



BAW BAW SHIRE

Open Space Strategy 2025–35





Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their ongoing connection to the land and waters that make up Baw Baw Shire. We pay our respects to their Elders: past, present, and emerging. We thank the Traditional Custodians for caring for Country and continuing the customs that maintain the longest practised culture in the world.

Baw Baw Shire Council's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Baw Baw Shire Council is committed to providing and actively promoting a safe environment for children. Council has zero tolerance towards child abuse, and is committed to protecting the physical, emotional, cultural, and social wellbeing of all children. Council has policies and systems to protect children, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously. Council acknowledges that children's safety is a whole of community responsibility and is everyone's business.

Preventing Violence Against Women

Council promotes the prevention of violence against women, through leading gender equity and building respectful and safe relationships and breaking down gender stereotypes.



IMAGE: Blue Rock Lake, Willow Grove



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Executive Summary

The Baw Baw Shire Open Space Strategy sets out a strategic framework to guide the planning, enhancement, and management of public open spaces across the municipality over the next 10 years. In the context of strong population growth and ongoing urban expansion, the Strategy aims to ensure that all residents have access to high-quality, sustainable, and well-connected open spaces that support community wellbeing, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

Developed through comprehensive analysis and shaped by extensive engagement with the community and stakeholders, the Strategy identifies priorities that reflect the values, needs, and aspirations of Baw Baw's diverse communities. It adopts a place-based approach to address gaps in access and quality, with a strong focus on improving liveability, protecting natural systems, and fostering inclusive and welcoming spaces for all.

The Strategy includes a clear and actionable plan to guide future investment, inform policy development, and support the coordinated delivery of projects. Its successful implementation will rely on collaboration across Council departments, landowners, government agencies, and local communities, ensuring that Baw Baw's open spaces continue to support a healthy, connected, and resilient Shire for generations to come.





Message from the Mayor

Baw Baw Shire is privileged to be embraced by an expansive network of open spaces that are integral to the fabric, culture, and vitality of our towns, villages, and districts.

Our parks, gardens, and reserves help make Baw Baw Shire a vibrant, healthy, and sustainable place where people can thrive. They contribute to economic growth, attract visitors, and provide opportunities for social connection, physical activity, and well-being. At the same time, the Shire's accelerated population growth and increasing density in key towns such as Warragul and Drouin present Council with new challenges and opportunities. Meeting these challenges requires careful planning, innovation, and targeted investment in our open spaces, which are among the most important assets for the community.

This Open Space Strategy sets a clear direction for the sustainable care, management, and expansion of our parks and reserves to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population. It recognises the importance of supporting all members of our community, including older residents who wish to age in place, families, and people with varying abilities. Our aim is to create environments where people can live, work, and enjoy life in their community, while maintaining strong connections to nature and each other. Open spaces are a vital tool in achieving this aim, providing the settings, facilities, and experiences that bring communities together and support wellbeing.

Through this strategy, Council reaffirms its commitment to a thriving, healthy, sustainable and supporting Shire. By planning our open spaces to respond to climate change, provide shade and cooling, and support biodiversity, we are safeguarding the longterm wellbeing of our community and the natural environment we cherish. I am delighted to share this strategy with our residents, stakeholders, and partners as a guide for the future of our open spaces, and look forward to seeing Baw Baw Shire's open spaces continue to flourish for generations to come.

Mayor Cr Kate Wilson



IMAGE: Civic Park, Drouin



1.

Introduction

Baw Baw Shire stands on the land and water that the Kulin and Kurnai Nations have lived on and cared for over tens of thousands of years. This land remains central to Aboriginal people's sense of identity and culture, despite the profound changes brought about by European settlement. European settlement of Baw Baw Shire began in earnest during the late 19th century, coinciding with the establishment of the Gippsland railway from Melbourne to Sale in the 1870s.

Baw Baw Shire is privileged to be embraced by an expansive network of blue, green and grey open spaces that are integral to the urban fabric, culture, and vitality of its towns, villages, and districts. These spaces forge a profound connection with native flora and fauna and encompass diverse ecosystems, including alpine areas, mountain ash forests, rainforests, bushlands, and swamps. These ecosystems support significant biodiversity, including nationally important species that contribute valuable ecosystem services to the region.

Our natural features not only serve as tourist attractions and recreational havens, supporting economic growth and employment, but also bestow numerous social and health benefits upon our community. The accelerated rate of growth and associated higher migration and population density in the growth areas and main towns such as Warragul and Drouin, present Council with a range of complex social, environmental and public health challenges that the Shire attempts to address by delivering a range of municipal services and facilities. These include, road infrastructure, community infrastructure and the construction of public parks on an unprecedented scale.

As the population burgeons, new expectations are placed upon our open spaces, necessitating their role in climate change adaptation, biodiversity enhancement, the creation of interconnected bio-links, establishment of safer walking and cycling networks, and provision of spaces for outdoor recreation, sports, food cultivation, and social gatherings. For Baw Baw to be well equipped to address recent challenges, it is important that these demands are met, and Baw Baw continue to enhance its attractiveness and vibrancy as a place in which to live and invest.

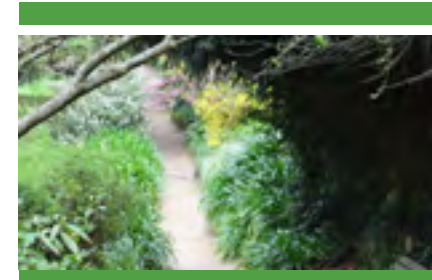
To address these evolving demands and ensure the enduring allure and vibrancy of

Baw Baw, an Open Space Strategy (OSS) is imperative. This strategic framework will guide the responsible utilisation of open spaces by residents, flora, and fauna alike, ensuring sustainability for years to come. The OSS not only seeks practical solutions to current challenges but also serves as a forward-looking tool for Council to assess existing open space assets and anticipate future needs. By providing strategic direction, the OSS informs the decision-making processes of all Council services, fostering the development of a well-functioning network of green, blue, and grey open spaces. In doing so, the strategy endeavours to secure a flourishing future for our community and natural environment.

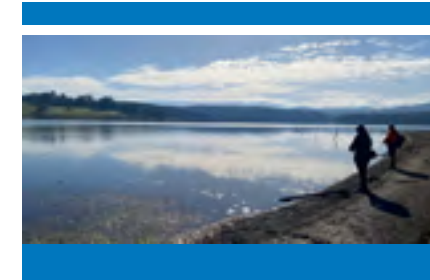
1.1 What is Open Space?

Open space is a diverse and encompassing concept that holds different meanings depends on context. It generally refers to areas of land or water, both public and private, that are undeveloped or designed for recreation, conservation, or aesthetic purposes. Open space takes on different forms, including green, blue, and grey.

Open space can be seen in three different forms: blue, green and grey.



Green Space: Open spaces are natural or constructed, open spaces that are accessible spaces covered primarily in plants and vegetation, created for recreation and or environmental purposes.



Blue Space: Blue spaces are outdoor environments—either natural or constructed—that prominently feature water and are accessible to people. In short – the collective term for waterways, lakes or the sea.



Grey space: The open spaces that usually are surrounded by buildings and streets, such as civic squares. While the streets are mainly linear circulation places, grey open spaces or squares are destinations and places of meeting and activities.

Understanding these distinctions helps in recognising the multifaceted nature of open spaces, each serving unique purposes in enhancing the quality of life in communities.

This strategy is about public open space that meet certain criteria.

In delineating public open space for the scope of this strategy, three primary criteria are considered: purpose of use, accessibility conditions, and ownership status.

1. Purpose of use

- The strategy encompasses spaces publicly owned and set aside primarily or secondarily for recreation, outdoor enjoyment, and public gatherings.
- Spaces that are too small to provide adequate recreational value or outdoor enjoyment, though excluded from the access assessment, are included in the overall provision of open space if they are being utilised by the community. Examples of these spaces are smaller linear connections and local linkages.

2. Access Conditions

- The strategy focuses on spaces that are free of charge at all times and publicly accessible
- Areas where community access is restricted or limited have been excluded, aligning with the priority of enabling broad community access to and enjoyment of open spaces. Examples of these space are public golf courses or bowling clubs that require membership.

3. Ownership Status

- The strategy focuses on spaces that are publicly owned.
- Public open spaces with private owners are excluded from the strategy due to uncertainties regarding their future accessibility. Examples include outdoor seating areas in shopping plazas and communal outdoor spaces in apartment complexes.

Throughout this document, we refer to Public Open Space simply as “Open Space.” However, this term specifically refers to spaces that meet the three criteria outlined above.

Acknowledgment is also given to other open spaces contributing to the environmental and biodiversity aspects, enhancing visual amenity in the overall environment.

Refer to [Appendix 1](#) for more information about these spaces.

1.2 Benefits of Public Open Spaces

Public open spaces play a crucial role in contributing to various aspects of sustainability, offering a range of benefits that extend across environmental, economic, and social domains.

Social Benefit

Public parks and open spaces enhance community wellbeing by promoting health, education, safety, inclusion, and resilience.

They provide spaces for physical activity and mental relaxation, support learning through nature-based programs, and improve safety with thoughtful design. Equitable access fosters social connections, while these spaces also help communities adapt to challenges and crises.



Economic Benefit

Public open spaces provide significant economic benefits by boosting tourism, increasing property values, and creating local job opportunities.

They reduce infrastructure costs by offering natural services like flood control and water quality improvements, lowering reliance on expensive engineered solutions. Additionally, access to green spaces improves physical and mental health benefits, leading to reduced healthcare costs and long-term public savings.



Environmental Benefit

Public open spaces help combat climate change by reducing urban heat, improving air quality, and managing stormwater to prevent flooding.

They also support biodiversity by providing habitats for wildlife, with initiatives like tree planting and biolink mapping enhancing ecosystem connectivity. These efforts align with sustainability strategies, ensuring long-term environmental resilience.



Social Benefits

Health and Well-being

Access to well-maintained public spaces significantly enhances both physical and mental health. Regular use of these spaces for activities such as walking, jogging, or sports can improve physical fitness and lower the risk of chronic illnesses. Additionally, green spaces provide a natural refuge that reduces stress, decreases rates of depression, and enhances mental well-being. Proximity to nature has been linked to higher levels of life satisfaction, offering residents a sense of tranquillity and connection to their environment.

Learning and Education

Open spaces serve as dynamic environments for both formal and informal learning, catering to people of all age groups. Programs such as Bush Kinder demonstrate the value of nature-based learning, fostering children’s development by encouraging exploration, creativity, and problem-solving in natural settings. These spaces also provide adults and community groups with opportunities for environmental education, workshops, and cultural awareness programs.

Safety Enhancement

Thoughtfully designed and diverse public open spaces enhance the sense of safety within communities. Reduced vehicle presence in these areas fosters a more secure environment, encouraging physical activity, social interactions, and leisure activities. Clear sightlines, appropriate lighting, and active usage of these spaces further contribute to a welcoming atmosphere for all users.

Equity and Social Inclusion

High-quality public open spaces are critical for promoting equity and social inclusion. By improving access to these spaces, communities can bridge social divides and ensure everyone benefits, regardless of their background. Participatory programs, community festivals, and volunteer initiatives empower individuals to take ownership of their local open spaces, fostering a shared sense of belonging and connection.

Urban Resilience

Public open spaces are integral to urban resilience, acting as buffers during times of social, environmental, or economic challenges. They provide settings for cultural and community gatherings, act as sanctuaries during environmental shocks, and support adaptive responses to urban stresses. These spaces are pivotal in enabling cities to respond collectively and effectively to crises while maintaining the well-being of their residents.

Economic Benefits

Income Generation and Investment

Nature-based tourism in Baw Baw plays a significant role in supporting the local economy, attracting approximately one million visitors annually. Beyond tourism, well-designed open spaces enhance land values, contributing to broader economic growth. Parks, recreational trails, and similar open spaces not only serve as community assets but also generate local employment opportunities and support activities like temporary markets, further boosting the economy.

Reduced Infrastructure Costs

Green assets, such as open spaces, are inherently cost-effective due to their lower maintenance requirements and longer lifespan compared to traditional infrastructure. These spaces also provide natural services, such as water quality improvements and flood control, reducing the need for costly engineered solutions and ongoing operational expenses.

Reduced Healthcare Costs

Public open spaces positively impact community health by encouraging physical activity, social interaction, and mental well-being. These benefits can potentially reduce public expenditure on healthcare. Research underscores the mental health advantages of green open spaces, demonstrating their value as a preventative health measure.

Research indicates that proximity to green spaces can lead to significant reductions in healthcare costs, a Study¹ demonstrated that the development of a small urban park resulted in annual benefits of CAD 133,000 including savings from reduced physical inactivity and improved mental health.

Environmental Benefits

Climate Change Response

Open spaces play a vital role in addressing climate change by mitigating its impacts. The vegetation within these spaces provides shade, reduces urban heat island effect, and improves air quality by combating air pollution reducing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and erosion from stormwater, reducing risks associated with extreme weather events such as flooding, heatwave and storm event. These contributions align closely with Council’s Environmental Sustainability Strategy, supporting short term and long-term resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Enhancing Biodiversity

Open spaces are essential for supporting biodiversity, providing habitats for a wide range of plant and animal species. Initiatives such as the Native Vegetation Offset Site Scheme and ongoing tree planting programs actively contribute to the enhancement of these habitats. Furthermore, tools like biolink maps and significant tree registries play a critical role in protecting and connecting ecosystems, ensuring sustainable biodiversity for future generations.



IMAGE: Alex Goudie Park, Drouin

¹ REF: The Trust for public land (2016). The Economic benefits of Toronto’s parks. City of Toronto.

1.3 Different Roles of Open Spaces

Open spaces serve multiple roles within communities, catering to diverse activities such as recreation, social interaction, environmental conservation, and active transportation. These spaces are essential for fostering a vibrant and inclusive community, but their multifunctional nature often leads to conflicts between different user groups. For instance, cyclists sharing pathways with families near playgrounds can create safety concerns, or off-leash dogs in parks may clash with those seeking a tranquil environment or risk for areas that are of environmental significance.

Such conflicts stem from varying needs, expectations, and usage patterns within the community. Without clear planning and management, these tensions can undermine the enjoyment and safety of open spaces, reducing their value as community assets.

1.4 Balancing Act of Strategy

The strategy acknowledges potential conflicts and aims to strike a balance between the diverse functions of open spaces through:

Identifying and Prioritising Community Needs: Through consultation and assessment, Council officers can understand the specific requirements of different user groups, ensuring that no single interest dominates at the expense of others.

Designing Spaces for Coexistence: This strategy recommends design solutions such as designated cycling lanes, and separate off-leash dog areas to minimise conflict and enhance safety.

Establishing Clear Guidelines and Rules: Guidelines regarding signage, education campaigns, and enforcement directions that are established in this strategy can help communicate appropriate behaviours and foster respect among users.

Adaptive Management: The OSS supports the implementation of adaptive management practices to monitor, assess, and adjust strategies based on evolving community needs and environmental considerations. Regular reviews and feedback loops ensure the strategy remains dynamic and responsive to balance diverse activities.

1.5 Council Role Related to Public Open Space

Planning for Open Space

Councils play a pivotal role in shaping the future of public open spaces within their jurisdiction. They are tasked with developing strategic plans that articulate a vision, establish goals, and outline objectives for these spaces. Taking into account factors such as population growth, community needs, environmental sustainability, and recreational trends, these plans serve as a roadmap for responsible development.

Councils further create comprehensive policies guiding the utilisation, development, and upkeep of public open spaces. These policies encompass critical elements like land acquisition, zoning regulations, and measures for environmental conservation.

In their commitment to preserving suitable areas for public open spaces, councils identify and acquire land while instituting zoning regulations to ensure the responsible and sustainable utilisation of these spaces. Such regulations may stipulate permissible activities and mandate conservation measures.

Recognising the significance of community engagement, councils actively seek public input to comprehend the diverse preferences, needs, and priorities related to open spaces. This collaborative approach is integral to aligning open space planning with the genuine requirements of residents.

Budgetary considerations are paramount in executing these plans, and councils allocate funds for both the development and maintenance of public open spaces. Seeking financial support from various sources, including government grants, community partnerships, and development contributions, Council ensures the viability and sustainability of these spaces. Additionally, councils play a hands-on role in overseeing the design and construction of open space infrastructure, encompassing parks, playgrounds, trails, and recreational facilities.

This multifaceted involvement reflects Council commitment to creating vibrant, inclusive, and well-maintained public spaces for the benefit of the community; in relation to its urban, social, economic and environmental planning responsibilities, within the existing legislative framework and through the Victorian Planning Provisions.



IMAGE: Civic Building, Drouin

Delivery of Open Space

Council is the responsible authority for delivery of new open space throughout the Shire. Such open space is planned and delivered discretely or as a combination of the below:

1. Execution of a planning permit by developer.
2. A project in Council's Long Term Infrastructure Plan.
3. Listed in the Precinct Structure Plans which are developed by the Victorian planning authorities in consultation and adopted by Council.

The DCPs (Developer Contribution Plans) provide funding for active public open space (sporting reserves) and related infrastructure as detailed out in each DCPs. The contributions / funding for passive public open space areas is as specified in clause 53.01 of the Baw Baw Planning Scheme.

Baw Shire Council is both the Collecting Agency and the Development Agency for all DCPs adopted by Council.

The DCP levies specified in DCPO2 and DCPO3 applies to the land areas in the Urban Growth Zone and the levies specified in DCPO1 applies to the whole of the Shire.

Council use the open space contribution fund to deliver passive open spaces in developing areas and to upgrade existing passive open space areas. Council also use DCPO1 fund to provide improvements (infrastructure) to existing and new open space areas.

The Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) Guidelines recommend the adoption of an average open space provision of 10% of Net Developable Area-Residential (NDA-R)across PSP areas. The guidelines are a reference document in the Baw Baw Planning Scheme. The 10% figure is based on the appropriate provision of both sporting reserves (active open space) and neighbourhood parks (passive open space) for new communities. The reference to 10% is a combined quantity of unencumbered public open space for both passive (local parks) and active (sporting reserves) open space.

For the land within the Precinct Structure Plans this 10% overall provision of unencumbered open space is generally divided into two components being:

1. 4.5% of the NDA-R for neighbourhood parks to be delivered through Clause 53.01 of the Baw Baw Planning Scheme; and
2. In accordance with the PSP and 5.5% of NDA-R for new sporting reserves to be delivered as infrastructure projects (land) via the DCPs.

Open Space Contribution

In Victoria, councils have several methods for levying development contributions towards the provision of municipal open space. These include Development Contribution Plans (DCPs), the Subdivision Act, and Clause 53.01 of the Planning Scheme. Baw Baw Shire utilises all three approaches to ensure adequate funding for its open space needs.

A mandatory financial contribution to open space, either as land or cash (at the discretion of Council), is typically levied at the time of subdivision whether land or building. This contribution, expressed as a percentage of land value, is made by the developer and reflected in the purchase price, ultimately passed on to new owners. These contributions are earmarked solely for delivering open space benefits to the population for whom the contribution is made. Cash contributions, in particular, are restricted to land acquisition or Improvements to the land, not ongoing maintenance.

As Baw Baw Shire continues to experience significant population growth, it's essential to anticipate where this growth will drive demand for new open spaces or upgrades to existing reserves. Open space contributions whether in the form of land, facilities, or financial resources are necessary to support these projects. In areas where existing open space is limited/not walkable, development triggers the need for additional open spaces, requiring contributions to fund land acquisition and the creation of associated facilities. Conversely, in areas with sufficient/walkable open space, contributions should be directed towards enhancing and expanding existing facilities to meet the needs of the growing population.

With Baw Baw Shire's population growth rate, the demand for accessible, high-quality parks and open spaces will only increase. To accommodate this growth, it is crucial to evaluate public spaces based on three key factors: quantity, quality, and accessibility. These measures help guide forward planning and ensure the effective allocation of resources. Priority should be given to areas where walkable access is not met, where the diversity and quality of open spaces are lacking or where open space provision per capita is low. These areas should be earmarked for future open space capital expenditure.

Currently, Baw Baw Shire's open space contribution rate has been assessed as insufficient to meet the demands of its growing population to high quality and walkable parks and open space network. To address this, the Council proposes amending the Schedule to Clause 53.01 (Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision) of the Baw Baw Planning Scheme. The proposed changes would establish new open space contribution rates across the municipality, ensuring that residential, commercial, and industrial developments contribute fairly to the cost of expanding and enhancing the Shire's open space network.

To inform the proposed rate, Council prepared a supporting report that identifies a suitable contribution based on the need to plan for and secure open space where it is most needed. Importantly, the calculation of open space provision underpinning the rate focuses solely on Council-owned land, this is because development contributions can only be used to fund the expansion and improvement of land that Council owns and manages. As such, open space contributions are a key funding mechanism for the future delivery of Council-owned facilities across the Shire.



Maintenance of Open Spaces

Ensuring open spaces are well-maintained through regular upkeep, landscaping, and safety inspections to provide a pleasant and functional environment for all users.

Monitoring of Open Spaces

Continuously assessing the use, condition, and performance of open spaces to adapt strategies, address challenges, and optimize resources effectively.

Advocacy for Open Spaces

Serving as advocates for open spaces, Councils engages with the community to promote the benefits of green areas, garnering support for their preservation and advocating for additional spaces when needed.

Statutory Responsibilities

Enforcing town planning, building, and public health regulations related to open spaces, ensuring safety and compliance with legal standards.

Partnering

Collaborating with developers, residents, schools, and other agencies to enhance open space outcomes and ensure shared responsibility in maintaining and utilizing open space assets.

Education on Open Spaces

Provide information and best practice advice to residents, council staff and professionals involved in open space planning and design.

Activation of Open Spaces

Encouraging and facilitating diverse uses of open spaces through programming, events, and temporary or permanent installations. Activation will attract visitors, and ensure open spaces are vibrant and well-utilized while supporting local culture, recreation, and economic activity.

1.6 What is an Open Space Strategy

An Open Space Strategy (OSS) serves as a comprehensive and high-level framework guiding all aspects of open space, from initial planning and development to ongoing delivery and maintenance. Positioned as a corporate document, the OSS aligns with and complements other key strategies and plans within the council's purview.

Key Characteristics:

Strategic Guidance: The OSS is a strategic document that provides overarching guidance for all matters related to open spaces, ensuring a cohesive and purposeful approach.

Influence on Decision-Making: The OSS holds the power to influence decisions related to council initiatives, fostering a strategic, multifunctional approach that optimises spending and investments for the benefit of the community.

Alignment with Council Objectives: By adhering to the OSS, Council ensures that its operations and services contribute to the realisation of objectives outlined in the Council plan, municipal health and well-being plan to deliver the optimum outcomes for the Shire's people, environment and economy.

Corporate Integration: Aligned with various council strategies and informing many of corporate strategies through its direction and actions and plans, the OSS operates as an integral part of the broader corporate framework.

National and International Commitments: The OSS aligns with Australia's international commitments, encompassing the following initiatives:

- **Child-Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI).**
- **UNICEF Initiative:** The OSS embraces the principles of the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI), a UNICEF-led effort supporting municipal governments in upholding the rights of children at the local level based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- **Age-Friendly Declaration:** While some councils, including Baw Baw, have yet to sign the Age-Friendly Declaration, the OSS emphasises the commitment to creating liveable communities for older Victorians and encourages support for the declaration.
- **Adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Framework and sustainable goals Convention on Climate Change.**

IMAGE: United Nations Framework



Legislative Considerations

The development of the OSS incorporates advice from Practice Note 70 and the new document “Guide for Open Space Strategy” developed by DEECA, ensuring a comprehensive and informed approach.

In essence, the Open Space Strategy serves as a dynamic and forward-thinking guide, steering Council efforts towards creating and maintaining open spaces that contribute positively to the community, environment, and economy.

1.7 Strategy Scope and Purpose

The OSS is a comprehensive framework designed to address the current and future open space requirements of the entire Baw Baw municipality. Applicable to all open spaces under council ownership or management, as well as publicly owned lands accessible to residents, the strategy aims to understand existing resources available for public recreation, community needs and guiding the quantity, location, design, and development of public open spaces. This inclusive approach spans existing and new developments, ensuring a nuanced analysis of spatial requirements contributing to the holistic development of the Shire’s open spaces.

1.8 Strategy Development Stages

The development of the Open Space Strategy followed an 11-stage process. The table below outlines each stage undertaken in the preparation of the Strategy.

No:	Stage	Description
1.	Background and Research	Collection of data about current open spaces, relevant state and federal guidelines, and benchmarking against open space strategies from similar local governments.
2.	First Stage of Community Engagement	Extensive Shire-wide community consultation involving internal council staff, Baw Baw Shire community members, tourists, visitors, public and private authorities, and landowners.
3.	Development of Vision, Objectives, and Principles	Creation of a community-driven open space vision, outcomes, objectives, and key direction to guide future planning and decision-making.
4.	Strategic Context Alignment	Establishment of the strategy’s relationship to other key local, state, and federal documents, ensuring alignment with broader planning and policy frameworks.
5.	Open Space Classification and Service Levels	Development of a classification system based on hierarchy and function, and creation of park and open space level of service standards and asset provision guidelines.
6.	Assessment of Open Spaces	Evaluation of open spaces based on quality, quantity, and walkable access, using both on-ground site assessments and spatial analysis tailored to each open space type and hierarchy.
7.	Action Plan Development	Identification and formulation of actions to address identified shortcomings or capitalize on potential future opportunities within the open space network.
8.	Second Stage of Community Engagement	Further extensive Shire-wide consultation to refine and validate the draft strategy, engaging internal council staff, community members, visitors, and relevant authorities and landowners.
9.	Implementation Plan Development	Creation of a 10-year implementation plan (2025–2035) that prioritizes actions as projects, assigns timeframes, and provides a roadmap for achieving the strategy’s goals.
10.	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	Development of a framework to regularly monitor the strategy’s progress, evaluate its effectiveness, and ensure it remains adaptable to changing needs and priorities.
11.	Final Endorsement and Publication	Securing formal endorsement of the strategy by relevant stakeholders and council, followed by its publication and dissemination to guide implementation.

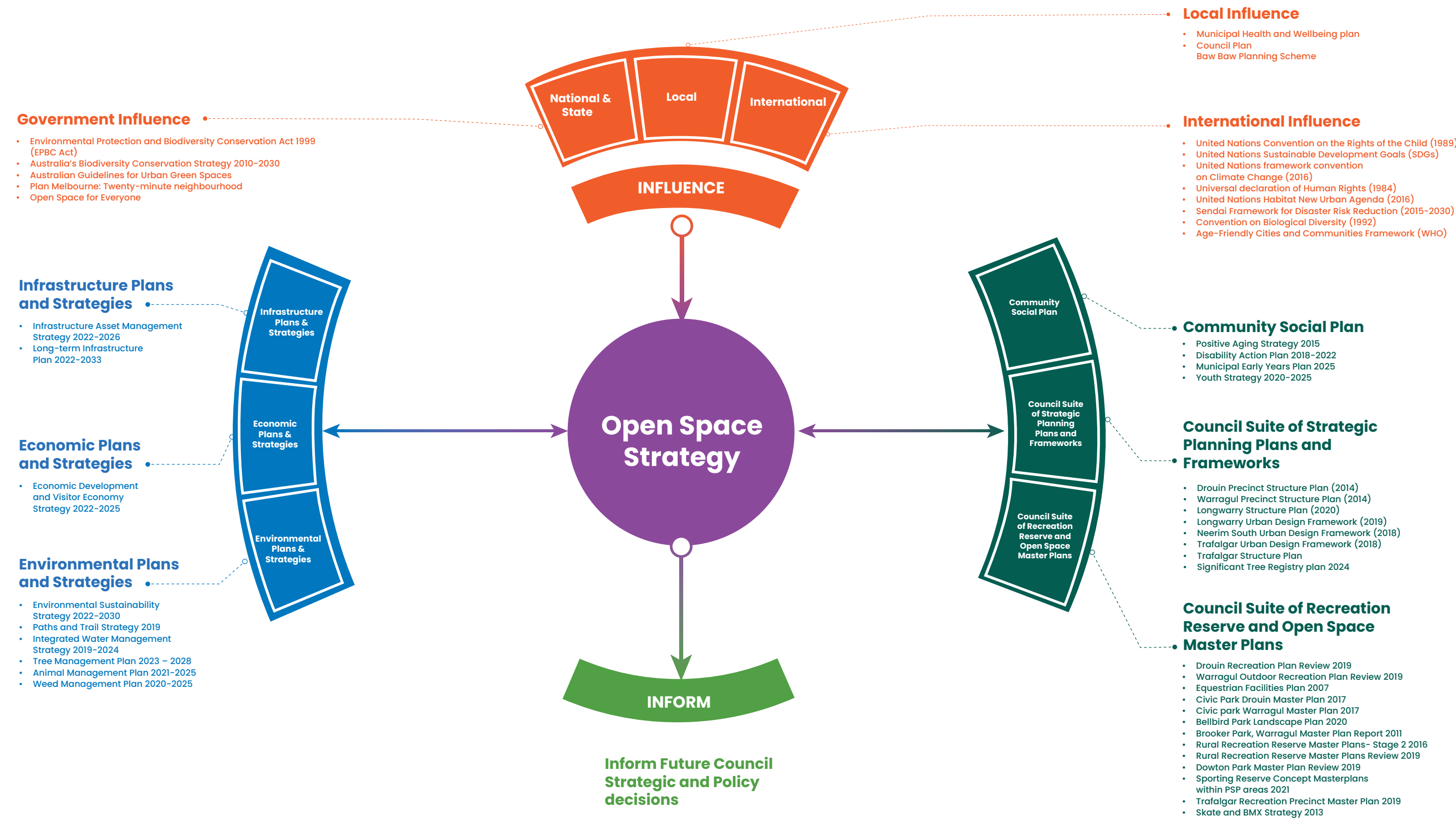


IMAGE: Burke Street Park, Warragul

1.9 Strategic Context

The Baw Baw Shire Open Space Strategy is aligned with key international commitments, state and national-level policies, plans, and guidelines, and its supporting the Council Plan and the Municipality Health and Wellbeing Plan objective and key direction. This strategy is designed to support and harmonize with various corporate strategies, plans, and policiesW

The relationship of the Open Space Strategy (OSS) with other pertinent documents is illustrated in the figure below. Refer to (Appendix 2) for more information about plan/policy and their relationship with Open Space Strategy.



Our Baw Baw

2.1 Geographic Location

Nestled in the West Gippsland region of Victoria, Baw Baw Shire encompasses 4025 sq km of picturesque land, situated approximately 100 kilometres east of Melbourne's CBD. Bounded by Yarra Ranges Council, Mansfield Shire, Wellington Shire, Latrobe City, South Gippsland Shire, and Cardinia Shire, Baw Baw derives its name from the Baw Baw Ranges, believed to originate from an Aboriginal term signifying "echo."



2.2 Settlement History

The region has a rich history, with the Kulin and Kurnai people as its original inhabitants. European settlement began in 1870, marked by farming and mining activities, and the introduction of a railway in 1890 spurred further growth and the establishment of townships. Growth took place in the larger townships of Drouin, Trafalgar and Warragul during the post-war years. Several water storage facilities were constructed, particularly during the 1970s.

The population of the Shire gradually increased from the 1990s, with more substantial growth from 2006. Most of the recent growth has been in Drouin and Warragul. Population growth is expected to continue.

2.3 Land Use

Baw Baw Shire is a predominantly rural area, with a mix of rural-residential and urban developments across numerous townships. Spanning approximately 4,025 square kilometres, the Shire covers 10% of Gippsland's land area and features vast agricultural lands, forests, ski slopes, and the growing urban centres of Warragul and Drouin.

The northern part of the Shire is heavily forested, while the southern part is used largely for dairy farming and agriculture. The middle part of the Shire is more densely populated, particularly along the Princes Highway and the Gippsland railway line. The main population centres are Warragul and Drouin, and to a lesser extent, Longwarry, Trafalgar and Yarragon. Smaller townships include Darnum, Drouin South, Drouin West, Erica, Jindivick, Neerim South, Noojee, Rawson, Tanjil Bren, Thorpdale, Walhalla and Willow Grove. Agriculture, particularly dairying and farming, remains a key land use, alongside forestry and tourism, which are vital to the local economy.

Over the past decade, Baw Baw has experienced significant growth in both population and economic output, driven by its affordable housing, lifestyle advantages, and diverse industries.

Looking ahead, Baw Baw is set for further transformation, influenced by population growth, technological advancements, and climate change, which will shape future land use and development across the region.



IMAGE: Ferntree Park, Drouin

2.4 Our Landscape

Baw Baw Shire boasts a rich and diverse landscape, encompassing alpine areas, majestic mountain ash forests, lush rainforests, expansive bushland, and serene low-lying swamps. Our region, characterized by forests, rolling hills, and mountains, provides a habitat for unique flora and fauna, including endangered species found nowhere else in the world. Notable inhabitants include the Warragul Burrowing Crayfish, Baw Baw Frog, Leadbeater’s Possum, Giant Gippsland Earthworm, Dwarf Galaxias, Strzelecki Gum, Greater Glider, Growling Grass Frog and Flinders Pygmy Perch.

Key features of Baw Baw Shire include natural treasures like Baw Baw National Park, Bunyip State Park (part), Moondarra State Park, Mount Worth State Park, Tyers Park, and conservation reserves like Bull Beef Creek and Sweetwater Creek. Our waterways, including Thomson Dam, Moondarra Reservoir, Tarago Reservoir, Blue Rock Lake, and Narracan Falls Streamside Reserve, contribute to the unique charm of our landscape.

In addition to these natural wonders, our region is home to cultural and recreational landmarks such as Walhalla Goldfields Railway, Noojee Trestle Bridge, and the Warragul Leisure Centre. We take pride in our vibrant community, reflected in facilities like the West Gippsland Arts Centre, Drouin Golf & Country Club, Trafalgar Golf Club, Warragul Country Club, and a plethora of vineyards and wineries.

Today, the Shire boasts a diverse landscape, with the northern part characterised by dense forests, the southern part dedicated to dairy farming and agriculture, and the middle section housing more populated areas along major transport routes like the Princes Highway and Gippsland railway line. Baw Baw is predominantly rural, featuring rural-residential and urban zones across various townships. The key population centres include Warragul and Drouin, experiencing notable growth, along with smaller yet vibrant towns like Longwarry, Trafalgar, and Yarragon. Additionally, the Shire encompasses charming hamlets such as Darnum, Drouin South, Drouin West, Erica, Jindivick, Neerim South, Noojee, Rawson, Tanjil Bren, Thorpdale, Walhalla, and Willow Grove.

2.5. Our Community Dynamics

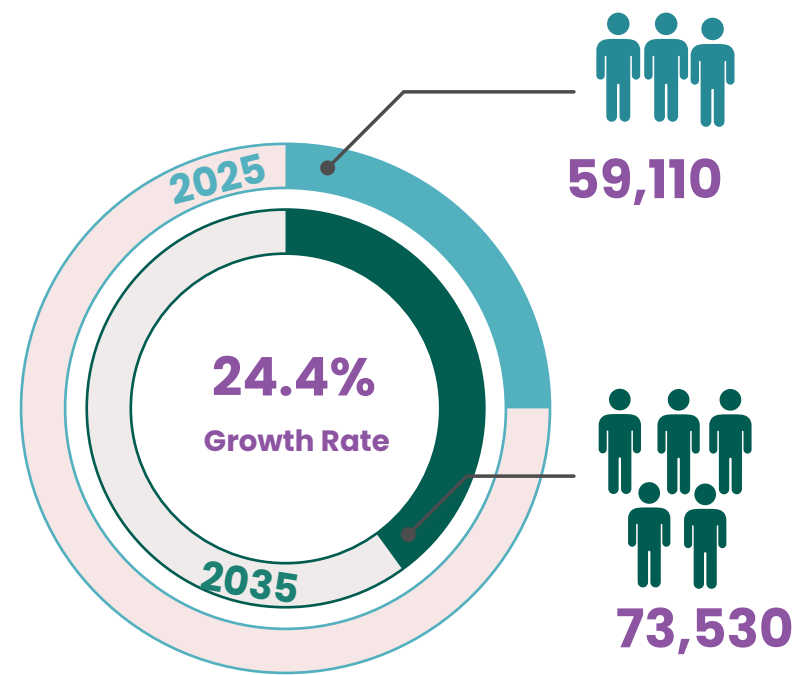
Baw Baw’s community is experiencing rapid growth, a demographic shift, and changes in settlement patterns, all of which significantly impact the current and future utilisation of public open spaces. There are an estimated 60,000 people currently calling Baw Baw home. most of whom live in the towns along the rail and road corridor of Warragul, Drouin, Longwarry, Yarragon, and Trafalgar. We are growing by 3% each year. By 2041 it is estimated there will be more than 80,000 people living in Baw Baw. The majority of those moving to the shire are coming from elsewhere in Victoria. The evolving population, characterised by varying density in dwelling and settlement types, plays a crucial role in shaping the demand for open spaces. The Baw Baw Shire community profile serves as a valuable tool in comprehending the unique characteristics of individuals in each area and tracking how these traits evolve over time. This demographic insight forms the foundation for evidence-based decision-making concerning the provision of services, particularly open spaces, to cater to the evolving needs of the community.

Recognising the diverse needs of the community, open spaces are designed to offer a variety of environments to fulfill these requirements effectively. Various social indicators, such as population dynamics, age structure, ethnicity, income levels, educational qualifications, occupations, employment rates, unemployment rates, disability prevalence, socio-economic disadvantage, childcare needs, family structures, household compositions, housing tenures, and dwelling characteristics, exert considerable influence on the usage and demand for open spaces. By understanding these social indicators, the strategy aims to tailor open spaces to cater to the unique and evolving needs of the vibrant Baw Baw community.

Population

Impact of Population Growth on Space: Population growth increases demand for diverse, high-quality open spaces, larger recreational areas, and better connectivity through trails and paths. It may require upgrading existing spaces, adapting to changing community needs, and integrating cultural heritage while ensuring equitable access and sustainable management.¹

¹ REF: About the profile areas | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)



The area with the greatest increase in population between 2025 and 2035 in Baw Baw Shire is **Warragul North**.¹

Population Density

61 percent of Baw Baw Shire’s population live within its two major localities within only 2.7 percent of its total land area.



High-density housing demands smaller, easily accessible spaces like pocket parks, rooftop gardens, and plazas. High-density areas also need well-connected trails and green infrastructure to compensate for limited private outdoor space. In low-density areas, particularly rural parts of the Shire, residents often need to travel longer distances to access open spaces. This highlights the importance of providing well-equipped facilities that support play, socialisation, and exercise and infrastructure that support the longer stay.

- Baw Baw Shire has a population density of 15.07 persons per square km based on the estimated population in 2025
- Drouin’s population density is 283.4 persons per square km per estimate population in 2023.
- Warragul’s has population density of 354.5 persons per square km as per estimated population in 2023.

¹ REF: Age Structure: Service age groups | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

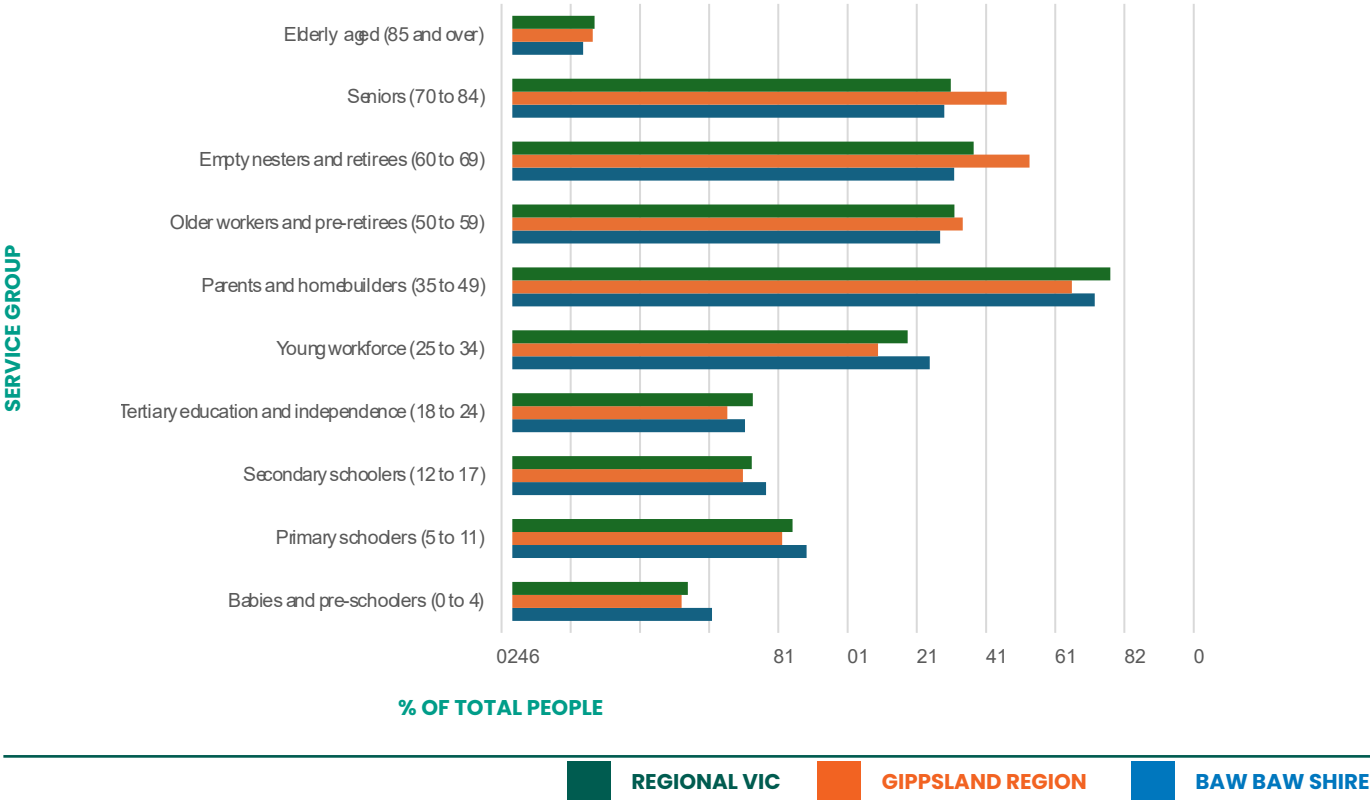
Impact of Age: The age structure of Baw Baw Shire provides key insights into the level of demand for age based services and facilities such as open spaces . A younger population drives demand for active recreation spaces, playgrounds, and safe cycling or walking paths, while an older population requires accessible, passive recreation areas with amenities like shaded seating and smooth trails. Both benefit from intergenerational spaces.

Baw Baw Shire has an ageing population. The median age in Baw Baw Shire is 42, compared to 37 in Victoria and 38 in Australia. The proportion of people aged 65 years and is also higher than state and national rates at 20.2%, compared to 15.6% in Victoria and 15.7% across Australia.

Age Structure Data

- In 2021 age structure data, the largest age group in Baw Baw Shire was 60 to 64 year olds and the largest service group was parents and homebuilders 35–49 years old.. The group that changed the most since 2016 was 30 to 34 year olds, increasing by 975 people.
- There is also a high proportion of children aged 0–14 who make up 19% of the population. Children have greater rates of participation in formal sports compared to adults, with the participation peaking at 5–14 years. The population dip of young adults can be explained by the general trend to seek out tertiary education and employment in metropolitan areas after high school. Understanding this age profile of Baw Baw helps in providing recreation opportunities that will be most in demand now and in the future.
- Approximately 31% of Baw Baw’s residents are young people aged 24 years and below,
- Approximately 29% are between the ages of 25 and 49 years old.
- Approximately 41% are aged 50 and older.
- The top three 5-year age groups forecast to have the greatest increase:
50 to 54: 6.4% growth
55–59: 6.3% growth
5–9: 6.2 % growth

GRAPH: Age Service Group ³



³ REF: Age Structure: 5 Years Age Gap | [Community profile](#)

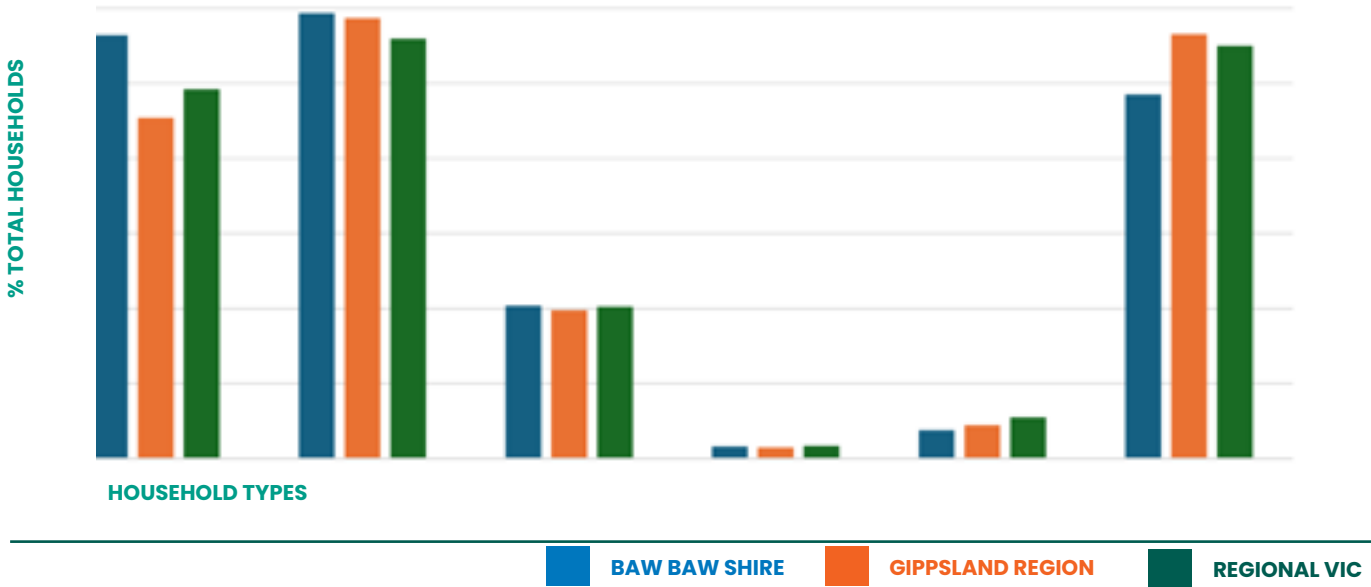
Household Type

The growth of household types affects open space needs differently. Couple families with children drive demand for playgrounds and sports fields, while couples without children prefer passive recreation areas and fitness-friendly spaces. Sole-person households benefit from accessible social spaces like community gardens and walking paths, emphasising inclusivity and well-being.

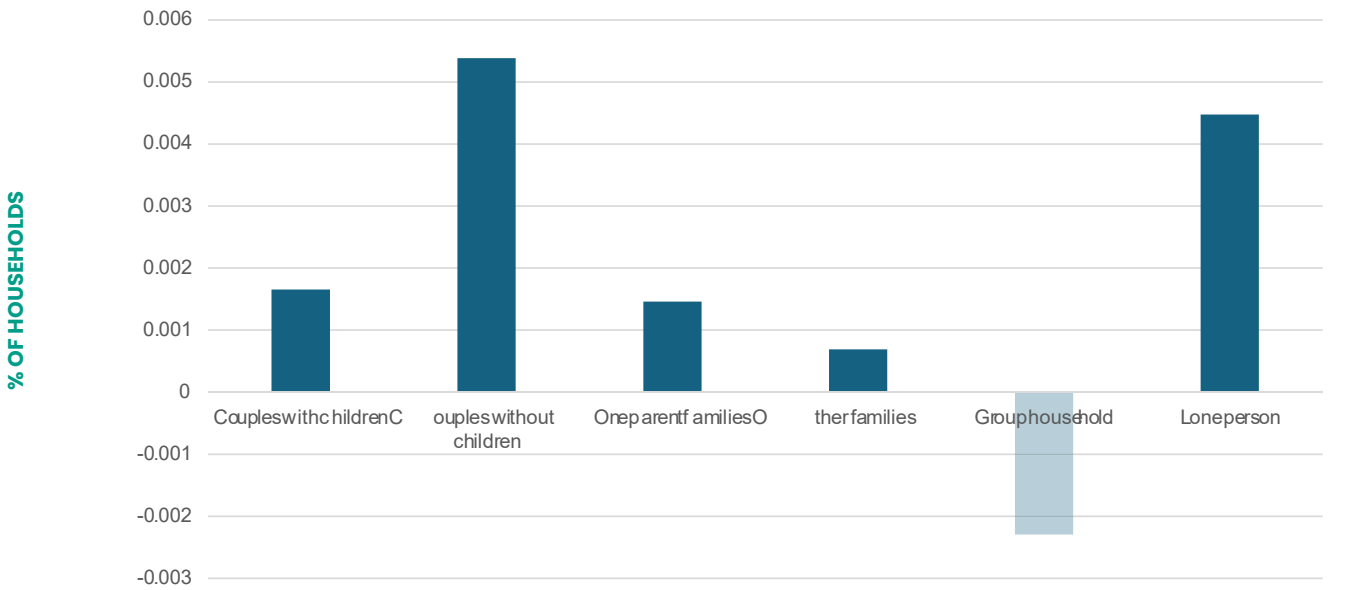
Data

- In Baw Baw Shire, 28.2% of households were made up of couples with children in 2021, compared with 22.7% in Gippsland Region.
- Analysis of the household/family types in Baw Baw Shire in 2021 compared to the Gippsland Region shows that there was a higher proportion of couple families with child(ren) as well as a similar proportion of one-parent families. Overall, 28.2% of total families were couple families with child(ren), and 10.2% were one-parent families, compared with 22.7% and 9.9% respectively for the Gippsland Region. ⁴

GRAPH: Household Type: 2021



GRAPH: Change in House Type: 2016–2021 ⁵



HOUSEHOLD TYPES

⁴ REF: <https://profile.id.com.au/baw-baw/households?BMID=30>

⁵ REF: Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Census of Population and Housing](#), 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

Transport

Impact of transport on open space usage: Commuting data is very useful in transport planning as it informs decision-makers about the availability, effectiveness and utilisation of local transport options, particularly when analysed with [Residents Place of Work](#) data and [Car Ownership](#).

High car ownership allows greater access to regional open spaces, but reliance on cars may reduce the use of local spaces. Conversely, limited car ownership increases the need for accessible open spaces within walking or cycling distance. Effective public transport networks enable access to larger and more diverse open spaces, particularly for those without private vehicles. Communities favouring walking or cycling require safe, connected trails and pathways linking homes to open spaces.

Overall, transport modes and car ownership shape accessibility, connectivity, and the design of open spaces to accommodate diverse mobility needs.⁵

Data

- Census day 2021 in Baw Baw Shire, 66.7% of people travelled to work in a private car, 1.1% took public transport and 2.4% rode a bike or walked. 15.6% worked at home.
- **Car Ownership:** Analysis of car ownership in 2021, indicates 62% of households in Baw Baw Shire had access to two or more motor vehicles, compared to 56% in the Gippsland Region¹

Physical Ability and Health Condition

Physical ability and health rates directly influence how people use and interact with open spaces and how open spaces need to be designed. Accessible design, including smooth pathways, ramps, seating, and inclusive play areas, ensures that open spaces accommodate individuals with disabilities or mobility challenges.

Similarly communities with lower health outcomes may rely on open spaces for physical activity and mental well-being, increasing demand for features like fitness stations, walking trails, and calming green areas.

Data

- In 2021, 3,775 people (or 6.6% of the population) in Baw Baw Shire reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This was a percentage increase from 2016.
- The major differences in the age groups reporting a need for assistance in Baw Baw Shire and the Gippsland region were:
 - A larger percentage of persons aged 85 and over (47.4% compared to 45.6%)
 - A smaller percentage of persons aged 75 to 79 (13.1% compared to 14.4%)
 - A smaller percentage of persons aged 60 to 64 (5.5% compared to 6.6%)⁶

Diversity

Impact of Diversity on Open Space: A diverse population, including Aboriginal communities and overseas-born residents, influences open space design and management by emphasising the need for culturally inclusive and reflective spaces to foster social cohesion, respect heritage, and ensure that everyone feels welcomed and represented.

Aboriginal Communities: Open spaces can celebrate Aboriginal heritage through art, storytelling, and conservation of culturally significant sites, supporting connection to Country and Traditional Custodian values.

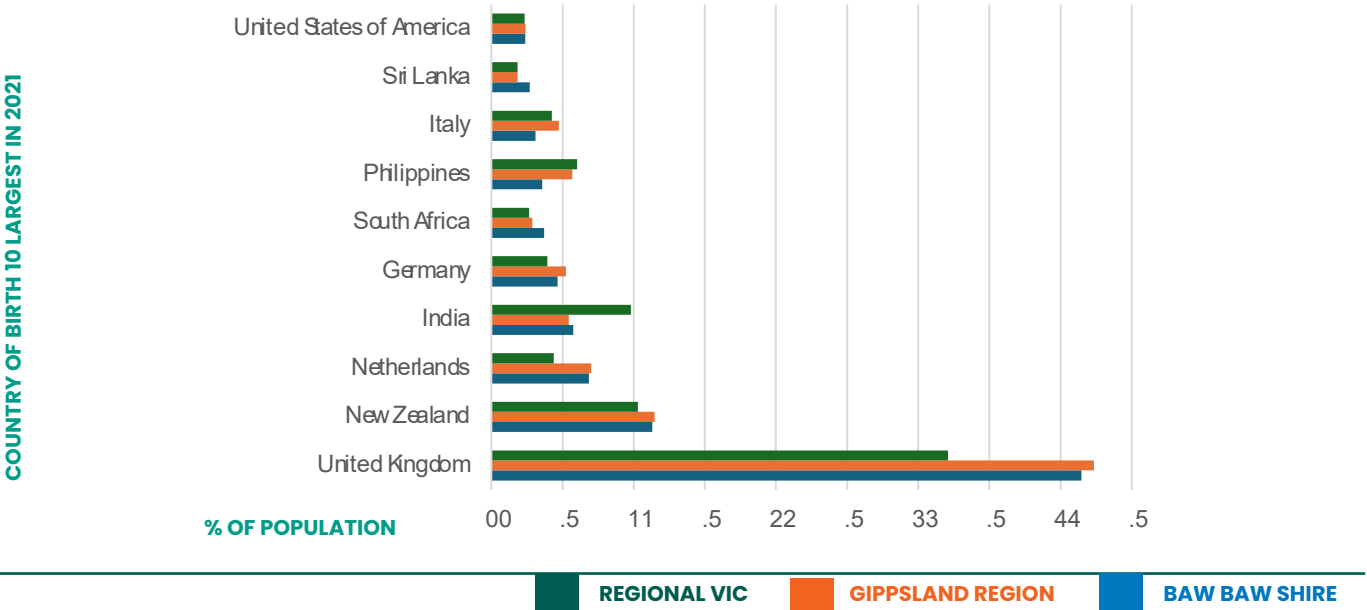
Overseas-born Residents: Open spaces should accommodate diverse recreational needs, such as areas for large gatherings, multicultural events, and spaces that reflect varying cultural practices around recreation and leisure.

- In 2021, 12.1% of people in Baw Baw Shire were born overseas, compared with 12.4% in Gippsland Region and 11% arrived in Australia within 5 years prior to 2021.
- Analysis of the year of arrival for the overseas born population of Baw Baw Shire in 2021 compared to Gippsland Region shows that there was a smaller proportion of people who arrived before 2001, and a larger proportion of recent overseas arrivals (those who arrived between 2016 to Aug 2021).

⁵ REF: Number of cars per household | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

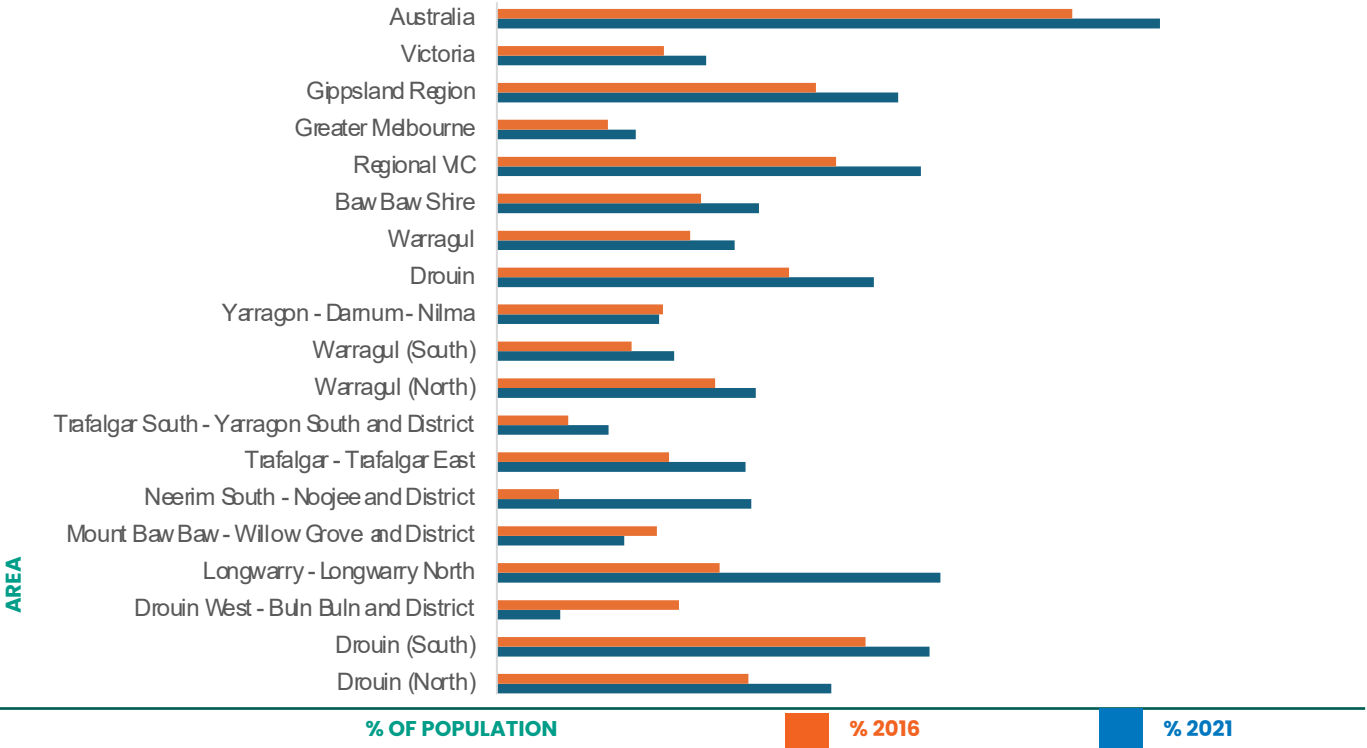
⁶ REF: Need for assistance | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

GRAPH: Birthplace: 2021⁷



- In 2021, 1.3% of Baw Baw Shire’s population was of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin
- In 2021, Longwarry - Longwarry North had the highest proportion of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander population in Baw Baw Shire.

GRAPH: People of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Origin⁸



- Baw Baw Shire population in 2016 compared to 1.9% in Gippsland and 0.8% in Victoria. Country of origin and language spoken at home People born overseas represent 18.7% of people in Baw Baw Shire compared to 20.6% in Gippsland and 35.1% in Victoria. Country of birth can have implications for the types of sport and recreation people have been exposed to and wish to participate in. 10.5% of people in Baw Baw Shire speak a language other than English at home compared to 13.5% in Gippsland and 32.1% in Victoria.¹

⁷ REF: Birthplace | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

⁸ REF: Overseas arrivals | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

⁹ REF: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander origin | Baw Baw Shire | [atlas.id](#)

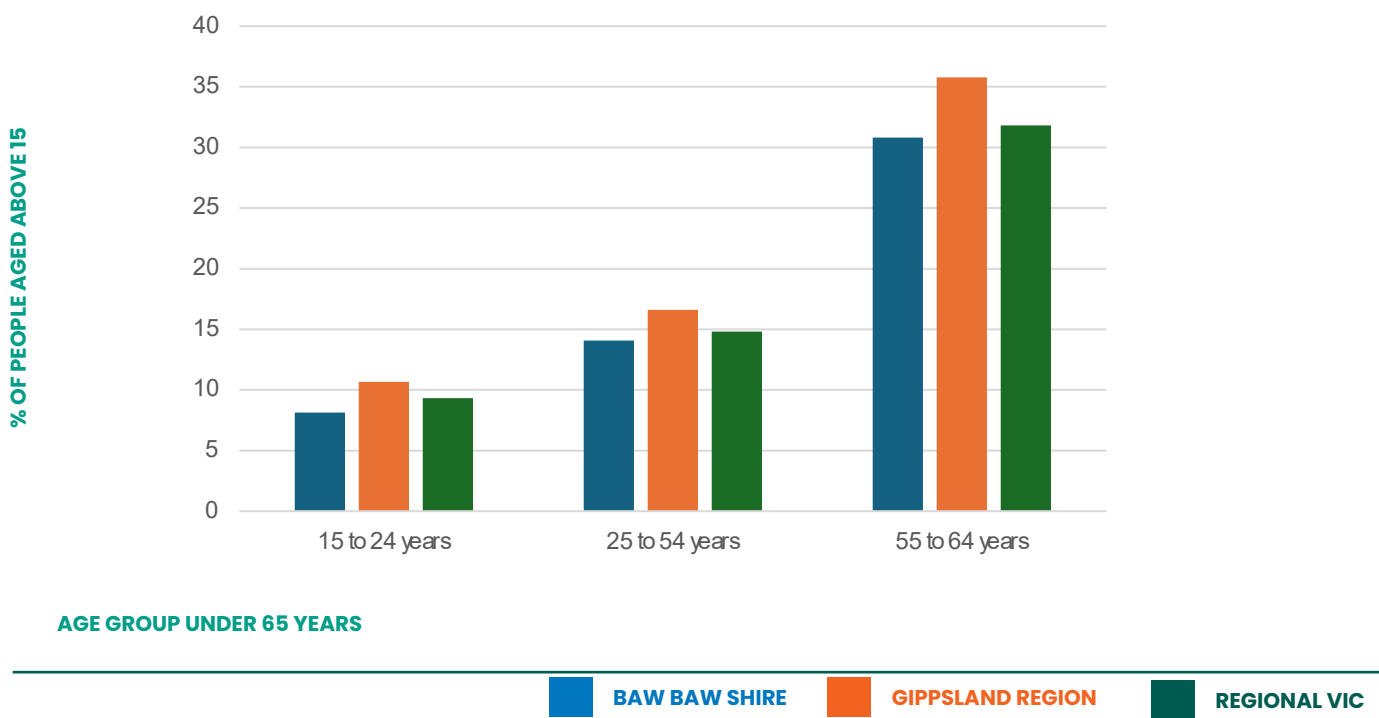
Youth Disengagement

Level of youth disengagement impact on open space: Youth disengagement can impact open spaces by shaping how they are used and perceived. Disengaged youth may require open spaces designed to foster connection, skill-building, and engagement, such as skate parks, youth hubs, or areas for creative and social activities. Without these opportunities, open spaces may face issues like vandalism or underutilisation. Well-designed and inclusive open spaces can help address disengagement by providing safe, accessible, and stimulating environments for youth to socialize, exercise, and participate in community life.

- In 2021, 8.1% of 15 to 24 year olds in Baw Baw Shire were disengaged with employment and education, compared to 10.7% in Gippsland region.
- Between 2016 to 2021, The number of disengaged people aged 15 to 24 years showed a decrease of 50 or 9.1%.
- In 2021, 10.4% of 15 to 24 year olds in Drouin were disengaged with employment and education, compared to 10.7% in Gippsland region.
- In 2021, 7.8% of 15 to 24 year olds in Warragul were disengaged with employment and education, compared to 10.7% in Gippsland region.

While the data shows that disengagement tends to increase with age, the focus on youth remains important because early engagement through open space design and activation can have long-term social benefits. For older residents, disengagement may relate more to isolation or reduced mobility, which is explored further in the section on inclusion and Accessibility.

GRAPH: Disengaged Person by Age: 2021¹⁰



¹⁰ REF: Disengagement by age | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

Employment Status 2021

Impact of employment rate on open space usage: Employment rates can influence open spaces by shaping their use and demand. Higher employment rates often mean busier lifestyles, increasing the need for easily accessible, multi-functional open spaces near workplaces for relaxation, exercise, and socialisation. Conversely, lower employment rates may lead to increased use of open spaces for free or low-cost recreation, emphasising the need for inclusive and well-maintained facilities that support community well-being and engagement.

Location of Employment: The location of employment affects how residents use open spaces. Those working locally may have more opportunities to engage with open spaces during breaks or after work, increasing demand for accessible, multi-functional spaces near employment hubs. In contrast, residents commuting to distant jobs may rely more on open spaces during weekends or non-working hours, requiring spaces that support relaxation, socialisation, and family-oriented activities. The balance of local and external employment shapes the timing, type, and intensity of open space use.

- In 2021 96.2% of people in Baw Baw were employed in comparison to 95.3% of the WGippsland region.
- 54.4% were full-time employed in comparison to 51.6% in the Gippsland region.
- 26,603 people living in Baw Baw Shire in 2021 were employed, of which 57% worked full-time and 36% part-time.
- The unemployment rate in Baw Baw is 4.1%. The largest employers are healthcare and social assistance, agriculture, education and training, construction, and retail.

GRAPH: Employment Status: 2021¹¹



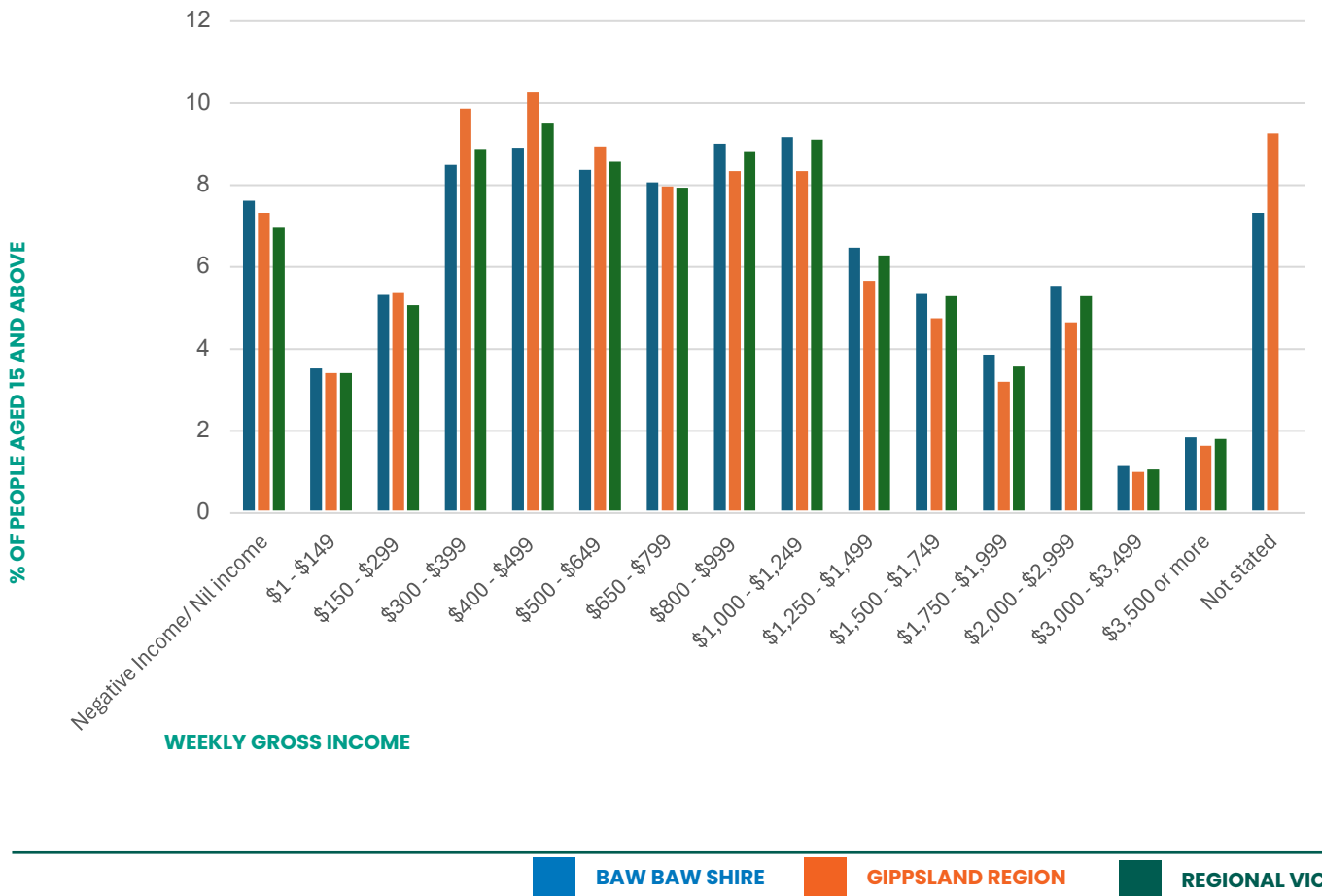
¹¹ REF: Employment status | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

Income

Impact of level of income on open space usage: Income levels significantly impact open space usage. Higher-income communities may demand premium facilities, such as landscaped parks, fitness stations, and specialized recreation areas, and may also engage in fee-based activities. Lower-income communities often rely on open spaces for free or low-cost recreation, making accessibility, maintenance, and diverse, inclusive amenities crucial to support equitable use and community well-being.

- In Baw Baw Shire, 15.8% of households earned an income of \$3,000 or more per week in 2021.
- Analysis of household income levels in Baw Baw Shire in 2021 compared to the Gippsland Region shows that there was a larger proportion of high income households (those earning \$3,000 per week or more) and a lower proportion of low income households (those earning less than \$800 per week).
- Overall, 15.8% of the households earned a high income and 24.4% were low income households, compared with 12.8% and 29.7% respectively for Gippsland Region.
- In Baw Baw Shire, the ‘medium lowest’ income quartile was the largest group in 2021, comprising 30% of people aged 15 and over.

GRAPH: Weekly Individual Income: 2021 ¹²



Economic Growth

Baw Baw is home to over 5,600 local businesses and boasts a gross regional product (GRP) of approximately \$2.64 billion, growing at nearly twice the rate of the other five local government agencies in Gippsland. The region’s unique blend of rich agricultural and manufacturing heritage, combined with a variety of tourism attractions such as Toorong Falls, the Walhalla Goldfields Railway, and an assortment of wineries, restaurants, and boutiques, fuels its dynamic economy. In 2018, Baw Baw Shire welcomed 1 million visitors, generating visitor spending of \$201.9 million and contributing \$200.7 million to the local economy. Known for its natural attractions and family-friendly environment, many popular tourist sites are located within parks and open spaces, highlighting significant opportunities for targeted improvements to enhance visitor experiences and further stimulate economic growth.

SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA (Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas) index helps assess the level of disadvantage within specific regions, with a higher score indicating lower disadvantage. In Baw Baw Shire, Drouin West – Buln Buln and District had the lowest level of disadvantage with a SEIFA score of 1,066.0, which reflects relative economic stability and access to resources.

When planning open spaces, it’s essential to consider both the SEIFA index and local nuances that may not be captured by the index alone. While areas with lower SEIFA scores may experience more pronounced challenges related to access, safety, and health, those with higher scores may have different needs, such as recreational amenities or enhanced green space for social cohesion. Tailoring open space planning to both the level of disadvantage and the unique characteristics of each area can ensure that facilities are designed to support diverse community needs and foster equitable access to quality open space. Refer to [Appendix 3](#) for more information. Refer to [Appendix 3](#) for more information.

¹² REF: Weekly Individual Income | Baw Baw Shire | [Community profile](#)

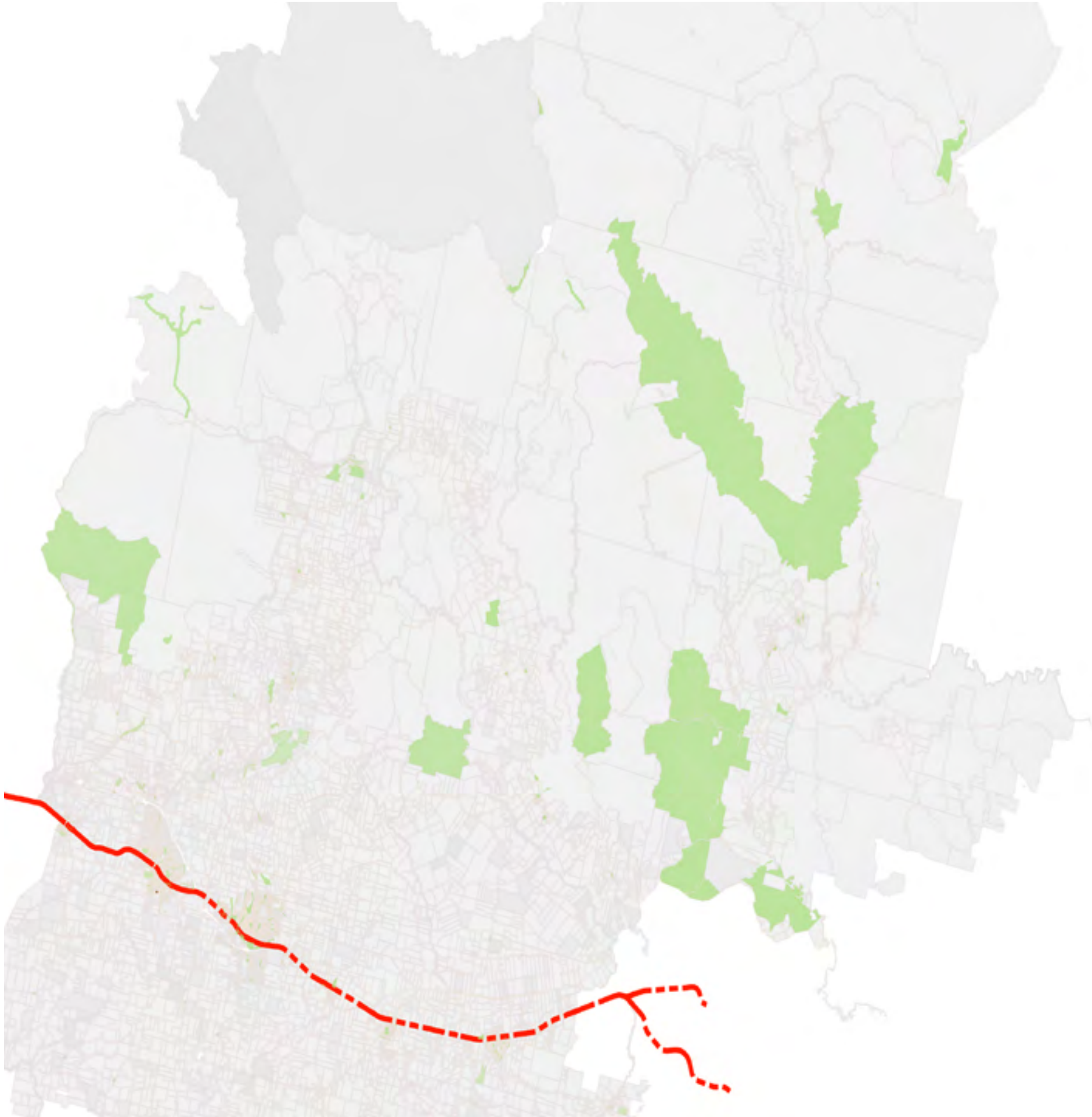
2.6 Our Open Spaces

The total area of public parks and open spaces in Baw Baw Shire, owned by Council or other public authorities and available for community recreation, is estimated at approximately **30,344.86 hectares**. This includes natural spaces, drainage sites, water management areas, active sports and family recreation areas, linear access spaces, and bushlands that provide some sort of recreational value and outdoor enjoyment as result of direct or indirect function. The actual total is likely higher, as many bushlands and state parks have unclear accessibility and size data.

- 492.3535 ha of Baw Baw Shire owned land or share owner ship with other authorities.
- 559.85 ha either owned or managed by Baw Baw Shire Council.
- 80.88 ha Recreation Sport Reserves.

There are currently 107 playgrounds, 8 skate and BMX parks and 5 designated spaces for outdoor fitness, 4 fully fenced dog parks and 3 designated dog off-lead areas.

FIGURE: Map of Baw Baw Shire’s Open Spaces



2.6.1 Baw Baw Open Space Current Challenges and Consideration

Current Challenges

Improper Use and Vulnerability: Many public spaces face the vulnerability of improper uses, such as using garden beds for parking, leading to a need for stricter regulation.

Youth Engagement: There are significant gaps in accessible, inclusive, and engaging open spaces that meet the diverse needs of young people. In some cases, the lack of these spaces has led some youth to turn to informal or unauthorized activities, such as graffiti, vandalism, or building makeshift bike jumps, cubby houses, and trails in parks and bushland areas. While these actions signal a strong desire to interact with the outdoors, they can pose safety risks, cause environmental damage, and present maintenance and liability challenges for Council. Addressing this issue requires a proactive approach that balances enforcement with opportunity.

Competition for Space: Intense competition for space by different uses and users has resulted in the potential privatisation of public open spaces, highlighting the importance of equitable access. For example, some parks that were once a communal space for various recreational activities and events, are now facing intense competition for space. With the increasing popularity of outdoor fitness classes, food markets, and private events, parks are at risk of being privatised during certain times, limiting their availability to the wider community.

Lack of Comprehensive Policy Framework for Open Space: Public open space planning is hindered by the absence of a cohesive suite of policies that address key management and design considerations. Essential policies, such as those for lighting, dog off-leash areas, shade provision, and other critical aspects are either lacking or inconsistently applied. This policy gap leads to ad-hoc decision-making, inconsistencies across different spaces, and challenges in ensuring that open spaces are safe, accessible, and aligned with community needs.

Issues with Modern Urban Design: Contemporary urban design has led to the creation of artificial public spaces that are challenging to use and maintain due to their scale and poor functionality. These designs incorporate large, aesthetically pleasing structures and expansive paved areas but lack practical functionality. These vast open spaces, while visually appealing, prove challenging for residents to utilise effectively for everyday activities.

Mismatched Developer Contributions: Developers sometimes deliver open spaces that do not align with the hierarchy of community needs, making them expensive to maintain and potentially be underutilised.

Impact of Technology: The rise of the internet and social networks has transformed people's usage patterns, with parks competing with virtual spaces. This shift demands additional infrastructure services like WiFi, comfortable seating, and charging stations. With the increasing reliance on smartphones and other electronic devices, integrating charging stations within parks becomes a valuable amenity. This helps visitors keep their devices powered, encouraging longer stays in the park. E.g. Smart lighting, information kiosks, etc.

Lack of Direction and Signage: Absence of clear directions, information, and references in some parks can lead to user confusion, emphasising the need for improved signage and wayfinding systems.

Weakening Social Cohesion: A weakening sense of social cohesion and a lack of regard for public goods contribute to increasing acts of vandalism at parks, affecting the overall community experience.

High Resident Expectations: Residents now have higher expectations for parks, desiring a wide range of facilities and infrastructure comparable to those available in other areas.

Lack of Resources to Improve Open Space: Limited funding and resources often hinder the ability to enhance open spaces to meet community needs. Without sufficient investment, opportunities for upgrades, new infrastructure, and maintenance can be delayed or overlooked. The gap between planning and execution can lead to frustration among residents and missed opportunities to enhance recreational, environmental, and social benefits. Securing ongoing funding and aligning priorities with available resources is crucial to ensuring masterplans translate into tangible improvements.

Growing Maintenance Burden with Static Budgets: As the open space network continues to expand, maintenance budgets have not kept pace. This has placed significant pressure on existing resources, making it increasingly difficult to maintain open spaces to the standards required to meet community expectations. Without an increase in financial support, the sustainability and quality of open spaces may decline, impacting accessibility, safety, and overall usability. Ensuring that maintenance funding grows in alignment with open space expansion is critical to preserving their long-term value.

Sport Reserve Challenges

Outdated Facilities: Many of the existing buildings and pavilions do not meet the current standards outlined in the *Preferred Facility Guidelines* provided by relevant state sporting associations. This misalignment limits clubs' ability to grow and maintain compliance for competition.

Facilities also fail to support increasing female participation, lacking inclusive amenities such as female change rooms, accessible toilets, and equitable spaces. This creates barriers for women, girls, and people with disabilities.

Additionally, many reserves are now serving broader purposes beyond sport, including use as community hubs and for passive recreation. These evolving roles were not considered in the original designs, resulting in infrastructure that is unable to accommodate diverse or growing community needs.

Ongoing population growth has further intensified the demand on these spaces, with many reserves unable to cope with increased usage, leading to overuse, wear and tear, and reduced service levels.

Significant Funding Gaps: There is a substantial shortfall between the cost of bringing facilities up to standard and the funding available. While state government grants remain a key source of funding, they have become highly competitive, and the amounts awarded are often insufficient to meet the actual upgrade requirements.

Although many sport reserves have developed master plans that clearly identify needs and opportunities, the majority of these plans remain unimplemented due to chronic underfunding, leaving critical infrastructure improvements and community priorities unaddressed.

Sport Surface Fatigue: Playing surfaces require periodic rest and repair, particularly for natural turf ovals. However, there is a lack of alternative facilities or venues to relocate clubs while maintenance takes place, disrupting club activities and competitions.

Lack of Strategic Planning for Lifecycle Renewal: In many cases, upgrades and renewals have been reactive rather than part of a long-term strategic renewal plan. This leads to inefficiencies in funding and delivery, and inconsistent standards across facilities.

Considerations

Considerations below aim to guide comprehensive open space planning ensuring that the diverse needs and challenges of the community are addressed effectively.

Population Growth and Increased Demand: Population growth necessitates the creation of new, high-quality open spaces, particularly in densifying areas. The size of individuals' living spaces directly influences their frequency of outdoor activities.

Ageing Population: Catering to the needs of the ageing population requires open spaces and associated infrastructure that are designed to accommodate older individuals.

Youth Disengagement: Baw Baw Shire has some of the highest levels of youth disengagement in the region, particularly in areas like Longwarry. This includes young people not engaged in education, employment, or training (NEET), which can contribute to feelings of isolation, reduced physical and mental health, and increased vulnerability to risk-taking behaviours. Open spaces can play a preventive and supportive role by offering inclusive, safe, and appealing environments where young people can connect socially, access informal recreation, express themselves creatively, and participate in community activities. Planning should consider spaces that foster belonging and agency among youth and support youth-led activation.

Climate Change: Adapting to more severe weather conditions due to climate change is crucial in open space planning.

Cultural and Heritage Recognition: Acknowledging and reflecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage in open space design is essential for social justice, reconciliation efforts, and preserving valuable knowledge and strengths.

Enhancing Open Spaces in Rural Areas

In rural regions and smaller townships, there is a need to cater to visitors from surrounding rural districts or travellers passing through, offering them a resting spot for rejuvenation. Despite the lower population density in these rural areas, the provision of high-quality public open spaces is deemed crucial and actively encouraged where feasible. The goal is to establish inclusive recreational spaces that enable local residents in rural areas to socialize and enjoy recreational activities close to home within their communities.

Advocate for targeted funding programs from the state government that specifically address the renewal of ageing sport infrastructure, female-friendly facilities, and growing participation and also strengthen advocacy effort by seeking strategic partnerships with sport associations, peak bodies, and regional alliances to present a unified voice and strengthen funding bids. Additionally, Baw Baw Shire, being one of the fastest-growing areas, should be recognised at the funding level to ensure it receives adequate support for its expanding community needs.

Industrial Area Consideration

With the expansion of industrial sectors, identifying open space opportunities in industrial areas becomes vital for employee well-being, relaxation, and environmental benefits.

Resilience to Shocks and Stresses

Open spaces serve as tools to equip Baw Baw Shire residents to handle shocks and stresses such as pandemics and environmental disasters. Adaptable, multifunctional open spaces enhance resilience in the face of challenges.

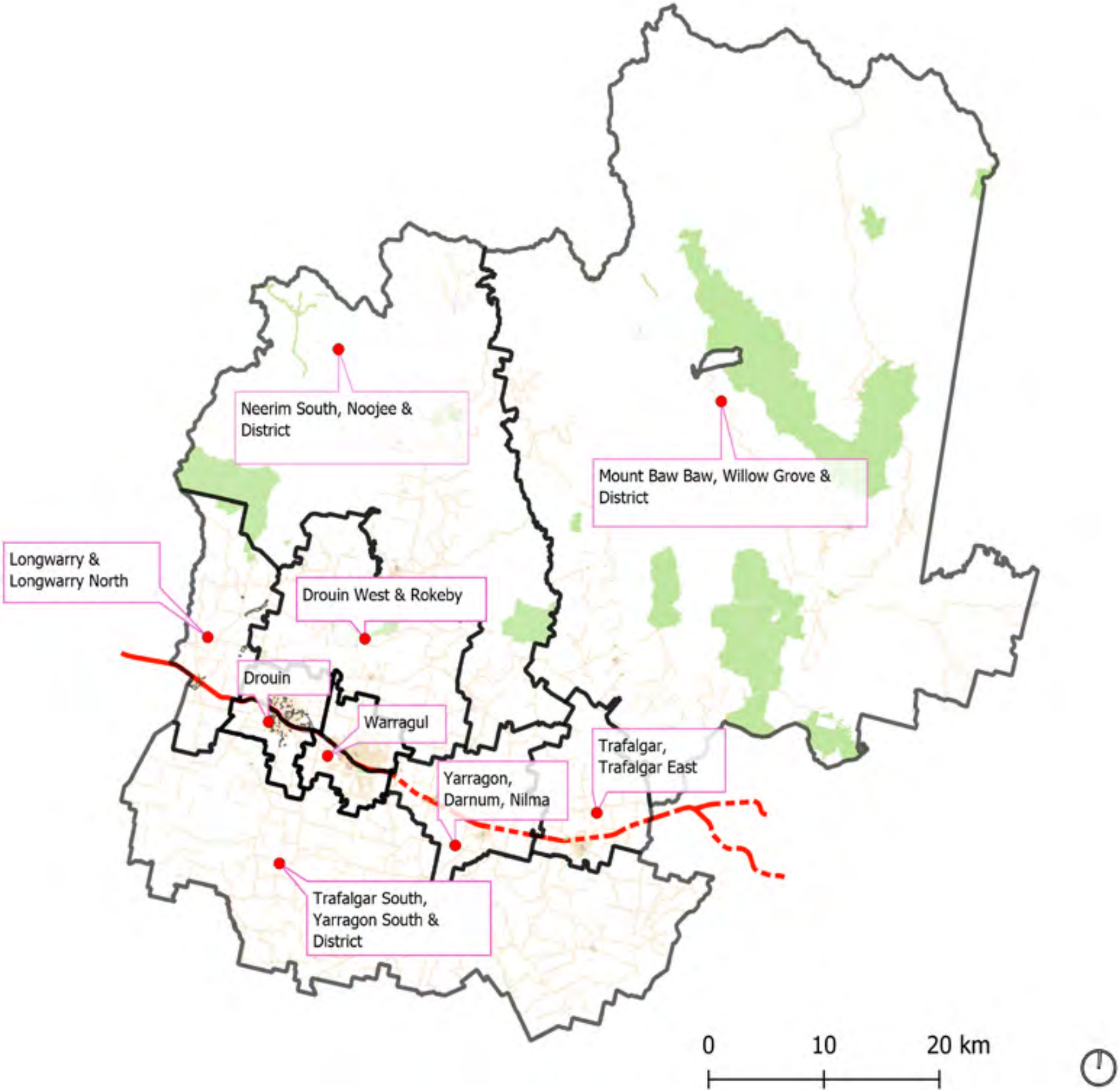


2.6.2 Open space planning units

Each area of Baw Baw has its own unique open space characteristics. For the purposes of open space analysis and planning this strategy has divided the shire to different units. The boundaries area generally align with the community profile boundaries used by .id Consulting. This allows easy comparison with demographic data.

Geographical unit	Town and Village
Longwarry & Longwarry North	Longwarry
Drouin (North & south)	Drouin
Warragul (North & south)	Warragul
Yarragon, Darnum, Nilma	Yarragon Darnum Nilma
Trafalgar South, Yarragon South & District	Thorpdale Cloverlea Ripplebrook Athlone Hallora Lardner Ellinbank Allambee
Drouin West, Rokeby & District	Rokeby Buln Buln Jindivick
Neerim South, Noojee & District	Neerim South Neerim Noojee Neerim Junction Shady Creek
Mount Baw Baw, Willow Grove and District	Rawson Willow Grove Walhalla Tanjil South Tanjil Bren Baw Baw Village

FIGURE: Map of Baw Baw Shire Units



2.6.3 Open space classification

The network of open spaces in Baw Baw Shire is remarkably diverse, encompassing bushlands, natural resources, linear connections, significant memorials, cultural heritage sites, and community-driven formal and informal recreational areas. Within this strategy, open spaces are classified based on two key dimensions: primary function and hierarchy.

Classification Based on Primary Function

The primary function of open spaces defines their main use and the activities they support. This strategy identifies six distinct types of open spaces, aligned with the Open Space Strategy Guide developed by DEECA to ensure national consistency:

- 1. Community Recreation Spaces
- 2. Organised Sport Recreation Spaces
- 3. Natural and Semi Natural Spaces
- 4. Water Management Spaces
- 5. Linkages or Access Ways
- 6. Specific Purpose Spaces

These categories guide how open spaces are planned and utilized, reflecting their opportunities and intended uses. Acknowledgment is given to the multifunctionality of these spaces, and where multiple functions exist, the primary function—most influencing design, amenities, and recreation levels, has been prioritized. A table below outlines the key categories for open spaces in Baw Baw Shire.

Community Recreation Space	
Purpose	Community Recreation Spaces are designed to offer a setting for informal play, physical activity, relaxation, and social interaction and outdoor enjoyment.
Description	These spaces contribute to both physical and mental well-being by facilitating activities that promote relaxation, amusement, stimulation, social interaction, and play. Accessible to everyone, these Recreation Spaces serve as venues for playing, socialising, exercising, celebrating, or engaging in activities that bring personal satisfaction. E.g Drouin Civic Park.

Organised Sport Recreation Space	
Purpose	Sport Recreation Spaces are intended to serve as venues for formal structured sporting activities.
Description	<p>These spaces are designed to facilitate formal, structured sporting activities, including team competitions, physical skill development, and training. Sport Recreation Spaces are tailored to accommodate the specific needs and infrastructure requirements of various sports, providing playing surfaces and buffer zones.</p> <p>These spaces attract players and spectators with the explicit purpose of participating in organised sporting activities, training, or competitions, or simply watching the games unfold. Additionally, when not in use for formal sports events, most Sport Recreation Spaces can be accessed by community members for informal sports and recreational activities. E.g. Darnum Recreation Reserve.</p>

Natural/Semi-Natural Space	
Purpose	Natural Spaces are intended to preserve vegetation and natural habitats, often featuring remnant vegetation or areas with significant plant or animal species. They are vital for conserving biodiversity, protecting ecosystems, and maintaining the ecological integrity of the region. These spaces also provide opportunities for individuals to connect with nature, engage in low-impact recreational activities, and support their mental well-being.
Description	Natural Spaces include bushlands, coastal areas, wetlands, riparian habitats, and geological formations. They support recreational activities such as bushwalking, birdwatching, and nature photography while offering educational opportunities and fostering community appreciation for natural heritage. Tailored and careful management of these spaces can balances recreational access with the preservation of ecological and biodiversity values, ensuring long-term sustainability. E.g Golden Whistler Reserve, Drouin.

Linkages	
Purpose	Linkages, or access ways, are linear pathways, walkways, or corridors that connect streets, neighbourhoods, parks, and key community destinations. They are integral to urban planning and community development, enhancing connectivity, pedestrian mobility, recreation opportunities, safety, and placemaking.
Description	These corridors encourage walking, cycling, and other forms of non-motorized transportation, promoting active lifestyles and reducing reliance on vehicles. In addition to providing functional connections, linkages often offer recreational opportunities, improve safety, and enhance the overall well-being of residents by fostering accessible, interconnected communities. Typically small in size, they may include basic amenities such as trails, seating, lighting, and landscaping, contributing to vibrant and liveable urban environments. High-quality linkages can also support biodiversity by serving as ecological corridors connecting natural habitats. E.g Scenic Park, Warragul.

Water Management Spaces	
Purpose	Water management spaces, including drainage areas, are primarily designed to manage stormwater runoff, mitigate flooding, and prevent waterlogging in urban or suburban areas. These spaces often feature infrastructure such as swales, retention basins, wetlands, or bio-retention systems to efficiently channel and control excess water during rainfall.
Description	Beyond their primary function of stormwater management, these areas can be thoughtfully repurposed for recreational and aesthetic purposes, offering a dual benefit to the community. By integrating walking paths, seating, landscaping, and wildlife-friendly elements, they provide opportunities for passive recreation, environmental education, and habitat creation. E.g. Longview Rd (Wetland), Drouin.

Specific Purpose Spaces	
Purpose	These parks are designed and planned to fulfill specific needs. Each park’s purpose is carefully considered, and the level of service and provision is determined on a case-by-case basis. This assessment takes into account the unique goals of each park, the extent of its usage, and how effectively it fulfills its designated purpose. This individualised approach ensures that open spaces are not only tailored to their intended functions but are also responsive to the varying needs and expectations of the community they serve.
Description	<p>Rest Stop: Rest stop parks are designed to offer a break for travellers on their way to a larger destination. These parks vary in size but are characterized by the provision of a designated resting area and essential infrastructure, such as toilets, to support travellers during their short or extended stays. Whether large or small, the primary function of these parks is to serve as a convenient and comfortable pause in the journey, offering necessary amenities to enhance the overall travel experience.</p> <p>Major Rest Spots</p> <p>These areas cater for longer breaks and provide a range of facilities and sufficient number of parking areas for heavy and light vehicles. They are designed to allow all drivers to take breaks for sleep and rest. These facilities can include all-weather parking areas, toilets, drinking water, sheltered seating areas, tables and seating, rubbish bins, landscaping, and lighting. Depending on the location, they may also include playgrounds, tourist information, commercial food and drink vans and barbecues.</p> <p>Minor Rest Areas</p> <p>These areas cater for shorter rest breaks, such as a power nap and may only cater to light vehicles. These facilities can include parking areas for light vehicles, tables and seating and rubbish bins.</p> <p>Factors that influence the decision to install a rest area are proximity to the nearest rest area, the volume and mix of traffic and repeated fatigue related crash locations. At rest stops VicRoads has committed to working with Local Government and communities to develop actions that encourage drivers to use in-town facilities. This can include the promotion of attractions and services of individual towns. E.g Stringers Park, Walhalla</p> <p>Rural Destination: Rural destination parks are vital recreational spaces located within towns, central and easily accessible locations within villages and settlement across the shire serving not only local residents but also attracting visitors from surrounding rural areas and settlement. These parks are purposefully designed to accommodate longer stays by providing essential amenities such as toilets, playgrounds, picnic facilities, and ample car parking. Their infrastructure is tailored to enhance visitor experiences and meet the diverse needs of rural communities and social interaction and recreation</p> <p>Many rural destination parks also function as organised sports facilities, often expanding their infrastructure to include broader community recreation opportunities, such as walking trails, Playground, or multi-use courts.</p> <p>In addition to their recreational role, these parks can play a significant part in fostering a sense of community, promoting health and well-being, and supporting tourism by offering appealing destinations for day trips or events. E.g Howard Park, Yarragon</p> <p>Memorial: Memorial parks are dedicated spaces designed to honour and commemorate individuals, events, or significant historical milestones. These parks serve as reflective and contemplative areas, providing a peaceful environment for visitors to pay their respects. Typically, memorial parks feature various elements such as monuments, plaques, and landscaped areas that contribute to the solemn atmosphere. The design and amenities within these parks are tailored to align with the specific theme or purpose of the memorial, ensuring a meaningful and respectful experience for those who visit. The level of provision and service for memorial parks is influenced by the significance of the commemorated subject, the expected visitation, and the desired ambiance. E.g Drouin Memorial Prark, Drouin</p>

Specific Purpose Spaces	
Description continued	Lookout: Lookout spaces are strategically situated areas specifically designed to offer breathtaking views of particular landscapes, sceneries, or points of interest. These spaces are carefully chosen for their vantage points, allowing visitors to enjoy and appreciate the surrounding natural beauty. Lookout spaces may vary in size and design, but they share the common goal of providing an elevated perspective for observers. To enhance the viewing experience, lookout spaces often include amenities such as viewing platforms, seating, and informational signage that highlights key features of the observed landscape. The design and accessibility of these spaces are crucial factors, ensuring that visitors can easily reach and enjoy the panoramic views while preserving the natural environment. E.g T.K Shanahan Lookout. Trafalgar.
	<p>Green Buffer: Green buffers are wide landscaped spaces located alongside roads, designed primarily to enhance the visual appeal of roadways and provide environmental and functional benefits. These areas typically feature tree planting, shrubs, and other vegetation, creating a natural screen between roads and adjacent land uses.</p> <p>While their primary purpose is to improve aesthetics and soften the built environment, green buffers also contribute to environmental outcomes by reducing heat, improving air quality, and supporting biodiversity. They can mitigate the impacts of noise and pollution from traffic, creating a more pleasant environment for nearby residents and pedestrians.</p> <p>Although not typically designed for active recreation, green buffers can offer informal opportunities for walking or cycling when pathways are integrated. E.g F.T. Davey Reserve, Warragul</p>
	<p>Transit Hubs: Transit hub parks are open spaces strategically developed alongside major public transport stations to provide recreational and social opportunities for commuters and the broader community. These parks serve as welcoming green spaces that enhance the amenity of transit precincts, offering a place for rest, relaxation, and informal gatherings. Designed to complement the surrounding transport infrastructure, transit hub parks typically feature seating, shaded areas, pathways, public toilet and They contribute to placemaking efforts by improving the overall experience of public transport users Waterloo park, Yarragon.</p>
	<p>Urban and Civic spaces: Hard paved open spaces in urban areas and town centres, includes paths and civic spaces consisting of squares or plazas, urban parks, marketplaces: e.g Warragul Civic Space.</p>
	<p>Vacant Land as part of broader open space site: Vacant land refers to open spaces owned by the Council that are accessible to the public but do not currently provide recreational facilities, trails, or infrastructure. These areas may be maintained regularly or left in their natural state, depending on Council priorities and resources.</p> <p>While vacant land serves no immediate recreational purpose, they hold potential for future development or repurposing based on community needs, urban planning strategies, or environmental considerations. These spaces are often retained to allow flexibility in meeting long-term open space or infrastructure requirements. E.g Maple Place Reserve, Drouin.</p>

Please note that the descriptions of open space types provided in this framework are intended as general guidelines and may not fully capture the unique characteristics or circumstances of every site. These categories and descriptions have been generalized to allow for the inclusion of a wide variety of spaces, while recognizing local variations and the influence of contextual settings.

Classification Based on Hierarchy

Open spaces are also categorised based on their hierarchy. The hierarchy determines the distance a user is likely to travel to visit a particular site and the site’s capability to offer different levels of recreation. The appropriate hierarchy is established by considering factors such as geographical location, development potential, current and future open space needs, size, infrastructure availability, and historical, environmental, and aesthetic significance. Community attachment and identity also influence the hierarchy of a park.

The hierarchy for active recreation spaces is determined by specific criteria such as the level of competition and other relevant factors, distinguishing it from other types of open spaces.

This strategy identifies five open space hierarchies, including:

- Local
- Neighbourhood
- District
- Regional
- State and National

Additionally, the active recreation hierarchy is categorised as:

- Local
- Local Significant
- District

The hierarchy has been assigned to all individual open spaces.

Local	
Purpose	Local parks serve the immediate residential area, providing spaces for casual recreation and community gathering.
Access	Within 400–500m.
Size	0.02–1 ha.
Description	<p>Local parks support a range of activities, including children’s play, family gatherings, casual team activities, , walking, running, and cycling. Smaller parks under 0.4 hectares often act as linear access points or walking connections with minimal recreational facilities, while parks larger than 0.4 hectares provide more significant recreational value, including walking, seating, and landscaping. These parks are strategically distributed to ensure equitable access to open space across the community, promoting physical activity and social interaction. The inclusion of small parks less than 0.04 hectars in greenfield developments is optimal only if they serve a clear functional purpose, such as connecting to other amenities or facilitating pedestrian access. Local parks are essential in encouraging community well-being through simple infrastructure like paths, seating, and informal play areas.</p> <p>Local Sport recreation and Significant Local Sport recreation spaces may include either single or multiple sport and usually playscapes particularly in rural or village communities.</p>

Neighbourhood	
Purpose	Neighbourhood parks serve as key recreational and social hubs within a community, offering a variety of features and facilities that encourage social interaction and outdoor activities. These parks foster a sense of community and place, enhancing local identity and providing spaces for relaxation and play.
Access	Typically within an 800–metre walk from residential house.
Size	1–5 ha.
Description	Neighbourhood parks may provide a mix of open parkland and natural spaces, such as bushland, with areas for casual play and recreation. These parks may include informal sports facilities, off-leash areas for dogs (if space and safety consideration allows), and amenities like playgrounds, walking paths, and picnic spaces and open green spaces for family gatherings or casual exercise. They serve as focal points for community activities, catering to a broad range of recreational needs.

District	
Purpose	District parks serve as community focal points or destination spaces, offering a wider range of facilities to accommodate all ages and abilities. These parks encourage extended visits by providing infrastructure that supports various recreational activities. District parks may also act as key hubs along trails, with an emphasis on accessibility and inclusivity. They are designed to serve multiple suburbs or a town and surrounding rural areas, offering significant value to both the local community and the broader region. These parks can also have cultural, conservation, or social significance, serving as venues for large gatherings or events. Some district parks may be located within higher-order commercial precincts or activity centres.
Access	District parks typically serve a group of suburbs or a town along with the surrounding rural area. They are easily accessible by car and or public transport, given the larger catchment area they serve.
Size	Usually above 5 ha.
Description	<p>District parks provide a broad range of facilities and infrastructure to support various activities for all age groups and abilities. They often feature play areas, open "kick-about" spaces, seating, picnic shelters, paths, and dog-off-leash areas, informal sport. Vegetation plays a key role in these parks, contributing to both aesthetics and environmental value. District parks also include amenities such as toilets, barbecues, and car parking to encourage longer stays and enhance user experience. Additionally, they may offer organised sport. These parks serve as significant community assets, providing spaces for both casual use and organised activities, and supporting social interaction and physical activity across a large catchment area.</p> <p>District sport recreation spaces should include multiple sport and are generally larger in size and include playspace and other amenities as well.</p>

Regional	
Purpose	Regional open space may accommodate important recreation and organised sport spaces as well as significant conservation and/or environmental features. they may provide substantial facilities for organised sport, play, social interaction, relaxation and enjoyment of nature. they can assist to protect biodiversity conservation and environmental values through retention of bushland, wetlands and other natural features
Access	Regional open spaces serve one or more geographical or social regions, attracting visitors from a broader area, often beyond a single local government jurisdiction. Users may travel to these spaces by private vehicles or public transport, depending on their proximity
Size	Any size- above 5 hectares and can vary depending on the specific needs of the space and the community it serves.
Description	Regional open spaces are typically characterized by unique features or special significance or, by virtue of their size, that offer diversity of opportunities or levels of development that would not necessarily be available for all primary functions and in every municipality. These spaces serve as high-level destinations, offering a diverse range of recreational, environmental, and social opportunities. They are equipped with extensive services and asset provisions to cater to large numbers of visitors. These parks may include specialized facilities for organised sports, large play areas, picnic zones, walking trails, and the protection of natural habitats. Their distinctive attributes and high-quality provisions make them key focal points for community engagement and recreation, often drawing people from outside the immediate area.

State and National	
Purpose	State and national open spaces are typically owned and managed by state or federal governments. These areas often serve both conservation and recreational purposes at a broader scale, playing a key role in preserving natural habitats, biodiversity, and significant environmental features.
Access	These spaces typically serve large geographic areas, attracting visitors from across regions, states, or even nationally and internationally. Access may be more limited due to their location and size, with visitors often needing private transportation or guided tours to reach them.
Size	State and national open spaces are typically very large, often exceeding hundreds or thousands of hectares, encompassing extensive bushland, forests, wetlands, and other significant natural.
Description	These spaces include vast areas of bushland, state forests, national parks, and protected environmental zones. They are often home to unique wildlife, rare plant species, and other ecological assets. While primarily focused on conservation, they also offer recreational opportunities such as hiking, camping, nature walks, and eco-tourism, but at a much larger and more natural scale compared to regional parks. These areas are integral to environmental preservation efforts and provide a setting for educational and nature-based experiences that foster appreciation and respect for the natural world. E.g Noojee State Forest, Noojee.

Please note that each park that has been assigned a hierarchy may not fully align with the recommended size, distance, or activities. These generalizations are intended to provide a framework.



IMAGE: Jackson Dr Park, Drouin

2.6.4 Open Space Level of Service

As part of this strategy, the Council has introduced a new strategic parks management framework, which includes a Parks Level of Service and Asset Provision system. This framework is based on different park types and hierarchies, outlining the appropriate number and types of assets that should be provided at each park. Each park was assessed against this matrix to determine whether there was a surplus or shortage of assets.

Historically, the absence of comprehensive data led to reactive decision-making regarding the provision of open space (OS) assets. As a result, more affluent areas of the municipality became asset-dense, while lower socioeconomic areas were often overlooked. This imbalance raised concerns, especially considering the Council’s commitment to equity and inclusion. The introduction of reliable data through this framework will make it easier to balance community service requirements and expectations. It will also assist the Council in making more objective investment decisions and effectively communicating why certain spaces are equipped with specific amenities or lack them.

It is important to acknowledge that many parks were developed before the establishment of this framework, based on the needs and recreational priorities of the community at the time. As a result, these parks may not fully align with the current framework. In cases where existing parks do not meet the Level of Service, Council intends to explore strategies to enhance or repurpose these spaces in line with the updated framework. This may involve adjusting the type or number of amenities, relocating infrastructure, or focusing on specific functions that better serve the surrounding community. These changes typically occur during renewal or upgrade projects and when budget is available.

Open Space Levels of Service				
Asset	Regional	District	Neighbourhood	Local
Formal Sports Structures				
Informal Sport Structures				
Skate park, Mountain Bike, BMX Tracks/Pump Tracks				
Bike Racks				
Exercise Equipment				
Playgrounds				
Dog Exercise Area - (fenced dog park)				
Dog Waste bag dispenser				
Paths/Trails				
Shared Path				
Car Parking Onsite				
Gardens beds				
Green ground cover				
Natural Shade				
Structure Shade- Shelters				
Shade Sails-Playground				
Litter Bin				
Lighting				
Drinking Fountains				
Public Art				
Public Toilets				
Seats				
BBQs				
Sign - Naming				
Sign - Interpretive/regulatory				
Sign - Wayfinding				
Table				
Community garden				

Supported

Not Supported

Case by Case Assessment

3.

Growing Baw Baw: Planning for the Future

3.1 Community consultation and finding

Council conducted extensive community engagement from October to December 2024 to inform the development of this Strategy. The first stage of consultation reached 445 participants through online surveys, mapping activities, and community pop-ups, with the majority being residents from Drouin and Warragul. Key findings highlighted the frequent use of parks for activities such as walking, playground visits, and social gatherings, with accessibility and essential amenities like public toilets, walking trails, and parking identified as priorities. Participants also emphasised the importance of biodiversity protection, functional open spaces, and connectivity in open space planning.

Community survey results inspired the design framework, which was formed by three principles and nine objectives to articulate how the Open Space Strategy Vision will be achieved and guide more detailed planning.

The second stage of community consultation was conducted between 1 September and 4 October, providing an opportunity for the community to review and comment on the draft Strategy. Council received 30 responses, with majority of participants expressing support for the Strategy's vision, key directions, and recommendations.

A detailed summary of the consultation findings, can be found in (Appendix 4).



IMAGE: Jacksons View Lake, Drouin

Engagement with Traditional Custodian

As part of second stage of consultation, Council also undertook a significant and deliberate step to engage with all Aboriginal Parties across Baw Baw Shire including Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Kurnai Elder representative. These conversations were vital to ensuring the Strategy reflects the voices, knowledge, and aspirations of Traditional Custodians and First Nation communities. This engagement not only informed the relevant actions within the Strategy but also established a foundation for ongoing collaboration, creating clear obligations for Council to embed Aboriginal perspectives in open space planning and delivery.

This process led to the inclusion of new actions that were developed during the engagement with Aboriginal parties and were supported for inclusion in the Strategy. These actions focus on strengthening ongoing engagement, caring for Country, protecting cultural heritage, promoting Aboriginal languages and cultural naming practices, and incorporating storytelling and cultural interpretation within parks and open spaces. Together, they provide an enduring pathway for Council to honour Aboriginal culture and ensure it is meaningfully embedded in future open space planning, design, and management.



IMAGE: Indigenous Art Work by Lionel Rose Junior, Warragul Station Park

3.2 Developing a Community Open Space Vision Statement

The Open Space Strategy sets out a vision for Baw Baw's open space that has been shaped by community aspiration, need as well as the prevailing policy context at the international, national, state and local levels. This Strategy sets out how the Council intends to deliver Baw Baw's Vision for Open Space. Under the key outcomes of A Liveable Baw Baw, A Healthy Baw Baw and A Resilient Baw Baw.

The vision for Baw Baw Shire Open Spaces is:

“Our shared vision for open spaces is to create an equitably distributed network that is liveable, high-quality, and promotes a healthy lifestyle, while also enhancing biodiversity to strengthen the resilience of the Baw Baw community.”

Each outcome is accompanied by a series of objectives that are categorised according to the outcome they most closely align with, and each objective will include a set of key directions. Directions are the key deliverables that will guide Council to achieve each objective and have been developed with a 10 year time frame in mind. They are the way our vision is translated into tangible deliverables.

In addition to the engagement that directly informed the development of this strategy, Council recently undertook broad and deliberative engagement to review its Community Vision (originally adopted in 2021) and shape the updated Council Plan. This engagement captured current community aspirations and priorities through widespread consultation and a deliberative Community Panel process. The updated Community Vision for Baw Baw is:

Sustainable towns and villages that continue to benefit from our beautiful rural and natural environment

Healthy and well people, living in safe, connected communities and healthy environments

Thriving, diverse and resilient communities.

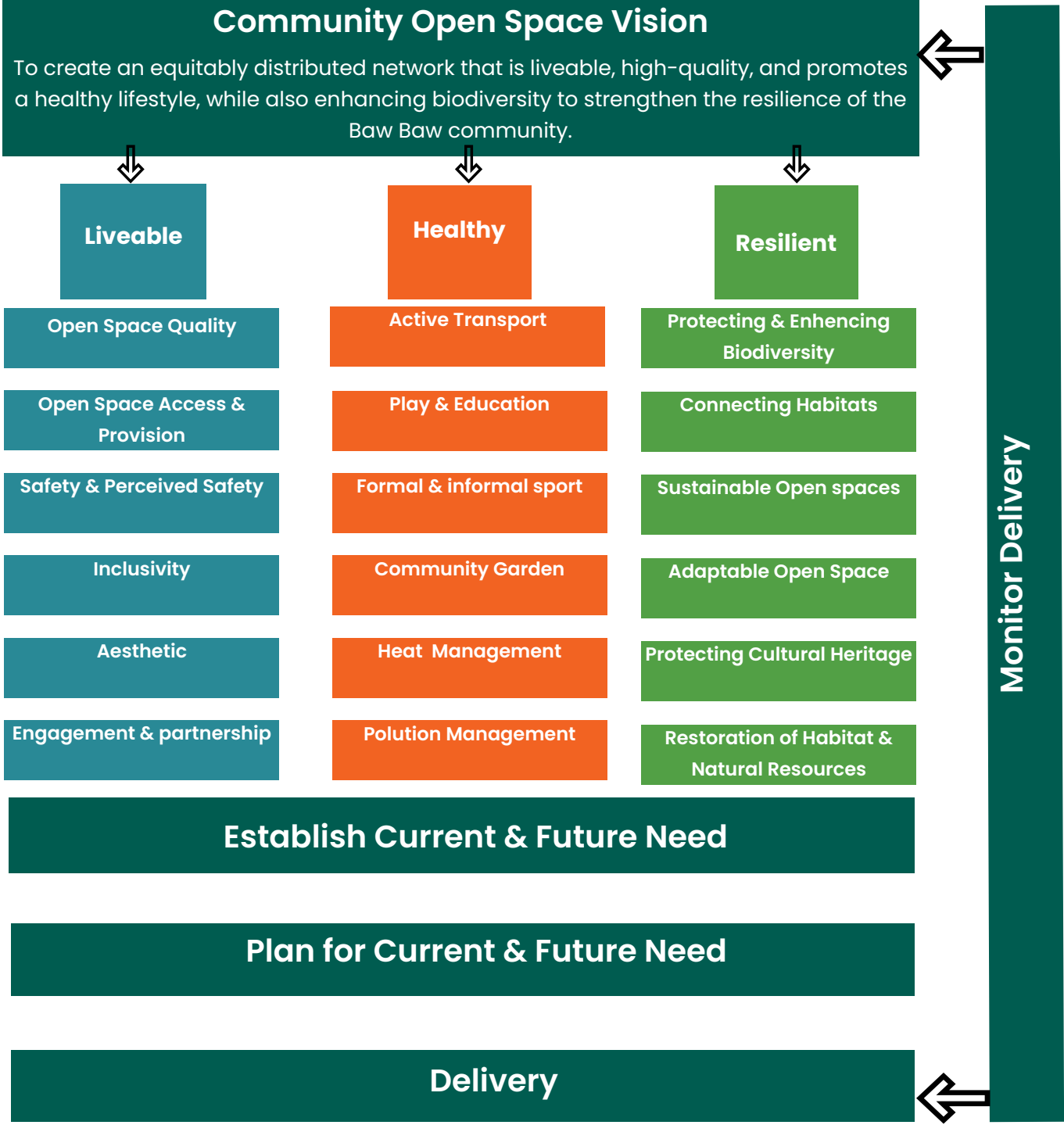
The most well-supported priorities from this engagement emphasised direct, everyday benefits, such as walkability, accessible infrastructure, and support for vulnerable communities. These community priorities reflect a desire for initiatives that foster inclusion, strengthen local connections, and improve access to safe, quality environments.

Open space plays a critical role in delivering on these aspirations. Parks, trails, bushland, and recreation reserves contribute directly to healthier, more liveable and resilient communities by supporting active lifestyles, providing spaces for social connection, and enhancing environmental sustainability.

Improving accessibility and walkability has been a central focus of this strategy. Notably, accessibility was also identified as the highest priority for open space planning during community consultation for this strategy, highlighting the importance of providing inclusive, safe, and well-connected spaces across Baw Baw.

To support this, an Open Space Walkability Assessment was undertaken to better understand current pedestrian access to parks and open spaces throughout the municipality. This assessment is one of several methods used to demonstrate our commitment to what the community values most. It enables Council to plan for walkable access in a more equitable manner by identifying gaps and guiding future improvements.

Through this strategy, Council aims to ensure that open space planning and investment reflect the priorities of the community, contribute to the updated Council Plan outcomes, and promote a connected, inclusive, and sustainable future for Baw Baw.



3.2.1 Outcome 1: Liveable Baw Baw

Open Space Quality

The quality of open spaces is a critical factor in determining the positive benefits they offer to the community. Quality in this context includes not only the design and amenities within these spaces but also their ongoing maintenance and the overall experience they provide. High-quality, well-designed, and strategically located open spaces are instrumental in making Baw Baw Shire a more attractive and enjoyable place to live, work, and invest. These spaces contribute significantly to the economic, environmental, and social well-being of the community.

Baw Baw Shire is home to a diverse array of parks and open spaces, each offering a unique range of activities and experiences. This diversity is a key strength, enabling the open space network to cater to the varied needs of different community groups **to ensure we provide the highest quality parks and open spaces, each of which has been assigned a hierarchy and type.** This classification system is linked to a matrix that allocates specific types and quantities of assets and amenities to each type and hierarchy of park.

The community consultation conducted in 2024 as part of the Open Space Strategy development highlighted that quality open space was one of the five most important priorities for the community in open space planning. This feedback reinforces the need to prioritise the improvement and maintenance of open spaces to meet community expectations in a sustainable and systematic way.

This aligns strongly with Priority 1 under the Healthy Environments pillar of the revised Council Plan Vision, which reflects the community's desire for updated and new assets that are inclusive and reflective of local values. It also supports Priority 4 under the "Thriving Communities" pillar, which emphasises the importance of maintaining and enhancing public amenities — including access to clean and functional spaces, drinking fountains, dog water stations, toilets, and well-kept streets and parks. Together, these priorities underscore the essential role of well-maintained, inclusive, and accessible open spaces in Baw Baw Shire.

Establishing standards for the provision of amenities and services, tailored to the function and hierarchy of each space, is essential for sustainability and data-driven management. This approach enhances the quality of open spaces, creating environments that enrich residents' lives and contribute to the overall liveability of Baw Baw Shire.

Quality will be assessed through the application of a Level of Service (LOS) matrix, which incorporates industry best practices for the provision of assets and services, tailored to the local context of Baw Baw Shire. This matrix helps bridge the gap between community expectations and the actual offerings of each park, ensuring that key assets and services are delivered where they are most needed. All existing or proposed open spaces should meet the criteria specified for each function and hierarchy of a park when evaluated against the LOS Matrix.

Key Directions

1. Over time, plan and prioritise the upgrade of parks that are not meeting the level of service for their particular class. This upgrade could include new provisions and improvements of amenities and infrastructure that support the community's needs and enjoyable experience.
2. Review the level of maintenance for parks and open spaces in collaboration with Council internal teams to reflect the appropriate level of maintenance services for each type of parks and hierarchy.
3. Develop a maintenance cost framework for parks and open spaces to establish a clear understanding of the budget required for sustainable Maintenance and operation. This will help bridge the gap between actual maintenance needs and the initially allocated budget, ensuring that resources are distributed effectively to maintain service standards.
4. Follow good design practices ([Appendix 5](#)) in planning for new parks and upgrading the existing ones to ensure that consideration is given to layout, circulation, neighbourhood character and aesthetics and to ensures that all assets are fit for purpose.
5. Advocate for incorporating smart technology in parks and open space with high level of usage where appropriate. This may include:
 - Implementation of smart waste bins equipped with sensors to monitor waste levels and notify maintenance staff when they need to be emptied. This technology enhances the efficiency of waste management and ensures that the park remains clean and welcoming for visitors. Smart bins reduce the frequency of collection trips, contributing to lower carbon emissions and operational costs. These bins should be placed in high-traffic areas within the well-used parks to maximise their effectiveness.

- Consider the use of smart lighting systems include adaptive lighting and motion-activated lighting where identified as appropriate in parks and open spaces to improve safety, activation and conserve energy.
 - Consider using smart irrigation systems such as automated watering or remote monitoring that enhance water and time efficiency and help to maintain healthier landscapes while lowering maintenance costs.
 - Support the incorporation of Interactive kiosks that provide information about park events, maps, and points of interest. They can also be used for educational purposes, such as sharing information about local flora and fauna and wayfinding assistance to navigate the park Particularly within our well-visited parks with significant feature.
 - Consider the utilisation of drones for regular maintenance checks to monitor large areas of the open space or to provide security surveillance and remote mowing, and Weed treatment management especially in hard-to-reach areas. Drones equipped with sensors can monitor environmental changes, such as erosion, plant health, or wildlife activity and be used for environmental monitoring within our natural spaces.
 - Advocate for the inclusion of interactive play element in new designs to create more engaging and enjoyable park that encourage prolonged park usage and attract visitors.
6. Investigate and develop a comprehensive signage system and design strategy to establish a common visual language for our public park signage, with consistent representation of the Baw Baw Shire brand. It should include systems for the presentation of information, regulations, wayfinding and mapmaking to ensure clarity, legibility and optimised navigation and facility identification. All internal council officers and external contractors/ community groups must refer to these guidelines when preparing to design, locate and implement signage elements within the Shire's parks and open spaces.

Additionally, council should consider the appointment of a signage officer who oversees the development, installation, and ongoing management of signage to enhance wayfinding and user experience across the Shire.

Advertising Signage:

Parks and open spaces are often popular locations for advertising signage, as they attract many visitors. However, the installation of advertising signage should not compromise visual aesthetics, safety, or the overall user experience by obstructing views, cluttering the landscape, or creating distractions in areas intended for relaxation and recreation.

The Baw Baw Planning Scheme and Council Local Laws outline requirements for advertising signage, including instances where a permit may or may not be required.

The following guidelines help in providing consistent direction for provision of advertising signs that do not require a planning permit in open spaces but do require Council permission to erect a sign on Council land.

- Any proposed signs should be temporary and should be removed immediately at the conclusion of the event or season for which they are being proposed.
- Signs need to be consistent with the scale and the size of the structure on which it is proposed to be installed.
- Signs should not obstruct main view lines into the parks and open space from the main pedestrian and vehicle entry points.
- Signs should not dominate the visual prominence park, when viewed from the broader areas of the open space reserve.

7. Development of a Dog off-Lead Policy contributes to greater clarity and direction in planning for and managing Baw Baw's existing and future off-lead dog spaces and informs a consistent response to the range of community requests, and operational and maintenance issues which arise from dog off-lead areas (DOLAs) and projected future population growth and open space pressures.

This approach directly supports Priority 6 under the "Healthy Environments" pillar of the revised Council Plan Vision 2025-2029, which calls for the maintenance and promotion of existing dog parks. Continued investment in these spaces, along with increased community awareness and involvement, contributes to cleaner, safer, and better-used parks.

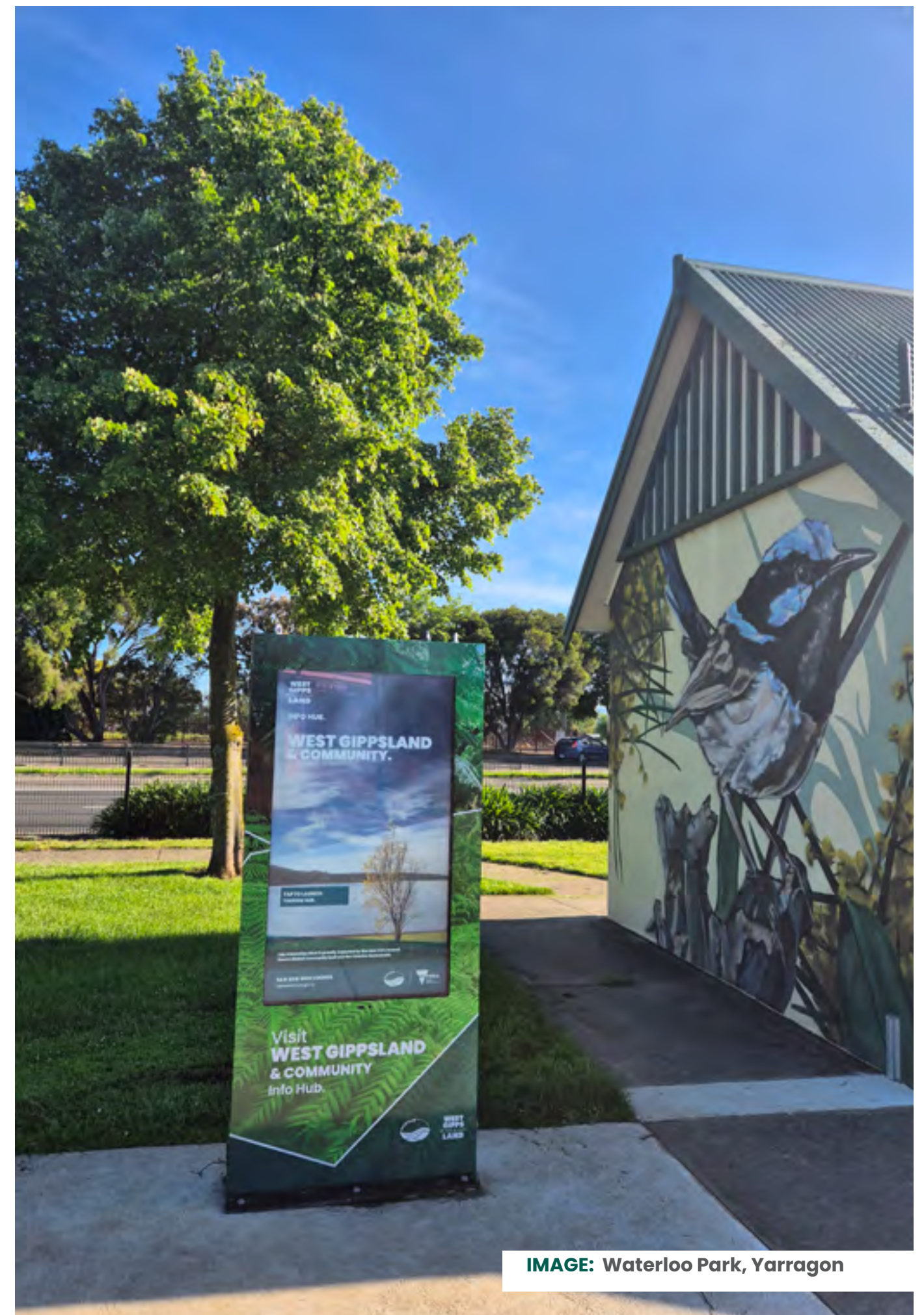


IMAGE: Waterloo Park, Yarragon

Dogs in Baw Baw

Dog parks have become a recognised amenity in Baw Baw catering to the health and wellbeing of both dogs and their owners. When properly established and managed, dog off-lead areas (DOLAs) represent a valuable asset providing improved physical and mental health to the community derived from social interaction, physical exercise, and pet kinship. As Baw Baw Shire's population grows, the demand for open spaces to accommodate various activities will increase, leading to potential conflicts among users. Dog ownership has surged, with registered dogs increasing by over 16% since 2023, now totalling 9321. This rise in dog ownership has placed additional pressure on open spaces to serve multiple purposes simultaneously, some of which may be in conflict.

In June 2016, Council made an Order pursuant to s.26 of the Act, requiring that dogs be kept under effective control by means of chain, leash or cord at all times within any public place, except within designated Off Leash Parks or Areas. Currently there are 7 designated dog off lead areas in Baw Baw out of which 4 are fenced and the only document that is directly relevant to managing these off-lead areas is the Baw Baw Shire Domestic Animal Management Plan. The DAMP sets out education and enforcement activities in dog off-leash areas. Council's compliance team takes a proactive approach, conducting park patrols in both on- and off-leash areas, as well as nearby streets, to promote education and enforcement. This approach has contributed to a reduction in dog-related community inquiries, with reported incidents decreasing from 2023 to 2024. Dog attacks declined by 27.14%, while dog rush incidents dropped by 26.32%, demonstrating the effectiveness of Council's efforts in minimizing animal nuisance and dog attacks..

A well-balanced Dog Off-Lead Policy is needed to identify the areas in need of dog off-lead or fenced off lead areas and to manage and enforce DOLAs more effectively, ensuring they are accessible and beneficial for multiple users. If not addressed, the growing pressure on open spaces could result in continued conflicts, unequal access to DOLAs, ad-hoc responses that exclude portions of the community, increased maintenance costs for Council, and environmental damage caused by domestic dogs, including risks to native species and pollution from dog waste. The policy should address key considerations, including principles for assessing demand and accessibility, criteria for site selection, DOLA standards, provision of supporting assets, and design principles. These principles should account for current and future demand, park hierarchies, location, connectivity, environmental impacts, and design elements such as appropriate buffers, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and surface treatments.

Interim guidelines have been developed to address immediate needs, while a comprehensive Dog Off-Lead policy is planned for development over the longer term. These conditions of use will also be updated on Council's website.

Dogs should be restricted in the following areas:

- Areas with significant cultural, biodiversity, or habitat value,
- In all sport ovals
- In Playgrounds

Dog off lead areas should follow the following guidelines:

- Have clear sightlines for easy monitoring by dog owners and park users.
- Dog off-leash spaces, where possible, should be located away from schools and main roads.
- A buffer zone of at least 20 m is recommended between playgrounds/bbq areas and any dog off-leash space.
- Have recognisable definitions or landmarks to clearly delineate off-lead areas from on-lead zones with clear signage.
- Be appropriately sized and shaped based on the capacity of the site, ensuring they fulfil the intended function and meet community demand.
- Ensure all dog-off lead area and fenced dog park has rubbish bin, drinking fountain with dog bowl at or close to entrance or exit.
- Council to continue implementing educational campaigns and promotions to reduce and address dog nuisance issues and clearly communicate designated no-dog, on-leash, and off-leash areas to park users to minimise conflicts arising from a lack of awareness about dog regulations in open spaces.



IMAGE: Pet Expo, Drouin

8. Explore opportunities to increase activation in parks and open spaces in accordance with BBSC Community Local Law 2024 and Council Community Event Planning Guide. This can include frequent activities, one-off activities, dog training, personal training, events, and performances.

Event and functions in open spaces:

Community events and festivals in open spaces are essential for building community spirit and promoting outdoor activities. These events offer residents a chance to connect, enjoy the natural surroundings, and strengthen their sense of place and belonging.

Council supports these events as they enhance the vibrancy and utilisation of open spaces throughout the Municipality. However, it is important to balance the positive impact of these gatherings with the need to maintain regular access for local residents and protect the environmental integrity of these areas.

Council currently has an event application process that requires the submission of an application for any community event on Council-owned or managed land including public open spaces. To ensure that open spaces remain welcoming and sustainable, the application must meet all guidelines listed in the Event Planning Guide. Additionally, the specific guidelines below have been established to minimise potential conflicts and manage the use of these areas for events within the parks and open spaces:

- Major festivals and events are encouraged to be held in either regional or district open space as these generally have the appropriate level of facilities, public transport access, parking and usage levels appropriate to this use.
- Council officers to review the need for a Parks and Open Space Event Management Plan to guide the booking and management of public and private events within these spaces. If deemed necessary, the plan should aim to balance the benefits of community events with the ongoing protection and maintenance of open spaces for everyday public use. It should consider key aspects such as event planning, site selection, environmental impact, community engagement, and long-term sustainability.
- Council to explore opportunities for reserving and renting shelters or picnic areas in open spaces for smaller occasions, such as birthdays, allowing parts of these spaces to be booked for specific times of the day.
- In accommodating events in parks and open space, minimise the area and length of time that general community access will be restricted to open space.
- Prioritise those events that enhance sense of community and neighbourhood spirit, foster residents' appreciation of the cultural or natural character of the space, and align with community expectations for appropriate use of public open space.
- Event planning should work toward minimise impacts on nearby residents. While it is understood that some events will inevitably increase traffic, noise, or affect parking, event organisers should take steps to mitigate these disruptions. For larger events, event organisers should notify nearby residents in advance, informing them about potential disruptions and planned mitigation strategies.



9. In parks that appear under-utilised or have low visitation, Council to consider the following initiatives in consultation with the local community:
 - **Consolidating under-utilised parks** by focusing resources on nearby parks with higher potential for use and accessibility.
 - **Redesigning the park** to provide unique or niche facilities (e.g. sensory gardens, fitness equipment, or themed play areas) that attract specific user groups.
 - **Trialling temporary installations or programs**, such as pop-up events, community-led activities, or modular recreational facilities, to gauge interest and test new ideas before committing to permanent upgrades.
 - **Co-locate shared facilities** or run programs that activate the space.
 - **Exploring alternative land uses**, such as stormwater management, biodiversity conservation, or habitat restoration, if the site is unsuitable for activation.
10. Work toward preparation of a master plan for all regional, district level and specific purpose rural destinations type of parks to direct their future planning and management in alignment to the LOS matrix.
11. Council to consider expanding the Recreation Team's scope to include a dedicated Open Space and Recreation Planning and Delivery function responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of open space projects, such as park and playground upgrades and new amenities. This function will oversee these initiatives, drawing on expertise from various departments to ensure an integrated approach . Centralizing both planning and delivery within the same team enables continuity and efficiency, streamlining the transition from plan to execution.
12. Review local and neighbourhood open spaces that are close to each other and work towards reducing the duplication of facilities. Not all the spaces need to contain every service or facilities; however, the network as a whole should have a fair and equitable distribution of activities and should be in proportion with the intended use, number of users and hierarchy of the open space.
13. Develop a standardised suite of furniture and Infrastructure for parks and open spaces to ensure consistency across the parks network, facilitating ease of maintenance and replacement. Exceptions may apply where a master plan specifies unique or site-specific elements.
14. Prepare Developer Landscape Design Guidelines to ensure that new parks and open spaces developed by developers meet the approved standards and levels of service as per the strategy. The guidelines will direct the design, approval, and implementation of landscaping in new subdivisions within Baw Baw Shire.
15. Develop a public toilet strategy to guide the development, management, and evaluation of public toilets within the Shire, ensuring that facilities meet both current and future community needs.

Public toilets within parks and open spaces

Council recognises that the provision of public toilets is critical to enable all members of the community to use public spaces and participate in community life. Council currently provides and manages 67 public toilet facilities. This stock comprises 36 facilities located in parks. Some are restricted to public and are only for club users with 28 of them are open to the public.

The community consultation outcome for open space strategy conducted in 2023 identified public toilets as a most important feature for park visitors in Baw Baw shire and community. Provided feedback regarding the provision and maintenance of public toilets, emphasising the need for a strategic approach. This strategy should not only establish guidelines for the placement and upkeep of public toilets but also assess areas where they are either oversupplied or lacking.

Public toilets are most appropriate in regional and district parks, as well as in specific-purpose open space reserves where they support longer stays or accommodate high visitor numbers. In specific-purpose reserves, public toilet facilities should be considered when their role and usage justify the need.

In sport recreation spaces, public toilets are typically provided; however, these facilities are not always accessible to the general public, as they are often tied to organised sports use. When sport and recreation spaces include a playground, it is important to ensure that public toilets are available and accessible to support broader community use.

Additionally, many sport and recreation reserves in rural areas serve as the primary recreation space for a combination of villages and settlements, functioning as rural destinations. These spaces support not only sports activities but also community recreation and gatherings, making public toilet facilities crucial for accommodating visitors and ensuring comfort during longer stays.

Below is a summary of key guidelines for provision of new public toilets or upgrades to existing public toilets in open space. It is important to note that the principles and directions outlined in any new public toilet policy/strategy will take precedence over these guidelines once the policy is developed.

- When assessing the need for public toilets, considerations could include the park's hierarchy (e.g., regional or district level), expected visitor numbers, duration of visits, presence of complementary facilities like playgrounds or picnic areas, and the role of the space in serving surrounding communities or acting as a destination. Environmental and maintenance implications, as well as accessibility and equity, should also be factored in.
- Where possible, integrate with other buildings in the reserve including consideration of how the other building/s may be modified to allow some public access to existing toilet/change facilities, while retaining secure and separate access for the existing clubs and groups already operating in the buildings.
- Locate to avoid the need for park visitors to cross internal roads and car parks. Where feasible, locate near high use facilities such as barbecues and playgrounds or near existing services where available.
- Locate in a position to service the whole reserve and as such minimise the need for additional toilets.
- Use best practice environmentally sustainable principles in siting and design, particularly in relation to water and energy use and demonstrate waste management is adequately provided for.
- Location should not block prominent public views to the reserve and should not create hidden or unusable areas around them.
- Locate with passive supervision from surrounding area where possible, referring to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in public toilet design.
- Provide all-ability, access, gender neutral toilets and signage in accordance with current Australian Standards
- Adequate lighting including maximising daylight where possible.
- Appropriately sized to meet demands and the size of the open space, in line with Parks LOS to determine the appropriate type and number of public toilets in different park types and hierarchies.
- Complement the character of the open space.
- Ensure appropriate signing.
- Consideration for the ongoing maintenance, operation and renewal cost, inclusive of the cost to open/close facilities and the associated resourcing required to service any new or expanded public toilet facilities

16. Strategically review and plan for built facilities in open spaces that does not support outdoor activities.

Building in open spaces

Proposed building infrastructure within open spaces that does not directly support outdoor activities like sport, leisure, or passive recreation is generally discouraged (e.g., community halls, office spaces). Any such proposals must clearly demonstrate how they will enhance access to and use of the open space before relevant planning approval and land use assessment is considered. When buildings are necessary in open spaces, specific guidelines ensure that both existing and new structures complement the open space's function, character, and value. Clear justification is required for the location, development, and retention of these facilities within open spaces.

Future proposals for new developments or the expansion/upgrade of existing non-open-space-dependent facilities must meet the following guidelines to ensure they are appropriate and beneficial to the open space and its users.

- Assess whether existing buildings can be repurposed to support open space-related activities before continuing their non-open space dependent use.
- For any required non-open space dependent buildings, determine how the design will harmonise with and enhance the accessibility and functionality of the open space.
- Implement best practice (Appendix 6) environmentally sustainable design principles, particularly concerning water and energy conservation, to minimise the environmental footprint.
- Ensure the building's location and design do not obstruct key public views or create hidden or inaccessible areas. Buildings should be designed to contribute to the passive surveillance of the open space, enhancing safety and usability.
- Provide for efficient waste management, including adequate bin enclosures and recycling facilities, to maintain the cleanliness and environmental integrity of the open space.
- Ensure that public transportation options are available to support the building's new uses, and integrate sufficient bicycle parking facilities into the design. All buildings should offer all-abilities access, following current Australian Standards.
- Design the building to complement the existing character of the open space, ensuring that the construction and operational activities cause minimal disruption and environmental impact.

17. Follow guidelines to install new or upgrade existing park infrastructures and amenities and in accordance with Parks LoS. There is a range of existing recreational infrastructure in open space for structured sporting use and community recreation. This includes fencing, goal posts, scoreboards, cricket nets, storage sheds, temporary sheds, car parking, seating, picnic shelters, barbecues, picnic tables etc.

The design and placement of infrastructure in open space affects the use, landscape character and value of the site and it determines the level of community use of open space. Below we have developed key guidelines for assessing current conditions and future installation of some of this infrastructure that are frequently used by general community and are highly visible.

18. Establish a comprehensive Public Open space Lighting Policy that provides clear direction and criteria for installation, discontinuance, and ongoing maintenance and management of lighting within public open spaces including parks and recreation areas, ensuring it supports safe human movement, activates spaces at appropriate times, and minimises impacts on native flora and fauna.

Light in Public Open Space

While lighting is commonly used with the intention of enhancing public safety, research highlights that its effects are more complex than often assumed. A 2011 study of London Street lighting found no strong evidence that increased lighting reduces overall crime. In some cases, lighting can create a false sense of security, potentially putting users at greater risk. Therefore, any lighting installation that is considered should be comprehensively evaluated to ensure it truly enhances safety and space activation.

Australian research conducted in 2019 further supports this perspective, showing that the relationship between light levels and perceived safety is not straightforward. An analysis of over 80 unsafe "hotspots" identified by women in Melbourne revealed that brightly over-lit areas did not correlate with their perceptions of urban safety. In fact, over-lighting can diminish the sense of security, as it may obscure visibility or create harsh contrasts. Additionally, some crimes, such as vandalism and graffiti, can thrive under night lighting.

Given these insights, the policy should emphasise smart lighting solutions that direct light where it is most needed, balancing safety with the preservation of natural nightscapes. The goal is to enhance visibility without compromising the safety, ecological and aesthetic value of open spaces.

In alignment with the recommended development of a Public open space lighting policy, the following interim guidelines can assist with the installation of lighting in parks and open spaces to address the immediate need. These guidelines should be implemented in synergy with Council's upcoming Paths and Trails Strategy to ensure a coordinated approach.



IMAGE: Warragul Art Center, Warragul

- Lighting is generally only applicable in high use open space and larger reserves including regional and
- district open space or specific purpose rural destination. The key targeted lighting for larger, high-used parks where lighting is prioritised include:

Pathways

Consider illuminating main paths/shared paths within parks and open space, especially those heavily used during evening hours. Points where multiple pathways or roads intersect are priority for lighting, as they help guide movement and prevent accidents.

Entrances and Exits

Makes access points clearly visible and enhances the sense of security for users entering or leaving the park

Car Parks/ Bike Racks

Lighting in parking areas reduces the risk of accidents and theft.

Recreation area and playgrounds

While lighting may not be as necessary late at night in playgrounds, lighting in the early evening can make playgrounds more accessible and safer for families. Areas like tennis courts, basketball courts, and sports fields require targeted lighting, especially if they are used for night games or practices. It is important to ensure that lighting in these areas complies with the relevant Australian standards for sports lighting to guarantee safety and optimal use.

Public toilets and amenities

Lighting should also be considered in areas where park maintenance takes place or near service entrances

Seating areas and shelters

These structures may need lighting both for safety and to encourage their use during the evening

Stair and ramp

Any elevation changes, such as stairs, ramps, or changes in the grade, should be well-lit to prevent trips and falls, especially to comply with accessibility standards.

Security and surveillance area:

Areas under surveillance or near security installations should be illuminated to ensure clear camera footage and deter criminal activities.

Signage and information board

Lighting around signs and maps helps visitors navigate the park at night and locate important information

Event spaces and gathering areas

If Lighting is provided for these spaces, they should be adjustable and sufficient to cater to large crowds and varied activities when its necessary. Portable lighting can also be used to provide flexibility and adaptability for different events:

- Lighting should not be installed in reserves with significant nature conservation values, including waterway corridors. In these areas, environmental considerations must take precedence over recreational and human needs, Council future Public open space lighting Policy will have guidelines and measure on Lux levels and type of lighting
- Where possible, use existing lighting, such as sports field lighting, to minimise disruption and resource expenditure.
- Council may consider approval of aesthetic lighting if it contributes to place making and activation. In that

case the timers are to be installed linked to the operation hours of the associated site.

- As a minimum standard, choose lighting that:

- Minimises upward glare to reduce its impact on native fauna and nearby residential areas.

- Is energy efficient and appropriately scaled to meet the specific identified need.

- Is easily maintained Under Council current resources and designed to complement the character of the reserve

- Follows Australian standard relevant to lighting in parks and open spaces. (Appendix 7)

- Investigate the need for lighting in formalised dog parks, with consideration given to safety, proximity to residential areas, usage patterns, and potential impacts. gnage and information board Lighting around signs and maps helps visitors navigate the park at night and locate important information

Event spaces and gathering areas

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- Where possible, use existing lighting, such as sports field lighting, to minimise disruption and resource expenditure.
- Council may consider approval of aesthetic lighting if it contributes to placemaking and activation. In that case the timers are to be installed linked to operation hours of the associated site.
- As a minimum standard, choose lighting that:
 - ◊ Minimises upward glare to reduce its impact on native fauna and nearby residential areas.
 - ◊ Is energy efficient and appropriately scaled to meet the specific identified need.
 - ◊ Is easily maintained under Council current resources and designed to complement the character of the reserve
- Follow Australian standard relevant to lighting in parks and open spaces. (Appendix 7)
- Investigate the need for lighting in formalised dog parks, with consideration given to safety, proximity to residential areas, usage patterns, and potential impacts.

19. Open Space Key Infrastructure:

Follow the key guidelines below when assessing current conditions and planning future installation of frequently used and highly visible infrastructure. In applying these guidelines, consider that full compliance may not always be possible in areas with land constraints, environmental sensitivities, or other limiting factors.

19.1 Shared path

Shared paths cater to multiple types of users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and sometimes inline skaters. These paths are designed to accommodate various activities on a single route, promoting seamless connectivity within the park. Unlike pedestrian-only paths, shared paths must balance the needs of different users, incorporating features like clear signage and safety measures to manage interactions and prevent conflicts.

When developing new shared paths within parks and open spaces, it’s crucial to integrate guidance from existing strategies like the Council’s Path and Trail Strategy and the forthcoming Integrated Transport Strategy. Shared paths must address the diverse needs of users, including cyclists, pedestrians, and dog walkers, to minimise potential conflicts.

Key challenges include: Different types of users (pedestrians, cyclists, runners, wheelchair users) often share the same space, which can lead to conflicts and safety concerns, especially when path width or design is inadequate to accommodate all. Also the different travel speeds of cyclists and pedestrians, which can lead to safety issues, especially on sealed paths where cyclists may not be easily audible to pedestrians, heightening the potential for accidents. Additionally, the presence of off-lead dogs can create significant hazards, particularly for cyclists, adding to the complexity of shared trails safety.

To ensure the safety and functionality of shared paths, careful consideration is needed regarding various factors such as surface treatment, trail gradient, width, road crossings, and vegetation management, all of which affect visibility and usability. The following guidelines will assist in assessing existing trails or designing new ones within the park.

- Ensure that the gradients on both existing and proposed paths meet access and mobility standards, in accordance with Austroads guidelines for shared trails. This includes designing slopes that accommodate users of all abilities where practicable.
- Maintain clear visibility along the paths, particularly at points where the trail changes direction. Vegetation management should prevent low-hanging branches or overgrowth from obstructing sightlines.
- Shared trails should be a minimum of 2.5 m wide or meet the current standards for shared trail design, providing sufficient space for various users to coexist safely.
- Follow the Level of Service matrix to assess appropriate width and type of shared path within different park types and hierarchies
- The trail surface should be appropriate to the character, location, and anticipated usage levels of the path. This may include using different materials based on the surrounding environment and expected traffic.
- Clear signage should be installed to inform all shared trail users, including cyclists, pedestrians, dog walkers, pram pushers, and skateboarders about appropriate behaviour and the necessary levels of control on shared path.
- Adhere to best management practices for trail design, (Appendix 8) particularly concerning flood management and environmental sustainability.
- When high volume travel is expected, consider separation of pedestrians and cyclists.

19.2 Paths

Paths in parks are dedicated walkways designed primarily for pedestrian use. They enhance accessibility and connectivity within the park, offering a safe and smooth surface for walking. Paths can vary in width and material, depending on their purpose and location, and are essential for creating a pleasant and functional pedestrian experience.

Council adopted the Recreation Strategy 2017-2027, in 2017 which highlighted that 65% of all survey respondents walk for recreation. Walking and cycling paths, tracks and trails were deemed to be the most popular places to recreate. The need for constructing new or upgraded walking and cycling paths was identified as one of the top five community priorities. Also, community consultation conducted in Oct 2023 for the open space strategy revealed the importance of walking as a primary activity for residents, given the high levels of participation in walking, their future design, alignment, and condition will continue to be an important focus for facility provision.

Guidelines for review and design of path in open space:

- Paths should complement and be consistent with the park's location, usage levels, and overall character.
- Ensure paths are wide enough to accommodate the intended levels of use and meet relevant path design standards. Refer to Level of service for appropriate width of paths in different park hierarchies.
- Considering access for maintenance needs during the design process, and where possible, integrate them into the overall design without compromising the park's functionality.
- Paths must meet current standards for access and mobility to cater to all users, including those with disabilities and current best management practices for path design, including considerations for flood management. (Appendix 8)
- Design paths to minimise intersections with vehicle entries to enhance user safety within the park.
- Ensure safe crossing points and junctions where paths intersect with adjoining streets.
- Design paths to direct surface runoff into adjacent garden beds or utilise it on-site, minimising reliance on drainage systems.



IMAGE: Alex Goudie park, Drouin

19.3 Car Parks

Car parking is available in many of the regional and district open spaces, and its design and size must be proportionate to the reserve to ensure it positively impacts the use, safety, and enjoyment of the area. Poorly located car parks can hinder access to park facilities and may fragment the open space. The strategy acknowledges the necessity of car parking in certain parks, particularly in larger and more significant parks for sporting groups and older visitors who rely on driving to access open spaces and then walk from there. However, the strategy also emphasises encouraging alternative transportation options, such as public transport, walking, and cycling, to reduce the reliance on car parking within open spaces. This includes the provision of bicycle parking facilities and well-designed, safe shared trail access to and within the reserves.

When evaluating the need for existing and future car parking designs and requirements in open spaces, they should be assessed according to the following guidelines.

- Conduct the Car Parking Demand Assessment to identify the quantity of parking required to meet the existing or future need of visitors to a parks and open spaces.
- Demonstrate how the parking will be accommodated in the area without undue impact on adjoining land use or undue loss of existing open space areas.
- Demonstrate there is safe pedestrian access and circulation to, around and through the car park
- Proposed design should adhere to sustainability principles and best management practice regarding car park design (Appendix 9).
- Planting in car parks should be provided for improved, shade, aesthetics and habitat provision, with consideration of adequate sight lines for safety.
- Proposed size, material use, and design should not compromise the desired landscape character of the park.
- Lighting car parks in open space is generally not required, and should be determined in line with the hierarchy or Level of Service (LOS) of the park, except where the open space facilities are in use outside daylight hours by a large number of park users and the lighting does not interfere with a natural habitat or wildlife.
- Consider Local traffic management in the locality of the land.
- Where appropriate, consider multiple use of the car park or Share parking with other nearby facilities.
- Consider Including the provision of parking facilities for cyclists and disabled people.
- Determine the short-stay and long-stay car parking in accordance with the type of parks and available activities.
- Consider the design and construction standards proposed for paving, drainage, line marking, signage lighting and other relevant matters and ensure layout of car spaces and accessways are consistent with Australian Standard AS2890.1-2004 (off street) and AS2890.6-2009 (disabled). (Appendix 9)
- Refer to the LOS to determine the parking needs and its attributes in different hierarchy and type of park.
- Follow the design standard and relevant requirements of the Baw Baw Planning Scheme.

19.4 Seats

Seats offer resting places for people exercising, walking, or simply enjoying the environment, and they also serve as focal points for social interaction and relaxation. The design and placement of seats significantly affect their use and accessibility.

Recent assessment of all seats in our parks has identified that, seating distribution is uneven across the Shire. Some areas have an oversupply of seats, while others are lacking, especially when measured against the development Level of Service. According to Yardstick Benchmarking 2023, the provision of seats per hectare in the Shire exceeds the country median, suggesting that while overall seating availability may be adequate, distribution inconsistencies need to be addressed to better align with community needs and service levels.

Guidelines for provision, design and location of seats in Open Space:

- Seats should be strategically placed to face areas of activity, such as playgrounds, walking paths, and scenic views. This encourages use and enhances the enjoyment of the space, making the seating areas inviting and purposeful.
- Offer a mix of seating locations, some in shaded areas, others in the sun, to caters to diverse user preferences. Additionally, providing different types of seating, such as benches with backrests and armrests, ensures comfort and accessibility for all, including those with varying mobility needs.
- Seats should be located adjacent to paths or paved areas to ensure easy access, particularly for individuals with disabilities. They should be positioned along major pedestrian links and near popular areas to maximise their utility. Where possible, provide space beside seating for prams or mobility aids to be parked off the path without obstructing circulation.
- Where possible, incorporate informal seating options, such as low walls or ledges, that blend with the natural surroundings. These can activate the edges of spaces and provide additional, flexible seating options while helping to define a space.
- Increase the number of seats in high-traffic areas, particularly those with good sightlines of the entire space and its entry points. This not only supports the comfort of visitors but also promotes safety through passive surveillance.
- Ensure that seating design aligns with the park's overall aesthetic and caters to the needs of its users, enhancing the park's functionality and appeal.
- Select durable, weather-resistant materials to minimise upkeep and ensure the longevity of the seating, ensuring alignment with Council's future suite of furniture for parks and open spaces.
- Refer to the Level of Service (LOS) standards to determine the appropriate placement and number of seats for different types and hierarchies of parks.



IMAGE: Bellbird Park Recreation Reserve, Drouin

19.5 Fences

Fences in open spaces are crucial for several reasons. They help define the boundaries between private properties and public land, ensuring that public spaces are clearly demarcated and accessible. Fences can also serve as barriers that enhance safety, especially in areas near playgrounds, busy roads, or water bodies, preventing unauthorized access and protecting vulnerable users, such as children.

Guidelines for fencing around the park:

- Property boundaries adjoining public land should follow the BBSC Half Cost Fencing Policy, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations.
- Where a gap in walking access to open space is identified and private properties adjoin a park or reserve, Council may prioritise approval for gate installations in fences. This will be considered where it improves public access, enhances safety, and provides a broader benefit to the community.
- Fencing height, type, and design for properties adjacent to public land should align with the Baw Baw Council Planning Scheme, ensuring consistency with relevant planning and design considerations.
- In urban growth areas, fencing within open spaces should be low in height and visually permeable to promote safety, surveillance, and community connectivity, as outlined in local Precinct Structure Plans.
- The design of fences should integrate with the surrounding environment by using materials, colours, and styles that complement the natural landscape. Transparent or semi-transparent designs are preferred to maintain sightlines and minimise visual impact.
- Fences should allow for small animal movement where appropriate to support a healthy ecosystem within and around parks

Guideline for fencing around the playground and fencing within the park:

- Traditional fencing should be minimised in playgrounds to create a more open and inviting atmosphere. When safety and boundary demarcation are necessary, consider using fencing selectively rather than enclosing the entire area. This approach fosters a sense of openness and encourages interaction between the playground and its surrounding environment.

Fencing should be considered in locations identified as high traffic areas, which are characterized by a combination of factors such as the speed of adjacent roads and the proximity of playgrounds to those roads. For example, playgrounds located near roads with high vehicle speeds or heavy traffic volumes pose greater risks for children playing nearby. Specifically, playgrounds situated near roads with speed limits above 50 km/h should be carefully evaluated for fencing needs, as these conditions pose greater risks for children playing nearby. In this case fencing can serve as an important safety measure to prevent children from wandering into traffic. However, not all natural features necessitate fencing. For example, ponds or lakes may not require fencing if they are designed with safety in mind, such as having gentle slopes, clear visibility, and appropriate signage to educate visitors about potential hazards. Additionally, features like grassy hills or gardens may not pose the same risk and can be left unfenced to promote accessibility and encourage interaction with nature.

Fencing should be considered for playgrounds located within 30 metres of distributor roads with speed limits of 50–60 km/h or higher, particularly in areas with high pedestrian activity.

While there is no specific Australian Standard mandating fencing for playgrounds adjacent to roads with a 50 km/h speed limit, a comprehensive risk assessment should be conducted to determine the need for fencing based on site-specific factors such as traffic volume, road design, and pedestrian movement.

Similarly, where playgrounds are located within 20 m of potential hazards including stormwater drains, bike tracks, and playing fields.

- In areas where fencing is necessary for safety, use materials and designs that prevent climbing, ensuring children remain within the safe play area.
- Consider using green fences, such as hedges, shrubs, or trellises with climbing plants, as a natural barrier. These provide safety while also enhancing the playground’s aesthetic and contributing to environmental sustainability, a sense of connection to nature and supporting local biodiversity.
- Even with minimised or green fencing, ensure that access points are clearly defined and accessible, with gates that are wide enough for strollers and wheelchairs, complying with accessibility standards.
- Prioritise fencing that maintains an open feel, such as using vertical pickets, wire mesh, or low hedges, to prevent the playground from feeling isolated or enclosed.
- Use materials that are durable and weather-resistant, especially for green fencing, which requires less maintenance over time and offers environmental benefits.

- When fencing is used primarily to define boundaries within a park rather than for safety purposes, consider designing the fence as a multifunctional feature. Incorporate seating elements or social spaces along the fence line, such as benches or low walls, to encourage interaction and relaxation. This approach not only serves as a boundary marker but also enhances the usability of the space, providing opportunities for socialisation and rest within the park.
- Ensure compliance with local safety and building codes in all fencing.

(Appendix 10)

19.6 Picnic and Barbecue Facilities and Shelters

Picnic and barbecue facilities play a pivotal role in making open spaces inviting and functional for social gatherings. These amenities encourage community interaction, enabling families and groups to enjoy outdoor activities regardless of the weather. Shelters, in particular, extend the usability of parks by providing covered areas.

The recent parks and playground asset and performance assessment data indicate that tables are unevenly distributed across the Shire, with some sites having an oversupply while others have no provision at all. When compared with other local authorities, the Shire’s provision of tables per hectare is significantly above the upper quartile, indicating a higher-than-average availability. However, the inconsistency in distribution suggests a need for better alignment with service standards.

The following guidelines assist in the strategic positioning and design of these facilities across parks and open spaces:

- Picnic and barbecue facilities are preferred to be positioned near car parks or main pedestrian entrances to ensure easy access. This convenience encourages greater use and makes the facilities more accessible for all visitors.
- Co-locate these facilities with other key park features such as playgrounds, community centres, and walking paths. This placement fosters a multifunctional space where different activities can occur simultaneously, enhancing the overall user experience.
- Shelters should be designed in harmony with the park’s character, considering the natural landscape and the anticipated frequency of use. They should include seating and tables, with additional picnic tables placed nearby to offer variety and accommodate larger groups.
- Future designs should incorporate sustainable principles, such as the use of eco-friendly materials, water runoff management, energy efficiency, and integrated waste management systems. These features contribute to the long-term environmental sustainability of the park.
- Barbecue facilities are most suitable in larger regional or district-level reserves where they are likely to see frequent use. In smaller local or neighbourhood open spaces, where use is minimal, the presence of barbecues may not be justified due to the high maintenance costs and their potential to dominate the space.
- Barbecues should be designed to minimise fire risks and reduce the potential for public nuisance. This includes considering the appropriate location, type of barbecue, and the materials used in construction.
- Facilities must be designed to be accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. This includes ensuring that paths leading to the facilities are accessible, and that seating and barbecue setups cater to all users.
- Select durable, weather-resistant materials to minimise upkeep and ensure the longevity of the seating, aligning with Council’s future suite of furniture for parks and open spaces.
- Refer to LOS standards to determine the appropriate number and placement of picnic and barbecue facilities based on the park’s type and hierarchy. This ensures that amenities are provided in the right locations and quantities to meet community needs.

19.7 Drinking Fountains

Drinking fountains are essential amenities in parks and open spaces, providing visitors with convenient access to clean drinking water. They support healthy lifestyles by encouraging hydration during physical activities and contribute to the overall quality and comfort of public open spaces. The installation and maintenance of drinking fountains should be carefully considered to ensure they meet the needs of all park users.

General guidelines for placement and design of drinking fountain in parks and open spaces:

- Refer to LOS standards to determine the appropriate number, placement and design of drinking fountain based on the park’s type and hierarchy. This ensures that amenities are provided in the right locations and quantities to meet community needs ensuring, prioritising areas with high visitor numbers or where people engage in physical activities.
- Place drinking fountains in high-traffic areas, such as near playgrounds, sports fields, picnic areas, and walking trails. Or near other amenities like seating areas.
- Ensure that fountains are easily accessible to all users, including those with disabilities, by adhering to current accessibility standards. (Appendix 11)
- Use robust, vandal-resistant materials suitable for outdoor environments to minimise maintenance needs and extend the lifespan of the fountains, and ensure the longevity of the seating. ensuring alignment with Council’s future suite of furniture for parks and open spaces.
- Consider installing pet-friendly fountains at dog off-lead areas to cater to both humans and their pets.
- Equip fountains with proper drainage systems to prevent water from pooling and to maintain cleanliness.
- Provide signage encouraging users to report any issues with the fountains to maintain hygiene standards.
- Where possible, install fountains that reduce water wastage, such as those with automatic shut-off features.
- Consider incorporating refill stations for reusable water bottles to promote sustainability and reduce plastic waste.

19.8 Bins

Bins play a crucial role in maintaining the cleanliness and overall visual amenity helping to prevent pollution, protect local wildlife, and enhance the user experience. Strategically placed bins can also encourage recycling and reduce the environmental impact of waste. Compared to other Councils, the Shire’s provision of rubbish bins per hectare is low, underscoring the need for a strategic approach to improve waste management infrastructure across the area.

Guidelines for the provision of rubbish bins in open space:

- Refer to LOS standards to determine the appropriate number, placement and design of bins based on the park’s type and hierarchy. This ensures that amenities are provided in the right locations and quantities to meet community needs ensuring, prioritising areas with high visitor numbers or where people engage in related activities.
- Position bins in locations that are both accessible for maintenance and convenient for park users, such as near entry and exit points, picnic areas, and along frequently used paths.
- Ensure bin designs minimise the risk of wind-blown litter, including secure lids or covers to keep waste contained. Provide bin enclosures at all regional, district and sports pavilions to keep waste contained and improve visual amenity and ensuring bin designs, material and type are in alignment with Council’s future suite of furniture for parks and open spaces.
- Bins to be in pair of waste and recycling to encourage responsible disposal and reduce landfill. The number and type of bins at all passive and sports pavilions is to be consistent with Parks Level of Service.
- Consider including dedicated dog waste bins, in dog off lead areas and fenced in parks that are frequented by dog owners, and ensure they are regularly serviced to maintain hygiene and reduce environmental impact.



IMAGE: Civic Park, Warragul

19.9 Bicycle Parking

As communities continue to embrace cycling as a sustainable and healthy mode of transportation, the demand for bicycle parking in parks and open spaces has significantly increased. Parks are natural destinations for cyclists, whether for recreation, exercise, or simply as part of their daily commute. To support this growing trend and encourage more people to choose cycling over driving, it is essential to provide adequate and accessible bike parking facilities within parks.

The recent 2023 park performance assessment identified that across the Shire, bike racks represent the most significant investment needed to meet the developed levels of service. A review and possible refinement of these service levels may be necessary to ensure they are achievable and aligned with current resources. Specifically, when compared with other Councils across the country, the provision of bike racks per hectare is low, indicating a key area where improvements are needed to better support the community's needs.

Guidelines for design and placement of bike racks in parks and open spaces:

- Given the lower provision of bike racks per hectare compared to other councils across the country, efforts should be made to increase the number of bike racks in larger and higher-used parks. Refer to level of service to determine appropriate number and type of bike rack in different type and hierarchy of parks.
- Follow the planning scheme Clause 52.34-6 & 7 in regard to design of bicycle spaces and signage.
- Bike racks should be conveniently located near key amenities within parks, such as entrances, playgrounds, picnic areas, and trailheads. This ensures that cyclists can easily access their destination without the need for long detours or unsafe parking practices.
- The design of bike racks should accommodate various types of bicycles and provide secure locking points. Racks should be made from durable, weather-resistant materials and be placed in well-lit, visible areas to enhance security. Additionally, the design should comply with Australian Standard AS 2890.3 for bicycle parking, which specifies the requirements for safe and secure bike storage.
- Bike racks should be integrated with other forms of transportation, such as public transit stops or car parking areas, to facilitate multi-modal travel. This approach encourages the use of bicycles as a complement to public transport.



IMAGE: Angela Malacarne Park, Yarragon

20. Ensure that developments adjoining public open spaces are designed and managed to enhance the quality, accessibility, and environmental integrity of these spaces.

Interference between public open space and adjoining development:

Guidelines are required to improve the treatment of the interface between adjoining land and open space to ensure future development is compatible with open space values and use. To effectively administer these guidelines, planning applications on land adjoining open space should be referred internally to Council's statutory, Environment , Infrastructure Maintenance team and Recreation teams.

Development of properties adjoining open space reserves should demonstrates the following:

- Development should not obstruct existing public access to open spaces.
- Open space access should be improved where possible as a result of the proposed development. Direct pedestrian access to the reserve from individual properties will not be counted as improved public access and should only be approved where the design interface does not discourage public access directly to the reserve or through the site or appear to privatise the open space or a part of it.
- Ensure that developments do not encroach upon or privatise public open spaces. For example, through expansion of infrastructure, furniture or fittings, boundary treatments, garden landscaping and other methods.
- Development should retain existing vegetation in public open space where feasible. new developments should provide a tree inspection report. This report should include an assessment of the tree species, health condition, and potential risks. The report should also consider factors potential impact on surrounding park infrastructure or future park development. This ensures that the management of trees supports both ecological sustainability and the safety of the community.
- Subdivision/development layout achieves at least some passive surveillance where possible from adjoining properties of open space.
- The scale, height, building mass, building design and fencing does not adversely affect weather patterns, including wind, and retains a minimum of five hours sun access to the open space between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM during the winter. Refer to item17.4 guidelines for fencing for properties abutting public open space.
- The site layout and building design adequately caters for any noise and light that spills from the adjoining open space, eg. through sensitive dwelling orientation or location of bedrooms. pre-existing recreational activities will not be rescheduled or relocated.
- Any upgrade to an existing property with vehicle access and/or parking in or through open space should be reviewed to remove or to demonstrate how continued access will not compromise safe use and access to public.
- Landscaping in adjoining developments should avoid the use of weed species and preferably incorporate locally indigenous plants, especially when adjacent to nature conservation areas or waterways.
- Council to engage landowners adjoining nature conservation reserves and waterway corridors with a goal to promote planting on private property using locally indigenous species.

21. Combine open spaces and or playgrounds that currently function separately but could be combined and provide more opportunity for recreation by meeting size and multifunctionality.
22. The design and layout of waterway corridors and all other encumbered open space must maximise the potential for the integration of recreation uses, utility infrastructure, and wetlands, where this does not conflict with the primary function of the land.

Open Space Quantity

The Open Space Strategy aims to ensure there is adequate provision of public open space for recreational opportunity across the Shire. While this high-level metric is useful, it does not provide a complete picture on its own. It should be interpreted alongside walking access analysis, as significant quantities of open space may exist within the municipality but be unevenly distributed.

Various methodologies are employed to assess the quantity of open space. For instance, the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) calculates open space as a percentage of net developable area within Precinct Structure Plans and new subdivisions. However, this approach does not sufficiently account for variations in population density and the corresponding demands for open space in our shire which can differ significantly across the Shire. Therefore, in this strategy, we have aligned with the approach outlined in the VPA's *Metropolitan Open Space Network Provision and Distribution 2017* report, which measures open space on a per capita basis. This report identifies an average of approximately 57 square metres of public open space per person across metropolitan areas, incorporating all publicly owned and managed open spaces by councils as well as other public authorities.

To understand how Baw Baw compares to this average, Baw Baw's open space provision was assessed using this same approach. This comparison is not intended as a measure of adequacy for the purpose of open space contribution, but to provide a high-level point of comparison. Additionally, Council has undertaken a separate piece of work to assess the adequacy of open space provision to determine the appropriate open space contribution rate.

In rural parts of the Shire, where population density is low and large areas of state or national parks are present, per capita figures tend to be significantly inflated. For this particular assessment, the Strategy focuses on Rail corridor towns, where population densities are higher and growth pressures are more concentrated.

To assess the open space per capita, the projected population growth over the next 10 years should be compared against anticipated increases in public open space. This can result in three scenarios:

- **Static Supply Scenario:** Assumes no additional open space is delivered over the next 10 years while the population continue to grow. This presents a conservative, worst-case view that highlights the potential pressures if open space delivery is significantly delayed or stalled.
- **Staged Delivery Scenario:** Includes only open space that is considered likely to be delivered within the next 10 years based on current subdivision approvals and indicative staging timelines.
- **Maximum Supply Scenario:** Assumes all open space associated with currently approved subdivision applications is delivered within the 10-year period.

While population forecasts provided by .id Forecast are informed by development potential and known growth areas, they are based on assumptions about housing demand, land capacity, and market activity rather than exact approved subdivisions and guaranteed delivery timelines.

Similarly, although we have detailed data on the amount of open space proposed within approved subdivision applications, the timing of delivery remains highly uncertain. These subdivisions are typically delivered in stages, with open space provision often tied to future stages that may or may not proceed within the next decade.

Housing delivery, and therefore the associated open space, is determined by market forces, not Council. If the economy slows or enters a recession, these timelines may be delayed significantly; conversely, a strong market may accelerate them. Accurately matching open space delivery with the number of dwellings or population arising from each subdivision would therefore require assumptions that may not reflect real-world outcomes.

For these reasons, and to avoid introducing compounded uncertainties, this Strategy applies a Static Supply Scenario, assuming no additional open space is delivered over the next 10 years while population growth continues. This conservative approach highlights areas that may experience pressure under a worst-case scenario and helps identify where monitoring or proactive planning may be needed to avoid potential overcrowding or under-provision.



IMAGE: Civic Park, Warragul

Population Forecast 2025–2035						
Baw Baw Shire	2025		2035		Change between 2025 and 2035	
Unit	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Baw Baw Shire	63,723	100.0	77,219	100.0	+13,496	+21.2
Baw Baw – Willow Grove and District	2,250	100.0	2,345	100.0	+95	+4.2
Drouin North	10,937	100.0	12,915	100.0	+1,978	+18.1
Drouin South	6,740	100.0	9,524	100.0	+2,784	+41.3
Drouin West – Rokeby and District	2,693	100.0	2,678	100.0	–15	–0.5
Longwarry – Longwarry North	3,354	100.0	3,804	100.0	+451	+13.4
Neerim and District	2,756	100.0	2,870	100.0	+113	+4.1
Trafalgar South – Yarragon South and District	4,398	100.0	4,331	100.0	–67	–1.5
Trafalgar – Trafalgar East	4,776	100.0	4,991	100.0	+215	+4.5
Warragul North	17,197	100.0	23,784	100.0	+6,587	+38.3
Warragul South	5,272	100.0	6,411	100.0	+1,138	+21.6
Yarragon – Darnum – Nilma	3,350	100.0	3,566	100.0	+216	+6.4

Geographical area (id Forecast)	Open Space/capita (Sqm) 2025	POS/capita (Sqm) 2035 Static Scenario
Baw Baw – Willow Grove and District	101,693	97,573
Drouin (North ,South)	73	57
Drouin West–Rokeby and District	1,640	1,649
Longwarry–Longwarry North	214	188
Neerim and District	19,566	18,789
Trafalgar South – Yarragon South and District	2612	2,652
Trafalgar–Trafalgar East	54	52
Warragul (North, South)	97	72
Yarragon, Darnum, Nilma	83	78

Key Directions

1. Continue to review and adjust the zoning of parks and open spaces in the Baw Baw Planning Scheme to ensure proper allocation. This will protect public open spaces in the future and prevent their repurposing into different zones.
2. Identify parks and open spaces still under private ownership and work toward their transfer to Council ownership.
3. Public open spaces should be retained for community use and not be privatised, whether, temporarily or permanently. For example, selling or transferring portions of public open space to private property owners is generally not supported. However, in exceptional circumstances, such as where land is no longer used by the community or is deemed unsuitable for public use, limited consideration may be given, provided that any proceeds are reinvested into enhancing public open spaces, particularly in areas of greater need or to improve existing open space infrastructure.

Selling public parkland to private property owners could potentially be justified under the following circumstances:

Alignment with Broader Strategic Goals

If the sale supports larger urban planning goals, such as enabling developments that significantly enhance the surrounding area’s liveability, accessibility, or infrastructure.

Environmental Considerations

If the land is environmentally degraded or contaminated and requires significant remediation that the Council cannot justify or afford, selling it could fund improvements elsewhere.

Equity and Accessibility Trade-offs

If the sale enables funding or land swaps that result in more accessible or better-located open spaces, especially in underserved or high-demand areas.

Safety Concerns

If a portion of land poses significant safety hazards (e.g., flood-prone, unstable terrain) and cannot be reasonably improved for public use.

Administrative or Operational Inefficiency

If the land is isolated, difficult to maintain, or offers limited recreational or ecological value, making its upkeep an inefficient use of resources.

Community Support

If there is strong, documented community support for selling a specific piece of land, provided that funds or trade-offs benefit public open spaces in return.

However, decisions of this nature should always be taken with caution, ensuring robust consultation, alignment with long-term strategic objectives, and transparent communication about reinvestment or compensation for the loss of public land.

4. The placement of private memorials commemorating individuals can be perceived to act as an occupation or privatisation of public space. In alignment with BBSC’s Memorial Policy residents are encouraged to pursue alternatives to the placement of memorials within public open spaces.
5. Monitor and assess public open space provision in relation to population growth and development patterns, especially in areas with higher population density where the capacity of open space maybe under pressure and could cause overcrowding and over use of public open spaces. Should any shortfall be identified, the following mechanisms should be employed to address the need. Mechanisms to Address Public Open Space Shortfall.
 - Develop a strategic plan to acquire land in areas identified with an open space shortfall. This ensures that new open spaces are created where they are most needed
 - Expand existing open spaces when opportunities arise, particularly in areas where population density is increasing, to accommodate growing community needs
 - Civic Space Development: Identify locations for new or improved civic spaces within commercial or densely populated urban areas
 - Transform vacant and derelict land into functional open spaces that meet community needs, contributing to the revitalisation of neglected areas.
 - Review the design and use of adjoining road reserves to maximise their size and potential as public open spaces

Open Space Access and Distribution

Access to open space is a crucial aspect of the overall provision, focusing not only on the availability but also on the ease of accessibility for residents. The conscious design of our public open spaces and improving access in terms of walking distance to various types of open spaces contribute to creating a walkable and liveable neighbourhood that is easy to get around within and in return reduces energy use in travel, develops social networks, and improves physical health and mental wellbeing.

Measuring the access to open space is governed by the Baw Baw Shire planning scheme, Clause C13 – 56.05–2 Public Open Space Provision “The provision of public open space should consider: • Local parks within 400 metres safe walking distance of at least 95 per cent of dwellings. Local parks generally 1 hectare in area.”

Research, such as the findings from ‘Creating a More Liveable Melbourne’, indicates that effective walkability requires a minimum density of 25 dwellings per hectare. Given the varied population distribution in Baw Baw Shire (denser in towns and sparser in rural areas) it is challenging to establish a uniform standard for park access across the entire shire. To address this, our strategy differentiates access standards across zones. In general, Residential and Township zones which are usually denser in population, a 400 m walkable access is standard, whereas a more lenient 800 m distance is acceptable in Low-Density Residential Zones.

We also acknowledge the significant role of open space in enhancing the quality of life for all residents including those in rural settlement zones,. While in urban areas, open spaces are crucial for physical activity and environmental benefits, in rural areas, they serve as vital hubs for social connectedness and mental well-being. Historically, parks in rural areas have been highly valued, often as the only public open spaces available. Given that travel distances to parks are typically longer in these areas, a designated parks in each locality will be reviewed to ensure it is enhanced with appropriate infrastructure and diverse activities. These parks will serve as key rural destinations, supporting extended visits and catering to the unique needs of rural residents. This focus is particularly important in light of the 2024 Open Space Strategy community consultation, where open space distribution emerged as the community’s highest priority for open space planning. Residents consistently emphasised the need for fair and equitable access to quality public spaces, This strong local feedback also mirrors the top priority identified by the Council Plan 2025–2029 Review Panel: to create an accessible, connected, and safe network of public walkways and open spaces across Baw Baw Shire. These priorities directly align with the Council Plan’s liveability and health objectives, and with the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029, which calls for building inclusive, healthy environments that enhance walkability and accessibility.

The measurement of access to open space in Baw Baw Shire has been assessed precisely, focusing on actual walking distance rather than linear measurements. This assessment considers physical barriers and the precise location of park entrances. In areas where the open space is broadly accessible from all sides, measurement points are set at road intersections to the site or every 20–30 m, ensuring accuracy in defining the 400 m walkable catchment around each public open space. This approach allows the Council to accurately identify residents who are within the catchment area and, crucially, those who are not, thereby pinpointing priority areas for improved access. In this way, the Open Space Strategy acts as a vital mechanism to operationalise the Council Plan’s vision 2025–2029, bridging community priorities with local planning standards to deliver a connected and inclusive network of open spaces for all Baw Baw residents.

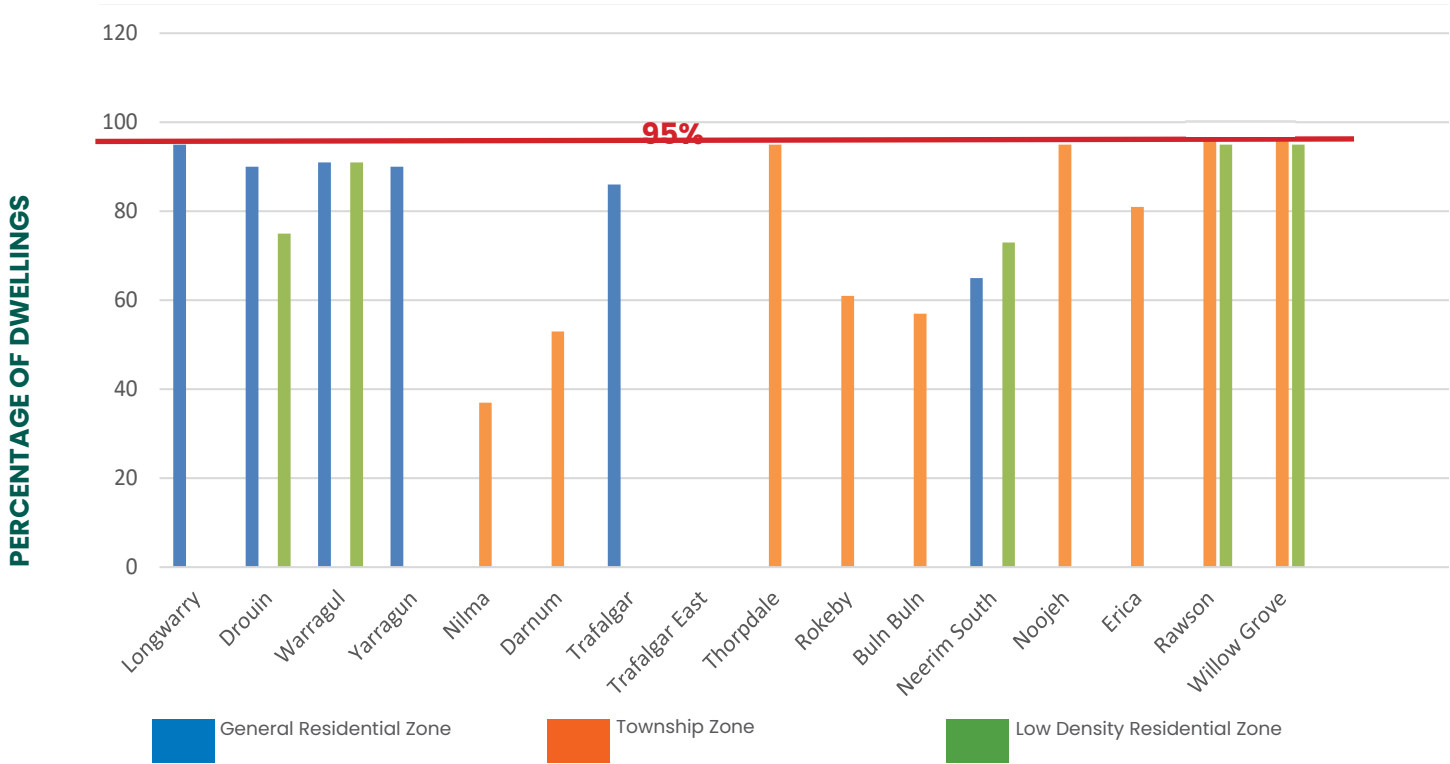
Despite varying hierarchies and sizes of open spaces, which generally correspond to different service areas, our strategy maintains an equitable approach to ensure that basic access needs are consistently and fairly addressed across the Shire.

Table below demonstrate the percentage of population with suitable walkable access to park at various zones in each town ship:

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)
Longwarry,Longwarry North	Longwarry	95%	N/A	N/A
Drouin (South & North)	Drouin	89.90%	N/A	75.44%
Warragul(South & North)	Warragul	91.05%	N/A	91.25%
Yarragon, Darnum, Nilma	Yarragun	89.53%	N/A	N/A
	Nilma	N/A	36.66%	N/A
	Darnum	N/A	52.91%	N/A
Trafalgar-Trafalgar East	Trafalgar	88.34%	N/A	N/A
	Trafalgar East	N/A	0%	0%
Trafalgar South - Yarragon South and District	Thorpdale	N/A	95%	N/A
Drouin West-Buln Buln & District	Rokeby	N/A	61.22%	N/A
	Buln Buln	N/A	56.71%	N/A
Neerim South-Noojee & District	Neerim South	64.65%	N/A	73.43%
	Noojee	N/A	95%	N/A
Mount Baw Baw-Willow Grove & District	Erica	N/A	81.13%	N/A
	Rawson	N/A	95%	95%
	Willow Grove	N/A	95%	95%

Note: N/A in the table means that this type of zoning does not exist in the area



Key directions:

Following key directions help guide our efforts to create more walkable neighbourhoods:

1. Work towards ensuring easy and safe walking access to public open spaces within a 400 m for residents in residential and township zones and 800 m walking access for residents in low-density residential zones.
2. Ensure that open spaces in centrally located areas within rural residential communities (Specific Purpose Destination Parks) provide diverse and high-quality infrastructure to support longer visitor stays.
3. Identify and prioritise areas lacking open space access by assessing current distribution against desired walking access at each zone and evaluating factors such as Socio-Economic indexes for Areas (SEIFA), proximity to existing parks, and population density. We achieved this by integrating SEIFA index and population density GIS layers into our mapping data, overlaying them with identified open space gaps. We highlighted variations in value using colour coding, where darker areas indicate higher population density and lower SEIFA index values, allowing us to visualize priority locations more effectively. This approach helped pinpoint where walking access gaps exist in relation to both density and disadvantage. When multiple gaps had similar SEIFA and density values, we prioritized them based on their proximity to the nearest open space.
4. Develop a strategic plan to address identified gaps over time through following mechanisms:
 - Enhance access to and within open spaces by providing additional access points, improving walking connections, expanding or connecting linear open spaces, and linking existing open spaces.
 - Utilise encumbered or restricted public land for open space and recreation through sharing facilities, repurposing, or making them more accessible this could be done by providing additional opportunities for the community and can address gaps in access to open space. Improvements could be through aspects such as a viewing platform, walking trail, basic infrastructure such as seating, or facilitating community connection to nature.
 - Improve public access to school-owned open spaces through agreements for out-of-hours public access in areas that been assessed with lack of standard walking access.
 - Enhance access to open spaces owned by the Cemeteries Trusts where needed.
 - Partnership with other public authorities using their space where there is lack of open space walking access.
 - Develop new open spaces on vacant and/or derelict land or integrate them into new housing developments.
 - Purchase new land in areas of open space access gaps.
 - Advocate for public access to restricted sites such as golf courses, in areas lacking in open space where land purchasing is not a viable option.
5. Increase quality of parks where there is gap of open space walking access and land acquisition is not possible to create new open spaces within the gap area.
6. Where a gap in walking access to a park is identified, work toward enhancing the comfort, safety, and continuity of the walk to the nearest park. This includes completing missing footpath connections and improving the pedestrian environment through streetscape enhancements, street tree planting, footpath repairs, pram crossings, traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, and shade. Additionally, assess and improve pedestrian and cycle access along streets and into open space reserves.
7. Identify and work toward addressing illegal encroachments on public open space that limit community access to their parks.
8. Complete missing links to connect residents to parks, open spaces and connect parks and open space to schools and other key destinations through development of Walking and Cycling Strategy or Integrated Transport Strategy.
9. Improve connections and walkability to open spaces where needed, based on assessment of existing access, through improved footpaths, shared paths, cycling paths, enhanced crossings, and traffic calming measures.
10. Prioritize pedestrian connections between public open spaces and the Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) where they connect or are directly adjacent. Identify and pursue opportunities to enhance crossing facilities to improve accessibility and safety.

Safety and Perceived Safety

Ensuring both actual safety and the perception of safety in public open spaces is crucial for creating a secure and welcoming environment in Baw Baw Shire. Integrating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, along with gender-sensitive and inclusive design, helps ensure that spaces are safe and perceived as safe by all community members.

Public spaces are experienced differently by various groups, particularly women and gender-diverse groups, who often feel unsafe due to both physical and social factors. This is especially true for women who face intersecting forms of discrimination, such as those from Priority groups Including children and young people, older adults, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The design of public spaces can significantly impact their sense of safety and well-being. Physical infrastructure such as lighting and clear sightlines, plays a key role in shaping these perceptions. To create truly safe public spaces, it is essential to involve diverse voices, particularly those of women, in every stage of planning through a co-design approach.

By emphasising CPTED principles, the Council aims to reduce crime and enhance the sense of safety in open spaces. This includes increasing passive surveillance and improving sightlines. This approach directly supports Priority 1 under the ‘Sustainable’ pillar of the revised Council Plan Community Vision 2025–2029, which calls for improved perceptions of safety to encourage increased active transport, walking, and cycling. By designing spaces that feel safe to walk and cycle through, and where families, young people, and older adults feel welcome and secure, the Strategy supports healthier lifestyles and increased voluntary community participation. It also reinforces the importance of collaboration with police and safety agencies, where appropriate, to support safe and accessible open space use.

Furthermore, this focus on safety aligns with the priority 5 under the ‘Healthy’ pillar of the revised Council Plan Vision 2025–2029, where enhancing community safety is a key outcome. Actions such as better planning and design of parks, increased lighting, targeted local safety initiatives, and the inclusion of youth-friendly infrastructure and services all reinforce the important role that open space planning plays in improving safety outcomes across the municipality. By addressing both actual and perceived safety, the Open Space Strategy ensures these places can be confidently and regularly used by everyone in the community.

Key Directions:

To further enhance safety in open spaces, the following guidelines should be integrated into future designs and ongoing management efforts:

1. Tailor the design of parks to consider the safety needs of diverse and priority groups, ensuring that all community members feel both physically and culturally safe.
2. Strategically plan for appropriate lighting improvements to enhance the safety and usability of open spaces, particularly during winter months in parks with higher level of usage and in accordance with relevant policy
3. Ensure that all new and upgraded parks incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles by maintaining clear sightlines at entry points and along paths. Design open spaces to enhance natural surveillance, making them visible from surrounding developments and public areas, activating underutilised areas, and clearly delineating the boundaries between private and public spaces which helps to improve safety and reduce the likelihood of crime.
4. Collaborate with local Police and Council’s community safety team to identify parks with a history of crime and develop targeted strategies for improvement. This may include increased patrolling, installing surveillance systems, enhancing lighting, or redesigning spaces to reduce opportunities for crime.
5. Promote safety by encouraging that adjoining developments incorporate passive surveillance.
6. Ensure that the needs of all park users, including cyclists, pedestrians, and dog walkers, are considered through education, thoughtful design, and the promotion appropriate etiquette.
7. Assess traffic speed, road safety, and pedestrian visibility where roads divide reserves or parks into two sections. Evaluate the need for appropriate crossing or traffic calming solutions to ensure safe and seamless connectivity across the green space network. Prioritize locations with higher traffic volumes and speeds exceeding 50 km/h for formal crossings, such as pedestrian refuges, raised crossings, or signalized options, or traffic calming solutions to improve safety and accessibility.
8. Council to implement safe practices for the use of weed killers and pesticides this could include, Clearly signage in affected areas to inform the public of any chemical applications, Providing advance notice to the community through local channels, such as social media, Implementing buffer zones around heavily used areas and ensure that applications are carried out during off-peak hours to minimise exposure and offering educational materials on the potential risks and safety measures related to pesticide use.
9. Implement educational programs to inform visitors about local wildlife, including potential dangers like snakes. Use signage to highlight safe practices when exploring these areas, such as wearing appropriate footwear and staying on designated paths.

Inclusivity

Prioritising inclusivity in the design of public open spaces, considering the diverse needs and interests of the entire community, fosters a sense of belonging and strengthens social ties. As Baw Baw Shire continues to grow, so does the diversity of its population, with residents coming from various cultural backgrounds, demographics, and levels of physical ability. This reality demands that we not only design spaces that are accessible to all, but also adapt to the evolving needs of our community.

By emphasising the right of everyone regardless of background or ability to enjoy and benefit from open spaces, we contribute to a more inclusive and welcoming environment, which positively impacts the overall liveability of Baw Baw. The Shire’s population is projected to increase by over 30% in the coming decade, bringing with it a broader spectrum of needs, including those of disadvantaged groups who significantly benefit from outdoor activities for their health and wellbeing. Increasing the diversity of facilities, in terms of design, character, and function will enhance the appeal for our varied community members, making our public spaces true gathering points for everyone.

Key Directions:

Following Key directions assist in planning inclusive parks:

1. Grades on paths for at least one entry point to meet current standards (Australian Standards AS 1428- Design for Access and Mobility).
2. Fully compacted gravel or sealed paths into the parks at the minimum width to allow all ability access in accordance with the current Australian Standards (AS 1428 Design for Access and Mobility).
3. Design open spaces through meaningful engagement with all community groups including diverse group, understanding how different cultural and ethnic groups use, navigate, and interpret open spaces. This includes ensuring that wayfinding signage is clear and usable, incorporating translations, infographics, or easily understood icons.
4. Incorporate Principles of Universal Design, the World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities Framework, and all relevant Australian Standards regarding accessibility ([Appendix 12](#))
5. Work toward developing intergenerational and inclusive play spaces with equipment, activities, and amenities specifically targeted at all ages and abilities in areas of high population density in regional and district-level parks.
6. Consider Incorporating of purpose-built spaces or areas for youth in all upgrades to district and regional parks. These spaces should be developed through youth-focused consultation processes to understand the needs of these user groups. Community consultations conducted in 2017 for the development of the Recreation Strategy revealed that activities for youth were rated among the lowest satisfaction rates. Discussions with school students indicated that while many currently participate in sports, there is a strong desire for more outdoor recreational opportunities, such as dirt biking and water play activities for teenagers.

Additionally, consultations for the development of the Youth Strategy 2024 highlighted the need for increased investment in specific entertainment options and challenging play areas for youth. This category emerged as the highest priority for improvement, with a rating of 24.84%, followed closely by a 16% need for enhancement in exercise and sports facilities.
7. Align with council place and feature naming policy work toward ensuring the contributions of diverse individuals in the municipality are reflected in the names of Council open spaces. Achieve gender parity in the naming of open spaces reflect the community profile and diversity, notably the contributions of the elderly, children, the LGBTIQ community, and people with disabilities in the naming of open spaces.
8. Council should utilise consultation mechanisms to include access and inclusion considerations during the planning and design of open spaces to ensure they are accessible.



Aesthetic

Incorporating facilities and features that enhance the visual appeal of open spaces encourages community gatherings, performances, and artistic expressions. Striving to create iconic, vibrant spaces that contribute to the unique character of neighbourhoods elevates the overall aesthetic and liveability of Baw Baw, making it a more attractive and engaging and liveable place for both residents and all the visitors. These efforts directly support the Council Plan Review Panel's priority under the 'Thriving' vision pillar, which calls for improved access to arts and cultural experiences, including low or no-cost programs, educational opportunities, and recognition of local history, such as stories like Jackson's Track. By embedding cultural narratives and artistic expression into our open space network, the strategy promotes social cohesion and encourages inclusive participation in community life.

Key Directions:

1. In our larger and well-used park such as regional and district level park consider Including aesthetically pleasing and functional amenities such as stylish benches, artistic lighting, decorative pathways, and well-designed green walls and shelters to enhance comfort and usability while contributing to the overall visual appeal as per the master plan. This also includes incorporating context-based design elements particularly play features, that reflect the neighbourhood's character and local identity. Ensure these amenities align with Council's management practices and adhere to the relevant master plan guidelines.
2. Explore opportunities to incorporate iconic landmarks or focal points within open spaces that become symbols of the community. These landmarks can serve as gathering points and enhance the unique character of the area. For example, a community art installation at one of high-use Linear Reserve.
3. Where appropriate add water features, as per park's level of service and asset provision standards, such as fountains, ponds, or splash pads, to enhance the aesthetic appeal and provide interactive elements that attract visitors and encourage use of the spaces.
4. Continue to include public artwork in new open spaces and open space projects, as well as new artwork in existing open spaces in alignment with Council's upcoming Public Art Strategy and the key initiatives of Baw Baw shire Creative Art Strategy and Public Art Policy. Artwork could include a mix of commissioned artwork, sculptures or park furniture or equipment with an art element.

Public Art

Public art is a key aspect of beautifying public open spaces and has already been incorporated into several of our well-utilised areas. However, there are generally higher costs and ongoing maintenance considerations that need to be addressed in the future provision of public art. The Council is currently developing a Public Art Policy, which will establish a clear framework for the creation, acquisition, maintenance, and management of public art in Baw Baw. The Open Space Strategy will also provide guidance on the appropriate type, location and class of open spaces where public art may be suitable.

- Consider incorporating public art into future landscape master plans for regional and district open spaces, as well as urban plazas and other highly visible or visited locations. Public art in these areas should align with design parameters outlined in the forthcoming Public Art Strategy, ensuring compatibility with the site's overall vision and character.
- For existing parks, strategically place public art in areas with high levels of foot traffic and visitation. While public art may not be suitable for smaller neighbourhood parks or reserves with lower usage or where preserving natural aesthetics is a priority, exceptions may be made for spaces with significant cultural, historical, or community narratives. In such cases, public art can enhance the park's unique identity and strengthen its connection to the community.
- Leverage public art as a powerful placemaking tool to create iconic and memorable spaces within suitable parks. Art installations and focal features should be located in central, accessible areas to draw people in and encourage engagement. To ensure impact and sustainability, features such as sculptures, large shade trees, fountains, or interactive play and performance spaces can be used.
- Where possible, designate specific areas, such as blank walls, or vinyl wraps as spaces for artistic expression by professional artists and local community members, providing appropriate outlets for creativity and helping to reduce vandalism in unsuitable locations. provide appropriate outlets for expression and reduce vandalism in unsuitable spaces.
- Collaborate with the Baw Baw Shire Arts and Culture Advisory Committee which is comprised of members of our creative community across a variety of disciplines in planning for provision, upgrade or removal of any public arts in our parks an open space.
- Work with local artists to incorporate public art installations, murals, sculptures, and interactive art pieces into open spaces. These installations should reflect the cultural diversity and unique identity of the community. as part of a consultative design process.

Public Engagement and Partnership

Fostering collaboration between the council, community, First Nation stakeholders and other public authorities in the development, funding, and maintenance of public spaces establishes a collective responsibility for their success. This multi-stakeholder engagement significantly contributes to the vibrancy and liveability of Baw Baw.

Key Directions:

1. Conduct regular Community Consultations in line with council community engagement policies for any new park, master plan, concept design, landscape plan or park upgrade by organising regular public consultation events, workshops, and forums to gather input from residents on the design, use, and maintenance of public spaces. Utilise various platforms such as in-person meetings, online surveys, and social media to reach a broad audience.
2. For renewal projects involving equipment replacement on a "like-for-like" basis, community consultation will take the form of informing community of the planned works. This is particularly important if the renewal leads to significant disruption, such as temporary park or section closures, major construction noise, traffic impacts, or other inconveniences for nearby residents. In such cases, all residents adjacent to the park should receive formal notification about the project's start date and estimated completion date. Additionally, clear signage should be placed at park entrances and exits to inform visitors of any closures or disruptions
3. Continue developing programs that encourage community members to take an active role in maintaining and enhancing public spaces. This could include volunteer opportunities and community-led clean-up events.
4. Council to continue to liaise with in adjoining municipalities regarding the recreation and open space as a needs basis. Specific issues to resolve include open space links, regional facility provision and improvement to habitat corridor values along waterways.
5. Liaise with relevant public authorities, such as VicTrack and Melbourne Water, to confirm ongoing lease arrangements for land currently utilised as public open space. This also includes exploring opportunities to improve public open spaces or utilise land or some part of land owned by other public authorities for public recreation use where a need for additional recreational space has been identified.
6. Continue working with relevant teams to complete the development of the volunteering framework. Once finalised, support its implementation by promoting consistent use across park sites.
7. Continue to encourage and assist existing Friends group and other community groups who provide ongoing interest and support for the open space. Support and encourage groups to apply for external funding from the State and Federal Government agencies for improvement works in the reserves.
8. Establish mechanisms for ongoing feedback from the community about public spaces. This can include suggestion boxes, online feedback forms, and periodic surveys to understand public satisfaction and areas for improvement.
9. Ensure customer inquiries regarding the provision or upgrade of park assets, such as walking paths, bins, benches, seating, drinking fountains, or any other infrastructure or amenities, are referred to the Recreation Team to collaborate with Infrastructure Maintenance and Civil Asset Planning for resolution. Officers will aim to provide an initial response to community inquiries within 10 business days as per the BBSC customer service charter. If a full resolution or detailed response is not feasible within this timeframe, an update will be provided to inform the inquirer of the progress and expected next steps. Timely and effective communication is essential for building trust and maintaining strong relationships with the community.
10. Continue to offer opportunities for schools, colleges, universities and other educational centres to participate in environmental education programs, internships, and projects that enhance public spaces, recognising engagement may vary due to external factors.
11. Engage with local businesses to sponsor park maintenance, equipment, or community events. This can strengthen relationships between the business community and residents.
12. Engage with the Traditional Custodians and First Nations community with focus on
 - Sharing knowledge and embed cultural practices in managing land, water, and sky.
 - Identifying and safeguarding cultural heritage sites and assets within parks and open spaces.
 - Promoting the use of local Aboriginal languages and developing best-practice guidelines for naming or renaming parks and features.
 - Co-designing signage and interpretation that reflect Aboriginal cultural values, identity, and history.
13. Engage children and young people in open space planning and consultation processes, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in the development of community spaces. This could include collaboration with local schools, youth groups, and organisations to facilitate meaningful participation and ensure the needs of younger generations are incorporated into planning outcomes.

3.2.2 Outcome 2: Healthy Baw Baw

Parks and public open spaces play a crucial role in promoting health and wellbeing, fostering social connections, and providing opportunities for physical activity. To achieve a Healthy Baw Baw, the community envisions a network of parks and open spaces that actively contribute to improving the overall health and lifestyle of its residents. This vision will be realised through strategic objectives in the following key areas.

Active Transport

Establishing a connected network of shared, walking and cycling paths within our parks and open spaces is essential for facilitating active transportation. This initiative encourages residents to engage in physical activity while enjoying the natural environment. By creating safe and accessible routes that link parks to key destinations, we aim to enhance health and wellbeing while promoting a healthy lifestyle.

The Recreation Strategy (2017–2027) highlighted that 78% of community members travel by car to parks and recreation spaces, with walking and cycling identified as the most popular recreational activities. This finding was further reinforced in the first stage of the Open Space Strategy, where community feedback revealed that walking or running were the most common activities. Nearly half of the participants (48.2%) drove to parks and open spaces, while 42.8% walked. Only a small percentage rode a bicycle or scooter (8.2%) or used public transport (0.6%).

Encouragingly, 70.3% of participants felt that accessing parks and open spaces was easy, with the highest ease of access reported by those who walked. This data underscores the importance of establishing a connected network of shared walking and cycling paths. To further this goal, the Council is planning to develop an Integrated Transport Strategy, contributing to improved health outcomes and fostering a more active lifestyle for our community.

Key Directions:

1. Work toward enhancing connectivity between parks and key destinations. Identify and develop routes that link parks with key community destinations, such as schools, public transport hubs, shopping centres, and residential areas. Prioritise establishing the direct, well-marked, and continuous paths to encourage park use and active transportation.
2. Ensure parks and open spaces have appropriate, well-connected footpaths that provide safe and accessible links between key amenities and activity areas.
3. Where public open space connects to or is directly adjacent to the Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN), prioritise pedestrian connections from the open space to the PPN and identify opportunities for improved crossing facilities.
4. Incorporate green infrastructure, such as rain gardens, tree canopies, and permeable surfaces, along pathways to enhance the natural environment and provide shade and comfort for users. This should be prioritised on walking paths where gaps in open space access exist and where the community must walk longer distances to access public open space.
5. Launch public awareness campaigns and programs to encourage walking and cycling as preferred modes of transport. Collaborate with local schools, businesses, and community groups to promote the health and environmental benefits of active transport.
6. Conduct a comprehensive audit of existing cycling and walking infrastructure across the shire to identify key areas where bike repair stations, bike racks, and other active transport amenities are needed as developed per level of service standards . Based on this audit, strategically install these facilities in high-priority locations near parks, public transport hubs, and popular community destinations. Ensure that these additions support and encourage active transport by enhancing convenience and accessibility.

Play and Education

Incorporating inclusive play spaces within the network of open spaces is essential for encouraging play and activities for individuals of all ages, genders, and abilities. The development of intergenerational play spaces, featuring diverse equipment, activities, and amenities, will not only contribute to the health and education of children but also provide opportunities for residents of all ages to engage in recreational and educational activities. Community consultations conducted in 2023 for the development of the Open Space Strategy identified playgrounds as the second most common activity, following walking and running, as determined by respondents.

Council has developed a Municipal Early Years Plan 2024–2027, which outlines several strategies to encourage play for children. These strategies include the delivery of the Pop-Up Playgroup project and the implementation of activities during Children’s Week, many of which will take place in parks and open spaces. Additionally, the plan emphasises increasing opportunities for nature-based play by supporting local kindergartens to establish Bush Kindergarten programs. However, play is just as important for adults as it is for children. Adult play offers numerous benefits: it can boost creativity, sharpen one’s sense of humour, and help manage stress and lower risk of developing age-related diseases and boost overall wellbeing.

Recognising the importance of play for all ages, it is critical that our parks and open spaces provide diverse play experiences that cater to everyone. Ensuring that play areas are inclusive and accessible is a key goal of this strategy.

Key Directions:

1. Create play spaces that cater to children and adults of all ages, abilities, and genders. Ensure these spaces are accessible and inclusive by incorporating universal design principles and features such as wheelchair-accessible play equipment, sensory play areas, and shaded rest areas.
2. Integrate educational and interactive elements into play spaces, and any other public space such as interactive exhibits, nature trails, and learning stations. Use these features to teach visitors about local history, culture, and the environment, fostering a love for learning through play.
3. Incorporating more nature play areas in parks and open spaces fosters a connection between children and the natural environment, promoting exploration, creativity, and physical activity. By utilising natural elements such as logs, rocks, plants, and water feature we can create stimulating and engaging environments that encourage imaginative play and learning.
4. Encourage nature play in open spaces for schools and early years institutions, promote and support nature play in open spaces by assisting local kindergartens and schools in establishing Bush Kinder programs. Council can assist in providing guidance and resources to facilitate these programs, including information on suitable locations for outdoor learning environments.
5. Develop Baw Baw shire play space strategy to create a comprehensive framework for planning and managing play spaces throughout the Shire. The strategy should assess current facilities, future demand, prioritise inclusive and accessible designs, and integrate natural play elements. Community engagement will be central to the strategy, ensuring that play spaces reflect the needs and desires of residents. Additionally, the strategy will outline sustainable practices and a phased implementation plan to enhance the quality and accessibility of play environments for all children.



Community Gardens

Community gardens play a vital role in promoting sustainable and healthy food production. These gardens foster social interaction, learning, and education, while contributing to overall health and well-being by providing opportunities for people to grow vegetables and plants in a shared, social setting. As community gardening gains popularity due to its environmental benefits, such as growing food locally and organically, it is important to ensure that these spaces are inclusive and accessible without limiting public access to open spaces.

There are currently three community gardens on Council land at:

- Jindivick, Kydd Parke Reserve- Jindivick Progress Association.
- Warragul, Eastern Park- Growing Together Baw Baw / Warragul Community House.
- Mawarra, George St Warragul.

Council should assess the growing demand for community garden spaces and investigate the need for additional sites, especially in response to increasing population density and urbanisation. Identifying suitable locations within the existing open space network will be essential as towns become denser and more residents, particularly those living in apartments or houses with limited outdoor space, seek opportunities to grow their own food. By integrating community gardens into public open spaces, councils can support food security, sustainable living, and community cohesion, while enhancing the overall functionality and inclusivity of public lands.

Key Directions:

There are currently no clear management responsibilities or established processes for overseeing the development, maintenance, and operational needs of the community gardens. Additionally, there is a lack of coordinated policy or guidelines for their sustainable growth and integration with other open space assets in the region. Given the population growth and growing demand for this activity it is recommended that Council:

1. Develop a Sustainable Community Garden Framework to address key considerations, including, roles and responsibilities for both Council and external stakeholders in regard to existing community garden, management and maintenance guidelines, safety protocols for chemical use, and the process for establishing, authorising, and potentially closing community gardens. This policy will also evaluate demand, feasibility, and provide guidance to determine suitable sites for community gardens within parks and open spaces, ensuring that all relevant factors are carefully considered and clarified.

Formal and Informal Sport

Ensuring the provision of adequate and high-quality formal sports facilities, along with spaces for informal sports activities, is essential for encouraging regular physical exercise among residents. These spaces will be designed to accommodate a variety of sports and recreational activities, ultimately contributing to the overall health and vitality of the community.

The Recreation Strategy 2017-27 serves as a guiding framework for the future development of structured sporting and recreational facilities within open spaces. The Plan recognizes the need to better integrate structured sporting facilities with unstructured or informal recreational uses. It outlines several key investigations necessary to enhance these facilities, ensuring they meet the needs of the local community both now and in the future.

The development of our formal sports facilities is facilitated by venue-specific master plans, which outline a vision for the provision of infrastructure tailored to the needs of users and the wider community at these venues. While the Recreation Strategy sets the guiding principles, the master plans establish the strategic vision and direction for infrastructure at each sports venue.

Key considerations include:

Meeting the growing demand for recreation facilities, which will require increased funding from the Council and external sources.

- Upgrading the quality of existing infrastructure to increase their capacity.
- Addressing the need for 2 to 4 additional indoor courts.
- Developing or upgrading ancillary and supporting infrastructure.
- Assisting clubs with funding grants and strategic planning.

Furthermore, there is a pressing need for more inclusive planning to increase participation among women and girls. This includes retrofitting existing facilities to ensure equitable access for females and individuals with disabilities, as well as providing more affordable sport options. Implementing universal design practices for new facilities is also a priority.

The strategy also emphasises the importance of incorporating other forms of active recreation, such as challenge parks and nature play areas, to create diverse and engaging environments for all community members.

Key Directions:

1. Consideration of integrating informal recreational facilities compatible with other uses should be considered in future master plans for all sporting reserves These should be prioritised based on the following:
 - Locations where no nearby parks are set aside for unstructured recreation.
 - Reserves where the quality is rated as being inadequate.
 - Locations where population growth is anticipated nearby, and the future provision of these facilities will be partly or fully funded by the new population.
2. Design multi-use sports areas that can accommodate a variety of sports and activities. These flexible spaces can be used for different sports at different times, maximising their utility and encouraging diverse recreational activities.
3. Invest in the development and upgrading of formal sports facilities, such as soccer fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, and cricket pitches. Ensure these facilities are in accordance with relevant venue master plan that equip them with necessary amenities like lighting, seating, and changing rooms as per their level of service asset provision standards or a set out in the relevant master plan.
4. Develop and promote physical activity programs and classes in various sports and recreational reserves. Offer these programs in different locations and at different times to accommodate varying schedules and preferences. Council does not currently offer any low cost/free physical activity programming (except at aquatic/leisure centres) which is possibly why during the 2017 community consultation for development of recreation strategy the number of people who reported they were not satisfied with this opportunity was 34%. People have requested for free outdoor fitness classes and more low cost options to exercise.
5. Review the current maintenance schedules to ensure they are meeting current trends based on available resources.
6. Review the Council’s current Equestrian Facilities Plan (2007) to ensure it accurately reflects participation trends, assesses the needs and constraints of equestrian facilities and venues within the Shire and the surrounding region. The review should also evaluate the condition, maintenance, and future demand for equestrian paths, and recommend a strategy for the future provision of equestrian facilities and infrastructure that balances these demands in the context of the growing municipal population.
7. Review Council’s existing Skate and BMX Strategy to address the growing demand for emerging trends, including mountain biking and other informal wheeled recreation activities.
8. Develop an Outdoor Fitness Equipment Plan to guide the location, design, type, quantity, and distribution of outdoor fitness equipment across the municipality. The plan should consider accessibility, demographic needs, proximity to other recreation facilities, safety, and opportunities to support social and intergenerational activity.
9. Review the Recreation/Sporting Hierarches and ensure they are in line with State Sporting Association Guidelines.



Heat and Pollution Management

Green infrastructure serves as a natural filter, cooling the environment, purifying the air, and contributing to improved health for park users and the surrounding community. Parks and open space's role in providing cleaner air and mitigating heat, is through shade and tree canopy coverage. This dual function of improving air quality and reducing heat enhances the overall well-being of Baw Baw's residents, especially during warmer months. Managing both heat and pollution in these spaces is essential for creating sustainable, healthy environments that support community health, comfort, and resilience against rising temperatures.

Key Directions:

1. Develop Urban Forest plan that sets out a specific ratio of vegetative cover and canopy coverage in parks and open space and public land which consider the purpose and function of the park, ensuring it aligns with the park's intended use (e.g. recreational, community, or natural areas) and the needs of the surrounding community.
2. Plant more shade trees to create natural cooling zones in parks. Tree canopies significantly reduce ground-level temperatures, mitigating the urban heat island effect and creating comfortable outdoor spaces for the community during hot weather. In Victoria, a common target is to achieve 20–30% tree canopy coverage in urban areas by 2050, aligning with the Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy.
3. Develop a park and open space Shade Policy to ensure adequate shading in parks and open spaces by addressing both natural and structural shade. The policy should prioritise areas of high sun exposure, such as playgrounds, picnic zones, and walking paths, outline criteria for identifying priority areas and propose solutions tailored to the needs of different park types. A combination of vegetative and structural shading will enhance thermal comfort, reduce heat stress for park users, and support long-term health outcomes for the community. Additionally, the policy should consider the full lifecycle costs of shade infrastructure, including initial purchase, ongoing maintenance, repairs, and cleaning. The policy could also integrate a preference for shade trees, which provide sustainable, low-maintenance shading solutions over time



IMAGE: Civic Park, Wrragul

Shade in Parks and Open Spaces

As climate change intensifies, providing quality shade in public spaces is crucial for ensuring safe, comfortable, and healthy environments. Given Australia's high rates of skin cancer, primarily caused by exposure, shade can reduce UV exposure by up to 75%, offering an easy and effective protection method. Additionally, the growing demand for functional shade in parks and open spaces presents challenges for local councils in meeting this need while maintaining infrastructure. Green infrastructure, such as trees, is a key solution to mitigating the urban heat island effect by reducing solar radiation on hard surfaces.

Baw Baw Shire currently has limited shade infrastructure, there are currently functioning shade sails and 39 shade structures, often located away from playgrounds, providing little to no shade for play equipment and no specific shade tree planting programs existed for parks prior to 2023. In the 2022/23 CWP – Shade Tree Program, a budget of \$10,000 supported the identification of 63 tree species for planting across 17 sites.

The 2024 Open Space Assessment identified specific areas within parks and playgrounds that require shade. To address this, a dedicated Shade Policy is essential to effectively prioritise these locations, ensuring a strategic and equitable approach to shade provision across the Shire. The policy would guide the design of shade solutions, taking into account factors such as community usage, environmental impact, and aesthetics. It would also establish clear standards for the placement and type of shade infrastructure, encompassing both natural options, like tree-based solutions, and built structures. Additionally, the policy would address maintenance responsibilities to ensure the long-term sustainability of shade infrastructure, aligning with broader environmental, public health, and urban planning objectives. By providing a framework for future programs, the policy would set clear objectives and optimize the use of resources to meet community expectations while advancing environmental goals.

To effectively integrate shade into Baw Baw Shire's parks and playgrounds, the following guidelines should be considered:

- Shade should be prioritised in district and regional parks and in all playgrounds.
- The primary aim is to provide shade at playgrounds, table settings, and BBQ areas.
- Where possible, natural shade should be the preferred option over structural shade due to its environmental and aesthetic benefits.
- New facilities should leverage existing or future shade where practicable, and shade considerations should be integrated into the design process from the outset with playgrounds, BBQs, and other facilities positioned to take advantage of existing shade where possible.
- In areas where shade is identified as a gap, structural shade can serve as an interim solution. Priority should be given to high-use locations until natural shade can be established.
- When providing natural shade for playgrounds, careful consideration must be given to the interface between tree species and playground assets. Factors like tree size, root type, life expectancy, and potential risk of limb drops should be considered in the selection of trees.
- Where structural shade is used, consider incorporating additional features such as rainwater harvesting systems or solar panels to maximise the utility of the shade infrastructure.

4. Where possible, at the time of renewal or upgrade replace impermeable surfaces with permeable materials like permeable pavers, gravel, or grass. This not only reduces stormwater runoff but also helps pollutants filter naturally through the soil, contributing to both heat and pollution management
5. Consider utilising low-emission or electric equipment for park maintenance to reduce air pollution from traditional gasoline-powered tools. Continue to adopt sustainable practices such as mulching mowers, battery-powered equipment, and other eco-friendly alternatives.
6. Select native plants with local provenance where possible, that can withstand hotter temperatures and periods of lower rainfall, ensuring that parks remain green and functional even in extreme heat conditions.
7. Consider incorporating water features, such as fountains or misting stations, to cool the air in hotter areas of the park especially in district and regional playground. Water elements also contribute to evaporative cooling, making the space more comfortable during heatwaves.

3.2.3 Outcome 3: Resilient Baw Baw

This outcome encompasses a holistic approach to resilience, addressing various aspects of the environment and community well-being. The key areas contributing to resilience are as follows:

Protecting, Restoring and Enhancing Biodiversity and Habitat

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is vital to the resilience of Baw Baw Shire. By preserving a rich variety of plant and animal species in parks and open spaces, we strengthen ecosystems’ ability to withstand disturbances, adapt to changing conditions, and recover from environmental challenges. Many open spaces in the Shire are already recognised for their importance to nature conservation and have been classified as natural spaces. Additionally, newly constructed open spaces resulting from approved developments often include environmental assets that contribute to biodiversity. However, periodic review is essential to assess their conservation value and potential to accommodate protected species, as well as opportunities to deliver enhanced biodiversity.

Key Directions:

1. Develop a shire-wide Nature Conservation Plan that includes a comprehensive action plan covering all Council activities related to biodiversity protection, informed by a flora and fauna and other environmental asset audit.. This will support Goal 3 of BBSC Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2030 – “Protect the Natural Environment” by building a better understanding of the overall health and condition of Council’s environmental assets and determining proactive protection and management measures. This plan should adopt a tailored approach, addressing the unique ecological characteristics, species, and threats specific to each of the Shire’s key natural parks and bushland reserves. Management actions should be relevant to the specific needs and conditions of each area, ensuring effective conservation and enhancement of local biodiversity across Shire.
2. Protect existing natural areas within parks, particularly those with remnant vegetation and bushland, by minimising human activity. Prioritize these spaces for the conservation of vulnerable and endangered species.
3. Work toward prioritising the use of native plant species with local provenance and ecological vegetation classes where possible, in landscaping, restoration, and revegetation projects. Native species support local wildlife by providing habitat and food, while being better suited to local environmental conditions. Increase multilayered vegetation cover, including trees, shrubs, climbers, and groundcover, to enhance habitat diversity.
4. Expand community education and raise awareness about environmental requirements by engaging the community in biodiversity monitoring and conservation efforts through citizen science programs. Encourage residents to participate in activities such as the Blitz program, birdwatching, plant identification, and wildlife survey.
5. Participation in programs like the Gardens for Wildlife initiative to involve residents, businesses, and schools in creating habitat-friendly private spaces.
6. Investigate the introduction of an offset plan within parks and open spaces to ensure no net loss of any trees and significant vegetation due to Council operations. This would involve exploring mechanisms to balance any necessary tree removal with appropriate replanting or restoration efforts, aiming to maintain or enhance canopy cover and biodiversity through the preservation and replenishment of vegetation.
7. Plan to increase the provision of nature play in parks and open space where it is appropriate and support bush kinder programs in school and early years institutes, to promote outdoor learning for young children and support their engagement with natural environments and foster early connections with local biodiversity. Council should provide information and guidelines about areas that council considered appropriate to have bush kinder program and places (high biodiversity value) where council cannot encourage this activity. Guidelines should also set parameters about what can and can’t be done during the visit and build a respect for our natural spaces.
8. Safeguard water resources within parks and open spaces by implementing riparian buffer zones, restoring natural waterways, and reducing pollution. Healthy aquatic ecosystems are crucial for supporting diverse plant and animal life.
9. Identify and implement habitat restoration projects within parks and open spaces, such as wetland restoration, reforestation of degraded areas, and enhancement of native vegetation to support biodiversity and improve ecosystem health. Create customised restoration plans for each, tailored to its unique environmental conditions and intended purpose. Include specific goals, timelines, and measurable outcomes.

Green and Blue Infrastructures

The term “green-blue infrastructure” refers to the use of vegetation, soils, and natural processes in urban areas to deliver both landscape and water management benefits. Green and blue infrastructure, including water bodies and trees, plays a vital role in enhancing resilience by providing essential ecosystem services such as water purification, flood control, and climate regulation. Increasing and enhancing these features strengthens the region’s capacity to adapt to environmental changes, mitigates the impact of natural disasters, and contributes to a more sustainable community.

A crucial link exists between greening and water management, yet these are often planned separately. Healthy trees and vegetation rely on soil moisture, while vegetated areas help absorb, treat, and manage excess water in urban spaces. When thoughtfully planned and designed, green-blue infrastructure can address urban and climatic challenges by providing ecosystem services that enhance community well-being. Parks and open spaces are prime locations for accommodating this infrastructure, offering opportunities for sustainable landscape and water management.

10. Work toward enhancing and increasing biodiversity and habitat in parks and open spaces by incorporating more blue and green infrastructure features to support local wildlife. This includes placing logs and rocks, creating habitat islands, and providing water sources. These elements contribute to a more diverse and sustainable ecosystem, offering shelter, breeding grounds, and food sources for various species.
11. Identify and secure funding and resources from grants, government programs, and private sponsors to support habitat restoration initiatives. Ensure sustainable funding mechanisms for ongoing maintenance and monitoring.
12. Where feasible, mitigate impacts on biodiversity from reserve infrastructure by considering wildlife-sensitive lighting, establishing wildlife crossings, and reducing noise pollution in natural areas.
13. Incorporate the actions and recommendations related to the design of and access to recreational opportunities along Hazel Creek, as outlined in the draft Hazel Creek Restoration Management Plan.
14. As opportunities arise, acquire land or re-design to establish vegetated buffers along creeks, in alignment with the preferred waterway management and development setback outlined in the Baw Baw Shire Council Waterway Management Guidelines 2017. The approach will differ based on the presence of existing native vegetation: BBSC water management guidelines provide metrics and measures that assist with design of these spaces. (Appendix 13)
15. Ensure all recreational areas are away from high-value conservation zones and increase widths of open space corridors to maintain required buffer zones. Recreation zones must occupy less than 10% of the available 30 m wide waterway corridor area.
16. Evaluate significant natural areas with valuable biodiversity and ecosystems on freehold land as potential candidates for land acquisition, prioritising those at risk of private development. Pursue acquisition opportunities as they become available, ensuring that valuable biodiversity and ecosystems are preserved from private development for future generations.
17. Balance the use of open spaces, especially in areas with significant natural features. Utilise natural materials that harmonise with the park’s environment to minimise disturbance and reduce visual clutter.
18. Prioritise the needs of natural ecosystems in our classified natural parks and open spaces above those of the community to ensure the long-term health and resilience of both the environment and the community itself in the face of climate change and other crisis.
19. Explore solutions to address the safety of park visitors in bushland and natural spaces by implementing wildlife-friendly strategies that respect and protect local habitats while ensuring a safe environment for users.

Connection of Habitat

Ensuring resilient ecosystems hinges on establishing and preserving connections between habitats. By strategically implementing wildlife corridors and green pathways, we facilitate species movement, thus safeguarding genetic diversity and bolstering ecosystem resilience. This connectivity mitigates isolation, facilitating natural migration and adaptation of flora and fauna to evolving environmental conditions. When selecting new open space locations, it's crucial to consider these interconnections and strive to contribute to linking habitats wherever feasible.

Key Directions:

The following directions support efforts to strengthen habitat connectivity across Baw Baw Shire:

1. Collate existing biolink and habitat connectivity mapping undertaken by neighbouring councils and Landcare networks into a single GIS layer and use this as a basis to identify gaps in the network to identify key habitat areas and potential wildlife corridors within Baw Baw Shire and update the biolink mapping.
2. Protect and restore riparian zones along rivers, streams, and wetlands. Riparian buffers provide essential habitat for many species and act as natural corridors for wildlife movement.
3. Incorporate connectivity into New Open Space Planning when planning and developing new open spaces, prioritise locations that enhance habitat connectivity. Design these spaces to function as part of a larger ecological network, supporting species movement and genetic diversity.
4. Collaborate with non-Council landowners, neighbouring local government areas, and stakeholders to enhance habitat connectivity and biodiversity across boundaries, ensuring coordinated conservation efforts.



Sustainable Open Spaces

Implementing sustainable practices in land use, resource management, and infrastructure development within Baw Baw's green spaces is vital for conserving natural resources and reducing the ecological footprint. In alignment with Council's developed environmental sustainability strategy 2022, harmonising human needs with environmental health, will create a resilient foundation that ensures the long-term vitality of both natural ecosystems and the broader community.

Key Directions:

1. Design open spaces with minimal maintenance needs, reducing reliance on chemical weed management by utilising natural materials, minimising hard edges, and encouraging natural habitat formation. This approach should also extend to the design of infrastructure and equipment, ensuring that they are durable, easy to maintain, and require minimal intervention over time.
2. Work toward developing a council-operated nursery to supply local, commonly used plants in parks and open spaces. This initiative supports financial sustainability and promotes the use of native species.
3. Council to review of all open spaces owned by external authorities, to determine which land (not owned by Council) should continue to be maintained and managed by Council, and which land should not. This piece of work will require some historical agreements to be updated or ceased, and new agreements made where appropriate. Council currently conducts routine maintenance and responds to matters relating to some open space owned by other agencies, which impacts resources as well as relationships with our community. Efforts could be better placed, and with more impact, on Council owned parks and open spaces, and strategically significant non-Council owned spaces. There is an opportunity to limit using valuable resources on land that doesn't serve social and environmental purposes and confirming agreements for better management of those spaces by the owning authorities
4. Prioritise the use of recycled, locally sourced, and eco-friendly materials in park infrastructure projects; in line with Circular Economy principles and guidelines to reduce environmental impact and support local economies.
5. Consider Installing water-efficient irrigation systems and utilising drought-tolerant native plants and incorporate rainwater harvesting techniques to conserve water across parks and open spaces.
6. Support the Integration of renewable energy sources and energy efficient infrastructure into parks and open space infrastructure to power lighting, facilities, and amenities sustainably.
Implement waste reduction and recycling programs in parks and open spaces by providing clearly marked recycling and glass bins (where available), supported by targeted educational campaigns to promote responsible waste disposal. This may include signage, social media messaging, community engagement activities, or school partnerships that raise awareness about waste minimisation and correct recycling practices.
Opportunities to reduce single-use plastics, trial composting or green waste bins at high-use sites, and align with Council's broader waste management strategies and council Circular Economy policy can also be explored.
7. Where possible, Increase usage of organic fertilisers and composting to enhance soil health, If herbicides are used, ensure they are environmentally safe and consider the potential impact on soil, water quality and fauna.
8. Enhance waterway corridors by naturalising modified waterways, implementing riparian planting as per BBSC waterway management guideline 2017, and reconnecting floodplains to waterways to promote subsurface water flow.
9. Create open spaces that are responsive to specific local conditions, including drainage, contamination, indigenous flora and fauna, landscape, and surrounding built form features.
10. Manage water sustainably and holistically across parks and open spaces by implementing WSUD measures such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable surfaces to treat stormwater runoff, filter pollutants, and enhance water infiltration. Continue to prioritise actions from the Baw Baw Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) 2019–2024, including the use of recycled water and integrated approaches for key open spaces and recreation reserve. Additionally, council to consider developing a Drainage Asset Management Plan in collaboration with the community and other public authorities to manage stormwater renewal projects and upgrade projects to manage surface runoff and, reduce flooding risks, and support biodiversity, while utilising parks as key green infrastructure to improve water resilience and provide recreational benefits.

Flood Management and Sustainable Open Spaces

Baw Baw Shire is expected to face increasing pressures from climate change, including more frequent and intense rainfall events. Significant investment will be required to reduce flood risks and ensure that the Shire's drainage infrastructure is resilient and adaptive.

Council has prepared several township-specific drainage strategies that identify flood mitigation projects aimed at protecting public and private assets. Many of these flood mitigation initiatives intersect with or take place within parks and open spaces, which often serve a dual role in both managing stormwater and providing recreational and environmental benefits. The delivery of these flood management measures will be guided by the development and implementation of a Drainage Asset Management Plan, which will help maintain and upgrade stormwater infrastructure to reduce localised flooding while considering opportunities to integrate flood management solutions into the open space network where appropriate.

In parallel, Integrated Water Management Planning (IWMP) presents a broader opportunity to deliver environmental, recreational, and sustainability outcomes through water-sensitive urban design. IWMP supports the sustainable use and reuse of water across the urban landscape, including stormwater harvesting, greywater reuse, and the use of recycled water in open spaces.

An example of IWMP in practice is the Neerim South Wetland Reserve, which functions as a flood mitigation measure while also providing recreational opportunities for the community and enhancing biodiversity.

Some existing recreation spaces, such as Western Park and Bellbird Park, are already using recycled water for irrigation.

To strengthen the link between flood management, sustainability, and open space planning, it is recommended that Council:

- Develop Drainage Asset Management Plan.
- Investigate the feasibility of extending recycled water use to other sites, including Trafalgar Recreation Reserve.
- Incorporate integrated water management principles to support water-sensitive, climate-resilient, and sustainable open spaces in all future sport and recreation master plans.

Adaptability

Encouraging adaptability in the management and design of parks and open spaces involves proactive measures to address the impacts of climate change and other environmental challenges. Developing adaptive strategies tailored to these green areas, such as resilient park planning, and sustainable infrastructure design, ensures that Baw Baw's parks and open spaces can respond effectively to changing conditions. This adaptability not only strengthens the resilience of these open spaces but also fosters a community within Baw Baw that can withstand shocks, recover swiftly, and continue to thrive amidst uncertainty, with the parks serving as adaptable and resilient focal points for communal well-being.

Key Directions:

1. Design Park spaces to be flexible and multi-functional, allowing them to adapt to changing needs and conditions. Incorporate adaptable design elements, such as movable furniture, adaptable play areas, and multi-use sports facilities.
2. Create adaptive management plans that outline strategies for responding to environmental changes and unexpected events. Include provisions for monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment of management practices.

Protecting Cultural Heritage

Protecting cultural heritage within parks and open spaces is crucial for preserving the history, identity, and traditions of Baw Baw Shire. By safeguarding and celebrating cultural heritage sites, artefacts, and stories, we honour the past while enriching the community's sense of place and continuity. This commitment enhances the cultural and educational value of these spaces, fostering pride and connection among residents and visitors. Baw Baw Shire has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that illustrates the historic exploration, occupation, use, adaptation, and development of the land since the first contact between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal people.

The heritage locations within the Shire are diverse and include buildings, structures such as memorials, trees, landscapes, and archaeological sites, many of which are located within parks and open spaces. There are also places with few physical remnants but strong associations and values for local communities that should be cherished and kept.

Key Directions:

1. Review culturally, historically, and environmentally significant sites within parks and open spaces to determine where Conservation Management Plans (CMPs) may be required, based on factors such as vulnerability, significance, and the need for specialised long-term management.
2. Support and promote educational programs, guided tours, and interpretive signage that inform the public about the cultural heritage significance of parks and open spaces. Highlighting the importance of protecting these sites fosters greater appreciation and involvement from the community. Additionally, initiatives such as creating digital archives and online resources that document and share the cultural heritage of parks and open spaces that are accessible to the public for educational and research purposes can foster greater community involvement and a collective responsibility for preserving the cultural richness of Baw Baw Shire's parks and open spaces.
3. Where appropriate incorporate cultural heritage elements into the design and layout of major parks and open spaces. This can include heritage trails, interpretive art installations, and the preservation of natural features of cultural or historical importance, enriching the visitor experience.
4. Engage Indigenous communities, cultural heritage experts, and historians in decision-making processes about new designs or new cultural and art inclusion within the park to ensure accurate representation and protection of cultural heritage. Collaboration ensures that design and management strategies are respectful and informed by those with the deepest connections to these sites.
5. Support and implement the recommendations of the forthcoming Baw Baw Significant Tree Study. This study will allow us to map and protect trees with ecological, cultural, and aesthetic value, ensuring their conservation.



IMAGE: Mountaineer Brass Band Rotunda, Walhalla

Unit Assessment

Open Spaces Assessments

The evaluation of open spaces in terms of quantity, quality, and access are crucial in guiding the development and planning of open spaces within each locality, aiming to deliver optimal outcomes for the community. Each unit will be assessed individually against these three aspects to provide a clear understanding of the specific directions and improvement projects required to drive actions that are tailored to the needs of each unit. This approach seeks to achieve the strategy's objectives where possible, leveraging developed key directions in previous sections to inform tailored actions.

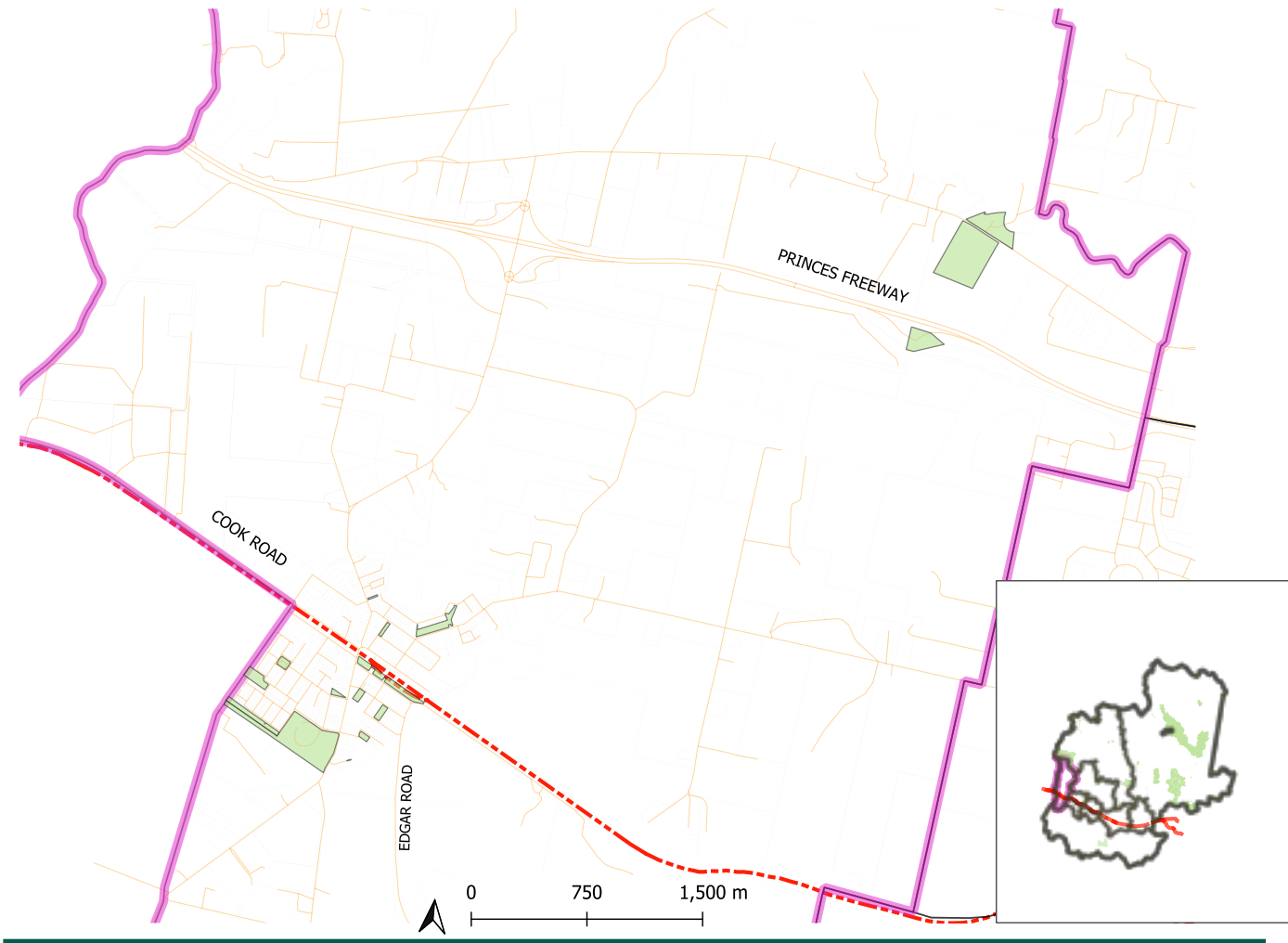
Note: These assessments were completed in September 2024. However, it is important to acknowledge that new open spaces may emerge through recent development submissions or Council land acquisitions since these assessments. As a result, some newly established spaces may not be reflected in the current quantity and walkability assessments included in this strategy.

4.1 Longwarry and Longwarry North

Background and Location: Longwarry is a small town in Gippsland, approximately 84km east of Melbourne, located near the Koo Wee Rup Swamp and the Great Dividing Range. Strategically positioned on the western edge of Baw Baw Shire, it lies 8km from Drouin, 15km from Warragul, 50km from Dandenong, and 80km from Melbourne, providing easy access to regional and urban centres. The town borders the Cardinia Shire to the south-west and is near the Bunyip River and Koo Wee Rup swamplands, contributing to its vast, flat open spaces. Longwarry is primarily residential but also supports agricultural industries, with industrial areas in its eastern part. The area, including Longwarry North, is a mix of urban and semi-rural environments, bordered by Gentle Annie to the north, the Bunyip River to the west, and neighbouring areas such as Jindivick, Drouin, Ripplebrook, and Modella.

Longwarry’s development began in the 1870s with the arrival of the railway, which spurred growth in the timber industry. Originally known for timber production, the town experienced significant setbacks during bushfires in the 1920s and 1930s, which led to the decline of the sawmill industry. Following these events, Longwarry transitioned to dairy farming, and the Bonlac milk factory (now Longwarry Food Park) became a key employer in the area. Despite its relatively slow development, Longwarry has retained a strong community spirit, supported by local clubs, churches, and a school.

FIGURE: Map of Longwarry Location and Open Spaces



Demographic and Community Growth: As of 2024, the population of Longwarry – Longwarry North stands at 3,174 residents, and will grow to 3,389 by 2034 with a population growth of 6.8% and population density of approximately 27.96 persons per square kilometre. This modest but steadily growing population underscores Longwarry’s role as both a residential hub and a support centre for surrounding agricultural enterprises, while the town continues to preserve its strong community identity and historical roots.

Public Open Space Statistics: In Longwarry and Longwarry North, there are a total of 20 public open spaces covering an area of 71.79 hectares, including two sport recreation areas and six playgrounds.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The total provision of public open space in Longwarry – Longwarry North is currently 214 sqm per person. Several state-managed reserves, including Labertouche Creek Bushland Reserve, Thornell Reserve, and Picnic Point Reserve, significantly boost the overall open space provision in the wider assessment unit. However, the distribution of this space is uneven, particularly affecting residents on the northern side of the railway line. These residents have access only to a small local park (Toy Park), which is inadequate for meeting local recreational needs. On average, residents in this area have access to just 3.1 square metres of open space per person, well below the VPA Victorian averaged assessed amount of 57 square metres per capita.

Open Space sqm		Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025		2025	2035	2025	2035
717,900		3,354	3,804	214	189

Access to Open Space: In Longwarry, 94% of dwellings within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) are within 400 m walking distance of a park. However, many of these parks, particularly Toy Park in the north, are too small to meet community needs, raising concerns about overuse and limited recreational function.

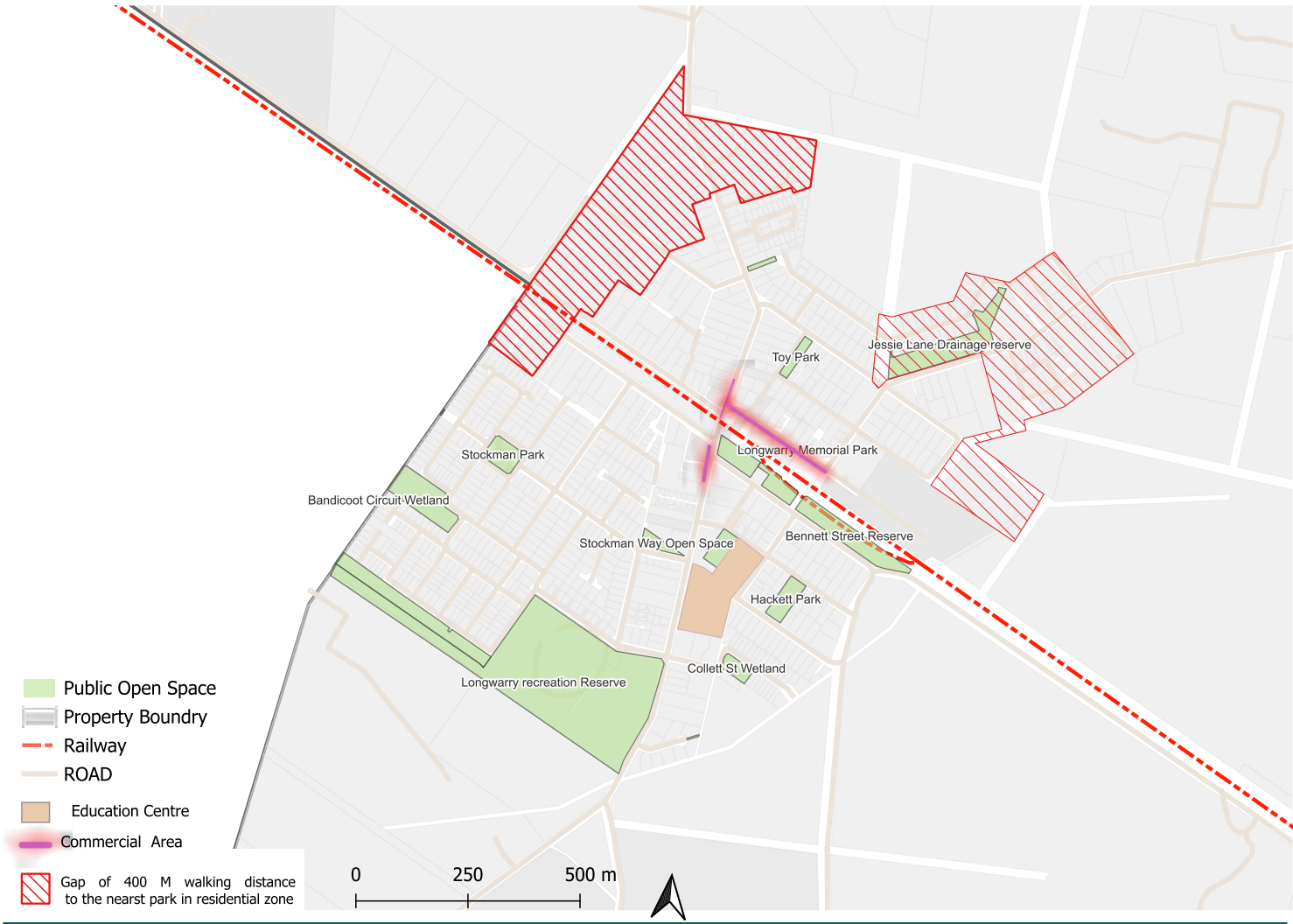
The railway line acts as a major physical barrier, restricting safe pedestrian movement between the northern and southern parts of town and limiting walkable access to the larger and better-equipped parks located to the south. This creates a risk of overcrowding at the few accessible parks in the north.

To address access gaps and ensure more equitable distribution of open space the following improvements are suggested:

- Expand and improve Toy Park to a Neighbourhood Park.
- **Labertouche Community Access Reserve** has been identified as a Specific Purpose Rural Destination to support communities in the Labertouche area and northern outskirts.
- **Longwarry Memorial Park and Bennett Street Reserve**, located near the Longwarry railway station and home to a weekly market, will be enhanced to function as Specific Purpose Destination parks, providing improved recreational opportunities and better serving the wider Longwarry community, particularly those who must travel further to access open space.

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town GRZ, TZ (400m) & (LDRZ 800m)
Longwarry – Longwarry North	Longwarry	94%	N/A	N/A	94%

FIGURE: Map of Longwarry Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recommendations

1. Improve visitor experience in public open space and address the identified gap of walking access in Longwarry through the following strategies:
 - Upgrade Toy Park and create an upgrade plan for it that incorporates a variety of activities designed to cater to different age groups and genders. Given its strategic location and high usage by residents who lack access to open space within 400 m of their homes, the park should be elevated to a neighbourhood-level facility despite the small size.
 - Pursue the expansion of the park through the land acquisition process when opportunities arise.
 - Investigate the feasibility of an agreement between Council and other private/public landowners in north of the railway to provide public access to recreation facilities.
2. Advocate and support the land contribution for new subdivision and planning applications north of the railway in Longwarry. under Clause 53.01 of the Baw Baw Planning scheme. The delivery of new local open spaces should prioritise ensuring that the maximum number of homes are located within 400 m of a park or recreational area. The Longwarry Township Structure Plan identifies indicative locations for new open spaces within growth areas, and these should be carefully considered in new development applications to maintain this accessibility measures.
3. Plan to improve recreational amenities at Jessie Lane, including the installation of seating, and garden beds. This area is currently located in an open space access gap zone, and providing such facilities would improve access to recreation for local residents. Additionally, these improvements would offer a welcoming space for workers in nearby industrial zones to relax, exercise, and enjoy their breaks.
4. Develop a master plan for Bennett Street Reserve to enhance its amenities and usability, currently regarded as a local park, there is a need to elevate its hierarchy to Specific Purpose Destination and by connecting it to Longwarry Memorial Park creating a continuous green corridor suitable for walking and cycling. The plan should aim to increase play value and inclusivity for all ages and ensure accessibility for all users specially host a designated place targeted at teenagers, providing social and recreational spaces such as seating areas, skate or bike zones, and gathering spots. This development will encourage community engagement among teenagers and enhance the overall recreational offering at the reserve. Notably, Longwarry has the highest level of youth disadvantage compared to other units, reflecting relative economic instability and access to resources.
5. Investigate opportunities to collaborate with the State Government and the Committee of Management (CoM) to establish clear management responsibilities for the Longwarry Recreation Reserve playground and upgrade this playground to a neighbourhood level hierarchy. This approach will help improve governance, ensure proper maintenance, and enhance long-term usability and sustainability.
6. Work with the landowner, DEECA, to adopt the existing Longwarry Recreation Reserve Masterplan. This includes the development of a new oval to the east. Engage with the State Government to discuss asset ownership structures and shared responsibilities, ensuring the recreation reserve is developed and managed in alignment with the adopted masterplan.
7. Investigate the feasibility of using stormwater harvesting systems to irrigate Longwarry Recreation Reserve and seek funding for its implementation.
8. Establish a continuous footpath along Drouin Road to connect Jessie Lane with the internal path network of the Drainage Reserve. This will create a cohesive walking loop, enhancing pedestrian accessibility and encouraging greater use of the reserve's walking trails.
9. Work with the landowner DEECA to improve the condition of Longwarry tennis court through having one multi court and additional landscaping and tree planting for improved usability, given its visibility from the road and its location next to a primary school and community garden.
10. Consider upgrading and maintaining the playground in Labertouche Community Access Reserve given its hierarchy as Specific Purpose Rural Destination and upgrade its playground considering play elements that provides inclusive and accessible play opportunities.
11. Consider a suitable location for a designated dog off-lead area in consultation with community within the current open space or future development within the Longwarry township.

Appendix 15: Longwarry Open Space List

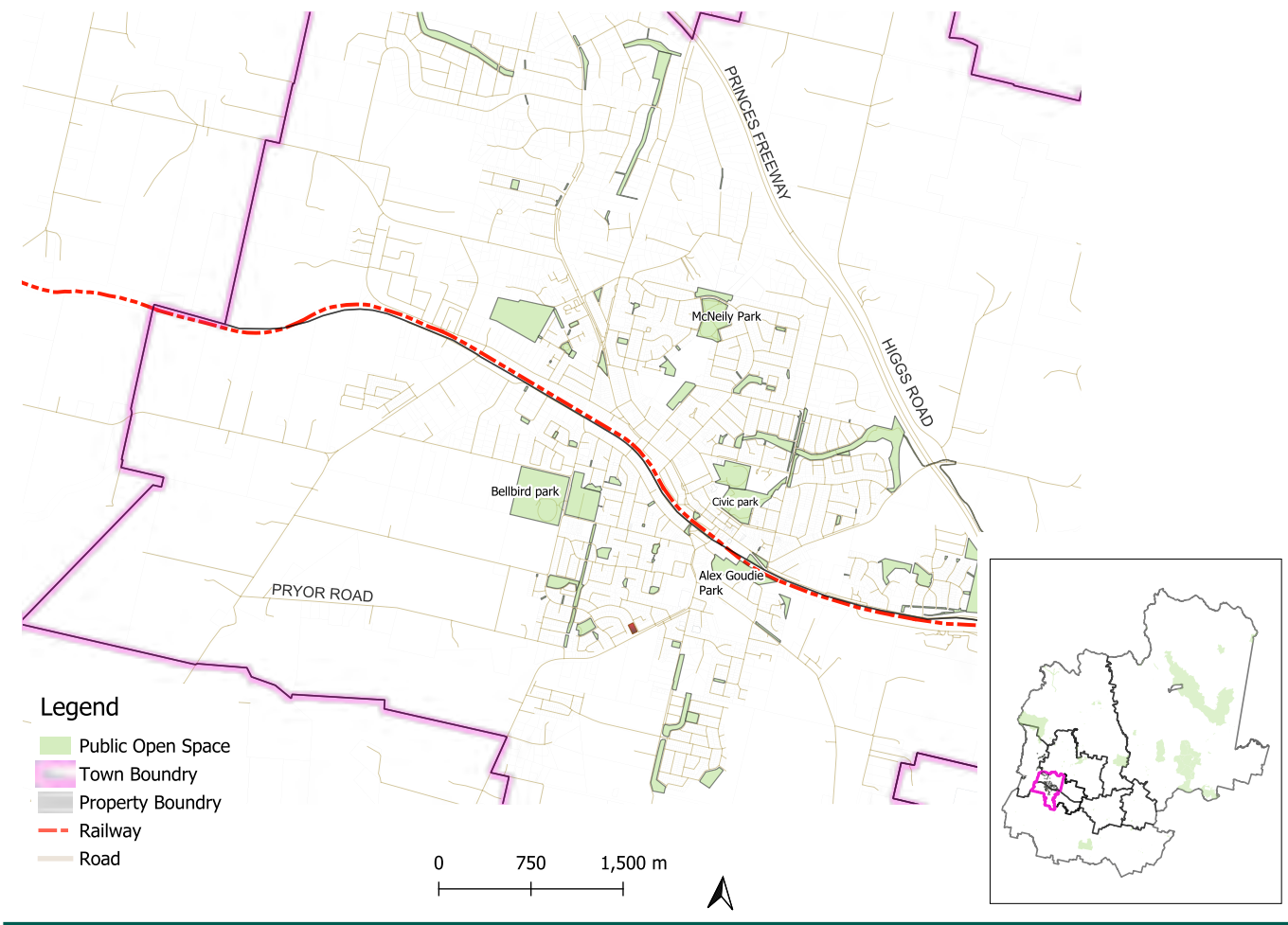
4.2 Drouin (Drouin South & Drouin North)

Background and Location

Drouin is strategically located 86 km east of Melbourne in the West Gippsland region, along the Princes Freeway. It lies just 7km west of Warragul, offering excellent connectivity to major urban centres while retaining its rural charm. Bordered by Longwarry, Drouin West, and Drouin South, the town forms part of a larger urban area with Warragul. The bypassing of the Princes Freeway has allowed the central area to become more pedestrian-friendly and commercially vibrant. Despite being the second-largest town in the Baw Baw Shire, Drouin serves as the administrative headquarters of the shire, highlighting its importance as a regional hub.

Historically, Drouin’s development is closely tied to the construction of the Gippsland railway between 1877 and 1879, which transformed it from a small workers’ camp into a bustling commercial centre. Before the railway, the area was sparsely developed due to dense forests that hampered European settlement. The town’s name is believed to come from an Aboriginal word meaning “north wind,” reflecting its Indigenous heritage, with the Kulin and Kurnai peoples as the original custodians of the land. Over time, Drouin became a centre for dairy farming and timber milling, with its first cooperative butter factory established in 1904 to supply milk to Melbourne. Although the closure of the Bonlac dairy factory marked the loss of a significant employment source, Drouin has since thrived, driven by recent residential developments.

FIGURE: Map of Drouin Location and open space



Demographic and Community Growth

Drouin has experienced rapid growth in recent years, driven by new housing developments and its integration with the expanding Greater Melbourne region. Notable projects, such as the Jackson’s View Estate, have significantly contributed to the expansion of the town, particularly in its northern areas. As of 2024, Drouin has an estimated population of 16,099 residents, with a population density of 281.4 persons per square kilometre. This population is projected to grow to 17,926 by 2034, with a growth rate of 3.6% in Drouin North and an impressive 24.5% in Drouin South.

The town fosters a strong sense of community, hosting vibrant events like the Ficifolia Festival, which celebrates local culture and unites residents. As Drouin evolves, it successfully balances its historical roots with modern growth, offering an attractive lifestyle for both residents and businesses.

Open Space Statistics: In Drouin, there are a total of 100 public open spaces covering an area of 136.084 ha hectares, including three sports recreation area and 35 playgrounds one skate and one outdoor fitness area.

Open Space quantity: The total provision of public open space in Drouin currently is assessed 73.22 sqm per person. With continued population growth, this provision may be reduced over the next decade if no new open spaces are delivered. There are plans for additional open space to be developed by 2025 as a result of new subdivisions, which is expected to help maintain this amount.

Open Space sqm	Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025	2025	2035	2025	2035
1,294,306.7	17,677	22,439	73.22	57.68

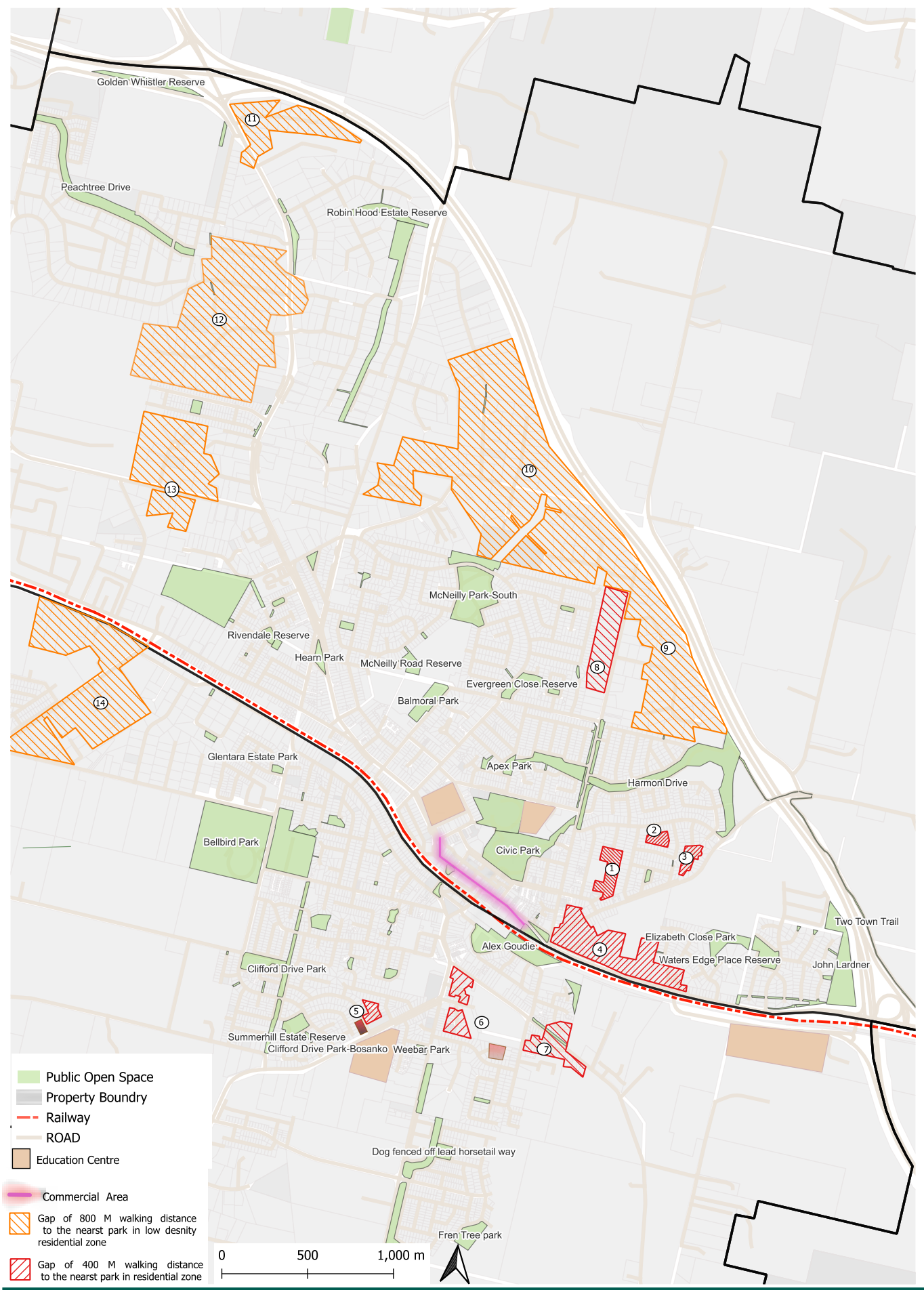
Access to Open Space: In Drouin, 89.90% of dwellings within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) have access within a 400 m walking distance to the nearest park. This percentage come to 75.44% in the Low density residential zone considering 800 m walking distance to open spaces.

To address the gap of walking access in Drouin and ensure at least 95% of resident are within our desired walking distance, gaps have been prioritized based on various factors such as population density, potential future growth, socio-economic levels of disadvantage and proximity to the nearest park.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town GRZ, TZ (400m) & (LDRZ 800m)
Drouin (South & North)	Drouin	89.90%	N/A	75.44%	87.74%

FIGURE: Map of Drouin Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recommendations

1. Address the following open space walking access gaps to ensure the equitable access for residents across Drouin. This could be achieved through the following tailored strategies for each

General Residential Zone

Gap 1,2,3

This area has been identified as a high-priority gap affecting some residents along Darnum Road. The following recommendations are proposed to address this issue:

- Audit the Pedestrian Accesses along Walker, Outlook, Amber, Buln Buln and Crabine Street that connect residents in Open Space Gaps 1, 2, and 3 to L.G. Boeyen Park, their nearest local park. The audit should focus on improvements to accessibility (e.g. DDA compliance), pedestrian safety (e.g. appropriate road crossings, especially at busy intersections), and streetscape quality (e.g. planting short, dense edge vegetation for separation from traffic and tall trees for shade to enhance comfort and walkability).
- Upgrade L.G. Boeyen Park to a neighbourhood park with more age-appropriate play elements for children aged 10-13 years, enhanced access both around and within the park, improved amenities, natural shade, and improved perceptions of safety through better integration with surrounding streets, to be assessed as part of the upgrade process. These improvements are crucial as L.G. Boeyen Park also serves residents in Gap Numbers 1, 2 and 3. Given the park's small size, it should offer high-quality, engaging play experiences to accommodate residents who may need to undertake extended walks to reach it.
- Audit Pedestrian Access to southern end of Tomas Maddock Reserve which is the nearest recreation space to residents in walking access gap number 3 by focus on improvements such as compliance with DDA, and other accessibility needs, ensure the footpath includes appropriate crossings to improve pedestrian safety, intersections and planting shading trees to enhance pedestrian experience.
- At Thomas Maddock Reserve, provide a direct footpath connection between the existing loop path (which connects to Buln Buln Road) and Walker Street.

Note: There are planning applications in close proximity to this gap; however, the location and accessibility of proposed public open space remain beyond the desired parameters, and therefore, these developments would not adequately address the existing gap.

Gap 4

- Support and advocate for future land contributions in new developments within this area, particularly along Buln Buln Road and Princes Way, to include for the provision of public open space. This will help address the current lack of accessible recreational areas for residents in the gap area.
- Investigate the future use and potential upgrade of Morton Park.

This includes consulting with the community to determine whether Morton Park, (small triangular space bordered by Princes Way and Buln Buln Road), should be enhanced to provide greater recreational value. If improvements are supported, community input will inform the types of enhancements preferred. Given its location within a walking access gap area, there is an opportunity to better serve local residents through potential upgrades; however, any changes should be guided by community needs and priorities.

Gap 5

To better serve the residents in the identified gap area, improvements are needed at the nearby parks, Summerhill Estate Reserve and Russress Reserve.

- Plan to enhance Summerhill Estate Reserve to better align with its park classification and accommodate residents from surrounding gap areas. Improvements may focus on increasing accessibility, providing comfortable seating, enhancing landscaping, and exploring opportunities for additional recreational features that encourage active and social use for all ages.
- Explore opportunities to partner with public landowners along Main South Road, near gap area 5, to provide public access to recreational opportunities
- Audit Pedestrian Access to both Russress Reserve and Summerhill estate which are the nearest recreation spaces to residents in gap number 5 by focus on improvements such as compliance with DDA, and other accessibility needs, ensure the footpath includes appropriate crossings or traffic calming where needed to improve pedestrian safety, provide appropriated level of shade for a better walking experience.

Gap 6,7

- Assess the feasibility of a new linear recreation opportunity at the Council owned land that is currently not accessible to community along Pure Harvest Factory intersection with Gould Street.
- Explore opportunities to connect this access to Norman Road at intersection with Fairchild street. This can address the walking access Gap 6 and some of residents in area of walking access **Gap 7** in Fairchild area.

Gap 7

- Develop a connected pedestrian path along Lardner Road (63 Lardner Road), linking the intersection of Fairchild Street to the east and Norman Road to the west. Incorporate landscaping and other amenities to enhance the recreational value and user experience.
- Planting to create a low impact recreational opportunity in Mathew court Reserve with seating, path network to benefit some of the residents in Gap No7 as this park serves as their closest recreational space.

Gap No 8

Addressing the gap in Low Density Residential Area No. 9 could enhance access for those in Gap No. 8, improving overall connectivity and recreational opportunities for the broader community.

Low Density Residential Zone

Gap No 8,9

Explore opportunities to improve connectivity between Greenland Court and Thomas Maddock Reserve. This may include discussions with relevant landowners about potential access options, such as easements or shared-use agreements, if and when opportunities arise.

Gap 10

- Review current leasing arrangements to assess future access options to open Green Valley Drive Drainage Reserve for public access, as it is currently leased for private use. Enhancing the reserve could provide benefits to residents in the identified gap area. Potential improvements may include a pathway connecting to the northern section of McNeilly Park, seating, and landscaping. Additionally, consider extending the path network to improve connections to Green Valley Court and Surman Court.

Gap 11

- Explore opportunities to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to improve community access to restricted open space within the area. This may include discussions on potential shared-use arrangements that enhance recreational opportunities for the residents in Gap 11 and Gap 12 while optimising use of existing facilities.

Gap 12:

- Explore opportunities to improve connectivity between Peach Way Drive, Golf View, and Fairway Road to enhance access for residents in gap areas. Potential options may include discussions with relevant stakeholders to identify feasible connection solutions.
- Explore opportunities to improving connectivity between Arnup Court and Palladium Street to enhance walking access to Palladium Park.

Gap 13

Explore opportunities to introduce access to the Wellwood Natural Area, or parts of it. Enhancing access and introducing low-impact recreational activity such as walking track for additional recreational opportunities could provide benefits to the community while preserving the area’s natural values.

Gap 14:

Future development in this area has included public open spaces that can benefit existing resident with gap of walking distance to park.

2. Jamescott Drive Reserve

Consider developing an upgrade plan for Jamescott Drive Reserve to enhance accessibility, amenity, and overall community use. Improvements may include pathway connections, landscaping, and other enhancements aligned with neighbourhood park Level of Service standards(LoS).

3. Alex Goudie Master Plan

Implement the Alex Goudie Master Plan according to the designated stages, ensuring that each phase aligns with the overall vision and objectives for the park. Coordinate resources and scheduling to deliver planned upgrades, amenities, and improvements effectively.

4. Alex Goudie Memorial Park

Adjacent to the Drouin Bowls Club and located next to the railway line along Princes Way, this park serves as a symbolic entryway to Drouin. While its proximity to the freeway and rail track makes it less suitable for family recreation, it has great potential to enhance the town’s visual appeal. Potential improvements could include landscaping with native plants, decorative garden beds, and, if deemed suitable, public art that reflects the local identity. These enhancements would not only beautify this prominent location but also create a welcoming atmosphere for residents and visitors, fostering local pride and reinforcing the town’s character.

5. Amberly Acres Bushland Reserve

- Plan to enhance Amberly Acres Bushland Reserve by leveraging its natural features and focusing on the restoration of indigenous plant species. Conduct biodiversity assessment and Ensure preserving its ecological integrity. Emphasise conservation through careful landscaping, habitat protection, and the promotion of biodiversity to maintain a natural, resilient environment for wildlife and community enjoyment.
- Extend the existing footpath from the Amberly Acres reserve’s endpoint, connecting it in both directions to Myers Court and Neerim Road to improve accessibility and connectivity for surrounding neighbourhoods.

6. Bloy Park

Plan to upgrade Bloy Park to neighbourhood-level standards, enhancing amenities and play elements while improving access pathways within the park. Given that Bloy Park is the primary accessible green space for east-side Drouin residents, these upgrades will support the local community by reducing the need to travel farther for quality playgrounds and park facilities. Focus on creating a welcoming environment that meets community needs with landscaping, and facilities that encourage a variety of recreational activities for all age.

7. Bellbird Park

Continue the delivery of the Bellbird Park Landscape Plan 2020, and relevant actions regarding this park.

8. Clifford Drive Park

- Consider improving accessibility and amenities by upgrading the playground and park facilities to meet the Level of Service.
- Assess the need for traffic calming or safe crossing options at the Summerhill Road intersection, which divides the park, to improve safety.
- Examine options for implementing effective drainage solutions, including subsurface systems like perforated pipes or French drains, to redirect excess water from paths into appropriate drainage channels. Integrate landscaping with water-absorbent vegetation to manage moisture levels. Plant riparian vegetation, along the park’s low-lying areas prone to flooding, supporting natural water absorption and soil stability that allow for all-weather usability of the path.
- Complete the missing link from the walking path in Clifford Drive Park and connect it to path along Bosanko Street.

9. Elizabeth Close Park

- Explore opportunity for biodiversity enhancement by planting additional native trees and creating a nature play area that fosters engagement with the natural environment.
- Consider constructing an access path to improve connectivity and provide natural shade around he playground.

10. Waters Edge Place Reserve

- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a connecting footpath from the north of this reserve to link this reserve with Elizabeth Close Reserve.
- Plan to equip at least one of the playgrounds in Elizabeth Close Reserve or Water Edge Place Reserve with recreational features suitable for youth.
- Ensure connectivity to future developments to the north by establishing a walking path along the creek, in alignment with the Drouin PSP, to provide links to Buln Buln Road and ultimately the Two Towns Trail.
- Evaluate the feasibility of a connected walking path network that connects the southern end of Waterside Street, along water side Drive Access Reserve and from 23879 Princes Way Drouin (John Lardner Park) to the northern end of waterside street, linking to the future development . This network would aim to create a continuous route around the surrounding existing neighbourhood, connecting the linear access points at Valley View Grove Drainage Reserve, Bushy Park Court, Water Court Reserve, and Lakeview Court Access Reserve. The route would ultimately extend to Waterside future Road and connect to the two town trail along Buln Buln Road providing a cohesive link between existing developments and future developments in the area.
- Collaborate with DEECA or the respective private landowner, depending on ownership to preserve and maintain the health of the tree corridor around Wateredge Place Reserve.

FIGURE: Map of linkages



11. Fairway Drive Access Reserve

Consider establishing a connecting footpath from Lindenell Court to Fairway within this access reserve, complemented by natural shade from tree plantings along the path to enhance user comfort and accessibility.

12. Glentara Estate Park

Enhance the park by planting additional trees and establishing garden beds to improve visual appeal and biodiversity. Install seating areas to encourage social interaction and community gatherings, creating a more inviting and functional space for residents.

13. Hearn Park

This park holds historical significance for the Drouin community. More recently, Council has received several requests regarding its use. Council should engage with the community to assess current needs, explore future opportunities, and plan for its improvement and management accordingly.

14. Buln Buln Road to Thomas Maddock Reserve and Two Towns Trail

Investigate the feasibility of extending the footpath along Buln Buln Road from the intersection with Viking Street to the Two Town Trail to create a walkable and enjoyable connecting network. Implement traffic calming measures and safe crossing solutions at the intersection with Walker Road to enhance pedestrian safety and facilitate access to Thomas Maddock Reserve.

15. Hill Park

Plan to establish a footpath that connects the playgrounds within Hill Park, providing a continuous link between the two ends of the park (Johnson Street and McLean Street).

16. Jamescott Drive Reserve

Identify additional opportunities for tree planting to enhance shade and biodiversity. Develop a path network within the park and to the playground. Provide other amenities in alignment with the park's classification and Level of service and asset provision standards.

17. Maple Place Reserve Connection

Enhance the recreational value of Maple Place Reserve through landscaping and a establishment of a connected pathway to Riverdale Reserve, creating a seamless and inviting link for users.

18. McNeilly Park North

- Assess the feasibility of adding traffic calming measures or a safe crossing between the north and south sections of McNeilly Reserve. Improve connectivity with a pathway extending from Green Valley Drive, and establish a planted corridor to support both human movement and wildlife.
- Ensure future open space connections between McNeilly Park, McNeilly Road Reserve, and Balmoral Park are planned for and secured through planning applications and future subdivisions to create a cohesive open space network along Whisky Creek.

19. Waddell Reserve

Prioritise installation of a footpath along Waddell Road adjacent to Waddell Reserve to enhance accessibility and walkability to and from the park.

20. Palm Square Park

Consider planting trees and creating garden beds to improve shade and aesthetic appeal. Incorporate landscaping that enhances walking access and seating areas, fostering a more inviting and functional community space.

21. Pepperell Drive Access Reserve

Provide a footpath in Pepperell Drive Access Reserve.

22. Roberts Court Bushland Reserve

Prepare a master plan that outlines long-term vision and strategic direction for the bushland area, including goals for public access, recreational uses, and focuses and strategies for habitat restoration, biodiversity enhancement, and sustainable land management practices to protect and preserve the natural environment, enhancements, and intended future uses.

23. Robinhood Estate Reserve

Plan towards enhancing the park and playground by incorporating more inclusive play elements, planting trees, and creating garden beds. Incorporate nature play elements to encourage interaction with the natural environment. Install a footpath within linear access to Robinhood Street ensure its all-weather path to improve connectivity.

24. Richie Court Access Reserve, Samuel Drive Access Reserve, Shakespeare Court Access Reserve, Valley View Grove Drainage Reserve, Richie Court Access Reserve, Kamanari Court to Binbeal Road, Mountain Vista Court Access Reserve and Golf View Court Access Reserve

Prioritise tree planting for shade and amenities.

25. St Mabyn Avenue Park and Apex Park

Continue the footpath to Apex Park –plant suitable trees around the creek (Gum Scrub Creek) and in linear access to Orchard Road and provide natural shade around the playground.

26. Two Town Trail

Conduct a shade audit along the Two Towns Trail to assess shade coverage needs, identifying areas that would benefit from natural shade provision through additional tree plantings. Perform a safety audit to evaluate traffic and pedestrian safety at all road intersections and implement appropriate safety measures such as traffic calming devices or designated crossings. Where beneficial, consider vegetation buffers along the trail to enhance user safety and comfort in areas adjacent to roads. Provide seating and bicycle repair stations at appropriate locations along the trail to support user convenience and encourage active use of the path.

27. Weebar Park

Consider Providing a path network through and to the playground. Prioritise construction of footpath on at least one side of the Smethurst street that connect McKindlay to Weebar Road to improve easy and safe and easy walking access to the park.

Appendix 16: Drouin Open Space List



IMAGE: Civic Park, Drouin

4.3 Warragul (Warragul North & Warragul South)

Warragul: Background and Location

Located about 102 kilometres southeast of Melbourne, Warragul is strategically positioned between the Strzelecki Ranges to the south and the Mount Baw Baw Plateau to the north, offering scenic views of hills, valleys, and farmland. This geographic setting enhances Warragul’s role as the primary population and service centre for West Gippsland and the broader Shire of Baw Baw. Known for its rural charm and picturesque landscape, the town serves as a gateway between urban Melbourne and the natural beauty of Gippsland. Warragul also holds significant environmental value, with biodiversity hotspots supporting unique species like the Strzelecki Gums, Giant Gippsland Earthworm, and Growling Grass Frog, all of which are protected within the town’s open spaces.

Warragul was originally established as a railway construction camp in the late 19th century and quickly evolved into a vital commercial hub in West Gippsland. The development of the Gippsland Railway Line in 1878 and a branch line to Neerim South further solidified its role as a railway town throughout the 20th century. By the 1880s, the construction of public buildings and factories, including the Warragul Co-operative Butter Factory, supported the booming dairy industry. Warragul’s population reached over 1,700 by 1900 and continued to grow during the interwar period, marking the town’s transformation from a railway camp to a thriving regional centre.

Demographic and Community Growth

Warragul has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by new residential developments and its proximity to Greater Melbourne. This expansion has led to the development of new neighbourhoods and amenities, further enhancing the town’s appeal as both a residential and commercial hub.

As of 2024, Warragul and its surrounding areas have an estimated population of 20,566, with a population density of 338.8 persons per square kilometre. By 2034, the population is expected to grow to approximately 24,000, reflecting steady growth and the town’s enduring appeal as a regional centre. Growth rates vary across the town, with Warragul North projected to grow by 19.1% and Warragul South by 9.4%.

Warragul fosters a strong sense of community through events such as the annual Farm World Expo, which celebrates its agricultural heritage and brings residents together. As the town continues to expand, it balances its rural charm and community-oriented lifestyle, making it an attractive destination for both residents and businesses.

FIGURE: Map of Warragul (Warragul North & South) Location and Open Space



Open space statistics: Warragul has 109 public open spaces including eight sport recreations reserves , 30 playgrounds and two skate and BMX parks and two outdoor fitness area covering area of 2,191,822 in total.

Quantity of Public Open Space: As of 2025, Warragul has approximately 2,191,822 sqm of public open space, resulting in a provision of 97.6 sqm per person. By 2035, the population is projected to grow , which would reduce the per capita provision to 72.6 sqm if no additional open space is delivered. However, it is anticipated that new subdivisions will include public open space contributions, which will help maintain this level of provision across the next decade.

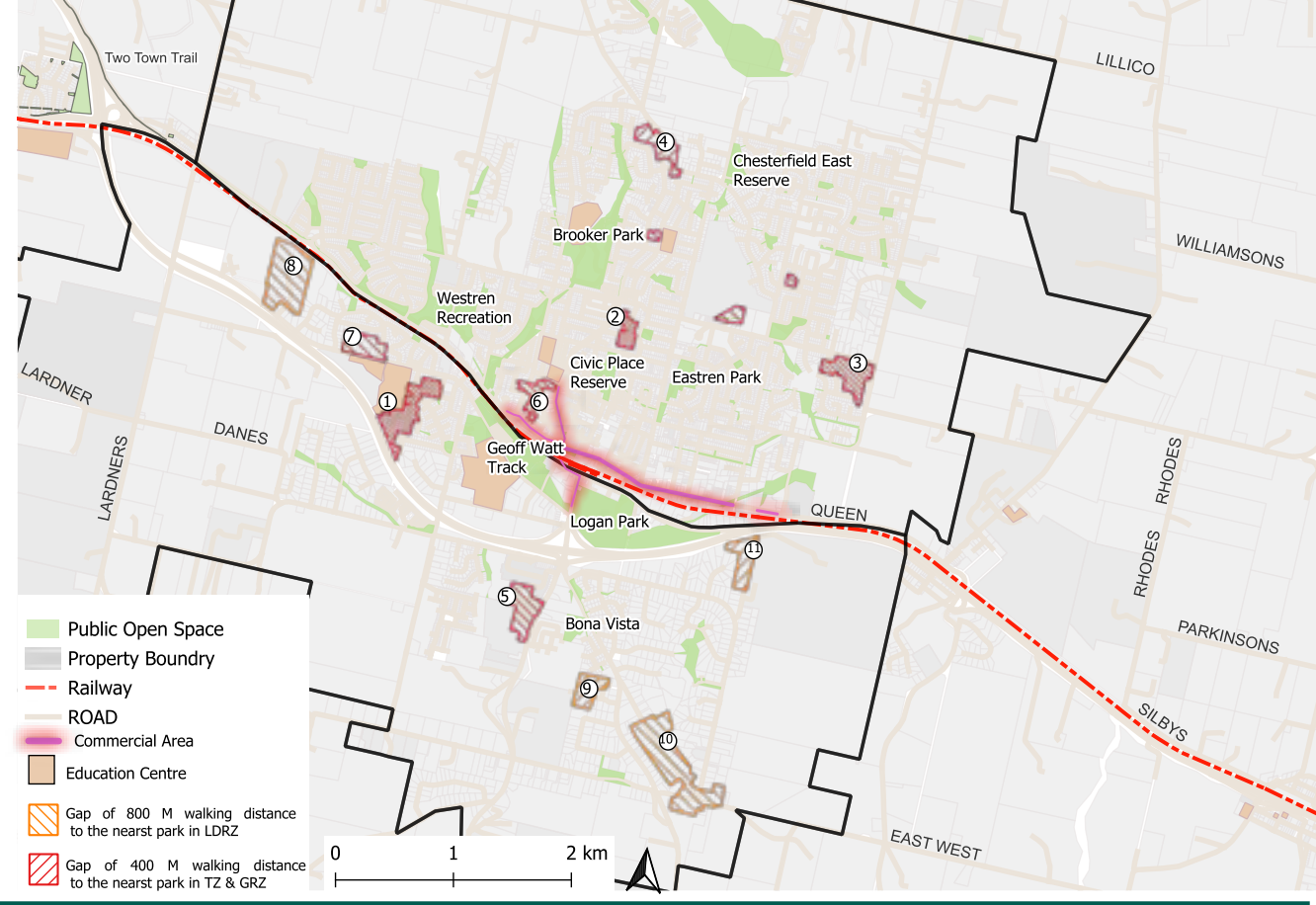
Open Space sqm		Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025		2025	2035	2025	2035
2,191,822		22,469	730,195	97.6	72.6

Access to Open Space: In Warragul , 91% of dwellings within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) have access within a 400m walking distance to the nearest park. This percentage come to 91.25% in Low density residential zone considering 800 m walking distance to open spaces. To address the area with identified walking access gap in Warragul and hit the target of 95% of residents within the desired walking distance. Gaps have been prioritised based on various factors such as population density, potential future growth, socio-economic levels of disadvantage, proximity to the nearest park.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town GRZ, TZ (400m) & (LDRZ 800m)
Warragul (South & North)	Warragul	91.05%	N/A	91.25%	91.08%

FIGURE: Map of Warragul (Warragul North & South) Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recommendations

1. **Address the following open space walking access gaps to ensure the equitable access for residents across Warragul.** This could be achieved through the following tailored strategies for each identified gap.

Gap 1

Investigate the possibility of establishing an arrangement with a nearby educational facility along Burke Street to explore public access to potential recreational opportunities for the community.

- **Leichardt Court Reserve:** Explore opportunities to enhance Leichardt Court Reserve, pursuing additional land to expand the park and to improve recreational amenities.
- **McDonald Street Park:** Enhance the park to increase its recreational value by upgrading amenities, improving landscaping, and providing play elements to better meet the needs of the community.
- **McMillan Drive Reserve:** Enhance the reserve by establishing a path network and adding landscaping features to increase accessibility and aesthetic appeal and meet the LoS standards.

Gap 2

- Investigate the possibility to establish a connection between McArthur Street and Elizabeth Street.
- **MacArthur Street Park:** Enhance the park by establishing a connecting path between key areas, providing amenities and shade where needed. Create a youth-specific feature and explore the possibility of incorporating a nature play opportunity in the adjacent garden. This area, located near the primary access gap for open space walking routes, would greatly benefit the local community, particularly those who face extended walks to access the park.

Gap 3

- Plan for improvement to Cromie Drive and Melzak Way Reserve, provide assets and amenity for better recreation and walking experience.
- Advocate for and support construction of well connected walking path within future subdivision application from Sutton Reserve to the neighbourhoods in the identified gap area, passing through these reserves to Dawson Road. Include a shared bicycle path to support active transport and ensure seamless connectivity. These improvements aim to address the gap in open space access and create better linkages for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- Ensure the Continuity of the shared path from Sutton Reserve to Amberwood Reserve through the potential future subdivision that connects to Ellen Close Reserve.

Gap 4

Advocate for and support land contributions in future planning applications within the identified gap area or its surroundings, ensuring the inclusion of public open space and the provision of a direct footpath connection from Brandy Creek Road to Magnolia Street (including Tilia and Correa Courts).

Gap 5

Advocate for and support land contributions in future planning applications within the identified gap area or its surroundings, ensuring the inclusion of public open space and the provision of a direct footpath connection to residents in this gap.

Gap 6

Explore feasibility of repurposing of Council-owned land in this area to create additional open space, offering recreational opportunities that benefit residents in the gap area, as well as visitors and the broader community in the commercial area.

Gap 7

Investigate the possibility of establishing an arrangement with a nearby educational facility along Burke Street between Grange Cres and to explore public access to potential recreational opportunities for the community.

Gap 8: Gaps in Low Density Residential Zone

- Ensure footpath connectivity to Grange Crescent Reserve to improve accessibility for the community.
- Plan to enhance Grange Crescent Reserve to align with the LoS standards, including upgrades to amenities and overall usability. Establish a path network to improve accessibility and activity within the reserve.

2. Boronia Park

Plan to complete the path network in Boronia park to enhance connectivity and accessibility, ensuring a seamless walking experience within and around the park.

3. Brooker Park

- Assess the open drainage near the pathway for potential solutions to address the associated safety concerns.
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing an informal link from the walking path to the main path (over the creek) to improve connectivity and accessibility.
- Provide natural shade near seating areas within the dog park for added comfort.
- Assess traffic at the intersection of Bowen Street and Sutton Street, and implement traffic calming measures or safe pedestrian crossings to enhance safety.

4. Bona Vista Wetlands

- Consider creating a nature walk with seats that connects to future subdivision.
- Plant shade trees along linear access to Jacob Court.

5. Buckland Drive – Two Towns Trail

- Conduct a shade audit along the Two Towns Trail to assess shade coverage needs, identifying areas that would benefit from natural shade provision through additional tree plantings.
- Perform a safety audit to evaluate traffic and pedestrian safety at all road intersections and implement appropriate safety measures such as traffic calming devices or designated crossings. Where beneficial, consider vegetation buffers along the trail to enhance user safety and comfort in areas adjacent to roads. provide seating and bicycle repair stations at appropriate locations along the trail to support user convenience and encourage active use of the path.
- Plan to provide amenity such as distance markers to significant locations, add recycle bin and increased seating and asset as per LOS standards.

6. Chesterfield Estate Wetland

- Investigate an opportunity to provide a path and views to wetland.
- Consider providing amenity and space for informal ball game.

7. F.T. Davey Reserve

Plant tall and short trees for shade, amenity and safety to create a green buffer.

8. Franklin Avenue Wetland

- Assess the need for a suitable type of barrier around the deep drain outlet to improve safety, particularly for children and park users.
- Provide shade to seating areas by planting trees and increase the number of trees in the grassed area to enhance the wetland’s amenity and ecological value.

9. Geoff Watt Track Reserve

Assess the feasibility of installing a full basketball court to enhance recreational opportunities in the area.

10. Gwinear Court Reserve

Consider planting trees and provide landscaping for shade and amenity.

11. Hayes Drive Reserve

Plan to create a path within the site and to its two extensions from Hayes Street.

12. Hazel Creek Nature Reserve

Assess the feasibility of establishing a path network connecting Albert Street in the north to Queen Street in the south. This should include consideration of traffic safety measures at the intersection with Hazel Road to ensure safe crossings. This initiative will enhance connectivity and activate the space.

13. Jones Arboretum

- Investigate the establishment of a path that connects to the serene St to the main path that ultimately connects to Fernery Street.
- Implement weed management strategies to maintain the ecological health of the arboretum.

14. Logan Park

Investigate the establishment of a path connecting Alfred Road to Howitt Road through the southern section of Logan Park.

15. Lovell Drive Reserve

Consider providing a footpath to improve connectivity between East West Road and Lovell Drive through the park, along with appropriate amenities to support active transport and enhance user experience.

16. Albert Street to North Road Connection

Consider providing a walking path and connecting Albert street to North road and ensure the footpath includes appropriate crossings or traffic calming at the intersection with North Road.

17. Melanie Linear Reserve and Kent Street Linear Reserve

Plant trees along the path for shade and amenity and ensure the footpath includes appropriate crossings or traffic calming to improve pedestrian safety, especially at busier intersections.

18. North Road – Paulan Court Access Reserve

Consider providing a path and plant trees for shade and amenity.

19. Orion Court Park

Plant trees and create garden bed for shade and amenity.

20. Ryan Court Drainage Reserve

Explore opportunities to enhance connectivity by assessing the feasibility of a footpath within the drainage reserve and potential links to the Two Towns Trail. This may involve collaboration with relevant stakeholders to establish a continuous route from Rotary Park. Additionally, consider tree planting and appropriate amenities to improve usability and comfort.

21. Sheoak Reserve

- Plan to enhance the reserve by planting additional trees and providing landscaping to improve its aesthetics and ecological value.
- Ensure its future connection to the adjacent new development and the gas easement to improve accessibility and connectivity.

22. Stoll Street Access Reserve

Provide a path and plant trees along the path for shade and amenity.

23. Sutton Street Reserve

- Provide a path that will connect all the way through future new development to Cromie Drive and Melzak Way.
- Plant more trees and provide amenities as appropriate based on park classification.

24. Warragul Velodrome

Consider establishing a footpath through this site to create a connection to Logan Park. Provide seating and other assets along the path and within the park in accordance with Level of Service (LoS) standards and install appropriate signage and wayfinding to support navigation and park use.

25. Web Court Linear Reserve

Plan to develop a pathway and install amenities such as seating to enhance the reserve’s accessibility and usability. This improvement addresses the lack of 400 m walking access to the nearest park for the community north of the drainage, providing them with a closer and more convenient recreational space.

Appendix 17: Warragul (Warragul North & South) Open Space List



4.5 Nilma– Darnum–Yarragon

Background and Location

The Yarragon–Darnum–Nilma unit encompasses the historically rich town of Yarragon and the smaller settlements of Darnum and Nilma. Together, these localities form a cohesive community that blends rural charm, agricultural heritage, and modern growth. Yarragon serves as the cultural and economic hub, while Darnum and Nilma offer quieter rural settings that enhance the region’s character. This area’s evolving demographics and vibrant community life reflect its enduring appeal to residents and visitors seeking a balance between historical significance and modern convenience.

Nilma

Nilma is a small settlement located approximately 105 km southeast of Melbourne. Its origins tied to the development of the Gippsland railway in the 1870s. Originally known as Bloomfield, the village became a hub for sawmilling and agriculture, with a butter factory established in the early 20th century. Although small, Nilma retains its historical ties to the railways and agriculture, maintaining its identity as a quiet rural community.

Darnum

Darnum, a small rural town in Gippsland, is situated approximately 110 km southeast of Melbourne. Its name, derived from an Aboriginal word meaning “parrot”, reflects its cultural heritage. The town’s development began with the surveying of the Gippsland railway line in 1873, leading to the establishment of key facilities such as a railway station (1880), school (1881), and post office (1882). This unit is bounded by the localities of Nilma North and Shady Creek in the north, the locality of Trafalgar in the east, the localities of Yarragon South and Cloverlea in the south, and the localities of Bona Vista and Warragul in the west.

Initially, Darnum thrived on timber industries, with sawmills and tramways operating in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As forests were cleared, dairying emerged as the primary industry, supported by the establishment of milk depots and later dairy factories, including the Bonlac facility (now operated by Fonterra). Today, Darnum is home to a hotel, recreation reserve, multi-denominational church, and the nearby Mount Worth State Park, which preserves remnants of the region’s original dense forest. Despite modern infrastructure dividing the town, Darnum remains a close-knit community that values its rural charm.

Yarragon

Yarragon, the largest township within this unit, is located approximately 115 km southeast of Melbourne in the West Gippsland region. Its development is closely tied to the construction of the Gippsland railway in 1878, which transformed the area from dense forests and swampy lowlands into a vibrant settlement. Initially referred to as “Little Moe”, the township underwent several name changes before officially becoming Yarragon in 1883. The name is thought to derive from “Yarragondock”, an Aboriginal term meaning “mustachios”. The land’s original custodians are the Kulin Nation people, who maintain a deep cultural connection to the area.

Yarragon’s early prosperity was driven by timber industries, with sawmills and tramways supporting its development. By the early 20th century, as forests gave way to farmland, Yarragon transitioned to dairy farming, with the Yarragon Butter Factory emerging as a key employer and economic driver. Industrial and transportation shifts during the mid-20th century, however, led to the factory’s closure in the 1970s, leaving the town at a crossroads.

A revival in the 1980s repositioned Yarragon as a tourist destination. The township leveraged its charming streetscape and boutique offerings to attract visitors traveling along the Princes Highway. Today, Yarragon continues to embrace its historical identity while evolving as a cultural and tourism hub.

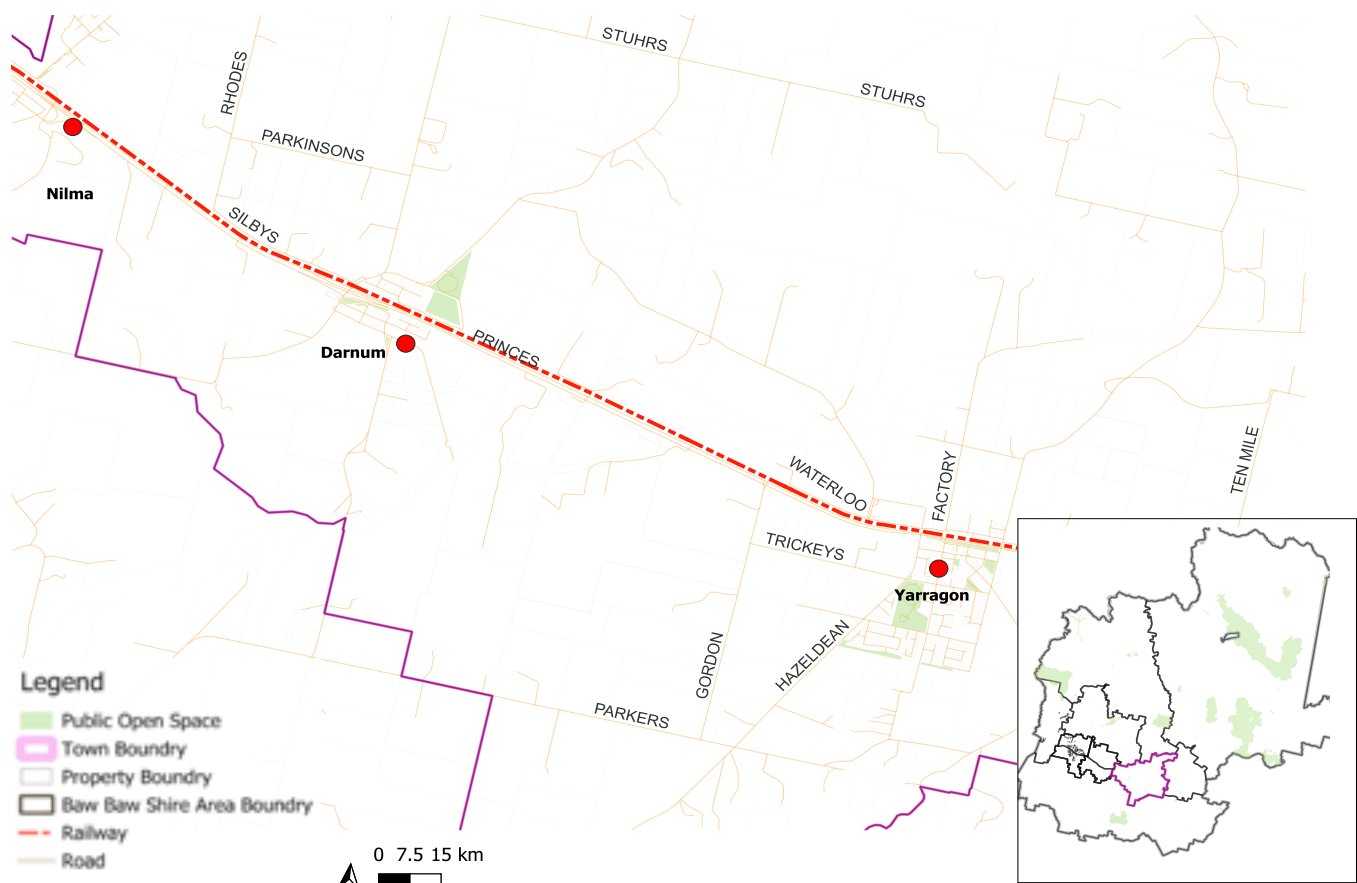
Demographic and Community Growth

As of 2024, the Yarragon–Darnum–Nilma area has a combined population of approximately 3,169, with Yarragon serving as the primary focal point of the unit. Yarragon offers a blend of historical depth, modern amenities, and a vibrant cultural scene, making it an attractive destination for both residents and visitors.

Demographic projections for the area suggest a slight population increase, with the total expected to grow to 3,334 by 2034, reflecting a modest growth rate of 5.2%. The current population density stands at 28.31 persons per square kilometre, highlighting the region’s rural charm and low-density living.

While Yarragon experiences steady growth, Darnum and Nilma retain their quiet, rural character, contributing to the overall appeal of the Yarragon–Darnum–Nilma area as a harmonious mix of history, community, and lifestyle.

FIGURE: Map of Nilma– Darnum–Yarragon Location and Open Space



Open Space Statistics: Yarragon, Darnum and Nilma have 19 public open spaces including two sport recreation Reserves and eight Playgrounds and one skate park covering a total area of 28.039 hectares.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The total provision of open space in Yarragon currently 83.7 sqm per person. However, as the population continues to grow, this amount is projected to slightly decrease.

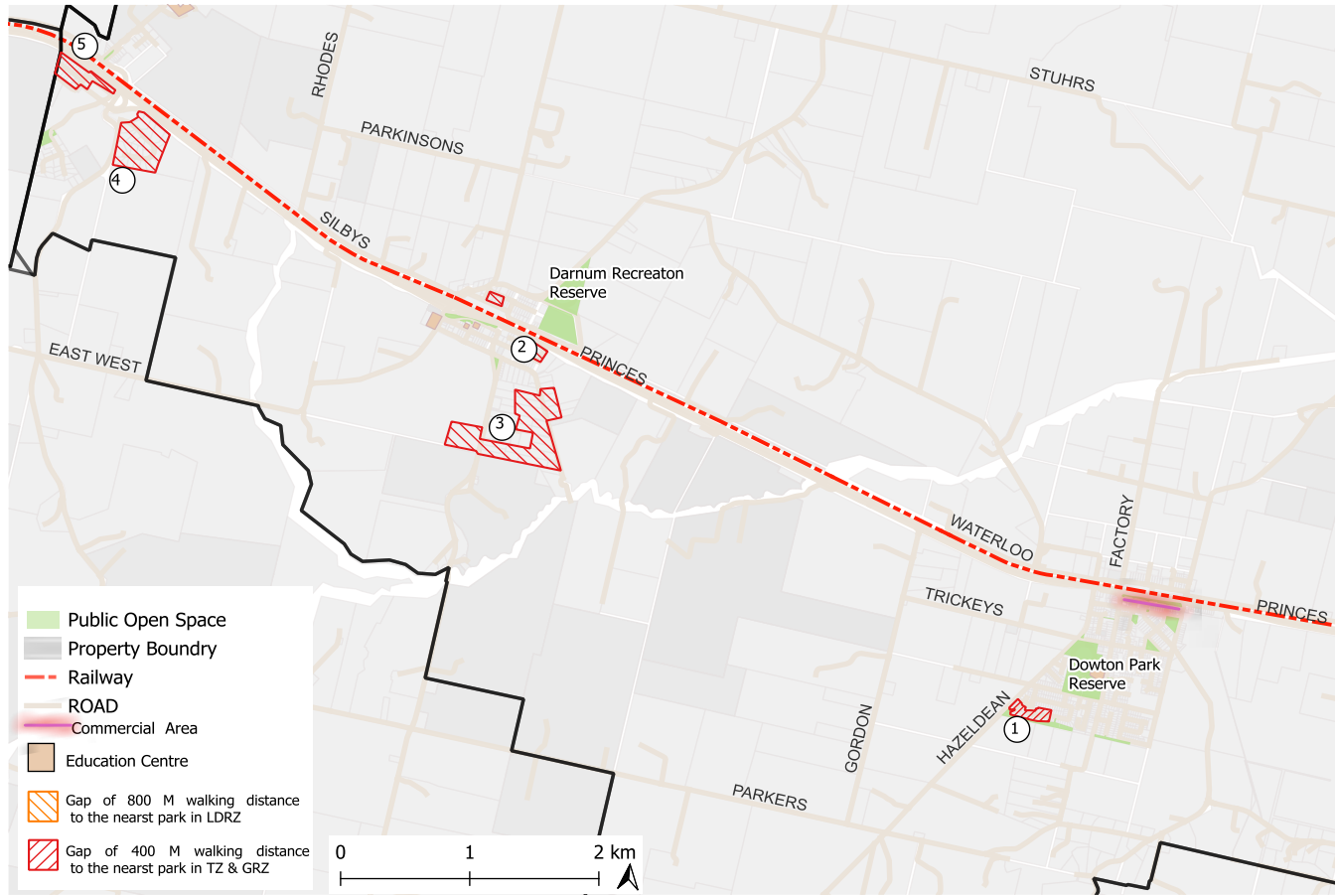
Public Open Space sqm		Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025		2025	2035	2025	2035
280,391.4		3,350	3,566	83.7	78.6

Access to Open Space: In this unit a total of 73.97% of dwellings within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) and Township Zone (TZ) have access to a 400 m walking distance to the nearest park. This percentage is broken down as follows: 87.10% in Yarragon GRZ, 33.66% in Nilma TZ, and 52.91% in Darnum TZ.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town
Yarragon, Nilma & Darnum	Yarragon	87.10%	N/A	N/A	83.10%
	Nilma	N/A	36.66%	N/A	36.66%
	Darnum	N/A	52.91%	N/A	52.91%

FIGURE: Map of Nilma- Darnum-Yarragon Open Space Walking Access Gap:



Recommendations

1. Address the following open space walking access gaps to ensure the equitable access for residents across this unit. This could be achieved through the following tailored strategies for each identified gap.

Gap 1: Yarragon

Explore the feasibility of connecting the path within Durling Close Reserve to reach the end of the reserve, and to Ti-Tree Reserve via the existing gas easement. This includes liaising with relevant land owners. This offers an opportunity to activate and improve encumbered land while enhancing connectivity between the residential developments in the east and the existing development in the west and linking it to Yarragon trail further to the north. Features such as seating, and canopy trees can be included to make the space more usable and enjoyable.

Gap 2: Darnum

Investigate the opportunity to create new recreational opportunity in the area with identified open space walking access gap.

Gap 3: Darnum

Gaul Avenue Reserve

Consider enhancing Gaul Avenue Reserve at the intersection with Darnum-Allambee this includes providing a more inclusive playground, and improved amenities.

Gap 4: Nilma

Develop Cameron Road Reserve into a functional park, as it is currently an open green space with no amenities. This should include installing appropriate park amenities and prioritising the construction of a footpath to improve accessibility for nearby residents in the identified gap area.

Gap 5: Nilma

Assess the feasibility of creating a new local park along McColl Street and Princes Freeway. This includes collaborating with public and private landowners, understanding safety measures required for proximity to the freeway, and identifying potential amenities such as seating, pathways, and landscaping. If this is not possible, reconsider re-purchasing the Council's old tennis court site that was sold in the past.

2. Ti Tree Reserve

- Continue the path to the end of Silver Top Street.
- Consider the development of a footpath extending from Ti Tree Reserve to the north along Rolo Street, with a connection to the Yarragon Trail. To enhance the comfort and usability of this pathway for pedestrians, incorporate shaded areas and seating options along the route. This will provide a more pleasant walking experience and encourage greater pedestrian use.

3. Waterloo Road

Plan to Improve pedestrian access along the north side of Waterloo Road and adjacent railway areas, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment for local residents and industrial employees in northeast Yarragon.

This includes:

- Enhance connections to the Yarragon railway station and level crossing, enabling the community to easily access parks and open spaces located on the opposite side of the railway.
- Create a walking and bicycle path along Waterloo Road, with and working with public or private landowner for additional public open space at the intersection with Factory Road.

4. Downton Recreation Reserve

Consider providing an accessible path from the gate at Downton recreation park at Hazeldean street to the main path, this helps the adjacent community in east of the site be able to have 400m walking access directly to the park's amenities.

5. Darnum Recreation Reserve -Southern Parcel

Investigate feasibility of creating a new recreational space at this location (or some part of it) this should include working with the community, assessing contamination and evaluating the cost of undertaking remediation works to address potential contamination concerns and other potential restriction.

6. Yarragon Trail

According to survey participants conducted in 2023 for development of Yarragon township plan, the Yarragon Trail is the most popular open space in the town, but there were also suggested improvements to the trail. These were to create better connections and improved amenity and facilities such as trees, benches and public toilets.

- Ensure the connectivity of footpath in Yarragon trail and prioritise the establishment of missing link along Rolo Street.
- Realigning the trail to connect with the future Rollo Street Reserve and the open space proposed within the residential development along Yarragon-Leongatha Road, ensuring improved access to these and other open spaces.
- Formalizing the start of the trail at Waterloo Park with wayfinding signage to encourage visitors to explore more of Yarragon and potentially extend their stay. Consider installation of benches, canopy trees, and other amenities along sections of the trail to enhance user experience and comfort.

Appendix 18: Nilma-Darnum-Yarragon Open Space List

4.6 Trafalgar–Trafalgar East

Background and geographic location

Trafalgar and Trafalgar East, located in West Gippsland approximately 120 km east of Melbourne, are steeped in rich history and natural charm. Trafalgar lies between the Strzelecki Ranges to the south and the former Moe Swamp’s flat farmlands to the north, with Trafalgar East bordered by Old Sale Road, O’Briens Road, and nearby localities such as Westbury and Yarragon.

Developed in the 1870s with the arrival of the Gippsland railway, the area was initially known as Narracan before being renamed Trafalgar in 1879 to honour the Battle of Trafalgar. The region’s early economy was built on agriculture, timber, and dairy production, which have since been complemented by residential growth, tourism, and community activities.

Trafalgar’s strategic position along the Princes Highway and Gippsland railway line establishes it as a gateway to the area’s cultural and natural attractions, including the Strzelecki Ranges, Uralla Nature Reserve, and Trafalgar Holden Museum. With modern amenities, recreational spaces, and a vibrant community, Trafalgar–Trafalgar East remains a key hub within the Baw Baw Shire, balancing historical heritage with contemporary development.

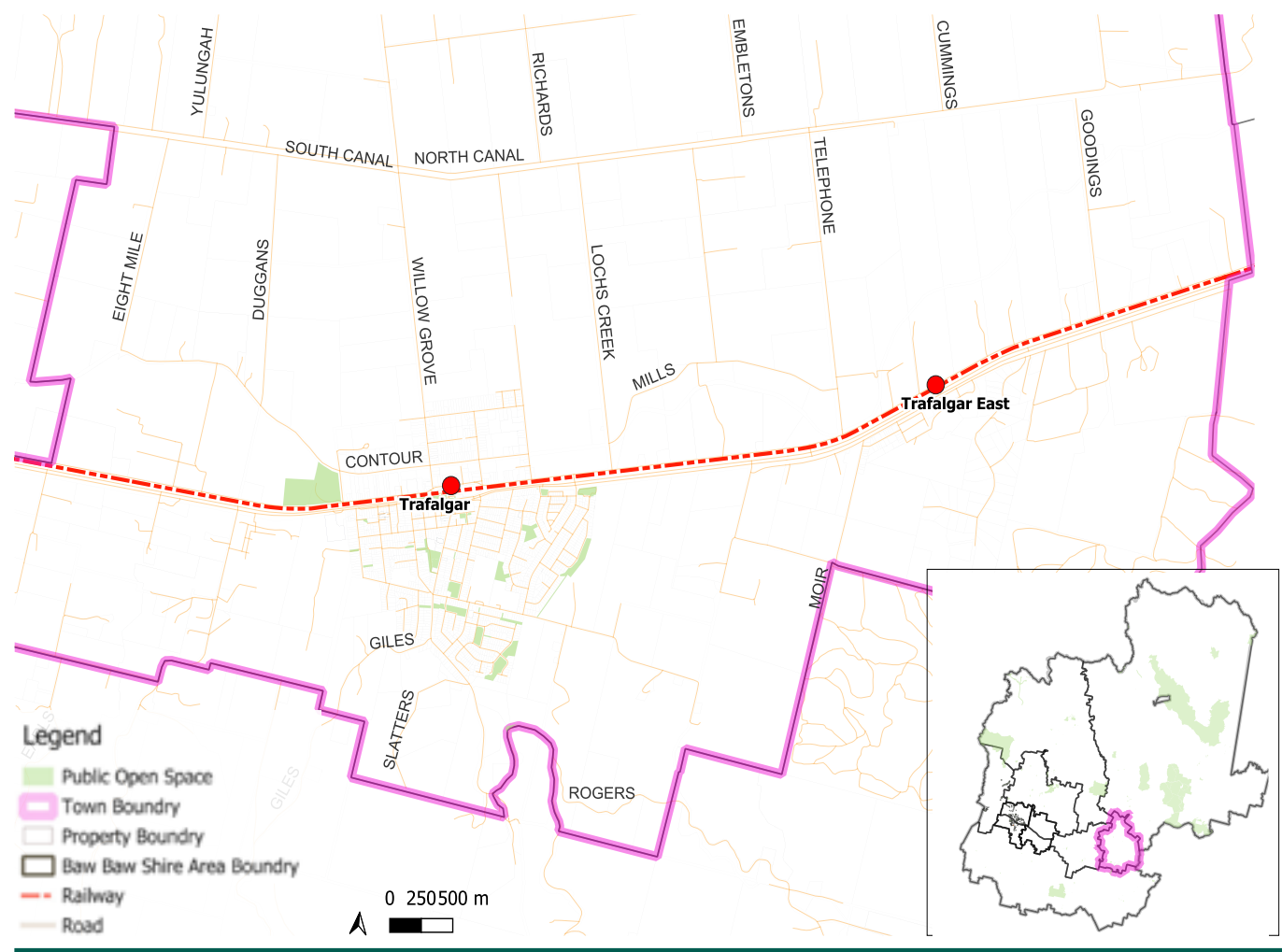
Demographic and Community Growth

Trafalgar–Trafalgar East is experiencing steady growth, highlighting its appeal as a desirable location for those seeking the balance of regional living with urban accessibility.

In 2024, the population of Trafalgar–Trafalgar East is approximately 4,708, with a density of 46.72 persons per square kilometre. Trafalgar itself is anticipated to grow at a modest annual rate of 0.03%, reaching an estimated 4,720 residents by 2034.

This growth is supported by expanding infrastructure, vibrant community facilities, and a thriving local economy.

FIGURE: Map of Trafalgar – Trafalgar East Location and Open Space



Open Space Statistic: Trafalgar has a total of 27 public open spaces covering 26 hectares. These include three sports recreations, eight playgrounds, one BMX park, one skate park and one fenced dog park.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The total provision of public open space in Trafalgar currently assessed at 53.9 sqm per person. Without the timely delivery of new public open space, this is expected to reduce further as the population continues to grow. Strategic planning is essential to ensure that future development is accompanied by timely delivery of open spaces to improve equity and meet community needs. Notably, residents in Trafalgar East currently have no access to local parks or public open spaces, highlighting a clear shortfall that requires targeted attention.

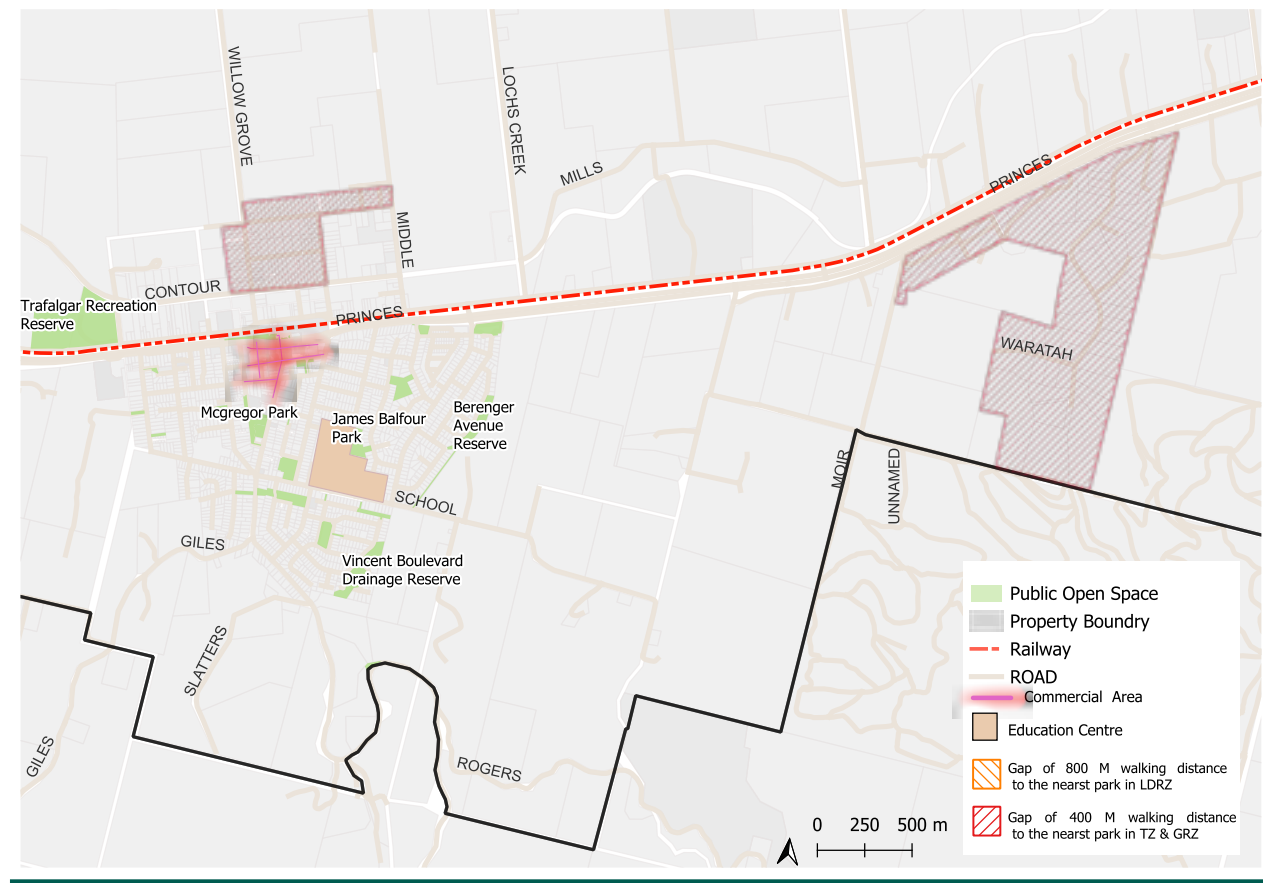
Public Open Space sqm	Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025	2025	2035	2025	2035
257,529.4	4,991	53.92	51.60	78.6

Access to Open Space: In Trafalgar, 85.74% of dwellings within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) are within a 400-meter walking distance to the nearest park. However, residents in Trafalgar East, located in the Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) and Township Zone (TZ), currently do not have access to any public open space. These residents are required to travel further in order to meet basic recreational needs.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town
Trafalgar and Trafalgar East	Trafalgar	85.74%	N/A	N/A	85.74%
	Trafalgar East	N/A	0%	0%	0%

FIGURE: Map of Trafalgar–Trafalgar East Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recommendations

1. **Address the following open space gaps to ensure the equitable access for residents across Trafalgar and Trafalgar east.** This could be achieved through the following tailored strategies for each identified gap.

Gap 1: Trafalgar

- Liaise with Public or Private landowners (north of Trafalgar railway) to identify opportunities to enter into agreements to increase access to existing open space not currently available to the public.
- Upgrade the Trafalgar recreation playground to better serve the broader catchment north of the railway line and improve inclusivity.
- Pursuing the opportunity to establish a new park through land acquisition in area of identified gap.

Gap 2: Trafalgar East

- Explore opportunities to collaborate with the public and private landowners to create additional recreational opportunities.
- Consider land acquisition option as the opportunity arise to address the lack of public open space for the residents.

2. **Dodemaids Road Reserve**

Plan to establish a path and plant trees for shade and amenity to encourage the usage of this access path and encourage activa transport.

3. **Briona Court Playground**

Consider providing a path within the park and from Didemnids Street access to the park and plant shade tree along the path and to the playground.

4. **McGregor Park**

Develop a master plan that includes amenities to accommodate future growth and the weekend market.

5. **Open Space rear of Shire Offices**

Plant trees for shade and amenity.

Appendix 19: Trafalgar– Trafalgar East Open Space List



IMAGE: Trafagar

4.7 Trafalgar South–Yarragon South & District

Background and Geographic Location

Trafalgar South – Yarragon South and District Located in the southern part of the Gippsland region, the district’s landscape is shaped by its rich natural resources and rural charm. This unit is strategically bordered by multiple municipalities: Nilma, Darnum, Yarragon, Trafalgar, and Trafalgar East to the north; Latrobe City to the east; South Gippsland Shire to the south; and Cardinia Shire to the west.

This unit encompasses several small towns and villages, including Thorpdale, Allambee, Hallora, and Ripplebrook, each contributing unique historical significance and character. These settlements reflect the region’s agricultural heritage and the evolving dynamics of population and land use.

Key Settlements Within the District

- **Thorpdale:** Renowned for its rich volcanic soil, Thorpdale has a strong connection to potato farming and agricultural production. Its history includes events like the devastating Red Tuesday bushfire (1898) and the closure of its railway line in 1958. Despite challenges such as declining agricultural demand, Thorpdale retains its rural charm, celebrated through festivals and natural landmarks like the Narracan Falls.
- **Allambee:** A rugged and sparsely populated district, Allambee faced difficulties during early settlement due to dense forests and isolation. Though efforts in the early 20th century brought brief revival, economic challenges led to land abandonment and reforestation, with the area now focusing on plantation forestry.
- **Hallora and Ripplebrook:** Located south of Drouin, Hallora features a community hall and recreation reserve, serving as a local hub. Ripplebrook, situated on Westernport Road, has a longstanding school and a history shaped by its late-19th-century churches. Nearby villages like Modella, Athlone, and Lardner add to the region’s historical and cultural heritage.

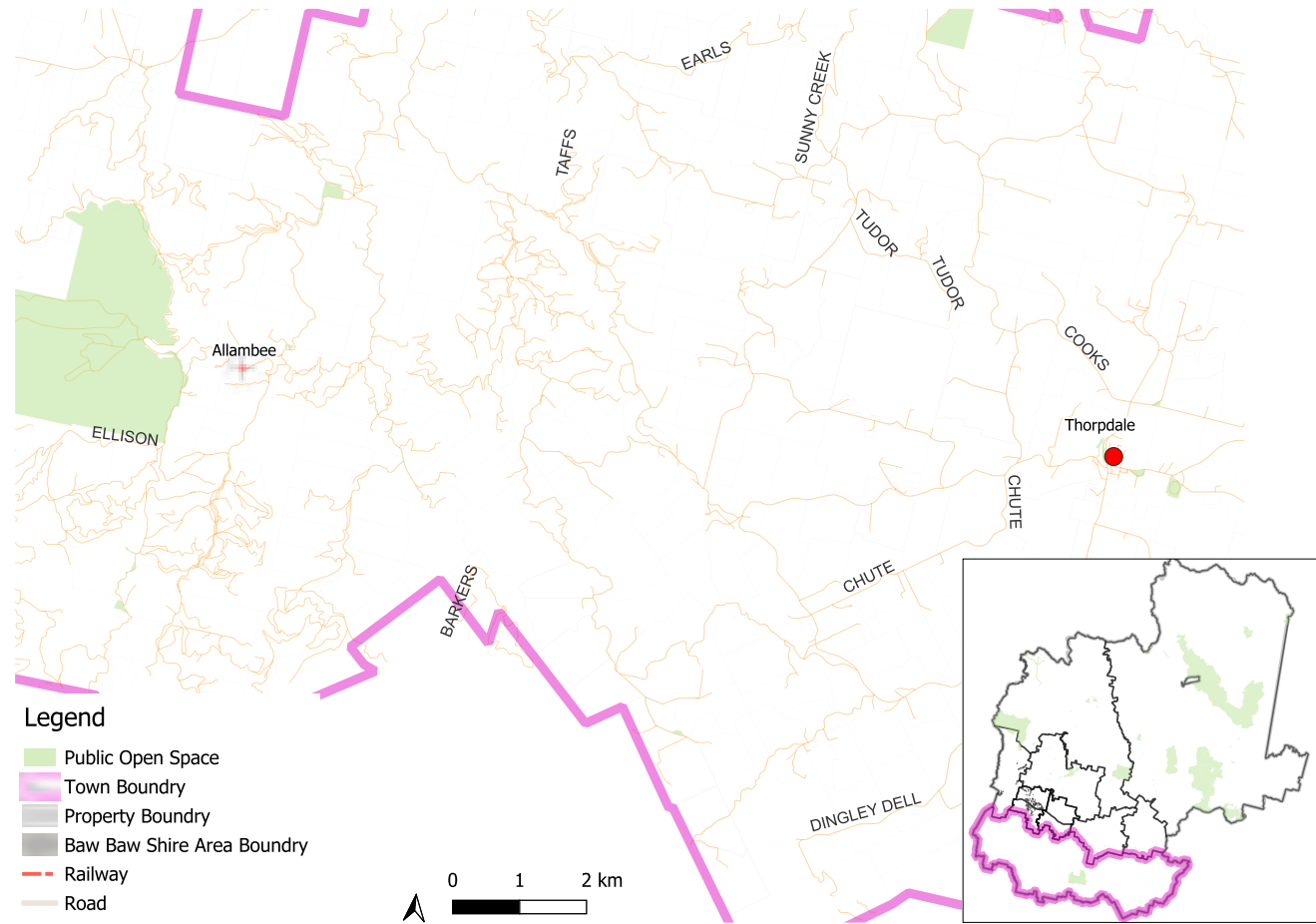
Demographic and Community Growth

The population of Yarragon South and District is forecast to decrease from 4,415 in 2024 to 4,284 by 2046, accompanied by a reduction in average household size and a current population density of 6.79 persons per square kilometre. The area’s growth rate is estimated at –3.0%. Despite projected population decline, Trafalgar South and District retains its historical and cultural significance, underpinned by its strong agricultural heritage and rural character

Key Community Highlights

- **Thorpdale:** The community remains vibrant through events like the Potato Festival, which attract visitors and foster local pride.
- **Allambee:** Limited dairying and grazing persist, while reforestation efforts have successfully repurposed former farmlands into sustainable timber production.
- **Hallora and Ripplebrook:** Active community spaces, including halls and recreation reserves, support activities that connect residents and maintain a strong sense of community.

FIGURE: Map of Yarragon South –Trafalgar South & District Location and Open Space



Open Space Statistics

This unit encompasses 25 public open spaces covering a total area of approximately 1,148.775 hectares. These include seven sports and recreation reserves and four playgrounds. The majority of public open spaces within the area are natural or semi-natural, reflecting the region’s rural character and strong connection to its natural landscape.

Many sports and recreation reserves serve as the primary, and in some cases, the only recreational facilities for surrounding communities. As such, they function as important destination points for local residents and visitors, offering a range of recreational, social, and community-building opportunities.

Given the projected population decline in these areas, it becomes increasingly critical to maintain and enhance open spaces to provide high-quality, accessible, and inclusive recreational options. These spaces are integral to fostering healthy, connected, and resilient communities, particularly in rural areas where open spaces often double as hubs for social interaction and community identity.

High-quality open spaces also play a pivotal role in encouraging communities to age in place. By offering accessible, well-maintained, and thoughtfully designed facilities, these spaces can meet the diverse needs of all age groups, from young families to older adults, and help mitigate depopulation trends. Moreover, well-planned open spaces contribute to liveability and can act as a key factor in retaining residents and attracting new ones, reinforcing the area’s long-term sustainability and vibrancy.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The provision of open space in this unit is significantly high, primarily due to the presence of large state-owned and/or managed reserves. This already high provision is expected to increase slightly over time due to a projected decline in population over the next decade.

Public Open Space sqm	Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025	2025	2035	2025	2035
11,487,747	4,398	4,331	2,612	2,652

Access to Open Space: more than 95% of the residents in township zone fall within the 400m walking distance of a park.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town
Yarragon South -Trafalgar South & District	Thorpdale	N/A	95%	N/A	95%

Recommendation

Enhance Infrastructure to Support Longer Stays

Ensure that open spaces, particularly active spaces that serve as key destination points for rural communities, are equipped with essential infrastructure to encourage longer stays and greater utilisation. These amenities may include public toilet, seating and playground.

Appendix 20: Trafalgar South-Yarragon South & District Open Space List

4.8 Drouin West-Rokeby & District

Background and Geographical Location

Drouin West, Rokeby, and District comprise a collection of rural and small-town communities, each contributing to the region’s agricultural heritage and cultural identity. The district is centred around key settlements, including Rokeby, Jindivick, and Buln Buln, which reflect West Gippsland’s historic roots and vibrant rural character.

The area is geographically defined by its proximity to significant natural and rural landmarks. To the north, it is bordered by Gentle Annie, Tarago Reservoir, and Neerim South; to the east by Neerim East and Shady Creek; to the south by Darnum, Nilma-Shady Creek Road, Bloomfield Road, Warragul, Lillico Road, Christies Road, Cazalys Road, Drouin East, Drouin, and the Princes Highway; and to the west by Longwarry North and Labertouche.

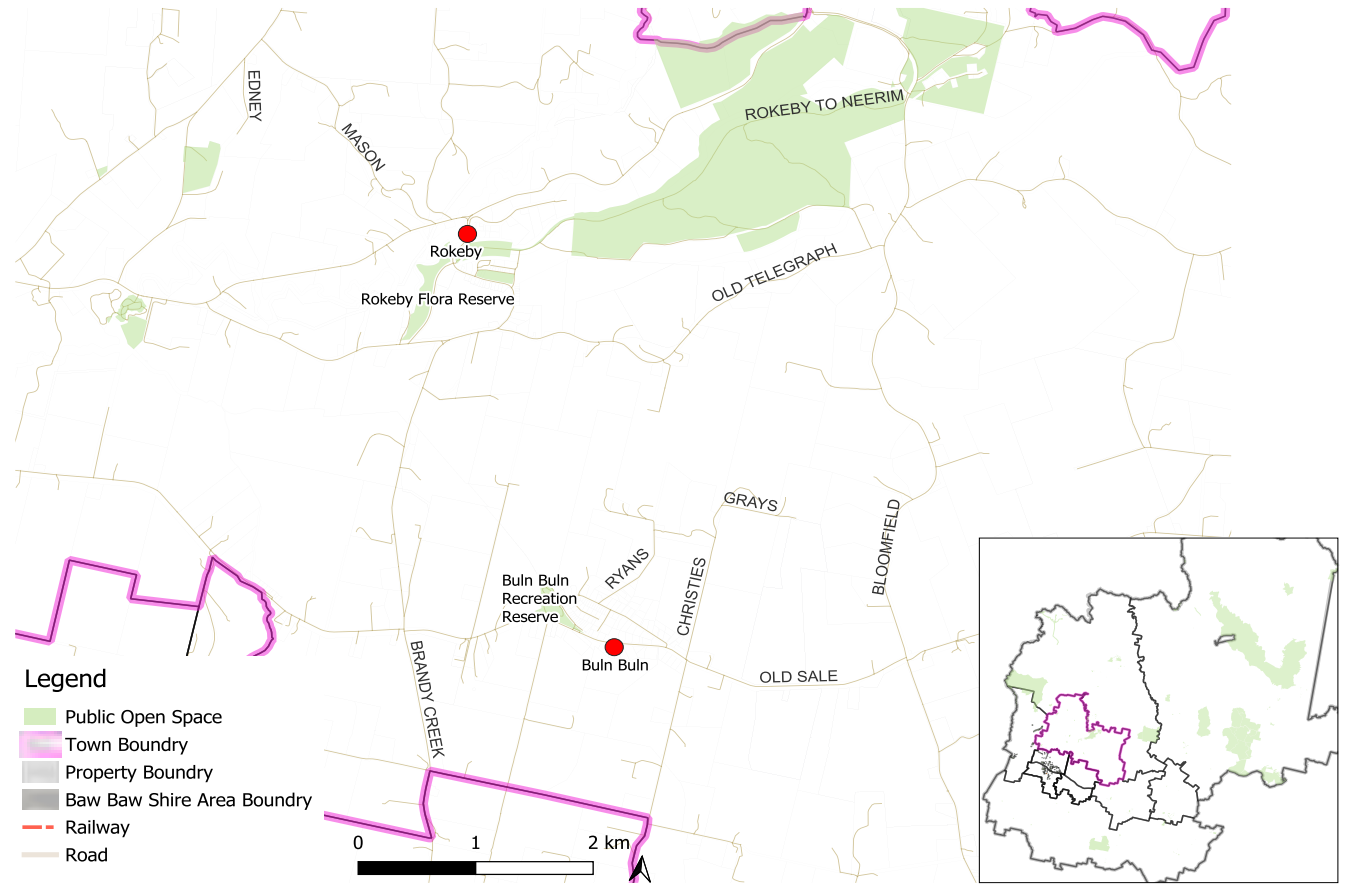
This district plays a pivotal role as a rural hub within West Gippsland, balancing its agricultural activity with efforts to preserve its unique cultural and natural heritage.

Community Growth

The 2024 population for the area is approximately 2,668, with a projected decline to 2,614 over the next decade. The current population density stands at 13.15 persons per square kilometre, reflecting the area’s rural and low-density character.

- Rokeby:** A rural setting known for its natural landscapes, agricultural activities, and as a starting point for the Rokeby to Neerim Rail Trail.
- Buln Buln:** Located 8 km north of Warragul, Buln Buln’s name is derived from an Aboriginal term for the lyrebird or its habitat. The village’s history stretches back to the 1870s, with early development cantered around agriculture and community infrastructure, including a school (established in 1884), a railway station (1890), and a cooperative creamery (1893–1902). Buln Buln remains rooted in its agricultural legacy while preserving its historical charm.
- Jindivick:** Nestled within the scenic rolling hills of West Gippsland, Jindivick is celebrated for its stunning views, vibrant arts scene, and rich community spirit. Known for its dairy farming and boutique food production, the village also attracts visitors with its galleries, gardens, and walking trails, highlighting its blend of natural beauty and cultural vibrancy.

FIGURE: Map of Drouin West-Rokeby & District Location and open Space



Open Space Statistic: Total of 16 public open spaces three sport recreation reserve, five playgrounds and one outdoor fitness area. Covering area of 441.69 ha. the majority of larger open spaces are natural bushland and state-owned parks.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The provision of open space in this unit is significantly high, primarily due to the presence of large state-owned and or managed reserves. With a projected decline in population over time, the per capita provision of open space is expected to increase slightly.

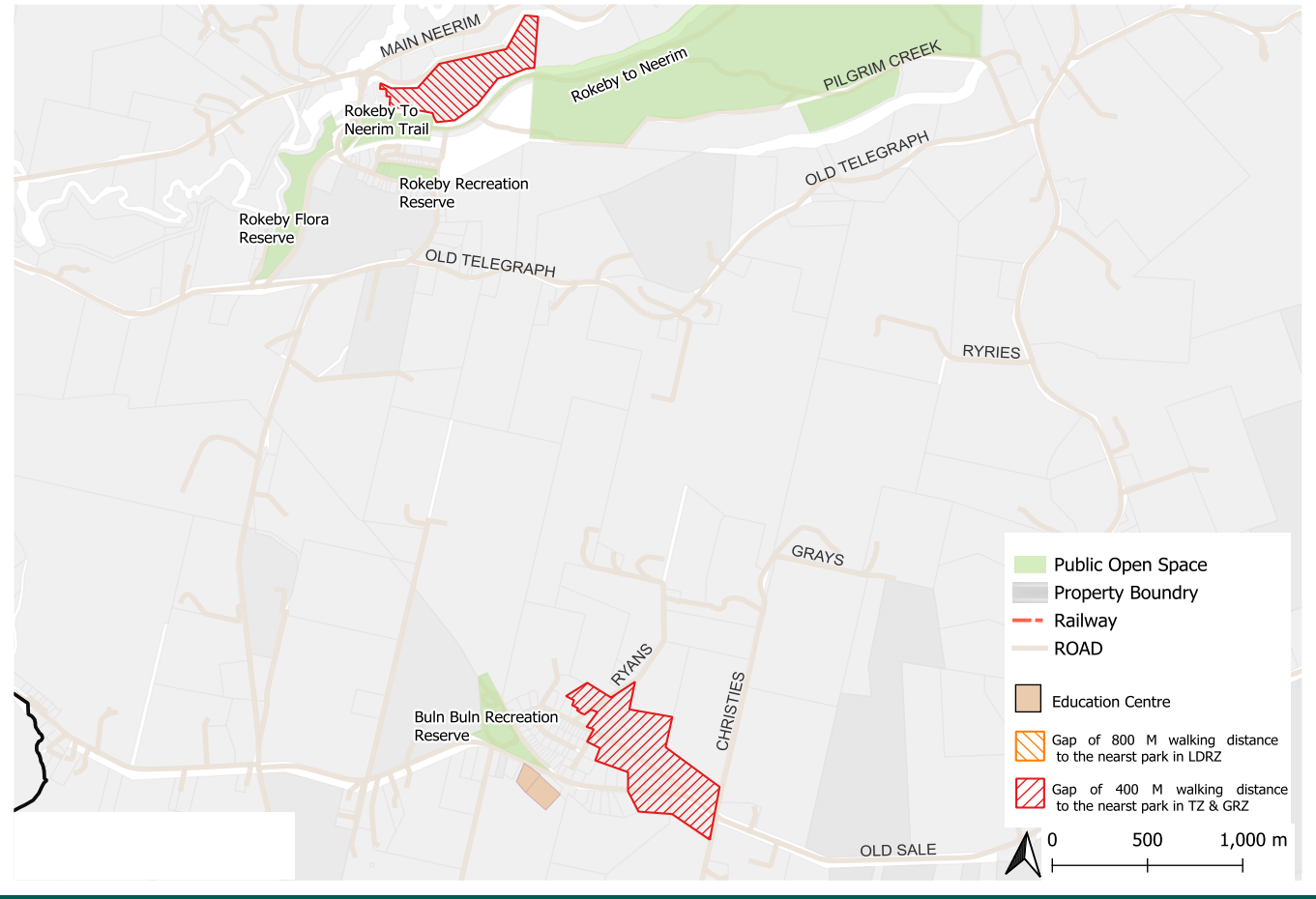
Public Open Space sqm	Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025	2025	2035	2025	2035
4416,946	2,693	2,678	1,640	1,649

Access to Open Space: In Drouin West-Rokeby & District have overall 57.92% of resident have 400 m walking distance to the nearest park. The breakdown of this by town is shown in the tale below:

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town
Drouin West-Rokeby & District	Rokeby	N/A	61.22%	N/A	61.22%
	Buln Buln	N/A	56.71%	N/A	56.71%

FIGURE: Map of Drouin West-Rokeby & Districk Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recommendations

Address the following open space walking access gaps to ensure the equitable access for residents across this unit. This could be achieved through the following tailored strategies for each identified gap.

Buln Buln

Ensure that an appropriate and well-maintained footpath is available to connect residents in the gap area to Buln Buln Recreation Reserve. The path should be designed to encourage walking by providing a safe, accessible, and comfortable route that supports extended walking distances for residents.

Rokeby

Explore opportunity for a potential Linear connection from Tymkin Road to Rokeby-Neerim Trail.

Appendix 21: Drouin West-Rokeby & Districk Open Space List



IMAGE: Rokeby to Noojee Trail

4.9 Neerim South–Noojee & District

Background and Geographical Location

This district encompasses the small towns of Neerim South and Noojee, along with smaller localities such as Piedmont, Loch Valley, and Toorongo. Known for its breathtaking landscapes, rich agricultural heritage, and growing tourism sector, the region is a gateway to the Alpine areas and serves as a vital connection between Gippsland and the Victorian High Country.

The district is geographically defined by Yarra Ranges Council to the north localities including Toorongo, Vesper, Fumina, Hill End, and Willow Grove to the east, Trafalgar, Yarragon, Darnum, Nilma North, Buln Buln East, Crossover, Jindivick, and Labertouche to the south, and Cardinia Shire to the west.

Nestled in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range, the district’s unique geography contributes to its agricultural productivity and makes it a key area for tourism, particularly as a base for exploring Victoria’s Alpine region.

Neerim South

Neerim South is the largest township in the district, located 22 km north of Warragul and 124 km east of Melbourne. Its name, derived from an Aboriginal word meaning “long spear,” reflects the area’s cultural heritage. Neerim South plays a vital role as a service hub for the surrounding agricultural and rural communities.

The township’s early development was driven by gold prospecting and timber industries in the late 19th century, with the opening of a railway line in 1892 bolstering its growth. Agriculture, including dairying and potato farming, has been the backbone of the local economy, complemented by emerging industries such as specialty cheese production, berry farming, and vineyards.

Modern-day Neerim South features essential amenities, including a secondary college, a community library, a hospital, and recreational facilities. Its main street is a picturesque focal point with a median adorned with flower beds. Housing developments in the area attract retirees and young families seeking a rural lifestyle.



IMAGE: Apex Lookout, Neerim South

Noojee

Noojee, located at the edge of dense forests and the base of the Alpine region, has a rich history rooted in the timber industry. Established in 1919 around the terminus of the Warragul train line, the town was instrumental in timber transportation until the mid-20th century. The historic Noojee Trestle Bridge remains a popular attraction, symbolizing the area’s heritage.

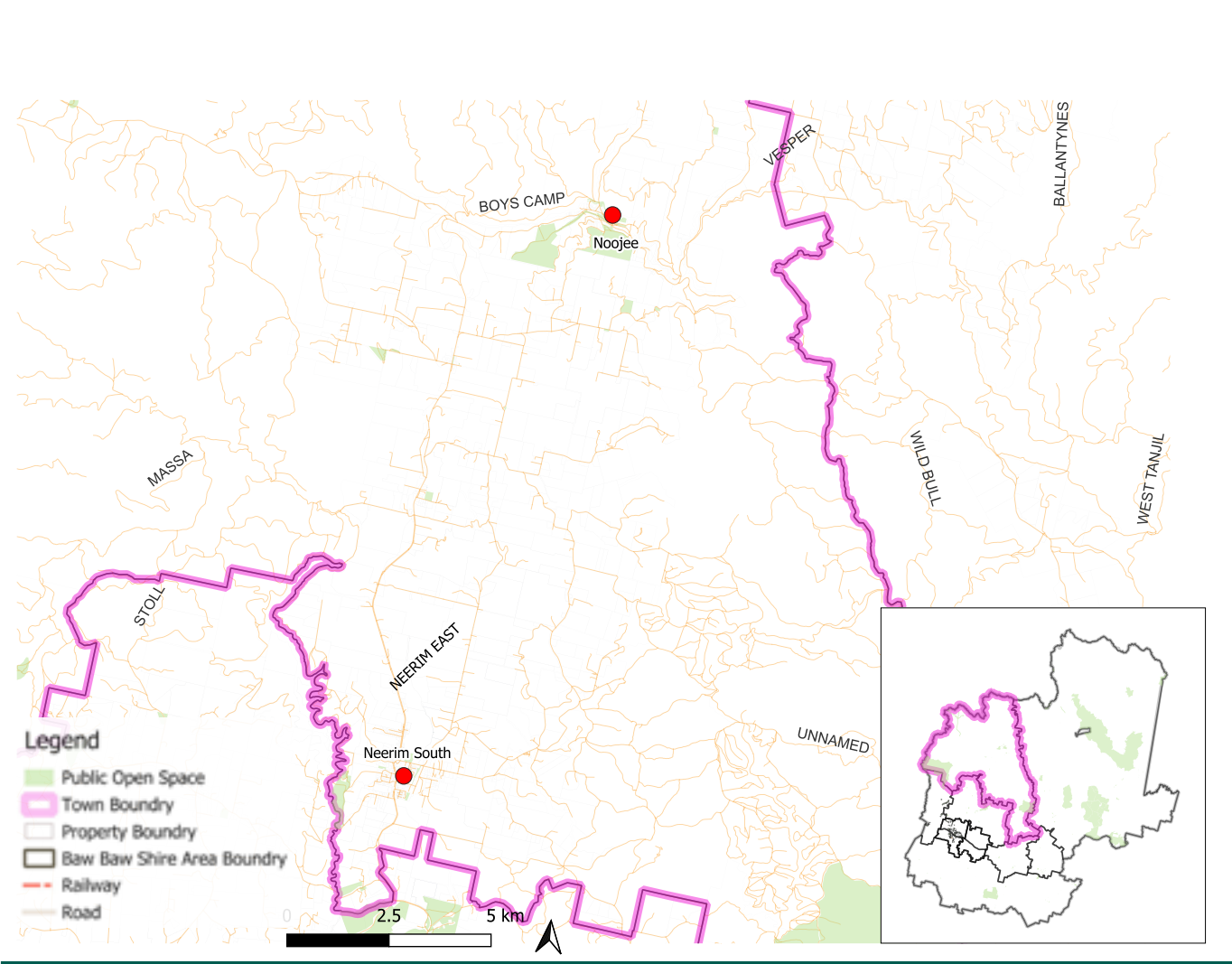
The town has faced significant challenges, including devastating bushfires in 1926, 1939, 1983, and 2009, which have shaped its community resilience. Today, Noojee thrives as a small but vibrant hub for tourism, offering accommodation, cafes, and outdoor activities. Visitors are drawn to the Alpine Trout Farm, local sawmills, and unique agricultural ventures, such as commercial flower and tree farming.

Despite its growth in tourism, Noojee residents rely on Neerim South and Warragul for essential services such as healthcare, education, and groceries. The town is a popular base for exploring nearby natural attractions, including forest reserves and ski areas.

Demographic and Community Growth

The 2024 population of Neerim South, Noojee, and District stands at 2,614, with a slight decline to 2,570 projected by 2034, reflecting a population density of 3.86 persons per square kilometre. While agriculture remains a vital part of the economy, the region is increasingly diversifying into tourism and small-scale agribusiness, with significant growth in visitor spending in Noojee between 2019 and 2022. The area’s natural beauty, cultural history, and strong community spirit continue to attract visitors and new residents, helping the district maintain its rural charm while adapting to economic and demographic shifts. Emerging housing developments in Neerim South cater to retirees and young families, while the growth of eco-tourism and heritage tourism underscores the importance of the region’s scenic landscapes and historical landmarks, such as the Noojee Trestle Bridge.

FIGURE: Map of Neerim South – Noojee & District Location and Open Space



Open Space Statistic: There are current 29 public open space covered area of 5392.6 ha mostly bushlands and state and conservations parks. including four sport recreation reserves and four playgrounds, one skate park and one outdoor fitness area in this locality.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The total provision of open space in this unit is significantly high, primarily due to the presence of extensive state and national parks.

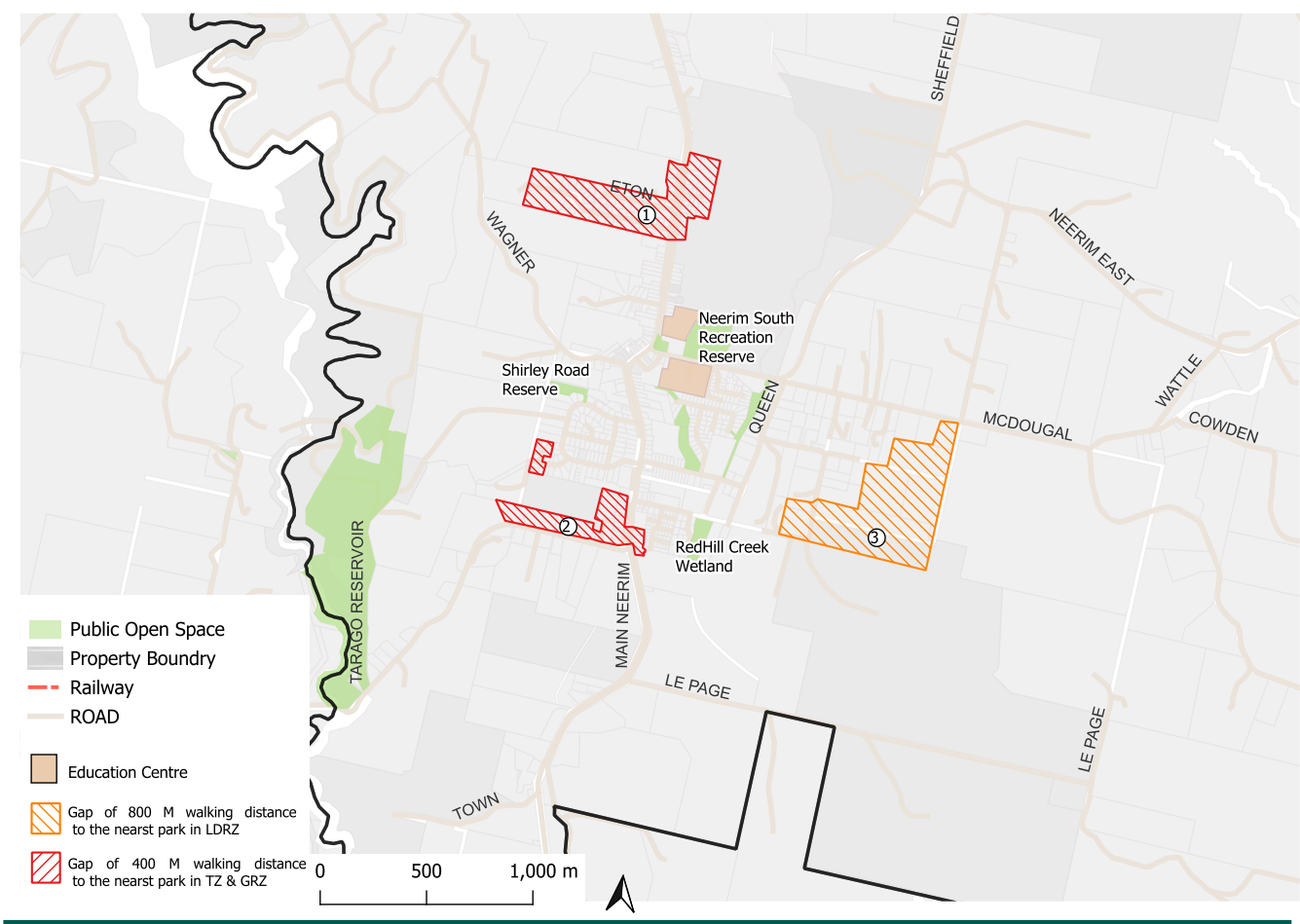
Public Open Space sqm	Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025	2025	2035	2025	2035
53,926,331	2,756	2,556	19,566.9	18,789.7

Access to Open Space: In Neerim South **73.5%** of the community in low-density residential zones, who are within 800 meters walking distance. And **64.65%** of the community in general residential zones, who are within 400 meters walking distance to the nearest park.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town GRZ, TZ (400m) & (LDRZ 800m)
Neerim South – Noojee & District	Neerim South	64.65%	N/A	73.43%	66.50%
	Noojee	NA	95.00%	N/A	95.00%

FIGURE: Map of Neerim South–Noojee & District Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recommendations

1. **Address the following open space walking access gaps to ensure the equitable access for residents across Neerim South.** This could be achieved through the following tailored strategies for each identified gap.

General Residential Zone

Gap 1

Conduct an audit of footpaths along Eton St, Burtonwood St and along Rokeby to Main Neerim South up to intersection with Neerim East Road to assess their availability, connectivity, and safety. Ensure that safety measures are in place and identify opportunities to enhance the pedestrian experience with amenities such as canopy trees for shade. The goal is to improve access for residents in the gap area to key destinations, including Neerim South Recreation Reserve and Craig Watts Skate Park to improving footpath connections and supporting walking as an active mode of transport.

Gap 2

- Conduct an audit of footpaths along Jindivick–Neerim South Road up to intersection with Rokeby to Neerim south Road to evaluate their availability and connectivity, with a focus on ensuring safety measures. Incorporate shaded areas through canopy tree coverage to enhance comfort for pedestrians. The aim is to improve accessibility for residents in the gap area to Neerim South Wetland Reserve, promoting safer, more enjoyable walking routes.
- Plan to enhance amenities at Neerim South Wetland Reserve, the closest reserve to residents in Gap 2 and the west side of Neerim. This includes assessing the need for an improved playground or nature play area. By improving amenities, this reserve could meet the recreational need of several communities currently located in identified walking access gap, encouraging extended walks and providing recreational benefits to residents.

Low Density Residential Zone

Gap 3

1. Advocate and support the future planning applications in this area (east of Neerim South township) to consider land contributions for public open space to address the lack of nearby recreational opportunities.

2. Shirley Road Reserve

Consider enhancing the playground with improved equipment and amenities such as shade and path This reserve is located near a public open space access gap, and improvements would encourage extended walking from the gap area, benefiting the local community.

Appendix 22 : Neerim South–Noojee & District Open Space List

4.10 Baw Baw–Willow Grove & District

Background and Location

This unit is located in the northern region of the Shire of Baw Baw, sharing boundaries with Yarra Ranges Council and Mansfield Shire to the north, Wellington Shire to the east, Latrobe City to the south, and localities such as Trafalgar East, Shady Creek, and Neerim North to the west. The area is renowned for its stunning natural attractions, strategic significance in tourism, agriculture, and forestry, and serves as a gateway to destinations like the Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort and the Walhalla and Thomson River region.

Erica

Erica is a small town situated on Rawson Road, approximately 30 km north of Moe and 135 km east of Melbourne. Established in the early 20th century and originally named Upper Moondarra, it adopted the name Erica in 1914. The town prospered due to its railway connection, timber industry, and agricultural activities. Today, Erica serves as a gateway for tourists visiting attractions such as Thomson Dam, Mount St Gwinear, and the Walhalla Goldfields Railway. The town retains its rural character with amenities like a recreation reserve, a general store, and a hotel.

Rawson

Rawson, developed in the late 1970s to accommodate workers during the construction of the Thomson Dam, has since evolved into a residential and recreational town. It is known for activities such as bushwalking, mountain biking, trout fishing, and skiing. The town features a shopping centre, recreation reserve, and caravan park, catering to both residents and visitors.

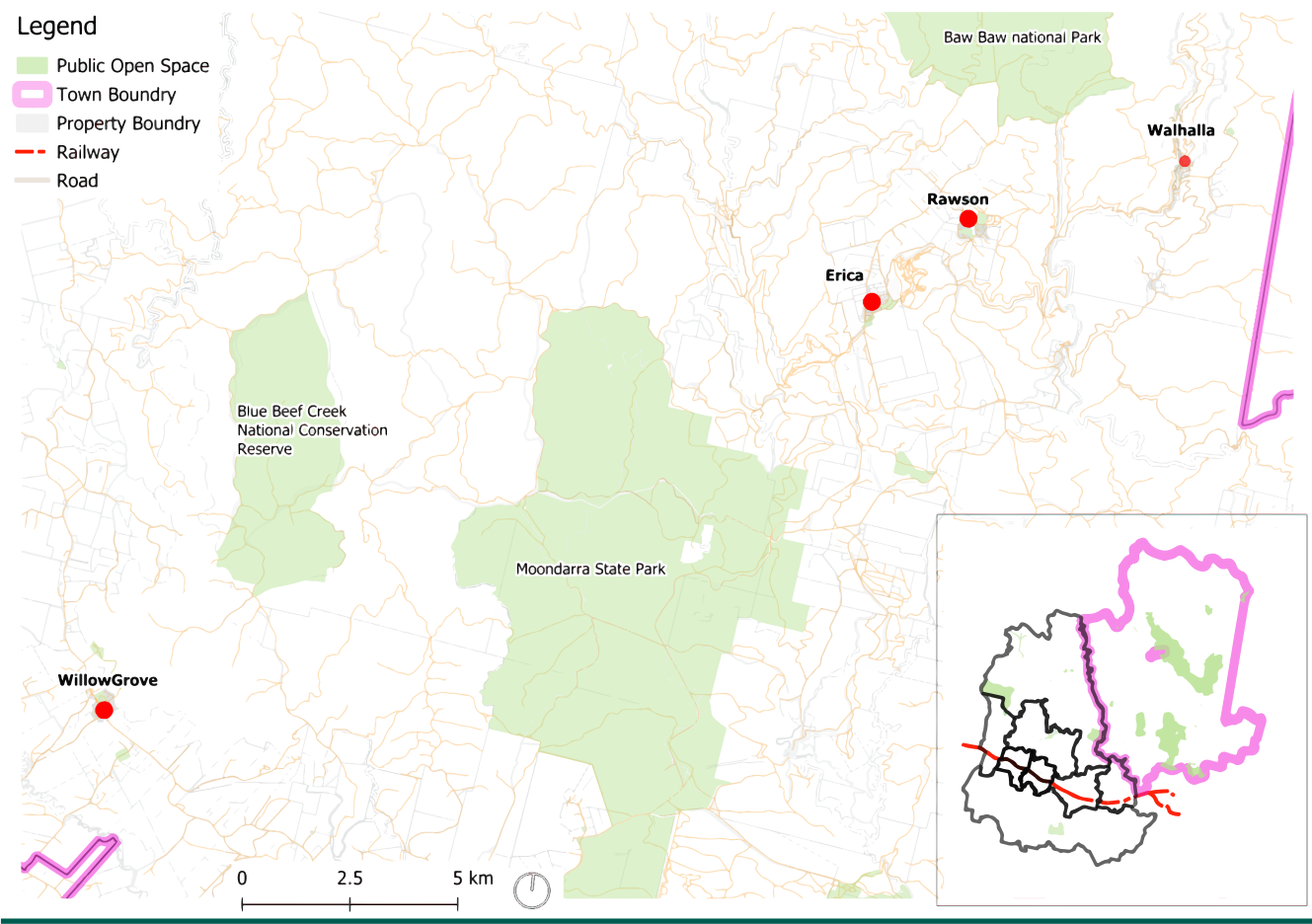
Willow Grove

Willow Grove is a rural township located 17 km north of Trafalgar, with a history rooted in farming, particularly dairying. The town is popular for its proximity to Blue Rock Lake, a significant water reservoir and recreational hub. Visitors and locals enjoy boating, fishing, and picnicking at the lake. The town also supports its community with a primary school, community hall, CFA shed, and recreation reserve.

Demographic and Community Growth

The population of the Mount Baw Baw – Willow Grove and District unit, which includes Erica, Rawson, and Willow Grove, is expected to grow modestly from 2,188 in 2024 to 2,285 by 2034. with a population density of 1.06 persons per square km. This area is uniquely positioned to leverage its proximity to key natural attractions such as Mount Baw Baw, Blue Rock Lake, and Mount St Gwinear, solidifying its role as a hub for tourism and outdoor recreation.

FIGURE: Map Baw Baw–Willowgrove & District Location and Open Space



Open Space Statistics: This unit has 43 public open space including six sport recreation and four playground, one outdoor fitness area and one skate park. covering area of 22880.95 ha mostly made of state and national parks.

The Mount Baw Baw – Willow Grove and District unit, comprising Erica, Rawson, and Willow Grove, is poised for community growth by leveraging its proximity to Mount Baw Baw, Blue Rock Lake, and Mount St Gwinear, making it a hub for tourism and outdoor recreation. With a modest projected population increase from 2,188 in 2024 to 2,285 by 2034, the area can benefit from carefully managed residential development that complements its natural and rural character. Investments in sustainable forestry, agriculture, and tourism infrastructure, alongside enhancements to community facilities and digital connectivity, will help retain residents and attract visitors. Maintaining bushfire resilience and preserving the district’s natural environment are critical to supporting sustainable growth.

Quantity of Public Open Space: The total provision of open space in this unit is significantly high due to the low population and large proportion of state, national and bushland reserve.

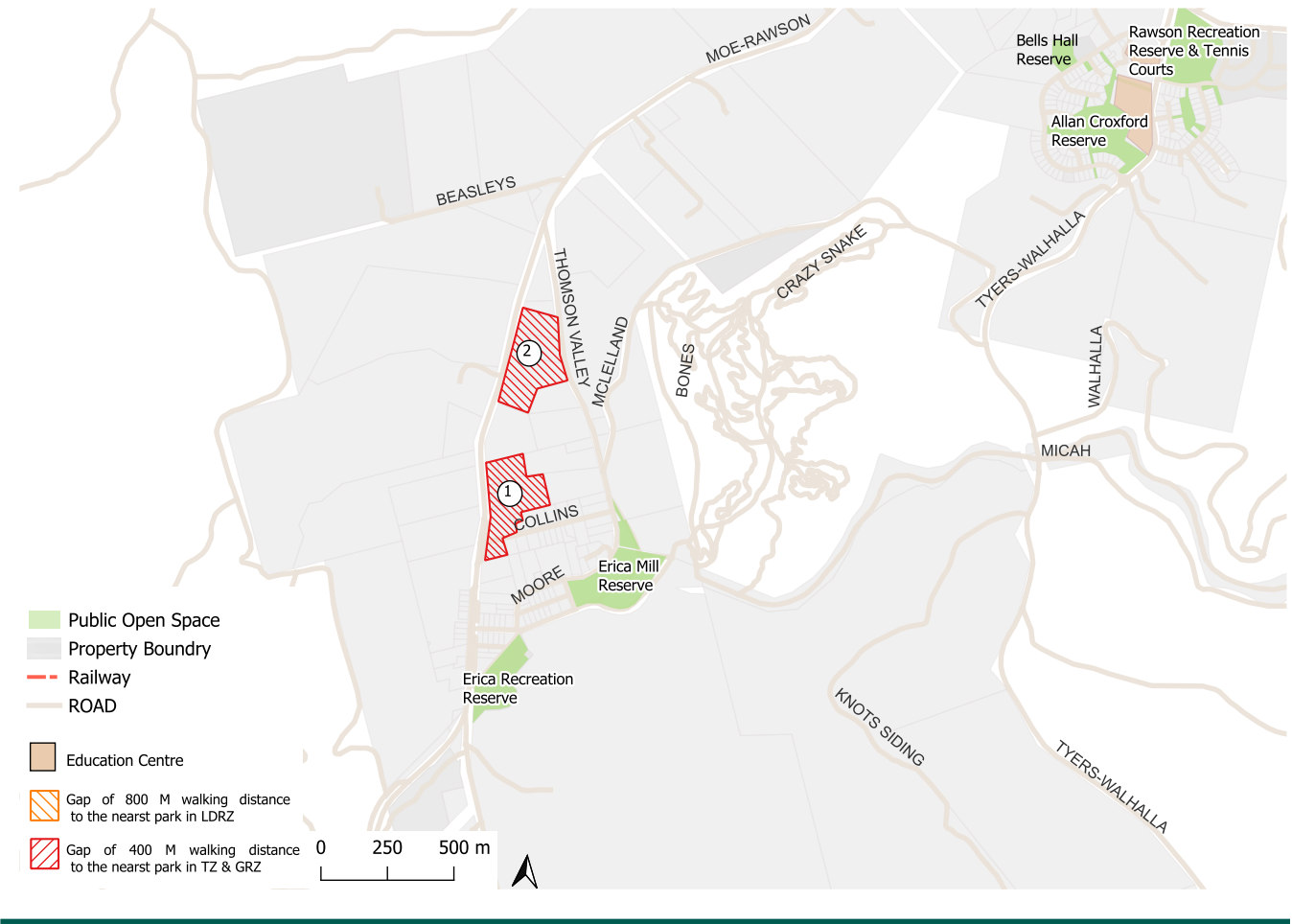
Public Open Space sqm		Population		Open Space / Capita	
2025		2025	2035	2025	2035
228,809,540.8		2,250	2,345	101,693	97,573

Access to Open Space: In Erica, 81.13% of the community has walkable access to the nearest park within the Township Zone, while Rawson and Willow Grove are meeting the 95% target.

Percentage of the dwelling with desired walking access to park

Geographical unit	Town	GRZ (400m)	TZ (400m)	LDRZ (800m)	Total town
Baw Baw, Willowgrove & District	Erica	N/A	81.13%	N/A	81.13%
	Rawson	N/A	95%	95%	95%
	Willowgrove	N/A	95%	95%	95%

FIGURE: Map of Erica Open Space Walking Access Gap



Recomendations

1. Address the following walking access gap to ensure equitable access for residents in this unit.

Gap 1: Erica Mill Reserve

- This is a large reserve with significant potential for activation, particularly as it is located near two gap areas. Enhancing this reserve would greatly benefit the surrounding neighbourhoods, providing accessible open space for residents in the gap areas. With appropriate upgrades, the reserve could be elevated to a district-level park, catering to a wider community and offering more diverse amenities.
- Review the placement of the playground and dog off-lead area at St Phillack Reserve, Rawson, to ensure optimal use of space and minimise potential conflicts between uses.

Appendix 23: Baw Baw-Willow Grove & Distric Open Space List



IMAGE: Rawson Skate Park, Rawson

5.

Implementaion Plan & Review

The implementation of the Open Space Strategy will enable the Council to achieve its vision within the next decade. Successful delivery of its key actions will be contingent on sufficient funding, resources, and collaboration with various public and private stakeholders. Many of the actions outlined in the strategy focus on improving parks, upgrading assets, and expanding the open space network to meet community needs. As the network grows and existing spaces are enhanced, it is essential that funding for ongoing maintenance and asset renewal is allocated accordingly. Increased infrastructure, improved park facilities, and greater usage of open spaces will place additional demands on Council's maintenance resources. To ensure long-term sustainability, maintenance budgets and service levels will need to be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate to align with the growing needs of the open space network and community expectations.



IMAGE: Drouin Recreation Reserve, Drouin

Funding Sources

Funding for implementing the Strategy will come from a mix of public and private sources, including:

- Council revenue and general rates
- Developer contributions and works
- Open space contributions
- State and federal grants
- Voluntary planning agreements
- Partnerships with community groups or businesses.

Key Considerations for Implementation

The Strategy acknowledges the significant investment required to acquire, develop, and maintain public open spaces sustainably. Projects included in the implementation plan reflect community feedback and internal recommendations, ensuring alignment with identified needs.

Adjustments to recommendations and actions may be necessary in response to:

- Allocation of Council resources and funding.
- Changes in State Government policy
- Shifts in land use and development trends.
- Unforeseen circumstances.

Progress Monitoring and Review

To ensure the Strategy remains relevant, regular reviews will be conducted as follows:

- Triennial Reviews:** Progress on the implementation and action plan will be reviewed every three years, with updates provided by responsible managers.
- End-of-Term Evaluation:** A comprehensive evaluation of the Strategy will occur at the end of the ten-year period, incorporating learnings and evolving priorities into a revised Strategy.

The Strategy is designed to be adaptable, considering changes in population growth, legislation, community values, funding availability, and partnership opportunities.

Prioritisation and Action Timeframes

All actions have been prioritised using a weighted set of criteria and scoring mechanism to ensure a fair and transparent assessment, particularly when funding is limited. This approach helps guide decision-making by identifying which actions are most critical and should be advanced when resources are available, while also helping avoid setting up actions to fail due to unrealistic delivery timeframes.

Each action is scored against several criteria on a scale from 0 to 10. Higher scores indicate greater urgency, alignment with strategic outcomes, and potential community impact. The total score informs the level of priority and the likely sequencing of actions. While specific timeframes are not prescribed, the priority levels can generally be understood as follows:

- High Priority:** Actions with the highest scores that address critical needs such as safety, growth, or major deficiencies. These are expected to be progressed as soon as feasible.
- Moderate Priority:** Actions of strategic importance that support longer-term outcomes and community benefits. These are considered important but less time-sensitive.
- Low Priority:** Actions that offer value but are non-essential or dependent on other developments. These may be delivered later or when opportunities arise.
- Ongoing:** Actions that require continuous effort or monitoring over time, often tied to operations, partnerships, or sustained service delivery.
- Conditional/Context-Dependent:** Actions that may require further assessment, specific triggers, or funding availability before they can be implemented.

This structure provides flexibility to respond to changing circumstances, while still ensuring that effort and investment are focused where they will have the greatest impact.

Scoring System

Each criterion is scored on a scale of 0 to 10:

- 10 Critical priority (must be considered in the short term)
- 8-9 High Priority(high Impact)
- 5-7 Moderate priority (important and adds value, but not critical)
- 1-4 Low priority (beneficial but non-essential)

Scoring Ranges & Timeframes

Total Score Range	Priority Level	Description
70+	High Priority	Critical projects with immediate impact, addressing urgent needs (e.g., safety, growth, major deficiencies).
50-69	Moderate Priority	Important but less urgent projects that support long-term goals and community benefits.
30-49	Low Priority	Desirable but non-urgent projects, often dependent on funding or other developments.
30-70+	Context-Dependent	Actions requiring continuous effort
30-70+	Context Dependent/Conditional	Actions requiring further assessment, funding availability or particular conditions.

Refer to **Appendix 14:** for the list of indicators that was utilised to develop the evaluation matrix.

The Implementation Plan

This Implementation Plan addresses issues related to access, quality, and the quantity of available open space. Given the constraints on delivering new open spaces, primarily due to limited land availability (including privately owned land) and limited financial resources, our focus is on the more efficient utilisation of existing spaces. This is particularly important as walking access gaps have been identified across various zones within the Shire.

Enhancing the service levels and quality of existing public open spaces remains a key priority. Many actions in this plan aim to maximise the full potential of parks through improved utilisation, ensuring they meet appropriate service levels and, where possible, elevating their classification within the open space hierarchy.

The implementation of these projects (actions) will vary in their resource requirements. Some will require dedicated funding, including significant investment in certain cases. Others may not require direct funding but instead rely on partnerships with other public landowners, the use of Council's internal resources, or integrating with ongoing initiatives.

The implementation plan will be developed using the established evaluation matrix following the endorsement of this Strategy.

Glossary of term and phrases:

Aboriginal People: The First Nations people of Australia, with deep cultural and spiritual connections to the land and water. In this document, specifically refers to the Kulin and Kurnai Nations.

Accessibility: The ease with which people can reach and use public spaces, including considerations for people with disabilities, families, and older adults.

Active Open Space: Land used primarily for organised sport or recreation, such as sporting ovals, courts, and associated infrastructure.

Ad-hoc Decision-Making: Decisions made without a consistent or structured policy framework, often leading to inconsistent outcomes across open space planning and management.

Age Structure: The distribution of people in different age groups within a population, used to understand service needs such as youth recreation or aged-friendly infrastructure.

Alpine Areas: High-elevation landscapes, often snow-covered in winter, found in the northern part of Baw Baw Shire and home to unique ecosystems.

Amenity: Features or facilities in public spaces that enhance usability, such as seating, playgrounds, shade structures, and drinking fountains.

Audit of Footpaths: A systematic review of pathways to assess their condition, connectivity, and safety for pedestrians.

Blue Space: Outdoor environments that feature water bodies such as rivers, lakes, wetlands, or man-made water features. These areas are valued for recreation, biodiversity, and aesthetic purposes.

Biodiversity: The variety of plants, animals, and ecosystems in an area, contributing to environmental health.

Bushland: Natural, often forested areas with minimal development, playing a crucial role in biodiversity and conservation within the Shire.

Canopy Coverage: The proportion of land covered by tree canopies, providing shade, cooling, and environmental benefits.

Canopy Trees: Large trees that provide shade and cooling, improving the comfort of outdoor spaces.

Catchment Area: The geographical area served by a particular park or open space, often defined by walking distance.

Co-Design: A collaborative design process involving Council, stakeholders, and the community in shaping open spaces.

Community Event: Organised gatherings held in public spaces aimed at fostering social connections, celebrating culture, or providing recreational activities. Includes festivals, markets, performances, and sports events.

Community Profile: A demographic snapshot of the local population used to guide evidence-based decision-making and planning, including for open space provision.

Community Vision: A long-term plan or goal that reflects the aspirations and needs of the local community.

Connectivity: Linking parks and open spaces through pathways, trails, or ecological corridors to improve access and support wildlife movement.

Conservation: The protection and management of natural environments to preserve biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Cultural Heritage: Tangible and intangible heritage that includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions, stories, and cultural practices. Recognition in open space design supports reconciliation and inclusive community identity.

Demographic: Statistical data about the population, such as age, density, or socio-economic status.

Developer Contributions / Land Contributions: Payments or land provided by developers to fund public infrastructure, including parks.

Disability Prevalence: The proportion of individuals within a population who report needing assistance with daily activities due to long-term health conditions or disabilities.

District-Level Park: A park designed to serve a larger community, offering diverse amenities and activities.

Diversity: The variety of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds among residents. In Baw Baw, this includes Aboriginal communities and overseas-born populations.

Dwelling Characteristics: Attributes of homes in the region, such as type (detached house, apartment), tenure (owned, rented), and density, which influence open space needs.

Economic Growth: Increase in the region’s economic activity, driven by industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism.

Ecological Footprint: A measure of the environmental impact of human activities, expressed in terms of land and water area required.

Equitable Access: Ensuring all community members, regardless of location or socio-economic status, have fair access to public spaces.

European Settlement: Refers to the colonisation and establishment of communities by European settlers, which significantly altered Aboriginal land and cultural practices.

Encumbered Land: Land with restrictions or limitations on its use, often due to environmental, legal, or infrastructure considerations.

Ecosystem Services: The benefits that people gain from healthy natural environments, including air and water purification, climate regulation, and pollination.

Environmental Sustainability Strategy: A Council strategy outlining actions to reduce environmental impact, mitigate climate change, and promote sustainable practices.

Event Application Process: The official procedure requiring submission of an application to Council for approval to hold events on Council-managed land, ensuring events meet safety, environmental, and community guidelines.

Event Management Plan: A comprehensive document that outlines the logistics, risk management, environmental considerations, community engagement, and operational strategies for conducting an event within public spaces.

Event Planning Guide: A set of guidelines published by Council detailing requirements, standards, and best practices for planning and managing community events on public land.

Footpath Connectivity: The linking of pathways to ensure smooth and safe pedestrian movement between destinations.

Gippsland: A region in southeastern Victoria that includes Baw Baw Shire. Baw Baw accounts for about 10% of Gippsland’s land area.

Green Infrastructure: Natural or semi-natural systems, such as parks, wetlands, and tree-lined streets, that provide environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Heat Island Effect: The increased temperature in urban areas caused by the concentration of buildings, roads, and other heat-absorbing infrastructure, reduced by tree canopy and vegetation in open spaces.

Land Use: How land is utilised, including urban development, agriculture, forestry, and conservation areas.

Linear Reserve: A narrow strip of land, often used for pathways, trails, or ecological corridors.

Master Plan: A strategic long-term planning document guiding the development, design, and management of a park or group of parks to meet community needs and sustainability goals.

Nature Play: Play areas that incorporate natural elements like logs, rocks, and plants to encourage exploration and creativity.

Open Space: Publicly accessible land designated for recreational, environmental, or cultural use, including parks, reserves, trails, and natural areas.

Open Space Gap: Areas where residents lack access to public parks or recreational spaces within a reasonable walking distance.

Passive Open Space / Passive Recreation: Public land and leisure activities that require minimal physical exertion, such as walking, picnicking, or nature appreciation, generally without sporting infrastructure.

Planning Applications: Proposals submitted to local councils for approval of new developments, including parks and recreational spaces.

Population Density / Population Growth: The number of people living per square kilometer and the increase in the number of residents in the Shire, expected to exceed 80,000 by 2041.

Public Open Space: Land designated for public use, such as parks, playgrounds, and reserves.

Public Transport: Shared transport options like buses or trains that impact how people access open spaces, especially those without private vehicles.

Recreation / Recreation Reserve: Activities done for enjoyment, relaxation, or exercise in open space settings, and parks designed for sports and other recreational activities.

Recreational Amenities: Facilities provided in parks and open spaces, such as playgrounds, sports courts, picnic areas, and walking paths.

Resilience: The ability of a community or environment to recover from challenges like climate change, natural disasters, or population growth.

Sense of Place: The emotional and cultural connection people feel to a location, shaped by its natural features, history, and social uses.

Shared Path: A pathway designed for multiple users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized transport.

Site Selection: The process of choosing appropriate locations within parks or open spaces for events, facilities, or amenities, considering accessibility, impact, and suitability.

Strategic Framework: A long-term plan or guide that outlines priorities, goals, and directions for future decision-making and development.

Sustainability: Practices that ensure resources are used responsibly to meet current needs without compromising future generations.

Urban Design Framework: A strategic plan that guides the development and improvement of urban areas, focusing on aesthetics, functionality, and sustainability.

Vibrancy: The liveliness or attractiveness of a place, often resulting from a mix of good design, community activity, and cultural identity.

Vulnerable: Refers to individuals or groups at higher risk of social, economic, or health disadvantage.

Walkable Access: The ability for residents to safely and conveniently reach open space on foot within a set distance, typically 400–500m.

Youth Disengagement: Young people (15–24 years) not engaged in education or employment. High disengagement rates may require targeted open space initiatives to encourage inclusion.

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Appendix 1: List of Public Open Spaces that are excluded from strategic assessment

Type	Description
Restricted open spaces	<p>Restricted open spaces refer to public lands that, despite their public status, are not freely accessible to the community. These areas include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Specialised Sporting Infrastructure: Examples include outdoor swimming pools, bowling clubs, and equestrian facilities. Access may be restricted by membership requirements or fees.Conservation Protection Overlays and Educational Institutes: Areas subjected to conservation protection overlays or located within educational institutions and accessibility may be limited due to conservation efforts or institutional regulations
Ancillary	<p>Ancillary open spaces are sections of public lands typically situated between buildings, such as streetscapes. These spaces are influenced by various documents, including structure plans, streetscape designs, and other strategic guidelines</p>
Privatly Owned Public Open Spaces	<p>Private open spaces encompass lands that are privately owned yet accessible to the public. Examples include privately owned shopping precincts, courts, body corporate communal spaces, and access points</p>
Under-Developed Lands , Not fit for purpose	<p>Undeveloped land not fit for purpose refers to publicly owned open spaces that are currently unsuitable for recreational use. These areas typically lack the necessary infrastructure, facilities, or accessibility to support community activities. Examples include vacant Council land, unused parcels managed by public authorities, or undeveloped creek frontages.</p> <p>Where such land forms part of a larger, accessible park, it has been included in the overall open space provision assessment. While not currently usable, these areas may be considered for future development based on identified community needs and strategic priorities.</p>

Appendix 2: Open Space Strategy relationship with other Key plans,policies & frameworks

Key Document that open space strategy is influenced by:

International Commitments:

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

The strategy aligns with several SDGs, including:

- Goal 3:** Good Health and Well-being – Promoting physical activity and mental health through access to quality open spaces.
- Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities – Ensuring inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable urban open spaces.
- Goal 13:** Climate Action – Enhancing green spaces to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.
- Convention on Climate Change (Paris Agreement, 2016):
Open spaces play a role in climate mitigation and adaptation by supporting carbon sequestration, enhancing biodiversity, and managing urban heat and stormwater.
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948):
Article 25 emphasises the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, which includes access to clean, safe, and functional open spaces.
 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989):
Ensures children’s rights to safe, accessible spaces for play and recreation, contributing to their physical, mental, and social development.
 - Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Framework (WHO):
Open spaces are a critical component of age-friendly urban environments, providing accessibility, seating, and safety for older adults.
 - United Nations Habitat New Urban Agenda (2016):
Advocates for the creation of sustainable and inclusive urban spaces, with an emphasis on equitable access to green and public spaces.
 - Convention on Biological Diversity (1992):
Promotes the integration of biodiversity conservation into open space planning and management, aligning with global biodiversity goals.
 - Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030):
Encourages the use of open spaces for disaster mitigation, such as flood management and emergency response zones.

These commitments emphasise the intersection of social, environmental, and economic benefits, shaping how councils plan and manage open spaces to align with global priorities.

Commonwealth and State Government Strategic Context:

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act): While focused on biodiversity protection, the EPBC Act can influence the creation and management of open spaces, especially in relation to environmental values.

Australia’s Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030: This strategy outlines actions for preserving biodiversity, which often intersects with open space planning for wildlife corridors and natural areas.

Australian Guidelines for Urban Green Spaces such as Australian urban forest strategy, Healthy active by design, national urban policy , etc: Provides national best practices for creating sustainable and accessible green spaces in urban environments.

Plan Melbourne 2017–2050: Twenty-minute neighbourhood establishing integrated networks of public open spaces that meet the needs of the community

Open Space for everyone: Open Space for Everyone Sets out a strategic framework to strengthen the open space network by connecting it at the local and landscape scales

Plan for Victoria: This is a plan to guide the Victorian Government’s actions to deliver the future Victorians have said they want to build Victoria towards 2050, in line with community needs.

Corporate plans:

Baw Baw Shire Council Plan 2025–2029:

Strategic Objective: A Thriving Community – Thriving, diverse, and resilient communities.

Thriving: Council aims to create a thriving community by supporting local business growth and job creation, promoting its region as a unique tourism destination, and fostering vibrant events that celebrate and strengthen community life.

Diverse: Council celebrates and protects the shire’s unique heritage. It supports its diverse community to connect with each other and with creativity. Growing the unique creative community of the region.

Strategic Objective: A Healthy Community – Healthy people, living in connected communities, and healthy environments.

Healthy People: Enhancing personal health, safety, and wellbeing of our community through the services Council delivers and assets it manages. Working with and promoting external providers of services to our community.

Healthy environments: Provide access to high-quality parks, outdoor spaces, and recreational facilities that support passive and active recreation across the whole shire. Prioritisation and investment that is based on data and evidence of the population’s needs.

Strategic Objective: A Sustainable Shire – Sustainable towns and villages that continue to benefit from our beautiful rural and natural environment.

Natural Environment: Protect, enhance, and improve access to Council’s natural environment, including trees and green assets.

Strategic Objective: Council Supporting Thriving, Healthy, Sustainable.

Community engagement: Working in partnership with the community by tapping into their expertise and experience during the planning and design of community assets, programs, and services.

Community trust: Build community trust by focusing on customer experience and operational excellence.

Advocacy: Strategic advocacy that seeks the best outcome for our current and future communities.

Baw Baw Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029:

This plan focuses on four priority areas, Active Living, Healthy Eating, Wellbeing and Resilience, and Gender Equity and Prevention of Family Violence, and outlines how Council and its partners will support community health and wellbeing, including addressing the impacts of climate change..

All four priorities are directly linked to open space and the role parks and reserves play in achieving them

Active Living: Increase participation in active and passive recreation.

Parks provide safe, accessible, and inclusive areas for exercise, play, and leisure, with programs, facilities, walkable paths, and features that enhance liveability.

Healthy Eating: Promote healthy food environments.

Parks support community gardens, healthy food events or markets, and partner initiatives, fostering community connections and education around food security and sustainability.

Wellbeing and Resilience: Build resilient, connected, and socially inclusive communities. Parks offer spaces for social connection, volunteering, recreation, cultural activities, and nature engagement, through inclusive engagement with First Nations and other community groups, while supporting climate adaptation and emergency preparedness.

Gender Equity and Prevention of Family Violence: Create a gender-equitable and respectful community free from violence.

Parks support this through inclusive design and naming, safe and accessible areas for recreation, and promoting social inclusion and community engagement.

Baw Baw Planning Scheme:

Planning Scheme a legal document, prepared and approved under the Act. It contains state and local planning policies, zones and overlays and other provisions that affect how land can be used and developed.. The Baw Baw Shire planning scheme contain both state and local planning policies on the provision of open space and includes guidelines in relation to location, size, facilities, design, and other aspects of open space.

12.05–2S, Landscapes. “To protect and enhance significant landscapes and open spaces that contribute to character, identity, and sustainable environments.”

15.01–4, Healthy Neighbourhoods. “To achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.”

19.2–6S, Open Space. “To establish, manage and improve a diverse and integrated network of public open space that meets the needs of the community.”

56.03–1, Compact and walkable neighbourhoods, “To create compact neighbourhoods that are oriented around easy walking distances to activity centres, schools and community facilities, public open space and public transport. To allow easy movement through and between neighbourhoods for all people.”

56.03-1, Compact and walkable neighbourhoods, “To create compact neighbourhoods that are oriented around easy walking distances to activity centres, schools and community facilities, public open space, and public transport. To allow easy movement through and between neighbourhoods for all people.”

56.03-3, Planning for community facilities. “To provide appropriately located sites for community facilities including schools, libraries, preschools and childcare, health services, police and fire stations, recreation and sports facilities.”

56.05-1, Integrated urban landscape objectives. “To provide attractive and continuous landscaping in streets and public open spaces that contribute to the character and identity of new neighbourhoods and urban places or to existing or preferred neighbourhood character in existing urban areas....”

56.05-2, Public open space provision. “To provide a network of quality, well-distributed, multi-functional and cost-effective public open space that includes local parks, active open space, linear parks and trails, and links to regional open space. To provide a network of public open space that caters for a broad range of users. To encourage healthy and active communities. To provide adequate unencumbered land for public open space and integrate any encumbered land with the open space network. To ensure land provided for public open space can be managed in an environmentally sustainable way and contributes to the development of sustainable neighbourhoods.”

Key Plans and Strategies that are in a close relation with the Open Space Strategy:

Township and Structure Plan:

Township Plans are strategic documents that guide the development and growth of smaller towns or rural communities. Township plans typically address elements like residential areas, commercial zones, open spaces, community facilities, transport networks, and environmental considerations. They help ensure that development aligns with the long-term vision for the area and supports community well-being, with a focus on local context and the preservation of unique characteristics. Longwarry Structure Plan 2020 and Trafalgar Structure Plan

A Precinct Structure Plan is a high-level strategic plan that outlines the layout and design of an entire community. It typically includes locations and guidelines for key elements such as roads, shopping centres, schools, housing, parks, employment areas, and transport connections. PSPs consider complex issues such as biodiversity, cultural heritage, infrastructure provision, and Council charges, ensuring to enable a coordinated approach to urban development. In relation to open spaces, PSPs plan the location and integration of parks and recreational areas within the broader development to enhance liveability and sustainability. In Baw Baw there are two Structure Plans, including Drouin Precinct Structure Plan, 2014, Warragul Precinct Structure Plan 2014.

Recreation Strategies and Master Plans

Recreation Strategy 2017-2027:

The Council Recreation Strategy aims to understand the current and future recreational needs of the community and develop a framework for the effective provision, development, and management of recreational facilities and services within Baw Baw Shire. Open space plays a key role in providing access to a diverse range of social and traditional sports, as well as informal active recreation. The Open Space Strategy has identified opportunities for enhancing parks to support informal recreation, in response to emerging trends and a shift from organised sports to more informal forms of physical activity.

- Drouin Recreation Plan Review 2019
- Warragul Outdoor Recreation Plan Review 2019
- Equestrian Facilities Plan 2007
- Civic Park Drouin Master Plan 2017
- Civic park Warragul Master Plan 2017
- Bellbird Park Landscape Plan 2020
- Brooker Park, Warragul Master Plan Report 2018
- Rural Recreation Reserve Master Plans- Stage 2, 2016
- Rural Recreation Reserve Master Plans Review 2019
- Dowton Park Master Plan Review 2019
- Sporting Reserve Concept Masterplans within PSP areas 2021
- Trafalgar Recreation Precinct Master Plan 2019
- Skate and BMX Strategy 2013

Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy 2022-2026

This strategy guides the maintenance, renewal, and upgrade of Council assets, including open space assets ensuring open space infrastructure is sustainable, safe, and well maintained.

Long Term Infrastructure Plan 2022-2031

Provides a framework for future infrastructure investment, aligning with open space planning priorities to secure long-term funding for parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

Paths and Trail Strategy 2019

Provides a framework for future Council's decision making for paths and trails investment. through promoting walking and provide paths and trails that link key destinations.

Environment Sustainability Strategy 2022-2030

promoting biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable land management within shire including natural parks and reserves.

Positive Ageing Strategy 2015

Supports the creation of accessible and age-friendly open spaces, ensuring parks and public areas cater to older residents through seating, pathways, and inclusive design.

Integrated Water Management Plan 2019–2024

Provides direction for sustainable water use, stormwater management, and waterways, integrating water-sensitive design into open space.

Youth Strategy 2024–2028

Recognises the role of open spaces in supporting youth recreation, social connection, and physical activity, informing the design of parks and facilities to meet youth needs.

Municipal Early Years Plan 2024–2027

Highlights the importance of play spaces, nature play, and family-friendly parks in supporting early childhood development and community well-being.

Tree Management Plan 2023 – 2028

Guides urban tree planting, maintenance, and protection, ensuring trees contribute to shade, biodiversity, and amenity in open spaces.

Economic development and visitor economy strategy 2022–2025

Recognizes open space as an asset for tourism and local economic growth, supporting events, recreation, and nature-based experiences.

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021–2025

The DAMP is a four-year plan that provides Council with a strategic, balanced approach towards promotion of responsible pet ownership, the welfare of dogs and cats in the community and the protection of the community and the environment from nuisance dogs and cats. It includes strategies to consider access to Council’s network of leash free areas.

Disability Action plan 2018–2022

Supports inclusive and accessible open spaces by guiding the design of pathways, facilities, and recreational areas to ensure people of all abilities can participate and enjoy public spaces.

Weed Management Strategy 2020–2025

This document addresses invasive species management in parks and reserves, supporting biodiversity, habitat health, and the maintenance of natural landscapes.

Key document that will be informed by open space strategy in future:

Future plans and policies will be shaped by the Open Space Strategy, either as direct actions arising from it or by referencing its guidelines for development and decision-making. This ensures a consistent. e.g Playspace Strategy, Public Open Space Shade Policy, etc

Appendix 3: Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage for Baw Baw Shire’s small areas and benchmark areas

Area	2021 Index	Percentile
Drouin West – Buln Buln and District	1,066.0	83
Trafalgar South – Yarragon South and District	1,039.0	66
Warragul (South)	1,021.9	55
Yarragon – Darnum – Nilma	1,016.8	52
Trafalgar – Trafalgar East	993.0	38
Neerim South – Noojee and District	1,013.9	50
Warragul	1,003.6	44
Warragul (North)	997.5	41
Drouin (North)	993.8	39
Drouin (South)	985.4	34
Mount Baw Baw – Willow Grove and District	989.6	36
Longwarry – Longwarry North	966.9	25
Victoria	1,010.0	48
Regional VIC	985.0	33
Gippsland Region	972.0	28

Appendix 4: Plese refer to community consultaion Summary report here

<https://www.bawbawconnect.com.au/102298/widgets/469072/documents/314336>

Appendix 5: Good Design Practices

- Universal Design Principles–Australian Standards (AS 1428) & National Disability Strategy (NDS) 2010–2020
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Playground and Recreation Design Standards–Australian Standard AS 4685 & ASTM F1487 (Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment)
- Green Star – Design & As Built by Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), SITES v2 Rating System,
- ISO 21542 (Building Construction – Accessibility and Usability of the Built Environment)
- Healthy Parks Healthy People (Parks Victoria)
- Urban Open Space Guidelines (Victoria): Developed by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA)
- Gender-Sensitive Design Guidelines (UN Women)
- Inclusive Play Guidelines (Play Australia)
- Australian Rainwater and Stormwater Harvesting Guidelines , WSUD (Water Sensitive Urban Design) Guidelines
- AS 4970 Protection of Trees on Development Sites
- IPWEA Practice Note 10.3 (Parks Asset Management)
- AS 5334 (Climate Change Adaptation for Settlements and Infrastructure)

Appendix 6: Best practice environmentally sustainable design principles, concerning water and energy conservation,

- water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles as outlined in the Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling and Stormwater Management in Urbanised Areas frameworks.
- Green Star Design & As Built certification standards by the Green Building Council of Australia for energy-efficient infrastructure.
- passive solar design and energy-efficient materials guided by the National Construction Code (NCC) Section J for energy efficiency.
- the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia (ISCA) Ratings Scheme for sustainable infrastructure design.
- rainwater harvesting systems and permeable pavements as recommended by the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) or local WSUD guidelines.
- AS/NZS 1158 standards for sustainable public lighting.
- native landscaping strategies to reduce irrigation needs, guided by the Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Cooperative (VINC)

Appendix 7: Australian Standards for lighting

- AS/NZS 1158 – Lighting for Roads and Public Spaces, AS/NZS 1158.6: Lighting for public spaces, Luminaires
- AS/NZS 4282:2019 – Control of the Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting
- AS/NZS 3000:2018 – Electrical Installations (Wiring Rules)
-

Appendix 8: Australian Standards AS 1428 for accessible design

- AS 2890 for path and cycleway design,
- Victorian Planning Provisions for flood management in open spaces.
- Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) for path design specifications and flood management practices,

Appendix 9: Australian Standards AS 2890.1 for off-street parking

- AS 2890.6 for accessible parking,
- Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria for sustainable and integrated car park design.
- principles from the Green Star Communities Guide by the Green Building Council of Australia for environmentally sustainable design
- Australian Standard AS2890.1–2004 (off street) and
- AS2890.6–2009(disabled)

Appendix 10: Australian Standards AS 1926.1 for swimming pool safety barriers

AS 1725 for chain-link fabric fencing, and state-specific building codes, such as the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) guidelines

Appendix 11: Australian Standards AS 1428.1 for accessible design

Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Premises Standards), National Construction Code (NCC) Section D3 for access and egress. Building Code of Australia (BCA) guidelines for accessible public spaces

Appendix 12: Principles of Universal Design, the World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities Framework, and all relevant Australian standards regarding accessibility

- AS 1428.1–2009: General Requirements for Access
- AS 1428.2–1992: Enhanced and Additional Requirements
- AS 1428.3–1992: Requirements for Children and Adolescents with Physical Disabilities
- AS 1428.4.1–2009: Tactile Ground Surface Indicators
- AS 1428.5–2010: Communication for People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- AS 2890.6–2009: Off-Street Parking for People with Disabilities

- AS 1735 Series: Lifts, Escalators, and Moving Walks
- AS 1657-2018: Fixed Platforms, Walkways, Stairways, and Ladders – Design, Construction, and Installation
- AS 2156.1-2001: Walking Tracks – Classification and Signage
- National Construction Code (NCC)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Standards)

Appendix 13: Baw Baw Shire Council Water Management Guideline

Areas with Limited Native Vegetation:

Maintain an uninterrupted lower bank zone of the waterway and establish a 10-metre riparian zone with Overstorey, Mid-storey, and Understorey vegetation consistent with the Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC). A secondary buffer zone of scattered vegetation, focused on overstorey trees, should be incorporated to maintain visual access to the waterway. A 10-meter-wide path for recreation should be positioned at least 30 meters away from the waterway bank to preserve natural ecosystems.

Areas with Existing Native Vegetation:

Preserve an uninterrupted conservation zone and establish a primary buffer of 10-metre on both sides of the riparian zone. This buffer should include overstorey, mid-storey, and understorey vegetation, consistent with the EVC. Beyond this buffer zone, provide a recreation area with a clear, unsealed path or boardwalk. The path should be accompanied by clean-stemmed indigenous overstorey riparian trees to retain views of the creek.

Areas with Wetlands in the Floodplain:

Construct wetland zones and ensure a minimum 10-metre riparian zone with overstorey, mid-storey, and understorey vegetation consistent with the EVC. A secondary buffer zone of scattered overstorey trees should be maintained to retain views. Paths may be incorporated in this area, but shrubs should be minimized within 5 meters of the path to ensure the safety of walkers. Path should be out of 10% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) flood level.

Appendix 14: Evaluation Indicators Farmework

Note: Item marked “*” must be assessed against relevant overlays in the Baw Baw Shire Planning Scheme. If a project is subject to any overlays or specific planning considerations, appropriate steps must be undertaken, including ecological and environmental assessments, feasibility studies, or a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP). Depending on the overlay type, additional requirements such as arborist reports, land capability assessments, or consultation with Traditional Owners, DEECA (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action), and Heritage Victoria may also be necessary.

Priority	Action Assessment Criteria	Score
Essential	Support Council’s Community Vision and Council Plan	Y/N
Essential	Support Open Space Strategy and its key outcomes and objectives	Y/N
Essential	Has biodiversity significance been considered?*	Y/N
Essential	Has cultural heritage been considered?*	Y/N
1	Addresses OHS issues and improves risk management	C,10
2	Provides open space within desired/equitable walkable access across various zones of residences	C,10
3	Can address multiple Walking Access Gap to OS	C,10
4	Identified in other key Council strategies and documents	H,9
5	Associated with an endorsed structure plan or state government pre-cinct plan	H,8
6	Improve council internal process(planning, management, maintenance) significantly	H 9
7	Improves community wellbeing, considering current and future demographic needs	H,8
8	Project is situated in a high-growth area	M,7
9	Project is situated in a low socio-economic area	M,7
10	Enhances climate resilience (e.g., shade, flood mitigation, water-sensitive design)	M,7
11	Enhances active transport connections (e.g., walking/cycling links)	M,7
12	Project is in a high-use park, regional/district park, or specific-purpose destination	M,6
13	Enhence activation and community use	M,6
14	Based on strong community demand or previous consultation	M,6
15	Reduces future Council operational expenditure	M,5
16	Improves accessibility and inclusion (e.g., disability access, universal design)	M,5
17	Supports tourism and local economic stability	L,5
18	Benefits multiple community user groups	L,4
19	Replaces aging/unfit infrastructure requiring intervention	L,4
20	Does not involve external approval	L,4
21	Address lack of facility provision	L,3

Appendix 15: Longwarry & Longwarry North

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area(sqm)
Bandicoot Circuit Wetland	Bandicoot Circuit	LONGWARRY	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	10,095.97
Bennett Street Reserve	Bennett St	LONGWARRY	SP-Rural Destination	_	No	BBSC	BBSC	13,524.56
Collett St Wetland	Serenity Court & Collett St	LONGWARRY	WM	Local	No	BBSC	Developer	2,369.47
Hackett Park	3-5 Gardener St	LONGWARRY	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	Crown Land	BBSC	4,054.45
Jessie Lane Drainage reserve	Jessie Lane	LONGWARRY	Community Recreation	Neigh- bourhood	No	Developer	Developer	13,364.11
Labertouch Creek Bushland Reserve	Jacksons Track	LABERTOUCHE	Natural	District	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	375,419.62
Labertouche Community Access Reserve	Labertouche Rd	LABERTOUCHE	SP-Rural Destination	_	Yes	Crown Land	BBSC-CoM	20,010.73
Longwarry Memorial Park	Bennett St	LONGWARRY	SP-Rural Destination	_	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	4,055.85
Longwarry Recreation Reserve Linear part	2 Collerr St	LONGWARRY	Sport Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	94,013.30
Longwarry Recreation Reserve Linear part	Collett St	LONGWARRY	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	11,591.34
Longwarry Tennis Courts Reserve	First St	LONGWARRY	Sport Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	3,426.77
Picnic Point Reserve	Princes Way	LONGWARRY NORTH	SP-Rest Spot	_	Yes	Crown Land	BBSC	34,255.81
Princes Avenue & Burnnett Court Access Re- serve	Princes Avenue	LONGWARRY	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	662.90
Princes Freeway Stop station	Princess Freeway	LONGWARRY	SP-Rest Spot	_	No	DTP	VicRoad	22,727.51
Sanctuary Court Access Reserve	Sanctuary Court	LONGWARRY	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	95.79
Stockman Park	43A Stockman Way	LONGWARRY	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	4,268.64
Stockman Way Open Space	Stockman Way	LONGWARRY	Community Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	BBSC	2,065.77
Thornells Reserve	Princes Way	LONGWARRY NORTH	Natural	District	No	Crown Land	BBSC	99,880.98
Toy Park	2 Church St	LONGWARRY	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,016.44

LEGEND: For Appendix 15-23

- BBSC: Baw Baw Shire Council
- CoM: Committees of Management
- DEECA: Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- DTP: Department of Transport and Planning
- SP: Specific Purpose
- WM: Water Management

PLEASE NOTE:

The size of public open spaces owned by the State Government listed in this table is an estimate, as precise data on the portions available for public use versus restricted areas is unavailable. Many of these spaces include State Parks and bushland, which lack detailed mapping to accurately determine public accessibility. These areas maybe inaccessible due to their primary purpose for conservation or other restrictions. Given that these localities significantly oversupply public open space in terms of quantity, a precise assessment of the actual available size for public use has not been prioritised.

Appendix 16: Drouin (Drouin North & South)

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area (sqm)
Alex Goudie	Princes Way	DROUIN	Community Recreation	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	48,780.99
Alex Goudie Memorial Reserve	Princes Way	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	Multi	BBSC	4,392.70
ALF Court	8 ALF Court	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	467.14
Amberly Acres Bushland Reserve	10 Billabong Close	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	53,213.96
Apex Park	Boanyoo Rd	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	5,021.21
Balmoral Park	31 Bennett St	DROUIN	Linkagee	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	19,938.52
Baw Baw Vista Park	Callistemon Cres	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,899.02
Bellbird Park	280 Settlement Rd	DROUIN	Spor Recreation	Local significant	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	231,834.62
Blackwood Court Reserve and Forrest Street Reserve	91 Lampard Rd	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	5,149.03
Bloye Park	6 Beverley St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	864.08
Bushy Park Court	13A Bushy Park Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	594.88
Civic Park	33 Young St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Regional	Yes Skate/Gym	BBSC	BBSC	74,238.73
Clifford Drive Park	Clifford Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Neighouhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	13,886.32
Clifford Drive Park-Bosanko	Bosanko	Drouin	Linkagee	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,271.40
Dog fenced off lead horsetail way	Horsetail way & Bracken St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes/Gym	BBSC	BBSC	7,691.13
Drouin Recreation Reserve	Sinclair St & Victoria St	DROUIN	Sport Recreation	Significant Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	48,546.43
Elizabeth Close Park	Elizabeth Close	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	21,710.82
Evergreen Close Reserve	95 Mcneilly Rd	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	13,726.79
Fairway Drive Access Reserve	Fairway Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	461.73
Flax Mill Close Reserve	Flax Mill Close	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	3,197.67
Folkstone Court Access Reserve	8A Folkstone Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	194.62
Fren Tree park	20 Staghorn Way	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	Developer	15,563.14
Glentara Estate Park	Rowan Walk	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,202.99
Glentara Estate Park 2	319 Settlement Rd	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,572.10
Golden Whistler Reserve	92 Mcglone Rd	DROUIN	Natural	Distric	No	BBSC	BBSC	18,879.28
Golf View Court Access Reserve	8A Golf View Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	543.43
Hamp Park	9-10 Bright Court	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	4,635.27
Harmon Drive	Harmon Dr	Drouin	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,977.47
Harper Walk	Harper St	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	DTP	BBSC	1,044.17
Hearn Park	Hearn St	DROUIN	Community- Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	6,527.57
Hill Park	Johnson Avenue	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	3,253.58
Hopeetoun Road & Buscombe Crescent Roadside	Hopeetoun Rd & Buscombe Cres	DROUIN	SP-Green Buffer	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,571.51
Hopetoun Road & Hyprerno Street Open Space	Hopetoun Rd & Hyprerno St	DROUIN	SP-Green Buffer	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,395.17
Hopetoun Road & Leura Street Nature Strip & Walk	Hopetoun Rd & Leura St	DROUIN	SP-Green Buffer	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,643.01
Hopetoun Road Nature Strip & Walk	Hopetoun Rd	DROUIN	SP-Green Buffer	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	3,449.50

Hopetoun Street & Walker Drive Nature strip & Walk	Hopetoun St & Walker Dr	DROUIN	SP-Green Buffer	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	6,388.10
Jack Butler Park	4A Alcorn St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,247.52
Jackson Drive Access Reserves	Jackson Dr to Bunyip Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	572.25
Jamescott Drive Linear Reserve	Jamescott Dr & Lampard Rd	DROUIN	Linkagee	Neighbourhood	No	DTP	BBSC	5,537.73
Jamescott Drive Reserve	8 Jamescott Dr	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	7,953.42
John Lardner	Princes Freeway	Drouin	Natural	Naighbourhood	No	BBSC	-	55,228.55
Kamanari Court Reserve	24 Kamanari Court	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,273.46
Kamanari Court to Binbeal Road	58 Kamanari Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	627.94
Kensington Square Reserve	13 Kensington Square	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,831.97
L.G. Boeyen Reserve	Murrell St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,787.79
Lakeview Court Access Reserve	4A Lakeview Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	371.68
Lardener Rd Linear Reserve	63 Lardner Rd	DROUIN	Linkagee	Neighbourhood?	No	BBSC	BBSC	3,500.93
Lomandra Court & Park Vista Access Reserve	7A Park Vista	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	199.18
Lyndhurst Square Reserve	Lyndhurst Square	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,811.00
Manallack Lane	Manallack Lane to Southern Close	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,291.10
Maple Place Reserve	21-23 Foster St	DROUIN	SP- Vacant	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,377.93
Mathew Court Reserve	10A Mathew Court	DROUIN	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	6,226.16
Matthew Bennett Park Reserve	17 Mcglone Rd	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,657.68
McNeilly Park 1-North	Jackson Dr	DROUIN	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	15,484.35
McNeilly Park-South	Jackson Dr	DROUIN	Community Recreation	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC-Melb Water	62,182.56
McNeilly Road Reserve	Monica Dr	Drouin	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,504.78
Memorial Park	Princes Way Service Rd	DROUIN	SP-Memorial	-	No	Vicroad	BBSC	2,085.09
Miller Close Access Reserve	7 Miller Close	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	511.90
Minkato Drive Access Reserve	44A Manikato Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	152.63
Morton Park	Princes Way & Buln Buln Rd	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	DEECA	BBSC	3,695.14
Mountain Vista Court Access Reserve	Mountain Vista Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,014.38
Outlook Drive Access Reserve	40A Outlook Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	168.01
Palladium Boulevard	2 Palladium Boulevard	DROUIN	SP_Road Buffer	-	No	BBSC	_	560.97
Palladium Boulevard and Dimond Street Park	Palladium Boulevard and Di-mond St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	Developer	Developer	4,287.18
Palm Square	Palm Square	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,096.29
Palm Square Access Reserve	Palm Square	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	3,724.39
Peachtree Drive	Kingston Heath Dr	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC-Devel-oper	61,972.49
Pepperell Drive Access Reserve	6B Lancelot Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,118.49
Porter Place	Church St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	DTP	BBSC	1,976.35
Princes Way & Copper Close Court	2 Palladium Boulevard	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	Developer	1,075.38
Richie Court Access Reserve	13A Holland St	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	399.56
Rivendale Reserve	32 Rivendale Cres	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	5,318.64
Robert Court Bushland Reserve	Robert Court-Longwarry Rd	DROUIN	Natural	District	No	BBSC	BBSC	109,498.01

Robin Hood Estate Reserve	6 Nottingham Court	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	20,803.60
Robinhood Way & Princes Way Linear reserve	Robinhood Way & Princes Way	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	Vic Road-BB-SC	9,370.54
Rusrees Court Reserve	13 Janine Court	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,635.47
Samuel Drive Access Reserve	1A Samuel Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	694.39
Shakespeare Court Access Reserve	46A Summerhill Boulevard	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	671.49
South Fork Court Drainage Reserve	7A South Fork Court	DROUIN	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,342.37
St Ita Reserve	15A Rees Close	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	167.80
Street Mabyn Avenue Park	106 Mcneilly Rd	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	22,531.67
Summerhill Boulevard Access Reserve	51A Summerhill Boulevard	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	426.45
Summerhill Boulevard Derainge reserve	Summerhill Boulevard	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	17,544.43
Summerhill Estate Reserve	5 Manallack Lane	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	12,542.30
Thomas Maddock Reserve	Manikato Dr	DROUIN	WM	Regional	Yes	BBSC	BBSC-Melb Water	89,011.42
Timber top Crescent-Terracini Court	14-28 Timbertop Cres	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	3,392.01
Tracie Court Access Reserve	12A Tracie Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	248.27
Two Town Trail	Princes Highway	DROUIN	Linkagee	Regional	No	BBSC	BBSC	11,429.45
Valley View Grove Drainage Reserve	9 Valleyview Grove	DROUIN	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,096.61
Vincent Squar Park-Wiltons Crescent Park	Wiltons Cres	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,967.13
Waddell Reserve	Waddell Rd	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	3,257.93
Waterford Court Reserve	7A Waterford Court	DROUIN	Linkagee	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	454.62
Waters Edge Place Reserve	Waterside Dr	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	16,645.38
Waterside Drive Access Reserve	3A Waterside Dr	DROUIN	Linkagee	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,039.80
Weebar Park	10 Smethurst St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	Crown Land	BBSC	3,040.65
Weeber Road and King Parrot Boulevard Linear Reserve	Weeber Road and King Parrot Boulevard	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	Developer	41,823.96
Weeber Road Linear Reserve	Weebar Rd	DROUIN	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	10,757.51
Wolff Street Road Reserve	Wolff St	DROUIN	Community Recreation	Local	No	Victrack	BBSC-Private	360.75

Appendix 17: Warragul (Warragul North & South)

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area(sqm)
Ambrose Court	Ambrose Court & Pharaohs Rd	WARRAGUL	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,655.58
Ascott Street Linear Park	Ascott St	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	4,391.11
Bailey Rd & Emberwood Rd Linear wetland	Bailey Rd & Emberwood Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	10,415.52
Bailey Rd Drainage	Bailey rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,997.51
Baxter Park	Burke Street	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	37,458.74
Bentley St Land Parcle	Bentley St	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	401.03
Biram Drive Park	Biram Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	3,207.32
Blue Jacklet Drive & Bailey Rd Linear Reserve	Blue Jacket Dr & Red Jacket Dr & Bailey Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,543.09
Bona Vista Rd Open Space	50 Bona Vista Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,782.87
Bona Vista Reserve	6A Henry Court	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	11,490.93
Bona Vista Wetlands	50 Bona Vista Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	33,219.04
Boronia St Park	133 Boronia St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	6,816.46
Brandy Creek Road Reserve	Brandy Creek Rd	WARRAGUL	SP-Road Reserve	_	No	BBSC	BBSC	765.05
Brooker Park	128 Bowen St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	District	Gym	BBSC	BBSC	155,439.94
Brooker Park Tennis Courts	63A Charles St	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	District	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,734.12
Buckland drive-two towns trail	Silkwood Dr & Buckland Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Regional	No	BBSC	BBSC	28,469.52
Burke St Park	Anderson St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	District	Yes,Skate	DEECA	BBSC	45,343.22
Burke Street Netball Courts	Burke Street	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	District	Yes	DEECA	BBSC	14,713.84
Charldon Park	61 Pharooha Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	11,185.69
Charles St Reserve	Charles St	WARRAGUL	Linkage	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	38,064.48
Cherrywood Place Access Reserve	Cherrywood Place	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	605.39
Chesterfield East Wetland Reserve	Mills Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	33,498.04
Chesterfield Estate Open Space	197 Twin Ranges Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,891.19
Civic Place Reserve	Smith St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Regional	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	49,279.51
Copelands Linear Reserve	Copelands Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	4,277.98
Coppeland Rd wetland	210 Copeland Rd	Warragul	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	24,071.81
Coventry Drive	Coventry Dr & Emberwod Rd	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	6,600.68
Crole Drive Linear Plantaion	Crole Dr-Longview Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	186.99
Cromie Drive & Melzak Way	Cromie Dr & Melzak Way	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	Yes	DEVELOPER	-	63,002.36
Cypress Hill Reserve	Brandy Creek Rd	WARRAGUL	SP-Road Reserve	-	No	BBSC	BBSC	4,773.33
Dawson Drive Access Reserve	Dawson Dve	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	18,600.93
Decker Park	Chesterfield Avenue	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,236.53
Eastern Park	Stoffers St	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	48,399.42
Ellen Close Reserve	Ellen Close	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	12,026.56
Emberwood Drive & Archee Rd park	Emberwood Dr & Archee Rd	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	Developer	2,493.58
Emberwood Reserve	Emberwood Rd	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	31,772.54
F T Davey Reserve	Princes Freeway	WARRAGUL	SP-Green buffer	Local	No	VICRoad	BBSC	1,548.60

Fernery Boulevard Reserve	11 Fernery Boulevard	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,760.98
Franklin Avenue Wetland	Franklin Avenue & Carisbroke Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,960.54
Geoff Watt Track	Burke St	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes,Skate	Crow Land	BBSC	91,251.68
Gloucester Park	32a Gloucester Place	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	Yes	Department of Family Fairness & Housing	BBSC	701.65
Grange Cres Reserve	58 Grange Cres	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	11,491.48
Gwinear Court Reserve	7 Gwinear Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,053.00
Harmony Park	Princes Highway	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,007.89
Hart Drive & MCCubbin Drive Wetland	MCCubin Dr & Street On Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC-Devel-oper	40,469.00
Hayes Drive Reserve	Hayes Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	11,374.97
Hays Drive Open Space	Hayes Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	461.38
Hazel Creek Nature Reserve	Hazel Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	63,215.62
Howitt St Tree Reserve	Howitt St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	3,653.51
Huntingfield Court Access Reserve	Huntingfield Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	382.75
Jacaranda Court Linear reserve	Jacaranda Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	12,955.33
Jones Arboretum	22 Fernery Boulevard	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	41,528.44
Kensington Drive Access Reserve	Kensington Dr	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	384.80
Kent Street Linear Reserve	Kent St	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	420.44
Kestle Park	Crole Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	22,290.90
Kiah Park	24 Rutland St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	14,003.11
Latrobe St Park	52 Latrobe St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	3,698.63
Leichardt Court Reserve	Mitchell Court	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,415.04
Lifestyle Village Wetlands	Warragul-Lardner Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	Developer	BBSC	8,902.60
Lochfyne Close Linear Reserve	Lochfyne Close	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,721.98
Logan Park	Howitt St	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	local	Yes	Crow Land & BBSC	BBSC	202,437.09
Long View Rd Oval	Long View Rd & Princes Way	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	Local significant	No	BBSC	BBSC	22,012.56
Longview Rd (Wetland)	Long View Rd & Princess Way & Tarwin St	WARRAGOL	WM	District	No	BBSC	BBSC	60,878.38
Lovell Drive Reserve	78 Lovell Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	21,122.63
Macarthur Street Park	16 Macarthurs St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	7,744.65
McDonald St Park	3A Cunningham Court	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,250.37
McMillian Drive Reserve	33 Mchmillan Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	6,921.35
Melanie Drive Access Reserve	Melanie Dr	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	537.75
Melanie Linear Reserve	Melanie Dve	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,209.28
Moroka Reserve	Warragul-Lardner Rd	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	41,251.03
Myrle Crescent - Birch Court Access Reserve	Myrle Cres	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,336.70
Need Court Park	Tarago Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,336.74
Normanby St Reserve	Normanby St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,576.49
North Rd & Albert Road Linear Reserve	Albert Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,140.65

North Rd & Rangeview St Reserve	26A Rangeview St	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,789.41
North Road – Paulan Court Access Reserve	North Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	753.86
Oak Court Access Reserve	Oak Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	679.62
Oak Court Reserve	17 Baw Baw Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	9,947.63
Orion Court	9 Orion Court	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	658.54
Paulan Court Access Reserve	Paulan Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	690.70
Pedersen Park	16 Steward St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	4,108.46
Penaluna Park	Willandra Circuit & Stoke St & Skyline Dr	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	7,178.14
Penaluna Park-Willandra Circuit	Willandra Circuit	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	25,694.39
Pettit Park	Trumpy St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,241.36
Pretzel Court – Cason Cresent Reserve	Pretzel Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,839.25
Queen Street Park	Queen St	WARRAGUL	SP-Destination	–	Yes	V Line Cor- poration	BBSC	3,788.40
Regent St Wetland Park	Regent St	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	94,775.33
Rotary Park	Princes Highway	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	24,476.01
Ryan Court Drainage Reserve	Ryan Court	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,467.72
Scenic Park	9 Hallyburton Grove	WARRAGUL	Linkage	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	53,261.73
Serene Court (wetland)	Serene Court	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	4,940.60
Sheoak St	Sheoak Reserve	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,076.37
Stoddarts Road to princes highway	Stoddarts Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	763.63
Stoddarts Road Access Reserve	Stoddarts Rd	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	518.32
Stoll Street Access Reserve	Stoll Street	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,158.58
Sutton St Reserve	Dawson Dr	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	15,296.00
Trumpy Lane Reserve	24A Witton St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	–	70.91
Two Towns Trail	Highland Way	WARRAGUL	Linkage	Regional	No	BBSC	BBSC	7,661.25
Valleyview Park	Normanby St	WARRAGUL	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,109.35
Volcano Park	Lilico Rd	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	District	Yes	–	–	248,915.64
Waratah Drive – Fir Court Reserve	Waratah Dr	WARRAGUL	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	36,667.58
Warragul senta	Smith St & Victoria St	WARRAGUL	SP-Memorial	–	No	BBSC	BBSC	375.96
Warralgul Velodrome	120 Alfred St	WARRAGUL	Community Recreation	District	No	BBSC	BBSC	87,729.74
Web Court Linear Reserve	Web Court	WARRAGUL	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,739.16
Western Park Recreation Reserve	Tarwin St	WARRAGUL	Sport Recreation	Local significant	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	62,226.83

Appendix 18: Nilma, Darnum, Yarragon

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	land Manager	Land Area(sqm)
Durling Close Reserve	63 Woodlawn Boulevard	YARRAGON	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	14,178.20
Linnea Drive Access Way	46A Loch St	YARRAGON	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	699.25
Loch Street Access Reserve	19 Loch St	YARRAGON	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	578.81
Darnum Recreation Reserve	92 Darnum-Shady Creek Rd	DARNUM	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	Crown Land	CoM	65,513.12
Dowton Park Reserve	61 Market St	YARRAGON	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	80,884.07
Bushman’s Reserve	Main St	DARNUM	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	DTP	BBSC	9,244.31
Camerons Road Open Space	50 Camerons Rd	NILMA	SP-Vacant	–	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,040.94
Campbell Street Park	4 Campbell St	YARRAGON	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	391.09
Darnum Recreation Reserve South Piece	48 Pedder St	DARNUM	SP-Vacant	–	No	BBSC	CoM	55,617.64
Fraser Street Reserve	Fraser St	NILMA	Community Recreation	–	Yes	DTP	BBSC	1,627.42
Gaul Avenue Reserve	Darnum-Allambee Rd	DARNUM	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,946.71
Hazeldean Market Street Reserve	36 Market St	YARRAGON	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	593.02
Howard Park	5 Campbell St	YARRAGON	SP-Destination	–	Yes,Skate	BBSC	BBSC	2,971.03
Market Street Park	12 Market St	YARRAGON	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	Crown Land	BBSC	4,985.06
Rollo Street Park	Rollo St	Yarragon	Community Recreation	Neigh- bourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,971.80
Ti Tree Reserve	117 Loch St	YARRAGON	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	11,523.00
Ti Tree Reseve Continue to silver-top Drive	Silvertop Dr	YARRAGON	SP-Vacant	–	No	BBSC	BBSC	3,014.94
Waterloo Park	Princes Highway Service Rd	YARRAGON	SP-Destination	–	No	DTP	BBSC	9,610.95

Appendix 19: Trafalgar, Trafalgar East

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area(sqm)
19 A Dodemaides Road reserve	19 A Dodemaides Rd	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,224.69
30 A Dodemaids Road Reserve	30A Dodemaides Rd	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,202.16
Acacia Close Access Reserve	Acacia Close	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	554.62
Berenger Avenue Reserve	132A School Rd	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	18,283.77
Brindlewood Park	6 Vincent Boulevard	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	7,290.08
Briona Court Playground	2 Briona Crt	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	594.49
Davey Drive Wet Land	Davey Dr	TRAFALGAR	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,438.17
H.M.S. Victory Park	Waterloo Rd	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Local	No	VicTrack	BBSC	5,175.90
Hardy Drive Drainage	39 Hardy Dr	TRAFALGAR	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,576.75
Hardy Drive Reserve & Apex Park	15 Hardy Dr	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	10,555.40
Holland Court Access Reserve	5 Church St	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	414.08
Hollydell Park	3 Edward Cres	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Neighbourhood	Fenced dog	BBSC	BBSC	8,010.38
James Balfour Park	64 School Rd	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	BBSC	8,929.11
Lois Court Playground	23 Ashby St	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,155.80
Mcgregor Park	27 B Contingent St	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	12,327.10
Miirboo North Linear Reserve	Mirboo North-Trafalgar Rd	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	BMX	BBSC	BBSC	4,924.87
Murray St Reserve	49-53 Murry St	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,776.59
Open Space Ear of Shire Offices	46 Kitchener St	TRAFALGAR	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	661.99
Poplar Close Access Reserve	16A Poplar Close	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	4,051.92
Poplar Close Access Reserve	6A Poplar Close	TRAFALGAR	Linkage	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	325.91
T.K Shanahan Lookout	Trafalgar-Mirboo North Rd	TRAFALGAR EAST	SP-Lookout	-	No	Vic Track	BBSC	1,575.57
Trafalgar Recreation Reserve	15 Reserve Rd	TRAFALGAR EAST	Sport Recreation	Local Significant	No	BBSC & Trafalgar Recreation Reserve Committee	BBSC	99,705.00
Trafalgar Skate Park	46 Kitchener St	TRAFALGAR	Sport Recreation	Local	Skate	BBSC	BBSC	2,054.48
Trafalgar Tennis Courts	27 B Contingent St	TRAFALGAR	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	3,286.08
Vincent Boulevard Drainage Reserve	51 Vincent Boulevard	TRAFALGAR	WM	Neighbourhood	No	BBSC	BBSC	21,209.30
Willow Grove Tree Reserve	Willow Grove Rd	TRAFALGAR	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	19,191.37
Yarragon Bushland Reserve	Gibson Brothers Rd	TRAFALGAR EAST	Natural	Local	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	4,033.88

Appendix 20: Trafalgar South, Yarragon South & district)

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area(sqm)
Ellinbank Tennis Courts	11 Community Place	ELLINBANK	Sport Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	1,313.63
Linns Road Reserve	Linns Rd	CHILDERS	Community Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	8,014.80
Thorpdale Recreation Reserve	10 Stockdales Rd	THORPDALE	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	Crown Land	CoM	48,633.82
Thorpdale Swimming Pool	32 Robinson St	THORPDALE	Community Recreation	District	No	BBSC	YMCA Victoria	16,544.85
Bishops Road Reserve	Bishops Rd	THORPDALE	SP-Rest Spot	_	No	Crown Land	CoM	5,232.98
Coalville Recreation Reserve	Coalville Rd	COALVILLE	Community Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	8,102.72
Modella Recreation Reserve	1005 Koo Wee Rup-Longwarry Rd	MODELLA	Community Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	25,063.66
Yarragon-Leongatha Road Bush Reserve	Yarragon-Leongatha Rd	ALLAMBEE	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	CoM	5,636.15
Ripplebrook Recreation Reserve	689 North Yannathan Rd	RIPPLEBROOK	Community Recreation	Neigh- bourhood	No	Crown Land	CoM	33,083.99
Athlone Recreation Reserve	Drouin-Korumburra Rd	ATHLONE	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	CoM	24,908.37
Ellinbank Recreation Reserve	3283 Korumburra-Warragul Rd	WARRAGUL SOUTH	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	CoM	37,913.24
Hallora Recreation Reserve	1530 Main South Rd	HALLORA	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	CoM/BBSC	40,046.49
Tetoora Road Tennis Courts	2575 Korumburra-Warragul Rd	TETOORA ROAD	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	CoM/BBSC	8,825.64
Mirboo North-Trafalgar Road open space(Triangle)	Mirboo North-Trafalgar Rd	THORPDALE	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,492.44
Lardner Public Hall Reserve	255 Burnt Store Rd	LARDNER	SP-Destination	-	No	BBSC	No	2,105.63
Ellinbank Tennis Courts	155 Giles Rd	TRAFALGAR SOUTH	Natural	Regional	No	Trust for Nature Victoria	CoM	444,400.89
Linns Road Reserve	Station St	THORPDALE	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	9,697.85
Thorpdale Recreation Reserve	256 Burnt Store Rd	LARDNER	Sport Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	15,915.50
Thorpdale Swimming Pool	Narracan Connection Rd	NARRACAN	SP-Rest Spot	-	No	BBSC	YMCA Victoria	3,267.63
Bishops Road Reserve	Falls Rd	NARRACAN	Natural	Regional	No	BBSC	CoM	8,625.11
Coalville Recreation Reserve	284 Allambee Estate Rd	ALLAMBEE	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	CoM	10,377,502.23
Modella Recreation Reserve	Allambee Estate Rd	ALLAMBEE	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	CoM	28,705.69
Yarragon-Leongatha Road Bush Reserve	Yarragon-Leongatha Rd	YARRAGON SOUTH	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	CoM	64,306.19
Ripplebrook Recreation Reserve	Mills Rd	COALVILLE	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	CoM	255,055.24
Pioneer Reserve	Station St	THORPDALE	SP-Destination	-	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	13,352.64

Appendix 21: Drouin West, Rokeby & District

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area(sqm)
Buln Buln Recreation Reserve	Staion Street	BULN BULN	Recreation Sport	District	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	62,917.05
Crossover Regional Park	1455 Main Neerim Rd	CROSSOVER	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	3,595,284.00
Drouin Speedway	140 Main Jindivick Rd	JINDIVICK	Recreation Sport	District	No	BBSC-Drouin Speed-way Club	_	107,344.70
Gleeson Road Access Reserve	Gleeson Rd	JINDIVICK	SP-Vacant	_	No	BBSC	_	1,833.61
Glen Crombie Parkland	850 main Neerim Rd	DROUIN WEST	Natural	District	Yes	BBSC	Private	42,073.97
Jindivick G78 Bushland Reserve	Stall Rd	JINDIVICK	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	43,465.00
Jindivick Playground	Jacksons Track	JINIDIVICK	Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	1,050.26
Kydd Parke Reserve (Jindivick Recreation Reserve Oval)	1120 Jacksons Track	JINDIVICK	Sport Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	Com-BBSC	38,101.95
Lillico Court Reserve	375 Lillico Rd	LILLICO	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	CoM	5,479.31
Nangarra Reserve	95 Nangara Rd	JINDIVICK	Natural	Regional	No	BBSC	CoM	150,295.00
Old Main Jindivick Road Bush Reserve	125 Old Main Jindivick Rd	JINDIVICK	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	5,349.99
Robin Hood Reserve(Middle part)	Fisher Rd	DROUIN WEST	Natural	District	No	Crown Land	BBSC / MW / CoM	169,068.60
Rokeby Flora Reserve	Old Telegraph Rd	WEST ROKEBY	Natural	Regional	No	BBSC	BBSC (Natural ENV)	89,825.73
Rokeby Recreation Reserve	1010 Brandy Creek Rd	ROKEBY	Sp-Destination	_	Yes	BBSC	Com/BBSC	25,442.87
Rokeby to Neerim Trail	Rokeby to Neerim Trail	ROKEBY	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	52,570.00
Whiskey Creek Bushland Reserve	130 Old Sale Rd	DROUIN WEST	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	26,844.00

Appendix 22: Neerim South, Noojee & District

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land Area(sq.m)
Neerim South Wetlands Reserve	23 Railway Rd	NEERIM SOUTH	WM	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	16,338.00
Noojee Tennis Courts	Mt Baw Baw Tourist Rd	NOOJEE	Sport Recreation	local	Yes	Crown Land	Noojee Parks and Reserves Inc CoM	1,724.01
Neerim Recreation Reserve	Hamono Rd	NEERIM	Sport Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	37,864.97
R.J. Fawcett Park	Main Neerim Rd	NEERIM JUNCTION	Community Recreation	Local	Gym	VicTrack	BBSC	4,330.72
Murphy Road Creek Reserve	Murphy Rd	NEERIM JUNCTION	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	2,942.11
Ridge Road Bush Reserve	Ridge Rd	NOOJEE	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	21,154.93
Neerim South Recreation Reserve	17 Neerim East Rd	NEERIM SOUTH	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	CoM	37,861.27
Natural Researve Between Kuhnell Road & Old Fumina Road	65 Old Fumina Rd	NEERIM NORTH	Natural	Regional	No	BBSC	Education Department	73,241.98
Shirley Road Reserve	16 Shirley Rd	NEERIM SOUTH	Natural	Local	Yes	BBSC	OSM/NE/Fire Cut	8,615.98
Neerim Junction Tennis Club	17 Court Rd	NEERIM JUNCTION	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	726.76
Labertouche Caves	Forest Rd	GENTLE ANNIE	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	232,015.66
Craig Watts Skate Park	150-168 Main Neerim Rd	NEERIM SOUTH	Community recreation	District	Yes-Skate	BBSC	BBSC	3,942.57
Nayook Bushland Reserve	90 Paynter Rd	NEERIM JUNCTION	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	88,833.14
Noojee Station Ground Parkland	Mt Baw Baw Tourist Dave	NOOJEE	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	36,424.41
Noojee Trestle Bridge	Mt Baw Baw Tourist Rd	NOOJEE	Natural-heiritage	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	752,376.72
McCay Aboretum	360 Neerim North Rd	NEERIM NORTH	Community recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	6,157.78
Neerim Bushland Reserve	170 Old Fumina Rd	NEERIM NORTH	Natural	Regional	No	Education De- partment	Parks Victoria	8,270.75
Noojee Bushland Reserve	15 School Rd	NOOJEE	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	669,137.39
RedHill Creek Wetland	Red Hill Crt	NEERIM SOUTH	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	12,956.08
Red Hill Creek Reserve	Neerim East Rd	NEERIM SOUTH	WM	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	12,983.71
Linear Connection Between Swiming Pool and Cur- rawong Close	Currawong Close	NEERIM SOUTH	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	1,781.14
SweetWater Creek Nature Conservation Reserve	Brigg Track & Beards Track	NEERIM EAST	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	12,034,550.56
Neerim G209 Bushland Reserve	1515 Jacksons Track	NEERIM SOUTH	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	101,853.17
Tarago Reservoir Park	235 Jindivick-Neerim South Rd	NEERIM SOUTH	Natural	Regional	No	Melbourne Water	Parks Victoria	337,544.83
Bunyip State Park	Forest Rd	GENTLE ANNIE	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	35,882,979.55
Ada River Historical and Cultural Reserve	Dowey Spur Rd	ADA	Natural-Historical	State	No	Crown Land	VicTrack	3,330,547.50
Ada Trail Trees Reserve	Federal Rd	ADA	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	140,378.44
Latrobe River Noojee Streamside Reserve	15 School Rd	NOOJEE	Natural	State	Gym	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	37,867.59
Noojee River Reserve Campling Group	Loch Valley Rd	NOOJEE	Community Recreation	Regional	Yes	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	30,929.45

Appendix 23: Baw Baw, Willow Grove & District

Place Name	Street Name	Locality	Type	Hierarchy	Playground	Land Owner	Land Manager	Land area(sqm)
Allan Croxford Reserve	Knotts Siding Rd	RAWSON	WM	Neighbourhood	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	48,738.05
Baw Baw national Park	South Face Rd	BAW BAW	Natural	National	No	Crown Land	Parks victoria	127,977,842.20
Bells Hall Reserve	12 Pinnacle Dr	RAWSON	SP-Destination	_	No	BBSC	BBSC	8,531.21
Blue Beef Creek National Conservation Reserve	Blue Rock Rd	TANJIL	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	14,465,624.53
Blue Lake Park	Blue Rd	WILLOW GROVE	Community Recreation	District	Yes	Southern Melbourne Water	Southern Melb Water	141,536.20
Chinese Gardens Camping Ground	Walhalla Rd	WALHALLA	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Walhalla Broad of Management	13,953.67
Church Hill Rd Reserve	Church Hill Rd	WALHALLA	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	541.16
Daveys Road Reserve	Daveys Rd	WILLOW GROVE	Natural	Neighbourhood	No	Crown Land	CoM	68,372.78
Erica Mill Reserve	Moore St	ERICA	Community Recreation	District	No	Crown Land	CoM	54,805.12
Erica Recreation Reserve	School Rd	ERICA	Sport Recreation	Local Significant	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	32,062.20
Fumina South Education Area	Willow Grove Rd	FUMINA SOUTH	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	1,271,130.38
Glenbrook Place Reserve	32 Glenbrook Place	WILLOW GROVE	SP-Vacant	_	No	BBSC	BBSC	698.36
Hill End Hall and Recreation Reserve	Willow Grove Rd	HILL END	Sport Recreation	_	No	Crown Land	CoM	40,529.58
Kirchubels Tramway & Mill Historic Area	Rowleys Ridge Rd	TANJIL BREN	Natural Historic	National	No	Crown Land	Parks Voctoria	466,219.87
Maiden Town Track Reserve	Maiden Town Track	WALHALLA	Natural	District	No	BBSC	_	24,965.37
Main Road Reserve	174 Main Rd	WALHALLA	Community Recreation	Local	No	Department of Transport and Plan-ning(DTP)	DTP	487.19
Moondara Reservoir Picnic Ground	Moondara Reservoir Rd	MOONDARA	Natural	Regional	No	Crown Land	Gippsland Water	196,522.77
Moondarra Bushland Reserve	Jacobs Creek Rd	JACOBS CREEK	SP-Nature Reserve	_	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	283,393.00
Moondarra State Park	Tanjil Bren Rd	MOONDARRA	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	65,046,984.11
Mount Useful Natural Feature and Scenic Re-serve	Springs Road	TOOMBON	SP-Nature Reserve	_	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	2,898,505.74
Mountaineer Brass Band Rotunda	Main Road	WALHALLA	SP-Rest Spot	_	No	Crown Land	CoM	296.68
Moondara State park 2	Moondarra Reserve Rd	YALLOURN NORTH	Natural	State	No	Crown Land	CoM	11,056,481.19
Rawson Park	5 Pinnacle Dr	RAWSON	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	723.85
Rawson Recreation Reserve & Tennis Courts	Knotts Siding Rd	RAWSON	Sport Recreation	Local	BMX	BBSC	BBSC	45,007.69
Right Hand Branch Road Open Space	15 Right Hand Branch Rd	WALHALLA	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	_	570.21
St Phillack Court Reserve	St Phillack Cres	RAWSON	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	8,820.81
Stringers Park	113 Main Rd	WALHALLA	SP-RestSpot	_	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,812.87
Tanjil Bren Recreation Reserve	Saxtons Rd	TANJIL BREN	Community Recreation	Local	No	DEECA	BBSC	7,646.56
Tanjil Court Access Reserve	4A Tanjil Ct	WILLOW GROVE	Linkage	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	278.24
Tanjil South Recreation Reserve	377 Moe-Willow Grove Rd	TANJIL SOUTH	Sport Recreation	Local	No	Crown Land	CoM	24,548.72
Thalloo Road Tennis Court	25 Thalloo Rd	THALLOO	Community Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	6,191.53
Tombon Gold Mine	Donnellys Creek Rd	TOOMBON	SP-Historic	_	No	Crown Land	_	3,740,360.53
Tooronga Road Reserve	Tooronga Rd	WILLOW GROVE	Community Recreation	Local	Yes	BBSC	BBSC	2,936.86

Upper Hospital Road Reserve	7 Slaughterhouse Track	WALHALLA	Natural	Local	No	BBSC	Not managed by BBSC	3,220.53
Walhalla Camp Grounds	Walhalla Rd	WALHALLA	SP-RestSpot	–	No	Crown Land	CoM	4,674.37
Walhalla Rd Reserve & Open Space	Walhalla Road	THOMSON	SP-RestSpot	–	No	BBSC	BBSC	4,955.67
Walhalla Rest Area 1	Walhalla Rd	WALHALLA	SP-RestSpot	–	No	–	BBSC	6,320.22
Walhalla Rest Area 2	Walhalla Rd	WALHALLA	SP-RestSpot	–	No	–	BBSC	1,074.13
Walhalla Rest Area 3	88 Main Rd	WALHALLA	SP-RestSpot	–	No	The Long Tunnel Gold Mines	BBSC	3,804.19
Westbury Tennis Courts	Millers Rd	WESTBURY	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	BBSC	5,330.96
Willow Grove Natural Reserve	Willow Grove Rd	HILL END	Natural	District	No	–	–	28,095.91
Willow Grove Recreation Reserve	40 Moe-Willow Grove Rd	WILLOW GROVE	Sport Recreation	Local	No	BBSC	CoM	52,536.24
Yarra Ranger National Park(partially)	Toorong Tanjil Rd	TOORONGO	Natural	National	No	Crown Land	Parks Victoria	761,409.30

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IMAGE: Civic Park, Drouin