PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PLAN 2014-2024

Part 1 of 3 - Strategic Vision

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WELLINGTON SHIRE COUNCIL
The Heart of Gippsland

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PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PLAN
PART ONE – Strategic Vision

1 About this document:

The purpose of document is to review existing (2014) Public Open Space (POS) provision and infrastructure across urban areas of Wellington Shire and provides individual town plans for the provision of POS until 2024.

To align with the overall concept of creating vibrant urban centres where people choose to live the overall focus of the Open Space Plan (OSP) is on 'liveability', hence the management of play (play spaces) and the urban forest have been incorporated into this document.

The document is in four parts:

- Part One addresses the strategic approach, broad demographics and methodological assumptions, this part focuses on a whole of shire analysis, in effect creating an overall vision of Wellington's future POS
- Part Two covers the more detailed and specific Town Plans
- Part Three includes appendices and supporting information
- Part Four will be developed from the adopted OSP as a 'works' program, where specific maintenance and capital projects are summarised and time-lined, Part Four will inform recurrent needs and the capital works programs

2 Introduction:

The value that urban POS provides to the community is a combination of social, economic and environmental factors. A principal role of POS is to support health, recreation and leisure functions including active pursuits, such as organised sports, exercise, children's play and social activities; yet also encompassing passive uses such as quiet reflection in an attractive setting. Equally, POS is the key to creating attractive towns and neighbourhoods where people want to live and socialise. POS includes the urban forest.

Sustainability and environmental conservation are also essential roles of public open space management, e.g., through habitat and biodiversity conservation and air and water quality management. It moreover provides a strong connection to nature for people living in urbanised environments. POS is also highly valued for its natural beauty, contribution to neighbourhood character and community identity, cultural and heritage values, tourism potential and the emotional connection people may attach to it.

The Wellington Shire Council's Open Space Plan provides a framework for the planning and management of the Shire's POS network, including the urban forest and play spaces, it does however exclude sporting infrastructure. The plan defines how Wellington Shire Council will meet community needs and expectations for urban public open space now and until 2024 in terms of equity, liveability, vitality, sustainability, quality, flexibility, diversity, community health and well-being and efficient use of resources.

WSC recognises that public open space is no longer just 'nice to have' but is essential for healthy communities.

3 Background

Council developed an Open Space Strategy in 1999 and adopted it in 2000. Whilst this document was a significant step forward for the relatively new Wellington Shire and many of the recommendations have been undertaken, community aspirations have changed, as has the position of Council. Equally, the development of other Council strategic documents (e.g., Healthy Wellington, Physical Activity, Walking & Cycling, and Built Environment Strategy) have changed the need for a specific POS strategy and highlighted the need for a more outcome focussed asset management approach.

A 2011 VicHealth survey identified that in Victoria between 50 and 80 percent of people visit a green space each week. Consultation at the local level generally illustrates community satisfaction with parks and reserves and a high value is placed on POS for the major contribution they make to local character, amenity and community vibrancy (liveability). The annual Community Satisfaction Survey constantly rates WSC presentation of open space highly with the 2014 survey giving a performance index score of 75 four points above comparable large rural shires and importance at 71 points (rating more highly with women than men 74 vs. 68).

4 Existing Open Space

The Natural Environment and Parks business unit manages approximately 600 hectares of POS; it is difficult to provide an exact area value because open space in urban areas falls into a number categories, has many functional managers (owners) and in some instances occurs on non-council managed/owned land, e.g., Knob Reserve Stratford (DEPI), town approaches (VicRoads).

- Natural Areas (e.g., forests, National Parks, coastlines, etc.) throughout Wellington are normally managed by state government departments and are generally not considered in this plan, however, they are often major open space elements for residents and visitors, the most significant example is The Ninety Mile Beach (abutting numerous coastal communities). WSC does manage some of these areas within an urban or peri-urban context, including the Macalister Wetlands Maffra, Red Gate and Herb Guyatt Reserves Sale
- Road Reserves much of the open space within towns is located within road reserves; the vast majority of WSC managed urban trees are planted on road reserves, medians and town entries open space areas are typically road reserves. Some of these areas are not on Council managed roads, these include most highways and arterial roads, examples include Johnson Street Maffra and Commercial Road Yarram
- Rail Trails and associated connections whilst the inter-town rail trails are not managed by WSC, rail trails within towns and some connections (e.g., Heyfield, Yarram) are managed by WSC
- Recreation Reserves whilst generally set aside for sporting purposes, many recreation reserves also provides open space for casual users. Some recreation reserves in smaller towns also function as community parks, e.g., Devon North
- Land set aside for other purposes but used for open space, e.g., drainage reserves

- Land acquired from subdivisions and not used for any practical purpose, numerous examples exist, particularly in Loch Sport
- Land owned by other agencies but used and managed by WSC, sometimes because of historical precinct (Apex Park Maffra) and others by a lease agreement (e.g., Cowwarr), this can also include unalienated land
- Public purpose reserves, land set aside for POS, this is the most common form of POS land category

4.1 Defining Issues

As urban populations grow housing density and house sizes increase, private back yards diminish in size. Population demographics continue to change with a far greater number of single person households, smaller families and an aging population, thus making the role of POS in community life more critical. Equally, community values have grown and changed over time and expectations of POS have increased. People now expect parks to be more accessible and to offer a greater quality and a wider variety of experiences.

Whilst many of the issues with POS provision are common across most municipalities, there are a number of issues that are more typical of rural/regional municipalities and some specific to Wellington, these include:

- Resource availability (material and human resources)
- Competing demands of urban and rural sectors
- Dwelling changes and highly varied population densities
- A large number of small and geographically dispersed townships
- Differing current, future growth and development potential
- Demographic and social planning

- Large number of absentee owners, e.g., holiday houses at Loch Sport, Coongulla/Glenmaggie, Golden Beach, Seaspray, etc.
- Provision of services for tourists and visitors, including those visiting non WSC sites, e.g., Alpine National Park, Ninety-Mile Beach
- Widely disparate communities

Whilst significant steps have been taken to improve POS, there are still examples where thinking that is more contemporary is required.

POS provision and management in regional areas and in particular WSC is different from that in metropolitan centres and municipalities composed largely of contiguous urban areas because of the large differences between urban centres both in size and demographics, the limited growth, the large geographic area, several areas which are composed of largely absentee owners and importantly the provision of POS for visitors and tourists rather than a local population.

4.2 Vision and Aim(s):

4.2.1 Vision

Have communities engaged with, valuing and using a diverse range of sustainable open spaces that are safe to use, are welcoming, engaging and accessible. These spaces will be well distributed and connected, increase the biodiversity of our urban centres and provide quality POS that makes a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of our communities, the liveability of our urban centres and a significant contribution to our Wellington 2030 strategic vision.

Provision and sustainable management of POS including the Urban Forest and Play Spaces, are critical elements in providing liveable communities. This importance is widely recognised throughout a range of council policies, strategies, and plans (e.g., Wellington 2030, Council Plan 2013-17, Healthy Wellington Plan, Built Environment Strategy and Physical Activity Strategy), however none directly address provision of POS. The Wellington Planning Scheme provides some guidance both generalistically and with specific requirements (e.g., Standard C13; Local parks within 400 metres safe walking distance of at least 95% of all dwellings).

This Public Open Space Plan has been developed to manage open space assets, including the urban forest and play spaces and to provide for current and future community needs. The Plan recognises the importance of engaging with the community and activating these open spaces to fully realise the social and physical benefits that these spaces provide.

Broadly, for open space, play spaces, and the urban forest, the Public Open Space Plan encompasses:

- A classification methodology
- An audit of existing POS, (both WSC managed and other significant POS) in and around urban centres
- Spatial analysis (relative to the classification framework)

- Demographic analysis (relative to the classification framework and planning scheme requirements)
- Service standards review (relative to the classification framework)
- An implementation/action plan

Hence, the overall aim of this plan is to inform Council and the community about the current levels of POS, how existing provision fits within the existing and future community framework(s) and demographics, and to provide both a framework and an action plan to take POS provision forward for the next 10 years.

4.3 Context with Wellington Shire Strategies and Policies

The Open Space Plan is set within an overall strategic framework derived from a range of WSC strategies, industries standards and the Infrastructure Development Manual (IDM). This section discusses the connection between the OSP and these documents.

4.3.1 Wellington 2030

Wellington 2030 provides a long-term vision and broad guidance; 2030 is a visioning document and was derived from a community survey, community meetings and a series of workshops. It was adopted by Council in 2008.

The primary themes are:

- Natural Environment
- Economy
- Transport and Road
- Population
- Development
- Wellbeing and Safety
- Culture
- Liveability
- Council

Open space provision and management directly provides significant inputs and outcomes to the vast majority of these themes and indirectly to all. This makes POS provision and management significant contributors to enabling the Wellington 2030 vision. By default, if the vision of Wellington 2030 is to be realised then resourcing and provision of POS by Council is a critical factor in determining success.

4.3.2 Council Plan 2013-17

Key strategies in the current Council Plan (2013-2017) that are relevant (directly and or indirectly) to the provision of open space include, provision of a wide range of active and passive opportunities focusing on creating healthy lifestyles, cultural and community liveability, land use planning, economic growth, the development of the built and natural environment and community engagement. These key strategies are detailed in Appendix One. Whilst Council Plans are dynamic documents that are frequently reviewed to reflect changing priorities, the overall importance and requirement for POS is a reoccurring theme.

4.3.3 Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan (Healthy Wellington) 2013-17

The Community Wellbeing Strategy is the health and wellbeing planning connection between State and Local Government and other local stakeholders, including the community. The top health outcomes identified in Wellington for the next four years, include 'increasing social connectedness and inclusion' and 'increasing physical activity', both areas where POS provision has a significant influence and POS does this by directly and indirectly influencing built, social, economic and natural environments. As detailed in the plan sustainable built and natural environments are key elements, however, POS also provides critical elements in other areas of this strategy including, provision of healthy, safe and inclusive communities, engaged communities, cultural diversity and richness, etc.

Given the importance of this plans outcomes to the community health and the role that quality POS provision can provide then it is important that POS analysis include spatial gap analysis, infrastructure provisions and measures of social disadvantage.

4.3.4 Physical Activity Strategy (PAS)

The purpose of the PAS is to provide the structure, settings and supports for more people to participate in physical activity more often. In relation to POS the key areas are:

- 'to support more people walking or cycling more often' and
- 'to plan and design community facilities and settings in ways that diversify the function and therefore the opportunity for people to be physically active'
- Open space settings that currently accommodate a diverse range of interests and opportunities for people to be physically active, should have a rolling program of planned events that showcase the space. These events would promote existing open space and the potential of open space as a place to play

4.3.5 Built Environment Strategy

The provision of POS, involves the opportunity for people to interact with the environment, in most instances this requires the provision of some form of infrastructure. This infrastructure has a cost, in the initial provision and on-going maintenance and replacement; this is typically framed with the term 'Asset Management'.

The Wellington Shire Built Environment Strategy was developed to provide a framework to enable improved asset management to support Council and community services and to promote sustainable infrastructure. Its vision is:

> *"For Wellington Shire to have a built environment that is sustainable, appropriate, accessible and responsive to the community".*

And its priorities are:

- Structured Asset Management Plans that link with Wellington Shire Council's key strategic documents
- Responsible and sustainable expansion of community infrastructure
- Well informed and engaged communities
- Improve liveability for the residents of Wellington Shire

A major aspect of this strategy is the requirement for Asset Management Plans to provide a framework and to undertake service provision with the financial and physical limitations to

the WSC, particularly in recognising and managing the existing and future costs required to maintain the assets.

4.3.6 Walking & Cycling Strategic Plan 2012 –16

This plan's vision is to promote and support healthy, active and liveable communities throughout Wellington Shire through the provision of safe walking and cycling opportunities for all to enjoy and to encourage everyone to include walking and cycling as part of their daily lives. It identifies the importance of walking and cycling, the need to promote walking and cycling opportunities and the need for path networks to connect key destinations including parks, gardens and open spaces.

4.3.7 Economic and Tourism Strategy 2011-2015

According to this strategy, the tourism industry employs 7% of the total employment in the Shire, employing approximately 937 people. A further 2,400 people are employed in the retail sector, some of which would be working in the tourism industry.

Tourism and in particular holiday home (absentee) ownership are important factors to the sustainability of Wellington and that in many instances POS is provided largely for tourism (e.g., Rutter Park, Port Albert, Woodside Beach Park), this strategy provides little direct comment (positive or negative) about the provision of quality POS.

4.3.8 Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Adopted in December 2011 this recent addition to WSC's strategic plans outlines WSC's "commitment to our continuing journey towards environmental sustainability".

In relation to POS development and maintenance, this strategy provides largely a 'big picture' overview. POS should be developed and maintained sustainably, although this is not currently a formalised process. POS management has huge potential to be a leader in demonstrating environmental sustainability, however may need to develop a more overarching asset management focus to quantify such sustainability.

4.3.9 Planning Scheme Provisions

The WSC planning scheme provides a legislated framework around some provisions of POS. This includes POS contributions (Clause 52.01), liveability and sustainability requirements and standards (Clause 56.3), urban landscapes and quality standards (Clause 56.05). Generally, the planning scheme provisions provide valuable overview and specific standards. The details in the specific clauses are listed in Appendix 2 - Planning Scheme Provisions.

4.3.10 Town Structure Plans

WSC has developed three 'structure plans' which have been incorporated into its planning scheme. The current plans are Heyfield, Rosedale and Sale, Wurruk and Longford. Further plans may be developed in the life of the POS plan.

These plans guide future development by:

- Ensuring that future growth and infrastructure are appropriately located and planned for in an integrated way

- Responding to the key challenges facing the community and shape the vision for the future of the area
- Contributing to the creation of more prosperous and attractive places
- Promoting better connected and sustainable communities

As planning documents developed through extensive community consultation, adopted by Council and incorporated into the Wellington Planning Scheme, these documents inform POS development

4.3.11 Industry, Professional Guidelines & Australian Standards

Numerous excellent industry standards and guidelines exist, none are definitive:

- The Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) has been developed by a range of rural municipalities, including WSC, and has various sections, including public open space provisions. This document should be tested against the planning scheme provisions
- VicRoads – Cycle Notes – Guideline to the provision and design of bicycle networks
- Healthy by Design(Heart Foundation) – planning guidelines
- Creating Healthy Neighbourhoods (Heart Foundation)
- An Australian Vision for Active Transport (REF)
- AS4685-2014 (six parts) Playgrounds Standard
- SEPA (Sustainable Environments for Physical Activity).
- Parks & Leisure Australia (PLA) Open Space Planning and Design Guide 2013

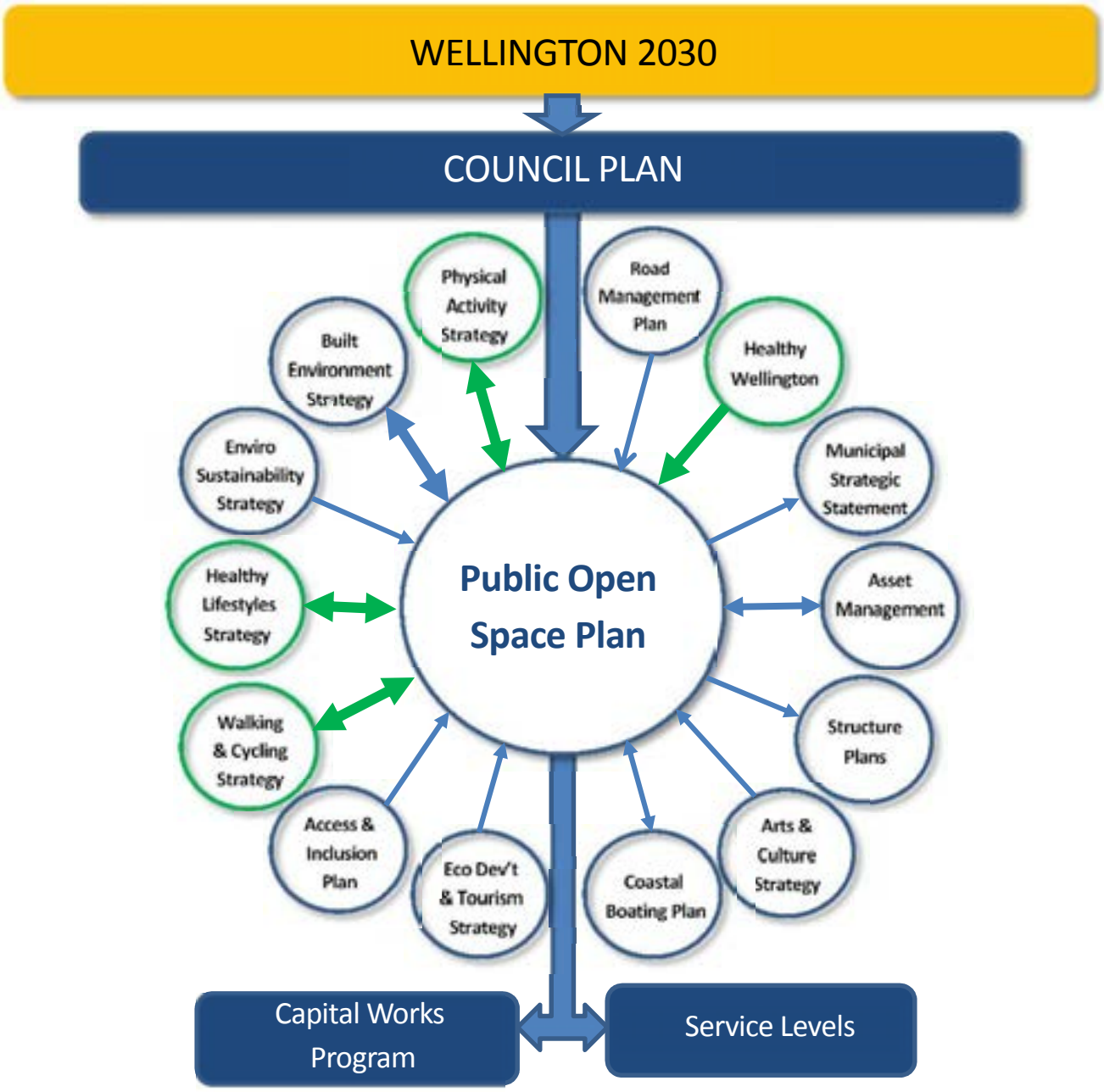
4.3.12 Summary of Wellington Plans and Strategies

The review of existing plans and strategies demonstrate that a high level of planning exists, and whilst many of the plans and strategies overlap, all highlight the importance of public open space. Largely the WSC planning scheme covers the provision and style of POS well and arguably covers much of the points raised in many other plans and strategies. Given the greater legislated authority of the planning scheme, when conflict arise, plans and strategies should either be subservient to the planning scheme or the planning scheme revised.

Figure 1 graphically illustrates the relationship between the OSP and other WSC plans and strategies.

There appears little value in this plan rehashing the various plans and strategies; hence, the POS Plan will focus on specific objectives covered by a series of guiding principles.

Figure 1 Relationship of OSP to WSC Plans and Strategies



- **Line thickness reflects strength of relationship**
- **Arrows reflect information directional flow**
- **Green colour indicates strategies having a major influence on OSP**

4.4 Public Open Space Guiding Principles

A set of guiding principles have been developed to guide the vision and the development of the classification criteria. These principles also assist in the assessment and classification of POS. The principles are based on the following table:

Sustainability	The fundamental guiding principle is of sustainability. This requires balancing the current and future needs of the community, the environment and the economy in providing and maintaining public open space. Sustainability in public open space principally involves ensuring appropriate use and protection of resources, including the best use of parklands, the protection of habitats, maintaining open space reserves for future generations, and appropriate use of public assets
Access and availability	A range of open spaces of different size and function should be accessible to all of the Shire's residents. Ease of access and choice of transport mode are key considerations in land use planning in and around open spaces
Equity	Equitable distribution of public open space, in terms of amount, condition, protection and access of spaces across and within urban areas so that locations, user groups or segments of the community are not disadvantaged. Responsibility to consider intergenerational equity and ensure good quality spaces and healthy environments are available for future generations
Quality and enjoyment	The provision of quality spaces for the enjoyment of the Shire's residents is critical and the principle of quality and enjoyment will be used as a reference point; i.e., each decision must be mindful of whether public open space is of good quality and that people will safely enjoy using the area
Financial responsibility	The Shire must be accountable and responsible in how it uses public funds and assets. It must address the cost of provision and ongoing maintenance in a responsible, equitable and sustainable way. Investment in open space must be justified in terms of an efficient use of resources, whilst funds obtained from developer contributions or from any open space disposal must be used appropriately
Efficient use of resources	Recognition of the need to manage natural and community resources in a sustainable manner and to ensure integration of best practice principles such as the efficient use of water
Flexibility	Implementation of the plan must be responsive to community needs, changes in priorities and to regional and local issues. Therefore, a degree of flexibility must be incorporated into classifications, actions and implementation. This includes considerations for different circumstances, environments, needs and aspirations in different areas and communities across the Shire
Diversity	To provide a diverse range of opportunities offered in public open space across the Shire
Partnerships	To recognise the importance of partnerships in assisting to achieve the provision of quality open space
Culture and heritage	Recognition of the local culture and heritage of an area when considering the provision of or development of public open space
Management	To ensure the most effective and efficient management of public open space and to continue an ethos of continuous improvement in internal partnerships, processes and land use planning
Community health and well-being	Recognition of the significant benefits that public open space provides concerning positive community health outcomes such as fostering social connectivity and building community capacity
Community engagement	Continue to foster community input and ownership through the use of appropriate communication and consultation methods

4.5 Open Space Classification:

4.5.1 POS provision standards

A new set of provision standards (classification criteria) is suggested as part of the new POS Plan hierarchy and classification system. These provision standards identify the size, role, type and diversity of spaces that it is desirable to provide across the municipality. The classification criteria include five different provision headings — function, size, service area, location and facilities, which establish the target provision and development standards for each type of POS in the established network.

The proposed standards have two elements, namely, catchment and function. Small areas of undefined, active recreational, residual or special purpose open spaces are not included in this classification framework e.g., drainage reserves.

Inclusion of small spaces within POS allocations is not generally considered optimal unless these spaces serve a demonstrated functional community purpose.

It is recognised that POS sometimes provide numerous other urban functions such as stormwater management, telecommunication infrastructure, depots, etc. These uses have been located within POS functions across all types, however it is essential that features are subordinate to, and do not compromise the main functional use.

Community gardens have been raised during the process of developing this plan, whilst the OSP plan does not address such enterprises, the use of public land for such use is supported and encouraged where such use does not detract from the existing value of OS areas. The use of naturestrips for vegetable gardening or non-grass landscaping has not been addressed in this plan, it will be addressed in a future review of relevant local laws.

4.5.1.1 Catchment

The provision standard consists of four specific catchments types, and the special classes of 'natural areas', 'linear or linking', 'Town Entry', 'Tourism' and 'Central Business District' (CBD) open space. Often POS serves a range of functions other than purely open space (e.g., drainage, conservation), the classification is based on the primary purpose of an area. Other types of open space managed by council are not classified (e.g., reserves that are primarily for drainage, unused road reserves). For most towns the focus will be on the provision of NOS (Neighbourhood Open Space) and DOS (District Open Space).

1. **Local Open Space (LOS)**
    - Local open spaces are small parks that service the recreation needs of the immediate residential population. Typically, these will be within 300m or a 5-minute walk for 90% of the local population (township or part of township). Size 0.1-0.5ha
    - Largely they should allow for passive surveillance, be responsive to natural site features, build on a sense of place and preserve or enhance local biodiversity, and connect to walking and preferably cycling networks
    - With a shift in community expectations and in POS standards LOS is not encouraged with the typical minimum standard being NOS

    Examples of LOS include Queen St Rosedale, Mountainview Drive Stratford, Perry Court Heyfield, and Deanne Drv Yarram.

2. **Neighbourhood Open Space (NOS)**
    - Neighbourhood open spaces serve as the recreational and social focus of a community. Residents are attracted by the variety of features and facilities, and opportunities to socialise. They should be located within 400m or a 10-minute walk for 85% of the local population (township or part of township). Typically sized 0.5-2ha although specific requirements could vary the size (e.g., conservation needs, local population size)

- NOS catchments would typically apply to catchments of around 500 residents. However they may also be provided as a tourism driver
- Largely NOS should be central to surrounding neighbourhoods, allow for passive surveillance, be responsive to natural site features, build on a sense of place and preserve or enhance local biodiversity, and connect to good walking and cycling networks. Typically they will be large enough to enable different activities and uses to occur simultaneously
- For some smaller isolated communities these areas should provide some of the features of District Open Space, hence they may have additional or enhanced facilities

Examples of NOS include Anzac Park Briagolong, Brennan Park Sale and Edward Crook Park Rosedale.

3. District Open Space (DOS)

- District open spaces primarily provide for recreational and social focus for larger communities/populations, neighbouring rural areas and neighbouring smaller communities. These sites should be able to cater for significant community events. They should be located within a 15-minute drive of adjoining rural areas (where possible) and within 1km or 20-minute walk of 85% of an urban population. Typically they would be larger than 2ha although this could vary depending on site needs and population catchment
- Largely DOS should be central to catchment populations, located on significant roads, provide car parking, allows for passive surveillance, link to good walking and cycling connections. Provide a significant visual break in the urban environment, particularly along major thoroughfares
- A DOS would typically applicable for catchment populations greater than 1000 people. DOS may be developed in smaller population catchments because area

has a tourism driver. Towns with a large absentee population. e.g., Loch Sport may also meet the DOS requirement

Examples of existing DOS are Victoria Park Maffra, Memorial Park Yarram and Apex Park Heyfield.

4. Regional Open Space (ROS)

- Regional Open Space should accommodate significant and important recreation, conservation and environmental features. ROS needs to achieve a balance of functions for surrounding districts. The location of ROS is usually determined by resource availability and opportunities to utilise and/or protect the space
- Access is based on the assumption that the majority of users will drive, although connections to walking and cycling networks are also critical. It should be accessible via major road networks and if available public transport. Sufficient car parking should be available
- The size will largely depend on the function, given that such sites should be able to accommodate a range of concurrent activities, including play, picnicking, walking, etc., most would be of significant size
- ROS should have the ability to attract visitors from outside the local government area

In Wellington, many ROS areas are not directly managed by WSC. The Lake Guthridge/Botanic Garden precinct is a WSC direct managed ROS, whilst areas managed by others include The Knob Reserve, Stratford; Ninety Mile Beach, Golden Beach and Woodside Beach; Blue Pools, Briagolong, etc.

Special POS Classes

5. **Natural Areas**
    - Opportunities to experience the natural environment is an important addition to the breadth of POS experiences available to residents
    - Studies have shown that they can assist with the mental health and wellbeing of a wide cross section of the community
    - Often these reserves cater for broad range of ages and abilities and provide excellent opportunities to learn more about the natural environment
    - Native vegetation around urban centres has mostly been cleared. Hence these reserves are often made up of rare vegetation communities and can be important natural linkages across the landscape
    - Many natural areas are not owned or controlled by council (e.g. Sale Common, Briagolong Red Gum Reserve). Those that are council owned or controlled typically have service levels focused on the control of weeds, enhancement of natural values and interpretation

- Where natural areas adjacent to urban centres are managed by external agencies, WSC supports where practicable strong off road linkages to facilitate usage (e.g., links to Briagolong Red Gum Forest, Herb Guyatt Reserve Sale or Knob Reserve Stratford)
- These areas cannot be readily created, hence connections and links are critical elements in providing access to these sites. Where natural areas do not exist adjacent to urban towns it will generally not be possible to develop such sites

Examples include Herb Guyatt Sanctuary Sale, the Red Gum Reserve in Briagolong and the Macalister Wetlands in Maffra.

6. Linear or linking POS

- The purpose of these areas is to provide off road connections between various town areas. An example is the reserve in Figure 2 showing the link between Cedarwood Drive and Powerscourt St Maffra
- Generally the service level for these areas will align with the POS it links to

Figure 2 Linear linking reserve Maffra

7. Town Entries

- The entrances to urban towns fundamentally set the 'tone' for each town, and hence the primary purpose of such areas is to 'announce' the town
- The vast majority are not on council owned, controlled or managed land, most are controlled by VicRoads. Council has traditionally maintained some of these areas because VicRoad's service standards are well below that acceptable to the community. However it is often difficult to improve the basic infrastructure supplied by VicRoads
- Town entry maintenance levels (service standards) should be high
- The boundaries or limits for such areas cannot easily be defined (e.g., 'the start of the 60km/h zone') and are chosen by a combination of practicality and aesthetics
- OH&S Issues around traffic management and service delivery can be an issue in these areas
- The current service level provisions are varied

8. **Tourism**
    - Unlike most large urban centres, several POS areas exist in WSC primarily for visitors not residents
    - Often the service standards and levels in these areas are far greater than would typically exist for the resident population, hence the previous categories are not applicable for these areas
    - Industry or planning guidelines do not exist for such areas, hence service standards need to be individually applied
    - Data should be used to set and justify service standards. Visitor experience should be used to define expectations
    - Examples, include Port Albert, Woodside Beach, Dargo, and Licola

9. **Central Business Districts**
    - Central Business Districts (CBDs) or Town Centres are the economic hubs of towns. They can vary from a small number of businesses covering a limited area e.g., Newry or Golden Beach, to a large and diverse CBD covering several square kilometres (e.g., Sale), some towns have no town centres, e.g., Munro and McLoughlins Beach
    - CBDs are defined as mainly retail areas not commercial or industrial
    - Typically these areas should be developed and serviced according to levels of use and business types, hence service provision and service standards will vary significantly
    - Landscaping and hardscaping should be developed and remain congruent with a 'town' style developed through business and community consultation
    - The six larger town CBDs will have high service standards, with smaller town service standards set to reflect the use and nature of the area

4.5.1.2 Functional Types

1. **Function**
    - The primary types of open space functionality for the four-catchment types are recreation (e.g., most urban parks) and natural spaces (e.g., Herb Guyatt Reserve, Maffra Wetlands, Blue Pools); the majority fall into the recreation category, although many sites have multiple functions. Special classes vary in their functional type
2. **Size**
    - The size criterion identifies the desirable or preferred size for each type or classification of space within the POS network. The size of each type/ classification of space is directly related to its role and also the number and location of these spaces within the urban environment

3. **Service area/catchment population**
    - The service area generally identifies the preferred size of the geographical area surrounding the POS that is designated as the catchment. This identifies that a certain space is servicing the needs of people living or working within a specific area surrounding that particular POS. The service area standards also identify where walkability is a priority or where other modes of transport may be needed

4. **Location**
    - The location criterion establishes the most desirable location for each classification of POS. The principle consideration in location of POS is accessibility. This criterion stresses the importance of being able to access public open spaces by the pedestrian, cycle, and road. The location criterion also addresses the urban context of POS with key considerations being visibility, profile and visual amenity
5. **Facilities**
    - Identifying the appropriate facilities required for different types of POS is a major element in the development of this plan
    - The facilities standards will be tailored to the identified role of the POS as different types and amounts of facilities are required based on the size, function and amount of use of the space. This criterion identifies core and optional facilities allowing flexibility in responding to the unique nature and role of each POS

4.6 Relationship to New Developments

Council will generally require the creation of public open space as part of any new residential development or subdivision. It is critical that public open space created by new developments, aligns with the overall tenets of this plan. Provision should be based on the guiding principles, catchment classifications in the OSP and Parks & Leisure Australia (PLA) Open Space Planning and Design Guide 2013 (as amended), and the Infrastructure Development Manual (IDM).

Proposed developments will be assessed in relation to nearby existing open space areas and the extent of connectivity and linkages for all transport modes (pedestrians, bicycles, cars and public transport) to and from open space areas.

The preferred approach is the provision of central inclusive public open space area rather than smaller isolated public open space areas, unless a strategic value for a small POS area can be justified. POS layouts should be created with more than 50% passive surveillance.

The Wellington Planning Scheme requires 5 % public open space contribution (Clause 52.01) for subdivision within the Residential 1 Zone, Low Density Residential Zone, Township Zone, Mixed Use Zone and Rural Living Zone. The contribution can be a percentage of the land intended to be used or a percentage of the site value of such land, or a combination of both. (See Appendix 2 - Planning Scheme Provisions). There may be arguments for a greater amount of POS to be set aside depending of individual circumstances. Areas set aside in new developments of conservation or drainage will not generally be considered part of any open space contribution.

4.7 Acquiring and Disposing of Open Space Land

Land used for POS falls under a range of categories, as noted in the previous section. This plan has identified that there is land that contributes no or insignificant value to POS provision or other required urban functions (e.g. storm water management). Given the inherent cost in managing any land, in some instances Council could choose to not maintain land owned by others (e.g., VicRoads), or hand back management rights to the crown, equally council owned residual land could be sold; this is a sensitive area for many in the community and where many varied opinions are likely. Hence, the OSP has developed a 'community reinvestment framework' to help guide reinvestment back into local areas with the following draft set of principles. Rather than identify specific sites and the issues potentially with such an approach, town plans generally identify that such land exists within an area and that specific discussion should be had with the community has to the identified sites and current and future need for such land.

4.7.1 Community reinvestment framework

- Council will reinvest funds obtained from the sale of residual land back into the local area
- Council will pursue reinvestment from the State, back into that local area where Crown land is not required
- Council will investigate the acquisition of land in areas if public open space is lacking and a need identified
- Council will upgrade parks to higher standard(s) as required relative to the classification framework
- Council will consult with the local community where change is being considered and with the wider community where significant change is being considered (in addition to the legal requirements)
- The 'Local Government Best Practice Guideline for the Sale, Exchange & Transfer of Land' (2009) and relevant legislation will guide the legal and best practice processes

In addition to the requirements of the Local Government Act (1989), the Subdivision Act (1988) requires that councils use the proceeds from the sale of POS to buy similar land and/or improve land set aside for POS (Section 20). The Open Space Plan proposes that all proceeds from land sales of land currently managed/maintained as POS (even is zoned differently) be reinvested to provide better amenities, such as playgrounds, picnic facilities,

footpaths, lighting, recreational facilities and also support community activities such as community events, community recreational programs, youth programs etc. in that local area.

5 Public Open Space - Towards 2024

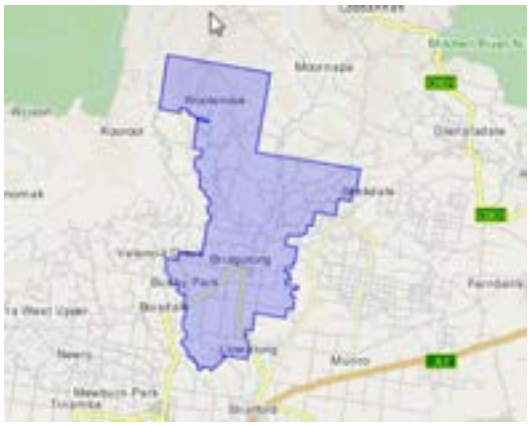
5.1 Demographics

Data are based on the Census data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), recent census data are available online (abs.gov.au). Census data can easily be misreported particularly in relation to regional and rural areas. There are several reporting classifications, e.g., the State Suburb area of Briagolong reports a population of 1075, whilst the Urban Locality has a population of 537. This is because data collection areas vary significantly (Figure 3). Equally, population numbers are often misreported because two datasets are available, 'place of enumeration[1]' and 'place of usual residence', the first reflects who was where on the census night, and the latter is based on the area in which they usually live. Where possible the 'place of usual residence' data have been used because this minimises the influence of seasonal factors, e.g., snow season, school holidays.

For many towns in Wellington it is not possible to accurately determine the population because the census data collection areas are too large, hence, the State Suburb classification is used and noted. This includes areas such as Coongulla, Alberton, Woodside Beach, etc. Urban Locality areas have been used if possible because most POS provision is directly relevant to the surrounding urban population; however, District Open Space and Regional Open Space are also considered in light of nearby rural populations.

For towns with small populations (less than 200) the ABS does not provide detailed data for privacy reasons.

Figure 3 Difference between State Suburb and Urban Locality



Briagolong State Suburb (2011)

Briagolong Urban Locality (2011)

[1] Place of enumeration is where the person lives rather than was at the census time, this difference often makes a significant difference to the population numbers

Data support that the Shire of Wellington is likely to have a relatively stable population over the next 20 years, although there have been population gains and losses in different parts of the Shire and this is likely to continue. Specific issues and differences in demographics are addressed in the individual town plans. This section will provide a broad comparative overview.

Dwelling numbers, however, will increase significantly as overall average household numbers drops. The average number of people per dwelling has dropped from 4.5 in 1911 to 2.6 in 2011, the ABS (Pink, 2012) predicts this trend will continue reaching 2.3 people by 2026; this trend is caused by the decrease in family sizes and significant increase in one and two people households. Effectively this is an increase in social isolation and raises the importance of POS provision that has the potential to increase socialisation and community connections.

In many of new developments, particularly in Sale, the traditional 1000m2 block is being replaced by 500-700 m2 blocks[2] and higher density unit developments, often leading to a loss of private space in the neighbourhood.

Many of the newer subdivisions are developing quite some distances from existing infrastructure and present particular problems, mostly the size and quality of POS (given the lack of nearby POS) and connections to facilities and CBDs or town centres. Examples of these problems are Glenview Estate which the 1.8km from the Maffra Sale Road and 4.5 km from the Gippsland Centre, Woondella Estate (Maffra Sale Road), the proposed developments at Wurruk, estates off Redbank Road Stratford are 1.5 km from Post office) and the developments on Cemetery Road Maffra 2.5 kilometres from the CBD.

A significant difference in Wellington urban area demographics to that of metropolitan areas is urban area population densities. On average, Sydney has 1,900 persons per square kilometre, and Melbourne has 1,500. Darwin, the least densely populated Australian capital, has 480 persons per square kilometre. Wellington urban areas vary enormously, with many towns averaging around the 600-800 people per square kilometre; Maffra and Sale have densities exceeding 1000 persons per square kilometre (Figure 101). Many smaller towns have densities lower than 300 persons km2. The absentee owner areas of the shire have densities of 0.4-0.7 persons per square kilometre for much of the year, this increases to 1500–2000 persons per square kilometre over summer holidays and in between levels

[2] Most lot sizes in Woondella Park (Sale) are below 700m2 with some below 400m2, Glenhaven Estate (Sale) has an average lot size of 602m2. In contrast recent subdivisions in Stratford, Yarram and Maffra have averaged around 800-900m2.

during other holiday periods. Population density and the related dwelling density (Appendix 3, Figure 102) largely reflect the intensity of urbanisation within an area; towns with low densities typically have wide streets, significant areas of non-dwelling land and or vacant blocks, and generally have a more country town 'feel'. Towns with large absentee owner levels will have low population densities for much of the year however, typically higher dwelling densities. Population and dwelling density are a measure of cost benefits and have been used at the individual town plan level and for comparative purposes between towns.

5.2 Existing Open Space

Spatial analysis of existing OS has been undertaken at the individual town level; including reviewing classification, size and location relevant to the residents. This data have been compared to the classification framework standards. Other measures have also been used to allow inter-town and intra-town comparisons and contrasts; e.g., the amount of POS by population and dwelling numbers, children under 15 years per play space, etc.

An OS assessment methodology and model will be created to assist in quantifying the values of POS and required service standards. It will consider catchment population, amenity, linkages, infrastructure condition and standards, service levels, distance to other POS and creates both a park value score and a rating that can be used to rank works and projects. It will be applied at Town Plan level and will be used in Part Four to develop capital projects and set priorities.

5.3 Measures of Relative Advantage and Disadvantage

The opportunity to experience physical activity through quality open space and quality play spaces is of benefit to all in the community, but those with the most need are often those with the greatest economic and social disadvantage.

DPCP in their 2011 report 'Change and Disadvantage in the Gippsland Region, Victoria' looked specifically at Gippsland LGAs and made this statement:

"Populations in Sale (2023 residents), Loch Sport/Seaspray (981 residents) and Heyfield (191 residents) contribute to the most disadvantaged 10% of the population in Australia"

This lowest 10% group generally identifies "*those that cannot afford medical and dental treatment, who do not have safe and secure housing, and who cannot afford activities for their children"*. This group represents approximately 10% of the Australian population and are typically clustered in particular localities.

SEIFA Index of Disadvantage measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of Census characteristics. It provides an excellent general view of the relative level of disadvantage in one area compared to others. The index is derived from attributes that reflect disadvantage such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations.

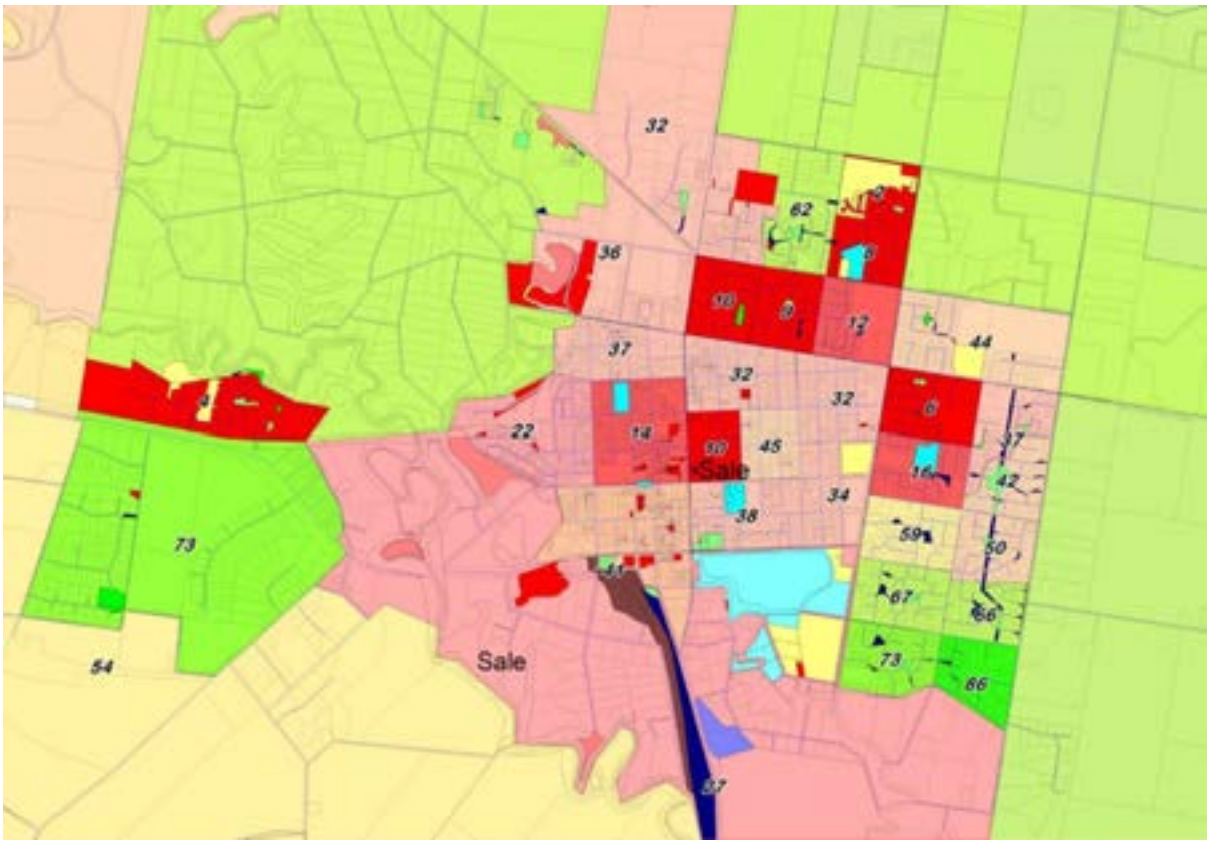
A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage. Figure 4 is a colour (thematic) map of the ABS data for Sale by deciles (red is the most disadvantaged and green the least); the number in each coloured area is the percentage rating of that area compared to all of Australia, the lower the number the greater the disadvantage in the area. E.g., the area in north Sale labelled '2'

means that this area is within the 2% most disadvantaged areas in Australia (98% are more advantaged).

Whilst the complexities of disadvantage are such that no one solution can completely address the issues, the provision of quality POS can assist. Decades of research backs the value of POS in improving physical and physiological wellbeing. In disadvantaged areas it is even more critical that high quality POS is available within easy walking distance.

Levels of relative disadvantaged are mapped in detail under specific town plans. And when compared to available and types of POS will assist in identifying need and prioritising actions.

Figure 4 Sale - ABS Measures of Relative Advantage and Disadvantage



5.4 Towards 2024 – Summary

Analysis and review has confirmed the following:

- Wellington communities vary significantly in a range of areas and whilst applying accepted industry standards in line with a ‘one size fits all’ approach is commonplace in metropolitan areas is not applicable to Wellington. The additional local aspects of the importance of town entries, of creating individual town identities (particularly CBDs and Town Centres), that of tourism focussed areas and in some localities significantly aging and reduced growth offer somewhat unique challenges
- Generally, over the next ten years Wellington is unlikely to see significant growth in fact some contraction of populations is likely to continue in some areas. ABS data

confirms that the only significant areas of growth have been in Sale, Maffra and Stratford, with some potential in Longford

- Although population growth may be limited in the next ten years, key characteristics and demographics are changing, in many instances strong community action is advocating for opportunities and change, equally community standards and expectations of POS continue to increase
- The existing older demographic and indeed a generally aging demographic has the potential to significantly change some communities and requires a more 'tailored' approach to POS provision in some localities (e.g., Yarram and Loch Sport)
- Due to the diversity of communities in Wellington, the provision of open space is not as easily defined as in contiguous urban areas (e.g., large regional towns and metropolitan areas), speciality open space for tourism and for areas with large numbers of absentee owners is particularly challenging. Towns with high population and housing densities and in particular with the development of smaller blocks (particularly in Sale) and infill developments will continue to place greater demands on POS and questions the traditional '5%' rule for open space (which was established when 1000m2 blocks were commonplace)
- The development of newer subdivisions quite distant from established urban centres makes it difficult to use existing POS and adds pressure on the development of additional POS for these areas; linking of these areas is also a problem, and given the absence of public transport this reinforces a car culture
- Engaging the community in these spaces will be a critical element in achieving key objectives of a range of Council strategic documents, e.g., Wellington 2030, Council Plan 2013-2017, Healthy Wellington (Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017), Physical Activity Strategy etc. Effective community engagement and activation of POS is not a passive process and resources will be required to successfully meet these key objectives

Given the above the likely direction of the next 10 years open space management will focus predominantly (although not exclusively) on improving and developing high quality POS in largely existing localities, whilst effectively engaging communities in these spaces to contribute to the creation of liveable and sustainable communities.

End of section

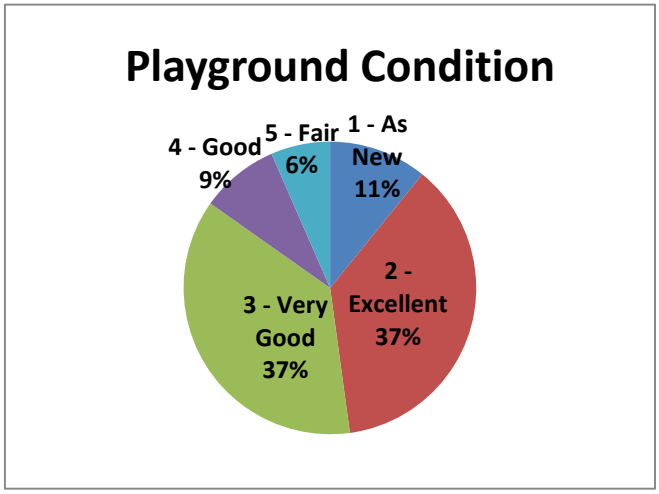
6 Play Space Management and Provision

6.1 Introduction

Play is a critical element of human development. It has been shown to have an important part in physical, social and cognitive development, and as a result affects the physical, intellectual, creative, emotional and spiritual health of all members of the community. Play enables children to master critical skills necessary for their growth into independent adulthood. Although play is considered important for people of all ages including adults, children's play differs in many ways from the play and recreation of adults and requires its own special planning and design.

Analysis confirms that primarily, playgrounds in Wellington are in good condition (Figure 5) and located in pleasant surrounds, are reasonably accessible and are low risk with good amenities. Several have won national award for play innovation. However, there is significant potential to make further improvements and to create play spaces that are unique and exciting features for residents and visitors to the Shire.

Figure 5 WSC Play Space Condition Audit 2012



6.2 Vision

Have communities engaged with, valuing and using a diverse range of play opportunities that are safe to use, welcoming, engaging, inclusive and accessible. These spaces will make a positive contribution to children's development by encouraging physical, cognitive and social play and make a significant contribution to our Wellington 2030 strategic vision.

6.3 The Role of Play in Childhood Development

Great play spaces enable children to create their own play experiences. Through these play experiences children develop essential life skills.

There are many ways that play contributes to children's development. Grouped by developmental area, they are described under three categories in The Good Play Space Guide: "I can play too" (SRV, 2007). These are:

- Physical or active play – all kinds of physical movement and motion including climbing, balancing, hanging, running, swinging, and rocking
- Cognitive play – using the imagination, ordering, categorising and manipulating objects to construct or create, sensory experience, and problem solving
- Social play – experiences that involve another child or group of children, often involving games of the imagination, dramatic role-play, rules, and creative or physical activity

The challenge is to provide interesting and adaptable play spaces that entice children of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to engage with other children and their surrounds, playing in different ways each time they visit to help them develop physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially.

6.4 Why is Play Important?

The United Nations (UN) has stated that "every child has a right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and arts" (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31).

The Good Play Space Guide (SRV, 2007) acknowledges the importance of play as follows: *"All children need to play. All children have the right to play. When children play they are not just filling in time, they are learning to interpret their world. Play facilitates the learning of life skills, and for this reason, the provision of quality outdoor play spaces is vitally important in local communities."*

The qualities that children develop through play that are necessary in adulthood include:

- Problem solving
- Independence
- Self-awareness
- Creativity
- Resilience
- Spatial knowledge
- Flexibility and ability to deal with change

6.5 Safety and Risky Play

Play space providers are faced with the difficult task of balancing the safety needs of users, compliance with a range of Australian Standards and encouraging creative play, exploration and providing elements that test the limits of individual development.

The Good Play Space Guide (SRV, 2007) notes that *"play spaces have many inherent physical challenges which pose risks to some users. As challenge is a crucial element in play, the elimination of risk-taking is highly undesirable".*

Providing opportunities for risk taking in unsupervised play is now recognised as an essential element of play. It enables children to test their abilities, learn new skills and experience a sense of adventure. Risk taking also helps children to build self-confidence and resilience, which are now known to be two key protective factors for mental health.

As a provider of play opportunities, Wellington Shire must provide environments that integrate nature play to structures. By creating imaginative and physically challenging environments, children will extend their limits and explore the world around them. The incorporation of 'risky' play components, integrated with the natural setting and within a controlled environment must be provided to help children develop to their full potential.

6.6 Provision

Play Spaces are provided based on a spatial criteria and a hierarchy of provision. Ideally, a play space should be available within 400 metres for the majority of urban residents (Victoria Planning Provisions Standard C12/13, Melbourne 2030 pg. 101-103). This may often be a neighbourhood or local play space. Major roads can be an obstacle when considering distances to play spaces and open space, equally in smaller towns a greater distance may be acceptable because parents will let children walk further and have less concerns about traffic. Play Spaces may also be provided as part of tourism infrastructure. A town's demographics can also vary the requirement and type of play space. Hence, distance should only be considered as an indicator of possible need(s).

6.6.1 WSC Play Provision Model

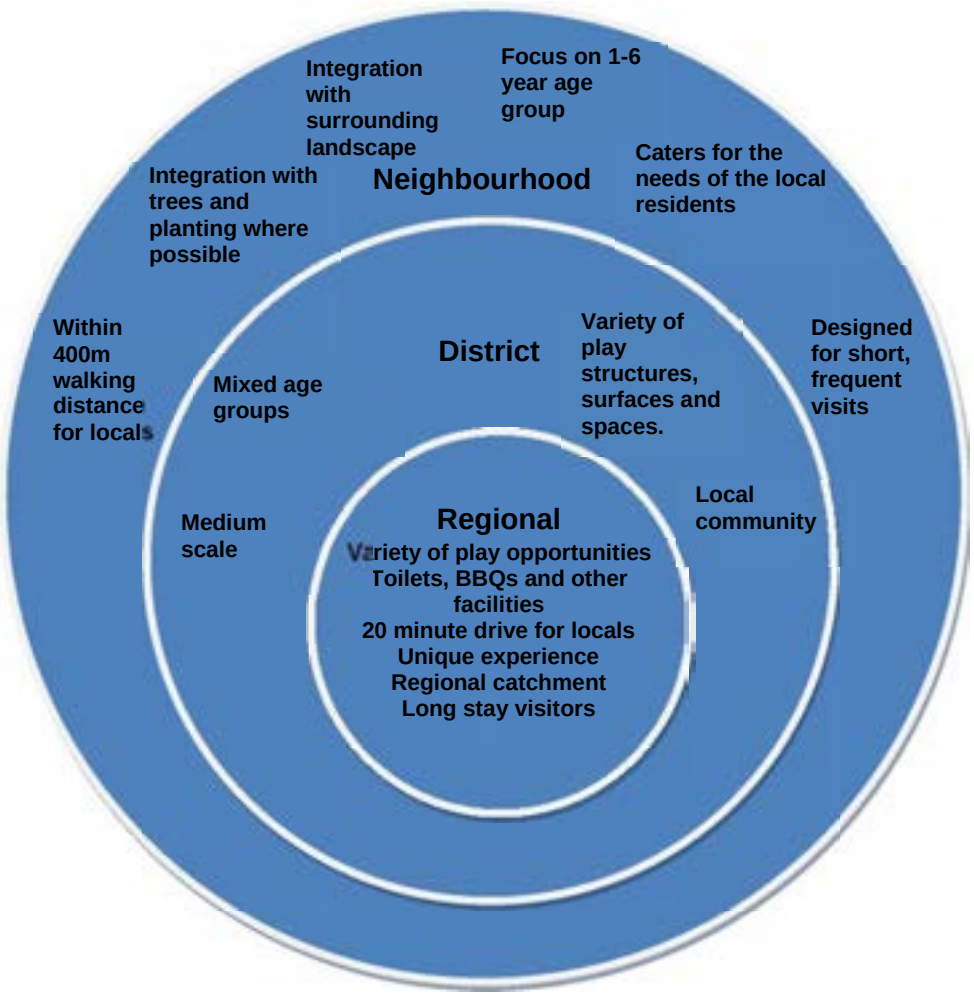
A play provision model has been developed that provides a framework for the provision and management of play spaces within the Wellington Shire. Play Spaces are public open space that are specifically managed for play and incorporate playground equipment and other landscape elements within open space areas.

Consistent with the Open Space Plan classifications, play spaces have been classified as:

- Neighbourhood play spaces
- District play spaces
- Regional play spaces

The play provision model (Figure 6) overviews the purpose, appropriate distribution, type and level of infrastructure and facilities to be provided for Neighbourhood, District and Regional play spaces. The large demographic and population diversity across urban areas and with the inclusion of the special class POS areas (e.g., tourism areas) mean that 'equal' provision of play space based on the play space classification is not achievable nor valid, e.g., rural localities such as Woodside Beach will have play spaces because they are provided as part of a 'visitor experience' purpose for these areas, whilst similar sized rural areas may not have such play spaces. Often local schools have playgrounds than can be included in any analysis of an area's need.

Figure 6 Play Space provision model



6.6.2 Regional Play Spaces

Regional play spaces are intended to be used by people from a wider catchment than both neighbourhood and district play spaces while remaining accessible, attractive and responsive to a local and neighbourhood catchment. They also have the capacity to draw a tourist element.

In general, a higher proportion of people are expected to access regional play spaces by means other than by foot or bicycle. This means that both car parking and public transport accessibility need to be taken into account in planning, designing and managing regional play spaces. Regional play spaces will commonly be used by groups of people as a gathering place, rather than predominantly by individual users. Play spaces that attract a regional catchment need to provide a scale, range and/or uniqueness of play experiences, as well as support amenities including car parking, barbecue and picnic facilities, shelter and public toilets that support a regional status.

6.6.2.1 Regional Play Space summary:

- Large size and range of play facilities, and/or a uniqueness of play experience provided
- Provision of complementary facilities that support a regional catchment
- Specialised play experiences for mixed aged groups
- Facilities such as BBQ, toilets, and seating to cater for large groups and/or longer stays
- Provided in the six larger towns and/or as a tourism driver
- Access within approximately a 20 minute drive to residents
- Designed to provide unique setting where landscape is explored to full potential to ensure children experience texture, foliage, scent and colour

Examples of regional play space are the Sale Botanic Gardens, Macalister Park Maffra, Apex Park Heyfield, Memorial Park Yarram, and Apex Park Stratford.

6.6.3 District Play Spaces

District Play Spaces are intended to be used by people from a wider catchment than local play spaces, and with more of a focus upon local users who access the space by foot or bicycle. They are defined by being larger and providing more play opportunities than a neighbourhood play space. They also have more scope to provide facilities focussed upon particular age groups or interests.

The specialisation of different district play spaces within an area combine to provide a wide range of play experiences and meet particular requirements.

It is important that older age groups are also well catered for in district facilities. The larger size of district facilities makes open grass spaces for ball sports and other informal play possible. Consideration where appropriate should also be given to providing hard paved areas providing opportunities for ball sports and wheeled play including scooters, bikes and skateboards.

6.6.3.1 District Play Space summary:

- Medium scale
- Mixed age groups
- An opportunity to take advantage of larger open space by providing complementary spaces such as mown grass and hard paved areas
- Provide a variety of play structures and facilities
- Provided for catchments over 1000 people
- Access within approximately one kilometre walk or a fifteen minute drive to residents
- Designed to cater for larger urban catchment, nearby rural areas and smaller town communities

- Designed to provide maximum integration with surrounding landscape by drawing in local landscape character
- Interesting use of landscape elements, texture and foliage to stimulate play

Examples include Victoria Park Maffra, Edward Crook Park Rosedale, and Memorial Park Stratford.

6.6.4 Neighbourhood Play Spaces

Neighbourhood play spaces are intended to be used primarily by people who live within walking distance of the spaces. If the play space meets their needs, the local target audience is likely to access the same play space regularly, and are likely to feel a strong sense of ownership over the space. Neighbourhood play spaces are partly defined by their size, being at the smaller scale both in overall area as well as in the play elements provided.

The local nature of these spaces provides the opportunity to customise them to their local context. This includes referencing the local context of the space in the selection of materials and themes, as well as focussing the facilities provided upon the needs of the local community. This might be based on the target age profile, or by the particular needs or interests of motivated local residents or groups.

Due to the small size of neighbourhood play spaces and the limited number of play elements able to be incorporated, the age group focus needs to be relatively broad. However, there should generally be an emphasis on younger age groups, particularly the pre-school years (1-6 years). Older school children are likely to have more of their play needs met at school, and spend less of the daylight hours in their local neighbourhood.

As children get older they are also more likely to develop specific play interests, be more able to transport themselves (e.g. bicycle or walking) and be more likely to play in social groups. For example, a twelve-year-old boy may ride his bike to an oval to kick a ball with

friends, rather than play on the local swing. These tendencies suggest that older children are more likely to play in district and regional facilities.

6.6.4.1 Neighbourhood Play Space Summary:

- Relatively small scale
- A focus upon pre-school age groups (although can cater for other age groups as appropriate)
- An opportunity to reflect local context
- Opportunity to respond to local interests
- Basic facilities to cater for short stays and a small numbers of visitors
- Provided for catchments of approximately 500 people and around 100 children under 15 years
- Access approximately 5 minute walk or 400 metres
- Integration with trees and planting where opportunity exists

Numerous examples exist, including Fred Drury Park Maffra, Mountainview Cr Stratford, Perry Crt Heyfield and Maxwell Crt Yarram

6.6.1 Youth Oriented Play

Providing play elements for over 14 year olds is challenging and with the exception of skate parks few other elements have traditionally been provided. Social interaction appears to be the key to youth ‘play’, whilst shopping strips and centres can provide this ‘hang-out’ function these areas do not encourage or foster active play.

Larger open space areas are generally well suited to creating ‘hang-out’ areas whilst providing active elements, such as open grass spaces for ball sports and other informal play possible. Consideration where appropriate should also be given to providing hard paved areas providing opportunities for ball sports (e.g., half-court basketball) and wheeled play including scooters, bikes and skate boards.

6.6.2 Towards 2024 Summary

Play Space spatial analysis has been undertaken as part of Town Analysis in the OSP and recommendations are included with the individual Town Plans. A play space suitability assessment will be undertaken during early in the life of this plan to inform Part Four (works program). The information collected will be used for the classification of play spaces, to describe existing play space provision and to identify issues and opportunities to be addressed. The assessment will consider a number of factors that include the following core play space elements:

- Opportunities for participation
- Diversity of play opportunities
- Physical conditions
- Amenity/attractiveness
- Support amenities
- Access and circulation
- Suitability for youth based activities

This will then form the basis for updating the existing play space capital works program.

End of section

7 Urban Forest Management

7.1 Introduction

Urban trees are the most dominant and arguably the most important element of the urban landscape. Trees are a valued part of any urbanised community, and have a wide range of social, economic and environmental values. Urbanised areas are not considered desirable unless planted to significant woody vegetation, because humanity has an inherent desire to be close to nature.

The 'urban forest' is broadly defined as ***'the sum of all trees and vegetation, soil and water that provides valuable ecosystem services, which are essential for healthy liveable urban centres'***. Trees in particular are the most recognisable and important element within the urban forest. A healthy urban forest plays a critical role in maintaining the health and liveability of urban centres.

Similar to many urban centres Wellington is facing three significant challenges:

- Climate change
- Urban expansion
- Aging urban tree stock

These challenges will place significant pressure on the existing tree stock and arboricultural service provision for a wide range of reasons, including increased potential for pest and diseases, shorter life cycles, faster decline of marginally suitable species and a reduced tree species palette. Managing these issues will involve significant community engagement as the connection with local trees is often strong.

Through the development of the OSP, Wellington Shire recognises the importance of a holistic, whole-of-forest approach to understanding and managing this invaluable resource.

The goal is to provide a robust strategic framework for the evolution and longevity of Wellington's urban forest. It will guide the transition of our landscape to a future forest that is diverse, resilient and responsive to the varied needs of different communities and of the urban environment. Its intended outcomes are supported by three primary purposes:

- Create resilient landscapes
- Community health and wellbeing
- Liveable sustainable urban centres

The urban forest is undergoing rapid change. The recent decade of drought and dry summers has highlighted the vulnerability of some species and combined with many urban areas having aging tree populations, means that a large amount of the current tree population will be at the end of their useful lives within twenty to thirty years. Wellington Shire is addressing these changes head on by engaging communities in the development of whole of town tree plans, which focus on assessing the viability and retention of existing trees and planning the urban forest of the future.

Building the urban forest as a living ecosystem will rely on smart species selection to advance goals such as improving biodiversity, improving soil moisture retention, reducing stormwater flows, increasing shade and canopy cover, reducing infrastructure conflicts and ensuring our urban forest provides the maximum benefits for our communities.

Ultimately, urban forestry is now entering a new era in Australia and this plan highlights how critically important urban forestry is for urban planning and design particularly in the context of enhancing liveability and adapting to predicted climate change. An urban forest provides a multitude of benefits for the ecosystem, the economy and community health and wellbeing.

7.2 Vision

Our urban forest will be sustainable, resilient, healthy and diverse and will contribute to the biodiversity values of our urban centres, the health and wellbeing of our communities and to the liveability of our towns.

The primary objective of urban forestry management planning is to maximise public benefits (social & environmental) of the urban forest while minimising public expense by undertaking effective, efficient management of the Shire's assets.

7.3 Background & Context

7.3.1 What is an Urban Forest?

The urban forest, in the context of the municipality, comprises all of the trees and vegetation – including the soil, air and water that supports it – within an urban environment. It incorporates trees and vegetation in streets, parks, gardens, other public spaces and within the private realm.

Urban forests provide critical ecosystem services such as air and water filtration, shade, habitat, oxygen, carbon sequestration and nutrient cycling. The urban forest also provides the 'connection to nature' that is often perceived to be missing in urban areas.

Urban forestry, as opposed to arboriculture and horticulture, looks holistically at the urban forest and its associated ecosystem services. It can be described as the science and art of

managing trees, forests and natural ecosystems in and around urban communities to maximise the physiological, sociological, economic and aesthetic benefits that trees provide society

7.3.2 Evolution of Wellington's Urban forest

The original forest evolved in a completely different landscape than the one we have now. The majority of WSC towns were created via government subdivisions 1850-1890s and typically included public gardens and boulevards that were developed with the notion of human beings and their society being central to any evaluation of the environment. Aesthetics and functionality of green spaces were key objectives in planning green spaces in early Australian towns. Whilst there is still great consideration given to the needs of society in planning for urban green infrastructure, a separate set of environmental needs and solutions has entered the planning discussions.

European settlement saw the taming of the bush to make way for a burgeoning township where trees were an abundant resource available for exploitation. The late 1800s and early 1900s saw a refinement of the landscape through the building of contrived, highly designed English garden spaces for recreation of the elite classes. Some remnants of this culturally and heritage rich palette of open green spaces exist in most areas and all are highly valued by all members of the that community, these include, Sale Botanic Gardens and Lake Guthridge, Victoria Park Maffra, and Commercial Road Yarram.

7.3.3 The Urban Forest Today

The WSC urban forest comprises around 50,000 trees in streets and parks as well as approximately as many trees located in the private realm. This does not include the large number of trees fund in 'bush streets' such as found in Loch Sport and Golden Beach.. The trees managed by the WSC in the public realm contribute significantly to the individual character and identity of each town. There are over 200 different species of trees in the municipality ranging from the iconic Elms and Planes to River Red Gums, Melaleuca, Lemon Scented Gums, Spotted Gums and some significant conifers. Just five genera account for over 54% of the street tree population. Just 10 tree species (all native and all in the one family) account for over 25 per cent of all street trees.

We can regard and examine the public urban forest in a number of different ways. In order to best manage existing trees and to guide the development of the forest of the future the major urban area trees were mapped in 2002 for health, species composition, and expected useful life. This data was incorporated into WSC asset system, whilst valuable and still used; this

mapping requires updating to allow the measurement of changes over time and to set future targets and benchmarks.

7.3.3.1 Environmental Benefits

The urban forest is essentially the 'engine room' for urban ecosystems. The urban forest takes in water, nutrients and carbon dioxide and processes them through photosynthesis and transpiration, transforming them into the valuable environmental outputs of clean air, oxygen, shade and habitat. Broad calculations suggest that larger mature trees provide 75 per cent more environmental benefits than smaller trees. Trees:

- Provide shade and cool urban areas
- Reduce stormwater flows and nutrient loads
- Reduce air pollution and air-borne particulates
- Provide habitat and enhancing levels of biodiversity
- Mitigate and help adaption to climate change

7.3.3.2 Community Benefits

Urban forests have a large range of positive impacts on the community by forming shared points of orientation within the urban environment and allowing daily interaction with nature. Trees:

- Provide a sense of place and creation of local identity
- Improve community cohesion
- Encourage outdoor activity
- Reconnect children with nature
- Reduce sun exposure to people
- Reduce heat related illnesses
- Improve mental wellbeing

7.3.3.3 Economic Benefits

The breadth of urban forest benefits that can be quantified in economic terms span a range of industries and disciplines. Most infrastructure and design decisions are based on economic cost benefit analysis and understanding the financial impacts of urban forests is critical in helping understand their functionalities. Trees:

- Reduce energy costs
- Increase property values
- Avoid costs of infrastructure damage
- Decrease health costs
- Market urban areas
- Store and sequester carbon

7.3.3.4 Key Targets and Benchmarks

7.3.3.4.1 Amenity and Environmental Dollar values

The use of an amenity tree valuation formula (The Revised Burnley Method) is a simple but effective benchmark. The formula is based on factors such as tree condition, species type

and its growth rates, aesthetics value and locality values. A broad estimate of the WSC's urban forest amenity value is around $150 million.

There is the possibility to value the environmental benefits of our urban forest through a US based tool called i-Tree Eco (http://www.itreetools.org/eco/international.php). Air pollution amelioration, carbon storage and sequestration, energy savings benefits of trees and structural values of the urban forest can be calculated using i-tree.

A WSC employee undertaking her MSc showed that a randomised and stratified sample of 982 urban trees within the municipality:

- Removes 0.5 metric tonnes of air pollution per year at a dollar benefit of $3,820
- Stores 838 metric tonnes of carbon at a dollar value of $19,100
- Sequesters 24 metric tonnes of carbon each year at a value of $548 per year
- Avoids carbon emissions by reducing energy use by $114 per year

If we broadly extrapolate these figures across the entire population of 50,000 trees, there is a clear indication that our urban forest is a very valuable asset.

7.3.3.4.2 Species and Age Diversity

Species diversity plays an important role in the long-term stability of an ecosystem and is a representation of vulnerability within the forest. Limited tree species and age diversity is likely to create an unstable ecosystem that is vulnerable to pest and disease attack or loss from extreme events such as heat or drought. A skewed age profile amongst the urban forest also contributes to vulnerability, as many trees will decline and senesce at the same time. **We should therefore aim for greater species and age diversity.**

Forty seven per cent of our tree base is from one family, the Myrtaceae family. In fact, many Australian native trees that function well as urban trees in Wellington belong to this family, which includes Eucalypts, Corymbia, Callistemon, Angophora and Melaleuca. This creates a high level of vulnerability in terms of pest and diseases such as Myrtle Rust.

7.3.3.4.3 Useful Life Expectancy (ULE)

Useful life expectancy (ULE) is an estimated measure of how long a tree is likely to remain in the landscape based on health, amenity, environmental services contribution and risk to the community. It is not a measure of the biological life of the tree. Based on 2002 data, 58 per cent of our entire street tree population will be at the end of its useful life in the landscape within the next 20 years. This is of course only an estimate because short and longer-term weather conditions, in particular rainfall, can substantially lengthen or shorten longevity.

7.4 Issues & Challenges

We know that the current urban forest is vulnerable on a range of levels, due to:

7.4.1 Ageing Tree Population

Many of Wellington's trees, including those in our boulevards and parks, are now well over 100 years old and approaching the end of their useful life. Trees planted in the late 1800s

such as those in Macalister St Sale (Figure 7) were planted in socially, culturally and environmentally different times, and have performed remarkably well against droughts, urbanisation and changing cultural trends. However the older a tree becomes, the less tolerant it is to change. WSC currently manages the population of ageing trees, through regular assessments to determine which trees need to be removed, and in turn planning when, and how and with what trees they will be replaced. Managing ageing trees requires careful consideration of some key challenges. Urban tree renewal is now not simply about when to replace old and dying trees, but also why, where, how and what.

Figure 7 Elm Avenue Macalister St Sale (planted circa 1880)

7.4.2 Water

Water is the primary element needed for an urban vegetation growth. The recent extended drought and recent extended dry summers have impacted severely on the health of urban forest. There has been a steep increase in tree mortality due to stress and dieback from lack of water. Fundamentally, urban areas have low levels of water permeability. Hard surfaces such as roads, footpaths and roofs expedite stormwater through an extensive drainage system to prevent flooding and to some extent it has meant that natural rainfall has limited the opportunity to infiltrate the soil.

Potable water has become very expensive, with current (2014) Gippsland Water charges exceeding $4000mL (including waste charges). Whilst the majority of urban trees are not in irrigated landscapes, significant numbers are in irrigated parks and CBDs.

7.4.3 Climate change

The Australian Government's most recent report on climate change, the Critical Decade (Steffen & Hughes, 2013), states unequivocally that it is now 'beyond doubt' that climate change is occurring. Whilst the rate of climate change is just becoming discernible now, it will be increasingly prominent in the coming decades. The risks to towns of more severe weather conditions will continue to increase, bringing with them high economic, social and environmental costs.

The realisation of predicted change will inflict many stresses on trees:

- The susceptibility of vegetation to increasing pests and diseases will also challenge its ability to withstand these outbreaks and recover
- Extreme weather events directly impact on vegetation health, generally leading to reduction in canopy cover and overall decline
- Heat extremes lead to foliage and trunk scorch and canopy desiccation
- Storm events have the ability to shred foliage and uproot trees
- Lower rainfall will result in increasing frequency of tree death and decline in response to frequent and severe drought

7.4.4 Population Increase and Urban Intensification

Whilst the overall population of WSC is unlikely to increase significantly, growth has and will continue to occur notably in Sale, Maffra and Stratford. This growth occurs as infill developments and expansion into new greenfield sites. Newer developments have far smaller road reserves and housing blocks than older subdivisions, equally houses are larger, resulting in a greatly reduced area for trees in both the public and private realms.

The urban forest will be central to delivering amenity and ecosystem services, and ensuring that new growth and development is functionally and visually integrated with the existing neighbouring urban fabric.

7.5 Towards 2024- Principles & Strategies

Achieving the vision of a sustainable, healthy, diverse and resilient, urban forest that contributes to the health and wellbeing of our community and to the creation of liveable towns will only happen through sound strategic thinking, planning and focussing on the

overarching important decisions related to resilient landscapes, community health and wellbeing, liveability and sustainability.

To guide decision-making a series of key principles and strategies have been developed. Equally, to quantify progress a series of benchmarks have been created.

7.5.1 Key Principles

7.5.1.1 Design and Tree Selection

Design and tree selection are key principles that guide our vision:

- Provide cool shaded spaces in summer; sunlight access in winter
- Plan and manage the urban forest to ensure longevity of green spaces for future generations
- Create well-designed public spaces to encourage outdoor activity, social connectedness, respite, exercise and general sense of wellbeing
- Design landscapes to reflect the cultural integrity, identity and character of towns and neighbourhoods
- Build a resilient urban forest that can tolerate and continue to thrive in future climatic extremes
- Ensure a diversity of tree species and ages to maximise resilience against pests and diseases
- Increase overall vegetation biomass to assist in storage and sequestration of carbon

7.5.1.2 Community

The communities of Wellington are critical to the success in reaching our vision; as such, it is vital that these communities recognise the importance and values of the urban forest and community. A key priority will be to:

- Increase the public profile and understanding of the attributes, role and benefits of the urban forest

7.6 Key Strategies

To achieve the vision of a healthy and resilient urban forest that contributes to the health and wellbeing of communities and to liveable towns, better urban environments need to be created. The principles defined above highlight the importance of well-designed urban areas, and the following strategies list how to create these ‘living spaces’.

Each of these strategies has an action plan to demonstrate how we will implement specific targets:

- Increase canopy cover
- Increase urban forest diversity
- Improve vegetation health
- Inform and engage the community

7.6.1 Increase Canopy Cover

Canopy cover is the key criteria from which to measure the urban forest's ability to produce benefits for the community and the environment. Large canopied trees provide greater environmental and health benefits than smaller canopies and, depending on the scale, a large tree can provide up to 75 per cent greater benefits.

Canopy cover can be increased by planting more trees and improving the health of existing urban trees.

7.6.1.1 Benchmark Value and Actions

Benchmark: Research has identified that 40% canopy cover is desirable and hence is the 'gold standard' and target value. To determine needs and measure progress, base values need to be developed and two approaches are desirable.

1. Review the feasibility of analysing WSC's aerial imagery to create both an existing base canopy cover value and to monitor progress
2. Use spatial analysis to model tree inventory data to determine existing low canopy areas and changes in canopy cover over time

Actions required to increase canopy cover are:

- Select the most appropriate vegetation type and species for each location given spatial and climatic constraints and neighbourhood character
- Provide best planting conditions possible for newly planted trees to ensure maximum canopy potential, including below ground spaces and water
- Ensure that the overall urban design for places ensures that spaces and streets are best designed for our urban forest and for people
- Use town tree plans to develop 20 year planting and replacement programs
- Promote increases in canopy cover where possible in the private realm

7.6.1.2 Increase Urban Forest Diversity

Much of the vulnerability of the urban forest can be attributable to a lack in diversity of plant species and ages. Accordingly, a greater range of species with varied life expectancy provides greater resilience to pests and diseases, reduces the risk of trees ageing at the same time and supports biodiversity and healthy habitats.

What is chosen to be planted now must have a proven ability to remain resilient in hotter, drier conditions, and potentially cope with major storm events. Diversifying the urban forest lowers the risk of incurring significant loss in any one particular individual or range of species.

7.6.1.3 Benchmark Value and Actions

Benchmark: No town's urban forest population will be composed of more than 5 per cent of one tree species, more than 10 per cent of one genus and more than 20 per cent of any one family.

Actions required to increase diversity are:

- Undertake regular plantings across the municipality to reduce the risk of similar aged trees dying at the same time
- Via the Town Plans map out planting schedules for each urban area to ensure spread of tree age and species.
- Monitor, treat and evaluate pest and disease attacks as part of the maintenance program
- Utilise a scientifically-based tree selection matrix when planting

7.6.2 Improve vegetation health

To maximise the ecosystem services, community health and financial benefits that the urban forest provides, it is imperative to ensure its trees are healthy. Safeguarding the urban forest against extreme weather events such as drought, heat or flooding is vital for long-term forest health, particularly for ageing trees.

Integral to tree planning is ensuring that the most appropriate species is selected for each specific location, stock quality assurance checks are made, and best practice planting procedures are in place.

The urban environment is highly modified which means conditions for plant growth are harsher than those conditions found in a natural landscapes. It is therefore necessary that species selected for planting throughout the municipality are adaptable to current urban

conditions as well as future urban conditions that are likely to be even harsher in a changed climate.

7.6.2.1 Benchmark Value and Actions

Benchmark: The target value for this strategy is that ninety per cent of WSC's urban trees will be healthy. To achieve this:

- All trees will be proactively inspected for health as part of the Works Inspection Program (required works audit), this inspection should occur on a two year cycle
- Vulnerable species and population will be identified and monitored as required.
- Species unlikely to survive in the longer term will be identified for priority in replanting programs
- Choose species that are robust and likely to cope with future climate changes and urbanisation.
- Implement best practice soil preparation before each planting
- Minimise infrastructure conflicts
- Create tree planting outstands in residential streets where required and possible to allow for space for larger healthier trees to grow

7.6.3 Inform and Consult with the Wider Community

The urban forest influences everyone in the community. Engaging people throughout the urban towns and wider community involves not only informing them about the importance and multiple benefits of green infrastructure, but also highlighting the role it plays in ensuring Wellington's liveability, sustainability and support of cultural identity.

The success of an urban forestry program does not hinge only on the contributions of the Council, it requires the commitment of the residents and local businesses that represent the community to be involved at different levels, all of whom bring something vital to the process.

WSC will be a strong advocate for the benefits of a healthy urban forest and continue to seek the views of the wider community about how to protect, manage and enhance the urban forest asset for future generations. We will continue to allow the local community to have their say in the way treed landscapes are planned, designed and managed into the future.

7.6.3.1 Benchmark Value and Actions

Benchmark The community will have a broader understanding of the importance of the urban forest, increase their connection to it and engage with its process of evolution. To achieve this we will:

- Enable the community to have a say in the design of landscapes of the future
- Encourage diverse conversations about the urban forest
- Develop individual Town Tree Plans in conjunction with the local community

7.7 Implementation Framework

This strategy states the principles that will guide the long-term planning, development and management of the urban forest. It also outlines a set of benchmark targets to evaluate the success of implementation.

Creating a resilient and robust urban forest requires forward planning in a similar manner to municipal strategic planning. The management and development of the urban forest needs to be undertaken with a long-term vision. Planning, development and implementation of urban tree policy takes place at two levels: long-term (strategic and spatial) and shorter-term (project and operationally focused).

7.7.1 Implementation tools

With a full picture in place of the integrated benefits and processes for managing the urban forest, we can now determine the technical and supportive documents, tools and processes for integrating the urban forest into the built environment. The tools comprise the following:

7.7.1.1 WSC's Town Tree Plans

Town based tree plans will be developed in collaboration with individual communities. The plans will provide a definitive guide for future street tree planting programs and tree species selections. Through an extensive community engagement program, the plans will ensure that the key principles articulated in this document are projected. These plans combined with inspection data will drive WSC tree planting and management programs.

7.7.1.2 Recurrent Proactive Inspection and Works Program

To proactively manage the urban forest a regular inspection program will be undertaken to identify and monitor any pest and disease, health, risk issues and compliance with WSC's Road Management Plan along with identification and programming of any works required. This program will ensure that trees are monitored regularly maximising benefits while providing an efficient service level. Inspection frequencies will be based on the relative use of a road or park and the needs of the trees on the site. The aim will be to inspect and program works for street trees and major parks on average on a 2-year cycle; for minor parks, a three-year basis is the target frequency.

7.7.1.3 Urban Forest Asset Management and Data collection Program

To measure change over time it is critical that we understand what we manage. WSC's asset management and GIS systems will be the tools to provide an understanding of the urban forest. Regular tree inventory audits are the key to successful asset management. Audits to update the tree inventory will occurs at twenty per cent of the urban each year, effectively updating the asset inventory in a five-year cycle. NE&P will determine the usefulness of i-Tree) as a planning and management tool via a small trial and if found valuable apply to the entire WSC urban forest.

7.7.1.4 Urban Forest Community Engagement Process

As noted in 7.6.3 community engagement is critical to the success in creating a resilient, healthy and diverse urban forest within each town. The engagement process will aim to include the broadest possible cross section of the community. Town Tree Plans will be the key outcome from this engagement.

7.7.2 Capital Works Program

Urban renewal and streetscape improvements provide opportunities for additional tree planting or a review of the performance of existing vegetation. Subdivision street tree planting is covered by a levy on developers. Priorities for tree planting programs will be developed through the creation of Town Tree Plans.

Tree planting as part of urban infrastructure renewal frequently occurs, often however it is not considered until the works commence or post-the planning stage. Opportunity exists to incorporate urban tree planning earlier in the planning stages; it is proposed that as part of any urban renewal planning existing street trees are assessed. If the trees meet the benchmark of longevity with regard to useful life expectancy (ULE) and are fulfilling a valuable role then the street will be designed around tree retention. However if the trees are assessed to have a limited ULE or are an undesirable species then tree replacement will be incorporated as part of the renewal program.

7.7.3 Technical Tools

7.7.3.1 I-tree

i-tree Eco is a valuation model that allows us to value the environmental benefits of the Urban Forest. These values have typically been used by communities, local governments and NGOs in the United States to inventory, evaluate, and assess the environmental benefits of urban and community forests. This assists in determining existing tree cover, calculating its ecosystem benefits and economic value whilst quantifying the effect urban

forests have on stormwater, air and water quality, and carbon storage and sequestration. This, in turn, gives them the means to establish levels of priority and importance for both preservation and acquisition of various elements of tree cover within the spatial planning process.

WSC will assess the value in incorporating i-Tree Eco into the tree data collection process to provide the above information which alongside tree amenity values can be used as part of a decision making process. For example, New York has used i-tree to evaluate that for every dollar they spend on trees, they receive a return of $5.60. New York's 600,000 trees are valued at $122 million using i-tree.

7.7.3.2 Tree Valuation

Amenity tree evaluation systems have been widely used, not only in Australia but also around the world. They place a monetary value on trees, usually for the purposes of insurance, compensation or litigation. However, the major significance of placing such a value on trees is that they are then recognised as assets. The recognition of trees as assets has major implications, not only for their management, but also for the decision-making processes that involve trees.

WSC's method of determining amenity tree valuation is by using the Burnley College (University of Melbourne) Amenity Tree Evaluation: A Revised Method (Moore, nd). It is detailed in OSP Appendix 5 – Tree Valuation Method.

7.7.3.3 Tree Inventory GIS Analysis

Spatial analysis of the urban forest asset data gathered from regularly updated inventory is critical to planning, measuring changes, performance and benchmarks. Council's GIS & Asset software will be the key method used to undertake this analysis. Standard reports and additional staff training will be required to improve performance in this area.

7.7.3.4 Operational Guidelines

To provide a fair, clear and transparent process various operational guidelines (OG) have been developed and others currently being considered. Currently four OGs exist:

1. Amenity Tree Valuation Guideline: Used to value trees for various purposes including legal, risk, cost/benefit etc. (Appendix 5 – Tree Valuation Method)
2. Tree Removal for Private Good Guideline: This OG is used where individuals, groups, developers or businesses wish to removal a tree for their private good; this removes trees from the public realm and hence removes a public good. This OG uses an amenity value for the tree(s) allowing a discussion to occur with the effected person(s) on how to best proceed, often alternatives are possible. In instances where no alternative but tree removal is possible, the valuation is used to provide compensation, allowing additional tree planting to occur. (Appendix 6 – Tree Removal Requests for Private Good)
3. Tree Removal Guideline: Council receives requests to remove trees from streets and parks. It is often a difficult decision balancing public and private goods, this Guideline details circumstances were tree removal may occur and importantly when tree removal will not be permitted (Appendix 7 – Tree Removal Evaluation)

4. Tree Root Issues Guidelines: Issues occasionally occur in relation to tree roots and public or private infrastructure, this guideline provide a decision flow chart (Appendix 8 – Tree Roots Issue Guideline)

7.8 Measurement, Monitoring and Review

A key element of success for any long-term process is to monitor and evaluate progress over time. Changes to and in the urban forest occur slowly, hence monitoring needs to occur in such a form that the data is relevant in 20 years. Equally, this is a relatively new area, management of the urban forest is an on-going learning process that requires innovation, and constant feedback loops to quantify results and progress. New tools and improved understanding will continue to be developed and will improve understanding in this area.

Design and management of public places is an iterative process. It extends well beyond the initial development of an asset to its on-going maintenance and review of its continued operation through 'adaptive management', wherein applying the new knowledge from lessons learnt as an urban forestry program moves forward (for instance the ways in which trees respond to new stresses as well as new treatments for those stresses) helps improve the accuracy in predicting how an ecosystem will respond to new managerial approaches.

Monitoring and reviewing progress for the Urban Forest Plan will involve assessing how well the actions of the plan are realising its principles, goals and objectives, and whether projects at an individual or collective level are meeting the plan's performance criteria and targets to ensure that its directions are still valid. Evaluating this progress over time may allow, if necessary, to introduce remedial measures and actions, to refine or adjust key directions, and to maintain the momentum of its actions and outcomes into the future. In each of the above cases, the information gained will become part of a collective knowledge affecting the direction of future urban forest (or green infrastructure) proposals or processes.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PLAN 2014-2024

PART 2 of 3 – Town Plans

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PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PLAN
PART 2 – TOWN PLANS
Open Space Town Analysis

Wellington is a regional area with over 35 towns spread across a large geographical area. Whilst the overall Wellington statistics and POS (public open space) standards are valuable in providing for the big picture, the large variation in population demographics, geographic size, context and existing town character suggest that the 'one size fits all' approach that may be appropriate across contiguous urban areas should not be the focus of POS provision in Wellington. Rather the focus should be on reflecting local needs and aspirations and enhancing existing town character within the proposed classification framework.

Hence, the approach taken here is to undertake individual town analysis and creating a POS plan for each urban area.

8 Briagolong

Briagolong is a historical township with an interesting and diverse history. The best description comes from the people who live there; the following is from the Briagolong Community Plan (2007).

“Briagolong is situated in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range and enjoys scenic rural and mountain landscapes.

Briagolong is primarily a residential area for people who work and shop in Sale, Maffra, Stratford, Longford and other centres including the Latrobe Valley. A diverse range of cultural, artistic and lifestyle interests and pursuits exist in the community.

Briagolong offers a variety of activities from the quiet relaxation of exploring a country township to the adventures within the mountains beyond. Bush walking, gold fossicking, horse riding, trail rides are all available locally.

Ranges of community and sporting organisations have been responsible for the development of community assets such as the Mechanics’ Institute, Anzac Park, RSL Log Cabin and the Recreation Reserve. Adjoining the Recreation Reserve is the 112-hectare Briagolong Forest Red Gum Reserve. Serene natural and constructed swimming areas on the Freestone Creek include the Quarry Reserve camping area and Blue Pools.”

Figure 8 Briagolong Mechanic's Institute before the 1990s extension

The town’s character is split in two, with the western side layout reflecting the classic government layout of wide streets in a grid like pattern, whilst the eastern side was create by a private subdivision and is much less developed but somewhat contained within a remnant forest.

There is only one public park in the town and it has recently been significant upgraded.

8.1 Demographics

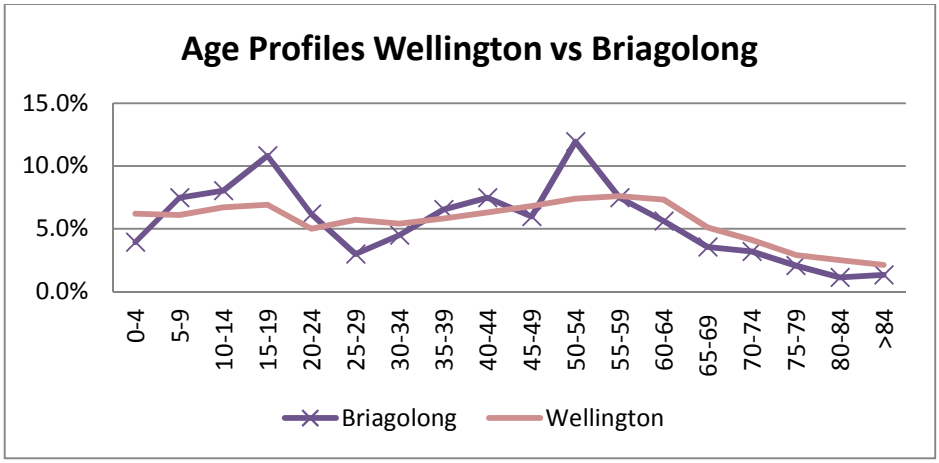
The population of the area in 2011 was 537, with a median age of 40. This is a slight decrease in the town population from the 2006 census and during the same period the median age increased from 36 to 43. The 20-year population growth was 6%. Income spread is similar to the average Wellington level with some 33% of household reporting a gross weekly income below $600 and 3% above $3000. The unemployment rate from the 2011 census was 6.2% (slightly higher than the Wellington 5.2%).

The age profile for Briagolong is interesting with peaks in the 5-19 year and 50-54 groups (Figure 9), however this may merely be a statistical anomaly because the actual numbers are small. Regardless there are 162 people at 19 or below, this is 30% of the town

population and above the Wellington figure of 26%. For 14 years and under there are 104 children (19%) this age group is the target range for play space provision.

There were 248 dwellings in 2011, an 8% increase from 2006. Dwelling density is 241 per square kilometre, which is half the density of the larger Wellington urban towns, reflecting the larger block sizes and more open nature of the town.

Figure 9 Briagolong Age Profile compared to Wellington (Census 2011)



There are 248 private dwellings in the town with an 82% occupancy rate. There is slow but steady development with 14 new dwellings being built between 2006 and 2011.

This plan focuses largely on the township, not the larger State Suburb classification (Figure 10), as POS largely provides for township people. However, within many smaller rural communities, POS becomes the focal point for community events and gatherings and this includes from surrounding rural areas. Anzac Park has been recently upgraded to provide such a facility.

Figure 10 Briagolong ABS 2011 Census State Suburb and Urban Locality Areas

Figure 11 Anzac Park Briagolong

8.2 Existing POS

Briagolong's existing POS is mapped in Figure 12.

- Anzac Park (1.) is a 'twin' park recently upgraded and doubled in size. This is the town's major POS; it covers some 4200m2 and has a district level playground, Radcon sawn timber toilet block and BBQ. The park is of two distinct areas, the Anzac Park section providing a reflective area and site for the cenotaph and the northern section a more active recreational area. Within the POS Classification Framework this park is a Neighbourhood Open Space (NOS) with the acknowledgment that it caters as a community gathering point for the wider Briagolong Community
- The Briagolong Recreation Reserve (2.) provides a large open space area, as well as catering for varied sporting uses, it is situated on the southern entrance to the town and linked to the town via a shared path
- The Red Gum Forest (3.) is a DEPI controlled area on the southern edge of the town and provides a quiet site for walking, nature appreciation, etc., access is limited due to the distance from the town (1.2 km from the town centre) and lack of a formal path
- Several other longer stay POS recreational areas are nearby including DEPI controlled Blue Pools (3.5km)and WSC Quarry Reserve(9km) (both require driving)
- There has been a formal tree planting along Forbes Street (5.) creating a potentially significant town entry

Figure 12 Briagolong POS Areas (blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types) and 400mm buffer around the main park and playground

8.3 Spatial Analysis

Spatial analysis of both the POS and playground provision suggests that an additional POS area is maybe required to meet the POS standards.

- The 400m playground buffer covers 0.41km2 and represents around 40% of the town area, this means that some 60% of the town population lives more than 400 metres from a playground. The maximum distance is 1.7 kilometres
- Whilst spatially not ideal Briagolong has one playground for every 97 children, compared to Sale at one in 223 and Maffra at one in 153
- The school has a playground, however, this is on the furthest western edge of the town with the Anzac Park playground nearby
- The Briagolong Recreation Reserve (2) is on the southern edge and quite some distance from the main residential areas; a 400-metre buffer only captures some 16% of the township area
- POS provision is similar to that of the playground (that only a single playground exists this is not surprising), based on a 400 metre buffer some 46% of the township area is within 400 metres of the town park
- The eastern area was privately subdivided in the 1890s which accounts for the lack of crown land and public open space (which was typically included in crown subdivisions of the time)
- If Anzac Park is considered similar to a DOS level park then the 1000m buffer captures the entire urban area

Figure 13 POS and Playground Buffer Zones

1000m metre District POS buffer

400 metre Play Space and Neighbourhood Park Buffer

8.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The existing infrastructure in Anzac Park is in excellent condition and meets the needs of the local community and casual visitors. The two landscapes are in context for the relative values each part of the park offers and appear well maintained. The site is notable for pleasant landscapes that do not require irrigation. Service levels and service quality appears well done.

As noted, the town entry maintenance standard from Stratford reduces the visual appeal of the town. This issues occurs in other towns and may need reviewing within the overall service standards for townships.

8.5 Needs

Anzac Park, with the play space, public toilet and BBQ caters well as a centralised community space and at the NOS level largely provides for the community. However, a large area of the township is not well catered for in the provision of play and parkland. Given the nature of the town and lack of physical barriers to accessing the existing park, there is a strong argument that an additional play space is not needed. Nevertheless needs analysis suggests that:

- That WSC undertake further analysis including consulting with the community around the current level of play space provision around the township
- Off-road access to the Red Gum Forest should be reviewed

8.6 Briagolong Summary

Briagolong is a distinctive town with quite a different character to most urban centres. The existing park is of particularly high quality and would seem to cater well to the needs of the community. Given the nature of the town and layout there is probably not a need for further POS provision. This should be further explored with the community.

Given the limited growth in the town and the excellent existing POS, any further development should be focussed on determining whether there is a demonstrated need for further POS development.

9 Coongulla

Coongulla is a small town in the Great Divide foothills adjacent to Lake Glenmaggie. It was created by subdivision in the early 1960s. This area has significant number of absentee owners (the Lake Glenmaggie Community Plan states that about half the houses in the Coongulla/Glenmaggie area are occupied); the 2011 census data would suggest occupancy is closer to 75%.

In 2009 a community survey was undertaken for the Lake Glenmaggie Community Plan (CRG, 2012), 86 responses were received 60 of these were from Coongulla. This plan highlighted some of the values people placed on the area, the highest responses were 'Peaceful, safe and quiet' (23) and 'Boating, water sports, fishing and recreational use of the lake' (32). Most of the issues identified in the Community Plan were not directly or indirectly related to WSC POS provision (more often to do with management of OS areas associated with the lake), with the exception of the comments 'Better council support for the park' and 'The reserve on Ryans Road and Woolenook Way has become a disgrace e.g.; people making their own roads through the reserve ruining a nice park.'

Coongulla is very much a town carved from the bush and functionally not dissimilar to many of the coastal towns e.g., Golden Beach.

9.1 Demographics

Coongulla is too small to be statistically considered an urban locality by the ABS for census purposes. Hence the State Suburb area is used (Figure 15), this larger area over estimates the urban area data limiting its value for POS analysis.

The demographics provided for Coongulla in the revised Community Plan and in the 2006 census are significantly different to those released in the 2011 census data, for example the 2006 census reports 165 people and the 2011 reports 297, this reflects a large change in the collector zone area and not a change to the district.

The population of the State Suburb area in 2011 was 297, with a median age of 53. This median age is well above the Wellington median of 41 and the Victorian 37. Income spread is similar to the Wellington level with some 31% of household reporting a gross weekly income below $600 and 6% above $3000. The unemployment rate from the 2011 census was 4.3% (slightly lower than the Wellington 5.2%).

The 2011 census cube data reports the actual township area has 244 residents and 148 dwellings. This suggests an absentee rate of 24%; the approximate holiday population is 600. Applying the Coongulla State Suburb age profile rates, suggest there are approximately 40 children less than 15 years.

The dwelling density is 125 dwelling per square kilometre a very low density; however, this is more a reflection of the larger rural residential area on the northern edge of the town rather than an indicator of empty blocks.

Figure 14 Coongulla Age Profile compared to Wellington (Census 2011)

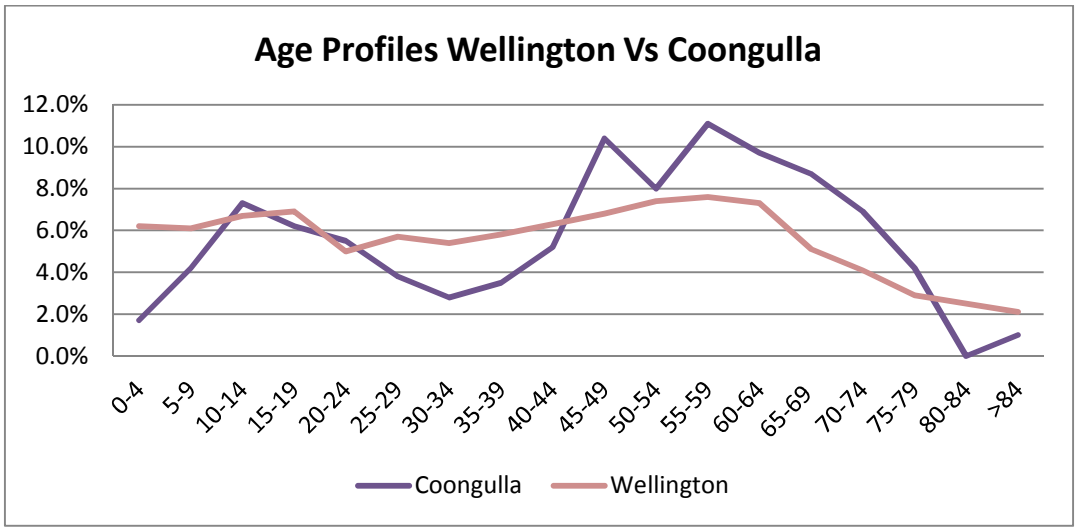


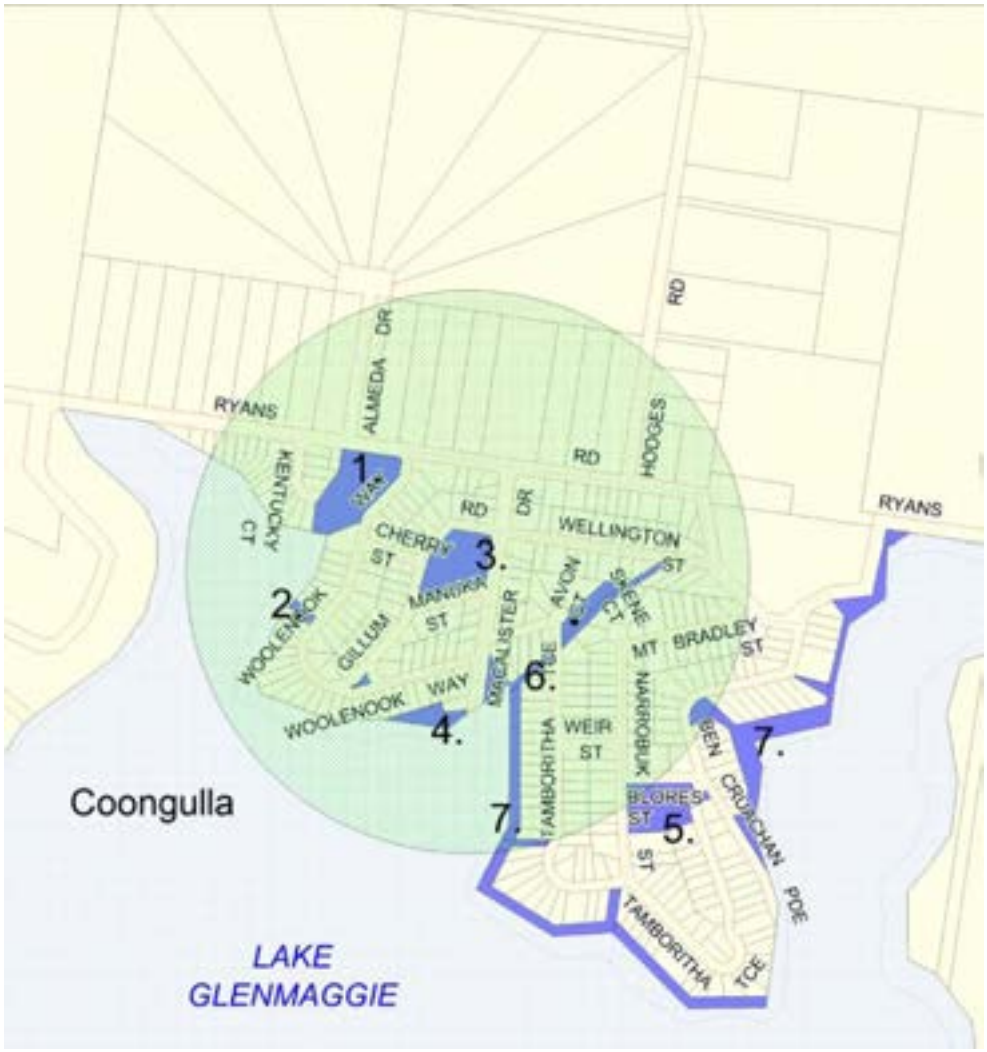
Figure 15 Coongulla ABS 2011 Census State Suburb Area

9.2 Existing POS

Existing POS is mapped in Figure 16 . Coongulla has a relatively large amount of POS; however most is poorly developed and serves little direct purpose. The only developed park is off Macalister Drive (3.) and has a public hall, tennis court and playground. This park functions as a community hub. It is not well developed; however, in of 2014 WSC and a State Government grant has allowed redevelopment of the site.

Other significant sized POS areas include Reserves off Narrobuk St (5.) and Woolenook Way (1.). An extensive buffer exists between the lake and the township (7.). Several reserves are functionally for drainage purposes, but also serve as linkages (6.). A boat ramp exists at the lake end of Macalester St (4.).

Figure 16 Coongulla POS Areas (blue sections POS and 400mm buffer around the main park and playground)



9.3 Spatial & Needs Analysis

Visually Coongulla would appear well catered for POS although the 400m metre playground buffer could suggest that an additional Play Space area is required to meet the Play Space standards.

- The 400m playground buffer covers 70% of the town area; this means that some 30% of the town population lives more than 400 metres from a playground. However, the maximum distance is only 700 metres. Approximately 13 children live outside the 400-metre radius. Ninety per cent of the town is within 500 metres of the playground. There are 40 children per playground in Coongulla, whilst, for example, in Sale and Maffra it is 197 and 153 respectively; the shire average is 70 children per playground. This suggests that an additional playground is not currently warranted
- The Woolenook Way reserve (Figure 17) is being used as a road short cut and to access private properties. This destroys any amenity the site has. This site appears to serve little recreational purpose and it is difficult to recommend expenditure on the site when it is less than 150 metres from the main reserve

Figure 17 Coongulla: Woolenook Reserve

- Unless it has a drainage function, the community's opinion should be sought on the value and future of the small reserve next to 47 Woolenook Way (Figure 18). Further analysis of the reserve is required to determine its functions and current use. This analysis should be done in conjunction with the community. This analysis will assist in determining the future of this reserve

Figure 18 Coongulla: Woolenook Way Reserve next to No. 47

- The existing drainage and lake buffer reserves (coloured red and blue in Figure 19) have great potential to be linkages and to provide areas with natural values and should be further assessed for this function. Management actions to enhance the natural values should be undertaken to preserve, enhance and promote the values of these areas and to increase usage

Figure 19 Coongulla Drainage and Lake Buffer Reserves

- The reserve in Blores Street (Figure 20) is poorly developed with little amenity value and no infrastructure. It is in effect a vacant piece of land. However as shown with the 400 metre buffer in Figure 21 it is spatially well placed to improve Coongulla's POS provision. During the development of this plan, the community made strong recommendations that this land was important and should be enhanced and retained. If the town should further develop (and this is likely with sewerage and sealing of the roads) given its location within the town this reserve could be a valuable part of Coongulla's POS. It is recommended that the site is maintained in its current state for the time being.

Figure 20 Coongulla Reserve Blores St

Figure 21 Coongulla reserves with 400m buffers

9.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

As noted, the main reserve in Macalister Drive, whilst it had some infrastructure, the overall condition was poor. The nature of the natural vegetation of the area, the dry gravelly soils and lack of water for irrigation do limit the type of landscapes, which can be developed, however these are merely local constraints and appropriate well-maintained and high quality landscapes are achievable.

9.5 Needs

Coongulla is a unique town; it does not fit the model of an absentee town, retirement area or a tourism model. Therefore, it is difficult to determine applicable and equitable service levels and standards for the township. It has the twelfth biggest town population and is larger than Seaspray.

Unlike most towns, the exiting POS is largely not developed and the service standards low. There is also a relatively large amount of POS for a town of this size and of course the 'borrowed' landscape of Lake Glenmaggie.

- A combined State Government and WSC funded project has significantly upgraded the Coongulla Recreation Reserve; this will provide an excellent central community park
- Review current and future need for the reserves identified in the spatial analysis
- In the longer term, seek the community's opinion as to the value and future of the Blores Street Reserve. However, it is recommended that the site is maintained in its current state for the time being
- Create management actions to preserve, enhance and promote the natural values of the lake and drainage reserves

- Woolenook Way Reserve should be maintained as a low-level reserve with a focus improved biodiversity through appropriate revegetation

9.6 Coongulla Summary

The undeveloped nature of much of the existing POS does provide an opportunity for the residents to determine future POS development. Community engagement is the key needs requirement for Coongulla POS development.

10 Cowwarr

A small town established in the 1860s servicing the Walhalla gold fields. There are still some historic buildings existing in the town. The town has a well-regarded art deco style hotel built in 1930 and the heritage listed butter factory operates as a contemporary art gallery. The Gippsland Plains Rail Trail passes the town. Cowwarr has become well known for its sculptural cows throughout the town.

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10.1 Demographics

Cowwarr is too small to be statistically considered an urban locality by the ABS for census purposes. Given the size of the State Suburb area (Figure 34), there would appear little value in using the data for POS analysis. Based on the 2011 census cube data there are approximately 56 dwellings in the township area and a population of 135. This would suggest approximately 25 children under 15.

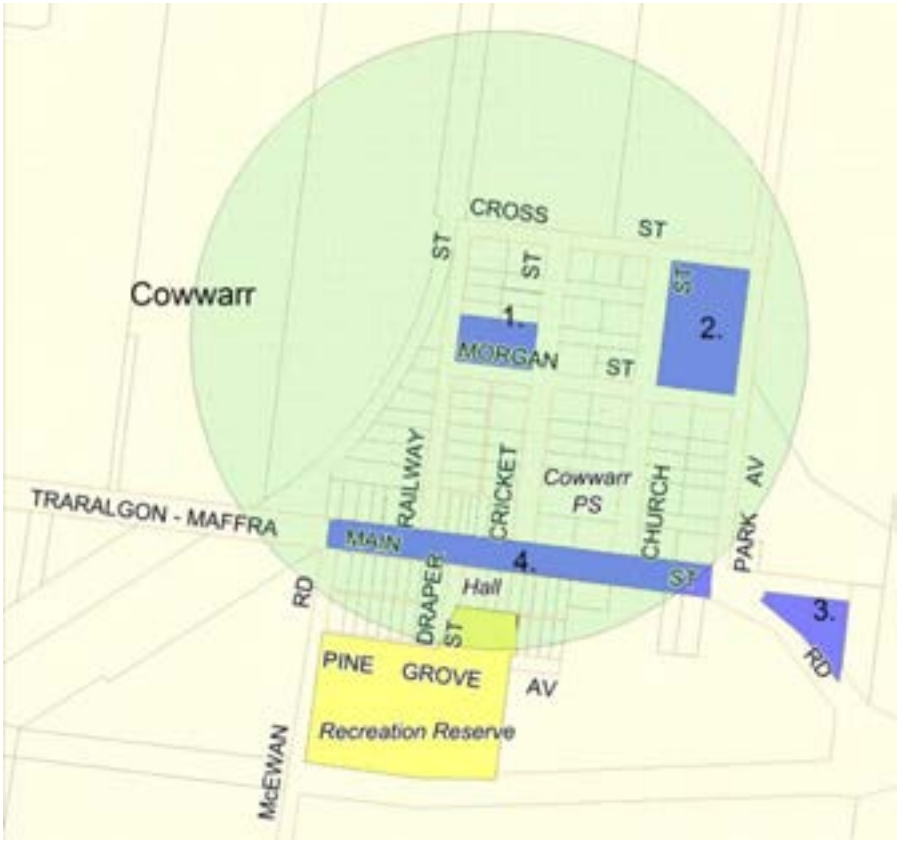
Figure 22 Cowwarr ABS Census 2011 State Suburb

10.2 Existing POS

POS areas are mapped in Figure 23

- **Morgan Street Reserve (1).** Is neighbourhood open space, the site has a playground paths and some landscaping. The site is leased by Council from the Anglican Church and was recently upgraded
- **Rainbow Creek Reserve (2).** Is a 1.7-hectare reserve on the northeast edge of the town. A large amount of the area is subject to significant flooding. The site was recently upgraded with anew path and seating. The Cypress tree grove is believed to be a memorial planting although no evidence has been found to support this belief. There have been requests in the past to remove this grove. Given the level of use of the park, the condition of the trees is considered acceptable until their heritage is established. Tree works will be undertaken as required in line with the service provision in similar parks
- **Town Entry (3).** Council staff undertake regular mowing of the town entries. Current provision is considered appropriate, although there have been requests to extend the mowing further out towards the Cowwarr Artspace This area is managed by VicRoads
- **Town Centre (4).** Recent streetscape works the length of the town have made a significant positive improvement to the amenity of Cowwarr

Figure 23 Cowwarr POS with 400m Play Space Buffer



10.3 Spatial Analysis

A 400m buffer from the Morgan Street play space (Figure 23Figure 21) covers the vast majority of the town.

WSC maintains the town approaches, parks and garden beds within the town centre. Service levels would seem appropriate.

10.4 Needs

Current service standards and provision are considered adequate at this point. Given this, and although not a high priority further consideration should be given to completing Stage 2 of the approved Streetscape Masterplan.

10.5 Cowwarr Summary

Cowwarr will not grow significantly in the next decade. The focus should be on maintaining adequate service standards.

11 Dargo

Dargo is a very small town with a permanent town population of less than 40. Located 92km from Sale, Dargo is one of Victoria's legendary 'bush towns.' It was established primarily as a resting place and later as a supply town for miners on their way to the local goldfields in the mid-1800s. Dargo is a stockbreeding and agricultural district and is known for its century old walnut groves that line the valley.

Dargo is popular for individuals and groups wanting to explore the Dargo High Plains and high country with many anglers, walkers, hikers, campers, 4WD enthusiasts and trail bike riders visiting the area. An annual Walnut Festival was held at Easter, this festival ceased a few years ago.

Similar to Licola and Woodside Beach from a POS perspective the focus is on provision of facilities suited to shorter-term visitors.

Figure 24 Dargo

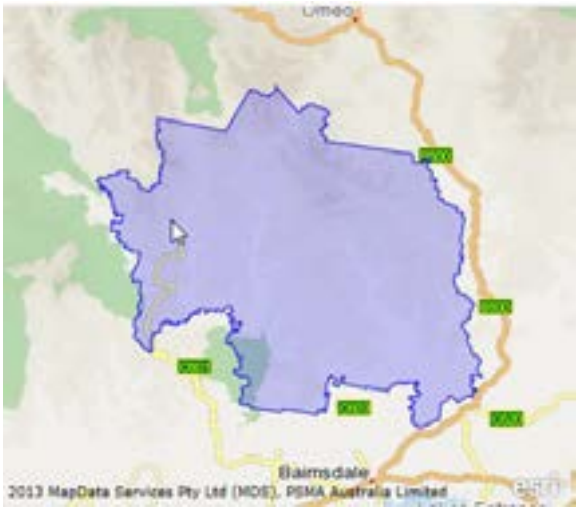
11.1 Demographics

Dargo is too small to be statistically considered an urban locality by the ABS for census purposes. Hence, the much larger State Suburb area is used (Figure 25). The population of the state suburb area in 2011 was 148 approximately the same as the 2006 census. The median age was 60, an increase from the 2006 55; this is well above the WSC average of 42.

Using the 2011 Census 'Block Data' the township population was 36 with 44 dwellings. It is estimated that the absentee rate is 65%, although with such an age profile this may merely reflect more single person households. Based on the average age profile for Wellington it is estimated there are six children under 15 years in Dargo.

Similar to many coastal towns and Licola, Dargo is fundamentally a tourism driven town and POS development should consider this perspective.

Figure 25 Dargo ABS Census State Suburb Area



11.2 Existing POS

Existing POS includes the significant avenue of Liquid Amber and Cedar trees that run through the town, the 'oval' with associated BBQ shelter, playground and public toilets (1.). A small reserve exists over the river on Nortons Road (2).

The oval reserve area is a DEPI reserve and is not managed by Council. Council does maintain the playground, BBQ and toilets on the site. The local Landcare group maintains the river reserve.

The major demand of POS is due to visitors. Holiday periods place a significant demand on the town's facilities. During peak visitor times, an issue of rubbish being dropped off in the reserve by visitors to the high country creates problems.

Figure 26 Dargo POS (blue sections POS)

11.3 Spatial Analysis

Spatial analysis is largely irrelevant due to the very small population and limited distances.

Unlike many smaller towns in Wellington, Dargo has a commercial hub that relies heavily on tourism. The main POS area is within 500 metres of the shops.

11.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- The BBQ shelter and public toilets have been upgraded and appear adequate. The playground is on the recurrent replacement program and due for renewal
- There is no directly WSC maintained POS in Dargo, however service levels of the existing POS appears adequate
- The main avenue of Cedar and Liquidambar trees throughout the town do have some issues and at some point, a discussion as to their replacement will be required
- The reserve off Nortons Road has a car parking area and table and seat

11.5 Needs

- The community has raised the desire to improve the river reserve (2) by adding furniture and a public toilet. This is crown land and not WSC controlled. Council has supported this project. This site does offer potentially a far more pleasant visitor experience than the facilities located at the oval. It is suggested that the site does not need to be any more than a pleasant picnic spot that can easily be achieved with some furniture
- The playground is due for replacement in the next few years
- The avenue of liquidambars and cedars has some issues with many reaching the end of their useful life. In partnership with the community the future management of this significant and somewhat iconic avenue should be reviewed

11.6 Dargo Summary

As with so many of the smaller rural towns, the one-size fits all urban town model does not fit Dargo. As with many other tourism-focused towns, the levels and ranges of facilities need to be relevant to the visitor experience. Justification for such infrastructure should be focussed on the visitor experience and demonstrated need.

12 Golden Beach/Paradise Beach

Golden Beach is located some 37km southeast of Sale and is one of the main towns interacting with the Ninety-Mile Beach. It has a small Town Centre area, with community centre and with a neighbourhood park within 200 metres of the beach.

One of the most striking town features is the extended (1.5 km) divided road entry with an impressive naturalistic centre median planting.

The area is a very popular fishing location, a fishing competition is held annually at Easter. Camping along the foreshore between Golden Beach, and Seaspray is very popular, particularly in summer.

The Golden Beach /Paradise beach area was created by developers in the 1950-60s and 11,800 residential lots were created and sold. Unfortunately, many of these lots were not suitable for development in such a sensitive environment. Currently the area has some 330 permanent residents and 353 dwellings.

12.1 Demographics

The population of Golden/Paradise Beach in 2011 was 330, with a median age of 59. This is a 4% increase since 2006, although during the same period the median age increased from 55 to 59. The population is 10% lower than 2001 and largely appears stable.

The age profile for the area shows a very large peak over 55 years and a corresponding low percentage under 35 years (Figure 27). This demographic is also shown in the 74% couples with no children group, which is nearly double the Wellington average. For 14 years and under there are 24 children (7.2%) this is only one third of the Wellington average. The

unemployment rate from the 2011 census was 15.9% (well above the Wellington 5.2% average).

Whilst there are 330 residents there are 353 dwellings giving an absentee owner rate of approximately 57%. The holiday period population is estimated to be 1400 people plus those using the coastal camping areas. The dwelling density is 60 dwelling per square kilometre a extremely low density.

As with many coastal areas, Golden/Paradise Beach has two key demographics that of the older profile permanent residents and that of the absentee owner.

Figure 27 Golden Beach/Paradise Beach Age Profile (2011 Census)

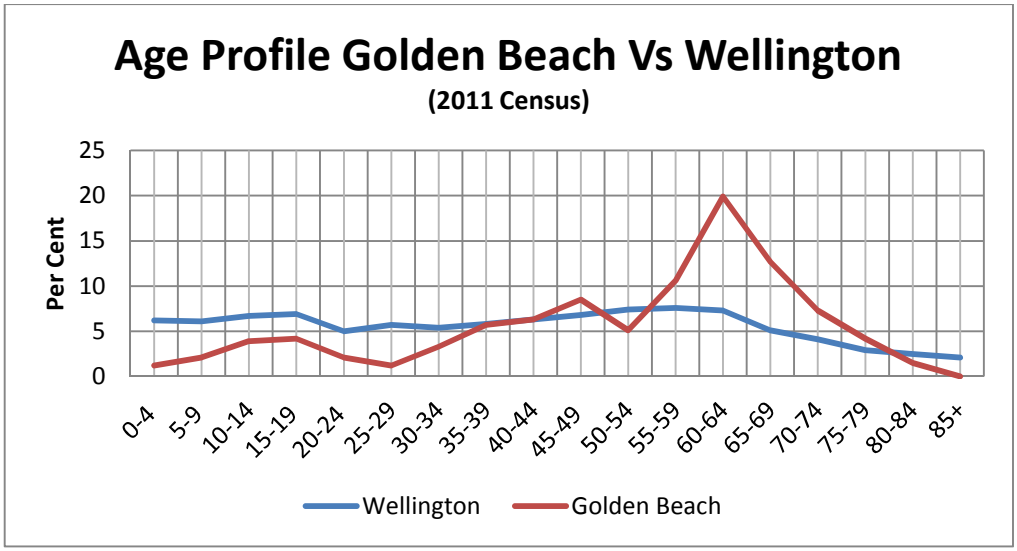


Figure 28 Golden Beach/Paradise Beach ABS Census Urban Locality

12.2 Existing POS

- Town Park (1.): Adjacent to the Community Centre is a small area of POS compromising a play space, landscaping, central lawn area, car park, public toilets, BBQ and BBQ shelter
- The extensive Veronica Maybury Recreation Reserve (2.) is not considered in this plan because it largely is focussed on active recreation, although much of the site provides pleasant walks
- Town Entry (3.): The town entry to Golden Beach is probably the most interesting and unique entry of any coastal town in Wellington. The existing Norfolk Island Pine planted centre median is an attractive element of the main street
- Parks Victoria (4.) manages a sizeable area of foreshore POS adjacent to the Town Park
- As commonly found in these coastal subdivisions numerous small lots of land have been created presumably as part of the original subdivision's open space contribution. Most offer no amenity value or are not suited for future POS, although some lots have the potential to provide linkages

Figure 29 Golden Beach blue sections POS and 400mm buffer around the park and playground. Green areas are dwellings, whilst blank areas are lots without a dwelling.

Figure 30 Golden Beach Play Space

12.3 Spatial Analysis

Golden/Paradise Beach is a long linear development stretching some six kilometres (Figure 31) with a very small permanent population. The dwelling density for this area is 60km2; this is 10% of the density of towns such as Maffra. This is largely a reflection of the low number of house compared to lots (Figure 29). The typical town distance buffers are not valid in such low-density zones because they capture very few people, e.g., a 400m metre buffer in Sale will capture approximately 660 people whilst the same area in Golden Beach will capture 66. Hence, placing the existing POS into a standard urban context is not valid in this context.

The presence of the Ninety-Mile Beach is effectively the provision of POS for most residents and visitors. There are only 24 children over this extensive area, given this area one of the lowest number of children per playground in Wellington.

The centralised community centre, CBD and town park is an excellent feature particularly for visitors to the area.

Figure 31 Golden Beach POS with 400m buffer

12.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The play space, public toilets, BBQ etc., are at a suitable standard for both locals and visitors, issues do exist during the short extremely busy Christmas-New Year period, mainly with rubbish dumping and overloading of the public toilets.

Coastal sites are difficult to provide high quality amenity landscapes in the traditional European sense. Even more so on sites where it is so exposed to the sea and without suitable water for irrigation. The service levels in maintaining these landscapes fluctuate but generally need improvement.

12.5 Needs

The demographics of Golden Beach and Paradise Beaches would suggest that existing POS provision is suitable, particularly as the Ninety-Mile Beach is the primary POS and attractor for the area.

Improving the service levels and standards of existing areas would appear to be the priority with the harsh environment and summer dryness being major constraints.

- The town park should be re-landscaped with maybe a lesser palate of hardier more sustainable species. Whilst not part of the OSP, sealing of the car park adjacent to the public toilet would improve the amenity and function of the park
- The roundabout should be re-landscaped
- The town entry is an attractive feature, with the exception of the 70 metres just before the town CBD, which is largely uncleared native vegetation; this is incongruent with the rest of the entry. However, as it is native vegetation, planning permission is required and environmental concerns may override an amenity perspective
- The number of small blocks spread throughout the two areas from the original subdivision do not provide any amenity value, and none appear large enough to be considered as natural area POS, these should be assessed as to the value in retaining them, community feedback should be sought once the assessments are undertaken. The many other blocks linked to inappropriate subdivisions are not considered as part of the OSP

12.6 Golden/Paradise Beach Summary

This area is unlikely to see significant growth in the next decade. The focus on POS provision in this area should be on improving the amenity and the visitor experience of the centralised area in and near the town centre. As noted, this should be focused on providing a more sustainable landscape. The number of small lots is also an issue, which may be difficult to address, however an assessment should be undertaken and the options discussed with the community.

13 Glenmaggie

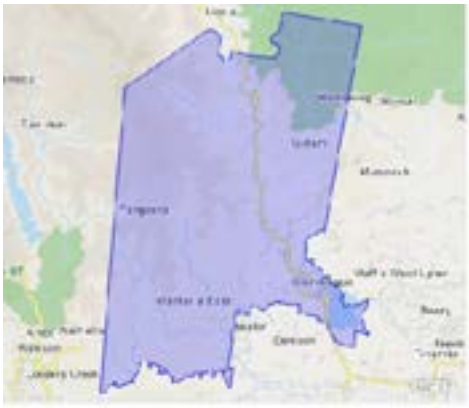
Glenmaggie is more a geographic location than one township as seen in Figure 33 it covers three areas over 5 kilometres. Lake Glenmaggie is the primary attraction for the area, offering boating and fishing opportunities.

13.1 Demographics

Glenmaggie is too small to be statistically considered an urban locality by the ABS for census purposes. Given the size of the State Suburb area (Figure 32), there would appear little value in using the data for POS analysis.

Based on the 2011 census cube data there are approximately 44 dwellings in the township area north of the lake and a population of 28. This would suggest approximately nine children under 15. It would also indicate an absentee owner rate of 70%. The southern area has 32 dwellings with 57 residents. This would suggest approximately 12 children under 15. And with only a low absentee rate of 15%.

Figure 32 Glenmaggie ABS 2011 Census State Suburb



13.2 Existing POS

Figure 33 Glenmaggie WSC POS Areas

WSC POS areas are mapped in Figure 33.
Little Council controlled POS exists, the Southern Rural Water (SRW) controlled Lake Glenmaggie is the largest and most significant POS

- Area 1 is a natural reserve adjacent to the Licola Road
- Area 2 is a reserve adjoining a SRW access area to the lake
- Area 3 is a natural area lot created as part of this rural residential subdivision and it appears to function mostly as a drainage reserve.

13.3 Spatial analysis

There is no developed POS in these areas. The presence of Lake Glenmaggie is effectively the provision of POS for most residents and visitors. They are approximately 20 children over this extensive area.

13.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

There is no WSC POS infrastructure within existing areas. Reserves 2 & 3 are managed as natural area reserves. Area 1 is slashed and functionally largely serves as a part of the SRW managed area to allow access to the lake. Some of this site may have natural area values.

13.5 Needs

Glenmaggie is a very small town spread over a large area. Whilst it has high visitor numbers these are largely associated with use of Lake Glenmaggie.

- The three reserves should be assessed for natural area values and if significant values are identified any management should reflect enhancing and/or retaining these values
- Review current and future need for the Area 3 reserve identified in the spatial analysis
- Current service standards and provision are considered adequate

13.6 Glenmaggie Summary

Glenmaggie will not grow significantly in the next decade and there does not appear to be any significant requirement to increase the level or provision of existing POS.

14 Gormandale

Nestled in the fertile Merrimans Creek Valley, Gormandale is a popular visiting place for those travelling to the Tarra Bulga National Park and Grand Strzelecki Track and the mid-point to those travelling to Port Albert or other coastal areas.

Given that much of the area is some distance from other towns, Gormandale acts somewhat as a community hub. It has an active football/netball club, community house and public hall.

14.1 Demographics

Gormandale is too small to be statistically considered an urban locality by the ABS for census purposes. Given the size of the State Suburb area (Figure 34), there would appear little value in using the data for POS analysis.

Due to its limited size ABS cube data is equally not available for the area. Garbage charges against properties is a reasonable measure of dwellings; based on the 2012 data, there are approximately 29 dwellings in the township area, including the small area of rural residential. This would suggest a town population of 65 people and using the WSC average age demographic 14 children under 15.

Figure 34 Gormandale ABS Census State Suburb

14.2 Existing POS

POS areas are mapped in Figure 35.

- The major piece of POS in Gormandale is within the Gormandale Recreation Reserve (1.). It contains a recently completed play space, public toilet and BBQ shelter and BBQ. This is a service level above that provided for most communities of this size and was funded via State Government grants after the 2009 bushfires. This site is a crown land reserve and not controlled by WSC
- Other areas include the war memorial (2.), town entries (3.), and garden beds within the town centre (4.)

14.3 Spatial Analysis

A 400m buffer from the park area in the Recreation Reserve covers the vast majority of the town. The level of infrastructure exceeds what is provided to other communities of this size.

Figure 35 Gormandale POS areas with 400m buffer

14.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

WSC maintains the town approaches and garden beds within the town centre, they are maintained at a high standards, the service levels in Gormandale exceed that of most other smaller towns e.g., Newry, Tinamba, Woodside, etc. This high service standard may reflect a historical context but is incongruent to other areas.

14.5 Needs

Gormandale is a very small town; infrastructure levels are very high as are service standards. Current service standards and provision are considered adequate.

14.6 Gormandale Summary

Gormandale will not grow significantly in the next decade. The focus should be on maintaining adequate service standards.

15 Heyfield

The ‘Timber Town’ of Heyfield is situated 37km from Sale in the centre of Wellington Shire and is a gateway to the Alpine National Park. Heyfield has a rich timber industry and is home to one of the largest sawmills in the Southern Hemisphere, which is the principal source of hardwood for Victoria.

A pleasant township with a population of 1459, Heyfield is situated on the Thomson River and services the timber, dairy and tourism industries. Thousands of tourists visit Lake Glenmaggie and the natural bushland located near Heyfield each year.

Figure 36 Sculpture at the Heyfield Wetlands

15.1 Demographics

The population of Heyfield at the 2011 census was 1459, with a median age of 41. This is a similar population and median age to the 2006 census. The 20-year population growth was -10%.

The age profile for Heyfield is similar to the Wellington average (Figure 37). For 14 years and under there are 313 children (21%) this age group is the target range for play space provision.

Whilst there are 1459 residents there are 654 dwellings giving an occupancy rate suggesting no significant absentee owner rate. The dwelling density is 374 dwelling per square kilometre below the levels found in other similar size towns, reflecting the large amount of non-residential land within the township boundaries, particularly the large amount of POS and active OS. Dwelling numbers have increased by 25 (3.8%) since 2001.

All in all the Heyfield demographic is very similar to the Wellington average.

Figure 37 Heyfield Age Profile (2011 Census)

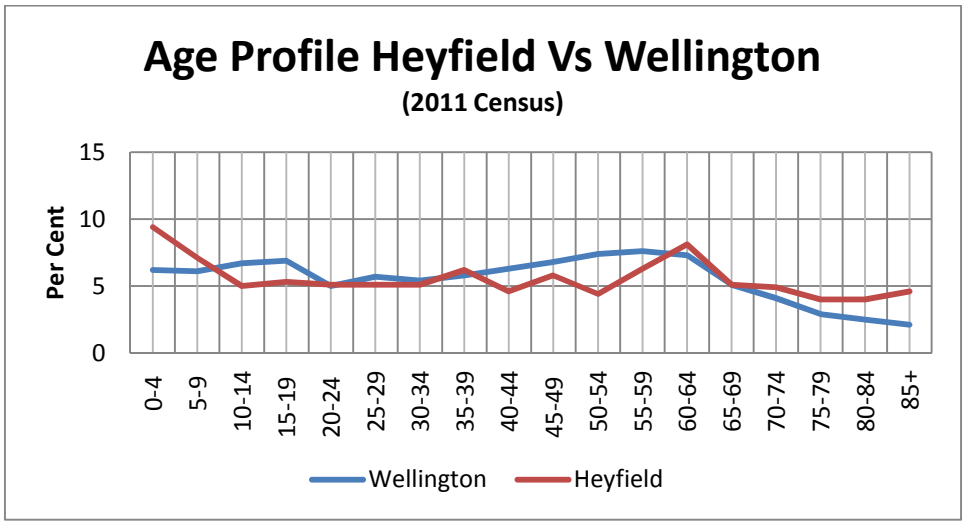
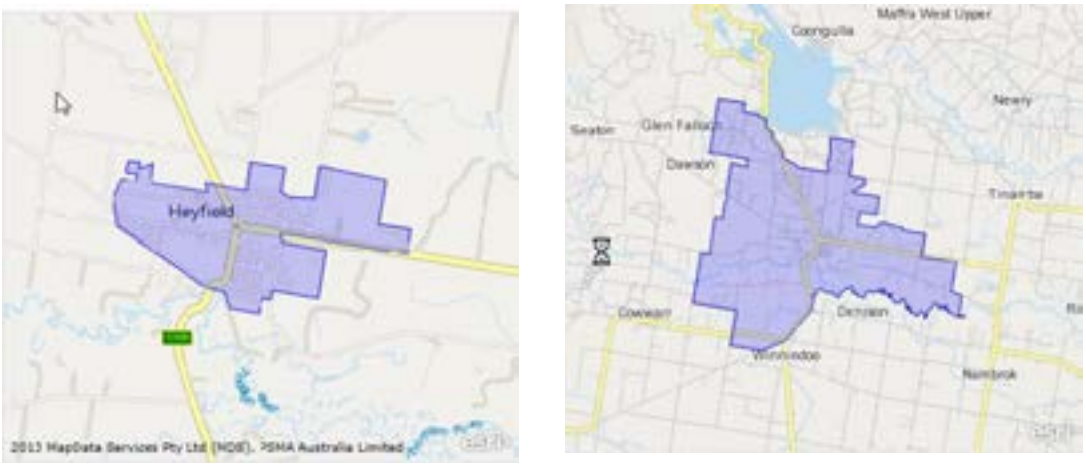


Figure 38 Heyfield ABS 2011 Census Urban Locality and State Suburb Area



15.2 Existing POS

There are several large areas of POS in Heyfield, and few local parks.

- Heyfield's Town Centre (1) is split between Temple and George Streets both contain excellent quality landscapes that reflect the character of the town
- The major park dominating the centre of the Heyfield is the former railway land (2, 3 & 4). Whilst WSC maintains the entire site, control is split between WSC and the DEPI appointed Gippsland Plains Rail Trail Committee of Management. Apex and Rotary Parks (3) and the skatepark land (4) are WSC controlled. The entire area has had significant upgrades in the last decade and is a significant town asset
- There is a small LOS park off Perry Crt (5)
- The Heyfield Wetlands (6) is a tremendous combination of natural open space and areas that are more open and presents an excellent visitor opportunity and a great area for residents to exercise. This area is managed by a Council appointed Committee of Management

- An interesting natural area exists near the bridge over the Thompson River, known as the swimming pool reserve (7)
- A very small area (430m2) block of land exists on Stagg St (8) on the western side of the town
- Other areas managed by WSC as POS are the town entries
- Heyfield also has the nearby Lake Glenmaggie providing Regional Open Space

Figure 39 Heyfield POS Areas (blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types)

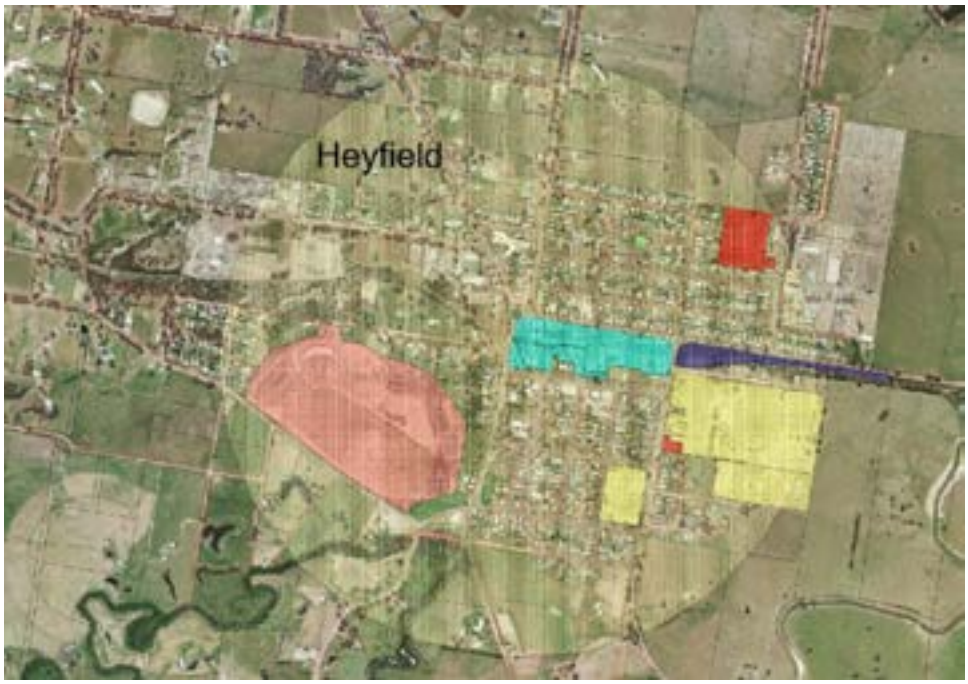
15.3 Spatial Analysis

Spatial analysis of both the POS and playground provision suggests that Heyfield is generally well serviced with available POS.

- The 400m playground buffer (Figure 40) covers 0.8km2 and represents around 71% of the town area. This increases to 80% with a 500-metre buffer. The areas to the north east and southeast are the furthest from play spaces. The small subdivision south off Racecourse Rd has no POS. This 400m buffer also covers the requirement for NOS
- The 1000m metre buffer for District Open Space (Figure 41) covers the vast majority of the town
- The Heyfield Recreation Reserve is a large area on the east of the town that due to its size and because the reserve is not solely a sporting reserve (cf. Sale Oval) has the potential to provide additional high value POS activities, although the demands and needs are not currently demonstrated
- The Heyfield Wetlands is difficult to classify because it is a recently developed area that provides a connection to nature. Over time, the natural feel and opportunity to interact with nature will improve. Its location makes it ideal to promote physical activity. Linkages to this site are important

Figure 40 Heyfield POS 400m Playground Buffers

Figure 41 Heyfield POS 1000m DOS Buffers



15.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- Apex & Rotary Parks were upgraded in 2013 with new playground, shelter, paths, landscaping lighting etc. It is high quality DOS level POS. The rest of the central railway reserve was upgraded within the last 5 years with new walking paths and extensive tree plantings. Generally, the area is well maintained. Irrigation to Apex Park would improve summer amenity, there is some potential to use stormwater capture, however, it is not easily nor inexpensively achieved
- The CBD has also been recently updated and is generally in good condition and well maintained

- The Davis Street town entrance is probably the least attractive element in Heyfield, this road is VicRoads controlled and significant improvement could not be achieved without considerable expenditure and in conjunction with VicRoads
- A request has been made to create a new park and playground to service the residents on the western side of the wetlands. There is a small 400m2 council owned block of land in Stagg St. There are 46 dwellings in the area and 105 residents (2011 Census). This area does sit in relative isolation from the main urban area of Heyfield, approximately 1 kilometre from the Apex Park. Using the Heyfield's age profile there are approximately 23 children under 15 in the area. There are other areas of Heyfield at least as far from a playground, e.g., Burnett Crt, Justice Pde and Portas Mill Lane. It is difficult to justify building a park and playground for such a small number of children and many towns do not have such high service provisions. Only tourist towns, such as Dargo, Seaspray, Golden Beach etc., have similar children to playground ratios. Maffra has 153 children per playground, Heyfield (overall) 157, Yarram 78. Equally, the only available site is not suitable as a park, at 400m2 it is too small, the existing access road crosses the site. Hence, more suitable land would need to be acquired

15.5 Needs

Heyfield is generally well serviced with all aspects of POS. Areas for consideration and discussions with the community are:

- Future use/need for the Swimming Pool Reserve on the Thompson River, it has potential to be a pleasant natural area and possibly as an adjunct walk to the Heyfield Wetlands
- Management of Railway Reserve. Given that WSC largely maintains the entire area, should WSC formalise control of the site
- Apex/Rotary Park's summer amenity could be enhanced by the installation of an irrigation system. The use of potable water is generally not acceptable. Stormwater capture is possible, but not easy or low cost (most likely needing stormwater diverted to underground storage)
- Establish the strength of community's desire to improve the Davis St town entry.
- Develop a Street Tree Town Plan to guide future street tree management

15.6 Summary

Heyfield has had some significant upgrades to its POS in the last few years. There are few significant POS weaknesses. It is unlikely that Heyfield will see major growth in the next decade; the focus should be on quality of service provision and in promoting the use of the area.

16 Licola

A small village located beside the Macalister River, Licola is owned by the Lions Club of Victoria and is the starting point for exploration into the Gippsland High Country. The Licola Township has a population of approximately five; the greater district population is 29. It consists of the 'Lions Wilderness Village', a combined shop, caravan park and service station, CFA building and community meeting room and a small park recently updated with a new public toilet, BBQ and shelter.

The Lions Wilderness Village is the heart of the Licola township and provides accommodation and constructive activities for school groups, young people, special needs groups and disadvantaged children.

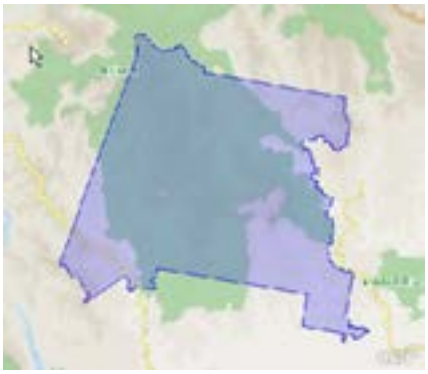
Licola is a starting point for visitors to the high country. From a POS perspective, Licola is a tourist locality and the extensive POS infrastructure would be disproportionate for very limited local population.

Figure 42 Licola POS

16.1 Demographics

In the 2011 census, five people were listed as living in the town, and 29 across the much larger State Suburb. As noted Licola is largely a tourist area and hence visitor demographics are a better measure of need. Unfortunately, visitor data is not readily available, capturing such data is critical to future planning and consideration should be given to creating methods to capture such data.

Figure 43 Licola ABS 2011 Census State Suburb



16.2 Existing POS

The Licola township is privately owned by Lions. The small 0.2-hectare park is on WSC controlled land and provides a public toilet, BBQ shelter & BBQ. It is designed as a short stay site for visitors to the area.

Figure 44 Location of Licola POS

16.3 Spatial Analysis

Due to the tiny site and tourism focus there is no need for spatial analysis, beyond noting the site is centrally located.

16.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The new site infrastructure was built post the 2007 floods and is at a standard well above most other sites in the shire. It provides a high quality experience for visitors.

16.5 Needs

Largely this site caters well for the intended users. The recent infrastructure upgrade should provide for the site for the next 20 years with little more than recurrent maintenance.

- Given the difficulty managing resources for such a remote site, amenity landscaping is not a practical consideration
- Some thought could be given to adding some children's play elements to the site, e.g., swings, spinners; however, the cost of servicing and inspecting such items needs to be considered
- As noted for tourism areas a greater focus needs to be made on data collection of visitors and visitor activities

16.6 Summary

Licola exists as a tourism gateway. POS provision and service standards should continue to reflect that focus

17 Loch Sport

Located on a peninsula splitting Lake Victoria and the Ninety Mile Beach, Loch Sport sits adjacent to state and national coastal parks.

Popular for holidaymakers and day-trippers, Loch Sport is situated 65km from Sale and visitors and residents have many places where they can enjoy a picnic or a BBQ while taking in the beautiful scenery. Fishing, boating, water skiing, and swimming are popular.

Developed by subdivision in the 1960s, and based on area and dwelling numbers it is the third largest town in Wellington. Like most coastal towns, Loch Sport is composed of two characters, a small permanent population, disproportionately composed of an older demographic and that of the large number of absentee owners.

The Loch Sport Urban Design Framework 2007 gives a vision for the town (and a similar vision is given in the Loch Sport Community Plan 2008):

> "Loch Sport will be a major and central Gippsland Lakes settlement and key boating node, attractive to both permanent residents and visitors.
>
> The town will consolidate within its boundaries and new buildings will contribute to the streetscape and respect the coastal character and environment of Loch Sport.
>
> The town centre will become a focus for the community and will be linked through to the main access spine of the town. Excellent walking and cycling opportunities will exist throughout the settlement, which will particularly capitalise on the natural beauty of the lake foreshores.
>
> Enhanced boating facilities will be available, the recreation reserve will function more effectively and there will exist activities and destinations for visitors throughout Loch Sport, including links to the National Parks, which will stimulate the economic and social life of the town."

17.1 Demographics

Demographically the permanent population of Loch Sport is very different to most other areas of Wellington.

The population of the Loch Sport in 2011 was 689, with a median age of 61. Whilst the overall permanent population has been relatively stable over the last 20 years, the last census saw a population decrease of 12%. The median age was similar (60).

The age profile for the area shows a very large peak over 55 years and corresponding low percentage below 50 years (Figure 45). This demographic is also shown in the 75% couples with no children group, which is nearly double the Wellington average. For 14 years and under there are 45 children (6.8%) this is only one third of the Wellington average. The unemployment rate from the 2011 census was 14.2% (well above the Wellington 5.2% average).

Whilst there are 689 residents there are 1571 dwellings giving an estimated absentee owner rate of approximately 80%. The holiday period population is estimated to be more than 6000 people. The dwelling density is 542 dwellings per square kilometre a level higher than most Wellington towns, and a level similar to Sale. Dwelling numbers have increased by 185 (13.3%) since 2001, this is the second highest number of new dwellings in any Wellington town.

As with many coastal areas, Loch Sport has two key demographics that of the older profile permanent residents and that of the absentee owner.

Figure 45 Loch Sport ABS 2011 Age Profile (reflects only the age profile of the permanent population)

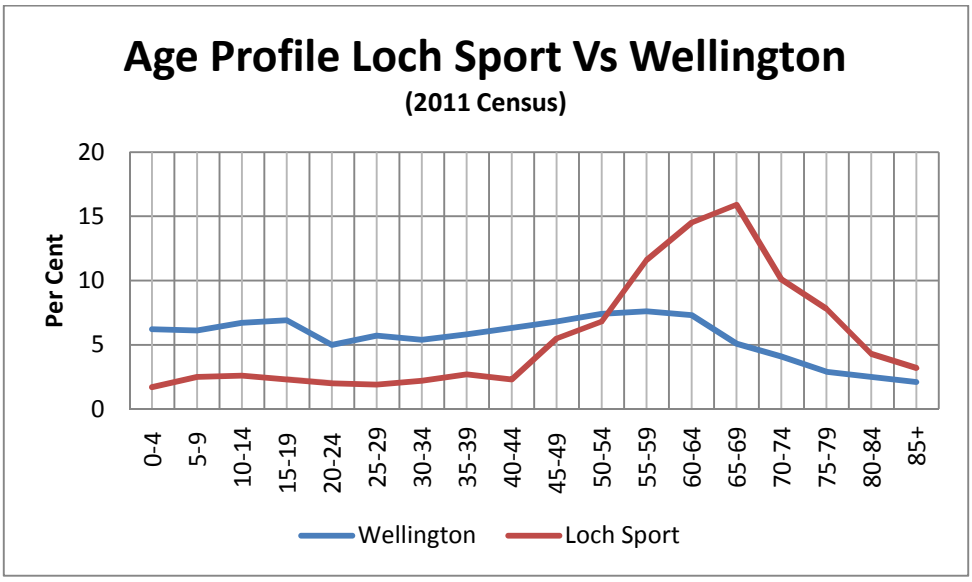


Figure 46 Loch Sport ABS 2011 Census Urban Locality

17.2 Existing POS

Loch Sport was created by developers in the 1950/60s. The existing open space largely reflects the approach of the time, and consists of quite a large number of small lots of little current or potential recreational value; equally two of the larger areas (land adjacent to Lake Reeve and Dolomite Swamp) currently have little POS value, but have potential to be of significant recreational value. Whilst most POS areas in Loch Sport are controlled by WSC some areas are managed by others, this does create some confusion particularly in relation to management of the foreshore, to add to the mix WSC does maintain some of these areas and this is mostly for historical reasons. The three boat ramp areas are not considered POS in this plan.

The Loch Sport POS is shown in Figure 47. Fundamentally the high value POS areas are:

- The central lake foreshore area opposite the shops (1.), is in effect the default 'town centre'

- Because of the linear nature of the town and attraction value of Lake Victoria linkages throughout the town are critically important, this includes the foreshore paths and cross-town links (2.)
- The foreshore path (3.) stretches approximately 6 kilometres and varies from an asphalt all abilities standard to a rough track through the coastal vegetation
- The foreshore path has some broader areas of native vegetation (e.g., Seagull Drive), whilst the vegetation quality is not high, it is valuable for the biodiversity, amenity and ambience provided (4.)
- Dolomite Swamp (5.) is an underrated natural area
- There are large WSC reserves (6.) along Lake Reeve (Figure 48) composed mainly of salt marsh, this valuable natural landscape is excellent habitat and adjoins the RAMSAR listed Lake Reeve and Lakes National Park
- Various lakeside beach areas are high value POS, but not considered further in this plan as they are managed by others

The majority of other POS areas in Loch Sport are typically small lots from the original subdivision (8.) generally offering little amenity value and are mostly unused or used for rear access to private property.

Figure 47 Loch Sport POS Areas (blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types)

Figure 48 Loch Sport WSC Land Lake Reeve and Dolomite Swamp

17.3 Spatial Analysis

As shown in the demographic analysis Loch Sport is not a typical urban centre. Similar to many coastal areas, the major attractor for people is the proximity to the lake and ocean, in effect these areas are the most critical POS; nevertheless, WSC controlled POS provides important visitors and resident services, and enhances the overall ambience.

Another difference to most other towns is that Loch Sport is very elongated, the town is some 5.3 kilometres in length, whilst only 700 metres wide at its widest point. This means that larger distance buffers cover little actual liveable area. The 1000 metres district park

buffer would cover 1700 dwellings if the dwellings were in a normal grid layout, however due to Loch Sport's linearity the buffer covers less than 400 dwellings (Figure 50).

- Loch Sport has one playground located on the foreshore (Figure 49); a 400-metre buffer does not cover a significant area of the town. A 1000m district park buffer covers 25% of the town area
- There is no other developed POS in Loch Sport; a few of the lakeside reserves have tables and seats. Whilst numerous reserves exist, given the nature of the town the standards requirement for developed POS at regular distances does not appear logical nor in demand

Figure 49 Loch Sport Playground with 400-metre buffer

Figure 50 Loch Sport Playground with 1000-metre buffer

17.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- The main 'park' area in Loch Sport runs from the deep-water jetty in Victoria Street to the intersection with Cliff Street. Given the nature of the area, maintenance of the grassed areas is mostly adequate; the maintenance of the native vegetation in particularly smaller woody plants needs improvement
- The town entrance is well maintained, however, it and the first section of Government Road lack any impact and the community raised issues about the large number of signs detracting from the entranc
- Other areas are mown or slashed largely for fire hazard control rather than amenity

17.5 Needs

Whilst Loch Sport is similar to many other coastal towns, it size (it is the third largest town in Wellington), 80% absentee level and location mean that it is a unique town. If Loch Sport had a permanent population it would be only slightly smaller than Maffra and would have need a similar level of infrastructure and services, however for the majority of the year its population is only a little larger than Briagolong's.

The focus on POS development in Loch Sport should be on, as noted in the Loch Sport Community Plan (2008) and the Loch Sport Urban Design Framework (2007) on creating a strong Town Centre. Given the existing infrastructure and WSC controlled land, this development should be near Lions Park.

- Whilst the existing playground in Lions Park is suitable for the needs of the permanent population, it is inadequate for the thousands of people using the area during the holiday period. The existing playground is classified as district level, it is suggested that this should be increased to a regional status, similar to Apex Park Heyfield or Macalister Park Maffra
- There has been a community drive to construct a Skate Park on the Lake Victoria foreshore, given the large holiday population this is a logical service provision. Equally, the development of this facility in the Lions Park zone will increase the vibrancy of the area
- Whilst the existing Lions Club BBQ shelter is very functional it is not an attractive structure and any development should, in conjunction with Lions, create a more iconic building, the recent development at Licola would be a good example.
- What would appear to be apparent is that entire Lion Park section of the foreshore should be redeveloped to a District Park level. To facilitate this, a Masterplan should be developed for this area
- The 6 kilometres foreshore walking path has the potential to be a great tourism feature, however it needs to be brought up to a standard suitable for bicycles and people of all abilities. To address this, WSC should review the recommendations contained within the DEPI Foreshore Management Plan (2012). Maintenance of the foreshore area is split between DEPI, a local DEPI committee and WSC; this does lead to differing service levels. The area is largely split between the western section from the deep-water jetty to Cliff Street and the eastern section from the marina to the national park. WSC maintains the entire western section regardless of the actual controlling body. Given this is the highest priority and value POS for visitors and residents this is appropriate. Whether WSC should formalise control should be considered (as recommended in the DEPI Foreshore Management Plan)

- Natural areas: The coastal Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) of the area is valuable and its ecological status being reviewed. There are three main areas within the township, Dolomite Swamp, the Lake Reeve salt marsh and the larger remnant vegetation along Seagull Drive and the Boulevard. These areas have been largely not managed for their natural values. Management Plans should be created for these areas, addressing in particular the best approaches for preventing any further degradation, enhancing the natural values of the sites and engaging the community in understanding the value of these areas. Walking paths should be considered along with suitable interpretive signage
- Linkages: As noted the primary feature of Loch Sport is the Lake Victoria foreshore, most of the linkages across the town have been upgraded in the last few years. The value and appropriateness of these linkages should be analysed
- The town entry is not overly inviting after the long drive and creating more of a 'you have arrived' feeling would be worthwhile. The red flowering gums were an attempt at this, how appropriate this species selection was could be questioned and the overall scale is considered too small. There is the opportunity to set the tone for the town by enhancing the town entry
- POS with little actual or potential value: There are a significant number of lots in Loch Sport that serve no direct value as POS, these should be surveyed and their value ascertained

17.6 Loch Sport Summary

The diversity between Wellington communities is enormous and each needs to be treated individually. POS development in Loch Sport has not to date been the priority it could have been. The redevelopment of the central foreshore area (Lions Park) would enormously enhance both resident and visitor experiences and help to create a town centre. Significant funding will be required to lift the condition of POS in Loch Sport to an appropriate level. The natural areas in the town have largely been unmanaged for these values, an opportunity

exists to improve the status of these areas and add another valuable experience to residents and visitors.

Along with many other coastal communities, the original subdivisions create POS of little value along with the long-term costs of managing such areas, these sites should be analysed and their value ascertained.

18 Longford

Longford is located 8km from Sale, with the area well known as the onshore production base for ESSO-BHP Billiton and being the receiving point for oil and gas output from nearby Bass Strait. Longford is also home to the Sale Golf Club, with views over the RAMSAR listed Sale Common wetlands.

The National Trust classified historic Swing Bridge is located near Longford at the junction of the Latrobe and Thomson Rivers. It is the oldest surviving swing bridge in Australia and is regarded as one of the engineering wonders of Victoria.

18.1 Demographics

Longford is too small a population to be more than a state suburb, this largely means the census data is of little value because the area covered is vastly larger than the township area (Figure 52). The actual Longford area accounts for only 60% of the state suburb dataset.

Longford is largely a rural residential region rather than a defined township; it covers some 11 square kilometres (Figure 53), similar to the area of Sale, however its population is only 930 people with 317 dwellings (compared with Sale's 6076 dwellings). The rural residential lifestyle of Longford is reinforced by the dwelling density of only 28 to the square kilometre, compared to Sale's 545.

Using the broader state suburb data, the age profile of Longford has a higher level of younger families and less of the older demographic, this is shown in the median age of 40, the greater number of people in each dwelling (2.9 compared with Wellington average of 2.4) and the higher percentage of the population under 15 (23%). For 14 years and under there are estimated 210 children (23%) this age group is the target range for play space provision. The unemployment rate from the 2011 census was 4.4% (significantly lower than the Wellington 5.2%).

Figure 51 Longford Age Profile ABS 2011

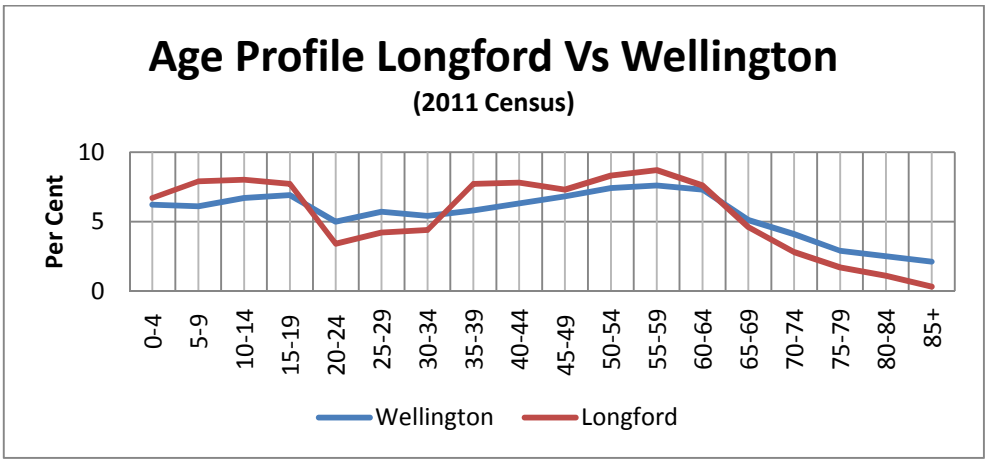


Figure 52 Longford State Suburb ABS 2011 Census

Figure 53 Longford Boundary of Region

18.2 Existing POS

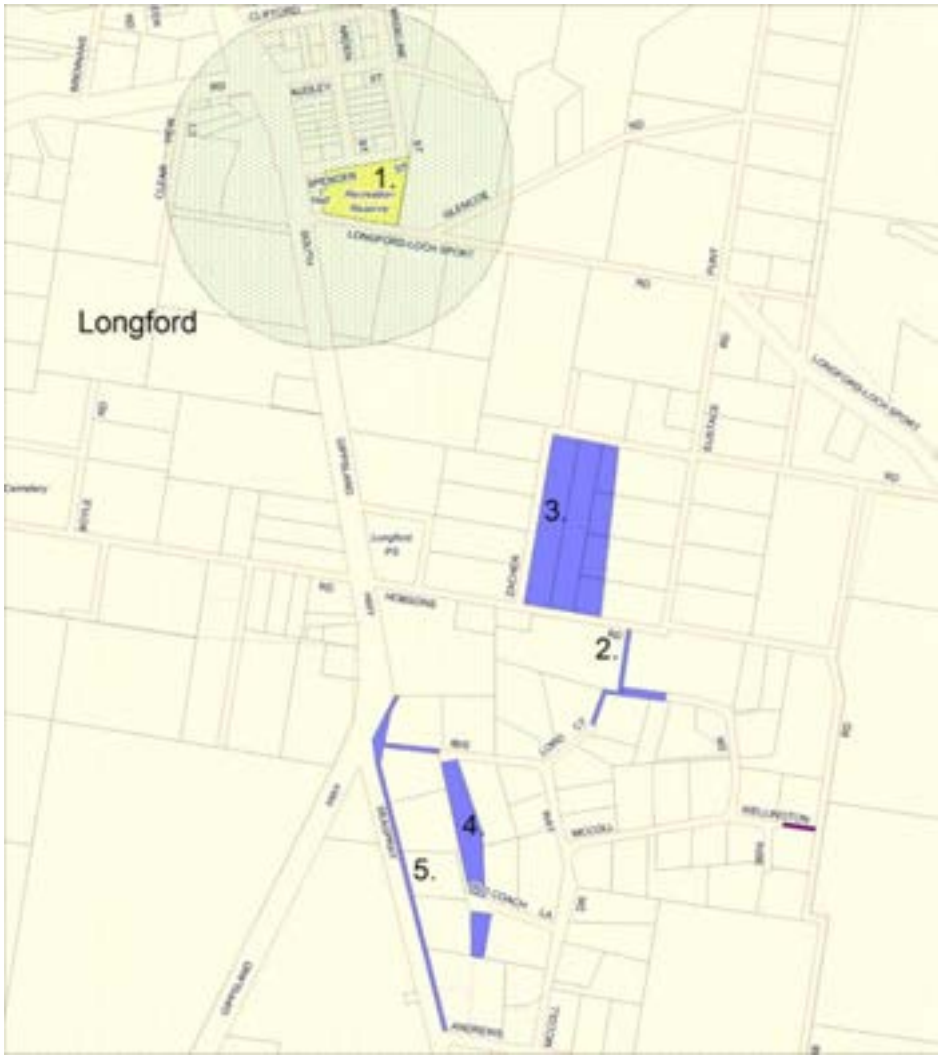
As shown in Figure 54 Longford has limited POS, as would be expected in a rural residential area.

- The existing hall and sport ground (1.) provides a central community hub along with a small playground. This is not a Council controlled reserve
- Several reserves creating linkages particularly from the school exist (2.)
- The former depot site (3.) in Hobsons Road has some value as a natural reserve
- A natural area gully runs down from Old Coach Road and makes an interesting walk (4.)
- A ten-metre wide buffer exists alongside the Seaspray Road; this has never been developed (5.)

18.3 Spatial Analysis

Given the massive area and rural residential nature of Longford spatial analysis provides little assistance. The playground buffer covers some of the small 'traditional' lot area (Figure 54).

Figure 54 Longford POS and 400m Playground Buffer



18.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The hall and sports ground provide an excellent community hub area and are largely fit for purpose. The various linkages are serviced at a mostly low level.

18.5 Needs

Analysis would suggest that there are no significant community open space needs in Longford.

- The existing linkages throughout the rural residential area could be more frequently maintained, weed control improved and some tree planting would improve amenity.
- The reserve off Old Coach Road should be assessed for the value of its remnant vegetation and a Management Plan for the reserve created
- Whilst not part of this plan, the final off road connection of a bike path from Longford into Sale is important
- A review should be undertaken as to the value of the natural area reserve in Hobson Street, and possibly an assessment made as to the future value of the site to the community
- Some uniform plantings of suitable trees along the main roads would help give the town a more cohesive feel
- The Longford Hall and Recreational Reserve is not managed by WSC, however it is a critical piece of community infrastructure. In effect, this area should be serviced and managed as DOS. WSC should continue to work with the local community to get the most benefit out of this reserve for the broader community

18.6 Longford Summary

Potential for significant growth exists in the area particularly as additional rural residential areas. Being a largely rural residential area gives Longford its character and it is unlikely to need any significant changes to POS provision.

19 Maffra

Maffra is the second largest town in Wellington and whilst one-third the population of Sale it is nearly three times larger than the next nearest town. Maffra began in the 1860s and like most rural towns it fortunes have waxed and waned over time. From premier cattle selling centre in the 1880s, to the only sugar beet producing area in the Southern hemisphere for more than 40 years from 1896, to its current claim as the 'largest single milk producing town in the whole of Australia'.

As would be expected for an urban town of its size, Maffra offers a wide range of activities and facilities for residents. Including several primary schools, a high school, well developed tree lined Town Centre (which provides services for a number of nearby smaller towns and much of the Macalister Irrigation District), extensive sporting infrastructure etc. The town is unique in Wellington for its extensive mature street planting; the focus on creating a treed township has been strong for over 120 years. The town is also well serviced with major parks that have been redeveloped over the last 15 years. Visitor interests include the Maffra Beet and The Gippsland Vehicle Collection Motor Museums; the Gippsland Rail Trail running from Traralgon to Stratford also intersects the town.

19.1 Demographics

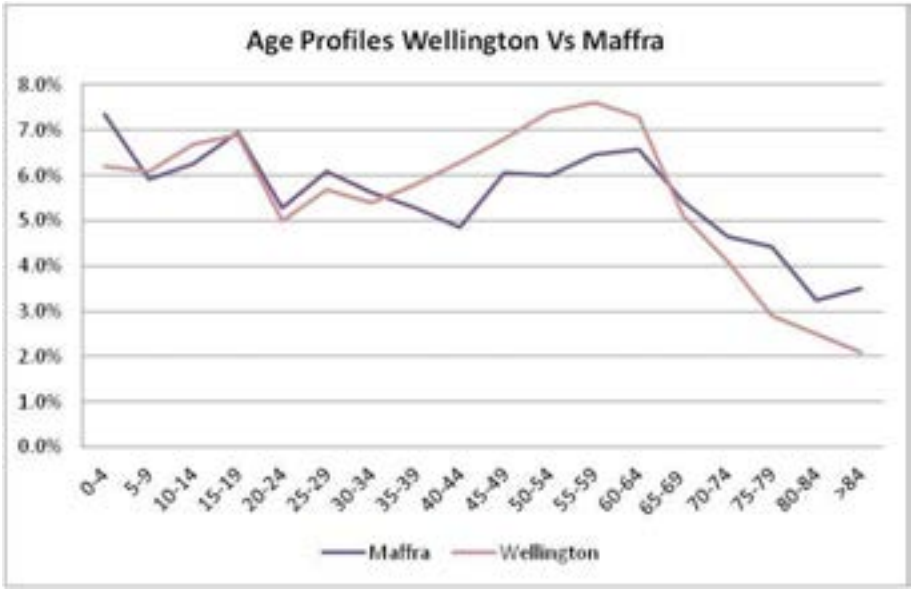
The population of the urban locality area (Figure 56) in 2011 was 4262, with a median age of 41. This is a 3% population increase since 2006, during the same period the median age increased from 40 to 41. The 20-year population growth is 10%. The broader ABS census area Maffra State Suburb (Figure 56) has population of 5,112.

The age profile for Maffra is not dissimilar to that of Wellington, with a slightly smaller percentage of the 40-60 age groups and slightly more of the over 70 groups (Figure 55). There are 1030 people at 19 or below, this is 26% of the town population and the same as

the overall Wellington figure. For 14 years and under there are 833 children (20%) this age grouping is the target range for play spaces.

There are 1929 dwellings in the township at 467 dwelling per square kilometre this is slightly lower than some other urban centres in Wellington, probably due to the larger lot sizes, wide street and some significant POS areas. Dwelling numbers have increased by 129 (7.5%) since 2001, this is the third highest number of new dwellings in any Wellington town.

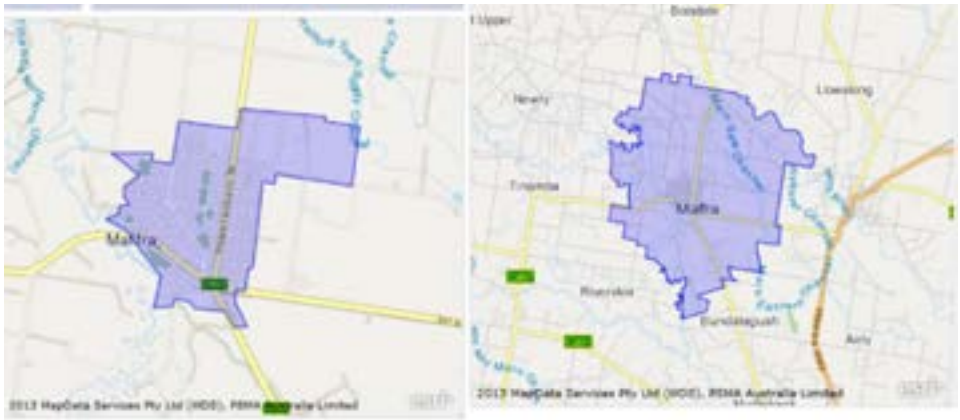
Figure 55 Maffra Age Profiles vs. Wellington



There are 1860 private dwellings in the town with a 91% occupancy rate. There is steady development with 45 new dwellings being built between 2006 and 2011; this is a slowly rate than the previous census period (9 vs. 16 pa), the ten year dwelling increase is 7% (five year 2%).

Maffra being a larger township provides for a wider range of people than do smaller communities do. As such whilst much of the POS plan focuses on provision of services to local residents it also considers provision of services at a 'district' level to service for example the nearby townships of Newry, Boisdale, Tinamba and families within some of Macalister Irrigation District.

Figure 56 Maffra Urban Locality and State Suburb Area for 2011 census data



19.2 Existing POS

Existing POS areas in Maffra are (the site numbers refer to locations in Figure 57):

- The majority of Maffra's existing open space is located around the southern and western town boundaries (Figure 57). **Victoria Park (1.) and Mafeking Hill (2.)** are the only significant sized POS areas that are more centralised. The development of the **Apex Park/Macalister River (3.)** area is a relatively new development and until the early 1980s the open space area south of the Town Centre **(Island Reserve 4.)** was a rubbish tip, in recent times this area has been developed into POS offering passive walking areas, potential for community events and a skate-park for Maffra youth
- The post government subdivision expansion in Maffra has developed firstly to the east of Powerscourt St and as was typical at the time, little POS was provided, the only POS is **Fred Drury Park (5.)** a 2000m2 block in Carpenter St
- Later developments east of Powerscourt St provided one small reserve in **Cameron Court (6.)**. A large drainage reserve and an unmade road reserve exists **(7.)**, but neither could be considered significant POS. The **Cameron Sporting Complex (8.)** is a large area to the north east that has sufficient land to offer potential non-sport recreation
- More recent developments have occurred to the north of the original town layout, and little POS has been allocated in these areas **(9.)**
- **Macalister Wetlands** (Maffra Swamp) is a significant natural area **(10.)**
- **Maffra's Town Centre** (Johnson St) is a unique and significant landscape **(11.)**
- The **Heyfield-Maffra Rail Trail (12.)** crosses the Macalister River and the trail on the north side of the highway is managed by WSC

- The **Boisdale Street Median (13.)** is a significant area of POS containing, the CFA training track, Croquet Club, Guide Hall and a significant avenue of elm trees. The median north of Princess St is less developed and of a different style
- The **Maffra-Sale Road town entry (14.)** is a WWI memorial avenue

Figure 57 Maffra POS Areas (blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types)

19.3 Spatial Analysis

Spatial analysis of both the POS and playground provision suggests that issues exist around distribution of POS and play spaces.

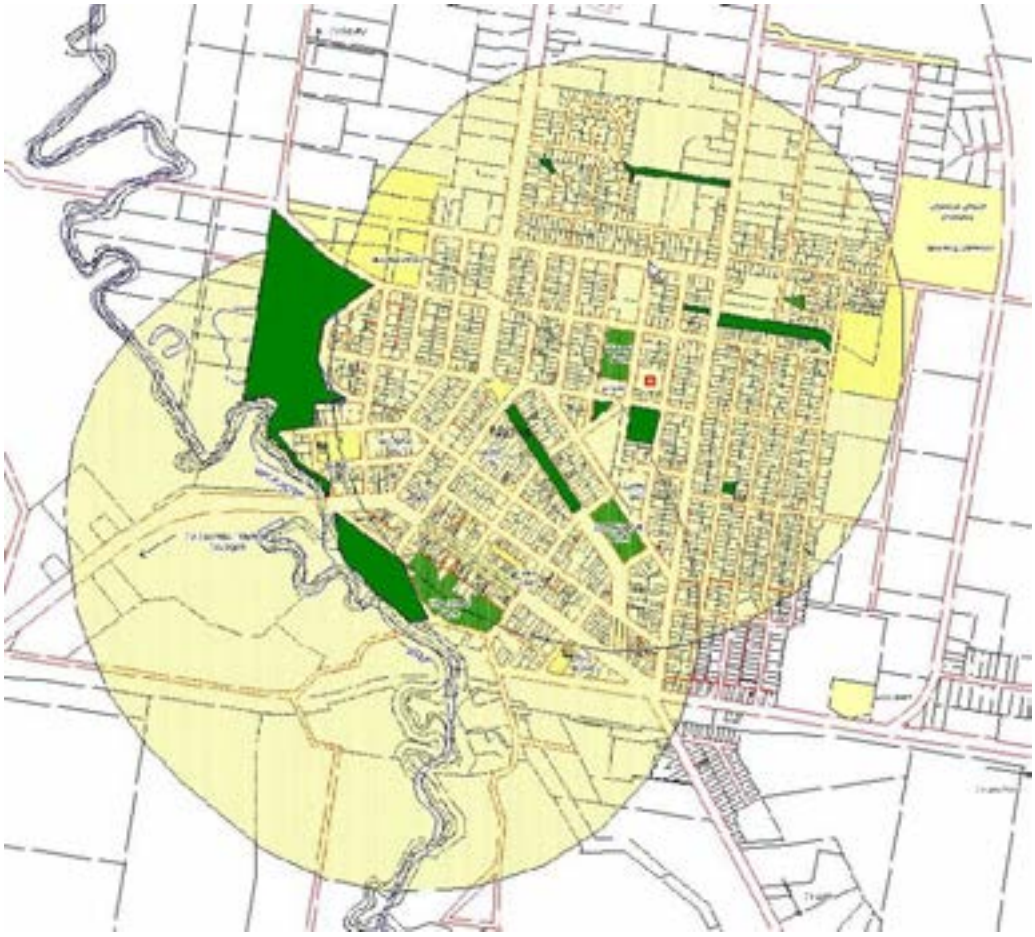
- The 400m playground buffer covers 1.7 km2 and represents around 51% of the town area; this means that some 49% of the town population lives more than 400 metres from a playground. The maximum distance is 1.2 kilometres. There are 400 people in the area to the northeast and approximately 80 under 15 children
- The 400 metres POS buffers show that areas to the north and northwest lack POS, quality of the POS areas in the east and northeast is also generally below standards
- The major POS 1000 metre buffers (Figure 59) show that the two major parks provide adequate major DOS for the town
- Maffra Recreation Reserve and the Cameron Sport Sporting Complex are large areas on the West and East of the town that due to their size and because the reserves are not solely sporting reserves (cf. Sale Oval) have the potential to provide

additional high value POS activities, although the demands and needs are not demonstrated

- Additionally the Maffra Wetland has is a large ‘natural’ reserve providing significant biodiversity values and providing opportunities to interact with nature

Figure 58 POS 400m Buffers and 400m Play Space Buffers

Figure 59 1000m buffers over the two DOS Parks



19.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

19.4.1 District Open Space (DOS)

The existing infrastructure of the two DOS parks (Victoria and Macalister River) is excellent; both have largely been redeveloped during the last decade and meet the needs of the local community, the broader district and casual visitors. The Macalister River Park contains the regional play space, and has unique and well-developed play opportunities. The large area behind the Town Centre was a former tip site and has recently been upgraded with paths, tree planting and lighting; it also contains the Maffra Skatepark; this area is included as part of the Macalister River Park complex.

The landscapes for these sites are generally appropriate, neither site is irrigated, whilst this is not a problem for Macalister River Park as it low lying and tends to stay relatively green for most of the summer, for Victoria Park the lack of green open space areas over summer does limit the site and consideration should be given to irrigating the turf area near the play space.

The BBQs and Shelter in the ‘Apex Park’ section the Macalister River Park are nearing the end of their useful life and do not sit well within the newer infrastructure and should be upgraded.

The set service levels for the DOS are appropriate, however, over several visits it was noted maintenance is not reflecting the set service standards (particularly in the landscaped areas and weed control). Either service standards should be lowered or maintenance improved.

19.4.2 Neighbourhood Open Space (NOS)

NOS in Maffra is limited to Mafeking Hill. This ‘hill’ was the site used to provide much of the gravel required for early street construction in the town. It is unknown when it was planted out, however the Maffra Spectator on Sept 5 and Oct 3 1940 refers to the ‘resoiling’ of this site.

This area provides and interesting and unique experience, the elevation gives great views to the south and the Sugar Gum (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) 'forest' provides an interesting backdrop. A newish playground on the site caters well for the area and certainly meets the needs of a neighbourhood playground. Gravels paths provide links from the east to the centre of town, school and Town Centre.

The Sugar Gum forest is fenced off for risk reduction reasons. Consideration should be given to managing this site for improved biodiversity values.

19.4.3 Local Open Space (LOS)

LOS areas Fred Drury Park (Carpenter St), Cameron/Dwyer Court have playgrounds associated with them. The only other POS in Maffra that fits this category is the small undeveloped reserve (1400m2) in Mountainview Court.

Fred Drury (5) is reasonably well placed as LOS as is the playground. However, the condition of the site is poor with little amenity and should be prioritised for both a landscape and play space upgrade.

Cameron/Dwyer Reserve (6) is in area with some social issues and in 2013 was redeveloped in consultation with the local community and the State Government. A small linking reserve also exists which current serves little purpose, it would however be a valuable link to any development of an off road path network through the adjacent drainage reserves.

A small reserve exists in Mountainview Crt Maffra (9); it has not been developed and offers little POS or potential recreational value. This area of Maffra has little POS, however this site has little passive surveillance, no linkages, is too small and is situated in a court, hence it is not suitable for development. It may be of value in a land swap or to assist with funding a more suitable site for the area.

19.4.4 Linear or linking POS

The reserve linking Cedarwood Drive to Powerscourt St (7) is a good example of the type. A gravel path link exists from Macalister River Park to the Maffra Wetlands. An informal but notable link exists in parts of Boisdale St. All are fit for purpose with suitable service standards.

19.5 Special Classes

19.5.1 Town Entries

Maffra has major town entrances along VicRoads roads, from Sale, Stratford, Boisdale and Tinamba, none are particularly attractive. The Sale, Stratford and Boisdale entrances are typical wide-open roads without kerb and channel, providing at best a 'rural' feel to the town. Mowing is generally undertaken by adjoining residents, some WSC mowing occurs on the Maffra-Sale Road.

The tree planting on the Maffra-Sale Road is part of a 1918 World War I planting and recent infill tree plantings have been with the same species as the original planting.

Whilst signage and tree planting does improve these town entries, without kerb and channel these entrances do little to enhance the town amenity. The construction of such kerb and channel is within the remit of VicRoads and is not planned.

The only area maintained by WSC is parts of the Maffra-Sale Road entrance and the areas surrounding the Johnson/Powerscourt roundabout (RAB). Grass mowing service levels could be increased on the Maffra-Sale entry to improve and provide a more consistent quality.

19.5.2 Tourism

Possibly the only POS that is largely justified purely for its tourism potential is the Gippsland Rail Trail; this trail runs through the Wellington towns of Heyfield, Maffra and Stratford. The rail trail is generally not managed nor maintained by WSC, however a section near Stratford and a significant area west of Maffra are maintained by WSC and within towns the rail trail is managed and maintained by WSC and typically treated as park paths.

19.5.3 Town Centre

For the purposes of this plan, the Maffra Town Centre is defined as the length of Johnson Street from the Sale Maffra Road to the bridge over the Macalister River.

Maffra's Town Centre is arguably the most attractive in the shire, Johnson Street is a wide long linear road planted to significant avenue trees. The central section is unique in that it is boulevard style (two medians separating the main road) and is planted to a diverse range of trees.

Significant and somewhat constant efforts have been made to maintain this area and generally, its quality is very good. Service standards appear adequate.

19.5.1 Other Natural Areas

The Maffra Wetlands (aka Maffra Swamp) is located on the western side of the town and provides an opportunity to interact with nature. Gradual improvements have been made to improve access on the site. Directional signage would assist visitors to find the site. Significant opportunities exist to provide additional interpretative signage.

The site is currently being managed in line with an existing Management Plan.

19.5.2 Other POS in Maffra

Other non-sporting land areas that exist in Maffra include an unmade road and a drainage reserve. The major drainage reserve running from Landy St to Powerscourt St has potential to be developed into a Linear Linking Reserve. Along with WSC owned land behind the Maffra Works Depot an off road path to the Cameron Sporting Complex could be created; with the exception of one block this would also provide a connection with the shared path from Victoria Park to the Town Centre.

The unmade road reserve running north from this reserve does not offer significant benefits other than offering an off-road link from Morrison and adjacent streets; this could be developed at a relatively low cost.

19.6 Needs

19.6.1 LOS

- LOS – as shown in Figure 58 the 400-metre buffers show significant lack of local open space and play spaces in the north and northeast areas of Maffra
- No WSC or public land is apparent in the northeast area; the road closure section of Boisdale St near Macmillan St (current Site of the Guide Hall) could be developed to improve the situation. Improved footpaths linking to Victoria Park could encourage people to walk further
- The small reserve in Mountainview Court offers no value to the development of LOS on the northern area. It is suggested that this land be swapped of sold to assist in purchasing land better located and sized to provide LOS and a play space for this area of Maffra

19.6.2 NOS

- NOS is largely catered for by the DOS areas of Victoria Park and the Macalister River Park. As shown in Figure 59 the one kilometre radius provides for a 15 minute walk and covers the majority of Maffra's urban population
- The Cameron Sporting Complex is very large site with significant passive open space potential, in an area of Maffra lacking POS of any substantial size. Any future on-site irrigation water storage development (dam/lake) could be a great catalyst to develop a natural area park surrounding the lake with walking tracks, etc.

19.6.3 DOS

- DOS – as shown in Figure 59 the current Maffra township is adequately covered for DOS level parks, however, should the northern development continue, there would be a requirement to include a DOS or NOS level park in this area. This should be considered in any future Overall Development Plan (ODP)

19.7 Maffra Summary

Maffra is a significant urban centre that continues to grow. Maffra has many of the desirable traits needed to be a liveable town. Future POS management and development should be on retaining and enhancing this liveability.

20 Manns Beach

Manns Beach is a small community near Port Albert. It has a small permanent population and an estimated 86% absentee owner rate. Environmentally it is a somewhat unique coastal community.

The Manns Beach Urban Design Framework and the Manns Beach Community Plan identifies a vision:

> "Manns Beach will remain a small, remote holiday hamlet, bordered by the Nooramunga Marine and Wildlife Reserve with excellent access to local islands and inlets. It will retain a strong recreational fishing focus for residents and the surrounding area with attractive and functional foreshore facilities."

Figure 60 Manns Beach Foreshore

20.1 Demographics

Manns Beach has a very small permanent population of 24, with 63 dwellings. The population is too small to have other demographic data available. Extrapolating the absentee rate to the holiday population, the summer population could rise to 200.

20.2 Existing POS

The existing POS consists of foreshore land that includes a large car park (1.) jetty (2.), public hall (3), playground, public toilet (4), BBQ shelter and BBQ (5).

20.3 Spatial Analysis

The existing community and visitor facilities are located on the foreshore and capture the majority of dwellings.

Figure 61 Manns Beach POS & 400m buffer

20.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The level of POS is for such a small community is in excess of comparable service standards for other like sized communities. It is difficult to determine its tourism level or tourism activities, as there is no beach; however, boat fishing by mostly regional locals would be a reasonable assumption. The value that a BBQ and playground at the site provide should be reviewed.

WSC's Boating Facilities Strategic Plan 2013-2016 identifies the needs for 'Recreational Facilities (Picnic Tables, BBQs). These exist on the site.

20.5 Needs

Other than regular maintenance and recurrent renewal of existing POS infrastructure there does not appears to be any significant additional needs.

- Planting of suitable first line coastal trees would add significantly to the site at little cost once established
- Whilst outside the scope of this plan, formalising and sealing the car park would improve the amenity of the area. Subject to further analysis around this, tree planting should be part of any car park upgrade

20.6 Manns Beach Summary

Manns Beach is unlikely to change significantly over the life of this plan and current service levels are comparatively high. Some additional minor works should be considered as noted above.

21 McLoughlins Beach

Is a small coastal village that is best known for being a fishing location. It has a boat ramp and access to Bass Straight. A footbridge links it to the Ninety-Mile Beach. At the 2011 census, it had 77 permanent residents. Like many coastal centres, it is largely a holiday town.

21.1 Demographics

McLoughlins Beach has a permanent population of 77 residents with 126 dwellings. The population is too small to have other demographic data available. The absentee owner rate is estimated to be 72%, giving the town a holiday population potential of around 500. Using the 2011 state suburb age demographic for the area it is estimated there are 14 children under 15 years. The town is purely residential in nature; there are no shops or other commercial activity in the town.

21.2 Existing POS

There are a number of POS areas in McLoughlins Beach and these are mapped in Figure 62. The town has a small well-developed park with a playground (1.). An area of grassed foreshore with a walking path (2.) is on the southern edge of the town. The township connects across a pedestrian bridge to the Ninety-Mile Beach (3.). Public toilets exist at the jetty (4.) and boat ramp (3.). There are several other areas of POS in the town (5.) that currently serve little recreational purpose (school bus pickup).

21.3 Spatial Analysis

The developed open space is not centrally located, however 55% of the residents are with 400m and 100% are with 850m. Many towns of this size do not have playgrounds.

As with many coastal holiday towns, the POS is largely supplied by others (e.g., the foreshore and Ninety-Mile Beach).

21.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The existing playground is well suited to a town of this size. The general parks service level is high. The extent of maintenance of non-Council controlled areas should be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate for WSC to be maintaining these areas and if so the required service levels.

Figure 62 McLoughlins Beach POS areas and 400 metres Play Space Buffer

21.5 Needs

McLoughlins Beach appears well serviced with POS and other than regular maintenance and recurrent renewal of existing POS infrastructure there does not appears to be any obvious additional needs.

- Recurrent renewal of the playground will address the aging of this equipment.
- Review validity, extent and appropriateness of WSC maintenance of non-WSC controlled areas
- Planting of suitable first line coastal trees to the foreshore area would add significantly to the site at little cost once established
- The reserve adjacent to the corner of McLoughlins Beach and Beach Roads provides no amenity and its recreational value to the community should be analysed
- The ambience of the town could be enhanced enormously by planting the main road with suitable trees

21.6 McLoughlins Beach Summary

McLoughlins Beach is unlikely to change significantly in the life of this plan, and other than the identified needs, no further POS will be required.

22 Port Albert

A small coastal town Port Albert was established in 1841 as a southern port for the transport of livestock between New South Wales and Tasmania. Port Albert is Gippsland's oldest port and was the main port linking to the Gippsland goldfields.

The town has a mix of heritage and newer buildings. It is a very popular boating and fishing area, with access to Bass Strait.

22.1 Demographics

Port Albert has a permanent population of 256 people with a median age of 57, which is well above the Wellington age median of 41. The population has slowly been decreasing for a long period, resulting in a 20% reduction over the last 20 years. The nearby town of Langsborough has a population of less than 100 and given the distance to Port Albert and in line with the ABS census approach of not including it in local data, it was not considered as part of the Port Albert demographic.

The age profile (Figure 63) shows the disproportionate level of older persons, where people aged 65 years and over made up 22.8% of the population. Equally, the level of children aged 0-14 years was very low at 8.9% of the population. There are 23 children under 15 in Port Albert. The unemployment rate from the 2011 census was 3.3% below the Wellington average of 5.2%.

The absentee owner rate is estimated to be 58%, giving the town a holiday population potential of around 1000.

Figure 63 Port Albert Age Profile ABS 2011 Census

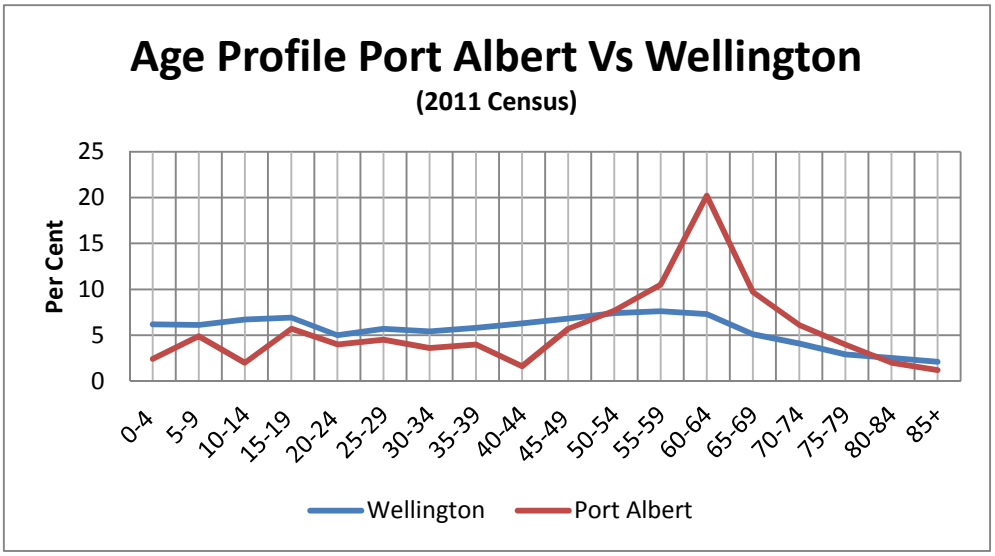


Figure 64 Port Albert ABS 2011 Census Urban Locality

22.2 Existing POS

Not surprisingly, the existing POS is concentrated around the foreshore, stretching from the point to Pier Street. In the last decade a major upgrade to the point landscape has been undertaken, a new district level park (Rutter Park) has replaced a small playground in Memorial Park, which was also recently upgraded. No local or neighbourhood parks exist in the town.

Figure 65 Port Albert POS with 400m Playground Buffer

22.3 Spatial Analysis

Given the tourist focus of the town, high level of absentee owners and attraction of the foreshore area, spatial analysis is not a good methodology to apportion POS in Port Albert. Nevertheless approximately 55% of the population is within 400m of the major POS. With only 23 children under 15 within the town, another playground is not warranted.

The large amount of POS in Port Albert provides a significant attractor to visitors.

22.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

Generally, all WSC POS areas in Port Albert are well maintained. Service levels are high as is appropriate for a tourist-focused area.

22.5 Needs

Given the extensive renewal of POS infrastructure in Port Albert, it is difficult to identify further significant works, other than improvements to address the poorly presented town entry.

- The overall character of the town could be improved by extensive street tree plantings. To achieve this, the community will be engaged during the creation of a Street Tree Town Plan
- The existing large shelter in Rutter Park functionality could be improved. Engagement with the community as to the best approach to improve such functionality is important
- Interpretive historical information in Rutter Park would add interest and value to this space
- Complete Tarra Trail from Alberton to Port Albert. Although a complex task due to heritage, conservation and access issues this would add another dimension to Port Albert's appeal
- Community feedback did raise a range of non-

22.6 Port Albert Summary

As noted the renewal of existing POS areas in Port Albert has largely addressed current and future POS needs. Growth in the area is unlikely to be significant and therefore existing POS provision is largely adequate for the foreseeable future.

23 Rosedale

Rosedale is located on the Princes Highway between Traralgon and Sale; it is a popular stop with tourists who enjoy the variety of specialty shops, cafes, pubs and parks.

The earliest European inhabitant was thought to have been named Blind Joe who lived in a hut on the Latrobe River. Rosedale was a staging post on the Port Albert to Sale coach run.

Rosedale has a range of community facilities as befits a town of its size, including a primary school, the Rosedale Community Centre which includes a library and a range of sporting facilities including golf course, equestrian grounds, a speedway, rifle range, recreation reserve and swimming pool.

23.1 Demographics

The population of Rosedale at the 2011 census was 1133, with a median age of 39. This is a similar population and median age to the 2006 census. The 20-year population growth was minus 2%.

The age profile for Rosedale is very similar to the Wellington average (Figure 66). For 14 years and under there are 203 children (18%) this age group is the target range for play space provision.

Whilst there are 1133 residents there are 499 dwellings giving an occupancy rate that suggests no significant absentee owner level. The dwelling density is 365 dwelling per square kilometre; this is below the levels found in other similar size towns. Dwelling numbers have increased by 68 (15.3%) since 2001.

Figure 66 Rosedale Age Profile 2011 Census

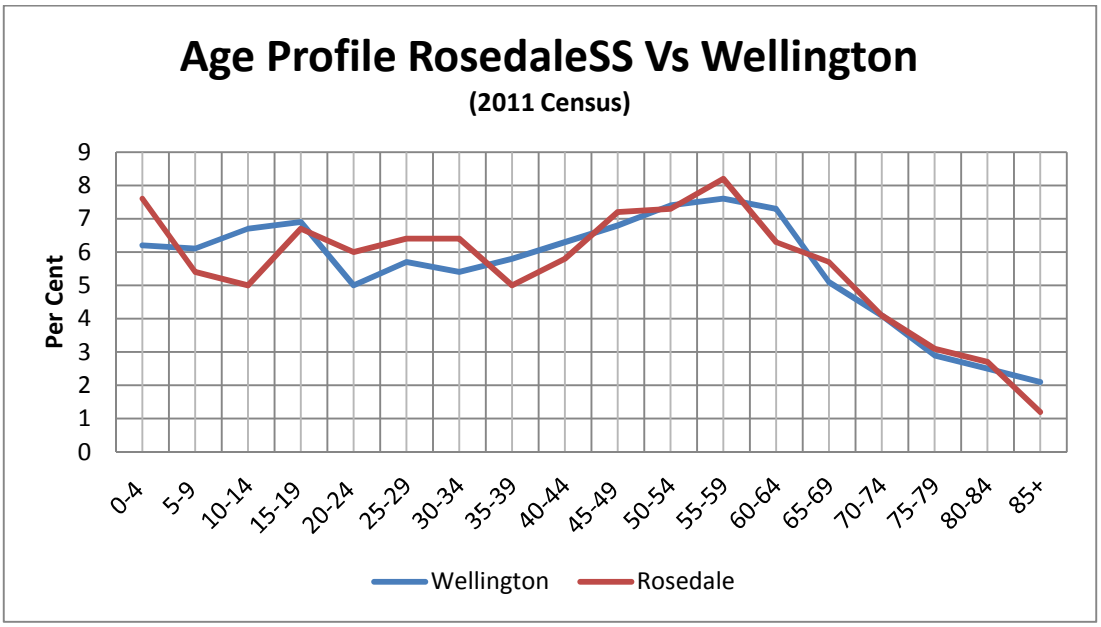


Figure 67 Rosedale ABS 2011 Census Urban Locality

23.2 Existing POS

Rosedale appears to be a town developed largely without POS, until the former school site now called the Prince Street Reserve was taken over by Council in the 1990s the only significant POS existed on the far southern side of the town. POS is split between a focus on traveller facilities and resident POS provision.

Existing POS areas in Rosedale are (the site numbers refer to locations in Figure 68):

- **Town Centre medians (1.);** being a highway town, the central medians are significant contributors in creating the character of Rosedale. The rose planting in the medians are attractive and effective. The Lyons Street Median contains an avenue of National Trust listed Purple Leaf Elms (Ulmus x hollandica 'Purpurea')
- **Prince St Reserve (2.)** is the district level park for the town as well as functioning as significant stopping point for visitors and travellers. It contains the regional level play

space, skatepark and half-court basketball court. The old school building is an additional feature that allows the site to be more multipurpose

- **Edward Crook Park (3.)** is a Neighbourhood Park with a substantial play space. It is also a major link to the adjacent Community Centre
- **Alan Semple Memorial Park (4.)** contains a carved eagle as a memorial to a former Rosedale Shire employee
- **Former Tennis Club Site (5.)** is no longer actively used
- **Blind Joes Creek (6.)** is a significant natural area close to the town
- **Town Entry Medians (7.)** are the transition zone for traffic from the east. Much of this area is within a 80kmh zone; it is difficult to maintain areas in such a high-speed zone
- **Queen Street local Park (8.)** contains a local level playground and does provide some value for those people living north of the highway
- **Willow Park Linkage (9.)** This path links the town to Willow Park; it includes historical interpretive panels and a pedestrian bridge over the Latrobe River
- **Willow Park (10.)** is a highway park widely used as an overnight stopping point for recreational vehicles (RVs)

Figure 68 Rosedale WSC Controlled or Maintained areas, POS is highlighted Blue

23.3 Spatial Analysis

The Princes Highway (Prince St) dissects the town and is a major barrier to cross town use of POS. As shown in Figure 69 the Prince St Reserve is spatially well sited for the majority of the town.

Figure 69 Rosedale Prince St Reserve - District Level 1000m buffer

The location and 400m buffers for play spaces are shown in Figure 70. There is a large area of the town that does not meet the 400m play space requirement; 50% of the dwellings are not within a buffer zone. This suggests that significant numbers of children are not close to a playground, however the Rosedale Primary School is at the western end of Rosedale and unlike many primary schools does not have a high security fence around the site, it is reasonable to assume that local children can access this site outside of school hours. If a play space buffer is added allowing for the school play space cover for Rosedale reaches 70%, which is greater than most other WSC urban centres.

Figure 70 Rosedale Play Space 400m Buffers

Whilst the playground issue is addressed providing the school site is available, there is a spatial issue with neighbourhood park areas in the western side of Rosedale. Equally given the major restriction of the highway the one small local park in Queen St does not provide significant amenity; there are 103 dwellings and 223 residents on the northern side of the highway this represents some 40 children under 15.

23.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- The dominance of the highway and lack of planting opportunities through the town centre area of Rosedale does restrict the creation of high-level town centre amenity. However, improvement can be made to the town centre, footpath treatments and the increased planting would add to the ambience, instead of street trees in the footpath, plants growing on frames such as commonly used in South Yarra would add scale and amenity to the area. The previous median plantings of confers was changed to the rose and turf style as used in the main Town Centre during 2013
- Princes St Reserve is generally well maintained however, it lacks a quality landscape and feels more like an old school site than a high quality urban park
- The Queen St local park is not ideal because it is small and has very limited passive surveillance
- Edward Crook Park has been upgraded in recent years and is fit for purpose, although recurrent maintenance could be improved
- Alan Semple Memorial Park has no significant value as POS, it is difficult to access, bounded by industrial land, and it is only 200 metres from the much more suitable Edward Crook Park
- The Former Tennis Club area has no value as POS
- Blind Joes Creek Reserve is valuable POS offering significant biodiversity values and a natural area experience to residents. Reserve improvements to enhance the visitor experience and biodiversity values would be beneficial
- The linkage to Willow Park, functions well as it is, although the walk could be vastly improved by increasing biodiversity values through revegetating the area
- Willow Park floods when the Latrobe River breaks it banks; therefore, any development on the site is limited. It is a popular recreational vehicle stopover

23.5 Needs

- The highway medians and town centre have improved recently. The addition of some planter/plantings in the footpath areas throughout the town centre would improve amenity
- The existing tree plantings on the naturestrips of Princes St lack the uniformity that such sites ideally have and do not sit well against the much more formalised rose and turf median plantings. Consideration should be given to replacing the *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (Yellow Gums) with a uniform tree species. Due to the very narrow naturestrips and overhead powerlines there are some major constraints as to suitable species providing adequate scaling. Ideally, such planting should be in the centre median
- The Princes St Reserve landscape lacks quality and should be improved to provide greater amenity as per Victoria Park Maffra, or Memorial Park Yarram
- Town Entries particularly in the 80-100kmh zone are difficult to manage because of OHS requirements. The entrance from Traralgon has drainage issues limiting opportunities. Improved tree planting and maintenance would enhance the amenity
- Willow Park: the long-term value of this site needs to be considered. Development of a Masterplan for the site should be considered
- Willow Park Link: this walk should be planted out so that over time it becomes a shaded and pleasant walk with enhanced biodiversity values

- Blind Joes Creek is currently undervalued. A Reserve Management Plan needs to be undertaken to maximise the natural area values and use by residents and visitors.
- The Alan Semple Memorial Park and Former Tennis Club sites should be reviewed to determine if there is a valid future use for these sites
- Ideally it would be worthwhile to lift the standard of the Queen St Reserve, however whether the community see a need and whether it warrants the expenditure should be further investigated
- The broad open streets of Rosedale are suitable for significant tree plantings. The creation of a Town Tree Plan will give the community the opportunity to create an attractive liveable town

23.6 Rosedale Summary

Unlike most towns, Rosedale had little POS; therefore, additional effort is required to improve the liveability and attractiveness of this town. There are many often relatively simple needs, which can make Rosedale a more attractive and liveable town.

24 Sale

Sale is the largest city in the Wellington Shire with a population of approximately 14,000 people. It is a popular place to live due to its close proximity to the Ninety Mile Beach and Gippsland High Country, while only being 2.5 hours from the Melbourne CBD.

The Port of Sale precinct is a main feature of the town and is part of the Gippsland Lakes system, allowing boats to cruise all the way to Lakes Entrance. The town also features the beautiful Lake Guthridge/Guyatt area, which includes playgrounds and a walking track that leads to the historic & picturesque Botanic Gardens.

The town also features many modern facilities including an Entertainment Centre, Art Gallery, the Aqua Energy Pool/Gym Complex and the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex.

Attributing much of its prosperity to the oil and gas fields in the Bass Strait and also the East Sale RAAF Base, Sale is seen as the engine of the local economy, providing work and attracting skilled people to the region.

24.1 Demographics

Any demographics of Sale include that of Wurruk. The census area for Sale and Wurruk does not include the largely rural residential areas south of the highway; an additional 600 people reside in 190 dwellings within this area.

The population of the Sale area in 2011 was 13,837 with a median age of 39. This median age is below the Wellington average of 41. The 20-year population growth was 11%.

The age profile for Sale is different to the Wellington average (Figure 71), with a notably greater number of people in the 20-45 year age groups and a lower number in the 55+ groups. The less than 15 years group is marginally higher than the average at 19.3%. There are over 2,600 children under 15 years; this age group is the target range for play space provision.

Whilst there are 13,387 residents there are 6365 dwellings. The dwelling density is 571 dwelling per square kilometre the highest in Wellington, this is reflects the very urbanised and developed nature of Sale. Dwelling numbers have increased by 734 (13%) since 2001.

DPCP in their 2011 report 'Change and Disadvantage in the Gippsland Region, Victoria' looked specifically at Gippsland LGAs and noted that 2023 residents of Sale were in the most disadvantaged 10% of the population in Australia. This number is greater than the total population of all other urban town in Wellington other than Maffra.

Figure 71 Sale Age Profile ABS 2011

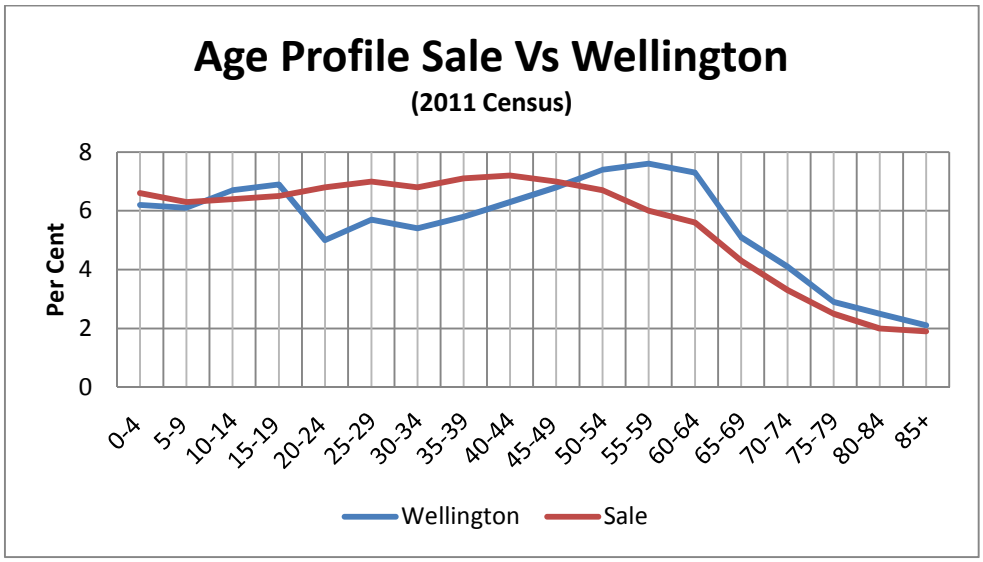


Figure 72 Sale ABS 2011 Census Urban Locality

24.2 Existing POS

Sale has a wide range of POS covering the full gamut of POS types. In other town plans, specific sites are detailed. Given the number and range in Sale, discussion is limited to the broad POS categories.

Regional Open Space (ROS):

- The most significant POS is the regional open space of the Lake Guthridge Precinct and Sale Botanic Gardens (SBG). This is the only area of ROS managed by WSC

District Open Space (DOS)

- Surprisingly Sale has no designated DOS level parks. The SBG although ROS does also provide this level of provision

Neighbourhood Open Space (NOS):

- The majority of POS in Sale falls into this category. Whilst quite a few areas have play spaces, many are underdeveloped

Local Open Space (LOS):

- Many smaller reserves and quite a few play spaces fall into this category. Many of the road closures fulfil this function

Linear Linking Reserves:

- Numerous linking reserves exist in Sale. East Sale Drainage is the most significant. Flooding Creek has the greatest potential however, it is as of yet largely incomplete. There are many small road closures existing in central Sale that fulfil the same function as the linking reserves throughout East Sale

Central Business District (CBD):

- Sale's CBD extends over some 75 hectares and varies from the highway frontages of Foster and York Streets to the retail-shopping precinct of Raymond St, Sale Mall and the Gippsland Centre

Tourism:

- The Port of Sale is largely a visitor-focussed area. The Lake Guthridge precinct (including the Sale Botanic Gardens) is a major visitor draw card

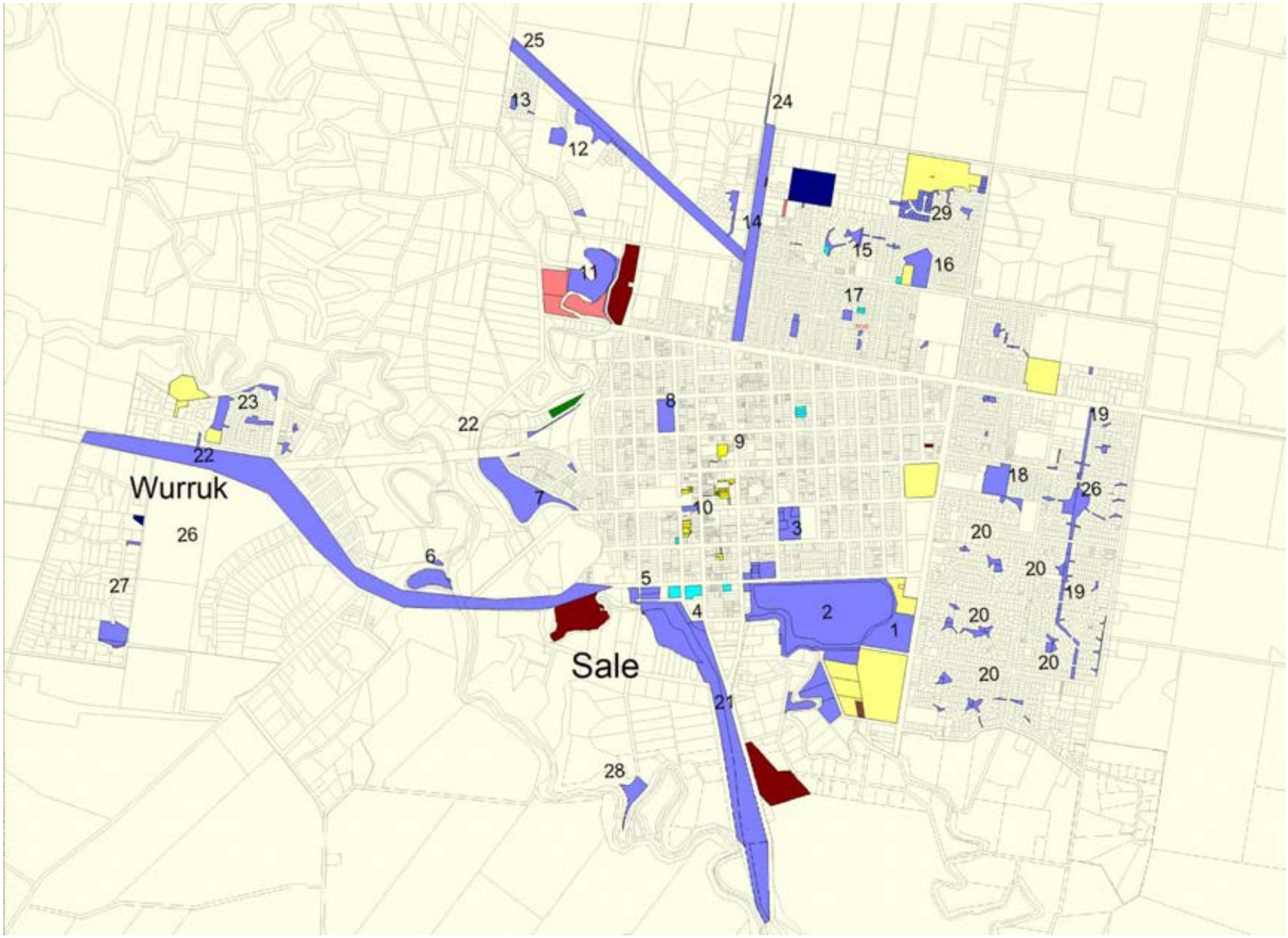
Town Entries:

- Sale has four major town entries; each has quite a different character. The South Gippsland Highway entrance from Longford has recently been upgraded by VicRoads, as has the Princes Highway Entrance from Traralgon. The Stratford (eastern side) has some significant residential developments occurring and more planned, this town entry should be reviewed to reflect these developments. Whilst the Maffra Sale Road is not as trafficked as the other town entries, nevertheless given the extensive new residential developments in the area service levels should be reviewed

Natural Areas

- Being surrounded by floodplains results in Sale having some excellent natural areas. The Sale Common managed by Parks Victoria is a Ramsar listed wetlands. Herb Guyatt Reserve is a significant natural area directly managed by WSC. Several other areas linked with the Flooding Creek Masterplan have the potential to offer residents and visitors a significant natural area experience. These areas have important biodiversity and habitat values

Figure 73 Sale POS Blue areas are existing WSC POS, other colours are other types of WSC land (yellow area are active recreation)



Spatial Analysis

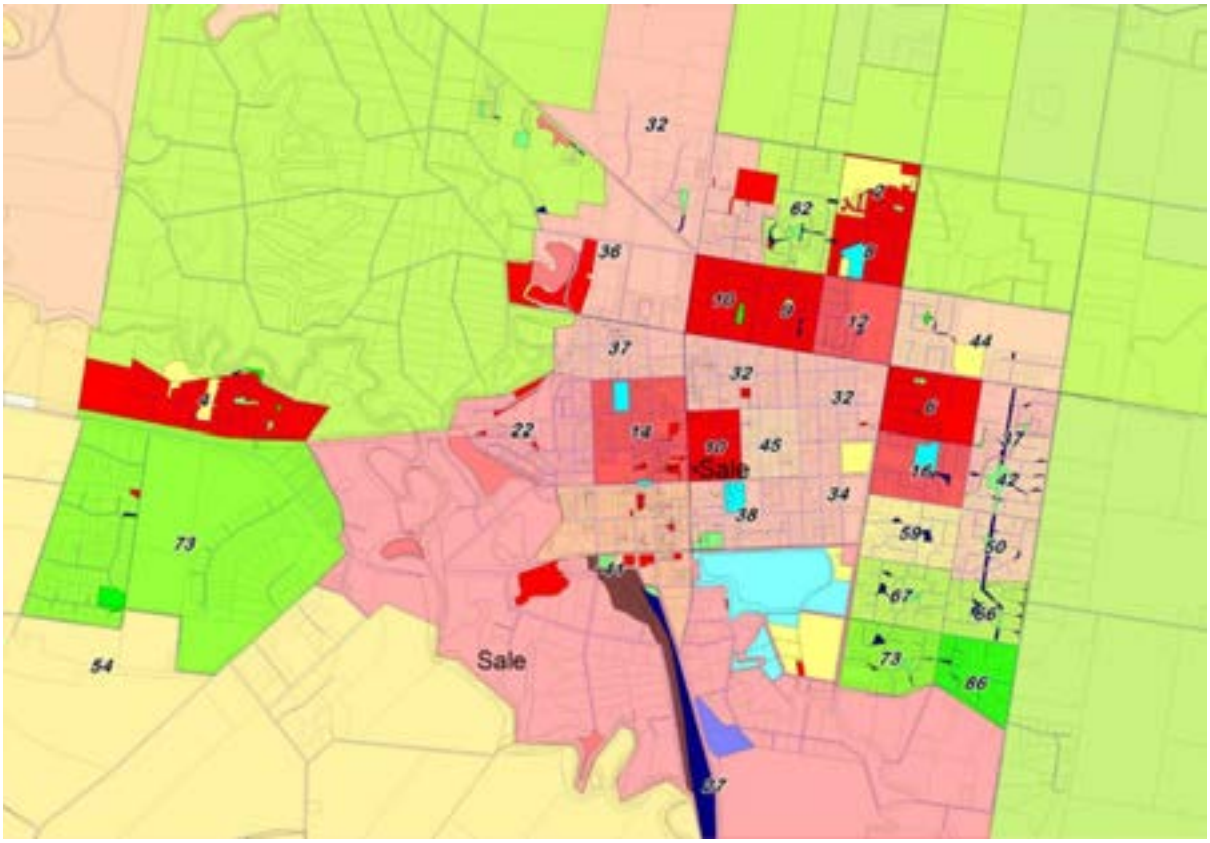
Sale is different to all other towns in Wellington. It the only town that is similar in scale and layout to many metropolitan areas, hence industry POS standards more easily align with Sale. To place Sale in context, it has as many dwellings as the sum of the next 7 largest towns and a population the size of the next 11 largest towns. Sale has the greatest number of residents in the most disadvantaged positions in the community hence equitable provision of POS infrastructure provides significant value.

The measure of relative advantage and disadvantage is designed to be a spatial tool. Areas are mapped by SEIFA Index of Disadvantage, this measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of Census characteristics. It provides an excellent general view of the relative level of disadvantage in one area compared to others. For many smaller towns the size of the ABS mapped unit is too large to offer a high level of analysis because typically the mapping units cover approximately 500 people. However, it is well suited to larger towns such as Sale and Maffra.

Figure 74 maps the SEIFA index for Sale by deciles (red is the most disadvantaged and green the least); the number in each coloured area is the percentage rating of that area compared to all of Australia, the lower the number the greater the disadvantage in the area. E.g., the area in north Sale labelled '2' means that this area is within the 2% most disadvantaged areas in Australia (98% are more advantaged).

Whilst the complexity of disadvantage are such that no one solution can completely address the issues, the provision of quality POS can assist. Decades of research backs the value of POS in improving physical and physiological wellbeing.

Figure 74 Sale - ABS Measures of Relative Advantage and Disadvantage



POS in Sale is largely missing from the central area of Sale. As shown in Figure 75 a large area of central Sale does not have access to POS, this is worsened because there are significant physical barriers to accessing POS in other areas because of the restriction of busy roads (Cunninghame, York & Macarthur Streets). This area contains one of the most disadvantaged areas of Sale, DHS recently upgraded the properties in Stawell Street, in what was a poor planning decision the development was created with no open space areas for children's play. There are no parks or playgrounds nearby.

Figure 75 maps all POS areas, many of these areas are not developed and have little POS value.

The spatial issues are more pronounced when play spaces area mapped. Figure 76 maps existing play spaces in Sale the gaps are significant, over 5000 residents are not with 400 metres of a play space. Many of the Sale play spaces are only LOS level and often the surrounding POS has no other values. There is only one well developed NOS level playgrounds within Sale's POS. Mark Avenue Reserve is an example of this. The most

significant play space ‘gaps’ are the western side of Reeve Street, the central area of East Sale and the central area of Sale. This central area has 2500 residents with an estimated under 15-year’s group of 500. This area is larger than all towns except Maffra. No vacant council land exists in this area.

Figure 75 Sale – Location of POS – all Categories with 400m buffers

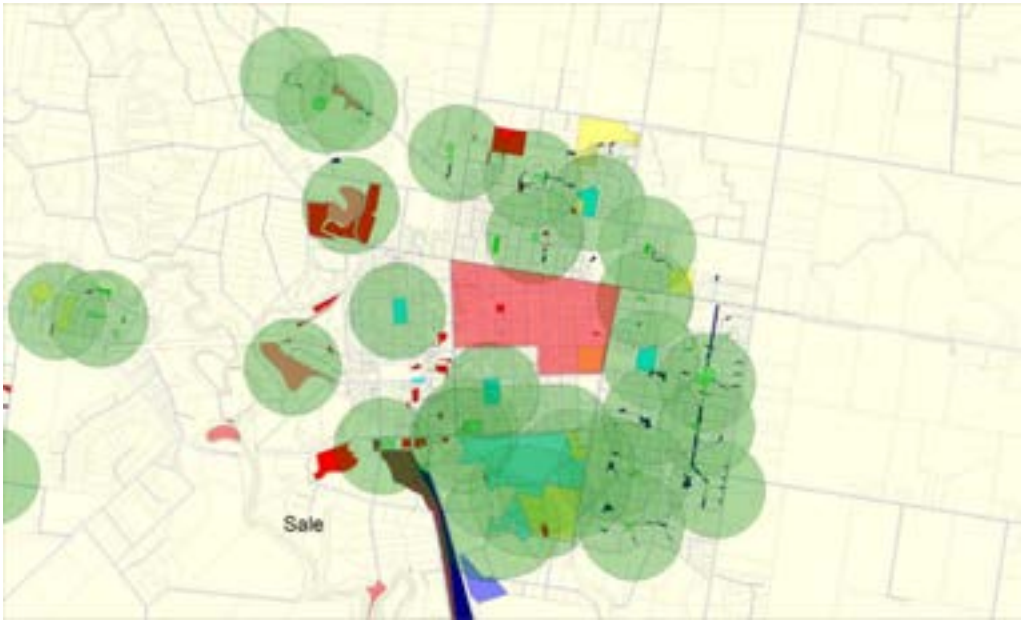


Figure 76 Sale – Location of Play spaces – all Categories with 400m Buffers
(the dashed lines represent major roads as physical barriers)

As previously noted Sale has no DOS level parks. The Sale Botanic Gardens fulfils that function for some residents, however as shown in

Figure 78 this area is a significant distance from most Sale residents and when compared to other Wellington urban centres Sale has a far lower level of provision than any. This means that 80% of Sale residents are not with 1km of a DOS level park.

When DOS is mapped against levels of disadvantage, there are no areas in the most disadvantaged areas close to the DOS level park. Distance is a significant factor for encouraging use of POS, the greater the distance from residents the lower the participation rates.

Existing WSC land suitable for DOS includes Brennan Park, Stead Street Reserve, Victoria Park, and Apex Park/Little Athletics. There are a few other suitable sized sites but these are generally not close to a significant number of dwellings, well connected or too close the Lake Guthridge precinct.

Figure 77. Percentage of Town Areas with 1km of a District Level Park

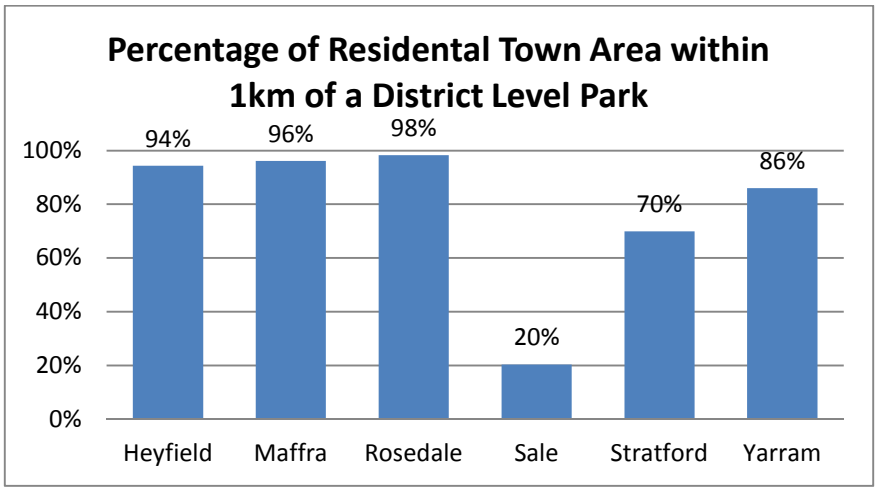


Figure 78. Park Providing DOS Level facilities in Sale with 1000m buffer

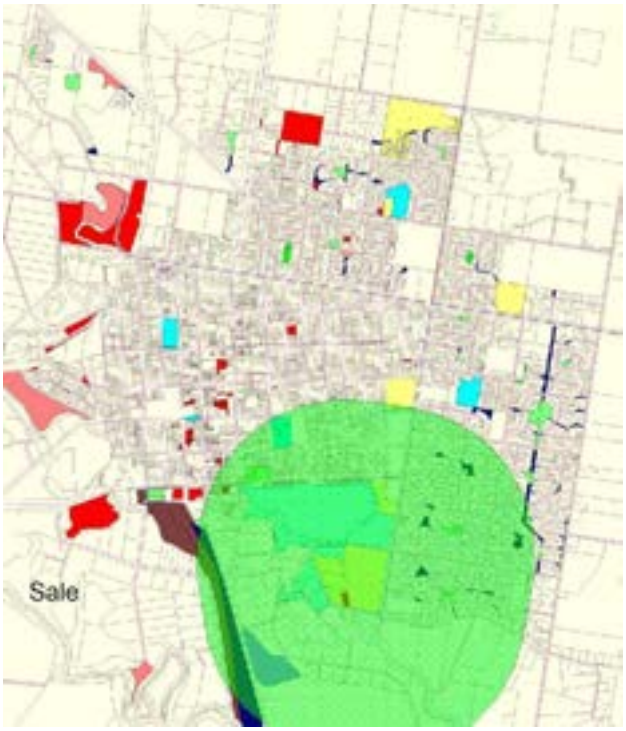
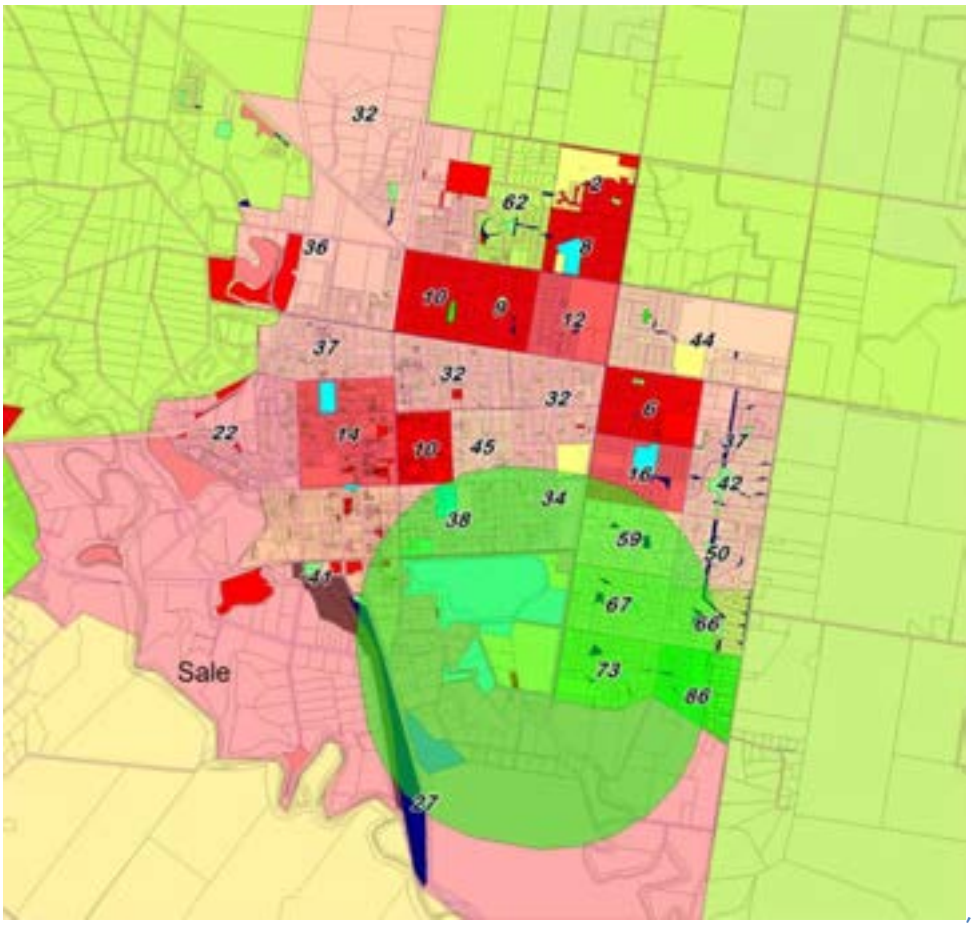


Figure 79. Park Providing DOS Level facilities in Sale with 1000m buffer mapped against areas of relative advantage and disadvantage



Whilst Sale has many POS areas, as noted much is undeveloped or merely functions as linking reserves. Parks with infrastructure that meet the definition of NOS are mapped in Figure 80. These POS areas cover approximately 60% of the Sale population. Significant spatial gaps exist, particularly in western, eastern and central Sale.

Figure 80. Park Providing NOS Level facilities in Sale with 400m Buffer

Sale Spatial Analysis Summary

Sale due to its size is quite different to any other Wellington town, the distances involved, the housing and population densities, busy road network and the high numbers of disadvantaged residents, present issues that do not exist in the smaller towns.

At a ROS level, Sale is fortunate, however, at a DOS, NOS and play space level there are some significant spatial issues; this is compounded by the physical barriers created by busy roads. In some areas, suitable land is available for NOS and/or DOS development, however in the central area of Sale land availability is an issue.

24.3 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

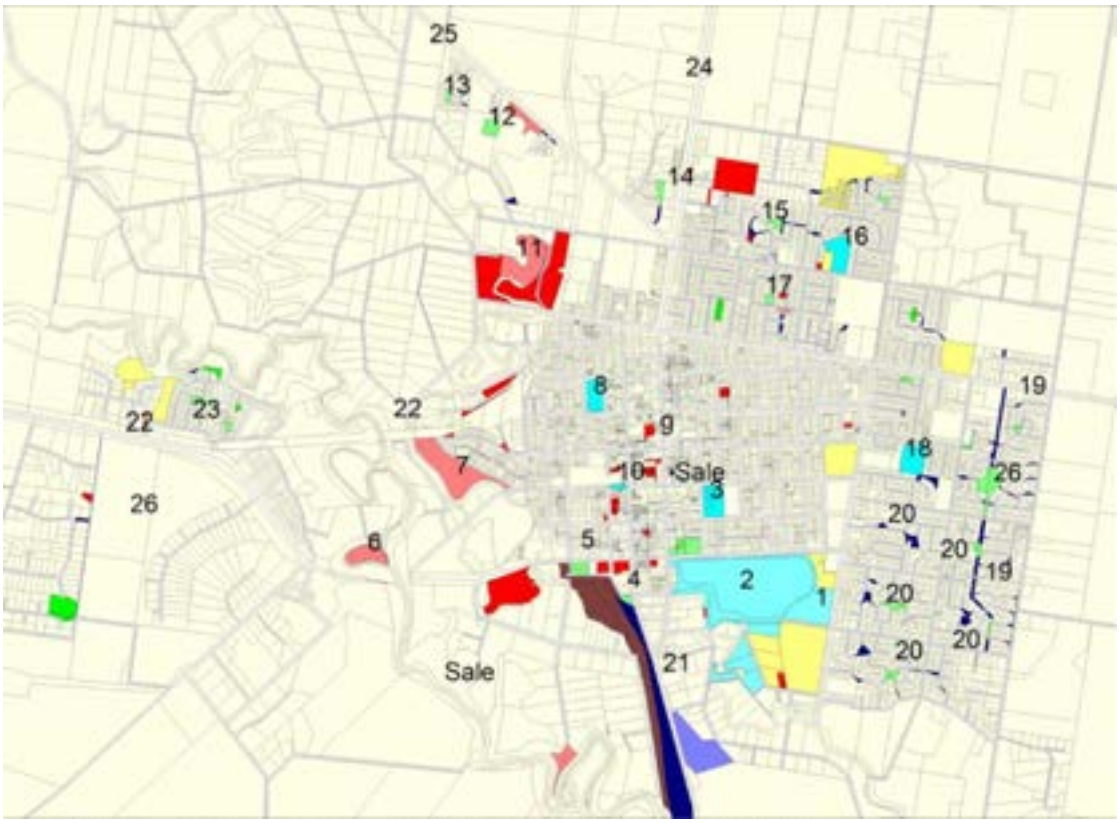
As applies across much of Wellington the bulk of physical infrastructure is in good condition and providing the existing asset management approach to maintenance and renewal continues existing infrastructure will remain serviceable. Maintenance service levels appear generally adequate; some issues with landscape maintenance exist and need improvement.

As discussed a greater issue in Sale is the lack of suitable quality infrastructure within a reasonable distance to much of the population.

24.4 Needs

As noted Sale is significantly larger and a far more urbanised centre compared to most other Wellington towns. Sale, and to some degree Maffra, are where industry standard POS provisions best align. Because of its larger geographical area, provision of POS is more involved, e.g., one well-placed DOS park will meet the standard service level provision for most urban towns. Whereas in Sale 4-5 well placed sites are required.

Figure 81. Sale & Wurruk POS Numbered Locations



- **DOS.** Spatial analysis identified that the vast majority (80% or over 11,000) of Sale's residents do not have access to a district level park (DOS). In comparison to other towns, this is an extremely low level (Figure 77). The Importance of DOS cannot be understated, high quality DOS is critical to providing the community with the opportunity to enjoy the many benefits of POS. The 1km buffer zone is based in research showing that participation of people in POS declines with distance from suitable POS, with maximum ranges being 0.8-1.2km or around a ten-minute walk. The DOS parks in the other urban centres have all been significantly upgraded in the last decade; participation in the upgraded sites is significantly improved. Spatially and based on physical barriers (e.g., major roads) three additional DOS parks are required to raise the standard of provision to a similar level as other urban centres. There are five sites of sufficient size to meet DOS standards, it is recommended that these sites be further reviewed as to which are best suited to be upgraded to a DOS level

- **NOS.** Neighbourhood OS is also lacking over much of Sale, this is further exasperated by the lack of DOS areas. There is a lack of suitable land for NOS development in most areas of Sale. The small-enclosed areas of East Sale have access issues and due to their small size and largely being surrounded by the rear of housing developments have passive surveillance issues
  It is recommended that the need for NOS parks is incorporated with the review of DOS sites in Sale as a mixture of both may well be a suitable outcome

- **General POS provision:** Sale is generally well provided with POS land except for the central area of Sale where no POS exists and no suitable Council controlled land exists on which to develop POS. As show in Figure 75, this POS absent central area

covers an area nearly the size of Rosedale and has the major physical barriers of York, Cunninghame and Raglan Streets. Many of the POS areas in Sale are have limited POS value; these areas should be further analysed for current and future need

- **Play spaces**. Two large areas of Sale fail the standard provision for Play spaces (Figure 76). Over 2000 residents (400 children under 15) in the Sale central area are not within 400m of a play space. And over 11% of people (220 under 15 children) are not with 400m of a play space in East Sale. Significant barriers exist in accessing other areas, e.g., Cunninghame, Raglan and York Streets. Play space locations and provision should be reviewed along with the DOS provision

- **CBD (10):** Sale's CBD has undergone significant renewal over the last few years and several further years are required to complete the works. The Mall and Raymond Street renewals in particular have revitalised the area. It is critical that recurrent maintenance standards are maintained to maximise the return to the community of this investment

- **York Street (9):** Highways running the length of towns are always difficult areas to make attractive. York Street is no exception, the length, diversity of business, aged infrastructure, overhead powerlines and lack of a cohesive theme; present at best what could be described as a utilitarian streetscape. A streetscape study and design for York Street is currently being undertaken (2014)

- **Sale Botanic Gardens (1).** Part of the only WSC managed regional open space and the only extant botanic gardens in Gippsland. Whilst the site has massively improved in the last decade, in contrast to other major park developments in Wellington the works have been incremental rather concentrated. It is suggested that a new Masterplan be developed to refine the major elements and to accommodate the ever-increasing visitation at the site

- **Lake Guthridge Precinct (2**): This area (combined with the SBG) represents the most well used parcel of open space in the shire. The site is well developed and generally well managed. Appropriate asset management is required to ensure that the site remains fit for purpose into the future. No other major needs have been identified at this time

- **Victoria Park (3)**. This park is important for tourism particularly as a site for long vehicle parking, equally the ambience and distance from the CBD of this park is ideal for lunchtime visits. With York, Cunninghame and Foster Streets creating major barriers this is the only park within those boundaries. The location would suggest a neighbourhood level play space. An agreement with Sale Primary School exists agreeing that their playground would be available for public use outside of schools hours. The change to security fencing around the school means the playground is not available for public use. WSC is negotiating with the school over this access

- **Stead Street (18).** A relatively well-landscaped park also used for low-grade cricket. It is the only significant sized park in East Sale. This POS is important for two reasons, one, spatially it is the only significantly sized area of POS in that area of Sale (Figure 81) and probably most importantly it is the only significant POS available

to several surrounding areas that have the 20% most disadvantaged people in Australia

- **Brennan Park (8).** The only major park in eastern central area of Sale. Whilst currently an attractive Neighbourhood Park, it offers limited park facilities to the central area of Sale. Upgrading would broadly involve upgrading the play space, and improving the landscaping of the area and negotiating use of the toilets attached to the CFA building. Given the size and location, Brennan Park It should be included in the review of Sale DOS

- **Apex Park/Little Athletics (16).** Is the only significant park in the northern area of Sale. This is an area of significant disadvantage with 40% of the residents with a one-kilometre radius being in the 10% most disadvantaged in Australia. The site largely functions as a drainage retention basin and base for Little Athletics. It is not an attractive site and significant landscaping and amenity planting is required. A Masterplan should be developed

- **Port of Sale area (4, 5):** This area underwent a substantial upgrade and is now an attractive area. Regular flooding does create issues particularly for the infrastructure and landscape. Further development of this site is largely dependent on the private sector

- **Flooding Creek Linear Park - Saleyards Reserve (11).** Part of the Flooding Creek Masterplan, this reserve was created over landfill. Whilst a pleasant area and quite well used, its full value will occur once the Flooding Creek Masterplan is completed, giving an off-road linear link from the Maffra Sale Road to the Port of Sale

- **Ross Street Reserve (7).** This somewhat neglected seven-hectare site is an important link along Flooding Creek and is part of the Flooding Creek Masterplan development. The area should be managed as a natural area with a focus on increasing biodiversity values. A Conservation and Management Plan should be created for the site

- **Herb Guyatt Reserve (6).** A natural area reserve adjoining the Thompson River with substantial biodiversity values. Substantial weed control and revegetation has been undertaken on this site with paths and interpretive signage installed. The land tenure for this site is unclear, with WSC controlling three areas and DEPI several others. The total area of the site is 4.7ha; WSC officially controls approximately 50% of this area. Land tenure for this area should be resolved. The area has a Management Plan and should continue to be guided by this document

- **Canal Reserve (21).** This area was used for junior football until a decade ago. It also contains the WSC designated ‘Circus Ground’. A significant part of the site has been revegetated. With the closure of the Thompson River Caravan Park and the opening of the new highway, it is an ideal time to develop a Masterplan that address the future use of this site

- **East Sale Drainage Reserve (19).** This 2.5 km Linear Linking Reserve extends from Raglan Street to Montgomery Street. It is an important off-road path. It connects to on-road bicycle paths on Raglan and Montgomery Streets. Two play spaces have

been developed along its length. Little work except further tree planting is required. The velodrome is part of this area

- **Sale Velodrome (19).** Part of the East Sale Drainage Reserve this site has not been actively used as a velodrome for many years. The site facilities are currently used by a dog club. The actual velodrome is a drainage retention basin for Sale and as such is designed to fill with water in high rain events. The basin occupies 65% of the site. There is no practical useable POS on the site and its primary function is that of drainage not POS. This site is largely landlocked with very limited access. It is well suited to its current use

- **Road Closures:** Numerous road closures were created in Sale as part of a traffic management plan. These often form excellent linking reserves allowing people to walk or cycle through low trafficked areas. Other than recurrent maintenance and tree planting few other needs have been identified

- **East Sale Connecting Reserves (20).** Created as part of the 1980-90s subdivisions these areas are often far larger than required for linking purposes. Some have been developed as local play spaces. Several areas have the potential to be developed as play spaces and this would assist in reducing identified gaps in service provision. The enclosed nature of these areas would suggest siting of such play spaces should consider passive surveillance requirements

- **Town Entries** are critical in setting an early tone as what to expect in a town.

    - **Maffra Sale Road (25).** This entry is not presently managed as a formal entry to Sale. Given that housing development has now expanded to Grassdale Lane and future growth for the area is planned, this road should form a more formal entry to Sale. There once was a First World War Memorial avenue from Sale to Maffra, few trees remain. A Streetscape Plan should be created for this entry

    - **Sale Stratford and link to Glenhaven (24)**. As with the Maffra Sale Road, development has expanded well past the former Sale boundaries and further development is planned for the eastern side. A planning requirement of the Glenhaven development is to install a shared path from the development to the Sale Maffra Road; most of this route is not management as a town entry. A Streetscape Masterplan should be developed to guide planners and developers as to what form this critical town entry should take

    - **Sale Traralgon (22).** The recently completed western entry to Sale requires significant landscaping to link it to the existing Foster Street landscape. The Wurruk section is a completely different site to predevelopment and an appropriate service level has yet to be established. WSC should develop a service plan for the area to establish the likely costs and resource requirements and negotiate a level of recurrent funding from VicRoads

- **Glenhaven and Cobains Rd Developments (24)**. These sites are a significant distance from the Sale CBD and any POS. It is important that sufficient well-planned and suitable POS is developed for these future communities. Planning standards as per the recent Parks & Leisure Australia (PLA) Open Space Planning and Design

Guide 2013 should be required. Importance should be placed in creating larger and central POS areas

- **Wurruk (23).** The small park at Wurruk has been upgraded. Further discussions with the Wurruk Harmony Group and the broader community are required to ascertain whether this site should be upgraded to DOS level

- **Wurruk South (26).** This development proposal has the potential to create a community the size of Rosedale. This area is remote both by distance but more so because of the highway and river; hence the importance of high quality POS at the DOS level is critical in creating a healthy liveable township. WSC should continue to work with the developers to ensure this outcome

- **Maffra Sale Road (12, 13, 25)**. Two of the three new developments in this area have well developed quality POS. The Glebe was an older subdivision that was permitted without POS provision. The more recent development of Woondella provides some access for The Glebe subdivision. Given the distance, these areas are from the main areas of Sale and that the area has potentially further residential development the development of a DOS level park should be incorporated into any future subdivisions in the areas. Providing pedestrian links will also be critical

- **Urban Forest.** Sale has a substantial urban forest; however, it is not without its challenges. The creation of a Street Tree Town Plan is critical to maintaining and developing this important asset into the future

24.5 Sale Summary

Sale will continue to be the economic and commercial hub of Wellington. Future POS development should focus on improving and enhancing Sale's character. Some significant POS issues exist in Sale and the vast difference in size of Sale compared to other Wellington towns means that the scale of POS development will appear greater than in other centres.

Sale will continue to be the fastest growing area of the shire and new land will be developed for housing. It is critically important that the POS are well planned and considered and importance is also placed as to how each new development links with previous and possibly future developments.

25 Seaspray

Seaspray is located on the Ninety Mile Beach and has a population of approximately 200 residents, which swells considerably during the summer holiday period. The Ninety Mile Beach is Seaspray's main attraction and is popular for fishing, surfing and swimming. It is one of two patrolled surf beaches in Wellington.

25.1 Demographics

Seaspray is too small to be statistically considered an urban locality by the ABS for census purposes. State suburb data is available but covers a much larger area. Hence, the State Suburb area is used (Figure 83); unfortunately, this over-estimates the urban area data limiting its value for POS analysis. However, 2011 census data for population and housing is available.

Seaspray has a permanent population of 221 however, it only has 0.75 people per dwelling (well below the shire average of 2.4) whilst this is double the occupation rate of Loch Sport and Golden Beach it suggests not surprisingly that Seaspray is seasonally occupied. The absentee rate is 69%. Extrapolating the absentee rate it suggests that Seaspray's holiday population could increase to 1200 plus those using the caravan park.

Growth is slow in the town with a long-term average dwelling increase of one additional dwelling per year. This limited growth is also reflected in the population decline over the last 20 years.

The age profile for Seaspray (State Suburb) is notably different to Wellington with the large reduction in younger working aged people and much higher percentage of older people; this is reflected with the median age being 48 versus the WSC median of 41 and for Victoria, 37. Although due to the small population in absolute terms, the numbers are small. Using the State Suburb age profile rates, there are about 40 children under 15 in Seaspray. Not surprisingly given the age profile, Seaspray has a far higher rate of couples without children and a far lower number of couples with children.

Figure 82 Seaspray Age Profile

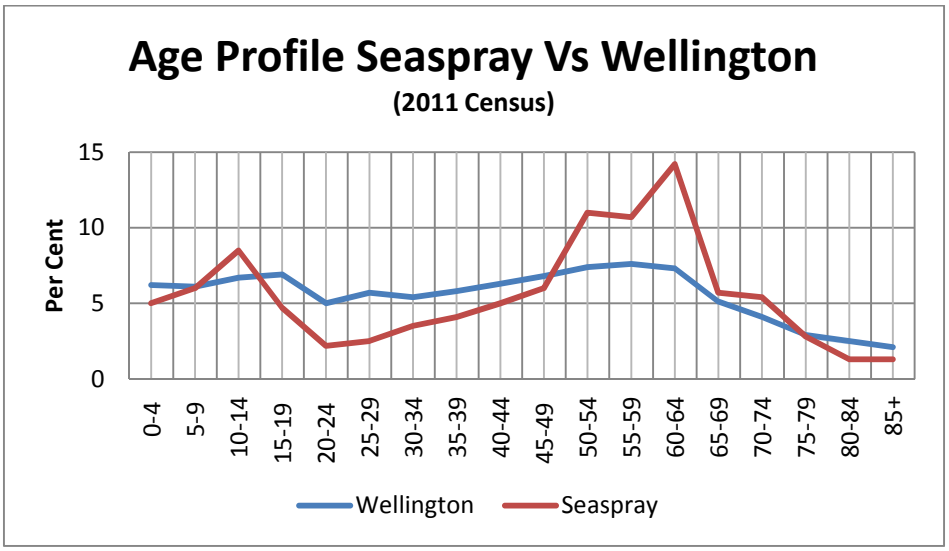


Figure 83 Seaspray ABS Census State Suburb Area

25.2 Existing POS

Seaspray has a diverse mix of POS as is often found in coastal communities. Existing POS areas in Seaspray are (the site numbers refer to locations in Figure 84):

- **Town Entry (1.)** The town entry through a Cypress avenue is VicRoads controlled although WSC has undertaken pruning of theses as it is believed that this is a memorial planting
- **Drainage Reserve (2.)** Area set aside for stormwater retention
- **Futcher Park (3.)** This is a largely undeveloped area; it has a memorial garden bed.
- **Seaspray Flood Mitigation Scheme (4.)** Large area set aside to reduce the impacts of flooding, maintained by WSC
- **Public Hall and Caravan Park (5.)** Former Recreation Reserve recently converted to Caravan Park. Non-WSC managed
- **The Bearup Street Medians (6.)** Which contain a playground, BBQ and Shelter and an Anzac Memorial
- **Trood Street Car Park (7.)** This area at the end of Trood Street provides access to Merrimans Creek, it has a public toilet and BBQ

- **Foreshore Reserve (8)** Former caravan park site, being redeveloped
- **Undeveloped land (9.)** A large area of land on the edge of the town heading towards The Honeysuckles

Figure 84 Seaspray POS Areas; light blue areas POS, other colours are other public land types

Figure 85 Seaspray Bearup St BB Shelter

25.3 Spatial Analysis

- Spatially the POS is distributed throughout the town and not surprisingly concentrated closer to the beach. As with many of the coastal towns the most used POS is the beach
- The one playground (Bearup Street) does not spatially meet the required standards for a standard township (Figure 86). There are some 150 permanent residents outside the 400m buffer, giving an estimated 30 children under 15. Given the very low dwelling density, linear nature of the town, mostly good off-road connections, small number of under-15 year old children and tourism focus it is considered that an additional play space is not required

Figure 86 Seaspray ABS POS (blue) with 400m play space buffer

Figure 87 Seaspray ABS POS with 400m buffers

25.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- The Bearup Street median contains most of the WSC managed POS facilities, this stems from a period when a shop existed opposite the site. In recent years, WSC has built a new BBQ shelter on the site. This area is well maintained, but the appropriateness or relevance given the changes to the caravan park and the proposed transformation of the foreshore into a District level park is questionable
- Futcher Park is a poorly developed and poorly maintained, it does contain a memorial garden
- The one playground is adequate for the permanent population, with a playground ratio of one playground for <40 children, compared to Maffra at 1/153 and Sale 1/197. The location of the existing playground is not ideal because it is away from the foreshore area, where the majority of visitors are based
- The day park at Merrimens Creek is not an attractive site as it is largely a car park. Unless the car park is sealed, there is little value in upgrading the limited landscape areas. The public toilets are functionally for the users of the beach and Merrimens Creek and their siting in this area is acceptable. The value of the BBQ in the context of the proposed foreshore development is questionable
- The town entry avenue of cypress trees has a limited useful life however it does create a great entrance to the town

25.5 Needs

- Given Seaspray's low population it would appear to be over serviced with POS and associated infrastructure. However, as with many of the coastal towns, much of this POS is provided based on servicing the absentee owners and tourism sectors
- The value of the park on Futcher St should be considered as it is undeveloped and adds little amenity to the town, particularly given the large area of higher quality POS that will be developed on the foreshore
- The relocation of the caravan park to the Recreation Reserve has freed up the foreshore reserve. This provides a great opportunity to develop this area as POS. As such, WSC should play an active role in developing and managing this site

25.6 Seaspray Summary

Seaspray is unlikely to see significant growth, however, the new caravan park and redevelopment of the foreshore may increase the tourism and visitor levels in the town.

26 Stratford

Stratford is located on the Avon River 18km from Sale on the Princes Highway. It has a growing population of nearly 1700 people, and is a popular place for families to live as it is close to Sale. Stratford is a common rest stop for tourists due to the range of services, accommodation and speciality shops available.

Stratford comes alive in April/May for the annual 'Shakespeare on the River Festival'. The medieval themed Apex Park is a popular with young children, and is also the start/end of the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail.

26.1 Demographics

Stratford is the fastest growing town in Wellington, with the 2011 population being 1677 and the 20-year population increase was 29%. The median age is 40, which just below the Wellington average. Based on 20 and 10-year trends, Stratford will become the third largest town in Wellington by the 2016 census.

Given the rapid growth in Stratford, it could be assumed that the age demographic would reflect a younger trend, however, the age profile for Stratford is surprising similar to the Wellington average (Figure 88). The under 15 years group is only slightly higher than the average at 21% compared to Wellington's 19%. For 14 years and under there are 351 children (21%) this age group is the target range for play space provision.

Whilst there are 1677 residents there are 653 dwellings giving an occupancy rate that suggests no significant absentee owner level. The dwelling density is 237 dwelling per square kilometre well below the levels found in other similar size towns; this is reflected in the wide streets, larger lots, significant rural residential area within the town, and large areas to the east still being developed.

Dwelling numbers have increased by 123 (22%) since 2001, this is double the Wellington average.

Figure 88 Stratford Age Profile ABS 2011 Census

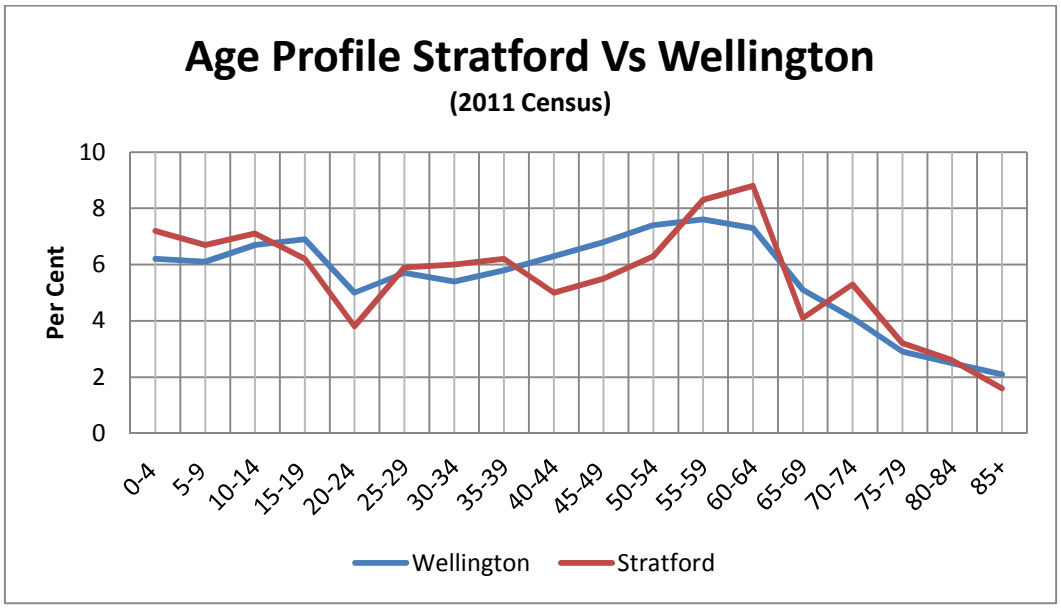


Figure 89 Stratford ABS 2011Census Urban Locality

26.2 Existing POS

Stratford is an interesting town of two characters, being a highway town with a focus on travellers and a proportionally rapidly growing largely residential town. The non-WSC managed Knob Reserve is a significant community asset.

Figure 90 Stratford POS Areas (blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types)

Existing POS areas in Stratford are (the site numbers refer to locations in Figure 90:

- **Apex Park (1).** This park adjacent to the Avon River, is a DOS level park containing an award winning regional level play space, it also has one of two BMX tracks in Wellington. The site is well appointed, although prone to flooding. It is a common stop for travellers
- **Women's Garden (2).** Small LOS area of POS overlooking the Avon River
- **Town Centre (3).** Being a highway town means this strip shopping centre is important to the town image as a visitor a visitor attractor. The central medians are significant contributors in creating the character of Stratford
- **Memorial Park (4.)** A small DOS park in the middle of the town centre that provides an excellent respite stop for travellers
- **Mountainview Crt (5.)** Small LOS reserve containing a playground

- **Town Entry (6).** The eastern town entry. As with many rural towns, this runs adjacent to an industrial zone
- **Railway Linear linking Reserve (7.)** Linear reserve and part of a path running the length of the town
- **Market Square (8).** Recently develop NOS with minor landscaping and the site for Stratford's skatepark
- **Undeveloped POS (9, 10).** Areas of POS that are not currently developed. There appears to be an easement over part of 10
- **Swan Estate Park (11).** Recently developed NOS providing POS to a new subdivision
- **Martin Hart Memorial Avenue (12).** A well treed avenue leading into Stratford. Also contains the final section of the Maffra-Stratford Rail Trail
- **Knob Reserve (13).** Non-WSC managed crown land reserve with potential to be a regional POS

26.3 Spatial Analysis

Stratford was a small rural town until about 20 years ago when it started to expand. Existing POS is formed from the original town development and the more recent subdivisions. Until recently, POS was not a planned part of newer subdivisions and due to the small size of developments still presents POS planning issues.

- Stratford is generally well placed spatially with play spaces, with 70% of the urban residential areas with 400m of a play space. However, some gaps exist mainly in the southeast area. There is no existing POS land in this section, with people in this area needing to travel a maximum of 600m to reach a play space
- NOS needs are met by four parks meeting the required standard (Figure 92); an area to the north of town and another to the southeast lacks NOS cover and no WSC land of a sufficient size or location exists in the area
- DOS park coverage is 70% (Figure 93) because Apex Park (1) is situated on the southern boundary of the town and is not ideally situated spatially. However, whilst Memorial Park (4) is small it does have the facilities to provide many of functions of a DOS park
- There is a lack of POS being developed with the newer subdivisions in the eastern areas of Stratford; this is largely due to the very small development lot numbers. Given the barriers of the highway and railway line and this lack of POS, Market Reserve (8) is best placed to meet the growing needs of this area, although a lack of NOS is going to be an issue in this new area
- ROS: The Knob Reserve (13) is a significant piece of POS with a rich aboriginal and European cultural history and some excellent remnant vegetation and high diversity values. It is not currently managed by WSC

Figure 91 Stratford Play spaces with 400mm Buffer

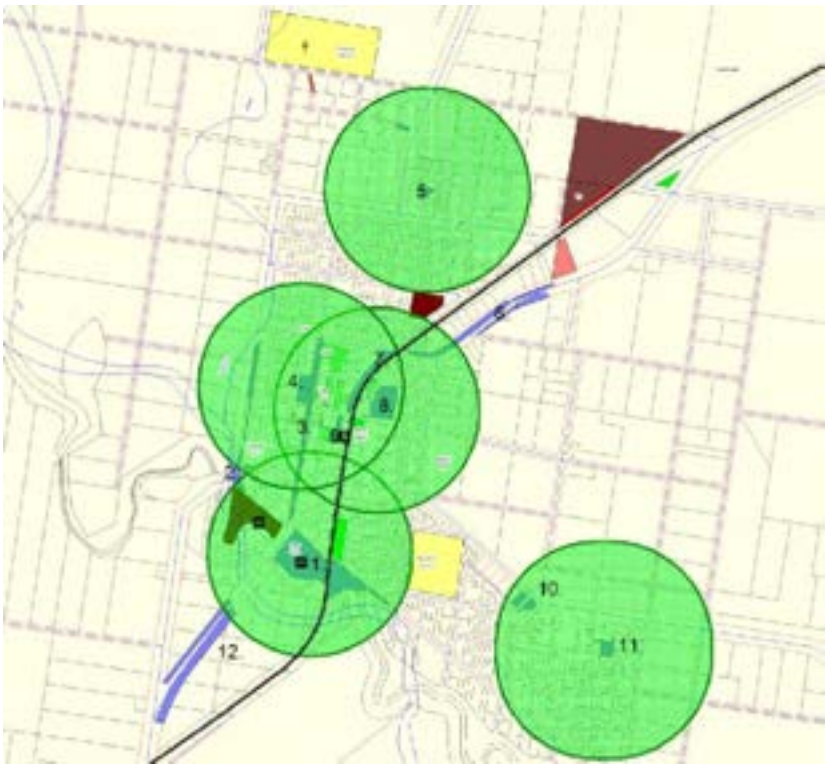
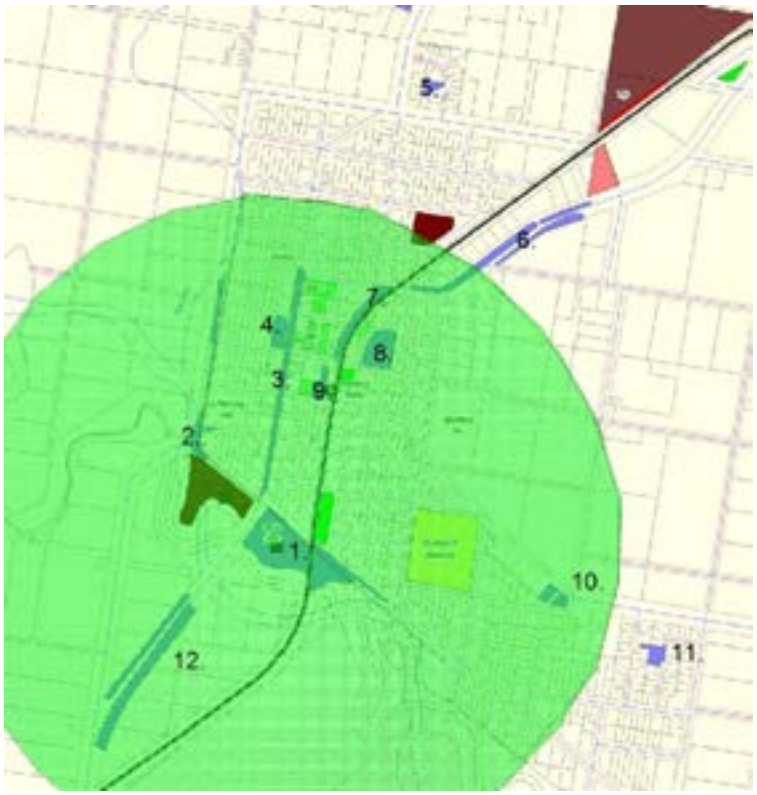


Figure 92 Stratford NOS Parks with 400m Buffer

Figure 93 Stratford DOS Park with 1000m Buffer



26.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- Memorial Park (3) has two prime functions, it serves as a community meeting point for events, and as a respite stop for travellers. It is well appointed, but not a very inspirational park. The Maternal Health building that dominated this site was removed in 2014 and during 2014/15 the entire park will be upgraded
- The local level play space in Mountainview Drive (5) is not ideal, the level of passive surveillance is of concern and the site offers little POS value
- The relatively recently developed Swan Estate Park in Kelly Crt has the same issues with only 10% openness. Future POS development should aim for a minimum 50% public frontage
- Small subdivisions continue to occur on the western edge of the town, typically these are small 10-20 lot subdivisions, and are being created without POS
- Apex Park (1) contains the regional playground. Its siting is not ideal for local residents being on the edge of the town; however, it is an attractive site and well suited to travellers and is well connected with off-road connections
- Market Square (8) is a larger neighbourhood level park, it includes the Stratford Skate Park
- Knob Reserve is a regional level reserve managed by a local DEPI Committee of Management
- The eastern highway entrance is not overly attractive, but similar to other towns with adjacent industrial land use, unmade road edges, and a gradual progression to a rural landscape it is difficult to address

26.5 Needs

Stratford is an interesting town with its own distinct character and in percentage terms, it is the most rapidly growing town in Wellington.

- Memorial Park is an important site in the Town Centre of Stratford; a Park Masterplan has been developed for the site and in 2014/2015 the park will be redveloped
- Undertake further analysis in consultation with the community as the demonstrable need to upgrade the Market Reserve to DOS standard
- Discuss with the Planning Department options to address the issues with lack of OS development with the many small developments
- There are a few sites that currently serve little useful POS function; these sites should be reviewed to determine if there is a valid future use
- Work with DEPI to enhance the management of the Knob Reserve. Determine if WSC involvement could play a role in enhancing this site's value as a significant piece of regional POS
- Stratford has wide streets and would benefit from a more extensive street tree-planting program. The creation of a Street Tree Town Plan is important in this regard
- The eastern town entry requires improvements

26.6 Stratford Summary

Stratford is one of three growing urban towns in Wellington. Support will be needed into the future to ensure that POS development keeps place with this growth. The Knob Reserve could become a significant attractor for the area.

27 Yarram

Yarram is at the heart of some of the most scenic country in Gippsland. A service town for local dairy and sawmilling industries, Yarram is an important local hub for several towns in the area. Yarram is known for its proximity to Ninety Mile Beach, Port Albert and neighbouring Tarra-Bulga National Park.

The area around Yarram was sold for farming in 1853. The first store was opened in 1857, the town continued to grow and was gazetted in 1893. The relative isolation of Yarram from other urban centres in Wellington means that Yarram is more important to locals and nearby small communities than would otherwise be the case.

27.1 Demographics

The population of Yarram in 2011 was 1740, with a median age of 48. The 20-year population change was -13%.

The age profile for Yarram is interesting because there is lower percentage of people in all age classes until over 65 years where it is much higher (Figure 94). The less than 15 years age group is substantially below the Wellington average at 15.6%. There are 271 14 years and under; this age group is the target range for play space provision.

Whilst there are 1740 residents there are 851 dwellings giving an occupancy rate that suggests no significant absentee owner level. The dwelling density is 565 dwelling per square kilometre the second highest level in Wellington; reflecting the narrow roads and lack of large areas of POS. Dwelling numbers have increased by 22 (2.2%) since 2001.

Yarram has some demographic challenges with a declining population, little housing growth, and an aged and aging population.

Figure 94 Yarram Age Profile 2011 Census

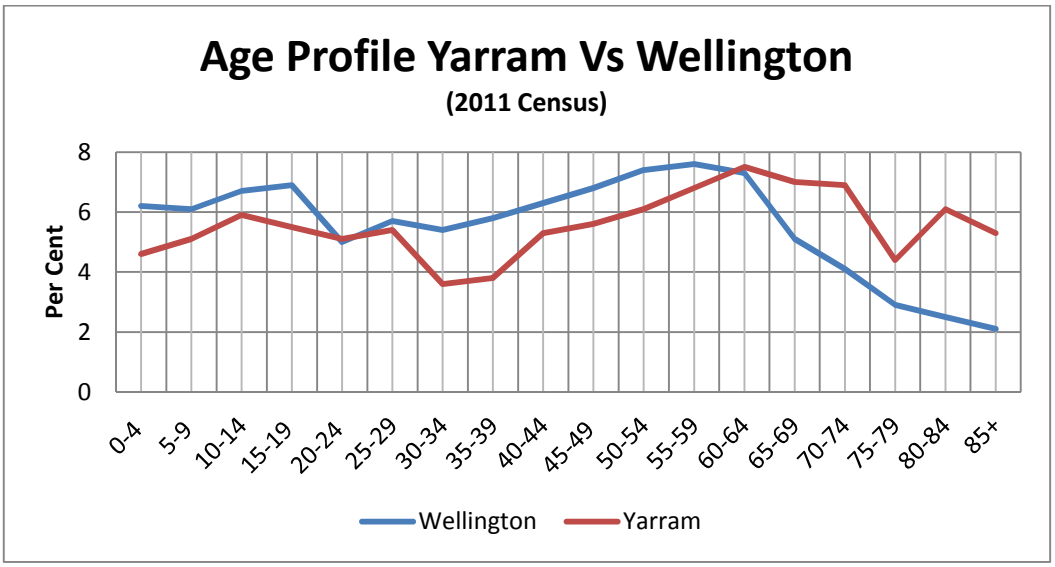


Figure 95 Yarram ABS 2011 Census Urban Locality

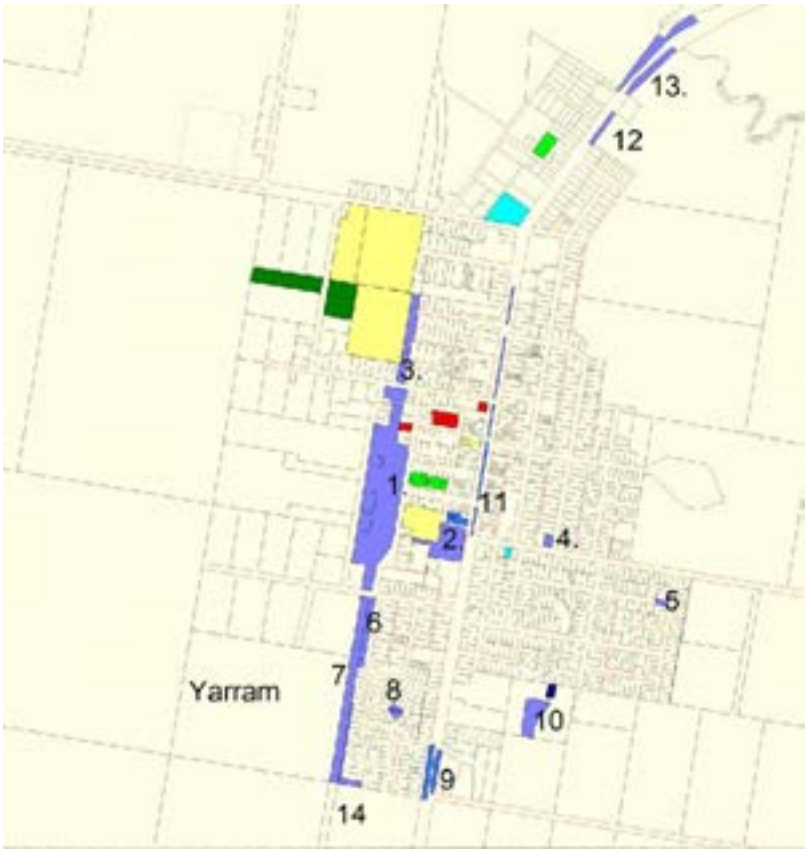
27.2 Existing POS

Yarram has a range of POS filling a number of functions (numbers relate to town plan Figure 96):

- **Yarram Railway Reserve and Wetlands (1).** A large area of former railway land has been turned into a significant area of POS. In recent years, significant resources have been allocated to this site, which now contains a skatepark, BMX track, outdoor fitness equipment, wetlands, walking trails, seating and shelters. The former railway station building has recently returned to Council management. The site is part of the Tarra Trail and is in effect a linear linking reserve with facilities at the Neighbourhood Park level. A Masterplan exists for the site
- **Memorial Park (2).** A DOS park with regional level play space. This site has undergone major redevelopment in the last few years
- **Former Railway reserve (3)** a linear linking reserve
- **Union Street local park** (4) LOS with play space.
- **Dougherty Street linking reserve (5)**

- **Kay Street (6)** local park
- **Tarra-Trail Yarram to Alberton Rail Trail (7)**. Start of rail trail to Alberton
- **Maxwell Crt (8)** local park with local play space
- **Town Entry (9)** Southern Town Entry
- **Scott Street Reserve (10)** LOS and part of the site drainage scheme
- **Yarram's Town Centre (Commercial Road) (11)**
- **Northern Tourist Information stop (12)** roadside stop with information board
- **Town Entry (13)** Northern Town entry, includes small roadside stop
- **Deanne Drv (14)** Small local playground, which does link to the Tarra Trail

Figure 96 Yarram POS Areas (blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types)



27.3 Spatial Analysis

Yarram has had a declining and aging population for over 20 years. Until the inclusion if the Railway Reserve (1) Yarram had little POS for a town of its size. The most notable POSs are Memorial Park, Railway Reserve and the Town Centre medians.

- Yarram has a very high ratio of children per playground (1 playground per 78 children, compared to Sale's 1 in 223 or Maffra's 1 in 153), however spatially these are largely in the southern section of the town, resulting in only 53% of the town being within 400m of a play space
- NOS needs are met by three parks meeting this specification (Figure 98). However, an area to the north of town and another to the southeast lacks NOS cover. No WSC land in the north of the town exists and whilst land in the new southeast subdivision is of a suitable size it has many other constraints
- DOS park coverage is 86% (Figure 99) and Memorial Park is reasonable well sited

- There is little residential growth in Yarram. Hence unlikely to be further substantial POS need

Figure 97 Yarram Play Space POS with 400m Buffers
(blue sections POS, other colours are other WSC or Crown Land Types)

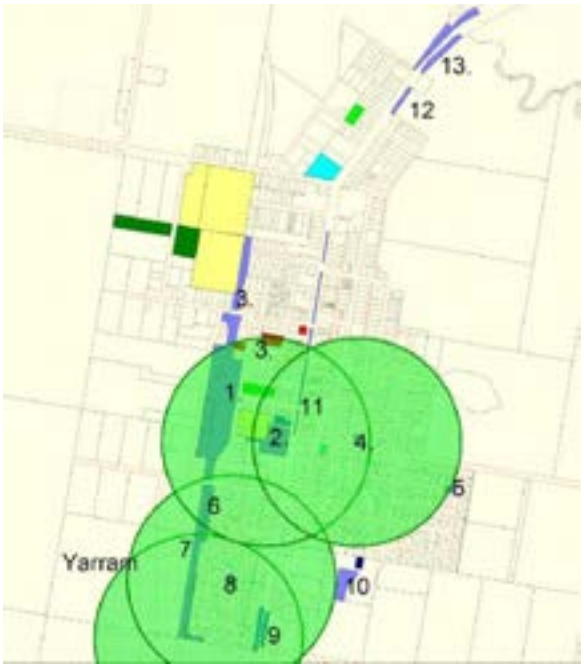


Figure 98 Yarram NOS POS with 400m Buffers

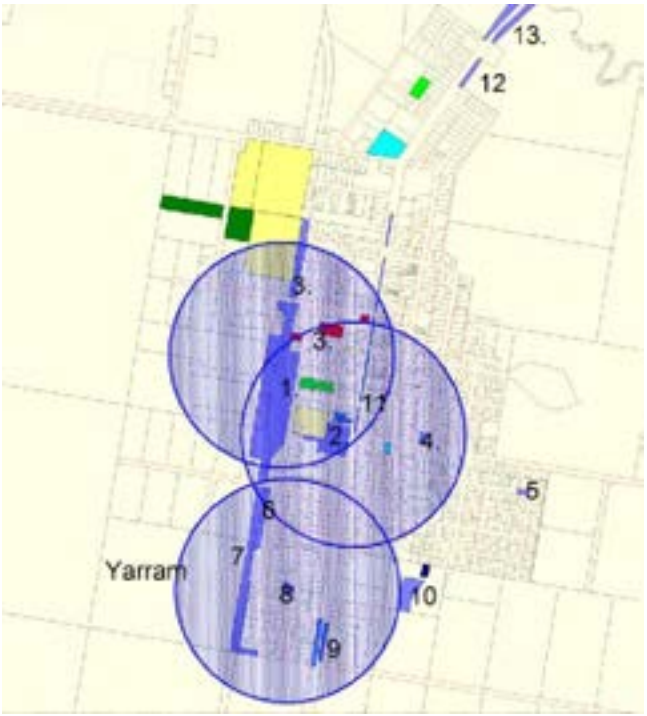
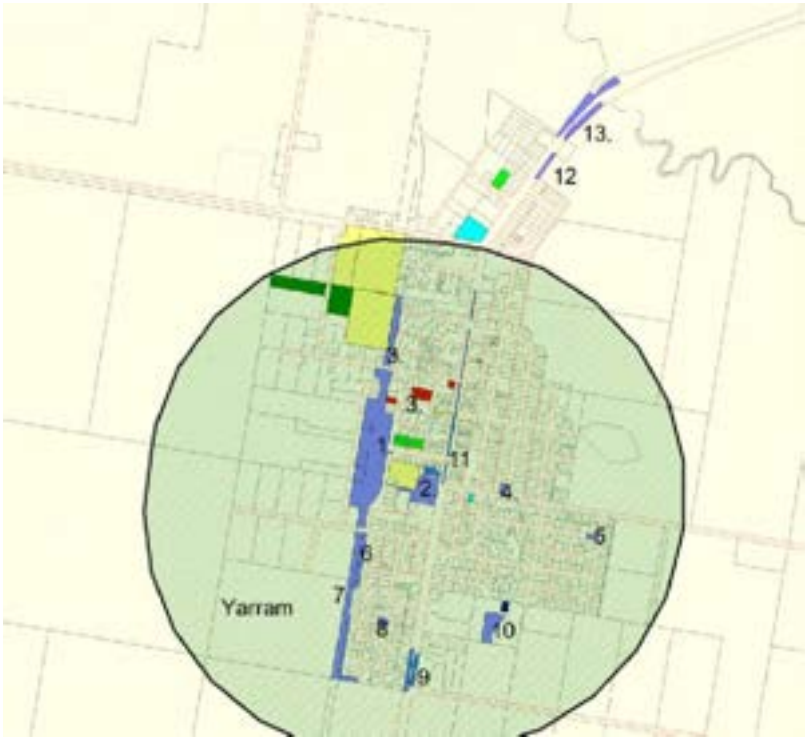


Figure 99 Yarram DOS POS with 1000m Buffers



27.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

- **Tarra Trail (1)** provides a significant improvement in the type and level of POS provision in Yarram by creating an area that particularly encourages active use of the area by a wide range of the community. The **former railway land (3)** that is now a linear linking reserve provides a good off-road connection
- **Memorial Park (2)** is very well maintained DOS level park that has been recently upgraded. A very pleasant park for both residents and visitors
- **The local level play spaces** in **Union St (4)** and **Maxwell Crt (8)** are fit for purpose and well sited. The play space in **Deanne Drv (14)** is poorly located at the end of a court and serves very few people
- The small subdivision in **Scott St (10)** does not have the catchment to justify a higher service provisions, however, should further stages occur it will be an excellent site to bring to NOS level

- The Town Centre **(11)** is very well maintained; the centre median is unique feature and no doubt encourages travellers to stopover. Lack of irrigation is an issue in maintaining quality over summer
- The **town approaches (9 &13**) are maintained at a very high service standard

27.5 Needs

In recent years, Yarram has had several significant POS upgrades.

- Works are programmed for the Town Centre 2014/15. This will enhance the streetscape
- A Masterplan exists for the Railway Reserve; the majority of the plan is now complete. The future use of the former station building needs to be confirmed
- Unlike most other urban towns, Yarram lack a natural area in or adjacent to the town, e.g., Maffra Wetlands, Herb Guyatt, and Sale. Such sites cannot readily be created
- The Town Centre medians should be irrigated via an automatic irrigation system. The current hand move process is slow and inefficient. Further analysis should be undertaken to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness of such a system and as part of any Streetscape Masterplan
- WSC undertake further analysis including consulting with the community around the current level of POS provision in the northern section of Yarram
- Extensive street and park tree planting has occurred recently in Yarram. The creation of a Street Tree Town Plan will give the community the opportunity to help create an attractive liveable town and define future urban forest management

27.6 Yarram Summary

Major upgrades to Yarram's POS have occurred in recent years. Generally, the provision of POS is excellent. Yarram is not expected to grow significantly in the next decade; hence, new areas of POS are unlikely to be required.

28 Woodside Beach

Woodside Beach is a small coastal community between Sale and Yarram. The swimming beach is patrolled over the summer months and camping spots are available in the large caravan park adjacent to the beach. The town is a mix of rural residential and residential lots. Woodside Beach also receives a large number of day visitors over the summer holiday period. The foreshore area is well developed for visitors.

28.1 Demographics

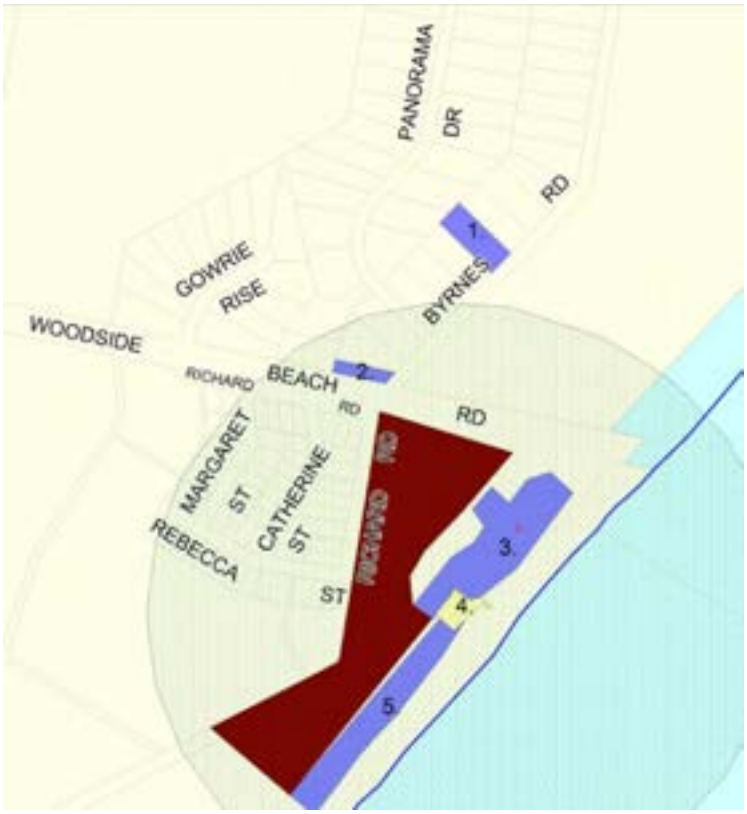
Woodside Beach has a permanent population of 74 residents and 84 dwellings. The population is too small to have other demographic data available. The absentee owner rate is estimated to be 60%, giving the town a holiday population potential of around 300. Using the 2011 state suburb age demographic for the area it is estimated there are 12 children under 15 years.

28.2 Existing POS

Three areas of POS exist (Figure 100):

- The main foreshore area (3) is well developed with car park, picnic and BBQ shelter and playground
- A ‘tree planting reserve’ (2) on the corner of Byrnes and Woodside Beach Roads
- A lot (1.) from the subdivision of Byrnes Road
- Area 4 is the surf lifesaving club
- Area 5 is a developed area adjacent to the foreshore, accessible by a rough track

Figure 100 Woodside Beach POS Areas with 400m buffer around playground. Blue areas POS, other colours are other public land types



28.3 Spatial Analysis

Given that the main reason the foreshore POS exists is for the visitor experience, spatial analysis adds little value.

28.4 Existing Infrastructure Condition & Service Levels

The existing foreshore area is well maintained and has been renewed in the last few years. The other areas are not developed and it is difficult to see any current or future needs for these sites.

28.5 Needs

Largely the area is fit for purpose. Suggested actions include:

- Upgrade the car park by sealing and re-landscaping the area
- Review the value of the two POS areas on Byrnes Road

28.6 Woodside Beach Summary

Woodside Beach is unlikely to see significant growth and use is not expected to change significantly in the next decade.

29 Other Towns/Localities

Numerous small town or rural localities exist throughout the Wellington Shire, e.g., Kilmany, Balook, Munro, Woodside, Hiawatha, Honeysuckles, Tarraville, Robertson Beach, Newry, Tinamba, Munro, Carrajung, etc. Open space provision is mostly non-existent and what does exist is often disparate between many of these localities. In many instances, POS is provided by other agencies, e.g., the foreshore areas of Honeysuckles, the Visitor Centre in Balook. Major ROS and DOS are generally available with a 15-minute drive from these localities.

In the majority of instances, the only Parks Services activities are urban tree maintenance and some town entry slashing.

Currently town entry service levels vary for historical reasons and some cross over between roads maintenance areas and Parks Services.

29.1 Needs

- Service standards for town entry maintenance (mowing/slashing) needs to be standardised
- Future Open Space development in these areas needs to be undertaken on a 'case by case' basis
- Specific 'other towns/localities' needs:
    - Tarraville; remove old pipe planters from around memorial if the area is important to the community then hardscape the area
    - Woodside; the traffic islands on the corner of the highway and Woodside Beach Road offer little value in their current state, and present OHS issues for employees maintaining the site. These should be hardscaped. VicRoads should be consulted
    - Hiawatha; land tenure for the area is a mixture of road reserve, private land, DSE and WSC. It is used for a camping site typically over the Christmas period and a source of regular complaints. This is not a function of POS provision and is provided at a high cost to rate payers and with no clear benefit to businesses. The toilets on the site are substandard. Discussions were held with stakeholders over 10 years ago and the issues of this site have not been resolved. A review of this site should be undertaken to determine future management actions

- Munro - there is a 7 hectare WSC crown reserve which is not cleared and hence an excellent small remnant piece of native vegetation. Half the site is gazetted as a recreation reserve with WSC as the Committee of management, the eastern section is DEPI controlled. The value of WSC continuing to partially manage this reserve should be reviewed including discussion with DEPI as to the most appropriate management model

End of section

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PLAN 2014-2024

PART 3 of 3 - Appendices

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WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL
The Heart of Gippsland

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CONTENTS

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30 Appendix One – Council Plan 2013-17 Links to POS

30.1 Healthy Lifestyles

- Provide and facilitate a range of active and passive recreational opportunities for all sectors of the community
- Foster partnerships that influence access, diversity and the quality of healthy lifestyle opportunities

30.2 Cultural Liveability

- Strengthen community understanding and support for our diverse arts, culture and heritage
- Provide a supportive environment for events and activities that promote and enhance a sense of community
- Recognise and promote Wellington's contribution to local, national and international arts and culture
- Acknowledge and respect Wellington's indigenous heritage.

30.3 Community Liveability

- Develop programs, projects and infrastructure aimed at strengthening our communities
- Foster engaged, inclusive and resilient communities that work with Council and one another to improve their local area
- Partner with key stakeholders to facilitate the development of required community services and initiatives
- Work collaboratively to maintain a safe community

30.4 Land Use Planning

- Ensure there is an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for residential, industrial, agricultural and business purposes to enable sustainable growth
- Development protects and enhances our heritage, cultural and environmental assets
- Development is in keeping with the character of and visions for our diverse communities

30.5 Economic

- Facilitate support, investment and growth in business, government enterprises and infrastructure development
- Enhance the capacity of local residents, industry and business to be actively involved in Wellington's economic growth
- Actively market Wellington as a visitor destination and promote the benefits of tourism as a significant contributor to the economy

30.6 Built Environment

- Provide for Wellington's economic, social and environmental needs through planning, development and maintenance of appropriate community assets

- Ensure the coordination and integration of Wellington's infrastructure through appropriate planning and design practices

30.7 Natural Environment

- Create a sustainable balance between the use of the shire's natural resources and the need to protect them for future generations
- Demonstrate leadership in efficient energy use, waste and water management
- Support a coordinated and diverse approach to developing a sustainable environment through partnerships.
- Increase community resilience and ability to adapt to our changing environment through simple and effective engagement and education

30.8 Council and Community Engagement

- Engage the community in Council deliberations and decision-making through participative processes
- Foster partnerships and stakeholder involvement in areas of interest and provide opportunities for community input

31 Appendix 2 - Planning Scheme Provisions

The WSC planning scheme provides a legislated framework around some provisions of POS. This includes POS contributions (Clause 52.01), liveability and sustainability requirements and standards (Clause 56.3), urban landscapes and quality standards (Clause 56.05).

The specific details are:

31.1 In relation to new developments Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision (Clause 52.01)

PARTICULAR PROVISIONS – CLAUSE 52.01 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE CONTRIBUTION AND SUBDIVISION

A person who proposes to subdivide land must contribute to council for public open space in an amount specified in the schedule to this clause (being a percentage of the land intended to be used for residential, industrial or commercial purposes, or a percentage of the site value of such land, or a combination of both). If no amount is specified, a contribution for public open space may still be required under Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988.

A public open space contribution may be made only once for any of the land to be subdivided. This does not apply to the subdivision of a building if a public open space requirement was not made under Section 569H of the Local Government Act 1958 or Section 21A of the Building Control Act 1981 when the building was constructed.

A subdivision is exempt from a public open space requirement, in accordance with Section 18(8) of the Subdivision Act 1988, if:

- It is one of the following classes of subdivision:
  - Class 1: The subdivision of a building used for residential purposes provided each lot contains part of the building. The building must have been constructed or used for residential purposes immediately before 30 October 1989 or a planning permit must have been issued for the building to be constructed or used for residential purposes immediately before that date.
  - Class 2: The subdivision of a commercial or industrial building provided each lot contains part of the building.
- It is for the purpose of excising land to be transferred to a public authority, council or a Minister for a utility installation.
- It subdivides land into two lots and the council considers it unlikely that each lot will be further subdivided.

31.2 In the provision of Liveable and Sustainable Communities through Clause 56.3., specifically:

- Compact and walkable neighbourhoods objectives (56.03-1)
  - 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
- Activity centre objective (56.03-2)

        - To provide for mixed-use activity centres, including neighbourhood activity centres, of appropriate area and location
- Planning for community facilities objective (56.03-3)
    - To provide appropriately located sites for community facilities including schools, libraries, preschools and childcare, health services, police and fire stations, recreation and sports facilities
- Built environment objective
    - To create urban places with identity and character
- Neighbourhood character objective
    - To design subdivisions that respond to neighbourhood character

Urban landscapes and quality standards through Clause 56.05, specifically addressing in effect POS; and specifically 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
- Incorporate natural and cultural features in the design of streets and public open space where appropriate
- Protect and enhance native habitat and discourage the planting and spread of noxious weeds
- Provide for integrated water management systems and contribute to drinking water conservation
- Clause 56.05 details standards, specifically:
- C12 An application for subdivision that creates streets or public open space should be accompanied by a landscape design. The landscape design should:
    - Implement any relevant streetscape, landscape, urban design or native vegetation precinct plan, strategy or policy for the area set out in this scheme
    - Create attractive landscapes that visually emphasise streets and public open spaces.
    - Respond to the site and context description for the site and surrounding area
    - Maintain significant vegetation where possible within an urban context
    - Take account of the physical features of the land including landform, soil and climate
    - Protect and enhance any significant natural and cultural features
    - Protect and link areas of significant local habitat where appropriate
    - Support integrated water management systems with appropriate landscape design techniques for managing urban run-off including wetlands and other water sensitive urban design features in streets and public open space
    - Promote the use of drought tolerant and low maintenance plants and avoid species that are likely to spread into the surrounding environment
    - Ensure landscaping supports surveillance and provides shade in streets, parks and public open space
    - Develop appropriate landscapes for the intended use of public open space including areas for passive and active recreation, the exercising of pets, playgrounds and shaded areas
    - Provide for walking and cycling networks that link with community facilities
    - Provide appropriate pathways, signage, fencing, public lighting and street furniture
    - Create low maintenance, durable landscapes that are capable of a long life
- C13 The provision of public open space should:
    - Implement any relevant objective, policy, strategy or plan (including any growth area precinct structure plan) for open space set out in this scheme.
    - Provide a network of well-distributed neighbourhood public open space that includes:
    - Local parks within 400 metres safe walking distance of at least 95 per cent of all dwellings. Where not designed to include active open space, local parks should be generally 1 hectare in area and suitably dimensioned and designed to provide for their intended use and to allow easy adaptation in response to changing community preferences.
    - Additional small local parks or public squares in activity centres and higher density residential areas.
    - Active open space of a least 8 hectares in area within 1 kilometre of 95 per cent of all dwellings that is:

        - Suitably dimensioned and designed to provide for the intended use, buffer areas around sporting fields and passive open space
        - Sufficient to incorporate two football/cricket ovals
        - Appropriate for the intended use in terms of quality and orientation
        - Located on flat land (which can be cost effectively graded)
        - Located with access to, or making provision for, a recycled or sustainable water supply
        - Adjoin schools and other community facilities where practical
        - Designed to achieve sharing of space between sports
    - Linear parks and trails along waterways, vegetation corridors and road reserves within 1 kilometre of 95 per cent of all dwellings
- Public open space should:
    - Be provided along foreshores, streams and permanent water bodies
    - Be linked to existing or proposed future public open spaces where appropriate.
    - Be integrated with floodways and encumbered land that is accessible for public recreation
    - Be suitable for the intended use
    - Be of an area and dimensions to allow easy adaptation to different uses in response to changing community active and passive recreational preferences
    - Maximise passive surveillance
    - Be integrated with urban water management systems, waterways and other water bodies
    - Incorporate natural and cultural features where appropriate.

32 Appendix 3 - Supporting Demographic Analysis

Figure 101 Population Density of various WSC Urban Areas

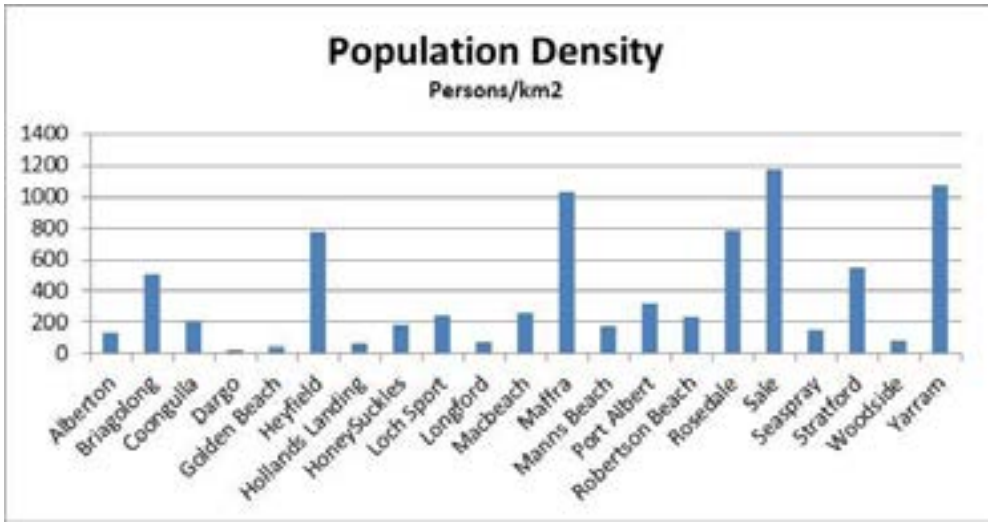
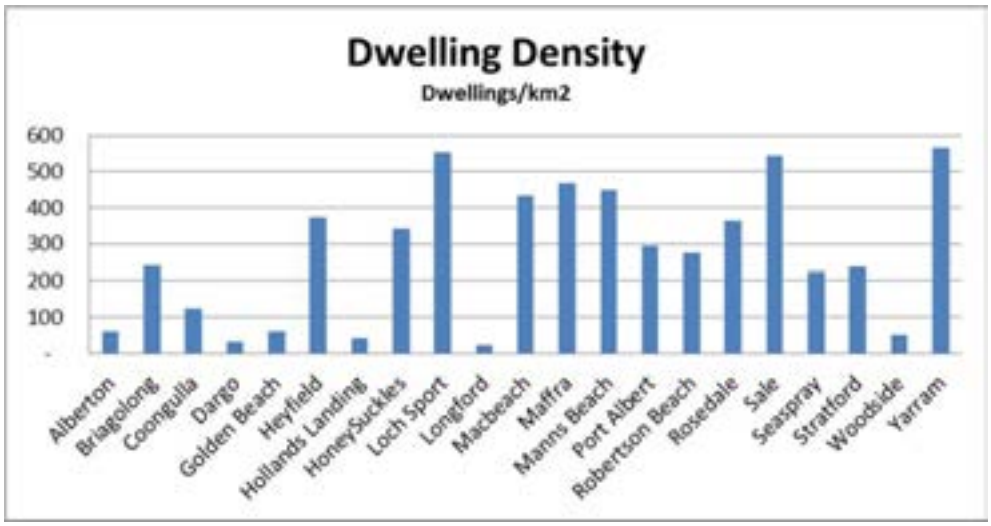


Figure 102 Dwelling Density of various WSC Urban Areas



The population across the shire increased by 3% between 2006 and 2011, but only 1% over the 1991-2011 twenty-year periods.

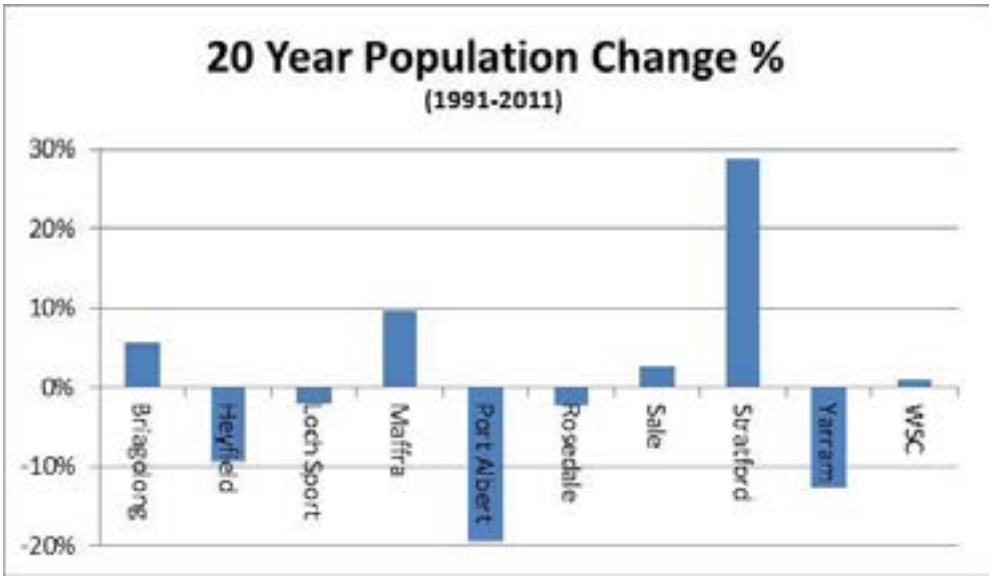
Table 1 lists the 1991-2011 ABS Census population data, the population growth varies, with growth (in percentage change terms) in Briagolong, Maffra, Sale and standout growth was in Stratford (29%), whilst decreases in populations over the last 20 years have occurred in Heyfield, Loch Sport, Port Albert, Rosedale and Yarram.

Figure 103 provides a graphic summary for towns where the data are available. Comparison of areas with less data available or only more recent data would suggest that Heyfield, Yarram and Rosedale populations have stabilised and that little population growth is occurring elsewhere. The trend towards a stable population, although changing population centres and demographics is perhaps best illustrated by the change of population of only 1% across Wellington in the last 20 years.

Table 1 Twenty-Year Population Data and Changes

Locality	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	20 Year Change +/-	20 Year Change %
Alberton	na	na	150	162	168*		
Briagolong	509	509	542	546	538	29	6%
Coongulla	na	229	176	165	148*		
Dargo*	na	na	148	144	148		
Golden Beach/Paradise Beach	na	na	358	318	331		
Heyfield	1614	1602	1436	1461	1464	-150	-9%
Loch Sport	704	791	949	778	689	-15	-2%
Longford	na	na	479	na	901		
Maffra	3879	4033	3916	4149	4257	378	10%
Port Albert	307	248	224	200	247	-60	-20%
RAAF Base East Sale	na	246	129	78	na		
Rosedale	1154	1134	1042	1077	1129	-25	-2%
Sale (inc: Wurruk)	13885	13366	12854	13336	14259	374	3%
Seaspray	233	216	208	186	197*	-36	-15%
Stratford	1298	1350	1330	1440	1673	375	29%
Yarram	1991	1807	1789	1715	1740	-251	-13%
Woodside Beach	na	na	114	114	74*		
WSC	41052	39817	39288	40080	41440	388	1%
	na = data not available						
	**Later 2011 census data releases allowed small town populations to be calculated for towns, such as Woodside Beach, Seaspray, etc.*						

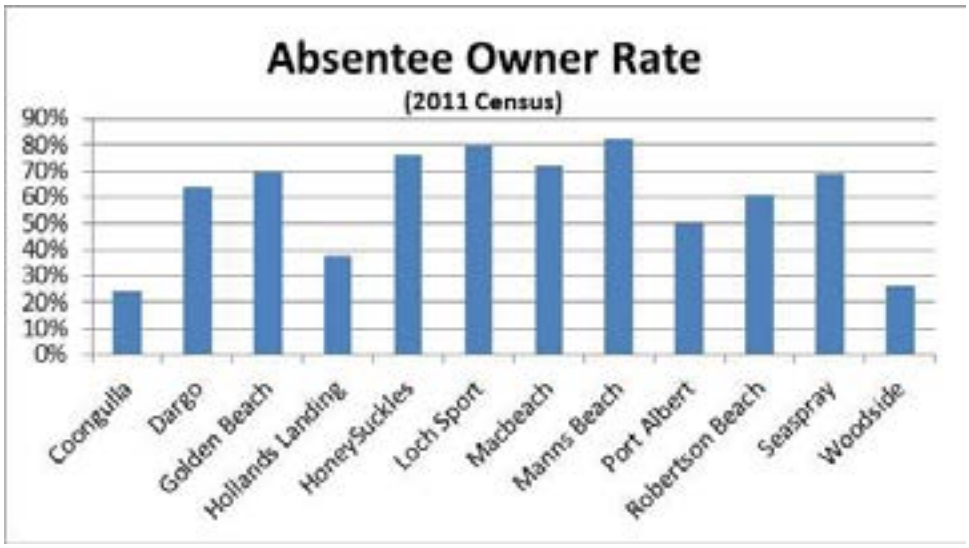
Figure 103 Population Changes 1991-2011



Dwelling vacancy rates are an interesting comparative figure and once again highlighting the difference amongst communities. WSC has a large number of absentee owners, there were 4617 unoccupied dwellings on the 2011 census night; a large number of these particularly in

the coastal communities, also Dargo, Coongulla and Glenmaggie have significant absentee owners (Figure 104). This creates an interesting and challenging dilemma for open space provision, because the populations of these towns can vary enormously across the year. For example, the Loch Sport population in the 2011 census was 698; the absentee rate is 82%, using data from the 2012 Gippsland Tourism Study into holiday homes the estimated summer population of Loch Sport is over 6,000.

Figure 104 Absentee Owners (Private Dwellings) (2011 Census)



Population growth is only one indicator of development; another reflection of actual growth is in changes to the number of private dwellings. Table 2 details the changes in dwelling number both in actual numbers and percentage terms. Growth in private dwellings at more than 10 dwelling per year (2001-2011) has occurred in Golden Beach (5-year data not shown), Loch Sport, Maffra, Sale and Stratford. Yarram has had the least number of private dwelling developments at a ten-year average of 2.2 dwellings pa, Heyfield has had a similar low net increase in dwellings (this correlates well with the changes to populations).

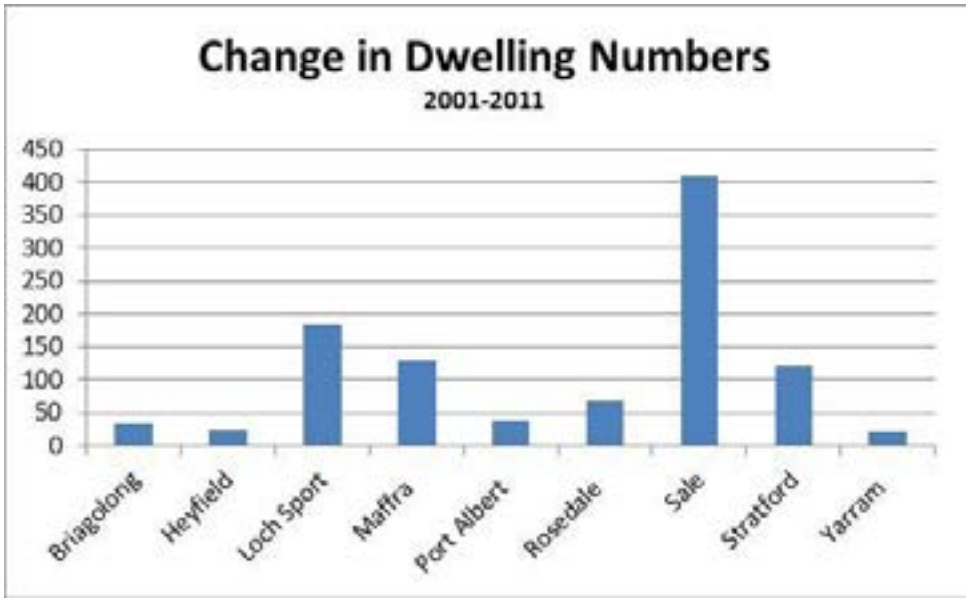
Based on data from the last 10 years, growth over the next decade is only likely to be significant in Loch Sport, Maffra, Sale and Stratford, unless population drivers change. In actual number of new blocks, projections would suggest that only in Sale is the provision of POS an issue that will require significant inputs to ensure adequate and suitable open space is created.

Generally, from a POS perspective, the limited projected growth presents few challenges and providing suitable planning provisions are in place for new subdivisions, then simple needs based analysis based on existing POS provision should provide a suitable base for decision making over the next 10 years.

Table 2 Number of Private Dwelling Built 2001-2011

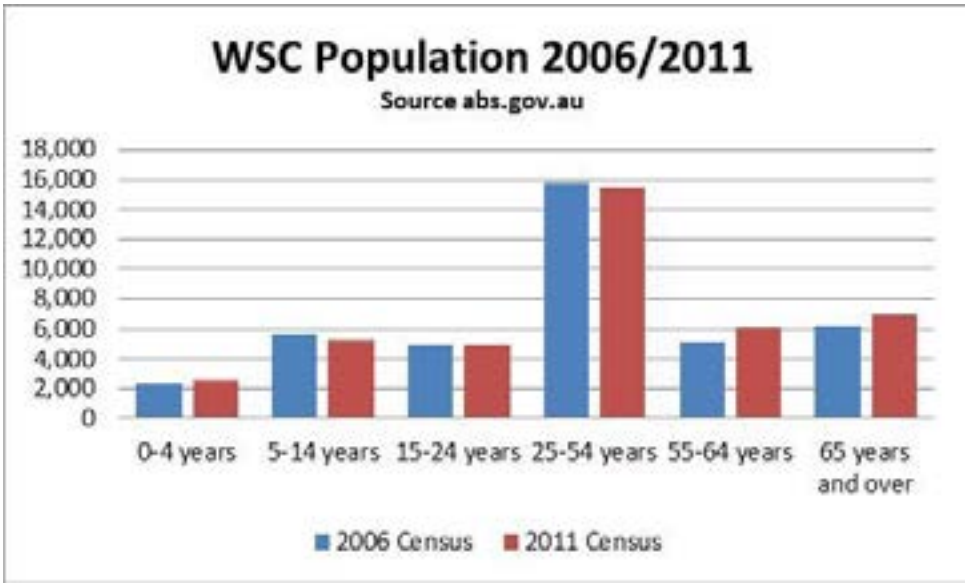
Locality	2001	2006	2011	Total Growth	Mean Dwelling Growth pa 2001-2011	% Change 2001-2011	% Change 2006-2011
Briagolong	209	230	244	35	3.5	16.7%	6.1%
Heyfield	652	671	677	25	2.5	3.8%	0.9%
Loch Sport	1396	1475	1581	185	18.5	13.3%	7.2%
Maffra	1731	1815	1860	129	12.9	7.5%	2.5%
Port Albert	199	221	239	40	4	20.1%	8.1%
Rosedale	443	476	511	68	6.8	15.3%	7.4%
Sale	5631	5853	6041	410	41	7.3%	3.2%
Stratford	561	576	684	123	12.3	21.9%	18.8%
Yarram	850	870	872	22	2.2	2.6%	0.2%

Figure 105 Changes in Number of Private Dwellings 2006-2011



The continuing trend to an aging population is evident, with an increase in the over 55-age group of 15% and a net 1% decrease in the population below 55 (Figure 106). The median age has increased from 40 to 41 in the same period. However, whilst an aging population is evident, there are nearly 11,000 people under 19 years old (25% of the population). The Victorian Government's Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) estimates that the percentage of Wellington residents over 65 will increase from 15.1% in 2006 to 29.6% in 2026 (Pope J, 2011). This significant trend to an increasing aging population has been identified for at least ten years and with improved health outcomes will continue to rise. A larger retirement population sector does mean that POS will be used differently than in the past.

Figure 106 2006-2011 Population changes by age groups



Significant differences exist in the age profiles by urban areas. Compared to the Victorian age profile Wellington has a lower range of people in the 20-50 year categories and more in the over 50 groups (Figure 107). However, this varies significantly by urban areas. The major differences are in the coastal areas of Loch Sport and Golden Beach with large (proportionally) 55-75 age groups, Yarram with lower younger age groups and Briagolong with a twin peak age profile (Figure 9).

Percentage figures are used because they allow easy comparisons between widely differing population numbers. However it is important to keep the proportionality in perspective, for instance there are more 0-14 children in Sale them all other urban areas combined (Figure 7); however in percentage terms only Yarram and most notably Loch Sport and Golden Beach have children number well below the state and Wellington levels (Figure 8).

Figure 107 Comparison of Wellington's population age profile to Victoria's

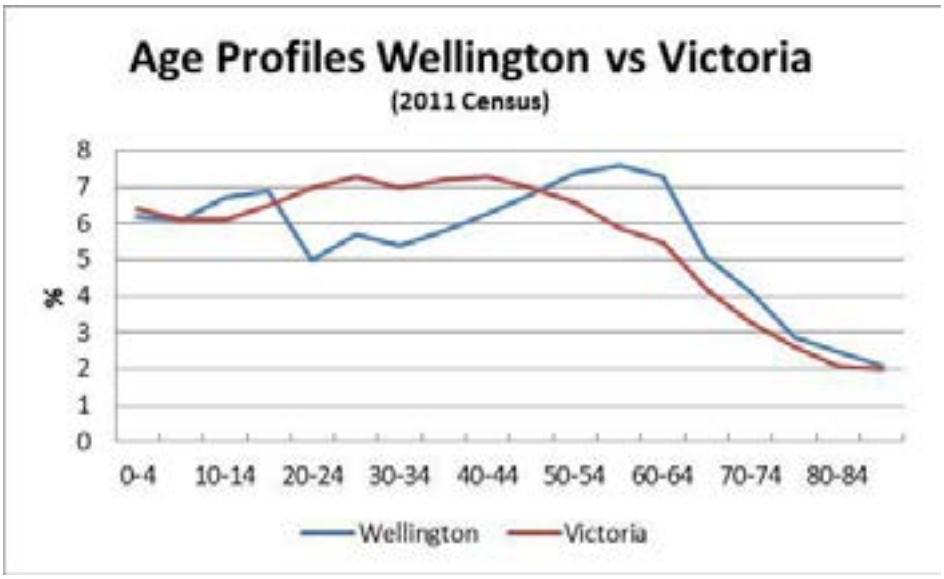


Figure 108 Children 14 years and under
(*based on the 2011 Census, others estimated based on WSC average for age group)

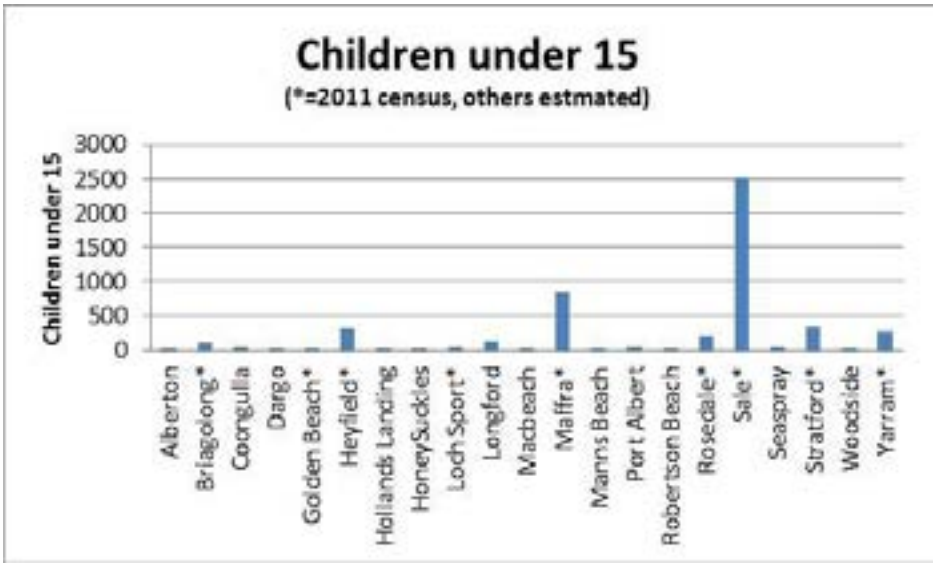
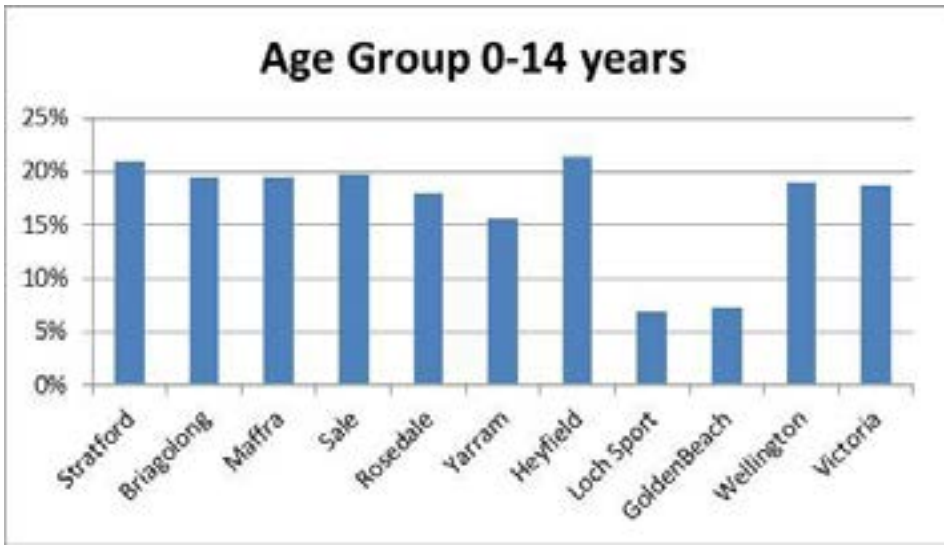


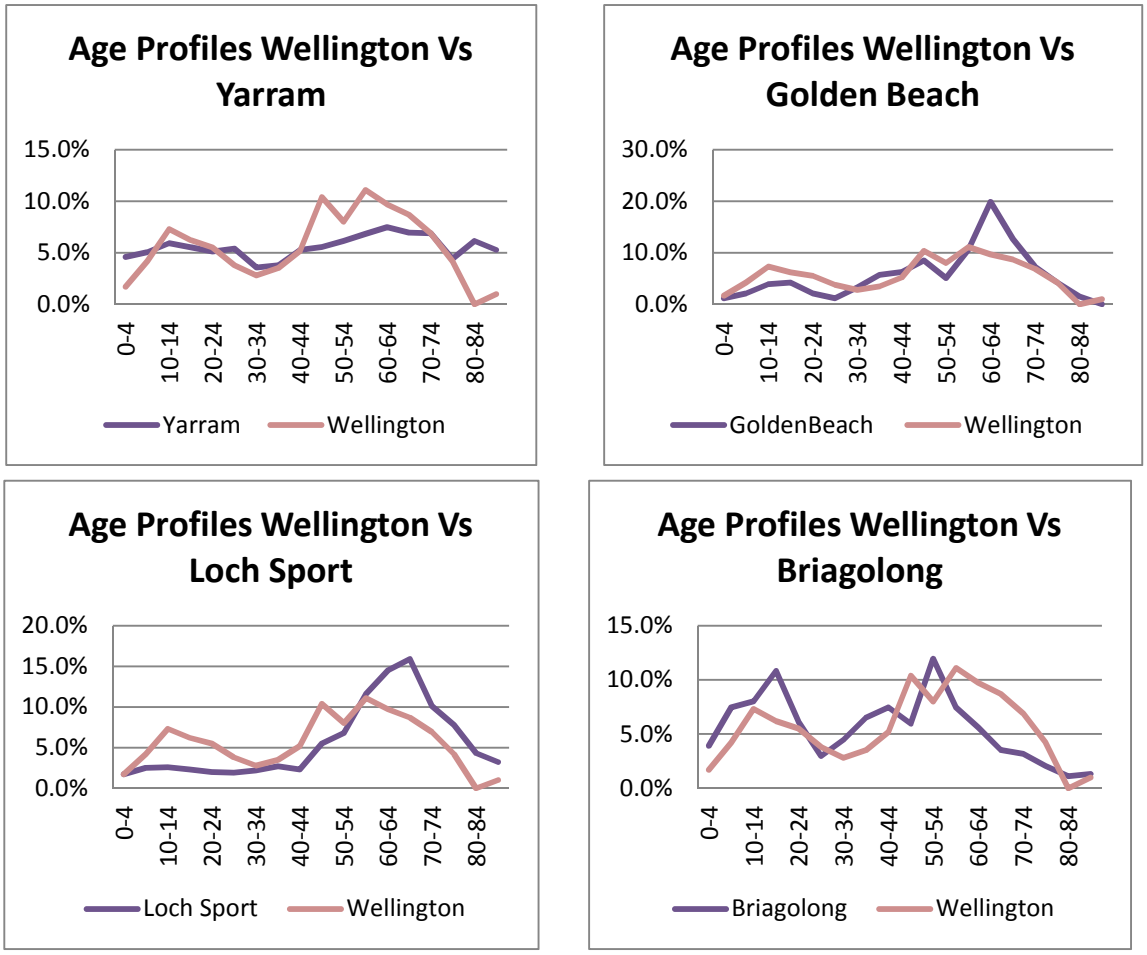
Figure 109 Children 14 years and under comparative percentages



Families are defined by the ABS as, Couple without Children, Couple with Children, and One Parent Family. Wellington has a significantly greater percentage of Couple without Children than the Victorian average (44% vs. 37%) and significant differences exist across some towns, with very large percentages of Couple without Children being in Loch Sport Golden Beach and Coongulla. Single parent families across Wellington are only slightly above the State average, but across most of the main urban towns, the percentages are above the State average. Percentage figures are useful when comparing town data due the large bias presented by Sale's large population; however it can present an unrealistic view; Sale contains 52% (no. 1941) of the families with children in this comparison; compared with for example, Loch Sport 1%, Heyfield 6%, Maffra 6% and Briagolong 2%.

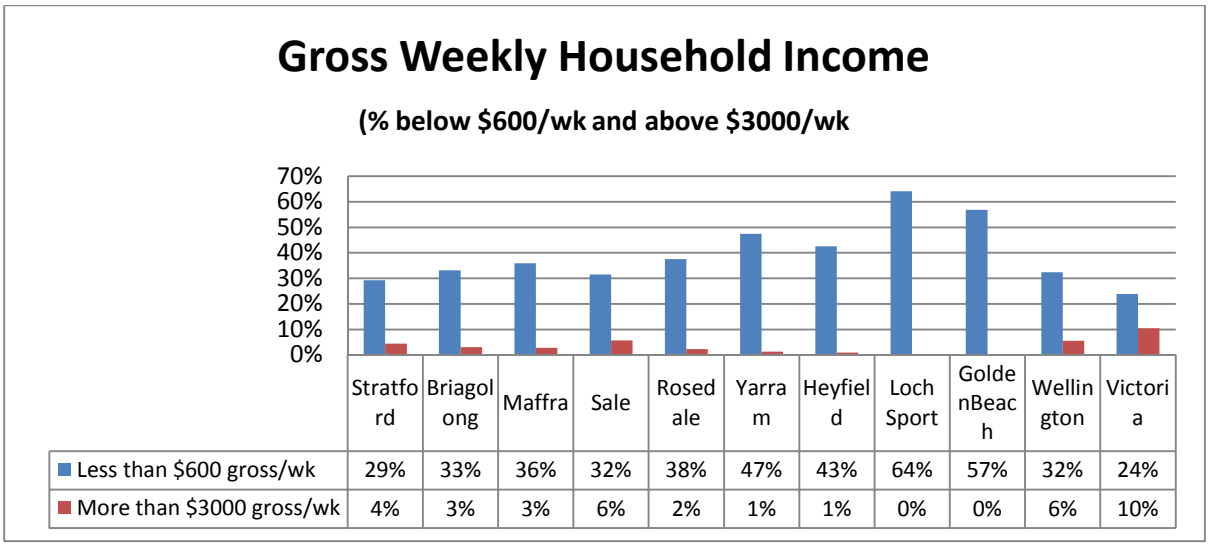
Correlation of the various town age profiles shows some significant differences (Appendix 4). It is clear that the population profiles are quite different for Yarram, Heyfield, Loch Sport and Golden Beach from the urban areas of Stratford, Maffra, Sale and Rosedale (which are quite similar).

Figure 110 Comparison of various towns with Wellington's Age Profile



Also of note is the large variation in gross income across the various urban towns, with a large number of low income households in many towns; equally all Wellington towns have a greater number of low income and lesser number of high income households than the Victorian average (Figure 111) . Whilst not definitive this would suggest some social disadvantage and that high quality POS would be of advantage.

Figure 111 Gross Weekly Incomes



	Stratford	Briagolong	Maffra	Sale	Rosedale	Yarram	Heyfield	Loch Sport	GoldenBeach	Wellington	Victoria
Less than $600 gross/wk	29%	33%	36%	32%	38%	47%	43%	64%	57%	32%	24%
More than $3000 gross/wk	4%	3%	3%	6%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	6%	10%

33 Appendix 4 - Correlation Matrix of Township Age Profiles

Orange coloured cells indicate a high-level association, i.e., similar age profiles, whilst blue coloured cells indicate low associations, i.e., a high level of difference in age profiles. For example, Stratford has a similar age profile to Maffra, Sale and Rosedale and a dissimilar age profile to Yarram and Loch Sport.

	Strat	*Briag*	*Maffra*	*Sale*	*Rose*	*Yar*	*Hey*	*Loch Sport*	*Golden Beach*
Stratford	1.00	0.56	0.85	0.73	0.76	0.20	0.66	0.17	0.47
Briagolong	0.56	1.00	0.59	0.73	0.62	0.07	0.10	- 0.11	0.15
Maffra	0.85	0.59	1.00	0.86	0.87	0.06	0.66	0.02	0.28
Sale	0.73	0.73	0.86	1.00	0.87	- 0.11	0.44	- 0.31	0.03
Rosedale	0.76	0.62	0.87	0.87	1.00	0.09	0.49	0.08	0.32
Yarram	0.20	0.07	0.06	- 0.11	0.09	1.00	0.49	0.08	0.32
Heyfield	0.66	0.10	0.66	0.44	0.49	0.02	1.00	0.07	0.28
Loch Sport	0.17	- 0.11	0.02	- 0.31	0.08	0.74	0.07	1.00	0.84
Golden Beach	0.47	0.15	0.28	0.03	0.32	0.64	0.28	0.84	1.00

34 Appendix 5 – Tree Valuation Method

AMENITY TREE EVALUATION: A REVISED METHOD

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ABSTRACT

Amenity tree evaluation systems have been widely used, not only in Australia but around the world. They place a monetary value on trees, usually for the purposes of insurance, compensation and litigation. However, the major significance of placing such a value on trees is that they are then recognised as assets. The recognition of trees as assets has major implications, not only for their management, but also for the decision-making processes that involve trees. No method has received widespread support or acceptance in Australia and the Burnley method was developed in 1988 to meet local needs. This method was intended to be easily used and to minimise operator error. Criticism of the original method has led to a modification that has resolved most of these criticisms.

INTRODUCTION

In 1988 a method of placing a monetary value on amenity trees was developed at the Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture Limited, Burnley Campus (McGarry and Moore, 1988). The method was developed in response to a perceived need by those involved in Australian arboriculture and those responsible for managing trees in public open space (Moore, 1991) for matters relating to compensation and litigation, insurance, and policy and decision-making.

Although other methods have been tried in Australia, none has received universal support. Furthermore, when valuations were placed before courts of law, the massive discrepancies in values placed on trees placed the whole concept and acceptance of tree valuation at risk. Accordingly, a method was developed, which was designed for use in the Australian context and which attempted to deal with further concerns, such as placing a realistic dollar base value on the specimens and allowing for rapid rates of inflation, which required a constant updating of values if they were to be of any relevance.

The various evaluation techniques available from overseas (Helliwell, 1967; Anon, 1974) for valuing trees were often tried in Australia, but often failed because of species limitations, historical components or inappropriate growth rate data for the Australian environment. It is worth noting that these overseas methods are widely used and are routinely recognised by courts, and in some instances, have statutory or regulatory status. It is unfortunate that in Australia, despite the hope that the Australian Institute of Horticulture Method (Anon, 1974) would be widely accepted, methods have not achieved appropriate recognition.

It is to be hoped that in the not too distant future a method will be accepted by Australian arborists and open space managers. Failure to do so will continue the situation where trees are not recognised as assets, are not valued and not recognised in the decision making process. Sadly, the real currency of decision making is money and until trees are given an appropriate monetary value, they will not be managed properly and may receive harsh treatment in the expediency of decision making.

The Burnley method has as its focus two simple elements. The first is the establishment of tree size. Initially, this was determined using the formula for a cylinder ($\pi r^2 h$), which requires the simple measurements of height and canopy spread. The second element of the method

involved establishing a dollar base value for the tree. This was achieved by obtaining the retail price from appropriate nurseries for purchasing a specimen with a volume greater than 1m3, using the formula for a cylinder. The base value calculation was expressed as $/m3. The calculation was done by determining an average value for at least three specimens from different nurseries.

In developing the Burnley method, it was intended that by multiplying the size and value components together a basic tree value would be established, which would then be modified to allow for the peculiarities of the tree and its location. The modifiers to be used were:

- TREE SIZE (V): With large trees, the values determined by the formula were unrealistically high. Accordingly, a modifier was developed (Table 1) to reduce the value.
- USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY (E): This modifier took into account the projected useful life expectancy of the specimen (Table 2).
- FORM AND VIGOUR (FV): This factor was used to assess the form and vigour of the tree (Table 3).
- LOCATION (L): This modifier was used to assess the tree's suitability for its particular location (Table 4).

The modifier tables were used to minimise the risk of significant discrepancies in tree values made for the same tree by different arborists. The value of an amenity tree was then determined using the formula:

VALUE ($) = TREE VOLUME x BASE VALUE x (E) x (V) x (FV) x (L)

The formula developed is consistent with the mathematical principles proposed by Helliwell (1976) where related variables are multiplied.

MODIFICATION OF THE BURNLEY METHOD

Following the use of the Burnley method, particularly in Victoria, criticism was made of the volume modifier in particular, which was seen by many arborists as little more than a fudge-factor that adjusted values without reason (Wycherley, 1991). This criticism was to be expected because the rationale for use of the modifier had not been clearly identified in the original paper.

Accordingly, in 1991 the method was modified by using the formula for a cone ($1/3\ \pi r^2 h$) to calculate tree volume and the use of the volume modifier (V) was discontinued. In the modified method, tree value can be determined using the formula:

VALUE ($) = TREE VOLUME x BASE VALUE x (E) x (FV) x (L)

For consistency, when determining the base value under the modified method, the formula for a cone should be used. The modified method tends to give a lower value for smaller, short-lived or inferior quality specimens.

CONCLUSION

The modified Burnley method of tree valuation is self-indexing for inflation, will operate in any country, and is sensitive to changes in the value of trees due to changes in consumer

preference. The calculations and modifiers allow precise, objective and simple use, which minimises the serious operator errors that befall many of the other techniques.

The Burnley method has been successfully used by open space managers to value their trees, thereby recognising them as assets. It has been tested in the courts and has been accepted as a realistic and well based method of evaluation for use in the Australian context. There is still one remaining criticism of the technique. Many arborists (Yau, 1990; Kenyon, 1990) find the establishment of the initial base value time-consuming and tedious.

The modified Burnley method applies to amenity trees in both urban and rural contexts. It does not attempt to deal with subjective components of tree valuation, such as historical or environmental significance, which have led to the abandonment of other techniques. Whether the method achieves widespread use in Australia remains to be seen. Time alone and the choice of practising arborists and possibly the courts will finally settle the matter.

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TABLE 1. VOLUME MODIFIER (V) TO BE USED FOR A GIVEN VOLUME OF TREE ***(NO LONGER USED)***

Volume of Tree (m3)	**Volume Modifier Value (V)**
0 – 99	1.0
100 – 249	0.9
250 – 499	0.8
500 – 749	0.7
750 – 999	0.6
1000 – 1499	0.5
1500 – 1999	0.4
2000 – 2999	0.3
3000 – 3999	0.2
> 4000	0.1

TABLE 2. VALUES FOR THE LIFE EXPECTANCY (E) MODIFIER

	USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY RANGES	**MODIFIER VALUE (E)**
50	Years	1.0
40–49	Years	0.9
30–39	Years	0.8
20–29	Years	0.7
10–19	Years	0.6
< 10	Years	0.5

TABLE 3. VALUES AND DESCRIPTORS FOR THE FORM AND VIGOUR (FV) MODIFIER

FORM AND VIGOUR DESCRIPTORS	**MODIFIERS (FV)**
Perfect form and excellent vigour	1.00
Slight imperfections in form	0.90
Slightly reduced vigour	0.90
Slight imperfections & slightly reduced vigour	0.80
Good form with good vigour	0.75
Good form with average vigour	0.70
Good vigour with average form	0.70
Good form with poor vigour	0.65
Good vigour with poor form	0.65
Bifurcation of trunk & excellent vigour	0.60
Bifurcation of trunk & good vigour	0.55
Bifurcation of trunk & average vigour	0.50
Bifurcation of trunk & poor vigour	0.40
Poor form with average vigour	0.30
Poor vigour with average form	0.30
Excessive deadwood, cavities & poor form	0.10
Dead	0.00

TABLE 4. VALUES AND DESCRIPTORS FOR THE LOCATION (L) MODIFIER LOCATION

DESCRIPTORS	**MODIFIERS (L)**
Perfect suitability	1.0
Could be better located but no problems	0.9
Minor problems, eg. lifting paving	0.8
Species unsuited or causes problems	0.7
Species unsuited and causes problems	0.6
Species unsuited and causes major problems	0.5
Species unsuitable	0.4

35 Appendix 6 – Tree Removal Requests for Private Good or Limited Public Good

35.1 Purpose

The Urban Forest Strategy states: 'The primary objective of urban forestry management planning is to maximise public benefits of the urban forest while minimising public expense in achieving these benefits by undertaking effective, efficient management of the Shire's assets.'

Trees are major capital assets in all cities and towns. Just as streets, footpaths, sewers and public building and facilities are part of a community's infrastructure, as are publicly owned trees. Trees in the Shire are an essential part of the landscape, they provide significant urban amenity by providing shade, scale, heritage values and wildlife habitat. In addition, they provide significant economic and aesthetic benefit, both of which enhance the liveability of the Shire's urban centres. Trees are also key in combating the effects of climate change with a recognised ability to sequester carbon, moderate urban temperatures and process storm water.

The community invests significant time and resources to develop its urban forest and trees are significant community assets. This guideline is to provide an equitable and transparent process when dealing with requests to remove public owned trees from open space areas for non-tree maintenance/management reasons. Typical examples are for trees growing where a driveway is proposed, or for requests to remove trees to as part of a new subdivision. It can equally apply to removal of trees on Council owned or controlled land where a proposed development requires tree removal, e.g., removal of a tree to extend a council building. It includes any tree that is requested to be removed for the good of a group/business or individual and removal would cause a reduction to the overall quality of the urban forest. It is not dissimilar to the approach taken when a request to move a drainage pit or electrical pole is received.

This process is not for requests to remove a tree from Council controlled land because they have an issue with it.

The overall purpose is to minimise losses of trees from the public realm and in such cases that it is not possible to avoid such a loss, that the broader WSC community does not incur a loss in amenity or costs, direct or indirect. Equally, it is the intent of this guideline to use the tree removal request to trigger a conversation with the requestor, often resulting in being able to provide technical guidance that provides a 'win/win' solution or indeed a reduction is costs to the requestor.

35.2 Process

The approach is to assess the request with particular emphasis being placed on retaining the tree. This can involve realigning driveways or crossovers or using different construction techniques so that the building and tree can co-exist.

1. Assess tree based on the tree removal criteria contained in24 Appendix 7 – Tree Removal Evaluation, if the tree meets the removal criteria it will be removed at no cost to the requestor

2. If tree does not meet such guidelines, undertake a tree valuation based on Appendix 5 ‘Wellington Shire Council - Guidelines for Tree Valuation (Revised Burnley Method), this is undertaken to determine the amenity valuation of the tree. Only staff suitable trained should undertake this assessment

3. Review the proposal to determine possible alternative approaches, the value of the tree may or may not have a significant bearing on alternative approaches

4. If a suitable alternative approach is not possible, the requestor will be required to pay Council the valuation of the tree(s) and remove the tree(s) at their cost. A formal proposal should be given to the requestor. This process equally applies to WSC projects.

5. Trees with a stem diameter at 300mm of less than 75mm shall not incur an amenity value, instead pay the current developer fee for street tree planting (currently 2014 is $400)

6. Trees with an amenity valuation greater than $10,000 shall not be removed unless the request is for a commercial or government development

7. Permission should be forwarded once payment has been received, this permission should include a requirement that the tree is only to be removed by suitably qualified and insured persons/companies. It is acceptable to provide a list of tree contractors from Council’s preferred Contactors list, however individual companies should not be recommended.

8. If the tree valuation is less than the current developer tree planting requirement (currently 2014 is $400), the valuation shall be that value

9. Where possible a replacement tree or trees should be planted in the same area. Alternatively planting should be undertaken where it best benefits the immediate community (this could include planting of nearby streets or parks)

10. Monies received should be allocated as income into the sub-division tree planting reserve

36 Appendix 7 – Tree Removal Evaluation

It is often difficult to make a final determination upon when a tree should be removed. Council's Urban Forest Management Plan places a high priority on the preservation of trees in urban public spaces, including streets. It is expensive to establish trees, mature trees offer the greatest community benefits and therefore preservation is generally the preferred management.

WSC will investigate all tree management options prior to the recommendation for tree removal wherever possible. There are circumstances where tree removal is required in nature strips, parks and reserves and other council managed land to protect human health and safety, infrastructure, facilitate approved development and infrastructure improvements, maintain a healthy urban forest, or for ecological restoration.

Fundamentally tree removal will only be undertaken where the need can be clearly established. Only persons trained in the assessment process will evaluate trees, the assessment shall be based on recognised best management or industry standards. Risk assessments will be based on accepted industry methods, in particular the International Society of Arboriculture's (ISA) 'Best Management Practices (BMP) - Tree Risk Assessment' will be the primary guide for tree risk assessments; if a more detailed risk assessment is warranted then a quantified risk assessment based on a probabilistic approach shall be undertaken by a suitable qualified person.

All assessment shall be documented and such documentation kept for future reference.

36.1 Criteria under which WSC trees may be removed:

1. Tree is dead or diseased (with little chance of recovery)
2. Tree is determined by a suitably qualified and experienced person to present an unacceptable level of risk using a recognised tree risk assessment method and that the risk cannot be mitigated by methods other than removal (e.g., pruning, moving target, etc.)
3. The tree has damaged or is damaging nearby infrastructure (e.g., footpath, driveway, curb and gutter), and the damaged cannot be reduced or eliminated by other means (e.g., root barrier, pruning, moving or changing the infrastructure, etc.) and that the infrastructure is not substandard (not fit for purpose)
4. Tree species is a noxious weed, or significant environmental weed that adversely effects the immediate environment (e.g., Crack Willows on waterways)
5. Evidence from a suitably qualified medical practitioner stating that the particular tree is without doubt the direct cause of a severe allergic reaction to a nearby resident
6. Tree is being removed for approved development purposes (see Appendix 6 – Tree Removal Requests for Private Good)

36.2 Unacceptable reasons for tree removal

Including but not limited to the following:

1. Impacting on view (pruning may be an option)
2. Shading private property, this includes shading solar panels or solar access
3. Removing moisture from surrounding area (impacting on private lawn or garden)
4. Seed, bark, sap or leaf drop
5. Perception of tree being dangerous (which cannot be substantiated)
6. Casting shadows or obstructing street lighting

37 Appendix 8 – Tree Roots Issue Guideline

37.1 Trees and their Effect on Assets

Most residents live in close proximity to a street or park tree and unfortunately associated conflicts can arise. Council has developed and implemented a uniformed practice to address potential conflicts with Council trees.

Damage to sewer and stormwater pipes in particular is a difficult and time-consuming issue. To assist residents and Council the following information has been prepared to enable all parties to resolve such issues in an efficient and consistent manner.

Trees are an important part of the character of towns and the community values the amenity trees provide. Council understands that trees can sometimes affect privately and publicly owned assets near them. The following information is provided to clarify Council's position and provides advice on the course of action residents should take when there is a concern that private property has been damaged by a tree growing on public land.

37.2 Who is responsible for private in-ground services?

A property owner is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of in-ground services, such as sewer and storm water pipes, even though they may run through or adjoin private and public land. That is a resident is responsible for pipes servicing their property, not only within their property boundary but also, for example; to the sewer main.

37.3 How do trees affect in ground services?

Tree roots can enter in ground services causing the pipes to be blocked. While it is possible for a tree root to crack a pipe this is very uncommon if the pipe has been installed and maintained correctly. Tree roots often enter a pipe as a result of the pipe failing, usually through deteriorated seals in older pipes.

37.4 Why do tree roots enter in ground services?

Tree roots are opportunistic and grow wherever conditions are favourable. They do not actively search for water. Tree roots will follow a pattern of growth where, when they come in to contact with water/nutrients, they will grow towards an increasing concentration of water/nutrients. Tree roots will only usually enter pipes that have a fault and are leaking water.

37.5 Why might my in ground services be leaking?

Sewer or storm-water services may crack for a number of reasons including the age of the pipe (old terracotta), failure at a joint, ground movement, etc.

37.6 What process should I follow if it is alleged the damage or blockage is caused by a tree growing on Council land and I wish to make a formal claim for the cost of repairs?

- You should obtain 3 written quotations for the necessary repair works.
- If excavation through a council road or footpath is required, you will need to obtain a road opening permit which is available from Council.

- Necessary repair work may be undertaken to avoid any further damage and/or reduce the hazard, which will not affect the owner's right to make a claim. However, please note that at this stage Council has not accepted any liability for damages and the cost of repair and the decision to undertake repairs is made by the owner of the asset, unless a request for compensation claim is accepted by Council later.
- During the course of the works you must arrange for a council officer to inspect the exposed pipe and confirm if Council tree roots have caused the problem or whether the pipe has been damaged for some other reason.
- While on site the council officer will take photos as a record to be referred to later if necessary.
- It is recommended that you also keep your own records.
- If you would like to take further action, it will be necessary to make a formal claim against Council for the cost of repairs if you are of the opinion that Council has been negligent in some way. You should contact Council about your claim along with all information gathered above. Council will then send you the necessary claim forms.

37.7 What happens if it appears that the roots are the cause of the problem?

The matter will be referred to Council's insurers for assessment of liability including the cost for the repairs. For Council to be considered liable for any damages the asset owner will need to provide evidence of the negligence of Council and how any such negligence resulted in the damage.

37.8 Why does Council take this approach?

It is important to follow the process above as the works relate to a private asset and may involve spending public funds on the repair. The above process needs to be followed for both insurance and governance purposes. This information is provided to advise of the importance of having clear evidence to forward to insurers if there is a claim in the future, particularly if there is a chance the initial damage may have been the result of other causes. The clearer the evidence provided the greater the likelihood of a positive result through any insurance claim.

37.9 How can I manage my in ground services so that I can prevent this happening in the future?

The most efficient way to prevent root damage to your services is to replace the old terracotta pipes with new PVC or UPVC pipes and use pressure seals. Other methods include the type and compaction of the backfill around these services that help prevent root growth in these areas. Also using chemical or mechanical forms of plumbing equipment to control root development in the pipes, but this may only be a short-term solution and might not prevent root ingress in the future.

38 Appendix 9 – Elm Leaf Beetle Guideline

This Guideline replaces the June 2001 Policy and is administered by Council's Open Space Arborist.

The elm leaf beetle is causing significant problems to many populations of elm trees in Victoria. This insect has become a significant pest throughout many areas of the Wellington Shire.

Elm trees exist on private and public land in urban and rural areas. Many populations are over 100 years old. Based on values derived from using a range of amenity tree valuation models, public owned elms in Wellington are valued in the millions of dollars, and add significant other benefits to the community. Victoria is one of the few places in the world where significant elms populations still exist (due to Dutch Elm disease) and hence a repository of valuable genetic material and example of the species.

Trees cannot be treated as individuals, as with any disease outbreak control is only achieved by treating all infected plants. The elms within the shire must be considered in forest context, where all trees whether private or public have equal disease infection/control status.

No easy control solutions exist. The major issues are:

1. Developing acceptable control measures
2. The control of the insect on private trees
3. The control of infestation in feral populations of Elms, and

4. The public — shire relationships.

If left untreated, repeated defoliation weakens the trees, which then become susceptible to wind-breakage and can become hazardous. Although the beetle cannot be eradicated, it is possible to use controls that limit the damage to trees. A very high level of control is possible in many of the smaller communities.

It has been found that to date elm leaf beetle does not appear to breed as rapidly in Wellington as metropolitan Melbourne and there is a significant variation from year to year. Ten years of beetle management in WSC has allowed the development of suitable strategies to largely control the beetle and damage to manageable levels. This largely involves the in-ground injection of a suitable and relatively low-toxicity chemical on both a programmed and ad hoc basis. Bark banding or stem injection may also be used if ground injection is not possible. Canopy spraying will generally not be undertaken unless a demonstrated need is determined and any effected householder consulted.

Major public elm populations are monitored for damage annually and if damage levels are significant then works are programmed for the following winter/spring. Feral elm populations have not proven to be as much of a significant issue as first envisaged and have largely been left unmanaged. Privately owned elms have been managed largely on an as needs basis, with Council providing assistance based on the significance of the private tree, proximity to other significant elms and degree of infestation.

Future controls will follow a similar approach to the last decade, with public and private trees being treated as required based on the level of damage and the significance of the tree(s). Significant populations in Sale, Rosedale, Maffra and Yarram will be programmed on a three-year rotational basis. Town Trials will be conducted if Council considers that it may be possible to eradicate the beetle from an area or significant longer-term benefits would apply to the local elm population.

Table 1 summarises this guideline's approach for trees on Council controlled land, whilst Table 2 applies to trees on non-council controlled land.

Table 1 Public Trees - Control Effort Matrix

	Excellent Condition	**Good Condition**	**Average Condition**	**Less than Average Condition**	**Poor Condition**
Very Significant	Protect	Protect	Protect	Protect	Protect
Significant	Protect	Protect	Protect	Assess	Assess
Valuable	Protect	Protect	Protect	Assess	Assess
Average	Protect	Protect	Assess	Assess	Assess
Medium Value	Assess	Assess	Assess	Remove	Remove
Low Value	Assess	Assess	Remove	Remove	Remove
Feral Populations	Remove	Remove	Remove	Remove	Remove

Protect = Council will protect from major beetle damage Assess = Council will assess tree and undertake a cost/benefit analysis on removal or retention Remove = Tree will be removed as resources allow, no effort will be made to control beetle damage

Table 2 Private Tree Responsibility/Assistance Matrix

	Within 400m	**Within 1000m**	**Over 1000m**	**Town Trial**
	of significant public elms	*of significant public elms*	*from significant public elms*	*any trees in trial* area
Very Significant	Protect1 CC	Protect1 CC	Protect2 CC	Protect1 CC
Significant	Protect1 CC	Protect2 PCC	Protect2 CC	Protect1 CC
Valuable	Protect1 CC	Protect2 PCC	Assist PCC	Protect1 CC
Average	Protect2 CC	Assist PCC	Assess PCC	Assess CC
Medium Value	Protect2 CC	Assess PCC	Assess PCC	Assess Special
Low Value	Remove1 CC	Remove1 CC	Encourage OC	Assess Special
Feral Populations	Remove1 CC	Remove1 CC	Remove2 OC	Assess Special

***CC**= Council Cost, **OC** = Owner's Cost **PCC** = Partial Council Cost (50% of actual)*
***Protect1** = Applicable beetle controls will be provided by Council in negotiation with the tree's owners, a very high level of control will be applied.*
***Protect2** = Applicable beetle controls will be provided by Council in negotiation with the tree's owners, a medium level of control will be applied, and only if resources are available after completing Protect1 trees*

***Assist** = Council will assist owners to control beetles, free advice and site inspections will be provided, if possible Council will include trees in Council control program at a 50% cost recovery*
***Encourage** = Council will encourage owners to provide beetle control, by supplying advice, and the like*
***Assess** = Tree will be assessed by Council and in negotiation with tree's owners either removed or protected, either at partial or no cost to Council*
***Assess Special** = Tree will be assessed by Council and in negotiation with tree's owners either removed or protected, protection will generally be at owner's cost, removal at Council's cost*
***Remove1** = Council will remove tree providing owner gives permission and if such trees can be shown to be a significant breeding site for ELB*
***Remove2** =Owner will be encouraged to remove trees, technical assistance will be provided*

39 Appendix 10 – Public Open Space Assessment Method

To provide a logical and transparent way of assess POS an assessment tool was created. Inputs include site size, OS classification, catchment population, visual amenity, access, suitability of infrastructure to classification, passive surveillance levels, linkages, appropriateness of current service levels and distance to nearest other POS.

These inputs are weighted and a Park Value Score and Importance Factor created, these combine to create a weighted ranking.

This tool will be used to prioritise future capital works programs.