associated opportunities. Further leverage opportunities associated with the South West Loddon Pipeline to deliver diversification and intensification of agriculture, further securing the future for local supply chains and communities.

### Advocacy

- Continue to advocate for improved digital and logistical connectivity. Improved digital connectivity is vital for increased uptake of technology driven innovation in agriculture.

### Housing to support skills attraction and retention

- Improve housing supply and worker accommodation options to support the workforce expansion requirements of local business. Housing options within proximity to townships and agricultural enterprises attracts workers by offering reduced commute times and access to essential services.



# Housing: A catalyst for growth

## Objective

*A diverse and sustainable housing supply which supports economic growth by attracting and retaining residents and workers, while strengthening existing townships.*

Housing supply acts as a catalyst for economic growth by attracting and retaining residents and workers whilst building on existing vibrant communities. A housing supply that delivers a diversity of housing and accommodation stock that meets worker accommodation needs, desired quality and builds on Loddon’s lifestyle, attracts new residents and accommodates residents of all life stages. A sustainable delivery of housing stock strengthens existing townships by leveraging existing services and infrastructure.

## Challenges and opportunities

Housing availability and quality are crucial in shaping the attractiveness of regional towns, influencing decisions to relocate. This is particularly important in Loddon as migration (i.e. people relocating to the region) is the primary driver of population growth.

Population growth and workforce attraction are crucial for business expansion. While housing remains affordable in Loddon, the cost of development in the Shire is impeding the utilisation of available land and constraining growth in housing stock.

The primary issues impeding housing supply in Loddon include prohibitive infrastructure costs, higher building costs in regional areas, and low volume development opportunities. The existing poor supply of housing is limiting population growth, with migration being the main driver of workforce growth.

Loddon boasts several assets that can support housing development, such as affordability, demand, available land, community amenities, and established well-serviced townships such as like Wedderburn, Boort, and Inglewood.

There are several opportunities to enhance housing development, including state and federal grants, direct investment by the Council, extension of trunk infrastructure, reduction of development fees, and initiatives to support the provision of worker accommodation.

## Priorities

### Housing to support skills attraction and retention

- Establish housing targets within key townships to send a signal to the market that Council places a high value of residential development, and that there is demand and opportunity in priority settlements.
- Support infrastructure projects and settlement within Loddon’s five key townships to improve and leverage existing infrastructure and builds the case for improved delivery of essential services.
- Investigate ways to release unoccupied dwellings onto the market in key townships.

### Celebration of regional identity and opportunities

- Build on a strong regional identity and marketing product to showcase development, land and house sales to enhance the story that Loddon is a place of quality lifestyle and opportunity. Signal the economic growth potential and future job opportunities to help attract residential developers.

### Advocacy

- Continue advocacy efforts for funding support for provision of infrastructure and land development to attract residential developments.

### Partnerships

- Regional opportunities and demand for flexible worker accommodation options are understood and communicated to businesses reliant on housing employees to expand operations.
- Partner with private and public sector organisations to investigate best practice approach for Council to support housing development.

# Council: An advocating & collaborative partner

## Objective

**Council actions that foster a growing and prosperous Loddon Shire by collaborating with businesses and industry partners, and government entities to attract investment, and promote sustainable economic growth and job creation.**

Council is committed to working toward a Loddon Shire that is growing and prosperous through working with multiple regional and government partners. An advocating and collaborative partner will support local business, strengthen industry connections, enhance liveability, and ensure sustainable growth for the region. Delivery of economic development efforts will attract investment to support infrastructure projects, business growth, and job creation and lifestyle.

## Challenges and opportunities

Effective council advocacy and investment attraction are crucial for fostering economic growth and community development in rural municipalities like Loddon Shire. By actively engaging with stakeholders and advocating for supportive policies and funding, Council can stimulate innovation, enhance liveability, and ensure sustainable growth for the region.

Loddon Shire is often seen as a pass-through municipality, facing higher costs, limited market access, and poor infrastructure, reducing its competitiveness. Successful local governments must identify, commission, and manage strategic partnerships to maximise value. Loddon Council manages extensive infrastructure with limited financial resources which constrains spending on growth-stimulating projects.

State and federal incentives for renewable energy projects within the Murray River Renewable Energy Zone can attract investment, benefiting local workers and supply chains. Organising events and developing a strong regional brand can attract residents, businesses, and visitors, enhancing tourism and celebrating unique local characteristics.

## Priorities

### Advocacy

- Advocate on behalf of Loddon residents and business to ensure challenges specific to Loddon and regional Australia are adequately considered, prioritised and resolved by other levels government.
- Prioritise projects and activities aimed at addressing local challenges to assist in efforts to secure funding, major project development and improve essential services.
- Adequate digital connectivity is vital for business and community viability. Continue to work with NBN Co, and telecommunications providers to deliver better network connectivity to improved productivity, public safety (e.g. natural disaster early warning), and environmental monitoring.

### Housing to support skills attraction and retention

- By collaborating with private and public sector partners, the Council is exploring ways to increase housing supply, identify the most effective methods to facilitate housing development, and assess current constraints to determine the best actions the Council can take to address these challenges.

### Business support

- Deliver an effective single point of contact of business and potential investors.
- Develop business networks to establish connections, information sharing and the opportunity to highlight achievements, celebrate the wins.

### Celebration of regional identity and opportunities

- Establish a strong regional identity which celebrates, culture, lifestyle, industry, and opportunity in Loddon.
- Work to retain young workers in the region by showcasing industry leaders and innovative businesses to highlight employment and career progression opportunities in Loddon.



# Liveable & Resilient Communities

## Objective

*Loddon will be known for its lifestyle and opportunities, offering equitable access to services and employment, celebrated through a strong regional identity that attracts people and investment, comprised of townships that foster a sense of place and culture.*

Communities renowned for lifestyle and resilience, within a region comprised of equitable access to services and employment, residents who celebrate their strong regional identity, an identity that attracts residents, workers, visitors, and investment. Local townships feature public spaces which showcase unique local characteristics fostering a sense of place and culture.

## Challenges and opportunities

Loddon Shire is a 'community of communities' - a great place to live, with diverse landscapes, vibrant communities, and rich natural endowments. Loddon Shire faces several challenges that impact its liveability, but it also has numerous opportunities and existing assets to leverage for community growth and development.

Challenges include a preference shift for population and investment towards large regional centres, continued flood recovery, limited access to aged care and child care services, climate change impacts, housing supply restrictions, social isolation, lack of place branding, poor digital connectivity, and disparity in social and economic disadvantage.

Loddon Shire benefits from an engaged community, established partnerships with key groups, a range of community networks, regular events, and natural assets like Lake Bort.

Opportunities for growth include fostering community-driven initiatives, building economic, social, and human capital, advocating for key service providers, investing in telecommunications infrastructure, collaborating with existing partnerships, supporting local events, and leveraging the unique insights of the Dja Dja Wurrung peoples.

## Priorities

### Advocacy

- Advocate to other levels of Government to highlight region-specific challenges and aim to secure improved outcomes for residents and business on key issues such as skills attraction, access to childcare services and digital connectivity.

### Housing to support skills attraction and retention

- Progress housing developments that capitalise on Loddon's attractive lifestyle and the services available in key townships to encourage population growth and boost confidence among current residents about Loddon's future and the opportunities it will bring.

### Celebration of regional identity and opportunities

- A strong regional identity that draws on the culture and character across Loddon attracts population, visitors, workers and fosters community and civic pride.
- Promotion of business and employment opportunities within Loddon helps to reinforce local opportunities to existing residents and workers - retaining younger workers and those workers that are unaware of career progression opportunities within Loddon.

### Township activation

- Design, public amenity and placemaking to support townships and to facilitate activity, visitation and community connection and to encourage people to 'linger longer'.

# Innovative & Diverse Industries

## Objective

*A diverse and innovative industry base that has capabilities to respond to emerging industry, economic and policy trends, leveraging regional supply chain opportunities while value adding to the local economy.*

A diverse and innovative industry base that builds capacity and capability to attract investment and capitalise on opportunities for new technologies, productive ways of using resources and waste materials. Industry that is supported to ensure responsiveness to changes in policy, trade conditions, and emerging industry trends. A diverse industrial base that complements and builds on Loddon’s strong agricultural foundations, natural endowments, connectivity and water infrastructure.

## Challenges and opportunities

Loddon Shire aims to diversify its economy to enhance resilience, productivity, and sustainability. The region faces several challenges but also has opportunities to leverage its existing assets and emerging trends.

Embracing innovation and diversifying the industry base can improve economic resilience, productivity, environmental sustainability, and attract investment and skilled workers.

Challenges include poor digital connectivity, a highly concentrated economy dominated by agriculture, stagnant population due to limited housing, poor access to child and health care services, and constrained transmission network.

Existing assets include solar resources, available land for development, the South West Loddon Pipeline, the Murray Renewable Energy Zone, and membership in the Victorian Energy Collaboration.

Opportunities include diversifying the industrial base, promoting buy-local campaigns, leveraging the South West Loddon Pipeline, renewable energy opportunities and investing in adequate housing stock to support a growing workforce.

## Priorities

### Advocacy

- Advocate for state and federal renewable energy projects to leverage the significant opportunity for Loddon as part of the Murray River Renewable Energy Zone. Increased renewable energy activity attracts investment, creating new opportunities for local workers business.
- Collaborative efforts with regional stakeholders ensure the Victoria NSW Interconnector (VNI West) minimises impact on lifestyle and amenity while supporting growth in local power generation and renewables.

### Economic Diversity

- Building on work already undertaken by Council, create circular economy opportunities to add value from waste materials - in particular agriculture byproduct into biomass. One of the key principles of circular economy is to build on existing resources and utilise what is already being generated within the local economy. In Loddon, this is agriculture byproduct.
- Support private sector investment into supply chain or value-adding processing to broaden the economy from its principal economic base.

### Sustained water security

- Investigate how industry can further leverage the opportunities associated with the South West Loddon Pipeline through innovative and efficient use of water resources.
- Partner with Murray River Group of Councils to support water security advocacy efforts.

### Housing to support skills attraction and retention

- Increase housing supply and offer innovative worker accommodation options in Loddon to demonstrate to the private sector that the region can cater for and absorb a growing workforce.
- Expand the diversity of housing options to help retain workers who might otherwise leave the region due to different life stage needs. Retaining a skilled workforce in Loddon strengthens the region's capacity to support industry diversification.







## Action Plan

This Economic Development Strategy has been developed within Loddon Shire Council's existing strategic framework, the foundation of which is Loddon's community strategic plan, *Community Vision 2031 | Council Plan 2021-2025*.

This Action Plan outlines a range of focused actions for the 5-year period 2025-2029, relating to the identified strategic priorities which will be delivered within Loddon Shire Council's strategic framework. Delivering on these actions aims to achieve the five strategic objectives outlined in the Economic Development Strategy and fulfil Loddon Shire's economic vision.

Activities outlined in this Action Plan align with the following state, regional and local policies:

- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Settlement Strategy 2019-2034
- Settlement Strategy 2019-2034
- Loddon Community Plans
- Youth Strategy
- *DRAFT* Tourism Strategy 2025-2029
- *DRAFT* Loddon Social Infrastructure Strategy Childcare Feasibility Study
- Waste Management Strategy 2020-2030
- Loddon Campaspe Regional Economic Development Strategy
- Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan
- Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan
- Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund
- Victorian Renewable Energy Target
- Victorian Skills Commissioner, Regional Skills Demand Profile for the Loddon Campaspe
- Made in Victoria Manufacturing Statement
- Yuma Yirramboi Strategy (Invest in Tomorrow)
- Victorian Skills Plan

Council's efforts in supporting economic development within Loddon includes a range of ongoing activities and project specific activities, both of which are outlined in the following pages. The delivery of certain project oriented actions may be subject to third party funding.

Implementation of the Economic Development Strategy requires ongoing monitoring and review which is an important task and will be embedded in the delivery of this Action Plan. Annual review of progress metrics and strategic priorities is crucial for Council to ensure that efforts remain aligned with achieving Loddon's economic vision. Council will invest in an annual review of economic development efforts to:

- undertake review and reporting of Council's progress against strategic outcomes and adopted key performance measures;
- consider strategic priorities to ensure short, medium and long term actions remain strongly aligned with the most current state and federal government policy and match community and business needs; and
- develop a transparent reporting mechanism to demonstrate the return on investment in economic development in terms of broader community benefits.

**Ongoing Responsibilities**

The following activities reflect the day-to-day function and role of the Economic Development Unit within Loddon Shire Council to supporting local business, marketing and promotions and planning and events. In addition to those listed below, a number of project oriented actions will become an ongoing responsibility once they have been established.

Economic Development Function	Activity
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing research support documents, attending meetings and representing the Shire with government and potential new businesses</li> <li>• Work with regional partners to advocate for faster and more stable mobile and digital connectivity across the region.</li> <li>• Advocate to other decision makers to ensure the supply of adequate infrastructure to service the resident population and enable employment growth (such as affordable housing, health services, and education facilities).</li> </ul>
Investment attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concierge service / single point of contact for business and investors.</li> <li>• Developing newsletters, media, brochures and communiques</li> <li>• Presentations to business and community groups and stakeholders</li> <li>• Advice, referrals and printed materials</li> <li>• Manage sale, purchase and leasing of Council’s vacant land, residential and industrial property.</li> <li>• Support projects which align with existing industrial and residential land zoning.</li> </ul>
Grant applications support to business and community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting businesses and community organisations with grant applications and liaison with State and Federal agencies</li> </ul>
Industry support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with leaders in intensive agriculture and relevant industry supply chains to attract investment in intensive animal industries in an effort to leverage the economic foundations of Loddon and boost employment and output in the agricultural sector.</li> </ul>
Business liaison and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing liaison with businesses and community groups involved in economic development</li> <li>• Provide supportive services for new, existing and expanding businesses, including staff “facilitators” for investors, partnering with businesses as opportunities arise, and investigating business support packages for businesses.</li> </ul>
Tourism product support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support implementation of the Loddon Shire Tourism Strategy 2025-2029</li> <li>• Facilitate emerging niche food and beverages businesses into an integrated artisan food network.</li> <li>• Support the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.</li> </ul>
Skills attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support migration assistance activities to attract skilled workers to the region.</li> <li>• Support initiatives to improve employment opportunities for Loddon residents and employers.</li> </ul>

**Project Oriented Actions**

The following actions represent project-focused activities that have been prioritised for the strategy timeframe (2025-2029). These actions have been selected to concentrate Council efforts and accelerate the achievement of the five economic objectives:

- Optimised Agricultural Sector.
- Housing: A catalyst for growth.
- Council: An advocating & collaborative partner.
- Liveable & Resilient Communities.
- Innovative & Diverse Industries.

The following actions have been identified as having the greatest priority and greatest impact on the Loddon economy within the capacity of the Loddon Shire Economic Development Unit and within the Strategy’s timeframe.

Project oriented actions include detail for each initiative, Council role, potential partners, and timing.

The following acronyms have been adopted to describe action delivery partners:

- DET: Department of Education and Training.
- DET (VIC): Department of Education and Training.
- DEECA: Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.
- DITRDCA: Dept. Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication & the Arts.
- RAI: Regional Australia Institute.
- RDV: Regional Development Victoria.
- VPA: Victorian Planning Authority.
- VSA: Victorian Skills Authority.

The following timeframes has been allocated to each delivery:

- Short: undertaken in 2025.
- Medium: undertaken in 2-4 years.
- Long: undertaken in 2-5 years.

A number of project oriented actions will become an ongoing responsibility for the Economic Development Unit once the activity have been undertaken, this is indicated in the last column of each action table.





## Optimised Agricultural Sector

### Objective

An optimised agricultural sector that promotes collaboration and innovation among producers, enhancing productivity, resilience, market responsiveness, and the region's capacity to attract investment, new businesses, and talent.

### Outcomes

- Increased value-added generated by agriculture and food product manufacturing
- Employment growth within agriculture and food product manufacturing
- Increased First Nations workforce participation

Actions	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Short Medium Long	Ongoing Following action completion
<b>1. Optimised Agricultural Sector</b>				
1.1. Establish and facilitate a local producer and supply chain network, to assist in knowledge sharing and the implantation of innovative farming practices.	Lead	-	Short	
1.2. Actively engage with Agriculture Victoria and Regional Development Victoria to investigate further leveraging the public benefit of the SW Pipeline. Actively engage with stakeholders to review farm business planning and how it relates to piped water as an asset.	Partner	RDV Agriculture Victoria	Short	
1.3. Partner with DEECA and Agriculture Victoria to ensure industry is positioned to respond to the risk of lower water allocations with best practice approaches.	Partner	DEECA Agriculture Victoria	Short	
1.4. Investigate and share industry trends and supply chain opportunities with local network to boost local capability, increase local expenditure and support growth of local jobs.	Lead	-	Medium	
1.5. Facilitate business and industry connections between First Nations businesses and the agricultural sector.	Support	Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation Local producers	Medium	





## Housing: A catalyst for growth

### Objective

A diverse and sustainable housing supply which supports economic growth by attracting and retaining residents and workers, while strengthening existing townships.

### Outcomes

- Increased interest and activity from residential developers.
- Increased housing supply
- Sustained annual housing development in key townships.

Actions	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Short Medium Long	Ongoing Following action completion
<b>2. Housing: A catalyst for growth</b>				
2.1. Delos Delta action: Delivery housing investigation and feasibility project.	Partner	Private sector	Short	
2.2. Develop marketing collateral highlighting infrastructure projects, Council land sales, sub-division process and land development opportunities.	Lead	-	Short	
2.3. Investigate alternative funding options to provide trunk infrastructure & regional government grants to support land development.	Lead	-	Short	
2.4. Establish annual dwelling targets through settlement planning and/or township structure plans for the townships of Inglewood, Wedderburn, and Boort to support a steady release of new housing.	Lead	VPA DEECA	Medium	
2.5. Identify and document options alternatives to traditional housing (e.g., modular) that may resolve worker accommodation issues, with a focus on local regional providers.	Partner	Industry	Medium	
2.6. Identify and work with potential development partners to support long term procurement of housing that directly addresses supply constraints and supports access to new skills and increased workforce.	Partner	Homes Victoria Housing Developers DEECA RDV	Long	
2.7. Develop a project to investigate cause, effect and potential actions to address the high rate of unoccupied dwellings and the potential release of a proportion of those dwellings back onto the housing market, with a focus on key townships.	Partner	Private sector	Long	





### Council: An advocating & collaborative partner

**Objective**

Council actions that foster a growing and prosperous Loddon Shire by collaborating with businesses and industry partners, and government entities to attract investment, and promote sustainable economic growth and job creation.

**Outcomes**

- More residents participating in the workforce, particularly women and young people.
- Delivery of infrastructure and activities that address lifestyle and industry challenges.
- Increased relocation interest from business and people.
- Authentic, unique and celebrated regional identity marketing created.

Actions	Council Role	Potential Partners	Timeframe	Ongoing
	Lead Partner Support		Short Medium Long	Following action completion
<b>3. Council: An advocating &amp; collaborative partner</b>				
3.1. Actively engage with local stakeholders and advocate to other levels of government on behalf of local business and industry. Advocating efforts to focus on challenges in attracting workforce and local workforce participation, focus area to include housing, access to child care.	Partner	Local Business DITRDCA   DET   DET (VIC)   RDV	Short	
3.2. Identify and apply for funding opportunities which address key challenges as identified by local industry.	Lead	-	Short	
3.3. Partner with neighbouring Councils across the region to showcase liveability, jobs and investment opportunities and cultural and visitor attractions.	Partner	Neighbouring Councils	Medium	
3.4. Prepare a 'business support package' proposal to Council with modest financial support for businesses needing investment incentives (involving a possible mix of rate relief, infrastructure provision or support, and/or small capital works contributions).	Lead	-	Medium	
3.5. Develop case studies for marketing collateral showcasing innovative local businesses to highlight opportunities for investment and employment opportunities.	Lead	Local Business	Medium	
3.6. In order to address the perception of lack of opportunity in regional areas, and address business staffing difficulties, Council to promote the benefits and opportunities within key industries and of lifestyle in Loddon Shire	Lead	Neighbouring Councils VSA	Medium	
3.7. Build on "Waste" team actions to promote recycling to identify opportunities to attract business and investment in circular economy activities / engage with business to identify challenges for business in adopting circular economy practices and identify which challenges are realistic to be overcome.	Support	Internal (Waste)	Medium	
3.8. Participate in a regional joint skills development project which aims to improve the matching of labour requirements with available skills, including the improvement of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses and other accredited training. For Loddon, this impacts on jobs on farms, at processing plants and service businesses.	Support	DET (VIC) RDV	Long	





## Liveable & Resilient Communities

### Objective

Loddon will be known for its lifestyle and opportunities, offering equitable access to services and employment, celebrated through a strong regional identity that attracts people and investment, comprised of townships that foster a sense of place and culture.

### Outcomes

- Delivery of community leader training and initiatives
- Improved experience for users of township retail areas
- Stronger population growth
- Retain new residents

Actions	Council Role	Potential Partners	Timeframe	Ongoing
	Lead Partner Support		Short Medium Long	Following action completion
<b>4. Liveable &amp; Resilient Communities</b>				
4.1. Investigate opportunity for local artisan food and beverage products to be showcased and retailed in townships, enhancing the retail experience for residents and visitors.	Lead	-	Short	
4.2. Work with local town traders to develop collaboration and coordination to support retail viability and a positive main street experience for local residents and visitors.	Lead	-	Short	
4.3. Facilitate training and initiatives that identify and build capability of community leaders.	Lead	-	Medium	
4.4. Facilitate and promote community groups in the coordination of delivery of events that celebrate culture, Loddon's liveability, strong community connections, business and industry.	Lead	-	Medium	
4.5. Provide content for Move to More (resident attraction campaign by Regional Australia Institute) to attract residents and skilled workers.	Support	RAI	Medium	
4.6. Contribute to development and delivery of Local Community Plans place making activities to support business development and viability.	Support	Internal – Community Partnerships	Medium	
4.7. Identify priority services, infrastructure and development in southern areas of Loddon required to service the potential growth in the area due to Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct.	Partner	City of Greater Bendigo VPA	Long	
4.8. Support the implementation of township structure plans and/or relevant urban design frameworks through business case development that attracts funding support for high quality urban design and streetscape improvement works.	Support	Internal – Planning	Long	
4.9. Audit and improve township and way finding signage to showcase attractions and retail precincts in key settlements to boost visitor experience and place identity.	Partner	Internal - Tourism	Long	



## Innovative & Diverse Industries

### Objective

A diverse and innovative industry base that has capabilities to respond to emerging industry, economic and policy trends, leveraging regional supply chain opportunities while value adding to the local economy.

### Outcomes

- Established clusters of priority industries.
- Diversified industry base.
- Growth in the circular economy.
- Greater contribution to value of production and value adding in industries other than agriculture.
- Infrastructure established to support growth in renewables industry

Action	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Short Medium Long	Ongoing Following action completion
<b>5. Innovative &amp; Diverse Industries</b>				
5.1. Develop and maintain a documented understanding of funding opportunities for renewable energy projects, share that knowledge with industry and business network.	Lead	Industry	Short	
5.2. Advocate for renewable energy projects and infrastructure that will enable Loddon to leverage opportunities associated with its natural resource endowment, particularly solar.	Lead	Sustainability Victoria Invest Victoria DEECA	Short	
5.3. Undertake a Circular Economy Feasibility study that identifies opportunities for local material flows to address supply chain gaps and return local economic benefits.	Lead	Industry Internal – Waste	Medium	
5.4. Applying for funding and offer support for funding applications prepared by other organisations seeking support for renewable energy projects.	Lead	Industry	Medium	
5.5. Maintain connections with industry and private sector to understand existing and prospective investments in order to ensure projects deliver benefits and local projects are adopting circular economy initiatives.	Partner	Industry Internal – Waste	Long	

# Implementation Timeframe



## Measuring our success

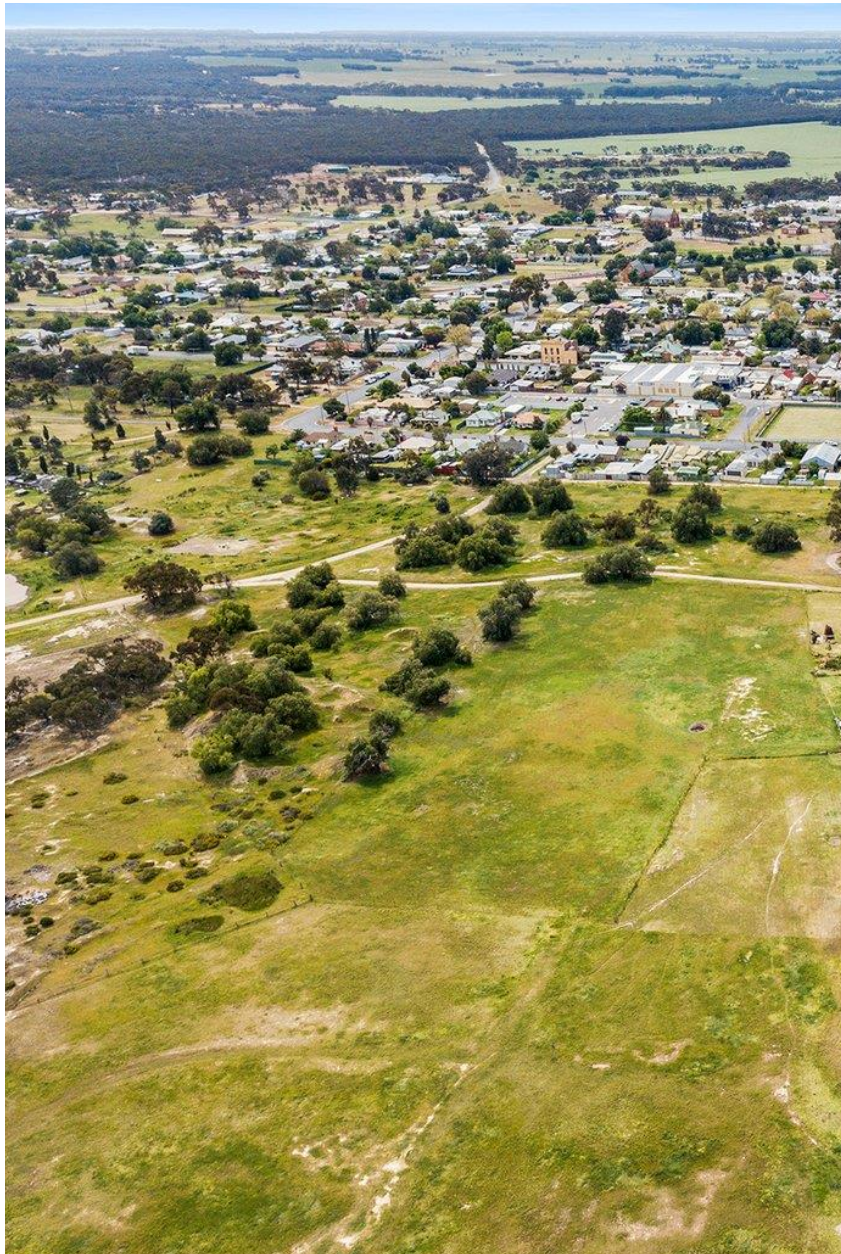
The role of monitoring and evaluation of the Economic Development Strategy is required to understand the performance and success of actions taken to achieve our economic objectives.

Where available, a quantitative measure has been suggested for the remaining objectives to assess performance over time. A regional benchmark has been included where data is readily available, primarily regional New South Wales. Measuring performance against a benchmark is a means to account for factors outside the influence of local economic development actions, e.g. unexpected events that impact the wider region, State or the Nation.

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Indicator	Reporting / data source	Measure
<b>Optimised Agricultural Sector</b>	Increased value-added generated by agriculture and food product manufacturing.	Worker productivity (value-added).	Value-added per worker in agriculture and food product manufacturing.	Increase of worker productivity by selected industry sectors.
	Employment growth within agriculture and food product manufacturing.	Count of jobs.	Census 2026 (available 2027) indicator "Industry of Employment" for agriculture and food product manufacturing.	Increase of jobs by selected industry sectors.
	Increased First Nations workforce participation.	Labour force participation of First Nations people.	Census 2026 (available 2027) indicator "Labour Force Status" benchmarked against Census 2021.	Increase in labour force participation by First Nations people.
	Delivery of information sessions.	Count of events and attendees.	Events delivery and attendance recorded.	Event delivery and annual increase in attendance.
<b>Housing: A catalyst for growth</b>	Increased interest and activity from residential developers.	Development enquiries and applications.	Development applications for new dwellings.	Increase from the annual average of 2019 – 2024.
	Increased housing supply.	Residential building approvals.	Approved development applications for new dwellings.	Increase from the annual average of 2019 – 2024.
	Sustained annual housing development activity within each of the key townships.	Number of residential building completions.	Occupation Certificates.	Increase from the annual average of 2019 – 2024.
<b>Council: An advocating &amp; collaborative partner</b>	More residents participating in the workforce, particularly women and young people.	Labor force participation rate.	Census 2026 (available 2027) indicator "Not in Labour Force" benchmarked against Census 2021.	Fall in the proportion of residents not in labour force (i.e. residents neither working or looking for work).
	More young residents participating in study or work.	Youth engagement (study or work).	Census 2026 (available 2027) benchmarked against Census 2021.	Proportion of youth engaged in work or study has experienced a higher increase than regional Victoria.
	Increased relocation interest from business and people.	Enquiries from businesses and residents.	Counts of enquiries.	Increase in enquiries from previous years.

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Indicator	Reporting / data source	Measure
	Funding to support delivery of infrastructure and activities that address lifestyle and industry challenges.	Funding opportunities that address key challenges identified by industry.	Number of applications submitted.	Value of successful grants.
	Authentic, unique and celebrated regional identity marketing created.	Developed marketing products.	Reporting on the marketing engagement.	Published marketing collateral.
<b>Liveable &amp; Resilient Communities</b>	Delivery of community leader training and initiatives.	Delivery of community leader training and initiatives.	Count of Council facilitated events.	Annual delivery target met.
	Improved experience for users of township retail areas.	User experience.	Annual online public survey.	Amenity improvements noted by users.
	Stronger population growth.	Count of residents.	Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population.	Increasing annual growth rate faster than previous years.
	Retain new residents.	New resident retention.	Census 2026 (available 2027) indicators "LGA of Usual Residence 1 Year ago" and "LGA of Usual Residence 5 Years ago" benchmarked against Census 2021.	Proportion of retained residents is higher than is higher than the Loddon Campaspe Region.
<b>Innovative &amp; Diverse Industries</b>	Established clusters of priority industries.	Enquiries from potential businesses in priority industries.	Count of enquiries.	Count of enquiries.
	Diversified industry base.	Industry diversification.	Industry diversification index. (Utilising an approach such as the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index or standard deviation across employment sectors).	Industry diversification is greater than regional Victoria.
	Growth in the circular economy.	Circular economy business count.	Australian Business Register data.	Annual increase in number of businesses within industries with a propensity to contribute to the circular economy.
	Greater contribution to value of production and value adding in industries other than agriculture.	Increased diversity in industry contribution to total value-add.	Annual estimate of value-add by industry, share of total value-added by industry.	Annual growth in value-added is higher than the annual growth rate for Loddon Campaspe Region. Reduced concentration of industry contribution (currently 50% in agriculture).
	Infrastructure established to support growth in renewables industry.	Funding opportunities.	Number of applications submitted.	Value of successful applications and infrastructure delivered.





Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029  
MONTH 2024.

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Disclaimer: All figures and data presented in this document are based on data sourced from the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS), government agencies and other sources where cited. Using ABS datasets, the regional economic modelling software REMPLAN, developed by REMPLAN has been applied to generate industrial economic data estimates. This document is provided in good faith with every effort made to provide accurate data and apply comprehensive knowledge. However, REMPLAN does not guarantee the accuracy of data, nor the conclusions drawn from this information. A decision to pursue any suggestions mentioned in the report is wholly the responsibility of the party concerned. REMPLAN advises any party to conduct detailed feasibility studies and seek professional advice before proceeding with any action and accept no responsibility for the consequences of pursuing any of the findings or actions discussed in the document.



**10.3 LODDON SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY****File Number:****Author:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Loddon Shire Social Infrastructure Strategy**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopt the Loddon Shire Social Infrastructure Strategy.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Social Infrastructure Strategy has been before Council during its development as follows:

April 2023 Council Forum

April 2023 Council Briefing

May 2023 Council Forum

August 2023 Council Forum

September 2023 Consultation session

September 2023 Council Briefing

October 2023 Consultation session

March 2024 Council Forum

March 2024 Council Briefing

August 2024 Council Forum

**BACKGROUND**

The Social Infrastructure Strategy provides a framework for how Council can foster reasonable community access to social infrastructure across Loddon Shire. Social infrastructure includes, for example, facilities such as public halls, community centres, sports facilities and recreational spaces.

Whilst Council acknowledges that these facilities support individuals, families, groups and communities to meet their social needs and enhance community wellbeing, it is also understood that there is an historic duplication of assets, many of whom are or will soon reach end of life, and influences a renewal gap that places increasing pressure on Council's long term financial position.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The development of the Social Infrastructure Strategy has involved:

- an extensive analysis of Loddon Shire population and demographic data
- mapping of the distribution of Council facilities and services across the Shire, as well as the availability of relevant services and facilities provided by other entities
- a review of relevant Council and other documentation

- consultation with the community, Councillors and Council Officers.

During the research period, it was identified that some key information to support informed decision making was not available, and that the gathering of this information should form the initial strategic projects in the Social Infrastructure Strategy. Following the gathering of this data, the development of community facility management plans can then be undertaken. The development of these plans will provide the opportunity for additional community consultation as decisions are made about which social infrastructure will be retained and maintained, and which will be identified as nearing or at end of life, and where better alternatives may exist.

The Social Infrastructure Strategy identifies the following seven projects for completion:

1. Identify the implications for the need or usage of town facilities based on the Recreation Open Space and Aquatics Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and Visitor Economy Strategy recommendations.
2. Develop a practical data collection process for the Council, "Management Committees" and users to establish actual facility usage — both frequency and type. Collect usage data.
3. Complete asset assessments for all social infrastructure facilities that identify facilities that are at, or close to end of life" and for which there are alternate spaces.
4. Review the Community Planning Framework to include a focus on identifying existing facilities that provide the most appropriate and usable indoor meeting space and spaces that are infrequently used (or not used at all); this process will utilise data made available through the process developed in #2. Update Community Plans as necessary.
5. Develop a "Facilities Management Plan" for each town that establishes priorities for investment in or rationalisation of existing Council facilities within 15 minutes driving time of the "Township Zone" (see Section 10.33).
6. Update community profiles for towns (and the other Localities in the Shire) based on the 2026 ABS Census and identify the implications for future social infrastructure development.
7. Update the network of available facilities and services available to towns.

## COST/BENEFITS

The Social Infrastructure Strategy will provide the platform to start conversations with our community about the infrastructure that supports their social and health/wellbeing needs, the position that Council faces in relation to the ability to adequately service the current social infrastructure offering and the future decisions that Council will need to make to support long term financial sustainability.

The projects to be completed in the first years of the strategy will provide Council with current and relevant data to support engagement with community and support informed decision making.

The implementation of projects three and five will require funding to progress. It is expected that project proposals will inform budget submissions in the lead up to the expected implementation period for each project item.

## RISK ANALYSIS

There is a risk that Council does not strategically allocate service and asset resources which could result in financially unsustainable provision and ultimately all assets/services would decline beyond fit for purpose.

Council's Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities Asset Management Plan notes *the "ageing infrastructure in Council's recreational, leisure and community facilities."* The Plan also notes the following:

*Adequate Funding "Without adequate funding, the declining condition of Council's assets will result in reduced levels of service and increased risk of failure."*

*Lifecycle Management "Our current approach to managing and operating our recreational, leisure, and community facilities assets is predominantly reactive, with only limited planning."*

*We are striving to improve our approach to lifecycle management to ensure that we deliver on our service commitments in the most cost-effective and efficient manner.*

The implementation of the projects identified in the Social Infrastructure Strategy will provide Council with data to support informed decision making on the future of social infrastructure assets and develop a proactive rather than reactive approach to asset management going forward.

Any report or strategy that includes discussion about the future of community assets comes with a risk of negative community reaction. The Social Infrastructure Strategy does not make any recommendations on the immediate future of community assets, and feedback from the 'closing the loop' consultation suggested that the community endorsed the gathering of further information to allow informed decisions in future.

## **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Community consultation occurred between 21 and 29 November 2023. The consultation included in person daytime sessions at Serpentine, Durham Ox, Mitiamo, Dingee, Tarnagulla, Korong Vale, Newbridge and Bridgwater and ward based online sessions with one session each evening over five evenings.

A second round of Consultation occurred during the final two weeks of June 2024 to present the draft Strategy's access principles and the recommended steps identified as projects two, three and five of the Social Infrastructure Strategy.

The consultation included display of the strategy and a survey on connect.Loddon with printed and social media promotion of the document and the pop up sessions. 14 pop up consultation sessions were conducted by Council officers, outside shops and other places with passing foot traffic.

A facilitated online meeting was conducted with Council's Community Reference Group members.



# Social Infrastructure Strategy



August 2024

**Social Infrastructure Strategy – Executive Summary**

**Acknowledgement of Country**

This Report acknowledges that the Social Infrastructure Strategy will occur on Dja Dja Wurrung and Barapa Barapa Country.

Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land comprising the Loddon Shire Council area. Council pays respect to their Elders, both past and present.



**Social Infrastructure Strategy – Executive Summary**

**Executive Summary**

The Social Infrastructure Strategy provides a framework for how the Loddon Shire Council can foster the community’s access to the social infrastructure in the Loddon Shire.

The Social Infrastructure Strategy has focused on the following Council facilities and services:

- Indoor Meeting spaces can take various forms, including public halls, community centres, senior citizen centres, and sporting club facilities.
- Recreational<sup>1</sup> spaces and facilities.
- Playgrounds
- Swimming Pools
- Maternal and Child Health Services
- Library Services
- Preschool Centres
- Community Centres – This Report has included Senior Citizens Clubs in this category.
- Waste Management Facilities

These community facilities and services help individuals, families, groups, and communities meet their social needs, maximise their potential for development, and enhance community well-being.

The Report also acknowledges the roles of important community well-being services delivered by other entities and the private sector, including schools, health, emergency, and retail services.

**Developing the Social Infrastructure Strategy**

The development of the Social Infrastructure Strategy has involved:-

- An extensive analysis of Loddon Shire population and demographic data
- Mapping of the distribution of Council facilities and services across the Shire, as well as the availability of relevant services and facilities provided by other entities
- A review of relevant Council and other documentation
- Consultation with the community, Councillors and Council Officers

**Loddon Shire Population**

The Loddon Shire population was 7,751 at the 2021 ABS Census; the ABS latest Estimated Resident Population for the Loddon Shire (as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023) was 7,747. This population is distributed across 100 ABS Localities as follows:

	Locality Population	Total # of Localities	Total Population	% of Loddon Population
<b>Localities with more than 100 people</b>	<b>Large Town Localities – Wedderburn, Boort, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Bridgewater</b>	5	3,847	50%
	<b>Small Town Localities – Serpentine, Dingee, Laanecoorie, Newbridge, Tarnagulla, Korong Vale, Mitiamo, Calivil</b>	9	1,441	18%
<b>Localities with a population less than 100 people</b>		86	2,463	32%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,751</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Council is also undertaking the development of a Recreation, Open Space and Aquatics Strategy, which will mainly address access to specific types of recreational and sporting activities

## Social Infrastructure Strategy – Executive Summary

### Population Growth

The State Government's population forecast for the Loddon Shire through 2031 shows a projected growth of 81 people. Population growth in small towns is limited due to constraints on building new dwellings, including limited water supply, absence of effluent management systems, and the risk of flooding. Most of the population growth is expected to occur in the larger centres.

### Reliance on Car Travel

The infrequency of public transport and the location of stops in 16 of the Shires' 100 localities requires an emphasis on using a motor vehicle to access facilities and services. This travel includes communities accessing facilities and services unavailable in their locality, including health services and supermarkets.

### Larger Towns

The larger towns in the Loddon Shire—i.e., Wedderburn, Inglewood, Bridgewater on Loddon, Boort, and Pyramid Hill—have a range of facilities and services, including health services and supermarkets, unavailable in the small towns. All localities in the Loddon Shire are within 30 minutes of drive time from at least one of the larger towns.

### Nearby Towns

Several towns near the Loddon Shire offer facilities, goods, and services not available within the Shire or closer to some Loddon communities. The largest nearby town is Bendigo, a major regional centre offering many facilities and services. Almost 100% of the Loddon Shire population can reach Bendigo within a 60-minute drive.

### Distribution of Facilities and Services

The distribution of social infrastructure insured by Council across the Shire is as follows.

Types of Facilities & Services	#	Located in Locality Types		
		Large Towns (5)	Small Towns (8)	Other (87)
Recreation Reserves and Sports Club Facilities	31	21	11	
Public Halls	29	8	10	11
Playgrounds	20	14	6	
Community Centres	7	4	2	1
Maternal & Child Health Services	6	4	2	
Senior Citizen Centres	6	4	2	
Waste Facilities	6	4	2	
Swimming Pools	5	4	1	
Preschools	5	4	1	
Library Services	6	4	2	
<i>totals</i>	<b>125</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Populations</i>	<b>7,750</b>	<b>3,847</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>2,463</b>



**Social Infrastructure Strategy – Executive Summary**

**Indoor Meeting Spaces**

The Shire has many facilities that can provide indoor meeting space, including public halls, community centres, senior citizen centres, and sports clubrooms. This Report calculates that more than 70 indoor meeting spaces exist through Loddon Council facilities; this does not include hotels or cafes.

**Asset Management**

The Council has yet to complete the development of asset lifecycle plans for Recreation, Leisure, and Community Facilities. The council's Recreation, Leisure, and Community Facilities Asset Management Plan notes the "ageing infrastructure in Council's recreational, leisure, and community facilities." The Report comments that, at present, all decision-making is reactive.

All of the Community Plans include actions to improve or upgrade facilities in the town.

**Management Committees**

Many Loddon towns have several management committees, including Community Asset Committees, Hall Committees, and Reserve Management committees that may be Council or DEECA committees. In addition to these entities, Committees are involved in running various community groups and sporting clubs. These various committees have to be raised from small populations, particularly in small towns.

**Network of Social Infrastructure**

Individual towns and communities in Loddon Shire have access to a network of council facilities and services across its urban centres, small towns, and other locations within the Shire. People also access facilities and services outside of the Shire.

Decisions about infrastructure in any town in the Loddon Shire impact the network and the opportunities for communities in other locations.

**Access Regime**

A regime<sup>2</sup> for reasonable access to facilities has been developed based on analysing the distribution of facilities and services and stakeholder feedback.

Drive Time	Facility or Service	Drive Time	Facility or Service
15 minutes or less	Indoor Meeting Place	30 minutes or less	M&CH Service
	Recreation Spaces & Facilities		Community Centre
	Equipped Play Space		Swimming Pool
			Preschool Centre
			Waste Facility

The regime would also encourage other outcomes, including understanding facility usage and increased shared usage, increasing the functionality of existing facilities, and improving asset management.

<sup>2</sup> There are 3 localities in the Shire with an estimated population of 50 that are located outside 15 minutes but within 20 minutes of towns with facilities. Additionally, 2 localities with a population of less than 40 are situated outside 30 minutes of an urban centre but within 30 minutes of larger towns outside the Shire.

## Social Infrastructure Strategy – Executive Summary

### Many Opportunities for All Towns

Based on the above regime, all towns have access to many facilities and services, including those in Bendigo, Dunolly, and Maryborough. All localities in the Shire are within 15 minutes drive of one or more of the Shire's towns.

Localities > 100 People	Population	Within 15 Minutes of Driving Time			Within 30 Minutes of Driving Time					
		Indoor Meeting Places	Recreation Facilities	Playgrounds	M&CH Service	Library Service	Preschool	Community Centres	Swimming Pool	Waste Facility
Wedderburn	951	11	12	6	3	2	2	4	2	2
Boort	940	12	11	4	2	2	2	5	2	2
Inglewood	784	13	18	5	3	2	2	6	4	2
Pyramid Hill	598	8	9	4	3	4	5	5	4	3
Bridgewater	466	13	23	6	4	4	2	6	4	3
Serpentine	221	11	15	5	5	5	4	8	6	5
Dingee	195	7	11	4	4	4	2	6	5	2
Laanecoorie	179	12	16	4	6	4	4	5	5	2
Calivil	175	10	16	6	3	4	3	7	3	3
Newbridge	169	13	10	5	6	7	4	7	6	2
Tarnagulla	153	14	18	7	4	5	3	6	5	2
Korong Vale	143	11	12	6	4	3	3	6	3	3
Mitiamo	111	10	15	5	3	2	2	4	2	2
Eddington	62	5	10	2	3	4	2	4	4	1

In identifying these opportunities, this Report acknowledges that many in the community will be unaware or unwilling to use facilities outside their town; this will require some change management processes to foster the use of other facilities.

#### Level of Usage

While the analysis indicates that all towns have access to multiple opportunities, more data is needed regarding facility usage, including frequency, purpose, and by whom. A process for gathering data about the usage level of all facilities needs to be developed.

#### Shared Usage

Encouraging greater shared use of facilities enables understanding whether and where the network can be rationalised and where investment in existing facilities can be best targeted to provide the best value for the community and Council. Fostering a greater level of shared usage will likely require some change management.

**Social Infrastructure Strategy – Executive Summary**

**Contemporary Functionality**

The challenge for much of the social infrastructure network is identifying which facilities need to meet contemporary requirements and which warrant investment to meet these requirements.

**Asset Condition**

Many of the social infrastructure assets available are aged and require investment; there is a need to complete asset management plans for community and recreation facilities. In concert with usage data, clear decisions can be made about a regime for investing in facilities and which facilities do not warrant further Council support.

**The Way Forward**

This Report recommends the following projects to improve the capability of making long-term decisions about investing in social infrastructure for towns and Localities in the Loddon Shire.

Projects	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y5+
1) Identify the implications for the need or usage of town facilities based on the ROSA, Economic Development Strategy and Visitor Economy Strategy recommendations.	■					
2) Develop a practical data collection process for the Council, "Management Committees" and users to establish actual facility usage — both frequency and type. Collect usage data	■	■	■	■	■	■
3) Complete asset assessments for all social infrastructure facilities that identify facilities that are at, or close to end of life” and for which there are alternate spaces.	■	■	■			
4) Review the Community Planning Framework to include a focus on identifying existing facilities that provide the most appropriate and usable indoor meeting space and spaces that are infrequently used (or not used at all); this process will utilise data made available through the process developed in #2. Update Community Plans as necessary		■	■	■		
5) Develop a "Facilities Management Plan" for each town that establishes priorities for investment in or rationalisation of existing Council facilities within 15 minutes driving time of the "Township Zone" (see Section 10.3 <sup>3</sup> )				■	■	■
6) Update community profiles for towns (and the other Localities in the Shire) based on the 2026 ABS Census and identify the implications for future social infrastructure development.				■		
7) Update the network of available facilities and services available to towns <sup>4</sup>				■	■	■

<sup>3</sup> At this time it unknown how long the development of these plans will take

<sup>4</sup> This update will consider any assets that will be discontinued based on usage and asset assessments and will underpin the development of the Facilities Management Plans

## Contents

<b>Acknowledgement of Country</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1. Policy Context</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2. A Network Approach</b>	<b>1</b>
1.2.1. What Types of Social Infrastructure?	2
1.2.2. Making Decisions about Social Infrastructure	2
<b>1.3. Project Methodology</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. The Loddon Settlement Strategy</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1. Growth Towns</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1.1. Newbridge	4
<b>2.2. Small Townships</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.3. Township Zones</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.4. 100 plus Populations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Loddon Shire's Population</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1. Forecast Population</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2. Estimated Resident Population (ERP)</b>	<b>6</b>
3.2.1. Updated Locality Population Data	6
<b>3.3. Loddon Shire's ABS-Defined Localities</b>	<b>6</b>
3.3.1. Localities with Populations of More Than 100 People	6
3.3.2. Shared Localities – Estimating the Loddon Shire's Population	7
<b>3.4. Loddon Shire's ABS Urban Centres</b>	<b>9</b>
3.4.1. Bridgewater on Loddon and Bridgewater Localities	9
<b>4. Town Populations</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>4.1. Population Changes in Large or Growth Towns</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1.1. The Percentage of Loddon Shire's Population Residing in the Large Towns	11
4.1.2. Newbridge is a Small Town	12
4.1.3. Minimal Population Growth in Larger Towns – The Demand for Social Infrastructure	13
<b>4.2. Small Townships Populations</b>	<b>13</b>
4.2.1. Population Changes in Small Townships	13
4.2.2. Minimal Population Growth in Small Towns –The Demand for Social Infrastructure	14
<b>4.3. Localities with a Population of Less than 100</b>	<b>15</b>
4.3.1. No Town Zones in Localities with a Population less than 100	15
<b>4.4. Town Zones, Residential Dwellings and Additional Residential Dwellings</b>	<b>16</b>
4.4.1. Current Private Dwellings	16
4.4.2. Capacity for Additional Dwellings	17
4.4.3. Unoccupied Private Dwellings	17
<b>4.5. Building Approvals in the Loddon Shire</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.6. Net Migration to the Loddon Shire</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.7. Economic Impacts on Town Populations</b>	<b>19</b>
4.7.1. Where People Work and Live	19
4.7.2. Most Frequent Industries of Employment	19
4.7.3. Median Weekly Household Income	21
<b>5. Transport and Driving Times</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>5.1. VLine Services</b>	<b>22</b>
5.1.1. Car Dominated	22
5.1.2. Driving Times	22
<b>5.2. Approximate Driving Times</b>	<b>23</b>

<b>6.</b>	<b>Social Infrastructure in the Loddon Shire</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>6.1.</b>	<b>Facilities and Services</b>	<b>24</b>
	6.1.1. Distribution of Services and Facilities	24
<b>6.2.</b>	<b>Indoor Meeting Spaces</b>	<b>25</b>
	6.2.1. More than 70 Indoor Meeting Places	25
	6.2.2. Public Hotels and Cafes	25
	6.2.3. Usage of Assets	26
<b>6.3.</b>	<b>Recreation Spaces</b>	<b>27</b>
	6.3.1. Sporting Clubs	27
	6.3.2. Travel between Sporting Venues	27
	6.3.3. Recreation, Outdoor Space and Aquatics Strategy	27
<b>6.4.</b>	<b>Playgrounds</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>6.5.</b>	<b>Facilities in Localities with Less than 100 People</b>	<b>29</b>
	6.5.1. Additional Options for Small Communities, Small Towns and Urban Centres	29
<b>6.6.</b>	<b>Swimming Pools</b>	<b>30</b>
	6.6.1. 15 Minutes Access to Swimming Pools	30
	6.6.2. Waste Management Facilities	31
<b>6.7.</b>	<b>Value of Council Assets</b>	<b>31</b>
	6.7.1. Ageing Assets	31
<b>6.8.</b>	<b>Management of Council Assets</b>	<b>32</b>
	6.8.1. Community Asset Committees and Committees of Management	32
	6.8.2. Impact on 18 years Plus Population	33
<b>7.</b>	<b>Capability of Loddon's Towns</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>7.1.</b>	<b>Other Services</b>	<b>35</b>
	7.1.1. Health Services	35
	7.1.2. Primary and Secondary Schools	35
	7.1.3. Hotels and Cafes	36
	7.1.4. Emergency Services and Other Facilities	36
	7.1.5. Retail Services	37
<b>7.2.</b>	<b>Community Plans</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>7.3.</b>	<b>Capability of Towns outside of the Loddon Shire</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>7.4.</b>	<b>Access to Loddon's Urban Centres and Other Towns</b>	<b>40</b>
	7.4.1. Driving Time Not Always the Key Factor	41
<b>8.</b>	<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8.1.</b>	<b>Engagement Program</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8.2.</b>	<b>Access to Halls and Meeting Places</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8.3.</b>	<b>Access to Recreation Facilities</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8.4.</b>	<b>Access to Other Services</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8.5.</b>	<b>Frequency of Use of Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>An Access Regime for Council Facilities and Services</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>9.1.</b>	<b>Key Principles</b>	<b>43</b>
	9.1.1. A Network Approach	43
	9.1.2. Understanding Usage	44
	9.1.3. Shared Use of Facilities	44
	9.1.4. Improving the Capability of What Already Exists	44
	9.1.5. Asset Management	44
	9.1.6. Community Resources	45
	9.1.7. Safety	45
	9.1.8. Risk Management	45
	9.1.9. Environmental Sustainability	45
	9.1.10. Financial Sustainability and Support	45

<b>9.2. Access Regime</b>	<b>45</b>
9.2.1. Analysis of the Impact on Towns of the Access Regime	46
<b>9.3. Wedderburn – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>47</b>
9.3.1. Wedderburn – 15 and 30 Minute Access	48
<b>9.4. Inglewood – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>49</b>
9.4.1. Inglewood – 15 and 30 Minute Access	50
<b>9.5. Boort – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>51</b>
9.5.1. Boort – 15 and 30 Minute Access	52
<b>9.6. Pyramid Hill – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>53</b>
9.6.1. Pyramid Hill – 15 and 30 Minute Access	54
<b>9.7. Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>55</b>
9.7.1. Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater – 15 and 30 Minute Access	56
<b>9.8. Serpentine – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>57</b>
9.8.1. Serpentine – 15 and 30 Minute Access	58
<b>9.9. Dingee – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>59</b>
9.9.1. Dingee – 15 and 30 Minute Access	60
<b>9.10. Mitiamo – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>61</b>
9.10.1. Mitiamo – 15 and 30-Minute access	62
<b>9.11. Korong Vale – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>63</b>
9.11.1. Korong Vale – 15 and 30-Minute Access	64
<b>9.12. Newbridge – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>65</b>
9.12.1. Newbridge – 15 and 30 Minute Access	66
<b>9.13. Laanecoorie – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>67</b>
9.13.1. Laanecoorie – 15 and 30-Minute access	68
<b>9.14. Tarnagulla – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>69</b>
9.14.1. Tarnagulla – 15 and 30-Minute access	70
<b>9.15. Eddington – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>71</b>
9.15.1. Eddington – 15 and 30-Minute access	72
<b>9.16. Calivil – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure</b>	<b>73</b>
9.16.1. Calivil – 15 and 30-Minute access	74
<b>9.17. Total Number of Social Infrastructure Options for Towns</b>	<b>75</b>
9.17.1. All Other Localities	75
9.17.2. Obstacles to Wider Usage	76
<b>9.18. Indoor Meeting Places</b>	<b>76</b>
9.18.1. Persons/Space	77
9.18.2. Future Demand for Indoor Meeting Spaces	77
9.18.3. Contemporary Functionality	78
9.18.4. Level of Usage	78
9.18.5. Accessing Facilities Outside of the Towns	78
9.18.6. Impact on Community Resources	78
9.18.7. Impact on Council Resources	79
9.18.8. Asset Management	79
<b>9.19. Recreational Facilities</b>	<b>79</b>
9.19.1. Future Investment in Recreation Facilities	79
9.19.2. Community Capability	79
9.19.3. Social and Competition Play	79
<b>10. Moving Forward</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>10.1. Key Findings</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>10.2. Decision Making</b>	<b>81</b>
10.2.1. 15 minutes Catchment	81
<b>10.3. Towns Facilities Management Plans</b>	<b>82</b>
10.3.1. Inputs	82

10.3.2. Usage Maximisation and Consolidation	83
10.3.3. Future Investment	83
10.3.4. Divestment or Reduction of Facilities	83
10.3.5. Governance	83
10.3.6. Outcomes	83
<b>10.4. Recommended Projects</b>	<b>84</b>



## 1. Introduction

Social Infrastructure helps individuals, families, groups, and communities meet their social needs, maximise their potential for development, and enhance community well-being.

The Loddon Social Infrastructure Strategy provides a framework for how the Loddon Shire Council can foster access to community facilities and services across the Shire consistent with contemporary demands.

### 1.1. Policy Context

The Council Plan has some outcomes that provide a context for the Social Infrastructure Strategy, the most notable being:

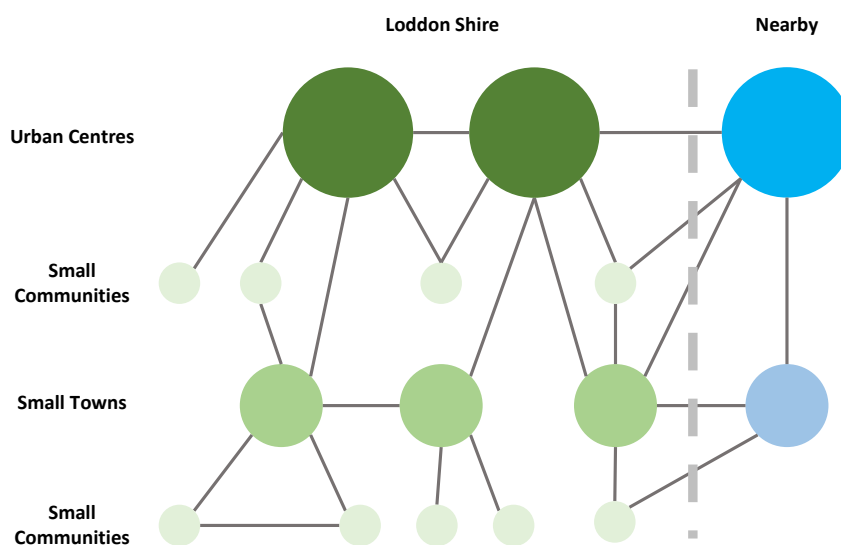
- *We will have infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs and embraces environmental sustainability*
- *We will implement financially and environmentally sustainable infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs.*

The Council also has a Small Towns Policy that aims to support each town in the Shire “in appropriate ways so that each town may meet its full potential.”

### 1.2. A Network Approach

As depicted in Figure 1-1, Loddon Shire's towns and communities do not operate in isolation when accessing social infrastructure. There is a network of Council and other facilities and services across its urban centres, small towns, and other locations. People also access facilities and services outside of the Loddon Shire.

Figure 1-1 – A Networked Approach



### 1.2.1. What Types of Social Infrastructure?

This Report has focused on the following types of social infrastructure: Council services and facilities, including:

- Indoor meeting spaces – these take a range of forms, including public halls, community centres, senior citizen centres and sporting club facilities; this Report has also acknowledged the use of commercial spaces such as cafes and public hotels
- Recreational<sup>5</sup> spaces and facilities include sporting reserves and more specialised facilities such as tennis courts and lawn bowl rinks.
- Playgrounds – spaces with play equipment
- Swimming pools
- Maternal and child health services
- Library services – this includes the use of agency services
- Preschool centres
- Community centres – places where community members can socialise with others and access a range of activities and information; this Report has included Senior Citizens Clubs in this category
- Waste management facilities – these include are essential facilities that enable households (and businesses) to function, particularly if they do not receive a “curbside” rubbish collection service

This Report also acknowledges the availability of facilities and services that are not owned or operated by Council but are essential to the social functioning of communities, including:

- Schools
- Health services
- Emergency services
- Retail services – particularly access to food and household goods (i.e. supermarkets) and fuel retailing

### 1.2.2. Making Decisions about Social Infrastructure

Making decisions about social infrastructure in any of Loddon Shire’s towns requires understanding how changing this infrastructure in any one location will impact the wider network.

This understanding requires “mapping” these relationships and maintaining this information. This Report has undertaken an extensive mapping of the current availability of the types of social infrastructure noted in Section 1.2.1 to understand the range of opportunities available to towns or nearby.

Decisions about social infrastructure in Loddon's towns also need to understand the following:

- Current usage of the relevant facilities or services
- Likely future demand and requirements for facilities or services
- Current condition of social infrastructure assets, including their capability and functionality and their ability to meet contemporary requirements and expectations
- Availability of other assets that can meet the needs of the community

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<sup>5</sup> Council is also undertaking the development of a Recreation, Open Space and Aquatics Strategy, which will mainly address access to specific types of recreational and sporting activities

### 1.3. Project Methodology

The development of the Social Infrastructure Strategy has involved the following:

- An extensive analysis of the Loddon Shire population and demographic data, much of this data was drawn from ABS Census data and data sets prepared by commercial providers for Council. This analysis has also included:
  - Population forecasts for the Loddon Shire prepared by the State Government
  - Land and property sales data provided by the Victorian Valuer General
- A review of Council strategies, documents and data sets, including the following:
  - Council Plan
  - Loddon Settlement Strategy
  - Loddon Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
  - Council Asset Management Strategy and Plans
  - Dataset of community facilities insured by Council

The review of documentation also includes a review of regional strategies, including:

- Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan
- Loddon Mallee Regional Economic Development Strategy
- Extensive mapping of Community facilities within 15-minute and 30-minute driving times from the Town Zone of Localities with a population of 100 or more people.
- A review of Council's current asset management strategies and plans for "social infrastructure."
- Workshops with Councillors and Council Staff
- Community consultation included an online survey, in-person drop-in sessions, and online forums.

## 2. The Loddon Settlement Strategy

The Loddon Settlement Strategy (2019 – 2035) was adopted in early 2020. The strategy” aims to maximise the potential for population and housing growth in the Loddon Shire. Based on an understanding of capacity and suitability, it identifies the localities in the municipality where Council is planning for people to live and proposes actions to promote development and growth”.

### 2.1. Growth Towns

The Loddon Settlement Strategy nominates Boort, Inglewood Wedderburn, Pyramid Hill and Bridgewater on Loddon as growth towns. The Strategy identifies criteria to support these nominations, including:

- Land supply for residential development
- Proximity to a major regional centre
- Infrastructure availability
- Free from environmental constraints
- Amenity
- Existing growth trends
- Housing suitability (size, quality)

#### 2.1.1. Newbridge

The Loddon Settlement Strategy nominates the town of Newbridge "as having unique qualities that could stimulate new growth and development. The high amenity location of Newbridge on the Loddon River, along with its proximity to Bendigo, is a growth opportunity. This opportunity cannot be realised without reticulated sewerage and water."

### 2.2. Small Townships

The Loddon Settlement Strategy nominates the following as existing small townships

- Serpentine
- Mitiamo
- Eddington<sup>6</sup>
- Laanecoorie
- Dingee
- Korong Vale
- Tarnagulla

### 2.3. Township Zones

Loddon Shire Council's planning scheme has several Localities with Township Zone (TZ) areas. The Township Zone provides for residential and other uses in towns and enables moderate housing growth. Figure 3-2 notes the Localities<sup>7</sup> with a TZ. The TZs vary in size (see Section 4.4) and the TZs in the Growth Towns largely align with the ABS Urban Centres. (see Section 3.4) There are no TZs in the Loddon Shire in Localities with less than 100 people.

### 2.4. 100 plus Populations

The report covers a larger area than the Loddon Settlement Strategy, as it applies to all locations in the Loddon Shire. The Loddon Settlement Strategy outlines a framework to maximise population and housing growth in the Loddon Shire, focusing on "growth" and "small townships." This report aims to identify the social infrastructure needs of communities across the Loddon Shire. It acknowledges the factors that will influence the Shire's population as outlined in the Loddon Settlement Strategy. With a broader scope, the report focuses on all localities with a population of more than 100 people with a designated TZ and the impact on localities with smaller populations. The following section explains the concept of Localities.

<sup>6</sup> The Eddington Locality spans the Loddon Shire boundary – a population of less than 100 is estimated to reside within the Loddon Shire

<sup>7</sup> Section 3.2 explains the concept of Localities

### 3. Loddon Shire's Population

As listed in Table 3-1, the 2021 ABS Census, the Loddon Shire has a population of 7,759 people, an increase from the 7,512 recorded in the 2016 ABS Census. Much of the population growth was in people aged 60 years or older, and much of the population loss was in people aged 40 to 59.

**Table 3-1 – Loddon Shire Population Trends**

	ABS Census <sup>8</sup>				Victoria in the Future <sup>9</sup>		
	2016	2021	Change 2016 to 2021		2031	Change 2021 to 2031	
	#	#	#	%	#	#	%
0-4 years	335	317	-18	-5%	356	39	12%
5-9 years	405	373	-32	-8%	341	-32	-9%
10-14 years	451	469	18	4%	348	-121	-26%
15-19 years	413	387	-26	-6%	393	6	2%
20-24 years	230	264	34	15%	314	50	19%
25-29 years	237	275	38	16%	308	33	12%
30-34 years	281	342	61	22%	358	16	5%
35-39 years	316	330	14	4%	379	49	15%
40-44 years	404	364	-40	-10%	445	81	22%
45-49 years	498	438	-60	-12%	414	-24	-5%
50-54 years	581	550	-31	-5%	474	-76	-14%
55-59 years	705	609	-96	-14%	570	-39	-6%
60-64 years	645	781	136	21%	612	-169	-22%
65-69 years	667	679	12	2%	593	-86	-13%
70-74 years	472	620	148	31%	679	59	10%
75-79 years	355	401	46	13%	524	123	31%
80-84 years	262	244	-18	-7%	410	166	68%
85 years +	256	308	52	20%	314	6	2%
<b><i>totals</i></b>	<b>7,513</b>	<b>7,751</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>7,832</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1%</b>

#### 3.1. Forecast Population

In Table 3.1, according to the Victoria in the Future (ViF) data from the State Government, the population of Loddon is projected to increase by 81 people by 2031 compared to 2021. Most of this growth is expected in the 65+ years and 15 to 39 years population. This growth will be offset by a forecast contraction in the population aged 0 to 14 years and 40 to 64 years. The anticipated growth in the 80-84 age group represents a significant change compared to the census periods between 2016 and 2021. Similarly, the projected decline in the 60-69-year-old population represents a substantial change from the growth observed in this age group between 2016 and 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Data sourced from the 2021 ABS Census

<sup>9</sup> Victoria in the Future population projections <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/data-and-insights/victoria-in-future>

**3.2. Estimated Resident Population (ERP)**

The Estimated Resident Population (ERP) is the official measure of Australia's population based on the concept of usual residence. Based on the Census of Population and Housing results, the ERP is adjusted for net undercount and Australian usual residents temporarily overseas on census night. The ERP is compiled as of June 30th of each census year and updated quarterly between censuses for Australia, states and territories and annually for smaller areas such as Local Government Areas.

The most recent ERP for the Loddon Shire (as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023) was 7,747, a very slight decrease from the 2021 ABS Census figure of 7,751 (see Table 3-1).

**3.2.1. Updated Locality Population Data**

The ABS provides an annual ERP for the Loddon Shire but not for small areas such as Localities and Urban Centres. The next opportunity to understand changes in the population of localities and urban centres will be after the 2026 ABS Census, with data expected to be available from mid-2027.

**3.3. Loddon Shire's ABS-Defined Localities**

The ABS provides population data for a range of area sizes. At the most local level, the ABS defines Suburbs (in cities and larger towns) and Localities (outside of cities and larger towns)

Loddon Shire's population is dispersed across 100 Localities, as shown in Figure 3-1. The Localities range in population from more than 900 people to less than 5.<sup>10</sup>

**3.3.1. Localities with Populations of More Than 100 People**

As noted in Table 3.2, the Localities with more than 100 people account for some 68% of the Shire's total population.

**Table 3-2 – Population of Localities in the Loddon Shire – 2021 ABS Census<sup>11</sup>**

Locality Population	Total # of Localities	Total Population	% of Loddon Population
<b>Localities with more than 100 people</b>	14	5,249	68%
<b>Localities with a population less than 100 people/more than 50</b>	21	1,252	16%
<b>Localities with a population of less than 50 people</b>	65	1,258	16%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,759</b>	<b>100%</b>

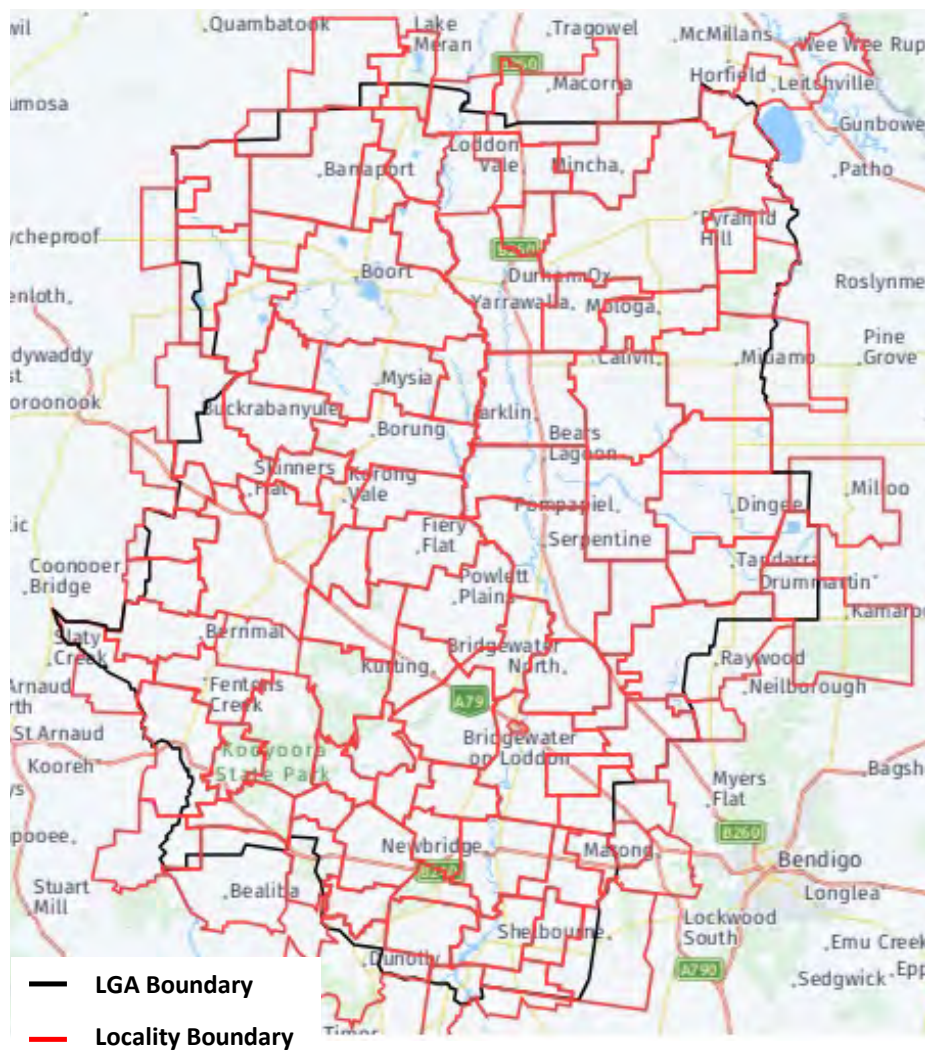
As noted in Table 3.2, the 14 localities with a population greater than 100 comprise 68% of Loddon Shire's population. The remaining 32% is spread across 86 other localities, 65 of which have a population of less than 50 people.

As illustrated in Figure 3-2, the localities with a population greater than 100 are scattered throughout the Loddon Shire.

<sup>10</sup> Figure from Loddon Shire Council's id population dataset

<sup>11</sup> Data sourced from the 2021 ABS Census

Figure 3-1 - Loddon Shire ABS Localities

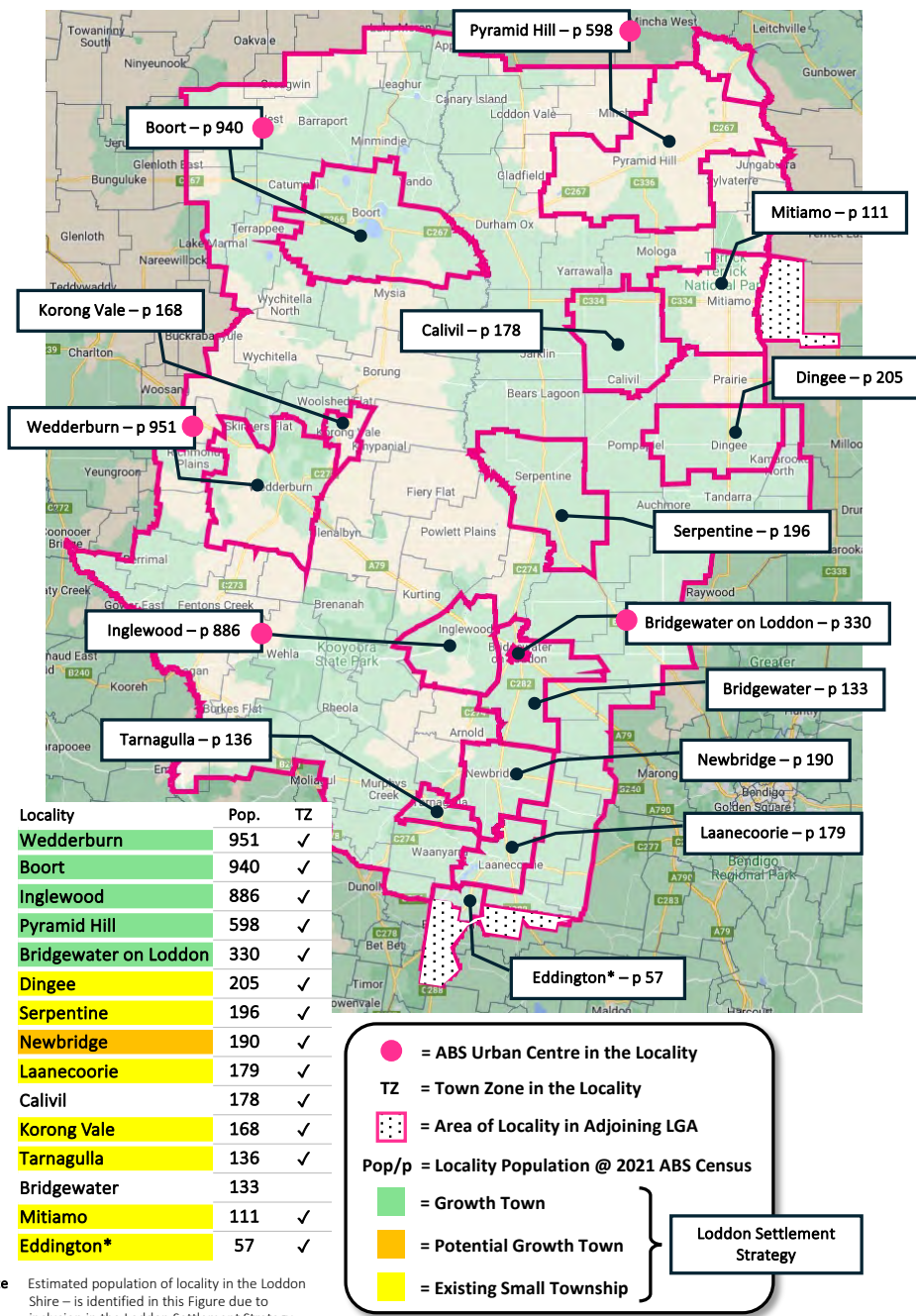


3.3.2. Shared Localities – Estimating the Loddon Shire’s Population

As shown in Figure 3-1, 14 ABS Localities span the boundary of Loddon Shire and neighbouring LGAs. For instance, the ABS Eddington Locality includes people residing in Loddon and Central Goldfields Shires. To determine the population of Loddon Shire, it is necessary to estimate the percentage of the population in these localities that reside within Loddon Shire. However, the population of these localities is usually very small, making it challenging to accurately estimate the overall population of Loddon Shire, which can result in some variation in calculations.



Figure 3-2 – 100 Plus Population ABS Localities



3.4. Loddon Shire’s ABS Urban Centres

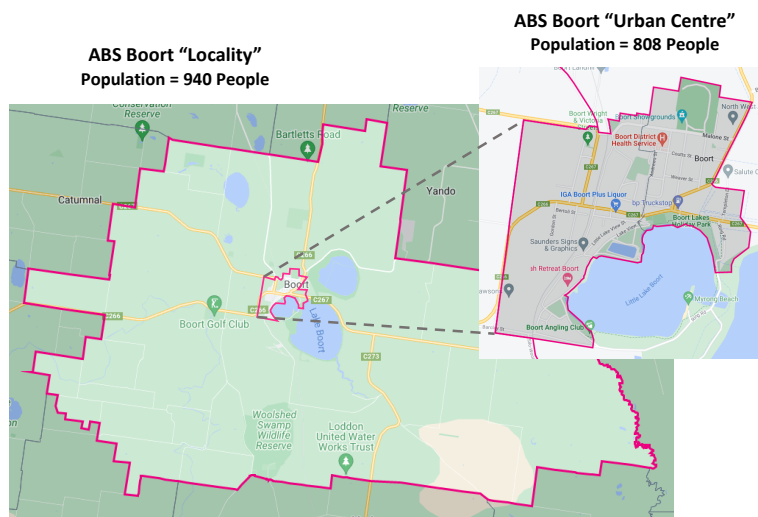
The ABS defines urban centres as areas of concentrated urban development with populations of 200 people or more within a Locality. The Loddon Shire has five urban centres in the adjoining listed Localities.

For example, the Boort “Locality” has a population of 928 people; within this Locality is the Boort “Urban Centre” with 801 people. Therefore, 127 people reside outside the Boort Urban Centre but within the Boort Locality.

Bridgewater on Loddon is both an “Urban Centre” and a “Locality” – a slightly confusing anomaly in ABS definitions – (see Section 3.4.1)

Localities	Population	
	Urban Centre # People	Locality # People
Wedderburn	664	944
Boort	801	928
Inglewood	784	902
Pyramid Hill	477	607
Bridgewater on Loddon	330	

Figure 3-3 – ABS Localities and Urban Centres



3.4.1. Bridgewater on Loddon and Bridgewater Localities

The "Bridgewater" Locality surrounds the "Bridgewater on Loddon" Locality (see Figure 3-4)

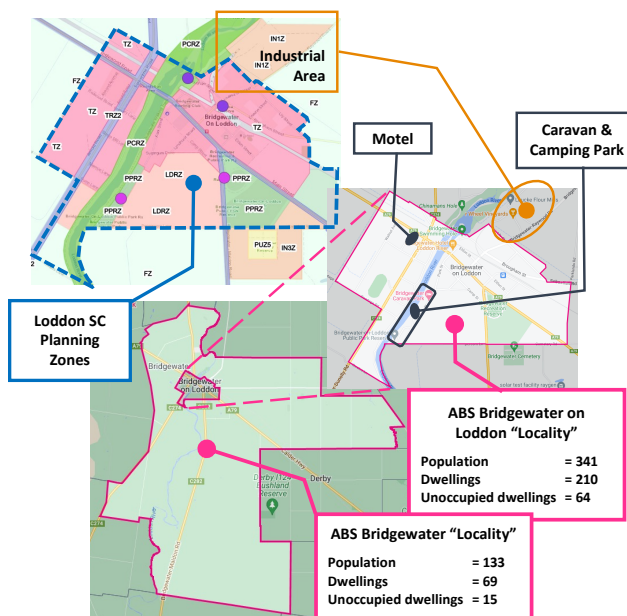
This Report has determined to treat Bridgewater on Loddon as the “Urban Centre” of the combination of the Bridgewater on Loddon and Bridgewater localities with a combined population of 463 people. This combined population is well above any of the existing small townships in the Loddon Shire as defined by the Loddon Settlement Strategy (see Section 2). This Report notes that:

- Like the urban centres of the other Growth Towns, the Bridgewater on Loddon Locality has a TZ. However, the Bridgewater Locality does not have a TZ. It has an area zoned for industrial use (IZ) that adjoins the "Bridgewater on Loddon" locality and has substantive businesses.

Social Infrastructure Strategy

- Outside of the Industrial area that adjoins the Bridgewater on Loddon Locality, the Bridgewater Locality is zoned for farming (FZ), which means that there is a very low density of residential dwellings (there is a Public Use Zone (PUZ) that has a sewerage treatment facility.) This combination is consistent with the make-up of the Growth Towns with defined Urban Centres.
- Bridgewater on Loddon has a town water and sewerage system that supports a substantial land supply for additional dwellings. This functionality contrasts the small towns, which significantly limit their ability to support an increased population due to water supply or effluent management constraints.
- Bridgewater on Loddon also has a substantial "visitor" population, with many attracted by the activities on the Loddon River. The combination of the following facilitates the visitor population:
  - 64 or 32% of dwellings<sup>12</sup> are "unoccupied residential dwellings" (i.e. many of these are holiday homes); when people occupy these dwellings, this will swell the local population by up to 150<sup>13</sup> people
  - Motel – that accommodates up to 40 people
  - Caravan park –when at total capacity, there may be between 250 and 300 people staying on-site

Figure 3-4 – Bridgewater on Loddon – A Wider Population



Site	People
Bol. residents	341
Bol. "Weekenders"	64 x 2.2 = 140
Caravan Park	300
Motel	40
	<i>total</i> 821
Bridgewater	133
	<i>total</i> 954

Given the above, there will be times when Bridgewater on Loddon’s population could swell to more than 850 people (see Figure 3-4.) This figure does not include "day trippers" visiting friends and relatives or experiencing events such as the water skiing competitions.

This Report also notes that Bridgewater on Loddon does not offer the range of services available in the four largest urban centres. This community has to travel to Inglewood or other locations to access health services, a supermarket, a pharmacy, or residential aged care (see Table 7-1 – Facilities and Services Available at Loddon Towns > 100 People).

<sup>12</sup> 2021 ABS Census  
<sup>13</sup> The 2021 ABS Census notes an average of 2.2 people per dwelling; 64 dwellings x 2.2 = 141; many dwellings likely have additional family or friends staying during popular visiting periods

## 4. Town Populations

This Section provides an overview of the population trends in towns with more than 100 people with a TZ.

### 4.1. Population Changes in Large or Growth Towns

The Localities in which the large towns are located experienced population growth between the 2016 and 2021 ABS Census, as noted in Table 4-1. Although the population of the Wedderburn Locality grew during the same period, the population of Wedderburn's urban centre experienced a slight contraction.

**Table 4-1 – Population Changes in Large Towns<sup>14</sup>**

Large Towns	Urban Centres & Localities				Change 2016 to 2021			
	2016		2021		UC		Locality	
	UC #	Locality #	UC #	Locality #	UC #	Locality #	UC %	Locality %
Wedderburn	681	930	664	944	-17	14	-2%	2%
Boort	752	868	801	928	49	60	7%	7%
Inglewood	748	862	784	902	36	40	5%	5%
Pyramid Hill	425	556	477	607	52	51	12%	9%
Bridgewater <sup>15</sup>	321	467	330	466	9	-1	3%	0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,927</b>	<b>3,683</b>	<b>3,056</b>	<b>3,847</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Change in Loddon LGA Population</b>								
Loddon LGA Population	7,513		7,751		LGA Change	247	3.3 % change	
% of Loddon LGA Population	39%	47%	41%	50%	Growth Towns Change	164	69% of LGA Change	

UC = Urban Centre

#### 4.1.1. The Percentage of Loddon Shire's Population Residing in the Large Towns

Loddon Shire's urban centres represent 41% of the Shire's total population, and the Large Town Localities represent 50% of Loddon Shire's population. These percentages represent an increase from 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Data sourced from the 2021 ABS Census

<sup>15</sup> Bridgewater is the combination of Bridgewater on Loddon and Bridgewater Localities – see Section 3.4.1

4.1.2. Newbridge is a Small Town

The Loddon Settlement Strategy nominates Newbridge as a town with growth potential if there are improved water supply and effluent management systems. This Report considers Newbridge as a small town on the following basis:

- The viability of Newbridge as a Growth Town hinges on Coliban Water's substantial investment in utilities. The timeline and commitment to this investment have yet to be determined.
- Therefore, for the foreseeable future, Newbridge will not have the capacity for additional dwellings available in the Growth Towns.
- Newbridge does have some Council facilities, businesses, and public services operating within a TZ. However, this presence is well below that of the Growth Towns.
- There are two other small towns (Serpentine and Dingee) with larger populations than Newbridge and that have more facilities and services than what is available in Newbridge.

Rather than growing in population, Newbridge experienced a population loss between the 2016 and 2021 ABS Census. notes that Newbridge experienced a population loss across most age cohorts.

This Report is not conclusive about all the factors contributing to this population change. One factor that may have impacted this change was people moving to other locations offering more services or housing options.

For example, as noted in Section 4.6, the Loddon Shire experienced a net loss of people who moved to other Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the Loddon Southern Mallee region, which includes Greater Bendigo.

Newbridge's proximity to Bendigo may also create both:

- Opportunities – people can find employment in Bendigo and live in a more rural setting in Newbridge
- Challenges – people may be more attracted to what Bendigo offers than what is available in Newbridge or some other towns in the Loddon Shire.

Table 4-2 Population Change - Newbridge

Age Groups	2016	2021	Diff
0-4 years	0	5	5
5-9 years	5	3	-2
10-14 years	8	11	3
15-19 years	11	6	-5
20-24 years	9	4	-5
25-29 years	5	9	4
30-34 years	5	4	-1
35-39 years	4	9	5
40-44 years	10	7	-3
45-49 years	11	5	-6
50-54 years	20	10	-10
55-59 years	24	17	-7
60-64 years	21	24	3
65-69 years	20	19	-1
70-74 years	12	18	6
75-79 years	13	7	-6
80-84 years	9	3	-6
85 years and over	3	8	5
<b><i>totals</i></b>	<b>190</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>-21</b>

**4.1.3. Minimal Population Growth in Larger Towns – The Demand for Social Infrastructure**

The Growth Towns have provided for much of the population growth experienced in the Loddon Shire. The population change experienced by the Growth Towns Localities (not including Newbridge<sup>16</sup>) over the 2016 and 2021 ABS Census period was 148 persons. This change represents almost 70% of the population growth experienced in the Loddon Shire. This Report has not included Newbridge as a Growth Town as it has yet to offer the capabilities available in the Growth Towns. (see Section 2.1.1)

These towns can provide for further growth due to the additional dwellings the Growth Towns could accommodate. This report anticipates that much of the population growth forecast through to 2031 will be accommodated in the Growth Towns. (see Section 3.1)

The population growth in urban centres does not indicate a need for additional social infrastructure. As discussed in Section 7.3 and Section 9.17, there are multiple options available for the urban centres, including access to opportunities in nearby LGAs. The challenge is determining whether the existing social infrastructure assets meet the contemporary requirements and provide sufficient functionality, if there is an overlap in the availability of similar functionality, and if so, which facilities should be targeted for ongoing investment.

**4.2. Small Townships Populations**

The Loddon Settlement Strategy nominates the locations listed in Table 4-3 as existing “Small Townships”. This Report has included the Calivil as it has a TZ (albeit a very small TZ - see Section 4.4) and a population of more than 100 people.

**4.2.1. Population Changes in Small Townships**

Table 4-3 shows that the population of the Localities in which the Small Townships are located account for around 19% of the Loddon Shire’s population.

**Table 4-3 – Population Changes in Small Townships**

Small Townships	Locality Population		Change 2016 to 2021		Private Dwellings			Approx. Growth Capacity* Dwellings
	2016	2021	#	%	2016	2021	Change	
Serpentine	198	238	40	20%	95	97	2	40
Dingee	200	198	-2	-1%	105	92	-13	5
Laanecoorie	183	190	7	4%	102	103	1	13
Calivil <sup>17</sup>	175	178	3	2%	87	86	-1	-
Newbridge	190	169	-21	-11%	106	96	-10	20
Tarnagulla	121	155	34	28%	112	129	17	6
Korong Vale	158	149	-9	-6%	102	109	7	15
Mitiamo	119	101	-18	-15%	51	64	13	15
Eddington	57	62	5	9%	57	45	-12	70
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,401</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>LGA Population</b>	<b>7,513</b>	<b>7,751</b>	<b>LGA Change</b>		<b>238</b>	<b>3.3 % change</b>		
<b>% of LGA Population</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>Small Towns Change</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>16 % of LGA Change</b>		

<sup>16</sup>0

<sup>17</sup> Calivil is not included in the Loddon Settlement Strategy

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

Key observations from Table 4-3 are as follows:

- Serpentine and Tarnagulla experienced the most significant population growth among the small townships.
- The total population growth for Eddington, Laanecoorie and Calivil was 15, representing 6.3% of the Loddon Shire's total population increase.
- Dingee, Mitiamo, Korong Vale, and Newbridge experienced a population contraction. Feedback from the community consultation indicated that workers from a local gold mining operation have moved into available housing in Mitiamo town and the local area. There was no indication of any additional dwellings being added.

#### 4.2.2. Minimal Population Growth in Small Towns -The Demand for Social Infrastructure

Future population growth in the existing small townships is limited due to restrictions in expanding the "Town Zones." The Loddon Settlement Strategy notes the following:

- "New residential development will be supported in the existing township area of the smaller towns where it can be demonstrated that effluent can be managed in accordance with relevant legislation. In the absence of reticulated sewer, expansion of the urban area cannot be supported."
- "The extent of the urban area in some towns (Serpentine, Laanecoorie and Newbridge) should be reviewed due to flood risk."

As already noted in this Report, the small towns accounted for less than 20% of the population growth experienced in the Loddon Shire since the 2016 ABS Census (see Table 4-3)

Small towns already have access to multiple options for various types of social infrastructure assets, as listed in Table 9-30

When it comes to indoor meeting spaces, smaller towns tend to have fewer people per indoor space compared to larger towns, as shown in Table 9-31 – Supply of Indoor Meeting Spaces (Council Facilities). This suggests that the supply of indoor spaces for the small towns is well above the demand for these spaces. However, similar to larger towns, it's essential to assess whether the current social infrastructure assets meet current needs and offer sufficient functionality, if there is any redundancy in the availability of similar functionality, and if so, which facilities should be prioritised for ongoing investment.



**4.3. Localities with a Population of Less than 100**

Table 4-4 lists the Localities in the Loddon Shire with a population of less than 100 people as recorded in the 2021 ABS Census.

These Localities account for almost 2,470 or 32% of the Loddon Shire's population. The collective population of these “Less than 100 People” Locations grew by 36 or 1%. There was a mix of Localities that experienced population growth and those that experienced contraction. This growth represents around 15% of the total population growth in the Loddon Shire since the 2016 ABS Census.

The ABS provides minimal data for Localities with less than 50 people to protect against the identification of individuals from specific households. For example, there is no age-specific population data.

Some of these Localities have Council facilities (see Figure 6-1)

**Table 4-4 – Loddon Localities with Population < 100 People<sup>1819</sup>**

People <100 >50		People <50 >25		People <25	
Yarrowalla	Borong	Jarklin	Powlett Plains	Buckrabanyule	Catumnal
Dunolly*	Raywood*	Leaghur	Salisbury West	Sylvaterre	Painswick
Eddington*	Woodstock OL	McIntyre	Prairie	Glenalbyn	Minmindie
Llanelly	Waanyarra	Kingower	Leichardt	Lake Marmal	Woolshed Flat
Mincha	Arnold	Murphys Creek	Fernihurst	Mologa	Barraport West
Shelbourne*	Barraport	Woodstock	Gladfield	Terrappee	Cochranes
Moliagul*	Tandarra	West	Brenanah	Wedderburn	Creek
Berrimal	Bears Lagoon	Yando	Wychitella	Junction	Kinypanial
Durham Ox	Bridgewater Nth	Logan	Fentons Creek	Arnold West	Richmond Plains
Kurting	Rheola	Wehla	Fiery Flat	Burkes Flat	Terrick Terrick
	Campbells	Kamarooka Nth	Skinners Flat	Nine Mile	Auchmore
	Forest	Loddon Vale	Mysia	Derby	Kurraca
		Pompapiel		Wychitella Nth	Canary Island
				Yarraberb	Jungaburra
					Kurraca West

\* Note – estimated population of the Locality within the Loddon LGA

**4.3.1. No Town Zones in Localities with a Population less than 100**

These Localities do not have any town zones (TZs). Most of these areas are primarily zoned for farming (FZ), meaning the residential density is very low due to the zoning restrictions. Furthermore, some localities have significant areas zoned as Public Conservation and Resources (PCRZ), including State Forests/Nature Reserves, especially in the southwest of the Shire, where no residential development is allowed.

<sup>18</sup> Data sourced from the 2021 ABS Census via REPLAN Community

<sup>19</sup> A further 14 Localities have a small area of the Locality within the Loddon LGA - REPLAN Community has incorporated the populations listed above. When added to the population figures for the Localities with more than 100 people, the estimates made regarding this inclusion are slightly different from the overall estimate of LGA's population made by the ABS.

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

## 4.4. Town Zones, Residential Dwellings and Additional Residential Dwellings

Table 4-5 shows that the designated TZs represent a small percentage of the Locality's land area. The remaining area outside is zoned FZ and PCRZ, resulting in a lower residential density than the TZs.

In larger towns with a designated ABS urban centre, the TZs generally correspond to the ABS urban area and accommodate most people living in the respective Localities. For small-town Localities without an urban centre, the ABS data does not provide information on the population residing in the TZ and the rest of the Locality, nor does it provide a breakdown of residential dwellings. Localities with smaller towns have a wider distribution of dwellings and populations compared to those with urban centres.

Table 4-5 - Approximate Size of TZs, Dwelling Numbers and Potential Additional Dwellings in Towns<sup>20</sup>

Towns	Town Zones			Dwellings						
	Approx. TZ Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Locality Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	% of Locality	2016		2021		Change 2016/21		Potential Additional Dwellings (#) <sup>21</sup>
				Urban Centre	Locality	Urban Centre	Locality	Urban Centre	Locality	
Inglewood	1.9	107	1.8%	371	440	405	464	34	24	400+
Wedderburn	1.8	207	0.9%	434	634	407	607	-27	-27	340+
Newbridge	1.8	96	2.0%		106		96		-10	20
Bridgewater OL	1.5	2.5	60.0%	192	259	211	283	19	24	270+
Boort	1.2	256	0.5%	381	440	429	491	48	51	70
Pyramid Hill	0.9	333	0.2%	240	304	236	300	-4	-4	80
Tarnagulla	0.8	29	3.0%		112		129		17	6
Laanecoorie	0.7	63	1.2%		102		103		1	13
Korong Vale	0.7	28	2.5%		102		109		7	15
Serpentine	0.6	169	0.4%		95		97		2	40
Dingee	0.4	143	0.3%		105		92		-13	5
Eddington	0.4	20	2.0%		57		45		-12	70
Mitiamo	0.3	139	0.2%		51		64		13	15
Calivil <sup>22</sup>	0.1	139	0.1%		87		86		-1	

## 4.4.1. Current Private Dwellings

Table 4-5 also presents Census data from 2016 and 2021 showing the number of private dwellings in each town. However, the ABS data does not explain why the number of dwellings has decreased. This Report assumes that the decrease may be due to changes in reporting methods between the two Censuses, the removal of dwellings due to their poor physical condition or plans to redevelop the site that have yet to be implemented.

<sup>20</sup> Data sourced from the Loddon REMPLAN community dataset, LSC online planning information, Google Maps

<sup>21</sup> Includes dwellings on Low Density Residential Zoned (LDRZ) areas that may adjoin the Town Centres

<sup>22</sup> Calivil is not included in the Loddon Settlement Strategy

**4.4.2. Capacity for Additional Dwellings**

The Loddon Settlement Strategy has identified the capacity for an increase in the number of dwellings for each of the Growth Towns and existing Small townships. Table 4-5 also provides the estimated growth capacity for additional dwellings, as noted in the Loddon Settlement Strategy, which notes significant limitations on the capacity for additional dwellings in the small townships, as noted in Section 4.2.2.

The ViF data for Loddon Shire projects that there will be 4,379 dwellings by 2026, rising to 4,449 by 2031. This represents an additional 528 dwellings from the 3,921 dwellings recorded in the 2021 ABS Census<sup>23</sup>.

The Loddon Settlement Strategy estimates that the Growth Towns can collectively provide for at least 1,100 additional dwellings. The 2021 ABS Census notes that the "Average number of people per household" in the Loddon Shire is 2.2<sup>24</sup> people. More than 2,500<sup>25</sup> people would reside in the Loddon Shire if these additional dwellings were developed and occupied. However, the rate of building approvals suggests that a very small percentage of this capacity has been taken up to date. (see Section 4.5)

**4.4.3. Unoccupied Private Dwellings<sup>1</sup>**

All areas in Australia have unoccupied private dwellings. Table 4-6 provides the ABS Census data for Loddon Shire’s Towns.

The reasons for dwellings being unoccupied vary and include:

- Usual occupants living elsewhere for some time (or at the time of the Census)
- The dwelling could be used as a second home – or non-primary residence
- The condition of the dwelling does not allow for occupation

If and when the unoccupied residences are occupied, this adds to a town’s overall population. The 2021 ABS Census notes that the "Average number of people per household" in the Loddon Shire is 2.2 people. For example, if 50% of all unoccupied residential dwellings in the Wedderburn urban area were to be occupied, this would add more than 100 people to the population, representing a 23% increase in the urban centre’s population.

As noted in Section 3.4.1, Bridgewater on Loddon has many "weekenders" that are not permanently occupied.

Feedback from Council indicates that many properties in Korong Vale and Tarnagulla may have been abandoned due to their condition.

**Table 4-6 – Unoccupied Private Dwellings**

Towns	UC #	Locality #	% of all Locality dwellings
Tarnagulla		43	37.4
Korong Vale		34	33.7
Bridgewater OL	64	64	32.2
Wedderburn	89	141	25.3
<b>Loddon</b>		<b>872</b>	<b>22.2</b>
Mitiamo		13	22.0
Calivil		18	21.7
Boort	70	77	18.2
Inglewood	57	68	15.7
Serpentine		14	15.1
Laanecoorie		13	14.6
Pyramid Hill	23	40	14.3
Newbridge		7	8.4
Newbridge		7	8.4
Dingee		7	8.4
Eddington		3	7.1

<sup>23</sup> The 2016 ABS Census recorded 3,806 dwellings, which means that the number of dwellings grew by 115 to 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Data Sourced from the 2021 ABS Census

<sup>25</sup> This would not represent the total change to the Loddon Shire population as it does not account for other factors, including net migrations, births and deaths

#### 4.5. Building Approvals in the Loddon Shire

Table 4-7 notes the number of building approvals made in the Loddon Shire from 2016/17 to 2022/23. This rate is well below the additional dwellings the Growth Towns can accommodate. Some of these developments may have involved the redevelopment of the currently occupied site with a new residential building

This level of approval goes some way to understanding the actual level of population growth experienced in the Loddon Shire. The total number of approvals is well below the number of additional dwellings that can be accommodated in the Loddon Shire. (see Section 4.4.2)

**Table 4-7 Building Approvals<sup>26</sup>**

Year (ending June 30)	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
# of Approvals	17	18	22	18	25	27	26

#### 4.6. Net Migration to the Loddon Shire

Table 4-8 notes a net migration of 27 people to the Loddon Shire from the ABS Census of 2016 to 2021. The most significant population gain was people migrating from Greater Metropolitan Melbourne.

Loddon Shire experienced a population loss compared to all other areas in Victoria and elsewhere. The most significant population loss was to the Greater Bendigo LGA.

There is no data to identify which specific Localities received or lost population due to migration.

**Table 4-8 – Net Migration to the Loddon Shire 2016 to 2021<sup>27</sup>**

Areas	From	To	Net
<b>Greater Metropolitan Melbourne</b>	241	87	154
<b>Loddon Mallee South<sup>28</sup> region (less Bendigo)</b>	120	142	-22
<b>Other regions</b>	148	191	-43
<b>Greater Bendigo</b>	344	406	-62
<b><i>totals</i></b>	<b>853</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>27</b>

<sup>26</sup> Data sourced from the Loddon id Community dataset

<sup>27</sup> Data sourced from the Loddon id Community dataset

<sup>28</sup> This region includes the LGAs of Greater Bendigo City and the Shires of Central Goldfields, Loddon, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander

**4.7. Economic Impacts on Town Populations**

Characteristics of the local economy impact the populations of towns in the Loddon Shire.

**4.7.1. Where People Work and Live**

As listed in Table 4-9, there were 2,772 jobs in Loddon's local economy, and the number of jobs has increased since the 2016 ABS Census. More than 1,300 jobs are in the agriculture sector, with around 1,000 jobs involved in beef, sheep, grain, or dairy production. Increased jobs are a positive force in terms of population growth in the Shire.

As at the 2021 ABS Census:

- 2,154, or 78% of the jobs in Loddon's economy, are held by people residing in the Loddon Shire.
- 662 people residing in the Loddon Shire worked in jobs outside of the Loddon Shire.

2,816 people with jobs resided in the Loddon Shire, a 2% decrease from 2016. A decrease in the number of people working in the Shire will impact the total expenditure on goods and services.

**Table 4-9 - Locations of Work**

Category	2016	2021	Change
Work in Loddon	2,734	2,772	1%
Live and Work in Loddon	2,038	2,154	6%
Live in Loddon – Work Elsewhere	834	662	-21%
<b>Total Number of Workers</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>2,816</b>	<b>-2%</b>
Work in Bendigo	337	474	41%
Work in Loddon – Live Elsewhere	696	618	-11%
Reside in Bendigo	461	483	5%

The data in Table 4-9 highlights the role of Bendigo in Loddon Shire's local economy as both a source of employment opportunities and a source of workers.

**4.7.2. Most Frequent Industries of Employment**

Table 4-10 shows the diversity of industry sectors in which people residing in localities with more than 100 people are most frequently employed.

As already noted, agriculture is the largest source of employment in the Loddon Shire. The only towns without agricultural production represented in the "most frequent employment industries" are Bridgewater on Loddon, Inglewood, and Tarnagulla.

The Health sector is the next largest employment sector in the Loddon economy. Many of the Shire's towns have people working in hospitals in some capacity, including outside the Shire.

Social Infrastructure Strategy

Table 4-10 – Most Frequent Industries of Employment <sup>29</sup>

Town	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span style="color: green;">■</span> = large town</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span style="color: orange;">■</span> = small town                 </div>																				
	Grain/Sheep/Beef Farming	Hospital	Sheep Farming	Primary Education	Supermarket	Dairy Cattle	Other Grains	Secondary Education	Beef Cattle Farming	Poultry Processing	Road Freight Transport	Local Govt Administration	Pig Farming	Horse Farming	Smallgoods Manufacturing	Beverage Manufacturing	Gold Ore Mining	Plumbing	Child Care	Fuel Retailing	Takeaway Food
Boort	●	●		●	●		●	●													
Bridgewater OL		●			●											●		●			
Dingee	●		●	●		●	●	●	●												
Eddington	●			●										●							
Inglewood		●		●	●						●										
Korong Vale					●		●														●
Laanecoorie	●									●					●						
Loddon Shire	●	●	●			●	●														
Mitiamo	●	●	●			●						●									
Newbridge	●	●				●					●								●		
Pyramid Hill		●	●			●							●								
Serpentine	●		●					●	●											●	
Tarnagulla				●	●					●							●				
Wedderburn		●	●	●	●			●				●									

Some sectors most frequently represented in the towns are not frequently represented in the Loddon Shire. This characteristic reflects workers in those towns' dependency on those sectors to generate wages and salaries. For example, Serpentine has "fuel retailing", and Tarnagulla has "Gold Ore Mining" as the most frequent employment industry, yet these sectors are not prevalent in other towns.

It must be understood that the industry sectors in which people are employed may not operate in the town in which they reside – e.g. there are no

- supermarkets in Tarnagulla and Korong Vale – yet people in these towns work in these sectors
- childcare services in the Loddon Shire; however, several workers in this sector reside in Newbridge

There are other industry sectors in which people are employed that are less frequent than those listed in Table 4-10

<sup>29</sup> Source – the 2021 ABS Census

Social Infrastructure Strategy

4.7.3. Median Weekly Household Income

Median Weekly Household Income levels vary across the growth and small towns, as shown in Table 4-11. Households in Eddington have the highest level of weekly income, and Korong Vale has the lowest.

Two small towns experience a median weekly household income greater than all of the largest growth towns and above the median for the Loddon Shire. Six of the eight small towns experience a level of weekly household income greater than the mean for the Loddon Shire.

Finally, Tarnagulla and Korong Vale have the lowest weekly household incomes of all towns.

Understanding the Median Weekly Household Income levels provides insight into a household’s ability to afford various goods and services. These services include participating in activities requiring a membership fee or purchasing equipment or clothing.

The data underscores the impact of household income in operating and maintaining community facilities in small towns. For instance, despite having bowls, tennis, and golf facilities, Korong Vale's clubs are no longer operational, leading to their underutilisation.

Eddington has the highest Median Weekly Household Income. However, it has one community facility on DEECA land, with a Committee of Management appointed by Council. The presence of only one facility is more of a function of Eddington, which has the smallest "town" population in the Loddon Shire.

The combination of a small population and relatively low household income means that organisations operating from social infrastructure assets (e.g., sports clubs) in many towns in the Loddon Shire can struggle to generate the revenue needed to sustain their operation through “user pay” mechanisms such as membership fees.

Table 4-11 - Median Weekly Household Income<sup>30</sup>

Town	Income
Eddington	\$1,291
Serpentine	\$1,275
Bridgewater OL	\$1,242
Laanecoorie	\$1,160
Boort	\$1,054
Newbridge	\$1,041
Loddon Shire	\$1,039
Dingee	\$1,021
Mitiamo	\$982
Pyramid Hill	\$964
Wedderburn	\$868
Inglewood	\$844
Tarnagulla	\$779
Korong Vale	\$575

■ = growth town - ■ = small town

<sup>30</sup> Source – the 2021 ABS Census



## 5. Transport and Driving Times

The Loddon Shire is serviced by public transport with V-Line bus and train services.

### 5.1. VLine Services

VLine operates services with stops in 16 locations in the Loddon Shire, including the 5 Urban Centres with service stops highlighted in Figure 5-1 and tabled below:-

Train Services	Bus Services				
Pyramid Hill	Barraport	Korong Vale	Tarnagulla	Durham Ox	Borong
Dingee	Boort	Wedderburn	Newbridge	Bears Lagoon	
	Mysia	Inglewood	Bridgewater on Loddon	Serpentine	

These services enable travel to several larger towns, including Bendigo, Echuca, and Maryborough, and through to Melbourne.

With 100 Localities in the Shire, many residents, including some who live within the localities where the stops are, have to travel by other means to get to one of these stops.<sup>31</sup> The infrequency of the services also means that some time is required to travel through this network. These limitations in public transport make it difficult for many residents to access services and facilities, especially in the evening and on weekends.

#### 5.1.1. Car Dominated

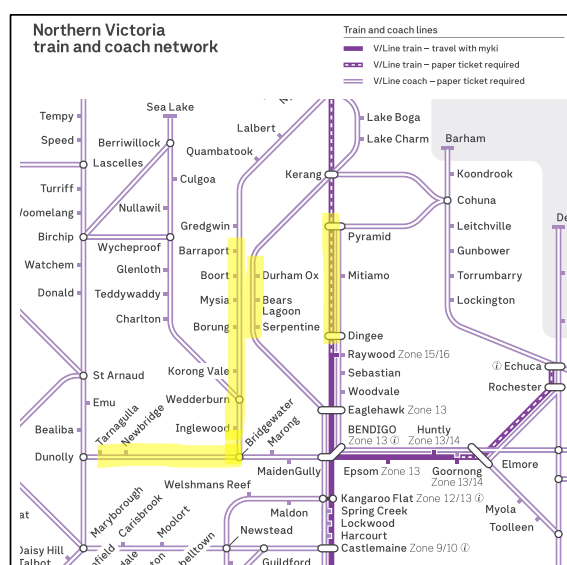
With limited public transport, relying on a car is critical to accessing social infrastructure. This limited public transport also means that facilities' location and geographic dispersal are necessary to facilitate access.

The 2021 ABS Census reports that 127 persons reside in households that do not have access to at least one vehicle. This number represents 1.7% of the Shire's population.

#### 5.1.2. Driving Times

Car use dominates access to facilities and services in the Loddon Shire. Understanding the time required to drive distances to access facilities and services in various towns is necessary to comprehend the appropriate access.

Figure 5-1 – Train and Coach Network in the Loddon Shire



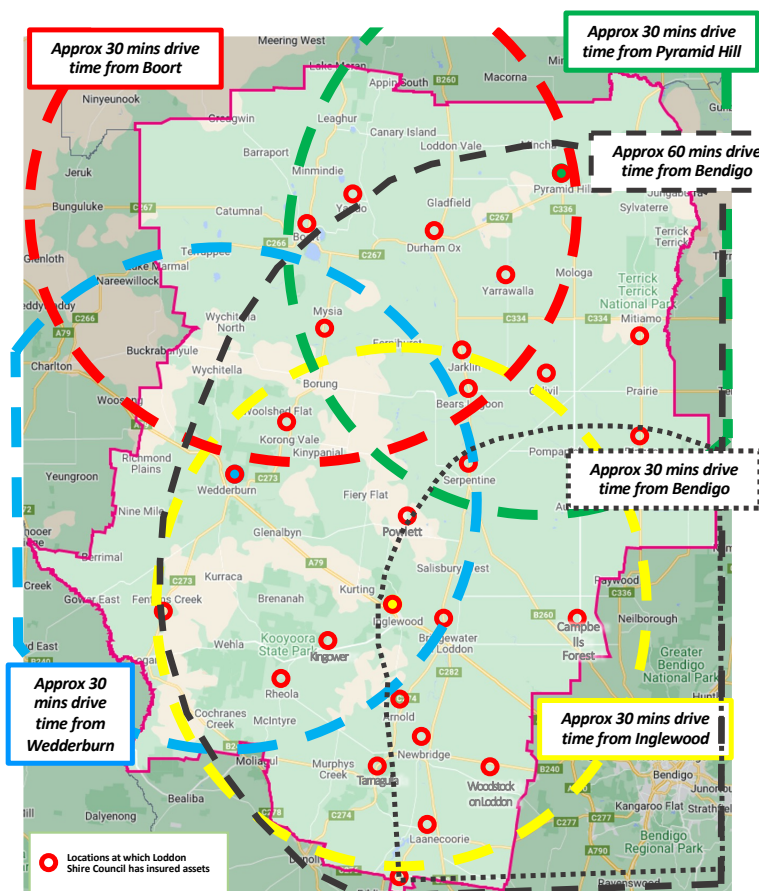
<sup>31</sup> This Report understands that some communities within the Loddon Shire will be closer to some VLine stops outside the Shire

5.2. Approximate Driving Times

Figure 5-2 provides an overview of the approximate driving times, according to Google Maps, to each of the four largest urban centres in Loddon and the Bendigo CBD<sup>32</sup>. Virtually all Localities<sup>33</sup> in Loddon are within a 30-minute driving time of at least one of the four largest urban centres, with several Localities being within a 30-minute driving time of more than one urban centre.

Most of Loddon Shire's localities and urban centres are within 60 minutes of Bendigo's driving time; the exception is Boort, which is 68 minutes. The locations in the far northwest of the Shire outside of the 60-minute drive to Bendigo are within a 60-minute drive of Kerang and Swan Hill. The Localities in the far West of the Shire that are outside of the 60-minute drive to Bendigo are within a 60 minute drive time to St Arnaud. All of these towns outside of the Loddon Shire have larger populations than Loddon's urban centres and have a wider availability of services.

Figure 5-2 - Approximate Drive Times to Urban Centres and Bendigo



<sup>32</sup> Other areas of Greater Bendigo -e.g. Eaglehawk, Golden Square, Kangaroo Flat and Marong will vary in the travel time from different Localities in the Loddon Shire

<sup>33</sup> Parts of two Localities are outside 30 minutes drive to an urban centre in the Loddon Shire. The Emu Locality (pop 37) in the Shire's SW "corner" is within 20 minutes of St Arnaud. The Kamarooka Locality (pop 89) on the Shire's western border is within a 30 minute drive of Eaglehawk. Most of the population in both of these Localities reside outside the Loddon Shire.

## 6. Social Infrastructure in the Loddon Shire

As noted in the introduction, communities need access to social infrastructure through facilities, services, and networks that help individuals, families, groups, and communities meet their social needs, maximise their potential for development, and enhance community well-being.

### 6.1. Facilities and Services

The facilities and services available to communities in the Loddon Shire are a mix of those owned and operated by the Loddon Shire Council and assets on crown land owned by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and managed by the Council. The number of DEECA assets is identified in Sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5.

The Council provides insurance and maintenance allocations to Council and DEECA-owned social infrastructure.

Council operates several community services, including maternal and child health and preschools and is a partner in the delivery of library services. These services are available at different times of the week from different locations.

#### 6.1.1. Distribution of Services and Facilities

Table 6-1 provides an overview of the Loddon Shire Council's facilities and services. In some cases, more than one service operates from the same facility, and recreation reserves accommodate more than one sporting club.

**Table 6-1 - Distribution of Council Services and Insured Facilities<sup>34</sup>**

Types of Facilities & Services	#	Located at		
		Urban Centres	Small Towns	Other
Recreation Reserves and Sports Club Facilities	31	21	11	
Public Halls	29	8	10	11
Playgrounds	20	14	6	
Community Centres	7	4	2	1
Maternal & Child Health Services	6	4	2	
Senior Citizen Centres	6	4	2	
Waste Facilities	6	4	2	
Swimming Pools	5	4	1	
Preschools <sup>35</sup>	5	4	1	
Library Services	6	4	2	
<i>totals</i>	<b>121</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Populations</i>	<b>7,750</b>	<b>3,847</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>2,463</b>

<sup>34</sup> Data sourced from the LSC Insured Community Facilities database

<sup>35</sup> The 2021 ABS Census notes that 106 people (i.e. 3 or 4-year-olds) were attending a preschool; this preschool may be outside of the Loddon LGA

6.2. Indoor Meeting Spaces

Access to indoor meeting spaces is a critical element of social infrastructure. As listed in Table 6-2, 29 public halls are distributed across the Loddon Shire.

6.2.1. More than 70 Indoor Meeting Places

Public halls provide an indoor meeting place for communities and community groups and a space for social functions. These meetings may vary from small groups (say six or fewer) to large functions.

The Loddon Shire has several other indoor meeting facilities, including sporting clubs, community centres, and senior citizen centres. Club members and regular participants usually prefer these facilities to public halls as they are the places where they regularly meet with others, and quite often, these facilities have better functionality than many public halls (e.g. they have toilets within the building)

When these facilities are totalled with public halls, there are more than seventy (70) spaces of varying size and functionality that communities could use for indoor meetings.

6.2.2. Public Hotels and Cafes

The 70 indoor meeting spaces do not include public hotels or cafes. However, the community feedback indicates that public hotels and cafes are popular meeting places for various reasons, including the availability of food and beverages.

Using these facilities is also a positive for the local economy as it supports local businesses and employment.

Table 6-2 Public Halls in Loddon Shire

Localities	Facilities
Boort	Boort Memorial Hall
	Boort RSL Hall
	James Boyle Hall/CWA Building
Bridgewater	Bridgewater Memorial Hall
Inglewood	Inglewood Town Hall & Community Hub
Pyramid Hill	Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall
	Pyramid Hill Scout and CERT Hall
Wedderburn	Wedderburn Mechanics Institute Hall & Library*
	Wedderburn St Andrews Hall
Dingee	Dingee Memorial Hall
	East Loddon Lions Club Hall
Eddington	Eddington Public Hall & Community Centre*
Korong Vale	Korong Vale Mechanics Institute Hall
Laanecoorie	Laanecoorie Mechanics Institute
Newbridge	Newbridge Public Hall
Serpentine	Serpentine Public Hall
Tarnagulla	Tarnagulla Community Centre
	Tarnagulla Public Hall
Calivil	Calivil Public Hall
Localities with > 100 People	Arnold Public Hall
	Campbell's Forest Public Hall and Shed
	Durham Ox Mechanics Institute
	Fenton's Creek Public Hall
	Jarklin Public Hall
	Mysia School Hall
	Powlett Public Hall
	Rheola Public Hall
	Woodstock Public Hall
	Yando Public Hall
	Yarrowalla Community Centre

Note\* = DEECA Asset

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

## 6.2.3. Usage of Assets

Council has established Community Asset Committees (CAC) to oversee the operation of some of its facilities (see Section 6.8.1). CACs collect data regarding facility usage, as noted in Table 6-3.

Based on the data in Table 6-3, two indoor meeting spaces experienced multiple hires per month or more, i.e., the Boort Memorial Hall and the Wedderburn Community Centre. The table includes 7 of the 29 public halls in the Loddon Shire. Usage data is not collected for the remaining 22 public halls, overseen by Committees of Management (see Section 6.8.1). Along with several other assets, there is a need to be able to understand better the level of usage of the facilities and for what purpose.

**Table 6-3 Council Report – Casual Hire of Facilities 2022/23**

Facility	Type	# of Hires
Boort Aerodrome	Hall/Facility	1
Boort Memorial Hall	Hall/Facility	129
Boort Park	Recreational Reserve	12
Campbell's Forest Hall	Hall/Facility	14
Donaldson Park Wedderburn	Recreational Reserve	2 - Under new construction
East Loddon Community Centre	Community Centre	not listed
Hard Hill (Tourist) Reserve	Hall/Facility	not listed
Inglewood Community Sports Centre	Recreational Reserve	4
Inglewood Town Hall Hub	Hall/Facility	10
Korong Vale Mechanics Hall	Hall/Facility	Nil - new renovations
Korong Vale Sports Centre	Recreational Reserve	Nil
Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall	Hall/Facility	12
Wedderburn Community Centre	Community Centre	131
Wedderburn Engine Park & Market Square Reserve	Engine park	Nil- N/A
Wedderburn Mechanics and Literary Institute Hall	Hall/Facility	not listed
Yando Public Hall	Hall/Facility	3

■ = Public Hall

6.3. Recreation Spaces

Access to recreation spaces is also an essential element of social infrastructure. The Loddon Shire has a range of designated recreation reserves, many of which have facilities that house clubs for sports such as football, netball, bowls, tennis, and harness racing. Table 6-4 lists the recreation reserves at which Loddon Shire Council has insured assets.

Table 6-4 Recreation Spaces

Several other recreation reserves are located in Localities with a population of less than 100 people. The recreation reserves listed in Table 6-4 have a council-appointed Committee of Management.

Outside of these spaces, several other recreation spaces are operated and maintained by local communities, such as Eddington Golf Course.

6.3.1. Sporting Clubs

Many recreational reserves in the Loddon Shire accommodate clubs in various sports, such as football, netball, cricket, lawn bowls, and tennis. These clubs have committees and volunteers to operate them and manage the resources needed.

6.3.2. Travel between Sporting Venues

Participants in many of the sports operating from the various recreation spaces travel to other locations to undertake competition. These locations are in Loddon Shire, adjoining LGAs and beyond.

6.3.3. Recreation, Outdoor Space and Aquatics Strategy

While this Report is being prepared, the Council is also preparing a Recreation, Outdoor Space, and Aquatics Strategy.

This Report assumes that this Strategy will provide a detailed analysis of these spaces and their users.

Localities	Facilities
Boort	Boort Croquet Club
	Boort Golf Club
	Boort Lawn Bowls Club
	Boort Park (Recreation Reserve)
	Boort Tennis Club
Bridgewater	Bridgewater Recreation Reserve*
Inglewood	Inglewood Bowls Club
	Inglewood Golf Course*
	Inglewood Riding Club
	Inglewood Sports Centre
Pyramid Hill	Pyramid Hill Bowling Club
	Pyramid Hill Golf Club
	Pyramid Hill Mitchell Park Sporting Clubs*
Wedderburn	Wedderburn Bowls & Tennis Clubs
	Wedderburn Cricket Club Market Square
	Wedderburn Donaldson Park
	Wedderburn Engine Park and Market Square Reserve
	Wedderburn Golf Course
Calivil	Calivil Recreation Reserve Sporting Club Facilities*
Dingee	Dingee Recreation Reserve & Bowls Clubs*
Korong Vale	Korong Vale Community Sports Centre
	Korong Vale Golf Club
	Korong Vale Recreation Reserve
Mitiamo	Mitiamo Golf Club*
	Mitiamo Recreation Reserve Sporting Clubs
Newbridge	Newbridge Recreation Reserve*
Serpentine	Serpentine Bowls & Tennis Clubs
	Serpentine Recreation Reserve*
Tarnagulla	Tarnagulla Golf Club
	Tarnagulla Recreation Reserve*
Localities with > 100 People	Arnold Recreation Reserve*
	Bears Lagoon Public Reserve and Tennis Club
	Kingower Cricket and Recreation Reserve*
	Rheola Recreation Reserve*
	Woodstock on Loddon Recreation Reserve
	Yarrowalla Recreation Reserve*
	<b>Without insured assets</b>
	Llanelly Public Hall & Reserve
	Logan Recreation Reserve
	Moliagul Recreation Reserves
Mysia Recreation Reserve	
Powlett Plains Recreation Reserve	

Note\* = DEECA Asset

6.4. Playgrounds

Table 6-5 notes that the Loddon Shire has 26 playgrounds accessible to the public. These include "exersites"<sup>36</sup> and 6 playgrounds located on DEECA-owned reserves. The playgrounds are different sizes and feature varying equipment, with some equipped with permanent shading.

There are no playgrounds in Laanecoorie. However, playgrounds are within 15 minutes drive of Laanecoorie at Eddington, Newbridge, and Tarnagulla. (see Table 9-22) As shown in Figure 6-1, all communities in the Loddon Shire are within 15 minutes driving time of one or more of the locations listed in Table 6-5. The only exceptions are small areas of the Durham Ox, Yarrawalla and Jarklin, Lake Meran and Appin South localities (see Table 4-4.) Some small communities in the southwest corner of the Shire are within 15 minutes drive of a playground in Bealiba in the adjoining Central Goldfields Shire.

**Table 6-5 Playgrounds in the Loddon Shire**

Localities	Playgrounds
Boort	Nolens Park Jubilee Park Sunnyside Court Reserve (Nolens Park Exersite) <sup>37</sup>
Bridgewater	Sloans Reserve Bridgewater Tourist Park Bridgewater Recreation Reserve*
Inglewood	J. Sloan Park
Pyramid Hill	Lions Park Kelly Park Lions Park West Mitchell Park*
Wedderburn	Donaldson Park Jacka Park Cooper Park (Nardoo Trail Exersite) (Cooper Park Exersite)
Calivil	Calivil Recreation Reserve*
Dingee	Progress Park
Korong Vale	Borella Park
Mitiamo	Mitiamo Recreation Reserve R.J. Phelan Park
Newbridge	Newbridge Recreation Reserve*
Serpentine	Serpentine Recreation Reserve*
Tarnagulla	Tarnagulla Public Park
Eddington	Community Hall*

**Note\*** = Located on a DEECA Asset

<sup>36</sup> Exersites provide a range of exercise stations

<sup>37</sup> Exersites are designed for the use by a wider age range than those that are the "typical" users of playgrounds



6.5. Facilities in Localities with Less than 100 People

A range of Council (or DEECA) facilities are in Localities with populations of less than 100 people. These facilities, locations, and the Locality's population are shown in Figure 6-1. The total population in these localities is 718, representing 9.3% of the Loddon Shire's population.

6.5.1. Additional Options for Small Communities, Small Towns and Urban Centres

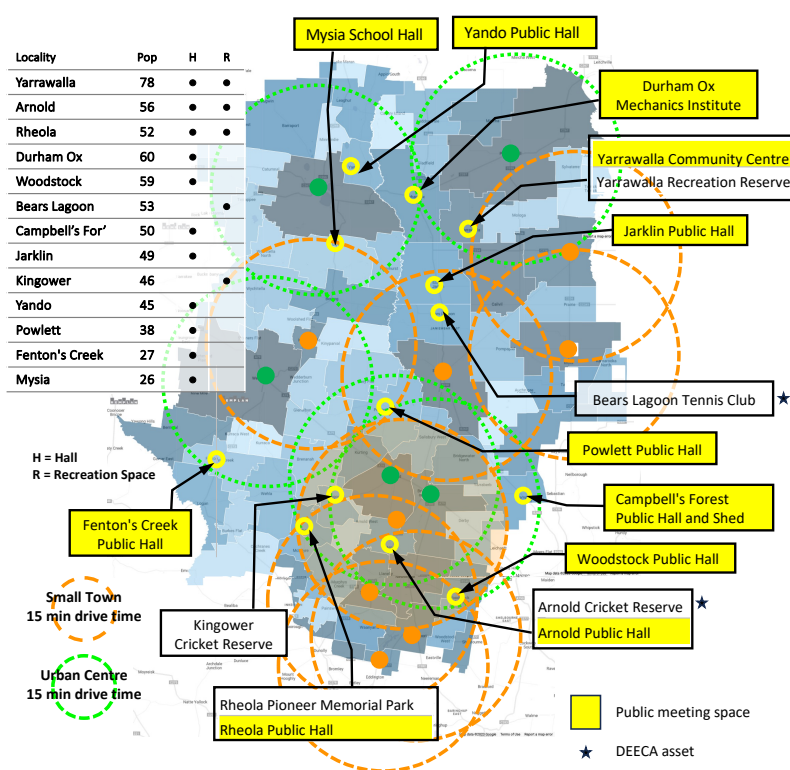
Many facilities are within a 15-minute drive of either a small town or an urban centre, and in some cases, both. These locations mean there are many options for communities; these options are provided in Table 9-30.

For example, Jarklin has a public hall and is within a 15-minute drive<sup>38</sup> of the Serpentine and Calivil TZs, both with public halls. This juxtaposition of facilities also means that the communities in Serpentine, Calivil and Jarklin all have additional options for indoor meeting spaces. Other facilities can be used to hold meetings within the 15-minute drive time radius of Jarklin, including Football/Netball Clubs and Bowling/Tennis Clubs at Serpentine and Calivil. In addition to the above, the community feedback also acknowledged that the public hotel,<sup>39</sup> in Jarklin is frequently used for local meetings and was used by Centrelink as an agency to provide flood relief to the local communities.

These options vary for different Localities with a population of less than 100 people.

However, as noted in Section 6.2.1, more than 70 indoor meeting spaces are available to the Loddon Shire community. These spaces vary in size, functionality, and physical condition.

Figure 6-1 – Other Locations with Council Facilities



<sup>38</sup> As estimated by Google Maps

<sup>39</sup> Public hotels and cafes are popular places for community meetings – see Section 6.2.2

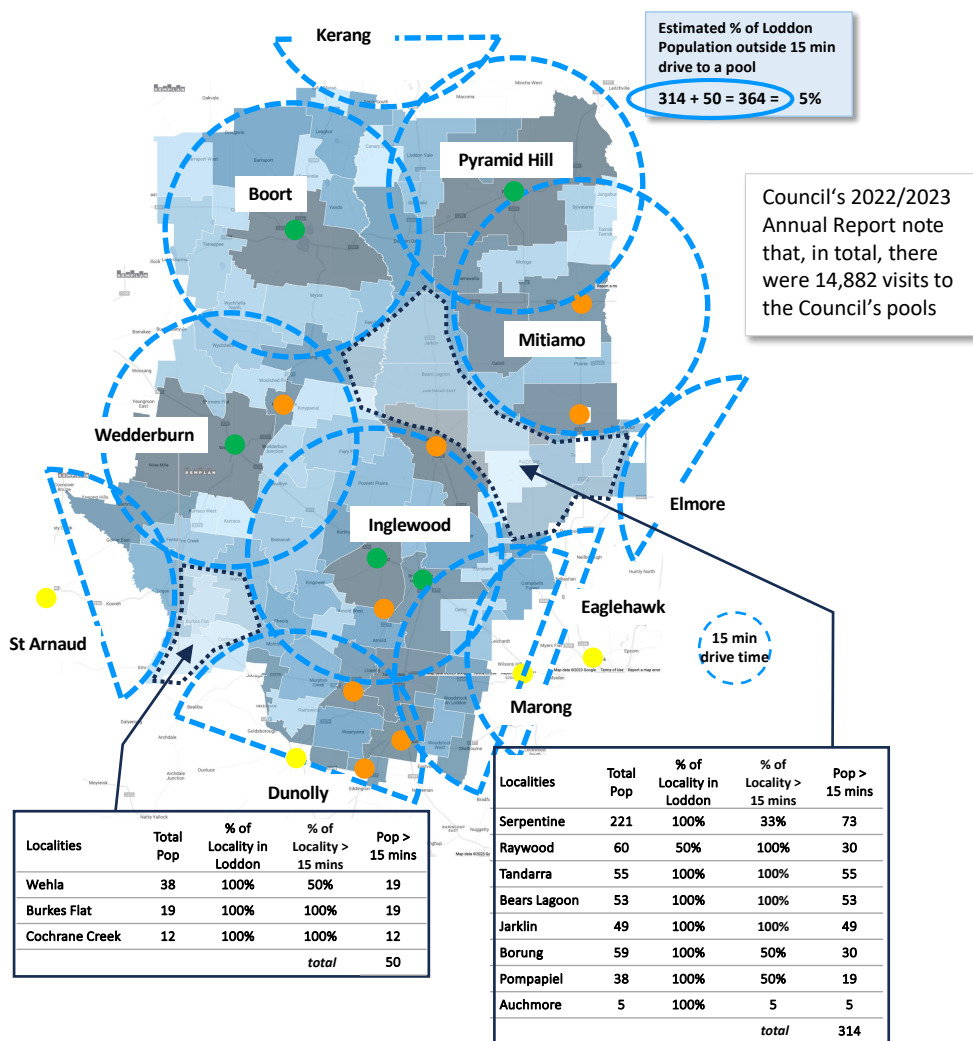
6.6. Swimming Pools

As already noted, the Loddon Shire Council operates five swimming pools. All Towns bar Eddington are within 30 minutes of a swimming pool in the Loddon Shire. Loddon Shire Council collects and reports on the number of visits to pools in Loddon Shire, as flagged in Figure 6-2. Other Towns and localities are within 15 minutes of pools operating in neighbouring local government areas.

6.6.1. 15 Minutes Access to Swimming Pools

As shown in Figure 6-2, access to many locations in the Loddon Shire is much less than 15 minutes. Report 41 estimates that about 5% of the Shire's population lives outside of a 15-minute drive to a swimming pool.

Figure 6-2 15 Minutes Access to Swimming Pools



6.6.2. **Waste Management Facilities**

The Loddon Shire operates 6 waste management facilities across the area. While these facilities are not considered "social" facilities, they are used by communities, especially households that do not receive a curbside garbage collection service. Access to these facilities is crucial for their waste disposal needs, daily functioning, and well-being (which is consistent with the purpose of other forms of social infrastructure). These households (or businesses) must travel to access these facilities, and all communities are within a 30-minute drive of one or more waste management facilities.

6.7. **Value of Council Assets**

Table 6-6 provides data from Council's Building Assets Management Plan and notes the following about the current replacement value of buildings concerning the categories identified in Section 6.1.1.

These assets represent 72% of the overall replacement value, with public halls, clubrooms, community centres and senior citizen centres accounting for just over \$36.8 M or 61.1%. These types of facilities can provide an indoor meeting space to various degrees.

**Table 6-6 – Replacement Value of Council Buildings**

Building asset category	Sub-category	No. of buildings	Replacement value <sup>1</sup> (\$)	
Children & family services	Pre-school & maternal child health centres	5	\$2,184,170	
	Public halls	14	\$16,015,103	
Community facilities	Community centres	6	\$7,487,715	
	Senior citizen centres	4	\$2,804,549	
	Other community buildings	15	\$1,538,553	
	Swimming pools	11	\$1,268,112	
Sports & recreation facilities	Clubrooms	21	\$10,498,739	
	Change rooms/toilets	7	\$1,105,501	
	Other sports & recreation buildings	7	\$657,902	
■ = Capable of providing an indoor meeting space		<b>Totals</b>	90	\$43,560,344
Note <sup>1</sup> – as at 30/6/2017		<b>Overall Total for All Building Assets</b>	173	\$60,187,866
		<b>% of Totals</b>	52%	72.4%

6.7.1. **Ageing Assets**

Council's Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities Asset Management Plan notes the "ageing infrastructure in Council's recreational, leisure and community facilities." The Plan also notes the following:

**Adequate Funding** "Without adequate funding, the declining condition of Council's assets will result in reduced levels of service and increased risk of failure."

**Lifecycle Management** "Our current approach to managing and operating our recreational, leisure, and community facilities assets is predominantly reactive, with only limited planning. We are striving to improve our approach to lifecycle management to ensure that we deliver on our service commitments in the most cost-effective and efficient manner."

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

*Condition Assessment* “Council is yet to undertake a full valuation and condition assessment of its recreational, leisure and community facilities portfolio. As Council improves its understanding of current asset performance and required levels of service, it will provide Council with the ability to make informed financial decisions.

The replacement values listed in Table 6-6 are as of 30/6/2017; they will likely have changed in response to various factors impacting the construction sector.

## 6.8. Management of Council Assets

A range of management structures are associated with the operation of Council facilities.

### 6.8.1. Community Asset Committees and Committees of Management

In accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government Act 2020, Loddon Shire Council has established several Community Asset Committees to manage a range of Council assets. Council has also established Committees of Management (CoM) for various assets, including public halls and recreation reserves in the Loddon Shire. DEECA have also established CoMs for its assets. The CACs and CoMs for the towns are listed in Table 6-7.

Communities throughout the Loddon Shire also fill a range of committees that manage the clubs and organisations operating from Council assets, including football and netball clubs, cricket clubs, golf and bowls clubs, and other entities.

**Table 6-7 – Localities with Population > 100 Committees**

Committees	Pop > 18	Committees	Pop > 18
Boort James Boyle Hall CAC		Calivil Recreation Reserve CoM	114
Boort Park CAC	762	Mitiamo Recreation Reserve CoM	97
Little Lake Boort CAC		Mitiamo Golf Course CoM	
Bridgewater Recreation Reserve CoM	392	Korong Vale Mechanics Hall CAC	124
Bridgewater Memorial Hall CoM		Korong Vale Sports Centre CAC <sup>40</sup>	
Inglewood Bowling Green Reserve CoM		Dingee Recreation Reserve CoM	
Inglewood Community Sports Centre CAC		Dingee Memorial Hall CoM	156
Inglewood Golf Links Reserve CoM	762	East Loddon Community Centre CAC	
Inglewood Sports Riding Club Reserve CoM		Eddington Public Hall & Community Centre CoM	91 <sup>41</sup>
Inglewood Town Hall Hub CAC			
Inglewood EUCY Museum CoM			
Mitchell Park CoM Incorporated	462	Tarnagulla Public Hall CoM	147
Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall CAC		Tarnagulla Community Centre CoM	
Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool CoM		Tarnagulla Recreation Reserve CoM	
Wedderburn Community Centre CAC	796	Laanecoorie Public Hall CoM	151
Wedderburn Engine Park & Market Square Reserve CAC		Laanecoorie South Recreation Reserve CoM	
Wedderburn Mechanics Literary Institute Hall CAC		Laanecoorie-Loddon River Recreation Reserve CoM	
Donaldson Park CAC		Newbridge Hall CoM	153
		Newbridge Recreation Reserve CoM	
		Serpentine Recreation Reserve CoM	154
		Serpentine Bowls/Tennis CoM	

Pop > 18 = Locality population aged 18 years plus

CAC = Community Asset Committee

CoM = Committee of Management

<sup>40</sup> This Report understands that this CAC is in recess

<sup>41</sup> This includes people who reside in the Eddington Locality but reside outside of the Loddon Shire

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

## 6.8.2. Impact on 18 years Plus Population

This Report assumes that the committees (Council, DEECA or community) involve people aged 18. On average, 73% of town populations are aged between 18 and 85. The need for volunteers to fill the committee positions may be challenging in some communities with relatively small populations, particularly for Localities with less than 100 people. This Report acknowledges that people who reside outside of the Locality in which the asset or club is located can join committees.

Table 6-8 - Locations with Less than 100 People

Committees	Population > 18
Campbells Forest Hall CAC	37
Derby Public Hall CoM /Tennis Club	18*
Fentons Creek Reserve Recreation Reserve CoM	27*
Jarklin Public Hall CoM	49
Kingower Cricket & Recreation Reserve CoM I	46*
Llanelly Public Hall & Reserve CoM	55
Logan Recreation Reserve CoM	50
Moliagul Reserves CoM	63
Mysia Recreation Reserve CoM	26*
Powlett Plains Recreation Reserve CoM	
Rheola Hall CoM	
Rheola Recreation Reserve CoM	52*
Woodstock Public Purposes Reserve CoM	36*
Yando Public Hall CAC	45*

\*Note – total population of Locality –ABS does not provide an age breakdown for these Localities

### 7. Capability of Loddon’s Towns

As noted in Table 7-1, the towns in localities with more than 100 people vary in the available range of services and facilities. Four urban centres (i.e., Boort, Wedderburn, Inglewood, and Pyramid Hill) offer services that many individuals or families regularly use, including supermarkets, health services, and pharmacies, unavailable at other locations in the Loddon Shire.

Table 7-1 – Facilities and Services Available at Loddon Towns > 100 People

Towns	Health/GP	Supermarket	Pharmacy <sup>42</sup>	Hotel/Cafe <sup>43</sup>	Residential Aged Care <sup>44</sup>	M&CH Service	Community Centres	Preschool	Primary School	Secondary School	Senior Citizens Centre	Public Hall	Library Service	Recreation Facilities	Playground	Swimming Pool	Waste Facility	Fuel Retail
Boort	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pyramid Hill	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Wedderburn	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Inglewood	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Dingee <sup>45,46</sup>	●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Tarnagulla				●		●		●			●	●	●	●				
Bridgewater				●				●			●	●	●	●				●
Serpentine				●		●					●	●	●	●				●
Mitiamo				●							●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Newbridge				●							●	●	●	●			●	
Laanecoorie											●	●	●	●				
Korong Vale				●							●	●	●	●				
Eddington				●							●	●	●	●				
Calivil											●	●	●	●				

M&CH = Maternal & Child Health Service

<sup>42</sup> This pharmacy is a depot service in Pyramid Hill

<sup>43</sup> These services are included as they are popular meeting places – see Section 6.2.2

<sup>44</sup> This Report acknowledges that the aged care services available in the Loddon Shire do not meet the demand for these services. The RCV Older Persons Services and Accommodation report identifies that the Loddon Shire has a significant shortfall in the supply of residential aged care beds. The shortfall is projected to grow significantly based on the population growth of older people should there be no increase in supply.

<sup>45</sup> Dingee Bush Nursing Centre is a nurse-led clinic with visiting health professionals

<sup>46</sup> The primary and secondary schools are located at East Loddon, which is a 6 minute drive from Dingee

**7.1. Other Services**

The community also requires access to other services and goods for its day-to-day functioning, including:

**7.1.1. Health Services**

The Loddon Shire has two hospitals located at

- Boort – Boort District Health operates a hospital facility, and Northern District Community Health Service provides various allied health services.
- Inglewood – Inglewood and District Health Services operate a hospital facility and provide a range of allied health services

Medical services are also provided in:

- Boort, Inglewood and Wedderburn1 have a General Practice
- Pyramid Hill - which has a community health service provided by the Northern District Community Health Service
- Dingee Bush Nursing Centre is located in Dingee. (Dingee is the only small town with a medical service; this is a nurse-led clinic with visiting health professionals. This service is within a 12-minute drive of Mitiamo)

**7.1.2. Primary and Secondary Schools**

The Loddon Shire has the following primary and secondary schools

**Primary schools**

Bridgewater PS	Bridgewater
Inglewood PS	Inglewood
St Mary’s PS	Inglewood
St Patricks PS	Pyramid Hill
Tarnagulla PS	Tarnagulla

**P to 10 School**

Pyramid Hill College	Pyramid Hill
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**P to 12 Schools**

Boort District P-12	Boort
East Loddon P-12	Dingee
Wedderburn P-12	Wedderburn

Many school-aged people residing at the southern end of the Loddon Shire have access to schooling in Maryborough and Dunolly.

The 2021 ABS Census notes the following regarding the number of people attending an educational institution:

- Primary Schools        520
- Secondary Schools    445

The 2021 ABS Census also identifies that 208 people attended a tertiary education institution.



7.1.3. Hotels and Cafes

Public hotels and cafes have been included, as the community's feedback indicates that these are popular meeting places.

7.1.4. Emergency Services and Other Facilities

Table 7 2 provides information on the location of emergency and postal services in the Loddon Shire. The Loddon Shire has 29 CFA brigades.

Table 7-2 – Emergency Services and Other Facilities

Town	Police	CFA	Ambulance	SES	LPO
Boort	●	●	●		●
Pyramid Hill	●	●			●
Wedderburn	●	●	●	●	●
Inglewood	●	●	●		●
Bridgewater	●	●			●
Dingee		●			●
Serpentine	●	●			●
Newbridge		●			●
Laanecoorie		●			
Korong Vale		●			
Tarnagulla	●	●			●
Mitiamo		●			●
Eddington		●			

LPO = Licenced Post Office

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

## 7.1.5. Retail Services

Communities need reasonable access to retail services, particularly for food and household items. Supermarkets are located in Wedderburn, Inglewood, Boort and Pyramid Hill.

Table 7-3 provides REMPLAN data for the Loddon Shire, indicating the local economy's retail employment level.

**Table 7-3 – Number of Retail and Food and Beverage Services Jobs in Loddon Shire<sup>47</sup>**

Retail Service	Jobs (#)	Food & Beverage Services	Jobs (#)
Supermarkets and Grocery Stores	74	Pubs, Taverns and Bars	23
Pharmaceutical, Cosmetic, & Toiletry Goods Retailing	25	Cafes and Restaurants	20
Fuel Retailing	22	Takeaway Food Services	12
Other Specialised Food Retailing	13	<i>total</i>	<i>55</i>
Retail Trade, nfd	9		
Hardware and Building Supplies Retailing	8		
Newspaper and Book Retailing	7		
Motor Vehicle Parts and Tyre Retailing	5		
Other Store-Based Retailing, nec	4		
Fresh Meat, Fish and Poultry Retailing	3		
Garden Supplies Retailing	3		
Manchester and Other Textile Goods Retailing	3		
<i>total</i>	<i>176</i>		

nfd - not further defined.  
nec - not elsewhere classified

The ratio of the total number of retail and food and beverage service jobs per capita in

- Loddon Shire is 7759 people/(176 + 55) jobs = 33.5 people per "retail" job
- Loddon Mallee South<sup>48</sup> region is 216,407 people/(9,018 + 5,357) = 15.0 people per "retail" job
- Victoria is 6,625,964 people/(312,616 + 182,846) jobs = 13.4 people per "retail" job

The differences in these ratios point to lower access to retail services in the Loddon Shire and the need for people to travel to other towns to access retail services that people cannot access in the Loddon Shire. The community feedback is that many Loddon residents access retail services in Bendigo.

## 7.2. Community Plans

Loddon Shire Council has an established a Community Planning Program<sup>49</sup>. Council's Community Planning Framework notes, "The program encourages people to consider and document the social inclusion, capacity building and community participation needs of their community. The information gleaned from the community and provided to Council through the community plan document is used to inform planning, funding, advocacy and community development activities. The development of this Community Planning Framework provides improved governance and guidelines to further strengthen the community plan program."

<sup>47</sup> Data sourced from the Loddon REMPLAN Economy dataset

<sup>48</sup> Consists of Loddon, Central Goldfields, Mount Alexander Shires and Greater Bendigo City

<sup>49</sup> The information in this Section is drawn from the material provided by Loddon Shire Council via the Council's website

**Social Infrastructure Strategy**

The Community Planning Framework has communities consider if and how the following areas can and would contribute to the desired outcomes that various communities have:

- Community health and wellbeing
- Sport and recreation
- Social opportunities
- Heritage, arts and culture
- Improving where they live
- Built environment and town beautification
- Natural environment
- Improving the local economy
- Tourism and marketing

Seventeen Community Plans are in place, including for all Localities (14) with a population of more than 100 people. All the Community Plans have identified priorities related to improvements to social infrastructure.

7.3. Capability of Towns outside of the Loddon Shire

Many of Loddon's population travel to "urban centres" outside the Shire to access various services. These towns have larger populations than Loddon Shire's urban centres, have facilities not available in Loddon, and offer a greater range of retail goods and services.

Bendigo is the largest centre near Loddon and, as the regional centre, offers a wide range of health, educational, retail, cultural and recreational services and facilities.

Most of Loddon's population is within 60 minutes driving time of Bendigo<sup>50</sup> and its various "suburbs."<sup>51</sup> The feedback from the community indicates that Bendigo is the most visited urban centre outside of Loddon. (see Section 8)

Table 7-4 lists towns with populations larger than those of Loddon's Urban Centres. Different Localities or communities in the Loddon Shire have varying access to these towns. In most cases, Localities or communities in the Loddon Shire can access at least one of these towns in less than 30 minutes of driving time.

Table 7-4 - Towns Outside of Loddon Shire

	Population	Health Service	Supermarket	Primary School	Secondary School	Residential Aged Care	Library Service	Swimming Pool	Recreation Facilities
Bendigo	122,500	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Echuca <sup>52</sup>	13,700	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Maryborough	7,700	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kerang	3,700	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rochester	2,800	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
St Arnaud	2,130	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cohuna	1,870	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Charlton	995	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Elmore <sup>53</sup>	753	●	●	●			●	●	●
Dunolly <sup>54</sup>	680	●	●	●			●	●	●

<sup>50</sup> Based on Google Maps, the estimated driving time

<sup>51</sup> These include central Bendigo, Eaglehawk, Golden Square, Kangaroo Flat, and Marong. The travel time to each of these centres varies for different Localities in the Loddon Shire

<sup>52</sup> Echuca is the closest large town to Mitiamo and offers a range of facilities not available in Pyramid Hill, the nearest urban centre within the Loddon Shire. The travel time to Echuca from Mitiamo is 38 minutes.

<sup>53</sup> The Library service in Elmore operates as an Agency, which is how library services are delivered in the Loddon Shire

<sup>54</sup> Dunolly has a smaller population than Wedderburn, Boort or Inglewood but does have a health service, supermarket, preschool, primary school, a swimming pool, as well as a range of other recreation assets and is highly accessible from Localities in the southwest area of the Loddon Shire including Laanecoorie, Tarnagulla and Eddington. The Cricket Club that competes at the Delidio Oval in Dunolly is the Dunolly-Laanecoorie Cricket Club

7.4. Access to Loddon’s Urban Centres and Other Towns

Table 7-5 provides the estimated drive times between Loddon Shire's towns, the urban centres, and other towns outside the Shire. Most of Loddon Shire's population (61%) reside outside the four urban centres of Boort, Wedderburn, Inglewood and Pyramid Hill. This population includes people living in the Localities of Boort, Wedderburn, Inglewood, and Pyramid Hill but outside the respective urban centres.

This “non-urban centre” component of the population must travel, most likely by car, to access services unavailable in the Locality where they reside. As noted in the Report (see Section 5.2), all Localities in the Loddon Shire are within a 30-minute drive of at least one urban centre.

Communities in the Loddon Shire's towns can access facilities and services in Loddon's urban centres and other towns outside the Loddon Shire. The urban centre populations also need to access services and facilities that are unavailable in their respective towns.

Table 7-5 – Estimated Driving Times between Towns

Loddon Towns	Loddon Urban Centres				Other Towns									Total Options for Loddon Towns			
	Wedderburn	Inglewood/BoL	Boort	Pyramid Hill	Maryborough	Dunolly	St Arnaud	Echuca	Rochester	Elmore	Kerang	Cohuna	Bendigo	Under 30	Under 45	Under 60	
Wedderburn	0	<30	<45	<60	60	<45	<30	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	<60	3	5	8	
Inglewood/BoL	<30	0	<60	45	<60	<30	<45	>60	>60	<60	>60	>60	<30	4	6	8	
Boort	<45	<60	0	<30	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	<45	<60	>60	2	4	6	
Pyramid Hill	<60	45	<30	0	>60	>60	>60	<60	<60	<60	<45	<30	60	3	5	10	
Dingee	45	30	<60	<30	>60	<60	>60	<60	30	<30	>60	<60	<45	2	4	10	
Serpentine	<30	<30	<45	<30	<60	<45	<60	<60	<60	45	<60	<60	30	4	5	12	
Newbridge	<45	<30	<60	<60	30	<30	45	>60	>60	60	>60	>60	<30	4	4	9	
Laanecoorie	<45	<30	>60	>60	<30	15	<60	>60	>60	60	>60	>60	<30	4	5	7	
Korong Vale	<30	<30	<30	<45	>60	<60	<45	>60	>60	>60	<60	>60	<60	3	4	8	
Tarnagulla	<45	<30	60	<60	30	<15	45	>60	>60	60	>60	>60	30	4	5	9	
Mitiamo	<60	<45	<45	<30	>60	>60	>60	<45	<45	<45	>60	<45	45	1	6	9	
Eddington	<60	<30	>60	>60	<30	<15	<60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	<45	4	4	6	
Calivil	<45	30	<45	<30	>60	<60	>60	<60	<45	<60	<60	<60	<60	2	5	11	
Totals for Loddon Towns & Other Towns	Under 30	4	10	3	6	4	5	1	1	1	1	1	6	<Less than >Greater than			
	Under 45	10	12	7	8	4	7	5	1	3	3	2	2				8
	Under 60	13	13	11	11	7	10	8	5	5	9	5	6				12

BoL = Bridgewater on Loddon

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

Wedderburn and Inglewood are the most accessible urban centres. Inglewood is accessible to 9 other towns in 30 minutes or less of driving time.

All Loddon towns without an urban centre can access towns with more facilities within 30 minutes of driving time. Mitiamo has one option for access to a larger town, and all other towns have access to two or more larger towns.

Other findings from the analysis presented in Table 7-5 are as follows:

- Inglewood is the most accessible of Loddon Shire's urban centres, with all other towns being within 60 minutes drive time, 12 being within 45 minutes drive time, and 10 being within 30 minutes drive time
- Serpentine has the most options for access to other towns under 60 minutes, with four of those within 30 minutes drive time.
- Eddington has the least under 60-minute options – but is very accessible to Dunolly, Maryborough and Bendigo.
- Bendigo is the most accessible of the other towns. All Loddon Shire towns, bar Boort, can access Bendigo in 60 minutes or less driving time, with 8 being less than 45 minutes and 6 within 30 minutes.
- Echuca is the least accessible of the other towns – with Mitiamo being the only town in the Loddon Shire that can access Echuca in under 45 minutes.

The feedback from community consultation acknowledged that Inglewood is the most visited town after Bendigo. (see Section 8)

#### 7.4.1. Driving Time Not Always the Key Factor

When people decide which town to go to, they often don't consider the availability of services or the travel distance. Instead, they choose a town based on their connections with friends or family. For instance, many families have relatives living in aged care facilities outside Loddon Shire whom they wish to visit.

This Report also assumes that many people who live in Loddon but work in nearby towns, with Bendigo being the most frequent destination (see Table 4-9), use the opportunity to access services they require, such as a broader range of retail services.

## 8. Community Feedback

The development of this Report has included feedback from Loddon's community.

### 8.1. Engagement Program

Over late November and the first week of December, a community engagement program was conducted that involved:

- Drop-in sessions at Serpentine, Durham Ox, Mitiamo, Dingee, Tarnagulla, Korong Vale, Bridgewater on Loddon and Newbridge
- An online survey
- Online focus groups

Council promoted the opportunity for the community to participate in this program through various channels, including:

- Council's website
- Advertising in the local paper
- Direct contact with community organisations and groups

94 people contributed their thoughts via a survey, drop-in sessions, or focus groups. 80% of contributors were aged between 35 and 69, and at most 16 people from any one town participated.

### 8.2. Access to Halls and Meeting Places

Most (79%) of contributors felt that community halls or meeting places should be within 30 minutes of their homes. This feeling was especially true of contributors who live in Calivil and Boort: 100% and 88% of contributors from these towns (respectively) thought that a maximum of a 30-minute drive to a hall or meeting place was reasonable.

### 8.3. Access to Recreation Facilities

Contributors were more inclined to agree that travelling up to an hour for sport (16%) was more acceptable than visiting a playground or swimming pool (3%).

Very few people (1% at most) thought that more than 60 minutes of travel to any facility was reasonable.

### 8.4. Access to Other Services

Bendigo was the most frequently mentioned destination for Loddon residents to travel for common services, predominantly supermarkets and doctors.

Inglewood was the next most commonly mentioned destination, especially for its supermarkets, doctors, and post offices.

### 8.5. Frequency of Use of Social Infrastructure

90% of contributors advised visiting a public indoor meeting or gathering space at least annually.



## 9. An Access Regime for Council Facilities and Services

This Report has developed a regime for access to Council facilities based on the following:

- Analysis of the distribution of Loddon Shires' population
- Analysis of the distribution of social infrastructure and services
- Feedback received from the community
- A review of social infrastructure strategies and plans from a range of organisations, including Infrastructure Australia and other local government strategies and plans

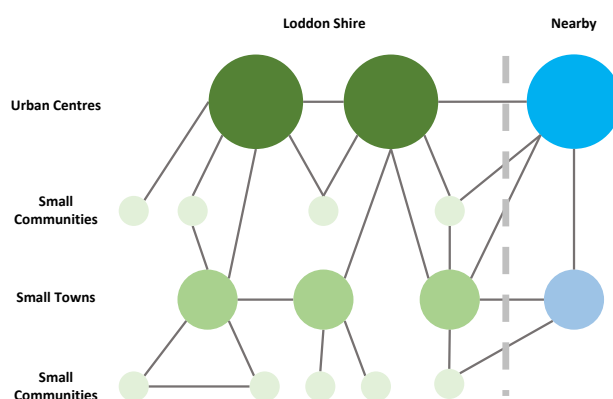
### 9.1. Key Principles

This Report recommends the following Principles:

#### 9.1.1. A Network Approach

Towns do not operate in isolation; the communities access a network of facilities and services across Loddon Shire's urban centres, small towns, and nearby municipalities.

Figure 9-1 – A Networked Approach



Making decisions about facilities and services in towns needs to understand what communities:

- use in their town
- can reasonably access at other locations.
- do access at different locations
- should access from other locations

Decisions about a change to a facility or service in any one location need to be made after considering the impact on the network.

This Report has mapped the "relationships" that currently exist between the various components of the network as they apply to the Loddon Shire. This mapping is provided in later Sections, including a summary of the total opportunities available to towns (see Section 9.17)

**9.1.2. Understanding Usage**

The council's Action Plan notes that it will "Ensure community facility use is maximised" and that "we will do this by working with facility managers to identify new ways of expanding use of facilities and by ensuring all facilities have master plans."

Understanding what needs to be available in towns means understanding the current usage of facilities and services across the network. It is necessary to understand better what facilities are used by what groups and organisations, for what purposes, and how frequently.

While some data is collected (see Section 6.2.3 ), more data about more facilities, particularly indoor meeting spaces, is needed. Collecting this data must be a collaborative effort between the Council and the community, particularly the groups and organisations that manage and operate facilities.

This collaboration will likely require change management involving a combination of investment in systems that facilitate the collection of the information, building this activity into the community planning process, and basing future investment decisions on having groups collect and use data regarding facility usage.

**9.1.3. Shared Use of Facilities**

Sharing space increases the usage of facilities currently underutilised or only available to a single user group. It can also decrease the need to build new facilities to replicate existing infrastructure.

Fostering shared use may involve change management, including:

- Reviewing management facility models that encourage collaboration and reduce the community resources needed to manage multiple facilities
- Emphasising sharing facilities in community planning processes
- Prioritising investment decisions towards facilities operating with a shared approach across two or more user groups maximising usage.

**9.1.4. Improving the Capability of What Already Exists**

It is important to prioritise the enhancement of existing capabilities. This involves understanding whether improving or expanding current facilities offers a greater benefit than investing in new ones. It's also important to consider how facilities are managed and operated to determine if current management processes are effective and that they are:

- Enabling the most significant benefit through the most comprehensive access to facilities.
- Minimising the community resources needed to manage and operate facilities

Increasing the capacity of what already exists would involve using tools such as

- Asset management
- Community planning
- Feasibility assessments and
- Investment cases.

**9.1.5. Asset Management**

Any development of facilities and services must be consistent with the Council's focus on planning that meets the community's future needs. The Council focuses on finalising asset management plans and long-term strategies for all its assets to ensure they reflect the current environment. Currently, the Council does not have life cycle asset management plans for recreational and community assets.

## Social Infrastructure Strategy

**9.1.6. Community Resources**

The Council has several Community Asset Committees and Committees of Management that manage facilities on behalf of the Council. As noted in Section 6.8.1, this can challenge community resources, particularly in "non-urban centre" towns. The ongoing development and operation of Council facilities and services should minimise the impact on community resources and ensure that communities are engaged in decision-making regarding facilities.

This Report understands that the Donaldson Park and Boort Park Community Asset Committees are examples of where one governance structure oversights several assets within a precinct.

**9.1.7. Safety**

The development and operation of facilities and services must be consistent with the Council's relevant Occupational and Safety Policies, its focus on supporting community safety and well-being, and its commitment to providing a safe working environment for its people.

**9.1.8. Risk Management**

The development and operation of facilities and services must be consistent with Council's Risk Management Policy and risk management processes.

**9.1.9. Environmental Sustainability**

The development of facilities and services must be consistent with Council's focus on environmental sustainability, including renewables, alternatives, and new technologies that reduce Council's and the community's environmental footprint.

**9.1.10. Financial Sustainability and Support**

Council is committed to maintaining financial sustainability through prudent decision-making, effective project management processes, and ongoing work to improve the efficiency of its operations. Council provides insurance and maintenance allocations to Council and Crown owned social infrastructure. Through its policies and programs, Council supports community planning groups, progress associations, tourism groups, and other groups within the Shire by providing in-kind and financial support.

**9.2. Access Regime**

This Report has already noted that:

- Access to facilities and services in the Loddon Shire highly depends on using a motor vehicle (see Section 5.1.2)
  - A large percentage of the community has to travel outside of the Locality where they reside to access other services, such as health services and supermarkets (see Section 7)
- All Localities in the Shire are within a 30-minute drive time of one or more of the Shire's Urban Centres – or other Towns - See Section 7.4
- Community feedback identified that access to:
  - Indoor meeting spaces should be no more than 30 minutes (see Section 8)
  - Recreation opportunities should be less than 60 minutes (see Section 8)

This Report has used this information to develop a regime for access to social infrastructure, as provided in Table 9-1.

Social Infrastructure Strategy

Table 9-1 – Drive Time Regimes for Access to Council Facilities and Services

Drive Time (mins)	Facility or Service	Description
15 minutes or less from the Township Zone	Indoor Meeting Place	Facility with space (with toilets) for community activities and social functions
	Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Space and facility (with toilets) that enables organised competition, social play, and the opportunity for "non-participants" to engage through volunteer-related roles. Many facilities, such as "clubrooms", can provide an indoor meeting space.
	Equipped Play Space	Play space and equipment that provides opportunities for preschool/primary school age and facilitates interaction and participation by others
30 minutes or less from the Township Zone	Maternal & Child Health Service (M&CH) Service	The M&CH service is free and available to all families with children from birth to school entry age. Loddon Shire Council’s M&CH service is staffed by registered nurses with postgraduate qualifications in midwifery and maternal and child health. The service offers an initial home visit to families, followed by appointments at M&CH centres.
	Library Service	The Goldfields Library Corporation provides Loddon Shire Council's library services. Library agencies are available at Boort, Dingee, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Tarnagulla and Wedderburn.
	Preschool Centre	Free Three- and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten programs are available at all Loddon Shire Kindergarten services. Qualified Early Childhood Teachers deliver these programs, offering families 15 hours of kindergarten a week.
	Community Centre <sup>55</sup>	A “community centre” offers a range of regular activities and resources. It can also provide an indoor meeting space.  This report considers that the facility can be a Community Centre, Neighborhood House, or Senior Citizens Centre. Local priorities and needs determine the range of services available from these centres.
	Swimming Pool	A swimming pool that is open to the community during the summer period. The pools in Loddon are outdoor pools. <sup>56</sup>
	Waste Facility	A waste facility operated by LSC <sup>57</sup>

9.2.1. Analysis of the Impact on Towns of the Access Regime

All Towns have access to Council facilities and services that meet the access parameters in the regime described above.

The access regime provided in Table 9-1 varies in impact on Towns as described in the following Sections. A summary of the number of access opportunities for each town is provided in Section 9.17

<sup>55</sup> This Report has grouped facilities that do or could provide a range of activities for different community cohorts

<sup>56</sup> Some small towns can access an indoor pool in Bendigo or Maryborough in less than 30 minutes.

<sup>57</sup> The analysis has not considered waste facilities outside the Loddon Shire

9.3. Wedderburn – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-2 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Wedderburn within a 30-minute drive.

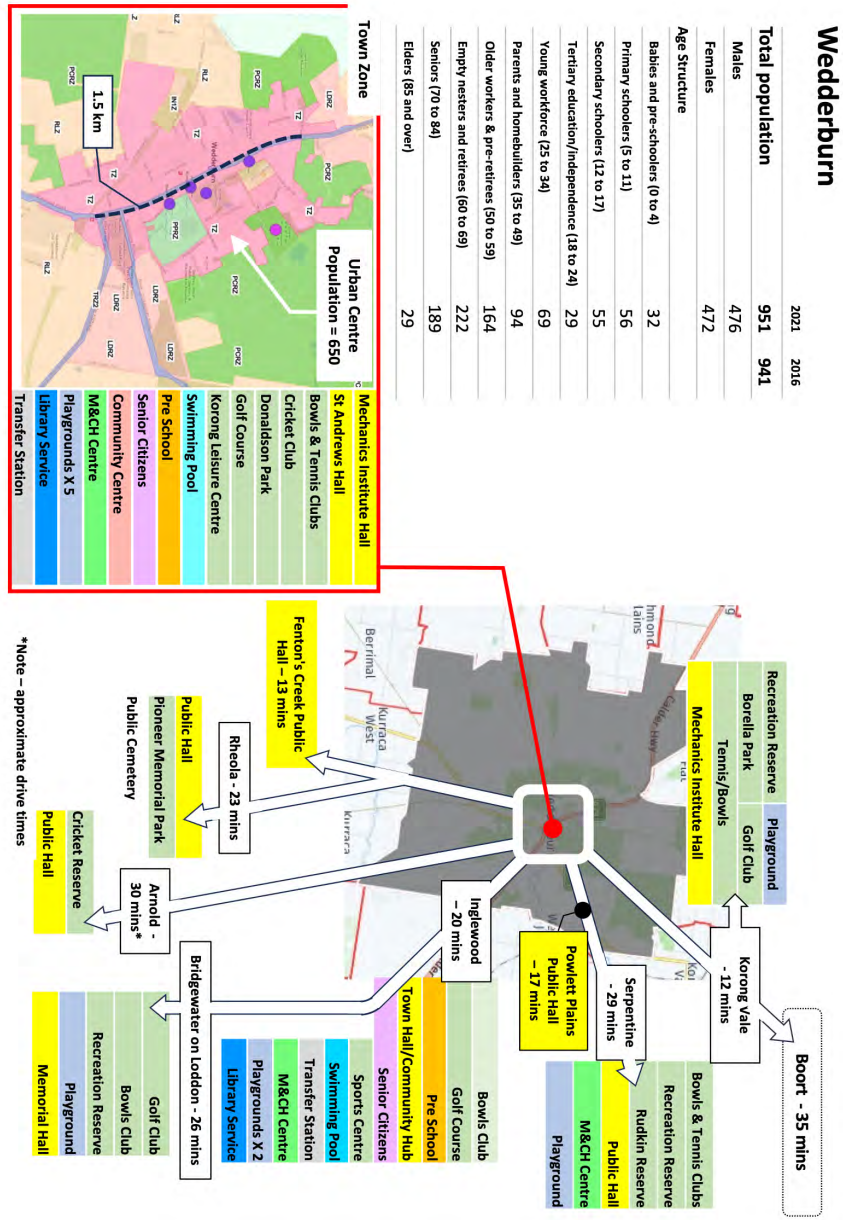


Figure 9-2 – Wedderburn - Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

9.3.1. Wedderburn – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-2 and Table 9-3 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Serpentine within 30 minutes of driving time.

**Table 9-2 Wedderburn - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Wedderburn		Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>Indoor Meeting Place</b>	PHs (x2) Senior CC Community Centre FNC	Bowls Club Tennis Club Golf Club	<b>8</b>	Fenton's Creek PH Korong Vale PH Korong Vale Bowls & Tennis Club	<b>3</b>				<b>11</b>
<b>Recreation Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Bowls & Tennis Clubs Market Square Leisure Centre Hockey Club	Donaldson Park Golf Course FNC <sup>58</sup>	<b>9</b>	Korong Vale Reserve Korong Vale Bowls & Tennis	<b>3</b>				<b>12</b>
<b>Equipped Play Space</b>	Donaldson Park Jacka Park Cooper Park (Nardoo Trail Exersite) (Cooper Park Exersite)		<b>5</b>	Korong Vale Reserve	<b>1</b>				<b>6</b>

FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

**Comments**

Wedderburn’s proximity to Korong Vale enables more opportunities for access to these facilities

**Table 9-3 – Wedderburn - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Wedderburn	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>M&amp;CH Service</b>		<b>1</b>	Inglewood Serpentine	<b>2</b>			<b>3</b>
<b>Library Service</b>		<b>1</b>	Inglewood	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>
<b>Preschool Centre</b>		<b>1</b>	Inglewood	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>
<b>Community Centre</b>	Senior CC Community Centre	<b>2</b>	Inglewood - Senior CC Community Centre	<b>2</b>			<b>4</b>
<b>Swimming Pool</b>		<b>1</b>	Inglewood	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>
<b>Waste Facility</b>		<b>1</b>	Inglewood	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>

CC – Citizens Centre

**Comments**

Wedderburn’s proximity to Inglewood increases the opportunities in the above facilities.

<sup>58</sup> This Report has counted Football & Netball Clubs as 2 separate recreation facilities







Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.4.1. Inglewood – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-4 and Table 9-5 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Inglewood within 30 minutes of driving time.

Table 9-4 – Inglewood<sup>59</sup> - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Inglewood	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>Indoor Meeting Place</b>	Inglewood Town Hall & Community Hub	5	BoL PH	Rheola PH	8		13
	Eucy Museum		BoL FNC	Tarnagulla* PH			
	Neighbourhood House		BoL Bowls	Tarnagulla CC			
	Senior CC		Arnold PH	Newbridge PH			
	FNC						
<b>Recreation Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Bowls Club	7	BoL RR	Arnold RR	11		18
	Golf Course		BoL FNC	Rheola RR			
	Riding Club		BoL Golf	Tarnagulla RR			
	Sports Centre		Course	Tarnagulla Golf Course			
	Recreation Reserve		BoL Bowls	Course			
	FNC		Kingower RR	Newbridge RR			
<b>Equipped Play Space</b>	J Sloan Park	1	Bridgewater X 3 Newbridge	4			5

RR – Recreation Reserve, FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre, CC Community Centre

Comments

Inglewood’s proximity to Bridgewater and other rural locations expands the options available to the community. At 16 minutes, Newbridge is just outside of the 15 minute access regime

Table 9-5 - Inglewood - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Inglewood	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>M&amp;CH Service</b>		1	Wedderburn Serpentine	2			3
<b>Library Service</b>		1	Wedderburn	1	Eaglehawk		2
<b>Preschool Centre</b>		1	Wedderburn	1			2
<b>Community Centre</b>	Community Hub Senior CC	2	Wedderburn CC Wedderburn SCC	2	Marong Eaglehawk	2	6
<b>Swimming Pool</b>		1	Wedderburn	1	Marong Eaglehawk	2	4
<b>Waste Facility</b>		1	Wedderburn	1			2

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre, CC – Community Centre

Comments

Inglewood’s proximity to Wedderburn and the northwest of Bendigo provides a range of opportunities for the community.

<sup>59</sup> Serpentine at 17 minutes’ drive time is just outside of the 15 minute regime but does add additional indoor meeting spaces, recreation spaces and playgrounds that are available in a reasonable time

9.5. Boort – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-4 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Boort within a 30-minute drive.

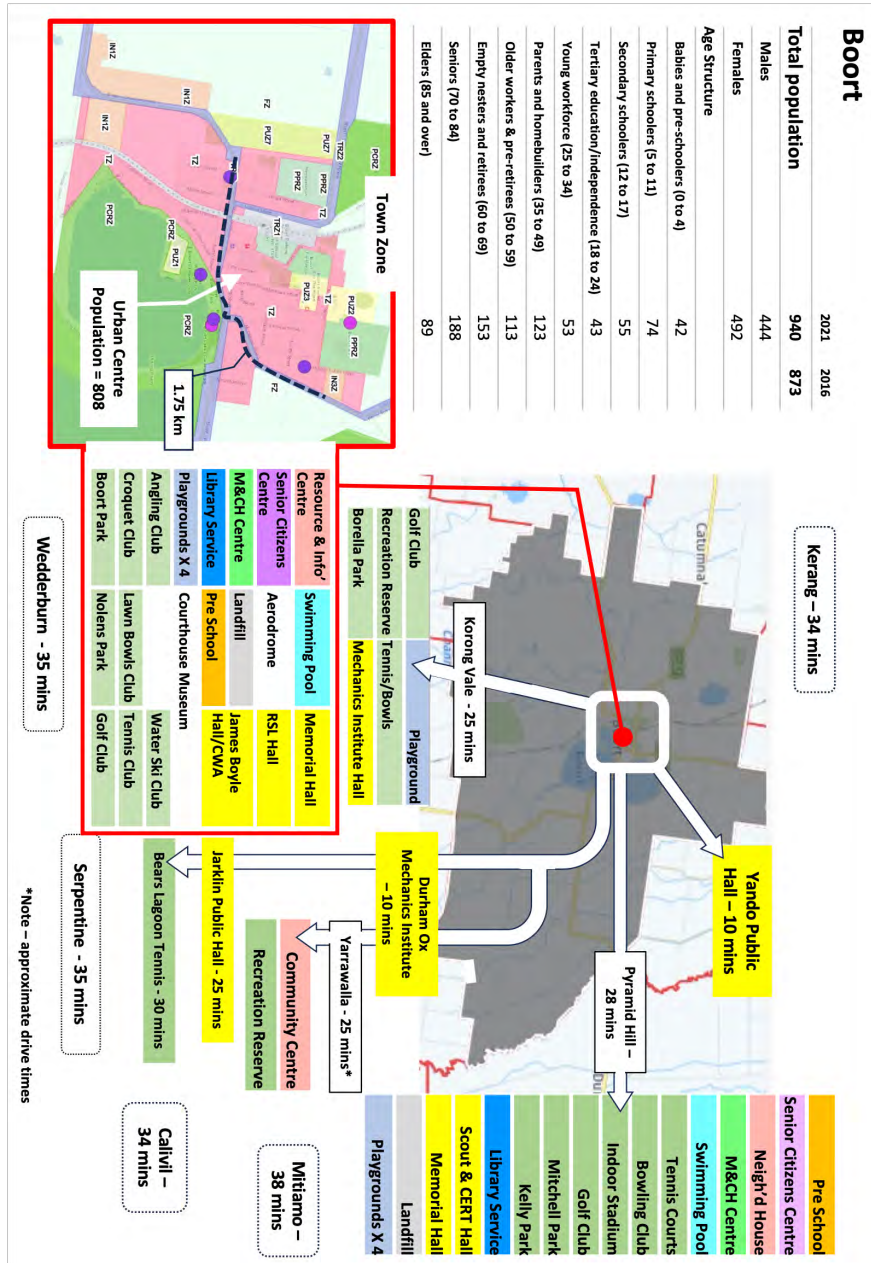


Figure 9-4 – Boort Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

9.5.1. Boort – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-6 and Table 9-7 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Boort within 30 minutes of driving time.

**Table 9-6 – Boort - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Boort		Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
Indoor Meeting Place	PH x 2	N'hood House	9	Durham Ox PH	3			12
	FNC	Senior CC		Yando PH				
	Bowling Club	Angling Club		Mysia School Hall				
	Lawn Bowls Club	Water Ski Club						
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Angling Club	Tennis Club	11					11
	Water Ski Club	Boort Park						
	Croquet Club	FNC						
	Lawn Bowls Club	Nolens Park						
		Golf Club						
	Hockey Club							
Equipped Play Space	X4		4					4

RR – Recreation Reserve, FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

**Comments**

Boort does not have access to other large or small towns within a 15 minute driving time

**Table 9-7 - Boort - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Boort	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
M&CH Service		1	Pyramid Hill	1			2
Library Service		1	Pyramid Hill	1			2
Preschool Centre		1	Pyramid Hill	1			2
Community Centre	Neighbourhood House	2	PH Neighbourhood House	3			5
	Senior CC		PH Senior CC				
			Yarrowalla CC				
Swimming Pool		1	Pyramid Hill	1			2
Waste Facility		1	Pyramid Hill	1			2

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre, CC – Community Centre

**Comments**

Boort has access to Pyramid Hill within 30 Minutes driving time, but all other larger towns are outside a 30 minute drive time.

9.6. Pyramid Hill – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-5 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Pyramid Hill within a 30-minute drive.

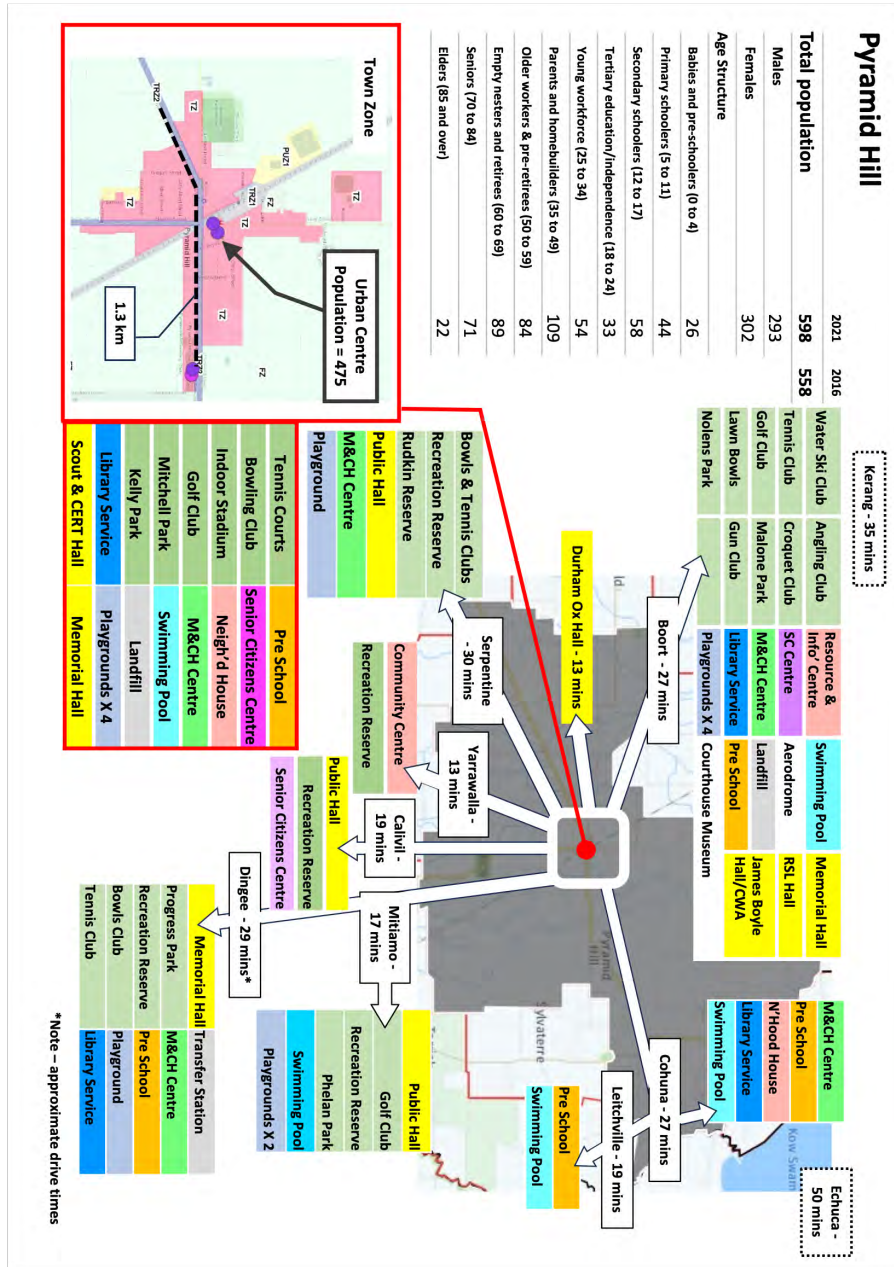


Figure 9-5 Pyramid Hill – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.6.1. Pyramid Hill – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-8 and Table 9-9 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Pyramid Hill within 30 minutes of driving time.

Table 9-8 – Pyramid Hill - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Pyramid Hill	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>Indoor Meeting Place</b>	Memorial Hall	6	Durham Ox PH Yarrowalla CC	2			8
	Scout and CERT Hall						
	N/Hood House						
	Senior CC						
	FNC						
Lawn Bowls Club							
<b>Recreation Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Tennis Courts	8	Yarrowalla RR	1			9
	Bowling Club						
	Indoor Stadium						
	Golf Club						
	Mitchell Park						
	Kelly Park						
	FNC						
<b>Equipped Play Space</b>	X4	4					4

FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

**Comments**

Pyramid Hill is 17 mins drive from Mitiamo which is outside of the 15 minute regime – there is one additional option if Mitiamo was added to the above.

Table 9-9 – Pyramid Hill - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Pyramid Hill	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>M&amp;CH Service</b>		1	Boort	1	Cohuna	1	3
<b>Library Service</b>		1	Boort Dingee	2	Cohuna	1	4
<b>Preschool Centre</b>		1	Boort Dingee	2	Cohuna* Leitchville*	2	5
<b>Community Centre</b>	N/Hood House Senior CC	2	Boort Neighbourhood House Boort SCC	2	Cohuna	1	5
<b>Swimming Pool</b>		1	Mitiamo	1	Cohuna Leitchville	2	4
<b>Waste Facility</b>		1	Boort Dingee	2			3

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre, CC – Community Centre - \*Note – subject to registrations

**Comments**

Pyramid Hill’s proximity to Boort, Mitiamo and Dingee provides a range of additional opportunities for the community. All other larger towns are outside of 30 minutes’ drive time.



9.7. Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-6 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater within a 30-minute drive.

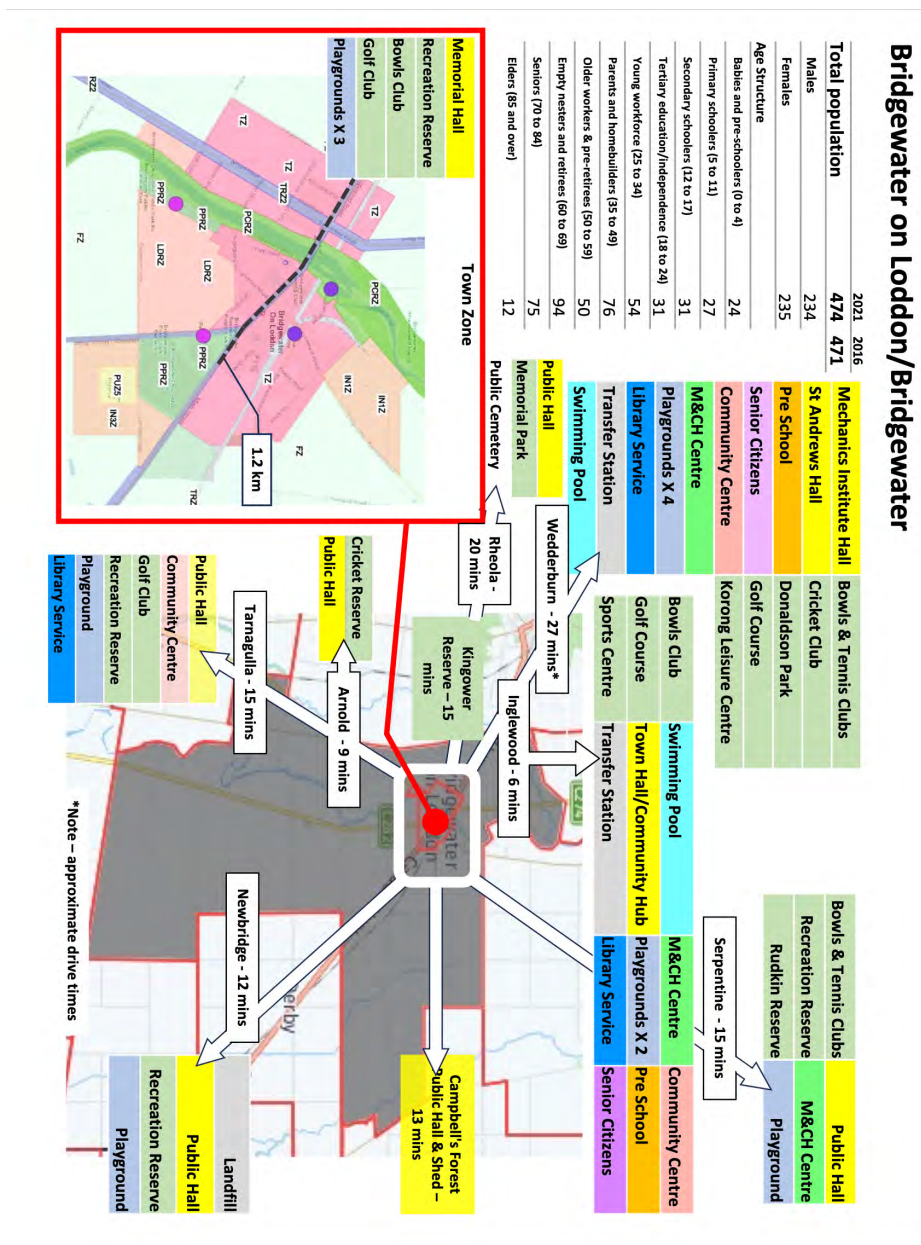


Figure 9-6 Bridgewater – Availability of Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.7.1. Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-10 and Table 9-11 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Bridgewater on Loddon within 30 minutes of driving time. The Bridgewater Locality does not have any Council facilities

Table 9-10 – Bridgewater- Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Bridgewater	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
Indoor Meeting Place	PH	4	Inglewood	Rheola PH	9			13
	FNC		Senior CC	Tarnagulla* PH				
	Tennis Club		Community Centre	Tarnagulla CC				
	Bowls		Arnold PH	Newbridge* PH				
			Campbells Forest PH	Newbridge FNC				
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	RR	6	Inglewood	Arnold RR	17			23
	FNC		Bowls Club	Rheola RR				
	Tennis Club		Golf Course	Tarnagulla* RR				
	Golf Club		Riding Club	Tarnagulla Golf Course				
	Bowls		Sports Centre	Newbridge RR				
			Serpentine RR – FNC	Newbridge FNC				
			Tennis - Bowls	Kingower RR				
Equipped Play Space	3	3	Inglewood	Newbridge	3			6
			Serpentine					

RR – Recreation Reserve, FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

Comments

Bridgewater on Loddon’s proximity to the Inglewood urban centre and the small towns of Tarnagulla, Newbridge and Serpentine enables a range of opportunities for the Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater communities. There are also recreation reserves and public halls at Arnold and Rheola.

Table 9-11 - Bridgewater - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Bridgewater	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
M&CH Service			Inglewood	Serpentine	3	Marong	1	4
			Wedderburn					
Library Service			Inglewood		2	Marong	2	4
			Wedderburn			Eaglehawk		
Preschool Centre			Inglewood		2			2
			Wedderburn					
Community Centre			Inglewood Hub	Inglewood SCC	4	Marong	2	6
			Wedderburn CC	Wedderburn SCC		Eaglehawk		
Swimming Pool			Inglewood		2	Marong	2	4
			Wedderburn			Eaglehawk		
Waste Facility			Inglewood		3			3
			Wedderburn					
			Newbridge					

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre, CC – Community Centre

Comments

Bridgewater on Loddon’s proximity to the Inglewood and Wedderburn urban centres, Serpentine, and Bendigo enables a range of opportunities for the Bridgewater on Loddon/Bridgewater communities.



9.8. Serpentine – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-7 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Serpentine within a 30-minute drive.

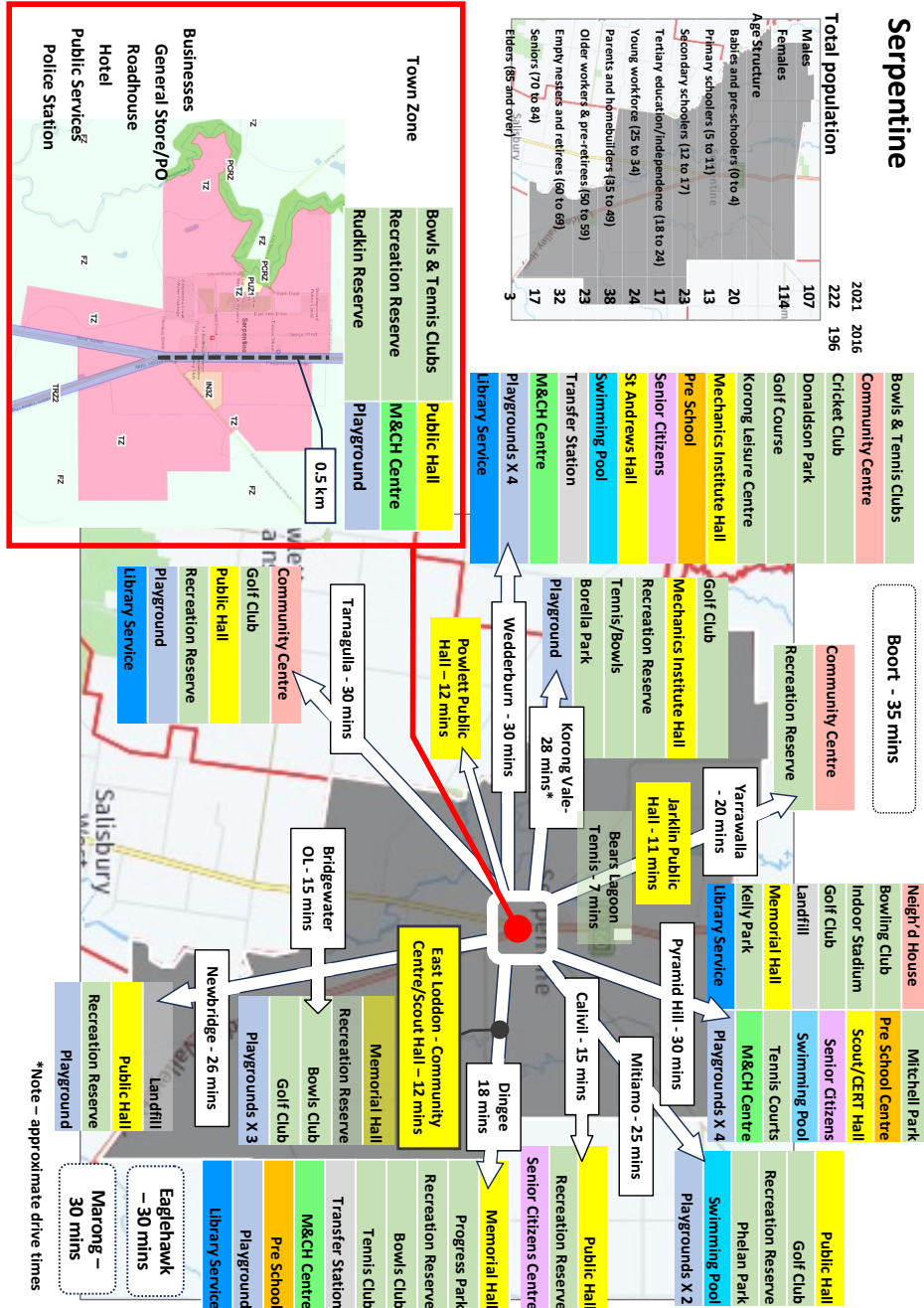


Figure 9-7 – Serpentine – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.8.1. Serpentine – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-12 and Table 9-13 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Serpentine within 30 minutes of driving time.

Table 9-12 – Serpentine -Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Serpentine	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
Indoor Meeting Place	Public Hall	3	Jarklin PH	Powlett PH	7	n/a		11
	Bowls Club		Calivil PH	BoL PH				
	Football/Netball		Calivil FNC	BoL FNC				
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Tennis Courts	5	Bears Lagoon-Tennis	BoL	10	n/a		15
	Bowls Club		Calivil	Football -				
	Football/Netball		Bowls	Netball				
	Rudkin Reserve		Tennis	Tennis				
Equipped Play Space	Playground	1	BoL Playgrounds (3)		4	n/a		5
			Calivil					

BoL = Bridgewater on Loddon, FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

Comments

By their proximity to Serpentine, the Jarklin, Calivil, Powlett, and Bears Lagoon Localities and the Bridgewater on Loddon urban centre also have several options for access to facilities within 15 minutes. Dingee is just out of the 15 minute access regime at 18 minutes.

Table 9-13 – Serpentine - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Serpentine	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
M&CH Service	M&CH Centre	1	Dingee	Pyramid Hill	3	Marong	1	5
Library Service	nil		Inglewood LS	Wedderburn LS	4	Eaglehawk	1	5
			Dingee LS	Pyramid Hill LS				
Preschool Centre	nil		Inglewood	Wedderburn	4	n/a		4
Community Centre	nil		Dingee	Pyramid Hill	7	Eaglehawk	1	8
			Calivil SCC	Wedderburn CC				
			Inglewood CC	Pyramid Hill CC				
			Yarrowalla CC	Tarnagulla CC				
Swimming Pool	nil		Inglewood	Wedderburn	4	Eaglehawk	2	6
			Mitiamo	Pyramid Hill				
Waste Facility	nil		Dingee	Wedderburn	5	n/a		5
			Newbridge	Pyramid Hill				
			Inglewood					

CC – Community Centre

Comments

The proximity of Serpentine to three of Loddon's urban centres, the facilities and services available in Dingee, and being within 30 minutes of Marong and Eaglehawk generate a wide range of options for Serpentine's community.

9.9. Dingee – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-8 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Dingee that are within 30 minutes of driving time.

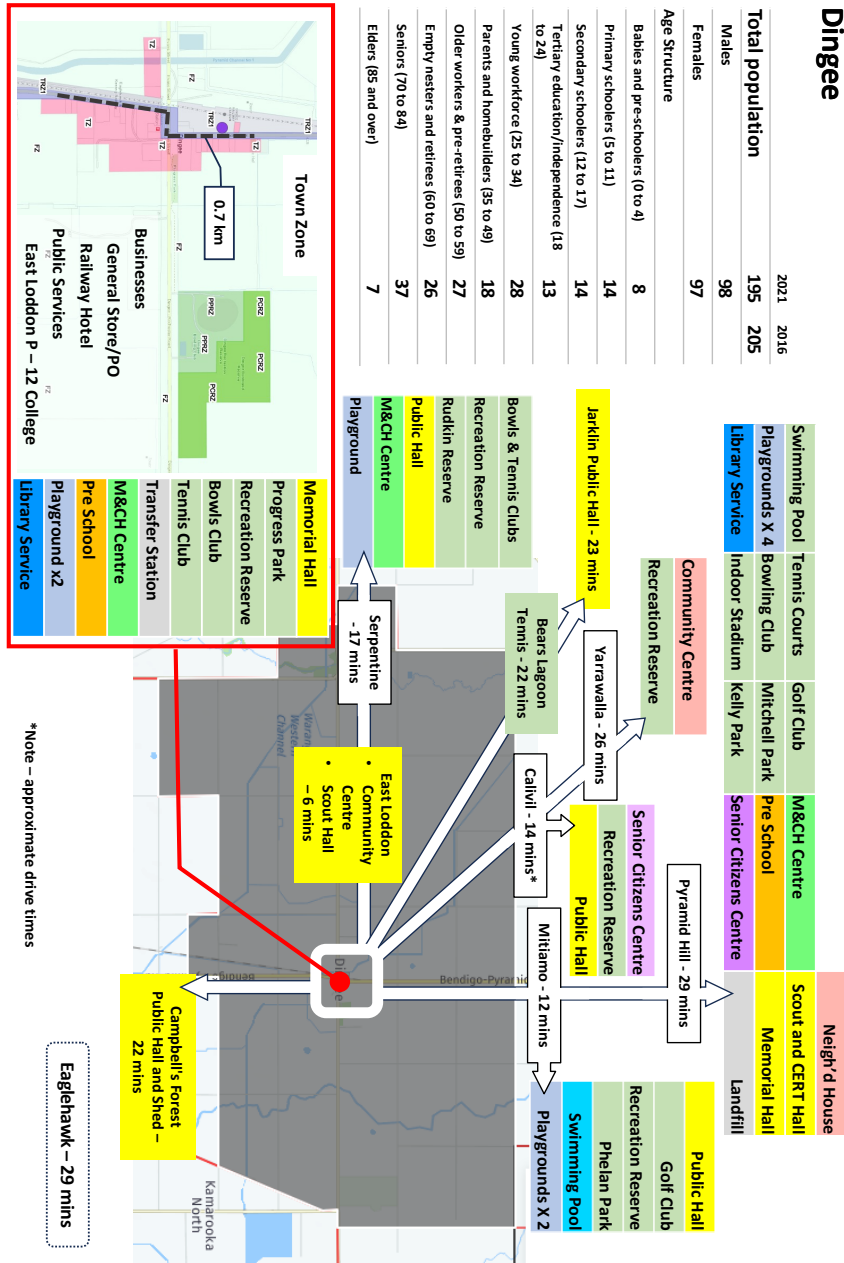


Figure 9-8 – Dingee – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

\*Note – approximate drive times

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.9.1. Dingee – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-14 and Table 9-15 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Dingee within 15 minutes and 30 minutes of driving time, respectively.

**Table 9-14– Dingee -Facilities and Services within 15 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Dingee	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall	
Indoor Meeting Place	Public Hall	3	Mitiamo FNC Clubrooms	4	n/a		7	
	Bowls Club		Mitiamo PH					
	Tennis Club		Calivil PH/SCC Calivil FNC Clubrooms					
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Tennis Courts	4	Calivil	7			11	
	Bowls Club		Bowls					Mitiamo Football/Netball
	RR		Tennis Courts					Golf Course
	Progress Park		Football/Netball					
Equipped Play Space	Playground	2	Mitiamo	2	n/a		4	
			Calivil					

RR – Recreation Reserve, FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

**Comments**

The proximity of Dingee to Mitiamo and Calivil enables several options for access to facilities within 15 minutes driving time. Serpentine is just out of the 15 minute access regime at 18 minutes.

**Table 9-15 – Dingee - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Dingee	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
M&CH Service	M&CH Centre	1	Serpentine Pyramid Hill	2	Elmore	1	4
Library Service	Library Service	1	Pyramid Hill	1	Elmore Eaglehawk	2	4
Preschool Centre	Preschool*	1	Pyramid Hill	1	n/a		2
Community Centre	nil		East Loddon CC Calivil SCC Yarrowalla CC Pyramid Hill CC Pyramid Hill SCC	4	Elmore Eaglehawk	2	6
Swimming Pool	nil		Mitiamo Pyramid Hill Calivil	3	Elmore Eaglehawk	2	5
Waste Facility	Waste Facility	1	Pyramid Hill	1	n/a		2

\*at East Loddon Campus - CC – Community Centre

**Comments**

Dingee’s network is extended by its proximity to Elmore and Eaglehawk.

9.10. Mitiamo – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-9 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Mitiamo within 30 minutes of driving time.

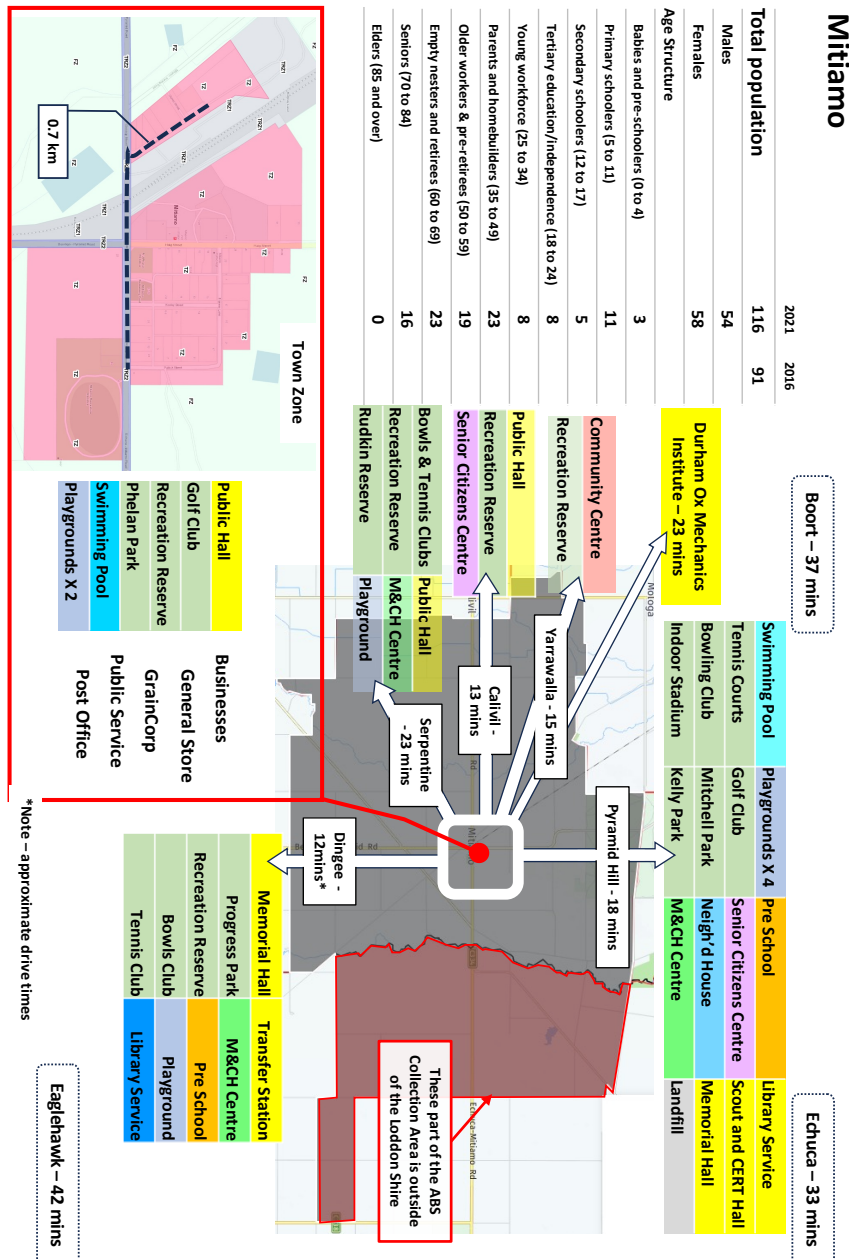


Figure 9-9 – Mitiamo – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.10.1. Mitiamo – 15 and 30-Minute access

Table 9-16 and Table 9-17 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Mitiamo within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

Table 9-16 – Mitiamo -Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Mitiamo	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
Indoor Meeting Place	Public Hall*	2	Dingee	Calivil	8	n/a		10
	Football/Netball Club		Public Hall	PH				
	<i>*used by the Historical Society</i>		Tennis Club	FNC				
			Bowls Club	Bowls Club				
			Yarrowalla PH	SCC				
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	FNC	3	Dingee	Calivil	12	n/a		15
	Golf Club		Tennis Club	FNC				
			Bowls Club	Tennis				
			Progress Park	Golf				
			RR					
			Yarrowalla Reserve					
Equipped Play Space	Playgrounds (2)	2	Dingee x2		3	n/a		5
			Calivil					

FNC – Football/Netball Club - PH = Public Hall SCC – Senior Citizens Centre

Comments

Mitiamo’s public hall operates as a venue for the historical society. Pyramid Hill has several recreation facilities and is slightly outside the 15-minute driving time regime at 18 minutes.

Table 9-17 – Mitiamo - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Mitiamo	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
M&CH Service	nil		Dingee	Pyramid Hill	3	n/a		3
			Serpentine					
Library Service	nil		Dingee LS		2	n/a		2
			Pyramid Hill LS					
Preschool Centre	nil		Dingee		2	n/a		2
			Pyramid Hill					
Community Centre	nil		Calivil SCC	Pyramid Hill CC	4	n/a		4
			Yarrowalla CC	Pyramid Hill SCC				
Swimming Pool	Swimming Pool	1	Pyramid Hill		1	n/a		2
Waste Facility	nil		Dingee		2	n/a		2
			Pyramid Hill					

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

Comments

Mitiamo’s network is entirely with the Loddon Shire. Echuca is the largest nearby town and is a 36-minute drive time away. The feedback from the community is that this is where they source health services and shopping. The football/netball club depends on people from Echuca (and surrounding areas) to form teams.

9.11. Korong Vale – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-10 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Korong Vale within 30 minutes of driving time.

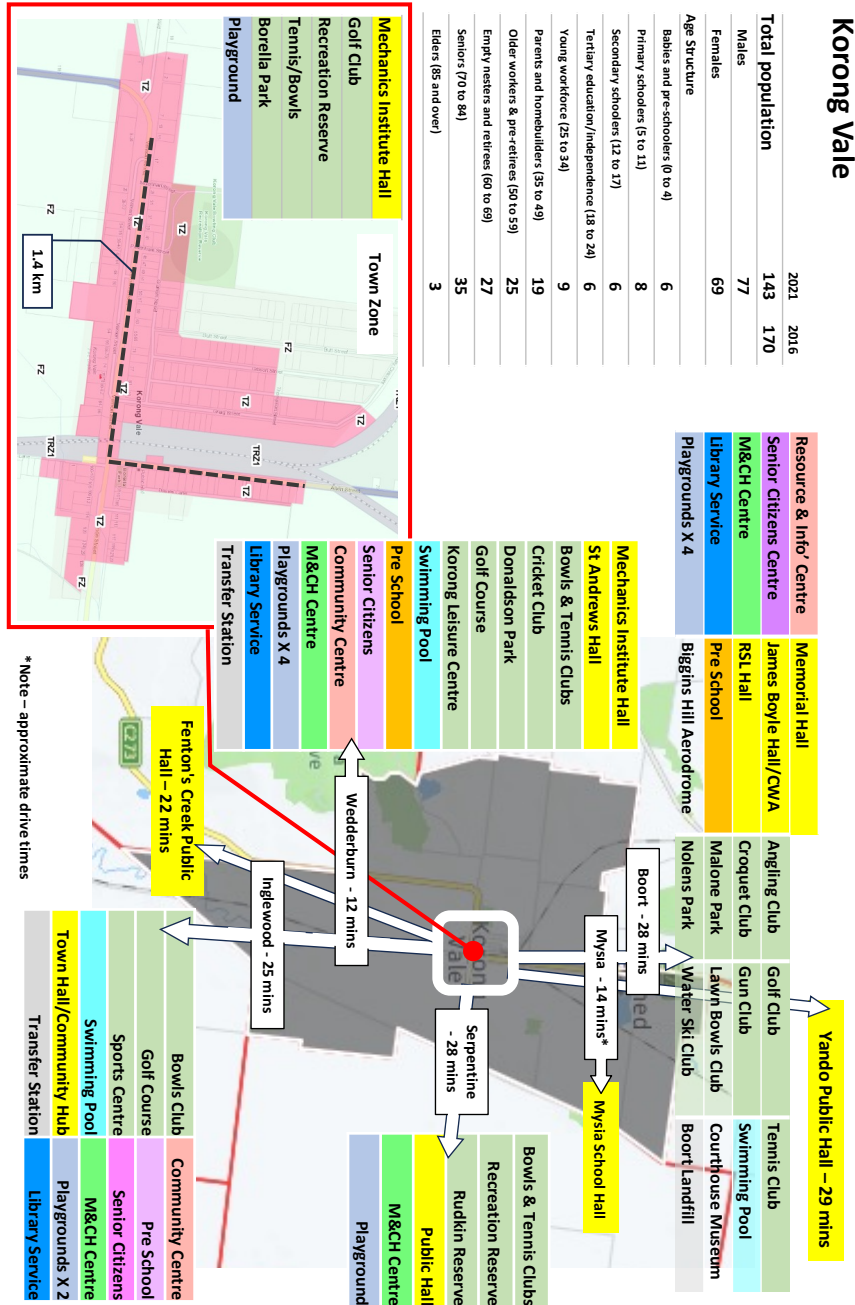


Figure 9-10 – Korong Vale – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure



Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.11.1. Korong Vale – 15 and 30-Minute Access

Table 9-18 and Table 9-19 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Korong Vale within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

Table 9-18 – Korong Vale - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Korong Vale	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
Indoor Meeting Place	Public Hall	2	Wedderburn Halls (2)	Wedderburn SCC	9	n/a		11
	Bowls/Tennis Club*		FNC	CC				
	*Not operating		Tennis Club Bowls Club	Donaldson Park Mysia School Hall				
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Bowls/Tennis Club*	4	Wedderburn FNC	Wedderburn Bowls Club	8	n/a		12
	Golf Club* RR		Tennis Club	Donaldson Park				
			Cricket Club	Golf Course				
			Leisure Centre					
Equipped Play Space	Playground	1	Wedderburn (5)		5	n/a		6

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

Comments

The combination of facilities in Korong Vale and its proximity to other locations enables several opportunities within 15 minutes.

Korong Vale does not have any recreation clubs that are operating at present. A former community centre facility that is located next to the public hall no longer operates and is being sold by Council.

This situation flags that the community needs to have the capacity and willingness to manage and operate facilities. It also highlights that raising and maintaining multiple management committees can be challenging for a small population.

Table 9-19 – Korong Vale - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Korong Vale	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
M&CH Service	nil		Inglewood Serpentine	Wedderburn Boort	4	n/a		4
Library Service	nil		Wedderburn Boort	Inglewood	3	n/a		3
Preschool Centre	nil		Inglewood Wedderburn	Boort	3	n/a		3
Community Centre	nil		Wedderburn CC Wedderburn SCC Inglewood CC	Inglewood SCC Boort CC Boort SCC	6	n/a		6
Swimming Pool	nil		Wedderburn Inglewood	Boort	3	n/a		3
Waste Facility	nil		Wedderburn Inglewood	Boort	3	n/a		3

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

Comments

Korong Vale’s 15/30 minute network is entirely within the Loddon Shire.

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.12. Newbridge – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-11 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Newbridge within 30 minutes of driving time.

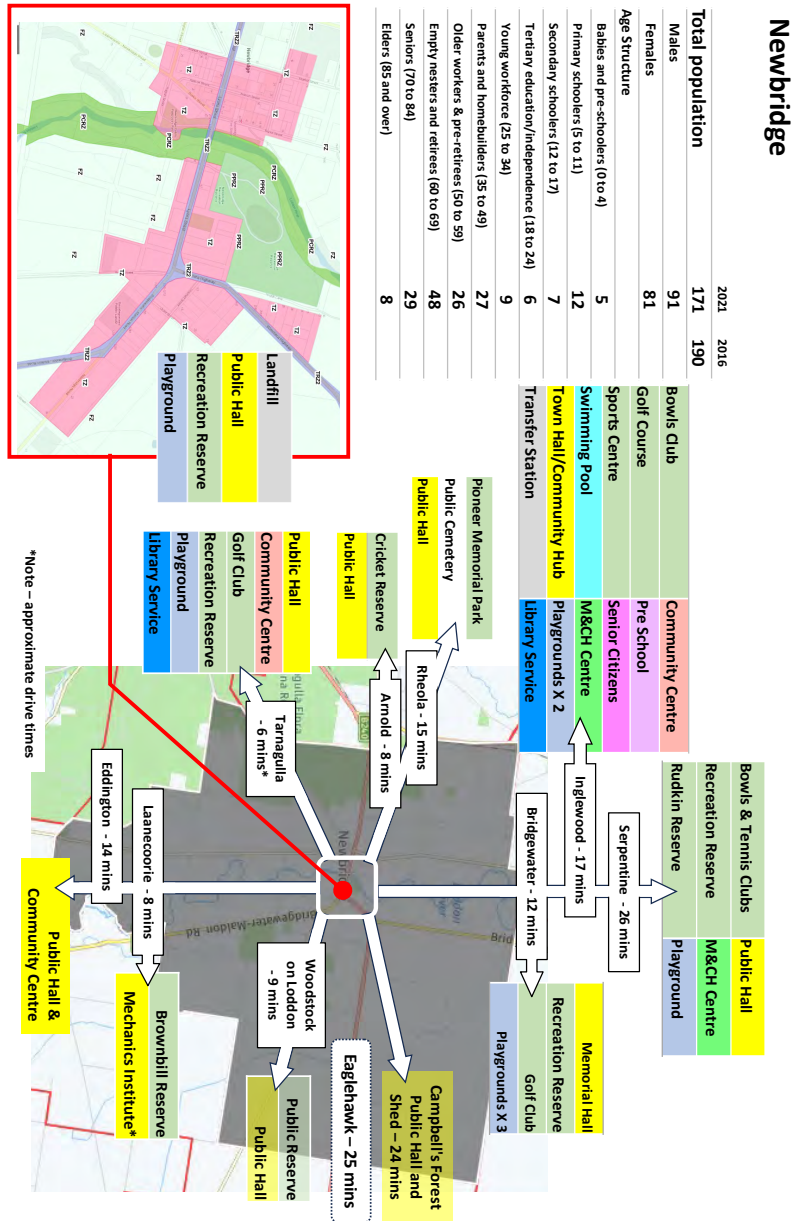


Figure 9-11 – Newbridge – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.12.1. Newbridge – 15 and 30 Minute Access

Table 9-20 and Table 9-21 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Newbridge within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

Table 9-20– Newbridge - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Newbridge	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
Indoor Meeting Place	Public Hall	2	Tarnagulla PH	BoL PH	11	n/a		13
	Football/Netball Clubrooms		Tarnagulla CC Tarnagulla Golf Club Laanecoorie PH Woodstock PH	BoL FNC BoL Golf Club BoL Bowls Eddington PH Rheola PH				
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Tennis Courts	3	Tarnagulla – Golf	BoL Bowls	7	n/a		10
	Football/Netball		Tarnagulla RR BoL FNC BoL Golf Club	BoL Tennis				
Equipped Play Space	Playground	1	Tarnagulla BoL Playgrounds (3)		4	n/a		5

BoL = Bridgewater on Loddon, RR – Recreation Reserve, FNC – Football/Netball Club PH = Public Hall CC – Community Centre

Comments

The proximity of Newbridge to Bridgewater on Loddon, Tarnagulla, Laanecoorie, and several smaller communities enables several options for access to facilities within 15 minutes. Marong, at 16 minutes, is just outside the 15-minute access regime and has a community hall and recreation facilities.

Table 9-21 – Newbridge - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	Newbridge	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby		Total	Overall
M&CH Service	nil		Inglewood Serpentine	2	Marong Maiden Gully	Kangaroo Flat Bendigo	4	6
Library Service	nil		Tarnagulla Inglewood	2	Dunolly Maryborough Kangaroo Flat	Eaglehawk Bendigo	5	7
Preschool Centre	nil		Inglewood	1	Dunolly Maryborough	Bendigo	3	4
Community Centre	nil		Tarnagulla CC Inglewood CC Inglewood SCC	3	Maryborough Bendigo (3)		4	7
Swimming Pool	nil		Inglewood	1	Dunolly Maryborough Marong	Kangaroo Flat Bendigo	5	6
Waste Facility	Waste Facility	1	Inglewood	1	n/a			2

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

Comments

Newbridge's proximity to several nearby locations outside of the Loddon Shire significantly extends its network.

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.13. Laanecoorie – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-12 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Laanecoorie within 30 minutes of driving time.

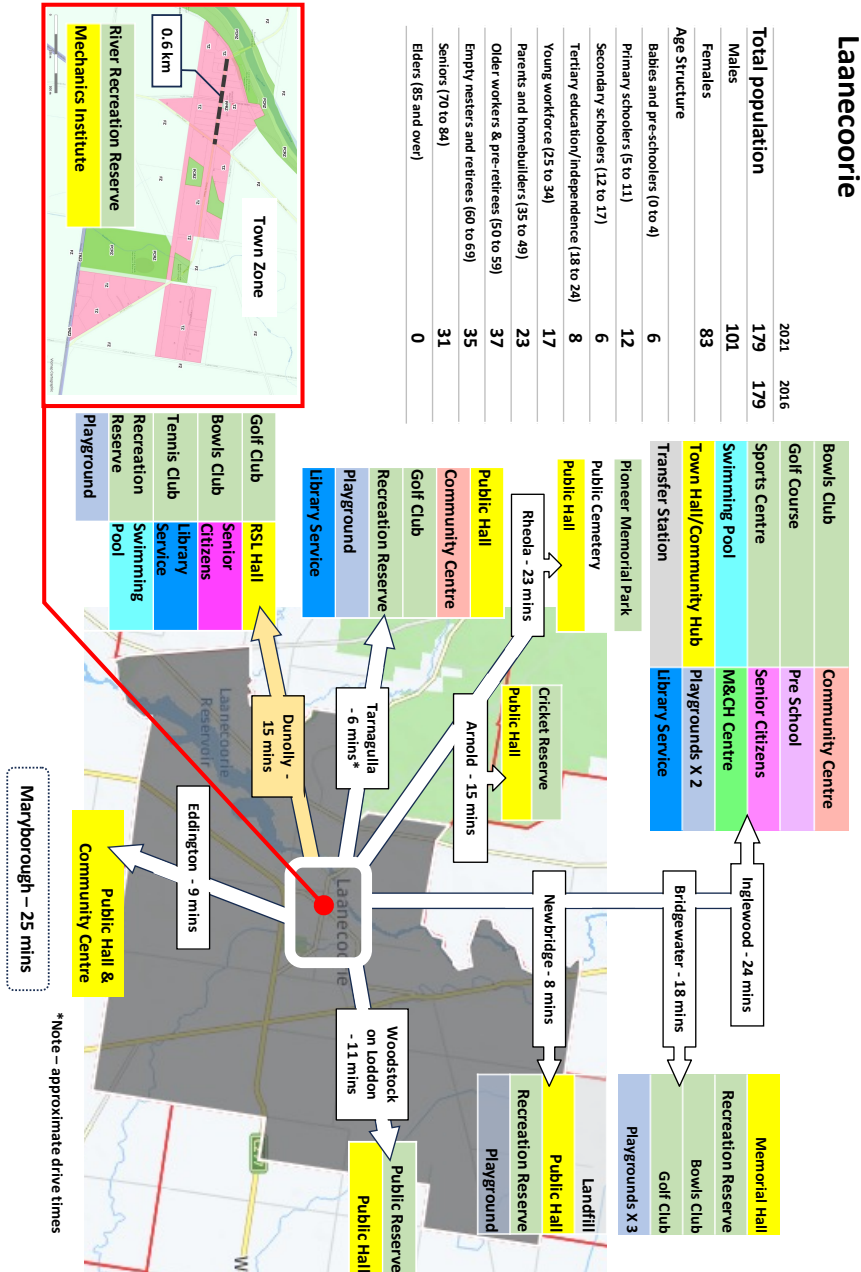


Figure 9-12 – Laanecoorie – Overview of Availability of Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.13.1. Laanecoorie – 15 and 30-Minute access

Table 9-22 and Table 9-23 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Laanecoorie within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

Table 9-22 – Laanecoorie -Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	Laanecoorie		Elsewhere in Loddon		Nearby		Overall	
		Total		Total		Total		
Indoor Meeting Place	Public Hall	1	Tarnagulla PH Tarnagulla CC Tarnagulla GC Newbridge PH	Eddington PH Newbridge FNC Woodstock PH Arnold PH	8	Dunolly RSL Hall Dunolly Senior Dunolly FNC	3	12
Recreation Spaces & Facilities	Recreation Reserve Tennis Courts	2	Tarnagulla Reserve Golf Club Newbridge Reserve FNC Tennis	Eddington Tennis Golf Arnold Reserve	8	Dunolly Bowls Tennis Courts Recreation Reserve Football/Netball Golf Course	6	16
Equipped Play Space			Tarnagulla Newbridge	Eddington	3	Dunolly	1	4

FNC – Football/Netball Club PH = Public Hall GC – Golf Club

Comments

The proximity of Laanecoorie to Tarnagulla, Newbridge, Eddington, and Dunolly enables a range of opportunities. The Dunolly/Laanecoorie Cricket Club, which has its home ground in Dunolly, is an example of the connections between these communities.

Table 9-23 – Laanecoorie - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	Laanecoorie		Elsewhere in Loddon		Elsewhere		Overall	
		Total		Total		Total		
M&CH Service	nil		Inglewood	1	Maryborough Marong Maiden Gully	Kangaroo Flat Bendigo	5	6
Library Service	nil		Tarnagulla Inglewood	2	Dunolly Maryborough		2	4
Preschool Centre	nil		Inglewood	1	Dunolly Maryborough	Bendigo	3	4
Community Centre	nil		Tarnagulla CC Inglewood CC Inglewood SCC	3	Maryborough CC Dunolly SCC		2	5
Swimming Pool	nil		Inglewood	1	Kangaroo Flat Marong	Dunolly Maryborough	4	5
Waste Facility	nil		Newbridge Inglewood	2				2

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

Comments

Laanecoorie's network is highly contingent upon its proximity to nearby locations.

9.14. Tarnagulla – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Figure 9-13 provides an overview of the facilities and services available to Tarnagulla within 30 minutes of driving time.

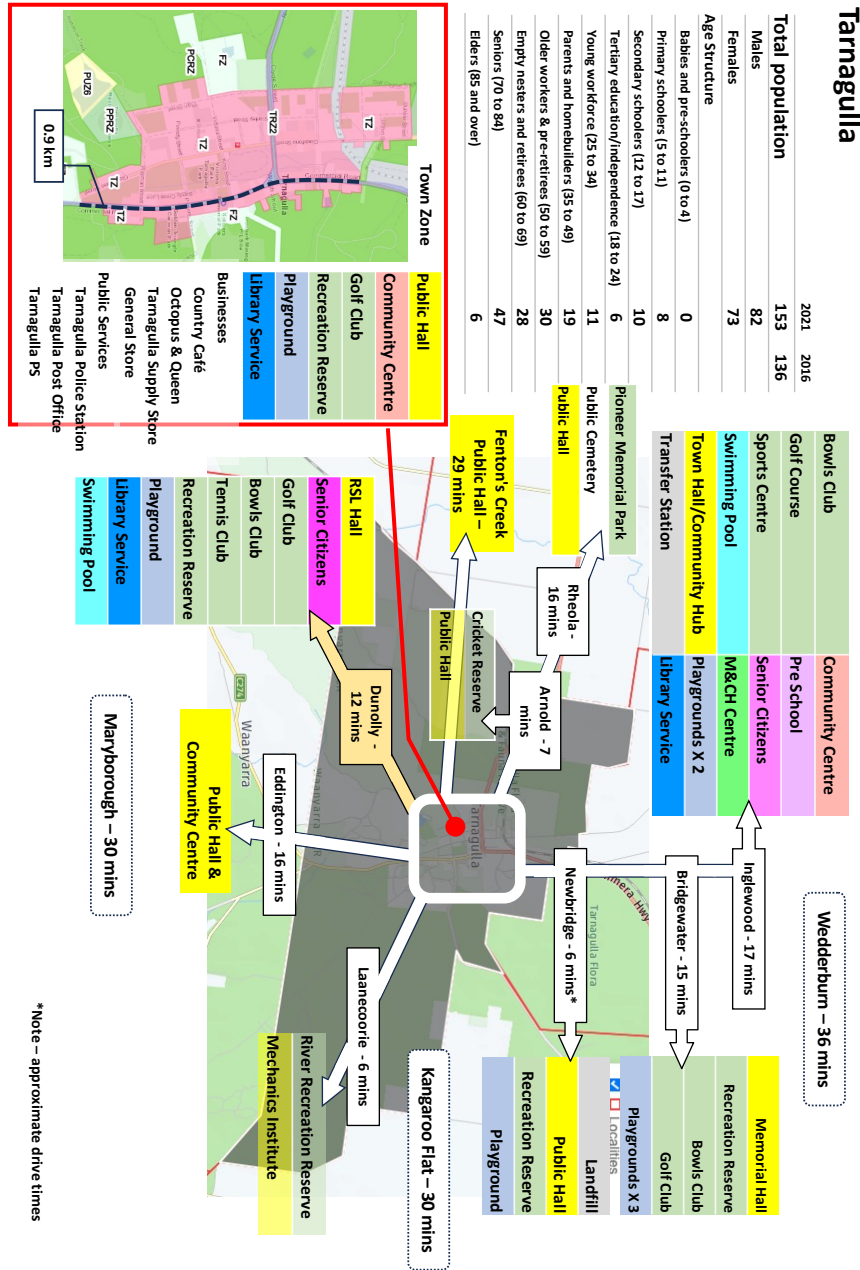


Figure 9-13 – Tarnagulla – Overview of Available Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.14.1. Tarnagulla – 15 and 30-Minute access

Table 9-24 and Table 9-25 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Tarnagulla within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

Table 9-24 – Tarnagulla - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Tarnagulla	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>Indoor Meeting Place</b>	Public Hall	<b>3</b>	Laanecoorie PH	BoL PH	Dunolly FNC rooms SCC RSL Hall	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>
	Tarnagulla CC		Newbridge PH	BoL FNC			
	Tarnagulla Golf Club		Newbridge FNC	BoL Golf			
			Arnold PH	BoL Bowls			
<b>Recreation Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Recreation Reserve/Pavilion Golf Club	<b>2</b>	Laanecoorie Reserve	Newbridge FNC	Dunolly Bowls Tennis Courts Recreation Reserve Football/Netball Golf Course	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>
			Arnold Reserve	Newbridge Tennis			
			BoL FNC				
			BoL Golf Club				
			BoL Bowls				
<b>Equipped Play Space</b>	Playground	<b>1</b>	Newbridge Eddington	BoL (3)	Dunolly	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

BoL = Bridgewater on Loddon, SCC – Senior Citizens Centre FNC – Football/Netball Club PH = Public Hall

**Comments**

Tarnagulla’s proximity to Dunolly greatly extends the options within 15 minutes. Inglewood is just outside the 15 minute regime at 17 minutes and adds several additional opportunities that have not been counted in this Report.

Table 9-25 – Tarnagulla - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes

Facilities & Services	In Tarnagulla	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>M&amp;CH Service</b>	nil		Inglewood	<b>1</b>	Maryborough Marong Kangaroo Flat	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Library Service</b>	Library Service	<b>1</b>	Inglewood	<b>1</b>	Dunolly Maryborough Kangaroo Flat	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Preschool Centre</b>	nil		Inglewood	<b>1</b>	Dunolly Maryborough	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Community Centre</b>	Community Centre	<b>1</b>	Inglewood CC Inglewood Senior CC	<b>2</b>	Dunolly Senior CC Maryborough CC Marong CC	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	nil		Inglewood	<b>1</b>	Dunolly Maryborough Marong Kangaroo Flat	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Waste Facility</b>	nil		Newbridge Inglewood	<b>2</b>			<b>2</b>

CC – Community Centre

**Comments**

Tarnagulla's proximity to nearby locations outside the Loddon Shire significantly extends its network.





Social Infrastructure Strategy

9.15.1. Eddington – 15 and 30-Minute access

Table 9-26 and Table 9-27 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Eddington within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

**Table 9-26 – Eddington - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Eddington	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>Indoor Meeting Place</b>	Public Hall	1	Laanecoorie PH	1	Dunolly RSL Hall FNC rooms SCC	3	5
<b>Recreation Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Tennis Courts Golf Course	2	Laanecoorie Reserve Laanecoorie Tennis Courts	2	Dunolly Bowls Tennis Courts Recreation Reserve Football/Netball Golf Course	6	10
<b>Equipped Play Space</b>	Community Hall				Dunolly	1	2

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre FNC – Football/Netball Club PH = Public Hall

**Comments**

The proximity of Eddington to Dunolly (i.e., 10 minutes' driving time) enables access to several facilities and services that are not available within 15 minutes' driving time within the Loddon Shire.

**Table 9-27 – Eddington - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Eddington	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon	Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>M&amp;CH Service</b>	nil				Maryborough Marong Kangaroo Flat	3	3
<b>Library Service</b>	nil		Tarnagulla	1	Dunolly Maryborough Kangaroo Flat	3	4
<b>Preschool Centre</b>	nil				Dunolly Maryborough	2	2
<b>Community Centre</b>	nil		Tarnagulla CC	1	Dunolly SCC Maryborough CC Marong CC	3	4
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	nil				Dunolly Maryborough Marong Kangaroo Flat	4	4
<b>Waste Facility</b>	nil		Newbridge	1			1

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

**Comments**

Eddington is more than thirty minutes drive from any urban centre in the Loddon Shire (Inglewood is 32 minutes away). Its network of facilities and services is highly dependent on its proximity to nearby locations.



9.16.1. Calivil – 15 and 30-Minute access

Table 9-28 and Table 9-29 provide a breakdown of the facilities and services available to Calivil within 15 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

**Table 9-28 – Calivil - Facilities and Services within 15 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Calivil	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>Indoor Meeting Place</b>	Public Hall	<b>2</b>	Jarklin PH	Dingee PH	<b>8</b>			<b>10</b>
	Bowls Club		Yarrowalla CC	Dingee Bowls Club				
			Mitiamo PH	Serpentine PH				
			Mitiamo FNC	Serpentine FNC				
<b>Recreation Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Tennis Courts	<b>4</b>	Bears Lagoon	Mitiamo RR	<b>12</b>			<b>16</b>
	Bowls Club		Tennis	Dingee RR				
	Recreation Reserve		Yarrowalla RR	Dingee Bowls Club				
	Netball Court		Mitiamo Golf Club	Serpentine Bowls & Tennis				
			Mitiamo FNC	Serpentine FNC				
<b>Equipped Play Space</b>		<b>1</b>	Dingee	Serpentine	<b>4</b>			<b>6</b>
			Mitiamo X2					

RR = Recreation Reserve, SCC – Senior Citizens Centre FNC – Football/Netball Club PH = Public Hall

**Comments**

The proximity of Mitiamo, Dingee and Serpentine, Yarrowalla and Jarklin enables access to several facilities and services. (By way of indoor meeting spaces, Jarklin also has a public hotel)

**Table 9-29 – Calivil - Facilities and Services within 30 minutes**

Facilities & Services	In Calivil	Total	Elsewhere in Loddon		Total	Nearby	Total	Overall
<b>M&amp;CH Service</b>			Dingee	Pyramid Hill	<b>4</b>			<b>3</b>
			Serpentine	Inglewood				
<b>Library Service</b>			Dingee	Inglewood	<b>3</b>			<b>4</b>
			Pyramid Hill					
<b>Preschool Centre</b>			Dingee	Inglewood	<b>3</b>			<b>3</b>
			Pyramid Hill					
<b>Community Centre</b>	Senior CC	<b>1</b>	Yarrowalla	Inglewood x3	<b>6</b>			<b>7</b>
			Pyramid Hill x2					
<b>Swimming Pool</b>			Mitiamo	Inglewood	<b>3</b>			<b>3</b>
			Pyramid Hill					
<b>Waste Facility</b>			Dingee	Inglewood	<b>3</b>			<b>3</b>
			Pyramid Hill					

SCC – Senior Citizens Centre CC – Community Centre

**Comments**

The proximity of Mitiamo, Dingee and Serpentine, Pyramid Hill enables access to several options for “30-minute” facilities and services none of which, other than the senior citizens centre, are located in Calivil. Inglewood is 32 minutes drive from the Calivil TZ; however, several households in the Calivil Locality would be within 30 minutes drive of Inglewood. (see Figure 3-2)

9.17. Total Number of Social Infrastructure Options for Towns

Table 9-30 shows each town's options for accessing facilities and services within 15—and 30-minute driving distances from its Township Zone. These options include those within the Loddon Shire and neighbouring LGAs.

The table demonstrates that all towns have multiple options for access to all types of social infrastructure within the 15-minute and 30-minute drive time regimes. The exception is Eddington, which has one option for a playground and a waste facility and is highly dependent on facilities and services in other locations, including outside of the Loddon Shire.

Table 9-30 – Total Social Infrastructure Options for Towns

Localities > 100 People	Population	Within 15 Minutes of Driving Time			Within 30 Minutes of Driving Time					
		Indoor Meeting Places	Recreation Facilities	Playgrounds	M&CH Service	Library Service	Preschool	Community Centres	Swimming Pool	Waste Facility
Wedderburn	951	11	12	6	3	2	2	4	2	2
Boort	940	12	11	4	2	2	2	5	2	2
Inglewood	784	13	18	5	3	2	2	6	4	2
Pyramid Hill	598	8	9	4	3	4	5	5	4	3
Bridgewater	466	13	23	6	4	4	2	6	4	3
Serpentine	221	11	15	5	5	5	4	8	6	5
Dingee	195	7	11	4	4	4	2	6	5	2
Laanecoorie	179	12	16	4	6	4	4	5	5	2
Calivil	175	10	16	6	3	4	3	7	3	3
Newbridge	169	13	10	5	6	7	4	7	6	2
Tarnagulla	153	14	18	7	4	5	3	6	5	2
Korong Vale	143	11	12	6	4	3	3	6	3	3
Mitiamo	111	10	15	5	3	2	2	4	2	2
Eddington	62	5	10	2	3	4	2	4	4	1

9.17.1. All Other Localities

The other 86 localities in the Shire (see Table 4-4) that are not listed in Table 9-30 are within a 15 minute drive of one or more of the towns listed in the above table, with 11 of these localities having some form of a Council facility (see Figure 6-1.)

**9.17.2. Obstacles to Wider Usage**

In identifying the opportunities listed in Section 9.17, this Report acknowledges that many in the community will be unaware or unwilling to use facilities outside their town; this will require some change management processes to foster the use of other facilities. There will be obstacles to people and groups making use of a broader range of facilities – in part, these will be:

- Awareness*            People, groups, and organisations may need to be made aware of opportunities to use different facilities.  
  
Groups or organisations that "operate" a facility may not have the resources or expertise to promote its availability to others.
- Cultural*             Groups or organisations that:
  - "Operate" or regularly use a facility unwilling to have others use it when they are not using it.
  - Are accustomed to using a particular facility and are not willing to use another space or an even more appropriate space that differs from the one they usually use
- Functional*           The available spaces do not support contemporary needs or meet current requirements and are unattractive to potential users.
- Procedural*          systems and processes are needed to enable different groups to more easily identify when facilities are available, how to access them, and the conditions of access or use. Often, this relies on a tacit understanding that may not be widely held within the community.
- Organisational*     Groups or organisations that "operate" a facility do not have the organisational capability to facilitate the use of the facility by different groups at different times; this may be partly due to cultural, functional or procedural factors.

**9.18. Indoor Meeting Places**

All towns have multiple indoor meeting options within 15 minutes of their TZs' driving time. The spaces included in the calculations include public halls, sporting club facilities, community centres, and senior citizen centres. These spaces vary in size, functionality, and condition. Many groups prefer to meet at local hotels or cafes, extending the options for indoor meeting spaces. These "commercial" spaces are available in all but two towns.

9.18.1. Persons/Space

All towns have access to multiple indoor meeting spaces. When the number of persons/spaces is considered, the opportunities for access to indoor meeting spaces in Small Towns are greater than those in urban centres. Table 9-31 compares the relative availability of options for indoor meeting spaces.

Table 9-31 – Supply of Indoor Meeting Spaces (Council Facilities)

	Locality Population	Number of Indoor Spaces	Persons/Space	Access to Hotels- Cafes
Mitiamo	111	10	11	Yes
Tarnagulla	153	14	11	Yes
Eddington	62	5	12	Yes
Korong Vale	143	11	13	Yes
Newbridge	169	13	13	Yes
Laanecoorie	179	12	15	No
Calivil	175	10	18	No
Serpentine	221	11	22	Yes
Dingee	195	7	28	Yes
Bridgewater	463	13	36	Yes
Inglewood	886	13	68	Yes
Pyramid Hill	598	8	75	Yes
Boort	940	12	78	Yes
Wedderburn	951	11	86	Yes

9.18.2. Future Demand for Indoor Meeting Spaces

The analysis in Table 9-31 suggests that all towns have a more than adequate number of facilities that communities and groups could use. Given the anecdotal evidence regarding the infrequent or non-use of some facilities, there is an oversupply of meeting space, particularly in small towns.

While the population is projected to increase (see Section 3.1), the analysis in the table above strongly indicates that there are more than enough indoor meeting space options. The greater challenge is providing indoor spaces consistent with contemporary needs and expectations.

**9.18.3. Contemporary Functionality**

The challenge is not the availability of indoor spaces but rather the need for spaces to meet contemporary needs instead of conforming to outdated expectations. Improving functionality may be difficult due to the age and condition of some of the spaces. Completing asset assessments of the indoor meeting spaces will help determine which ones best serve future needs and warrant ongoing investment.

**9.18.4. Level of Usage**

The facilities also vary in frequency of usage. Some spaces are highly utilised, particularly by the sporting/community groups operating from the facility—e.g., Football/Netball Clubrooms during the football/netball season. It is unknown what level of use such facilities may have outside competition seasons.

There is limited data on how often these facilities are used, by how many people, and for what purposes has yet to be collected. The anecdotal feedback provided by Council is that several public halls are utilised infrequently, if at all.

With this data, it will be easier to identify opportunities for future usage or decisions regarding the future of facilities.

**9.18.5. Accessing Facilities Outside of the Towns**

This Report acknowledges that while many facilities are available, the prevailing practice is that communities and groups are less likely to use facilities outside of the town where they reside due to a range of reasons, including:

- A lack of functionality that makes the facility not fit for purpose for use by different groups or for other events
- There is a “culture” of some individuals or groups being unwilling to use nearby facilities that are not in the location where they reside.
- A lack of awareness amongst the community of the opportunities or the availability of facilities located elsewhere
- A lack of ability of clubs or CoMs to make the facilities available at times that potential users desire and
- In some cases, an unwillingness of clubs or management committees to make the facility available for use for purposes other than what it has historically been used for or to other groups or users

**9.18.6. Impact on Community Resources**

The presence of a range of facilities with associated management committees located in communities with a small population places a strain on the capacity of those communities. The ability of these clubs or committees to maintain and “market” these facilities and generate the revenue needed is challenging in a small community.

In some cases, these clubs or committees have become dormant or ceased to operate – e.g. Korong Vale (see Section 9.11.1.) Auditing and updating the status of these clubs and committees is necessary.

Identifying models that can streamline the management and operation of facilities is necessary to reduce the burden on community resources and foster increased use.



**9.18.7. Impact on Council Resources**

The presence of Council facilities that offer overlapping functionality or facilities used infrequently (or not at all) presents a challenge to the Council's resources regarding staff time and the capital required to maintain these facilities.

A process is needed to ensure that communities have access to facilities that offer functionality consistent with contemporary requirements and that this is achieved in a manner that ensures the most effective use of Council's resources. This process would include identifying facilities that Council should prioritise for ongoing investment and others that will not be supported or closed.

**9.18.8. Asset Management**

The facilities vary in size, capacity, functionality and condition of the buildings. The Council's Asset Management Plan acknowledges that many community and recreational facilities have yet to be subject to a review of the asset's condition. This process would identify the following:

- needs of the assets about their ability to operate to current standards, and the
- feasibility of bringing a wide range of facilities up to current standards

**9.19. Recreational Facilities**

The access regime has included town communities having access to a recreational facility or space within 15 minutes of driving time of the town's TZ. As shown in Table 9-30, all towns have such access. In some cases, this accessibility is dependent on facilities in towns outside of the Loddon Shire.

**9.19.1. Future Investment in Recreation Facilities**

The report acknowledges that the population of Loddon Shire is expected to grow (see Section 3.1). However, this growth is unlikely to create a significant demand for additional recreational spaces and facilities, as all communities already have access to multiple recreation areas and facilities. It is challenging to argue for additional facilities; however, the purpose for which they are utilised may change. For instance, the increasing participation in pickleball in Australia may impact the use of some indoor facilities.

Furthermore, the Council is developing a Recreation, Open Space, and Aquatics Strategy (ROSA). This strategy will guide priorities for the future development and operation of recreational facilities.

**9.19.2. Community Capability**

The situation in Korong Vale (see Section 9.11.1) highlights that the presence of facilities does not guarantee that the community will or can use them. Future investment in such facilities needs to consider the community's capacity or willingness to operate the facilities in the town.

In turn, systems and processes that would ease the burden of running a club and operating a facility need to be investigated. Such an investigation could coincide with a review of management structures for these facilities (see Section 6.8.1)

**9.19.3. Social and Competition Play**

Communities need access to opportunities to participate in activities that support well-being. Opportunities for competitive play also attract visitors to the town. This visitation expands social interaction and allows visitors to spend money on recreation facilities and local businesses. Future investment decisions regarding recreational facilities should consider the participation of local clubs in broader competition.

## 10. Moving Forward

The following section provides a framework for future decision-making regarding social infrastructure in the Loddon Shire.

### 10.1. Key Findings

This Report has identified the following.

<b>Facilities Network</b>	All towns have a network of community facilities within 30 minutes of their respective town zones that provide residents with a range of options—this includes access to facilities and services in towns near the Loddon Shire.
<b>Indoor Meeting Spaces</b>	All towns have a wide range of potential meeting spaces available; in most cases, the number of options is likely well beyond their needs.
<b>Community Plans</b>	Community Plans have been established for each town, including references to improving facilities and services. However, the plans provide little regarding current usage patterns, opportunities for greater use, or asset conditions.
<b>Population</b>	The town populations range between 65 and 950. All towns are not likely to experience any substantive change to their respective populations in the foreseeable future; given the current supply of spaces and services, there is no basis for providing demand for additional facilities
<b>Usage of Facilities</b>	While information is collected by most CACs regarding facility usage more data is needed to identify the usage level of many facilities, particularly those capable of providing indoor meeting space.
<b>Asset Functionality</b>	The challenge for many facilities and spaces in Loddon's towns is their ability to meet contemporary demands and needs.
<b>Ageing Assets</b>	Loddon Shire Council's recreational, leisure, and community facility assets are ageing. Without adequate funding, their declining condition will result in reduced levels of service and increased risk of failure. Rationalising the range of facilities will enable increased investment in those facilities that are worthy of having their asset life extended.
<b>Asset Management</b>	Asset management plans have yet to be developed for the Council's recreational, leisure, and community facilities assets; decision-making is predominantly reactive with limited planning.
<b>Management Committees</b>	Some towns (and Localities with a population of less than 100 people) have two or more committees responsible for managing facilities and committees associated with organisations operating from those facilities. Populating and operating these committees can place a high demand on community resources in towns with small populations that are unlikely to grow in total numbers.
<b>Council Finances</b>	Council has finite financial resources that must be used for a wide range of requirements. With a range of social infrastructure options available to all towns, there is a need to determine how financial resources are best expended; this may extend to revising the current practice of funding insurance premiums and maintenance allowances for DEECA facilities.

Social Infrastructure Strategy

Future decisions regarding social infrastructure need to consider or address the above.

10.2. **Decision Making**

Decision-making regarding social infrastructure in towns needs to consider the following criteria.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Decisions need to consider -</b>
<b><i>A Network Approach</i></b>	The impact on the broader network of social infrastructure of a decision regarding a Council facility or service
<b><i>Usage</i></b>	Actual usage refers to which facilities are used, by what groups and organisations, for what purposes, and how frequently. Decisions need to consider whether recreational facilities are being used to support organised competition between clubs or groups.
<b><i>Shared Use of Facilities</i></b>	How shared use of facilities by different users can be fostered.
<b><i>Improving Existing Capability</i></b>	If improving existing capability will be of more significant benefit than undertaking any new development
<b><i>Accessibility</i></b>	The requirements for a facility to meet contemporary requirements regarding access and inclusion (As per Council Policy)
<b><i>Asset Management</i></b>	Life cycle asset management plans for the facility (As per Council Policy)
<b><i>Community Resources</i></b>	Minimising the impact on community resources associated with the management and operation of facilities in towns without increasing the impact on Council resources
<b><i>Safety</i></b>	The requirements for the safe use and operation of the facility (As per Council Policy)
<b><i>Risk</i></b>	The requirements to minimise or mitigate risks to a level that Council is willing to accept (As per Council Policy)
<b><i>Environmental Sustainability</i></b>	The requirements to reduce the footprint created by the facility and its operation (As per Council Policy)
<b><i>Financial Sustainability</i></b>	The requirements to improve long-term financial sustainability (As per Council Policy)

10.2.1. **15 minutes Catchment**

As noted earlier in this Report (see Section 9.2.1) each town has a range of options within 15 and 30-minute driving times. Given the range of options available to all towns, decision-making regarding future investment in such facilities needs to consider all of these options and identify opportunities to:

- Maximise the usage of existing assets<sup>60</sup> Establishing a baseline of current usage is necessary. As also noted in Section 9.1.2, data regarding the usage of many facilities is not collected. The Council is aware that some public halls are used infrequently, some not at all.

<sup>60</sup> Maximising usage is a stated focus in Council's current Action Plan

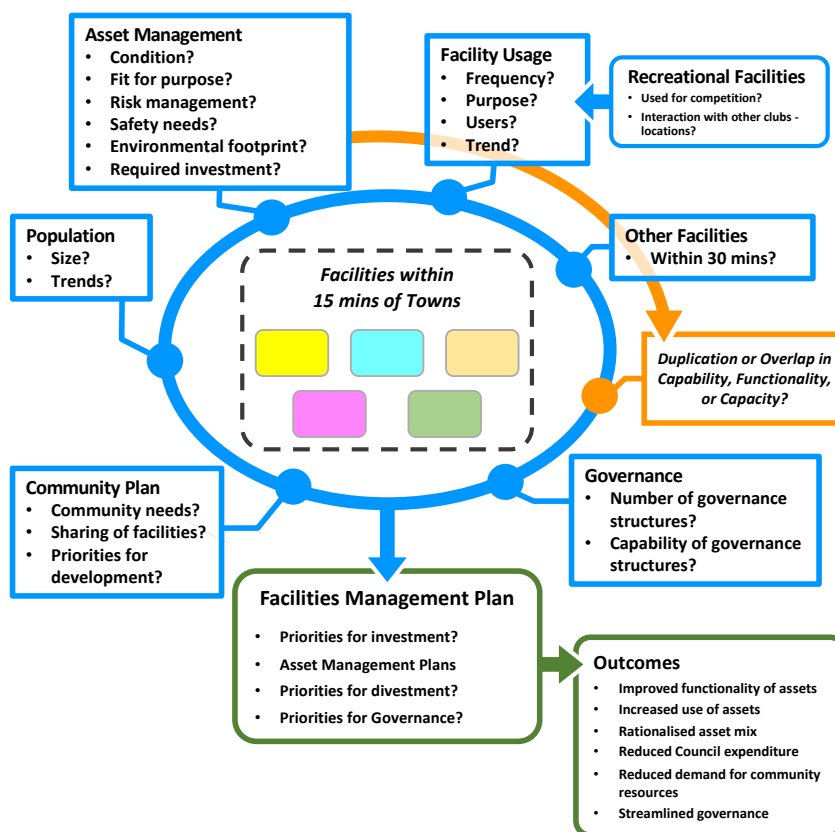
Social Infrastructure Strategy

- Opportunities for consolidation or reduction or duplicated assets so that any future investment is focused on delivering maximum benefit through improved functionality of fewer assets and reducing the burden on Council and community resources

10.3. Towns Facilities Management Plans

Given the analysis regarding the range of existing opportunities for the towns and the previous discussion in Section 9.17, this Report recommends the development of a "Facilities Management Plan" for each of the Towns that establishes priorities for existing Council facilities within 15 minutes' driving time of the Town's "Township Zone." This concept is depicted in Figure 10-1 and described in the following Sections.

Figure 10-1 - Facilities Management Planning Process



10.3.1. Inputs

The "Facilities Management Plan(s)" will draw upon:

- Needs expressed in Community Plans as well as opportunities for shared or multi-use
- Assess assessment and the subsequent Asset Management outcomes
- Usage data – including type and frequency of use
- The analysis of access to facilities provided in the Social Infrastructure Strategy

**10.3.2. Usage Maximisation and Consolidation**

The “Facilities Management Plan(s)” will investigate opportunities to:

- Maximise facility usage, including two or more groups collaborating to maximise the usage of existing facilities.
- Consolidate or reduce duplicated assets

**10.3.3. Future Investment**

The “Facilities Management Plan(s) will identify facilities that warrant future investment (from Council or other sources), including the:

- Identification of the functionality any investment in a facility aims to deliver.
- Establishment of an investment case that includes a form of cost-benefit prioritisation approved by Council.
- Prioritisation of investment in facilities that are experiencing maximum usage through the collaboration of multiple users,
- Preferred timeframe for the delivery of improvement (subject to Council approval)

**10.3.4. Divestment or Reduction of Facilities**

The “Facilities Management Plan(s) will identify the most appropriate means to reduce or divest of facilities are deemed:

- Not a priority for the future use of the town's community (or the community within the 15-minute catchment)
- To have significant challenges concerning future cost-effective asset management
- Replicate other facilities that offer greater functionality or capacity

This process may include discontinuing support for facilities under the ownership of DEECA, for which there are alternatives within 15 minutes of the driving time of those facilities.

**10.3.5. Governance**

The “Facilities Management Plan(s) would also explore opportunities to streamline the governance structures involved across the combination of facilities to reduce the call on community and Council resources.

**10.3.6. Outcomes**

The "Facilities Management Plan(s)" would support the following outcomes.

- Improved functionality of existing assets
- Increased use of existing assets
- Rationalised asset mix
- Reduced Council expenditure
- Reduced demand for community resources
- Streamlined governance processes regarding the management of community facilities

Social Infrastructure Strategy

10.4. Recommended Projects

This Report recommends the following projects to improve the capability of making long-term decisions about investing in social infrastructure for towns and Localities in the Loddon Shire.

Projects	Timeframe					
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y5+
1) Identify the implications for the need or usage of town facilities based on the ROSA, Economic Development Strategy and Visitor Economy Strategy recommendations.	■					
2) Develop a practical data collection process for the Council, "Management Committees" and users to establish actual facility usage — both frequency and type. Collect usage data	■	■	■	■	■	■
3) Complete asset assessments for all social infrastructure facilities that identify facilities that are at, or close to, end of life” and for which there are alternate spaces.	■	■	■			
4) Review the Community Planning Framework to include a focus on identifying existing facilities that provide the most appropriate and usable indoor meeting space and spaces that are infrequently used (or not used at all); this process will utilise data made available through the process developed in #2. Update Community Plans as necessary		■	■	■		
5) Develop a "Facilities Management Plan" for each town that establishes priorities for investment in or rationalisation of existing Council facilities within 15 minutes driving time of the "Township Zone" (see Section 10.3 <sup>61</sup> )				■	■	■
6) Update community profiles for towns (and the other Localities in the Shire) based on the 2026 ABS Census and identify the implications for future social infrastructure development.				■		
7) Update the network of available facilities and services available to towns <sup>62</sup>				■	■	

<sup>61</sup> At this time, it is unknown how long the development of these plans will take

<sup>62</sup> This update will consider any assets that will be discontinued based on usage and asset assessments and will underpin the development of the Facilities Management Plans

**10.4 TABLING OF PETITION - KERB AND CHANNEL IN GODFREY STREET, BOORT****File Number:****Author:** David Southcombe, Manager Assets and Infrastructure**Authoriser:** Steven Phillips, Director Operations**Attachments:** 1. **Attachment 1 - Petition - Confidential**

This attachment is designated as confidential in accordance with Section 3(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

Contains personal information of petition signatories **(under separate cover)**

2. **Attachment 2 - Report of Kerb and Channel in Godfrey St, Boort**3. **Attachment 3 - Cost estimate for proposed works**4. **Attachment 4 - Boort Streetscape Masterplan****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Receives the petition relating to kerb and channel in Godfrey Street, Boort.
2. Resolves to deal with this agenda item in accordance with section 66 of the Loddon Shire Council Governance Rules.
3. Responds to the persons forwarding the petition acknowledging their concerns, but not committing to undertaking their proposed works on the parking and kerb and channel on the north side of Godfrey Street, Boort between Lakeview Street and Station Street.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

There has been no previous Council discussion on this petition.

**BACKGROUND**

A petition has been received by Council, containing 98 signatories relating to reconstruction of kerb and channel in Godfrey Street, Boort.

The petition was submitted along with a "Report of Kerb and Channel in Godfrey Street, Boort" to Council's Manager Tourism and Economic Development at a Boort Tourism and Development Inc. meeting.

Petitions and joint letters are managed in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

A petition has been received by Council, containing 98 signatories relating to reconstruction of kerb and channel in Godfrey Street, Boort. The petition states:

*"We the undersigned hereby petition Loddon Shire Council regarding the state of the deep gutter on the north side of Godfrey Street, between Lakeview and Station Streets. The existing bluestone kerb and channel is too low and needs to be reconstructed. This will*

*provide for safer parking and easier access to and from vehicles. Reusing the bluestones is important to retain the aesthetics of the street and business area. The Committee would like to meet with Council to discuss this proposal, options and further progress.”*

The petition is attached as a confidential item due to it containing personal information of the signatories.

The document “Report of Kerb and Channel in Godfrey Street, Boort” is attached in Attachment 2.

Petitions and joint letters are considered by Council in accordance with section 66 of the Loddon Shire Council Governance Rules:

*66. Petitions and joint letters*

- (1) A member of the public may give a petition or a joint letter to a Councillor, the Chief Executive Officer or the delegated officer.*
- (2) A petition or joint letter must:*
  - (a) state the name of the person forwarding the petition or joint letter and an address to which notice of Council's response may be forwarded;*
  - (b) contain at least ten (10) signatures and include the name and address of each signatory to the petition or joint letter;*
  - (c) clearly state the request or describe the action that the Council is asked to do on each page of the petition or in the joint letter (whichever is applicable);*
  - (d) not include any statement that is offensive, defamatory or disrespectful to Council;*
  - (e) be legible;*
  - (f) not contain alterations; and*
  - (g) not have any letters or other documents attached to it.*
- (3) A petition or joint letter that complies with Sub-Rule (2) must be tabled at a scheduled Council meeting at the first reasonable opportunity.*
- (4) A petition or joint letter may be tabled by any Councillor or by the Chief Executive Officer. It does not have to be tabled by the person to whom it was given.*
- (5) A petition or joint letter tabled at a Council meeting must lay on the table until the next scheduled meeting of the Council and no motion, other than to receive the petition or joint letter may be accepted by the Chairperson unless the Council resolves to deal with it earlier.*

Loddon Shire Council is responsible for a large asset base that includes over 4,700km of road and 62km of kerb and channel. The age of Council’s assets ranges from newly constructed to assets installed over 100 years ago. Council assets are constructed to the standards prevailing at the time. Historically, roads and associated kerb and channel were constructed with steeper cambers and higher kerbs. This was undertaken to allow the kerbs to convey more water as underground drainage systems were not as prevalent as today.

Godfrey Street in Boort is a road where the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) is the responsible road authority. However, the Road Management Act 2004’s Code of Practice for Operational Responsibility for Public Roads delegates some sections of the parking and kerb of this road to Council. On urban DTP roads such as Godfrey Street, the DTP has responsibility for any part of the roadway located ‘kerb to kerb’ that could be made available for through traffic including areas of the roadway used for parking, but excludes isolated parking areas of lengths less than 200 metres located between kerb outstands or other physical obstruction (e.g. trees). The parking referenced by the petition is less than 200m between outstands so is the responsibility of Council.



The “Report of Kerb and Channel in Godfrey Street, Boort” provides greater detail on community concerns outlined by the petition, the opening paragraph is as follows:

*“The bluestone kerb and channel on the north side of Godfrey Street, between Lakeview and Station Streets, has been a problem for decades. The kerb is too high and this makes it difficult to open car passenger side doors.*

*This was accentuated in 2012, when VicRoads re-surfaced Godfrey Street with two layers of asphalt raising the road by 75-100mm.”*

*The resurfacing was carried out on the two traffic lanes and tapered to the gutter across the parking bays. This greatly increased the camber across the parking bays to such an extent, that it is now difficult to open the driver’s side door without it falling back. The situation with the passenger side door is now worse.”*

The bluestone kerb exists in total on Godfrey Street between the railway crossing and Lakeview Street. The difficulty mentioned by the petition in opening car doors is partially mitigated in other sections of parking on Godfrey Street where angle parking is present. High kerbing beside parking is not isolated only to Boort, other Loddon Shire towns have high kerbs in some locations, most notably this includes Main Street (Calder Hwy), Bridgewater.

The Boort Community Plan 2022 – 2031 identifies the Boort Streetscape Project as their second highest priority. The highest priority is the Little Lake Boort Recreation Precinct project which Council is currently progressing. The Boort Streetscape Project Masterplan Item 6 (refer Attachment 4) directly addresses the content of the petition. The scope of Item 6 includes kerb and channel regrading on the north and south side of Godfrey Street between Station and Lakeview Streets.

## **COST/BENEFITS**

There are no costs associated with Council’s consideration of this petition.

Council’s Project Design Engineer evaluated the works proposed by the petition, with a high level budget estimate to undertake the works being \$259,325. Please see Attachment 3 for details of the estimate. This project is not included in Council’s Annual Infrastructure Program of works for 2024-2025 and no funding has been identified in Council’s 2024-2025 Budget.

If the project is undertaken by Council as detailed in the petition, vehicle ingress/egress at the location would be improved. This project would need to be funded in priority over other projects within Council’s rolling program, including renewal projects. If it was to be funded it would require additional allocation of funding to the 2024-2025 Annual Infrastructure Program or the removal of a project(s) to the equivalent financial and in-kind (project management) value. Council currently has an annual renewal gap of \$2,200,000 million as detailed in the Asset Plan 2022.

Alternative parking on Godfrey Street is available that can be used in preference to the parking mentioned in the petition. Between Station and Lakeview Streets on the south side there are an additional 32 carparks available outside of the 19 on the north side that are related to the petition. Furthermore there is ample parking available in surrounding streets.

## **RISK ANALYSIS**

Consideration of this petition is being managed in accordance with Council’s Governance Rules.

The Boort Streetscape Project Masterplan Item 6 is “kerb and footpath (re-grading) upgrade to Godfrey Street”. This item addresses the section of parking and adjacent kerb mentioned in the petition. Undertaking the works proposed by the petition in isolation of the full streetscape project presents some risk. There is the potential for full or partial rework of the works once a detailed design is completed on an eventual Boort Streetscape Project.

As outlined in the “Report of Kerb and Channel in Godfrey Street, Boort”, the high kerb on Godfrey Street “has been a problem for decades”. Similarly, high kerb is also present on Main Street (Calder Hwy), Bridgewater adjacent the parallel parking. This is not a new issue or one that is isolated to Godfrey Street, Boort.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Council received a petition from the Boort Tourism Development Inc. The petition has been discussed by Council officers from the Operations, Community Wellbeing, and Executive directorates.



**Boort Tourism and Development Inc.**

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# **Report of Kerb and Channel in Godfrey Street, Boort**

**June 2024**

## Contents

1. Report.
  2. Attachments-
    - a. email to Vicroads requesting responsibility for works.
    - b. Reply from Vicroads including extract from Victoria Government Gazette, dated: 17 December 2004.
    - c. Updated extract, obtained by Council, from Victoria Government Gazette dated: 30 May 2017.
    - d. Aerial photograph showing location of proposed works.
    - e. Typical cross-section of proposed works.
    - f. Photographs of existing and proposed K&C.
    - g. Report in Loddon-Herald on 15 June 2023.
    - h. Petition sheet.
-

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### **Report on Kerb and Channel in Godfrey Street, Boort.**

The bluestone kerb and channel on the north side of Godfrey Street, between Lakeview and Station Streets, has been a problem for decades. The kerb is too high and this makes it difficult to open car passenger side doors.

This was accentuated in 2012, when Vicroads resurfaced Godfrey Street with two layers of asphalt raising the road by 75-100mm.

This resurfacing was carried out on the two traffic lanes and tapered to the gutter across the parking bays. This greatly increased the camber across the parking bays to such an extent, that it is now difficult to open the driver's side door without it falling back. The situation with the passenger side door is now worse.

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At this time, in 2012, this issue was discussed with Council and Vicroads. Council approached Vicroads to rectify this problem but Vicroads denied any responsibility for the works required. Unfortunately, as Council was not willing to fund these works the issue was not dealt with.

It is now time to address this issue and rectify the problem and a petition has been prepared to gauge public support. This petition has been signed by 98 signatories and can be presented to Council.

These works can be carried out quite simply by reconstructing the kerb and channel, reusing the existing bluestones. Reusing the bluestones will also maintain the aesthetics of the street, which is very important.

The length of kerb and channel to be reconstructed is 167m plus some relaying of the open gutter in the car park at the west end. Some work will also need to be carried out in reshaping part of this parking area. Four invert crossings for vehicular access to properties and one or two pedestrian crossings are required. (see detailed cross-section attached) Asphalt fill will be required in the parking bay area to provide a flatter fall to the new bluestone kerb and channel level.

If these works are carried out it will assist the ease of parking, access to and from vehicles and effectively make Godfrey Street a little wider and safer.

It is important that Council fund these works as they are identified as a considerable issue and hazard by the residents of Boort and district and it is obvious that Vicroads will not provide any funding.

*Barry Kennedy*

Report by,  
Barry Kennedy, CP Eng, Grad. Dip. ME,  
Treasurer, Boort Tourism and Development Inc.

Attachments a+b  
(5 pages)

**Barry Kennedy**

---

**From:** Mike.Perry@roads.vic.gov.au  
**Sent:** Monday, 3 September 2012 3:18 PM  
**To:** Barry Kennedy  
**Subject:** Re: Godfrey Street, Boort

Thanks Barry,

I have created an "Enquiry" with the reference number 500485606. It has been directed to the Manager Program Development at this stage for action.

Regards

Mike Perry  
VicRoads Northern Region  
53-61 Lansell St  
East Bendigo Victoria 3550

Phone 03 5434 5000

**From:** "Barry Kennedy" [REDACTED]  
**To:** <mike.perry@roads.vic.gov.au>  
**Date:** 03/09/2012 02:52 PM  
**Subject:** Godfrey Street, Boort

**Ext:** Business Area:  
**Fax:** Internet:  
**File Name:** File Description:  
This email is from an external source. If it is a Business Record remember to file it in QuickDocs

Email sent

Mike,

Attached is a photo and a cross section of Godfrey Street, north side, opposite the shopping precinct.

The local "Development Committee" are concerned with the crossfall on the parking bays that,

- make it difficult to open the passenger door due to gutter depth and grass build-up
- make it difficult to open the driver's door as it wants to close due to the crossfall.

We want to know who is responsible for the parking bays and kerb and channel. Council have indicated it is Vicroads responsibility to back of kerb.

---

Could you please clarify this matter so that progress can be made towards resolving this issue.

Regards

Barry

[attachment "SAM\_3794.JPG" deleted by Mike Perry/VicRoads] [attachment "Godfrey St K&C 001.jpg" deleted by Mike Perry/VicRoads]

DISCLAIMER

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**Barry Kennedy**

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**From:** Brian.Hogan@roads.vic.gov.au  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 September 2012 5:36 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Mike.Perry@roads.vic.gov.au  
**Subject:** Fw: Godfrey Street, Boort  
**Attachments:** RMA 2004 CofP Operational Responsibility for Public Roads.pdf

Hi Barry,

As discussed I have attached a copy of the RMA 2004 Operational Responsibility of Public Roads for your information.

Please refer to Section 10. (1) (a) Note 1.

The section of Godfrey St between the kerb outstand near the School Crossing and the kerb outstand near the Commercial Hotel is less than 200m.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss the above.

**Regards**

**Brian Hogan**  
Asset Manager  
Northern Region  
**VicRoads**  
57 Lansell Street, East Bendigo, 3550  
T 03 5434 5040  
F 03 5434 5003

E [brian.hogan@roads.vic.gov.au](mailto:brian.hogan@roads.vic.gov.au)  
W [vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://vicroads.vic.gov.au)

From: "Barry Kennedy" [REDACTED]  
To: <mike.perry@roads.vic.gov.au>  
Date: 03/09/2012 02:52 PM  
Subject: Godfrey Street, Boort

Ext: Business Area:  
Fax: Internet:  
File Name: File Description:  
This email is from an external source. If it is a Business Record remember to file it in QuickDocs

Mike,

Attached is a photo and a cross section of Godfrey Street, north side, opposite the shopping precinct.



- (b) slip lanes, acceleration and deceleration lanes, and roadway areas where detector loops are installed;
  - (c) any traffic or splitter islands on municipal roads up to the limits shown on the drawings, where such traffic or splitter islands contribute to the operation of the intersection and not for the purpose of separating traffic for an extended length along the municipal road;
  - (d) any signs (eg. Statcon, traffic direction signs) that control the movement of traffic to and from the arterial road, being located on either the arterial road or intersecting municipal road;
  - (e) advance direction signs on the municipal road, and any advance warning signs on the municipal road that are directly related to the operation of the intersection with the arterial road;
  - (f) road markings, including painted chevrons (or painted islands) on the municipal road, that control the movement of traffic to and from the arterial road;
  - (g) Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs) in central medians, and splitter islands;
  - (h) all kerb and channel within the defined limits of VicRoads responsibility; and
  - (i) pathways across a central median, traffic or splitter islands within the intersection within the 'kerb to kerb' limits of the intersection.
- (3) **Council performs the functions of a responsible road authority** with respect to the municipal road up to the limits of VicRoads' responsibility shown in Figures 1 and 2, with the exception of the road infrastructure specified in sub-clause (2) above.

Note: Traffic signals at the intersection of two municipal roads that are linked to the VicRoads coordinated traffic signals system (SCATS) are maintained by VicRoads at Council cost, unless otherwise agreed between VicRoads and a Council.

#### 10. Urban Area – Between Intersections

- (1) **VicRoads performs the functions of a responsible road authority** with respect to all parts of the arterial road and all road infrastructure (wherever located) that is provided for the operation of through traffic on the arterial road, as generally shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5, including –
- (a) any part of the roadway located 'kerb to kerb' that could be made available for through traffic (including acceleration and deceleration lanes) (refer Note 1 below);
  - (b) shoulders (sealed or unsealed) where there is no formal designated parking;
  - (c) on-road bicycle lanes;
  - (d) kerb and channel, or table drains, adjacent to any part of the roadway that could be made available for through traffic (refer Note 2 below);
  - (e) drainage pits and underground drainage collecting runoff from through carriageways and associated junction pits in medians, outer separators and through carriageways;
  - (f) all road markings on the through carriageways (but excluding parking bays);
  - (g) traffic safety barriers where the traffic safety barriers are for the safety and protection of through traffic;

Victoria Government Gazette

S 267 17 December 2004 11

- (m) TGSIs in footpaths and kerb ramps and at bus stops (except at central medians); and
- (n) assets on central medians that are owned by the Council.

Notes:

1. *Parking* – VicRoads' responsibility for any part of the roadway located 'kerb to kerb' that could be made available for through traffic includes areas of the roadway used for parking, but excludes isolated parking areas of lengths less than 200 metres located between kerb outstands extending onto, or trees located within, the roadway (distances less than 200 metres are considered to be of limited use for through traffic).
2. *Table drains* – where there is no clearly defined table drain adjacent to the roadway, the limits of VicRoads responsibility may include either:
  - (a) a cleared verge area to a maximum width of 3 metres from:
    - (i) the edge of a constructed shoulder; or
    - (ii) the edge of the roadway (eg. seal) where there is no constructed shoulder; or
  - (b) an area up to 3 metres behind any guide posts, or to the edge of any Council owned infrastructure (eg. footpath) or trees if the distance is less than 3 metres.
3. *Outer separators and roadside* –
  - (a) Subject to any arrangement of the type entered into in paragraph (b), Council is the responsible road authority with respect to the outer separator and roadside.
  - (b) VicRoads and Council may enter into an arrangement for the transfer of responsibility for certain road-related infrastructure within the outer separator or roadside, where that infrastructure is clearly required to support or protect the structural integrity of the adjacent through carriageways of the arterial road.

**Example:**

VicRoads and a Council may enter into an arrangement for the transfer to VicRoads of road management functions with respect to retaining walls, road embankments or cuttings where a retaining wall, road embankment or cutting:

  - (i) exceeds 1.5 metres in height; or
  - (ii) exceeds a slope of 1 in 2; or
  - (iii) extends over a substantial length and prohibits direct access from adjacent residential areas; or
  - (iv) is best maintained by VicRoads from the arterial road for safety, traffic operation or access reasons.
4. *Roadside* – VicRoads may consider requests from Councils for a transfer to VicRoads of road management functions with respect to the roadside within an urban area where substantial lengths of roadside (eg. continuous lengths of roadside greater than 1 kilometre) have adjacent residential areas that back onto the road (with no direct access) and where it is considered that the roadside principally performs an arterial (rather than a community) function.
5. *Driveways* – The Act provides that a road authority is not liable for private driveways and pathways on road reserves that provide access to land adjoining a road. This is consistent with the general principle in the Act that the owner of an asset is responsible for the condition and maintenance of that asset. This does not, however, prevent the responsible road authority from imposing conditions on the construction of the driveway.

Attachment c.  
(2 pages)

Victoria Government Gazette

S 174

30 May 2017

21

**10. Urban Area – Between Intersections**

(1) **VicRoads performs the functions of a responsible road authority** with respect to all parts of the arterial road and all road infrastructure (wherever located) that is provided for the operation of through traffic on the arterial road, as generally shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5, including –

- (a) any part of the roadway located 'kerb to kerb' that could be made available for through traffic (including acceleration and deceleration lanes) (refer Note 1 below);
- (b) shoulders (sealed or unsealed) where there is no formal designated parking;
- (c) on-road bicycle lanes;
- (d) kerb and channel, or table drains, adjacent to any part of the roadway that could be made available for through traffic (refer Note 2 below);
- (e) drainage pits and underground drainage collecting runoff from the through roadway and associated junction pits in medians, outer separators and the through roadway (subject to clause 15: Drainage of this Code);
- (f) all road markings on the through roadways, including for pedestrian crossings, but excluding parking bays and children's crossings (but including any yellow safety lines within a central median at a children's crossing);
- (g) traffic safety barriers where the traffic safety barriers are for the safety and protection of through traffic (subject to clause 47 of this Code as it applies to arterial roads with tramlines);
- (h) traffic signs and delineation provided for the control and guidance of traffic travelling along, or entering, the through roadways of the arterial road (whether located in either the central median, outer separator or roadside), including traffic signs and delineation that relate to the operation of on-road bicycle lanes;
- (i) standalone Clearway and End Clearway signs and associated tow-away sign plates;
- (j) central medians and any VicRoads infrastructure or vegetation thereon, including pedestrian fencing, Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs) and pathways across the central median (refer Figure 5);
- (k) all traffic signals and electronic traffic signs, including variable speed signs, and other on-road electrical assets for traffic management on the arterial road;
- (l) pedestrian crossings;
- (m) any ancillary area designated for the arterial road by VicRoads, as the coordinating road authority; and
- (n) public transport related infrastructure as detailed in Part 5 of this Code.

(2) **VicRoads does not perform the functions of a responsible road authority** with respect to –

- (a) certain safety barrier systems used at tram safety zones and platform tram stops as set out in clause 47 of this Code; and
- (b) assets on central medians which are owned by bodies other than VicRoads (eg. community facilities installed thereon by a council).

*Note:* Further details regarding street lighting and public transport facilities are covered in clauses 16 to 17 and Part 5 respectively of this Code.

(3) **Council performs the functions of a responsible road authority** with respect to the parts of the arterial road, and road infrastructure located in, on, over or under those parts of the arterial road, generally shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5, being –



- (a) service road traffic lanes, kerb and channel and shoulders;
- (b) pathways outside of the 'kerb to kerb' limits of the through roadway, and longitudinal pathways located along a central median (refer also item (o) below in this clause);
- (c) indented parking bays, and any other part of the roadway located 'kerb to kerb' that could not be made available for through traffic (being located either on the side of the road, in the outer separator or in the central median), and adjacent kerb and channel (refer Note 1 below);
- (d) drainage pits and underground drainage outside of the through roadway or outer separators and underground drainage that is part of a municipal drainage scheme (refer also to clause 15: Drainage);
- (e) off-road bicycle paths within the road reserve;
- (f) public transport related infrastructure as detailed in Part 5 of this Code;
- (g) road markings for all parking bays, plus road markings on service roads;
- (h) outer separators and roadside, including any Council infrastructure or vegetation thereon (refer Notes 2, 3, 4 and 5 below);
- (i) nature strips, including vegetation;
- (j) street name blades, direction signs for pedestrians and direction signs for cyclists on off-road bicycle paths within the roadside;
- (k) parking control signs (as defined in the Road Safety Road Rules 2009), but excluding standalone Clearway and End Clearway signs and associated tow-away sign plates;
- (l) pedestrian fencing, excluding where located on central medians;
- (m) children's crossings, including advance warning signs and crossing signs, road markings and pedestrian fencing located on the roadside (but excluding the roadway pavement);
- (n) Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs) in footpaths and kerb ramps (except those TGSIs specified in clause 10(1)(j)); and
- (o) infrastructure on central medians that is owned by the Council, including any pathways on central medians that provide access to that infrastructure.

**Notes:**

1. **Parking** – VicRoads responsibility for any part of the roadway located 'kerb to kerb' that could be made available for through traffic includes areas of the roadway used for parking, but excludes isolated parking areas of lengths less than 200 metres located between kerb outstands or other permanent physical obstructions extending onto, or trees or other permanent physical obstructions located within, the roadway (distances less than 200 metres are considered to be of limited use for through traffic). These isolated parts of the roadway (including adjacent kerb and channel, together with associated drainage pits and piped drainage lines in accordance with clause 15 of this Code) not available for through traffic are the responsibility of Council in accordance with section 37(1)(b)(ii) of the Act.

Council is also responsible for areas of widened roadway that are extended significantly beyond that reasonably required for the operation of through traffic and are used principally for parking purposes (refer Figure 4 – Road Type 3A of this Code).

2. **Table drains** –

- (a) where there is no clearly defined table drain adjacent to the roadway within an urban area, the limits of VicRoads responsibility may include either:
  - (i) a cleared verge area to a maximum width of 3 metres from:
    - the edge of a constructed shoulder; or
    - the edge of the roadway (eg. seal) where there is no constructed shoulder; or
  - (ii) an area up to 3 metres behind any guide posts, or to the edge of any Council owned infrastructure (eg. footpath) or trees if the distance is less than 3 metres.











Top: Existing Godfrey Street K&C. Bottom: Proposed profile and vehicular crossing.



Loddon HERALD Thursday June 15, 2023

# Camber danger concern

BOORT Tourism and Development wants to enlist support from Loddon Shire to fix a Godfrey Street safety problem building for two decades.

The group has started a community petition as it looks for solutions to the street's accentuated camber from Department of Transport adding layers of bitumen on the surface.

Barry Kennedy said the last resealing 10 years ago had raised the road another 100mm, creating a severe slope to north side gutters.

"You cannot park legally and open or close the passenger side doors," he said.

"We have a problem and we want it fixed," he said.

Mr Kennedy and Barry Barnes have been among the first to sign the petition.

"There's a huge drop on this side of the street. My mother once fell trying to get out and injured her ankle," Mr Barnes said.

They are proposing that the north-side channel of Godfrey Street be raised 200mm and historic bluestone pavers be used for a new kerb 100mm higher.

"That way we can keep the aesthetics of the street," Mr Kennedy said.

"The existing bluestone kerb and channel is too low and needs to be reconstructed.

"This will provide safer parking and easier access to and from vehicles.

Reusing the bluestone is important to the aesthetics of the street and the business area," Mr Ken-



Godfrey Street camber. LH PHOTO

Barry Barnes and Barry Kennedy are looking for solutions to the steep street," Mr Kennedy said. "And while this is something that could be discussed when looking at the next community plan, for the safety of people we would like to start talking about solutions now."

Mr Barnes and Mr Kennedy said the town's tourism and development committee hoped to lock in solutions for improved safety work between Lakeview and Station Streets with support of council.





# ATTACHMENT 3

## PROJECT ESTIMATE TEMPLATE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Street works on North side of Godfrey Street Boort

PREPARED BY: Project Design Engineer

DATE PREPARED: 2nd August 2024

LOCATION OF PROJECT: Godfrey Street Boort (North side between Lake View Street and Station Street)

SCOPE OF PROJECT: Lift cobble stone blocks, install layer of asphalt to marry in with inverts, re-establish nature strip cobble, alter kerbing, alter driveways, pedestrian access and re-linemark parking bays

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Description of Work</i>	<i>Estimated Quantity</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Rate \$</i>
1	Survey and data establishment	2	Day	2200
2	Design	1	Item	5000
3	Procurement process	1	Item	5000
4	Site establishment	1	Item	12000
5	Identification and location of services	1	Item	4000
6	Set out of works	1	Item	2500
7	Traffic management	1	Item	15000
8	Remove existing cobbles and kerb on west end	185	m	22500
9	Install bedding for raising of cobbles and kerb on west end	370	m2	50
10	Install cobbles (167 x 600mm wide)	105	m2	538
12	Install new kerbing on west end	18	m	250
13	Provide asphalt regulation layer (185 x 2.4m Approx)	452	m2	100
14	Repairs to irrigation (plumber x 2 day)	2	days	1500
15	Repair to nature strip (185 x 1.2m) Place, level topsoil and sow	230	m2	21.8
16	Modification to Driveways	4	No.	1500
17	Modification to Pedestrian Crossings	3	No.	1000
18	Linemarking of parking bays	1	Item	4000
	Sub-total			
	20 % contingency			
	Total Project Cost			

to match

<b>Extended Amount \$</b>
\$4,400.00
\$5,000.00
\$5,000.00
\$12,000.00
\$4,000.00
\$2,500.00
\$15,000.00
\$22,500.00
\$18,500.00
\$56,490.00
\$4,500.00
\$45,200.00
\$3,000.00
\$5,014.00
\$6,000.00
\$3,000.00
\$4,000.00
\$216,104.00
\$43,220.80
<u>\$259,324.80</u>

# BOORT STREETSCAPE MASTERPLAN

## *Preamble*

*Boort's town centre embodies civic pride in its buildings and its public places. Proposed streetscape works build on this while connecting some of the physical impediments that have happened over time. Other measures to better connect the town centre with the lake, recognise this relationship as vital to the long term prosperity of Boort.*

## *Project aspirations*

*Reliable pedestrian networks for all ages and abilities.*

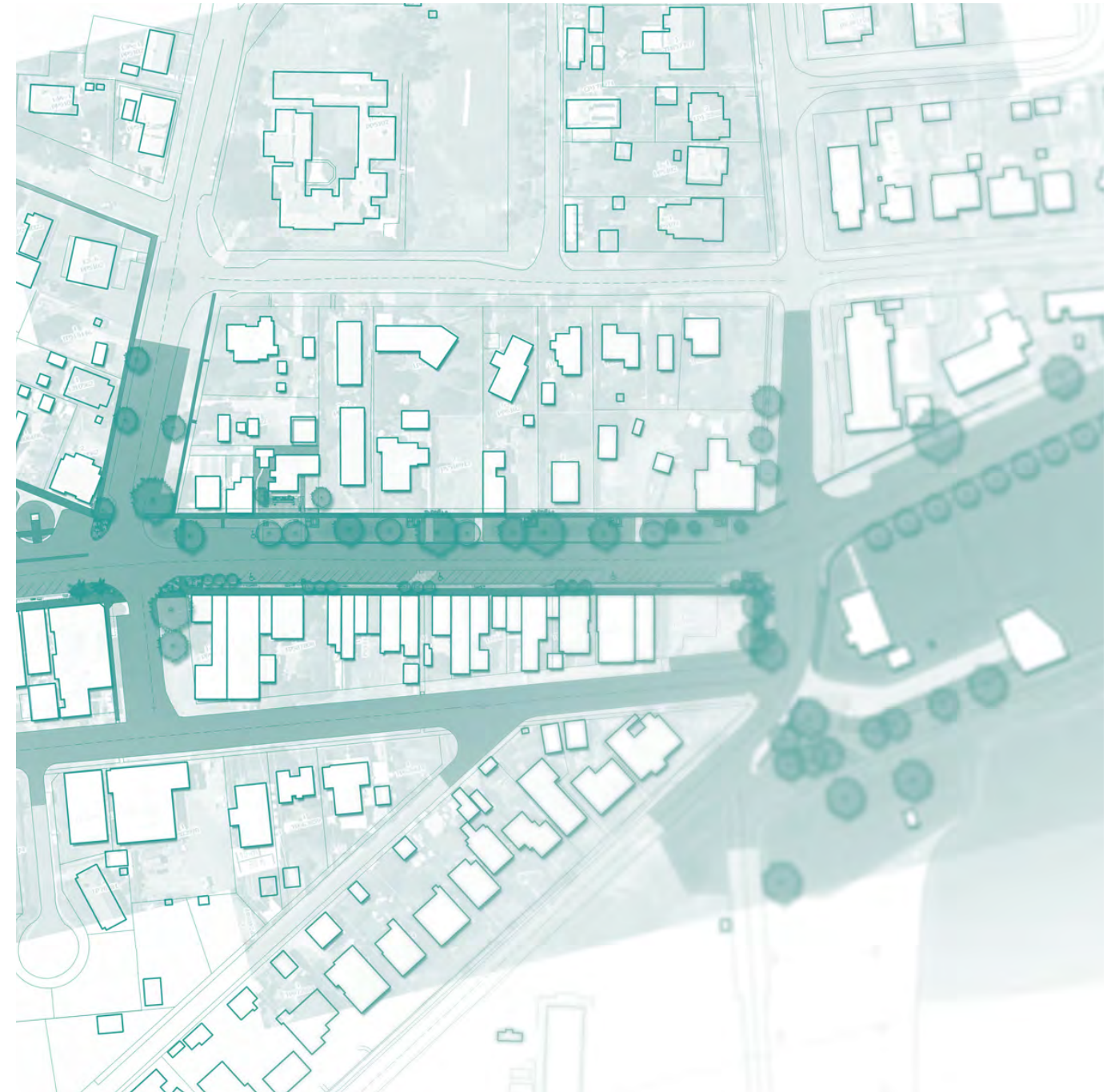
*Visual sense of the 'town centre' through recognisable tree planting hierarchy and other landscape measures.*

*Holistic Approach to landscaping renewal in the town centre.*

*Connections between key public open spaces favouring pedestrian and bicycle users.*

*Range of quality public places in and around existing buildings.*

*Build on Boort's landscape assets in the town centre, namely the retail promenade (southern side) and the linear park (northern side).*





MASTERPLAN DESIGN RESPONSE

MASTERPLAN STATEMENT

Boort has a well laid out, compact and pleasant town centre and the proposals aim to enhance this character through a number of subtle measures,

Correcting footpath and kerb level issues provides an opportunity to make the pedestrian experience one that is legible and easy to navigate for walkers, riders and those less able. This approach also supports the other key direction, that of connecting the town's trading precinct with the lake.

Key Concepts

- Street tree planting at key town centre approaches
- Correction of cross falls to southern footpath edge
- Correction of high kerb to northern gutter
- Small scale trees to southern footpath for shade provision
- Improved pedestrian amenity and navigation
- Greater connection between town centre and lake

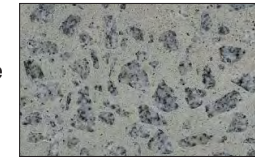
MATERIALS PALETTE

The palette for Boort references the geology of the region and the lake surrounds. It includes some of the materials and approaches already present in the town centre already.

Materials have been selected to be locally sourced where practical

SURFACES

EXPOSED AGGREGATE CONCRETE  
With grey granite aggregate

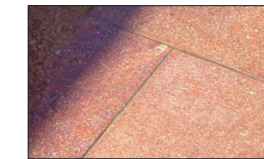


Standard

UNIT PAVERS  
Sandy toned granite pavers



Stone

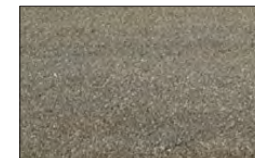


Contrasting red granite pavers as feature

ASPHALT



BITUMEN SPRAY SEAL  
Over existing compacted surface



COMPACTED GRAVEL



LOOSE GRAVEL



MATERIAL DETAILS



INLAY  
Used where contrasting materials meet

- Concrete
- Asphalt
- Gravel

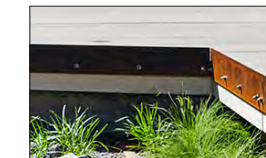


RAISED EDGING  
Used where garden beds meet pavements



OILED TIMBER

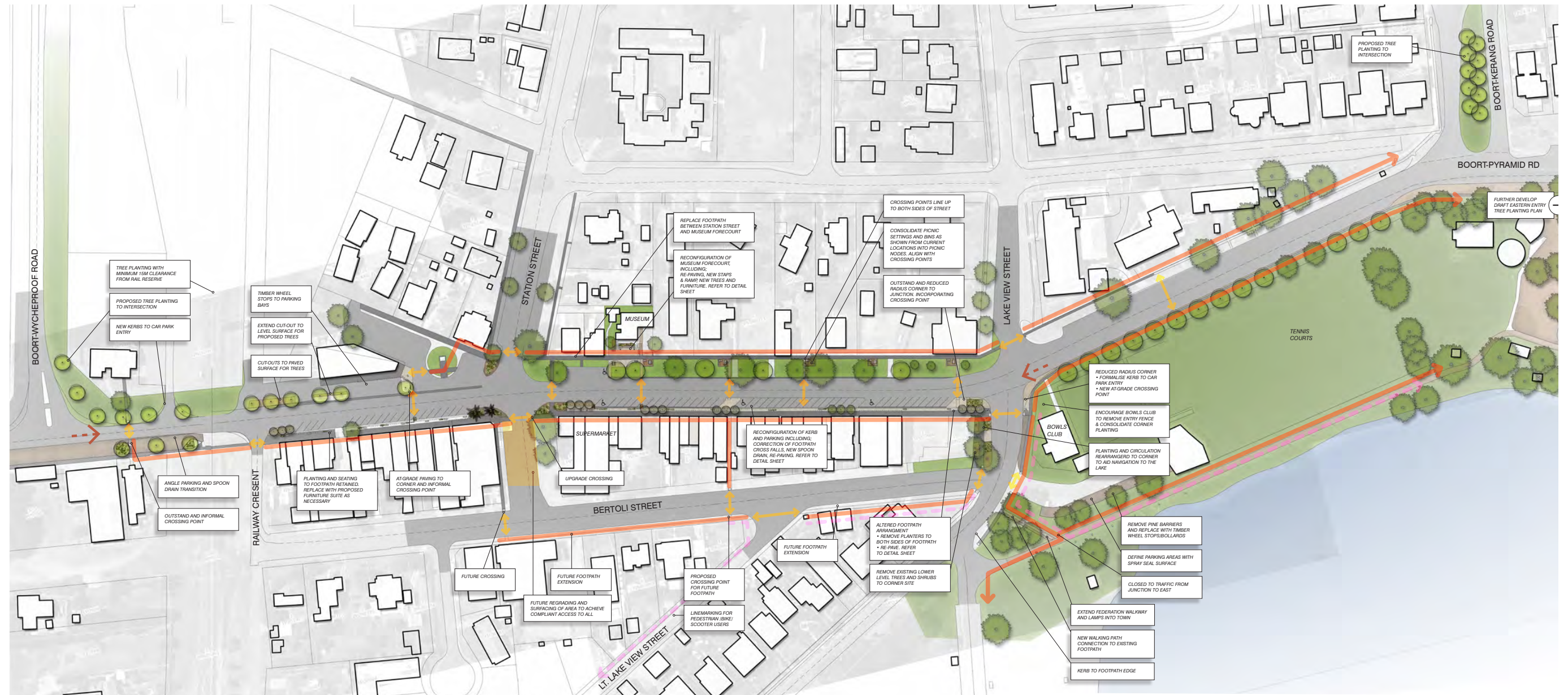
- Decks
- Kerb bridges



CORTEN STEEL



CONCEPT OVERLAY



LEGEND

	Stone pavers		Asphalt road surface		Picnic setting		Street tree planting		Grassed area
	Exposed aggregate concrete		Bitumen spray seal surface		Bench seat & raised planter		Existing tree		Garden bed in mulch
	Asphalt footpath		Bike Hoop & bollards		Street tree planting - small group		Compacted gravel		
	Timber decking		Street lamp						

CONCEPTS

Graphic overlays as previously presented at concept level

- Pedestrian network
- Crossing point
- Cycling and wheeled personal transport network
- Key traffic slowing points



ABOUT TOWN

LODDON SHIRE STREETScape MASTERPLANS  
Masterplan Proposals May 2016

DRAFT  
FOR COMMENT

BOORT





MASTERPLAN OVERVIEW



LEGEND

	Stone pavers		Asphalt road surface		Picnic setting		Street tree planting		Grassed area
	Exposed aggregate concrete		Bitumen spray seal surface		Bench seat & raised planter		Existing tree		Garden bed in mulch
	Asphalt footpath				Bike Hoop & bollards		Street tree planting - small group		Compacted gravel
	Timber decking				Street lamp				

**Botanic Specimen Park**  
*Bismarckia nobilis* (Bismarck Palm)  
*Brachycton rupestris* (Queensland Bottle Tree)  
*Cedrus atlantica* (Atlas Cedar)  
*Cedrus deodara* (Deodar Cedar)  
*Cedrus libani* (Lebanon Cedar)

**Town Entries**  
*Corymbia citriodora* (Lemon Scented Gum)  
*Eucalyptus tricarpa* (Red Ironbark)  
*Fraxinus griffithii* (Evergreen Ash)  
*Ulmus parvifolia* (Chinese Elm)

**Secondary Streets**  
*Acacia pendula* (Weeping Myall)  
*Acacia salicina* (Broughton Willow)  
*Acacia stenophylla* (River Cooba)  
*Jacaranda mimosifolia* (Jacaranda)



ABOUT TOWN

LODDON SHIRE STREETScape MASTERPLANS  
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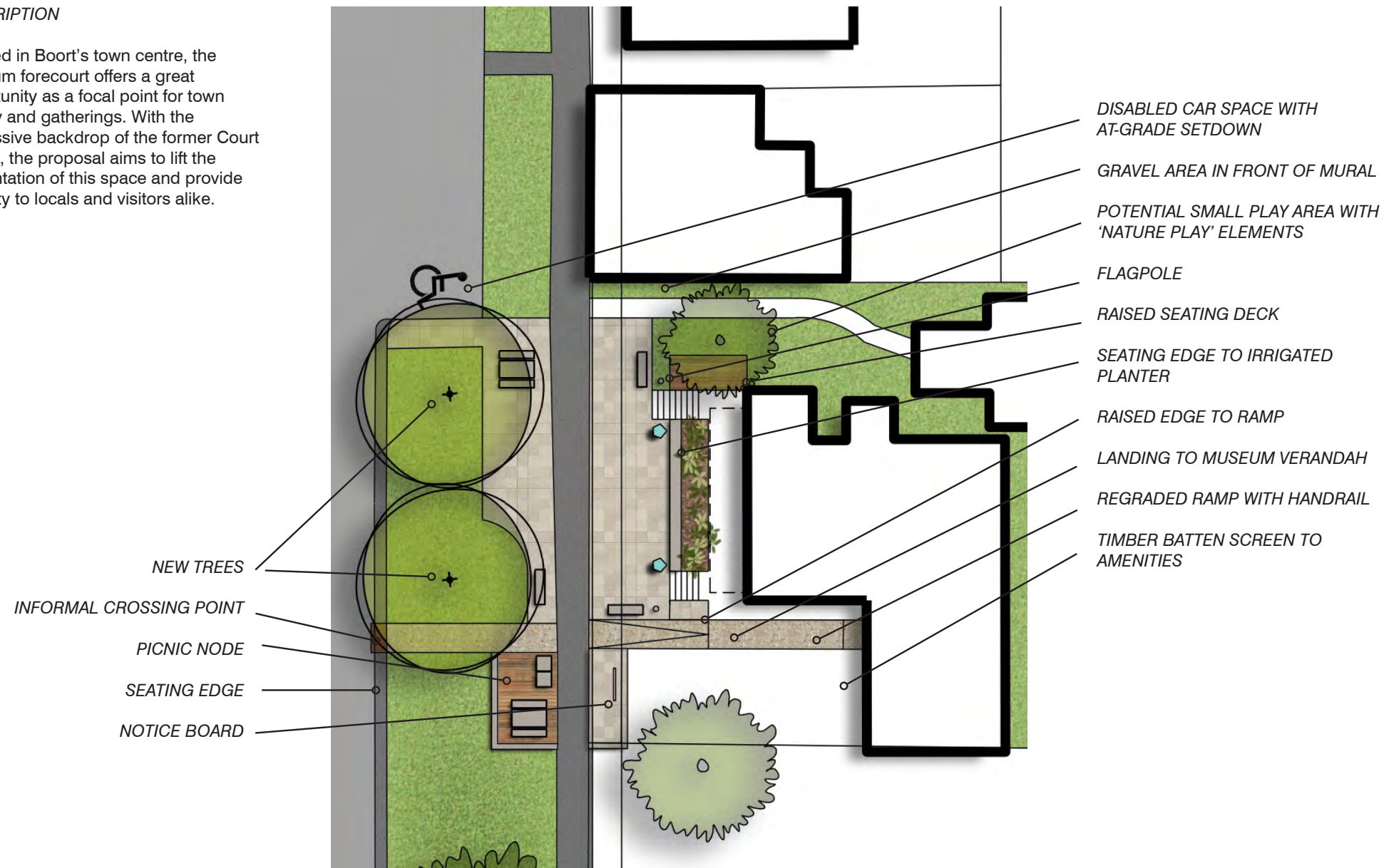




MUSEUM FORECOURT  
RECONFIGURATION

DESCRIPTION

Located in Boort's town centre, the Museum forecourt offers a great opportunity as a focal point for town activity and gatherings. With the impressive backdrop of the former Court House, the proposal aims to lift the presentation of this space and provide amenity to locals and visitors alike.

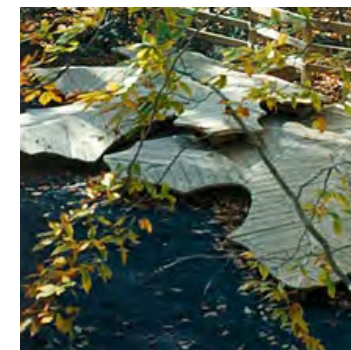


- DISABLED CAR SPACE WITH AT-GRADE SETDOWN
- GRAVEL AREA IN FRONT OF MURAL
- POTENTIAL SMALL PLAY AREA WITH 'NATURE PLAY' ELEMENTS
- FLAGPOLE
- RAISED SEATING DECK
- SEATING EDGE TO IRRIGATED PLANTER
- RAISED EDGE TO RAMP
- LANDING TO MUSEUM VERANDAH
- REGRADED RAMP WITH HANDRAIL
- TIMBER BATTEN SCREEN TO AMENITIES

- NEW TREES
- INFORMAL CROSSING POINT
- PICNIC NODE
- SEATING EDGE
- NOTICE BOARD



SHADE TREES TO FORECOURT



DECK WITH NATURE PLAY ELEMENT



STORIES INTEGRATED TINO SEATING AND PAVING



ABOUT TOWN

LODDON SHIRE STREETScape MASTERPLANS  
Masterplan Proposals May 2016

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BOORT

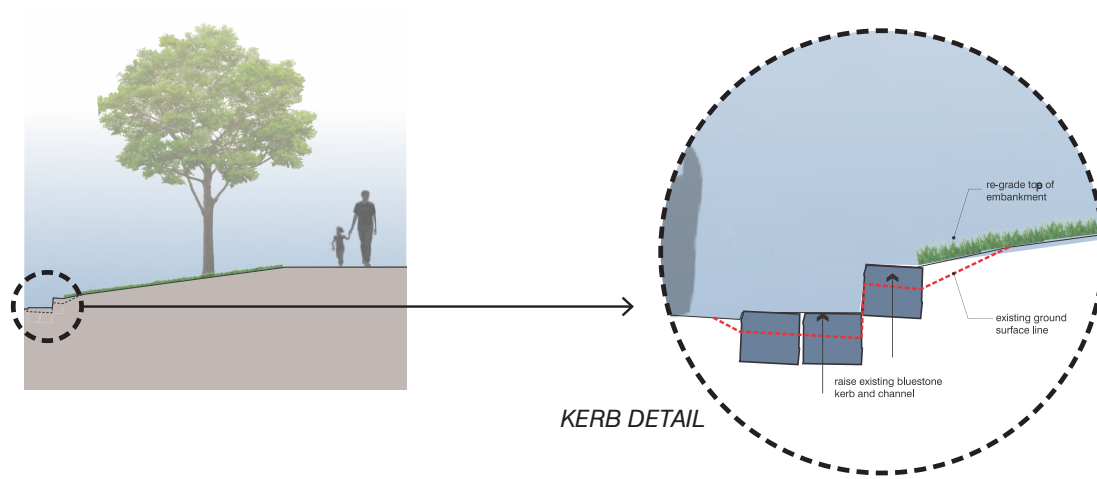
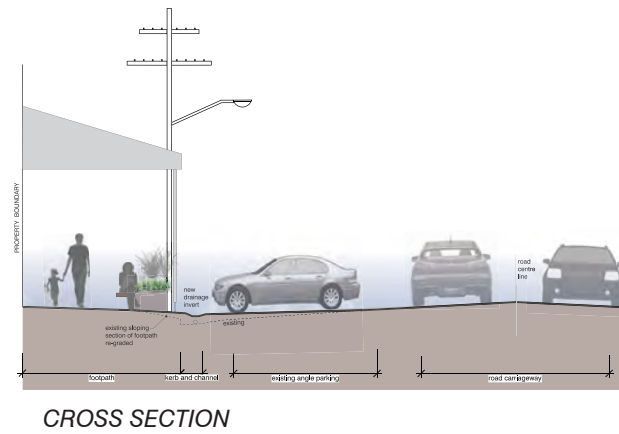
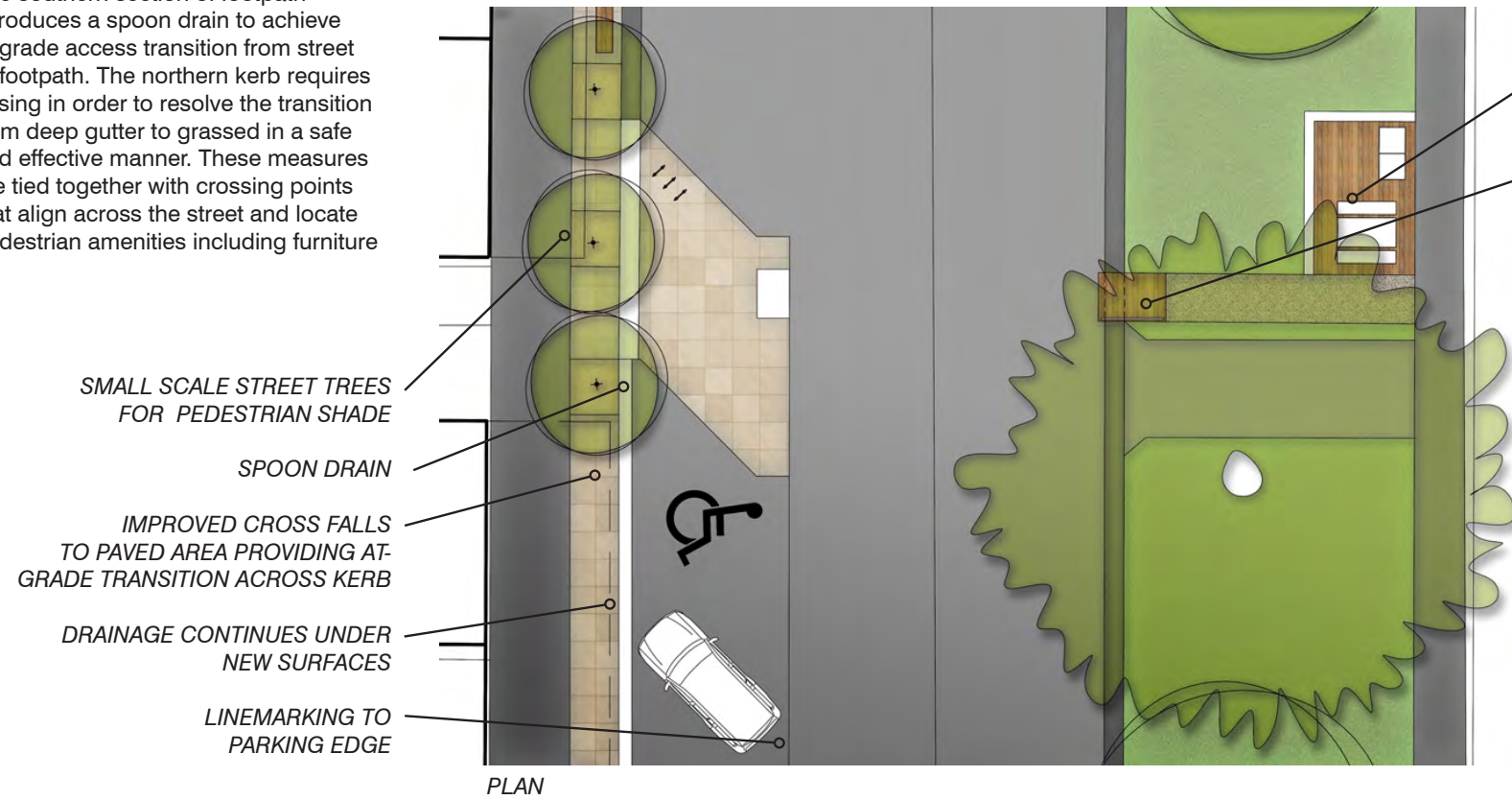


**SOUTHERN FOOTPATH  
CROSSFALL CORRECTION.  
NORTHERN KERB RAISING**

**DESCRIPTION**

Easy and safe navigation across the main street is achieved by raising deep kerbs on both sides to the most severe areas of the town centre.

The southern section of footpath introduces a spoon drain to achieve at-grade access transition from street to footpath. The northern kerb requires raising in order to resolve the transition from deep gutter to grassed in a safe and effective manner. These measures are tied together with crossing points that align across the street and locate pedestrian amenities including furniture



**ABOUT TOWN**

LODDON SHIRE STREETScape MASTERPLANS  
Masterplan Proposals May 2016

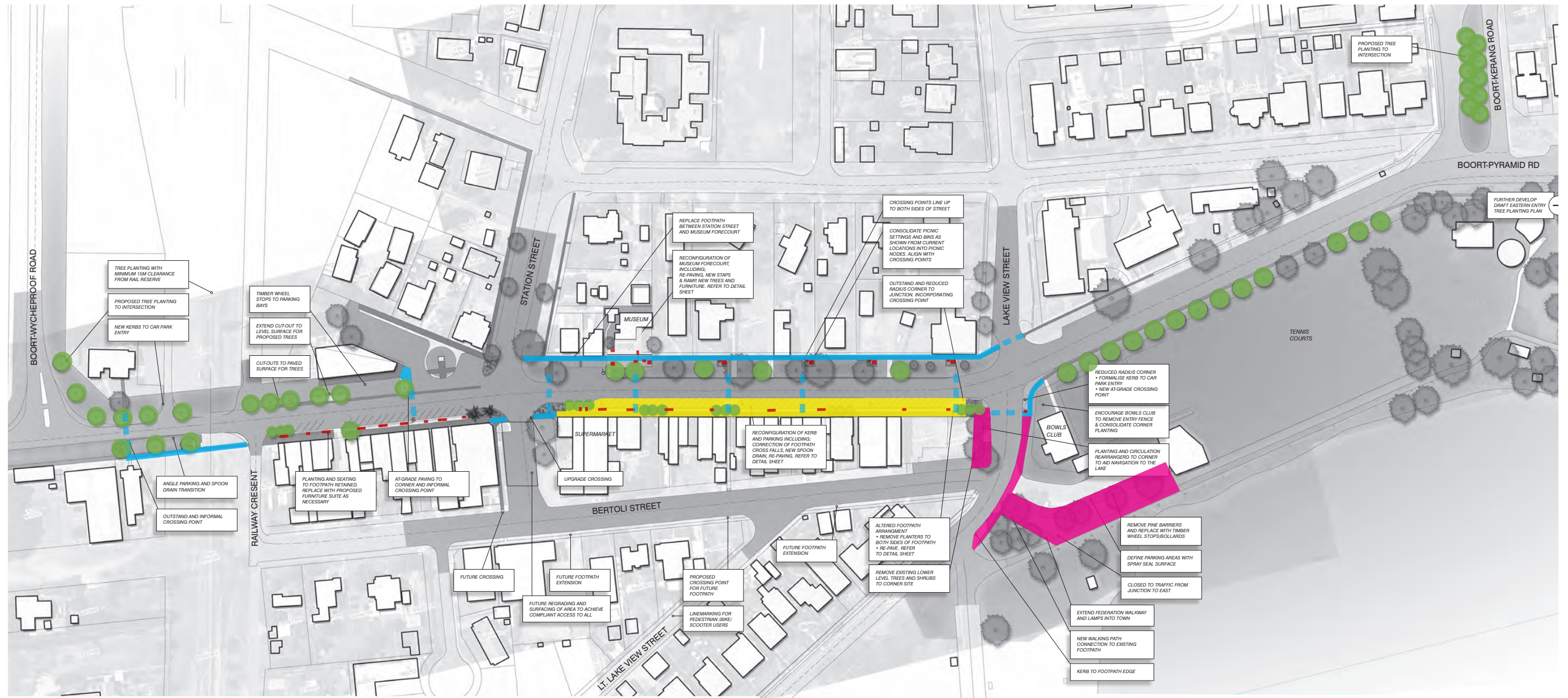
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**BOORT**





MASTERPLAN  
COSTING OVERVIEW



LEGEND

- access, pedestrian and cycle networks
- tree planting and town entries
- connection main street - lake
- furniture and planters
- develop key public spaces
- kerb and footpath upgrade to Godfrey Street

ABOUT  
TOWN

LODDON SHIRE STREETScape MASTERPLANS  
Masterplan Proposals May 2016

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FOR COMMENT

BOORT



MASTERPLAN  
COSTING OVERVIEW

**BOORT total: \$1,465,000.00**

**Exclusions**

- Works beyond site boundary
- Botanic specimen Park
- Road surface upgrades
- Private property works
- Further detailed design works / fees
- Cost escalations
- Decontamination
- Authority charges
- Undergrounding power
- Routine and asset maintenance associated with proposed works

Refer breakdowns below:

**1. Access, pedestrian and cycle networks**

*based upon rates:*

spray and seal (path / shoulder) \$60/lin m. = \$60,000 / km  
 gravel path \$40/lin m. = \$40,000 / km  
 concrete path \$180/lin m. = \$180,000 / km  
 lighting \$4,000 / pole unit = \$100,000 / km  
 kerb ramp pedestrian crossing inc. tactiles, linemarking \$5,000 x 7 (not signalise)  
 +preliminaries, o/heads contingency, misc items

Within project boundary total: \$ 175,000

Outside project boundary total: \$ 275,000

**2. tree planting and town entries**

*based upon rates:*

per tree (semi-mature) \$500 x 50  
 ground level planting \$80 / m2  
 kerb outstand (both sides) \$7,500  
 +irrigation, drainage, earthworks allowance \$50,000  
 +preliminaries, o/heads contingency, misc items

total: \$ 175,000

**3. connection main street - Lake**

*based upon rates:*

path connection Town Centre to lake \$60,000.  
 lighting allowance \$50,000  
 landscape upgrades at corner site \$20,000  
 intersection upgrade with kerb ramp pedestrian crossing inc. tactiles, linemarking  
 \$5,000 (not signalised)  
 + drainage, earthworks allowance \$50,000  
 +preliminaries, o/heads contingency, misc items

total: \$ 150,000

**4. furniture and planters**

*based upon rates:*

seat \$2,000  
 picnic setting \$4,500  
 raised planter \$500 - \$3000  
 bins \$3000  
 +preliminaries, o/heads contingency, misc items

total: \$ 140,000

**5. develop key public space**

\$400 / m2 (based upon Museum forecourt site)  
 + drainage, earthworks, services allowance \$25,000  
 +preliminaries, o/heads contingency, misc items

total: \$ 150,000

**6. kerb and footpath (re-grading) upgrade to Godfrey Street**

*based upon rates:*

survey, demolitions, excavations \$50,000  
 kerb re-configuration \$120/lin m.  
 footpath re-surface \$350/lin m.  
 integrated furniture \$2000 /item  
 drainage adjustments, services allowance \$150,000  
 crossings / kerb ramps \$25,000  
 road surface re-grade and match in \$75,000

(south side Godfrey Street sub- total = \$575,000)

north side kerb / re-grading total = \$100,000  
 +preliminaries, o/heads contingency, misc items

total: \$ 675,000



## OPTIONAL STREETScape PROPOSALS

Amongst the feedback received throughout the project, the following ideas were worth noting for future consideration beyond the present project scope and budget;

- Install underground power from co-op corner to Houston Street.
- Install pipe on northern side of Calder Highway from Southey Street South to Sullivan Street and create grass swale with low mallee planting at drain. Install heritage style guard rail at drain.
- Create pedestrian path from Eucalyptus Distillery Museum, heading south through park then turning east to Grant Street North. Continue south to Grant Street pedestrian railway crossing. Also create crossover to Georges Park and construct loop trail circuit in Georges Park.
- Restore Georges Park with planting and street furniture to provide amenity to the loop circuit.
- Create grass swales at northern entry of Calder Highway that can be mown and maintained to railway line. Potential planting of *Olea europaea* 'Swan Hill' in Houston Street to railway line.
- Conifer garden (japanese style) in place of tree nursery at co-op corner

## EXPANDED PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Beyond the Masterplans prepared in this document, the following should be considered in any further development of the projects;

Loddon Shire Council policies should be referenced, including but not limited to:

- Community Access and Inclusion Plan
- Aging in place
- Tracks and Trails strategy
- Kerbside trading
- Open space network
- Economic Development Strategy

AS1428.1 (2000) should be used as a minimum performance standard for checklist of all public facilities and spaces.

Full site levels and feature surveys should be undertaken to areas covered in the master plans to inform accurate and compliant Civil design.

Civil (and where appropriate traffic) engineering should be undertaken on all proposals to ensure accurate and compliant designs.

Further consultation with stakeholder immediately affected by proposals should be undertaken to ensure sound communication of project design intent and possible construction impacts.

As the recognised indigenous custodians of the region, the Dja Dja Wurrung have expressed an interest in the Loddon Streetscape Masterplans and should be assumed as a stakeholder in further development of the proposals

All proposal sited should be surveyed for existing underground services prior to any works

NOTE: The drawings contained in these master plans are not for construction.

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**10.5 DRAFT LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY**

**File Number:**

**Author:** Orrin Hogan, Manager Community Partnerships

**Authoriser:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing

- Attachments:**
1. Draft Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Summary Report
  2. Draft Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Background Report

**Recommendation**

**THAT COUNCIL APPROVE THE DRAFT RECREATION OPEN SPACE & AQUATIC STRATEGY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC DISPLAY TO RECEIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK.**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council was provided with the Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy (ROSA) background report at the February 2024 Forum.

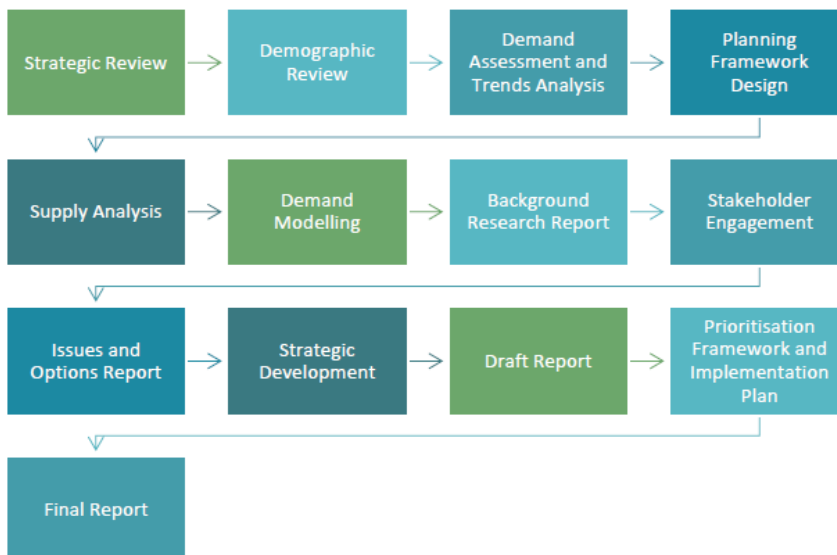
Council was provided with the ROSA Engagement Findings Report at the May 2024 Forum.

The draft ROSA reports were provided to the August Council Forum.

**BACKGROUND**

In September 2023 Otium Planning Group (Otium) was appointed to undertake the 10-year Loddon Recreation, Open Space & Aquatic Strategic Plan (ROSA).

Council’s Community Partnerships team worked closely with Otium to undertake the following steps in bringing the ROSA to fruition.



## ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Loddon Shire Council recognises that participation in sport and active recreation improves community health and wellbeing and contributes to the region's liveability and economic prosperity.

The ROSA consists of a Summary Report and a comprehensive Background and Data Report that has guided the development of this 10-year strategic plan and establishes a clear direction for providing, developing, and managing its sport and recreation, open space and aquatic facilities.

The strategy provides a robust evidence base that has informed a planning framework, strategic directions, an implementation plan and a decision-making framework for identifying investment priorities. It informs how Council can create active and healthy communities through:

- provision of a diverse range of universally accessible, sustainable facilities and outdoor spaces
- exploring opportunities that promote participation through structured programs and unstructured, social and incidental activities
- effective management and support services including information, leadership, and inclusive governance/management structures.

The proposed vision for the ROSA is '*Loddon's diverse, accessible and sustainable recreation, open space and aquatic facilities will activate and connect communities*'. The strategy responds to the Loddon Shire Council Plan 2021-2025, 'A sustainable built and natural environment and a growing and vibrant community'.

The ROSA provides details of the existing strengths, issues and opportunities that Loddon Shire Council experiences when it comes to the recreation, open space and aquatic facilities within the region. It also identifies concerns around varying asset conditions and a widening asset renewal funding gap particularly in the aquatics space.

The ROSA has provided a clear direction on activating the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities we have.

The Summary Report, provided as Attachment 1, details

- the key information used to inform the strategic direction
- the proposed strategic direction
- the planning framework
- some site specific recommendations
- the roles and functions of Council's recreation team.

The Background Report, provided as Attachment 2, provides comprehensive information relating to:

- industry research
- integration with Council plans and strategies
- community profile data
- consultation outcomes
- proposed strategic direction.

## COST/BENEFITS

Due to the prevailing fiscal environment, the expansive range of quality recreation and open space assets within the Loddon Shire Council, the strategy identifies a stronger emphasis on activation and maintenance of existing assets and infrastructure.

The strategy also provides functional benchmarking and service level information to inform future decision making around recreational, aquatic and open space infrastructure based on location, use and township categorization. Service level rationale is provided in the prescriptive table within the

document and is designed to provide consistency and guidance in decision making across the municipality.

A 10 year asset plan for recreation and open space assets is yet to be developed, however this strategy has produced a 10 year pool maintenance plan with a cost of \$1.3m required over that period.

The ROSA recreation services section will be implemented using existing resources and has a focus on activation and diversification of existing asset use over the next 10 year period. The strategy encourages Council to engage with the community and explore new and progressive partnership models in the interests of sustainable asset management.

Where projects requiring funding are identified, a funding strategy will be adopted, exploring and identifying external funding options and strategic consideration given to internal co-contribution funding.

Over time, Loddon's ROSA strategy will positively contribute to the activation of recreational and open spaces within the Shire having a positive impact on community health and wellbeing.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Comprehensive consultation and engagement processes are always challenging to run effectively, posing a risk that the information received may not represent the broader community. It is evident that one of Loddon Shire Council's challenges is how we effectively engage the community to receive meaningful feedback across a large and dispersed community. On this occasion, the community engagement process used a variety of methods to ensure a broad capture of information and resulted in strong feedback. This is detailed further in the consultation section of this report.

Condition audits for Council's five outdoor public swimming pools and a review into the operational performance of Loddon Shire's aquatic service found the asset condition and ongoing operation of the outdoor pools is a concern. The pools do not meet current industry standards and are now over 50 years old which is beyond their theoretical asset lives meaning they will become less reliable and prone to breakages. With the cost to Council for aquatic services increasing year on year, the ROSA identifies the need to explore how a sustainable aquatic service can be provided in Loddon Shire.

Council will need to consider the long-term financial capacity to renew assets. An examination of the future need for an asset at the time of renewal is required to ensure the current and future needs of community are met within a funding profile available to Council.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Initial community consultation was completed and forms the basis of the draft ROSA. Engagement was facilitated through online surveys, organised focused working groups inclusive of clubs and associations, committees of management and schools and public drop in sessions. Council officers supported the engagement process, providing the community with multiple opportunities to contribute to the development of the draft ROSA to date.

The final draft ROSA strategy is now available for Council review, with the intention to return to community and key stakeholders for a final round of consultation from Thursday, August 29 until Sunday, September 15 2024.

The Summary document will be used to undertake the final round of community consultation, placing the document on public display and inviting comment; including public notices via print and social media, placement of the document in key community locations and on Council's online engagement platform connect@Loddon. Council officers will deliver an online presentation and Q&A session and attend key stakeholder face to face meetings as requested.

# LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY



SUMMARY REPORT

AUGUST 2024



Prepared by Otium Planning Group Pty Ltd  
[www.otiumplanning.com.au](http://www.otiumplanning.com.au)





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement	1
The Project	2
What Have We Learnt?	5
What Did We Hear?	14
The Strategy	21
Warranties and Disclaimers	29
Appendix 1: Loddon Recreation Planning Framework	30
Appendix 2: Recreation Trails	35



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Otium Planning Group would like to acknowledge the staff and community from Loddon Shire Council who have provided their expertise and input to the Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy.

Their valuable insights and feedback have been instrumental in shaping the strategic framework and recommendations of this Plan.

### *Womindjika*

We respectfully acknowledge Dja Dja Wurrung and Barapa Barapa people as the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respect to their Elders both past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants of the land and their long and continuing connection to Country.

We are committed to national reconciliation and respect for indigenous peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas, and their rich contribution to society.

Loddon Shire has a rich Aboriginal history and is home to over 1,000 significant Aboriginal landmarks.





# THE PROJECT



Sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services are integral to achieving the visions of Loddon Shire Council and are recognised as key ingredients to achieving community health and wellbeing in Loddon and an important part of the social fabric and character of our agricultural/farming communities. They provide opportunities to be active and are highly valued by the Loddon communities, delivering social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits.

The **Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy** is a 10-year strategic plan that establishes a clear direction for providing, developing, and managing its sport and recreation, open space and aquatic facilities.

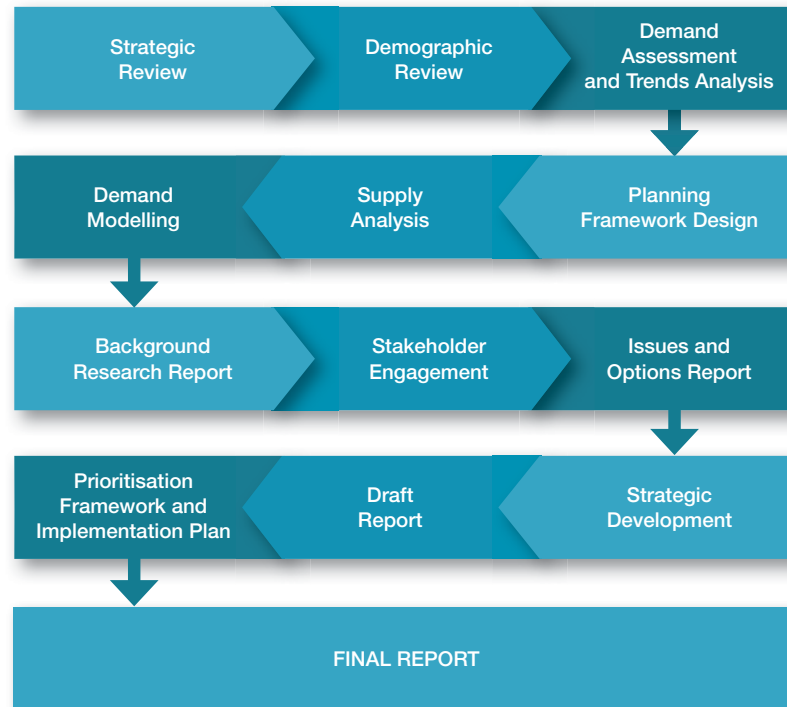
This Strategy informs how the Council can create active and healthy communities through:

- Ensuring the Shire has a diverse range of universally accessible, sustainable facilities and outdoor spaces.
- Exploring opportunities that promote participation through structured programs and unstructured, social and incidental activities.
- Effective management and support services include information, leadership, and inclusive governance/management structures.

The Strategy provides a robust evidence base that has informed the development of a planning framework and strategic directions that aim to deliver recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services that are diverse, accessible and sustainable and will activate and connect Loddon communities.

## Planning Process

The Strategy has involved the following planning process.



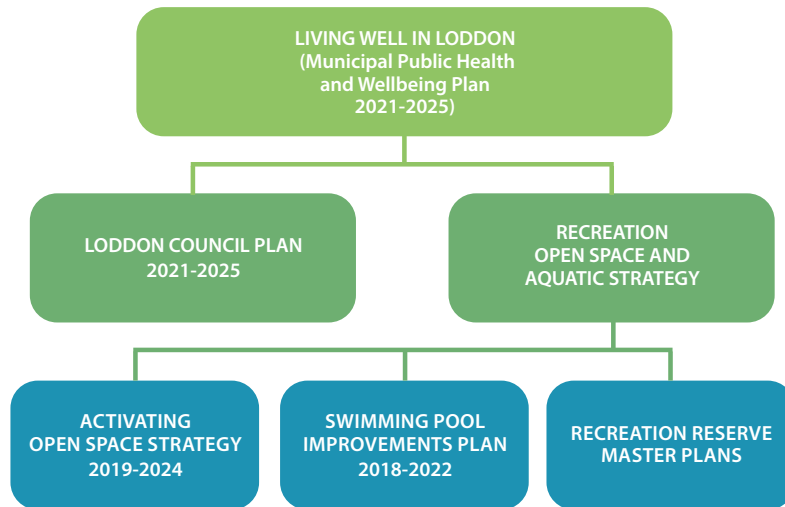
**Strategic Relationship**

The **Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy** responds to the Loddon Council Plan 2021-2025 directions to 'Plan for Future Facilities and Infrastructure That Meet Community Needs' and 'Maintain Sports and Recreation and Open Public Spaces to enable and Promote Access and Participation'.

The Strategy supersedes the Recreation Strategy 2014 and is an overarching strategy that consolidates strategic priorities identified in the:

- Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024
- Swimming Pool Improvements Plan 2018-2022
- Recreation Reserve Master Plans.

The Strategy aligns with Sport and Recreation Victoria's Active Victoria (Strategic Framework) and the Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan.



**Benefits of recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services**

**What are the benefits of public open spaces?**

Our recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services are critical for community health and wellbeing, helping to benefit our community:

- Physically and mentally** by promoting physical activity and active lifestyles, reducing illness and disease, improving mental health and creating a sense of wellbeing.
- Socially** by generating stronger and more connected communities with improved social interaction and inclusion through provision of active and vibrant community hubs, access to facilities and resources, opportunities for volunteering and involvement.
- Environmentally** by developing well-planned and attractive settings encouraging active transport and use of public parks and leisure services. The provision of parks and green environments also include temperature reduction and mitigation of the urban heat island effect; air quality improvement; management of storm water reducing the incidence of flooding and water-borne disease; ecosystem support and biodiversity enhancement.
- Economically** by assisting to reduce health care cost through reduction in disease and illness associated with lack of physical activity and social interaction. A park and public space network can also provide local employment and investment opportunities and contribute to maintaining a healthy workforce.

CASE STUDY

**Australian Masters Water Skiing Championships 2024**

The Australian Masters Ski Comp was held from 26 to 28 January 2024 and it is a prestigious event to host.

Established in November 1960, the Bridgewater Water Ski Club is situated on the Loddon River in the heart of the charming town of Bridgewater.

The Australian Masters Skiing Championships was run over three days in January on the Loddon River at the Bridgewater Water Ski Club. The event featured the country's best water skiing, slalom, trick and jump competitors. There were events for age groups from under 10 to over 65, as well as our top national open men and women skiers.





## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT?

Loddon Shire has a diverse network of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services. They are wonderful places to be active and present an opportunity to improve community health and wellbeing.

Loddon Shire has a diverse range of open spaces, including sport and active recreation reserves, parks and playgrounds, swimming pools, tracks and trails, and natural places, including bushland reserves and waterways (rivers and lakes). These places are important in supporting rural farming communities.

There are nine major and 11 minor recreation reserves, five community swimming pools, one swimming hole (Bridgewater) and over 113 parcels of public open spaces within the municipality. The facilities are in good condition and attractive to use. They are managed by Council, contractors and Reserve Committees.

There is a good distribution and supply of quality sport and recreation reserves, open spaces and aquatic facilities across the townships:

- The major towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Ingleswood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn

have a central sport and recreation reserve, a playground, a swimming pool, a golf course, a public hall and walking/cycling tracks.

- The medium-sized townships of Mitiamo, Calivil, Dingee, Newbridge, Serpentine and Tarnagulla don't have as many public open spaces. Still, most have a central sport and recreation reserve, public hall and playground.
- Small towns generally have a public hall and park or village green.
- Within each major and medium-sized township there are centralised district sports reserves and parks and gardens that support social recreation, active recreation and play and a local walking trail.
- The central sport and recreation reserves facilitate participation in a wide range of sports including Australian Rules football, netball, cricket, hockey and tennis. These are supported by other sports facilities including lawn bowls greens and golf courses.
- The sport and recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities are supported by a network of local walking tracks and regional trails that connect key destinations. A popular local trail is Nolens Park in Boort which hosts the local Park Run.
- Loddon Shire features spectacular bushland reserves and river corridors that connect people to nature and culture, whilst also holding high biodiversity values. They offer opportu-

nities for nature-based recreation including bushwalking, rock climbing and bouldering, fishing, canoeing, camping and picnicking. The bushland reserves in the Loddon Valley are managed by Parks Victoria, with some managed in partnership with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation following the formalising of the Recognition and Settlement Agreement. There is an opportunity for Council to work with land managers and Traditional Owner groups to develop products and promote nature-based recreation opportunities. Key nature conservation reserves include Kooyoora State Park, Leaghur State Park, Pyramid Hill Summit Walk, Mount Hope Nature Conservation Reserve, Boort Lakes and Wetlands and Loddon River.

- The Loddon Shire community also access regional sport and aquatic facilities within Bendigo and Kerang including the Red Energy Centre, Latrobe University Bendigo Athletics Centre, Bendigo Regional Tennis Centre, Bendigo Badminton Centre, Bendigo Regional Hockey Centre, Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre and Kerang Outdoor Pool. This means Loddon Shire does not need to provide competition fields for these sports, unless it services a local need i.e., local club training and competition venue or social competition. These venues host the regional associations and deliver athlete talent development pathways.

The sports reserves are generally in good condition and attractive to use and there is an opportunity to diversity play experiences:

- The sports reserves are in very good condition following significant investment by Council, the community and State and Federal Government in improving sports fields, lighting, courts and pavilions.
- The local playspaces are very similar and a planned approach to upgrading and diversifying play experiences is needed at renewal. There has been recent investment in diversifying play spaces and providing active recreation facilities like fitness stations in townships. The Ingleswood Reserve park has a shaded playspace and fitness station area with picnic facilities and access to a public toilet that also servicing the aquatic centre in summer and sports teams during the winter.
- Five major townships have access to an outdoor swimming pool. These facilities are in average condition. The recent technical assessment of all pools has found all pools to be in an average but serviceable condition. They all require upgrades in the next 10 years to continue the existing benefit to community.





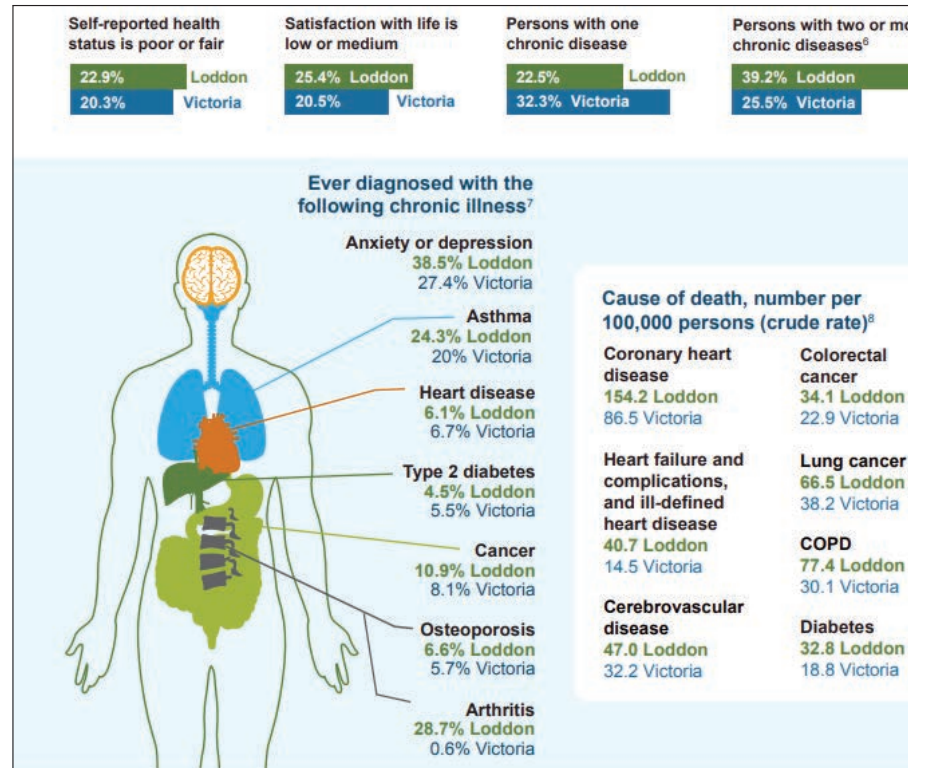
**Loddon Shire is facing a health crisis, and we need creative ways to reverse this trend**

There are high rates of dental health problems, smoking, and pre-obesity/obesity in the Loddon Shire’s rural communities. The impact of two flooding events and the COVID-19 pandemic has also seen a decline in participation and an impact on social connectedness as residents endured isolation from family, friends and community.

The Strategy’s priority is to deliver strategies to “activate people” with the aim to reversing the alarming health statistic that sees three-quarters of adults in the Loddon Shire being overweight or obese.



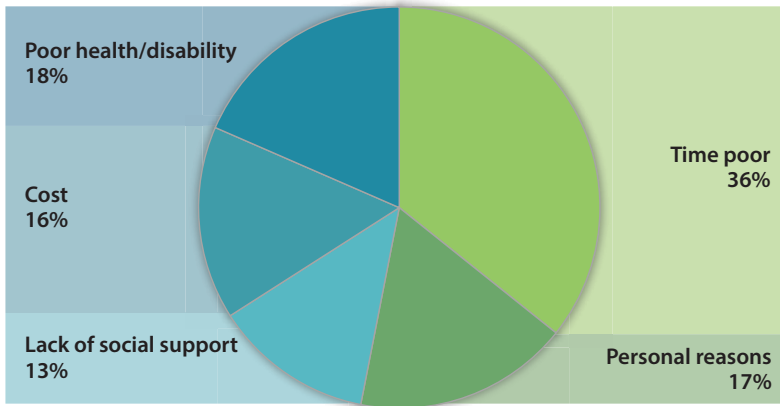
7



Credit – Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan



The figure below shows the reported barriers to being more active in Loddon Shire:



Credit – Active Living Census



Let's together explore ways to encourage how we can activate our community because it is important to improving community health and wellbeing in our rural communities.

### CASE STUDY

#### Active Farmers

Active Farmers host weekly fitness classes at the Bridgewater Recreation Reserve and host an annual Run for Resilience event. The Run for Resilience is a half marathon course run along the Inglewood to Bridgewater Trail. The event attracts 400 participants aged between 5 and 93 years.

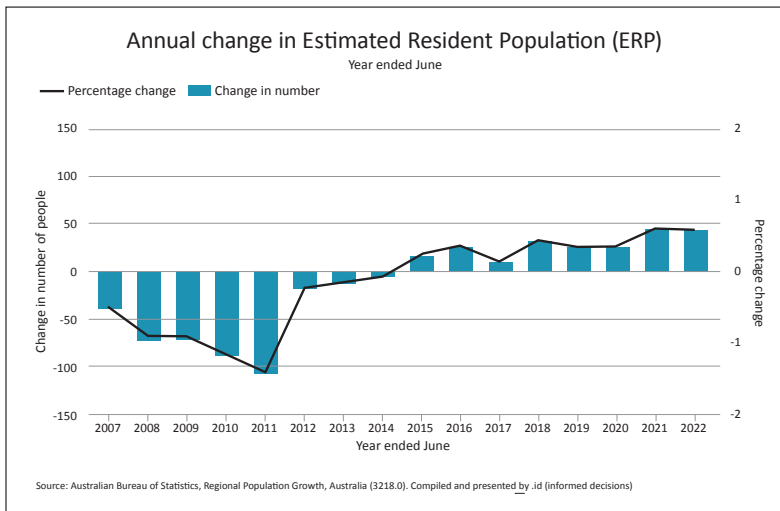


**We need to adapt and design sports and active recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services to meet the needs of our changing community.**

The current Loddon Shire population of 7,759 (ABS Census 2021) has grown over the last 10 years, and by 243 people since 2016 (7,516). The population is projected to grow by an average 0.5% annually to 8,144 by 2032. The townships identified for population growth in the Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan are Bridgewater and Inglewood.

The population is distributed across many rural townships that support a strong agricultural/farming industry. Providing services like sport and recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services and in local townships that support farming communities is an important social and economic driver.

Sport and active recreation in the Loddon Shire are considered the “heartbeat” of these rural communities and important for participation, community gathering, capacity building and economic development. Maintaining this benefit is important for rural living and the success of our townships. There is a history of migration of people to small townships to support local sports clubs.



Credit – ABS



Loddon Shire is an older population than the rest of regional Victoria, with a median age of 52 years. There are also higher rates of disability. The facilities and programs must be accessible and consider social engagement, fitness, and therapeutic activities.

There are relatively younger populations in Serpentine, Eddington, and Pyramid Hill. These communities will continue to seek sports competitions and active recreation activities.

Loddon Shire has people with diverse and rich cultural backgrounds. Townships like Boort and Pyramid Hill have a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people born overseas. Inclusive and culturally sensitive participation opportunities will be important to encourage participation from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Many people are on low median incomes, and some of the Loddon Shire communities are considered disadvantaged. Affordable participation opportunities will be important to encourage all of Loddon Shire to lead active lifestyles.

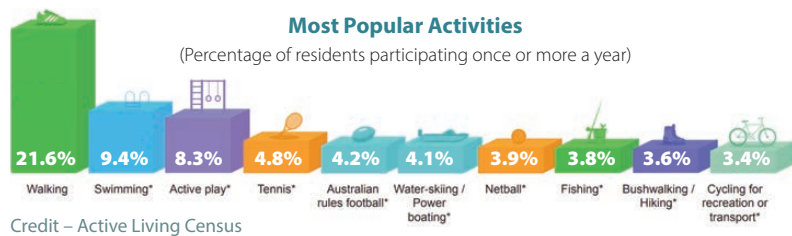
Other key findings include:

Sports clubs have been struggling to attract participants in Loddon Shire. A further two clubs (bowls clubs) have disbanded in the last 12 months. Junior teams are struggling with participation and volunteerism is in decline.

In general, competition structures still operate a traditional format of play. New modified formats could be encouraged more in Loddon Shire, but local sports clubs and associations need support from peak sporting bodies to facilitate this.

The recent Active Living Census survey shows the importance of active recreation in Loddon Shire with over 80% of residents utilising open spaces weekly with walking, play, and swimming being amongst the most popular types of active recreation in Loddon. Unstructured sports that can be played at flexible times and support a person's lifestyle, health and wellbeing are now being preferred.

The modelling shows no demand for additional sports facilities in Loddon Shire and that a key focus of this Strategy is on activating sport and active recreation facilities rather than needing to improve the capacity of existing facilities or build new facilities.



CASE STUDY

**Boort Parkrun and Little Lake Boort Foreshore Upgrade**

Parkrun is hosted in Boort at Nolen's Park. The free, fun, and friendly weekly 5km community running event attracts over 50 runners. The Parkrun is run along the upgraded Little Lake Boort Foreshore Trail.







**Loddon Shire Council has invested in improving sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities. However, the asset renewal funding gap is widening. A strategic and sustainable approach is now needed**

Loddon Shire Council has improved the sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces, aquatic facilities over the last 10 years. This includes upgraded sports fields, courts, lighting and pavilions. The Council has also invested in developing walking and cycling trails and streetscape improvements within township areas.

These improvements were identified through a series of master plans and have helped deliver on the Loddon Council Plan 2021-2025 directions to 'Plan for Future Facilities and Infrastructure That Meet Community Needs' and 'Maintain Sports and Recreation and Open Public Spaces to enable and Promote Access and Participation'.

The increasing costs of infrastructure and services is escalating, and the asset renewal funding gap is widening. The Asset Plan 2022 projects a significant funding shortfall to meet the current asset replacement and maintenance requirements in the next 10 years. However, asset values are unknown for sport, recreational and aquatic facilities, community facilities, parks, open spaces and streetscapes.

Loddon Shire Council has the lowest rate base in Victoria and the community is one of the most disadvantaged in Victoria. The Council is reliant on external grants to not only improve infrastructure but also to operate recreation, open space and aquatic facilities. External funders require a strategic approach to be undertaken by the Council if they are to invest in the future.

The Council will need to consider the long-term financial capacity to renew assets. This Strategy considers what a sustainable sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic service can be provided.

### CASE STUDY

#### Donaldson Park Pavilion

Wedderburn's Donaldson Park includes a new multi-sport and community-focused pavilion, construction of a carpark, solar installation with batteries, pavement works and landscaping. Stage 2 works are being designed to be delivered at a later stage and will include a new play-space for all abilities, landscaping and internal paths. The project is being delivered by Loddon Shire in partnership with the Reserve Committee and user groups, the Inglewood and Districts Community Enterprise Limited and State and Federal Government.

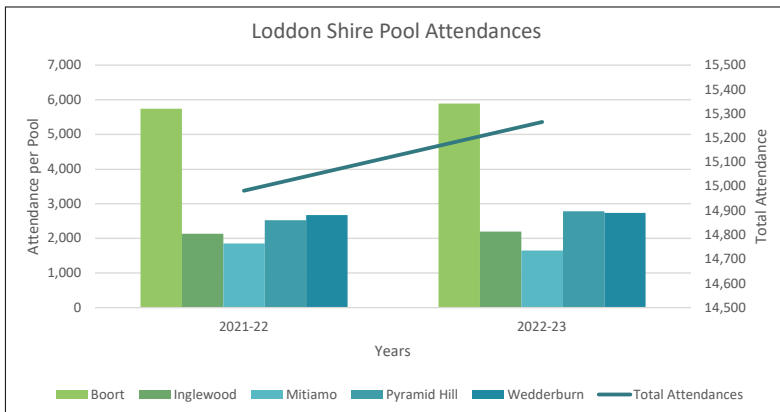
Donaldson Park is a key sport, recreation and community space for Wedderburn, and is home to the town's football, netball, hockey and harness racing clubs.



**Loddon Shire pools operate low patronage and now cost the Council \$47 per visit**

The aquatic service review identifies that Council is subsidising the use of the aquatic facilities by \$47 per visit with an annual cost of \$700,000 and attracting 15,000 visits. This is very high and well above the industry benchmark.

The graph below shows the attendances at the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities across 2021-22 and 2022-23 seasons.

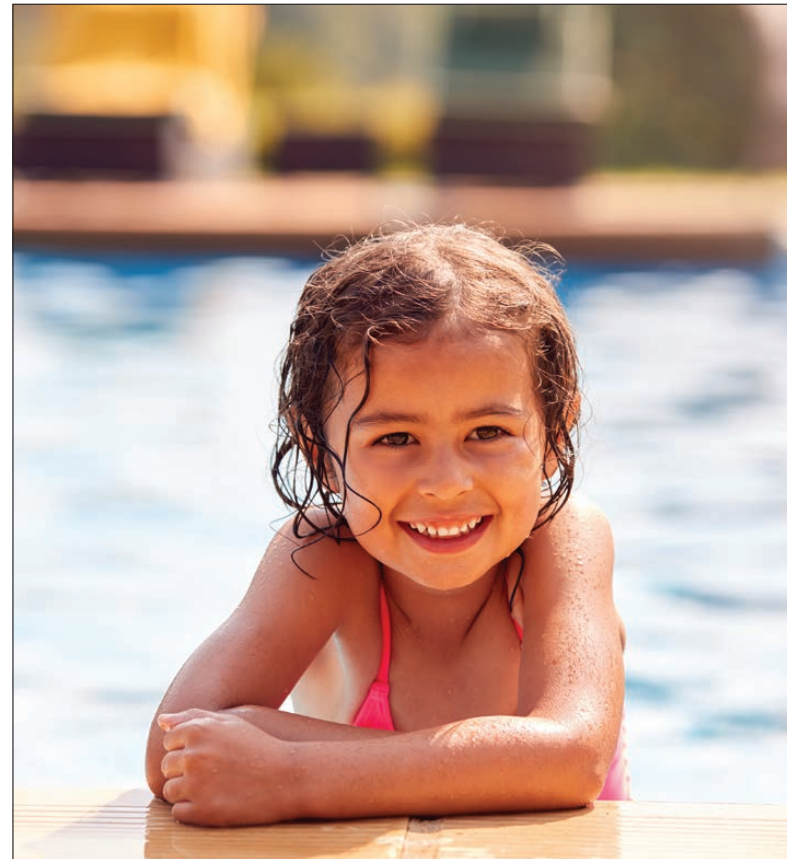


When compared to other outdoor pools in the region, Boort has the highest visitations across the Shire's pools. Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn, Inglewood and Mitiamo are operating at a low patronage. This is consistent with small township pools in the area.

Aquatic facility management and operations are subject to increasing costs across the industry. The increasing cost of qualified staffing, chemical supply and delivery are major contributing factors for rural facilities. Loddon Shire Council has also recently considered a proposed increased management fee by the current operator, whilst undesirable, represents market rates for pool management and operations. Staff (lifeguards) and chemicals (water treatment) are the major factors in managing operational risks.

Loddon Shire seasonal (October to March) pool attendances remained relatively static and when considered against the increasing costs, the Council will need to assess the benefit compared to the cost of providing an aquatic service in the future.

The Council recognises that the Loddon Shire community value having access to swimming pool facilities and despite declining attendances there is strong support for them. Unfortunately, the high cost of swimming pools is placing considerable pressure on Council's capacity to fund them amongst other competing community and infrastructure needs. A strategic approach to addressing this issue is critical.



**Mitiamo and Pyramid Hill pools have significant overlapping catchments and Echuca and Bendigo indoor pools service Loddon Shire**

Boort is the main tourism centre and Wedderburn the main service centre of Loddon with the largest population catchments. Inglewood pool and facilities are in the best condition and is central to communities in the south including Bridgewater, Newbridge and Serpentine. This area is identified for future growth.

Most pools are located 20 minutes from each other, except for Pyramid Hill and Mitiamo to the northwest and Wedderburn and Inglewood in the southeast of Loddon Shire, which have overlapping catchments. Pyramid Hill and Mitiamo Pools overlapping catchment is significant, with both facilities servicing both town centres.

Shire pools are not the only pools servicing Loddon residents. Bendigo, Dunolly and Echuca pools also service Loddon communities. As the facilities in Loddon Shire are all outdoor seasonal pools, it can be assumed that if residents wish to participate in aquatic programs i.e. learn to swim lessons or swim year-round, they will drive to Bendigo or Echuca indoor aquatic facilities.

The map shows the primary (0–15-minute travel time) and secondary (15–30-minute travel time) catchment areas of the aquatic facilities located within Loddon Shire.

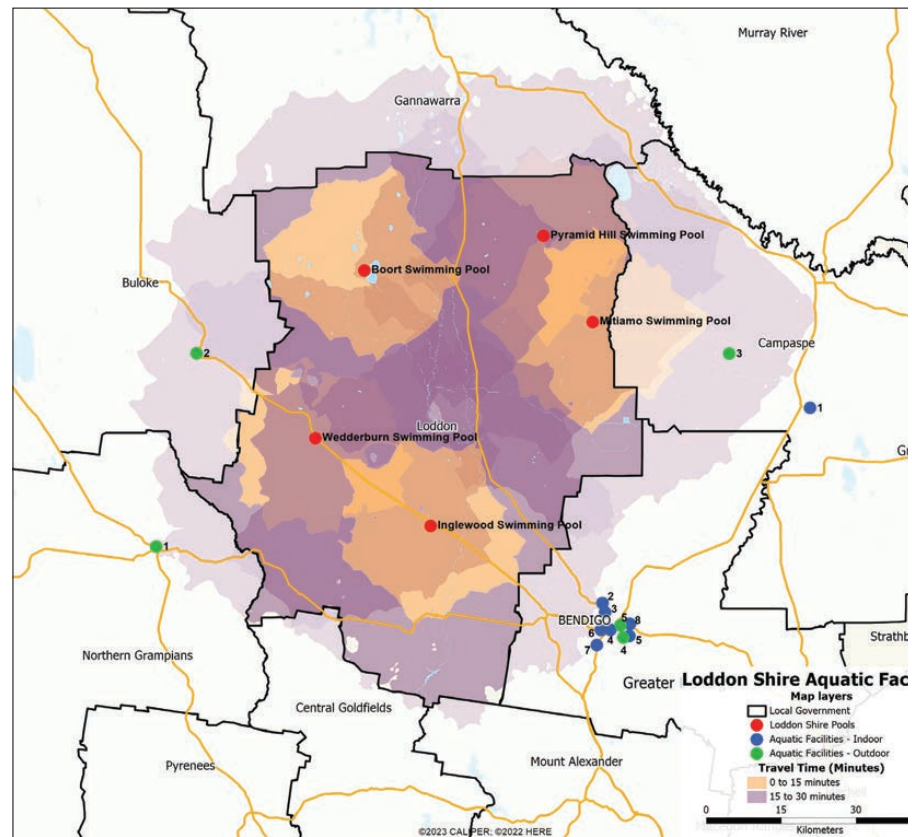
**\$1.3 million is needed over the next 10 years to maintain the current aquatic service**

The Structural Engineer (JWS Engineers) has provided a detailed Technical Assessment of the aquatic facilities and identified the asset management (renewal) requirements of the facilities in the next 10 years. The total cost of these works is approximately \$1.3 million over 10 years to maintain the current benefit.

This funding only maintains the assets and does not provide any additional benefit to the community; or address dignified accessibility and depth concerns with pools. The Pools do not meet current industry standards and are now over 50 years old.

The asset management costs do not include regular Council maintenance program items (e.g., pool painting and expansion joint reinstatement). These items are still required to be completed, and therefore, consideration must be made as to how these will be funded and included in future budget planning.

The current "management model" for aquatics in Loddon is effective, yet unavoidably expensive. The current financial input of public money is unsustainable. The need to explore and evaluate other potential partnership management models is critical and must occur over the next three years in order to preserve any chance of retaining the current number of aquatic facilities beyond 2028.





## WHAT DID WE HEAR?

The planning process was built on previous engagement activities hosted for the Activating Open Space Strategy and Swimming Pool Improvements Plan and involved a comprehensive community engagement process.

The engagement process involved:

- Community survey – 59 residents completed a survey. Respondents lived across most Loddon Shire communities.
- Sports club/association survey – 20 sports clubs and associations completed a survey.
- Community drop-in sessions – 170 people attended the drop-in sessions. Respondents were made up of 25% seniors, 25% adults and 50% children and young people.
- Public submissions – Two public submissions were received.
- Stakeholder interviews and workshops.

### Outdoor sporting facilities are highly valued, and the Reserve Committees and sporting clubs need support to maintain facilities and benefit the community

#### Outdoor sporting facilities are highly valued:

Residents highly value existing sports facilities and clubs as essential community assets. Active support is important for maintaining and improving these facilities to encourage increased usage.

**Sports club challenges:** Clubs across Loddon Shire face challenges with declining memberships, facility maintenance and in some regards deteriorating infrastructure. Supporting sport and recreation clubs in local communities was a key finding of the consultation process. It is also recognised by Council services that the partnership between Council, Reserve Committees and sporting clubs is critical to maintaining these recreation places for community.

Financial constraints, operational challenges, difficulties in securing volunteers, and concerns over facility accessibility, management expertise, and regulatory burdens are significant issues affecting the sustainability and growth of sports and recreation clubs in the area. Additionally, there is a noted impact of changing work patterns and seasonal overlaps on participation.

### CASE STUDY

#### Loddon Valley Football Netball League Finals

The Loddon Valley Football Netball League (LVFNL) finals are significant regional events that provide social and economic benefits to Loddon townships, businesses and communities. The LVFNL finals series include six finals hosting three football games and seven netball games. Each final is shared across Loddon townships.

In 2023, the finals series attendance was estimated to be within 8,500 to 10,000 players, officials and spectators and were hosted at Bridgewater, Newbridge, Serpentine, Pyramid Hill, Calivil and Inglewood.



**The community enjoys the diverse recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities in Loddon and wish to use them more**

**Diverse facilities**

There is a strong demand for more diverse recreational spaces to cater for a broad range of interests.

**The high value placed on parks and gardens and riding tracks and walking trails...**

...emphasises the importance of investing in green spaces and active recreation infrastructure to promote community health and wellbeing. Respondents particularly identified a high value for the township park and playspace provided in each township.

**Health and fitness stations and local programs encourage adults to be active:**

Adults appreciate gyms, fitness stations, and fitness sessions for maintaining health and fitness.

**Prioritising access to central open spaces in townships:**

Outdoor sport facilities and park with play-space and active recreation opportunities is important with the community emphasising the proximity to home to access family-oriented sport and recreation activities encourages physical activity.

**Community seeks an expanded aquatic program and service:**

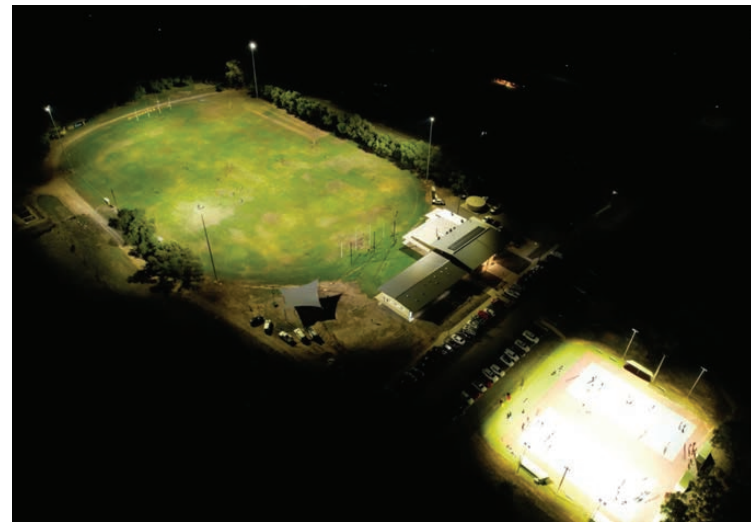
Local pools are valued as safe places for learning to swim and cooling down. The community suggested effective communication about pool timings and seek extended operating hours and diversifying aquatic programs, events and activities to meet the needs of residents and boost usage. Ideas include:

- Diversifying water play experiences: Installing water play splash parks and play equipment, diving boards and hosting more inflatable days as ways that would encourage greater participation. Innovative adventure and play opportunities should be explored with community when considering future aquatic facilities improvements.
- More programming and events: Hosting community events and introducing water aerobics, strength training, morning lap swims, etc. A range of programs and events that engage a cross-section of the community, including young and old and families should be explored with considering the future aquatic services.

**CASE STUDY**

**Recreation Reserve Lighting Upgrades at Serpentine, Mitiamo and Calivil**
















The Recreation Reserve floodlighting upgrade project includes lighting towers and LED lighting and associated works for playing areas. These projects have significantly improved the safety of football and netball training at each reserve.



Adults and Seniors Story Board

**LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY**  
**What facilities and services do you want to see?**

*Choose Your Top 3*














 <p>45</p>	 <p>14</p>	 <p>25</p>	 <p>9</p>	 <p>11</p>
Sports Facilities	Program/ Lap Swimming Pool	Trails i.e. Walking and Riding	Active Recreation	Playspaces
 <p>7</p>	 <p>11</p>	 <p>10</p>	 <p>16</p>	 <p>8</p>
Nature Play	Water Play	Adventure Activities	Nature-based Recreation Activities	Fitness Stations
 <p>19</p>	 <p>26</p>	 <p>16</p>	 <p>5</p>	 <p>14</p>
Fitness Sessions	Sports Club Support	Community Events	Social Seating and Water Stations	Landscaping i.e. Sensory, Shade



Children and Young People

**LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY**  
**What facilities and services do you want to see?**

*Choose Your Top 3*

 <p>25</p>	 <p>23</p>	 <p>12</p>	 <p>7</p>	 <p>8</p>
Sports Facilities	Program/ Lap Swimming Pool	Trails i.e. Walking and Riding	Active Recreation	Playspaces
 <p>10</p>	 <p>42</p>	 <p>9</p>	 <p>12</p>	 <p>3</p>
Nature Play	Water Play	Adventure Activities	Nature-based Recreation Activities	Fitness Stations
 <p>1</p>	 <p>6</p>	 <p>12</p>	 <p>1</p>	 <p>3</p>
Fitness Sessions	Sports Club Support	Community Events	Social Seating and Water Stations	Landscaping i.e. Sensory, Shade

**Maintain recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities to encourage regular use**

Facility upgrades and maintenance: Ongoing maintenance, improvements, and diversification of recreational facilities is important. Specific concerns include footpath improvements, trail maintenance, and facility upgrades to meet current needs and safety standards. There is a need to enhance facility quality and maintenance.

Residents also emphasise the need for facility upgrades, including renovated changing rooms, shaded areas, and recreational amenities like mountain bike trails and skate parks, to improve the appeal and functionality of Loddon Shire's public spaces. These spaces need to be maintained to encourage regular use.

High value placed on the maintenance and improvement of playspaces: This finding highlights the community's recognition of the importance of maintaining existing playspaces to ensure their continued usability for the residents.

Consistent theme of adequately maintaining and activating the current assets over building new ones: This finding indicates a preference for maximising the utility of existing facilities before investing in new infrastructure through maintenance and improvement of current assets in Loddon Shire.

CASE STUDY

**Inglewood Change Room and Park Upgrade**

The major upgrade of the building at the outdoor pool at Inglewood Recreation Reserve now provides shared change rooms where they are used as pool change rooms in the summer and netball change rooms in the winter. The upgrade also included improvements to the park with landscaping and a new playspace and fitness station.





**Accessible recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities will encourage participation**

**Accessibility to facilities and services:** Enhancing accessibility for seniors, diversifying play options for children and youth, promoting safe and inclusive swimming experiences, and providing a variety of recreational opportunities for adults and families are essential considerations. Improving access, footpaths, and trails is crucial, especially for seniors. Amenities like water stations, shade, and seating enhance outdoor experiences and encourage physical activity.

Additionally, the community seek more community events and support multipurpose recreational spaces. These suggestions were seen as vital for promoting physical activity and community participation.

**Activate the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities we have:** A range of ideas for increasing use of public open spaces have been suggested, including places that are tailored for young people, increasing public engagement through better promotion of existing activities, improved accessibility across the Shire, walking and cycling paths, seating and shade, fitness and play equipment and physical activity programs. There is active support for hosting more community events in open spaces to encourage physical activity and participation. There is growing interest in active recreation facilities like bike skills tracks, nature-based and water play experiences.

Residents suggested multi-purpose recreational spaces, amenities, and community-focused

events are key principles for the future recreation service.

**Promote nature-based recreation activities:** The drop-in sessions found children and young people benefit from diverse play experiences, including water play and nature activities. There is high interest by adults in activities like mountain biking, bouldering, bushwalking, and fishing to promote enjoyment of natural bushland and waterways.

**Key barriers:** Key barriers to engaging in sport and active recreation in Loddon Shire include limited accessibility, lack of specialised clubs or organisations, poor facility quality, and outdated amenities, underscoring the importance of addressing these issues to encourage participation.

CASE STUDY

**Bridgewater Swimming Hole and Foreshore Project**

Bridgewater Swimming Hole on the Loddon River is a popular destination for families to swim in the summer months, especially during the Christmas/New Year and Easter holiday periods when there is a high influx of visitors camping in Loddon caravan parks and bushland areas.

The swimming hole is now connected to the township and caravan park by the new Bridgewater Foreshore Trail.





**The community wants Council to prioritise high quality recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services**

**Community accepts fewer facilities if facilities are of high quality:** While a significant portion of respondents are willing to pay higher rates to maintain current sport and recreation facilities, a slightly larger group would accept fewer but higher-quality facilities, indicating a preference for prioritising maintenance and enhancement of existing infrastructure over new developments.

The “how would you spend \$100 engagement activity” resulted in the following priorities for funding:

- Improving and maintaining play spaces
- Improving and maintaining active recreation facilities
- Improving and maintaining aquatic facilities
- Improving and maintaining community sport facilities

The burdening "cost vs benefit" of five aquatic locations: There needs to be a careful evaluation of investment in aquatic facilities to ensure they align with community needs and provide significant value relative to their cost.

The community desire to see council spending increase in sport and active recreation suggests a need for prioritising budget allocations towards provision of sport and active recreation in Loddon Shire to promote physical activity, social engagement, and community cohesion.



**CASE STUDY**

**Newbridge Recreation Reserve Re-Establishment Project**

Delivery of the Newbridge Sporting Pavilion, new netball and tennis courts and other ancillary recreation and camping reserve restoration works was one of the largest flood recovery projects delivered by Loddon Shire in partnership with the Reserve Committee and user groups, local businesses and State Government.

The facilities accommodate multiple sporting and recreation activities and clubs, community events and visitors camping on the Loddon River at the reserve. In the future if Council were to develop a combined netball and tennis facility the opportunity to consider multi-purpose courts using an approved playing surface by Netball Victoria and Tennis Victoria could be investigated.



# THE STRATEGY

## Vision

*Loddon's diverse, accessible and sustainable recreation, open space and aquatic facilities will activate and connect communities.*



The following strategic objectives and actions are designed to achieve this vision.

## Objectives



Strategic Directions

ACTIVATE RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC FACILITIES

- How?**
- Partner with Reserve Committees and facilitate greater programming of sports reserves for community activities i.e. fitness classes, walking groups, etc.
  - Deliver innovative approaches and encourage a diversity of activities, programming and events at aquatic facilities to increase visitation.
  - Partner with community in hosting nature-based recreation events.
  - Explore opportunities for nature-based recreation and tourism activities with Land Managers.
  - Design community spaces in the main streets of townships that are welcoming and interesting to move through, that connect communities, encourage active lifestyles, are walkable, reflect local art and celebrate culture and heritage.

PROMOTE RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC FACILITIES

- How?**
- Promote recreation as key ingredient of country lifestyle.
  - Partner with Bendigo Tourism and develop the Loddon Valley webpage with content promoting family and lifestyle sport and active recreation and a connection to nature.

DIVERSIFY RECREATION, OPEN SPACES AND AQUATIC FACILITIES SO THEY ENCOURAGE GREATER PARTICIPATION

- How?**
- Take a strategic approach to the improvement of recreation assets and apply the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework.
  - When assets are due for renewal, identify opportunities to diversify recreation opportunities.
  - Prioritise improvements that address fair play, universal access and multipurpose objectives.
  - Develop a recreation project rolling program to undertake initial designs to enhance the ability to attract external funding to support diversification of existing recreation assets.

MAINTAIN QUALITY RECREATION, OPEN SPACES AND AQUATIC FACILITIES

- How?**
- Apply a consistent standard to design and maintenance of recreation, open space and aquatic facilities that responds to the planning framework (levels of service).
  - Develop an Asset Management Plan for recreation assets and provide annual funding allocation to implement Plan. This will include the recent aquatic facility asset management plan.
  - Regularly monitor and review the Asset Management Plan.
  - As part of Council's annual budget process provide funding for maintenance of parks, playspaces, active recreation and tracks and trails.
  - Seek external funding opportunities to support any planned upgrade or renewal of recreation, open spaces and aquatic assets.
  - As part of Council's annual budget process provide funding for asset management (renewal) of aquatic facilities as detailed in the JWS Engineers Technical Assessment to maintain the assets.
  - Conduct close analysis and feasibility studies of individual pool locations. Upon catastrophic plant and/or pool failure, Council investigates, with the community, future aquatic options.

DELIVER A SUSTAINABLE SERVICE

- How?**
- Support partnership with Reserve Committees in managing and maintaining sports reserves.
  - Support the development of sustainable clubs and organisations by partnering with peak bodies responsible for skilling and supporting volunteers; and promoting the Sports Community website that provides the resources, training and knowledge to volunteers and clubs on how to make their role easier.
  - Investigate options to consolidate if recreation facilities are duplicated. Partner with peak sporting bodies to conduct strategic reviews.
  - Recognise and protect high-value natural environments and landscapes in the planning scheme and when planning open spaces.
  - Integrate environmentally sustainable design and water-sensitive urban design features in capital works projects and encourage tenants to develop sustainable facility management practices.
  - Investigate management models and partnering opportunities for aquatic facilities e.g., Community partnership models and regional management models with partnering councils. This includes what the possible transition of management models could look like.



**Planning Framework**

To support best practice recreation and open space planning, a planning framework has been developed that considers the roles different facilities, assets and spaces, play in activating communities and the different places we live in. These different roles of recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities deliver a wide range of 'liveability' benefits. These include improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, providing a pathway from grass root to elite level

sport, socialising and play, learn to swim, cooling off in hot weather, protecting and connecting with nature, attracting community and visitor activity that returns economic benefits and cultural connection.

Effective recreation facilities, open space and aquatic facilities planning requires a partnership with community and land managers (Committees of Management) across Local, State and Federal Governments. The planning should be integrated, holistic, and sustainable.

The Planning Framework classifies recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities by their primary functions and provides a classification system to apply service levels to guide the provision of recreation assets across the municipality.

State and Federal Government legislation, the planning scheme and reserve management plans will outline the design and management requirements of nature conservation reserves. These open space types are mostly managed by other land managers, including Parks Victoria.

There is an opportunity for Council to advocate for nature based recreation and adventure activities that will provide a unique experience and community with an important connection to nature.

The Planning Framework will guide the project scope during development of concept plans or detailed designs along with consideration of industry design standards and principles, universal design standards and crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) guidelines.



**Site Specific Recommendations**

Site specific recommendations have been prioritised in an implementation plan. The Loddon Recreation Planning Framework (Appendix 1) will guide the delivery of recommendations in this section. Projects will be subject to available funding to support implementation, will be prioritised with other

projects in Council’s capital works program and may rely on the availability of external funding.

The recommended projects are prioritised for delivery:

- Short – 0-3 years
- Medium – 4-7 years
- Aspirational
- Ongoing

Table 1: Implementation Plan

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
<b>Sport and Recreation Precinct (Reserve)</b>				
Arnold Cricket Ground	Arnold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Bears Lagoon Tennis Centre	Bears Lagoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Boort Bowls Club	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Boort Croquet Club	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement actions identified for this site in the Boort Foreshore Recreation Plan</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/ Council
Boort Golf Club	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Boort Tennis Club	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement actions identified for this site in the Boort Foreshore Recreation Plan</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/ Council
Boort Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review design of current pavilion and consider netball and umpire change room provision</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/ Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relocation of timekeeper’s box</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/ Council
Bridgewater Bowls Club	Bridgewater on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review playing surface and lighting options and consider future use of second green</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/ Council
Bridgewater Recreation Reserve	Bridgewater on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider improved toilet facilities for patron use</li> </ul>	Medium	Committee of Management/ Council
Calivil Recreation Reserve	Calivil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate alternative use for old golf course - Consider a walking track</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management
Dingee Recreation Reserve	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review location of local level playspace location (see Parks and Playgrounds section)</li> </ul>	Short	Council

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
<b>Sport and Recreation Precinct (Reserve)</b>				
Inglewood Bowls Club	Inglewood	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Review playing surface and lighting options and consider shared site opportunities	Aspirational	Committee of Management/ Council
Inglewood Community Sports Centre	Inglewood	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Complete and implement Master Plan	Medium	Committee of Management/ Council
Inglewood Golf Course	Inglewood	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Kingower Cricket Ground	Kingower	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Korong Vale Recreation Reserve	Korong Vale	• Consider future of reserve	Short	Committee of Management/ Council
Mitiamo Recreation Reserve	Mitiamo	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Review reserve change rooms against current standards and develop a site management plan (including feasibility study)	Short	Committee of Management/ Council
Mitiamo Golf Course	Mitiamo	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Newbridge Recreation Reserve	Newbridge	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Mitchell Park	Pyramid Hill	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Review design of current pavilion and consider netball and umpire change rooms provision	Medium	Committee of Management/ Council
Pyramid Hill Bowls Club	Pyramid Hill	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Review playing surface and lighting options	Aspirational	Committee of Management/ Club/Council
Pyramid Hill Golf Club	Pyramid Hill	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Pyramid Hill Quarter Horse Club	Pyramid Hill	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Pyramid Hill Tennis Centre	Pyramid Hill	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Serpentine Recreation Reserve	Serpentine	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Centre	Serpentine	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
		• Consider opportunities to enhance shared facility use	Short	Committee of Management/Clubs
		• Review bowls playing surface and lighting options	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Council
Market Square Reserve	Wedderburn	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
		• Consider shared site opportunities	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Club



Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
<b>Sport and Recreation Precinct (Reserve)</b>				
Donaldson Park Recreation Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Consider oval playing surface options to increase shared space opportunities - eg cricket wicket</li> <li>Review Bowls playing surface and lighting options</li> </ul>	Ongoing Aspirational Aspirational	Committee of Management/Clubs Committee of Management/Council Committee of Management/ Club/Council
Skinners Flat Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolve Dam Wall / Spillway Issues</li> <li>Implement Master plan (after dam resolution complete)</li> </ul>	Short Medium	Council Council
Wedderburn Golf Club	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Woodstock Recreation Reserve	Woodstock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
<b>Parks and Playgrounds</b>				
Jubilee Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Review playground using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Ongoing Medium	Council
Little Lake Boort Precinct/ Nolens Park/ Rotary and Historical Parks	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Implement actions identified for this site in the Boort Foreshore Recreation Plan (separate to Tennis and Croquet actions)</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
Sunnyside Court Playground	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove equipment and sell block</li> </ul>	Short	Council
Sloans Park	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Consider future of site using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Short	Council
Bridgewater Foreshore	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Progress Park	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Review provision of local level playground using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Ongoing Medium	Council Council
J Sloan Park	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Review skate park design to incorporate current pump/skate/bike track trends to enhance activation</li> </ul>	Ongoing Aspirational	Council Council
Village Green	Kingower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Borella Park	Korong Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Consider improvements to seating and shade</li> </ul>	Ongoing Medium	Council Council
RJ Phelan Park	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Review provision of local level playground using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Ongoing Medium	Council Council

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
<b>Parks and Playgrounds</b>				
Progress Park	Newbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Kelly Park / Lions Park East Park	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Review provision of township playgrounds using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework and develop a playground management plan</li> </ul>	Ongoing Medium	Council Council
Pyramid Hill Reserve – The Hill	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
T J Rudkins Reserve	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Tarnagulla Soldiers Memorial Park	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Tarnagulla Park	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Consider removal of cricket nets and bike track</li> </ul>	Ongoing Medium	Council Council
Cooper Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Wedderburn Soldiers Memorial Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Nardoo Linear Park/equipment	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Teds Garden	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
<b>Aquatic Facility</b>				
Outdoor Pools	Boort/Inglewood/Mitiamo/Pyramid Hill/Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and monitor</li> <li>Activate space to enhance patronage</li> <li>Conduct feasibility study, including exploring alternative operating models</li> </ul>	Ongoing Ongoing Short	Council/Leisure Services Contractor Leisure Services Contractor/Council Council
Bridgewater Swimming Hole	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
<b>Trails</b>				
Loddon Trail Network	Various - refer Inventory Appendix 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Audit condition and compliance with standards</li> <li>Review provision of trails using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework and develop a trails management plan</li> </ul>	Ongoing Short Medium	Council Council Council
<b>Canoe Trails</b>				
Serpentine Canoe Trail	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Laanecoorie Canoe Trail	Laanecoorie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Durham Ox Canoe Trail	Durham Ox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council

**Recreation Service**

The Strategy has identified a shift for Loddon Shire’s Recreation Services from one that has partnered with community and State and Federal Government to deliver infrastructure improvements to one that focuses on activating the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities we have.

Proposed Recreation Service role:

- Partner with the Reserves Committee of Management to facilitate local programs and events for active sports reserves.
- Partner with State and Local Sporting Associations to facilitate modified playing formats that encourage more people to participate in sport and host club development programs.
- Establish a club support role that seeks feedback on club needs and links resources to respond to governance and management issues and initiatives. This includes supporting clubs in delivering fair access to facilities and programming.
- Represent the user groups in the planning and design of infrastructure projects. Prepare funding applications in partnership with the community.
- Participate in the development of asset management plans for recreation, open space and aquatic facilities. This will require organising asset audits and management of asset maintenance schedules.
- Planning for the renewal of recreation, open space, and aquatic facilities, apply the planning framework, consider duplicated services, and engage the community in planning processes.

- Promote the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire, through developing content and developing the Loddon Valley tourism webpage.
- Facilitate nature-based recreation programs and events in Loddon Shire nature parks and waterways. Partner with land managers, outdoor recreation groups and event promoters.
- Identify, and share with Council, clubs and committees, an understanding of recreation trends and opportunities to enhance or expand the recreation options to increase activation and participation.
- Identify, and work proactively with Clubs, opportunities for future shared usage of facilities.



## WARRANTIES AND DISCLAIMERS

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence', and these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are

inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

Otium Planning Group's advice does not extend to, or imply professional expertise in the disciplines of economics, quantity surveying, engineering or architecture. External advice in one or more of these disciplines may have been sought, where necessary to address the requirements of the project objectives. There will be differences between projected and actual results because events and circumstances frequently

do not occur as expected, and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite, or guarantee the projections' achievability as it is impossible to substantiate assumptions based on future events.

This report does not constitute advice, investment advice, or opinion and must not be relied on for funding or investment decisions. Independent advice should be obtained in relation to investment decisions.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than the client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.



## APPENDIX 1: LODDON RECREATION PLANNING FRAMEWORK

To pursue an appropriate and sustainable distribution of recreation facilities and open spaces throughout the municipality, the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework has been developed. This is based on the current situation, aligns with the township classification in the Social Infrastructure Strategy, and can be reviewed should circumstances change in future.

This table also provides a guide for future provision, in terms of what could or should realistically be provide in towns of various sizes to encourage active participation. The information in this table has been specifically developed for Loddon Shire, taking into consideration :

- Provision and benchmarking of facilities in similar-sized towns in rural Victoria
- the types of activities that currently occur (or may feasibly occur in the future given feedback from local residents and examining nation-wide participation trends)
- population distribution
- existing facility provision within the catchment (including neighbouring towns and municipalities)

The assessment of recreation and open space infrastructure provision levels will be subject to the following principles:

- Some townships may already exceed the infrastructure level identified for a town of its size. In this situation, Council will continue to provide the existing level of service, until such time as the asset is due for renewal where Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.
- Where infrastructure exceeds the level identified for a township, and the infrastructure will not be replaced in future, Council will cease insuring the asset.
- Some townships may not currently have the level of infrastructure as detailed in the table. The levels noted apply to townships where existing infrastructure exists. A feasibility study, demonstrating demand, need and sustainability will be required to initiate new infrastructure development. These projects will be subject to available funding and will be prioritised against other projects.
- Association or competition sport conducted in a township may create an override of the minimum provision levels. For example, two netball courts may be required in a community participating in a football/netball league competition. Council commits to retaining the existing level of service to recreation facilities whilst they continue to participate in competition sports.

- Community groups or other organisations, such as schools, may choose to construct and maintain additional facilities at their own cost. Where communities wish to develop infrastructure outside the level suggested in this guide, and where there is an expectation that Council will take on responsibility for the infrastructure, it is a requirement that the initiatives are subjected to a fully informed feasibility study (which demonstrates demand, need and sustainability) and whole of life costs are clearly understood. Council approval must be provided for construction or renewal of assets on a council owned or managed site.
- In cases where clubs are considering amalgamation, going into recess, or dissolution, Council will assist user groups in planning for the future use of their facilities. If amalgamation occurs, Council will support the parties in consolidating their facilities within a 4-year timeframe. The management and maintenance of dual locations is generally discouraged and will not be supported beyond the initial four years.





The following table classifies recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities by their primary functions and provides a classification system to apply service levels to guide the provision of recreation assets across the municipality.

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
<p><b>Sports field and change/social facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>Irrigated sports field provided.</p> <p>A fit for purpose change/social facility will be provided with the expectation of multi-use functionality, and guided by relevant requirements including building regulations, DDA compliance and other guidelines such as AFL Cricket Victoria, preferred facility guidelines.</p> <p>Where secondary ovals are used for individual sports, consideration should be given to planning for future consolidation to one precinct to reduce facility duplication.</p>	<p>Sports field provided – irrigated where competition sport is active and has playing surface standards.</p> <p>Where competitive sport is played, a fit for purpose change/social facility will be provided with the expectation of multi-use functionality, and guided by relevant requirements including building regulations, DDA compliance and other guidelines such as AFL, Cricket Victoria, preferred facility guidelines.</p>	<p>Retain existing sports fields.</p> <p>Change/social facilities retained until such time as the infrastructure is due for renewal.</p> <p>Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Hard courts and change facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>Two courts provided.</p> <p>Preference to be line marked for multipurpose use, with minimum of netball and tennis.</p> <p>Fit for purpose change facilities provided.</p>	<p>One court may be provided, with preference to be marked for multipurpose use, with minimum of netball and tennis.</p> <p>Where competition netball is played, two courts will be provided, with access to fit for purpose change facilities.</p>	<p>Retain existing hard courts and any associated infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Lawn Tennis Courts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>Retain existing lawn court numbers and associated infrastructure where competition and membership numbers support use.</p> <p>A "Tennis Victoria HIT Assessment" will be undertaken to inform any proposed growth or reduction in court or light numbers at Loddon tennis venues prior to any change.</p> <p>Explore alternative court surface options where required.</p> <p>A combination of grass and hard courts may be provided.</p>	<p>Where competition tennis is played, up to six courts may be available for local competition, social use and practice.</p> <p>No additional grass courts will be provided.</p> <p>Existing hard courts may be marked for multi-purpose use at the discretion of Council.</p> <p>Lighting will not be supplied.</p>	<p>Retain existing tennis court and any associated infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure</p>
<p><b>Bowling Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>One bowling green.</p> <p>Retain sites with two greens and associated infrastructure whilst competition requirement</p> <p>May have a synthetic surface, subject to business case and funding.</p>	<p>Generally not provided.</p> <p>Where competition bowls is played, one bowling green and associated infrastructure. May have a synthetic surface, subject to business case and funding.</p>	<p>Not provided.</p>
<p><b>Croquet Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>Retain existing Croquet green and associated infrastructure whilst competition sport is active.</p> <p>New Croquet greens are subject to feasibility study, identification of shared surface opportunities, and funding.</p>	<p>Not provided.</p>	<p>Not provided.</p>



Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
<p><b>Golf Course</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>One golf course and associated infrastructure whilst competition sport is active.</p>	<p>Generally not provided. Retain existing while competition sport active.</p>	<p>Not provided.</p>
<p><b>Equine sport facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<p>An equine sport facility and associated infrastructure may be provided. Retain existing facilities whilst events are active. New facilities are subject to a feasibility study and available funding.</p>	<p>Generally not provided.</p>	<p>Generally not provided.</p>
<p><b>Park</b></p>	<p>One main park with one or two BBQs, shade, picnic facilities and accessible public toilets within reasonable distance. Likely to be minimum of 0.5 hectare – where space permits Secondary park, smaller in size. May have one BBQ, shade and picnic facilities. A public toilet may not be available. For townships with 750+ population a tertiary park may be provided. Smaller in size. To be an open space or parkland. Public toilet may not be available. Waste Services may be provided to these spaces at the discretion of Council. Any of these sites may be associated with a recreation precinct or a linear area (such as a foreshore development)</p>	<p>One local level park provided to a basic level. Seating and shade provided. May have access to public toilets. May have a BBQ.  If public toilets and/or a BBQ are provided at a recreation precinct in the township, they will not be duplicated in the park (and vice versa) Waste Services may be provided to these spaces at the discretion of Council.</p>	<p>Possibly one small park area provided to a basic level. May have some seating and shade. Toilets and BBQs and waste services are generally not provided. Retain any existing infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Playground</b></p>	<p>One main playground, located at the main park area (as above) including play equipment relative to the space, the community size and profile. Current playground standards and design trends will be considered. May include a nature or themed play space. Playground will offer equipment suitable for a variety of children’s ages and abilities. Secondary (local level) playground provided. May be at a secondary park or recreation precinct, or another location specific to the needs of the community. A limited offering of equipment will be provided. At least one all abilities item to be included. For townships with 750+ population a tertiary (local level) playground may be provided. May be at a secondary/tertiary park or recreation precinct, or another location specific to the needs of the community. A limited offering of equipment will be provided. At least one all abilities item to be included.</p>	<p>A local level playground will be provided within an existing park or recreation precinct. A limited offering of equipment will be provided. At least one all abilities item to be included. Current playground standards and design trends will be considered.</p>	<p>Retain existing playgrounds and any associated infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure</p>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
<b>Footpaths</b>	<p>Council aspires to having constructed footpaths on at least one side of each sealed street in large townships. Subject to funding and prioritisation. Where practicable, seating to be provided on main pedestrian routes or key locations at regular intervals (500m apart). Priority to be given to footpaths linking shopping precincts and community facilities. Consideration given to paths that link existing footpaths. Select footpath routes to be enhanced with activation resources (such as decals), subject to funding. Footpath surface to be determined on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Footpaths, on one side of the road only, may be considered for key identified pedestrian routes, or to improve pedestrian safety. Subject to funding and prioritisation. Seating may be provided on main pedestrian routes (500m apart). Priority to be given to footpaths linking recreation, shopping &amp; community precincts. Footpath surface to be determined on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Not provided.</p>
<b>Walking/cycling trails</b>	<p>One or two off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and/or cycling, preferably near a creek, river, bushland or recreation precinct. Likely to be 5km in length, but in some circumstances may be longer to complete a select route or link to another trail or facility. Trail to feature appropriate signage. Seating or other facilities could be made available at the trail head or in select locations en-route (to be determined based on trail specific needs). Trails that can reasonably meet current standards to be retained.</p>	<p>One off road recreational trail or space that provides opportunities for walking and/or cycling. May be near a creek, river or bushland and could be within a local recreation precinct. Likely to be up to 2km in length, but in some circumstances may be longer to complete a select route or link to another space or facility. Seating and other facilities may be provided at trail heads, but unlikely to be en-route. Trails that can reasonably meet current standards to be retained.</p>	<p>Possibly one off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and/or cycling where the location has been identified as a priority site to attract visitors to the area. Likely to be near a significant natural attraction. Length determined on a case by case basis. Seating and other facilities may be provided at trail heads or in select locations en-route (to be determined based on trail specific needs). Trails that can reasonably meet current standards to be retained.</p>
<b>Swimming pools/sites</b>	<p>One 25m – 50m outdoor pool with a toddler pool provided. Where there is no existing outdoor pool an alternative swimming/water play site will be available. Consideration should be given to improving all abilities access to existing pools. Existing pool sites will be subject to a review to determine most appropriate operating model. Upon catastrophic plant and/or pool failure, Council investigates, with the community, future aquatic options.</p>	<p>Township will have access to a 25m – 50m outdoor pool and toddler pool within approximately 30 minute drive. (noting this may be in neighbouring municipality) Existing pool sites will be subject to a review to determine most appropriate operating model. Upon catastrophic plant and/or pool failure, Council investigates, with the community, future aquatic options.</p>	<p>Township will have access to a 25m – 50m outdoor pool and toddler pool within approximately 30 minute drive. (noting this may be in neighbouring municipality).</p>
<b>Pump tracks/bike skills area</b> Space that is suitable for bikes, scooters, skateboards & rollerblades	<p>Pump track/bike skills area provided in a suitable location, preferably in an existing recreation precinct. New pump track/bike skills are subject to feasibility study and available funding. Size and surface type of pump track/bike skills will be relative to the type of track use, size of community and community profile.</p>	<p>Generally not provided.</p>	<p>Not provided.</p>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
<b>Lakes/creeks/ivers</b> Council owned or managed infrastructure	Existing fishing or recreation platforms to be retained. Existing boat ramps and canoe launchers to be retained. Development of additional fishing or recreation platforms, boat ramps or canoe launchers subject to feasibility study and funding.	Existing fishing or recreation platforms to be retained. Existing boat ramps and canoe launchers to be retained. Development of additional fishing or recreation platforms, boat ramps or canoe launchers subject to feasibility study and funding.	Existing fishing or recreation platforms to be retained. Existing boat ramps and canoe launchers to be retained. Development of additional fishing or recreation platforms, boat ramps or canoe launchers will only be considered where the location has been identified as a priority site to attract visitors to the area. Subject to feasibility study and funding.
<b>Outdoor fitness equipment</b>	One outdoor fitness station with the type and number of items relative to the size of the community and the community profile. New or extended stations will be subject to feasibility study and available funding. Outdoor fitness station to be located in an existing recreation precinct or playground.	May be provided with a small outdoor fitness station containing a maximum of four equipment items. Subject to a feasibility study and available funding. Outdoor fitness station to be located in an existing recreation precinct or playground.	Not provided.
<b>Active recreation facilities</b> Physical activities that are non organised/formal activities.	A number of activations for informal recreation may be developed subject to community profile, prioritisation and funding. Active recreation opportunities should be co-located with an existing recreation, open space or community precinct.	A number of activations for informal recreation may be developed, subject to community profile, prioritisation and funding. Active recreation opportunities should be co-located with an existing recreation, open space or community precinct.	Not provided.

Social Infrastructure Strategy township classification:

<b>Large Towns</b>	Boort Pyramid Hill	Bridgewater Wedderburn	Inglewood
<b>Small Towns</b>	Calivil Korong Vale Newbridge	Dingee Laanecoorie Serpentine	Eddington Mitiamo Tarnagulla
<b>Localities</b>	All townships/communities under 100 people		

## APPENDIX 2: RECREATION TRAILS

Trail	Location	Description
Bridgewater River Track (Local)	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6km along banks of Loddon. Formed footpaths, gravel path and dirt road.</li> <li>Trail head - Loddon River, Bridgewater (adjacent to hotel)</li> </ul>
BullaBul Trail (District)	Inglewood/ Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13km trail links Inglewood and Bridgewater. Via bushland, dirt roads, and river track. Involves road crossing - local and VicRoad roads.</li> <li>Trail head: Verdon St (old gaol), Inglewood West Side, Loddon River Bridgewater</li> </ul>
Inglewood Reservoir Track (Local)	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2km loop through bush land and around reservoir.</li> <li>Trail head: Inglewood Botanical Gardens</li> </ul>
Laanecoorie River Trail (Local)	Laanecoorie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5km loop from camp ground, along Loddon River to the weir. Return track is on sealed road.</li> <li>Trail head: Laanecoorie Loddon River Recreation Reserve</li> </ul>
Tarnagulla Cemetery Track (Local)	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3km return from extension from township walk to cemetery.</li> <li>Trail head: Wimmera HWY, Tarnagulla</li> </ul>
Tarnagulla Reservoir Track (Local)	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3km loop with shorter option available at recreation reserve. Gravel path, majority is dirt road. Some sealed road crossings.</li> <li>Trail head: Poverty St, Tarnagulla</li> </ul>
Tarnagulla Town Heritage (Local)	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to 5km taking in heritage sites of Tarnagulla. Paved paths, bush tracks, road reserves and dirt tracks.</li> <li>Trail head: Tarnagulla</li> </ul>
Queens Gully Trail (Local)	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.8km Loop. Starting at Wedderburn Reservoir Walk. Small section of single track, then follows dirt roads.</li> <li>Trail head: Hospital St, Wedderburn</li> </ul>
Wedderburn Reservoir Track (Local)	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1km Loop around Wedderburn Reservoir on trail.</li> <li>Trail head: Hospital St, Wedderburn</li> </ul>
Blue Mallee Trail (Local)	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8km loop. Trail signed with post and yellow arrows. Dirt and sealed road crossings.</li> <li>Trail head: Hard Hill Reserve</li> </ul>
Nardoo Track Wedderburn (Local)	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2km loop along Nardoo Creek and Chapel St.</li> <li>Trail head: Wedderburn</li> </ul>

Trail	Location	Description
Pon Bon Track (Local)	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2km of trail through swamp. Trail begins at Travelers Rest.</li> <li>• Trail head: TJ Rudkins Reserve</li> </ul>
Dingee Walking Track (Local)	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 formed path from Dingee to the Recreation Reserve</li> <li>• Trail around oval and through bushland at the reserve.</li> <li>• Trail head: Winzar Reserve</li> <li>• Trail head: Dingee Pavillon</li> </ul>
Dunolly-Tarnagulla Cycle Tracks (District)	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44k Forest ride includes nature conversation reserve - loop from Dunolly to Tarnagulla.</li> <li>• Trail head: Dunolly Town Hall</li> </ul>
Dunolly-Laanecoorie Cycle Track (District)	Laanecoorie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44k Forest loop from Dunolly to Laanecoorie.</li> <li>• Trail head: Dunolly Town Hall</li> </ul>
Pyramid Hill Trail (Local)	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2km Loop around Pyramid Hill base.</li> <li>• Trail head: Hill Reserve</li> </ul>
Pyramid Hill Connecting Trail (Local)	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1k path connecting township to hill. Ends at swimming pool.</li> <li>• Trail head: Hill Reserve</li> </ul>
Little Lake Boort Trail (District)	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4km path around Little Lake Boort.</li> <li>• 2.5km path circuit around Little Lake Boort. The trail hosts the local Parkrun.</li> <li>• Trail head: Nolens Park</li> </ul>



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# LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY DRAFT REPORT



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*Otium Planning Group acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and to Elders, past, present and emerging. Otium is committed to national reconciliation and respect for indigenous peoples’ unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas, and their rich contribution to society.*





## Acknowledgement

Otium Planning Group would like to acknowledge the staff and community from Loddon Shire Council who have provided their expertise and input to the **Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy**.

Their valuable insights and feedback have been instrumental in shaping the strategic framework and recommendations of this Plan.

### *Womindjika*

We respectfully acknowledge Dja Dja Wurrung and Barapa Barapa people as the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respect to their Elders both past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants of the land and their long and continuing connection to Country.

We are committed to national reconciliation and respect for indigenous peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas, and their rich contribution to society.

Loddon Shire has a rich Aboriginal history and is home to over 1,000 significant Aboriginal landmarks.



Figure 1: Lake Boort Scarred Trees (Source: Lake Boort Scarred Trees Masterplan)

## Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
1.1	Planning Process .....	1
1.2	Location.....	2
2.	Strategic Review.....	4
2.1	Local Government Strategic Plans .....	4
2.2	Activating Open Space Strategy Implementation Plan.....	10
2.3	Swimming Pool Improvements Plan .....	13
2.4	Master Plans .....	15
2.5	State Government Strategies.....	23
2.6	National and International Strategies.....	24
2.7	Research Findings .....	29
2.8	Key Findings of the Strategic Review .....	31
3.	Demand Assessment.....	34
3.1	Demographic Influences .....	34
3.2	Local Participation Trends.....	38
3.3	Local Sports Participation Trends .....	41
3.4	National and State Participation Trends.....	42
3.5	Demand Analysis Model .....	46
3.6	Key Findings of Demand Assessment .....	50
4.	Trends Analysis.....	53
4.1	General Participation Trends .....	53
4.2	Sport Participation Trends .....	55
4.3	Open Space Trends .....	59
4.4	Aquatic Facility Trends.....	60
4.5	Facility Trends .....	66
4.6	Key Findings of Trends Analysis .....	71
5.	Supply Analysis.....	76
5.1	Current Supply .....	76
5.2	Planning Framework .....	85
5.3	Key Findings of Supply Analysis .....	85
6.	Aquatic Service Review .....	88
6.1	Current Facility Provision .....	88
6.2	Catchment Review .....	88
6.3	Competitor Review .....	90
6.4	Attendance Review .....	91
6.4.1	Council Costs.....	93

6.5	Asset Management Review .....	94
6.5.1	Current Asset Conditions.....	94
6.5.2	Overall Asset Renewal Costs .....	95
6.6	Key Findings of Aquatic Service Review.....	98
7.	Stakeholder Engagement .....	100
7.1	Previous Engagement Findings .....	100
7.2	Community Survey Findings.....	101
7.2.1	Respondent Profile .....	101
7.2.2	Aquatic Facilities in Loddon Shire.....	102
7.2.3	Sports and Active Recreation in Loddon Shire .....	108
7.2.4	Future Spending Priorities .....	113
7.2.5	Written Submissions.....	114
7.2.6	Community Drop in Sessions .....	115
7.3	Clubs and Associations Survey.....	122
7.4	Key Findings for Stakeholder Engagement .....	125
8.	Other Impacts on Open Space and Sport and Recreation Facilities .....	128
8.1	Climate Change Impacts .....	128
8.2	Environmental Impacts .....	129
8.3	A Child’s Right to Play .....	129
8.4	Fair Access to Play.....	130
8.5	Funding Major Sports Infrastructure Challenge .....	132
8.6	Key Findings of Other Issues .....	132
9.	Strategic Directions .....	134
9.1	Key Issues and Opportunities.....	134
9.2	Vision.....	140
9.3	Strategic Directions.....	140
9.4	Site Specific Recommendations.....	142
9.5	Recreation Service .....	146
10.	Warranties and Disclaimers .....	148
	Appendix 1: Loddon Recreation Planning Framework .....	149
	Appendix 2: Case Studies.....	157

# 1. Introduction

Loddon Shire Council (Council) recognises that participation in sport and active recreation improves community health and wellbeing and contributes to the region’s liveability and economic prosperity.

The **Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy** is a 10-year strategic plan that establishes a clear direction for providing, developing, and managing its sport and recreation, open space and aquatic facilities.

The Strategy informs how Council can create active and healthy communities through:

- Ensuring the Shire has a diverse range of universally accessible, sustainable facilities and outdoor spaces.
- Exploring opportunities that promote participation through structured programs and unstructured, social and incidental activities.
- Effective management and support services include information, leadership, and inclusive governance/management structures.

The Strategy provides a robust evidence base that has informed a planning framework, strategic directions, an implementation plan and a decision-making framework for identifying investment priorities.

The planning process includes a comprehensive community engagement process including interviewing land managers and surveying community, sport and recreation groups and schools.

## 1.1 Planning Process

The following planning process was undertaken. This **Draft Report** summarises key research and engagement findings and includes strategic directions.

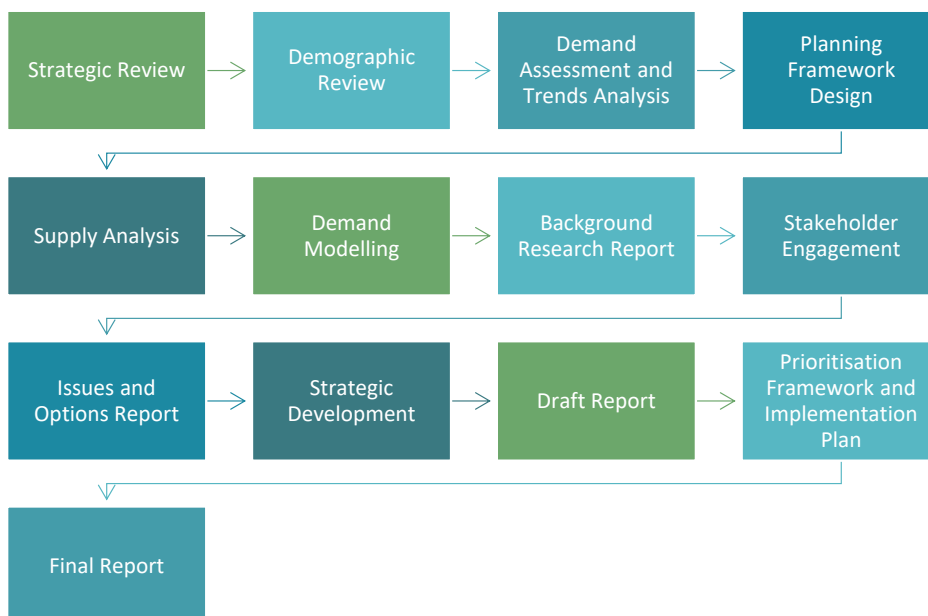


Figure 2: Planning Process



### 1.2 Location

The Loddon Shire Council is a rural municipality in central Victoria within proximity to the regional town centres of Bendigo, Kerang and Echuca. It shares borders with the following councils: Gannawarra Shire in the north, Campaspe Shire and the City of Greater Bendigo in the east, Mount Alexander Shire and Central Goldfields Shire in the south, and Northern Grampians Shire and Buloke Shire in the west.

It is made up of small towns dispersed throughout the Shire including the towns of Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn, Korong Vale, Dingee, Mitiamo, Serpentine, Newbridge, Tarnagulla, Laanecoorie, Eddington, Boort and Pyramid Hill.

The Shire covers a total land area of around 6,700 square kilometers. The primary industry is agricultural and horticultural, including grain production, sheep farming, wool, beef cattle, dairy, pigs, poultry, and in recent years, viticulture, olives, and fodder crop cultivation. Major employers within the Loddon Shire include Laucke Flour Mills, Hazeldene’s Chicken Farms, Boundary Bend Olives, Water Wheel Vineyards, Southern Riverlands Poultry, ASQ Allstone Quarries, health services in Boort and Inglewood, P-12 colleges in Boort, East Loddon, and Wedderburn, and a P-10 college in Pyramid Hill.

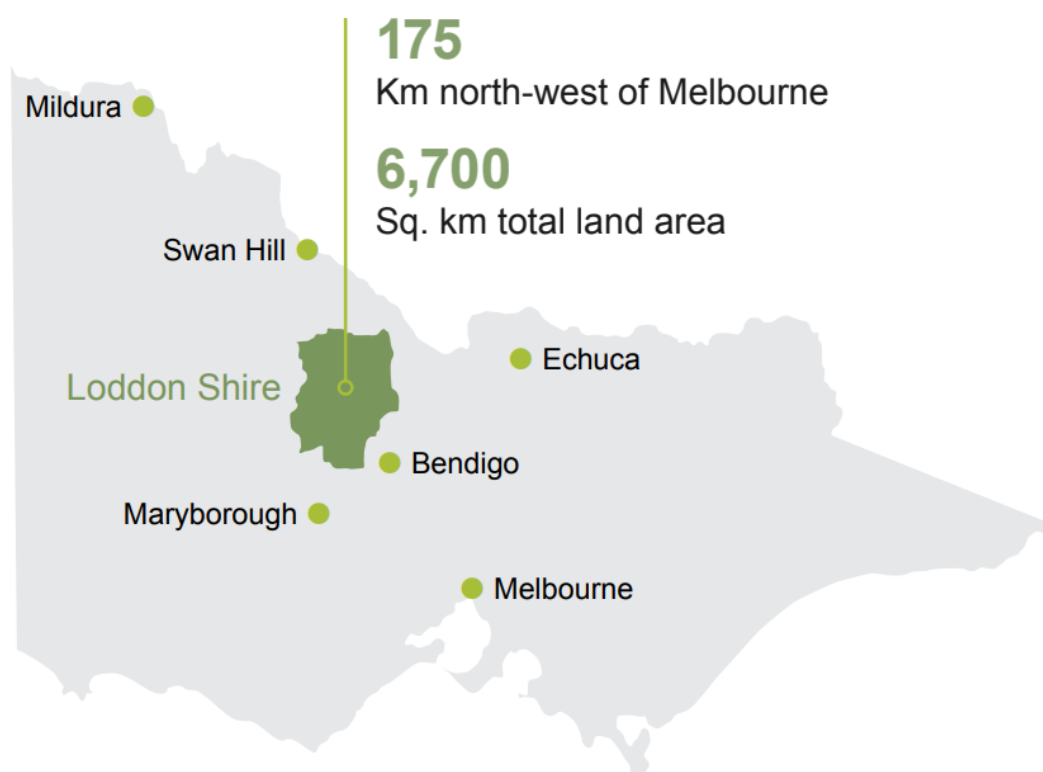


Figure 3: Loddon Shire location in Victoria (Source: Loddon Shire Council)

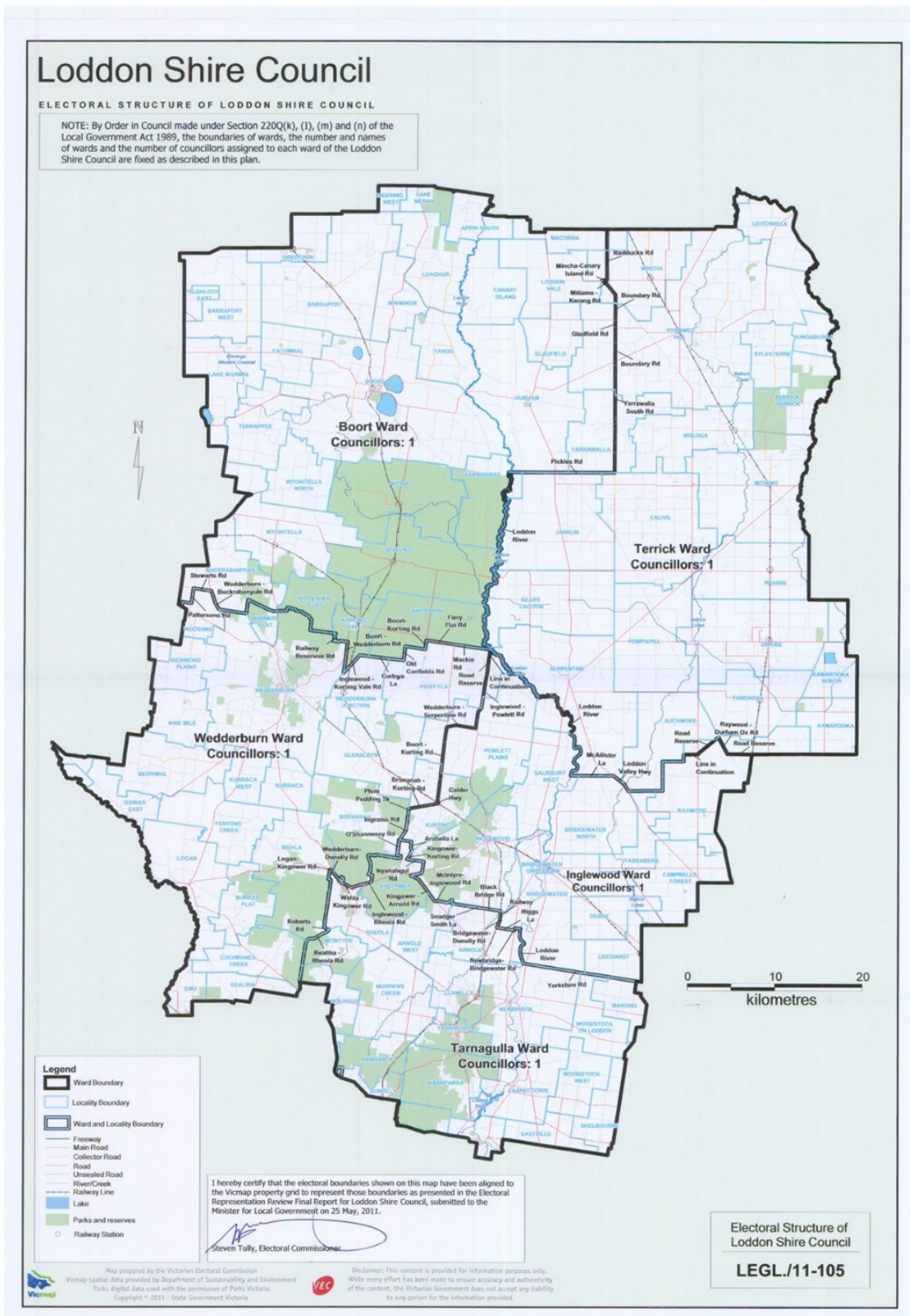


Figure 4: Loddon Shire Council Area Map (Source: Loddon Shire Council)

## 2. Strategic Review

*What strategic commitments have Loddon Shire Council made that will influence the provision, development and management of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services?*

This section reviews local, regional, State and National policies and strategic plans.

### 2.1 Local Government Strategic Plans

The table below summarises Loddon Shire Council strategies relevant to sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

**Table 1: Loddon Shire Council Strategy Review**

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
<p><b>Loddon Shire Council Plan</b></p>	<p>The Loddon Project was designed to develop the Council Vision and Council Plan that form the strategic planning framework for Loddon Shire Council. The process involved a Community Reference Group plus a further 187 participants in phase one engagement and 160 participants in phase two engagement.</p> <p>Four priority areas of interest were identified by community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community – Support of community events and community groups, local facilities and roads. Community engagement was identified as an important priority.</li> <li>• Economy – Supporting local business, tourism, marketing and promotions and planning and events.</li> <li>• Natural environment – Walking and cycling tracks, parks and gardens, tree planting and signage and environmental protection and preservation including weed management.</li> <li>• Services and infrastructure – Roads, improving internet and phone services and water and sewerage. Participants identified childcare and health services as key services that are needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Vision 2031:</b> “Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.”</p> <p>To achieve this vision, there are four strategic objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A sustainable built and natural environment</li> <li>2. A growing and vibrant community</li> <li>3. A diverse and expanding economy</li> <li>4. A supported and accessible community.</li> </ol> <p><b>Council Plan 2021-2025</b> strategies relevant to the Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1 We will implement financially and environmentally sustainable infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs. This includes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Planning for future facilities and infrastructure that meet community needs (finalising asset management plans and completing funded major infrastructure projects).</li> <li>– Our built and natural environments are accessible (Council assets are accessible).</li> <li>– Maintaining sports and recreation and open public spaces to enable and promote access and participation (Community facility use is maximised).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 1.2 We will work with our partners to preserve and protect our local environment. We will support our community to respond to the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Plan for and build community capacity to mitigate, respond and adapt to climate change (Participate with regional groups to implement environmental priorities).</li> <li>– Work with our partners to support biodiversity and habitat in our area (Participation with regional groups to maximise opportunities to support biodiversity and habitat).</li> <li>• 2.2 We will support a connected and inclusive community that provides opportunities for current and new community members at all ages, abilities, and stages of their life. This includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support community groups and volunteers (like Community Asset Committees who manage facilities on behalf of Council; and community groups providing in kind and financial support).</li> <li>– Promote welcoming and safe communities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 3.1 We will support established businesses and seek to attract new businesses to grow our local economy. This includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Leverage partnership opportunities to promote and support the local economy (Collaborating with regional partners on broader economic opportunities i.e. nature tourism).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 4.1 We will deliver our core services and advocate for access to other services for our community. This includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Enhance the community’s opportunity to maintain good health and wellbeing, including mental health (Implement initiative and advocate for services to support overall health and wellbeing to the community and partner with agencies in the Short to promote good health and wellbeing).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Council Plan includes ‘adults who get adequate physical exercise’ as a key strategic indicator of success.</p>
<p><b>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 – 2025</b></p> <p><i>Living Well in Loddon</i></p>	<p>Loddon Shire Council’s Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 is a strategic plan that guides Council and other agencies on how to improve the health and wellbeing of the Loddon Shire community.</p> <p>The Plan addresses four strategic priority focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good physical health</li> <li>• Good mental health</li> <li>• Protect and promote health</li> <li>• Feel safe and secure.</li> </ul> <p>The key initiatives of the Health and Wellbeing Plan relevant to the Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing partnerships to reduce preventable disease are maintained and strengthened.</li> <li>• The Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative is maintained.</li> <li>• Participation in active recreation is increased.</li> <li>• Partnerships to prevent family violence and improve gender equity are supported and strengthened.</li> <li>• Cooler space options are identified, and access promoted on days of extreme heat.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Loddon Settlement Strategy 2019-2034</b></p>	<p>Loddon Shire Settlement Strategy is a Council initiative supporting population growth in Loddon Shire through affordable housing development in suitable localities.</p> <p>The Strategy identifies where and how Council will support population and housing growth in its capacity as the planning authority.</p> <p>The key strategic directions are for Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote growth in Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn, taking advantage of all available development opportunities to fully develop the existing urban footprint.</li> </ul>

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodate new development in smaller settlements where effluent can be managed.</li> <li>• Support a range of residential forms including rural living and medium density.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy supports maximising the use of existing infrastructure to support population growth including community and sporting facilities; and protecting the environmental assets of Loddon Shire, including native vegetation and waterways for their contribution to amenity, tourism value and agriculture.</p>
<p><b>Loddon Shire Economic and Development Plan</b> (in development)</p>	<p>The Loddon Economic Development Plan is in development. Key focus areas of the Plan include the following:</p> <p>Economic drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture will continue to dominate the Loddon Shire economy in terms of output and employment. Council will continue to advocate for the sector and focus on water and technology to enable viability and sustainability.</li> <li>• Council will continue to encourage business expansion and investment attraction for food producers and processors in Loddon Shire, taking advantage of the over-endowment in suitable land, access to good roads and services.</li> <li>• Council will identify export opportunities for Loddon Shire’s food and beverage producers whilst working to create local and regional connections to regional distribution and sales (UNESCO City and Region of Gastronomy).</li> <li>• We will identify key regions for industrial development and potential industry clustering in the South Eastern region of the Shire.</li> <li>• Council will focus on, influence and encourage residential housing development (and stock diversity) in Loddon Shire key towns, including for the provision of affordable and worker housing (Loddon Settlement Strategy).</li> <li>• We will continue to explore opportunities to enable investment in renewable energy generation and local and regional benefit sharing programs.</li> <li>• We will support main street retail and SME – the Inglewood Streetscape Project is in planning stage, and we submitted a State Government budget bid to fund design and feasibility.</li> <li>• We will promote housing affordability, amenity and liveability to attract investment and population growth.</li> </ul> <p>Tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council will establish, develop and nurture the Visit Loddon Valley brand – centred on historic towns, natural landscapes, active and passive nature-based experiences and welcoming communities.</li> <li>• Council will invest and expand Council-owned caravan parks, including encouraging diversity in privately-owned short-stay accommodation.</li> <li>• Council will work with Traditional Owners to unlock compelling product and experiences in First Nations cultural tourism at Mt Kooyoora and Boort.</li> <li>• Loddon Shire Council is an active partner and contributor to the Victorian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage bid – anticipated to land circa 2025. This will attract visitors to Inglewood, Wedderburn and Tarnagulla.</li> <li>• Council will continue to acquire new events and support existing events that showcase Loddon Shire’s unique experiences and communities, to drive visitation. Loddon Shire’s open spaces including waterways and nature parks can support these events.</li> <li>• Council will promote Loddon Shire as a visitor destination that will in turn promote the Loddon Shire as a great place to work and live.</li> <li>• Council will contribute to regional tourism destination plans, showcasing Loddon Shire’s unique natural landscapes, attractions and experiences.</li> </ul>



Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
<p><b>Loddon Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024</b></p>	<p>The Strategy focuses on two key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improving the physical appearance, functionality and opportunities available at public open spaces.</li> <li>2. Activation of public open spaces through programs, activities, events and services.</li> </ol> <p>The following open spaces were included in the Strategy: parks, playgrounds, waterways, shared paths, and bushland.</p> <p>Sport and recreation reserves were excluded from the analysis because each reserve has its own master plan and Reserve Committees are responsible for overseeing these sites. In addition, public halls, indoor leisure centres and aquatic facilities were excluded from the analysis.</p> <p>The Strategy identifies seven key factors to activate open space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the benefits of being physically active to the community.</li> <li>• Create safe, inclusive and accessible spaces and places.</li> <li>• Promote events and programs that encourage physical activity.</li> <li>• Involve the community in planning spaces, places, events and programs.</li> <li>• Promote spaces, places, events and programs where physical activity occurs.</li> <li>• Ensure that our systems, policies and processes encourage physical activity.</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with organisations to help deliver spaces, places, events and activities.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy includes an implementation plan with actions. The status of these actions is provided in the next section.</p>
<p><b>Loddon Recreation Strategy 2015-2020</b></p>	<p>The Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy 2015-2020 is now out of date. It has provided Council and partners with a framework to invest in sport and recreation facilities, services and programs.</p> <p>The Strategy includes a vision and ten guiding planning principles that will be reviewed as part of this strategy.</p> <p>Vision: “Loddon Shire is an active, healthy and inclusive community supported by strong community clubs and a diversity of programs and accessible facilities”.</p> <p>Planning principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designed to meet demonstrated community need.</li> <li>• Of benefit to the community.</li> <li>• Accessible for people of all abilities.</li> <li>• Inclusive and welcoming.</li> <li>• Sustainable.</li> <li>• Multi-purpose design.</li> <li>• Able to offer diversity of opportunities.</li> <li>• Cost effective.</li> <li>• Designed to enhance and protect natural environment and cultural and heritage values.</li> <li>• Designed to reflect the unique nature of Loddon Shire.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy includes an implementation plan with actions. The status of these actions is provided in the next section.</p>
<p><b>Asset Plan 2022</b></p>	<p>The Asset Plan is Council’s asset management plan for the following asset classes: buildings, roads, bridges and major culverts, footpaths, stormwater drainage, recreational, leisure and community facilities, parks, open spaces and streetscapes.</p>



Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<p>The plan identifies the necessary funds to provide the agreed levels of service for all assets including operations, maintenance, renewal, upgrade and new assets over the 10-year planning period.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Asset values are unknown for recreational, leisure and community facilities, and parks, open spaces and streetscapes.</p> <p>The asset management funding shortfall is a key issue for the Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy.</p> <p>The Asset classes relevant to the Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational, leisure and community facilities – swimming pools, sports grounds, trotting tracks and lakes (water holdings).</li> <li>• Parks, open spaces and streetscapes – park and street trees, playgrounds, outdoor exercise equipment, picnic shelters, street furniture, barbecues and shelters, rotundas and band stands.</li> </ul> <p>The next steps are to review and prioritise all improvement projects in each asset class with a view of grouping projects that can be undertaken together which will lead to efficiencies.</p>
<p><b>Swimming Pool Improvements Plan 2018-2022</b></p>	<p>The Swimming Pool Improvements Plan 2018 assessed the current provision of Loddon Shire Council’s swimming pools and provides broad directions and actions to improve services and minor facility works. Significant upgrades to pool facilities in the future require further investigation.</p> <p>The following risks were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation and maintenance costs have significantly increased, placing greater pressure on Council to find ways of operating more efficiently. Water, energy, water treatment and waste-water disposal costs contributed a large portion of operational costs.</li> <li>• Council has little flexibility in limiting costs as legislative requirements dictate levels of compliance in the operations of public swimming pools. For example, new pressures from legislative requirements and government initiatives are impacting how Council delivers swimming pool services including when lifeguards are required to be on duty and how many are required at any given time.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy identifies a balance between cost and benefits is needed to assess Council’s aquatic service. In 2019, Council subsidised patrons \$20.06 per visit. Council does not expect to operate the pools at a profit; however, the expense needs to be justified by the health and social benefits gained. Royal Life Saving Australia recent social and economic benefit assessment shows for every visit to a public swimming pool an average health benefit of \$26.39 is realised.</p> <p>There are five outdoor swimming pools owned and managed under contract management by Loddon Shire Council.</p> <p>There was \$2.5m for capital works and major maintenance for swimming pools between 2008 and 2018 (10 years) that included both Council and external funding contributions. These improvements included installing wet decks, repairs to pool shells, installing water features, solar blankets, improvements to filtration/circulation systems/chlorination, buildings and landscaping (pathways, shade structures, fencing, barbecues).</p> <p>A community consultation process found six key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing opening hours without increasing operational budget.</li> <li>• Participation and partnerships – more structured activities and community events.</li> <li>• Greater communication with the community.</li> </ul>

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrading facilities.</li> <li>• Increasing usage by schools of lifeguard hours.</li> <li>• Tracking of data for greater informed future decision making.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy includes an improvement plan with actions for minor and major works, programming and partnerships, communications and promotions and records management. The status of these actions is provided in the next section.</p>
<p><b>Climate Proofing Loddon’s Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy 2011</b></p>	<p>The aim of this Strategy is to identify work that will assist to ‘climate proof’ as many sporting facilities in Loddon Shire as possible and at the same time help communities to retain their invaluable sport and recreation assets. The report notes that climate change has had a significant impact on the ability of sport and recreation clubs to access water to maintain sports grounds to a satisfactory standard. Rainfall levels have decreased, temperatures have increased and access to potable or irrigation water through water authorities has decreased.</p> <p>This Strategy has identified several works to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce water use.</li> <li>• Increase the security of supply of water.</li> <li>• Reduce leakage of storage systems at sport and recreation facilities in Loddon Shire.</li> </ul> <p>These works included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of hard courts and removal of grass courts.</li> <li>• Resurfacing grass playing fields.</li> <li>• Upgrading irrigation systems.</li> <li>• Water harvesting projects, e.g. installation of water tanks.</li> <li>• Installation of water saving devices.</li> </ul> <p>Council received \$900,000 external funding and contributed \$1.7 million to implement the Strategy and redevelop facilities.</p>
<p><b>Cycling and Walking Strategy 2009</b></p>	<p>The Cycling and Walking Strategy reviewed the existing tracks and trails located within Loddon Shire and identified tracks and trails provision, future development, management, maintenance and marketing.</p> <p>The Strategy recommendations will be reviewed as part of the Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy. Key initiatives included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve links between trails.</li> <li>• Improve connectivity of existing trails.</li> <li>• Improve trail design.</li> <li>• Instigate a “Stop and Walk” program.</li> <li>• Identify potential events to encourage usage of tracks and trails.</li> <li>• Ensure interpretation opportunities are made available.</li> <li>• Improve marketing and promotion of tracks and trails.</li> <li>• Improve the coordination, management and planning of trails.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate maintenance schedules.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails Strategy 2009</b></p>	<p>The Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails Strategic Plan provides a framework to guide land managers and trail planning and management groups in the development of regional cycling, walking, mountain biking, horse riding and canoeing/kayaking trails in the Loddon Mallee region.</p> <p>Of relevance to Loddon Shire Council is Captain Melville’s Trail, which links Bridgewater-on-Loddon, Inglewood, Kingower, and Melville Caves. This is a regionally significant trail that brings in economic and tourism benefits from trail users whilst delivering social and health benefits to residents.</p>

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<p>Strategic opportunities relevant to the Recreation and Open Space Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking trail-related activities to annual local events (such as food and wine festivals) will improve awareness and use of the trail.</li> <li>• The development of packages and some innovative marketing and interpretation (i.e. indigenous and bushranger history) and the naming of the trail to reflect its bushranger past may assist in attracting potential trail users from other parts of the state, and potentially internationally.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to develop canoe trails, rock climbing and horse riding which would further enhance the reputation of the trail.</li> </ul> <p>The major challenge identified was access to public transport and the distance from metropolitan and regional city areas. Also, the trail does not link with other major trails in the regional trail network in Loddon Mallee.</p>

## 2.2 Activating Open Space Strategy Implementation Plan

Table 2: Activating Open Space Strategy – Action Status

Theme	Action	Status
Parks	1. Review Council's Park Asset Management Plan 2010 to update policy around hierarchy, standards and service levels.	Not started. This Strategy has updated the hierarchy and service level standards.
	2. Undertake a gradual plan to renew and upgrade parks and reserves throughout the Shire, focusing on planting more shade trees in strategic locations, improved landscaping (using drought tolerant plantings and infrastructure such as rocks and logs), installing drinking fountains, installing more seats with arm and back rests, providing picnic tables, providing BBQs, improving accessibility for people of all abilities, installing paths and installing lighting where appropriate, etc.	Completed as part of funded projects.
	3. Appropriate planning should be undertaken prior to any renewals or upgrades to ensure that the proposed works complement what already exists and will meet community needs into the future. For major sites, a master plan is recommended.	Completed. Master plans have informed projects.
Play Spaces	1. Renew playgrounds when they reach the end of their useful life, taking into consideration diversity of play opportunities, quality of play, etc.	Ongoing
	2. Provide a greater focus on nature-based play and work towards including access for all abilities, particularly in the larger play spaces.	Ongoing
	3. Remove under-utilised play spaces that do not provide play value.	Not started
	4. Encourage each major recreation reserve to maintain and further develop suitable play opportunities for families.	Completed
	5. Explore opportunities to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with local schools to provide access to school play equipment after hours.	Not started
	6. Playgrounds will be included as part of the review of Councils Park Asset Management Plan and will include information about updating policy around hierarchy, standards and service levels.	Not started

Theme	Action	Status
<b>Walking/cycling tracks</b>	1. Develop future footpath infrastructure to be consistent with “Loddon Shire Footpath Asset Management Plan”.	Ongoing
	2. Continue to develop quality walking/cycling tracks throughout the Shire, with suitable supporting infrastructure, e.g. seats, shade, drinking water and signage (subject to feasibility and full costings/whole of life costings being established). Connect any new tracks to the existing walking/cycling network wherever possible.	In part
	3. Consider partnering with golf clubs to develop walking/cycling tracks on golf courses.	Not started
<b>Waterways</b>	1. Develop key water ways as passive recreation facilities for residents and visitors, including infrastructure such as seating, picnic tables, BBQs where relevant, shade, planting of grass, fishing platforms, swimming pontoons, kayak entrance/exit points, play opportunities, etc. There is a real opportunity to turn these spaces into quality family recreation facilities that attract not only locals but also visitors.	Completed
<b>Swimming pools</b>	1. Extend the swimming pool season wherever possible through use of solar heating and implementation of a volunteer lifeguard program.	Not started
	2. Provide a range of activities at each pool throughout summer, e.g. community BBQs, water aerobics, swimming lessons, pool parties and dive in movies to encourage physical activity participation. Share inflatable equipment between the pools. Install drinking fountains. These actions have been picked up in swimming pool development plans.	Not started
	3. Maintain and further develop early morning swimming sessions and other related activities i.e. aquarobics at all swimming pools.	Not started
<b>Signage</b>	1. Install suitable signage (trail heads, directional signage, place signage, kilojoule consumption signage, etc.) so that residents and visitors are aware of facilities available, their location and the benefits of physical activity. Provide interpretive signage where appropriate to enhance the experience.	Not started
<b>Maintenance and management</b>	1. Develop an adequate maintenance schedule and budget to keep infrastructure in a safe and usable state. Consideration for additional staff in Townscape Services to adequately maintain existing open spaces, parks and gardens as well as new additional items added into these areas.	Not started
<b>Affordability</b>	1. Ensure that facilities, events and programs remain affordable for residents to maximise participation.	Completed
<b>Programming</b>	2. Work in partnership with a range of organisations including the health sector, the environmental sector, schools, community organisations such as neighbourhood houses, churches and the private sector to do deliver a range of physical activity programs in parks and open spaces in Loddon Shire. Activities could include yoga, tai chi, walking groups, circus skills, bocce, community cricket games, old fashioned games, running groups, cycling groups, swimming groups, water aerobics, canoeing, stand up paddle boarding, etc. If funds permit, Loddon Shire could potentially train some local people to facilitate some of these programs (as per a key recommendation in the 2015 Recreation Strategy).	In part
<b>Boort Initiatives</b>	1. Implement the recommendations of the Little Lake Boort Draft Master Plan 2019.	Underway
	2. Incorporate rubberised paths to play equipment in Nolen’s Park and more informal play opportunities near Little Lake Boort as part of the Boort Foreshore Plan, e.g. half basketball court, a rock-climbing wall, outdoor table tennis tables, bocce pitch and a kayak launch pad.	Underway

Theme	Action	Status
	3. Sell the Sunnyside Court block and use the funds to expand the play space at nearby Boort Park.	Not started
	4. Renew Jubilee Park playground.	Not started
<b>Bridgewater Initiatives</b>	1. Continue to implement the Bridgewater Foreshore Development Plan (stages 1 and 2), which includes a nature-based play space, shade, seats, signage, art work, pier/jetty, landscaping, lighting and interpretation (black smith area).	Completed
	2. Prepare an upgrade plan in partnership with the local community for Sloan Park to install paths, landscaping, shade trees, a barrier, some form of public art and more exciting play equipment. Ensure that play opportunities available at this site are different to what is available at the Recreation Reserve and along the Foreshore	Not started
	3. Install additional seating at Bridgewater Swimming Hole and more shade trees/structures.	Not started
	4. Install signage on Bullabull track.	Not started
<b>Calivil Initiatives</b>	1. Support the Recreation Reserve COM to upgrade the social aspect of the Reserve to include a BBQ area, shelter, picnic tables, drinking fountain and landscaping. At the same time develop a pedestrian safe area.	Not started
	2. Support the Recreation Reserve COM to develop a walking track around Calivil Recreation Reserve utilising the old golf course.	Not started
<b>Dingee Initiatives</b>	1. Construct access paths at Progress Park and renew existing play equipment when it reaches the end of its lifespan.	Not started
<b>Durham Ox Initiatives</b>	1. Construct environmentally sustainable toilets at Durham Ox for use by canoeists.	Not started
<b>Eddington Initiatives</b>	1. Construct some access paths in the park next to Eddington Community Centre	Not started
<b>Inglewood Initiatives</b>	1. Develop a BBQ area with shelter and picnic tables at Inglewood Recreation Reserve.	Completed
	2. Consider providing active play opportunities for teenagers at J Sloan Park playground, e.g. flying fox, climbing wall, full sized basketball court and upgrade traditional skate park to a modular pump track when it reaches the end of its life.	Completed
	3. Plant more shade trees at J Sloan playground.	Completed
	4. Develop a safe pedestrian area at Inglewood Recreation Reserve in the vicinity of the J Sloan playground and the oval.	Completed
	5. Liaise with Inglewood Golf Club to develop a walking track around the golf course.	Not started
	6. Liaise with the Heart Foundation to establish a walking group in Inglewood, utilising the golf course.	Not started
	7. Upgrade Inglewood Botanic Gardens and Inglewood Reservoir, primarily through a track upgrade, more seats, renewal of infrastructure and better maintenance.	Not started
<b>Kingower Initiatives</b>	1. Advocate for Parks Victoria to upgrade seats, toilets, picnic/BBQ facilities at Melville Caves.	Completed
	2. Support development of Captain Melville's Trail.	Completed
<b>Korong Vale Initiatives</b>	1. Consider upgrading Borella Park to include shelter over the BBQ area, upgraded seats and new play equipment (when the existing equipment reaches the end of its useful life).	Not started
<b>Mitiamo Initiatives</b>	1. Advocate for Parks Victoria to undertake more regular grading of the tracks at Terrick Terrick National Park.	Not started
	2. Upgrade Phelan Park when equipment is at the end of its lifecycle by renewing equipment, installing some form of barrier against the Mitiamo-Echuca Road boundary and planting more shade trees and trees to act as a wind break.	Not started

Theme	Action	Status
<b>Newbridge Initiatives</b>	1. Install BBQs and shelters at Progress Park if feasible and if it aligns with community planning priorities.	Not started
<b>Pyramid Hill Initiatives</b>	1. Redevelop Lions Park in Kelly St to develop a passive recreational space.	Underway
	2. Install a drinking fountain and more comfortable seats at Kelly Park.	Underway
	3. Improve toilets at Pyramid Hill.	Underway
	4. Improve signage and maintenance of Pyramid Hill Walking.	Not started
	5. Redevelop the playground next to the swimming pool and tennis courts and install a barrier to prevent children from running on to the road.	Not started
<b>Serpentine Initiatives</b>	1. Upgrade track condition and wayfinding on the Pon Pon Trail in Serpentine.	Not started
<b>Tarnagulla Initiatives</b>	1. Renew street furniture in Heraud's Place and improve landscaping.	Not started
	2. Add additional play equipment at Soldier's Memorial Park.	Not started
<b>Wedderburn Initiatives</b>	1. Upgrade play equipment at Soldiers Memorial Park (consider installation of a learn to ride bicycle track) and include a screen to act as a wind break. This could become a smart park by installing technologically advanced items such as exercise bikes that charge mobile phones and a demonstration environmental park (i.e. use of solar lighting and water saving measures).	Not started
	2. Develop informal activities for young people, e.g. climbing wall, multi-use games areas, skate park or modular pump park, socialisation space, etc. at Soldier's Memorial Park.	Not started
	3. Install drinking fountains in public places in Wedderburn, e.g. Soldier's Memorial Park and Nardoo Creek Trail.	Not started
	4. Install additional seating and trees along Nardoo Creek Trail.	Not started
	5. Consider developing an off-leash dog area in Wedderburn.	Not started
	6. Prepare a development plan for Skinners Flat Reservoir, particularly focusing on items such as walking track to the site, BBQ, picnic tables, shelter and possibly a toilet.	Not started
	7. Consider installation of some water play features at or near the Wedderburn Swimming Pool.	Not started
	8. Advocate to Parks Victoria to grade tracks in state and national parks and provide additional facilities such as BBQs and seats.	Not started

## 2.3 Swimming Pool Improvements Plan

Table 3: Swimming Pool Improvement Plan – Action Status

Theme	Action	Status
<b>Minor and Major Works</b>		
Lawn areas:	Mow the lawns more often, inspect and remove evidence of prickles and bees at all pools.	Completed
Trees:	Plant trees on the perimeter of pool fence lines for Boort, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn pools.	Not started
	Trim back existing trees.	Completed
Pools:	Seek to repaint steps into Pyramid Hill pool a different colour for visibility.	Not started
	Paint inside pool edge as paint is flaking around the top of Wedderburn pool.	Not started
Change rooms:	Install hooks on back of shower doors and around the wall of all change rooms (all pools).	Not started
	Install new rubbish bins in change rooms (all pools).	Completed



Theme	Action	Status
	Install mirrors in change rooms (all pools).	Not started
	Assess Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool change room floor.	Completed
	Ensure change rooms are cleaned every day.	Completed
Bins:	Install bins in prominent places around the grounds (all pools).	Completed
Bollards:	Repaint the existing bollards at Wedderburn Swimming Pool.	Not started
Concrete and paved areas:	Investigate if concrete paving needs repainting (Inglewood Swimming Pool).	Completed
	Every day during opening hours, sweep and hose down concrete areas (all pools).	Completed
	Investigate feasibility and viability of rubber mats or alternative options on concrete areas on hot days.	Not started
	Paint four squares within one large square area for a tennis ball game (Wedderburn Swimming Pool).	Not started
	Conduct regular assessments to ensure surrounds of pool concrete are not slippery.	Completed
Portable shade:	Investigate feasibility and funding of portable shade umbrellas being provided at all pools.	Not started
Toilets:	Toilets to be cleaned every day at Mitiamo Swimming Pool.	Completed
Seating:	Seek funding to install more seating, particularly for parents to supervise and some on grass areas and under shade.	Not started
Tables:	Seek funding to install several tables at each of the pools.	Not started
Drinking fountains:	Seek funding to provide drinking fountains at each of the swimming pools.	Not started
Bike racks:	Seek funding to provide bike racks within the swimming pool facility to encourage adults and children to ride to swimming pools.	Not started
Permanent shade structures:	Consult with pool patrons and swimming pool staff to determine where shade structures are preferred.	Not started
	Seek external funding for the installation of permanent shade structures.	Not started
Change rooms upgrades:	Conduct an audit to identify recommendations on upgrading change room, toilets and shower facilities at all pools (except Inglewood Swimming Pool).	Completed
	Include any recommendations in future swimming pool capital works plan.	Underway
Pools:	Investigate feasibility to install extra rails on steps at the Pyramid Hill pool for greater access.	Completed
	Investigate installation of gates around the baby pool at Wedderburn Swimming Pool.	Completed
Kiosks:	Investigate the feasibility of upgrading the kiosks at the Boort, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn swimming pools.	Completed
Barbecues:	Investigate feasibility of installing picnic tables and chairs near barbecues at all swimming pools.	Not started
<b>Programming and Partnerships</b>	Investigate the development of a volunteer lifeguard program, with regard to the regulatory, legislative and insurance requirements.	Not started
	Recruit and train volunteer lifeguards to supervise adult only morning swimming lessons.	Not started
	Promote and open the pools where there is interest and qualified volunteer lifeguards for regular early morning lap swimming during opening season.	Not started
	Investigate possibility of local community health services coordinating water-based strength activities for older adults in the morning.	Not started
	Continue to support VicSwim and learn to swim programs.	Ongoing
	Host two to three inflatable days at each swimming pool over the summer period.	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Status
	Identify the impact of the roll out of the Swimming in Schools Program and review the current model where Council funds lifeguard costs.	Not started
	Where there is an interest, support the development of a swim club.	Not started
	Promote free entry for adult and child non-swimmers and a reduced price for seniors’ tickets.	Not started
<b>Communications and Promotions</b>	Investigate the use of Message Media to text patrons of changes to opening hours or events being held.	Not started
	Implementation of Message Media if investigation concurs.	Not started
	Investigate opportunity to develop a service specific App.	Not started
	Development and implementation of App if investigation concurs.	Not started
	Regularly update the opening hours and any events being held at pools on Council’s website.	Not started
	Regularly feed into and update Council’s Facebook page on what is happening at the pools.	Not started
	Investigate the possibility of purchasing flags for entry areas of pools to indicate when the pools are open.	Not started
<b>Records Management</b>	Update entry signage at all pools.	Not started
	Investigate systems that record accurate data to capture the details needed.	Completed

## 2.4 Master Plans

Loddon Shire Council have developed master plans for key sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities. The implementation of the following master plans has been progressing over the last five to 10 years. The following table summarises the key strategic directions and provides a status comment on progress (completed, in progress, not started, not required)

**Table 4: Loddon Shire Council Reserve Master Plans – Action Status**

Strategy	Strategic Directions	Status
<b>Bridgewater Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2011</b>	The Bridgewater Recreation Reserve Master Plan includes the following actions:	
	1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods, implement an ongoing water use monitoring and reporting program.	Completed
	2. Resurface and re-grade the oval and plant with warm season grasses.	Completed
	3. Irrigation specialist to assess the current system and provide recommendations to either upgrade or replace the system.	Completed
	4. Implement the recommendations provided by the irrigation specialist.	Completed
	5. Proceed with the development of a groundwater source at the Recreation Reserve.	Completed
	6. Construct concrete pathways and paving around the Sports Pavilion, construct verandah.	Completed
	7. Construct drainage near the pavilion to reduce pooling of water.	Completed
	8. Install two additional floodlights around the sports ground.	Completed
	9. Replace mower.	Completed
	10. Provide shade and protective barriers around playground equipment.	Completed
	11. Install boundary fencing, particularly along the highway.	Completed
12. Asses the need to purchase and install a rainwater/storm water harvesting system which collects run-off from the netball /tennis courts as a back-up emergency water supply.	Completed	

Strategy	Strategic Directions	Status
<b>Boort Park Master Plan 2011-2020</b>	The Boort Park Master Plan includes the following actions:	
	1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods.	Completed
	2. Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process.	Completed
	3. Construct basic facility with shelter and storage space for hockey club.	Completed
	4. Install lights to enable hockey club to train on winter evenings.	Completed
	5. Install a more hard-wearing grass on the sports oval that remains green over winter.	Completed
	6. Install more lights for football club training purposes.	Completed
	7. Build new scoreboard near the playground, incorporating regulation size stairs and power.	Completed
	8. Upgrade toilets, showers and taps to water efficient fixtures.	Completed
	9. Extend social rooms to cater for club functions (18 m x 5 m extension).	Completed
	10. Construct a small shed on site to be utilised as a gymnasium.	Not Required
	11. Develop a change room for use by female umpires (if netball change facilities are inadequate).	Not Started
	12. Upgrade kitchen (2 new stoves, 2 range hoods and new fridges) to better cater for club functions.	Completed
	13. Upgrade public toilets.	Completed
	14. Install rainwater tanks to collect water from club house roof and use for toilet flushing, cleaning and other non-drinking purposes.	Completed
15. Extend netball shelter full length of court.	Completed	
<b>Calivil Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2018</b>	The Calivil Reserve Master Plan includes the following actions:	
	Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process.	
	1. Investigate the sinking of a bore to provide an alternative source of water for the Recreation Reserve.	Completed
	2. Resurface courts and relocate light towers to meet Netball Victoria standards. Line-mark these two courts for tennis.	Completed
	3. Install a new irrigation system to reduce water use.	Completed
	4. Install lights for bowls to allow night time training and games.	Completed
	5. Construct a BBQ to encourage visitors.	Not started
	6. Resurface cricket practice nets.	Completed
	7. Consider development of a campground at the Recreation Reserve.	Not started
	8. Install shade sails to provide a safer and more attractive play space.	Completed
	9. Re-vegetate and landscape around the entire recreation reserve to improve visual amenity of the site.	Completed
	10. Consider the development of a farmer's market and alternative expos at the Recreation Reserve to increase local revenue.	Not started
	11. Modify power supply to the football shed.	Completed
	12. Install safety signage around play area and additional directional signage to and around the reserve.	Completed
	13. Retain two grass courts in the short term and develop two new hard courts if demand dictates.	Completed
	14. Install two extra light towers on the football oval.	Completed
15. Construct a covered and paved area which links the pavilion to the change rooms.	Completed	
16. Explore the possibility of developing an Opportunity Shop in the tennis pavilion at the Reserve.	Completed	
<b>Donaldson Park Master Plan 2018</b>	The Donaldson Park Reserve Master Plan includes the following actions:	Completed

Strategy	Strategic Directions	Status
<b>Community Hub Redevelopment Project 2023</b>	1. Calculate the yield of the old town water supply system and put in place a water allocation process.	Not started
	2. Develop and implement an ongoing program of works for Skinners Flat Reserve and Caravan Park dam.	Not started
	3. Investigate potential for storm water harvesting from Nardoo Creek.	Completed
	4. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods.	Completed
	5. Develop a new pavilion on the current site of the spectator shed. The new pavilion is to be constructed in two stages.	Completed
	6. Upgrade second netball court to meet Netball Victoria standards.	Completed
	7. Extend kitchen and construct administrative space in bowls pavilion. Ensure kitchen upgrade includes provision for low water use fixtures and appliances.	Completed
	8. Demolish the old tennis shed and develop an adventure/ outdoor play space in this area, and a more traditional play space near the netball courts.	Completed
	9. Plant with warm season grasses to reduce water use and costs.	Completed
	10. Replace two grass tennis courts with two synthetic (hard) tennis courts with lights to reduce water use and to provide for year-round tennis.	Completed
	11. Upgrade existing hockey irrigation system.	Completed
	12. Review use of harness racing in 2011 to determine future of pavilion and the track. Increase use of the pavilion, e.g. hockey change facility, cricket pavilion, community gym shared with Wedderburn P-12 College, etc. and install a DDA compliant toilet and ramp suitable for people with disabilities.	Completed
	13. Install signage that reflects Council's corporate style and provides information on opportunities at the park.	Completed
	14. Improve landscaping throughout the park, to create a more attractive and welcoming environment.	Completed
	15. Seal main entrance from Chapel St to improve condition of internal roadway.	Completed
	16. Install two lights at the southern end of the hockey field.	Not started
	17. Demolish existing sheds and build one new shed, able to provide some shelter, seating and storage for hockey equipment.	Completed
	18. Decommission Hospital Street toilet block once pavilion extension is complete.	Not started
	19. Render and smarten up existing public toilets near the bowls green.	Not started
	20. Develop an electronic ground booking system.	Ongoing
	21. Continue to explore opportunities for new activities/user groups.	Ongoing
	22. Continue to plant trees along Nardoo Walking Track.	
<p>The Donaldson Park Community Hub Redevelopment Project will include a new multi-purpose facility, replacing the current pavilions for football, netball and hockey club and harness racing club. The new community hub will support these sporting teams and increase sport participation whilst also providing a community facility able to host large-numbered community groups and events.</p>		
<p>The project includes the following actions. These are due for completion in 2023/2024:</p>		
1. New multi-sport and community-focused community hub		
2. Car park		
3. Solar installation with batteries		

Strategy	Strategic Directions	Status
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Pavement works</li> <li>5. Landscaping</li> <li>6. Playspace for all abilities</li> <li>7. Additional landscaping</li> <li>8. Internal paths adjacent to the new building.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Inglewood Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2018</b></p>	<p>The Inglewood Reserve Master Plan includes the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods. Completed</li> <li>2. Calculate the yield of the Old Inglewood Reservoir and put in place a water allocation process. Completed</li> <li>3. Develop and implement an ongoing program of works for the Old Town Reservoir. Completed</li> <li>4. Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process. Completed</li> <li>5. Secure water for the ground by upgrading catch drains to allow the Inglewood Reservoir to fill so that water can then be transferred to the sports complex for irrigation purposes. Completed</li> <li>6. Upgrade toilet facilities in Sports Centre. Completed</li> <li>7. Install a new irrigation system to allow more efficient use of water and plant warm season grasses to provide a better playing surface. Completed</li> <li>8. Install a range hood in the kitchen area to meet regulations. Completed</li> <li>9. Install some speed humps with signage around the sports oval. Not started</li> <li>10. Upgrade Sports Centre to improve overall appearance and amenity. Completed</li> <li>11. Develop change facilities for netballers and female umpires – as part of the tennis pavilion. Completed</li> <li>12. Install heating and cooling in the pavilion. Cover louver windows. Completed</li> <li>13. Install more shelter, shade and seating around the Recreation Reserve. Completed</li> <li>14. Upgrade the canteen and the bar. Completed</li> <li>15. Upgrade lights for sports oval and netball courts. Completed</li> <li>16. Upgrade football/cricket showers and toilets in change rooms. Completed</li> <li>17. Upgrade public toilets. Completed</li> <li>18. Develop a rebound wall to allow people to practice their tennis alone or in pairs. Not started</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Inglewood Streetscape Improvement Project</b></p>	<p>The Inglewood Streetscape Project will be a major influence in uplifting Inglewood’s main street appeal and experience and has the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beautification: Transform the streetscape into an inviting, visually pleasing environment that reflects the unique character and history of Inglewood.</li> <li>• Infrastructure Upgrades: Upgrade kerb and channel systems, enhancing drainage and accessibility while maintaining historical architectural elements.</li> <li>• Footpaths: Develop pedestrian-friendly footpaths that promote safe movement and accessibility for all residents and visitors.</li> <li>• Underground Power: Implement underground power installation to improve the aesthetic appeal and safety of the streetscape.</li> <li>• Greening Initiatives: Integrate landscaping and urban greening strategies, incorporating plantings to improve air quality, biodiversity, and aesthetics.</li> <li>• Traffic Calming: Implement traffic calming measures to reduce vehicular speed and enhance pedestrian safety, encouraging alternative modes of transportation.</li> </ul>	<p>In progress</p>





Strategy	Strategic Directions	Status
<b>Newbridge Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2018</b>	The Newbridge Recreation Reserve Master Plan includes the following actions:	
	1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods.	Completed
	2. Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process.	Completed
	3. Install an in-ground irrigation sprinkler system to decrease water use; decrease amount of time spent watering; and improve condition of the ground.	Completed
	4. Develop a new community sports pavilion to cater for social events and to provide suitable change facilities for players and umpires, and upgrade power. Incorporate water efficient fixtures and additional rainwater tanks.	Completed
	5. Reconstruct netball courts to meet Netball Victoria standards (over existing tennis courts).	Completed
	6. Mentor young people to take on administrative roles on the Newbridge Recreation Reserve Committee of Management to ensure its ongoing sustainability.	Completed
	7. Provide shade trees and a BBQ in playground/picnic area to provide a more comfortable place for people to recreate.	Completed
	8. Develop a track along reserve extending this around the top of the reserve.	Completed
	9. Fence the site to prevent sheep from causing damage.	Completed
10. Liaise with Coliban Water on potential for recycled water option if the proposal to provide a reticulated sewage system to the town goes ahead.	Completed	
<b>Pyramid Hill Mitchell Park Master Plan 2018</b>	The Mitchell Park Master Plan includes the following actions:	
	1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods.	Completed
	2. Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process and set up an agreement with Loddon Shire to access a set volume of water from the Loddon Shire's Pyramid Hill-Boort Irrigation water share.	Completed
	3. Reseal both courts and extend run-off to meet Netball Victoria standards and to improve safety for netballers.	Completed
	4. Replace existing irrigation system.	Completed
	5. Upgrade fire service to ensure safety of patrons in the pavilion should a fire break out.	Completed
	6. Install light near playground to improve visibility of children playing in the area.	Not started
	7. Install signage to warn motorists to slow down.	Not started
	8. Provide access for people with disabilities to top floor of the pavilion.	Not started
	9. Collect rainwater from clubhouse and use for toilet flushing and other non-drinking building purposes.	Not started
	10. Consider replacement of turf wickets with synthetic wickets to reduce water usage.	Not started
	11. Need to install heating and cooling in the pavilion, a skylight and better acoustics.	Not started
	12. Construct a verandah to the south end of the pavilion for netball spectators.	Not started
	13. Improve aesthetics of the ground through ongoing planting and upkeep of more trees.	Not started
14. Seal internal road around oval and provide signage and speed humps.	Not started	
	Completed	

Strategy	Strategic Directions	Status
	15. Replace training lighting around the sports oval to improve visibility during training sessions.	Not started
	16. Replace gate, fence and track to provide safe access for users of Mitchell Park.	Not started
	17. Replace original toilet block.	
<b>Pyramid Hill Tennis and Bowls Facility Master Plan 2018</b>	<p>The Pyramid Hill Tennis and Bowls Facility Master Plan includes the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods.</li> <li>2. Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process.</li> <li>3. Set up an agreement with Loddon Shire to access a set volume of water from the Loddon Shire's Pyramid Hill Boort Irrigation water share.</li> <li>4. Develop two synthetic tennis courts with lights to reduce water usage and to provide year-round tennis opportunities for the community and install an in-ground irrigation system on the tennis courts to eliminate the need for flood irrigation and to irrigate the tennis courts more effectively.</li> <li>5. Install a fence near the channel to prevent children from falling into the water; between the playground and the fire training track; and between the playground and the main road.</li> <li>6. Erect signage from main road to direct people to the tennis courts.</li> <li>7. Plant trees on the western side of the tennis/swimming pavilion to help keep players and the pavilion cooler and to provide additional shade in the car park.</li> <li>8. Purchase a new motorised spraying machine to maintain the bowls greens more effectively.</li> <li>9. Upgrade the bowls pavilion kitchen by installing a new oven and relocating the hand basin; and installing new carpet throughout the pavilion.</li> <li>10. Upgrade play equipment to ensure provision for younger and middle age groups.</li> <li>11. Undertake additional planting and landscaping around the tennis area, particularly at either end of the complex once the end tennis courts have been removed.</li> <li>12. Install lighting at the Bowls Club to allow night time training, competitions and events.</li> </ol>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Not started</p> <p>Not started</p> <p>Not started</p> <p>Not started</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Not started</p>
<b>Pyramid Hill Streetscapes Revitalisation Project 2023</b>	The Pyramid Hill Streetscapes Revitalisation Project is funded and will include tree planting, improved pedestrian amenity and navigation around the centre and between key community facilities, and a unified, exciting civic area along Kelly Street.	In progress
<b>Serpentine Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2018</b>	<p>The Serpentine Recreation Reserve Master Plan includes the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods.</li> <li>2. Implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process.</li> <li>3. Upgrade irrigation system so that it is fully automated.</li> <li>4. Purchase and install a storage tank and associated pipework to connect to the new pipeline.</li> <li>5. Re-level, laser and resurface sports ground oval to create a more uniform playing surface.</li> <li>6. Replant sports oval with warm season grasses to reduce water use.</li> </ol>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>



## 2.5 State Government Strategies

The table below summarises State Government strategies relevant to sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

**Table 5: State Strategy Review**

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
<p><b>Active Victoria</b></p>	<p>Active Victoria is the Victorian Government’s strategic framework for sport and recreation in Victoria. The framework aims to reset the sector following the COVID-19 global pandemic, build on the existing foundations for the State to be recognised as the nation’s sporting capital and to deliver a more active Victorian population.</p> <p>The vision of Active Victoria is to build a thriving, inclusive and connected sport and active recreation sector that benefits all Victorians.</p> <p>The framework includes twelve key directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase and promote opportunities so Victorians can participate in ways that suit them.</li> <li>2. Target efforts towards individuals and communities who participate less.</li> <li>3. Improve community sport and active recreation infrastructure coordination to better meet demand, with a focus on areas and populations who need it most.</li> <li>4. Deliver inclusive, multi-use and sustainable community sport and active recreation infrastructure.</li> <li>5. Attract and retain a skilled sport and active recreation workforce (paid and unpaid).</li> <li>6. Promote more financially sustainable organisations that reduce duplication and inefficiencies in service delivery.</li> <li>7. Implement frameworks to create safe and inclusive sport and active recreation settings.</li> <li>8. Build insights through better use of evidence and data.</li> <li>9. Develop a world-leading suite of major stadium and state facilities.</li> <li>10. Connected and co-ordinated pathways exist to pursue sport at the highest level.</li> <li>11. Invest in state infrastructure that can host international and regional events and support event content that boosts the Victorian economy.</li> <li>12. Partner to maximise leverage from investment in Victoria’s major events.</li> </ol> <p>The Strategy will need to respond to the strategic directions outlined above, and directly align with the identified need to increase participation and deliver multi-use sustainable community sporting infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan 2014</b></p>	<p>Regional growth plans provide broad direction for land use and development across regional Victoria. They also provide more detailed planning frameworks for key regional centres. Each of regional Victoria's regions is covered by a regional growth plan, which, together with Plan Melbourne, provide strategic land use plans for Victoria.</p> <p>The regional growth plans have been developed in a partnership with local government and state agencies and authorities through consultation with the community and key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan covers the municipalities of Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander. The Plan is endorsed by each council and is reviewed every four years.</p> <p>The Regional Growth Plan supports Bendigo as the regional city and Inglewood and Bridgewater as hinterland towns to encourage sustainable population growth; and to protect character and amenity of smaller settlements.</p> <p>The land use framework supports:</p>

Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating ongoing agricultural productivity and new opportunities that respond to climate change through ongoing adaptation and flexibility in the Loddon Shire.</li> <li>• Identifies areas containing high value terrestrial habitat in Loddon Shire (National and State Regional Parks).</li> <li>• Key transport corridors of Wimmera Hwy, Calder Hwy and Loddon Valley Hwy.</li> <li>• Rail corridors connecting Bendigo through Loddon Shire to Swan Hill/Kerang and connecting Maryborough through Loddon Shire to Boort and Mildura.</li> <li>• Support the ongoing role of the region’s small towns and settlements.</li> <li>• Acknowledge the non-urban population’s contribution to the region.</li> <li>• Invest in liveability, infrastructure and urban design initiatives.</li> <li>• Build community connectedness and reduce areas of social disadvantage.</li> </ul> <p>The land use planning framework provides for sport and recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services to deliver liveability benefits to the region.</p>
<p><b>Recognition and Settlement Agreement 2013</b></p>	<p>The Recognition and Settlement Agreement supports Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the land.</p> <p>As part of the agreement, six parks including Hepburn Regional Park, Paddys Ranges State Park, Kooyoora State Park, Wehla Conservation Reserve, Greater Bendigo National Park and Kara Kara National Park have been transferred to the Traditional Owners on Aboriginal Title.</p> <p>The Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board have a joint management plan with the State Government (Parks Victoria) for managing the parks. The plan includes strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the natural values and cultural values.</li> <li>• Managing threatened species.</li> <li>• Recognition and utilisation of traditional Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge and customs.</li> <li>• Attracting and managing visitors and identifying opportunities for benefits flowing from enhanced park experiences for visitors, the Dja Dja Wurrung people and wider community.</li> <li>• Connection with broader Dja Dja Wurrung Country.</li> <li>• Consequent economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for Dja Dja Wurrung people and the wider community.</li> </ul> <p>Public access to the parks and reserves continues in accordance with applicable legislation.</p>

## 2.6 National and International Strategies

The table below summarises National and International strategies relevant to sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

**Table 6: International, National and State Strategy Review**

Other Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
<b>International</b>	
<p><b>World Health Organisation: Brief for Action on Urban Green Spaces (2017)</b></p>	<p>Urban green spaces are a feature of healthy settlements and that the evidence proves <i>“green spaces benefit cities and urban quality of life”</i>.</p> <p>The brief found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban living limits access to nature and can increase exposure to certain environmental hazards such as air and noise pollution.</li> <li>• Many urban areas face increasing pressure from expanding populations, limited resources and growing impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>

Other Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These challenges must be addressed for cities to provide healthy and sustainable living environments.</li> </ul> <p>“Green spaces” include parks, playgrounds or vegetation in public and private places. They offer nature-based solutions that can help ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents have adequate opportunities for exposure to nature.</li> <li>• Biodiversity is maintained and protected.</li> <li>• Environmental hazards such as air pollution or noise are reduced.</li> <li>• Impacts of extreme weather events (heatwaves, extreme rainfall and flooding) are mitigated.</li> <li>• Quality of living (Liveability benefits) is enhanced.</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing of residents is improved.</li> </ul> <p>The brief includes planning and design advice based on an extensive evidence base reviewed as part of the brief. Key planning considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put the green space close to people.</li> <li>• Consider simple design features to improve the comfort of green space use.</li> <li>• Plan for a diversity of green space types.</li> <li>• Think of the maintenance needs of green space.</li> </ul>
<p><b>World Health Organisation: Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health (2010)</b></p>	<p>Physical inactivity is now identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality. Physical inactivity levels are rising in many countries with major implications for the prevalence of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and the general health of the population worldwide.</p> <p>The focus of the Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health is primary prevention of NCDs through physical activity at population level and the primary target audience for these recommendations are policymakers at national level.</p> <p>The recommendations address three age groups:</p> <p><b>1. Children and young people aged 5–17 years old</b> physical activity includes play, games, sports, transportation, recreation, physical education or planned exercise, in the context of family, school, and community activities. To improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, bone health, cardiovascular and metabolic health biomarkers and reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, the following are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.</li> <li>• Physical activity of amounts greater than 60 minutes daily will provide additional health benefits.</li> <li>• Most of daily physical activity should be aerobic. Vigorous-intensity activities should be incorporated, including those that strengthen muscle and bone, at least three times per week.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Adults 18–64 years old</b> physical activity includes recreational or leisure-time physical activity, transportation (e.g., walking or cycling), occupational (i.e., work), household chores, play, games, sports or planned exercise, in the context of daily, family, and community activities. To improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, bone health and reduce the risk of NCDs and depression the following are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week or do at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous-intensity activity.</li> <li>• Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes duration.</li> <li>• For additional health benefits, adults should increase their moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity to 300 minutes per week or engage in 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous-intensity activity.</li> </ul>



Other Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscle-strengthening activities should be done involving major muscle groups on two or more days a week.</li> </ul> <p>3. <b>Adults 65 years old and above</b>, physical activity includes recreational or leisure-time physical activity, transportation (e.g., walking or cycling), occupational (if the person is still engaged in work), household chores, play, games, sports or planned exercise, in the context of daily, family and community activities. To improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, bone and functional health, and reduce the risk of NCDs, depression and cognitive decline, the following are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week or do at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous-intensity activity.</li> <li>• Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes duration.</li> <li>• For additional health benefits, adults aged 65 years and above should increase their moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity to 300 minutes per week or engage in 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous-intensity activity.</li> <li>• Adults of this age group with poor mobility should perform physical activity to enhance balance and prevent falls on 3 or more days per week.</li> <li>• Muscle-strengthening activities should be done involving major muscle groups on two or more days a week.</li> <li>• When adults of this age group cannot do the recommended amounts of physical activity due to health conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.</li> </ul> <p>Overall, across all the age groups, the benefits of implementing the above recommendations and of being physically active outweigh the harms. At the recommended level of 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, musculoskeletal injury rates appear to be uncommon. In a population-based approach, to decrease the risks of musculoskeletal injuries, it would be appropriate to encourage a moderate start with gradual progress to higher levels of physical activity.</p>
<b>National</b>	
<p><b>Sport 2030: Sport Australia (2018)</b></p>	<p>This Strategy is Australia’s first national sport plan; it is the vision and the plan for sport and physical activity in Australia over the next 12 years to be delivered in partnership with Australia’s sporting, physical activity, technology, education and corporate community. The Plan on a page summary:</p> <p>The impact/effect of Sport 2030 on local government is within the first Strategic priority (Building a More Active Australia) with the role of local government being recognised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the sporting ecosystem.</li> <li>• A partner with Australian and state governments, non-government organisations and corporate sector that share the vision for a more active Australia.</li> <li>• Working alongside Australian and state governments in funding infrastructure that meets the ever-changing needs of Australian communities.</li> </ul>

Other Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with Australian government and national sporting organisations to create database of sports infrastructure and to develop a national approach to mapping infrastructure across the country.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>Australia:</b> To be the world's most active and healthy sporting nation, known for its integrity and sporting success.</p> </div> 
<p><b>Sport Australia Australian Physical Literacy Framework (2019)</b></p>	<p><b>Physical Literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is lifelong holistic learning acquired and applied in movement and physical activity contexts.</li> <li>Reflects ongoing changes integrating physical, psychological, social and cognitive capabilities.</li> <li>Is vital in helping us lead healthy and fulfilling lives through movement and physical activity.</li> </ul> <p>A physically literate person can draw on their integrated physical, psychological, social and cognitive capabilities to support health promoting and fulfilling movement and physical activity – relative to their situation and context – throughout the lifespan.</p> <p><b>The Framework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Categorises a range of movement-related skills, knowledge and behaviours into interrelated domains, elements and stages.</li> <li>Helps identify a person’s capability across all four domains and allows people to make informed decisions about their physical literacy.</li> </ul>

Other Strategies	Relevant Themes/Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a common language around effective development of physical literacy.</li> <li>• Accommodates the entire range of abilities, ages and backgrounds of all Australians.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p>This diagram demonstrates the four domains that the Framework is arranged around.</p> <p>The role and relationship of community/ industry segments to the Framework is articulated; with Policy makers being the most relevant to this Strategy; and the Framework application to policy makers helps them embed physical literacy through systems and policies (health, education, sport and physical activity), using physical literacy as a tool to improve individual and societal health and wellbeing.</p>
<p><b>Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines</b></p>	<p><b>For Children and Young People (5-17 years)</b></p> <p>Physical Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accumulating 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day involving mainly aerobic activities.</li> <li>• Several hours of a variety of light physical activities.</li> <li>• Activities that are vigorous, as well as those that strengthen muscle and bone should be incorporated at least three days per week.</li> <li>• To achieve greater health benefits, replace sedentary time with additional moderate to vigorous physical activity, while preserving sufficient sleep.</li> </ul> <p>Sedentary Behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break up long periods of sitting as often as possible.</li> <li>• Limit sedentary recreational screen time to no more than two hours per day.</li> <li>• When using screen-based electronic media, positive social interactions and experiences are encouraged.</li> </ul> <p><b>For Adults (18-64 years)</b></p> <p>Physical Activity Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing any physical activity is better than doing none. If you currently do no physical activity, start by doing some and gradually build up to the recommended amount.</li> <li>• Be active on most, preferably all, days every week.</li> <li>• Accumulate 150 to 300 minutes (2 ½ to 5 hours) of moderate intensity physical activity or 75 to 150 minutes (1 ¼ to 2 ½ hours) of vigorous intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both moderate and vigorous activities, each week.</li> <li>• Do muscle strengthening activities on at least two days each week.</li> </ul> <p>Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise the amount of time spent in prolonged sitting.</li> <li>• Break up long periods of sitting as often as possible.</li> </ul>

## 2.7 Research Findings

*How do people use our open spaces and sport and recreation facilities today and into the future?*

### What are the benefits of public open spaces?

Our parks, sport and recreation facilities are critical for community health and wellbeing, helping to benefit our community:



**Physically and mentally** by promoting physical activity and active lifestyles, reducing illness and disease, improving mental health and creating a sense of wellbeing.



**Socially** by generating stronger and more connected communities with improved social interaction and inclusion through provision of active and vibrant community hubs, access to facilities and resources, opportunities for volunteering and involvement.



**Environmentally** by developing well-planned and attractive settings encouraging active transport and use of public parks and leisure services. The provision of parks and green environments also include temperature reduction and mitigation of the urban heat island effect; air quality improvement; management of storm water reducing the incidence of flooding and water-borne disease; ecosystem support and biodiversity enhancement.



**Economically** by assisting to reduce health care cost through reduction in disease and illness associated with lack of physical activity and social interaction. A park and public space network can also provide local employment and investment opportunities and contribute to maintaining a healthy workforce.

“Evidence from around the world for building cities and regional areas around public open space, active recreation areas, green streets and walking and cycling infrastructure, has repeatedly demonstrated this approach will deliver improved health, social cohesion, vibrant local economies, productivity, and environmental benefits.” (State of New South Wales 2020 Draft Greener Spaces Design Guide).

Public open space, sport and recreation infrastructure could be defined as a critical investment in current and future populations. This “Urban Health Infrastructure” delivers multiple returns on investment.

The National Heart Foundation observes:

- The health effects of physical activity are compelling. However, the potency of physical activity as a policy investment for Australia extends far beyond health. Active living plays a key role in broader economic and social goals for our nation; walking, cycling and public transport are affordable and sustainable solutions to traffic congestion.
- These same behaviours contribute to cleaner air, reduced carbon emissions and sustainable environments.
- Active neighbourhoods and cities are more liveable, with higher levels of social capital and community cohesion and lower levels of crime.
- In the context of an ageing community, physical activity enables older Australians to live more active lifestyles with reduced risk from disabling and costly chronic diseases.
- Fit and active workers are more productive, take fewer sick days and make a positive contribution to our economic wellbeing.

(A Blueprint for an Active Australia, Heart Foundation, 2019)

In 2019 the National Heart Foundation of Australia released its third edition of the **Blueprint for an Active Australia**. The report highlights the importance of sport and physical activity to our health and wellbeing.

Some key evidence cited in this report includes:

- Physical activity can significantly reduce heart disease risk and the burden of a range of other chronic diseases, as well as improve mental health.
- Heart disease remains the single leading cause of death in Australia.
- Nearly 6 in 10 adults, 3 quarters of seniors and over 8 in 10 children and young people are not active enough for good heart health. This ranges Australia among the world's most inactive nations.
- 1 in 3 Australians aged 15 and over do very little or no exercise at all.
- 70% of Australian men and 56% of Australian women are overweight or obese.
- 1 in 5 Australians experience a mental illness.
- Physical inactivity contributes to 19% of diabetes cases, 16% of bowel cancer cases, 16% of uterine cancer cases, 14% of dementia cases, 11% of breast cancer cases, 11% of coronary heart disease and 10% of strokes.

These statistics are even more severe across disadvantaged groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that suffer two to three times worse off on most social and health indicators reported.

#### What is the economic cost of physical inactivity?

The University of Sydney study found in 2013 that physical inactivity costs Australia \$805 million each year (Source: Lancet Journal, 2016). This cost is made up of direct health care expenses linked to chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease and indirect costs of productivity losses when people die prematurely because of physical inactivity.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently conducted research into the global cost of physical activity. Key findings were:

- 499.2 million new cases of preventable major non communicable diseases (NCDs) would occur globally by 2030 if the prevalence of physical inactivity does not change, with direct health-care costs of INT\$520 billion.
- The global cost of inaction on physical inactivity would reach approximately \$47.6 billion per year. Although 74% of new cases of NCDs would occur in low-income and middle-countries, high-income countries would bear a larger proportion (63%) of the economic costs.
- The cost of treatment and management of NCDs varied—although dementia accounted for only 3% of new preventable NCDs, the disease corresponded to 22% of all costs; Type 2 diabetes accounted for 2% of new preventable cases but 9% of all costs; and cancers accounted for 1% of new preventable cases but 15% of all costs.

#### What is the role of government in reversing this trend?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Constitution (1947) best defines the rights of Australians and the government's role: "Having the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition and that governments have the responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures".

In 2017, the World Health Organisation (WHO) released a **Brief for Action on Urban Green Spaces**. The brief is based on extensive evidence supporting the need for urban green space and includes blue spaces, water bodies and corridors.

WHO explains that urban green spaces are a feature of healthy settlements and that the evidence proves “*green spaces benefit cities and urban quality of life*”.

Our urban green spaces including parks, civic spaces, active transport corridors, sport and recreation facilities and spaces, streets, water bodies and open space corridors, enable people to live a healthy and active lifestyle. These spaces and places help people escape from the built environment and reconnect with nature. They provide social spaces for us to connect with each other and strengthen our sense of community. They help us learn. They protect natural environments, important habitats and cultural heritage. They offer opportunities for tourism, sustainable economies and investment in social capital. Our green spaces are the lungs of our growing cities and the solution to overheating as the climate continues to change.

We need to have urban environments that make it easy and attractive to exercise as well as provide a range of opportunities to enable activity. While it is important to promote the benefits of physical activity to children and adults, there is a need to ensure that our parks can support and encourage physical activity for all ages, abilities, genders, cultures and socio-economic groups.

The **Healthy by Design Framework** supports availability of green spaces, including parks, playgrounds and streetscapes that are safe, accessible, walkable and inviting are a key component of an environment that supports physically active lifestyles.

## 2.8 Key Findings of the Strategic Review

**There is strategic support for improving the accessibility, diversity and quality of recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services to improve community health and wellbeing in Loddon.**

Sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services are integral to achieving the visions of Loddon Shire Council and are recognised as key ingredients to achieving community health and wellbeing in Loddon and an important part of the social fabric and character of our agricultural/farming communities. They provide opportunities to be active and are highly valued by the Loddon communities, delivering social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits.

The Strategy aligns with Loddon Shire Council’s strategic plans and commitments. Specifically, the Strategy will respond to the *Loddon Council Plan 2021-2025* directions to ‘Plan for Future Facilities and Infrastructure That Meet Community Needs’ and ‘Maintain Sports and Recreation and Open Public Spaces to enable and Promote Access and Participation’.

The Strategy will supersede the Recreation Strategy 2014 and be an overarching strategy that consolidates strategic priorities identified in the:

- *Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024*
- *Swimming Pool Improvements Plan 2018-2022*
- Outstanding actions identified in recreation reserve masterplans.

The Strategy will also align with State Government policy. Specifically, Sport and Recreation Victoria’s *Active Victoria (Strategic Framework)* and the *Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan*.



This Strategy now requires a planning framework that will help guide and inform the Council on what types of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities are required to meet the short, medium and aspirational needs of the Loddon Shire community.

The Strategy will prioritise and align project outcomes with Council's Annual Budget, Council's Asset Management Strategy and other potential funding mechanisms.

### **Loddon Shire Council has invested significantly in the improvement of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities following flooding events**

Loddon Shire Council has improved the sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services over the last 10 years. This includes upgraded sports fields, courts, lighting and pavilions. The Council has also invested in developing walking and cycling trails and streetscape improvements within township areas.

A program of sport and recreation reserve master plans has been implemented over the last 10 years that has improved the function, capacity and quality of facilities. Continued investment in the implementation of master plans will ensure contemporary facilities that meet user needs and experiences.

### **Asset condition varies, and the asset renewal funding gap is widening**

The assets vary in condition, with several ageing and needing renewal. Council's asset management obligation is a key consideration for the project. The Asset Plan 2022 projects a funding shortfall to meet the current asset replacement and maintenance requirements in the next 10 years.

A strategic approach that considers a hierarchy and agreed design and maintenance standards is required to improve sport and recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities in the future.

Further, condition audits for Council's five outdoor public swimming pools and a review into the operational performance of Loddon Shire's aquatic service found the asset condition and ongoing operation of the outdoor pools is a concern. The pools do not meet current industry standards and are now 50+ years old. They are currently costing Council \$40-50 per visit. The Strategy will need to explore how a sustainable aquatic service can be provided in Loddon Shire.

Council will need to consider the long-term financial capacity to renew assets. An examination of the need for an asset at the time of renewal is required to ensure the current and future needs of community are met within a funding profile available to Council.

### **Sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services will need to respond to State, National and International issues and strategies**

Sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services follow trends being influenced by broader state, national and internal policy. Loddon Shire Council must ensure future planning for sport and active recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities is adaptable to this changing environment.

WHO Urban Green Spaces: A Brief for Action (2017) highlights the important role green spaces (our parks, playground and vegetated areas) play to ensuring:

- People have adequate opportunities for exposure to nature.
- Biodiversity is maintained and protected.
- Environmental hazards such as air pollution or noise are reduced.
- Impacts of extreme weather events (heatwaves, extreme rainfall and flooding) are mitigated.

- Quality of living (Liveability benefits) is enhanced.
- Health and wellbeing of residents is improved.

Delivering accessible “green spaces” is critical to our health and wellbeing. WHO Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health (2010) highlight that physical inactivity is now the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality. This challenge is further evidenced by Sport 2030: Sport Australia (2018) report which incorporates a mission to reduce physical inactivity amongst Australians by 15% by 2030.

The WHO suggests a multifaceted approach to supporting increased physical activity levels and differentiates the targeted duration and intensity of physical activity goals by age, as follows:

- Aged 5 – 17 years - Accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.
- Aged 18 – 64 years - At least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, or at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity.
- Aged 65+ years - At least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, or at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity.

Whilst Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines differ slightly from the above goals, the overall objectives remain the same. That is, to increase physical activity levels by Australians across all age cohorts. Sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services play a critical role in achieving this through maximising opportunities for people to be physically active and facilitating a connection to nature. With limited resources available to local governments to support these outcomes, strategies must be realistic and focus on maximising participation and environmental outcomes.

## 3. Demand Assessment

### *Who are we planning for?*

This section assesses the different drivers of demand on our sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services, including population and demographic influences and local and national participation trends.

### 3.1 Demographic Influences

#### Current Population

The following table represents the demographics of Loddon Shire broken down into townships and is categorised by population, age and cultural diversity. Data is sourced from the *Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021*.

The total population of Loddon Shire in 2021 was 7,759. The biggest township in the Shire is Boort with a population of 808, followed by Inglewood with a population of 779.

There is an almost even split of the population between males and females, with 50.6% of the population being male and 49.4% female.

**Table 7: Current Population**

Township	Total Population 2021	Males	Females	Median Age	Overseas population	Aboriginal
<b>Loddon Shire</b>	<b>7,759</b>	<b>50.6%</b>	<b>49.4%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>170</b>
Boort	808	46.1%	53.9%	58	220	14
Inglewood	779	49.6%	50.4%	55	132	23
Wedderburn	650	48.2%	51.8%	57	145	12
Pyramid Hill	475	48.3%	51.7%	47	159	14
Bridgewater	341	50.0%	50.0%	50	56	8
Serpentine	222	48.4%	51.6%	40	40	0
Dingee	195	50.3%	49.7%	50	20	0
Laanecoorie	179	54.9%	45.1%	57	38	3
Newbridge	171	52.9%	47.1%	58	6	3
Tarnagulla	153	52.9%	47.1%	59	29	9
Korong Vale	143	52.7%	47.3%	57	28	9
Mitiamo	116	48.2%	51.8%	50	26	0
Eddington	113	48.3%	51.7%	42	8	4

#### Future Population

The following graph shows an increase of 0% and 1% over the last 10 years. Loddon Shire Council takes the view that the estimated population growth rate for Loddon Shire over the next decade is, on average, 0.5%.

The 2022 estimated population rate of 7,748 is projected to grow to 8,144 by 2032 (+396). The townships identified for population growth in the Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan are Bridgewater and Inglewood.

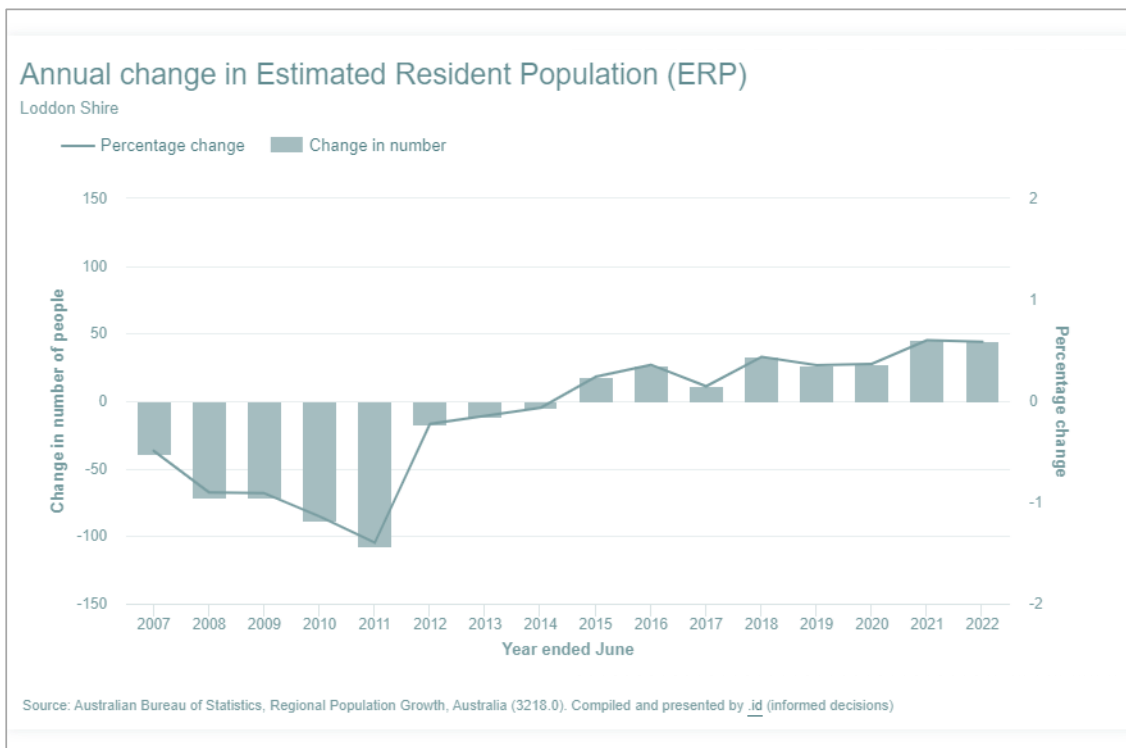


Figure 5: Loddon Shire Population (Source: .idcommunity)

**Age profile**

Loddon Shire is ageing. Key statistics show:

- The median age of Loddon Shire residents is 52 years. While most townships reflect the same median age, Serpentine (40), Eddington (42) and Pyramid Hill (47) have a relatively younger population.
- The age group with the highest population in most townships is 60 to 69 years.
- There are 24.6% of the population under 25 years, 30.4% between 22 and 54 years and 44.9% over 55 years.

Loddon Shire’s older demographic will need accessible active recreation facilities, programs, and services to support fitness, therapy and socialisation.

**Diversity**

Loddon Shire has a moderate level of diversity. Key statistics show:

- 2.2% of the population are Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander, compared to 1.9% in Regional Victoria.
- 8.6% of the population was born overseas (Cultural and Linguistically Diverse), compared to 12.4% in Regional Victoria.
- 7.5% of the population reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability, compared to 6.9% in Regional Victoria.
- The highest number of people born overseas were born in England (185), followed by Philippines (107) and New Zealand (74).

- There are pockets of CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities in Loddon Shire. Particularly in Boort, which has the highest number of Indian population (17) and Pyramid Hill, which has the highest number of Philippines population (74).

Aboriginal and CALD populations in Loddon Shire townships highlight the need for inclusive and culturally sensitive sport and active recreation facilities, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

The high rates of disability in Loddon Shire mean accessible facilities and participation opportunities like adaptive sports and therapy-based programs are required to encourage participation.

To address the diverse needs of different cultural backgrounds in the Loddon Shire community, the Strategy will engage with representative groups and understand preferences with a view of offering tailored programs and services that leads to greater participation.

### Social disadvantage

Loddon Shire has a high level of social disadvantage when compared to Victoria. It is ranked 72 out of 79 councils in Victoria on the socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA). Key statistics show:

- SEIFA Index of Disadvantage for Loddon Shire in 2021 was 948.
- The median weekly personal income in Loddon Shire is \$554 which is lower compared to the Victorian median weekly income of \$803.
- The median weekly household income in Loddon Shire is \$1,039 which is lower than the Victorian median household income of \$1,759.

The high levels of socioeconomic disadvantage experienced in Loddon shows the need for affordable and inclusive sport and active recreation facilities, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

The Strategy will explore targeted interventions that may be necessary to deliver equitable access to participation opportunities for people experienced social disadvantage.

### Health and wellbeing characteristics<sup>1</sup>

Loddon Shire is part of the Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership, which also includes the Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shires. The regional partnership has prioritised health and wellbeing through the Healthy Loddon Campaspe initiative which continues to fund place-based projects to address rates of obesity, chronic disability and high-risk behaviours.

The following figure highlights the key statistics in relation to health and wellbeing of Loddon residents when compared to Victoria.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Australian Health Policy Collaboration: Australia's Health Tracker Atlas, published Sept 2020; Australian Health Policy Collaboration (AHPC) at Victoria University and the Public Health Information and Development Unit (PHIDU) at Torrens University

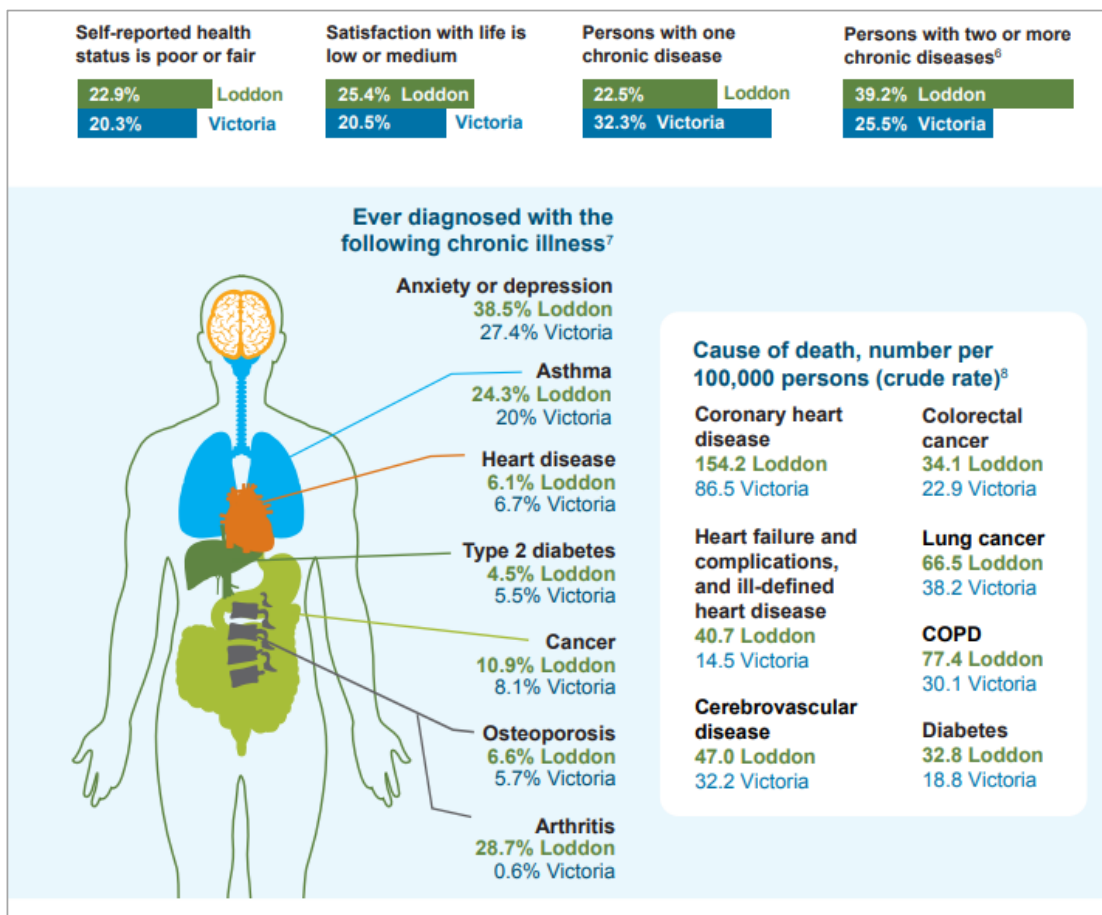


Figure 6: Loddon Shire Council Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 snapshot

Other key health and wellbeing statistics:

- One-third (36.6%) of Loddon people (compared to 24.4% of Victoria) self-reported dental health status as fair/poor.
- Nearly one-third (30.1%) of Loddon people (compared to 33.9% of Victoria) avoided or delayed visiting a dental health professional due to cost.
- One quarter (26.95%) of Loddon people (compared to 16.7% of Victoria) reported as a current smoker with most (25.5%) smoking daily.
- Half (50.1%) of Loddon people (compared to 50.8% of Victoria) are pre-obese or obese.
- Community members highlighted increased social isolation as a major mental health issue related to the pandemic. Associated with this is the increased importance of self-care during these times.
- There were 43.1% of people reporting insufficient physical activity time and sessions as per physical activity guidelines. This compares to 41.1% in Victoria. Main barriers to meeting daily physical activity guidelines were time poor (45.1%), poor health or disability (21%) and cost (19.6%).
- On average, Loddon residents travel 20.6km to get to their activities. Walking is the most popular physical activity among residents, with 19.6% of the population reporting that they walked for exercise in the previous 12 months. Most residents who walked for exercise in the past 12 months did so once per week or more (72.1%).



A key objective of the Strategy is to **get Loddon active** and reverse the significant health issues being experienced in Loddon Shire such as heart diseases, cancer, anxiety, depression, and diabetes. The Strategy will explore ways to promote physical fitness, mental wellbeing, and community engagement and offering preventive and rehabilitative measures. This will in time reduce healthcare costs and improve the overall health and quality of life for Loddon Shire residents.

### 3.2 Local Participation Trends

#### Active Living Census 2019

This section summarises the findings from the 2019 Active Living Census for Loddon Shire.

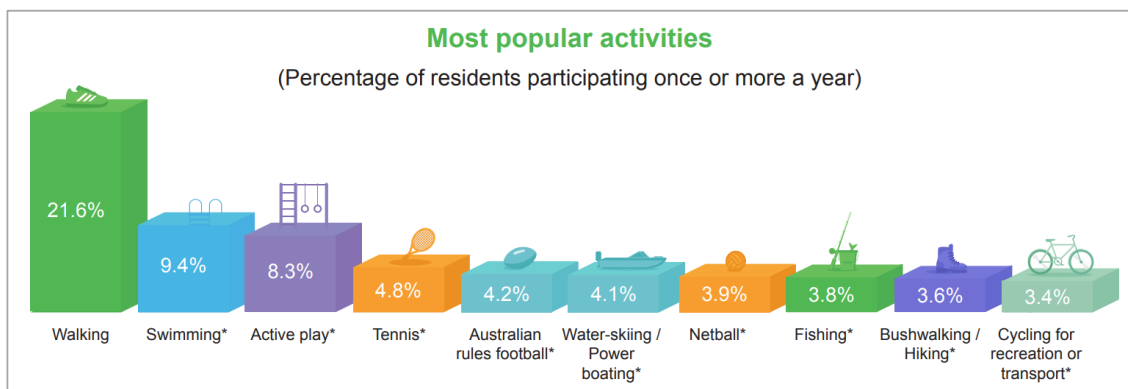












Figure 7: Most Popular Activities in Loddon Shire

The table below shows the 20 activities with the highest rates of annual participation (participating at least once per year). It also displays the rates of weekly participation for those activities (participating at least once per week during the previous 12 months).





















Table 8: Participation, Quality and Accessibility

Activity	Total	Weekly	Quality (out of 5)	Accessibility (out of 5)
Walking	19.6%	72.1%	4.0	4.2
Swimming	9.0%	46.9%	4.1	4.1
Active play	6.6%	54.1%	4.2	4.2
Tennis (indoor / outdoor)	5.8%	68.6%	4.0	4.2
Bush walking / Hiking	5.3%	28.5%	4.1	4.0
Australian rules football	4.3%	83.3%	4.1	4.1
Netball (indoor / outdoor)	3.8%	93.7%	4.2	4.3
Lawn bowls	3.6%	62.1%	4.3	4.2
Fishing	3.5%	8.8%	3.6	3.7
Golf	3.3%	42.9%	3.8	4.2

	Activity	Total	Weekly	Quality (out of 5)	Accessibility (out of 5)
	Fitness: Gym	3.1%	79.0%	4.3	4.5
	Cycling: General cycling for recreation or transport	3.1%	54.3%	4.0	4.4
	Horse riding/Equestrian	1.9%	35.2%	4.3	4.3
	Fitness: Indoor group activities	1.7%	79.7%	4.5	4.3
	Fitness: Outdoor fitness	1.7%	79.9%	4.3	4.6
	Canoeing/Kayaking/Rowing/Paddle boarding	1.6%	15.8%	3.9	3.9
	Water-skiing/Power boating	1.5%	8.9%	3.8	3.9
	Jogging/Running	1.4%	83.4%	3.9	4.3
	Hockey (indoor/outdoor)	1.3%	94.8%	4.2	4.1
	Martial Arts/Tai Chi	1.3%	75.3%	4.1	4.4

The table below indicates the percentage of residents aged three years and over, participating once or more a year, broken down by gender.

Table 9: Sport Participation Broken Down by Gender

Male participation			Female participation		
	Walking	16.5%		Walking	22.2%
	Swimming	8.1%		Swimming	9.7%
	Australian rules football	8.0%		Active play	6.7%
	Active play	6.4%		Tennis	5.5%
	Tennis	6.1%		Bushwalking/Hiking	5.6%
	Bushwalking / Hiking	5.1%		Australian rules football	1.0%
	Lawn bowls	4.9%		Netball	6.6%
	Fishing	4.9%		Lawn bowls	2.5%
	Golf	4.8%		Fishing	2.3%
	Cycling for recreation or transport	3.7%		Golf	2.0%

Following were the main recreation facilities used in Loddon Shire as reported in the Active Living Census:

- Little Lake Boort Trail, Boort
- Boort Park
- Donaldson Park, Wedderburn
- Bridgewater River Walk/Bridgewater foreshore, Bridgewater on Loddon
- Serpentine Recreation Reserve
- Boort Swimming Pool
- Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre, Kangaroo Flat
- Wedderburn Pool
- Bridgewater Recreation Reserve, Bridgewater on Loddon
- Boort Bowls, Croquet and Tennis Facility.

The figure below shows the reported barriers to being more active in Loddon Shire:

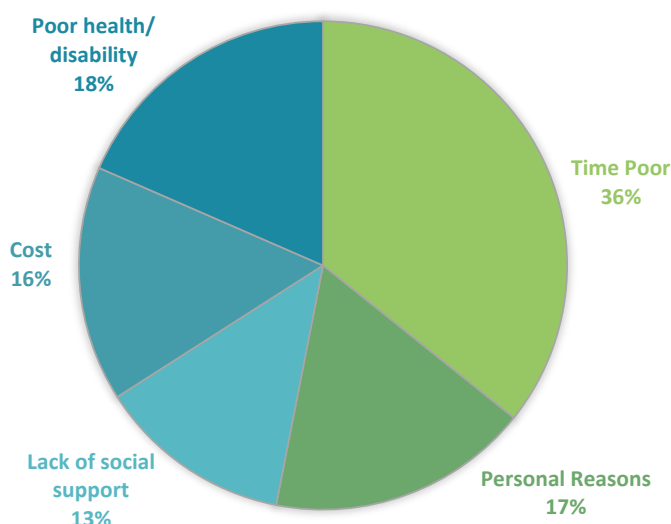


Figure 8: Barriers to people being more active in Loddon Shire

Some groups were particularly affected by certain barriers to participation in physical activities. For example, cost was identified at high rates by people identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and by food insecure or low-income households.

People in Loddon Shire reported wanting to be more active. There were 54.6% of people who want to participate in more activities, including adult females, males between the age of 18 and 69, low-income households, food insecure households, people who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Key findings of the participation data for Loddon Shire captured by the Active Living Census included:

- Sport Participation: The data shows that walking is the most popular physical activity, with 21.6% of the population participating in the activity. Swimming, active play, tennis, and bush walking/hiking also have notable participation rates, although they are less popular than walking.

- **Weekly Participation:** Walking has the highest weekly participation rate at 72.1%, followed by active play (54.1%) and tennis (68.6%). This suggests that these activities are part of regular routines for many individuals.
- **Quality Ratings:** The quality ratings for these activities range from 4.0 to 4.2, indicating that they are generally well-regarded in terms of the quality of the experience they provide. Higher quality ratings suggest that participants have positive experiences and are satisfied with the activities.
- **Accessibility Ratings:** Accessibility ratings for these activities are relatively high, ranging from 4.0 to 4.2. This implies that these activities are accessible to a wide range of people, making them convenient and available for the community.
- **Use of Open Spaces:** A significant 79.6% of people reported using open spaces, with more than half (51.9%) using open spaces weekly or more often. This highlights the importance of open spaces in promoting physical activity and recreation within the community.
- **Meeting Physical Activity Guidelines:** Approximately 50.8% of Loddon residents meet the physical activity guidelines, which is a positive sign. However, there is still room for improvement to increase the number of people meeting these guidelines.
- **Age and Gender Differences:** The data indicates that physical activity levels tend to decline with age for both males and females. This finding underscores the need for strategies to promote physical activity among older populations. Additionally, there is a desire for more physical activity, especially among females aged 18+ and males aged 18 to 69, which suggests an opportunity for targeted interventions.
- **Low-Income Households:** Cost is a significant barrier to physical activity, particularly for individuals identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, as well as for those in food insecure or low-income households. This finding underscores the importance of addressing financial barriers and making physical activities more affordable and accessible for these specific groups. Strategies to reduce the financial burden associated with participation in sports, recreation, and aquatic activities may be needed to promote inclusivity and equity in these activities.

### 3.3 Local Sports Participation Trends

#### AusPlay participation rates in sport

To gain an insight into the local participation level of major participation sports in the Loddon Shire Council area, the AusPlay participation rates were applied to the current (2021) and 2041 population forecasts. State participation rates were used for sports where data was reported. National participation rates were used for sports where State participation rates were not available.

The table below summarises the outcomes of applying the adult and children AusPlay participation rates to the current (2021) and 2041 population forecasts for major participation sports played at Loddon Shire sport and active recreation reserves.

Please note that the following sports were not assessed because they are supported by 'regional' sports facilities in Bendigo and Kerang: cycling, athletics, basketball, volleyball, swimming, table tennis, badminton and soccer.

The following sports have regional centres in Bendigo but are included in the assessment because there is a local competition provided in Loddon Shire. These are Australian Rules football, cricket, netball, tennis and hockey. The regional sports facilities are profiled in the supply analysis chapter.

Table 10: Population Projections 2022-2042

Loddon Shire Council Population	Adult (15yr+)	Children (0-14yrs)	Total
2021	6,592 (85%)	1,159 (15%)	7,751
2041	6,926	1,218	8,144

The table below shows minimal participation growth by 2032 if the current participation rate is maintained for major participation sports models.

There is a potential for additional participants if new playing formats and competitions are introduced. Recent improvements at sport and recreation reserves have improved the capacity for these facilities to meet any future participation growth over the next 20 years if there is an upsurge in participants through these initiatives.

Table 11: Participation Projections 2021-2041

Sports	2022 Total Participation – Model Participation Rate	2041 Total Participation – Model Participation Rate
<b>Outdoor Field Sports</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>724</b>
Australian Football	393	413
Cricket	227	239
Hockey	68	72
<b>Outdoor Court and Green Sports</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>1,135</b>
Netball	289	303
Tennis	375	394
Bowls	79	83
Golf	337	354
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>1,858</b>

### 3.4 National and State Participation Trends

Since 2001, data has been collected on participation in exercise, recreation and sport by adults aged 15 years and over. Consistent data was collected via the Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) between 2001 and 2010. Similar data was collected by the ABS between 2011 and 2014. The **AusPlay Survey** was introduced by the Australian Sports Commission in 2015 and collects sports participation data for children aged 0-14 and adults aged 15 and over. The latest data was released in October 2022, with results for the 2021-22 financial year. Annually, about 20,000 interviews are conducted with adults aged 15 and over and about 3,500 interviews with parents/guardians of children under 15 years of age.

The AusPlay survey results are summarised in this section.

Key physical activity participation statistics from AusPlay show:

- Children (0-14 years) are getting back to regular participation, at least 1+ per week. 42% of children participated in organised out-of-school hours sport and physical activity in 2020-21 increasing to 47% in 2021-22. This shows participation levels in organised sport and physical activity is returning to pre-COVID pandemic levels.
- Mental health is a growing motivator of participation across all age groups and genders.

- Inactive adult Australians reporting that physical activity is not a priority has increased from 7% in 2020-21 to 11% in 2021-22.
- Adult participation in sport and physical activity remained at similar levels since 2016-17 to 2021-22:
  - 81% of adults participate at least 1+ per week in 2021-22 compared to 80% in 2020-21 and 81% in 2016-17.
  - 41% of adults participate in sport-related activity at least 1+ per week in 2021-22 compared to 41% in 2020-21 and 42% in 2016-17.
  - 21% of adults participate through a sports club or association at least 1+ per week in 2021-22 compared to 21% in 2020-21 and 21% in 2016-17.
- Physical health and fitness remain the primary motivators for 83% of 15+ year olds and for all ages and abilities. A greater percentage of 15–19-year-olds recorded health and fitness as their motivation, the most significant increase (14%) of all age/ability groups from 62%-84% between 2016-17 and 2021-22.
- Nearly double the percentage of the population were motivated by mental health benefits over the same period, increasing by 15% from 16% to 31%. This trend occurred equally across all age/ability groups apart from the 55+ age group for whom the increase was 11%.
- Fun and enjoyment have continued to be the second most significant motivator for engagement in physical activity across all age and ability groups (46%), the increase being more significant in the 55+, LOTE (Language other than English) and disability cohorts. However, it continues to be the primary motivator for 70% of 15-19-year-olds, followed by fitness and health.
- Young people 15-19 (39%) are also more motivated by the social benefits compared to the general population (39%). Benefits associated with being in the outdoors is now significantly more important to females (23%) than males (17%) than in 2016-17 when it was important to 16% of females and 13% of males.
- Poor health or injury (27%), not enough time/too many other commitments (24%) and not a priority (11%) are major barriers to participation.
- Children’s participation (0-14 years) in sport and physical activity has increased in the last 12 months but is still below 2016-17 levels:
  - 47% of children participate in out-of-school hours sport and physical activity at least 1+ per week in 2021-22 compared to 42% in 2020-21 and 62% in 2016-17.
  - 43% of children participate in out-of-school hours sport and physical activity at least 1+ per week in 2021-22 compared to 37% in 2020-21 and 57% in 2016-17.
  - 43% of children participate through a sports club or association at least 1+ per week in 2021-22 compared to 41% in 2020-21 and 46% in 2016-17.



The following figure shows the adult frequency of participation rates:

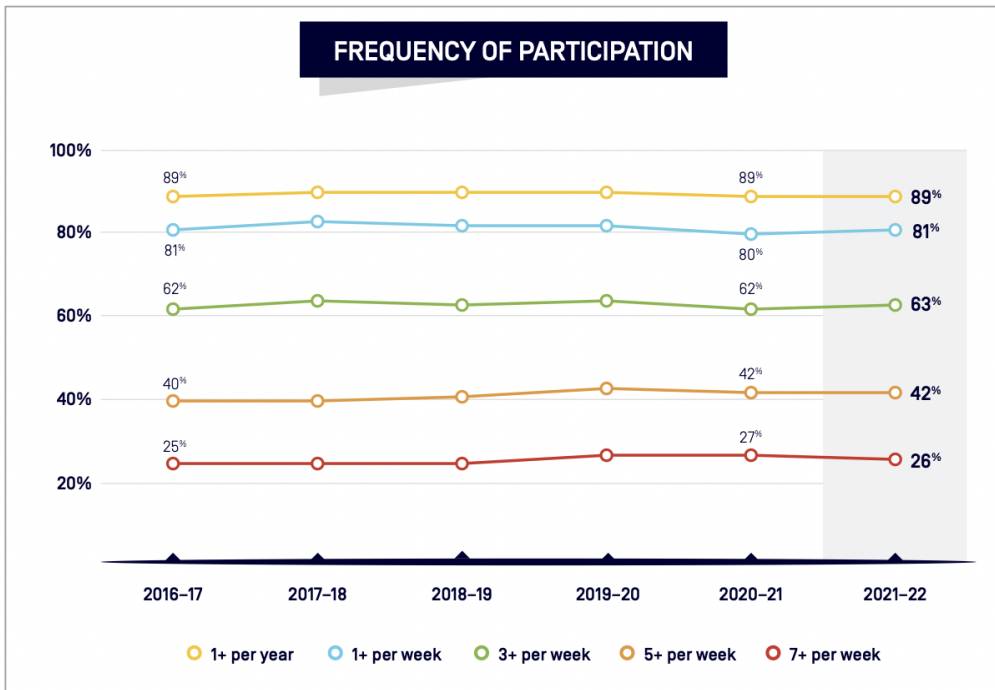


Figure 9: Adult Frequency of Participation 2016-17 to 2021-22

The figure below shows the children frequency of participation rates:

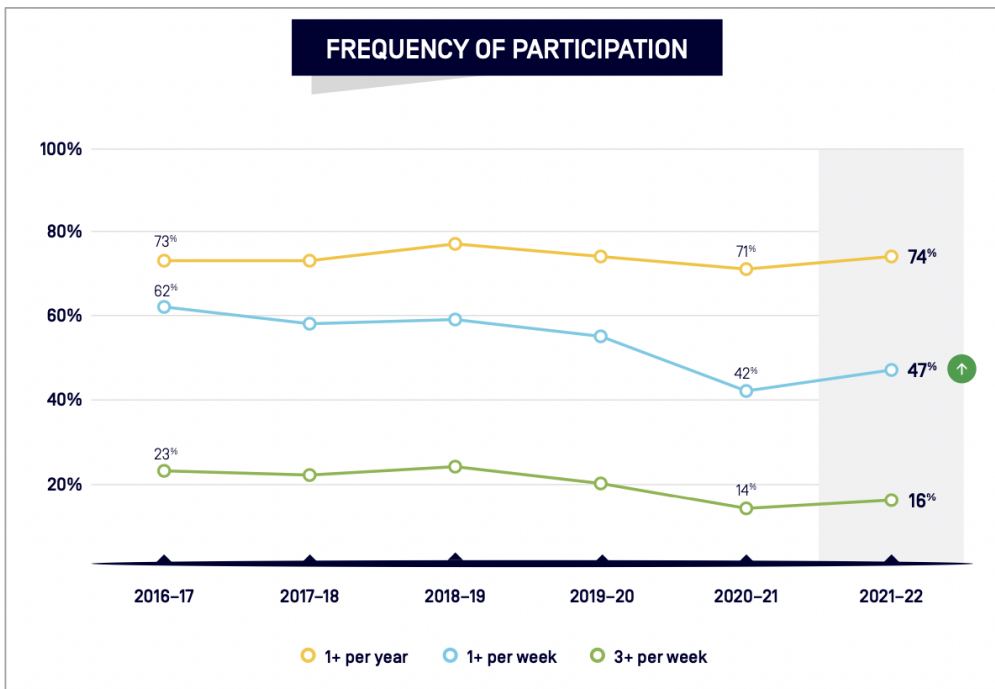


Figure 10: Children Frequency of Participation 2016-17 to 2021-22

Key organised sport participation statistics from AusPlay show:

- The top 15 club sports (organisation/venues used by activity) in Victoria for adults are shown in the table below. Golf, Australian Rules football, tennis, basketball and cricket are identified as the top five sports.
- The top 10 organised participation by activity in Victoria for children are shown in the table below. Swimming, basketball, gymnastics, Australian rules football and football are identified as the top five sports.
- Key sports played in Loddon Shire are identified in the top club sports and include golf, Australian Rules football, tennis, cricket, netball, bowls and hockey.

**Table 12: Adult Club Sport Participation**

Sport (Organisation/venues used by activity – club sports)	Participation rate
Golf	5.1%
Australian football	4.0%
Tennis	4.5%
Basketball	4.2%
Cricket	2.6%
Football/soccer	3.7%
Netball	3.2%
Bowls	1.2%
Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	5.3%
Badminton	2.0%
Hockey	0.7%
Swimming	11.8%
Equestrian	0.7%
Volleyball (indoor and outdoor)	0.7%
Rugby union	0.4%

**Table 13: Organised participation by activity**

Sport (Organised participation by activity)	Participation rate
Swimming	40.3%
Basketball	13.7%
Gymnastics	13.5%
Australian football	11.2%
Football/soccer	9.3%
Tennis	6.8%
Netball	6.7%
Dancing (recreational)	6.2%
Cricket	4.8%
Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	3.4%

Key swimming participation statistics from AusPlay show:

- Swimming is the organised activity of choice for a large proportion of Australian children aged 0-14 years, ahead of football and gymnastics.
- For children aged under 15 years, Victoria has the highest participation rate across the country at 36.8%.
- For adults (aged 15 +), the dominant reason to participate in swimming was physical health and fitness (51%) with fun/enjoyment also a key motivator at 34%.
- Swimming was also listed as one of the activities with the most gender equity amongst adults.
- The annual population estimate of Australian Adults (15+ years) participating in swimming was 2,984,880 or 14.8% of the adult population.
- Overall, females accounted for 56% of participants and males 44%.
- Swimming participation rates increased steadily from early adulthood to their peak in the 35 to 54-year age groups.
- Conversion to club participation was low with only 6% of participants a member of an organised swim club.
- An estimated 1.5 million children (under 15 years) participating in organised swimming out of school e.g. learn to swim or squad classes. This accounts for around one third of all Australian children.
- The peak participation rates for children in organised out of school swimming were five and eight years.
- Adult swimmers participated regularly with a median frequency of 48 sessions per annum for a duration of 45 minutes.
- The highest rating reasons for participating in swimming was 'physical health/fitness (51%) and 'fun/enjoyment (34%).'.
- The highest rating reasons for drop out were 'not enough time/too many commitments (19%) and poor health or injury (16%).'

### 3.5 Demand Analysis Model

A facility demand model has been developed to inform the current and future field requirements to meet field sports participation demand in the short-term, medium term and long-term.

The Otium Analytics **Demand Analysis Model** determines the estimated participants, required hours of access, number of facilities, playing space and total space for activities, and by user sharing potential. The key inputs into the model include:

- Participation rates by activity
- Available facility capacity
- User access needs
- Typical field size and ancillary space required
- Demographic information
- Current supply.

The interactive model allows us to adjust individual aspects of the inputs to ensure the model is a true reflection of the local context, including adjustable inputs on:

- Participation rate in adults and children.
- Season length, users per field, access needs per week.
- Facilities lighting across the network.
- Field size and ancillary spaced needed.

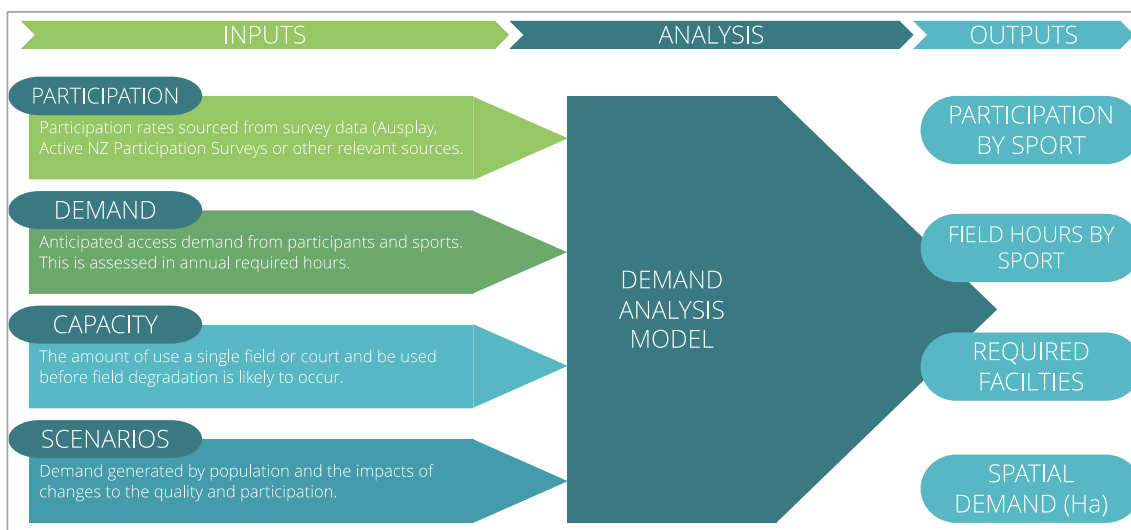


Figure 11: Diagram of the Otium Analytics Demand Analysis Model

The model considers the current field capacity, participation rates, and usage levels. Other factors such as the capacity of a field to accommodate playing numbers, the current distribution of clubs to fields, and opportunities for clubs to share need to be overlaid.

### Demand Analysis Model Assumptions

The model applies full optimisation of all fields and courts for average field and court capacity, based on participation and usage assumptions. A field or court is only added if a field is fully optimised.

The following fields usage (training and competition) and capacity levels have been assessed and categorised as follows:

- **Level 1** – A grass sports field with no drainage or irrigation, winter grasses = approximately 15 to 20 hours per week.
- **Level 2** – A grass sports field with basic drainage, irrigation and winter grasses and lighting = approximately 20 to 25 hours per week.
- **Level 3** – A grass sports field with full drainage, irrigation and warm season grasses and lighting = approximately 25 to 30 hours per week.
- **Level 4** – A synthetic sports field with lighting = up to 54 hours per week.

The model is used as a guide to facility demand requirements. It has been applied to major field and court participation sports played in Loddon Shire, except golf.

Table 14: Model Assumptions

Category	Assumption												
<b>Population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loddon Shire population will grow from 7,751 (2021) to approximately 8,144 by 2032.</li> <li>The proportion of people aged between 0-14 years (children) was 15% and for 15+ years (adults) was 85%. The population forecast shows that this proportion is the same in 2021 and 2032.</li> </ul>												
<b>Sport Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation rates for major participation sports identified in the recent AusPlay Participation Survey 2021-22 for once-a-week organised sport participation.</li> <li>The table below shows the participation rate for each sport.</li> </ul>												
<b>Field Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level 2 natural grass field capacity has been used for Australian Rules football and hockey sports fields with a capacity of 25 hours of use per lit field and 15 hours of use per unlit field each week.</li> <li>Level 3 natural grass field capacity has been used for cricket sports fields with a capacity of 30 hours of use per lit field and 25 hours of use per unlit field each week.</li> <li>Outdoor tennis courts have a capacity of 40 hours of use per lit court and 15 hours of use per unlit court each week.</li> <li>Outdoor netball courts have a capacity of 40 hours of use per lit court and 15 hours of use per unlit court each week.</li> <li>80% of sports fields in Loddon Shire are lit.</li> </ul>												
<b>Utilisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The benchmark average training and competition hours each week and participant numbers per field has been informed by State Sporting Associations.</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Rules football</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 5 hours per week and 40 participants per oval</li> <li>– Child – 3 hours per week and 60 participants per oval</li> <li>– Seasonal – Winter (6 months)</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cricket</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 7 hours per week and 24 participants per oval</li> <li>– Child – 4 hours per week and 24 participants per oval</li> <li>– Seasonal – Summer (6 months)</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hockey</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 3 hours per week and 24 participants per field</li> <li>– Child – 2 hours per week and 24 participants per field</li> <li>– Seasonal – Winter (6 months)</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Netball</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 3 hours per week and 18 participants per court</li> <li>– Child – 2 hours per week and 18 participants per court</li> <li>– Seasonal – Winter (6 months)</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tennis</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 2 hours per week and 4 participants per court</li> <li>– Child – 1 hours per week and 8 participants per court</li> <li>– All Year</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bowls</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 3 hours per week and 32 participants per green</li> <li>– Child – 1 hours per week and 32 participants per green</li> <li>– All Year</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Rules football</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 5 hours per week and 40 participants per oval</li> <li>– Child – 3 hours per week and 60 participants per oval</li> <li>– Seasonal – Winter (6 months)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cricket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 7 hours per week and 24 participants per oval</li> <li>– Child – 4 hours per week and 24 participants per oval</li> <li>– Seasonal – Summer (6 months)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hockey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 3 hours per week and 24 participants per field</li> <li>– Child – 2 hours per week and 24 participants per field</li> <li>– Seasonal – Winter (6 months)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Netball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 3 hours per week and 18 participants per court</li> <li>– Child – 2 hours per week and 18 participants per court</li> <li>– Seasonal – Winter (6 months)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tennis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 2 hours per week and 4 participants per court</li> <li>– Child – 1 hours per week and 8 participants per court</li> <li>– All Year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bowls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adult – 3 hours per week and 32 participants per green</li> <li>– Child – 1 hours per week and 32 participants per green</li> <li>– All Year</li> </ul>
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Table 15: Model Sport Participation Rates

Sport	Model Adult Participation Rates	Model Children Participation Rates
<b>Outdoor Field Sports</b>		
Australian Football	4.00%	11.20%
Cricket	2.60%	4.80%
Hockey	0.70%	1.90%
<b>Outdoor Sports Courts and Greens</b>		
Netball	3.20%	6.70%
Tennis	4.50%	6.80%
Bowls	1.20%	0.01%

**Demand Analysis Model – Facility Requirement Modelling**

For each sport, the model shows a current and future demand for access to the number of playing fields, courts and greens.

*The model found no demand for additional outdoor sports fields or outdoor sports courts and greens in Loddon Shire.*

**Table 16: Facility Requirements for Major Sports**

Sport	Current Field Access	Current Field Access Requirement for Participation Demand (2021)	Surplus / Deficit of Field Access	Future Field Access Requirements for Participation Demand (2032)	Surplus / Deficit of Field Access
<b>Outdoor Sports Fields</b>					
Australian Rules Football	10 fields	2 fields	+8 field	2 fields	+8 field
Cricket	9 fields	3 fields	+6 fields	3 fields	+6 fields
Hockey **	2 fields	1 field	+1 field	1 field	+1 field
<b>Outdoor Sports Courts and Greens</b>					
Netball	19.5 courts	2 courts	+17.5 courts	2 courts	+17.5 courts
Tennis **	80 courts (70 lawn and 10 synthetic)	5 courts (synthetic)	+75 courts	5 courts	+75 courts
Bowls	11.5 rinks	1 rink	+10.5 rinks	1 rink	+10.5 rinks

\* All fields are full-size equivalent. The field requirement does **not** mean new fields are needed. It means the sport will require access to this number of fields to meet participation demand. This could be achieved through shared fields with other sports.

\*\* Loddon Shire is serviced by regional facilities with multiple sports fields, courts and greens in Bendigo for these sports.

The modelling indicates an oversupply of outdoor sports fields and outdoor sports courts and greens in Loddon Shire. However, overlaying with local factors impacting a field’s use is important particularly the distance between rural townships. These include:

- **Importantly**, distribution and accessibility of fields. This is a particular factor impacting Loddon Shire that is rural in nature and townships are dispersed (in most cases over 20 minutes from the nearby township) making it difficult to share fields.
- Capacity of the field to accommodate the number of players for training and competition.
- Quality and condition of fields.
- Practicality of clubs sharing.
- Participation numbers within clubs changing from year to year.
- Programming of sports competitions.
- Inequitable participation distribution and other users (i.e., community and school use).
- Lack of validated data on how many hours each team plays and trains for.
- Location of facilities that have a wider catchment beyond a municipal boundary.

The modelling shows the key focus of this Strategy is on **activating sport and active recreation facilities (excluding aquatic and indoor stadiums)** rather than needing to improve the capacity of existing facilities or build new facilities.



### 3.6 Key Findings of Demand Assessment

*The Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy should be inclusive, accessible, and tailored to the specific needs of the population. It should prioritise programs and facilities that promote physical health and mental wellbeing, address socioeconomic disparities, and promote cultural diversity and sensitivity.*

#### **Providing sport and active recreation, diverse open spaces and access to aquatic facilities and services opportunities is important to maintaining vibrant rural townships**

The current Loddon Shire population of 7,759 (ABS Census 2021) has grown over the last 10 years, and by 243 people since 2016 (7,516). The population is projected to grow by an average 0.5% annually to 8,144 by 2032. The townships identified for population growth in the Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan are Bridgewater and Inglewood.

The population is distributed across many rural townships that support a strong agricultural/farming industry. Providing services like sport and recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services in local townships that support farming communities is an important social and economic driver.

Sport and active recreation in the Loddon Shire are considered the “heartbeat” of these rural communities and important for participation, community gathering, capacity building and economic development. Maintaining this benefit is important for rural living and the success of our townships. There is a history of migration of people to small townships to support local sports clubs.

#### **Accessible, social and therapy participation opportunities will be important to meet the needs of an ageing Loddon community**

The median age of the Loddon Shire is 52 years, indicating a predominantly older population. To address the unique needs and interests of older residents, a sport, recreation, and aquatic strategy should prioritise programs and facilities that focus on social engagement, fitness, and therapeutic activities.

Serpentine, Eddington, and Pyramid Hill have relatively younger populations. The Strategy should consider diverse offerings to engage residents of all age groups in these areas.

Intergenerational play and universally accessible spaces and places will be important design features of future open spaces.

#### **Culturally sensitive participation opportunities will encourage Loddon Shire’s Aboriginal and CALD community**

The presence of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and diverse overseas-born populations in townships like Boort and Pyramid Hill, highlights the need for an inclusive and culturally sensitive strategy. Tailored programs, cultural competency, and accessibility for all residents, regardless of their cultural background, should be prioritised.

#### **Affordable participation opportunities are important to encourage Loddon Shire to lead healthy and active lifestyles**

The low median income and SEIFA Index of Disadvantage emphasise the need for an inclusive and affordable strategy. Prioritising affordability, community outreach, and programs addressing specific challenges faced by disadvantaged populations is crucial to promote wellbeing and reduce barriers to participation.

### Loddon Shire is facing a health crisis – We need creative ways to reverse this trend

The high rates of dental health problems, smoking, and pre-obesity/obesity underline the importance of a strategy focusing on physical and mental wellbeing. Such a strategy can offer preventive and rehabilitative measures, reduce healthcare costs, and improve overall health.

The impact of two flooding events and the COVID-19 pandemic has seen a decline in participation and an impact on social connectedness, physical health and mental wellbeing as residents endured isolation from family, friends and community. Addressing these concerns and exploring ways to encourage a return to participation in sport and active recreation will be important to improving levels of community health and wellbeing in Loddon Shire's rural communities.

Time constraints, poor health or disability, and cost are identified as common barriers to meeting daily physical activity guidelines. The Strategy should address these barriers and provide solutions to make physical activity more accessible.

To address this challenge, we need to adapt and design sport and active recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services for the Loddon Shire communities in a way that responds to participation trends, leisure patterns and community expectations.

### Traditional competition sport is in decline and Loddon Shire residents now seek diverse active recreation activities and flexible playing formats

Key organised sports played in Loddon Shire include Australian Rules football, netball, cricket, hockey, tennis and lawn bowls. These sports are often played at a centralised sports precinct within each township. Providing fit for purpose venues that meet universal design, female friendly and industry sport standards will be important to maintain participation.

Sports clubs have been struggling to attract participants in Loddon Shire. A further two clubs (bowls clubs) have disbanded in the last 12 months. Junior teams are struggling with participation and volunteerism is in decline. The same volunteers are running sports clubs. Further exacerbating this issue is the flood impact that has impacted local contributions and resulting in volunteer fatigue. Loddon Shire sporting clubs rely on strong family connections. Distance and cost are a challenge. Leagues are getting larger, and people are having to travel further.

In general, competition structures still operate a traditional format of play. New modified formats are only being offered in Loddon Shire if a club volunteer drives the change i.e. tennis competition still operates an eight game Saturday competition, and cricket is a one-day competition. Engagement with Local and State Sporting Associations is important for the project. Exploring how we create flexible structures to support clubs is a key investigation with Local Sporting Associations. Also, defining the roles of Local Government, State Sport Association, Local Sport Association, Regional Sports Association will be an important outcome of the project. We must recognise the State Sporting Association resourcing is a challenge and are State Sporting Association programs fit for purpose for country clubs. What is sustainable product in country Victoria?

Recent consultation by Sports Focus with young people has shown they seek places to play that include active recreation and social play space opportunities. There needs to be a focus on active recreation and structured sport.

The recent Active Living Census survey shows the importance of active recreation in Loddon Shire with over 80% of residents utilising open spaces weekly with walking, play, and swimming being amongst the most popular types of active recreation in Loddon (Healthy Heart of Victoria, 2020). Providing diverse open spaces for social recreation, play and trail-based activities will be important ingredients in the network of places and spaces in Loddon Shire townships.

**There is no demand for additional outdoor sports fields or outdoor sports courts and greens in Loddon Shire.**

Total current participation across major sports played in Loddon Shire is 1,769 players in 2021, which will grow marginally to 1,858 players by 2032. This will only be achieved if new sport formats are introduced in Loddon Shire.

Using the AusPlay 2021 Participation Survey, the current participation for outdoor field sports played in Loddon Shire (Australian Rules football, cricket and hockey) is 689 players. The current participation for outdoor sports courts and greens played in Loddon Shire (netball, tennis, bowls and golf) is 1,080. If a 0.5% population growth rate is used and current participation rates maintained, participation in outdoor field sports will grow to 724 players whilst participation in outdoor court and green sports will grow to 1,135.

The modelling indicates an oversupply of outdoor sports fields and outdoor sports courts and greens in Loddon Shire. However, overlaying with local factors impacting a field's use is important particularly the distance between rural townships.

The modelling shows the key focus of this Strategy is on **activating sport and active recreation facilities** rather than needing to improve the capacity of existing facilities or build new facilities.

## 4. Trends Analysis

*What participation and facility trends will influence the development and management of recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities?*

This section reviews participation and facility trends and how they will influence the programming and facility requirements of recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire Council.

### 4.1 General Participation Trends

#### Factors affecting participation and facility provision

Otium research has identified a range of general participation trends that are likely to impact on local communities in the future. These are:

- **A gradual ageing of the population.** As life expectancy increases, birth rates stay low and the “baby boomers” of the 1950s and 1960s grow older. The percentage of population of 5 to 14-year-olds will continue to decrease with the greatest growth in the 55+ age group. This will create a demand for programs and services that go beyond a focus on junior and adult participation.
- **Flexibility in the times when people recreate.** As demands on people’s time increases and work practices change, people are seeking to take their sport and recreation at different times, over a broad spread of hours and at facilities that offer a lot of activities in one place.
- **Increased variety in sport and recreation options.** People’s sport and recreation options are changing towards newer, more varied activities offered over a greater range of timeframes compared to previous decades where limited variety in activities and scheduling occurred. This has supported the trend to more multi-use facilities to attract a broader range of users, multiple programs to meet different needs at the one facility, and different playing formats that support junior and social sport.
- **Constraints to sport and recreation participation.** Lack of time, lack of facilities nearby, family and work constraints, health problems and cost of service or use of facilities are the main constraints to many people’s sport and recreation participation. The development of new playing formats for junior and social sport, new competitions for girls and women, targeting specific markets of users through tailored programs and services has assisted in reducing some of these participation constraints.
- **Changing employment structures, trading and work hours.** These trends often make participation in traditional sport and recreation activities difficult and therefore people are looking for facilities that are open longer hours and have a lot of activity options at the one site. This makes opportunities such as indoor sports courts attractive as their long opening hours and days open per year means usage can be made in a wide range of social, training, competition and educational settings.
- **Different people want different activities.** The different population characteristics sees the need for facilities to offer potential users a much more varied range of programs and services than previously offered. Year round available indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities is an example where a greater diversity of activities can be provided throughout the different seasons and limiting the impact of poor weather.
- **Provision of high standards and quality of facilities and services.** People are more and more looking for high standard, high quality facilities and services to meet their sport and recreation needs. This has also seen the trend for indoor facilities becoming very popular as they allow activity in safe and secure spaces in all weather and environmental conditions. This leads to

indicating that building low standard, low-cost facilities will not attract the maximum user market. The development by several peak sporting bodies of sport specific facility standards and guidelines has also placed pressure on facility providers to meet higher standards of provision.

- **Desire for activities to be affordable.** The development of multi-purpose recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities has enabled the high operating cost activities to be cross subsidised by more profitable activity areas such as health and fitness, food and beverage and entertainment areas. This has enabled many facilities to keep general entry fees low to encourage use whilst seeking users who want special services to contribute at a greater level to the cost of such activities. In general, there is a greater reliance on locally accessed and lower cost opportunities by those without the resources to travel and pay for more expensive activities.
- **Recognition of strong links between physical activity and health.** Preventative health care and active lifestyles are very important to many people. There is increased recognition of the strong links between involvement in recreational activity and good health, and the development of appropriate activities and services which support this.
- **Expectations of equity and access.** Today's society expects all people to have equitable access to public facilities. There is a particular demand to provide sports facilities for the growing female participation across all sports. There are a growing number of competitions and programs for people all abilities to participate. This means we need to improve the design of our recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and ensure we provide accessible facilities.
- **Sustainable development.** In addition to the trends above, there are specific trends relating to the design and operations of recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities that responds to more sustainable and eco-friendlier practices.

All recreation facility, open space and aquatic facility providers are operating in an environment of change. Providers will need to respond to the following challenges:

- **Consumer expectations.** As a result of consumers being exposed to high quality programs, events and services through the media and other leisure industry providers they are expecting more and more from their programs. This includes quality of facilities, support amenity, player and spectator comfort, quality of service, coaching and expecting the service to be provided when they want it. However, this has meant that significantly less program space can be achieved per investment dollar.
- **Competition for participants.** All of Australia's sporting codes have recognised the need to recruit young players into their sport at an early age. Many of the sports face competition from large, well-funded junior programs and high-profile sports as well as other forms of entertainment competing for the time and interest of young people. A key challenge for many sports and recreational activities is the retention of those recruits beyond their early to mid-teen years.
- **Reliance on external revenues.** Participants provide a large proportion of funding for most activities, programs and services. Competition is intense for funding, sponsorship, users and members. Providers will need to clearly differentiate and market products and benefits to seek to access other revenue streams. This is particularly important in the development and upgrade of facilities and equipment.
- **Funding challenge.** Developing new and maintaining existing facilities and services is a major challenge for Local Government and the industry. The future may require providers to partner in multi-activity developments either in local government or commercially built complexes.
- **Well-trained personnel:** Volunteers predominantly service most sport and recreation clubs together with supporting aquatic facility operations in local communities. Recruiting and retaining paid staff and volunteers are critical to operations. In an increasingly regulated world, volunteers need and demand access to training and education in a flexible delivery model that responds to

their busy lives. Coaches, officials and administrators must be supported to ensure the delivery of quality programs and competitions. Supporting and recognising volunteers is a task not to be underestimated.

### 4.2 Sport Participation Trends

Peak sporting bodies are using Sport Australia’s megatrends research - **The Future of Australian Sport**, conducted by CSIRO in 2013 and again in 2022, together with their participation data (existing and potential markets), to design new participation programs to attract a broader audience or improve the retention rates of players.

The 2022 megatrends are patterns of social, economic, or environmental change that will shape the Australian sports sector over the next decade and beyond.

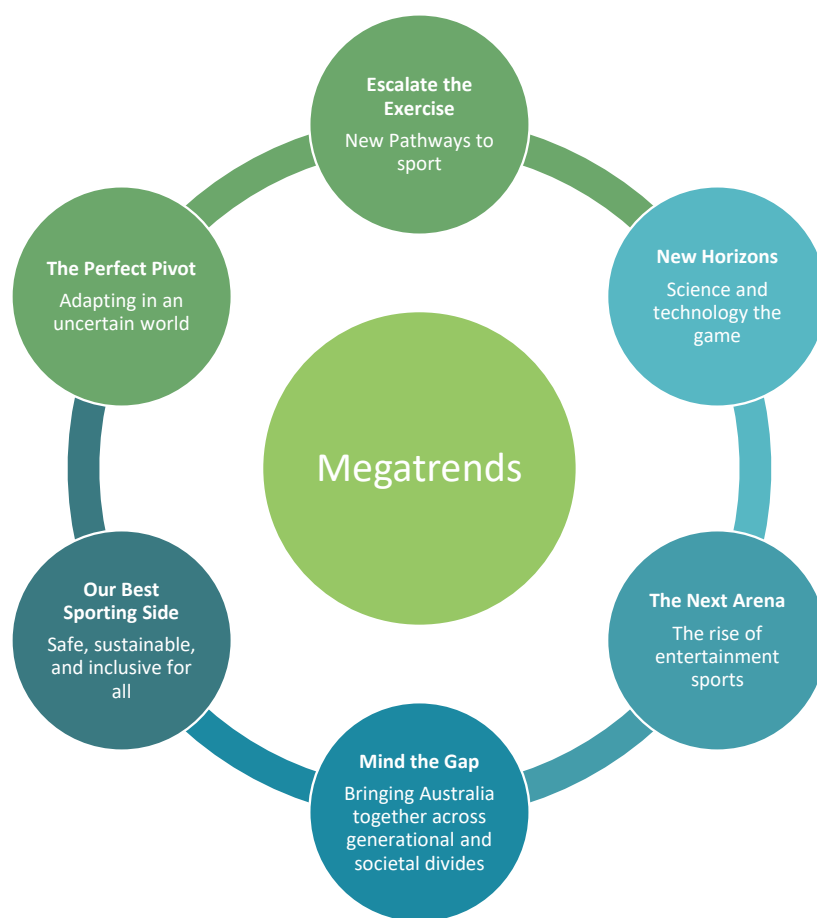


Figure 12: Sport Megatrends (Source: Sports Australia, 2023)

These 2022 megatrends are described in detail in the next section with supporting case study examples about how sports are responding to these trends.

#### Escalate the Exercise - New pathways to sport

Organised sports across Australia bring communities together and provide a platform where volunteers, players, sponsors, local businesses and organisers can form relationships on and beyond the sporting fields.



This is particularly apparent in regional and rural communities where sporting competitions build deep social connections and create a meeting place for people who live across larger distances.

Participation in organised sports across Australia has remained relatively steady over the past decade, but there has been a rise in participation in non-organised physical activities such as walking, running, cycling and gym-based fitness. This trend was further boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing, periods of home isolation, and the subsequent increase in adoption of home-based gym equipment, fitness apps, and wearable technologies. Much of the increase in fitness-based activity has been through non-formal or semi-formalised participation in fitness centres, home gyms, exercise groups, online communities, and individuals accessing outdoor recreational infrastructure and green space within their communities.

The increase in convenient and ad-hoc exercise by a proportion of the population hasn't generally translated to involvement in more formalised sports competitions and leagues. The rise of fitness-based activities presents new opportunities for sports organisers who can bring the game to the people, increase inclusion, promote the social benefits of playing together and utilise new technologies to increase convenience.

Barriers to participation in formalised sports remain significant for some groups, including older populations, people from regional and remote areas, First Nations peoples, low socio-economic individuals, LGBTIQ+ people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, and people with disability. These groups may benefit from specialised or modified sporting services and competitions. Overall, the pathways into organised sport are changing and diversifying.

*Social Sport, a Melbourne-based organisation established in 2007, aims to 'take the hassle out of playing sport'. It started as a weekly social futsal game among friends in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. In 2022 Social Sport had grown to run competitions for over 10,000 players of all ages and abilities in four different sporting codes.*

### **New horizons - Science and technology changing the game**

Australia has long been seen as a global leader in sport. Despite having a population of just over 26 million, Australia has been in the top ten on the medal tally of Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games since Sydney 2000, and in many games before then.

Our global reputation in this sector can be linked to several factors including support for sport at all levels from Australian governments, and a strong high-performance system led by the Australian Institute of Sport [AIS].

Over the next decade the world will look to Australia as we approach the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Much of the success of Australian high-performance sports teams to date can be attributed to advances in sports science and medicine, coaching, organisation, and ongoing investment in the potential of Australia's elite athletes.

New technologies and advances in areas of technical expertise that support the enhancement of performance (including but not limited to human physiology, nutrition, psychology, genetics, engineering and materials science) are now changing the game in sports. A better understanding of the individual and biological diversity of athletes is leading to an individualised approach to performance support across a range of technical direction disciplines, from coaching to sports medicine and training. Training programs tailored to the individual, resulting from the work of multi-disciplinary teams, can optimise sports performance, assist with injury prevention, enhance physical and mental recovery, and maximise the wellbeing and long-term psychological benefits of sport. The adoption of new and emerging technologies

will support this individualised approach but comes with issues to be negotiated around ethical implementation and privacy protections.

The global sport technology and innovation market continues to see significant growth. Australia will host a significant number of international sporting events over the next decade, and this will provide our science, technology, health, education and manufacturing sectors with an opportunity to invest in sport innovation and showcase and export their know-how and products to the world.

*CSIRO is currently working on creating a human digital twin. A digital twin is a virtual or digital representation of a physical object or being. The human digital twin project uses readily available cameras on mobiles, iPads, webcams and computers to capture the movements of a human body and creates an overlay of biomechanical modelling of bones and muscles. By combining deep-learning algorithms with knowledge of a person's musculoskeletal mechanics, the human digital twin could identify movements that present a risk of injury. The digital twin can be used to devise modifications to these movements aimed at increased efficiency and decreased injury risk. Over time a human digital twin will likely have additional information on blood flow, digestion, and respiration and be able to provide comprehensive real-time analysis of athletic physiological performance during training and competition.*

### The next arena - The rise of entertainment sports

Australians consume sport across a range of markets and platforms. Many Australians love to be entertained by sport, whether this is attending a live event or listening to or watching sport through the various broadcast and online options available.

Over-the-top (OTT) video-streaming platforms, with the ability to deliver sports content to many Internet-enabled devices, are increasingly challenging traditional sports broadcasting business models on satellite, cable, free-to-air (FTA) television and radio, creating new audiences and connecting viewers globally.

Some sporting organisations – particularly the major codes in Australia – generate significant revenue streams through broadcast rights deals, major events, merchandising, sponsorship activities, endorsements and branding.

Digital sport and e-sports are becoming increasingly popular, offering access to new activities in virtual environments. Some of these digital sport variants more recently supplemented or provided redundancy for cancelled real-world sporting events during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, urban and adventure sports are engaging the next generation of sports fans as they become more visible and available to mainstream audiences.

Over the coming decade we will see more sporting organisations and products compete for a share of national and global audiences. As a result, both established sporting codes and sports new to these markets will consider how to engage contemporary consumers and adjust their view of spectators to take advantage of the increasingly dynamic and diverse global media landscape.

*Sports, including BMX, skateboarding, sport climbing and snowboard half-pipe, have become increasingly mainstream and part of the Olympic Games program. These sports may no longer be considered extreme, but the lifestyle elements are especially important to many participants, and the degree of organisation is still developing.*

### Mind the gap - Bringing Australia together across generational and societal divides

Sports organisations can champion positive change across society. They do this by emphasising sporting values of fair play, egalitarianism, inclusivity, and teamwork.

By showcasing these values and creating a meritocracy based on commitment, fitness and skills development, sports offer a source of inspiration, create shared experiences, and build pride.

Sport can bridge the cultural and demographic gaps existing and emerging across Australian society. Australia's population overall is ageing increasingly diverse. In 2022, nearly a third of Australians are born overseas, 3.2% are members of First Nations groups, 17% live with disability, and just over half of the population are women. Young Australians are growing up with new technologies and global connections, creating distinctly different behaviours and values.

Over the coming decades, sports organisations and individual athletes will play a unique role in broader societal change and help bridge the gaps between demographic groups. Sport will provide a sense of common purpose, identity and belonging to Australians from many different backgrounds and abilities.

*In 2015, the Australian Women's Football Team (the Matildas) went on strike for equal pay from the Football Federation Australia and in November 2019, a ground-breaking equal pay agreement was announced. This has now become part of a global movement to eliminate gender discrimination in pay in elite team sport. Equal pay deals for women's football teams in England, Brazil, Norway and New Zealand have now been announced. Groups such as 'Women Sport Australia' and 'Male Champions of Change: Sport' are actively mapping pathways for gender pay equality across all major sporting codes in Australia.*

### **Our best sporting side - Safe, sustainable, and inclusive for all**

As Australia's demographic profile becomes more diverse and social values shift, organised sports in Australia will also transform and reflect these changes.

Persistent societal challenges such as racism, violence, abuse and other poor behaviours in sport have elevated the importance of sports integrity, safety and ethics in the sports industry at all levels. Stronger accountability, reporting structures and advocacy for vulnerable Australians will place further pressures on sports to provide a safe and welcoming place for all.

Community-driven sports clubs will increasingly seek to tap into the benefits of engaging a broader cross-section of Australian society. Many will place more emphasis on providing positive participant experiences and promoting inclusive behaviours on- and off-field. Growth in competing markets and competition for new participants will also provide further impetus for sporting organisations and clubs to implement positive change.

In the coming decades sports organisations will be faced with even stronger social licence obligations and will seek well-informed practices to encourage diversity, inclusivity and fair-play and offer athletes more choice, advocacy and individual expression.

*Since the first 'Green' Olympic and Paralympic Games in Lillehammer (1994), sporting events have been seeking to minimise their environmental impact, including waste and carbon emissions, sustainable sourcing of construction materials, and understanding potential impacts of facilities and events on biodiversity. Some research has ranked the sustainability of previous Olympic and Paralympic Games as 'medium' and shown that its sustainability rating has declined over time. For example, between 1992 and 2020 the most sustainable Games were in Salt Lake City in 2002, while the least sustainable were Sochi 2014 and Rio de Janeiro 2016. The Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games are now expected to have sustainability and human rights strategies and outcomes as part of their planning and legacy.*

### **The perfect pivot - Adapting in an uncertain world.**

The world is entering historically uncertain times. Climate change is increasing seasonal temperatures and the frequency of extreme weather events. Heightened geopolitical tensions have given rise to more wars

along with the threat of further military conflicts globally, trade sanctions, and threats and acts of terrorism.

Pandemics, like the COVID-19 pandemic, have increased in likelihood – with a 47% to 57% chance of a second pandemic of the same magnitude occurring in the next 25 years.

These factors have all disrupted scheduled sporting activities over recent years and this disruption is likely to continue and increase in frequency over the coming decades. This uncertainty will affect all sports, including event planning, infrastructure design and the types of sports that can be played in certain seasons. It will increase the need for some sports and their associated business models to make strategic 'pivots' or rapidly deploy alternative approaches and resources, move venues and competitions at short notice, or respond to other unexpected challenges when required.

This megatrend is far broader than just sport but has relevance to a sector with multiple points of exposure to geopolitical, extreme climate and pandemic-related risks. Australian sporting organisations will need to be flexible and ingenious over the coming decades.

*Military conflicts, threats and acts of terrorism, pandemics, and climate change, including increasing temperatures and extreme weather events, have disrupted scheduled sporting activities over the previous decade. For example, following the conflicts in Russia, Formula 1 has decided not to partner with the Russian promoter for any future races.*

### 4.3 Open Space Trends

#### Changes in how we value open spaces

We value our parks and open spaces more. We expect to have bikeways and walking tracks available in our neighbourhoods, and we are increasingly getting out and using the path and park networks for exercise and activity.

We have also increased our expectations for the quality of development in our parks and open spaces:

- **Increased participation in walking**, combined with rising participation in cycling and running in parks and natural areas means that the demand for pathway networks within open space is probably the largest emerging infrastructure need.
- Research has shown the importance of a **supportive environment** to encouraging participation. This means parks and shaded pathways, natural landscape settings, a sense of safety and good access to public open space increases participation.
- Many local governments are facing **increasing financial constraints** to funding of infrastructure and future maintenance. Planning and finance controls such as contributions caps and borrowing restraints have meant that funding parks and recreation facilities is increasingly difficult. A key challenge is to deliver open space and recreation infrastructure in a timely manner as demand emerges.
- Community **expectations are increasing** as to the quality of parks and sporting areas and the level of access to these. There is increasing awareness of "high quality" destination parks with regional scale play and active recreation elements.
- The rise of **exercise and fitness as recreation** has meant that public parks have become the new venues for formal and informal group fitness and social exercise. This is increasing pressure on local parks as well as increasing demand for shade and water as key elements.
- The **infiltration of technology throughout our lives** means we have unlimited access to knowledge, information and engagement and expect instantaneous communication. There is

potential for increased digitisation of public spaces through virtual and augmented play experiences and use of “smart” features, such as smart lights which can double as a Wi-Fi node, smart benches with solar powered USB charging docs and interactive kiosks that provide information on weather and local news.

- Increased value on the importance of our **environment and sustainability** will drive incorporation of sustainable design into parks and play spaces and creation of green spaces and corridors that mitigate urban heat island effects.
- There is an increasing desire to **exercise with our pets** which will lead to increasing demand for dog-friendly parks, particularly in urban areas.

### 4.4 Aquatic Facility Trends

#### Changes in how we use aquatic and leisure facilities

There has been a much greater emphasis in the development of a variety of water spaces within public aquatic centres including:

- Program pools designed for learn to swim and a variety of aquatics programs.
- Warm water pools which are used for rehabilitation and therapy, one of the highest use spaces within public aquatic and leisure centres.
- Water play including large, enclosed slides, water jets and other leisure play opportunities.

Health and fitness programming have also advanced with a greater emphasis on programs for older adults as well as a much broader range of opportunities including Pilates, Yoga and Boot Camp.

Components that contribute to successful contemporary aquatic and leisure facilities are summarised in the figure below.

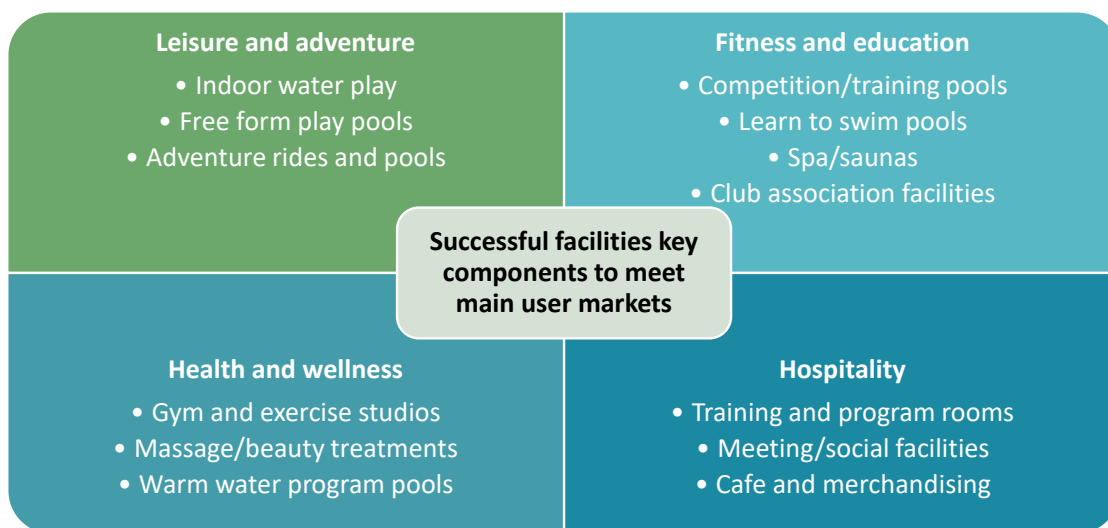


Figure 13: Successful Aquatic and Leisure Facility Model

Detailed planning and comprehensive feasibility studies show targeted user profiles with the majority of aquatic facility market research indicating complexes must equally cater for four distinct aquatic user markets, summarised in the figure below.

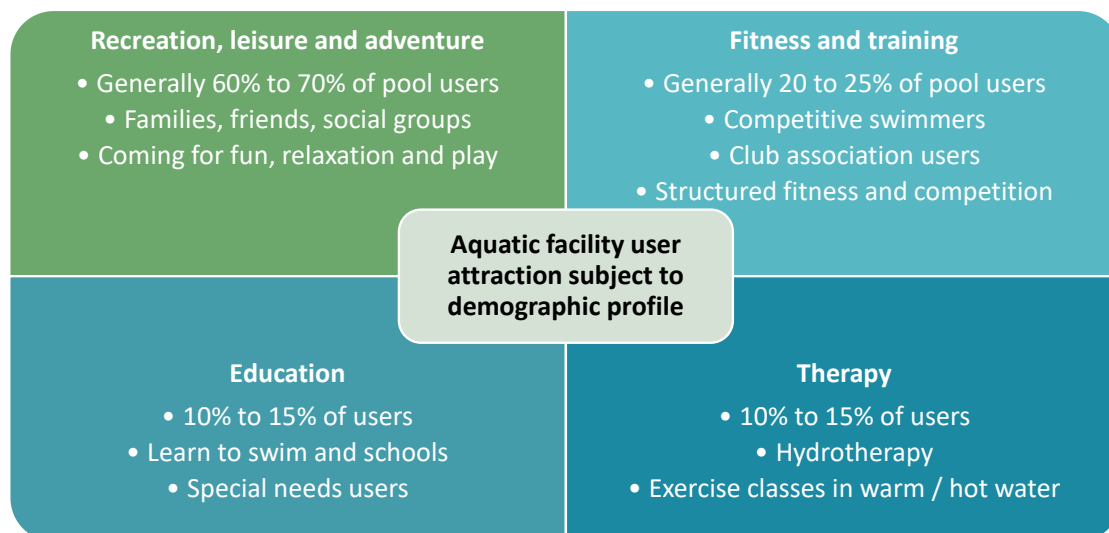


Figure 14: Main Aquatic and Leisure Facility User Markets

**What makes a successful aquatic and leisure centre?**

The most successful facilities attract all user markets, draw users from a large catchment and should be set up to allow people to participate in a range of activities at the one site.

Successful future facility trends indicated several common success factors:

- **One stop shop:** Large range of activity areas at the one site to maximise use/help share the costs.
- **Reduce operating losses:** Need a mix of community and commercial activities at the one site, however the location needs to be right to make this viable.
- **Programmable spaces:** Need to offer programs and memberships to keep users coming back.
- **Cater for all ages and interests:** Need to develop facilities for broad range of people.
- **Community/social hub:** Needed to offer quality food, beverage, social and entertainment spaces. This could also provide a range of other services like community and cultural services, health and allied services and/or commercial precincts.



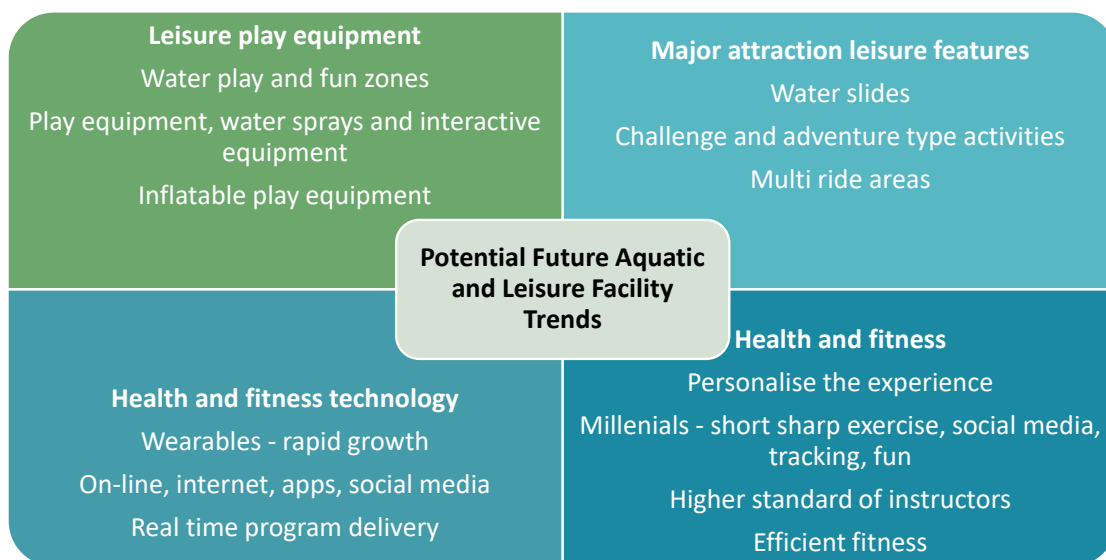


Figure 15: Potential Future Aquatic and Leisure Facility Trends

**Residents do not necessarily access services within their local government area**

Service catchment mapping shows that the use of services can be seen to be linked to travel to work patterns, where children attend schools, travel times and direct road/public transport link as well as types of experiences being sought. The aquatic service in Loddon Shire would primarily service a local catchment with major aquatic centres in Bendigo, Kerang and Echuca, providing for some school and swim club carnivals and aquatic programs like learn to swim and aqua aerobics.

**Aquatic, fitness and leisure services and experiences are offered by a range of providers**

Providers include:

- State Government, through accessible natural waterway sites.
- Local government through major aquatic, fitness and leisure centres.
- Range of private business providers, including swim schools, fitness centres and personal trainers.
- Community groups taking on the management of outdoor pools.

Private businesses continue to successfully operate in the ‘learn to swim’ and health and fitness market with an increased growth in this type of facility in many communities. Some of these pools are also offering aquatic program opportunities such as aqua aerobics. These pool facilities tend to be 15m to 20m indoor heated pools. Privately operated health and fitness facilities include 24/7 budget gyms as well as group fitness gyms offering cross fit, Pilates and yoga classes, personal training and women only gyms.

Golden Square Outdoor Pool in the City of Greater Bendigo is an example of a community group successfully managing an outdoor pool. They have designed a service that complements the aquatic and leisure centre programs at Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre, Faith Leech Aquatic Centre and Peter Krenz Leisure Centre. They have over 50 volunteers who support the operations of the pool and host programs and events including a swim safe program for those disadvantaged in the community, a pool fit bootcamp, yoga and Zumba classes and a full events calendar that includes a live beats music concert series and a range of community partnerships that deliver targeted community programs.

### Growth of water play

There has been a growth in the development of water play parks in Victoria.

The Seville Water Play in Yarra Ranges Council was one of the first outdoor water play spaces. It includes sprays and water flow within the footprint of the 25m pool retaining the pool walls as seating areas. It also includes boulders for scrambling over and a dry nature-based playspace creating a community destination for not only the summertime but year-round. Seville Water Play has been very successful with 200 people regularly visiting daily in the summer holiday period. The facility has received awards and featured as a best practice facility in many news and Australian Leisure journal articles.

Yarra Ranges Council has since opened the Warburton Water World that has attracted 500 people visiting daily. This water play park is located next to a caravan park and includes a community event space. They have also included a splash pad in the regional Lillydale Lake playspace that has also been very popular.



Figure 16: Seville Water Play and Warburton Water World (Source: Yarra Ranges Council)

The success of these water play parks has encouraged other municipalities to invest in water play parks including in Swan Hill, Shepparton, Bendigo and Ballarat. Local, State and Federal Government funding has been provided to these developments together with introducing water play in play spaces for learning and development of children. This has been possible through Local Government's acceptance of maintenance requirements and costs e.g. Hadfield Park (Splash Pad) in Mitchell Shire Council and Creswick Skate and Splash Park.

There is an opportunity to reimagine leisure, adventure and water play for children and young people at Loddon Shire aquatic facilities. An example to learn from could be the Darling Quarter at Sydney Harbour that has water damping and sprays with social 'beach style' seating options.





Figure 17: Darling Quarter Water Play Park (Source: Darling Harbour)

**Natural water swimming areas**

Natural water swimming areas offer a swimming and water play experience in nature, providing significant health and wellbeing benefits to people. The Loddon River swimming hole in Bridgewater is considered a unique place that attracts local communities and visitors to the region.

The future Loddon Shire aquatic service should complement the local natural swimming areas and offer a safe regulated place for people to learn to swim.



Figure 18: Bridgewater Swimming Hole (Source: Visit Loddon Valley)

**Innovative ways of activating aquatic centres**

There is a recognition that the old 1950’s pools don’t embrace all key markets and there is an opportunity to explore different ideas. Water play parks are one idea, however an exploration of a range of ideas to diversify the experiences for young and old will create a new concept of aquatic centre as a community destination. Ideas could include places for fun and adventure, fitness, for socialising and eating. They could be commercialised or community spaces.

Activation ideas:

- Blacktown City Council hosts a family fish-in day at the Mount Druitt Swimming Centre in the wintertime when the seasonal pool is closed.
- Solo rock climbing that relies upon the presence of water at the base of a climb. The image below is of the U.S. National Whitewater Centre.
- Spaces for young people. These include multisport activity spaces or beach volleyball court.
- Spaces for women and girls. These include places to hang, jump and cartwheel, socialise and role play.
- Café with lunch style social seating areas.
- Spaces for seniors. These include social and therapy spaces, warm water bathing, senior fitness station, sensory garden. The image below is of the Australian Royal Botanic Gardens sensory garden.
- Movie nights and music concerts at the pool. The image below is of Wet n Wild Theme Park.

**2023 Blacktown City Family Fish In**

Next date: Friday, 11 August 2023 | 05:00 PM to 08:40 PM

Blacktown City’s fishiest event is back in 2023 - the Family Fish In!

Held over the weekends of 4 - 5 and 11 - 12 of August, 600 trout will be game for all fishing enthusiasts wanting to try their luck at the perfect catch. All you need to bring is your own fishing rod, fishing line and bait (power bait is also available to purchase on the night).

This event is proceeding under a permit from NSW Department of Primary Industries.

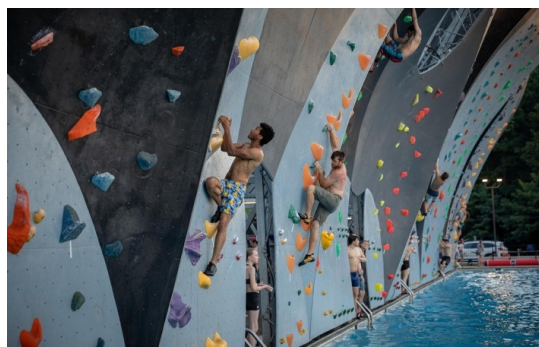
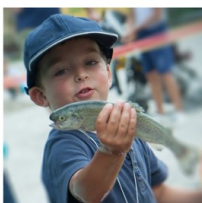


Figure 19: Ideas for diversifying use and experiences



## 4.5 Facility Trends

### Contemporary sports facility design principles

Otium research has identified the following design principles for contemporary sports facilities:

- **Take a place-making approach.** The Creating Places for People urban design protocol should be used in designing sports facilities. This approach will be supported by adherence to Universal Design and female-friendly design principles.
- **Be hub precincts.** Sports facilities can be provided within a hub for sport, entertainment, community, health and/or tourism activities. A regional sports hub should complement other precincts in a city/township for retail, food, arts, and culture, etc.; and connect via pedestrian and public transport links.
- **Meet contemporary standards** for building and sports including for community, regional, national and international competition, depending on the hierarchy classification of the sports facility.
- **Design and maintain facilities to hierarchy level.** This will mean Council can strategically invest in quality sports facilities to the level the sports facility provides for, whether that is delivering for local (community) standard competition or for regional (elite) standard competition. If a regional facility, the facilities will offer a higher level of service and quality design standard.
- **Be multi-purpose, promote shared-use and offer mixed-use programming.** Sports facilities will be active places that operate seven days a week in peak and off-peak times. Use should be optimised. This is particularly relevant for rural and regional areas such as Loddon with limited access to funding resources.
- **Be designed to deliver multiple solutions.** The design of sport facilities should include a canopy that provides shade for daily activities and capture rainwater; a roof structure with solar panels that generate energy for the building; maximise the use of natural light and double glazing for climate control; flexible lighting systems that offer security and safe passage for pedestrians.
- **Be sustainable.** The design should include strategies like harvesting water, creating energy, turning waste into food, enhancing the habitat and adding value for the surrounding community.
- **Respond to the community.** Sports facilities will interact with and support a mix of community sport and event activity. The design will include a future expansion area that will future-proof sports facilities if additional facility needs or opportunities are identified.
- **Consider biomimicry in design.** Sports facilities will respond to the local climate, allowing the building to breathe, provide comfort for every human sense and adapt to year-round requirements.
- **Embrace technology.** Sports facilities will respond to new technology in terms of entertainment, operations and monitoring facility performance.
- **Efficient.** Sports facilities will consider the maintenance and operational requirements of facilities with a view to making them efficient and easy to maintain.
- **Keep budget in mind.** Government is operating in a tight fiscal environment and therefore the design must balance the above principles with delivering the service objectives of sports facilities and to a reasonable budget.

### Making spaces for girls and women

The design for sport and active recreation facilities and services has been more suited to male participation. The following design guidelines and resources respond to extensive research and engagement with women and girls that focus on barriers faced when participating.

### Make Space for Girls Design Resource

The 'Make Space for Girls' is a resource that includes research, design principles and case studies for making space for women and girls in a public space.

Specifically, the website refers to research and guidelines developed by the University Leads titled Safer Parks – Improving Access for Women and Girls". The guidelines included extensive research and reports the concern about safety as the "biggest single barrier to women and girls' enjoyment of parks and green spaces". The guidelines include the following design principles:

- Eyes on the park:
  - Busyness and activation – Provide alternative seating options, locate spaces popular with women and girls in busier areas of the park, encourage businesses to use the park increases activity, a broad range of activities to activate the park and encourage new users and circular running or walking routes.
  - Staffing and authority figures – Arrange working patterns to maximise staff presence.
- Awareness:
  - Visibility and openness – Provide canopies above head height to enable a clear view, maintain bushes and shrubs alongside paths to ensure visibility, locate facilities close to main routes and busy areas of the park, mounds and high points give good prospects.
  - Escape – Provide wide and clearly visible park entrances and park edges as open and accessible as possible with regular breaks and regular exits with clear signposts.
  - Lighting – Provide human-scaled lighting rather than floodlights - low and even light can be safer than bright lights that create strong contrast and glare. Using lighting helps activate key routes and spaces, and lighting should enable good colour rendering.
  - Wayfinding and layout – Provide a clear hierarchy of paths that connect with routes beyond the park, a circular path around the perimeter with regular exit points, paths should connect key facilities with each destination and clear signage with directions to key destinations.
- Inclusion:
  - Belonging and familiarity – The naming of facilities to signal multiple uses broadens their appeal, statues and artworks can indicate belonging, and specific facilities aimed at women and girls signal that they are welcome.
  - Image – A tidy park signals care, remove graffiti and repair any vandalism, well-maintained vegetation around paths and well-maintained signage and information boards.
  - Access and location – Access should be via safe and well-used routes. Prioritise entrances close to public transport connections and signpost nearby places as safe zones.
  - Co-production and engagement – Engagement with existing women's and youth groups can be a good starting point for co-production, co-designing parks might change what is included and how spaces feel, engagement must be intersectional and involve existing and potential park users and safety walks help to articulate perceptions of safety in the park.



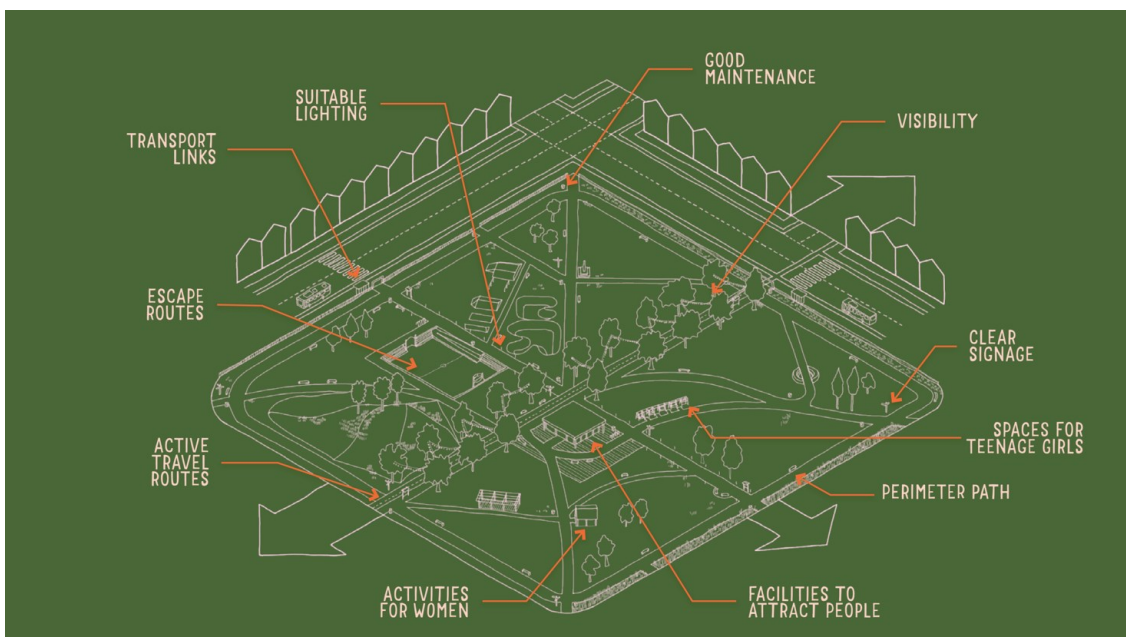


Figure 20: Design Advice for Improving Access to Parks for Women and Girls (Source: Safer Parks, 2023)

### Female-Friendly Sport Infrastructure Design Guidelines

Female sports participation at the elite and peak of athlete pathways is increasing and rapidly in line with an increase in grassroots participation in sport and physical activity. This represents an exciting time for Australia but also presents challenges for sports administrators and facilities.

Sport and Recreation Victoria has developed the Female Friendly Guidelines that include the following design principles to create female-friendly facilities:

- **Fit for purpose:** While promoting a flexible and multi-use approach, ensure female-friendly design elements and specific requirements meet the level and type of activities being delivered, as well as occupant, club or tenant needs.
- **Multi and shared use:** Infrastructure should be efficiently designed to promote equitable and flexible use by a mixture of users capable of sharing facilities and usage times. The facility space planning and design of public spaces should adopt a multi-purpose approach.
- **Compatibility:** Identification of compatible sports, teams, activities, clubs or organisations with similar objectives and requirements for facility design, use and management should be promoted.
- **Universal Design:** The principles of Universal Design should be applied to community sport and recreation facilities so that they accommodate users of all ages, gender, ability and cultural backgrounds.
- **Public Safety:** Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) takes into consideration the relationship between users and the physical environment in the design of public spaces in crime prevention and assists with public safety.
- **Health and safety:** Security and safety of users should be paramount. Sport and active recreation facilities and their surrounds should be designed, built and maintained in accordance with relevant occupational health and safety standards. They should also incorporate child safe and safer design principles into facility design.
- **Functionality:** Facility design and layout should promote safe and optimal functionality to accommodate formal, competitive, social and recreational forms of usage and participation.

### Making spaces for people with disabilities

Otium has engaged with Disability Sport and Recreation Victoria about key drivers and barriers for participants with disabilities engagement and facility, program and service ideas for delivering their meaningful engagement in sport and recreation.

The following key drivers were identified by participants engaged with sport:

- Providing opportunities for physical activities.
- Ability to play sport they enjoy, as close to able-bodied rules as possible.
- At the same time, considering their various needs to ensure they enjoy the activity.
- Clear pathways of progression as skills improve.
- Where possible, integration and understanding between able and disabled participants.
- Providing opportunities for social connection and emotional support.

The following key barriers were faced by participants' engagement with sport:

- A lack of awareness of the sport and where to play.
- Time, cost and effort involved in travel.
- The cost involved in getting kitted out.
- Lack of critical mass of participants.
- Lack of consistent and convenient scheduling.
- General lack of organisation and administration, needing them to step into this role to ensure gameplay goes ahead.

Disability Sport and Recreation Victoria advocates for 'Disability Sport Hubs' that service a regional catchment. These hubs are seen as an important ingredient to encouraging people with disabilities to participate.

*Loddon Shire has high rates of disability. Partnering with City of Greater Bendigo and advocating for a Disability Sports Hub in Bendigo would service the Central Victoria region.*

The Disability Sports Hub would provide:

- An information portal for how people with disabilities can get involved in sport.
- A central physical location, a dedicated fit-for-purpose space for adaptive (disability) sport.
- A place for bringing people together and cross-pollination of experience and expertise.

The Disability Sports Hub would involve project partners who would connect and engage with various stakeholders including the local community of people with disabilities, State Sporting Associations, disability sport organisations and local disability service providers.

The programs and services at a Disability Sports Hub would be:

- Driven by people with disabilities.
- Low-cost participation opportunities.
- Encourage engagement with local schools, sport clubs, coaches, leisure providers and disability organisations.

The physical activities and programs would be complemented by an information and education hub for the delivery of capacity-building training amongst local providers of sport and recreation programs. This would create a welcoming and skilled environment that supports greater participation by people with disabilities, addresses the key barriers and delivers more sustainable long-term outcomes.

The facility requirements of a Disability Sports Hub would consider:

- Indoor sports courts are ideal for most disability sports.
- Netting/walls.
- Ample circulation space.
- Access to facilities is important – older venues are set up for one or two people in a wheelchair (one accessible toilet and car park). When you have competition, you could have up to 40 people.
- Storage areas for wheelchairs (10 chairs) for programs.
- Lifts (bigger is better).
- Light switches at the right height.
- Braille signage.
- Access keys/downloadable information.

Disability Sport and Recreation identified the **Phoenix USA – Ability360 Sport and Fitness Centre** as the best example of a fit-for-purpose Disability Sports Hub for adaptive sports. It is a best practice in terms of welcoming and functional requirements for people with a disability.

The centre has wheelchair-accessible weight machines, an aquatic area equipped with lifts and elevators, accessible locker rooms, indoor courts, a climbing wall (35ft), an indoor track, personal training, swim lessons, group fitness classes, recreation therapy, team sports, etc. All programs, facilities, and activities are inclusive.

See the following weblinks to a fly-through of the facility:

<https://ability360.org/sports/>

<https://nirsa.net/nirsa/portfolio-items/ability360-sports-and-fitness-center/>

### Universal Design Principles

The seven Principles of Universal Design were developed in 1997 by a working group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers. The following principles will guide the design of the new Sports Performance Event Activity Centre in terms of place and function, environment and sustainability, products and communications:

- Equitable use: The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
- Flexibility in use: The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- Simple and intuitive use: Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language, skills, or current concentration level.
- Perceptible information: The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
- Tolerance for Error: The design minimises hazards and errors – most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated or shielded.
- Low physical effort: The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

- Size and space for approach and use: Appropriate size and space are provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility.

## 4.6 Key Findings of Trends Analysis

*There is an opportunity to explore innovative ideas that diversify the experiences in an aquatic centre environment that creates a community destination year-round.*

### Diverse and accessible network of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities are needed to deliver the full range of activities and benefits

Key trends influencing the provision and design of sport and recreation facilities and services are:

- There is a trend for new or improved sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities to be designed as multi-use and multi-functional. This is partly due to facility investment being used smarter to not put unnecessary financial pressure on Council by duplicating facilities with available capacity.
- Insights from the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of local open spaces and the growing expectations from the community around the quality of their open spaces. The community is increasing their informal active recreation use of sports precincts which is resulting in conflict with formal sport programming and facility capacity issues.
- The large growth in female participation within traditionally male-oriented sports is increasing pressures on playing facilities and increasing the need to diversify amenities to be universally accessible.
- Whilst the nature and intensity of participation in sport may change over time, the need for suitable and adaptable spaces to accommodate demand will remain. Future facility provision and design needs to ensure spaces are adaptable to accommodate changing participation trends.
- The location of sports precincts needs to be accessible to most of the community to maximise use. They should be well connected by active transport links and public transport.

### There is no demand for additional formal sport facilities

The Demand Analysis Model found an oversupply of outdoor sports fields (Australian Rules football +8 fields, cricket +6 fields, Hockey +1 field) and outdoor sports courts and greens (Netball +17.5 courts, tennis +75 courts and bowls +10.5 rinks) in Loddon Shire. **However**, overlaying with local factors impacting a field's use is important. Specifically, the distribution and accessibility of fields to communities. This is a particular factor impacting Loddon Shire which is rural in nature and townships are dispersed (in most cases over 20 minutes from the nearby township) making it difficult to share fields.

The modelling shows the key focus of this Strategy is on activating sport and active recreation facilities rather than needing to improve the capacity of existing facilities.



We have seen traditional sports introduce new formats that are gaining in popularity and growing participation. These new formats of traditional sports have broadened the audience of participants to sports. Examples include:

- New formats that are derivatives of traditional sports. Examples include pickle ball and padel are derivatives of tennis now being played in indoor courts and outdoor tennis court venues, footgolf and disc golf are derivatives of golf, football and ultimate frisbee.
- Social fast paced competition formats that are played on smaller fields, takes less time to play and are more accessible. Examples include AFL9's Netball Fast 5, Cricket T20, and Rugby Sevens.

The recent AusPlay Survey 2021 also shows several new emerging sports and trends in Australia. These include:

- Female sports – Women and girls sports have been the fastest growing participation across traditional and emerging sports.
- eSports (Exergaming) – eSports or competitive gaming has been gaining popularity not just in Australia but worldwide. There are now several eSports leagues and tournaments.
- Virtual training and racing – Zwift is an example of an online platform that allows cycling to connect their indoor trainers or stationary bikes to a virtual environment through a computer or smart phone. Zwift features include gamification elements, allows for multiplayer and social cycling, and hosting of racing events and challenges.
- Adventure racing: Trail based events that are hosted in nature and include extreme sports like mountain biking and trail running. These sports are growing in popularity.
- Adaptive and inclusive sports – Adaptive sports for people with disabilities are gaining recognition and support. These sports promote inclusivity and support people with a wide range of abilities. There is a growing number of adaptive sport competitions offered from local community to elite level. These include blind cricket and wheelchair sports for Australian Rules Football, rugby, basketball and tennis.
- Combat sports – Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) is an example of a combat sport in Australia growing participation with more gyms and competitions emerging and greater visibility of the sport through the global popularity of Ultimate Fighting Championships (UFC).
- Climbing and bouldering – Indoor and outdoor climbing and bouldering facilities have become more popular.

**The redesign of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities should adopt industry design principles that deliver inclusive, multi-use and sustainable facilities and programs**

The following design principles have been developed to help inform the future design of the sporting infrastructure within Loddon Shire. It will be used to guide the future prioritisation framework.

- **Accessible and Inclusive:** Facilities and spaces will be universally designed and inclusive, fostering participation in physical activity by all our community, across all life stages, genders and cultures.
- **Diverse and Equitable:** Facilities and spaces will offer a diverse mix of facilities, programs and experiences. Council will provide an equitable access to facilities across the Shire.
- **Safe and Welcoming:** Facilities and spaces and programs are designed to be visible, open and welcoming to the community, creating a safe place for girls and women to participate.
- **Multi-Use:** Facilities and spaces will be multi-use, offering several activities, programs and experiences for users.



- **Connected:** Well-planned recreational facilities and areas of public open space will provide connectivity across our localities and provide access to our unique natural environment.
- **Sustainable:** Facilities and spaces will be designed to operate efficiently, whilst being well managed and maintained.

The following reference documents are provided for guiding design principles:

- [Creating Places for People](#)
- [Making Places for Girls](#)
- [Healthy Active by Design](#)
- [Crime Prevention through Environmental Design](#)
- [Universal Design Principles](#)
- [Female Friendly Sports Infrastructure Design Guidelines](#).

### Contemporary aquatic and leisure facilities are community destinations or hubs offering a mix of facilities, diverse programming and experiences

The key factors of successful aquatic facilities that deliver an operational surplus or break-even position, as compared to a facility not performing as well, was that they respond to aquatic and leisure facilities trends by providing diverse participation opportunities and programmable components. This includes providing a range of contemporary 'wet' and 'dry' elements that appeal to broader market segments:

- Recreation, leisure and adventure
- Health, fitness and wellness
- Competitive and recreational swimming
- Aquatic education and learn to swim
- Therapy, and rehabilitation
- Food/beverage and merchandise services.

The five outdoor pools in Loddon Shire are missing key markets impacting participation and financial position. These are leisure adventure facilities and therapy users. They also don't meet industry standards for pool depths to support fitness and training and education users.

### There is reduced financial capacity of Councils to fund future aquatic facility development

Providing equitable access to aquatic and leisure facilities (and other services like health, education, cultural, recreational and other community services) in rural and regional areas is a challenge, particularly in smaller townships. Particularly with the capital and operational costs of aquatic and leisure facilities having risen significantly over the last ten to 20 years, and even more so in recent times post the COVID-19 global pandemic.

These factors raise some key questions for Council:

- What is the financial capacity to provide capital funding to future aquatic facility projects in Loddon Shire?
- The current "management model" for aquatics in Loddon is effective, yet avoidably expensive. The current financial input of public money is unsustainable. The need to explore and evaluate other potential management models is critical and must occur over the next three year in order to preserve any chance of retaining the current number of aquatic facilities beyond 2028.

- The high cost associated with managing and operating aquatic facilities across the Shire (10% of Council's operating budget) and the benefit/impact to the community given the outdoor nature of the pools and the short season.
- How will we support our communities to access to aquatic facilities given their reliance on these places that offer a relief from the hot summer periods in Northern Victoria, social connection, a safe regulated space for people to learn to swim, and for health, fitness and play.

## 5. Supply Analysis

### *What recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities do we have?*

This section identifies the key issues and opportunities impacting the current supply of recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities.

### 5.1 Current Supply

Loddon has a diverse range of open spaces, including sport and active recreation reserves, parks and playgrounds, swimming pools, tracks and trails, and natural places, including bushland reserves and waterways (rivers and lakes).

There are over 113 parcels of public open spaces within the municipality. There is a good distribution and supply of quality sport and recreation reserves, open spaces and aquatic facilities across the townships:

- The major towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn have a central sport and recreation reserve, a playground, a swimming pool, a golf course, a public hall and walking/cycling tracks.
- The medium-sized townships of Mitiamo, Calivil, Dingee, Newbridge, Serpentine and Tarnagulla don't have as many public open spaces, but most have a central sport and recreation reserve, public hall and playground.
- Small towns generally have a public hall and park or village green.
- The sport and recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities are supported by a network of local walking tracks and regional trails that connect key destinations.

### Sport and Recreation Reserves

There are nine major and 19 minor recreation reserves. Each major and medium-sized township has a central sport and recreation reserve that caters to various sports and places for active recreation. Local parks and gardens support these key open spaces within close proximity to where people live within rural townships but also service the rural district area surrounding the township area.

Sport and recreation reserves are managed and maintained by Reserve Committees of Management, comprised of representatives from user groups and local community. These volunteer committees are appointed directly by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) or by the Loddon Shire Council (as owner or the appointed Committee of Management under the *Crown Land Reserves Act 1978*), depending on the ownership of the land.

Key sport and recreation reserves are listed in the table below.

**Table 17: Sport and recreation reserves**

Sport and Recreation Reserve	Location	Description	Responsibility
Arnold Recreation Reserve	Arnold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One oval with cricket pitch.</li> <li>• Clubhouse.</li> <li>• Cricket practice net.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management/Club
Bears Lagoon Tennis Centre	Bears Lagoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>• The tennis facilities include five grass tennis courts (irrigated), pavilion, toilets, rebound wall, seating and playground.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management

Sport and Recreation Reserve	Location	Description	Responsibility
Boort Bowls, Croquet and Tennis Centre	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>The bowls facilities include one synthetic bowling green with 11 rinks with lights, pavilion (being redeveloped), storage shed, seats and shelters.</li> <li>The croquet facilities include a green with three courts and lights, a basic pavilion, toilets, seats and shelters.</li> <li>The tennis facilities include 14 lawn tennis courts and pavilion.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Boort Golf Club	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-hole golf course and club house.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management/Club
Boort Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>One sports oval with turf cricket pitch and lights (irrigated) and coaches Cricket practice nets.</li> <li>Portable grandstand.</li> <li>One turf hockey pitch and hockey storage shed.</li> <li>Two netball courts (one with lights) and one warm up 1/3 court, netball shelters and storage shed.</li> <li>Harness racing track, stewards' towers, harness racing sheds.</li> <li>Playground.</li> <li>Boort Historical Society Machinery Shed.</li> <li>Boort Agricultural Show Sheds.</li> </ul>	Council
Bridgewater Bowls Club	Bridgewater on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is privately owned.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two bowling greens with 11 rinks and lights.</li> <li>Storage, water tank, shelters and seats.</li> </ul>	Club
Bridgewater Recreation Reserve	Bridgewater on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>One sports oval with synthetic pitch and lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Two netball/tennis courts with lights.</li> <li>Two tennis courts without lights.</li> <li>Cricket practice nets.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Playground, water tank and scoreboard.</li> <li>Toilets are only open on days the reserve hosts an organised sporting event.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Calivil Recreation Reserve	Calivil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>One sports oval with turf pitch and lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Two netball courts with shelter</li> <li>Two tennis courts with lights.</li> <li>Cricket practice nets.</li> <li>Sports pavilion (shared).</li> <li>One synthetic bowling green with 8 rinks and lights.</li> <li>18-hole black soil scrapes golf course.</li> <li>Golf and bowls clubhouse.</li> <li>Playground, water tank and scoreboard.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management

Sport and Recreation Reserve	Location	Description	Responsibility
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets are only open on days the reserve hosts an organised sporting event.</li> </ul>	
Dingee Recreation Reserve	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>One bowling green with 8 rinks and lights.</li> <li>8 lawn tennis courts with shelter and clubrooms and rebound wall.</li> <li>One sports oval with synthetic cricket pitch and lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Cricket practice net.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Playground, water tank, scoreboard, walking track.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Inglewood Bowls Club	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>One bowling green with 11 rinks and lights.</li> <li>Club toilets, storage, water tank, shelters and seats.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Inglewood Recreation Reserve	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Six lawn tennis courts, shelter and pavilion.</li> <li>Public toilets, storage, water tank, shelters and seats.</li> <li>Cricket wicket, lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Cricket practice nets (in poor condition, infrequent use by nearby clubs for informal training).</li> <li>Two netball courts and shelter.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Inglewood Golf Course	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-hole golf course and pavilion.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Kingower Cricket and Recreation Reserve	Kingower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-hole golf course and club room.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management/Club
Korong Vale Recreation Reserve	Korong Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>One sports oval.</li> <li>Cricket practice nets.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two netball courts and shelter.</li> <li>One bowling green with 8 rinks and lights.</li> <li>Four lawn tennis courts, shelter and pavilion.</li> <li>Playground.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Mitiamo Recreation Reserve	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>One sports oval with lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two netball courts with lights and shelter.</li> <li>Five lawn tennis courts, shelter and pavilion.</li> <li>Club toilets.</li> <li>Playground, storage, water tank, shelters and seats.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Mitiamo Golf Course	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-hole golf course and pavilion.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Newbridge Recreation Reserve	Newbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>One sports oval with synthetic cricket pitch and lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management

Sport and Recreation Reserve	Location	Description	Responsibility
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two netball courts with lights and shelter.</li> <li>Four synthetic tennis courts, shelter and pavilion.</li> <li>Playground, camping area, shelters and seats.</li> </ul>	
Mitchell Park	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>One sports oval with lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two netball courts and shelter.</li> <li>Playground, old machinery sheds, shelters and seats.</li> <li>Toilets are only open on days the reserve hosts an organised sporting event.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Pyramid Hill Bowls and Tennis Centre	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>15 lawn tennis courts and tennis pavilion.</li> <li>Two bowling greens with 16 rinks, lights and bowls pavilion.</li> <li>Seating and shelters.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Pyramid Hill Quarter Horse Club	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arena.</li> <li>Club room.</li> <li>Yards.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management/Club
Serpentine Recreation Reserve	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Crown Land.</li> <li>One sports oval with turf cricket pitch and lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>Cricket training nets (unusable).</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two netball courts and shelter.</li> <li>Community hall.</li> <li>Playground, storage, water tank, shelters and seats.</li> <li>Toilets are only open on days the reserve hosts an organised sporting event.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Centre	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>Five lawn tennis courts and tennis shed.</li> <li>One bowling green with 8 rinks and lights.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Water tank, seating and shelters.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Market Square Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>One sports oval.</li> <li>Cricket training nets.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two sheds used by Engine Club.</li> <li>One shed used by Men's Shed Program.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management
Donaldson Park Recreation Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The precinct is Council freehold land.</li> <li>One sports oval with lights and coaches' boxes.</li> <li>One grass hockey pitch.</li> <li>Sports pavilion.</li> <li>Two netball courts and shelter with lights.</li> <li>Two synthetic and 8 lawn tennis courts with lights and clubhouse.</li> <li>Two bowling greens with 12 rinks, lights and clubhouse.</li> <li>Harness racing track.</li> <li>Playground, water tank, shelters and seats.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management



Sport and Recreation Reserve	Location	Description	Responsibility
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets are only open on days the reserve hosts an organised sporting event.</li> </ul>	
Wedderburn Golf Club	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-hole golf course and club house.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management/Club
Woodstock Recreation Reserve	Woodstock on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two synthetic tennis courts.</li> <li>Public hall.</li> </ul>	Committee of Management

### Parks and Gardens

The central sport and recreation reserves are supported by local parks and gardens offering community places for play, social gathering, community events, relaxation and reflection. These parks and gardens feature play spaces, seating and picnic facilities and landscaped areas, including gardens and shade trees.

Key parks and gardens are listed in the table below.

**Table 18: Parks and gardens**

Parks and Gardens	Location	Description	Responsibility
Jubilee Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> </ul>	Council
Nolens Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible toilets</li> <li>BBQ</li> <li>Table and seats</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Lake</li> <li>Exercise equipment</li> <li>Water fountain</li> </ul>	Council
Rotary and Historical Parks	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BBQ</li> <li>Table and seat</li> </ul>	Council
Sunnyside Court Playground	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> </ul>	Council
Sloans Park	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BBQ</li> <li>Table and seats</li> <li>Playground</li> </ul>	Council
Swimming and Fishing Piers	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets</li> <li>BBQ</li> <li>Swimming hole (not supervised/no lifeguards on duty)</li> <li>Tables and seats</li> <li>Water fountain</li> </ul>	Council
Progress Park	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Toilets</li> <li>Tables and seats</li> <li>BBQ</li> </ul>	Council
J Sloan Park	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible toilets</li> <li>BBQ</li> <li>Table and seats</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Skate ramp</li> <li>Water fountain</li> <li>Exercise equipment</li> </ul>	Council
Village Green	Kingower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rotunda</li> <li>BBQ</li> </ul>	Council
Borella Park	Korong Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>BBQ</li> </ul>	Council

Parks and Gardens	Location	Description	Responsibility
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shade sail</li> <li>• Table and seats</li> </ul>	
Progress Park	Newbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking and cycling trail.</li> </ul>	Council
Kelly Park	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Table and seats</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Half basketball court and netball ring</li> <li>• Kangaroo chair</li> <li>• Exercise equipment</li> </ul>	Council
Lions Park East	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>	Council
Pyramid Hill Reserve – The Hill	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Table and seats</li> <li>• Walking track</li> </ul>	Council
T J Rudkins Reserve	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Table and seats</li> <li>• Water fountain</li> </ul>	Council
Tarnagulla Soldiers Memorial Park	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Table and seats</li> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>	Council
Cooper Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table and seats</li> </ul>	Council
Wedderburn Soldiers Memorial Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• BBQ</li> <li>• Table and seats</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Half basketball court</li> <li>• Kangaroo chair</li> </ul>	Council
Nardoo Linear Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking Track</li> <li>• Exercise equipment</li> </ul>	Council
Teds Garden	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kangaroo chair</li> </ul>	Council

### Aquatic Facilities

Loddon Shire's five outdoor pools are located at Boort, Inglewood, Mitiamo, Pyramid and Wedderburn. A leisure service management contractor manages the outdoor pools.

Aquatic facilities are listed in the table below.

**Table 19: Aquatic facilities**

Aquatic Facility	Location	Description	Responsibility
Boort Outdoor Pool	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Toddlers pool</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Basketball ring</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> </ul>	Leisure Services Contractor
Inglewood Outdoor Pool	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Basketball ring</li> </ul>	Leisure Services Contractor

Aquatic Facility	Location	Description	Responsibility
Mitiamo Outdoor Pool	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> </ul>	Leisure Services Contractor
Pyramid Hill Outdoor Pool	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Toddlers pool</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> </ul>	Leisure Services Contractor
Wedderburn Outdoor Pool	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Basketball ring</li> <li>• Cricket nets</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> </ul>	Leisure Services Contractor

### Recreation Trails

The sport and recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities are supported by a network of local walking tracks and regional trails that connect key destinations. A popular local trail is Nolens Park in Boort which hosts the local Parkrun.

Key recreation trails are listed in the following table.

Table 20: Recreation trails

Trail	Location	Description
Bridgewater River Track	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6km along banks of Loddon. Formed footpaths, gravel path and dirt road.</li> <li>• Trail head - <a href="#">Loddon River, Bridgewater (adjacent to hotel)</a></li> </ul>
BullaBul Trail	Inglewood/ Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13km trail links Inglewood and Bridgewater. Via bushland, dirt roads, and river track. Involves road crossing - local and VicRoad roads.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Verdon St (old gaol), Inglewood West Side, Loddon River Bridgewater</a></li> </ul>
Inglewood Reservoir Track	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2km loop through bush land and around reservoir.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Inglewood Botanical Gardens</a></li> </ul>
Laanecoorie River Trail	Laanecoorie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.5km loop from camp ground, along Loddon River to the weir. Return track is on sealed road.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Laanecoorie Loddon River Recreation Reserve</a></li> </ul>
Tarnagulla Cemetery Track	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3km return from extension from township walk to cemetery.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Wimmera HWY, Tarnagulla</a></li> </ul>
Tarnagulla Reservoir Track	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3km loop with shorter option available at recreation reserve. Gravel path, majority is dirt road. Some sealed road crossings.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Poverty St, Tarnagulla</a></li> </ul>
Tarnagulla Town Heritage	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 5km taking in heritage sites of Tarnagulla. Paved paths, bush tracks, road reserves and dirt tracks.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Tarnagulla</a></li> </ul>
Queens Gully Trail	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.8km Loop. Starting at Wedderburn Reservoir Walk. Small section of single track, then follows dirt roads.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Hospital St, Wedderburn</a></li> </ul>
Wedderburn Reservoir Track	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1km Loop around Wedderburn Reservoir on trail.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Hospital St, Wedderburn</a></li> </ul>
Blue Mallee Trail	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8km loop. Trail signed with post and yellow arrows. Dirt and sealed road crossings.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Hard Hill Reserve</a></li> </ul>
Nardoo Track Wedderburn	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2km loop along Nardoo Creek and Chapel St.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Wedderburn</a></li> </ul>

Trail	Location	Description
Pon Bon Track	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2km of trail through the Pon Bon. Trail begins at Travelers Rest.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">TJ Rudkins Reserve</a></li> </ul>
Dingee Walking Tack	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500m formed path from Dingee to the Recreation Reserve</li> <li>• Trail around oval and through bushland at the reserve.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Winzar Reserve</a></li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Dingee Pavilion</a></li> </ul>
Dunolly-Tarnagulla Cycle Tracks	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44k Forest ride includes nature conversation reserve - loop from Dunolly to Tarnagulla.</li> <li>• Trail head: Dunolly Town Hall</li> </ul>
Dunolly-Laanecoorie Cycle Track	Laanecoorie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44k Forest loop from Dunolly to Laanecoorie.</li> <li>• Trail head: Dunolly Town Hall</li> </ul>
Pyramid Hill Trail	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2km Loop around Pyramid Hill base.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Hill Reserve</a></li> </ul>
Pyramid Hill Connecting Trail	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1k path connecting township to hill. Ends at swimming pool.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Hill Reserve</a></li> </ul>
Little Lake Boort Trail	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4km path around Little Lake Boort.</li> <li>• 2.5km path circuit around Little Lake Boort. The trail hosts the local Parkrun.</li> <li>• Trail head: <a href="#">Nolens Park</a></li> </ul>

### Nature Conservation Reserves

Loddon Shire has spectacular bushland reserves and river corridors that offer opportunities for nature-based recreation.

Key nature conservation reserves are:

- **Kooyoora State Park** – The bushland reserve features Mount Kooyoora and Melville Caves. It is a great place to rock climb and abseil, boulder hop, camp, picnic and hike. This park is managed by Parks Victoria.
- **Terrick Terrick National Park** – The bushland reserve features Mount Terrick Terrick and rare remnant native grasslands. It is a place to camp and bushwalk. This park is managed by Parks Victoria.
- **Leaghur State Park** – The 2022-hectare bushland reserve is located on the Loddon River floodplain and features Victorian most significant areas of block box wetland and woodland. It is a place to picnic, camp and bushwalk. This park is managed by Parks Victoria.
- **Wanyarra Camping Grounds** – The camping grounds is located near the historic town of Tarnagulla. It is a popular recreation reserve for camping and picnics. This park is managed by Parks Victoria.
- **Pyramid Hill Summit Walk** – The bushland reserve features “The Hill” with popular walking trails that wind around the base, an adventurous track the extends across the “saddle” of the hill and links to the existing track from the Pyramid Hill township. It is a popular place to picnic and for bird watching.
- **Mount Hope Nature Conservation Reserve** – This bushland reserve features seven small granite hills. The park is a great place for hiking, rock climbing, boulder hopping and picnics.
- **Kow Swamp** – Kow Swamp wetlands is an aboriginal significant place with Indigenous ancestral remains found that date back at least 13,000 years. The swamp was also important to European settlement being a water source for sheep, cattle, dairy and grain farming. Today it is a popular recreation and fishing spot.

- **Boort Lakes and Wetlands** – Boort is a popular visitor destination and features the 400 ha Lake Boort used for swimming and water sports including fishing and water skiing. Lake Boort has the greatest number of scar trees in Australia. Boort also includes Little Lake Boort, an attractive recreation lake and caravan/camping spot and Woolshed Swamp and Yando Swamp that are known wildlife and bird watching spots.
- **Loddon River in Bridgewater** – The open water spot includes a popular swimming hole and a designated zone for water sports including fishing, water skiing/speed boats and paddling. The spot includes a park with picnic facilities and connects with a foreshore river trail.
- **Serpentine Creek and Loddon River** – There are popular canoe trails with all abilities canoe ramps, hidden beaches and gentle rapids on the Loddon River in Laanecoorie and Serpentine Creek in Durham Ox.

### Regional Facilities

There are a range of regional sports facilities that service Loddon Shire located within Bendigo and Kerang. These include:

- **Tom Flood Centre (Velodrome)** – Cycling. The Centre supports track racing for the Bendigo and District Cycling Club. The club also ride road and gravel races.
- **Latrobe University Bendigo Athletics Centre** – Athletics. The Centre supports Athletics Bendigo which represents Little Athletics Victoria and Athletics Victoria in the Bendigo Region. There are four Athletics Victoria clubs in Bendigo including Bendigo Harriers, Bendigo University, Eaglehawk YMCA and South Bendigo Athletics clubs.
- **Bendigo East Aquatic Centre, Faith Leech Aquatic Centre, Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre and Kerang Outdoor Pool** – Swimming. These facilities have 50m heated pools and support Bendigo East Swimming Club, Bendigo Hawks Swimming Club, Kangaroo Flat Swimming Club, Kerang Swim Club. They support swim club meets and school carnival events.
- **Bendigo Table Tennis Centre** – Table Tennis. The regional table tennis centre has 12 tables permanently set up in a purpose-built stadium. The Centre supports the Bendigo and District Table Tennis Association.
- **Bendigo Badminton Centre** – Badminton. The regional badminton centre has 16 courts permanently set up in a purpose-built stadium. The Centre supports the Bendigo and Eaglehawk Badminton Association.
- **Red Energy Centre (Bendigo Indoor Sports and Entertainment Centre)** – Basketball, Netball and Volleyball. The centre also provides a regional netball centre for the Bendigo Netball Association. Whilst the centre provides for some Loddon Shire netball participants, most play in the local football and netball league competitions in Loddon Shire.
- **Bendigo Regional Tennis Centre** – Tennis. The regional tennis centre with 26 plexi-pave tennis courts. Tennis is included. Whilst the centre provides for some Loddon Shire tennis participants, most play in the local tennis association competitions in Loddon Shire.
- **Bendigo Regional Hockey Centre** – Hockey. The regional hockey centre with two international standard synthetic turf pitches. Hockey is included. Whilst the centre provides for some Loddon Shire hockey participants, most play in the local hockey association competitions in Loddon Shire.
- **Queen Elizabeth Oval (QEO)** – Australia Rules football and cricket. The QEO is the premier sports oval in Central Victoria. The oval has a capacity of 10,000 people and includes a grandstand and turf wicket pitches. The facility hosts finals and has the facilities to host Victorian Football League matches. Whilst the centre provides for some Loddon Shire Australian Rules football and cricket participants, most play in the local hockey association competitions in Loddon Shire.

- **Epson Huntly Recreation Reserve** – Soccer. The regional soccer facility features six soccer pitches and hosts the Bendigo Amateur Soccer League together with several local sports clubs, including the Bendigo City Football Club (NPL standard).

This means Loddon Shire does not need to provide competition fields for these sports, unless it services a local need i.e., local club training and competition venue or social competition. These venues host the regional associations and deliver athlete talent development pathways.

## 5.2 Planning Framework

To support best practice recreation and open space planning a planning framework has been developed that considers the roles different facilities, assets and spaces play in activating communities and the different places we live in. These different roles of recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities deliver a wide range of 'liveability' benefits. These include improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, providing a pathway from grass root to elite level sport, socialising and play, learn to swim, cooling off in hot weather, protecting and connecting with nature, attracting community and visitor activity that returns economic benefits and cultural connection.

Effective recreation facilities, open space and aquatic facilities planning requires a partnership with community and land managers (Committees of Management) across Local, State and Federal Governments. The planning should be integrated, holistic, and sustainable.

The Planning Framework classifies recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities by their primary functions and provides a classification system to apply service levels to guide the provision of recreation assets across the municipality.

State and Federal Government legislation, the planning scheme and reserve management plans will outline the design and management requirements of nature conservation reserves. These open space types are mostly managed by other land managers, including Parks Victoria. There is an opportunity for Council to advocate for nature-based recreation and adventure activities that will provide a unique experience and community with an important connection to nature.

The Planning Framework will guide the project scope during development of concept plans or detailed designs along with consideration of industry design standards and principles, universal design standards and crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) guidelines.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the detailed Loddon Recreation Planning Framework.

## 5.3 Key Findings of Supply Analysis

**Loddon Shire has a good provision and diverse mix of sport and recreation reserve, open spaces and aquatic facilities.**

There are nine major and 11 minor recreation reserves, five community swimming pools, one swimming hole (Bridgewater) and over 113 parcels of public open spaces within the municipality. The facilities are in good condition and attractive to use. They are managed by Council, contractors and Reserve Committees. Activation and reasonable access to sport facilities, programs and aquatic centres is a key focus of the project.

The central sport and recreation reserves facilitate participation in a wide range of sports including Australian Rules football, netball, cricket, hockey and tennis. These are supported by other sports facilities including lawn bowls greens and golf courses. A network of recreation trails offers walking and cycling opportunities within townships that connect activity centres with key destinations.



Loddon Shire features spectacular bushland reserves and river corridors that connect people to nature and culture, whilst also holding high biodiversity values. They offer opportunities for nature-based recreation including bushwalking, rock climbing and bouldering, fishing, canoeing, camping and picnicking. The bushland reserves in the Loddon Valley are managed by Parks Victoria, with some managed in partnership with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation following the formalising of the Recognition and Settlement Agreement. There is an opportunity for Council to work with land managers and Traditional Owner groups to develop products and promote nature-based recreation opportunities.

The supply analysis has found a good provision and distribution of different types of sport and active recreation reserve, parks and gardens, recreation trails, aquatic facilities, local streetscapes and civic spaces and nature conservation reserves.

Within each major and medium-sized township there are centralised district sports reserves and parks and gardens that support social recreation, active recreation and play and a local walking trail.

*These places respond to the rural township and locally to population settlements.*

The sports reserves are in very good condition following significant investment by Council, the community and State and Federal Government in improving sports fields, lighting, courts and pavilions.

Five major townships have access to an outdoor swimming pool. These facilities are in average condition. The recent technical assessment of all pools has found all pools to be in an average but serviceable condition. They all require upgrades in the next 10 years to continue the existing benefit to community.

The local play spaces are very similar and a planned approach to upgrading and diversifying play experiences is needed at renewal. There has been recent investment in diversifying play spaces and providing active recreation facilities like fitness stations in townships. J Sloans Park in Inglewood has a shaded play space and fitness station area with picnic facilities.

Each township has a network of local and regional walking and cycling trails. There has been recent investment into walking trails, with an example being the Loddon River Trail in Bridgewater that provides a lit path from the caravan park to the town centre and onto the swimming hole.

There are national parks and regional parks located throughout the Loddon Valley, whilst waterways such as the Loddon River traverse through major townships. They help profile and shape the land and mean Loddon Shire residents and visitors to the Loddon Valley can access nature-based recreation activities that deliver liveability and tourism benefits to the region. There are opportunities to continue to encourage these activities and trail links that connect community with nature.

The local streetscapes and civic spaces in Loddon Shire townships are community spaces and offer opportunities for community events and activities, for people to lunch and to socialise and they encourage walkable communities. There is an opportunity to activate these community spaces through improving amenity and celebrating cultural heritage and identity. An example of where this is occurring is the Walk this Way project at Inglewood.

**Councils are not the only providers of open space, sport and recreation facilities - A partnership approach with other land managers and providers is needed**

The Council is not the only provider of open space and sport and recreation facilities in Loddon Shire. There are Reserve Committees that manage the central sport and active recreation reserves. Council contract manages the operation of the five outdoor pools to a leisure services management contractor.

Bowls clubs and golf clubs with courses located on private land or Crown Land are responsible for managing these facilities. These spaces are restricted open spaces for community use.

There are other land managers, including Parks Victoria and the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, which manage regional nature conservation reserves including National Parks and Regional Parks.

There are regional sports facilities that service Loddon Shire located in Bendigo, Echuca and Kerang.

A partnership approach with these land managers is needed to deliver a complementary and regional network of sport and active recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services to the Loddon Shire.

## 6. Aquatic Service Review

The planning process includes a comprehensive service review of the Aquatic Facilities within the Loddon Shire. The review includes:

- Catchment and Competitor Review
- Performance Review
- Asset Condition Review and Renewal Plan.

### 6.1 Current Facility Provision

Council currently supports aquatic services through the provision of five aquatic facilities. The management of the five pools is currently contracted to Belgravia Leisure, with the contract having commenced in late 2021. The facilities and their components are detailed in the following table.

**Table 21: Aquatic facilities**

Aquatic Facility	Location	Description
Boort Outdoor Pool	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Toddlers pool</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Basketball ring</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> </ul>
Inglewood Outdoor Pool	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Basketball ring</li> </ul>
Mitiamo Outdoor Pool	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> </ul>
Pyramid Hill Outdoor Pool	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Toddlers pool</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> </ul>
Wedderburn Outdoor Pool	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33 m pool – solar heated</li> <li>• Infant wading pool</li> <li>• Basketball ring</li> <li>• Cricket nets</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> </ul>

### 6.2 Catchment Review

Leisure and sporting facility trends and benchmarking generally indicate that facilities located in regional areas have a primary catchment radius of approximately 0-15 minutes travel distance and a secondary catchment radius of 15–30-minute travel distance.

In general, approximately 75% to 85% of users will reside within a 0-15 drive time of a facility with the remaining 15% to 25% coming from areas within the 15-30-minute drive time of the facility.

The size and shape of the catchment area will be influenced by a number of factors including the range and quality of facilities and services offered, natural and built barriers i.e., highways, travel times and the availability of competing facilities. In metropolitan Melbourne, it is not uncommon for facilities to share catchment areas, particularly the secondary catchment areas.

The following map shows the primary (0-15-minute travel time) and secondary (15-30-minute travel time) catchment areas of the aquatic facilities located within Loddon Shire.

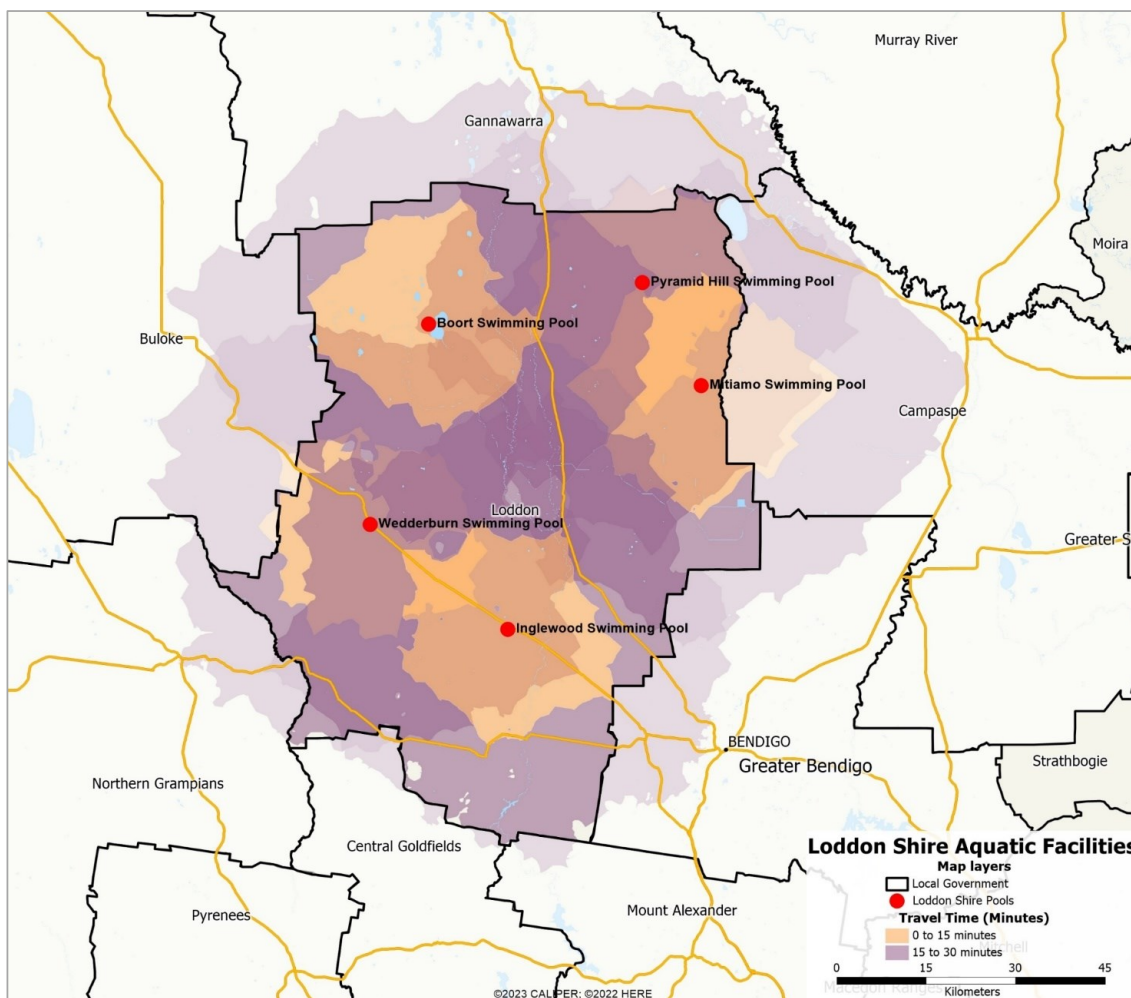


Figure 22: Loddon Shire Aquatic Facilities – 15 and 30-minute drive time catchment map

The below table shows the population catchment for the Loddon Shire Facilities according to catchment areas.

Table 22: Population of catchment areas

Facility	Primary Catchment 0–15-minute drive
Boort Outdoor Pool	1,157
Inglewood Outdoor Pool	1,848
Mitiamo Outdoor Pool	689
Pyramid Hill Outdoor Pool	972
Wedderburn Outdoor Pool	1,331

These mapping and population catchments indicate:

- There is an overlap of primary catchment zones between Pyramid Hill and Mitiamo Pools, and a significant secondary catchment overlap.
- Pyramid Hill has a secondary catchment overlap with Boort Pool.
- There is a small overlap of the primary catchment and a significant overlap of the secondary catchment areas between Wedderburn and Inglewood Pools (with a 20-minute drive time between the facilities).
- There is an overlap of secondary catchment areas between Wedderburn and Boort facilities.
- Mitiamo Pool has the smallest population within its primary catchment area of all the Loddon Shire facilities (689).
- Inglewood has the highest population within its primary catchment area of all the Loddon Shire facilities (1,848), followed by Wedderburn (1,331) and then Boort (1,157).

### 6.3 Competitor Review

This section provides a review of the competitors within the Loddon Shire and the surrounding LGA's.

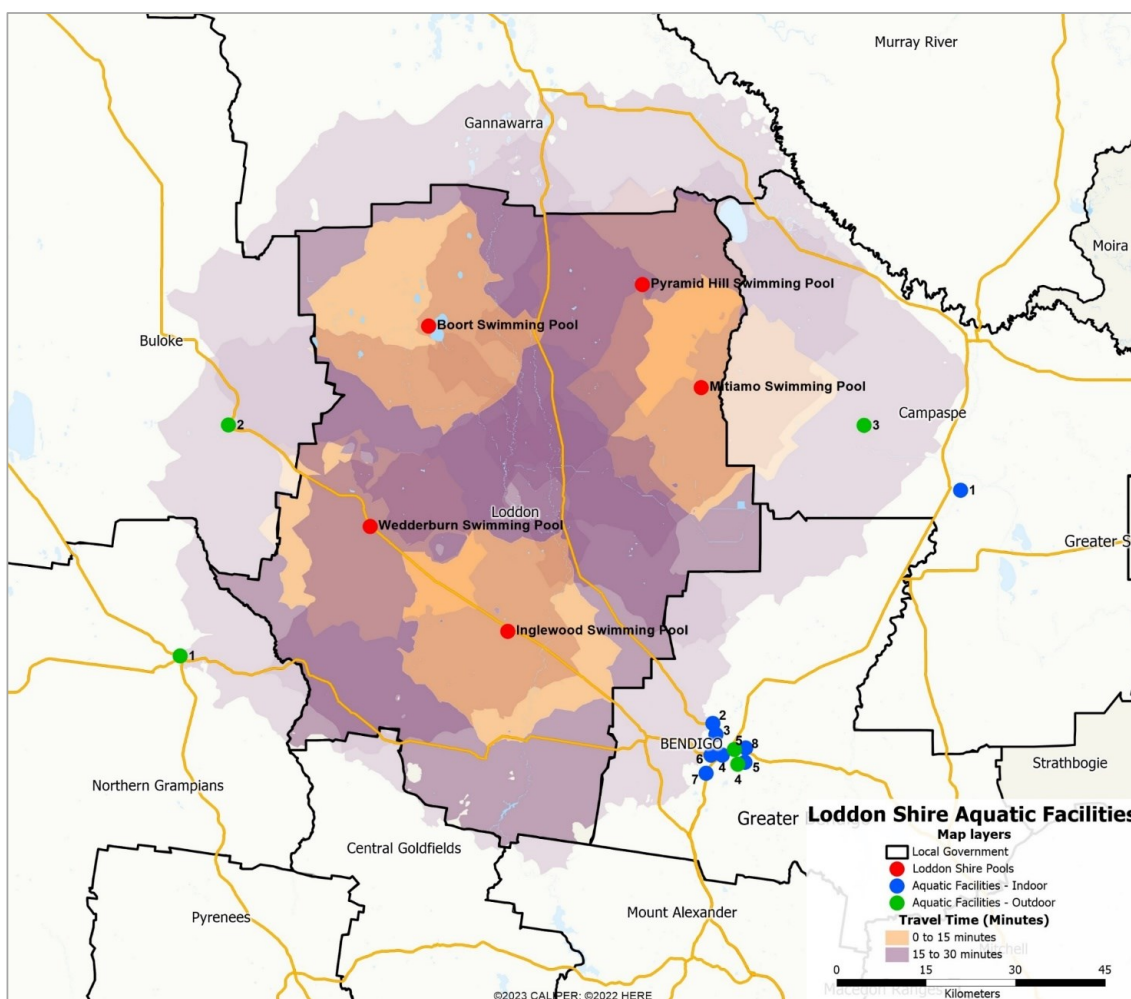


Figure 23: Aquatic Facility Competitors

The below table provides detail on the name and location of the facilities as shown in the above map.

**Table 23: Aquatic Facility Competitors**

Aquatic Facilities - Indoor		Location	Aquatic Facilities - Outdoor		Location
1	Splash 'n' Learn to swim	Rochester	1	St Arnaud Swimming Pool	St Arnaud
2	Peter Krenz Leisure Centre	Bendigo	2	Charlton Swimming Pool	Charlton
3	Sloan Swim School	Bendigo	3	Lockington Pool	Burns St, Lockington
4	Paul Sadler Swimland Bendigo	Bendigo	4	Brennan Park Swimming Pool	Kennington, Bendigo
5	Harley Street Swim School	Strathdale, Bendigo	5	Bendigo East Aquatic Centre	East Bendigo
6	Swim Culture	Golden Square, Bendigo			
7	Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre	Kangaroo Flat, Bendigo			
8	Swimz Bendigo	East Bendigo			

A review of the competitors indicates:

- There are no competitors in the primary catchment areas for any of the Loddon Shire facilities.
- Charlton Swimming Pool and Lockington Pool are just outside of the secondary catchment areas for Wedderburn and Mitiamo respectively.
- All indoor aquatic facilities, both Council owned and private except for one located in Rochester, are located in and around Bendigo, it can be assumed any residents of Loddon who wish to participate in a Learn to Swim program year-round (when the outdoor pools are closed) are required to travel to Bendigo.

## 6.4 Attendance Review

The following details the attendance of the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities across the 2021-22 and 2022-23 seasons.

**Table 24: Loddon Shire Aquatic Facilities Attendances**

Facility	2021-22 Attendances	2022-23 Attendances
Boort Outdoor Pool	5,745	5,893
Inglewood Outdoor Pool	2,135	2,198
Mitiamo Outdoor Pool	1,854	1,650
Pyramid Hill Outdoor Pool	2,522	2,789
Wedderburn Outdoor Pool	2,672	2,736
<b>Total Attendances</b>	<b>14,928</b>	<b>15,266</b>

The graph below shows the attendances at the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities across 2021-22 and 2022-23 seasons.



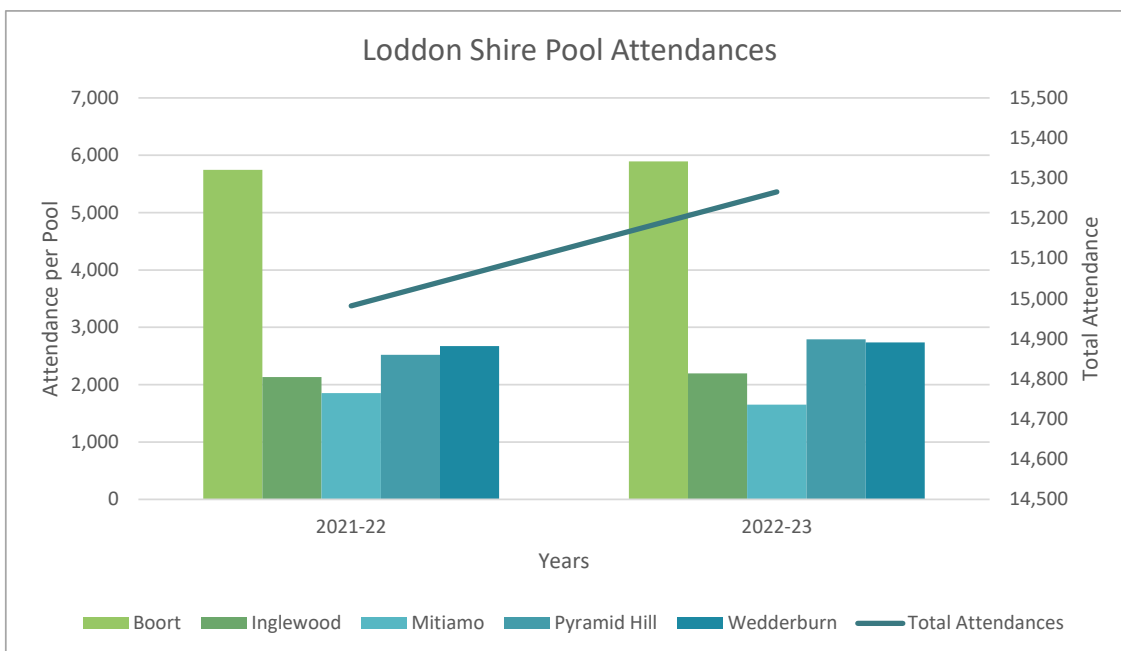


Figure 24: Loddon Shire Pool Attendances

The graph shows there was an increase in overall attendances between 2021-22 and 2022-23 of 338. This is an increase of 2.26% on the previous year.

An analysis of the attendances for each facility shows the following:

- **Boort Outdoor Pool** - There was a 2.57% increase in attendances from 2021-22 to 2022-23 seasons from 5,745 to 5,893, which equates to 148 visits.
- **Inglewood Outdoor Pool** - There was a 2.95% increase in attendances from 2021-22 to 2022-23 seasons from 2,135 to 2,198, which equates to 63 visits.
- **Mitiamo Outdoor Pool** - There was an 11% decrease in attendances from 2021-22 to 2022-23 seasons from 1,854 to 1,650, which equates to 204 visits.
- **Pyramid Hill Outdoor Pool** - There was a 10.59% increase in attendances from 2021-22 to 2022-23 seasons from 2,522 to 2,789, which equates to 267 visits.
- **Wedderburn Outdoor Pool** - There was a 2.39% increase in attendances from 2021-22 to 2022-23 seasons from 2,672 to 2,736, which equates to 64 visits.

### 6.4.1 Council Costs

The following table details the cost to Council to provide the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities. This data was provided by Council Officers.

Table 25: Loddon Shire Aquatic Facilities Costs to Council

Council Costs	2021-22	2022-23
<b>Net Operating Performance</b>	<b>\$47,928</b>	<b>\$6,064</b>
Contract Management Fee	-\$529,900*	-\$416,886
Utilities	-\$74,825	-\$78,223
Asset Maintenance	-\$95,488	-\$86,213
Council Salaries and associated costs	-\$117,068	-\$116,513
Miscellaneous	-\$7,499	-\$7,289
Pool Community Income	\$7,448	\$650
<b>Total Council Subsidy</b>	<b>-\$769,404</b>	<b>-\$698,410</b>
Attendances	14,315	15,266
<b>Subsidy Per Visit</b>	<b>-\$52</b>	<b>-\$46</b>

\*Includes Contract Transition Fee of \$97,495

The graph below shows the cost to Council and attendances of the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities across the 2021-22 and 2022-23 seasons.

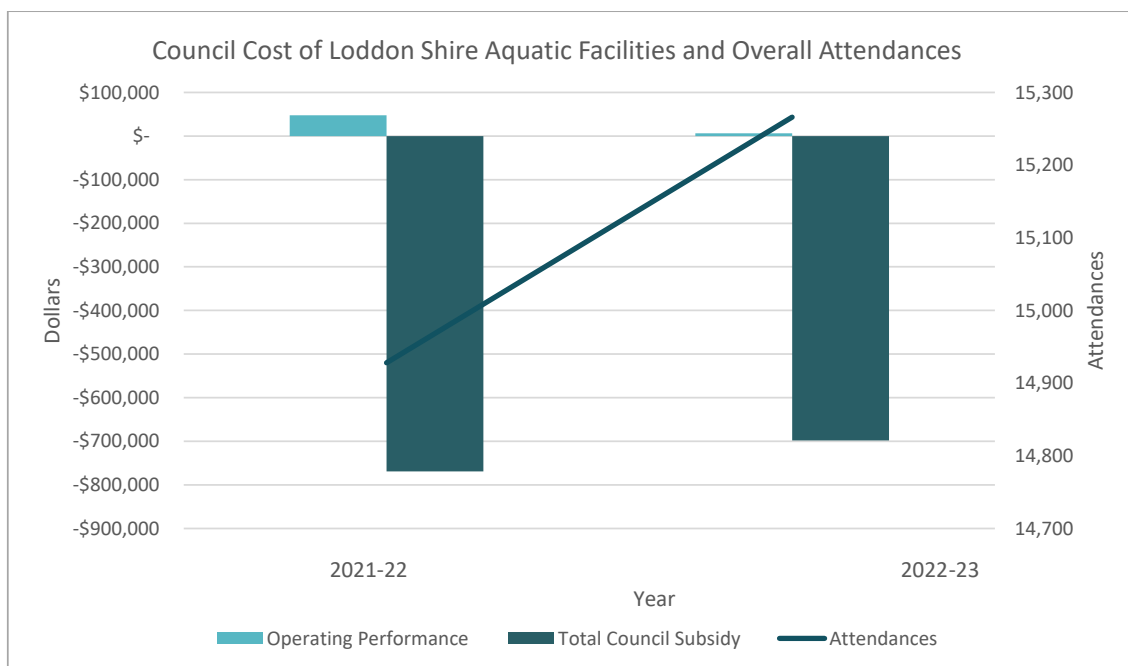


Figure 25: Loddon Shire Aquatic Facilities Costs to Council and Attendances 2022-23 and 2021-22

A review of the costs to Council indicates:

- The total Council subsidy decreased from 2021-22 to 2022-23 from \$769,404 to \$698,410. This, however, can be attributed to the Contract Transition Fee of \$97,495 included within the Contract Management Fee for 2021-22. If this was excluded from the calculations, the 2021-22 figure would be \$671,090.

- The highest cost to Council is the contract management fee for the external management company to operate the pools on Council’s behalf.
- Utilities were the only cost that increased from 2021-22, with surprisingly, all other costs to Council decreasing in 2022-23.
- Due to the low patronage numbers across the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities, the subsidy per visit average across the two seasons is \$47. This is an extremely high subsidy and well above the industry benchmark.

## 6.5 Asset Management Review

This section provides a high-level overview of a 10-year Asset Renewal Program and indicative associated costs for the Loddon Shire aquatic facilities. The information provided within this section comes from JWC Engineers, who conducted onsite inspections of each of the facilities and have provided a number of reports from 2022 to 2024 to Council Officers detailing current asset conditions and the below-proposed works.

### 6.5.1 Current Asset Conditions

All facilities are known or understood to be constructed circa 1960’s, or possibly into the 1970’s. The current conditions across the facilities are summarised below:

**Table 26: Loddon Shire Aquatic Facilities Current Asset Condition**

Asset	Condition
Main Pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shells generally are in average condition structurally, commensurate with their age, but there are specific structural issues at all (except Mitiamo), some are legacy (uplift) and some current (corrosion):                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Boort – extensive corrosion around main pool hob where cut for wet-deck conversion. Legacy uplift cracks in floor; major crack in corner of Program pool.</li> <li>– Inglewood – legacy shrinkage and uplift cracks in floor.</li> <li>– Wedderburn – some cracks in walls and floor but not extensive. Some corrosion in hob.</li> <li>– Pyramid Hill – extensive erosion and corrosion in the hob/gutter of both main and medium pools. Legacy uplift movement/cracks in main pool floor.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Legacy and uplift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typically, after an uplift event there can be defined crack patterns in the floor, hydrostatic valves if fitted may ‘pop’ (but noting that the reliability of decades old valves should not be relied upon implicitly), differential settlement can occur, or individual floor slabs may move vertically.</li> <li>• All are evidence of the distress that the shell has suffered but evidence also shows that most pools can nonetheless remain operating for many years.</li> <li>• The key long-term issues are leakage through displaced joints, cracks or pipework, and the development of corrosion of reinforcing steel.</li> </ul>
Depth Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primarily this comprises relatively new pole mounted signage around the pool concourse.</li> <li>• There is some legacy signage on hobs, but many letters/numerals are worn away and there is a mixture of imperial and metric depths.</li> </ul>
Treatment Plant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All current water treatment plants are replacement upgrades of the original systems. Most appear to be circa 1990’s era.</li> <li>• Wedderburn’s treatment plant retains the original brick plant room which houses a few operational elements. This brick building is in poor condition with plans to demolish.</li> </ul>
Chemical dosing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sodium hypochlorite and hydrochloric acid is used at all sites. This is conventional and used in many regional pools. All sites have modern automatic dosing control systems. Key notes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Some nesting bund tanks surrounding the hypo tanks are not high enough.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Asset	Condition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Proper storage of acid containers needs to be upgraded at several sites.</li> <li>– All sites need an EPA complying spill containment slab for ‘hypo’ tanker parking. Conversion to calcium hypochlorite dosing could be an alternative and avoiding spill containment requirements, but it would necessitate further study. It is an option actively considered by other Council’s in this situation. It has a longer shelf life but is a more expensive consumable.</li> </ul>
Backwash discharge to sewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All towns except for Mitiamo have reticulated sewer. Therefore, backwash from the four other sites should be connected to sewer and be formalised under a Trade Waste Agreement (TWA) with the sewer authority (Coliban Water).</li> </ul>
Backwash Tanks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn have old concrete tanks embedded fully or entirely into the ground.</li> <li>• The pump discharge systems from both should be investigated to ensure compliance with the TWA.</li> </ul>
Separate Toddler pool filtration system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only Wedderburn and Inglewood have dedicated Toddler’s pool system (refer to individual reports).</li> <li>• At Boort the Toddlers Pool is combined with the Program pool onto one system and this is considered acceptable in this case.</li> <li>• Separate systems are recommended and preferable.</li> </ul>
Disabled Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only Inglewood has dedicated access provisions (platform lift and hoist) into the main pool.</li> <li>• For the other pools, community benefits will need to be considered by Council in deciding on the scope and scale of any specific access system into pools.</li> </ul>

### 6.5.2 Overall Asset Renewal Costs

The table below provides a 10-year overview of indicative costs associated with recommended works from the audits conducted by JWC Engineers.

Table 27: 10 Year Asset Renewal Plan Estimates

Facility	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Years 6-10	Cost over 10 years
<b>Boort</b>	\$53,560		\$150,797	\$68,656			\$273,013
<b>Inglewood</b>	\$46,350						\$46,350
<b>Mitiamo</b>				\$50,648	\$37,097		\$87,745
<b>Pyramid Hill</b>			\$49,173			\$439,412	\$488,585
<b>Wedderburn</b>		\$366,010	\$34,967				\$400,977
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>\$99,910</b>	<b>\$366,010</b>	<b>\$234,937</b>	<b>\$119,304</b>	<b>\$37,097</b>	<b>\$439,412</b>	<b>\$1,296,670</b>

GST excluded.

Cost escalations included from year 2.

Allowances included in the above table: Prelim/margin 15%, locality allowance 3%, design contingency 5%, construction contingency 25%.

### Detailed Individual Facility Works and Costs

The table on the next page details the proposed 10-year Asset Renewal Plan and indicative associated costs. The items listed include renewal and refurbishment items, those that have been found needed for the ongoing operations of the pool. These works do not include regular Council maintenance program items (e.g., pool painting and expansion joint reinstatement).

There are a number of items that have been identified for renewal but have been excluded from the above table. They are:

- **Boort Outdoor Pool – Disabled Change Facilities** – such facilities are required to match with the above listed DA access into the pools, but Council advised that they would be done under a separate project with separate funding.
- **‘Backwash Tanks/TWA’** has been removed and is suggested to be addressed as a maintenance item. Tanks are provided and the remaining task is for Council to ensure an appropriate TWA is in place and that the discharge to sewer complies.
- **‘Depth Signage’** has been removed and is suggested to be addressed as a maintenance item. Relativity new signs on posts are already in place. Old sign writing on the hobs needs to be re-painted or even painted over. [Note: depth signage requirements are addressed in RLSS GSPO and are based on a risk assessment for each pool, they are not prescribed requirements].
- **Hypo Tank Bunding** has been removed from original lists and is suggested to be addressed simply and cost effectively by limiting the FULL capacity of the tank to match the bund volume and bund height to meet crest locus criteria. The FULL capacity level could be enforced by relocating the overflow to this lower level.

Table 28: 10-Year Asset Renewal Estimates

Location	Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Years 7-10	Total
<b>Boort</b>	Disabled Access Ramp				\$36,016				\$36,016
	Hypo Spill Containment Bay	\$53,560							\$53,560
	Disabled Access hoist into main pool				\$32,640				\$32,640
	Hob Remedial Work			\$132,220					\$132,220
	Shade Structure Mast			\$13,113					\$13,113
	Intermediate Pool - Crack			\$5,464					\$5,464
<b>Total</b>		\$53,560		\$150,797	\$68,656				\$273,013
<b>Inglewood</b>	Hypo Spill Containment Bay	\$46,350							\$46,350
<b>Total</b>		\$46,350							\$46,350
<b>Mitiamo</b>	Disabled Access hoist into pool					\$37,097			\$37,097
	Hypo Spill Containment Bay				\$50,648				\$50,648
<b>Total</b>					\$50,648	\$37,097			\$87,745
<b>Pyramid Hill</b>	Disabled Access hoist into pool						\$38,210		\$38,210
	Main & Program. Hob Remedial/ Wet deck conversion						\$401,202		\$401,202
	Hypo Spill Containment Bay			\$49,173					\$49,173
<b>Total</b>				\$49,173			\$439,412		\$488,585
<b>Wedderburn</b>	Plant room replacement		\$306,600						\$306,600
	Hypo Spill Containment Bay		\$59,410						\$59,410
	Disabled Access hoist into pool			\$34,967					\$34,967
<b>Total</b>			\$366,010	\$34,967					\$400,977
<b>Overall Total</b>		<b>\$99,910</b>	<b>\$366,010</b>	<b>\$234,937</b>	<b>\$119,304</b>	<b>\$37,097</b>	<b>\$439,412</b>		<b>\$1,296,670</b>



## 6.6 Key Findings of Aquatic Service Review

A detailed review of the asset condition and operational performance of Loddon Shire's aquatic service found the asset condition and ongoing operation of the outdoor pools is a significant concern.

*All pools operate with low patronage and now cost the Council \$47 per visit.*

The aquatic service review identifies the Council subsidising the use of the aquatic facilities by \$47 per visit with an annual cost of \$700,000 and attracting 15,000 visits.

When compared to other outdoor pools in the region, Boort is operating at a moderately high visitation. Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn and Inglewood are operating at a low patronage. This is consistent with small township pools in the area. Mitiamo is very low. Mitiamo had the least number of attendances with 3,504, followed by Inglewood (4,333), Pyramid Hill (5,311) Wedderburn (5,408) and Boort has the most attendances with 11,638.

Aquatic facility management and operations are subject to increasing costs across the industry. The increasing cost of qualified staffing, chemical supply and delivery are major contributing factors for rural facilities. Loddon Shire Council has also recently considered a proposed increased management fee by the current operator, whilst undesirable, represents market rates for pool management and operations. Staff (lifeguards) and chemicals (water treatment) are the major factors in managing operational risks and if underfunded, the risk to the Council and community increase.

Loddon Shire seasonal (October to March) pool attendances have continued to decline and when considered against the increasing costs, the Council will need to consider the benefit versus the cost of providing an aquatic service in the future.

The Council recognises that the Loddon Shire community value having access to swimming pool facilities and despite declining attendances there is strong support for them. Unfortunately, the high cost of swimming pools is placing considerable pressure on Council's capacity to fund them amongst other competing community and infrastructure needs. A strategic approach to addressing this issue is critical.

*Mitiamo and Pyramid Hill pools have overlapping catchments and Echuca and Bendigo indoor pools service Loddon Shire.*

Boort is the main tourism centre, and Wedderburn is the main service centre of Loddon, which has the largest population catchments. Inglewood pool and facilities are in the best condition, and its location is central to communities in the south, including Bridgewater, Newbridge and Serpentine. This area is identified for future growth.

Most residents can access a pool within an approximately 20 to 30-minute drive. Two outdoor pool facilities are located within the secondary catchment areas for Wedderburn (Charlton Swimming Pool and St Arnaud Swimming Pool) and Mitiamo (Lockington Swimming Pool).

Loddon Shire pools are not the only pools servicing Loddon residents. Bendigo, Dunolly, and Echuca pools also service Loddon communities. As the facilities in Loddon Shire are all outdoor seasonal pools, it can be assumed that if residents wish to participate in aquatic programs, i.e., learn-to-swim lessons or swim year-round, they will drive to Bendigo or Echuca indoor aquatic facilities.

The overlap of primary and secondary catchment zones between Pyramid Hill and Mitiamo Pools is significant, with both facilities servicing the catchment populations. The close proximity to each other may impact the operational performance and sustainability of these facilities.

The overlap of Wedderburn and Inglewood Pools is also within the primary and secondary catchment zone (15-to-30-minute drive time). However, both have the highest primary catchment populations of 1,012 and 1,393 respectively.

*\$1.3 million is needed over the next 10 years to maintain the current aquatic service.*

The Structural Engineer (JWS Engineers) has provided a detailed Technical Assessment of the aquatic facilities and identified the asset management (renewal) requirements of the facilities in the next 10 years. The total cost of these works is approximately \$1.3 million over 10 years to maintain the current benefit.

This funding only maintains the assets and does not provide any additional benefit to the community or address dignified accessibility and depth concerns with pools. The pools do not meet current industry standards and are now over 50 years old.

The asset management costs do not include regular Council maintenance program items (e.g., pool painting and expansion joint reinstatement). These items are still required to be completed, and therefore, consideration must be made as to how these will be funded and included in future budget planning.

Pyramid Hill has the highest estimated renewal plan cost at a total of \$488,585. This is followed by Wedderburn (\$400,977), Boort (\$273,013), Mitiamo (87,745) and Inglewood has the lowest of (\$46,350).

The current "management model" for aquatics in Loddon is effective, yet unavoidably expensive. The current financial input of public money has become unsustainable. The need to explore and evaluate other potential partnership management models is critical and must occur over the next three years in order to preserve any chance of retaining the current number of aquatic facilities beyond 2028.

## 7. Stakeholder Engagement

### *What issues and opportunities were identified by the community?*

The planning process included a comprehensive community engagement process including interviewing land managers and surveying community, sport, and recreation groups.

The engagement process involved:

- Community survey
- Sports club/association survey
- Community drop-in sessions
- Public submissions
- Stakeholder interviews.

The following provides a summary of the key issues, opportunities and constraints identified through the stakeholder engagement process. The data will be used to help guide the strategic directions and key recommendations for the Open Space, Recreation and Aquatic Strategy

### 7.1 Previous Engagement Findings

This section summarises the recent engagement findings from the Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024 and Swimming Pool Improvement Plan 2022.

#### Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024 Engagement Findings

The Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024 conducted an extensive consultation process to identify ideas for activating Loddon Shire's public open spaces. Across all consultation methods, 273 residents responded with their ideas.

There were various ways through which people from Wedderburn and Boort P-12 schools provided their feedback. 44 respondents participated in the consultation with young people. Additionally, three listening posts were set up at Wedderburn IGA Supermarket, Calivil Recreation Reserve and Inglewood Recreation Reserve, and 95 people responded to them. Seven people participated in the Seniors Forum, while the Townscape Services staff meeting received feedback from four respondents and the Technical Services staff meeting got feedback from one respondent. Lastly, 122 respondents shared their feedback through the Community Survey.

Residents who completed a survey identified the following ideas that would encourage them to utilise public open spaces more often:

- More events, e.g. movies in the park, festivals, markets, etc
- More or better walking/cycling paths and linkages
- More shade
- Outdoor gym equipment
- More seats and shelters
- More/better play equipment
- Picnic tables
- Drinking fountains
- Physical activity programs, e.g. outdoor tai chi, yoga, Zumba dance.

### Swimming Pool Improvement Plan 2022 Engagement Findings

An engagement process was undertaken as part of the plan that included a survey of pool users and the general community.

A total of 87 pool user survey responses were received. Key responses were:

- 88% wanted extended opening hours.
- 81% would like more activities, particularly more inflatable days.
- 76% indicated they like more recreation/play equipment.
- 72% wanted more information about services and programs.
- Introduction of early morning lap swimming.
- Introduction of morning adult-only time and hosting water aerobics/strength training.
- Re-introduction of diving boards for children and young people.
- More shade.
- Upgrade change rooms, showers, toilets and kiosks.
- Install water play splash parks.

A total of 46 community survey responses were received. Key responses were:

- 70% of respondents frequented a Loddon Shire pool.
- Seven respondents said they would visit more often if an adult-only lap swimming or water aerobics/strength training class was offered.
- Six respondents wanted more events.
- Four respondents wanted extended hours.
- Several respondents wanted more information about services and programs.

## 7.2 Community Survey Findings

This section summarises the key findings from the community survey conducted online. This survey took place between 04 December 2023 to 09 April 2024. A total of **59 people** completed the survey.

### 7.2.1 Respondent Profile

The following information provides details on who responded to the survey.

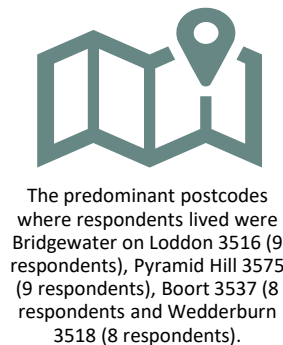
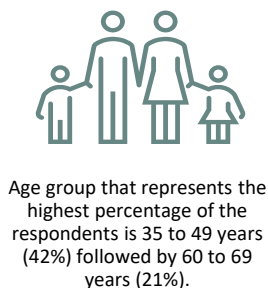
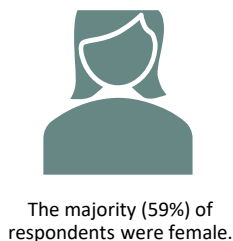


Figure 26: Survey Respondent Characteristics

The following tables summarise the user survey respondents' sample for Loddon Shire.

**Table 29: User Survey Respondent Sample**

Category	Sub-group	Number	%
Gender	<b>Women</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>59%</b>
	Men	17	29%
	Non-binary	0	0
	Prefer not to specify	5	12%
Age Range	Under 17	0	0
	18 to 24 years	0	0
	25 to 34 years	8	14%
	<b>35 to 49 years</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>42%</b>
	50 to 59 years	9	16%
	60 to 69 years	12	21%
	70 to 84 years	3	7%
	85 and over	0	0

**Table 30: User Survey Population Statistics**

Suburb	Count
Boort	8
Bridgewater on Loddon	9
Wedderburn	8
Serpentine	3
Pyramid Hill	9
Newbridge	2
Calivil	2

A review of the survey respondents indicates that:

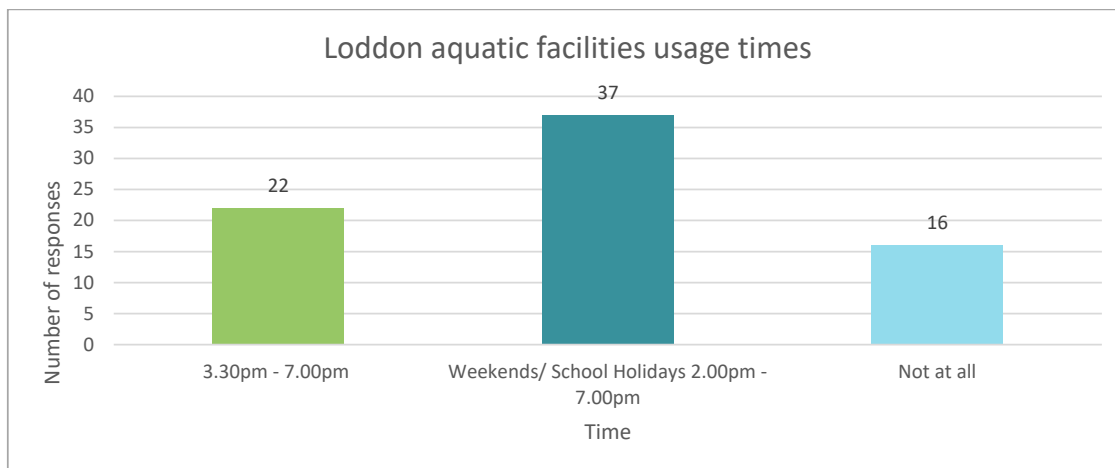
- More females (59%) than males (29%) responded to the survey.
- The age group that represents the highest percentage of respondents is 35 to 49 years (42%) followed by 60 to 69 years (21%).
- The predominant postcodes where respondents lived were Bridgewater on Loddon 3516 (9 respondents), Pyramid Hill 3575 (9 respondents), Boort 3537 (8 respondents) and Wedderburn 3518 (8 respondents).

### 7.2.2 Aquatic Facilities in Loddon Shire

This section focuses on the survey questions relating to the aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire, the usage and residents' feedback on the condition of the facilities as well as suggestions for future improvements.

**Usage times**

The following chart indicates the number of respondents using the aquatics facilities at various time slots.



**Figure 27: Loddon Aquatic Facilities usage times**

The majority of pool use occurred during school holidays and on weekends (37 respondents). Approximately twenty-two respondents reported visiting an aquatic facility between 3.30 pm and 7.00 pm on weekdays.

**Travel to aquatics facilities in Loddon Shire**

The following table summarises how respondents travelled to the aquatic facilities and where they travelled from.

**Table 31: Transport to aquatics facilities**

Category	Sub-Group	Number	% of Respondents
Location of Origin	<b>Home</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>77.9%</b>
	Work	8	13.5%
	School	13	22%
	Other	4	6.7%
Mode of Transport	Bike	4	6.7%
	<b>Car</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>74.5%</b>
	Walk	12	20.3%
	Other	2	3.3%

Most survey respondents indicated that they travel to the pools from their home (77.9%), followed by school (22%) and work (13.5%).

The majority of respondents travelled by car (74.5%). Walking was also a popular method of travel (20.3%) indicating that the majority of residents are prepared to travel by car to access a facility.

**Frequency of visitation to aquatics facility**

The following graph indicates the frequency of visitation to the aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire.



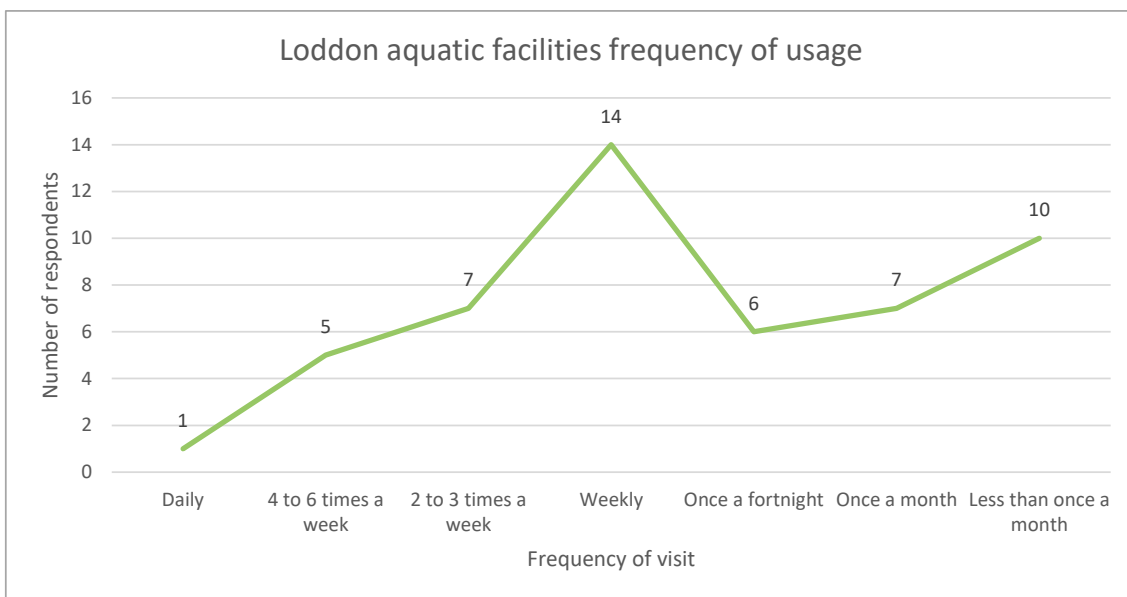


Figure 28: Loddon aquatic facilities frequency of usage

The results indicate that the respondents are regular users of aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire. The majority of the respondents used the pool once a week or more (27 respondents) with the most common being weekly visits (14 respondents). Ten respondents reported only using swimming pools once a month.

**Reason to visit aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire**

The following table indicates the reasons that residents chose to visit the aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire.

Table 32: Reasons to visit aquatic facilities

Main reasons to visit	Count	Percentage
Close to home	35	59.3%
To use outdoor pool	18	30.5%
Friends/family use it	15	25.4%
Close to work/school	12	20.3
Good facilities	9	15.2%
To attend aquatic program	3	5%
Low entry charges	2	3%
To attend swim club program	2	3%
To attend health and fitness program	3	5%
To attend leisure water/fun pools	3	5%
To attend learn to swim program	2	3%
Other (please specify)	7	11.8%

The survey results indicate that the most popular reason to visit the pool was proximity to home (59.3%) and to use an outdoor pool (30.5%) and the third most popular reason being to use the pool with friends and family (25.4%).

**Reasons to not use aquatics facilities in Loddon Shire**

The following table indicates the reasons that residents chose not to visit the aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire.

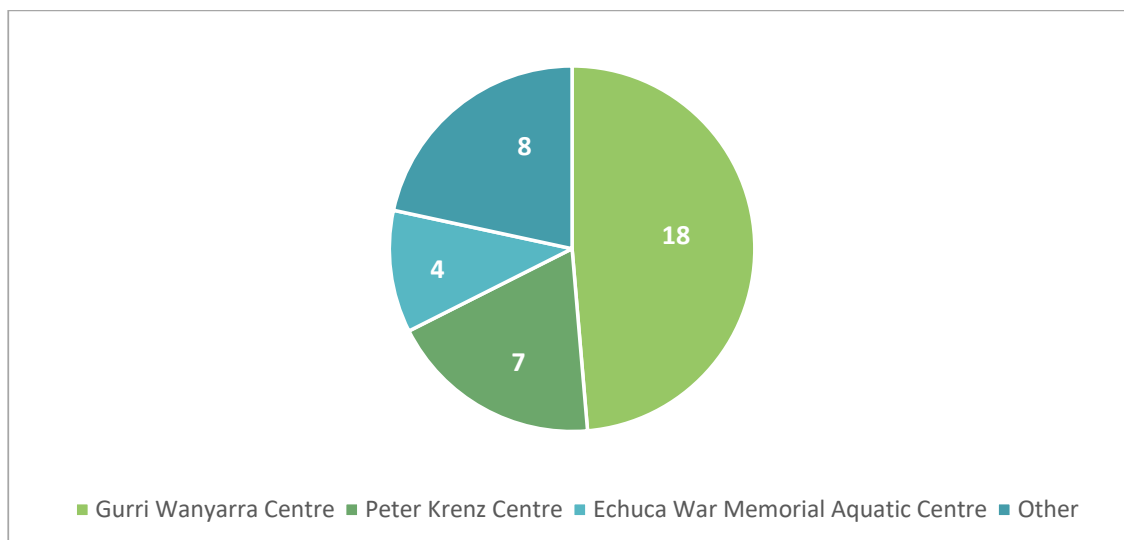
**Table 33: Reasons not to visit aquatic facilities**

Reasons to not visit an aquatic facility	Count	Percentage
<b>Activity not available</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
<b>Go to river or open water</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
Too busy	4	9.3%
Opening times don't suit	3	6.9%
No disabled access	3	6.9%
Don't know what is available	2	3.3%
Don't like swimming	2	3.3%
Not interested	2	3.3%
Prefer indoor pools	2	3.3%
Too old	2	3.3%
Work commitments	2	3.3%
Other	7	16.2%

Of the 43 respondents that indicated that they have not used an aquatic facility in the past, 16.2% indicated that the activity they were seeking was not available and 16.2% respondents preferred swimming in rivers or open water.

**Aquatics facilities used outside of Loddon Shire**

The following chart indicates what other facilities outside of the Loddon Shire that residents use.



**Figure 29: Visits to aquatic facilities outside Loddon Shire**

Of the respondents who reported using an aquatics facility outside of Loddon Shire, the Gurri Wanyarra Centre, located in Bendigo (Kangaroo Flat), was the most popular with 18 respondents indicating they had visited the Centre, followed by the Peter Krenz Centre also located in Bendigo (Eaglehawk) and the Echuca War Memorial Aquatic Centre. Other pools used include the Dunolly Outdoor Pool and Kerang Outdoor Pool.

**Main activities at visits to aquatic centre**

The following activities were identified as the most popular among residents that make use of the pools.

**Table 34: Activities undertaken at the pool**

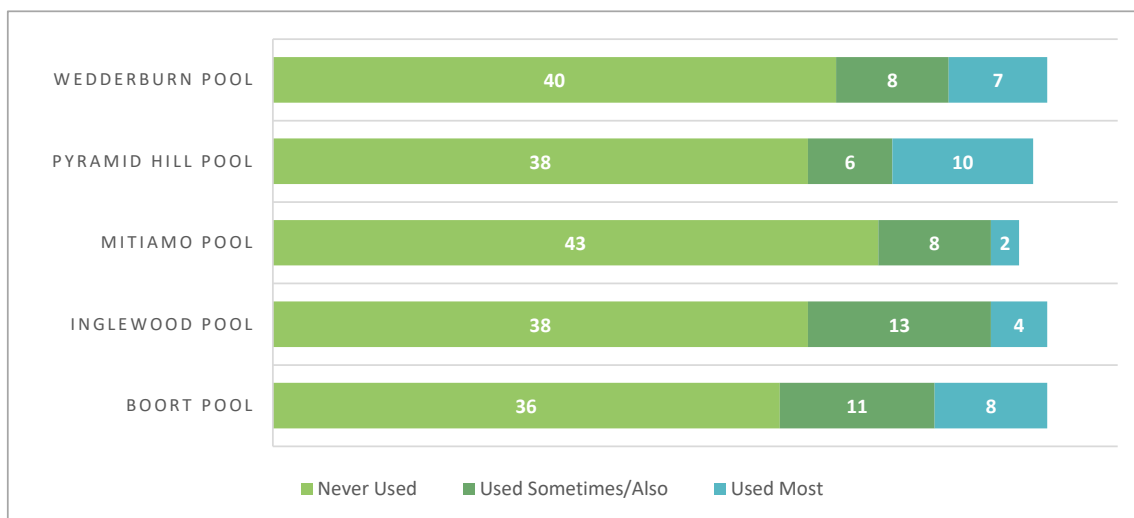
Activities	Count
Take child to pool	15
Recreation swimming/fun	14
Cool down from hot weather	12
Lap swim/fitness	11
Rehabilitation programs	8
Spectator	7
Group health and fitness classes	5

Main activities at the aquatic facilities include taking children to the pools (15 respondents), swimming for fun or recreation (14 respondents) and cooling down from hot weather (12 respondents).

**Use of aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire**

The following graph indicates the usage of the individual aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire. The criteria used was:

- Never Used
- Used Sometimes/Also Used
- Used Most.

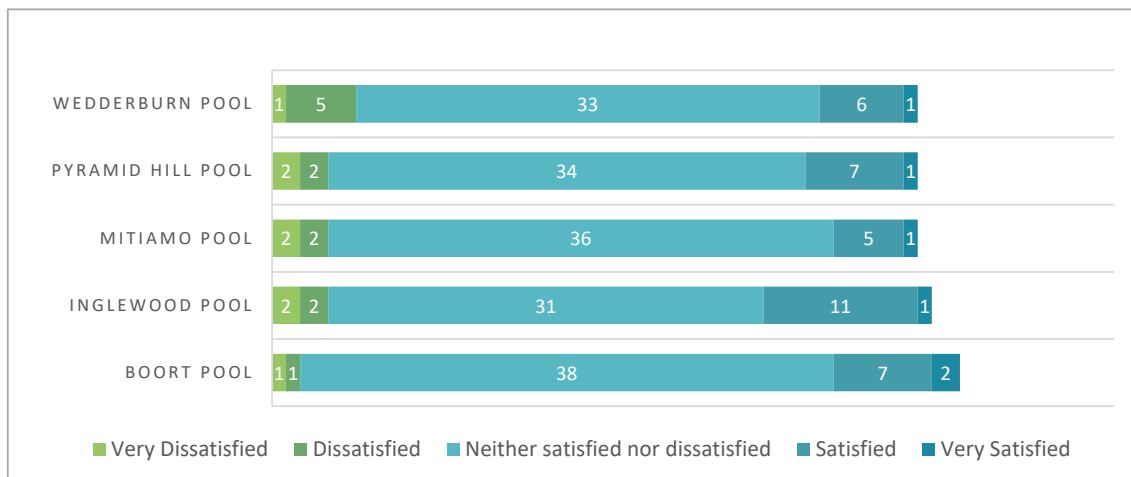


**Figure 30: Usage of aquatics facilities in Loddon Shire**

Pyramid Hill Pool was identified as the most used pool, followed by Boort Pool. Residents also used Inglewood Pool. Mitiamo Pool was the least used, followed by Wedderburn Pool

**Rating of aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire**

The respondents rated the aquatic facilities they used based on their level of satisfaction.



**Figure 31: Rating of aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire**

Inglewood Pool was rated the highest with 12 respondents indicating they were either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the facility. Inglewood pool was followed by Boort pool with 9 votes of either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied”. Wedderburn Pool had the most votes for either “Dissatisfied” or “Very Dissatisfied”.

**Future visitation**

Approximately 83.6% of the respondents indicated that they would make greater use of Loddon Shire aquatic centres in the future while 16.4% of the respondents indicated that would not make use or greater use in the future.

The following table indicates the key services or opportunities that would encourage greater use in the future.

**Table 35: Improvement areas**

Improvement areas	Count	Percentage
Health and fitness Centre	22	37.2%
Longer opening hours	20	33.8%
Warm water pool for therapy/rehabilitation	19	32.2%
More variety of activities/programs	14	23.7%
Health related programs	14	23.7%
Larger/improved learn to swim pool	13	22%
Improved learn to swim programs	12	20%
Gym/weights facilities	9	15.2%
Cleaner more hygienic facilities	7	11.8%
Membership packages/discounts	6	10.1%
Other	22	37.2%

Improvement areas highlighted by respondents include enhancing the Health and Fitness Centre (37.2%), extending opening hours (33.8%), introducing a warm water pool for therapy/rehabilitation (32.2%), offering a greater variety of activities/programs (23.7%), and implementing health-related programs (23.7%).

### Summary of feedback on aquatic facilities

- The main reasons for choosing aquatic facilities are proximity to home and the availability of outdoor pools, emphasising the importance of accessibility and outdoor recreational options for the community.
- The presence of friends and family using the facilities also plays a significant role in encouraging visitation.
- Activities such as taking children to the pool and recreational swimming are highly popular, indicating the family-oriented nature of aquatic facility use.
- A large number 83.6% of respondents plan to use the aquatic facilities more in the future, indicating a growing demand for aquatic programs and services.
- There is a clear demand for improving health and fitness centres, introducing warm water therapy pools, and enhancing learn-to-swim programs.
- Extending facility operating hours is as a key improvement area, highlighting the need for more flexible and accessible service timings.
- Diversifying activity and program offerings, including health-related programs, was identified as essential for catering to a broader range of community interests.
- The results underscore the importance of a community-centric approach in designing and maintaining aquatic facilities, emphasising accessibility, family-friendly activities, and social connections.
- Ensuring consistent facility quality across all locations is vital to meeting the diverse needs and expectations of the community.
- Anticipating and planning for increased facility use and addressing improvement areas proactively can help Loddon Shire meet the evolving demands of its residents effectively.

### 7.2.3 Sports and Active Recreation in Loddon Shire

This section focuses on the survey questions relating to sport and recreation activities and facilities in Loddon Shire, as well as suggestions for future improvements.

#### Participation in sports and recreation activities

Residents were asked about their participation frequency in organised and non-organised indoor and outdoor sports or recreational activities. They were asked to select between once a week, once a month, once every six months, once a year, less often than once a year and never.

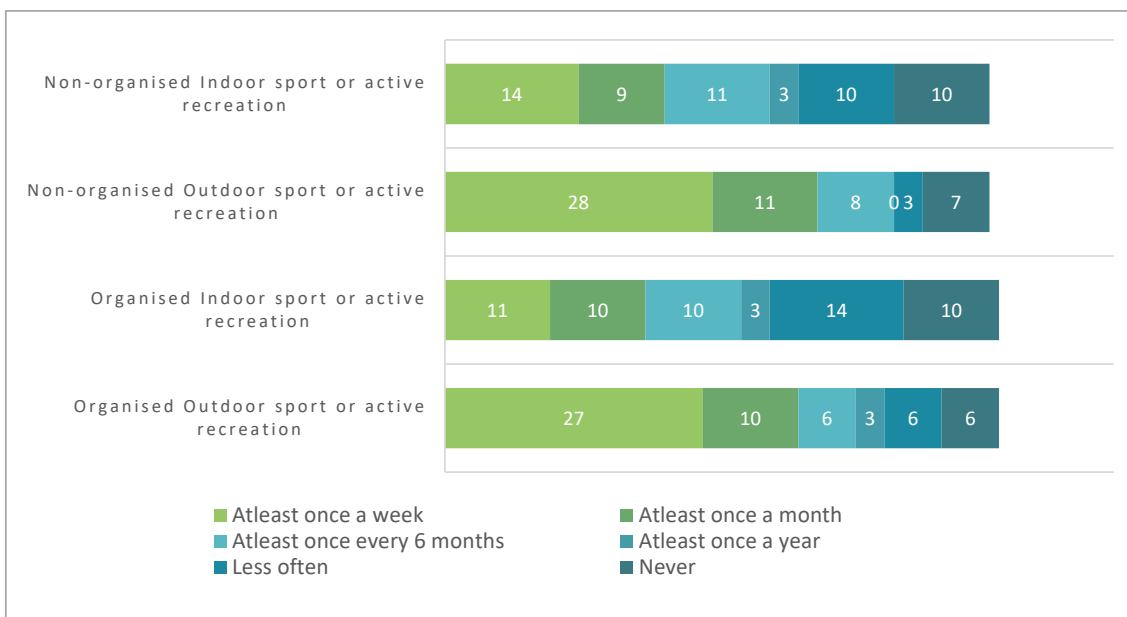


Figure 32: Participation frequency

The categories with the highest participation were seen in non-organised outdoor sport or active recreation, which includes sports such as walking and hiking (28 respondents) and organised outdoor sport or active recreation such as football and cricket (27 respondents).

**Loddon Shire sports and active recreation membership**

Approximately 71% of the respondents reported being a member of a sport club or association in Loddon Shire. Approximately 9% were not members of any club.

Of the respondents who reported being a member of a sport club, the following sports were the most popular:

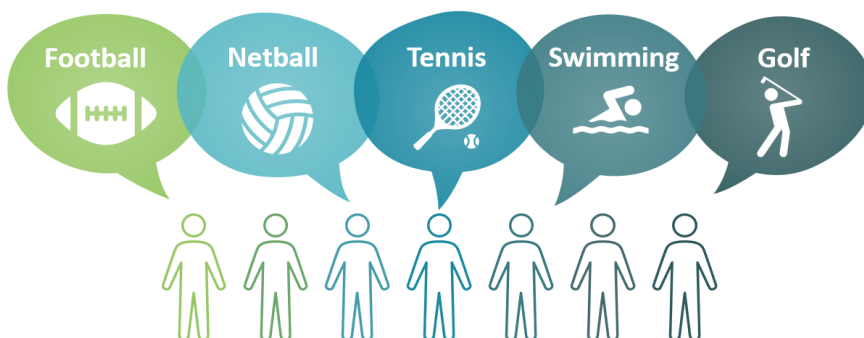


Figure 33: Most popular club-based participation



**Satisfaction with current provision**

Using a five-point rating system, survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the current sport and active recreation provision in Loddon Shire.

**Table 36: Satisfaction with current provisions in Loddon Shire**

Sport/Active recreation	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Outdoor sport fields	3	3	5	39	8
Sport courts	1	5	9	33	10
Sports greens	1	1	18	25	12
Golf courses	3	6	26	20	1
Riding sports facilities	11	24	20	2	0
Walking and riding tracks and trails	6	15	18	19	0
Fitness stations	8	13	17	18	2
Play spaces	9	17	17	14	1
Other active recreation facilities	9	20	26	2	0
Parks and gardens	9	11	19	17	2
Water sport facilities	3	11	13	26	4
Sport and active recreation activities for children	12	15	25	5	0
Sport and active recreation activities for young people	6	18	24	10	0
Sport and active recreation activities for adults	6	10	25	16	1
Sport and active recreation activities older adults	6	11	27	12	2
Other	6	6	18	2	0

Respondents who reported feeling “Dissatisfied” or “Very Dissatisfied” were asked to elaborate further. Common themes from the feedback include:

- Infrastructure and facilities:** Residents expressed concerns about the outdated and worn-out facilities in Loddon Shire. Specifically, the changing rooms at Boort Park need renovation to meet modern standards. Additionally, there is a strong demand for an indoor pool that would offer year-round access to aquatic activities. Many public areas lack shade, making them less appealing for community use. There are also calls for marked mountain bike trails and well-maintained skate parks.
- Sport and social recreation for young people:** The community has highlighted a significant gap in recreational spaces tailored to teenagers and young adults. There's a clear need for modular play areas, skateparks, and basketball courts. The absence of these facilities limits the recreational options available to young people, leading to calls for more diverse activities beyond traditional sports like netball and football. Additionally, residents have suggested climbing walls and outdoor performing or visual arts facilities to cater to a broader range of interests.
- Public engagement and awareness:** Residents pointed out the lack of regular fitness spaces available for local participation. The feedback also indicated that current sporting groups and activities are not adequately advertised, leading to low awareness among community members. This lack of promotion hinders community engagement and participation in local sports and recreational activities. There is also a call for more nature-focused spaces, such as wildlife sanctuaries and local food production areas.

- **Accessibility and inclusivity:** Accessibility is a common concern in Loddon Shire, with limited facilities catering to women in most sporting clubs. Additionally, there is a lack of facilities in the northern half of the Shire, making it challenging for residents in these areas to access recreational amenities. The community is calling for more inclusive facilities that cater to a broader range of interests beyond elite sports, ensuring that everyone can participate and benefit from recreational activities.
- **Maintenance and management:** Concerns about the maintenance and management of public spaces and facilities were raised by residents. Concerns were expressed about the poor quality of the maintenance and the heavy reliance on community volunteers to keep them operational. Residents are calling for Council-led initiatives to improve and maintain public facilities, ensuring they meet the needs and expectations of the community.
- **Recreation and leisure activities:** Residents highlighted the limited availability of recreational activities beyond traditional sports in Loddon Shire. There are calls for more diverse options, including walking and riding tracks, fitness stations, and canoe launches.

**Importance of provision of sport and active recreation**

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the following sport and active recreation provisions, selecting between non important, somewhat important and very important.

**Table 37: Importance of sport and recreation provision**

Sport/Active recreation	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Outdoor sport fields	6	15	34
Sport courts	7	16	32
Sports greens	9	22	24
Golf courses	14	21	20
Riding sports facilities	7	14	34
<b>Walking and riding tracks and trails</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>44</b>
Fitness stations	9	23	22
<b>Play spaces</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>39</b>
Other active recreation facilities	18	20	17
<b>Parks and gardens</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>44</b>
Water sport facilities	0	16	38
Sport and active recreation activities for children	5	20	33
Sport and active recreation activities for young people	2	20	33
Sport and active recreation activities for adults	2	18	35
Sport and active recreation activities older adults	4	15	36
Other	4	9	10

The survey results indicate that walking and riding tracks and trails (44%), parks and gardens (44%), and play spaces (39%) were top three activities, followed by golf courses (20%) and other active recreation facilities (17%).

**Improvements to the current sport and active recreation provision suggested by respondents**

Further improvements mentioned by the residents include:



Figure 34: Suggested improvements to the current sport and active recreation provision

**To what extent do the following things prevent you (or other members of your household) from participation in sport or active recreation in Loddon Shire?**

Table 38: Reasons not to participate in sport or active recreation

Reasons	No impact	To some extent	To great extent
Lack of facilities within easy access of where I/we live	16	26	16
Lack of facilities within easy access of where I/we live	35	17	6
Venue joining or activity fees are too expensive	36	16	6
Club I/we would like to join has too many members	53	4	1
I don't feel safe participating in my area	52	4	2
Cost of travel to venues	30	19	9
Poor disability access to facilities I/we would like to use	41	9	8
No existing club in my/our preferred sport and active recreation activity	22	19	16
Sport, active recreation and social recreation facility is poor quality	28	21	9
Sport and active recreation and social recreation facility is not fit for purpose	31	19	8
Existing sport and active recreation and social recreation facilities are too crowded	52	5	1
I don't know what sport or active recreation and social recreation facilities or services are available	32	22	3
I don't feel welcome at the sport and active recreation and social recreation facility I/we would like to use	43	14	1
Sport and active recreation and social recreation facilities/activities are not available at hours that are suitable for me/us	28	23	7
Other	14	3	4

The main reasons not to use sport or active recreation provision in Loddon Shire include a lack of easily accessible facilities (16 respondents), the absence of clubs or organisations catering to specific sports or recreational activities (16 respondents), poor quality of facilities (great 9 respondents), and facilities lacking modern updates (8 respondents). These reasons indicate that accessibility, availability and quality are important in influencing individuals' decisions to engage in sports and recreational activities.

### 7.2.4 Future Spending Priorities

Understanding the community's expectations for Council spending is crucial for aligning resources with community needs and preferences. Loddon Shire residents were asked to share their views on the Council's future funding on sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

#### Council spending

Participants were presented with options to choose whether they believed that the Council spending on sport and recreation should be increased, kept the same, decreased, or if they were uncertain.

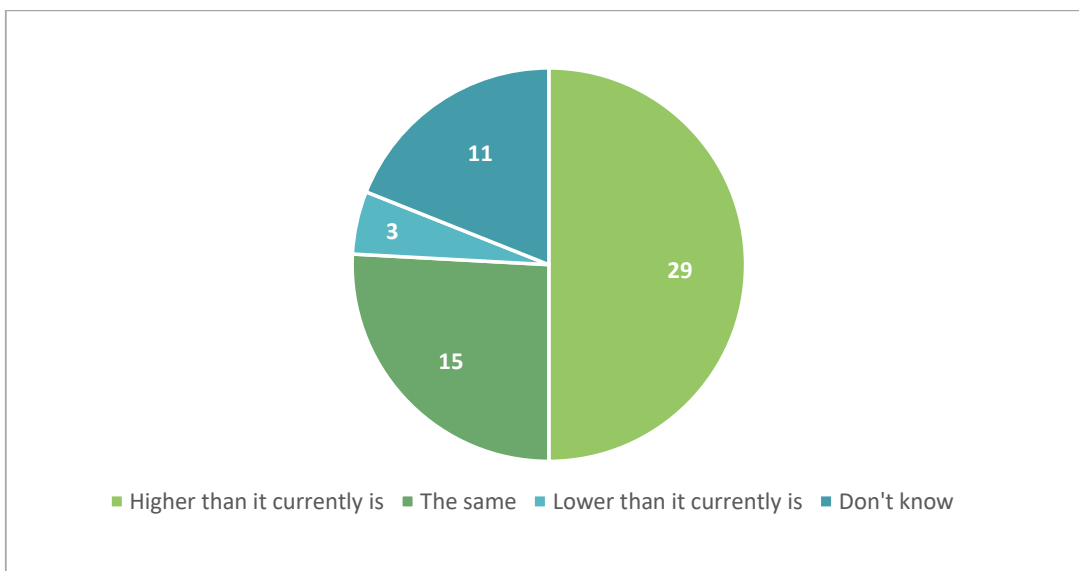


Figure 35: Future spending by Loddon Shire Council

Of the survey respondents:

- Twenty-nine residents or 49.1% of the respondents indicated that the Council spending should be higher than it currently is.
- Fifteen residents or 25.4% of the respondents indicated that the Council spending should remain the same.
- Eleven residents or 18.6% of the respondents indicated that the Council spending should decrease.
- Three residents or 5% of the respondents were uncertain.
- This suggests strong community support in Loddon Shire for increased Council spending on sports and active recreation, with nearly half of the respondents advocating for higher funding.

**Community spending**

When asked about community spending for better provision of sport in Loddon Shire, approximately 54.2% of the respondents agreed with the statement that **“they would accept fewer sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services of high quality”**. However, 45.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they **“would accept paying higher rates to maintain the current level of sport and active recreation”**, open space and aquatic facilities and services.

**Improvements to sport and recreation in Loddon Shire**

Participants were allocated a theoretical \$100 to allocate towards the listed improvements in increments of \$20, \$15, \$10, and \$5. The allocations resulted in the following amounts being spent on each improvement.



Figure 36: Spending exercise

The activity resulted in the following priorities for funding:

- Improving and maintaining play spaces
- Improving and maintaining active recreation facilities
- improving and maintaining aquatic facilities
- Improving and maintaining community sport facilities.

The feedback suggests that residents prioritise investment in existing sport and recreation provisions, such as play spaces and aquatic facilities, over the development of new facilities. This indicated a preference to value the upkeep, maintenance, and improvement of existing facilities to ensure they meet the needs and preferences of the community.

**7.2.5 Written Submissions**

Community organisations were invited to submit written submissions indicating current and future needs and issues. The following provides a summary of the submission received from the Pyramid Hill Golf Course Committee.

### Pyramid Hill Golf Course

- The Pyramid Hill Golf Club's submission emphasizes general satisfaction with the Shire's facilities but raises concerns about ongoing streetscape works affecting the community's wellbeing and the Council's reputation.
- The club stresses the interconnectedness of community elements and advocate for improved connections between the golf course and town to enhance community attraction and membership.
- The club values a range of sports and active recreation facilities, including outdoor fields, sports courts, aquatic facilities, walking trails, and play spaces, considering them essential for community vitality. Active participation in various activities, from golf to swimming, reflects the community's passion and involvement.
- The submission emphasises the need to maintain existing facilities, improve connectivity, and complete projects on time.
- Concerns were raised about the survey's question regarding service reductions or rate increases, with the club advocating for maintaining current services without compromising on quality.

### Direct feedback submissions

Wedderburn pool needs more shade and new pool hooks in showers, new shower heads, better drainage in showers, and warmer pool temperature.

## 7.2.6 Community Drop in Sessions

Community Drop-In Sessions were held in Loddon on the following dates:

### Wednesday 6 March

- Boort IGA 9.00am - 10.30am
- Pyramid Hill Supermarket 11.15am - 12.15om
- East Loddon P-12 - 1.00pm
- Bridgewater Bowls Club 5.00pm - 6.00pm.

### Thursday 7 March

- Tarnagulla Soldiers Park 9.30am - 11.00am
- Wedderburn 24 Karat Cafe 12.00pm -1.30pm.

In total approximately 170 people attended the sessions. The profile of the attendants was as follows:

- 25% seniors
- 25% adults
- 50% children and young people.

The community drop-in sessions provided an opportunity for the residents to engage with the consultants and present their concerns and ideas for the future of the sport and active recreation in Loddon.

The summary of the feedback received during the community drop-in sessions indicate the following.



- Residents value the existing sports facilities and clubs, seeing them as essential community assets. Supporting these clubs, maintaining sports facilities, and organising competitions are crucial for both children and adults, presenting an opportunity to encourage greater usage of these facilities.
- Improving access and maintaining footpaths and trails is vital for seniors. Providing amenities like water stations, shade, and seating can improve their outdoor experience and encourage more physical activity.
- Children and young people can benefit from diverse play experiences, including water play, nature play in play spaces, and active recreation opportunities like pump tracks and junior bike skills tracks.
- The community highly values the local pools as safe places for learning to swim and cooling down, especially in rural areas with waterways, farming channels, and dams.
- Offering nature-based recreation activities such as mountain biking, bouldering, bushwalking, canoeing, and fishing can attract both residents and visitors to enjoy the natural bushland and waterways.
- Key periods for pool usage are before school for lap swimming and after school for family visits. Effective communication about pool opening times and organising community events can promote greater pool usage.
- Adults appreciate gyms, fitness stations, and fitness sessions as ways to maintain fitness and health.
- There is support for hosting more community events in open spaces, particularly those that encourage physical activity and active participation.
- Ongoing maintenance, improvements, and diversification of recreational facilities is important. Specific concerns include footpath improvements, trail maintenance, and facility upgrades to meet current needs and safety standards.
- Interest in active recreation facilities like bike skills tracks, nature-based and water play experiences. Residents suggested multipurpose recreational spaces, amenities, and community-focused events.

### Storyboard results

As part of the Drop-In Sessions, a storyboard was presented with potential ideas for the future of sport and active recreation in Loddon. Residents were asked to vote for their top three priorities.

The following details the responses by the different age cohorts:

Adults and Seniors

LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY

What facilities and services do you want to see?

Choose Your Top 3

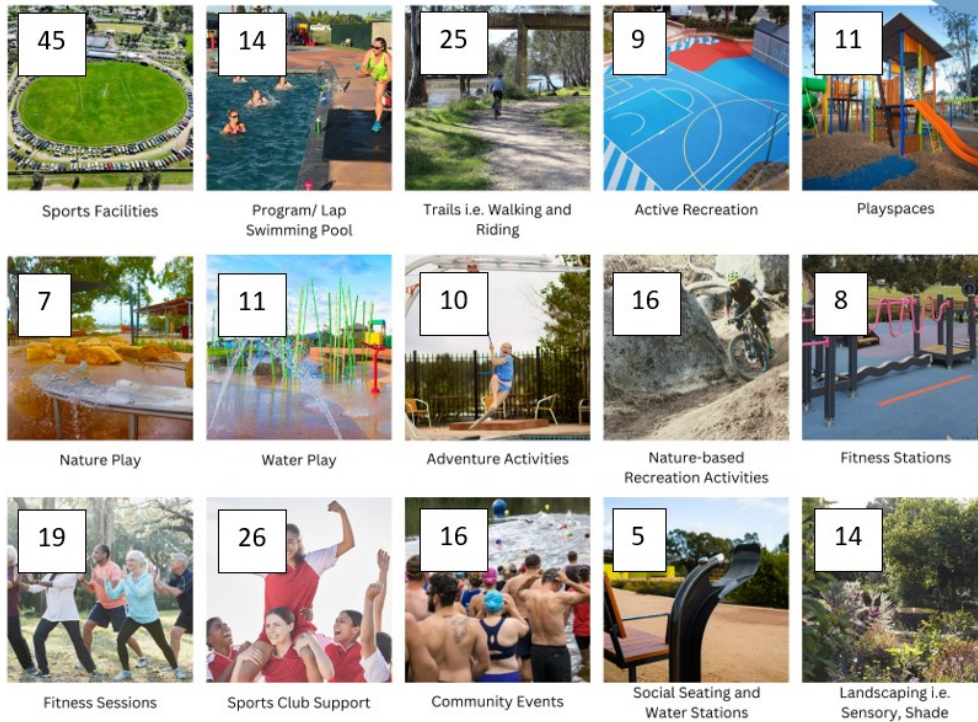


Figure 37: Storyboard results for Adults

The results indicate a high preference for outdoor sport facilities in the area followed by support for sports clubs and trails for walking and riding. Outdoor fitness stations, nature-based activities and community activities were popular as well. This indicates a high preference for accessible recreation activities in nature.

Children and Young People

LODDON RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND AQUATIC STRATEGY

What facilities and services do you want to see?

Choose Your Top 3

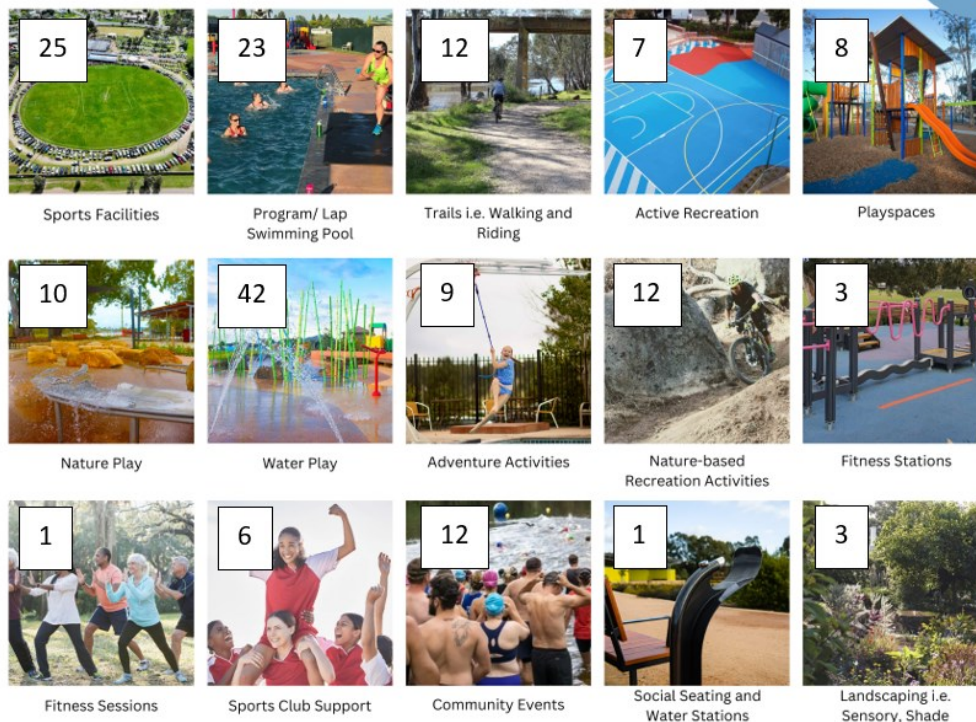


Figure 38: Storyboard results for children

Water play was the most popular activity among children followed by sport facilities and swimming pools. Nature play, trails for walking and riding, nature-based recreation activities and community events were voted highly as well.

Local community feedback

Residents provided the following feedback specific to different areas in Loddon Shire.

Boort (Attendants: 20 adults)

- Residents indicated support for active recreation such as Junior bike skills tracks and modular pump tracks.
- Water play was a popular suggestion which diversifies aquatic offerings for the community.
- Recreation hub project in Boort.
- Early years play - nature and adventure.
- Footpaths need improvements.
- Visitors appreciate the nature, the place, people and café.



Figure 39: Park in Boort

**Pyramid Hill (Attendants: 1 child, 10 adults)**

## Open spaces:

- Play space identified as a high priority.
- Nature, adventure, and sensory play crucial for enhancing early years' recreation experiences.
- Community interest in introducing Parkrun events.
- Maintenance of trails is essential for promoting outdoor activities.
- Significant pool attendance observed with 75 kids on a hot weekend day.
- Echuca East Play space recognised for well-executed water play features.
- Community events like bike races contribute to local engagement.
- Safe path to Pyramid Hill Summit Trail is a priority.
- Pyramid Hill boasts healthy sports participation in football, netball, and golf.
- Signage and wayfinding improvements needed for Pyramid Hill Summit Trail.
- Shade provision required along footpaths and trails, especially in Main Street.
- Support for group gathering seating in communal areas.
- Bindi-eyes causing punctures; removal needed beyond spraying to address the issue.
- Diversification of sport opportunities desired; interest in joining a darts group.
- Need for a diverse range of active recreation opportunities within the town.



Figure 40: Pyramid Hill

## Aquatics:

- Open swimming pool hours suggested during mornings (6-8am) and after school (3-5pm).
- Maintain pool to support VIC swim and swim lessons for three schools.
- Extended pool operating hours suggested to accommodate community needs.

**East Loddon (Attendants: 50 children, 15 adults)****Calivil**

- Continue servicing the pools.
- Need admin support for reserve committees and clubs.

**Serpentine**

- Improve access and activities on river and river frontage.
- Suggestions for Council to buy the paddock behind reserve and expand oval and area for multi-purpose gym and housing to attract families.



**Mitiamo**

- Pool concerns - unclear on when it is open/communication with public needs to improve.

**Dingee**

- Need for active recreation and play facilities.
- Oval maintenance lacking since cricket club disbanded due to low numbers.
- Tennis and Bowls share facility; both sports are active with junior and senior competitions.
- Reserve committee responsible for maintenance; seeking assistance for improvements.
- Community-based activities predominantly held after school hours.
- Trail requires maintenance to encourage increased usage.

**Bridgewater (Attendants: 3 children, 35 adults)**

- Lack of wayfinding to reserve.
- Unsafe crossing areas.
- Desire for an active recreation site for riding/skating.
- Improved access needed, current paths force pedestrians onto roads.
- Sports field requires drainage improvements.
- Courts nearing end-of-life; last renovated 22 years ago with visible cracking.
- Urgent need for maintenance and court renewal.
- Requirement for 4 playable courts which are feasible to implement.
- 20% energy reduction expected with LED light installation, but daytime use needs to be promoted.
- Interest in open water swimming lessons.
- Proposal for a rail trail from Bridgewater to Inglewood.
- Need for a designated riding circuit.
- Off-road trail for riding desired.
- Concerns over play space location; lacks toilet facilities.
- Support for repurposing disused green spaces.
- Advocacy for more fitness stations.
- Embrace Inglewood's model: invest in a standout site to create a recreational destination.
- Community interest in tractor pulling events.
- Struggles observed in summer sports participation.



Figure 41: Bridgewater on Loddon

**Tarnagulla (Attendants: 20 children, 5 adults)**

- The area near caravan park would make a good bike pump track.
- Yoga sessions would be beneficial for the community.

**Laanecoorie**

- Need play spaces in Laanecoorie as there are none at the moment.

**Wedderburn (Attendants, 20 Adults)**

- Need more diversity in play and active recreation and a destination play space.
- Skinners Flat waterhole needs improvement, particularly the public toilets. Great family place to use.
- Pool needs refurbishment of change room.
- Local play space swings need shade. The seating is located far from the equipment making it unsafe to supervise children.
- Fitness sessions at gym have good membership numbers.



**Figure 42: War memorial at Soldiers Memorial Park, Wedderburn**

**Key themes from community drop-in sessions**

The following provides a summary of the key themes from the community drop-in sessions:

- Residents highly value existing sports facilities and clubs as essential community assets. Active support is important for maintaining and improving these facilities to encourage increased usage.
- Improving access, footpaths, and trails is crucial, especially for seniors. Amenities like water stations, shade, and seating enhance outdoor experiences and encourage physical activity.
- Children and young people benefit from diverse play experiences, including water play and nature activities. There is high interest in activities like mountain biking, bouldering, bushwalking, and fishing to promote enjoyment of natural bushland and waterways.
- Local pools are valued as safe places for learning to swim and cooling down. Residents suggested effective communication about pool timings and community events to boost usage.
- Adults appreciate gyms, fitness stations, and fitness sessions for maintaining health and fitness.
- There is active support for hosting more community events in open spaces to encourage physical activity and participation.
- Ongoing maintenance, improvements, and diversification of recreational facilities is important. Specific concerns include footpath improvements, trail maintenance, and facility upgrades to meet current needs and safety standards.
- Interest in active recreation facilities like bike skills tracks, nature-based and water play experiences. Residents suggested multipurpose recreational spaces, amenities, and community-focused events.



### 7.3 Clubs and Associations Survey

A survey was distributed among local clubs and associations to gain understanding of their membership, participation, and their insight in the sport in Loddon. The survey received responses from 20 clubs and five associations. The following clubs and associations responded to the survey:

1. Kingower Cricket Club
2. Bridgewater Football Netball Club
3. Derby Tennis Club
4. Boort Lawn Tennis Club
5. Bridgewater Bowling Club
6. Inglewood Golf Club Inc
7. Bridgewater Cricket Club
8. Boort Football Club
9. Inglewood Cricket Club
10. Pyramid Hill Football Netball Club
11. Boort Lakeside Croquet Club
12. Inglewood Sports Centre
13. Inglewood Football Netball Club
14. Bridgewater Cricket Club
15. Active Farmers
16. Tarnagulla Recreation Parks Committee
17. Calivil Bowling Club
18. Pyramid Hill Bowling Club
19. Inglewood Riding Club Inc
20. Serpentine Bowling Club.

Clubs were asked to vote on the impact that some factors had on their membership and operations. They were given the choice to vote either “No Impact”, “Some Impact” and “Great Impact”. The graph on the following page shows the result on this vote.

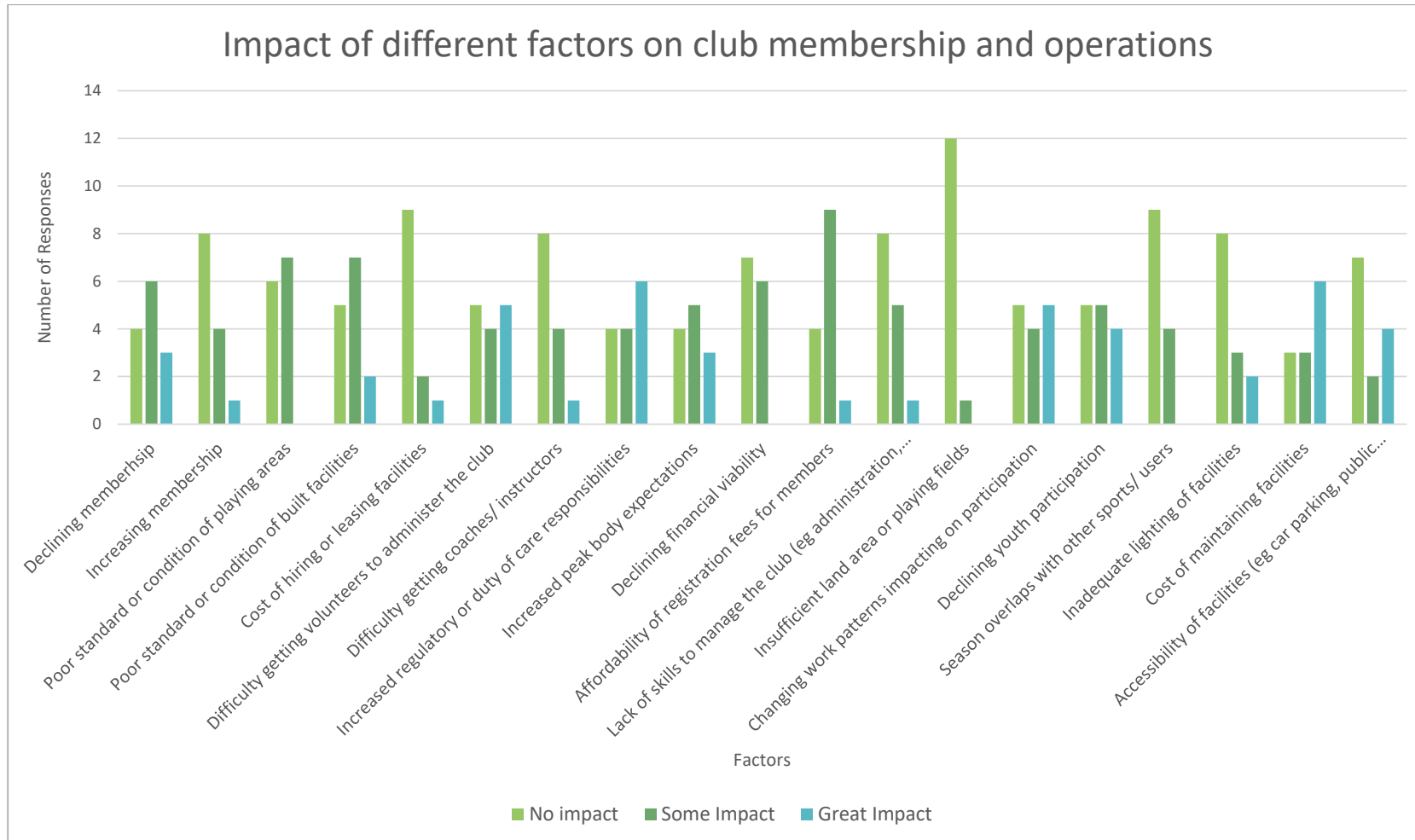


Figure 43: Impact of different factors on club membership and operations in Loddon Shire

An analysis of the graph and the survey responses, indicate the following points:

**Membership concerns:**

- Several clubs, such as Kingower Cricket Club, Boort Lawn Tennis Club, and Bridgewater Cricket Club, reported a great impact or some impact of declining membership.

**Infrastructure and facilities:**

- Some clubs, including Kingower Cricket Club, Boort Lawn Tennis Club, and Bridgewater Bowling Club, indicated poor standard or condition of playing areas as a concern.
- Poor standard or condition of built facilities is mentioned by Derby Tennis Club, Bridgewater Bowling Club, and Serpentine Bowling Club.
- Cost of maintaining facilities is a significant concern for clubs like Bridgewater Bowling Club, Inglewood sports centre, and Serpentine Bowling Club.
- Accessibility of facilities (e.g., car parking, public transport, bicycle) is highlighted by several clubs, such as Inglewood sports centre and Serpentine Bowling Club.

**Financial and operational challenges:**

- Difficulty in getting volunteers to administer the club was raised as an issue by Derby Tennis Club and Inglewood sports centre.
- Declining financial viability is a concern for Bridgewater Cricket Club, Active Farmers, and others.
- Cost of hiring or leasing facilities is also a concern for Derby Tennis Club and Serpentine Bowling Club.
- Affordability of registration fees for members is an important factor indicated by Boort Lawn Tennis Club and Active Farmers.

**Human resources and expertise:**

- Difficulty getting coaches/instructors is mentioned by Derby Tennis Club and Pyramid Hill Football Netball Club.
- Lack of skills to manage the club (e.g., administration, maintenance) are concerns noted by Derby Tennis Club, Bridgewater Cricket Club, and Inglewood sports centre.

**Regulatory and participation issues:**

- Increased regulatory or duty of care responsibilities is highlighted by Kingower Cricket Club and Inglewood sports centre.
- Boort Lawn Tennis Club and Serpentine Bowling Club raised concerns about declining youth participation.
- Changing work patterns impacting participation is a common observation.

**Other concerns**

- Kingower Cricket Club and Inglewood sports centre indicated increased peak body expectations.
- Season overlaps with other sports/users: Highlighted by Bridgewater Cricket Club and Inglewood Football Netball Club.
- Inadequate lighting of facilities was a concern raised by several clubs.

## 7.4 Key Findings for Stakeholder Engagement

The following provides a summary of the key issues and opportunities identified through the community engagement process:

### Outdoor sporting facilities are highly valued, and the Reserve Committees and sporting clubs need support to maintain facilities and benefit to community

- **Outdoor sporting facilities are highly valued:** Residents highly value existing sports facilities and clubs as essential community assets. Active support is important for maintaining and improving these facilities to encourage increased usage.
- **Sports club challenges:** Clubs across Loddon Shire, including Kingower Cricket Club, Boort Lawn Tennis Club, and Bridgewater Cricket Club, face challenges with declining memberships, facility maintenance and in some regards deteriorating infrastructure. Supporting sport and recreation clubs in local communities was a key finding of the consultation process. It is also recognised by Council services that the partnership between Council, Reserve Committees and sporting clubs is critical to maintaining these recreation places for community.
- Financial constraints, operational challenges, difficulties in securing volunteers, and concerns over facility accessibility, management expertise, and regulatory burdens are significant issues affecting the sustainability and growth of sports and recreation clubs in the area. Additionally, there is a noted impact of changing work patterns and seasonal overlaps on participation.

### The community enjoy the diverse recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities in Loddon and wish to use them more

- **Diverse facilities:** There is a strong demand for more diverse recreational spaces to cater for a broad range of interests.
- **Parks and play spaces are highly valued:** Residents highly value the township park and play space provided in each township.
- **Health and fitness stations and local programs encourage adults to be active:** Adults appreciate gyms, fitness stations, and fitness sessions for maintaining health and fitness.
- **Prioritising access to central open spaces in townships:** outdoor sport facilities and park with play space and active recreation opportunities is important with the community emphasising the proximity to home to access family-oriented sport and recreation activities encourages physical activity.
- **The community seeks an expanded aquatic program and service:** Local pools are valued as safe places for learning to swim and cooling down. Residents suggested effective communication about pool timings and community events to boost usage.

The community seeks extended operating hours and diversifying aquatic programs, events and activities to meet the needs of residents, underscoring a community-centric approach to aquatic facility design and maintenance. An indoor pool was also requested.

- Previous engagement as part of the Swimming Pool Improvement Plan 2022 identified:
  - Installing water play splash parks and play equipment, diving boards and hosting more inflatable days as ways that would encourage greater participation. Innovative adventure and play opportunities should be explored with community when considering future aquatic facilities improvements.
  - Hosting community events and introducing water aerobics, strength training, morning lap swims, etc. A range of programs and events that engage a cross-section of the community, including young and old and families should be explored with considering the future aquatic services.

### Maintain recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities to encourage regular use

- **Facility upgrades and maintenance:** Ongoing maintenance, improvements, and diversification of recreational facilities is important. Specific concerns include footpath improvements, trail maintenance, and facility upgrades to meet current needs and safety standards. There is a need to enhance facility quality and maintenance.

Residents also emphasise the need for facility upgrades, including renovated changing rooms, shaded areas, and recreational amenities like mountain bike trails and skate parks, to improve the appeal and functionality of Loddon Shire's public spaces. These spaces need to be maintained to encourage regular use.

### Accessible recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities will encourage participation

- **Accessibility to facilities and services:** Enhancing accessibility for seniors, diversifying play options for children and youth, promoting safe and inclusive swimming experiences, and providing a variety of recreational opportunities for adults and families are essential considerations. Improving access, footpaths, and trails is crucial, especially for seniors. Amenities like water stations, shade, and seating enhance outdoor experiences and encourage physical activity.

Additionally, the community seek more community events and support multipurpose recreational spaces. These suggestions were seen as vital for promoting physical activity and community participation.

- **Activate the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities we have:** A range of ideas for increasing use of public open spaces have been suggested including places that are tailored for young people, increasing public engagement through better promotion of existing activities, improved accessibility across the Shire, walking and cycling paths, seating and shade, fitness and play equipment and physical activity programs.

There is active support for hosting more community events in open spaces to encourage physical activity and participation. There is growing interest in active recreation facilities like bike skills tracks, nature-based and water play experiences.

Residents suggested multipurpose recreational spaces, amenities, and community-focused events are key principles for the future recreation service.

- **Promote nature-based recreation activities:** The drop-in sessions found children and young people benefit from diverse play experiences, including water play and nature activities. There is high interest by adults in activities like mountain biking, bouldering, bushwalking, and fishing to promote enjoyment of natural bushland and waterways.
- **Key barriers:** Key barriers to engaging in sport and active recreation in Loddon Shire include limited accessibility, lack of specialised clubs or organisations, poor facility quality, and outdated amenities, underscoring the importance of addressing these issues to encourage participation.

### Community want Council to prioritise high quality recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services

- **Community accepts fewer facilities if facilities are of high quality:** While a significant portion of respondents are willing to pay higher rates to maintain current sport and recreation facilities, a slightly larger group would accept fewer but higher-quality facilities, indicating a preference for prioritising maintenance and enhancement of existing infrastructure over new developments.

The “how would you spend \$100 engagement activity” resulted in the following priorities for funding:

- Improving and maintaining play spaces
- Improving and maintaining active recreation facilities
- improving and maintaining aquatic facilities
- Improving and maintaining community sport facilities.

Facilities and equipment that promote adventure and play would encourage greater use of pools. Previous engagement as part of the Swimming Pool Improvement Plan 2022 identified installing water play splash parks and play equipment, diving boards and hosting more inflatable days as ways that would encourage greater participation. Innovative adventure and play opportunities should be explored with community when considering future aquatic facilities improvements.



## 8. Other Impacts on Open Space and Sport and Recreation Facilities

### *What other issues will impact open spaces, sport and recreation facilities?*

This section summarises other issues impacting open spaces, sport and recreation facilities in Loddon.

#### 8.1 Climate Change Impacts

Climate-Ready Victoria (State Government Agency) has prepared a report reviewing the impact of climate change on the Loddon Mallee region. The report found that the Loddon Mallee has been getting warmer and drier and in the future the region can expect:

- Temperatures to continue to increase year-round. In the Loddon Shire, the rate of increase is 1.2%-1.4% since the 1960's.
- Fewer frosts.
- More hot days and warm spells. The region was impacted by the Millenium Drought (1996 to 2009).
- More frequent and more intense downpours. The Millenium Drought was ended with two of the wettest years on record in 2010-11, including the January 2011 flood. Most recently, Loddon Shire was impacted by the October 2022 flood.
- Less rainfall in autumn, winter and spring. In the Loddon Shire, rainfall has fallen by 0 to 100mm since the 1950's.
- Harsher fire weather and longer fire seasons.
- Biodiversity is at risk. Hotter temperatures will reduce the habitat for unique plants and animals.
- The more vulnerable members of our community are especially at risk of climate change impacts. These groups include the elderly, children, rural communities, and those unwell and disadvantaged.

These climate change impacts will result in an increase in flooding, landslides and erosion, damage to infrastructure and ecosystems and an increase in the spread of pests and weeds. Our recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services may reduce facility revenues from program and event cancellations and increased maintenance and insurance costs. People's health may also be impacted including, heat exhaustion and asthma related to reduced air quality.

The recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services will need to adapt to these climate change pressures and will present challenges to how we use, design and manage spaces and places in the future. Promoting sustainable and climate-ready solutions and practices will mean the community can continue to engage in sport and recreation for health, social, cultural benefits and other benefits such as economic and environmental.

The design of spaces and places will need to adapt by featuring innovative environmentally sustainable design and water sensitive urban design solutions. Examples include energy efficient technologies like LED lighting, water efficient technologies like non-potable water infrastructure, increasing tree canopy and recycling and waste management practices. Managing participant access to spaces and places and play during extreme weather events will be required to maintain a safe environment to participate.

## 8.2 Environmental Impacts

In 2017, the World Health Organisation (WHO) released a “brief for action” on urban green spaces. The brief is based on evidence compiled on urban green space and is defined as all urban land covered by vegetation of any kinds and on private and public grounds. These include our open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and nature conservation reserves. The brief also refers to blue spaces, water bodies and corridors.

WHO calls on policy makers and practitioners to invest in urban green spaces to provide healthy and sustainable living environments in urban areas for the health of cities and people and in the face of increasing pressures of urbanisation. These include increasing pressure from expanding populations, limited resources and growing impacts of climate change including pollution and loss of biodiversity.

WHO wants to maximise the benefits of urban green spaces through adequate planning, design and evaluation. The brief for action includes a best practice approach to urban green space planning and supports the development of a sport and recreation and open space plans.

WHO explains that urban green spaces are a feature of healthy settlements, and the evidence shows that “green spaces benefit cities and urban quality of life”. They deliver:

- Positive health, social and environmental outcomes.
- Upgrade the social and environmental quality of disadvantaged and deprived areas.
- Make a city more liveable and enjoyable.
- Contribute to the positive image of a city’s branding or identity.

## 8.3 A Child’s Right to Play

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child announced on 1 February 2013 in Geneva the formal adoption of the General Comment that outlines the importance of Article 31 within the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Article 31:

21. States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
22. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

The stated objectives of the General Comment are:

- To enhance understanding of the importance of Article 31 for children’s wellbeing and development, and for the realisation of other rights in the Convention.
- To provide interpretation to States parties regarding the provisions, and consequent obligations, associated with Article 31.
- To provide guidance on the legislative, judicial, administrative, social and educational measures necessary to ensure its implementation for all children without discrimination and on the basis of equality of opportunity.

Having the freedom and equal opportunity to play, recreation, rest, leisure and involvement in cultural and artistic life are all important elements to a happy, healthy and active childhood. They are all fundamental rights of children, and the UN calls on policy makers and practitioners across the world to turn these rights into action.

The Strategy is an opportunity to develop sport and recreation facilities and spaces that are 'child friendly' and encourage equal opportunity for children to play sport and recreation and enjoy an active childhood.

## 8.4 Fair Access to Play

There is a sustainable gap in both the participation of women and girls in sport and recreation and an identified gender imbalance in leadership positions across all levels of the Victorian sporting and recreation industry:

- Only 9% of women and girls' participation in sport across all ages compared to 17% of men and boys (AusPlay, 2021).
- Only 21% of girls aged 0-14 years participate in organised sport and active recreation outside of school hours three times a week (AusPlay, 2021).
- There has been a decline of 22,000 women and girls' participation after COVID-19 where men and boys' participation rose by over 20,500 participants in 2021 compared to 2019 (VicHealth Sports Participation in Victoria 2015-2021).
- 29% of executive positions and 33% of board positions were held by women in State Sporting Associations (Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation 2015).
- Some 28% of women have considered leaving their club due to inequitable treatment (State of Play Survey 2022-2023, Change Our Game).
- Women are 2.5 times more likely to report feeling unwelcome at their sporting club compared to men.
- Of people who played community sport, women were less likely than men to agree that club facilities were shared equally.
- Many Victorian women and girls don't have access to the best courts or grounds, have facilities of lesser standard, or are relegated to less convenient competition and training times.

Local Governments have an obligation to gender equality, not only under State Government legislation but also under Commonwealth legislation. The State and Commonwealth Government legislation includes:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic).
- Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic).
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwth).

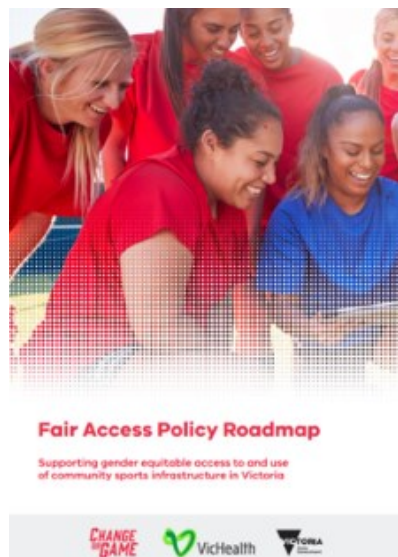
The Commission for Gender Equity in the Public Sector was established after the *Gender Equity Bill 2019 (Vic)* passed in February 2020. The Commission supports the Public Sector Gender Equity Commissioner in overseeing the implementation of the Gender Equity Act 2020 and promoting gender equity in the public sector workforce and the broader Victorian community.

Local Government Authorities are required to complete Gender Impact Assessments and submit these to the Commission for Gender Equity. The Commission reports on progress made towards delivering on the *Gender Equity Act 2020*.

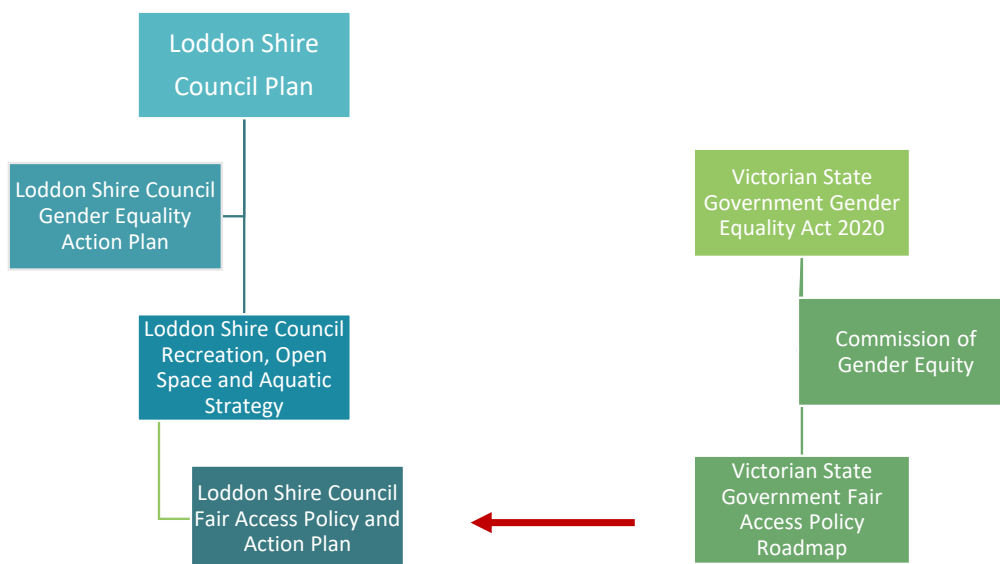
The Victorian Government initiated an Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation which resulted in key monumental changes in the sector. The changes included establishing a Victorian Office of Women in Sport, followed by the Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure Guidelines (2017) and funding program and then the Change Our Game Initiative. These resources were developed to support LGAs to engage better and provide for women and girls in sports.

Following the Inquiry and Change Our Game funding program the Victorian Government in 2022 released the Fair Access Policy Roadmap. The Fair Access Policy ‘RoadMap’ includes the following six principles.

1. Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
2. Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including, as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
3. Women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sport infrastructure.
4. Women and girls should be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.
5. Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender-equitable access and use practices.
6. Prioritise access, use and support all user groups who demonstrate and ongoing commitment to gender equitable access and use of allocated community sport infrastructure.



The following graphic shows the indicative relationship between Loddon Shire’s Fair Access Policy with the Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy and State Government’s gender equity legislation and policy and Local Government strategies.



**Figure 44: Relationship between Loddon Shire’s Fair Access Policy with Council and State Government Policies and Strategies**

## 8.5 Funding Major Sports Infrastructure Challenge

With ongoing Government economic constraints and limited capital and operational budgets, many new sports facilities may have to be joint venture arrangements between private and public sectors and sports clubs.

The reduction in commitment to curriculum-based school sports in State Government schools will have impacts on the local availability of school sports facilities while also discouraging public sector investment in new facilities at these sites.

Due to restricted rate and other revenue bases, local councils may have to encourage greater private investment in leisure facilities and services. This may be achieved by a mix of rate concessions, payback loans, management rights in return for investment, provision of land and planning concessions.

Facility provision is changing from single purpose to multi-purpose. However, there is also an emphasis on ensuring facilities are designed to meet the specific needs of the key user groups i.e., correct runoff and facility standards.

A great deal of infrastructure expenditure is now being directed to the development of larger public and private complexes providing aquatic, health, fitness and indoor sports facilities because of the higher utilisation which can be achieved. There is less emphasis on the development of traditional single purpose outdoor sports facilities.

The planning process for new facilities has improved significantly with the conduct of effective feasibility studies being the norm. These studies have generally included management/marketing financial plans with demand projections based on sophisticated survey data.

There has been considerable improvement in the management of leisure facilities, with increased expectations of managers to produce better financial outcomes and generate higher attendance. Public sector facility managers now need higher skill levels, face broader roles, need access to better training and professional networks and improved financial reporting systems.

As competition increases there will be an increased emphasis on programming and target marketing based on adopting consumer driven strategies and performance evaluation techniques. This indicates a greater resourcing of local area planning, knowing who “are your customers” and how to attract them.

## 8.6 Key Findings of Other Issues

### Loddon Shire Council needs to adapt facilities and services to respond to climate change

Loddon Shire is becoming a hotter and drier place which will result in climate change pressures such as an increase in flooding, erosion, damage to infrastructure and ecosystems, increasing facility maintenance and insurance costs. People’s health may also be impacted including heat exhaustion and asthma related to reduced air quality.

Promoting sustainable and climate-ready solutions and practices in Loddon Shire’s recreation, open spaces, aquatic facilities and services will mean the community can continue to engage in physical activity and connect to nature for health, social, cultural benefits and other benefits such as economic and environmental.

### Local Government must provide equitable access to recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services

Having the freedom and equal opportunity for play, recreation, rest, leisure and involvement in cultural and artistic life are all important elements to a happy, healthy and active childhood. They are a fundamental UN human rights of child. A key principle to the future design of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities are that they are 'child friendly' and encourage equal opportunity for children to play.

Local Government is legally obliged to provide equitable access to recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services, under State and Federal Government legislation:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic).
- Gender Equity Act 2020 (Vic).
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwth).

The Fair Access Policy Roadmap guides councils in the development of fair access policies. This Strategy will need to consider the approaches and measures to delivering the six principles outlined in the roadmap.

### The cost of Council's facilities and services are increasing within significant increases in revenue

Local councils are operating in a tight fiscal environment, with restricted rate and other revenue bases. Innovative approaches to funding open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and services will be required including encouraging greater private investment. Optimising the use of facility provision by changing from single purpose to multi-use will be a key design and operational principle together with operating a sustainable business model that consider a mix of community and commercial spaces.



## 9. Strategic Directions

Sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services are integral to achieving the visions of Loddon Shire Council and are recognised as key ingredients to achieving community health and wellbeing in Loddon and are an important part of the social fabric and character of our agricultural/farming communities. They provide opportunities to be active and are highly valued by the Loddon communities, delivering social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits.

The **Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy** responds to the *Loddon Council Plan 2021-2025* directions to ‘Plan for Future Facilities and Infrastructure that Meet Community Needs’ and ‘Maintain Sports and Recreation and Open Public Spaces to enable and Promote Access and Participation’.

The Strategy supersedes the Recreation Strategy 2014 and is an overarching strategy that consolidates strategic priorities identified in the:

- Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2014
- Swimming Pool Improvements Plan 2018-2022
- Recreation Reserve Master Plans.

The Strategy aligns with Sport and Recreation Victoria’s *Active Victoria (Strategic Framework)* and the *Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan*.

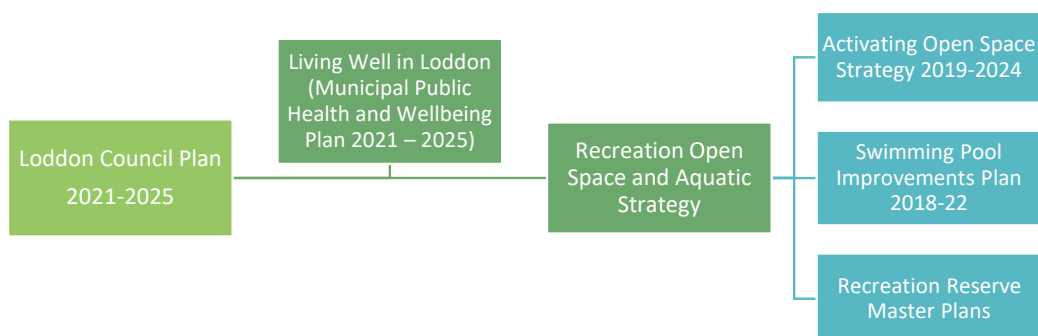


Figure 45: Strategy Alignment

### 9.1 Key Issues and Opportunities

#### What have we learnt?

*Loddon Shire has a diverse network of sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services. They are wonderful places to be active and present an opportunity to improve community health and wellbeing.*

Loddon Shire has a diverse range of open spaces, including sport and active recreation reserves, parks and playgrounds, swimming pools, tracks and trails, and natural places, including bushland reserves and waterways (rivers and lakes). These places are important in supporting rural farming communities.

There are over 113 parcels of public open spaces within the municipality, including nine major and 11 minor recreation reserves and five aquatic facilities. These are provided on Council and Crown Land and managed by Council, contractors and Reserve Committees.

There is a good distribution and supply of quality sport and recreation reserves, open spaces and aquatic facilities across the townships:

- The major towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn have a central sport and recreation reserve, a playground, a swimming pool, a golf course, a public hall and walking/cycling tracks.
- The medium-sized townships of Mitiamo, Calivil, Dingee, Newbridge, Serpentine and Tarnagulla don't have as many public open spaces. Still, most have a central sport and recreation reserve, public hall and playground.
- Small towns generally have a public hall and park or village green.
- The sport and recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities are supported by a network of local walking tracks and regional trails that connect key destinations. A popular local trail is Nolens Park in Boort which hosts the local Park Run.
- Loddon Shire has spectacular bushland reserves and river corridors that offer opportunities for nature-based recreation. Key nature conservation reserves include Kooyoora State Park, Leaghur State Park, Pyramid Hill Summit Walk, Mount Hope Nature Conservation Reserve, Boort Lakes and Wetlands and Loddon River.
- The Loddon Shire community also access regional sport and aquatic facilities within Bendigo and Kerang including the Red Energy Centre, Latrobe University Bendigo Athletics Centre, Bendigo Regional Tennis Centre, Bendigo Badminton Centre, Bendigo Regional Hockey Centre, Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre and Kerang Outdoor Pool.

The facilities are in good condition and attractive to use. Activation and equitable access to sport and active recreation, open spaces aquatic facilities, programs and services is a key focus of the project.

*Loddon Shire is facing a health crisis, and we need creative ways to reverse this trend.*

There are high rates of dental health problems, smoking, and pre-obesity/obesity in the Loddon Shire's rural communities. The impact of two flooding events and the COVID-19 pandemic has also seen a decline in participation and an impact on social connectedness as residents endured isolation from family, friends and community.

The Strategy's priority is to deliver strategies to "**activate people**" with the aim to reversing the alarming health statistic that sees three-quarters of adults in the Loddon Shire being overweight or obese.

Let's together explore ways to encourage how we can activate our community because it is important to improving community health and wellbeing in our rural communities.

*We need to adapt and design sports and active recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities and services to meet the needs of our changing community.*

Loddon Shire has an older population than the rest of regional Victoria, with a median age of 52 years. There are also higher rates of disability. The facilities and programs must be accessible and consider social engagement, fitness, and therapeutic activities.

There are relatively younger populations in Serpentine, Eddington, and Pyramid Hill. These communities will continue to seek sports competitions and active recreation activities.

Loddon Shire has people with diverse and rich cultural backgrounds. Townships like Boort and Pyramid Hill have a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people born overseas. Inclusive and culturally sensitive participation opportunities will be important to encourage participation from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Many people are on low median incomes, and some of the Loddon Shire communities are considered disadvantaged. Affordable participation opportunities will be important to encourage all of Loddon Shire to lead active lifestyles.

Other key findings include:

- Sports clubs have been struggling to attract participants in Loddon Shire. A further two clubs (bowls clubs) have disbanded in the last 12 months. Junior teams are struggling with participation and volunteerism is in decline.
- In general, competition structures still operate a traditional format of play. New modified formats could be encouraged more in Loddon Shire, but local sports clubs and associations need support from peak sporting bodies to facilitate this.
- The recent Active Living Census survey shows the importance of active recreation in Loddon Shire with over 80% of residents utilising open spaces weekly with walking, play, and swimming being amongst the most popular types of active recreation in Loddon. Unstructured sports that can be played at flexible times and support a person's lifestyle, health and wellbeing are now being preferred.
- The modelling shows no demand for additional sports facilities in Loddon Shire and that a key focus of this Strategy is on activating sport and active recreation facilities rather than needing to improve the capacity of existing facilities or build new facilities.

*Loddon Shire Council has invested in improving sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities. However, the asset renewal funding gap is widening. A strategic and sustainable approach is now needed.*

Loddon Shire Council has improved the sport and active recreation facilities, open spaces, aquatic facilities over the last 10 years. This includes upgraded sports fields, courts, lighting and pavilions. The Council has also invested in developing walking and cycling trails and streetscape improvements within township areas.

These improvements were identified through a series of master plans and have helped deliver on the *Loddon Council Plan 2021-2025* directions to 'Plan for Future Facilities and Infrastructure That Meet Community Needs' and 'Maintain Sports and Recreation and Open Public Spaces to enable and Promote Access and Participation'.

The increasing costs of infrastructure and services is escalating, and the asset renewal funding gap is widening. The Asset Plan 2022 projects a funding shortfall to meet the current asset replacement and maintenance requirements in the next 10 years. Asset values are currently unknown for sport, recreational and aquatic facilities, community facilities, parks, open spaces and streetscapes.

Loddon Shire Council has the lowest rate base and the community is one of the most disadvantaged in Victoria. The Council is reliant on external grants to not only improve infrastructure but also to operate recreation, open space and aquatic facilities. External funders require a strategic approach to be undertaken by the Council if they are to invest in the future.

The Council will need to consider the long-term financial capacity to renew assets. This Strategy considers what a sustainable sport and active recreation, open space and aquatic service can be provided.

*Loddon Shire pools operate low patronage and now cost the Council \$47 per visit.*

The aquatic service review identifies that the aquatic centres are attracting approximately 15,000 visits per annum. Council is subsidising the use of the aquatic facilities by approximately \$47 per visit with an annual subsidy cost of \$700,000. This is very high and well above the industry benchmark.

When compared to other outdoor pools in the region, Boort has the highest visitation. Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn and Inglewood (just) are operating at a low patronage. This is consistent with small township pools in the area. Mitiamo is very low.

Loddon Shire seasonal (November to March) pool attendances have continued to decline and when considered against the increasing costs, the Council will need to consider the benefits against the cost of providing an aquatic service in the future.

Aquatic facility management and operations are subject to increasing costs across the industry. The increasing cost of qualified staffing, chemical supply and utilities are major contributing factors for rural facilities. Loddon Shire Council has also recently considered a proposed increased management fee by the current operator, whilst undesirable, these rates represent current market rates for pool management and operations. Staff (lifeguards) and chemicals (water treatment) are the major factors in managing operational risks and if underfunded, the risk to the Council and community increase.

The Council recognises that the Loddon Shire community value having access to swimming pool facilities and despite declining attendances there is strong support for them. Unfortunately, the high cost of swimming pools is placing considerable pressure on Council's capacity to fund them amongst other competing community and infrastructure needs. A strategic approach to addressing this issue is critical.

*Mitiamo and Pyramid Hill pools have significant overlapping catchments and Echuca and Bendigo indoor pools service Loddon Shire.*

Within the Shire, Boort is the main tourism centre and Wedderburn the main service centre of Loddon with the largest population catchments. Inglewood pool and facilities are in the best condition and is central to communities in the south including Bridgewater, Newbridge and Serpentine. This area is identified for future growth.

Most residents can access a pool within an approximately 20 to 30-minute drive. Two outdoor pool facilities are located within the secondary catchment areas for Wedderburn (Charlton Swimming Pool and St Arnaud Swimming Pool) and Mitiamo (Lockington Swimming Pool).

Shire pools are not the only pools servicing Loddon residents. Bendigo, Dunolly, Kerang and Echuca pools also service Loddon communities. As the facilities in Loddon Shire are all outdoor seasonal pools, it can be assumed that if residents wish to participate in aquatic programs i.e. learn to swim lessons or swim year-round, they will drive to Bendigo or Echuca indoor aquatic facilities.

*\$1.3 million is needed over the next 10 years to maintain the current aquatic service.*

The Structural Engineer (JWS Engineers) undertook a detailed Technical Assessment of the aquatic facilities and identified the asset management (renewal) requirements of the facilities over the next 10 years. The total cost to maintain the current benefit, with no additional services, is approximately \$1.3 million over 10 the year period.

The Pools do not meet current industry standards and are now over 50 years old. This funding only maintains the assets and does not provide any additional benefit to the community; or address dignified accessibility and depth concerns with pools.

The identified asset management costs do not include the regular Council maintenance program items (e.g., pool painting and expansion joint reinstatement). These items are still required to be completed, and therefore, consideration must be made as to how these will be funded and included in future budget planning.

### What did we hear?

*Outdoor sporting facilities are highly valued, and the Reserve Committees and sporting clubs need support to maintain facilities and benefit the community.*

**Outdoor sporting facilities are highly valued:** Residents highly value existing sports facilities and clubs as essential community assets. Active support is important for maintaining and improving these facilities to encourage increased usage.

**Sports club challenges:** Clubs across Loddon Shire face challenges with declining memberships, facility maintenance and in some regards deteriorating infrastructure. Supporting sport and recreation clubs in local communities was a key finding of the consultation process. It is also recognised by Council services that the partnership between Council, Reserve Committees and sporting clubs is critical to maintaining these recreation places for community.

Financial constraints, operational challenges, difficulties in securing volunteers, and concerns over facility accessibility, management expertise, and regulatory burdens are significant issues affecting the sustainability and growth of sports and recreation clubs in the area. Additionally, there is a noted impact of changing work patterns and seasonal overlaps on participation.

*The community enjoys the diverse recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities in Loddon and wish to use them more.*

**Diverse facilities:** There is a strong demand for more diverse recreational spaces to cater for a broad range of interests.

**The high value placed on parks and gardens and riding tracks and walking trails** emphasises the importance of investing in green spaces and active recreation infrastructure to promote community health and wellbeing. Respondents particularly identified a high value for the township park and play space provided in each township.

**Health and fitness stations and local programs encourage adults to be active:** Adults appreciate gyms, fitness stations, and fitness sessions for maintaining health and fitness.

**Prioritising access to central open spaces in townships:** outdoor sport facilities and park with play space and active recreation opportunities is important with the community emphasising the proximity to home to access family-oriented sport and recreation activities encourages physical activity.

**Community seeks an expanded aquatic program and service:** Local pools are valued as safe places for learning to swim and cooling down. The community suggested effective communication about pool timings and seek extended operating hours and diversifying aquatic programs, events and activities to meet the needs of residents and boost usage. Ideas include:

- Diversifying water play experiences: Installing water play splash parks and play equipment, diving boards and hosting more inflatable days as ways that would encourage greater participation. Innovative adventure and play opportunities should be explored with community when considering future aquatic facilities improvements.
- More programming and events: Hosting community events and introducing water aerobics, strength training, morning lap swims, etc. A range of programs and events that engage a cross-section of the community, including young and old and families should be explored with considering the future aquatic services.

*Maintain recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities to encourage regular use.*

**Facility upgrades and maintenance:** Ongoing maintenance, improvements, and diversification of recreational facilities is important. Specific concerns include footpath improvements, trail maintenance, and facility upgrades to meet current needs and safety standards. There is a need to enhance facility quality and maintenance.

Residents also emphasise the need for facility upgrades, including renovated changing rooms, shaded areas, and recreational amenities like mountain bike trails and skate parks, to improve the appeal and functionality of Loddon Shire's public spaces. These spaces need to be maintained to encourage regular use.

**High value placed on the maintenance and improvement of play spaces:** This finding highlights the community's recognition of the importance of maintaining existing play spaces to ensure their continued usability for the residents.

**Consistent theme of adequately maintaining and activating the current assets over building new ones:** This finding indicates a preference for maximising the utility of existing facilities before investing in new infrastructure through maintenance and improvement of current assets in Loddon Shire.

*Accessible recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities will encourage participation.*

**Accessibility to facilities and services:** Enhancing accessibility for seniors, diversifying play options for children and youth, promoting safe and inclusive swimming experiences, and providing a variety of recreational opportunities for adults and families are essential considerations. Improving access, footpaths, and trails is crucial, especially for seniors. Amenities like water stations, shade, and seating enhance outdoor experiences and encourage physical activity.

Additionally, the community seek more community events and support multipurpose recreational spaces. These suggestions were seen as vital for promoting physical activity and community participation.

**Activate the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities we have:** A range of ideas for increasing use of public open spaces have been suggested, including places that are tailored for young people, increasing public engagement through better promotion of existing activities, improved accessibility across the Shire, walking and cycling paths, seating and shade, fitness and play equipment and physical activity programs. There is active support for hosting more community events in open spaces to encourage physical activity and participation. There is growing interest in active recreation facilities like bike skills tracks, nature-based and water play experiences.

Residents suggested multi-purpose recreational spaces, amenities, and community-focused events are key principles for the future recreation service.

**Promote nature-based recreation activities:** The drop-in sessions found children and young people benefit from diverse play experiences, including water play and nature activities. There is high interest by adults in activities like mountain biking, bouldering, bushwalking, and fishing to promote enjoyment of natural bushland and waterways.

**Key barriers:** Key barriers to engaging in sport and active recreation in Loddon Shire include limited accessibility, lack of specialised clubs or organisations, poor facility quality, and outdated amenities, underscoring the importance of addressing these issues to encourage participation.



*The community wants Council to prioritise high quality recreation, open space and aquatic facilities and services.*

**Community accepts fewer facilities if facilities are of high quality:** While a significant portion of respondents are willing to pay higher rates to maintain current sport and recreation facilities, a slightly larger group would accept fewer but higher-quality facilities, indicating a preference for prioritising maintenance and enhancement of existing infrastructure over new developments.

The “how would you spend \$100 engagement activity” resulted in the following priorities for funding:

- Improving and maintaining play spaces
- Improving and maintaining active recreation facilities
- improving and maintaining aquatic facilities
- Improving and maintaining community sport facilities.

**The burdening "cost vs benefit" of five aquatic locations:** There needs to be a careful evaluation of investment in aquatic facilities to ensure they align with community needs and provide significant value relative to their cost.

**The community desire to see Council spending increase in sport and active recreation** suggests a need for prioritising budget allocations towards provision of sport and active recreation in Loddon Shire to promote physical activity, social engagement, and community cohesion.

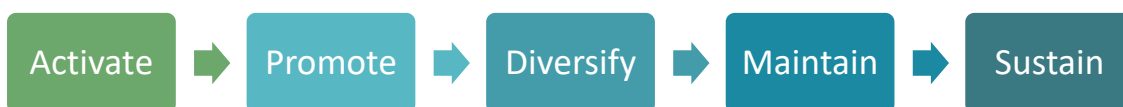
## 9.2 Vision

*Loddon’s diverse, accessible and sustainable recreation, open space and aquatic facilities will activate and connect communities.*

## 9.3 Strategic Directions

The following strategic objectives and actions are designed to achieve this vision.

### Objectives



### Activate recreation, open space and aquatic facilities

How?

- Partner with Reserve Committees and facilitate greater programming of sports reserves for community activities i.e. fitness classes, walking groups, etc.
- Deliver innovative approaches and encourage a diversity of activities, programming and events at aquatic facilities to increase visitation.
- Partner with community in hosting nature-based recreation events.
- Explore opportunities for nature-based recreation and tourism activities with Land Managers.

- Design community spaces in the main streets of townships that are welcoming and interesting to move through, that connect communities, encourage active lifestyles, are walkable, reflect local art and celebrate culture and heritage.

#### **Promote recreation, open space and aquatic facilities**

How?

- Promote recreation as key ingredient of country lifestyle.
- Partner with Bendigo Tourism and develop the Loddon Valley webpage with content promoting family and lifestyle sport and active recreation and a connection to nature.

#### **Diversify recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities so they encourage greater participation**

How?

- Take a strategic approach to the improvement of recreation assets and apply the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework.
- When assets are due for renewal, identify opportunities to diversify recreation opportunities.
- Prioritise improvements that address fair play, universal access and multipurpose objectives.
- Develop a recreation project rolling program to undertake initial designs to enhance the ability to attract external funding to support diversification of existing recreation assets.

#### **Maintain quality recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities**

How?

- Apply a consistent standard to design and maintenance of recreation, open space and aquatic facilities that responds to the planning framework (levels of service).
- Develop an Asset Management Plan for recreation assets and provide annual funding allocation to implement Plan. This will include the recent aquatic facility asset management plan.
- Regularly monitor and review the Asset Management Plan.
- As part of Council's annual budget process provide funding for maintenance of parks, play spaces, active recreation and tracks and trails.
- Seek external funding opportunities to support any planned upgrade or renewal of recreation, open spaces and aquatic assets.
- As part of Council's annual budget process provide funding for asset management (renewal) of aquatic facilities as detailed in the JWS Engineers Technical Assessment to maintain the assets.
- Conduct close analysis and feasibility studies of individual pool locations. Upon catastrophic plan and/or pool failure, Council investigates, with the community, future aquatic options.

#### **Deliver a sustainable service**

How?

- Support partnership with Reserve Committees in managing and maintaining sports reserves.
- Support the development of sustainable clubs and organisations by partnering with peak bodies responsible for skilling and supporting volunteers; and promoting the Sports Community website that provides the resources, training and knowledge to volunteers and clubs on how to make their role easier.
- Investigate options to consolidate if recreation facilities are duplicated. Partner with peak sporting bodies to conduct strategic reviews.

- Recognise and protect high-value natural environments and landscapes in the planning scheme and when planning open spaces.
- Integrate environmentally sustainable design and water-sensitive urban design features in capital works projects and encourage tenants to develop sustainable facility management practices.
- Investigate management models and partnering opportunities for aquatic facilities e.g., Community partnership models and regional management models with partnering councils. This includes what the possible transition of management models could look like.

### 9.4 Site Specific Recommendations

Site specific recommendations have been prioritised in an implementation plan. The Loddon Recreation Planning Framework (Appendix 1) will guide the delivery of recommendations in this section. Projects will be subject to available funding to support implementation, will be prioritised with other projects in Council’s capital works program and may rely on the availability of external funding.

- Short – 0-3 years
- Medium – 4-7 years
- Aspirational
- Ongoing.

Table 39: Implementation Plan

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/ Support
<b>Sport and Recreation Reserve</b>				
Arnold Cricket Ground	Arnold	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Bears Lagoon Tennis Centre	Bears Lagoon	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Boort Bowls Club	Boort	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Boort Croquet Club	Boort	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Implement actions identified for this site in the Boort Foreshore Recreation Plan	Short	Committee of Management/Council
Boort Tennis Club	Boort	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Implement actions identified for this site in the Boort Foreshore Recreation Plan	Short	Committee of Management/Council
Boort Park	Boort	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		• Review design of current pavilion and consider netball and umpire change rooms provision	Short	Committee of Management/Council
		• Relocation of timekeeper’s box	Short	Committee of Management/Council
Bridgewater Bowls Club	Bridgewater on Loddon	• Maintain	Ongoing	Committee of Management

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/ Support
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review playing surface and lighting options and consider future use of second green</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Council
Bridgewater Recreation Reserve	Bridgewater on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider improved toilet facilities for patron use</li> </ul>	Medium	Committee of Management/Council
Calivil Recreation Reserve	Calivil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate alternative use for old golf course - consider a walking track</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management
Dingee Recreation Reserve	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review location of local level play space location (see Parks and Playgrounds section)</li> </ul>	Short	Council
Inglewood Bowls Club	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review playing surface and lighting options and consider shared site opportunities</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Council
Inglewood Community Sports Centre	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and implement Master Plan</li> </ul>	Medium	Committee of Management/Council
Inglewood Golf Course	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Kingower Cricket Club	Kingower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Korong Vale Recreation Reserve	Korong Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider future of reserve</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/Council
Mitiamo Recreation Reserve	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review reserve change rooms against current standards and develop a site management plan (including feasibility study)</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/Council
Mitiamo Golf Course	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Newbridge Recreation Reserve	Newbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Mitchell Park	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review design of current pavilion and consider netball and umpire change rooms provision</li> </ul>	Medium	Committee of Management/Council
Pyramid Hill Bowls Club	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review playing surface and lighting options</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Club/Council

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
Pyramid Hill Golf Club	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Pyramid Hill Quarter Horse Club	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Pyramid Hill Tennis Centre	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
Serpentine Recreation Reserve	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Centre	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider opportunities to enhance shared facility use</li> </ul>	Short	Committee of Management/Clubs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review bowls playing surface and lighting options</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Council
Market Square Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider shared site opportunities</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Club
Donaldson Park Recreation Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Clubs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider oval playing surface options to increase shared space opportunities - e.g. cricket wicket</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Bowls playing surface and lighting options</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Committee of Management/Club/Council
Skinners Flat Reserve	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolve Dam Wall/Spillway Issues</li> </ul>	Short	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Master Plan (after dam resolution complete)</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
Wedderburn Golf Club	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management/Club
Woodstock Recreation Reserve	Woodstock on Loddon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee of Management
<b>Parks and Playgrounds</b>				
Jubilee Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review playground using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Medium	
Little Lake Boort Recreation Precinct/Nolens Park/Rotary Park	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> <li>Implement actions identified for this site in the Boort Foreshore Recreation Plan (separate to Tennis and Croquet actions)</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
Sunnyside Court Playground	Boort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove equipment and sell block</li> </ul>	Short	Council
Sloans Park	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Short	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider future of site using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>		

Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
Bridgewater Foreshore	Bridgewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Progress Park	Dingee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review provision of local level playground using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
J Sloan Park	Inglewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review skate park design to incorporate current pump/skate/bike track trends to enhance activation</li> </ul>	Aspirational	Council
Village Green	Kingower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Borella Park	Korong Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider improvements to seating and shade</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
RJ Phelan Park	Mitiamo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review provision of local level playground using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
Progress Park	Newbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Kelly Park/ Lions Park East	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review provision of township playgrounds using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework and develop a playground management plan.</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
Pyramid Hill Reserve - The Hill	Pyramid Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
TJ Rudkins Reserve	Serpentine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Tarnagulla Soldiers Memorial Park	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Tarnagulla Park	Tarnagulla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider removal of cricket nets and bike track</li> </ul>	Medium	Council
Cooper Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Wedderburn Soldiers Memorial Park	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Nardoo Linear Path/equipment	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
Teds Garden	Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council
<b>Aquatic Facility</b>				
Outdoor Pools	Boort/ Inglewood/ Mitiamo/ Pyramid Hill/ Wedderburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and monitor</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council/ Leisure Services Contractor
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activate space to enhance patronage</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Leisure Services Contractor/Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct feasibility study, including exploring alternative operating models</li> </ul>	Short	Council



Site	Location	Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility/Support
Bridgewater Swimming Hole	Bridgewater	• Maintain	Ongoing	Council
<b>Trails</b>				
Loddon Trail Network	Various - refer Inventory in Table 20.	• Maintain	Ongoing	Council
		• Audit condition and compliance with standards	Short	Council
		• Review provision of trails using the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework and develop a trails management plan.	Medium	Council
<b>Canoe Trails</b>				
Serpentine Canoe Trail	Serpentine	• Maintain	Ongoing	Council
Laanecoorie Canoe Trail	Laanecoorie	• Maintain	Ongoing	Council
Durham Ox Canoe Trail	Durham Ox	• Maintain	Ongoing	Council

## 9.5 Recreation Service

*The Strategy has identified a shift for Loddon Shire’s Recreation Services from one that has partnered with community and State and Federal Government to deliver infrastructure improvements to one that focuses on activating the existing recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities.*

Proposed Community Wellbeing Directorate actions:

- Partner with the Reserves Committee of Management to facilitate local programs and events for active sports reserves.
- Partner with State and Local Sporting Associations to facilitate modified playing formats that encourage more people to participate in sport and host club development programs.
- Establish a club support role within existing resources that seeks feedback on club needs and links resources to respond to governance and management issues and initiatives. This includes supporting clubs in delivering fair access to facilities and programming.
- Represent the user groups in the planning and design of infrastructure projects. Prepare funding applications in partnership with the community.
- Participate in the development of asset management plans for recreation, open space and aquatic facilities. This will require organising asset audits and management of asset maintenance schedules.
- Planning for the renewal of recreation, open space, and aquatic facilities, apply the planning framework, consider duplicated services, and engage the community in planning processes.
- Promote the recreation, open spaces and aquatic facilities in Loddon Shire, through developing content and developing the Loddon Valley tourism webpage.
- Facilitate nature-based recreation programs and events in Loddon Shire nature parks and waterways. Partner with land managers, outdoor recreation groups and event promoters.

- Identify, and share with Council, clubs and committees, an understanding of recreation trends and opportunities to enhance or expand the recreation options to increase activation and participation.
- Identify, and work proactively with Clubs, opportunities for future shared usage of facilities.

## 10. Warranties and Disclaimers

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence', and these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

Otium Planning Group's advice does not extend to, or imply professional expertise in the disciplines of economics, quantity surveying, engineering or architecture. External advice in one or more of these disciplines may have been sought, where necessary to address the requirements of the project objectives. There will be differences between projected and actual results because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected, and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite, or guarantee the projections' achievability as it is impossible to substantiate assumptions based on future events.

This report does not constitute advice, investment advice, or opinion and must not be relied on for funding or investment decisions. Independent advice should be obtained in relation to investment decisions.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than the client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.

## Appendix 1: Loddon Recreation Planning Framework

To pursue an appropriate and sustainable distribution of recreation facilities and open spaces throughout the municipality, the Loddon Recreation Planning Framework has been developed. This is based on the current situation, aligns with the township classification in the Social Infrastructure Strategy, and can be reviewed should circumstances change in future.

This table also provides a guide for future provision, in terms of what could or should realistically be provided in towns of various sizes to encourage active participation. The information in this table has been specifically developed for Loddon Shire, taking into consideration:

- Provision and benchmarking of facilities in similar-sized towns in rural Victoria.
- The types of activities that currently occur (or may feasibly occur in the future given feedback from local residents and examining nation-wide participation trends).
- Population distribution.
- Existing facility provision within the catchment (including neighbouring towns and municipalities).

The assessment of recreation and open space infrastructure provision levels will be subject to the following principles:

- Some townships may already exceed the infrastructure level identified for a town of its size. In this situation, Council will continue to provide the existing level of service, until such time as the asset is due for renewal where Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.
- Where infrastructure exceeds the level identified for a township, and the infrastructure will not be replaced in future, Council will cease insuring the asset.
- Some townships may not currently have the level of infrastructure as detailed in the table. The levels noted apply to townships where existing infrastructure exists. A feasibility study, demonstrating demand, need and sustainability will be required to initiate new infrastructure development. These projects will be subject to available funding and will be prioritised against other projects.
- Association or competition sport conducted in a township may create an override of the minimum provision levels. For example, two netball courts may be required in a community participating in a football/netball league competition. Council commits to retaining the existing level of service to recreation facilities whilst they continue to participate in competition sports.
- Community groups or other organisations, such as schools, may choose to construct and maintain additional facilities at their own cost. Where communities wish to develop infrastructure outside the level suggested in this guide, and where there is an expectation that Council will take on responsibility for the infrastructure, it is a requirement that the initiatives are subjected to a fully informed feasibility study (which demonstrates demand, need and sustainability) and whole of life costs are clearly understood. Council approval must be provided for construction or renewal of assets on a Council owned or managed site.
- In cases where clubs are considering amalgamation, going into recess, or dissolution, Council will assist user groups in planning for the future use of their facilities. If amalgamation occurs, Council will support the parties in consolidating their facilities within a 4-year timeframe. The management and maintenance of dual locations is generally discouraged and will not be supported beyond the initial four years.

The following table classifies recreation facilities, open spaces and aquatic facilities by their primary functions and provides a classification system to apply service levels to guide the provision of recreation assets across the municipality.

Table 40: Loddon Recreation Planning Framework

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
<p><b>Sports field and change/social facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irrigated sports field provided.</li> <li>A fit for purpose change/social facility will be provided with the expectation of multi-use functionality, and guided by relevant requirements including building regulations, DDA compliance and other guidelines such as AFL Cricket Victoria, preferred facility guidelines.</li> <li>Where secondary ovals are used for individual sports, consideration should be given to planning for future consolidation to one precinct to reduce facility duplication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sports field provided – irrigated where competition sport is active and has playing surface standards.</li> <li>Where competitive sport is played, a fit for purpose change/social facility will be provided with the expectation of multi-use functionality, and guided by relevant requirements including building regulations, DDA compliance and other guidelines such as AFL, Cricket Victoria, preferred facility guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain existing sports felids.</li> <li>Change/social facilities retained until such time as the infrastructure is due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hard courts and change facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two courts provided.</li> <li>Preference to be line marked for multipurpose use, with minimum of netball and tennis.</li> <li>Fit for purpose change facilities provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One court may be provided, with preference to be marked for multipurpose use, with minimum of netball and tennis.</li> <li>Where competition netball is played, two courts will be provided, with access to fit for purpose change facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain existing hard courts and any associated infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lawn Tennis Courts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain existing lawn court numbers and associated infrastructure where competition and membership numbers support use.</li> <li>A “Tennis Victoria HIT Assessment” will be undertaken to inform any proposed growth or reduction in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where competition tennis is played, up to six courts may be available for local competition, social use and practice.</li> <li>No additional grass courts will be provided. Existing hard courts may</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain existing tennis court and any associated infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</li> </ul>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
	<p>court or light numbers at Loddon tennis venues prior to any change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore alternative court surface options where required.</li> <li>• A combination of grass and hard courts may be provided.</li> </ul>	<p>be marked for multi-purpose use at the discretion of Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting will not be supplied.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bowling Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>• Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One bowling green.</li> <li>• Retain sites with two greens and associated infrastructure whilst competition requirement.</li> <li>• May have a synthetic surface, subject to business case and funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally not provided.</li> <li>• Where competition bowls is played, one bowling green and associated infrastructure. May have a synthetic surface, subject to business case and funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not provided.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Croquet Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>• Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain existing Croquet green and associated infrastructure whilst competition sport is active.</li> <li>• New Croquet greens are subject to feasibility study, identification of shared surface opportunities, and funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not provided.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Golf Course</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>• Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One golf course and associated infrastructure whilst competition sport is active.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally not provided.</li> <li>• Retain existing while competition sport active.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not provided.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equine sport facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be over-ridden by association or competition sport demands.</li> <li>• Service level standards subject to review should competition sport cease at venue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An equine sport facility and associated infrastructure may be provided.</li> <li>• Retain existing facilities whilst events are active.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally not provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally not provided.</li> </ul>



Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New facilities are subject to a feasibility study and available funding.</li> </ul>		
<b>Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One main park with one or two BBQs, shade, picnic facilities and accessible public toilets within reasonable distance. Likely to be minimum of 0.5 hectare – where space permits.</li> <li>• Secondary park, smaller in size. A public toilet may not be available.</li> <li>• For townships with 750+ population a tertiary park may be provided. Smaller in size. May have one BBQ, shade and picnic facilities. Public toilet may not be available.</li> <li>• Waste Services may be provided to these spaces at the discretion of Council.</li> <li>• Any of these sites may be associated with a recreation precinct or a linear area (such as a foreshore development).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One local level park provided to a basic level.</li> <li>• Seating and shade provided.</li> <li>• May have access to public toilets.</li> <li>• May have a BBQ.</li> <li>• If public toilets and/or a BBQ are provided at a recreation precinct in the township, they will not be duplicated in the park (and vice versa).</li> <li>• Waste Services may be provided to these spaces at the discretion of Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly one small park area provided to a basic level.</li> <li>• May have some seating and shade.</li> <li>• Toilets and BBQs and waste services are generally not provided.</li> <li>• Retain any existing infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Playground</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One main playground, located at the main park area (as above) including play equipment relative to the space, the community size and profile. Current playground standards and design trends will be considered.</li> <li>• May include a nature or themed play space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A local level playground will be provided within an existing park or recreation precinct.</li> <li>• A limited offering of equipment will be provided. At least one all abilities item to be included.</li> <li>• Current playground standards and design trends will be considered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain existing playgrounds and any associated infrastructure until such time as due for renewal. Review to be undertaken to determine if Council, at its discretion, may choose not to replace the infrastructure.</li> </ul>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground will offer equipment suitable for a variety of children’s ages and abilities.</li> <li>• Secondary (local level) playground provided. May be at a secondary park or recreation precinct, or another location specific to the needs of the community. A limited offering of equipment will be provided. At least one all abilities item to be included.</li> <li>• For townships with 750+ population a tertiary (local level) playground may be provided. May be at a secondary/tertiary park or recreation precinct, or another location specific to the needs of the community.</li> <li>• A limited offering of equipment will be provided. At least one all abilities item to be included.</li> </ul>		
<b>Footpaths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council aspires to having constructed footpaths on at least one side of each sealed street in large townships.</li> <li>• Subject to funding and prioritisation.</li> <li>• Where practicable, seating to be provided on main pedestrian routes or key locations at regular intervals (500m apart).</li> <li>• Priority to be given to footpaths linking shopping precincts and community facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpaths, on one side of the road only, may be considered for key identified pedestrian routes, or to improve pedestrian safety.</li> <li>• Subject to funding and prioritisation.</li> <li>• Seating may be provided on main pedestrian routes (500m apart).</li> <li>• Priority to be given to footpaths linking recreation, shopping &amp; community precincts.</li> <li>• Footpath surface to be determined on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not provided.</li> </ul>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration given to paths that link existing footpaths.</li> <li>• Select footpath routes to be enhanced with activation resources (such as decals), subject to funding.</li> <li>• Footpath surface to be determined on a case-by-case basis.</li> </ul>		
<b>Walking/cycling trails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or two off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and/or cycling, preferably near a creek, river, bushland or recreation precinct.</li> <li>• Likely to be 5km in length, but in some circumstances may be longer to complete a select route or link to another trail or facility.</li> <li>• Trail to feature appropriate signage.</li> <li>• Seating or other facilities could be made available at the trail head or in select locations en-route (to be determined based on trail-specific needs).</li> <li>• Trails that can reasonably meet current standards to be retained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One off road recreational trail or space that provides opportunities for walking and/or cycling.</li> <li>• May be near a creek, river or bushland and could be within a local recreation precinct.</li> <li>• Likely to be up to 2km in length, but in some circumstances may be longer to complete a select route or link to another space or facility.</li> <li>• Seating and other facilities may be provided at trail heads, but unlikely to be en-route.</li> <li>• Trails that can reasonably meet current standards to be retained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly one-off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and/or cycling where the location has been identified as a priority site to attract visitors to the area.</li> <li>• Likely to be near a significant natural attraction.</li> <li>• Length determined on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• Seating and other facilities may be provided at trail heads or in select locations en-route (to be determined based on trail-specific needs).</li> <li>• Trails that can reasonably meet current standards to be retained.</li> </ul>
<b>Swimming pools/sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One 25m – 50m outdoor pool with a toddler pool provided.</li> <li>• Where there is no existing outdoor pool an alternative swimming/water play site will be available.</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to improving all abilities access to existing pools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Township will have access to a 25m – 50m outdoor pool and toddler pool within approximately 30-minute drive. (noting this may be in neighbouring municipality).</li> <li>• Existing pool sites will be subject to a review to determine most appropriate operating model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Township will have access to a 25m – 50m outdoor pool and toddler pool within approximately 30-minute drive (noting this may be in neighbouring municipality).</li> </ul>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing pool sites will be subject to a review to determine most appropriate operating model.</li> <li>Upon catastrophic plant and/or pool failure, Council investigates, with the community, future aquatic option.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upon catastrophic plant and/or pool failure, Council investigates, with the community, future aquatic options.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Pump tracks/bike skills area</b>  <b>Space that is suitable for bikes, scooters, skateboards &amp; rollerblades</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pump track/bike skills area provided in a suitable location, preferably in an existing recreation precinct.</li> <li>New pump track/bike skills are subject to feasibility study and available funding.</li> <li>Size and surface type of pump track/bike skills will be relative to the type of track use, size of community and community profile.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally not provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not provided.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lakes/creeks/rivers</b>  <b>Council owned or managed infrastructure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing fishing or recreation platforms to be retained.</li> <li>Existing boat ramps and canoe launchers to be retained.</li> <li>Development of additional fishing or recreation platforms, boat ramps or canoe launchers subject to feasibility study and funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing fishing or recreation platforms to be retained.</li> <li>Existing boat ramps and canoe launchers to be retained.</li> <li>Development of additional fishing or recreation platforms, boat ramps or canoe launchers subject to feasibility study and funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing fishing or recreation platforms to be retained.</li> <li>Existing boat ramps and canoe launchers to be retained.</li> <li>Development of additional fishing or recreation platforms, boat ramps or canoe launchers will only be considered where the location has been identified as a priority site to attract visitors to the area. Subject to feasibility study and funding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outdoor fitness equipment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One outdoor fitness station with the type and number of items relative to the size of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be provided with a small outdoor fitness station containing a maximum of four equipment items.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not provided.</li> </ul>

Primary Functions	Large Towns	Small Towns	Localities
	community and the community profile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New or extended stations will be subject to feasibility study and available funding.</li> <li>• Outdoor fitness station to be located in an existing recreation precinct or playground.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to a feasibility study and available funding.</li> <li>• Outdoor fitness station to be located in an existing recreation precinct or playground.</li> </ul>	
<b>Active recreation facilities</b> <b>Physical activities that are non-organised/formal activities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of activations for informal recreation may be developed subject to community profile, prioritisation and funding.</li> <li>• Active recreation opportunities should be co-located with an existing recreation, open space or community precinct.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of activations for informal recreation may be developed, subject to community profile, prioritisation and funding.</li> <li>• Active recreation opportunities should be co-located with an existing recreation, open space or community precinct.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not provided.</li> </ul>

Table 41: Social Infrastructure Strategy township classification:

Category/Classification	Towns
Large Towns	Boort Bridgewater Inglewood Pyramid Hill Wedderburn
Small Towns	Calivil Dingee Eddington Korong Vale Laanecoorie Mitiamo Newbridge Serpentine Tarnagulla
Localities	All townships/communities under 100 people

## Appendix 2: Case Studies

### Donaldson Park Pavilion

Wedderburn's Donaldson Park includes a new multi-sport and community-focused pavilion, construction of a carpark, solar installation with batteries, pavement works and landscaping. Stage 2 works are being designed to be delivered at a later stage and will include a new play space for all abilities, landscaping and internal paths. The project is being delivered by Loddon Shire in partnership with the Reserve Committee and user groups, the Inglewood and Districts Community Enterprise Limited and State and Federal Government.

Donaldson Park is a key sport, recreation and community space for Wedderburn, and is home to the town's football, netball, hockey and harness racing clubs.



Figure 46: Donaldson Park Pavilion, Wedderburn



### Loddon Valley Football and Netball League Finals

The Loddon Valley Football and Netball League (LVNFL) finals are significant regional events that provide social and economic benefits to Loddon townships, businesses and communities.

The LVNFL finals series include six finals hosting three football games and seven netball games. Each final is shared across Loddon townships.

In 2023, the finals series attendance was estimated to be within 8,500 to 10,000 players, officials and spectators and was hosted at Bridgewater, Newbridge, Serpentine, Pyramid Hill, Calivil and Inglewood.



Figure 47: Football match at Inglewood Community Sports Centre

### Australian Masters Water Skiing Championships 2024

The Australian Masters Ski Comp was held from 26 to 28 January 2024. There is little local community involvement, but it is a prestigious event to host.

Established in November 1960, the Bridgewater Water Ski Club is situated on the Loddon River in the heart of the charming town of Bridgewater.

The Australian Masters Skiing Championships was run over three days in January on the Loddon River at the Bridgewater Water Ski Club. The event featured the country's best water skiing, slalom, trick and jump competitors. There were events for age groups from under 10 to over 65, as well as our top national open men and women skiers.



Figure 48: Waterskiing at Bridgewater



**Boort Parkrun and Little Boort Foreshore Upgrade**

Parkrun is hosted in Boort at Nolen’s Park. The free, fun, and friendly weekly 5km community running event attracts over 50 runners. The Parkrun is run along the upgraded Little Boort Foreshore Trail.



Figure 49: Parkrun at Nolens Park, Boort

**Active Farmers**

Active Farmers host weekly fitness classes at the Bridgewater Recreation Reserve and host an annual Run for Resilience event. The Run for Resilience is a half marathon course run along the Inglewood to Bridgewater Trail. The event attracts 400 participants aged between 5 and 93 years.



Figure 50: Run for Resilience Event at Bridgewater Recreation Reserve



**Bridgewater Swimming Hole and Foreshore Project**

Bridgewater Swimming Hole on the Loddon River is a popular destination for families to swim in the summer months, especially during the Christmas/New Year and Easter holiday periods when there is a high influx of visitors camping in Loddon caravan parks and bushland areas.

The swimming hole is now connected to the township and caravan park by the new Bridgewater Foreshore Trail.



Figure 51: Bridgewater Swimming Hole



**Inglewood Change Room and Park Upgrade**

The major upgrade of the building at the outdoor pool at Inglewood Recreation Reserve now provides shared change rooms where they are used as pool change rooms in the summer and netball change rooms in the summer. The upgrade also included improvements to the park with landscaping and a new play space and fitness station.



Figure 52: Inglewood Recreation Reserve

### Recreation Reserve Lighting Upgrades at Serpentine, Mitiamo and Calivil

The Recreation Reserve floodlighting upgrade project includes lighting towers and LED lighting and associated works for playing areas. These projects have significantly improved the safety of football and netball training at the reserve.



Figure 53: Serpentine Recreation Reserve



### Newbridge Recreation Reserve Re-Establishment Project

Delivery of the Newbridge Sporting Pavilion, new netball and tennis courts and other ancillary recreation and camping reserve restoration works was one of the largest flood recovery projects delivered by Loddon Shire in partnership with the Reserve Committee and user groups, local businesses and State Government.

The facilities accommodate multiple sporting and recreation activities and clubs, community events and visitors camping on the Loddon River at the reserve. In the future if Council were to develop a combined netball and tennis facility the opportunity to consider multi-purpose courts using an approved playing surface by Netball Victoria and Tennis Victoria could be investigated.



Figure 54: Newbridge Recreation Reserve

**10.6 LODDON PLANNING SCHEME - UPDATE AMENDMENT AUTHORISATION REQUEST**

**File Number:** 13/01/003  
**Author:** Carolyn Stephenson, Senior Strategic Planner  
**Authoriser:** Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance  
**Attachments:** 1. Draft amended Loddon Planning Scheme clauses - with changes shown.  
2. Draft amended Loddon Planning Scheme clauses.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council resolve to:

1. Seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to commence preparation of an amendment to the Loddon Planning Scheme to implement the changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy, the Planning Policy Framework, ESO 1 (Laanecoore Catchment) and associated referral provisions, and the strategic work program that were recommended in the Loddon Planning Scheme review report.
2. Commence the amendment process once authorisation is received.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

At the May Council meeting the Loddon Planning Scheme review report was considered and adopted. This proposed amendment implements the first recommendation of that report. A draft copy of the proposed amendments was discussed with Council at its August 2024 Forum.

**BACKGROUND**

The Loddon Planning Scheme review provided for an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the Loddon Planning Scheme. This review determined that the Loddon Planning Scheme is largely responsive to local issues and generally consistent with the aspirations of Council and the community. In particular, the review concluded that the scheme supports the key directions of the Council Plan, being population and economic growth.

The first recommendation of the review is to prepare an amendment to the Loddon Planning Scheme to update information; refine discussion and policy; and correct a few errors to improve the efficiency of the scheme.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

A draft of the proposed changes to the planning scheme, based on the recommendations of the review report, is attached. Attachment 1 shows the elements to be removed (in red) and elements to be added (in green). Attachment 2 shows the scheme as it is proposed to be revised without the mark up as shown in attachment 1. In attachment 2, some sections of State policy have been included to provide the context for the proposed local changes. Please note that the attachments only include the sections of the scheme to be amended, not the complete scheme. The complete Loddon Planning Scheme can be found at [www.planning.vic.gov.au/planning-schemes](http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/planning-schemes).

A summary of the proposed changes is included in the table below.

1. Loddon Planning Scheme		2. Description of change
3. Purpose and Vision		
4. Municipal planning strategy		
5. Clause 02.01 6. Context		7. Amends Clause 02.01: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to recognise the Traditional Owners of the land that is now included in the Loddon Shire;</li> <li>to include the most recent population data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and update the discussion in relation to population change and settlement;</li> <li>to update information about agriculture and include information about other significant employers;</li> <li>to include additional information about environmental values; and</li> <li>to remove outdated information about population and infrastructure.</li> </ul>
8. Clause 02.02 9. Vision		10. Amends Clause 02.02 to update the vision to reflect that of the most recently adopted Council Plan.
11. Clause 02.03 12. Strategic directions		13. Amends Clause 02.03-1 Settlement to reflect the findings and directions of the Loddon Shire Settlement Strategy (2019-2034). 14. Amends Clause 02.03-2 Environment and landscape values to better articulate the values and directions that are specific to Loddon and able to be influenced by planning controls. 15. Amends Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity to include reference to recent flood events and amend strategic directions in relation to wildfire and flooding to better reflect State policy. 16. Amends Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management to update and more clearly articulate strategic directions in relation to agricultural land and water. 17. Amends Clause 02.03-5 Built environment and heritage to incorporate recognition of First Nations heritage. 18. Amends Clause 02.03-6 Housing to reflect the directions of the Loddon Shire Settlement Strategy (2019-2034). 19. Amends Clause 02.03-7 – Economic development to update the discussion and directions to reflect current activity in relation to agriculture, manufacturing and tourism. 20. Amends Clause 02.03-8 – Infrastructure to incorporate the Settlement Strategy objectives regarding directing development to existing infrastructure, acknowledge the need to balance the location of renewable energy infrastructure with protection of land for agriculture and identify the need to protect the viability of waste storage and processing facilities through buffer protection. 21.
22. Clause 02.04 23. Strategic framework plan		24. Amends Clause 02.04 Strategic Framework Plan to include a new framework plan with some additional information.

<b>25. Planning Policy Framework</b>	
26. Settlement	
27. Clause 11.01-1L	29. Amends Clause 11.01-1L Settlement to include town structure plans and directions from the Settlement Strategy.
28. Settlement	30.
31. Natural Resource Management	
32. Clause 14.01-1L	34. Amends Clause 14.01-1L to:
33. Agricultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• change the title to better reflect the intention of the policy</li> <li>• refine the language in the excision policy to more clearly articulate the policy</li> <li>• change DELWP to DEECA.</li> </ul>
35. Housing	
36. Clause 16.01-1L	37. Amends Clause 16.01-1L Housing for older people to specify the towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.
38. 16.01-3L	39. Insert a new Clause 16.01-3L McIntyre and Wehla rural living areas that defines the purpose of land subdivided in this area for rural living development.
40. Transport	
41. Clause 18.02-4L	42. Inserts a local policy at Clause 18.02-4L Sustainable local road network to direct new development to existing roads where possible to minimise infrastructure liabilities.
	43.
44. Infrastructure	
45. Clause 19.03-5L	46. Inserts a local policy at Clause 19.03-5L to which aims to protect significant waste facilities, including tips, transfer stations and reuse facilities.
<b>47. Overlays</b>	
48. Clause 42.01 (ESO)	49. Amends Schedule 2 (Laanecoorie Catchment) to Clause 42.01 to limit its focus and scope to development that includes effluent disposal.
<b>50. General Provisions</b>	
51. Clause 66.06	53. Amends the Schedule to Clause 66.06 to remove notice provisions to DELPW and NCCMA for Clause 4.0 of Schedule 2 to Clause 42.01 (ESO)
52. (Notice of permit applications under local provisions)	
<b>54. Operational Provisions</b>	
55. Clause 74.02	57. Amends the Schedule to Clause 74.02 to rationalise the future strategic work program based on work that has already been completed and work that has been identified as a priority by Council.
56. (Further Strategic Work)	

The process for a planning scheme amendment is as follows:

1. Prepare a draft of the proposed changes
2. Seek Ministerial authorisation

3. Exhibition
4. Council review of submissions
5. Panel hearing (if required)
6. Council determine to adopt, change or abandon the amendment
7. Ministerial approval

This report seeks consent from Council to request authorisation from the Minister for Planning to commence the amendment process.

The purpose of the authorisation stage is to determine whether a proposed amendment is:

1. consistent with the objectives of planning in Victoria, and state and regional planning policy or interests; and
2. has demonstrated strategic merit; and
3. makes proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP).

It is proposed that the amendment will not commence the next stage until after Council elections.

### **COST/BENEFITS**

The planning scheme amendment will be prepared and progressed in-house by the strategic planner. There is a fee of \$530.70 payable to the Minister for Planning when approval for the amendment is sought.

This amendment will improve the relevance and efficiency of the planning scheme.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

This amendment implements a recommendation of the Planning Scheme Review. The Planning Scheme Review report was based on significant assessment, research and consultation with key stakeholders. There is no significant shift in policy to be implemented through this amendment. There is minimal risk associated with this amendment.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The proposed amendment to the planning scheme would be subject to public exhibition, with submissions invited. This would not commence until after the Council elections.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.01 CONTEXT

10/02/2022  
6451od Proposed C481od

Loddon Shire is located in north central Victoria, commencing approximately 180 kilometres north-west of Melbourne and immediately north-west of Bendigo. It has an area of approximately 6,700 square kilometres and extends over 100 kilometres from north to south and over 80 kilometres from east to west.

The traditional owners of the land that is included in the Loddon Shire are the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Barapa Barapa people.

The Shire is a rural municipality. It contains farmland, forest, native grasslands, lakes, rivers and wetlands interspersed with small townships and hamlets. These towns include Boort, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn, Bridgewater, Dingee, Eddington, Korong Vale, Laanecoorie, Mitiamo, Newbridge, Serpentine, Tarnagulla and Calivil. There is no one dominant service centre, and these communities range in size from 1,000 people to less than 100 people.

Agriculture is the predominant land use and the economic foundation of the Shire. It is the main largest employer and main income generator. The Shire has significant areas of high quality agriculture land, quality affordable rural water supplies and a climate that is conducive to high agricultural productivity. Key agricultural industries of the area are broadacre cropping (predominantly cereals and canola), prime lamb, dairy, wool, chicken meat, hay and pork.

Other significant employment sectors are manufacturing, healthcare, retail and education.

European settlement commenced with pastoral occupation in the 1840s, and the gold rush that commenced in 1850s accelerated growth and was the foundation of the towns of the south of the municipality.

After a period of time experiencing population decline, the population of the municipality has increased between 2016 and 2021. The population grew from 7512 people in 2016 to 7759 people in 2021 (ABS). This has been as a result of better times in the agricultural sector following favourable seasons, and broader trends related to tree change. Loddon Shire has benefitted from Covid related populated shift from Melbourne, and new residents seeking more affordable housing and a different lifestyle. The population growth is primarily in the larger townships and rural living areas of the south of the Shire. New housing development has accompanied this growth. Despite this growth, the population of Loddon is aging, and a planning challenge is suitable housing for this section of the population.

The Shire is located within the Loddon and Avoca River catchments, which are part of the Murray-Darling Basin and cover four bioregions – Victorian Riverina, Murray Mallee, Northern Inland Slopes and Goldfields. The Loddon River bisects the Shire. Although the environment, in particular native vegetation, has been highly modified as a result of agriculture and mining, significant environmental values remain including valuable pockets of remnant vegetation largely in the southern part of the shire and a unique wetland system in the north. The municipality includes significant tracts of public land with environmental values.

The Shire is serviced by a significant network of highways and roads which present locational opportunities in terms of access to and from the Shire. The Loddon Valley Highway and the Calder Highway move people and goods to, from and through the Shire and provide links to Bendigo, Melbourne and northern Victoria. Rail links are provided from a number of key towns to other centres and are most significant for their role in grain transportation to Melbourne ports.

~~The air strip at Boort provides opportunities for the sale and transportation of produce from this part of the Shire. It is an important asset for local business and tourism in the region.~~

~~Consistent with being a rural municipality, more than 50 per cent of the Shire's community resides in the rural areas of the Shire, with the balance living in the townships.~~

~~The Shire, like many other rural areas in Australia, is faced with the challenge of a declining population base.~~

~~The proportion of the population aged over 60 years is predicted to increase.~~



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.02 VISION

10/02/2022  
64510dd Proposed C4810dd  
The Loddon Shire Community Vision 2031 is:

Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.

The strategic directions to achieve this vision are:

### **A sustainable built and natural environment**

#### Infrastructure

We will have infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs and embraces environmental sustainability.

#### Environment

We will preserve our unique natural environment, places and spaces. We will embrace renewables, alternatives, and new technologies that reduce our footprint and promote sustainability.

### **A growing and vibrant community**

#### Population

We will increase our population and attract new people by promoting our lifestyle. Our growing, connected, and inclusive population will support the growth of our economy and services to meet our current and future needs.

#### Community

The Shire's vision as articulated in the Council Plan 2017-2021 is to "be a prosperous, vibrant and engaged community." We will be a welcoming, connected, inclusive and growing community that is strong, supportive and actively involved.

#### Youth

Our youth will be supported to access education, job and recreation opportunities and services in our area. Their voice will be valued and heard, through meaningful participation in our Shire.

~~The land use and development priorities for the Shire include:~~ **A diverse and expanding economy**

#### Tourism

We will attract local, national, and international tourists with our unique range of natural, cultural, and historical attractions, including the rich history of First Nations people and pioneers.

#### Economy

We will have a growing and sustainable economy that supports established and new businesses, has a skilled workforce and attracts business, industry, and people to our area.

### **A supported and accessible community**

#### Services

We will increase local services by working with our community and services providers to explore innovative ways to deliver existing and new services. We will seek out and adopt new technologies to increase and improve services and enable people to connect

#### Communication

- ~~Maximising urban growth and development in existing settlements and building viable small communities with strong links to regional centres.~~
- ~~Enhancing the natural resource base and environmental values.~~
- ~~Supporting the economy, especially agricultural production and employment opportunities.~~
- ~~Providing community and recreational facilities to meet the needs of residents.~~

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- ~~Preserving and enhancing cultural heritage.~~
- ~~Improving the presentation and amenity of the townships to attract and retain residents.~~

We will embrace all forms of communication to reach all age groups, backgrounds, and abilities to increase the cohesiveness and connection in our community. Our communication will be supported by the latest and most reliable infrastructure.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.03 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

~~10/02/2022~~  
~~6451odd Proposed C481odd~~

## 02.03-1 Settlement

~~10/02/2022~~  
~~6451odd Proposed C481odd~~

There is no one dominant urban centre of the Shire, rather the Shire has a number of small centres serving the surrounding rural areas. The key service centres are Boort, ~~Bridgewater~~, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn. These townships provide retail, health, community and education facilities, ~~and have the greatest capacity for growth due to this existing infrastructure investment. Capitalising on the significant capacity for infill development that exists in these towns will enable affordable residential development, and support Council's aim of population growth.~~

Other important townships are ~~Bridgewater~~, Dinglee, Eddington, Korong Vale, Laanecoorie, Mitiamo, Newbridge, Serpentine and Tarnagulla. Although these settlements are ~~small~~ smaller, they each play a vitally important social, service provision, residential and community focus and function in their respective districts. ~~These smaller towns are unsewered and therefore opportunities for further residential development are restricted.~~

~~In the rural areas of the Shire, the majority of residents live on agricultural properties.~~ Rural residential living is a popular lifestyle option in the south of the Shire, afforded by the proximity to Bendigo and attractive undulating agricultural and bush settings. Significant areas of rural residential living exist around Inglewood, ~~Bridgewater~~, Wedderburn, Moliagul, Dunolly, Laanecoorie, Tarnagulla and Newbridge. ~~Opportunities for ongoing development of these areas is fundamental to attracting population and supporting population growth goals, however rural living development must not undermine environmental values or agricultural activity.~~

~~The installation of reticulated sewerage disposal systems in the larger towns of the Shire introduced opportunities for additional urban development and improved the amenity of the towns. Lots that were previously unable to be developed, because they were too small for septic tank disposal, have now become available for in-fill development.~~

~~The smaller towns of the Shire (in particular Newbridge and Tarnagulla) are still unsewered and opportunities for further residential development are very limited due to this.~~ Within the farming areas, residents live on properties to facilitate the agricultural use of the land.

Council's strategic directions for settlement are to:

~~Promote residential growth in Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn, with a focus on infill and consolidation.~~

~~Accommodate new residential development in smaller settlements where effluent can be managed.~~

- ~~■ Direct urban development to key service centre townships.~~
- ~~■ Locate rural living development in areas close to urban centres with access to infrastructure and services.~~
- ~~■ Provide land for a range of urban uses in the townships.~~
- ~~■ Direct development to areas with no or lower vegetation values.~~
- ~~■ Encourage commercial development and services to locate within the existing commercial/retail areas.~~
- ~~■ Support the location of a range of retail facilities in the towns to cater for the needs of the community and visitors.~~
- ~~■ Protect the Loddon River corridor for agriculture by limiting the development of new dwellings beyond existing urban areas to those essential for agricultural use of the land.~~

~~Support the ongoing development of the existing rural living areas where environmental and agricultural values will not be compromised.~~

~~Limit residential development in farming areas to that required to support agriculture.~~

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values

10/02/2022  
64510dd Proposed C4810dd

The natural resource base is the economic foundation of the Shire. The natural resource base supports agriculture, tourism and is fundamental to the character, amenity and liveability of Loddon. The environmental values of the Shire include Box Ironbark ~~Forests~~forests, native grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and the Loddon River.

Much of the native vegetation of the shire has been highly modified or completely removed, particularly in the north of the municipality, as a result of agriculture.

The protection of remnant native vegetation is of vital importance in the Shire as it contributes to the state's biodiversity, stabilises soil, controls erosion, controls water table recharge (and subsequently, salinity) and provides habitat for native fauna. ~~Road reserves support some of the most significant communities of remnant vegetation in the north, as this land has been isolated from the surrounding farming activity.~~

~~Of particular importance in the north of the Shire is the Terriek Terriek National Park, which contains a forest of Murray Pines, grasslands and the nationally endangered ecological community of the Buloke Woodlands.~~ The south west area of the municipality (around Wedderburn, Inglewood and through to Dunolly) has retained a significant amount of high value native vegetation on both public and private land. These remnant patches of bushland are a haven for woodland birds that are declining throughout most of south-eastern Australia. They include the Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail and Brown Treecreeper. The region also includes some of the most reliable habitat on mainland Australia for the critically endangered Swift Parrot. –

Native grasslands were once widespread across the riverine plains of the north of the Shire, but are now restricted to a handful of isolated remnants on private and public land, ~~such as including~~ roadsides and railway lines. The greatest concentrations of significant grasslands are found ~~around~~ ~~Mitiamo~~ in the north east of the municipality at Terriek Terriek and are of national significance, as so little of this vegetation community remains Australia wide. The ~~critically endangered~~ Plains Wanderer can be found here. The Terriek Terriek National Park was established for the protection of this significant natural asset. The ongoing survival of ~~these grasslands could be prejudiced~~ grasslands on private land is ~~threatened~~ by overgrazing, land development and changes to land management practices, such as the introduction of cropping.

~~There are 72 threatened fauna and 120 threatened flora species in the~~ The municipality includes nationally listed ecological communities, including Buloke Woodlands, Grey Box Grassy Woodlands, White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Plains Mallee Box Woodlands. The Buloke (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*) that is listed as critically endangered under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988) is found in Loddon Shire. –

The Loddon River bisects the municipality and is a significant environment, recreational and economic asset. The water from the Loddon supplies towns and agriculture. It is used for recreation and supports flora, fauna, fish and insects. The Boort district includes a chain of significant lakes and wetlands. Many of the wetland systems in the Shire are threatened or have been eliminated by drainage or alteration to the natural flow paths of water. Some of these wetlands are protected under international agreements such as Ramsar, JAMBA and CAMBA.

Council's strategic directions for environmental and landscape values are to:

- ~~Protect significant native vegetation and habitat, including native grasslands.~~
- ~~Maintain~~Protect remnant ~~vegetation in viable sized parcels and enhance linkages between them.~~ native vegetation and habitat, including native grasslands, with a focus on the protection of:
  - .. ~~remnant vegetation that is currently in viable sized parcels~~
  - .. ~~vegetation that provides linkages between remnant vegetation parcels~~
  - .. ~~remnant vegetation on waterways (including the Loddon River), lakes and wetlands~~



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Agricultural land needs to be protected from conversion to non-soil-based uses, subdivision into non-viable parcels and land degradation in order to provide for the ongoing healthy economic performance of the Shire. In particular, land along the Loddon River between Serpentine and Eddington is under pressure for conversion to rural living due to its amenity and proximity to Bendigo.

Agricultural viability and profitability in the Shire is challenged by issues such as erosion, salinity, soil structure decline, soil sodicity, acidification and water quality.

In recent times, opportunities for horticulture to replace broadacre activities have become apparent and been pursued, improving the viability of the local industry.

Generally, the more productive soils of the Shire are located along the Loddon and Avoca riverine plains, between Lake Marmal and Boort and north to Leagur, and south west of Pyramid Hill to Bridgewater. Much of the north of the Shire has access to irrigation water. This is a significant asset that enhances the value of the land for agriculture. The southern area of the Shire predominantly consists of dry land broadacre agricultural enterprises. Around Bridgewater there are areas of high value horticulture, based on the fertile riverine soils and water from the Loddon River. A rural water supply pipeline was developed throughout south west Loddon in 2020 to enhance agricultural prospects in that area.

Areas managed for the harvesting of mallee leaf for eucalyptus oil extraction are also located close to Wedderburn.

The south of the Shire, especially around Kingower, is home to a number of wineries. The granite sand soils and the climate of the area are well suited to viticulture. In the east of the Shire, Dingee and Calivil are the centre of the dairy industry.

Opportunities in the agricultural areas of the Shire include expansion of the tomato industry around Boort, viticulture in areas such as Terrapee and Terrick-Terrick, olive production and ongoing improvement and innovation in the grains sector.

Generally large lots are required for agricultural production, especially in the dryland areas. However, irrigated horticulture can use smaller lots for a viable enterprise. Farms are often made up of a collection of lots, which may be scattered across a district. The protection of quality agricultural land for agriculture rests both with maintenance of it in viable sized lots, and deterring non-agricultural land use and the ability to restructure and develop it for agricultural purposes.

Much of the north of the Shire is provided with irrigation water from the Goulburn River, supplemented from the Loddon River, via the Waranga Channel. In the interests of the long-term viability of agriculture, Council supports improved efficiency in the use of irrigation water and the transfer of water from low value uses such as grazing to high value horticulture. Produce of the municipality includes sheep, beef, poultry, pigs, cereals, tomatoes, wine grapes, olives, pulses, wool, eucalyptus oil and dairy. It is estimated that the value of agricultural output in 2023 was almost \$600m, and supported more than 1,200 jobs.

The sparsely populated rural areas of the Shire hold opportunities for intensive animal industries, which Council supports, when where significant buffer distances from residential areas uses can be maintained. Effluent from Council has supported the development of a number of intensive animal industries can be a valuable resource for other agricultural enterprises in the Shire if productively used, including poultry, piggeries and dairy, in Loddon Shire.

Valuable agricultural land along the Loddon River between Serpentine and Eddington is under pressure for conversion to rural living due to its amenity and proximity to Bendigo.

Council's strategic directions for agriculture are to:

- Maintain agricultural land in large lots to support the agricultural industry. Minimise the fragmentation of agricultural land to maximise opportunities for a range of agricultural uses.
- Ensure that land use is matched to soil capability.
- Minimise dwellings in agricultural areas.



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- Support house lot excision only where it provides for farm consolidation and the excision will not compromise agricultural activities on surrounding land ~~or remove an unreasonable amount of land from agriculture.~~ -
- ~~Support the effective restructure and redevelopment of farm holdings to maximise opportunities for diversification and intensification of agricultural land use.~~ -
- Discourage non-agricultural land use and development in areas of high quality and productive agricultural potential.
- Encourage intensive animal industries to locate in isolated rural locations.

**Water**

~~Bet Bet Creek, Bul a Bul Creek, McCallum Creek and the Loddon River are some of the waterways in the Shire that are known to be suffering from low water quality. Stormwater and irrigation runoff, particularly when contaminated by soil, chemicals and effluent, results in a decline in water quality.~~

~~Laanecoorie Reservoir in the south of the Shire is a significant water storage on the Loddon River.~~ The Loddon River and Laanecoorie Reservoir are significant water assets in the Loddon Shire. This water is used for urban, agriculture and recreational purposes.

~~The construction of dams is often necessary to support the agricultural or residential use of land, but they need to be sited and designed to minimise impacts on land, native vegetation and waterways, with a particular emphasis on maintaining environmental flows in rivers and streams of the catchment.~~

~~Effluent disposal and reuse from intensive animal industries and urban uses needs to be effectively managed to prevent detriment to residents and the environment, especially waterways.~~ Water quality is affected by animal effluent, human effluent, contaminants from urban areas, soil erosion and salinity.

Council's strategic directions for water are to:

- Ensure use and development does not produce polluted runoff that leaves the property untreated.
- ~~Protect water quality, in particular in the Loddon and Laanecoorie catchments.~~
- ~~Locate and design dams to minimise alterations to natural drainage and natural flows of watercourses.~~
- ~~Maintain adequate flows for downstream users.~~
- Encourage sustainable reuse of effluent and manage stormwater and irrigation runoff into waterways.

**Gold mining**

The southern area of the Shire is part of the Central Victorian Goldfields and contains much of the area recognised as Victoria's "Golden Triangle".

Exploration and mining is being conducted throughout the state forest and some freehold areas around Wedderburn, Inglewood, Tarnagulla, Kingower and Rheola. At present, the majority of mining operations are small leases, of less than 5 hectares, which are being worked by open cut methods.

Council's strategic directions for gold mining are to:

- Ensure mining activity is conducted in such a way that minimal vegetation is removed and polluted runoff does not leave the site.
- Ensure land is rehabilitated after mining is completed and either returned to a state typical of the surrounding land or to some other pre-determined end use.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.03-5 Built environment and heritage

10/02/2022  
6451oddd Proposed C481oddd

## Heritage

Our heritage includes the stories, landscapes and places of significance to the First Peoples of this region. The traditional owners of the land on which the Shire of Loddon spans are the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Barapa Barapa people.

Dja Dja Wurrung Country is a cultural landscape that is more than just tangible objects; imprinted in it are the dreaming stories, Law, totemic relationships, songs, ceremonies and ancestral spirits, which give it life and significant value to Dja Dja Wurrung People (Recognition Statement, RSA 2013). Koyoorra State Park, in the south of Loddon Shire is jointly managed by the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Parks Victoria. There are heritage places of significance in and around the park.

~~The Shire contains significant heritage assets including a rich and diverse pre settlement heritage. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in the Shire includes~~ Aboriginal cultural heritage places and objects in Loddon Shire include scarred trees, stone artefact scatters, earthen mounds, stone features, burial sites, quarries, ~~collections~~ and an art site. ~~These Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values are mainly~~ Many of these significant places and objects are found in association with past and present natural drainage lines and water features such as rivers, lakes, lunettes, high ground, sandy deposits and remnant native vegetation.

The largest collection of scar trees in the world can be found around Boort. There are more than 2,000 scar trees around Lake Boort.

The European heritage of the Shire is based on pastoral settlement and goldmining. Inglewood and Tarnagulla have largely intact traditional streetscapes of unique heritage significance that are fundamental to the character and tourist attraction of the towns. ~~There are many former mining sites of importance located in the southern part of the municipality.~~

Council's strategic direction for heritage is to:

- ~~Support the protection of~~ Identify, document and protect significant heritage places and items.

## 02.03-6 Housing

10/02/2022  
6451oddd Proposed C481oddd

Loddon Shire has significant capacity for new housing in the towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

The Shire has a high proportion of older residents and this trend is expected to continue. Housing suited to the needs of this segment of the population needs to be a part of the future. ~~Existing business and industry are concerned that a lack of suitable housing is affecting their ability to recruit staff. Housing suited to families, professionals and singles is a vital part of the economic future of the region.~~

There is strong demand for rural living in the Shire, and it is a key attraction for new residents. Rural living must be located and managed to protect agricultural industries, agricultural land, and the natural resource base and, as well as be serviced with essential infrastructure (in particular all weather roads) and contribute to the viability of the existing townships. ~~Isolated rural living development should be avoided as it imposes undue cost on Council in the provision of services.~~

~~Rural living use and development needs to facilitate quality residential living that is supported by necessary infrastructure, such as power and all weather road access, as well as ready access to the goods and services provided in the urban centres of the Shire. Isolated rural living development should be avoided as it imposes undue cost on Council in provision of services.~~

Council's strategic directions for housing are to:

- Encourage residential growth in ~~areas~~ the towns with access to a full range of infrastructure, with a focus on infill.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- Support the development of a diversity of housing stock, including smaller housing forms located within the existing urban footprint of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.
- Support rural living where agricultural industries, agricultural land, ~~natural values and the viability of the existing townships can be protected and enhanced~~ and natural values will not be compromised, infrastructure is provided and it will support the viability of existing townships.
- Discourage unplanned rural living development throughout rural areas.

**02.03-7 Economic development**

~~10/02/2022~~  
6451odddProposed C481oddd

The Shire’s economy is centred on ~~agriculture. Other economic development activities that are important to the local economy are manufacturing, gold mining, eucalyptus oil production and tourism~~ around agriculture. Agricultural produce of Loddon Shire includes sheep, beef, poultry, pigs, cereals, wine grapes, olives, pulses, dairy and wool. Climate change will challenge agricultural production in Loddon. –

The availability of a diverse range of commodities in the Shire provides significant opportunities for ~~new~~ industries that process raw materials and by-products of agriculture. – Cobram Estate, near Boort, produces olive oil, Biogrow, near Newbridge produces compost from organic waste and agricultural by-product and Southern Stockfeeds at Bridgewater uses local grain for feed production. All businesses are significant employers and have recently invested in upgrades and expansion.

Other economic development activities that are important to the local economy are manufacturing, gold mining, eucalyptus oil production and tourism.

There is significant potential for the expansion of the tourism industry based on the Shire’s natural and built features. Tourism assets of the Shire include ~~European and Aboriginal~~ First Peoples and European heritage, wineries, the Loddon River, Lake Boort and numerous parks and reserves including Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park and Kooyoora State Park.

Council’s strategic directions for economic development are to:

- ~~Encourage a diverse and environmentally sustainable economy in the Shire~~ Protect the opportunity for agriculture to grow and operate relatively unhindered by limiting non agricultural uses and development in farming areas.
- ~~Support location of industry with access to infrastructure and without compromising residential amenity and~~ Provide opportunities for manufacturing industries in locations that do not impact residential amenity or the appearance of the town towns.
- Support the expansion and diversification of ~~accommodation facilities, including the tourism industry, including accommodation facilities such as~~ bed and breakfast and farm stays, and experiences related to the First Peoples heritage.

**02.03-8 Infrastructure**

~~10/02/2022~~  
6451odddProposed C481oddd

~~The Shire, especially the northern half, has high levels of solar exposure. It is also bisected by an electricity transmission line and a 66 kilovolt line, meaning it is highly suitable for solar energy generation and distribution~~ Loddon Shire supports its community through the provision of infrastructure including roads, sporting facilities, halls, parks, libraries and pools. This infrastructure is a significant investment and Council seeks to consolidate new development around these assets to maximise their use and minimise need for additional infrastructure investment. –

Mobile service reception is limited in some areas in the Shire and needs to be upgraded to provide reception in all areas.

The Shire, especially the northern half, has high levels of solar exposure. It is also bisected by a 220 kV and a 66kV electricity transmission line which could support renewable energy distribution. Use of rural land for energy production needs to be balanced with the significance of the land for food production.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Council's strategic directions for infrastructure are to:

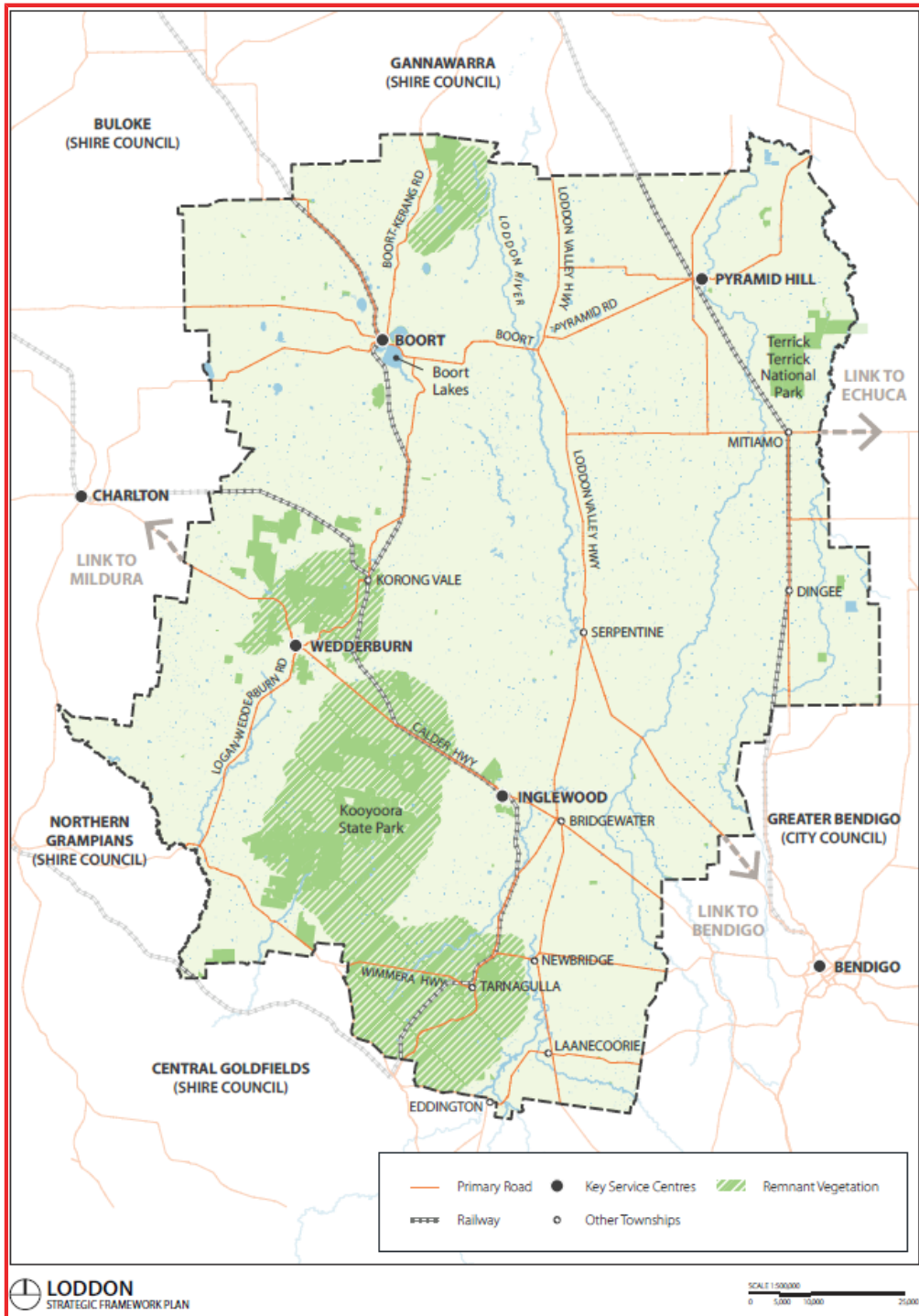
- Direct new development to existing infrastructure, in towns and rural areas.
- Support the upgrade of telecommunication infrastructure, to improve broadband and mobile telephone access.
- Direct renewable energy facilities to areas where they will not adversely affect agricultural land or production.
- Protect the viability of waste storage and processing facilities through protection of buffers.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

02.04 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN

10/02/2022  
64510dd Proposed C4810dd

The plan contained in Clause 02.04 is to be read in conjunction with the strategic directions in Clause 02.03.



Key strategic directions

Focus residential growth in Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

Support viable agricultural production throughout the rural areas.

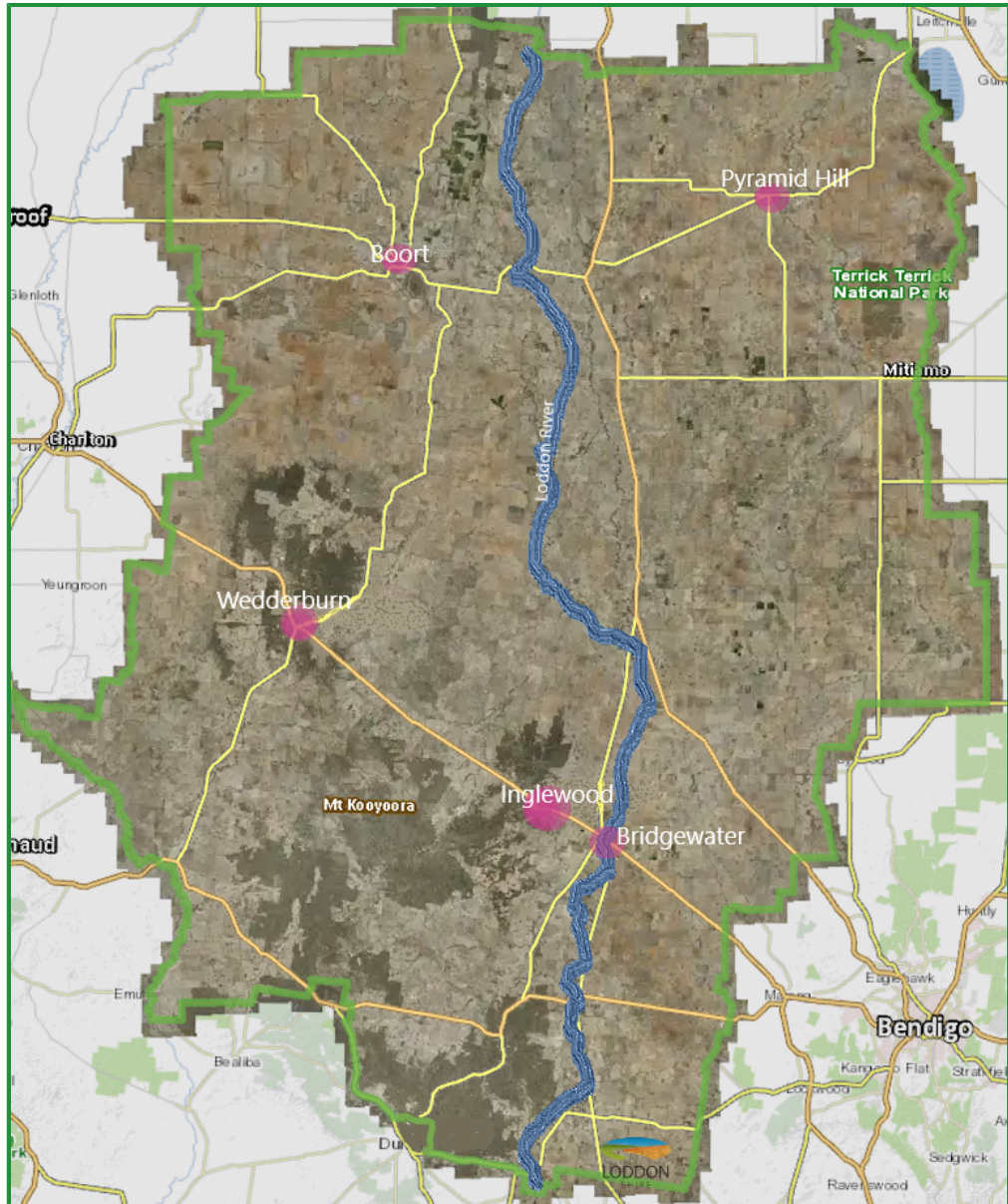


LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Protect remnant native vegetation and facilitate links, particularly between large parcels in the south west of the municipality.

Maintain water quality and quantity in the Loddon River and other water bodies, including RAMSAR wetlands in the north.

Value heritage, including first nations heritage, pastoral heritage and gold heritage.





LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

11.01-1L Settlement

10/02/2022  
6451odd Proposed C481odd

Strategies

Boort

Focus residential growth around the lake and town centre.

Direct development to areas serviced by all-weather roads, reducing pressure on the Shire to maintain roads. Enhance visual and physical links to the lake.

Support the provision of a range of goods and services in the commercial area of Boort. medium density housing.

Improve the focus on the lake in the township of Boort. Support residential development of vacant land within the existing urban footprint – in particular opposite the caravan park and the former primary school site.

Consolidate the commercial areas in Bridgewater and Wedderburn. Protect light industrial expansion opportunities.

Boort structure plan



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

~~Maintain urban development within the urban growth boundary to protect high quality agricultural land and associated activities around Bridgewater.~~ Bridgewater

~~Improve Bridgewater's visual~~ Enhance the visual and physical links to the Loddon River.-

~~Consolidate residential areas in Inglewood and Wedderburn~~ Support residential development of key Township zoned sites.-

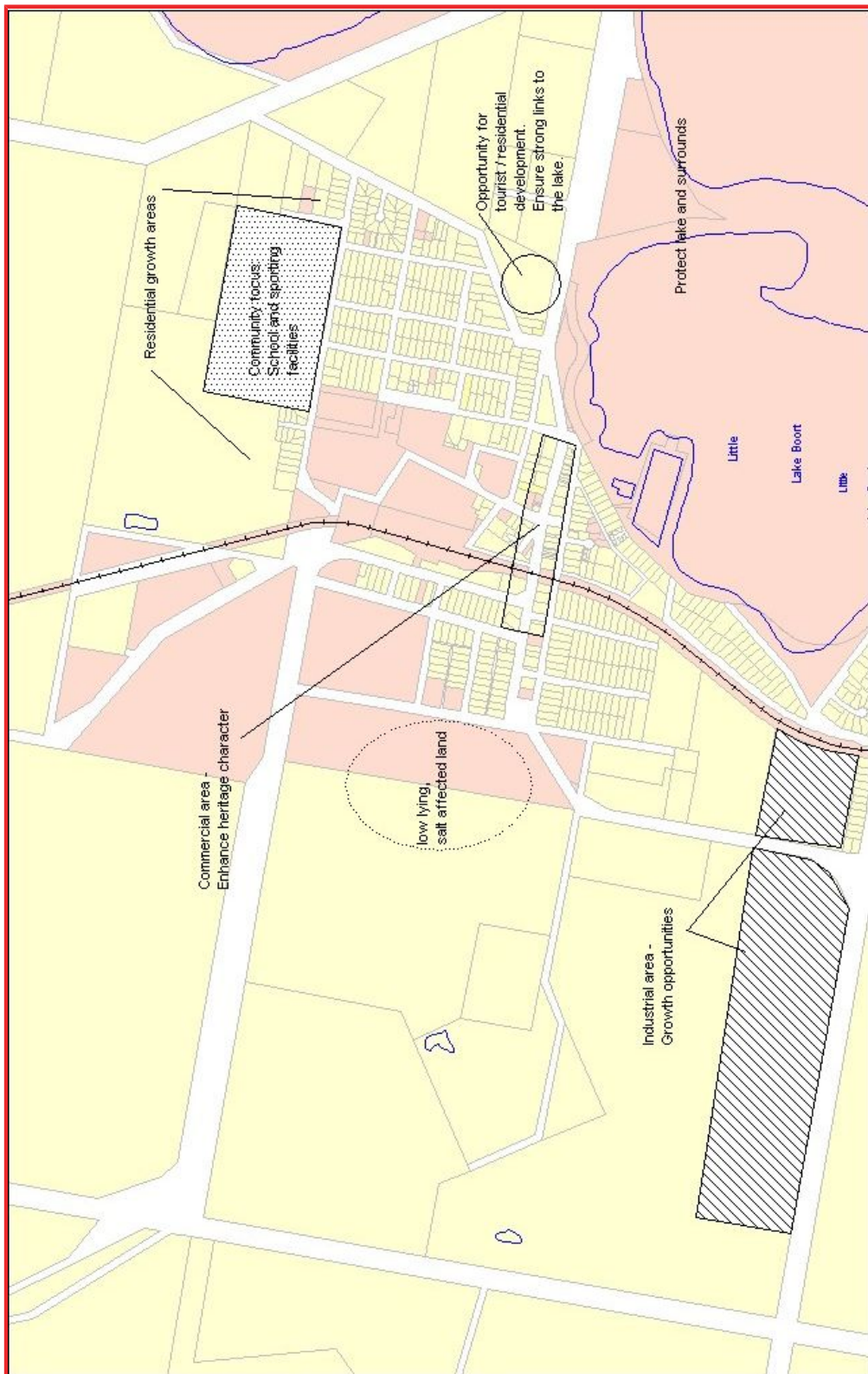
~~Support residential, commercial and industrial growth in Pyramid Hill~~ Maximise development opportunities on land south of Sugargum Drive.-

~~Boort structure plan~~

Protect existing industry.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

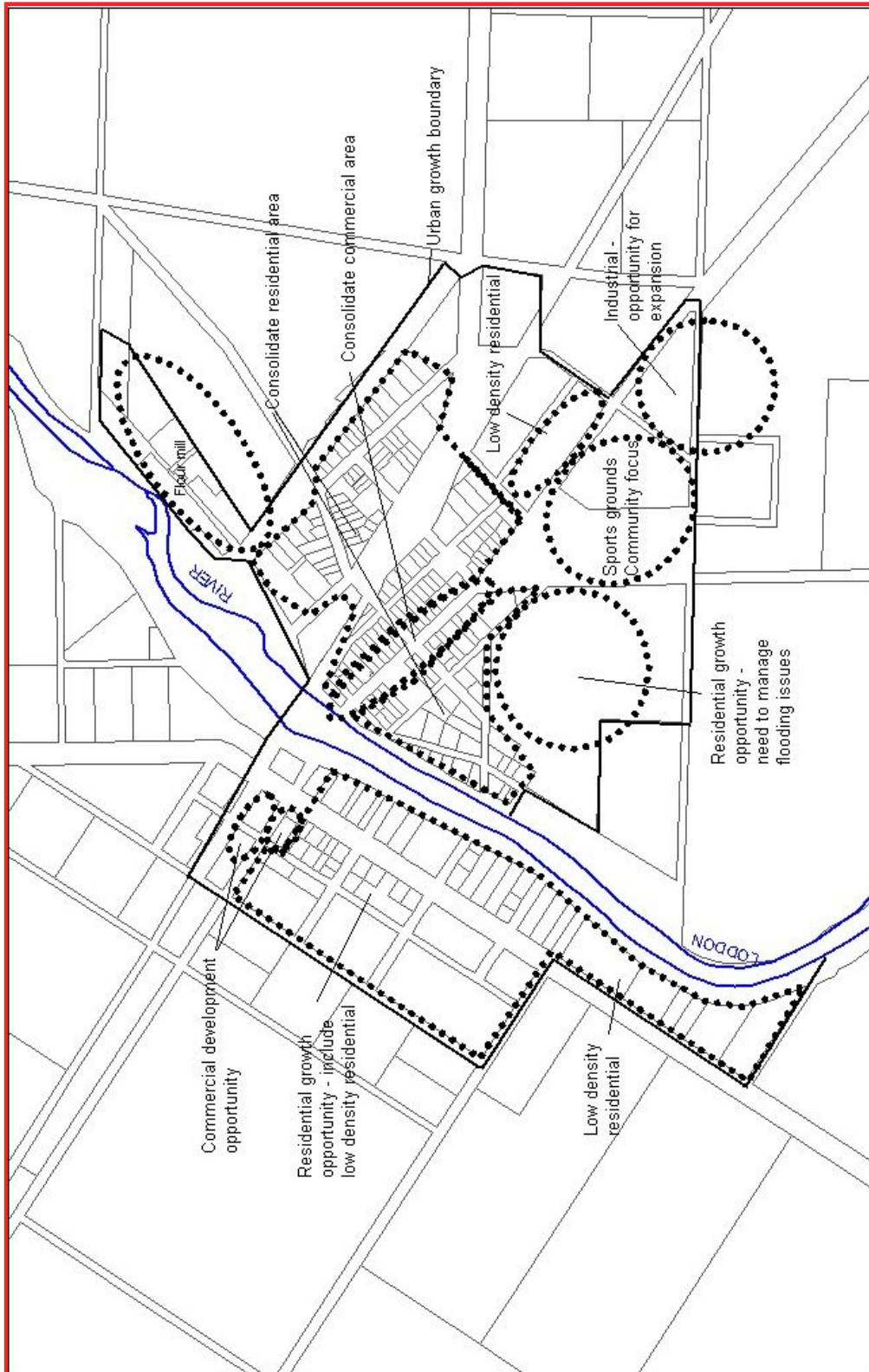


Minimise flood risk to residents and infrastructure.

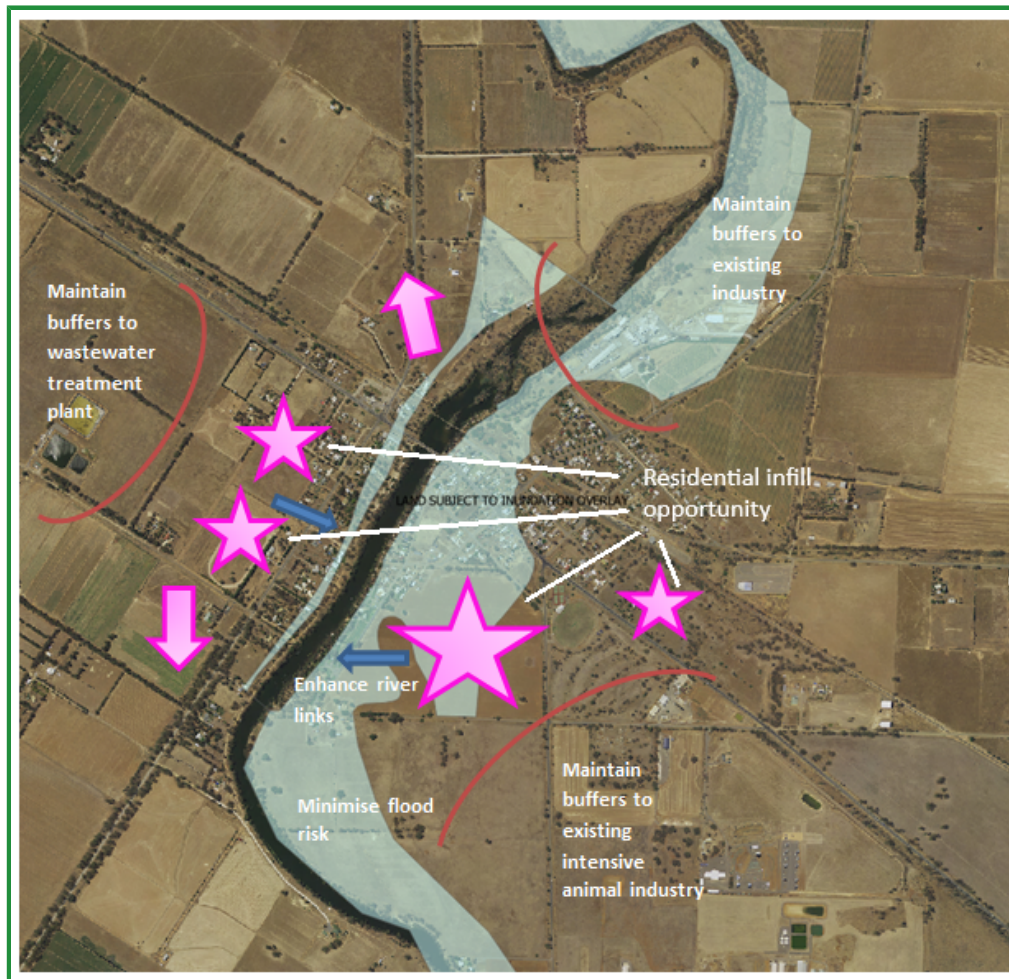


LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Bridgewater structure plan



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME



Inglewood

Focus residential growth around the town centre.

Support infill residential development, including medium density.

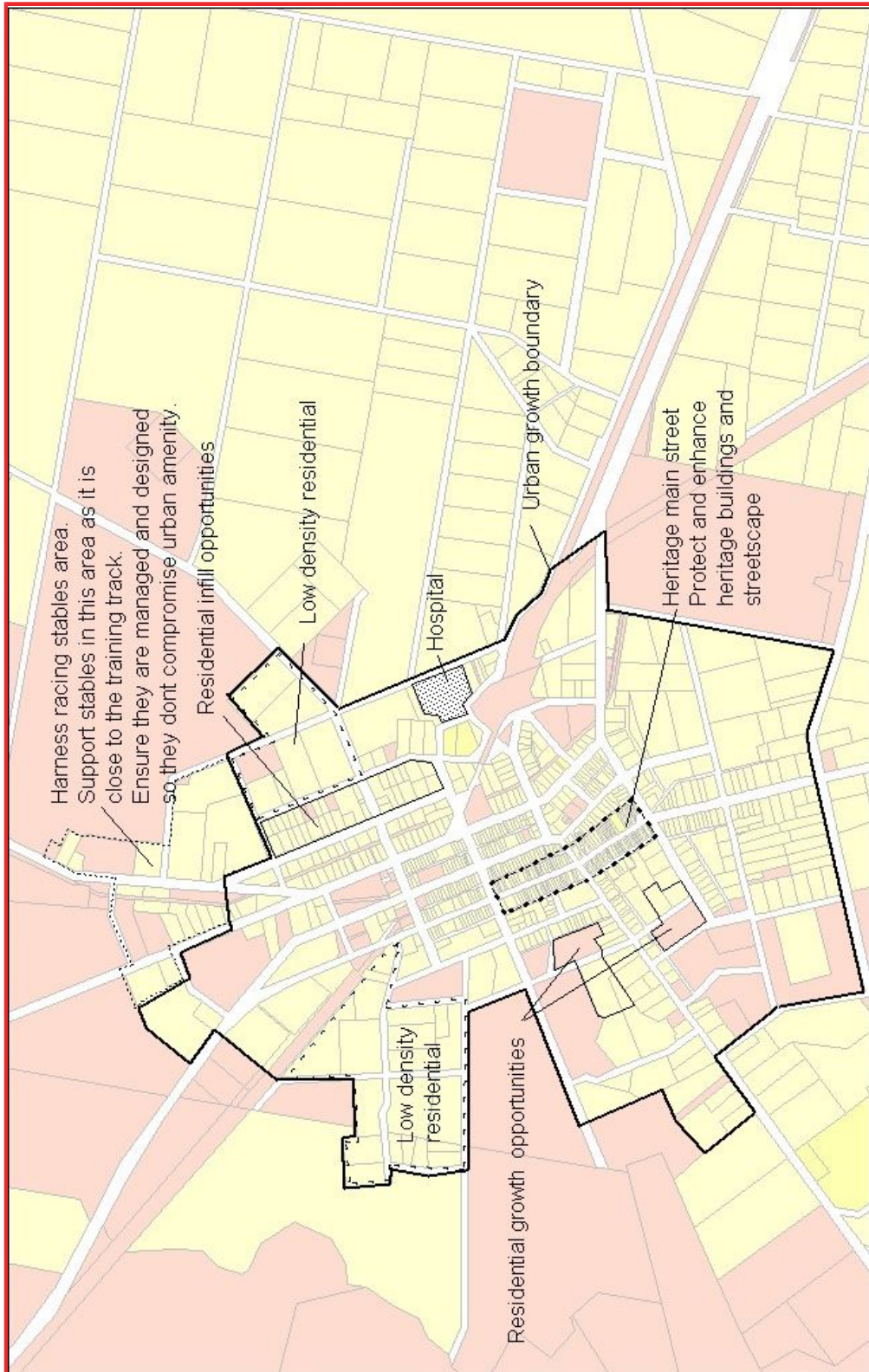
Protect the heritage character.

Support the development of rural living areas surrounding the town.



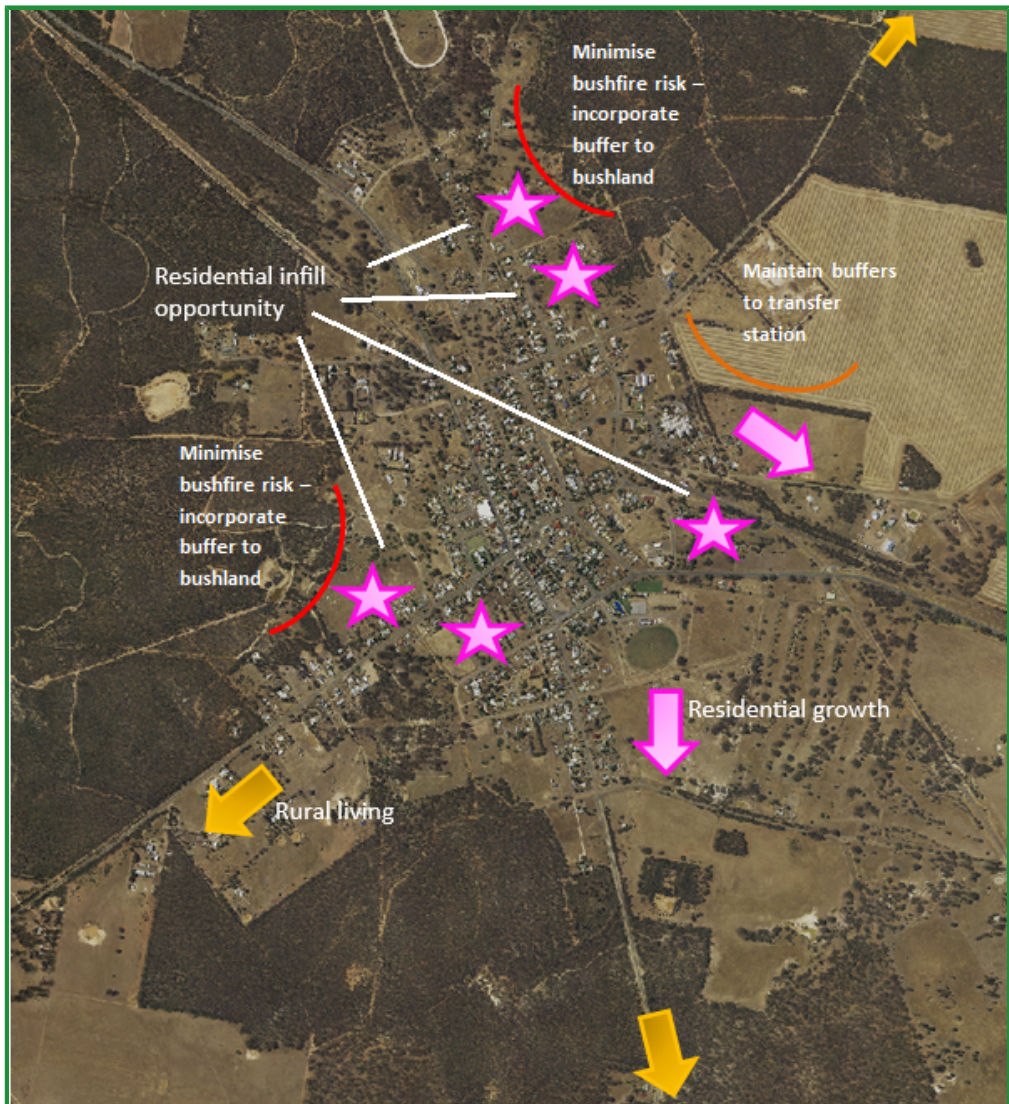
LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Inglewood structure plan



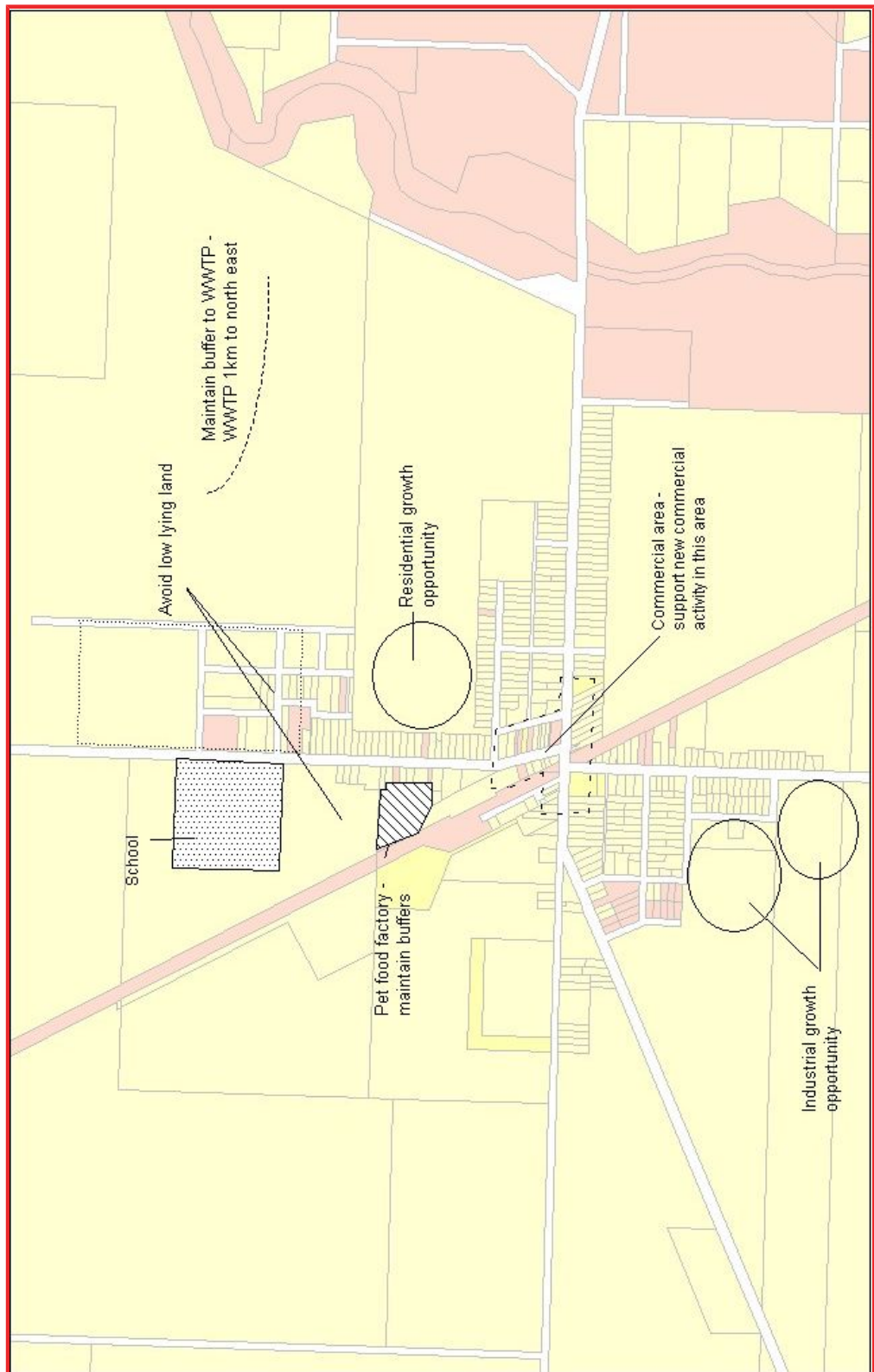


LODDON PLANNING SCHEME



[Pyramid Hill structure plan](#)  
[Pyramid Hill](#)

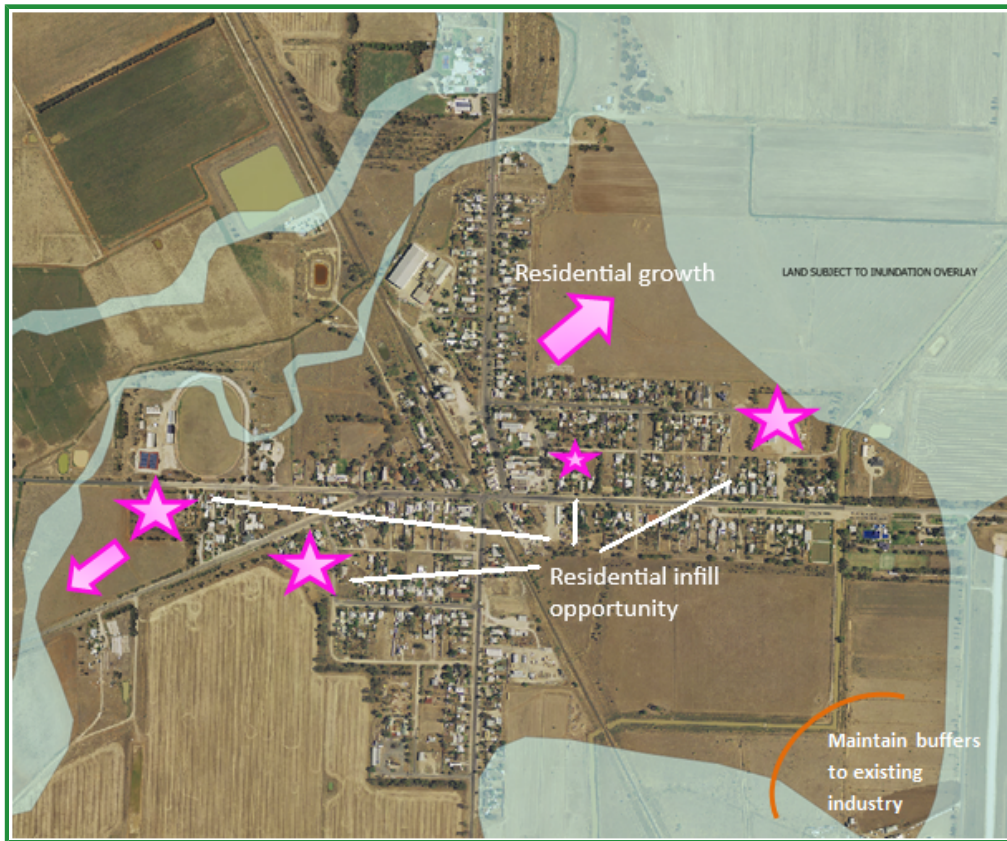
LODDON PLANNING SCHEME



- Focus residential growth around the town centre.
- Support urban consolidation, including medium density.
- Protect and enhance physical and visual links to the hill.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Pyramid Hill structure plan



Wedderburn

Support consolidation of the existing urban footprint and encourage residential development at a range of densities.

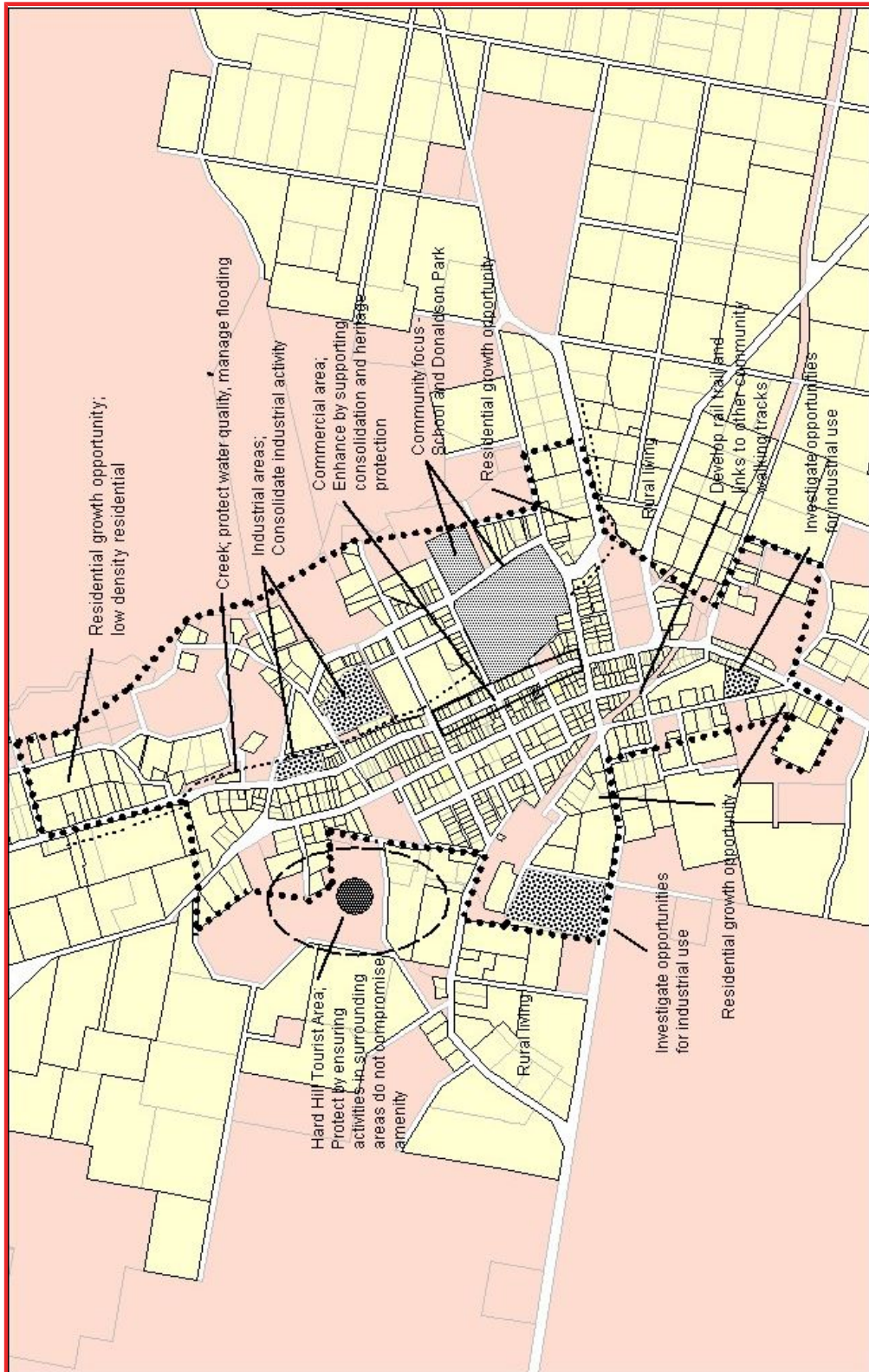
Upgrade pedestrian linkages throughout the town.

Support quality development of rural living land around the town.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Wedderburn structure plan



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**14.01-1L Agricultural land**10/02/2022  
6451odd Proposed C481odd**Policy application**

This policy applies to applications for use and development of land within the Farming Zone.

**General Strategies**

Support dwellings that are ~~ancillary to~~ demonstrated to be ancillary and required to support the agricultural use of the land.

Direct non soil based agricultural activity away from quality agricultural land.

~~Support development (including subdivision) in agricultural areas that is directly related to ongoing agricultural use of the land.~~

Site buildings and works to avoid or minimise loss of quality agricultural land.

**Subdivision strategies**

Avoid creating additional lots in the Farming Zone and use property restructure in preference.

Support subdivision in the Farming Zone that is based on an improved productive agricultural outcome that cannot be achieved with the current lot size.

**Excision strategies**

When excising an existing dwelling, ensure the balance lot is likely to be retained in productive agricultural use.

~~Support a~~ A dwelling lot excision ~~that~~ can be supported where:

- ~~Contains~~ the property contains a dwelling that is not required for the agricultural use and ~~the dwelling being retained with the balance of the land~~ may compromise the ability of the balance of the land being retained in agricultural use; ~~and~~
- ~~Meets~~ the balance lot meets the minimum lot size for the zone ~~on the balance lot;~~ and
- ~~Facilitates~~ the excision facilitates property consolidation or is in the form of a boundary restructure and does not create an additional lot; ~~and~~
- ~~Ensures continued~~ the excision is likely to result in the continuation of unhindered agriculture on the balance of the land; ~~and~~
- ~~Excises~~ the excised lot only includes the dwelling (that is considered to be in a habitable condition as defined by and complies with the Building Code of Australia) and the immediate surrounds only; ~~and~~
- ~~Results in an~~ the excised lot is located on the road frontage of the property; ~~and~~
- ~~Avoids~~ where the proposal avoids long, narrow “battle axe” lots that increase the risk of land use conflict and increase the amount of lost agricultural land.

**Policy guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- The views of Goulburn-Murray Water or Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (as appropriate) when an application for use or development is within 100 metres of a waterway or wetland.
- The views of the Department of ~~Environment, Land, Water and Planning~~ Energy, Environment and Climate Action when an application for use or development of the land adjoins State Forest, State Reserve, Nature Conservation Reserves, Crown Land Water Frontages, State Park or National Park.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-1L Housing for older people**

10/02/2022  
G45loddd Proposed C48loddd

**Strategy**

Support smaller sized housing close to shops and community facilities to meet the needs of the elderly community in the towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-3L McIntyre and Wehla Rural Living Areas**

and  
Proposed C48lodd

**Strategy**

Support rural residential development of land on O'Briens Drive, Clay Gully Lane, Dalmation Road, Moliagul Drive, Mason Drive Wheelhouse Road, subject to meeting access, wastewater disposal, power, environmental and bushfire requirements

**16.01-4S Community care accommodation**

04/11/2022  
VC226

**Objective**

To facilitate the establishment of community care accommodation and support their location being kept confidential.

**Strategies**

Planning schemes should not require a planning permit for or prohibit the use of land in a residential area for community care accommodation provided no more than 20 clients are accommodated and the use is funded by, or carried out by or on behalf of, a government department or public authority, including a public authority established for a public purpose under a Commonwealth Act.

Facilitate the confidential establishment of community care accommodation through appropriate permit, notice and review exemptions.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**18.02-4L Sustainable local road network**

Proposed C48Lodd

**Strategy**

Direct new development to the existing all-weather road network and any proposals that require the construction of new roads should be minimised to limit future maintenance costs for Council.

**18.02-5S**09/12/2021  
VC204**Freight****Objective**

To facilitate an efficient, coordinated, safe and sustainable freight and logistics system that enhances Victoria's economic prosperity and liveability.

**Strategies**

Plan and develop Victoria's freight and logistics system to:

- Support the movement of freight within Victoria's freight and logistics system.
- Improve freight efficiency and capacity.
- Manage negative impacts of freight generating activities on urban amenity, the development of urban areas, and on the efficient operation of movement networks.
- Prioritise new technologies that enhance road and rail safety, optimise the metropolitan road network, better manage congestion and reduce supply chain costs.
- Accommodate High Productivity Freight Vehicles, and oversize and overmass vehicles.
- Increase the capacity of the rail network to carry larger volumes of freight.

Protect and develop the Principal Freight Network, including freight movement corridors and freight places, and Principal Transport Gateways, by:

- Facilitating the movement of high volumes of freight and freight of strategic value.
- Linking areas of production and manufacturing to national and international gateways and export markets.
- Increasing the capacity of Principal Transport Gateways and supporting their use and development as important locations for employment and economic activity.
- Designing the Principal Freight Network to adapt to commodity, market and operating changes.
- Managing encroachment from incompatible land use and development that would undermine its ability to operate.

Support the development of freight and logistics precincts in strategic locations within and adjacent to Principal Transport Gateways and along the Principal Freight Network movement corridors by:

- Allocating land for complementary uses and employment-generating activities, such as distribution and warehousing.
- Reserving and appropriately zoning land for interstate freight terminals to support development that allows for the direct and immediate delivery of goods to market.
- Allocating land to allow high-volume freight customers to locate adjacent to interstate freight terminals, including the Western Interstate Freight Terminal and the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Principal Freight Network* (Department of Transport, 2021)

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

19.03-5L

Proposed C48lodd

**Protection of waste management infrastructure**

**Strategy**

Minimise incompatible uses within the buffers of Boort, Newbridge and Pyramid Hill Landfills; Inglewood, Dingee and Wedderburn transfer stations and Bio Gro Newbridge to protect the long term viability of these local waste management assets.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

06/05/2021  
C42lodd**SCHEDULE 2 TO CLAUSE 42.01 ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY**

Shown on the planning scheme map as ESO2.

**LAANECOORIE CATCHMENT****1.0 Statement of environmental significance**

~~06/05/2021  
C42lodd~~ ~~Proposed C48lodd~~ Laanecoorie is a significant water supply storage on the Loddon River for many communities in and beyond the Loddon Shire. It provides water for ~~both domestic use~~ domestic, recreation and agricultural use. ~~The quality of water within the Loddon River is currently under threat and development around this storage~~ Development around this storage and in the catchment must be managed to ensure that the quality and quantity of water in this storage is maintained ~~and enhanced~~ at the required standard.

**2.0 Environmental objective to be achieved**

~~06/05/2021  
C42lodd~~ ~~Proposed C48lodd~~ To protect ~~and maintain water~~ the quality and water yield quantity of water produced within the Laanecoorie ~~Water Catchment Area~~ water supply catchment areas.

To provide for appropriate development of land within the Laanecoorie water supply catchment areas.

**3.0 Permit requirement**

~~06/05/2021  
C42lodd~~ ~~Proposed C48lodd~~ ~~None specified~~ A permit is not required to construct a building or construct or carry out works where the development does not include works for a new wastewater treatment facility or changes to an existing wastewater treatment facility.

**4.0 Application requirements**

~~06/05/2021  
C42lodd~~ ~~Proposed C48lodd~~ An application to construct buildings or to carry out or construct works that include an wastewater treatment facility must be accompanied by a land capability assessment that demonstrates the ability of the site and the proposed treatment facility to treat and contain any waste water generated within the boundaries of the site.

**Notice of application**

Notice of an application must be given in accordance with Section 52(1)(c) of the Act to the person or body specified as a person or body to be notified in Clause 66.06 or a schedule to that clause.

**5.0 Decision guidelines**

~~06/05/2021  
C42lodd~~ ~~Proposed C48lodd~~ ~~None specified.~~ The following decision guidelines apply to an application for a permit under Clause 42.01, in addition to those specified in Clause 42.01 and elsewhere in the scheme which must be considered by the responsible authority:

- The slope, soil type and other environmental factors.
- The need to maintain water quality at a local and regional level.
- The possible effect of the development on the quality and quantity of water in local waterways, including the impact on nutrient levels.
- Effect of the proposed development and, where applicable, the method of waste disposal on the quality and quantity of water within the water supply catchment area.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- Whether a report has been provided which demonstrates that the land is capable of absorbing sewage and sullage effluent generated on the lot and that the wastewater treatment system has been designed to prevent wastewater entering any waterway, dam or wetland.
- Where an application is for the subdivision of land, whether the plan of subdivision shows appropriate building and effluent disposal envelopes.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

06/05/2021  
C42lodd

**SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 66.06 NOTICE OF PERMIT APPLICATIONS UNDER LOCAL PROVISIONS**

**1.0**

**Notice of permit applications under local provisions**

06/05/2021  
C42lodd Proposed C48lodd

Clause	Kind of application	Person or body to be notified
Clause 4.0 of Schedule 2 to Clause 42.01 (ESO)	All applications	Goulburn Murray Water <del>Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning</del> <del>North Central Catchment Management Authority</del>
Clause 4.0 of Schedule 1 to Clause 42.02 (VPO)	All applications	Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Clause 4.0 of Schedule 2 to Clause 42.02 (VPO)	All applications	Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

10/02/2022  
C48lodd

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 74.02 FURTHER STRATEGIC WORK

1.0 Further strategic work

10/02/2022  
648lodd Proposed C48lodd

- Further investigate sites and areas of potential heritage significance and incorporate the findings of completed heritage studies into the planning scheme.
- Identify and protect significant remnant vegetation parcels, especially in salinity recharge and discharge areas, along waterways and in erosion prone areas.
- Review the Vegetation Protection Overlay and develop an Environmental Significance Overlay or Vegetation Protection Overlay for threatened species habitat.
- Identify flood plains and paths in conjunction with Review and update flood controls in response to new and revised flood risk assessments and mapping from the North Central Catchment Management Authority and apply the appropriate overlays.
- Prepare a precinct plan for Bridgewater and Inglewood to provide for planned residential growth and coordinated infrastructure investment.
- Review the schedule to the Rural Living Zone to identify opportunities for consolidation of this use within the existing zone.
- Review the schedule to the Farming Zone to ensure that triggers are responsive to current agricultural development requirements.
- Work with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to determine the appropriate zoning of private land adjoining Terrick Terrick National Park and Kooyoora State Park, in particular inlier parcels Review and update the Heritage Overlay to include more recently identified properties of heritage significance.
- Develop an Inglewood Main Street Heritage Policy Review and update, if required, the Vegetation Protection Overlay, Environmental Significance Overlay (schedule 1), Erosion Management Overlay and Salinity Management Overlay to ensure that the value or issue is mapped correctly and the provisions are targeted and relevant.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.01

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Proposed C48lodd

## CONTEXT

Loddon Shire is located in north central Victoria, commencing approximately 180 kilometres north-west of Melbourne and immediately north-west of Bendigo. It has an area of approximately 6,700 square kilometres and extends over 100 kilometres from north to south and over 80 kilometres from east to west.

The traditional owners of the land that is included in the Loddon Shire are the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Barapa Barapa people.

The Shire is a rural municipality. It contains farmland, forest, native grasslands, lakes, rivers and wetlands interspersed with small townships and hamlets. These towns include Boort, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Wedderburn, Bridgewater, Dingee, Eddington, Korong Vale, Laanecoorie, Mitiamo, Newbridge, Serpentine, Tarnagulla and Calivil. There is no one dominant service centre, and these communities range in size from 1,000 people to less than 100 people.

Agriculture is the predominant land use and the economic foundation of the Shire. It is the largest employer and main income generator. The Shire has significant areas of high quality agriculture land, rural water supplies and a climate that is conducive to high agricultural productivity. Key agricultural industries of the area are broadacre cropping (predominantly cereals and canola), prime lamb, dairy, wool, chicken meat, hay and pork.

Other significant employment sectors are manufacturing, healthcare, retail and education.

European settlement commenced with pastoral occupation in the 1840s, and the gold rush that commenced in 1850s accelerated growth and was the foundation of the towns of the south of the municipality.

After a period of time experiencing population decline, the population of the municipality has increased between 2016 and 2021. The population grew from 7512 people in 2016 to 7759 people in 2021 (ABS). This has been as a result of better times in the agricultural sector following favourable seasons, and broader trends related to tree change. Loddon Shire has benefitted from Covid related populated shift from Melbourne, and new residents seeking more affordable housing and a different lifestyle. The population growth is primarily in the larger townships and rural living areas of the south of the Shire. New housing development has accompanied this growth. Despite this growth, the population of Loddon is aging, and a planning challenge is suitable housing for this section of the population.

The Shire is located within the Loddon and Avoca River catchments, which are part of the Murray-Darling Basin and cover four bioregions – Victorian Riverina, Murray Mallee, Northern Inland Slopes and Goldfields. The Loddon River bisects the Shire. Although the environment, in particular native vegetation, has been highly modified as a result of agriculture and mining, significant environmental values remain including valuable pockets of remnant vegetation largely in the southern part of the shire and a unique wetland system in the north. The municipality includes significant tracts of public land with environmental values.

The Shire is serviced by a significant network of highways and roads which present locational opportunities in terms of access to and from the Shire. The Loddon Valley Highway and the Calder Highway move people and goods to, from and through the Shire and provide links to Bendigo, Melbourne and northern Victoria. Rail links are provided from a number of key towns to other centres and are most significant for their role in grain transportation to Melbourne ports.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

## 02.02

Proposed C48lodd

## VISION

The Loddon Shire Community Vision 2031 is:

Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.

The strategic directions to achieve this vision are:

**A sustainable built and natural environment**Infrastructure

We will have infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs and embraces environmental sustainability.

Environment

We will preserve our unique natural environment, places and spaces. We will embrace renewables, alternatives, and new technologies that reduce our footprint and promote sustainability.

**A growing and vibrant community**Population

We will increase our population and attract new people by promoting our lifestyle. Our growing, connected, and inclusive population will support the growth of our economy and services to meet our current and future needs.

Community

We will be a welcoming, connected, inclusive and growing community that is strong, supportive and actively involved.

Youth

Our youth will be supported to access education, job and recreation opportunities and services in our area. Their voice will be valued and heard, through meaningful participation in our Shire.

**A diverse and expanding economy**Tourism

We will attract local, national, and international tourists with our unique range of natural, cultural, and historical attractions, including the rich history of First Nations people and pioneers.

Economy

We will have a growing and sustainable economy that supports established and new businesses, has a skilled workforce and attracts business, industry, and people to our area.

**A supported and accessible community**Services

We will increase local services by working with our community and services providers to explore innovative ways to deliver existing and new services. We will seek out and adopt new technologies to increase and improve services and enable people to connect

Communication

We will embrace all forms of communication to reach all age groups, backgrounds, and abilities to increase the cohesiveness and connection in our community. Our communication will be supported by the latest and most reliable infrastructure.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**02.03 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

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Proposed C48lodd

**02.03-1 Settlement**

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Proposed C48lodd

There is no one dominant urban centre of the Shire, rather the Shire has a number of small centres serving the surrounding rural areas. The key service centres are Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn. These townships provide retail, health, community and education facilities, and have the greatest capacity for growth due to this existing infrastructure investment. Capitalising on the significant capacity for infill development that exists in these towns will enable affordable residential development, and support Council's aim of population growth..

Other important townships are Dingee, Eddington, Korong Vale, Laanecoorie, Mitiamo, Newbridge, Serpentine and Tarnagulla. Although these settlements are smaller, they each play a vitally important social, service provision, residential and community focus and function in their respective districts. These smaller towns are unsewered and therefore opportunities for further residential development are restricted.

Rural residential living is a popular lifestyle option in the south of the Shire, afforded by the proximity to Bendigo and attractive undulating agricultural and bush settings. Significant areas of rural residential living exist around Inglewood, Wedderburn, Moliagul, Dunolly, Laanecoorie, Tarnagulla and Newbridge. Opportunities for ongoing development of these areas is fundamental to attracting population and supporting population growth goals, however rural living development must not undermine environmental values or agricultural activity

Within the farming areas, residents live on properties to facilitate the agricultural use of the land.

Council's strategic directions for settlement are to:

Promote residential growth in Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn, with a focus on infill and consolidation.

Accommodate new residential development in smaller settlements where effluent can be managed.

Support the ongoing development of the existing rural living areas where environmental and agricultural values will not be compromised.

Limit residential development in farming areas to that required to support agriculture.

**02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values**

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Proposed C48lodd

The natural resource base is the economic foundation of the Shire. The natural resource base supports agriculture, tourism and is fundamental to the character, amenity and liveability of Loddon. The environmental values of the Shire include Box Ironbark forests, native grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and the Loddon River.

Much of the native vegetation of the shire has been highly modified or completely removed, particularly in the north of the municipality, as a result of agriculture.

The protection of remnant native vegetation is of vital importance in the Shire as it contributes to the state's biodiversity, stabilises soil, controls erosion, controls water table recharge (and subsequently, salinity) and provides habitat for native fauna.

The south west area of the municipality (around Wedderburn, Inglewood and through to Dunolly) has retained a significant amount of high value native vegetation on both public and private land. These remnant patches of bushland are a haven for woodland birds that are declining throughout most of south-eastern Australia. They include the Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail and Brown Treecreeper. The region also includes some of the most reliable habitat on mainland Australia for the critically endangered Swift Parrot.

Native grasslands were once widespread across the riverine plains of the north of the Shire, but are now restricted to a handful of isolated remnants on private and public land, including roadsides and railway lines. The greatest concentrations of significant grasslands are found in the north east of the municipality at Terrick Terrick and are of national significance, as so little of this vegetation

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

community remains Australia wide. The critically endangered Plains Wanderer can be found here. The Terrick Terrick National Park was established for the protection of this significant natural asset. The ongoing survival of grasslands on private land is threatened by overgrazing, land development and changes to land management practices, such as the introduction of cropping.

The municipality includes nationally listed ecological communities, including Buloke Woodlands, Grey Box Grassy Woodlands, White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Plains Mallee Box Woodlands. The Buloke (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*) that is listed as critically endangered under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988) is found in Loddon Shire.

The Loddon River bisects the municipality and is a significant environment, recreational and economic asset. The water from the Loddon supplies towns and agriculture. It is used for recreation and supports flora, fauna, fish and insects. The Boort district includes a chain of significant lakes and wetlands. Many of the wetland systems in the Shire are threatened or have been eliminated by drainage or alteration to the natural flow paths of water. Some of these wetlands are protected under international agreements such as Ramsar, JAMBA and CAMBA.

Council's strategic directions for environmental and landscape values are to:

- Protect remnant native vegetation and habitat, including native grasslands, with a focus on the protection of;
  - remnant vegetation that is currently in viable sized parcels
  - vegetation that provides linkages between remnant vegetation parcels
  - remnant vegetation on waterways (including the Loddon River), lakes and wetlands
  - remnant vegetation on the hills and fragile soils in the south of the municipality, and
  - remnant vegetation on low lying areas where there is a risk of salinity discharge.
- Ensure development and use of private land does not impact any adjoining public land parcels, in particular Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park and Kooyoora State Park.
- Support improvements to the natural quality of the lakes and surrounds in the Boort district by protecting native vegetation and natural drainage.

### 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity

Proposed C48lodd

Wildfires are a risk throughout the municipality. The northern plains are more prone to grass fires while the southern areas experience bushfires in bushland as well as grassland.

There are extensive floodplains along the Loddon River, as well as north-west from the Loddon River through the lakes and wetland system around Boort and beyond. Flooding caused significant damage to houses, farms and community infrastructure in and around Bridgewater, Newbridge, Serpentine, Boort, Pyramid Hill and Mitiamo in 2010/11 and in 2022. Wedderburn was also impacted by flooding in 2020, 2022 and 2023 following significant rainfall events.

Soil salinity is a challenge in both the irrigation and dry land areas of the Shire. Extensive clearing of native vegetation in recharge areas, changes to flooding regimes and inefficient irrigation activities have all contributed to the rising water table. Salinity is of greatest concern in the lower lying areas of the north of the Shire around Pyramid Hill and Tragowel Plains.

Erosion of soil through wind and run off is evident in parts of the Shire. Erosion is prejudicial to the productive capacity of land and run off containing soil is detrimental to water quality. Native vegetation stabilises the soils and minimises the potential for erosion. Gully erosion is most prevalent in the undulating southern areas of the Shire, with the granite soils being particularly vulnerable to erosion. In the north of the Shire, wind erosion in the Mallee fringe areas is a threat.

Council's strategic directions for environmental risks are to:

- Improve fire safety by directing development to low risk locations.



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- Prevent development within the floodplain that would compromise its flood carrying capacity and threaten water quality.
- Minimise development in areas subject to flood risk to limit risk to life and loss of assets.
- Decrease the amount of land affected by salinity through vegetation retention and encouraging revegetation.
- Limit soil disturbance in areas with a high risk of soil erosion.

**02.03-4 Natural resource management**

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Proposed C48lodd

**Agricultural Land**

Agricultural production is the major focus of the economy and community in the Shire. Quality agricultural land is a valuable and a non-renewable resource. Its protection and sustainable use is fundamental to the ongoing economic health of the Shire.

The more productive soils of the Shire are located along the Loddon and Avoca riverine plains, between Lake Marmal and Boort and north to Leaghur, and south west of Pyramid Hill to Bridgewater. Much of the north of the Shire has access to irrigation water. This is a significant asset that enhances the value of the land for agriculture. The southern area of the Shire predominantly consists of dry land broadacre agricultural enterprises. A rural water supply pipeline was developed throughout south west Loddon in 2020 to enhance agricultural prospects in that area.

Generally large lots are required for agricultural production, especially in the dryland areas. However, irrigated horticulture can use smaller lots for a viable enterprise. Farms are often made up of a collection of lots, which may be scattered across a district. The protection of quality agricultural land for agriculture rests both with maintenance of it in viable sized lots and deterring non-agricultural land use.

Produce of the municipality includes sheep, beef, poultry, pigs, cereals, tomatoes, wine grapes, olives, pulses, wool, eucalyptus oil and dairy. It is estimated that the value of agricultural output in 2023 was almost \$600m, and supported more than 1,200 jobs.

The sparsely populated rural areas of the Shire hold opportunities for intensive animal industries where significant buffer distances from residential uses can be maintained. Council has supported the development of a number of intensive animal industries, including poultry, piggeries and dairy, in Loddon Shire.

Valuable agricultural land along the Loddon River between Serpentine and Eddington is under pressure for conversion to rural living due to its amenity and proximity to Bendigo.

Council's strategic directions for agriculture are to:

- Minimise the fragmentation of agricultural land to maximise opportunities for a range of agricultural uses.
- Minimise dwellings in agricultural areas.
- Support house lot excision only where it provides for farm consolidation and the excision will not compromise agricultural activities on surrounding land.
- Discourage non-agricultural land use and development in areas of high quality and productive agricultural potential.
- Encourage intensive animal industries to locate in isolated rural locations.

**Water**

The Loddon River and Laanecoorie Reservoir are significant water assets in the Loddon Shire. This water is used for urban, agriculture and recreational purposes.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Water quality is affected by animal effluent, human effluent, contaminants from urban areas, soil erosion and salinity.

Council's strategic directions for water are to:

- Ensure use and development does not produce polluted runoff that leaves the property untreated.
- Encourage sustainable reuse of effluent and manage stormwater and irrigation runoff into waterways.

**Gold mining**

The southern area of the Shire is part of the Central Victorian Goldfields and contains much of the area recognised as Victoria's "Golden Triangle".

Exploration and mining is being conducted throughout the state forest and some freehold areas around Wedderburn, Inglewood, Tarnagulla, Kingower and Rheola. At present, the majority of mining operations are small leases, of less than 5 hectares, which are being worked by open cut methods.

Council's strategic directions for gold mining are to:

- Ensure mining activity is conducted in such a way that minimal vegetation is removed and polluted runoff does not leave the site.
- Ensure land is rehabilitated after mining is completed and either returned to a state typical of the surrounding land or to some other pre-determined end use.

**02.03-5**

Proposed C48lodd

**Built environment and heritage****Heritage**

Our heritage includes the stories, landscapes and places of significance to the First Peoples of this region. The traditional owners of the land on which the Shire of Loddon spans are the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Barapa Barapa people.

Dja Dja Wurrung Country is a cultural landscape that is more than just tangible objects; imprinted in it are the dreaming stories, Law, totemic relationships, songs, ceremonies and ancestral spirits, which give it life and significant value to Dja Dja Wurrung People (Recognition Statement, RSA 2013). Koyoorra State Park, in the south of Loddon Shire is jointly managed by the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Parks Victoria. There are heritage places of significance in and around the park.

Aboriginal cultural heritage places and objects in Loddon Shire include scarred trees, stone artefact scatters, earthen mounds, stone features, burial sites, quarries and an art site. Many of these significant places and objects are found in association with past and present natural drainage lines and water features such as rivers, lakes, lunettes, high ground, sandy deposits and remnant native vegetation.

The largest collection of scar trees in the world can be found around Boort. There are more than 2,000 scar trees around Lake Boort.

The European heritage of the Shire is based on pastoral settlement and goldmining. Inglewood and Tarnagulla have largely intact traditional streetscapes of unique heritage significance that are fundamental to the character and tourist attraction of the towns. There are many former mining sites of importance located in the southern part of the municipality.

Council's strategic direction for heritage is to:

- Identify, document and protect significant heritage places and items.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**02.03-6**

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Proposed C48lodd

**Housing**

Loddon Shire has significant capacity for new housing in the towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

The Shire has a high proportion of older residents and this trend is expected to continue. Housing suited to the needs of this segment of the population needs to be a part of the future. Existing business and industry are concerned that a lack of suitable housing is affecting their ability to recruit staff. Housing suited to families, professionals and singles is a vital part of the economic future of the region.

There is strong demand for rural living in the Shire, and it is a key attraction for new residents. Rural living must be located and managed to protect agricultural industries, agricultural land and the natural resource base, as well as be serviced with essential infrastructure (in particular all weather roads) and contribute to the viability of the existing townships. Isolated rural living development should be avoided as it imposes undue cost on Council in the provision of services.

Council's strategic directions for housing are to:

- Encourage residential growth in the towns with access to a full range of infrastructure, with a focus on infill.
- Support the development of a diversity of housing stock, including smaller housing forms located within the existing urban footprint of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.
- Support rural living where agricultural industries, agricultural land and natural values will not be compromised, infrastructure is provided and it will support the viability of existing townships.
- Discourage unplanned rural living development throughout rural areas.

**02.03-7**

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Proposed C48lodd

**Economic development**

The Shire's economy is centred around agriculture. Agricultural produce of Loddon Shire includes sheep, beef, poultry, pigs, cereals, wine grapes, olives, pulses, dairy and wool. Climate change will challenge agricultural production in Loddon.

The availability of a diverse range of commodities in the Shire provides significant opportunities for industries that process raw materials and by-products of agriculture. Cobram Estate, near Boort, produces olive oil, Biogrow, near Newbridge produces compost from organic waste and agricultural by-product and Southern Stockfeeds at Bridgewater uses local grain for feed production. All businesses are significant employers and have recently invested in upgrades and expansion.

Other economic development activities that are important to the local economy are manufacturing, gold mining, eucalyptus oil production and tourism.

There is significant potential for the expansion of the tourism industry based on the Shire's natural and built features. Tourism assets of the Shire include First Peoples and European heritage, wineries, the Loddon River, Lake Boort and numerous parks and reserves including Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park and Kooyoora State Park.

Council's strategic directions for economic development are to:

- Protect the opportunity for agriculture to grow and operate relatively unhindered by limiting non agricultural uses and development in farming areas.
- Provide opportunities for manufacturing industries in locations that do not impact residential amenity or the appearance of towns.
- Support the expansion and diversification of the tourism industry, including accommodation facilities such as bed and breakfast and farm stays, and experiences related to the First Peoples heritage.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**02.03-8**

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Proposed C48lodd

**Infrastructure**

Loddon Shire supports its community through the provision of infrastructure including roads, sporting facilities, halls, parks, libraries and pools. This infrastructure is a significant investment and Council seeks to consolidate new development around these assets to maximise their use and minimise need for additional infrastructure investment.

Mobile service reception is limited in some areas in the Shire and needs to be upgraded to provide reception in all areas.

The Shire, especially the northern half, has high levels of solar exposure. It is also bisected by a 220 kV and a 66kV electricity transmission line which could support renewable energy distribution. Use of rural land for energy production needs to be balanced with the significance of the land for food production.

Council's strategic directions for infrastructure are to:

- Direct new development to existing infrastructure, in towns and rural areas.
- Support the upgrade of telecommunication infrastructure, to improve broadband and mobile telephone access.
- Direct renewable energy facilities to areas where they will not adversely affect agricultural land or production.
- Protect the viability of waste storage and processing facilities through protection of buffers.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**02.04 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN**

Proposed C48lodd

The plan contained in Clause 02.04 is to be read in conjunction with the strategic directions in Clause 02.03.

**Key strategic directions**

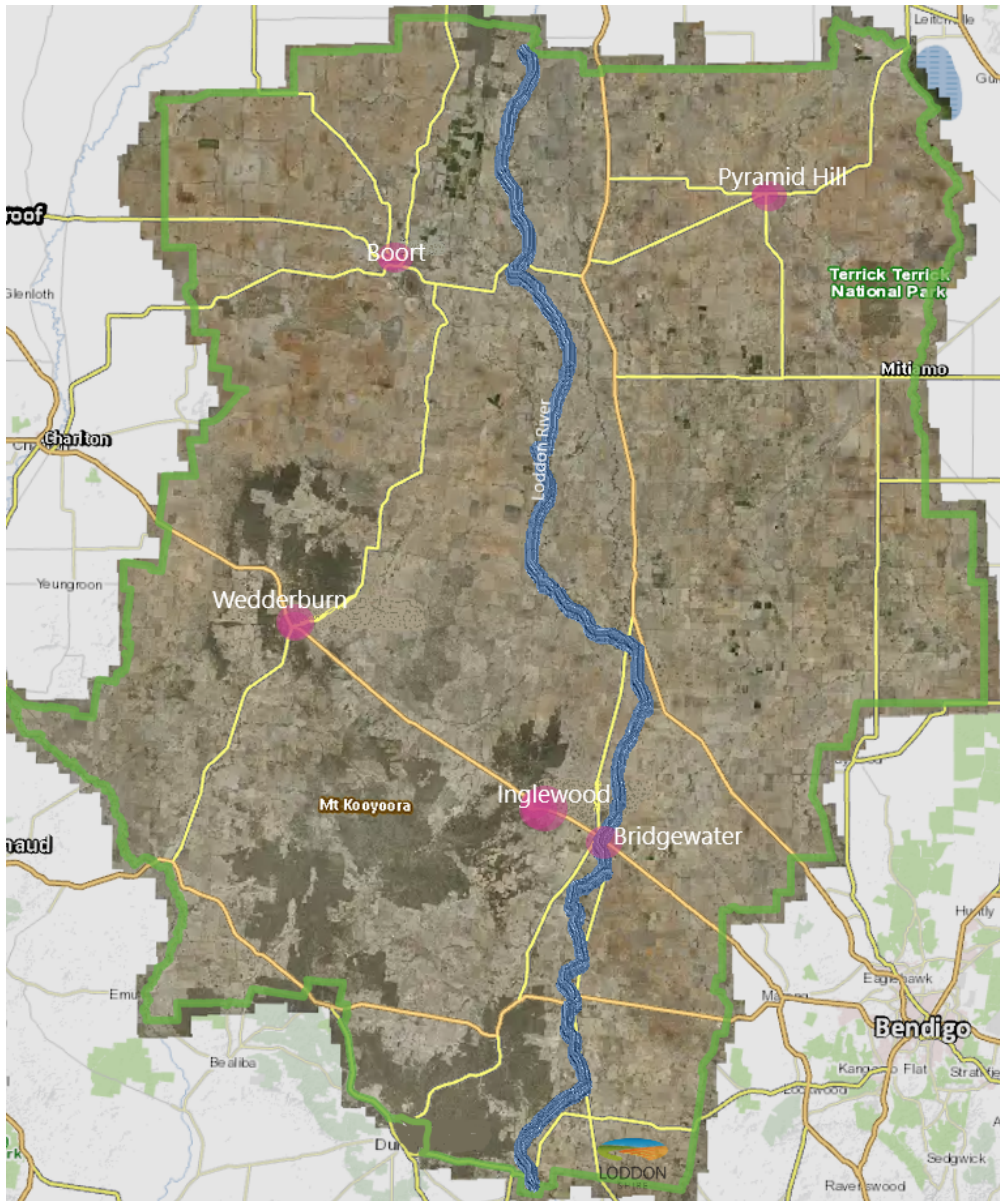
Focus residential growth in Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

Support viable agricultural production throughout the rural areas.

Protect remnant native vegetation and facilitate links, particularly between large parcels in the south west of the municipality.

Maintain water quality and quantity in the Loddon River and other water bodies, including RAMSAR wetlands in the north.

Value heritage, including first nations heritage, pastoral heritage and gold heritage.





LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

11.01-1L Settlement

Proposed C48lodd

Strategies

Boort

Focus residential growth around the lake and town centre.

Enhance visual and physical links to the lake.

Support medium density housing.

Support residential development of vacant land within the existing urban footprint – in particular opposite the caravan park and the former primary school site.

Protect light industrial expansion opportunities.

**Boort structure plan**



Bridgewater

Enhance the visual and physical links to the Loddon River.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- Support residential development of key Township zoned sites.
- Maximise development opportunities on land south of Sugargum Drive.
- Protect existing industry.
- Minimise flood risk to residents and infrastructure.

**Bridgewater structure plan**

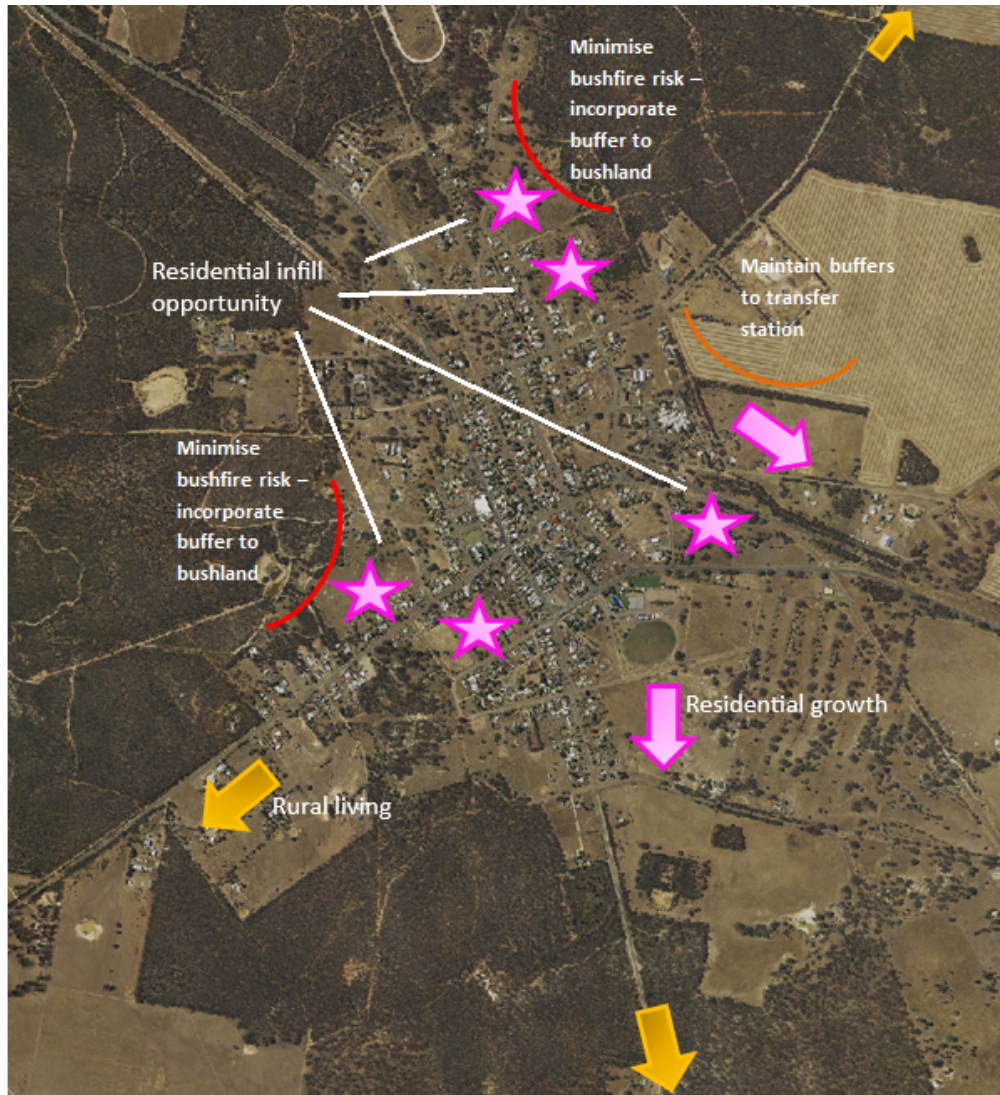


Inglewood

- Focus residential growth around the town centre.
- Support infill residential development, including medium density.
- Protect the heritage character.
- Support the development of rural living areas surrounding the town.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Inglewood structure plan



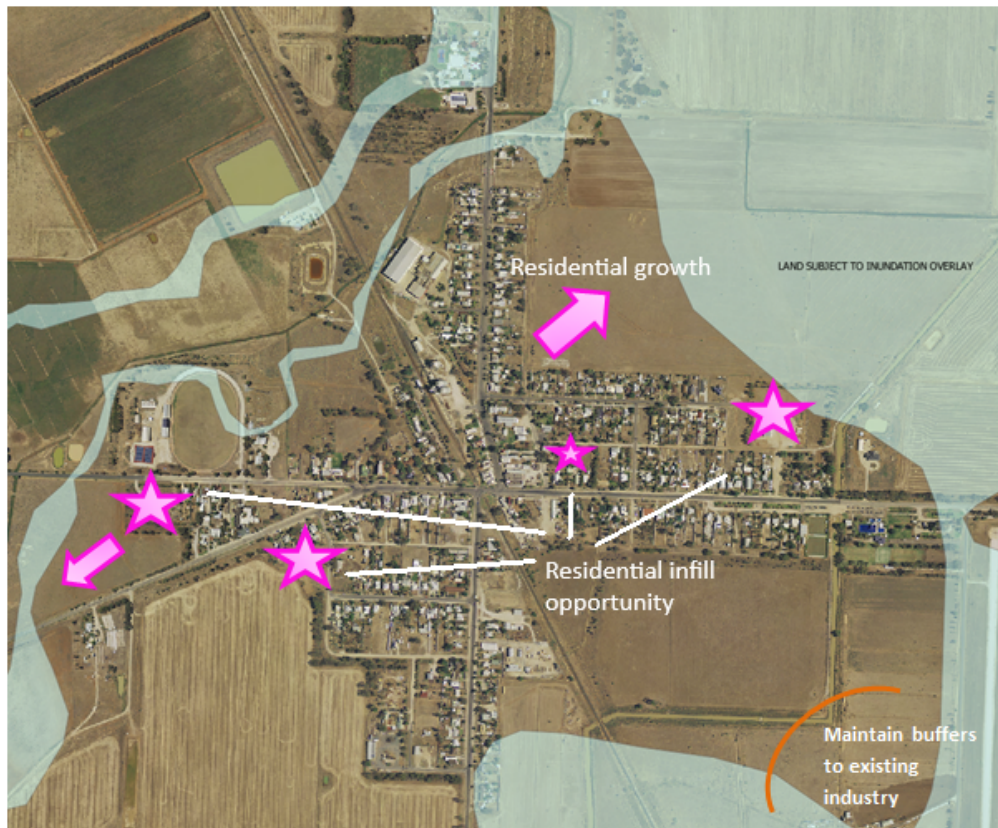
Pyramid Hill

- Focus residential growth around the town centre.
- Support urban consolidation, including medium density.
- Protect and enhance physical and visual links to the hill.



LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Pyramid Hill structure plan



Wedderburn

Support consolidation of the existing urban footprint and encourage residential development at a range of densities.

Upgrade pedestrian linkages throughout the town.

Support quality development of rural living land around the town.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

Wedderburn structure plan



**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01**  
31/07/2018  
VC148

**AGRICULTURE**

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**14.01-1S**20/03/2023  
VC229**Protection of agricultural land****Objective**

To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.

**Strategies**

Identify areas of productive agricultural land, including land for primary production and intensive agriculture.

Consider state, regional and local, issues and characteristics when assessing agricultural quality and productivity.

Avoid permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors.

Protect productive farmland that is of strategic significance in the local or regional context.

Protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use.

Prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas.

Protect strategically important agricultural and primary production land from incompatible uses.

Limit new housing development in rural areas by:

- Directing housing growth into existing settlements.
- Discouraging development of isolated small lots in the rural zones from use for dwellings or other incompatible uses.
- Encouraging consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones.

Identify areas of productive agricultural land by consulting with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and using available information.

In considering a proposal to use, subdivide or develop agricultural land, consider the:

- Desirability and impacts of removing the land from primary production, given its agricultural productivity.
- Impacts on the continuation of primary production on adjacent land, with particular regard to land values and the viability of infrastructure for such production.
- Compatibility between the proposed or likely development and the existing use of the surrounding land.
- The potential impacts of land use and development on the spread of plant and animal pests from areas of known infestation into agricultural areas.
- Land capability.

Avoid the subdivision of productive agricultural land from diminishing the long-term productive capacity of the land.

Give priority to the re-structure of inappropriate subdivisions where they exist on productive agricultural land.

Balance the potential off-site effects of a use or development proposal (such as degradation of soil or water quality and land salinisation) against the benefits of the proposal.



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**14.01-1L Agricultural land**

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Proposed C48lodd

**Policy application**

This policy applies to applications for use and development of land within the Farming Zone.

**General Strategies**

Support dwellings that are demonstrated to be ancillary and required to support the agricultural use of the land.

Direct non soil based agricultural activity away from quality agricultural land.

Site buildings and works to avoid or minimise loss of quality agricultural land.

**Subdivision strategies**

Avoid creating additional lots in the Farming Zone and use property restructure in preference.

Support subdivision in the Farming Zone that is based on an improved productive agricultural outcome that cannot be achieved with the current lot size.

**Excision strategies**

When excising an existing dwelling, ensure the balance lot is likely to be retained in productive agricultural use.

A dwelling lot excision can be supported where:

- the property contains a dwelling that is not required for the agricultural use and the the dwelling being retained with the balance of the land may compromise the ability of the land being retained in agricultural use; and
- the balance lot meets the minimum lot size for the zone; and
- the excision facilitates property consolidation or is in the form of a boundary restructure and does not create an additional lot; and
- the excision is likely to result in the continuation of unhindered agriculture on the balance of the land; and
- the excised lot only includes the dwelling (that is considered to be in a habitable condition as defined by and complies with the Building Code of Australia) and the immediate surrounds only; and
- the excised lot is located on the road frontage of the property; and
- where the proposal avoids long, narrow “battle axe” lots that increase the risk of land use conflict and increase the amount of lost agricultural land.

**Policy guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- The views of Goulburn-Murray Water or Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (as appropriate) when an application for use or development is within 100 metres of a waterway or wetland.
- The views of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action when an application for use or development of the land adjoins State Forest, State Reserve, Nature Conservation Reserves, Crown Land Water Frontages, State Park or National Park.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**14.01-2S Sustainable agricultural land use**21/09/2018  
VC150**Objective**

To encourage sustainable agricultural land use.

**Strategies**

Ensure agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.

Support the development of innovative and sustainable approaches to agricultural and associated rural land use practices.

Support adaptation of the agricultural sector to respond to the potential risks arising from climate change.

Encourage diversification and value-adding of agriculture through effective agricultural production and processing, rural industry and farm-related retailing.

Assist genuine farming enterprises to embrace opportunities and adjust flexibly to market changes.

Support agricultural investment through the protection and enhancement of appropriate infrastructure.

Facilitate ongoing productivity and investment in high value agriculture.

Facilitate the establishment and expansion of cattle feedlots, pig farms, poultry farms and other intensive animal industries in a manner consistent with orderly and proper planning and protection of the environment.

Ensure that the use and development of land for animal keeping or training is appropriately located and does not detrimentally impact the environment, the operation of surrounding land uses and the amenity of the surrounding area.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Victorian Code for Cattle Feedlots* (Department of Agriculture, Energy and Minerals, 1995)
- *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms* (Department of Primary Industries, 2009, plus 2018 amendments)
- *Apiary Code of Practice* (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2011)
- *Planning Guidelines for Land Based Aquaculture in Victoria* (Department of Primary Industries, No. 21, 2005)
- *Victorian Low Density Mobile Outdoor Poultry Farm Planning Permit Guidelines* (Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, June 2018)
- *Victorian Low Density Mobile Outdoor Pig Farm Planning Permit Guidelines* (Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, June 2018)

**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**14.01-2L Sustainable farming**

10/02/2022  
C45Iodd

Strategy

Encourage on-farm drainage re-use for effective nutrient management.

**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**16.01 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

31/07/2018  
VC148

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-1S**20/12/2021  
VC174**Housing supply****Objective**

To facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs.

**Strategies**

Ensure that an appropriate quantity, quality and type of housing is provided, including aged care facilities and other housing suitable for older people, supported accommodation for people with disability, rooming houses, student accommodation and social housing.

Increase the proportion of housing in designated locations in established urban areas (including under-utilised urban land) and reduce the share of new dwellings in greenfield, fringe and dispersed development areas.

Encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to jobs, services and public transport.

Identify opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.

Facilitate diverse housing that offers choice and meets changing household needs by widening housing diversity through a mix of housing types.

Encourage the development of well-designed housing that:

- Provides a high level of internal and external amenity.
- Incorporates universal design and adaptable internal dwelling design.

Support opportunities for a range of income groups to choose housing in well-serviced locations.

Plan for growth areas to provide for a mix of housing types through a variety of lot sizes, including higher housing densities in and around activity centres.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Homes for Victorians - Affordability, Access and Choice* (Victorian Government, 2017)
- *Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2021)

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-1L Housing for older people**

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Proposed C48lodd

**Strategy**

Support smaller sized housing close to shops and community facilities to meet the needs of the elderly community in the towns of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-2S**09/10/2020  
VC169**Housing affordability****Objective**

To deliver more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services.

**Strategies**

Improve housing affordability by:

- Ensuring land supply continues to be sufficient to meet demand.
- Increasing choice in housing type, tenure and cost to meet the needs of households as they move through life cycle changes and to support diverse communities.
- Promoting good housing and urban design to minimise negative environmental impacts and keep costs down for residents and the wider community.
- Encouraging a significant proportion of new development to be affordable for households on very low to moderate incomes.

Increase the supply of well-located affordable housing by:

- Facilitating a mix of private, affordable and social housing in suburbs, activity centres and urban renewal precincts.
- Ensuring the redevelopment and renewal of public housing stock better meets community needs.

Facilitate the delivery of social housing by identifying surplus government land suitable for housing.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Homes for Victorians - Affordability, Access and Choice* (Victorian Government, 2017)

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-3S Rural residential development**09/10/2020  
VC169**Objective**

To identify land suitable for rural residential development.

**Strategies**

Manage development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development.

Encourage the consolidation of new housing in existing settlements where investment in physical and community infrastructure and services has already been made.

Demonstrate need and identify locations for rural residential development through a housing and settlement strategy.

Ensure planning for rural residential development avoids or significantly reduces adverse economic, social and environmental impacts by:

- Maintaining the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resource attributes in activities including agricultural production, water, mineral and energy resources.
- Protecting existing landscape values and environmental qualities such as water quality, native vegetation, biodiversity and habitat.
- Minimising or avoiding property servicing costs carried by local and state governments.
- Maintaining an adequate buffer distance between rural residential development and animal production.

Ensure land is not zoned for rural residential development if it will encroach on high quality productive agricultural land or adversely impact on waterways or other natural resources.

Discourage development of small lots in rural zones for residential use or other incompatible uses.

Encourage consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones.

Ensure land is only zoned for rural residential development where it:

- Is located close to existing towns and urban centres, but not in areas that will be required for fully serviced urban development.
- Can be supplied with electricity, water and good quality road access.

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-3L McIntyre and Wehla Rural Living Areas**

--/---  
Proposed C48lodd

**Strategy**

Support rural residential development of land on O’Briens Drive, Clay Gully Lane, Dalmation Road, Moliagul Drive, Mason Drive Wheelhouse Road, subject to meeting access, wastewater disposal, power, environmental and bushfire requirements

**16.01-4S Community care accommodation**

04/11/2022  
VC226

**Objective**

To facilitate the establishment of community care accommodation and support their location being kept confidential.

**Strategies**

Planning schemes should not require a planning permit for or prohibit the use of land in a residential area for community care accommodation provided no more than 20 clients are accommodated and the use is funded by, or carried out by or on behalf of, a government department or public authority, including a public authority established for a public purpose under a Commonwealth Act.

Facilitate the confidential establishment of community care accommodation through appropriate permit, notice and review exemptions.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**16.01-5S**09/10/2020  
VC169**Residential aged care facilities****Objective**

To facilitate the development of well-designed and appropriately located residential aged care facilities.

**Strategies**

Recognise that residential aged care facilities contribute to housing diversity and choice, and are an appropriate use in a residential area.

Recognise that residential aged care facilities are different to dwellings in their purpose and function, and will have a different built form (including height, scale and mass).

Ensure local housing strategies, precinct structure plans and activity centre structure plans provide for residential aged care facilities.

Ensure that residential aged care facilities are located in residential areas, activity centres and urban renewal precincts, close to services and public transport.

Encourage planning for housing that:

- Delivers an adequate supply of land or redevelopment opportunities for residential aged care facilities.
- Enables older people to live in appropriate housing in their local community.

Provide for a mix of housing for older people with appropriate access to care and support services.

Ensure that proposals to establish residential aged care facilities early in the life of a growth area are in locations that will have early access to services and public transport.

Ensure that residential aged care facilities are designed to respond to the site and its context.

Promote a high standard of urban design and architecture in residential aged care facilities.

**Policy guidelines**

Consider as relevant:

- The Commonwealth Government's Responsible ratios for the provision of aged care places under the *Aged Care Act 1997*.

**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**18.02      MOVEMENT NETWORKS**

31/07/2018  
VC148

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**18.02-4S**20/03/2023  
VC229**Roads****Objective**

To facilitate an efficient and safe road network that integrates all movement networks and makes best use of existing infrastructure.

**Strategies**

Plan and develop the road network to:

- Ensure people are safe on and around roads.
- Improve people's perceptions of safety on and around roads.
- Improve road connections for all road users.
- Facilitate the use of public transport, cycling and walking.
- Integrate new and emerging technologies into road design, including the increasing connectivity and automation of vehicles.
- Accommodate the expansion of the High Productivity Freight Vehicle Network, and oversize and overmass vehicles.

Protect and develop the Principal Road Network to:

- Provide high mobility for through traffic and the efficient movement of freight by facilitating adequate movement capacity and speeds.
- Improve cross-town arterial links in outer suburbs and growth areas, including circumferential and radial movement to facilitate access to jobs and services.
- Limit access points to high-volume, high-speed roads by utilising urban design techniques such as service roads and internal connector roads.
- Improve high-capacity on-road public transport.

Develop declared freeways to:

- Link Melbourne with major regional cities, major interstate locations and other key locations important to the economy along major national and state transport corridors.
- Connect and provide access to Principal Transport Gateways and freight-generating areas.
- Improve connections to national employment and innovation clusters.
- Connect dispersed major residential areas with key destinations and lower density employment areas.
- Avoid private access, except for service centres.

Provide for grade separation at railway crossings, except with the approval of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure.

Improve Melbourne's distinctive, established boulevards by developing a connected, contemporary network of boulevards within the urban growth boundary.

Design road space to complement land use and meet business and community needs through the provision of wider footpaths, bicycle lanes, transit lanes (for buses and commercial passenger vehicles) and freight routes, in line with the designated role of the road.

Design roads to facilitate the safe movement of people and goods while providing places for people to interact and gather in high pedestrian areas like activity centres, around schools and around community facilities.

Plan an adequate supply of car parking that is designed and located to:

- Protect the role and function of nearby roads.



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- Enable the efficient movement and delivery of goods.
- Facilitate the use of public transport.
- Maintain journey times and the reliability of the on-road public transport network.
- Protect residential areas from the effects of road congestion created by on-street parking.
- Enable easy and efficient use.
- Achieve a high standard of urban design.
- Protect the amenity of the locality, including the amenity of pedestrians and other road users.
- Create a safe environment, particularly at night.

Allocate land for car parking considering:

- The existing and potential modes of access including public transport.
- The demand for off-street car parking.
- Road capacity.
- The potential for demand-management of car parking.

Consolidate car parking facilities to improve efficiency.

Design public car parks to incorporate electric charging facilities to support the use of low-emission vehicles.

**Policy documents**

Consider as relevant:

- *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* (Department of Transport, 2021)
- *Movement and Place in Victoria* (Department of Transport, February 2019)

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

**18.02-4L Sustainable local road network**

--/1/---  
Proposed C48lodd

**Strategy**

Direct new development to the existing all-weather road network and any proposals that require the construction of new roads should be minimised to limit future maintenance costs for Council.

**18.02-5S Freight**

09/12/2021  
VC204

**Objective**

To facilitate an efficient, coordinated, safe and sustainable freight and logistics system that enhances Victoria's economic prosperity and liveability.

**Strategies**

Plan and develop Victoria's freight and logistics system to:

- Support the movement of freight within Victoria's freight and logistics system.
- Improve freight efficiency and capacity.
- Manage negative impacts of freight generating activities on urban amenity, the development of urban areas, and on the efficient operation of movement networks.
- Prioritise new technologies that enhance road and rail safety, optimise the metropolitan road network, better manage congestion and reduce supply chain costs.
- Accommodate High Productivity Freight Vehicles, and oversize and overmass vehicles.
- Increase the capacity of the rail network to carry larger volumes of freight.

Protect and develop the Principal Freight Network, including freight movement corridors and freight places, and Principal Transport Gateways, by:

- Facilitating the movement of high volumes of freight and freight of strategic value.
- Linking areas of production and manufacturing to national and international gateways and export markets.
- Increasing the capacity of Principal Transport Gateways and supporting their use and development as important locations for employment and economic activity.
- Designing the Principal Freight Network to adapt to commodity, market and operating changes.
- Managing encroachment from incompatible land use and development that would undermine its ability to operate.

Support the development of freight and logistics precincts in strategic locations within and adjacent to Principal Transport Gateways and along the Principal Freight Network movement corridors by:

- Allocating land for complementary uses and employment-generating activities, such as distribution and warehousing.
- Reserving and appropriately zoning land for interstate freight terminals to support development that allows for the direct and immediate delivery of goods to market.
- Allocating land to allow high-volume freight customers to locate adjacent to interstate freight terminals, including the Western Interstate Freight Terminal and the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal.

**Policy documents**

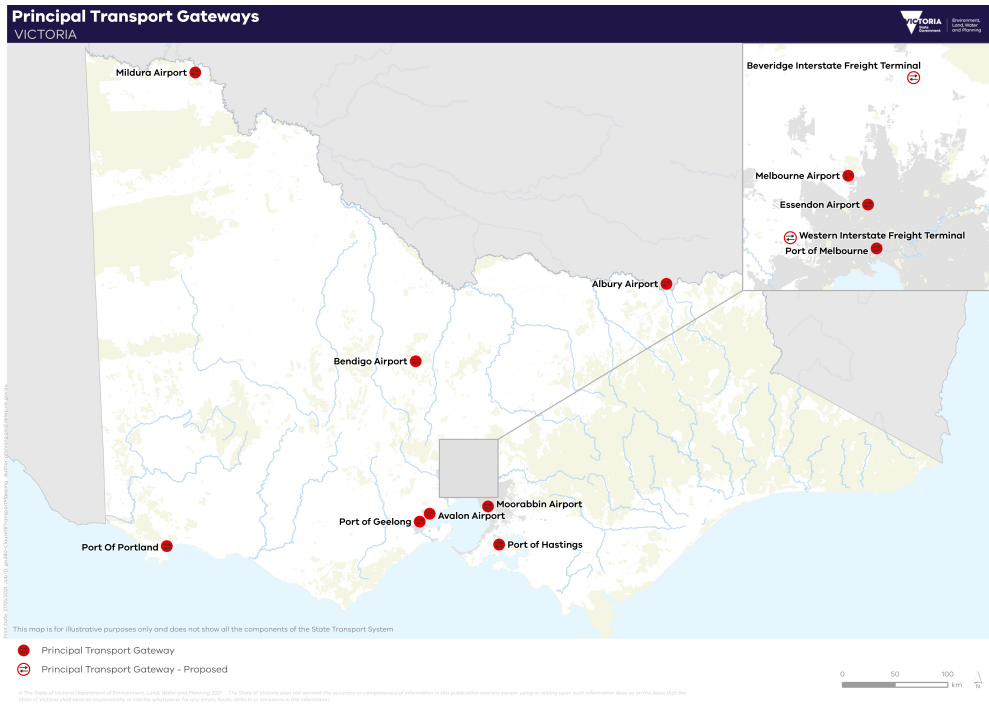
Consider as relevant:

- *Principal Freight Network* (Department of Transport, 2021)

LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

- *Principal Transport Gateways* (Department of Transport, 2021)
- *Delivering the Goods, Creating Victorian Jobs: Victorian Freight Plan* (Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, July 2018)

Principal Transport Gateways



**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**18.02-5R      Freight links - Loddon Mallee South**

09/12/2021  
VC204

**Strategy**

Explore opportunities to develop freight-related activities in Marong and Maryborough.

**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**19.03**  
31/07/2018  
VC148

**DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE**

**LODDON PLANNING SCHEME**

**19.03-5L Protection of waste management infrastructure**

--/---  
Proposed C48lodd

**Strategy**

Minimise incompatible uses within the buffers of Boort, Newbridge and Pyramid Hill Landfills; Inglewood, Dingee and Wedderburn transfer stations and Bio Gro Newbridge to protect the long term viability of these local waste management assets.



## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

06/05/2021  
C42lodd**SCHEDULE 2 TO CLAUSE 42.01 ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY**Shown on the planning scheme map as **ESO2**.**LAANECOORIE CATCHMENT****1.0 Statement of environmental significance**--/--/----  
Proposed C48lodd

Laanecoorie is a significant water supply storage on the Loddon River for many communities in and beyond the Loddon Shire. It provides water for domestic, recreation and agricultural use. Development around this storage and in the catchment must be managed to ensure that the quality and quantity of water in this storage is maintained at the required standard.

**2.0 Environmental objective to be achieved**--/--/----  
Proposed C48lodd

To protect the quality and quantity of water produced within the Laanecoorie water supply catchment areas.

To provide for appropriate development of land within the Laanecoorie water supply catchment areas.

**3.0 Permit requirement**--/--/----  
Proposed C48lodd

A permit is not required to construct a building or construct or carry out works where the development does not include works for a new wastewater treatment facility or changes to an existing wastewater treatment facility.

**4.0 Application requirements**--/--/----  
Proposed C48lodd

An application to construct buildings or to carry out or construct works that include an wastewater treatment facility must be accompanied by a land capability assessment that demonstrates the ability of the site and the proposed treatment facility to treat and contain any waste water generated within the boundaries of the site.

**Notice of application**

Notice of an application must be given in accordance with Section 52(1)(c) of the Act to the person or body specified as a person or body to be notified in Clause 66.06 or a schedule to that clause.

**5.0 Decision guidelines**--/--/----  
Proposed C48lodd

The following decision guidelines apply to an application for a permit under Clause 42.01, in addition to those specified in Clause 42.01 and elsewhere in the scheme which must be considered by the responsible authority:

- The slope, soil type and other environmental factors.
- The need to maintain water quality at a local and regional level.
- The possible effect of the development on the quality and quantity of water in local waterways, including the impact on nutrient levels.
- Effect of the proposed development and, where applicable, the method of waste disposal on the quality and quantity of water within the water supply catchment area.
- Whether a report has been provided which demonstrates that the land is capable of absorbing sewage and sullage effluent generated on the lot and that the wastewater treatment system has been designed to prevent wastewater entering any waterway, dam or wetland.
- Where an application is for the subdivision of land, whether the plan of subdivision shows appropriate building and effluent disposal envelopes.

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

06/05/2021  
C42lodd**SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 66.06 NOTICE OF PERMIT APPLICATIONS UNDER LOCAL PROVISIONS****1.0**---  
Proposed C48lodd**Notice of permit applications under local provisions**

<b>Clause</b>	<b>Kind of application</b>	<b>Person or body to be notified</b>
Clause 4.0 of Schedule 2 to Clause 42.01 (ESO)	All applications	Goulburn Murray Water
Clause 4.0 of Schedule 1 to Clause 42.02 (VPO)	All applications	Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Clause 4.0 of Schedule 2 to Clause 42.02 (VPO)	All applications	Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

## LODDON PLANNING SCHEME

10/02/2022  
C48lodd

**SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 74.02 FURTHER STRATEGIC WORK****1.0****Further strategic work**

--/---  
Proposed C48lodd

- Review and update flood controls in response to new and revised flood risk assessments and mapping from the North Central Catchment Management Authority.
- Prepare a precinct plan for Bridgewater and Inglewood to provide for planned residential growth and coordinated infrastructure investment.
- Review the schedule to the Rural Living Zone to identify opportunities for consolidation of this use within the existing zone.
- Review the schedule to the Farming Zone to ensure that triggers are responsive to current agricultural development requirements.
- Review and update the Heritage Overlay to include more recently identified properties of heritage significance.
- Review and update, if required, the Vegetation Protection Overlay, Environmental Significance Overlay (schedule 1), Erosion Management Overlay and Salinity Management Overlay to ensure that the value or issue is mapped correctly and the provisions are targeted and relevant.

**10.7 HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM - FUNDING APPLICATION ENDORSEMENT**

**File Number:**

**Author:** David Stretch, Manager Tourism and Economic Development

**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. **HSP-CEI Project Budget - Confidential**

This attachment is designated as confidential in accordance with Section 3(1)(a) and (g(ii)) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released; AND private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released the information to be received, discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item, may prejudice the commercial position of Council, as various negotiations remain pending **(under separate cover)**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve submission of a funding application to the Commonwealth Housing Support Program – Community Enabling Infrastructure (Stream 2) program.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Previous Council Forum discussions have occurred (October 2022, April 2023, November 2023) to brief Council on the proposed Yelka Street Stage 2 development and site, and economic impact this project can have upon the township and the market drivers of housing within Loddon Shire.

In December 2023 Council resolved to allocate \$200,000 from the Land & Buildings Reserve to progress this project and develop detailed design and cost estimates for a residential subdivision, to inform future decision making.

### **BACKGROUND**

Loddon Shire Council owns a parcel of land on the western fringe of Wedderburn Township. This land was purchased to support population growth through the provision of land for residential development. The purchase and residential development of this land was an initiative of the Wedderburn Development Association (WDA) with the support of Council.

Part of this site (fronting Ridge Street) was subdivided into five residential lots approximately 10 years ago. Five dwellings have been constructed on these lots since this time. (Stage 1)

The balance of the site (Yelka Street) remains undeveloped (Stage 2).

In 2020, Council adopted a Settlement Strategy that supported the use and development of this land for residential growth. The strategy further recommended additional investigation into the issues and costs associated with development of this site for residential purposes to enable Council to make an informed decision about whether it will take a proactive role in its development.

The site is zoned Township and is subject to the Bushfire Management Overlay. The sewer runs along Ridge St, and the water main is located in Yelka Street.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Tomkinson was engaged by Council in March 2024 to provide detailed design documentation for tender and construction.

Tomkinson have provided a Preliminary Subdivision Cost Estimate for the proposed 9 Lot Subdivision, dated July 2024, which informs the Housing Support Program – Community Enabling Infrastructure (Stream 2) funding application.

The project title for Council's funding application on August 16 2024 to the Housing Support Program – Community Enabling Infrastructure (Stream 2) is: The Unlocking Housing in Wedderburn Project.

The proposed project will see the Council-owned Yelka Street site in the Wedderburn township zone developed to create a serviced, 9-lot subdivision.

Proposed works will deliver residential lots with reticulated sewerage, water, power, data and phone services, as well as footpath, kerb and channel, drainage and road works.

Project and development works will include tree removal, Council supervision, checking fees, permit applications and certification fees.

Scope of works for provision of utilities includes electrical design, supply charges and cabling, as well as NBN pit and pipe works, headworks and cabling for network connection.

Costs associated with potential requirements for geotechnical report, service location, flora and fauna report, contamination report, vegetation offset contribution and First Nations Land Use Activity Agreement have been included.

Project management and professional fees, administration costs and other project fees and contingency have been included in the project scope and cost estimates.

**COST/BENEFITS**

The Community Enabling Infrastructure Stream (HSP-CEI) will focus on infrastructure projects that support new housing. It is open to local government authorities and the states and territories, and aims to remove barriers to housing construction by delivering enabling infrastructure and community amenities.

The total estimated project cost for Yelka Street (Stage 2) Subdivision is \$1,543,520, with Council seeking a contribution of \$778,520 from the Housing Support Program.

Loddon Shire is experiencing a range of challenges associated with residential housing development, particularly related to the availability and provision of affordable and suitable housing, which reflects both the needs of current and future populations.

Recent research indicates that when significant infrastructure such as new roads, drainage works and provision of services are required, the cost of these works generally exceeds the market sales price of the land in Wedderburn and therefore the financial viability of projects, which in turn means development projects are unlikely to be supported by lenders.

Funding support for the Unlocking Housing in Wedderburn Project addresses market viability and releases 9 high-value residential sites, ready for immediate housing development.

Recent demand analysis research indicates existing strong consumer demand for affordable land in Wedderburn.

The comparative affordability of land here, compared to land prices in towns close to the major regional centre of Bendigo, combined with general cost-of-living pressures, support the research that suggests serviced lots at a competitive price will be extremely attractive to market.

The provision of ready-to-develop lots with necessary infrastructure will significantly accelerate timelines to construction.

Independent, expert research funded by State Government and Council confirms CEI funding will allow developers to invest and existing market demand to be satisfied.

Local and regional buyers will respond positively, resulting in a swift uptake of available lots.

This intervention and subsequent construction activity will stimulate the local economy and trigger momentum for further development opportunities in Wedderburn and other key rural townships across the Shire.

Any revenue generated will be allocated to Council's Land and Buildings Reserve.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Risks associated with the development of the site by Council is that the lots will not sell or be developed, and Council will not recover any funds or generate any positive economic impact.

If Council was not to subdivide the land, it is unlikely this yield of new residential lots will be created at this location due to the cost of development exceeding any potential returns and therefore deterring private developers.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

There has been consultation with the Wedderburn Development Association in relation to the development of this land.

The project has been informed and supported by the Unlocking Loddon's Residential Growth Potential Report (Villawood Properties, August 2023), and the Loddon Shire Settlement Strategy (2020) whose findings and recommendations were influenced by extensive local and regional stakeholder consultation and engagement.



**10.8 GOVERNANCE RULES REVIEW****File Number:****Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive the report to consider amending the Governance Rules following a period of community engagement as required by July 2024 Council Meeting Resolution No. 2024/98.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Loddon Shire Council Governance Rules v3 were adopted by Council on 22 August 2023.

At the July 2024 Council meeting, Council resolved the following:

That Council receive a report to the August Council meeting to consider amending the Governance Rules following a period of community engagement.

The proposed change is:

That Council amends Division 2 – Standards of conduct, item 30. Addressing the meeting, to include an additional line (4), the use of Mr or Mrs or Miss or Madam is permitted in addressing persons, with established prior consent.

- (1) Any person addressing the Mayor should refer to the Mayor as Mayor ... [surname].
- (2) All Councillors, other than the Mayor, should be addressed as Cr .... [surname].
- (3) All officers should be addressed as Officer ... [surname] or by their official title.
- (4) The use of Mr or Mrs or Miss or Madam is permitted in addressing persons, with established prior consent. Eg; Mr Mayor, Madam Mayor, Mr, Mrs, Miss ... [surname]

**BACKGROUND**

The Loddon Shire Council Governance Rules were first adopted by Council on 25 August 2020.

The Governance Rules were reviewed in July 2022 to make provision for holding meetings by electronic means.

The most recent review of the Governance Rules, including a period of community engagement occurred during 2023. Following that review, Governance Rules v3 were adopted by Council on 22 August 2023.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

In response to a July 2024 Council meeting resolution, this report addresses a proposed amendment to the Loddon Shire Council Governance Rules, following a recent period of community engagement.

The resolution proposed to amend Rule 30, within Division 2 – Standards of conduct to include permitting the use of Mr or Mrs or Miss or Madam in addressing persons, with established prior consent.

### Community Engagement

Community feedback on the proposed amendment to the Governance Rules was invited via the following methods:

- Email to Council's Community Reference Group
- Information uploaded to the Public Notice section of Council's website
- Information posted to Council's Facebook page
- Information included in the Mayoral Column, distributed to media outlets and community groups
- Information included in Council's weekly advert in the Loddon Herald.

Feedback was invited until 9am on Tuesday, 13 August 2024.

No feedback was received.

### Gender Impact Assessment (GIA)

Section 9 of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, (the Act) requires that as a defined entity, Council must undertake a gender impact assessment when developing or reviewing any policy, or program or service it provides, that has a direct and significant impact on the public.

Alongside the period of community engagement, Council officers met to consider gender impacts of the proposed amendment to the Governance Rules using Council's GIA template.

Based on the scoring method within the template, the officers determined a GIA was not required on this occasion.

### **COST/BENEFITS**

Costs associated with this matter are predominately officer time. Advertising was undertaken at a small cost with the majority of advertising through existing subscriptions.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Governance Rules ensure effective meetings, provide clear direction for meeting protocol and mitigate reputational and unacceptable conduct risks.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Community feedback on the proposed amendment to Council's Governance Rules was invited over a fourteen day period, communicated via local print and social media, on Council's website and direct contact with Council's Community Reference Group.

**11 INFORMATION REPORTS****11.1 ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN DEFECT RECTIFICATION COMPLIANCE REPORT**

**File Number:** 14/01/022  
**Author:** Daniel Lloyd, Manager Works  
**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the road management plan defect rectification compliance report.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any council staff member involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This is the fourth report for the 2023 - 2024 financial year, summarising road network defect rectification compliance against requirements specified within the Loddon Shire Road Management Plan (RMP).

**BACKGROUND**

This report is produced quarterly and provides statistical data with respect to the Organisation's performance in managing the road network. Performance is measured through a comparison of actual defect rectification timeframes against requirements specified in the RMP.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Table 1 below provides a summary of the compliance against the schedule of road and street inspection regimes as set in the RMP.

*Table 1: Inspection summary report*

Quarter 4 (01/04/2024 – 30/06/2024)						
Work Group	Number of scheduled inspections	Number completed by due date	Number completed after due date	Number not completed	Compliance	Number of Defects Raised
Loddon Plains	18	18	0	0	100.0%	756
Loddon Goldfields	23	21	2	0	91.3%	513
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>1269</b>

During the fourth quarter of 2023 - 2024 financial year, 95.1% of the programmed inspections were completed according to the schedule. This is 4.9% below the target of 100% set in the RMP.

Table 2 below provides a summary of compliance of actual response times for rectification works of defects as detailed in the defect intervention levels and response timetables of the RMP. The defects have been identified through programmed inspections, customer requests and works crews identifying and rectifying defects as they find them, known as ad hoc work actions. It is important to note that flood damage is excluded from this report. In the context of the Road Management Plan these sites are considered as made safe through the utilisation of traffic management devices.

Table 2: Defect rectification summary report

Quarter 4 (01/04/2024 – 30/06/2024)								
	Number of Defects				Compliant with RMP			
Work Group	Ad hoc	Requests	Defects from inspections	Total	Yes	No	Not complete	%
Loddon Goldfields	0	58	422	480	444	27	9	92.5%
Loddon Plains	0	14	541	555	548	7	0	98.7%
Shire Wide	0	4	302	306	274	26	6	89.5%
Townscape Services	0	4	66	70	70	0	0	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>1331</b>	<b>1411</b>	<b>1336</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>94.7%</b>

During the fourth quarter of 2023 - 2024 financial year, 94.7% of all date imposed defects were completed before their due date. This is 5.3% below the target of 100% set in the RMP. There are 15 outstanding work actions to be completed. A plan is in place to complete the outstanding work actions in the next four weeks.

Table 3 provides a summary of performance against the unsealed road maintenance grading program, defects as identified through programmed inspections, customer requests and works crews identifying and rectifying defects as they find them, known as ad hoc work actions. The maintenance grading program identifies each road segment by its road hierarchy and grading frequency as detailed in the RMP.

Table 3: Maintenance grading program

Quarter 4 (01/04/2024 – 30/06/2024)											
	Number of Grading Work Actions					Compliant within scheduled timeframes					
Work Group	Roads Graded	Defects	Requests	Ad hoc	Total	Yes	No	Not completed	%	KM Graded	KM Inspected
Loddon Goldfields	126	7	31	14	178	138	40	0	77.5%	308.4	1058
Loddon Plains	72	1	7	18	98	97	1	0	99.0%	221.0	637
Shire Wide	0	3	1	0	4	3	1	0	75.0%	0.1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>85.0%</b>	<b>529.4</b>	<b>1694</b>

The data in Table 3 indicates that 280 grading work actions were completed for the fourth quarter of 2023 - 2024 financial year. There is no set level of compliance for the maintenance grading program in the RMP.

A graph has been provided in Chart 1 indicating a breakdown of the grading work actions, by road hierarchy and kilometres. The sealed roads section relates to shoulder grading work actions on the Sealed Road network. The gravel road section includes all grading work actions on Gravel Collector and Gravel Access roads. The Gravel Minor and the Formed Road sections relate directly to Council’s road hierarchy and show all grading work action on roads within that hierarchy.

Chart 1: Maintenance Grading Program



**COST/BENEFITS**

The year to date actual expenditure to the end of the fourth of 2023 - 2024 financial year of the Local Road Maintenance Program is \$7,394,835. The expenditure for the fourth quarter was \$1,975,552.

The benefits to the community in complying with the RMP are that it ensures a safe road network.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

Repairing 100% of all date imposed defects before their due date limits Council's liability for any claims for damage made against Council.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

No internal or external consultation is required in the formation of this report.

**11.2 TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT****File Number:****Author:** David Stretch, Manager Tourism and Economic Development**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Apr, May, June Quarterly report Presentation**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Tourism and Economic Development, Quarterly Activity Report – April, May, June 2024.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This report (and attachment) was tabled and discussed at the Council Forum August 13, 2024.

**BACKGROUND**

Quarterly Activity Reports are produced by the Manager of Tourism and Economic Development and consider current Council Plan objectives as well as preliminary focus areas, including:

- Financially and environmentally sustainable infrastructure (incl. residential development)
- Employment growth
- Population growth and diversity
- Industry development and investment attraction
- Local business development, retention, and expansion
- The unique visitor economy
- Townships and place-making
- Loddon's live-ability: amenity, affordability, community, environment.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The Tourism and Economic Development Quarterly Activity Reports focus on operational activity under 4 key themes:

1. Support land and residential development
2. Grown business and employment
3. Grow Tourism and the Visitor Economy
4. Support Townships

**COST/BENEFITS**

Tourism and economic development programs and activity are funded by Council operational budget, unless stated otherwise.

The Tourism and Economic Development team is uniquely-placed with insight into local opportunities for partnerships, innovation and growth.



Council strategies provide practical and relevant goals to maximize tourism and economic development opportunities.

Place-based policies that identify local synergies and facilitate connection and partnership super-charge local economies and communities.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Failure to invest in tourism and economic development programs could potentially lead to Loddon Shire Council businesses becoming more vulnerable to economic downturns and less capable of handling future challenges, thereby affecting the region's long-term sustainability and prosperity.

Negative impacts might include:

- Population decline
- Reduced visitation and losses to tourism businesses
- Limited business growth
- Reduction in local economic output
- Rise in unemployment
- Reduced liveability

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Internal and external stakeholders, influencers, enablers and participants in tourism and economic development are regularly engaged across the unit's work and activity.

The department consults with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

The Tourism and Economic Development team regularly consults and engages with business and community stakeholders across the Shire, in Central Victoria and Melbourne, including but not limited to:

- Federal Government and agencies
- State Government departments and agencies
- Regional Development Victoria
- Regional Tourism Board
- Regional Local Governments
- Major business and employers
- Small business and retail
- Tourism, Progress and Community Groups
- Community House network
- Tourism and regional business NFPs and stakeholders

Tourism and Economic Development Quarterly Activity Reports have been presented at Council Forum Meetings since January 2023.



Tourism and Economic Development  
Quarterly Activity Report (April, May, June 2024)

Council Forum  
August 13, 2024



# Support Land and Residential Development

MAY  
JUN  
2024

## – Unlocking Loddon’s Growth Potential Actions

- Market research and demand analysis completed
- Promotional plan for housing expo completed (commences August 2024)
- Draft costings and options paper completed
- Consultant Delos Delta briefed and preparing a project scope to accelerate residential development opportunities. (Confirmed sites and options, action plan.)



# Grow Business and Employment

MAY  
JUN  
2024

- Economic Development Strategy Project
  - Strategic objectives established
  - Business/stakeholder consultation
  
- Employment and Workforce
  - Loddon Workforce Showcase planning
  - Bendigo Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
  - Bendigo Region Workforce Plan completed
  
- Digital Connectivity
  - Telstra Connectivity Plan
  - NBN engagement
  - 3G Network closure – support, PR
  
- Renewables
  - Draft Transmission Plan Webinars
  - Meering West Wind Farm





# Grow Tourism and the Visitor Economy

MAY  
JUN  
2024

- Regional Contribution
  - BRT Destination Management Plan
  - VEP Working Group
  - Goldfields Gateways Project
  - City of Gastronomy – Regional Events Fund
  
- Visitor Economy Strategy
  - Sparrowly Group appointed
  - Council Forum presentation September 10
  
- Signage Audit
  - More than 600 tourism signs and assets recorded
  - New tourism signage Mitiamo
  
- Tourism Business Networking Event
  - Bridgewater (May)
  
- Event Support and Acquisition
  - Cork & Fork (November)
  - Flavours of Loddon (November to March)
  - Loddon Valley Arts Trail (October)



# Support Townships

MAY  
JUN  
2024

- Business and Retail Workshops
  - Inglewood June
  - Wedderburn August
  - Boort Oct (TBC)
  - Sharing Spendmapp insights and analysis
  - Facilitating collaboration, identifying shared challenges and opportunities
  - Identifying business-led actions, aligned with Community Plans
  
- Inglewood Streetscape Project
  - Urban design - Djandak
  - Surveying to locate services, support detailed design
  - Community Advisory Group







Tourism and Economic Development  
Quarterly Activity Report (April, May, June 2024)

Council Forum  
August 13, 2024



**11.3 QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT- STATUTORY PLANNING****File Number:****Author:** Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator**Authoriser:** Glenn Harvey, Acting Director Operations**Attachments:**

1. Applications processed in the Quarter
2. Applications completed in the Quarter

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Statutory Planning Permit Activity Report for April to June 2024

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This is the fourth report for the 2023- 2024 financial year summarising planning application activities undertaken within the Development and Compliance Department.

**BACKGROUND**

This report covers the planning permit activity for the previous quarter and provides Council with a high level summary for the purpose of monitoring performance within this area.

Council maintains powers under the *Planning & Environment Act 1987*, which are delegated to Planning Officers. Applications made under these powers may include but are not limited to the following:

- consideration of a planning application for a new use/development
- consideration of an amendment to an existing planning permit
- secondary consent applications (minor changes)
- extensions of time to existing planning permits.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**Planning permit activities

A detailed summary of the status of planning permits can be found in Attachments 1 and 2.

Timeframes

The *Planning & Environment Act 1987* requires a 60 day timeframe for the processing of planning applications by councils. The Act details how the 60 days is to be measured following the acceptance of a planning permit application.

Table 1 provides a summary of the average timeframe in which the Development and Compliance Department assessed and issued Planning Permits during the fourth quarter of the 2023-2024 financial year and compares these against the small to medium regional council's average.

Table 1: Average timeframes for decisions

	Quarter 4 of the 2023/2024 financial year			
Month	Average gross days to determine	Median processing days to determine	Completed within 60 days	Rural average completed within 60 days
April	36	22	100%	63%
May	136	86	86%	52%
June	43	34	100%	56%
<b>Total for the Quarter</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>57%</b>

During the fourth quarter of the 2023-2024 financial year 95% of all Planning Permit applications were assessed and issued within the timeframes as set in the *Planning & Environment Act 1987*. This was 38% above the rural average. In addition, the median processing days for Council to make a determination on applications is 31 days, well below the rural median of 78 days, a great result for Council and its planning team.

### **COST/BENEFITS**

The expenditure for the fourth quarter of 2023-2024 financial year of the statutory planning activities contained within this report is \$44,132

Benefits derived from investing in the planning process managed by the Development and Compliance Department include:

- well managed and appropriate development
- well informed community members who understand the value of planning within local government
- applications processed in a timely manner
- correct implementation of regulations and standards

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Failure of Council to adequately implement the planning scheme poses the following risks:

- inappropriate development which could endanger life and property
- Council's reputation as a Responsible Authority
- breaches of the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* requiring compliance action.

Insufficient investment in resources in the Development and Compliance Department may result in extended timeframes for the processing of applications.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Planning Staff consult with a number of stakeholders on a regular basis including:

- applicants
- surrounding land owners
- regulatory authorities
- other Loddon Shire Council departments
- other municipalities

Applications being processed in the quarter

April to June 2024

Applications
23

Number	Lodged	Site Address	Site Address Suburb	Status	Development Description	Applicant Name	Applicant Organisation
5407	10/12/2018	16 Park Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Further Information	two lot subdivision and earthworks	Dave Edwards	
5613		3421 Bridgewater-Maldon Road	Newbridge	New Application	A changed footprint with new kitchen added on	Andrew Simpson	
5808		6 Main Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	New Application	Extension and alterations to shop front	Patrick O'Toole	Bridgewater Bakehouse
5842		52 Brooke Street	Inglewood	New Application	Liquor Licence	Smyth David	
5893	10/05/2023	Road Reserve, Newbridge Road	NEWBRIDGE	Advertising Complete	Native vegetation removal (for road safety upgrades)	Bridgewater Public Caravan Park	
5909		17 Days Road	Mysia	New Application	Use and development of a dwelling	Jack Russell	
5940	29/11/2023	111 Bridgewater-Raywood Road	Bridgewater	Referred	Buildings and works associated with Southern stockfeeds expansion	Southern Stockfeeds Pty Ltd	
5945	3/01/2024	Laanecoorie Reservoir, Lot 1 Brownbill Reserve Road	Laanecoorie	Further Information	Laanecoorie Boat Ramp Relocation & Associated Works	Goulburn Murray Water	
5955		292 Thompsons Road	Dingee	New Application	subdivide the land into two lots.	Shaw Land Surveys	
5969	12/04/2024	4577 Bridgewater-Maldon Road	Bridgewater	Referred	Retrospective application for the use and development of the land accommodation (camping and caravan - four existing cabins) and an application for the development of a storage shed, relocation of an existing shed, and creation of new access to a Transport Zone 2	Grant Austin	Austin Earthmoving
5970		Harpers Lane	Wedderburn	New Application	Single Dwelling	Jamie Constantine	
5973	16/05/2024	465 Osborne Road	Barraport	Advertising	Use and development of a poultry farm (free range broiler farm, up to 400,000 birds in eight free range broiler sheds) and associated buildings and works including a managers residence.	Mr Fernando Ferreira	Spirecom Pty Ltd
5978	1/07/2024	Lot 39 Fenton's Creek-Whela Road	Fentons Creek	Advertising	Use and development of the land for an extractive industry (small quarry)	Australian Mining and Exploration Title Services (AMETS)	
5979	13/06/2024	Wedderburn Community Centre, 24-32 Wilson Street	Wedderburn	Ready for Meeting	Re-subdivision of four lots into two lots	Price Merrett Consulting Pty Ltd	
5985	4/07/2024	14 Eldon Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Advertising	Use and development of the land for a store (storage shed)	Rob Davis	Rob Davis Earthworks Pty Ltd
5986	2/07/2024	Bridgewater Public Caravan Park, Park Street	BRIDGEWATER ON LODDON	Advertising	Development of ten (10) two bedroom Cabins	Bridgewater Public Caravan Park	
5987	5/07/2024	Vacant land, 3 Yelka Street	Wedderburn	Advertising	Subdivision of the land into nine (9) lots and removal of native vegetation	Tomkinson Group	

5988		25 Leichardt Road	Leichardt	New Application	Use and development of the land a second dwelling	Sheryl Lydia Poljak	
5989		28 Station Street	Inglewood	New Application	Development of two shipping containers for storage	Andrew Perryman	Loddon Plains Landcare Network Inc.
5990	9/07/2024	50 Chapel Street	Wedderburn	Further Information	subdivision of two existing dwellings	Allan Noordennen	
5991		Lot 9A Swales Lane	Bridgewater	New Application	Use and development of the land for a dwelling	Rod Hinton	Bendigo Planning Services
5993		110 Bobs Lane	Dunolly	New Application	Development of a carport under the Environmental Significance Overlay	Grant Andrews	
5994		Lot 3 Billings Road	Barraport West	New Application	create a reserve	Onley Consulting	

Planning Application completed in the Quarter

April to June, 2024

Decisions
22

App Number	Lodged	Site Address	Locality	Status	Development Description	Applicant Name	Applicant Organisation
5878	27/03/2023	Calder Highway	Wedderburn	Lapsed	Use and development of a dwelling and shed (within 100 metres of a waterway) and new road opening within Transport Road Zone 2	Rod Hinton	Bendigo Planning Services
5913	9/02/2024	Lot 31 Clay Gully Lane	McIntyre	Application Complete	Relocation of the approved dwelling on the land	Lily Mason	Central Vic Planning Consultants
5941	11/12/2023	Lot 71A Old Boort Road	Serpentine	Application Complete	Earthworks (channel construction) associated with the development of lateral irrigation system in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay, and removal of native vegetation	Karl Hooke	Willera Merinos
5942	7/12/2023	Uniting Church Eddington, 41 McCoy Street	Eddington	Withdrawn	Amended application - Revision 3 - Use of the site for a place of assembly for weddings/ events (one event per week) reduction from 100 patrons to 69 patrons) liquor licence and a reduction in car parking	Mario Lancellotti	
5954	12/03/2024	Lot 1 Wimmera Highway	Tarnagulla	Application Complete	Use and development of the land for a dwelling	Matthew Carpenter	
5957	4/03/2024	Lot 10K Calder Highway	Wedderburn	Application Complete	Use and development of land for two dwellings and associated outbuilding	Karanjit Singh Goraya	
5958	8/03/2024	16-20 Park Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Withdrawn	2 Lot Subdivision	Daniel Lucas	
5960	13/03/2024	92 Moresis Road	Boort	Application Complete	Use and development of the land for a replacement dwelling	Graeme and Kathy Pink	
5961	15/03/2024	11 Park Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Application Complete	Variation of a restriction on title, to allow the construction of solid fence in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay	Andrew Ferguson	
5962	14/03/2024	251 Sylvaterre Road	Pyramid Hill	Application Complete	Development of the land for a Second Dwelling and removal of native vegetation under the Salinity Management Overlay	Rohan Stevens	
5963	21/03/2024	Lot 1 Scotts Lane	Wedderburn	Application Complete	Development of a shed associated with horse husbandry	Gabrielle Symons	
5964	25/03/2024	Lot 40 Blackburn Lane	Inglewood	Application Complete	Use and development of land for a dwelling and outbuilding	Chris Moloney	
5965	28/03/2024	4994 Calder Highway	Kurting	Application Complete	Shed	Simon Taylor	
5966	19/04/2024	44 Stuarts Road	Serpentine	Application Complete	Development of a 576sqm shed	Entegra Signature Structures	
5967	8/04/2024	23-25 Verdon Street	Inglewood	Application Complete	Development of a new shed	Corey Tinney	CV Sheds Pty Ltd
5968	4/04/2024	22 Main Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Application Complete	Alterations to the existing building (replace cladding)	Amanda Goodman	



5971	29/04/2024	3 Hospital Street	Inglewood	Application Complete	Demolition of a deck/staircase and Development of a Deck	Inglewood District Health Service	
5972	30/04/2024	16-20 Park Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Application Complete	Retrospective application for the development of a shed	Daniel Lucas	
5974	14/05/2024	Lot 2 Bendigo-Pyramid Road	Pyramid Hill	Application Complete	Development of an agricultural shed in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay with a total area of more than 130 square metres	Ben McLerie	Action Steel Industries
5976	31/05/2024	Bridgewater Police Station, 38 Park Street	Bridgewater on Loddon	Application Complete	Carport	Andrew Ferguson	
5977	30/05/2024	Lot 3B Arnold Newbridge Road	Newbridge	Application Complete	farm storage shed	CV Sheds Pty Ltd	
5984	20/06/2024	Lot 1 Scotts Lane	Wedderburn	Withdrawn	shed associated with horse husbandry	Gabrielle Symons	

**11.4 PUBLIC HEALTH QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT**

**File Number:** FOL/19/115173  
**Author:** David Price, Manager Community Services  
**Authoriser:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Public Health Quarterly Activity Report.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any council staff member involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This is the fourth and final report for the 2023-2024 financial year which reviews the period 1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024, summarising public health activities within the Community Services Department. It provides Council with a high level summary for the purpose of monitoring performance.

**BACKGROUND**

Loddon Shire Council is responsible for the administration and enforcement of several Acts including the:

- Food Act 1984
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Environment Protection Act 2017
- Tobacco Act 1987.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**Staff Resources

Council's Senior Public Health Officer resigned from the position during the reporting period. Council has interim arrangements in place for continued service delivery as the staff recruitment process continues. The reduced level of service shows in some of the statistical reports. Throughout this period, Council has continued to provide a service level that is in response to community demand. Regular contact with business operators, community groups, home owners and developers has been maintained within the available resources. Activities undertaken include inspecting registered premises, issuing septic tank permits and complaint investigations.

Registered Premises

Council undertakes annual inspections of premises that are registered under the Food Act, Public Health and Wellbeing Act and Residential Tenancies Act. Inspections are also undertaken of public swimming pools and of properties that must satisfy Tobacco Act requirements. Table 1 provides a summary of the inspections undertaken during the reporting period.

Table 1: Registered premises inspections

1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024		
Governing Legislation	Inspection Outcome	Number of inspections
Food Premises	Compliant*	29
	Major Non Compliance	2
Temporary Food Stall	Compliant*	1
Health Premises	Compliant*	3
	Major Non Compliance	0
Caravan Parks	Compliant*	2
	Major Non Compliance	0
<b>Total number of inspections for reporting period</b>		<b>37</b>

\* Compliant includes sites that were fully compliant and some sites that required minor actions to become compliant

Council officers liaise further with non-compliant premises to address identified issues.

### Tobacco Act

Council is funded to undertake Tobacco Act inspections throughout the year. Most inspections are carried out in conjunction with food premises inspections, however other properties also include non-smoking public outdoor venues such as kindergartens, schools, playgrounds and sporting reserves. Table 2 summaries the Tobacco Act activities undertaken during the reporting period.

Table 2: Tobacco Act inspections

1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024	
Inspection Type	Number
Tobacco Retailer (including vending machine)	2
Tobacco – Indoor Dining and drinking area	3
Tobacco – Outdoor Dining and drinking area	0
Outdoors & Other locations	0
<b>Total number of inspections</b>	<b>5</b>

### Septic Systems

Table 3 summarises septic system permit applications processed during the reporting period.

Table 3: Septic system permits

1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024	
Permit Type	Number
Installation or alteration	6
Certificate to use	5
<b>Total number of permits for reporting period</b>	<b>11</b>

### Public Health Complaints

Council is responsible to investigate nuisance complaints under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act. Complaints of nuisance can be complex and time consuming. Table 6 summarises the complaints during the reporting period.

*Table 6: Public health complaints*

1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024				
Nature of complaint	Number carried over from previous reporting period	Number received	Number resolved	Number currently pursuing resolution
Food Premises	0	0	0	0
Wastewater	3	0	1	2
Other	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

## COST/BENEFITS

The expenditure for the fourth quarter of the 2023-2024 financial year for the public health unit activities contained within this report is within the expected budget expenditure for this period.

Administration of the Acts that Council has responsibility for includes significant fieldwork, with staff regularly in the field engaging with business operators, developers, residents and ratepayers. This investment increases significantly when compliance issues are identified within registered premises and when complaints are received.

The benefits that stem from this investment include:

- improved public health and safety within registered premises
- improved local amenity
- full implementation by Council of our responsibilities under the various Acts and regulations.

## RISK ANALYSIS

Failure of Council to adequately administer and enforce the provisions of the applicable legislation would pose the following possible risks:

- the spread of infectious diseases through the community including food poisoning
- a barrier to the new developments and economic growth within Council
- Council's reputation as a regulatory authority
- contamination of the local environment
- failure to meet obligations set within the relevant legislation.

## CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Public Health Officer regularly engages with business operators, developers, residents and ratepayers during the administration of the various Acts which can range from annual assessments/inspections to the provision of advice when processing septic tank permits. Any business operator, developer, residents or ratepayer that is subject to enforcement action is regularly consulted with during the enforcement process.

**11.5 ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM 2023-2024 QUARTERLY UPDATE AND FLOOD PROGRAM UPDATE**

**File Number:** FOL/19/4522  
**Author:** David Southcombe, Manager Assets and Infrastructure  
**Authoriser:** Steven Phillips, Director Operations  
**Attachments:** 1. Annual Infrastructure Program 2023-2024  
2. October 2022 Flood Program 2022-2025

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council note the progress of the Annual Infrastructure Program 2023-2024 and Flood Restoration Program as at June 2024.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Annual Infrastructure Program was presented at the June 2023 Council Meeting.

The last quarterly report on progress of the Annual Infrastructure Program 2023-2024 and Flood Restoration Program was provided at the May 2024 meeting.

**BACKGROUND**

This report is produced quarterly and is provided to Council for the purpose of reporting progress of the Annual Infrastructure Program and the Flood Restoration Program. The information in this report covers progress up until the end of June 2024.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**Annual Infrastructure Program

There are currently 105 individual projects, including carryovers from previous financial years that form part of the Annual Infrastructure Program 2023-2024. 86 projects have been completed and 18 projects are in progress.

50 individual projects were completed in quarter 4 of the 2023-2024 financial year. There are an additional 18 projects in progress and 1 project on hold that will be carried over to next financial year.

The Roads to Recovery and Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program Phases 1, 2, and 3 required construction for projects funded under these programs to be completed by June 30, 2024. This was achieved, with some significant projects completed in quarter 4 such as the reconstruction of 2.5km of Pyramid Yarraberb Rd. In total 219 projects were funded under the previous 5 year funding period of the Roads to Recovery Program, and 46 projects under the LRCI Program Phase 1, 2 and 3. A new 5 year funding period for the Roads to Recovery Program begins in the 2024/25 financial year and Council will continue to deliver projects under the final LRCI Program Phase 4. This is the final funding round of the federal government's LRCI Program.

Table 1 provides a progress summary for the end of the 2023–2024 financial year of the Annual Infrastructure Program.

*Table 1: Annual Infrastructure Program progress*

Program Category	Total number of projects listed in Annual Infrastructure Program 2023 - 2024	Total number of projects carried over from previous year(s)	Total number of projects	Total number of projects completed to date	Total number of projects in progress	% Complete
Local Roads Gravel Resheet	7	3	10	10	0	100%
Local Roads Gravel Shoulder Resheet	3	0	3	3	0	100%
Local Road Construction - Asset Preservation	3	2	5	4	1	80%
Local Road Construction – Amenity	1	0	1	0	1	0%
Local Road Construction - Safety	0	1	1	0	1	0%
Township Street Improvement	3	7	10	6	4	60%
Local Bridges and Culverts	4	4	8	7	1	88%
Reseals	36	0	36	36	0	100%
Parks and Gardens	4	3	7	6	1	86%
Buildings	9	8	17	11	5	65%
Major Projects	0	7	7	3	4	43%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>81%</b>

As at the end of quarter four, 86 project or 81% of projects are completed with 18 out of the remaining 19 projects under progress. Attachment 1 contains a detailed list of projects that forms the Annual Infrastructure Program.

#### Flood Restoration Program – October 2022 event

All packages of work to rectify the damages required as a result of this flood required submission to the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) for assessment by 31 March 2024. These submissions have all been completed. The Flood Restoration program works must be completed by June 2025.

Inspections following the October 2022 flood event initially identified approximately 1,200 items of damage. This data is continually being assessed as it is processed into DRFA claimable packages of work. Any double ups, errors, ineligible work and non-Council assets are being removed. This process will be ongoing until all items are submitted and reviewed for eligibility through the DRFA process. The remaining list totals 675 items of damage which Council officers will continue to work with the DRFA to progress their rectification.



Table 2 provides a summary of progress for the Flood Restoration Program.

*Table 2: Flood Restoration Program summary*

Treatment category	Total number of damages recorded	Total number of damages rectified	Number of damage rectifications currently seeking approval	Number of damage rectifications in progress	% Complete
Unsealed pavements	453	81	373	0	18%
Sealed pavements	174	7	167	16	4%
Clearing and earthworks	3	0	3	0	0%
Road furniture and delineation	1	0	1	0	0%
Drainage structures	44	13	31	0	30%
Others	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15%</b>

Attachment 2 summarises the reimbursement claims for works so far (October 2022 to 30 June) in both, event response and restoration of essential public assets. To date Council has expended \$4,702,519 with \$4,589,987 reimbursed through the DRFA program and \$14,911 of the claim amount rejected. As works progress further claims for reimbursement will be added.

There are several non-essential public assets that were damaged during the October Flood event, these have been summarised in Table 3. The approximate value of the works listed in Table 3 is \$2.8 Million.

*Table 3 Insurance items*

Item	Asset Owner	Activity	Comments
Newbridge Recreation Reserve	DEECA	100%	Complete.
Bridgewater Caravan Park	Council	95%	Works complete, initial defects identified. Additional defects being addressed.
Durham Ox Hall	DEECA	100%	Complete.
Fentons Creek Hall	DEECA	100%	Complete.
Miscellaneous assets	Council	90%	Outstanding works at Donaldson Park fencing currently being addressed.

Council has also received State Government funding to assist with flood restoration through the Council Flood Support Fund. Several projects have been funded by this program, Table 4 summarises their progress.

*Table 4 Council Flood Support Fund projects*

Item	Activity
Emergency repairs to Skinners Flat Reservoir	Completed – 100%
Repairs to Loddon River, river side walking tracks	Not yet started
Lake Lyndger outflow doors	Completed – 100%
Hydrographical survey of the Loddon River at Bridgewater	Completed – 100%
Bridgewater boat ramp repairs	Completed – 100%
Bridgewater Swimming Hole pontoon	Completed – 100%
Skinners Flat Reservoir Flood damage remediation detailed engineering design	In Progress – 15%

**Flood Restoration Program – December 2023 event**

Inspections following the December 2023 flood event initially identified approximately 199 items of damage. This data is still being reviewed for accuracy and will be updated as Council officers review each damage as part of scoping process before submitting to the DRFA for funding. Table 5 provides a summary of progress for the December 2023 Flood Restoration Program.

*Table 5: December 2023 Flood Restoration Program summary*

Treatment category	Total number of damages recorded	Total number of damages rectified	Number of damage rectifications currently seeking approval	Number of damage rectifications in progress	% Complete
Unsealed pavements	64	0	0	0	0%
Sealed pavements	22	0	0	0	0%
Clearing and earthworks	0	0	0	0	0%
Concrete	1	0	0	0	0%
Road furniture and delineation	0	0	0	0	0%
Drainage structures	11	0	0	0	0%
Others	1	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**COST/BENEFITS**

The Annual Infrastructure Program expenditure in the Second quarter of the 2023–2024 financial year was \$4,575,562 for a total expenditure year to date of \$12,221,298. Attachment 1 lists all projects in the program which have an allocated budget of \$17,773,018 for the 2023-2024 financial year.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

There is still some uncertainty around the methodology adopted by the DRFA for the funding of gravel road resheets. Currently the DRFA is assessing each damage scope of works on a case by case basis to make an evaluation of the claimable amount of funding. Council will be required to fund the gap between the cost of undertaking a 100mm gravel resheet versus the amount funded by the DRFA. Given the significant financial risk of this funding gap, this risk is being managed and reported regularly to Council's independent Audit & Risk Committee.

Long term rectification of the Skinners Flat Reservoir wall and spillway is not eligible for funding under the DRFA. This work is also likely to be beyond the financial capacity of Council without significant financial assistance from State and/or Federal governments. Council has approval to utilise funding from the LGV Council Flood Support Fund for detailed design and costing. In the interim, a range of risk management and monitoring processes are in place to minimise risk.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The report has been completed in consultation with officers from the Works Department, Community Support Department, Manager Governance, Finance Department and other external government agencies.

Attachment 1 - Annual Infrastructure Program 2023-2024

Category	Project No.	Project Name	Project Details	% Activity	Comments
Local Road Resheet	LRG023292	Pyramid Cohuna Rd	Resheet - 7.5km	100%	Complete
	LRG023305	Old Leitchville Road	Resheet - 1.5km	100%	Complete
	LRG123248	Loddon River Rd	Resheet - 1.8km	100%	Complete
	LRG123274	Quambatook Wychitella Rd	Resheet - 3.8km	100%	Complete
	LRG223286	Marong Serpentine Rd	Resheet - 3.9km	100%	Complete
	LRG223333	Graham's Ln	Resheet - 0.2km	100%	Complete
	LRG323275	Unnamed road Laanecoorie between Guiney St and Cains Rd Upgrade	Resheet - 0.3km - between Guiney St and Cains Rd	100%	Complete
	LRG423260	Sylvaterre Timms Lake Rd	Resheet - 2.9km	100%	Complete
	LRG423261	Rockies Rd	Resheet - 1.7km	100%	Complete
	LRG324355	Blows Rd Calivil	Resheet - 3.0km	100%	Complete
Local Road Shoulder Sheet	LRS223374	Wedderburn Serpentine Rd, POWLETT PLAINS	Shoulder Resheet - 1.57km	100%	Complete
	LRS423375	Yallook Mail Rd, DINGEE	Shoulder Resheet - 3.12km	100%	Complete
	LRS423377	Prairie West Rd, CALAVIL	Shoulder Resheet - 8.34km	100%	Complete
Local Road Construction Asset Preservation	LRC0516	Newbridge Rd, WOODSTOCK	Reconstruction of road and seal - 1.16km	100%	Complete
	LRC0518	Echuca Serpentine Rd, POMPAIEL	Reconstruct and widen - 5.29km	75%	Carryover
	LRC0539	Pyramid Yarraberb Rd	Reconstruction of road and seal	100%	Complete
	LRC0540	Pyramid Yarraberb Rd	Reconstruction of road and seal	100%	Complete
	LRC0541	Pyramid Yarraberb Rd	Reconstruction of road and seal	100%	Complete
Local Road Construction - Amenity	AMN323053	Tarnagulla Community Centre	Car Park sealing works	0%	Carryover
Local Road Construction Safety	SAF022043	Safety signage restricted structures	Installation of signage on restricted structures	10%	Carryover

Attachment 1 - Annual Infrastructure Program 2023-2024

Category	Project No.	Project Name	Project Details	% Activity	Comments
Township St Improvement	TSI001	Wimmera Highway, NEWBRIDGE	New footpath	100%	Complete
	ATSI495	Southey Street, INGLEWOOD	New Footpath - North St to School gate	100%	Complete
	ATSI499	Armstrong Street, BOORT	New Footpath - Malone St to Coutts St	100%	Complete
	ATSI500	Armstrong Street, BOORT	New Footpath - Coutts St to McMillians Rd	100%	Complete
	ATSI501	McMillians Road, BOORT	New Footpath - McMillians Rd to Holloway St	100%	Complete
	TSI0513	Commercial Rd, TARNAGULLA	Footpath construction between Wayman Road and Poverty Street	20%	Carryover
	TSI0516	Commercial Rd, TARNAGULLA	Footpath construction between King and Poverty Street.	20%	Carryover
	TSI0517	Commercial Rd, TARNAGULLA	Footpath construction between Old Tarnagulla Road and Poverty Street	20%	Carryover
	TSI0535	Commercial Rd, TARNAGULLA	Footpath construction between Poverty Street and Old Laanecoorie Road	20%	Carryover
	TSI0554	Inglewood netball courts. INGLEWOOD	100m x 1.5m footpath construction	100%	Complete
Local Bridges and Culverts	BCC390	Brenanah Wehla Road, WEHLA	Installation of floodway and cut off wall	100%	Complete
	BCC410	Long Bush Road, MCINTYRE	Culvert Replacement and Floodway Installation	100%	Complete
	BCC430	Canary Island Leaghur Rd, CANARY ISLAND	Box Culvert Replacement	100%	Complete
	BCC432	Canary Island Leaghur Rd, LEAGHUR	Box Culvert Replacement	10%	Carryover
	BCC433	Canary Island Leaghur Rd, CANARY ISLAND	Box Culvert Replacement	100%	Complete
	BCC437	Appin South Road, APPIN SOUTH	Replace culvert and upgrade	100%	Complete
	BCC443	Wedderburn Junction East Road, WEDDERBURN JUNCTION	Installation of Floodway	100%	Complete
	BCC477	Small Culverts Allocation	Allocation to replace small culverts	100%	Complete
Reseals	36 Projects	Multiple	Reseal Program. 33 Roads, 80 segments	100%	Complete
Parks and Gardens	PGC028	Malone St, BOORT	Footpath installation at Boort Park	100%	Complete
	PGC032	Progress Park, NEWBRIDGE	Progress Park BBQ and Shelter	100%	Complete
	PGC041	Lions Park East, PYRAMID HILL	Replace barbecue shelter and benches	100%	Complete
	PGC053	Boort Caravan Park, BOORT	Installation of a rotary self cleaning filter	100%	Complete
	PGC054	Godfrey Streetscape, BOORT	Instalation of plants or turf for a 40cm strip outside of tennis courts	100%	Complete
	PGC055	Bridgewater Swimming Hole, BRIDGEWATER	Extend irrigation from Hotel to swimming hole	50%	Carryover
	PGC057	Myrnong Beach, BOORT	Replace car park, irrigation, bollards, tables and chairs, bin surrounds	100%	Complete

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Attachment 2 - October 2022 Flood Program 2022 - 2025

Flood Program 2022 - 2025								
Claim Number	Immediate Response Operations			Flood Restoration Program				Comments
	Relief & Recovery Claim	Counter Disaster Operations Claim	Emergency Works Claim	Immediate Restoration Works Claim	Restroation of Essential Public Assets Claim	Amount Reimbursed	Amount Rejected	
LODCC-1037-Claim-0008	\$42,949					\$37,213	\$5,736	Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0009		\$254,392				\$254,164	\$228	Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0010			\$113,021			\$113,021		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0011			\$81,965			\$81,965		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0012			\$80,084			\$80,084		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0013			\$24,392			\$24,392		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0014				\$1,456,168		\$1,456,168		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0015		\$24,412				\$24,412		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0016			\$82,430			\$76,631	\$5,799	Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0017		\$4,018				\$4,018		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0018				\$1,198,877		\$1,195,728	\$3,149	Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0019				\$100,166		\$100,166		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0020				\$1,090,586		\$1,090,586		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0021				\$51,439		\$51,439		Completed
LODCC-1037-Claim-0022					\$97,620			Lodged, awaiting assessment
	<b>\$42,949</b>	<b>\$282,822</b>	<b>\$381,892</b>	<b>\$3,897,236</b>	<b>\$97,620</b>	<b>\$4,589,987</b>	<b>\$14,911</b>	

**11.6 LOCAL LAWS AND PLANNING COMPLIANCE QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT**

**File Number:** FOL/19/115192  
**Author:** David Price, Manager Community Services  
**Authoriser:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Local Laws and Planning Compliance Quarterly Activity Report.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This is the fourth and final report for the 2023-2024 financial year, summarising the animal control, local laws, planning compliance and enforcement actions taken within the Community Services Department for the period 1 April to 30 June 2024. It provides Council with a high-level summary for the purpose of monitoring performance.

**BACKGROUND**

Council is responsible for a range of advisory, compliance and enforcement services to the community and maintains powers under various legislation and Council's local law to enable effective animal management, planning enforcement and local law compliance for community and township amenity.

A number of organisational policies and procedures have been developed, outlining the methodology and circumstances under which Council officers will undertake compliance action. Key areas of focus in respect to compliance action include:

- management of local law provisions, particularly with respect to unsightly properties
- effective animal management
- control of roadside activities, occupation and utilisation
- investigating planning scheme breaches and enforce planning permit conditions

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**Administrative

Table 1 provides a summary of administrative functions undertaken.

(\*) Council provides a 24 hour emergency call out service in respect to domestic animal management, local law compliance and enforcement, and livestock wandering on council roads.

Table 1: Administrative

Quarter 4 (1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024)			
Activity	After hours call outs (*)	Littering or illegal rubbish dumping	Local law permits issued
No. actions	4	2	14

Unightly properties

A summary of activity statistics and locations that are the subject of unsightly property compliance under Council's local law is provided in Table 2. Identified unsightly properties are assessed and prioritised for compliance action.

Staffing vacancies have limited the ability for significant progress to be made during this quarter. It is expected that, following some recent recruitment, progress will increase in the next quarter.

*Table 2: Summary of unsightly properties activities*

Quarter 4 (1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024)																
Town/Locality	Eddington	Rheola	Newbridge	Tarnagulla	Inglewood	Bridgewater	Wedderburn	Korong Vale	Borong	Boort	Pyramid Hill	Mitiamo	Dingee	Serpentine	Rural/Other	Total
No. identified from previous report period	2	0	2	3	9	1	15	3	3	4	1	2	1	2	0	48
No. resolved during quarter	0	0	0	0	5	1	5	0	2	2	1	2	0	1	0	19
New action commenced	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	9
No. currently pursuing	2	0	2	3	7	0	11	4	1	3	3	0	1	1	0	38
Progress Activities																
Site meeting / discussion held	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
Letter to comply issued	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Occupier has commenced clean-up work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Notice to comply issued	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Contractor engaged for clean-up work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Animal management

Table 3 provides a high level summary of animal management activities.

*Table 3: Summary of animal management activities*

Quarter 4 (1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024)						
Activity	Wandering livestock	Trespassing livestock	Dog attack	Domestic animal at large	Distribution of cat traps	General complaints / other
No. of actions	5	81	1	22	6	25

Table 4 summarises animal management activities that resulted in impoundments, encompassing both domestic animals and livestock.

*Table 4: Impoundment activities*

Quarter 4 (1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024)				
Animal type	Impoundments	Returned to owners	Animals rehoused	Animals disposed
Livestock	80	80	0	0
Dogs	15	3	9	3
Cats	11	0	11	0
Feral Animals	-	-	-	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>

#### Planning Compliance and Enforcement

Table 5 provides a summary of planning compliance and enforcement activities undertaken.

*Table 5: Planning compliance and enforcement activities*

Quarter 4 (1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024)						
Type	No. identified from previous report period	New action	PIN's	Warning Letter	No. resolved during quarter	No. currently pursuing
Land use in contravention of planning scheme without a permit	2	0	0	0	0	2
Native vegetation removal without a permit	2	1	0	0	1	2
Breach of planning permit	0	1	0	1	0	1
Dog breeding / animal keeping	1	0	0	0	0	1
Land used as a store without planning permit	2	0	0	0	0	2
Occupation of a site without a planning permit	0	2	0	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

Throughout all of the above compliance activities tabled, the Community Services Department aims to work proactively with property and animal owners to achieve a positive outcome within the legislative framework set by the State Government and Council's Local Law.

#### **COST/BENEFITS**

The expenditure for the fourth quarter of 2023-2024 financial year for the local laws and compliance activities contained within this report is within the expected budget expenditure for this period.

As the identified properties are escalated through the compliance process, costs associated with legal proceedings may also be incurred by Council.

The resulting cost to Council can be significant in terms of officer(s) time; particularly undertaking various site inspections across Loddon Shire Council. Direct monetary costs can be significant

should a matter progress to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) or the Magistrates' Court. Therefore, it is of benefit to Council and the community that the Community Services Department work through these matters in a timely and respectful manner to reach an appropriate outcome wherever possible.

Benefits derived from investing in local law and planning compliance activities include:

- improving and maintaining township amenity
- ensuring that appropriate development occurs
- maintaining and improving public safety
- encouraging good domestic animal and livestock management
- reduced risks.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Failure of Council to adequately manage the provisions associated with the Loddon Planning Scheme, *Planning and Environment Act 1987* or other applicable legislation including the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, *Impounding of Livestock Act 1994* or Council's Community Local Law is considered to pose the following risks:

- barrier to development and associated economic growth within Loddon Shire
- inappropriate development
- Council's reputation as a regulatory authority
- public safety that endangers life and property
- adverse amenity of our townships
- increased hazards.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Land and animal owners subject to compliance and enforcement actions under the abovementioned legislation and local law are consulted with at each stage of the process.

**11.7 QUARTERLY BUILDING SERVICES ACTIVITY REPORT**

**File Number:** 13/06/001, 13/08/001, 13/08/003  
**Author:** Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance  
**Authoriser:** Steven Phillips, Director Operations  
**Attachments:** Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Building Services Activity Report.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any council staff member involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council is provided with information quarterly summarising building services activities relating to permits, certificates and statutory enforcement activity undertaken within the Development & Compliance Department. This report covers the fourth quarter of this financial.

**BACKGROUND**

Council provides a range of building services through the Municipal Building Surveyor including the following:

- issuing relevant permits and certificates
- issuing report and consent determinations on matters not complying with the Building regulations
- building advisory and information services including legal point of discharge requests
- consultancy and building control functions
- administrative functions prescribed by the Building Act and Regulations including keeping records relating to the activity of private building surveyors issuing permits within Loddon Shire
- regulatory enforcement of relevant Acts.

The number of building permits, occupancy permits and final inspections is a basic indicator of building development and investment within the Loddon Shire Council area.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Throughout the fourth quarter of the 2023-2024 financial year, items of significance relating to the activity of Council's building services include:

- swimming pool registration requirements and registration of the Complying Barrier Certificates.
- issuing of demolition consents and variations to sitting under Part 5 of the Building Regulations.
- follow up on enforcement activities including following up Court and Building Appeals items
- ongoing implementation and improvement of software system changes.

Building permits



Table 1 provides the number and total value of building permits issued for the four quarters of 2023-2024. There is variation in the value of permits throughout any given financial year and this is attributable to the scale and cost of individual projects.

*Table 1: Summary of new building permits issued*

	Quarter 1 2023-24 (01/07/2023 – 30/09/2023)	Quarter 2 2023-24 (01/10/2023 – 31/12/2023)	Quarter 3 2023-24 (01/01/2024 – 31/03/2024)	Quarter 4 2023-24 (01/04/2024 – 30/06/2024)
<b>No. of new Permits</b>	25	42	30	31
<b>Value of Works</b>	\$2,319,670	\$14,523,408	\$14,035,638	\$5,859,102

Table 2 provides a summary of the number of final inspections and certificates of occupancy issued for building permits for each quarter.

*Table 2: Summary of final inspections and occupancy permits*

	Quarter 1 2023-24 (01/07/2023 – 30/09/2023)	Quarter 2 2023-24 (01/10/2023 – 31/12/2023)	Quarter 3 2023-24 (01/01/2024 – 31/03/2024)	Quarter 4 2023-24 (01/04/2024 – 30/06/2024)
<b>Certificates of final inspection</b>	41	33	23	37
<b>Occupancy Permits</b>	23	11	11	8

Council Building Services staff continue to work proactively with Council issued permit holders, sending follow up letters to notify building owners approximately two months before their building permits are due to lapse. This allows owners to arrange a final inspection/occupancy permit or apply for an extension of time for their building permit.

Statutory enforcement

Table 3 provides a high level summary of statutory enforcement activities undertaken by the Municipal Building Surveyor.

*Table 3: Summary of statutory enforcement activities*

Type	Actions incomplete from previous report period	New action started	Total actions	Building notice issued	Building order issued	Appeal to Building Appeals Board	Legal action / solicitors letter started this quarter	Legal action ongoing	No. resolved during this quarter
Building damaged by fire	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0

Type	Actions incomplete from previous report period	New action started	Total actions	Building notice issued	Building order issued	Appeal to Building Appeals Board	Legal action / solicitors letter started this quarter	Legal action ongoing	No. resolved during this quarter
Works required to make building safe (including pools)	21	1	22	2	3	1	0	1	1
Carrying out building works without a permit	12	5	17	11	2	0	0	0	1
Works not in accordance with building permit	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Illegal occupation of non-habitable building	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building with non-complying essential safety measures	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Whilst new issues requiring enforcement are identified regularly, it is also noted there are some longstanding enforcement activities that are ongoing. The time spent on individual items can be significant particularly when it requires escalation to Court. Council officers work to try to resolve matters without legal intervention.

**COST/BENEFITS**

The expenditure for the fourth quarter of the 2023-2024 financial year for building services activities was \$55,335.

The cost to Council of enforcement activity can be quite significant, particularly in terms of Council officers' time. This in turn impacts on other activities such as the timeframe for building permits. Direct monetary costs significantly escalate if matters progress to a Magistrate's hearing or the Municipal Building Surveyor needs to arrange for the work associated with any order to be completed by Council. As such, the Municipal Building Surveyor, together with other Development & Compliance Department staff endeavour to work through enforcement matters in a manner that engages with property owners/occupiers to have required works completed.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

There are risks associated with all building and development works. As such, it is vital that Building legislation, standards and controls are administered effectively. Failure of Council to adequately enforce the provisions of applicable legislation poses the following possible risks:

- unsafe development and building works which may affect the safety of property owners, occupiers and the general public within Loddon Shire
- Council's reputation as a regulatory authority
- Council being held liable for failure to act in a matter which results in damage to other property, or injury or death to a person
- failure to meet statutory obligations set within relevant legislation.

As part of the risk management process when undertaking enforcement work, the Municipal Building Surveyor makes reference to the building enforcement intervention filter criteria, developed by the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group and which forms part of the procedures covered in Loddon Shire Council's Building Control Policy.

A significant risk within Loddon Shire is unregulated developments, in particular small allotments which are sold to purchasers that have expectations of using it for a cheap home or "weekender". Often the landholder is unable or unwilling to meet the regulatory requirements to safely utilise the site as they desire. This has led to a number of undesirable and potentially unsafe outcomes of unregulated developments. This remains a matter of concern for Council's Municipal Building Surveyor and Local Laws & Planning Compliance Officer.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Municipal Building Surveyor regularly engages with business operators, developers, residents and ratepayers during the administration of the various Acts, which can range from essential safety measures assessments/inspections to the provision of advice relating to the need for building permits and other functions administered by the Municipal Building Surveyor under the Building Act and Building Regulations. Any business operator, developer, resident or ratepayer that is subject to enforcement action is regularly consulted with during the enforcement process to give them the opportunity to avoid the escalation of enforcement action.

**11.8 LIBRARY SERVICES QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT****File Number:****Author:** Renae Colls, Executive Assistant**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Loddon Shire Quarterly Activity Report April - June 2024**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Loddon Shire Council Library Services Quarterly Activity Report for April to June 2024.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**BACKGROUND**

The North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation (trading as Goldfields Library Corporation) consists of members from the City of Greater Bendigo, and the Shires of Loddon, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander. The Corporation provides library services to these municipalities, covering an area of 12,979km<sup>2</sup>.

In Loddon Shire, 15% of the population are library members and there are six library agencies located in Boort, Dingee, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Tarnagulla and Wedderburn.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

This report seeks to inform Council of the activities undertaken by the Goldfields Library Corporation (GLC) for the quarter April to June 2024. The attached Loddon Shire Quarterly Activity Report highlights key activities, programs, customer visits, library borrowings and more.

**COST/BENEFITS**

Loddon Shire Council's financial contribution for quarter four was \$54,915.63.

The Loddon Shire Council contribution for the 2023/24 financial year was \$217,875.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Goldfields Library Board is responsible for the provision of the best library service outcomes for the communities of the four member Councils. The Board comprises two representatives from each of the four member Councils and meet at least once every three months. The Corporation is managed by a Chief Executive Officer appointed by the Board.

The GLC current board members are:

- Vacant - City of Greater Bendigo
- Stacy Williams – City of Greater Bendigo
- Cr Linda Jungwirth – Loddon Shire Council
- Lincoln Fitzgerald – Loddon Shire Council
- Cr Bill West – Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Maria Weiss - Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Cr Rosie Annear – Mount Alexander Shire Council

- Rosalie Rogers – Mount Alexander Shire Council
- Mark Hands – North Central Goldfields Regional Library CEO

Cr Jungwirth and CEO Fitzgerald are members of the library board, CEO Fitzgerald is also on the board's Finance Committee.

# Loddon Shire Quarterly Report

April – May – June 2024



## Highlights:

- Wedderburn StoryWalk
- DIY Kokedama Ball
- Law Week: Legal Health Check
- DL: Creating a Facebook Page

*Patron visit formula; average number of patrons seen during weekly staff visit x number of hours open per week (capped at 20hrs) x 4.3 weeks.*

## Priority 1: Children and Young People

### Early Years Programs

- Agency Storytime session: 8 held – 155 attendees
- Outreach Storytime session: 8 held - 176 attendees
- School Holiday Activities: 6 held – 22 attendees

### Wedderburn Storywalk

The first Loddon Shire StoryWalk was launched after overcoming months of planning challenges, including setbacks caused by floods and location issues. Families, including children from the Wedderburn Playgroup and Preschool, gathered at Jacka Park Playground for the launch. After a warm welcomed by Loddon Shire Mayor Gavan Holt and Councilor Linda Jungwirth participants followed the StoryWalk along a section of the Nardoo Trail, guided by Storytime presenter Ange, dressed as a Koala, who delighted children with readings from *Little Lost Koala* and interactive songs and activities. Children received goodie bags with various gifts, including a picture book to take home, followed by morning tea and additional playtime. This fun initiative combines a beloved children’s story with a scenic walking route, promoting both physical activity and a literary experience. The StoryWalk will feature a new story quarterly, ensuring ongoing enjoyment in the future.

## Loddon Shire Agency Activities

Activity	JUL-SEP	OCT-DEC	JAN-MAR	APR-JUN
Staff visits	82	73	65	79
Engagement/partnership meeting	2	34	10	24
Patron visits	3765	4560	3836	3067
Programs run	27	21	28	32
Program attendance	311	340	158	420
Loans issues	2110	1929	1865	1882
Loans returned (Self-Serve)	3379	3369	3254	2869
New Library Members	29	16	34	19
Personalised Drop-in Tech Support		5	0	8

### Narrative:

*Jan-Mar visits and loans impacted by reduced service over January 2024 – Inglewood Community Neighbourhood House closed from 21 Dec to 22 Jan, Boort Agency visits reduced to one visit per week over Jan due to staff leave.*

*Programs run; includes adult programs, school holiday activities, Storytime, and outreach.*



Wedderburn StoryWalk Launch



# Loddon Shire Quarterly Report

April – May – June 2024



- Priority 2: Lifelong Learning
- Priority 4: An Informed Community
- Priority 5: Connecting People

During **Law Week** we offered **Legal Health Check** sessions at **Wedderburn Library Agency**. These sessions, presented in partnership with Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre, were designed to help participants learn how to run a personal legal health check to attain peace of mind.

We also offered **Digital Literacy: Create a Facebook Page for Your Community Group** sessions at **Boort, Inglewood and Wedderburn agencies**. These sessions, planned and produced by Russell, were designed to build skills in creating and managing a social media page as a great way to connect and share with communities and like-minded people. Participants were able to learn how to create a Facebook page for a community group and grow an audience and online presence.

- Priority 2: Lifelong Learning
- Priority 5: Connecting People
- Priority 8: A Sustainable Future

We held **DIY Kokedama Ball** workshops at **Inglewood and Pyramid Hill Library Agencies**. Creating Kokedama balls offers community members not only a creative outlet but also a host of joyful and practical benefits. Led by our staff member Naarah, who planned and delivered the workshops, participants were encouraged to shape soil and wrap roots with moss and twine. This shared activity promotes a sense of connection among participants, fostering new friendships and strengthening community bonds. Crafting Kokedama balls also encourages environmental awareness by reusing materials and promoting indoor gardening, which brings a touch of nature to indoor spaces. The process also nurtures a sense of accomplishment as each unique creation reflects personal style and creativity, leaving participants with a tangible reminder of their shared experience and the natural beauty they've cultivated together.



Pyramid Hill Library Agency: DIY Kokedama Ball workshop presented by Naarah.

**Feedback:**

**School Holiday activity**

*"Thank you so much for putting on the activity, we really enjoyed it. This is a lovely library and we love coming here."*

**DIY Kokedama Ball**

*"I really enjoyed this activity, it was very well presented and great fun, I hope we can do this again."*

**Wedderburn Storywalk Launch**

*"Thank you so much for this morning, my son loved it, he really love's Ange's storytime sessions. This StoryWalk is a great idea"*

**11.9 LODDON SWIMMING POOLS – END OF SEASON REPORT 2023-2024****File Number:****Author:** Orrin Hogan, Manager Community Partnerships**Authoriser:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Loddon swimming pools end of season report 2023-2024.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The swimming pools end of season report 2023-2024 was provided to the August 2024 Council Forum.

**BACKGROUND**

Council operates five swimming pools in Boort, Wedderburn, Inglewood, Mitiamo and Pyramid Hill and oversees the provision of the Bridgewater Swimming Hole. Council has a current contract with Belgravia Leisure to undertake the operational management of the five pools including the supervision of staff/lifeguards, training, chemical operations and daily cleaning.

This report helps stakeholders understand the performance and financial health of the aquatic facilities and guides future decision-making. This end of season report information will assist to inform Council regarding service levels and costs associated with this area of activity

Relevant to this report, Council have engaged consultants Otium to deliver the *Recreation, Open Space and Aquatics Strategy (ROSA)*; a 10-year strategic plan that establishes a clear direction for providing, developing, and managing its sport and recreation, open space and aquatic facilities into the future. Part of this strategy outlines a maintenance/renewal cost of \$1.3 million over the next ten years to continue the current level of service; in addition to the annual operating costs.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The following information relates to the operational outcomes of the 2023-2024 swimming season which was conducted from Saturday 18 November 2023 to Monday 11 March 2024. The pools operate between 2pm – 7.00pm during school holidays, and 3.30pm – 7.00pm during school terms.

During the season, pools were closed for a total of 25 days, due to forecast temperatures being below 24 degrees and severe weather events, resulting in storm activity and local flooding. Other closures were due to equipment failure, and a pool leak. No pools were closed due to staff shortages. Overall Loddon Shire pools remained open for 91.4% of the season.

Early morning swimming was well received by the community, and was offered at Boort, Wedderburn & Inglewood. In addition, 14 events were held across the venues, including movie nights, pool parties, and lawn games.

Total pool expenditure across the five aquatic venues for the season was \$711,067, with the total attendance figure across all five venues being 14,928. This figure includes casual swimmers, members & user groups (such as schools, exercise classes and swimming lessons).

The average daily attendance across the pool sites ranged between 20 – 53 patrons, with an overall average daily attendance of 29 patrons. The cost per patron per swim ranged from \$23.56 to \$73.03, with an overall average cost per patron per swim of \$47.63.

The total expense amounts only include costs associated with the running and maintenance of each pool; the figures do not include any capital investment amounts.

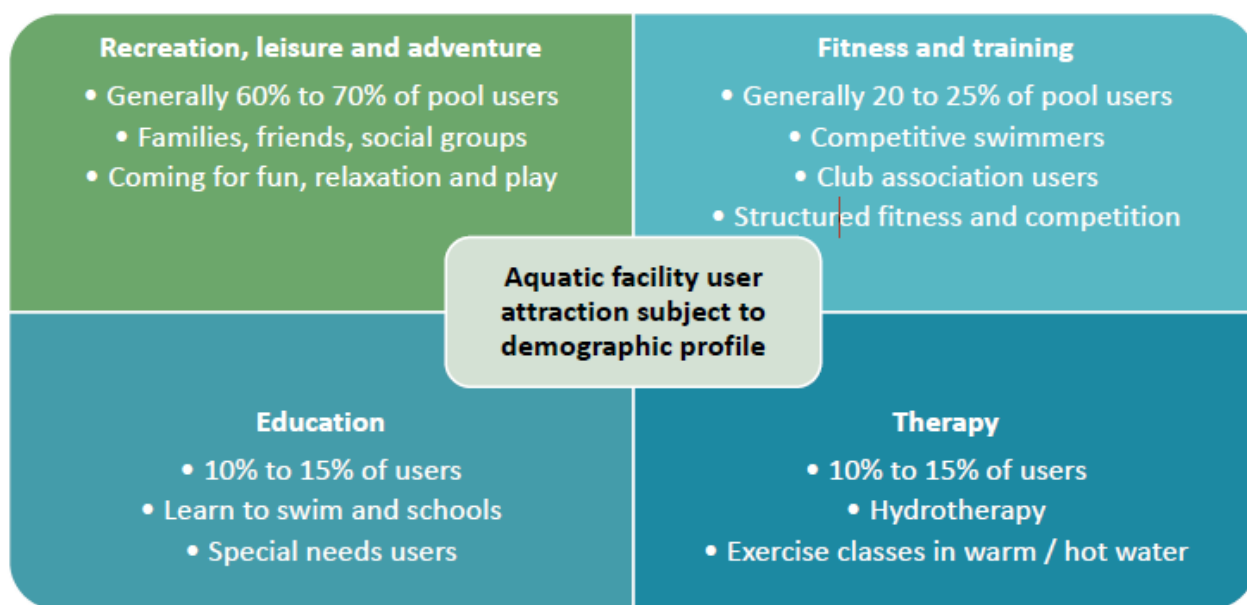
**COST/BENEFITS**

The total contract price across the initial three year term was \$1,486,489 (ex. GST). The contract cost for term three (2023/24 financial year) was \$442,070 and is subject to rise and fall, as discussed above. When including Council’s administration and maintenance costs the total pool expenditure for the season was \$711,067.

Belgravia Leisure completed their initial 3 year contact at the end of the 2023/24 pool season. Following a review, Council approved a contract extension for the aquatics management by Belgravia Leisure for an additional 3-year term at the May 2024 Council meeting.

The pools provide opportunity for physical activity for our community, promote healthier lifestyles, improve access and engage people of all backgrounds, ages and stages in active, social fun. Through the careful planning for and provision of community aquatic facilities and services, these become invaluable settings to help Loddon Shire become a healthier and more liveable place.

The swimming pools also provide a safe, supervised environment for people to engage with water for a range of purposes. These include the main markets as outlined in the diagram below.



Source: Loddon Recreation, Open Space and Aquatic Strategy Background Report, – Otium Planning Group Pty Ltd

Loddon Shire also has an enhanced need for swimming pools considering the high drowning risks that come with swimming in dams, channels and inland waterways. The availability of swimming pools enable people to enjoy the water whilst having trained staff onsite.

This report outlines the operational costs of this service only; noting that in addition to the operating costs, Council also has an annual capital investment which is expected to experience significant growth over the coming decades. The theoretical asset life of a water retaining structure is 50 years and many of our aquatic facilities are significantly older than this. Further work will be undertaken to quantify the likely capital investment required into the future, however it is clear that the status quo will be difficult to sustain

**RISK ANALYSIS**

One of the major risks is the capital investment required to the aging infrastructure of the five pools across the shire. Each of the pools shells are over 50 years old, with many already failing to some

degree. The high cost for the installation of a new pool shell, along with the supporting plant rooms, will likely require a significant future investment so that our community can continue to enjoy the aquatic environments. This aligns to Council's Plan and Community Vision of *1.1.1 – Plan for future facilities and infrastructure that meet community need* and *1.1.3 – Maintain sports and recreation and open public spaces to enable and promote access and participation*.

Council also has a responsibility to adhere to all safety and compliance regulations required to maintain the pools resulting in further costs.

The culmination of these two risks above can result in reputational risk due to pool closures either short or longer term. This was evident during the 2023/24 season when pools were unable to open due to equipment failure, which resulted in increased community concern as to the stability of continued operation of the pools.

Council Officers have engaged a specialist consultant (JWC Engineers) to prepare a swimming pools condition report to support a prioritised repair and maintenance program at the five aquatic locations across Loddon Shire Council, inform a future capital works plan and the impending Recreation Open Space Aquatic Strategy (ROSA).

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

There was no consultation or engagement required in the development of this report.

**12 COMPLIANCE REPORTS**

Nil

**13 URGENT BUSINESS**

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, Clause 53 provides that at a scheduled or special meeting of Council, business that is not included in the agenda notice must only be considered if no more than one Councillor is absent and the Council resolves that the matter is urgent.

Despite this requirement, a matter that is not included in the agenda notice must not be considered at a Council meeting if it will:

- (a) directly and significantly affect the exercise of a person's rights;
- (b) alter the Council Plan or the budget; or
- (c) commit the Council to expenditure exceeding \$20,000.

**14 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Nil

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Meeting of Council will be held on 16 September 2024 at Wedderburn commencing at 3.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at [enter time](#).