

# Moorabool Shire Economic Development Strategy October 2015



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# Introduction

The Shire of Moorabool recognises that having a strong economy – a variety of local jobs, healthy businesses and inward investment, reinforces the liveability of our Shire.

This Economic Development Strategy identifies the vision, objectives and targets for the future of the economy. It details the strategies and actions that Council can take to help support local growth while also enhancing our lifestyle. Council is committed to working with local businesses, investors and other levels of government to achieve the targets identified in this Strategy.

The Strategy has been informed by consultation with our local businesses, and analysis of future scenarios for economic growth. For those interested in knowing more, the Background Report to this Strategy provides further detail about the performance of our economy, and where it is heading.

Over 50 local businesses and stakeholders have provided input into this Strategy. A Strategy Reference Group, made up of local businesses and Council, have helped to define the economic development approach and priorities outlined within this document.

This Strategy outlines:

1. The main characteristics of the Shire’s economy.
2. The Vision for the Shire and economic targets.
3. The potential growth opportunities for the Shire.
4. The role that Council will play in facilitating economic growth and diversification.
5. How the Strategy will be monitored.

# Contents

1.0	Understanding the Moorabool Economy .....	2
2.0	The Vision for Moorabool’s Economy .....	6
3.0	Prospective Industries .....	8
4.0	Council’s Role in the Economy .....	11
5.0	Engaging Business and Stakeholders .....	13
6.0	Attracting Investment to Moorabool .....	18
7.0	Enhancing Local Lifestyle and Amenity .....	24
8.0	Developing Business Precincts .....	299
9.0	Implementation and Monitoring .....	322

## 1.0 Understanding the Moorabool Economy

A thorough overview of the Moorabool economy, including the results of consultation with industry, economic analysis and the modelling of future growth scenarios is provided in the Background Report to this Strategy.

### 1.1 Rapid population growth

Driven by proximity to Melbourne and its semi-rural lifestyle, since 2005, Moorabool Shire's population has grown at a rate of 2% per annum. Plan Melbourne and the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan assign Bacchus Marsh and Ballarat as growth areas. Consequently, the rate of population growth in Moorabool is expected to accelerate over the coming decades.

Figure 1 Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan - major corridors and growth centres (RDV, 2014)



Population growth in the Shire will be a key driver of new economic opportunities, but it will also create new challenges, such as infrastructure requirements and pressure to create new local jobs.

### 1.2 The dominance of population servicing industries

Moorabool's economy is dominated by industries that service the needs of local residents. The largest employers in the Shire are now supermarkets, schools and the hospitals. Retail, health, food services and education are also the fastest growing industries in the Shire in terms of the number of jobs (see Figure 3).

As towns grow, the industry mix will evolve, with new services becoming sustainable for the first time. As Bacchus Marsh reaches 20,000 residents, some population servicing industries will grow at a rate faster than the population – due to a step change in the local economy. Growing sectors such as professional and business services will demand new skills, new commercial spaces and infrastructure.

### 1.3 Three functional economies

Moorabool consists of three functional, local economies. The eastern parts of the Shire, including Bacchus Marsh, increasingly form part of the western Melbourne economy. Areas to the west, such as Gordon, function as part of the wider Ballarat economy and areas in the north, such as Blackwood, have strong links to Hepburn and Macedon Ranges. The different influences, economic flows and links across these three economies create challenges for how Council plans, manages and promotes economic growth across the Shire. They also create the need for new economic relationships with neighbouring councils and regional groupings.

Figure 2 Three functional economies influencing Moorabool Shire, and outward commuter numbers

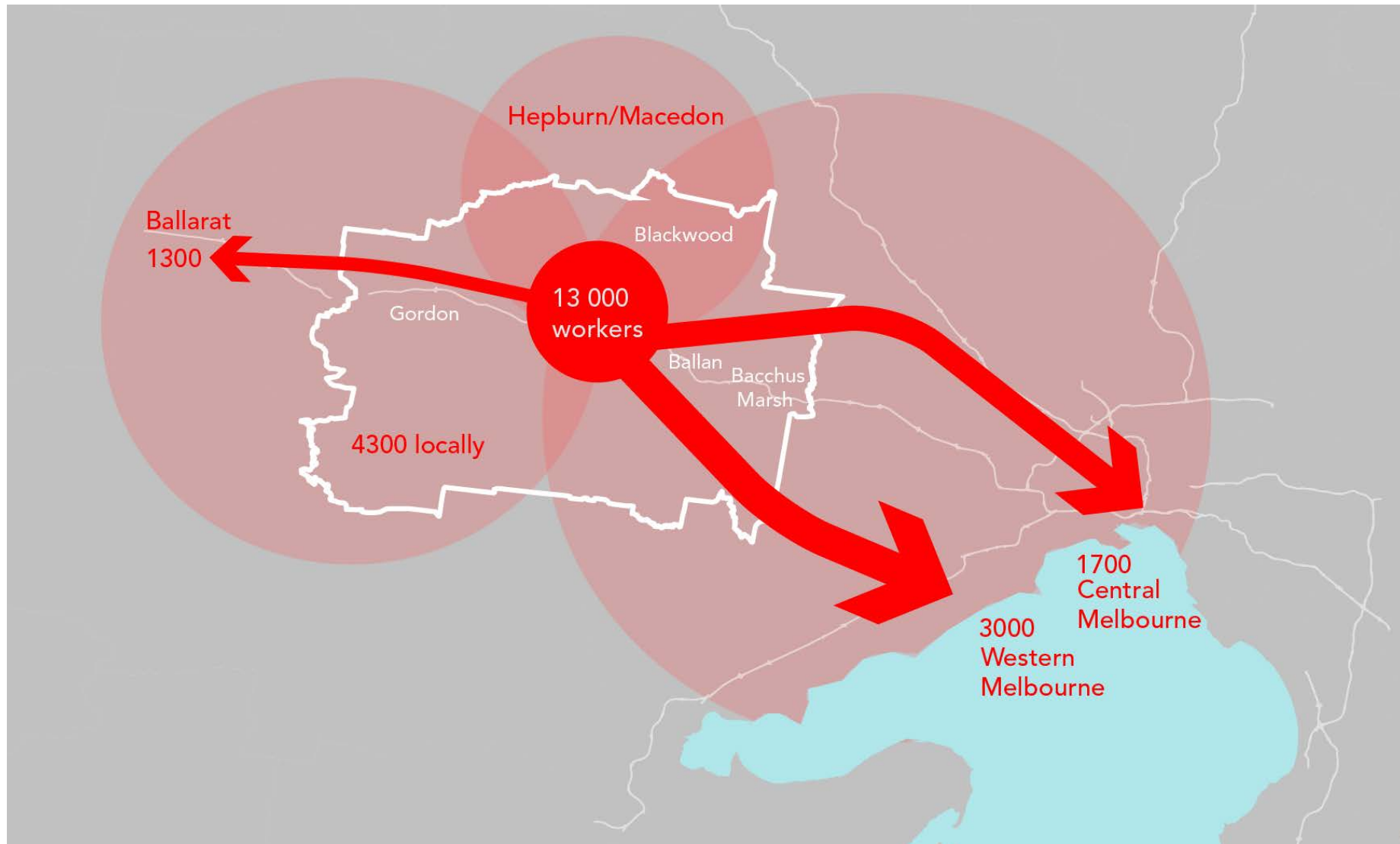


Figure 3 Industry local-state growth matrix (ANZSIC level 1), Moorabool Shire



Circle sizes represent the number of jobs in Moorabool Shire for each industry. The growth rate for each industry between 2006 and 2011 is shown locally (x-axis) and at the state level (y-axis). The fastest growing industries in the Shire have been professional services, construction, health care and accommodation and food services. Growth in these industries largely reflects state trends. Decline in the number of jobs in agriculture, and manufacturing also reflects state trends. Moorabool is underperforming, relative to the state, in a number of small industries (rental and hiring services, other services, arts and recreation). Source: ABS Census (2006, 2011)

## 1.4 Decreasing employment in key export sectors

Industries such as manufacturing, agriculture and mining generally export goods outside the Shire. They are particularly important as they bring income into the local economy. While the value of production in sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and mining may have increased, employment has decreased. Changing technology and labour requirements have driven this trend.

There is a need to grow existing export oriented sectors that draw outside income into the economy, but also find emerging export industries in the local economy that will generate new jobs.

## 1.5 Two-thirds of residents commute outside the Shire

Although high-levels of commuting are common to most peri-urban areas, Moorabool's rate of outward commuting is particularly high. Every day, two-thirds of our working residents leave the Shire for work. Outward commuting rates continue to increase as the population grows and integrates with the western Melbourne economy.

High levels of commuting create negative impacts for the Moorabool community. These include \$20 million in annual transport costs, lost retail expenditure, less time spent with family, and less time to participate in community life and build local social capital. While there are benefits associated with outward commuting (access to a variety of employment and higher wages), more local jobs, filled by local residents will underpin the sustainability of our growing community.

## 1.6 Resilient economic foundations

Three key features underpin the long-term economic resilience of the Moorabool economy. Firstly, the Moorabool economy is relatively diverse – it does not rely on one or two industries for employment and, therefore, it is not susceptible to 'booms and busts' in individual industries. Secondly, Moorabool is well connected, by both train and road, to major job and consumer markets in Ballarat, western Melbourne and central Melbourne. At 4%, the unemployment rate amongst Moorabool's residents is persistently low. Youth unemployment persists as a local issue.

## 1.7 Increasingly competitive labour markets

In the future, our economy will increasingly depend on the capacity and skills of our residents. More closely integrated with the western Melbourne and Ballarat economies, our residents will need to be competitive within the regional labour market. Although this competitiveness is growing, skill levels amongst younger adults (25 to 34) remain notably lower than the state average. Opportunities to diversify the industries that our residents work in should also be prioritised.

## 2.0 The Vision for Moorabool's Economy

Council's vision:

Council's vision is to create 'vibrant and resilient communities with unique identities'. Council recognises that economic development is crucial to the delivery of this vision.

The economic vision:

In 2024, our population of almost 40,000 will support a variety of new jobs, services and industries. The diversity of our economy, from agriculture through to professional services, will underpin our economic resilience. We will embrace our inter-dependence with the Melbourne and Ballarat economies while sustaining our unique local lifestyle.



### 2.1 Core economic objectives

Three core economic objectives have been identified for the Moorabool economy in 2021 and beyond.

1. **New local jobs, for local people.** As our population grows outward commuting rates continue to increase, having a negative financial and social impact on our community. Creating the preconditions for new local jobs, occupied by residents will help to address this challenge. A key measure will be the Parwan Employment Precinct.
2. **A diverse and entrepreneurial local industry base.** Moorabool benefits from a diverse and resilient industry base. Supporting innovation, entrepreneurialism and small business in the Shire will sustain this industrial diversity over the longer term. Evidence suggests that small business, and home based businesses in particular, can be a key driver of job growth in growing peri-urban areas.
3. **Facilitate the capacity and diversity of our workforce.** Our residents are increasingly competing within regional labour markets – in Ballarat and Melbourne. Maximising skills within these labour markets will be key to our economic future. Ensuring that our residents do not rely on one or two industries for employment will ensure our economy is versatile and prepared for economic challenges.

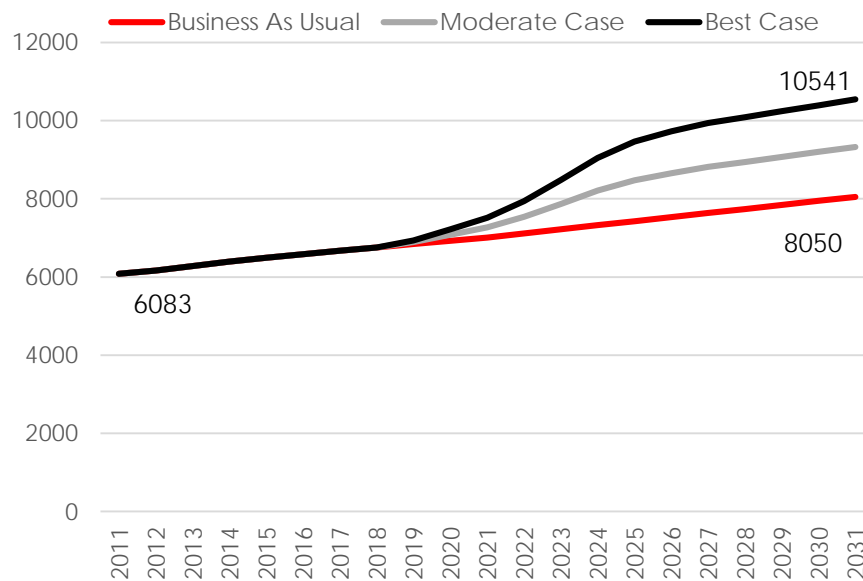
### 2.2 A step-change in the local economy

Modelling the future growth scenarios for the Moorabool economy suggests there is an opportunity for Moorabool to achieve an economic 'step change' supported by a larger population. With active facilitation from Council, the growth rate in local jobs could increase to help slow the increasing commuter rate.

Modelling suggests that these jobs will primarily come from population servicing industries, smaller and home based business, with some growth in export-oriented sectors. As shown in Figure 3, the role for Council over the coming decades is to facilitate a step change from the business as usual pathway to moderate case or scenarios of employment growth.



Figure 4 Future local employment scenarios for Moorabool Shire



Source: Geografia

### 2.3 Economic targets

There is support for setting economic development targets at the local level.<sup>1</sup> Targets provide a basis for defining local priorities, measuring the health and direction of the economy, and understanding the impact of programs and policies. Six aspirational economic targets have been identified for the Moorabool economy for the next decade and beyond. These targets (in Table 1) are based on achieving a ‘step change’ in the local economy, to bring it line with high performing peri-urban areas, as detailed in Section 2.2.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Victorian Government (2013) Inquiry into local economic development initiatives in Victoria

<sup>2</sup> Measured using the Herfindahl Index, Place of Work.

<sup>3</sup> Businesses with less than five employees and recent Business Activity Statement.

Table 1 Economic targets for Moorabool

Economic Objective	Measurable Target	Moorabool Shire 2011 (Actual)	Moorabool Shire 2021 (Target)	Moorabool Shire 2041 (Target)
New local jobs for local people	The number of local jobs for each local worker	0.47	0.46	0.52
	The number of workers commuting outside the Shire	67%	68%	63%
A diverse and entrepreneurial local industry base	The diversity of local industry <sup>2</sup>	91.8%	91.8%	91.8%
	The number of active, local small businesses <sup>3</sup>	2,200	2,800	3,700
Facilitate the capacity and diversity of our workforce	The number of younger adults with skills <sup>4</sup>	59%	61%	63%
	The diversity of our resident workforce <sup>5</sup>	92.2%	92.2%	92.2%

<sup>4</sup> Proportion of 25 to 34 year olds with Cert II qualification or above.

<sup>5</sup> Measured using the Herfindahl Index, Place of Usual Residence. This should be read in conjunction with the local unemployment rate to understand any structural changes in industries.

## 3.0 Prospective Industries

Council's resources are finite, and there is a need to direct efforts towards leverage points in the economy. A number of industries have been identified for prospective growth (Table 2 and Figure 5), to help provide a framework for Council efforts.

Council's engagement with local business should adapt to the needs of each industry. When prioritising its action program, there are two types of investment that Council needs to consider:

1. Investment that would ordinarily happen in order to service local residents and businesses, given average local conditions (generally, population-serving industries such as retailing, health, school education and local services). Scenarios for the growth of the economy suggest that the vast majority of job growth will come from these sectors as a 'step change' occurs in the economy.

In these industries, Council's key role is as a facilitator – reducing barriers to growth, building capacity and connecting businesses. In export-oriented industries, especially those that are emerging, organic growth is less guaranteed. As a general principle, Council's role in these sectors extends to more proactive activities such as infrastructure investment, advocacy and marketing.

2. Investment in activities for which the area has a comparative or competitive advantage and where the products are largely consumed outside the area (generally, "export" industries such as farming, tourism, and parts of the manufacturing sector). Export industries are those that create wealth for the area rather than simply distribute it. However, we also note that workers are the key "export" of the Shire (in the form of commuters)<sup>6</sup>.

Action on both key export and population-serving industries is required.

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<sup>6</sup> Commuters generate an estimated \$500 million per year compared with, for example, farm income of around \$93 million per year.

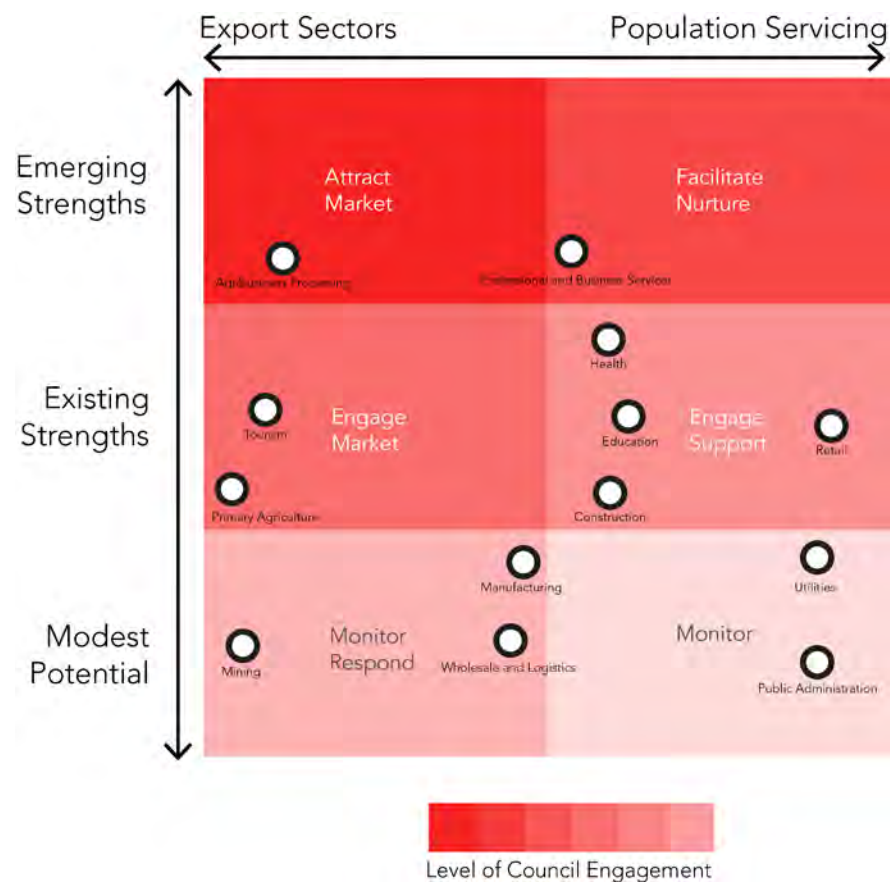
Table 2 Prospective industries in Moorabool

Target industry	Alignment of supply chain and market	Alignment of infrastructure	Alignment of workforce	Projected sector growth	Competition	Value	Major barriers to growth
Agribusiness processing / value adding	High - strong links to local and regional (western district) agricultural production and major markets	Medium – good transport and port links (especially Parwan), some water and gas constraints	Medium – large base of manufacturing and agribusiness workers across the wider region, access to metro workforce	High - predicted state-wide growth with global demand	High – competition with regional cities and medium sized regional centres	High value	Infrastructure, outside awareness, competition, quantity of local product
Agricultural primary production	High – existing scale, access to processors	Medium	Medium – universal issue of ageing workforce in ag.	Medium – high output growth, limited job growth	Low – local producers well positioned	High value	Workforce age, investment
Professional and business services	High – proximity to businesses in western Melbourne, Ballarat	High – universal NBN access in Bacchus Marsh	Medium – workforce potentially attracted by lifestyle	High – significant growth in wider region based on population growth	Medium – high-amenity peri-urban areas	High value	Workforce skills, office space, SME capacity, outside awareness
Health services	High – local and regional population growth	High – existing infrastructure, especially growing hospitals	High – large base of resident workers in health	High – significant demand increase with ageing population	Potentially high – competition from Melton as it grows	Quick win	Government and private investment
Retail	High – local population growth	Medium – some transport constraints	High – large base of younger resident workers, low barriers to entry	Medium – mixed growth projections across sub-sectors	Medium – higher order provision in Ballarat, Melton	Quick win	Infrastructure constraints, business coordination, land
Tourism	High – alignment to agriculture, proximity to Melbourne	Medium – good rail, road access, limited accommodation	Medium – reported skills gaps locally and regionally	Medium – changing tourism trends and preferences	High – competition with most other peri-urban areas, some with developed product	High value	Accommodation and product offer, coordination
Education	Medium – local population growth, no local university or TAFE	Medium – no university or TAFE presence, but private providers; high quality local Grammar school	High – large base of resident workers	High – predicted growth locally and in region with increasing aspirations	High - potential establishment of new schools in western Melbourne	Long term value	Involvement of schools in local economy, lack of TAFE/Higher Ed. in the area, limited engagement with western Melbourne

The prospective industries matrix highlights the preferred approach for Council's engagement with industry – recognising that different sectors have different needs, depending on their maturity and prospects. Where there are emerging segments, that do not yet have the significant local scale or momentum, Council is in the best position to actively attract outside investment and nurture the sector. Where there are more established strengths, Council is best positioned to support existing businesses and networks, while continuing to engage with industry to understand needs and barriers to growth. For industries with more modest medium-term prospects, Council can monitor and quickly respond to unexpected growth. Export oriented sectors are likely to require more active intervention than population servicing industries, where facilitation can produce 'quick wins'.

This approach is not about 'picking winners', but is based on thorough analysis of existing industry trends, local assets, and regional links as detailed in the Background Report. Industry fortunes and needs are constantly in flux. Today's stagnant industries may evolve into 'unexpected winners' that Council should embrace and promote. Prospective industries should be regularly reviewed and monitored by Council.

Figure 5 Prospective industries matrix



Source: Geografia, 2014: Qualitatively plotted, informed by analysis of location quotient, growth projections and discussions with stakeholders

## 4.0 Council's Role in the Economy

Four priority roles for Council in the economy have been identified based on significant input from local business and a review of best practice local economic development:

1. Engaging business and stakeholders
2. Facilitating investment
3. Developing business precincts
4. Building local lifestyle and amenity

A 'whole of Council' approach to economic development is essential if Moorabool's potential economic 'step change' is to be realised. For example, many initiatives identified in this Strategy relate to town planning, community leadership and development for example. A crucial role of the economic development strategy will be to ensure that our actions are coordinated across Council.

### 4.1 Engaging business and stakeholders

Council is a natural organiser in the local economy – few others have the incentive, mandate or relationships to lead local business. Council's engagement with the business community should focus on networking and capacity building, including innovation in the short to medium term. In the longer term, there is an opportunity to encourage self-organising amongst local business.

### 4.2 Facilitating investment

By leading economic development in the Shire, Council should be seen as a champion of growth, rather than only a regulator. Council can facilitate investment in the Shire by providing certainty to business, marketing opportunities in the Shire, minimising regulatory delays, investing in enabling infrastructure, and advocating for

investment. Together, these actions provide a business friendly environment that attracts outside investment to the Shire.

### 4.3 Developing business precincts

Encouraging the development of business clusters and precincts will maximise supply chain integration, promote specialisation, and business collaboration. Key precincts have been identified at Bacchus Marsh Town Centre, Parwan, and Ballan Town Centre. Council can help 'seed' clusters through infrastructure investment, marketing and business networking. These precincts should provide the focal point for investment and Council intervention in the economy. Facilitating new investment in population servicing precincts, such as Bacchus Marsh Town Centre, will be key to achieving the Shire's economic 'step change'. Unlocking the potential for private agribusiness investment in the Parwan precinct, through infrastructure provision, will be critical to adding higher value, export oriented jobs in the Shire.

### 4.4 Enhancing local lifestyle and amenity

The liveability of the Shire is key to attracting higher value workers and businesses. Aspects such as housing, skills, transport, access to community infrastructure, culture, health, the natural environment and social capital all influence the economic sustainability of Moorabool. Enhancing local liveability in the face of rapid population and economic growth will be a key role for Council. Ongoing planning and the implementation of Moorabool 2041 (M2041) will be critical to realising liveability in the Shire.

M2041 is a whole of Council framework that is designed to drive decision-making by Council, co-ordinate actions of agencies and manage community expectations in terms of the future of both rural and urban areas of the Shire. It is a response to growth pressures across the Shire, and is not limited to a land use strategy.

M2041 consists of a framework with key principles, objectives, strategies and actions which define boundaries for growth, the services to be provided (social and community services as well as physical built infrastructure) for the next 25 years. It focuses on how to manage growth and how towns can utilise services as a network of towns. There is a growing recognition of existing gaps and how these will be addressed (i.e. roads, open space, recreation reserves, community facilities, and inadequate retail offer). M2041 is concerned with how services and the building blocks of growth, especially infrastructure, are to be funded.

In partnership with the MPA, Council is looking at services required to cope specifically with pressure in the Bacchus Marsh district, what role agencies will play, and what developers will need to fund. Expected outcomes are:

1. A Growth Framework Map identifying opportunities for Bacchus Marsh to 2041 with strategic sub-components of a) housing strategy, b) retail strategy, c) industrial Strategy and community infrastructure plan.
2. An infrastructure delivery map in concert with key agencies on delivering infrastructure to support growth and enhance functionality of existing urban areas.
3. A Supporting Growth Management Strategy that supports these initiatives.

Within a peri-urban context, pressure for growth is often 'patchy' and location specific. Council's Moorabool Small Towns and Settlement Cluster Strategy - Context Report looks beyond current level of service to include accessibility and resilience within the towns and villages of the Shire. Current work in this area providing input into Moorabool 2041 identifies:

- a) which settlements have the basic building blocks (infrastructure, positive drivers of change) to grow and expand their population offer services to other settlements, and
- b) which have significant limitations to growth.

The Moorabool 2041 Strategy Framework is shown at Attachment A to this EDS.

## 5.0 Engaging Business and Stakeholders

There are limited opportunities for business to engage with Council, and with each other, especially in Bacchus Marsh. Many businesses have expressed their desire to build strong relationships with each other and with Council.

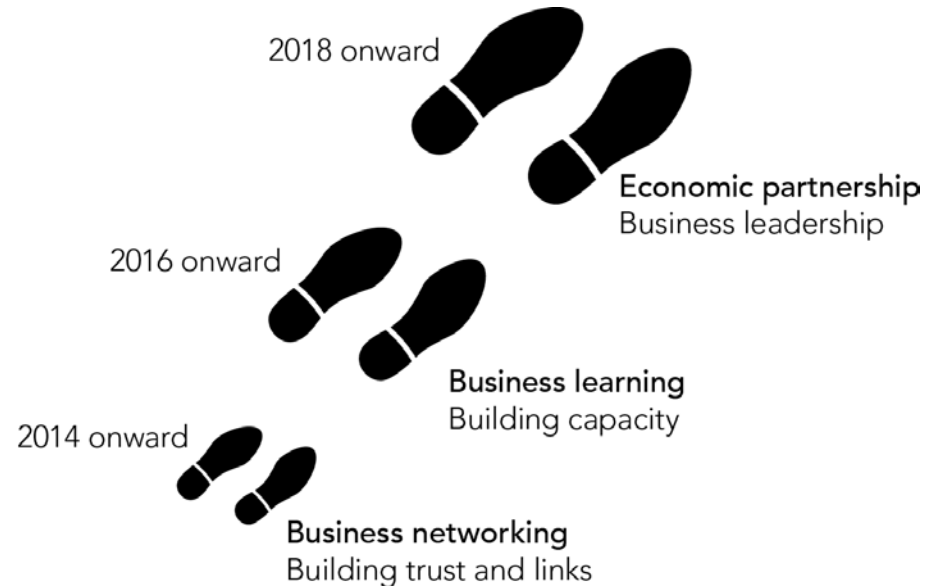
This Strategy encourages a progressive approach to engaging with local businesses. In the first instance, there is a need to build trust between Council and local businesses, through ongoing networks built over several years. As this trust develops, there is greater opportunity to move Council's focus toward building the capacity of local businesses to participate in a growing and transitioning economy. In the long-term, the aim should be to achieve a local economic partnership, where businesses take a more active role in setting the direction of the local economy, including priorities.

### 5.1 Business networking

Formal and informal business networks help the local economy by promoting business-to-business trade, reducing supply chain leakage, creating local business alliances, and sharing knowledge amongst peers. Business networks, such as the Ballan and District Chamber of Commerce, provide Council with a key opportunity to engage and understand the needs of local business. They are integral to business engaging with Council beyond a 'roads, rates, rubbish and regulation' role.

As Bacchus Marsh transitions toward a more urban economy, the needs of businesses will change. In urban areas, many businesses often prefer to engage in informal networking events, rather than more formal groupings (e.g. business chambers). These informal networks reflect more fluid business connections, and the decreasing importance of geography to their business.

Figure 6 A progressive approach to business engagement



A number of principles should underpin Council's business network facilitation:

- Minimise the barriers to participation - reduce formality and time requirements.
- Be engaging – provide social and learning opportunities at events.
- Be relevant - encourage small groups with shared interests as well as larger, general events.
- Continuity – give businesses time to build relationships and trust.
- Embrace regional groupings – where regional business groupings make sense, embrace and support them.
- Lead digital innovation – lead by example, and communicate with businesses through electronic means and social media



Priority business networks, that would best support higher value, prospective industries identified in Section 3, include:

- Agribusiness
- Professionals and home based businesses
- Tourism
- Retail traders in Bacchus Marsh and Ballan, considering the importance of trader cooperation to functioning retail precincts.

As large organisations with existing networks, the health services and hospitals in the Shire are in the best position to lead any specific business networks in this sector. Existing Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) provide an existing conduit for education, skills and job seeking services in the Shire.

## 5.2 Building business capacity

Capacity building is about helping local businesses develop the skills required to compete in the rapidly changing economy. Consultation revealed that many businesses require greater support to navigate technology changes and to take advantage of growing markets.

Priorities for building the capacity of local businesses, that address barriers identified through consultation and analysis include:

- Technology/ICT capacity
- New marketing techniques – including social media
- General skills for small and home based businesses
- Agricultural and land practices on smaller farms
- Staff recruitment and staff development practices

As well as workshops, targeted outreach activities can help engage businesses that might require support in priority sectors.

## 5.3 A local economic partnership

In the longer term, a local economic partnership would prioritise business and stakeholder leadership in local economic development. The partnership approach might take many forms – such as a separate organisation at arms' length from Council, or partnership committees based around different sectors (e.g. retail, tourism, and agribusiness) or interests (e.g. Bacchus Marsh Town Centre, Parwan).

Business and other stakeholders (e.g. educators) would have a greater influence over decision making about economic planning, training and capacity building needs, Council services to business, priority projects, and advocacy.

## 5.4 Embracing regional networks

The local economy of Moorabool operates in a wider environment that does not recognise municipal boundaries. This is clear when we consider that 67% of resident workers commute to jobs outside the Shire and that local farmers, and food producers, for example, operate in national and international markets.

In the eyes of state and federal government, Moorabool falls within the Central Highlands Region (extending from Bacchus Marsh to Ararat). However, the Moorabool economy is increasingly integrated with western Melbourne. There are also imbalances between regional funding and the classification of Moorabool Shire.

Despite this, there are currently limited avenues for Council to engage and participate in the western Melbourne economy. Council will need to embrace the western Melbourne economy and nurture links to western metropolitan councils and regional groupings. The communities within Moorabool can retain separate social networks and identities, but the need for greater economic integration will become vital over the next decade.



Priorities for engaging with both the western Melbourne and Central Highlands regions include:

- Workforce, labour market and skills planning and delivery – which both generally occur at the regional level. This includes engagement with Brimbank/Melton LLEN, Highlands LLEN, and the RDV Grampians Workforce Development initiative.
- Cultivate regional business networks focused on specific sectors (the Central Highlands Agribusiness Forum is a good example of existing networks).
- Exploring opportunities with the City of Melton to respond to issues and opportunities in sectors that are closely linked between the two areas. For example there is a strong relationship between the two areas in terms of supply chain, customers, and workers in the construction sector.
- This may also include participation in the Western BACE, a business incubator being developed in Melton, which will provide assistance to start-up businesses from across the region, including Moorabool. Over time, if this model of small business assistance proves successful, there may be opportunities to develop similar or satellite facilities in Moorabool.
- General engagement with groups such as Lead West and RDA Melbourne West, as well as the Grampians RDA.
- Engagement with regional tourism networks, such as Daylesford and Macedon Ranges Regional Tourism Board, Ballarat and Destination Melbourne.

## 5.5 Initiatives

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
1.	Establish an online communication channel with business and investors	Establish an online or social-media presence targeted specifically at the information needs of businesses – both local and prospective businesses.	Limited existing opportunities for obtaining information about the local business context. An opportunity for Council to lead by example and promote the use of the Internet as a key communications medium for local businesses.	Number of local businesses reached through online updates and social media
2.	Support a regular business networking event in Bacchus Marsh	Host a regular business breakfast event or similar (every few months) providing an opportunity for local businesses to socialise, and learn from a keynote speaker. Continue to support the Ballan Chamber of Commerce.	Limited opportunities for businesses to connect in the eastern areas of the Shire.	Number of unique businesses engaged in events
3.	Establish sector/interest specific local business networks	Establish local business networks for sectors that have been identified as being key to the prospects of the Moorabool economy – agribusiness, professional and business services, home-based businesses, and retail (Bacchus Marsh and Ballan). Continue to support the Ballan Chamber of Commerce as a key network in the central areas of the Shire.  Support a home based business network through the establishment of a data-base of small and home-based businesses in this sector; provide a series of updates; create an online communication medium.	Lack of business networks available in the eastern areas of the Shire, despite an interest from businesses. A need to establish trust and relationships with local businesses before building capacity or encouraging greater local business leadership.	Number of unique businesses engaged in local networks
4.	Consider early establishment of retailers groups in Bacchus Marsh and Ballan	Provide support for retail networks to quickly mature into more formal advisory or decision-making groups. Assist the formation of a traders' organisation for Bacchus Marsh town centre by providing initial administrative support. If required, assist the formation of a sub-committee of the Ballan and District Chamber of Commerce to provide a voice for town centre traders.	The town centres need to function as coherent entities in order to compete effectively for resident spending and continue to underpin liveability in the Shire.	Number of retailers engaged in local economic development

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
5.	Explore opportunities to participate in regional groupings in western Melbourne	<p>Explore opportunities for Council and key local stakeholders and businesses to participate in the regional groupings in western Melbourne, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RDA Melbourne West</li> <li>• Lead West</li> <li>• Brimbank-Melton LLEN</li> </ul> <p>Continue to participate in relevant groupings in the Central Highlands and Ballarat regions</p>	Moorabool's economy is increasingly integrated with the western Melbourne economy. The fortunes of residents are increasingly dependent upon this wider region. Regional participation is particularly important in influencing labour market/workforce issues.	Frequency of participation in western Melbourne regional groupings
6.	Plan and implement a business skills development program	Use newly established networks to understand the business skills needs of local businesses. Plan an ongoing business skills program that responds to the key barriers in prospective sectors – such as ICT capacity, marketing techniques, staff recruitment and development, home based business needs. Council may seek assistance in the delivery of these programs from outside organisations.	Business capacity is considered a key barrier smaller businesses benefiting from local and regional population growth, and the ability to respond to a 'step change' in the local economy.	Number of local businesses engaged in business skills activities
7.	Explore economic development initiatives in partnership with neighbouring councils	Work with neighbouring councils to identify opportunities for economic development partnerships. Potential partnerships could include business-networking events that encourage regional business connections, or joint marketing.	Many local businesses seek to benefit from rapid growth not just locally, but also in the wider region. A need to respond to economic integration.	Number of joint economic development initiatives or programs between Moorabool and other councils
8.	Plan and implement a local economic partnership	In partnership with local businesses and stakeholders explore opportunities to develop a business-led local economic partnership.	Local economic partnerships ensure that Council more directly responds to the needs of local businesses, industry and other stakeholders.	Number of businesses and stakeholders engaged in local economic partnership planning.

## 6.0 Attracting Investment to Moorabool

Facilitating investment requires action across a wide range of Council services, including land-use planning, infrastructure investment and community planning. It is a whole of Council responsibility. This section summarises the role of, and priority actions for, Council to attract investment. The actions have been informed by the analysis of prospective industries in the Shire (see Section 3).

Attracting investment to the Shire can extend to major enterprises, as well as individual entrepreneurs or small businesses. Investment attraction can seek to attract outside investment into the area, or to contain local investment within the Shire.

### 6.1 Awareness and marketing

Council has established previous campaigns and brands to market the Shire – including the ‘life was meant to be easy’ brand, and live, work, and invest website. These campaigns help differentiate the Shire and provide a strong base to build outside awareness about local opportunities.

As the Moorabool economy becomes increasingly integrated with the western Melbourne economy, new opportunities will arise for investment within the context of this wider region. Creating awareness within the western Melbourne business community about the advantages of the Shire should be considered a marketing priority over the coming years.

Efforts should be targeted toward the key prospective industries – that is those that will facilitate a ‘step-change’ in the Moorabool economy. Priority sectors for preparing targeted marketing material include agribusiness, retail, aged care and healthcare, land development opportunities, and professional and business services.

Each sector will have different information needs – for example, aged and health care providers will have a particular interest in land prices, access to major centres and demographic information. Professional and business services will have an interest in NBN access, availability of office space and rail access. The existing ‘life was meant to be easy’ campaign is particularly responsive to the needs of the home-based business sector that can be attracted to Moorabool, but requires review in the coming years.

### 6.2 Facilitating development approvals

Development approval is a key statutory role for Council and is a crucial hurdle for investors. Council has a responsibility to ensure that new investment meets the requirements of the planning scheme, which balances economic, social and environmental factors. Nevertheless, Council is committed to ensuring that job-creating investment is treated expeditiously. Council has introduced a case management approach to development applications that involve job-creating investments. Pre-application meetings are strongly encouraged to ensure that the necessary information can be generated and to provide proponents with initial design advice.

Development approval is the end point of the planning process. Identifying appropriate land-uses for areas is the role of strategic planning, through the Moorabool 2041 process and policies such as the Rural Growth Policy. Whilst Moorabool has strategic plans in place for its key towns, these must be revisited from time-to-time in order to accommodate changing circumstances, particularly in an era of growth. Strategic planning for Moorabool’s key towns should be revisited regularly to ensure it responds to changing circumstances and will capitalise on emerging economic opportunities. Strategic planning documents can provide guidance to the private sector about the opportunities available in the Shire by specifically identifying areas for potential investments.

Council has agreements in place with the Metropolitan Planning Authority to provide planning assistance in order to accommodate growth. This presents an opportunity for Council to seek resources to improve the planning and urban design of its main townships.

### 6.3 Enabling Infrastructure

A key attractor of industry in the Shire is the availability of enabling infrastructure, such as gas, water and telecommunications. Infrastructure shortfalls in some areas have been identified as potential barriers to investment in these areas.

Many infrastructure requirements are within the domain of state and federal government and Council has an advocacy role to play in attracting state and federal investment, including:

- Undertaking feasibility studies or cost-benefit analysis of infrastructure priorities.
- Providing representations to state and federal government.
- Committing to co-funding infrastructure priorities.
- Exploring alternative models of provision – for example private provision, or using the ratings system special charges to help capture the private sector value of any public investment.
- Advocating for sewage and water infrastructure in Wallace/Bungaree.
- Advocating for infrastructure investment in the Parwan area.

Council's annual advocacy document will continue to be updated to reflect the priority infrastructure needs of the Shire.

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
1.	Investigate investment options to support the long-term sustainability of farms in the Shire	Options could include: Investigating mechanisms for discussing farms in order to ensure productive land is used and maintained including being a broker for cooperative farming. Working with farmers groups to improve the potential for income generation through innovations such as holiday home rentals, and sustainable energy.	Better utilisation of farm capacity will generate more production for local processing and increased support for local services, leading to more jobs. Supplementary farm income will support long-term sustainability of the sector.	Value of new farming investment in the Shire.
2.	Support agricultural exports through marketing and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Central Highlands Agribusiness Forum (CHAF) to initiate and participate in food-based trade missions (both incoming and outgoing)</li> <li>Establish exporters data-base; identify intending exporters; create events to attract exporters; further develop networks</li> </ul>	Exports generate wealth for the Shire, with the strong potential for more local jobs. Duplication of accreditation and quality control processes adds unnecessarily to the costs of local producers	Value of exports from the Shire
3.	Continue to advocate for investment in infrastructure that will enable private investment in key precincts	This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with Parwan land-holders to develop a 'whole of government' service-plan for the provision of natural gas to the area.</li> <li>Working with Western Water in assessing the feasibility of supplying recycled water to the Bacchus Marsh irrigation district and surrounds.</li> <li>Advocating for gas and telecommunications provision to the Ballan Industrial Estate.</li> <li>Advocating for the upgrade of existing water infrastructure in Bacchus Marsh and district to drive efficiencies and balance demands for residential and agricultural uses of water.</li> <li>Advocating for the expansions of the agriculture irrigation district.</li> </ul>	Reduction of costs will improve levels of investment in Parwan. Improving the productivity of farmland will create more local jobs	Delivery of infrastructure investments
4.	Continue to support channels that market local produce more directly to consumers	This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Ballan Farmers Market</li> <li>Working with farmer networks to gauge capacity to sell direct to consumer</li> <li>Working with the local food sector to promote investment in and visitation to regional produce outlets including delicatessens, specialty food stores, farm gate retailers, cafes and restaurants.</li> </ul>	The Farmers Market stimulates tourism and provides income for farmers. Improving farm incomes will safeguard productive land, create local jobs and sustain local services Investment in food outlets creates jobs, generates visitation and supports local food producers	Increase in visitation Improvement in farm incomes Increase in cafés and restaurants

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
5.	Continue to market the distinctive experiences in each of the Shire's villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide material for the Visit Moorabool website and specifically designed marketing collateral that reflects village personalities and stories.</li> <li>• Continue a calendar of events that reinforces the key themes of local food and village lifestyles. Work with village communities to fill gaps in the calendar</li> <li>• Review directional signage to key tourism attractions.</li> <li>• Maintain tourism event funding.</li> </ul>	Improvements in visitation support jobs and services in the small towns of the Shire	Growth in visitation
6.	Promote the development of small offices that can make use of the NBN	Work with property owners in Bacchus Marsh town centre to promote the development of small offices. Develop marketing collateral in conjunction with local real estate agents; undertake feasibility studies for specific sites.	Lack of office space is a reported barrier to enabling growth in the professional and business services sector	Number of offices developed
7.	Explore options for expediting commercial land development in Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Wallace/Bungaree, and Gordon town centres	Facilitate timely land development in these centres through discussions with landholders and through the Moorabool 2041 process. Identify and secure appropriate sites for commercial development. Give consideration to future use of Council owned land. Further detail provided in retail strategy.	Land in the town centre is required to accommodate the services needed for a growing local population, and is a key barrier to a 'step change' occurring in the local economy	Development of land in the town centre
8.	Explore opportunities for statutory and strategic planning processes to facilitate investment	Continue with Council's 'case management' approach to facilitating major investment in the Shire. Consider establishing a priority investments list to expedite permit assessments in identified economic precincts (e.g. Parwan), and time limits for planning scheme amendments. Promote Council's proactive approach to planning assessment and approvals. Consider strategic plans that clearly identify prospective developments in key precincts – plans can work as investment prospectuses as well as regulatory frameworks.	Minimising regulatory barriers and promoting business certainty will reduce barriers to investment	Planning permit and scheme amendment process times
9.	Lobby for high-speed broadband access in smaller towns.	Investigate the opportunity to establish a microwave link between Bacchus Marsh and smaller towns, such as Ballan, in partnership with local businesses. Lobby for NBN roll-out in Ballan and other areas without the network, potentially through fixed wireless. Lobby Telstra and state government to provide Wifi in main streets and town centres.	Rapid Internet services are increasingly required for health services and manufacturers to operate effectively, especially in small towns	Number of high speed broadband connections in smaller towns

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
10.	Promote the Shire's prospects to the aged care, independent living, and other health and well-being sector investors	Promote the Shire as a location for aged care and independent living villages with a rural outlook. This could include pro-active identification of sites/precincts within the Shire to operators, demographic analysis of the local/regional catchment, comparative analysis of land prices, and expedited planning processes. There are also opportunities to promote the Shire as a location for health and well-being retreats, close to Melbourne but with a secluded rural outlook, through an investment package.	Private investment in the aged and health care sectors will be a major driver of the potential 'step change' in the local economy.	Quantity of private investment in local aged care and health facilities
11.	Consider how Council can use the presence of the NBN to deliver innovative services to residents and streamline assistance to businesses.	Review Council activities to create innovation in service delivery using broadband. Council 'leading by example' can help to seed ideas about local innovation capacity to business and investors.	Innovation in public services will improve innovation rates in local business as well as delivering improved services to residents	Publicity for innovative services Rates of investment in businesses making use of the NBN
12.	Develop marketing materials for the three key precincts in the Shire	Section 8 of this Strategy identifies key investment precincts that will be catalysts for employment growth in Moorabool. Each precinct should have a dedicated information page linked to Council's website, providing investors and residents with information about services and development opportunities. Prospectuses may be prepared. Separate branding for each precinct should be considered. Review and potentially rebrand the 'Life was meant to be easy' campaign.	There is a need to create awareness about opportunities in the three priority precincts, and Council's support for investment. These will be catalyst precincts that provide the bulk of job growth and facilitate the required step change in the local economy	Number of page views / prospectuses accessed
13.	Limit the impacts of urban encroachment through the planning scheme whilst allowing for innovative rural cooperative development.	Adjustment of the planning scheme if required and input to the Shire's Housing Strategy. The Rural Growth Policy and Small Towns Strategy outline the need to define boundaries around rural townships/clusters.	There is a need to protect the productive capacity of agricultural land in the Shire.	Area of land farmed



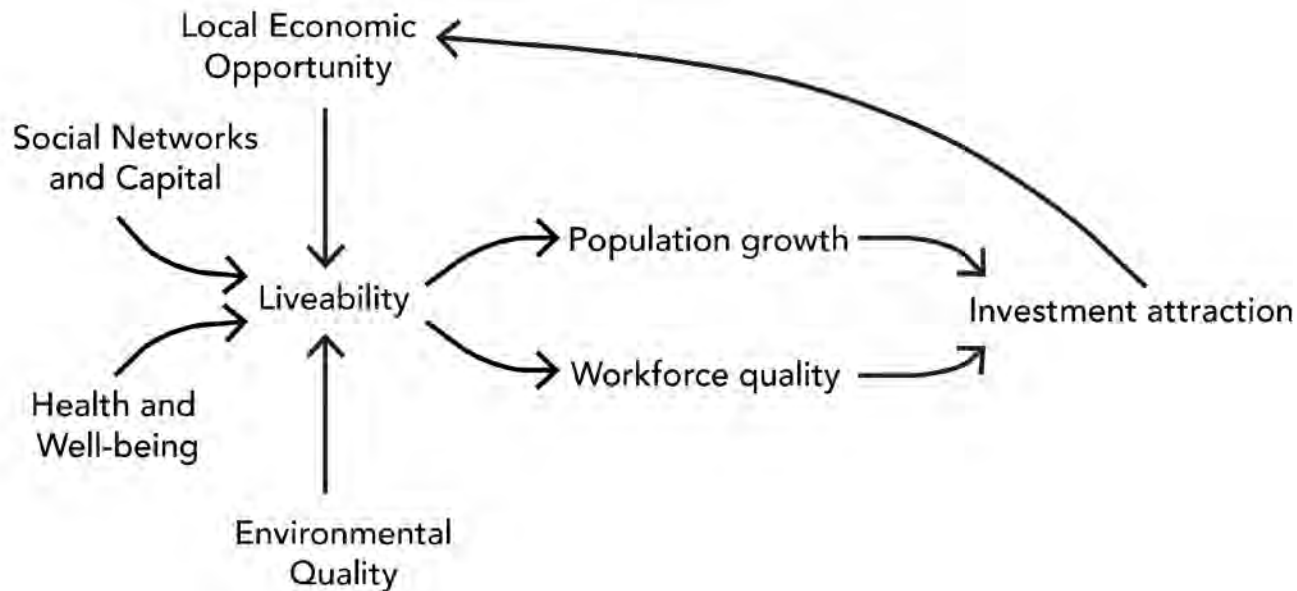
#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
14.	Focus on unlocking investment in Parwan and existing industrial estates through consolidation and infrastructure investment	Focus on consolidating existing industrial precincts in the Shire, and the provision of better infrastructure to these precincts. Beyond the Parwan precinct, there is no further industrial land required in the Shire for the foreseeable future.	Adequate and serviced land supply will underpin the growth of a number of prospective industries, including agribusiness.	Quantity of infrastructure serviced industrial land available in the Shire
15.	Undertake land use planning for out of centre 'big box' retail in Bacchus Marsh	Investigate adjustments to planning scheme to allow out-of-centre development in Bacchus Marsh for bulky goods retailing that cannot be accommodated in the town centre.	The Moorabool Retail Strategy notes that larger/bulky goods retailing cannot be accommodated in the town centre	Quantity of land zoned appropriately for 'big box' retail
16.	Encourage redevelopment of Darley Plaza	Council can help encourage development at Darley Plaza	Increase the design desirability and retail diversity of the Plaza	Investment in Plaza

## 7.0 Enhancing Local Lifestyle and Amenity

Moorabool's liveability has been a driver of recent population growth, and helps differentiate the Shire from growth areas in western Melbourne and Ballarat. Features such as a traditional town centre and facilities, hills, and the Avenue of Honour provide a unique amenity, not present in most growth areas.

Enhancing the liveability will be key to maintaining this growth and attracting higher value workers and businesses. The many elements that contribute to liveability include jobs access, a diverse mix of housing to fit different lifestyles, human capital, access to health and education, and community facilities, events and networks.

Figure 7 Relationship between liveability and economic development



Balancing local liveability with population and economic growth will be a key challenge for Council over the next decade, especially as more competitive, higher amenity growth areas emerge in western Melbourne as planning and early service delivery improves in these areas. The relationship of economic development to the many dimensions of liveability (Figure 7) underpins the need for a 'whole of Council' approach.

### 7.1 Delivering local infrastructure priorities

With a rapid population increase, parts of Moorabool are experiencing 'growing pains'. Projects that have a tangible impact on liveability and help facilitate population growth should be prioritised - critical road links, rail service access and quality, education facilities, health facilities, aged care services, and childcare. Infrastructure investment will help maintain our quality of life, and help unlock some of the barriers currently limiting sector growth in the Shire.

## 7.2 Connecting local people to local jobs

A key challenge to liveability in the Shire is the decreasing opportunities for local residents to live and work in the same area. Outward commuting is estimated to cost the community \$20 million annually in transport costs<sup>7</sup>, as well as create social costs for the community and escaped expenditure. This Strategy sets targets for slowing the increase in outward commuting outside of the Shire, reflecting the liveability challenges this creates.

The challenge in connecting local people to local jobs lies in the regional nature of labour markets. Some key sectors attract the majority of their workforce from outside the Shire, and some businesses have reported an inability to find local labour that is suited to their needs. As the economy experiences a 'step change', the challenge lies in maximising the number of local residents that can competitively meet the needs of expected job growth in the Shire.

## 7.3 Providing a diversity of lifestyle options

A diversity of lifestyle options, responding to different demographic groups and tastes, will help provide the foundation for a liveable community. Moorabool's mix of towns, with different lifestyles and identities, provides a good base for building this diversity.

In many of the smaller towns, tourism supports a mix of retail and hospitality businesses that would not normally be viable in a small town. In larger towns, access to the variety of tourism attractions in the Shire underpins a unique lifestyle amongst growth areas. Supporting the local tourism sector is critical for maintaining the quality of life in the Shire.

Providing a diverse mix of housing options will be increasingly important as the Shire's community ages, and household sizes continue to decrease. Promoting well-located, medium density housing, as well as investment in aged care facilities and independent living will help to provide housing diversity.

## 7.4 Boosting our human capital

The economic opportunities available to our local community will increasingly depend upon their capacity to respond to a changing local and regional economy. Human capital and local skills can help attract higher value jobs (Figure 7), and ensure that local residents can compete for newly available local jobs.

Council can support connections between local schools and education providers, such as establishing pathways between school and local jobs. Council can also support education providers to provide youth and older adults with general work 'readiness' skills – a key workforce gap identified by business through consultation.

The small business sector will be critical to facilitating our Shire's economic 'step change'. Programs that stimulate small business establishment and entrepreneurialism, at local schools and community education providers, will be supported.

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<sup>7</sup> Geografia, 2014

## 7.5 Initiatives

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
1.	Continue to pursue the Halletts Way extension as the priority infrastructure project in the Shire	<p>Increase pressure on State Government to fund the necessary road improvements to enable Bacchus Marsh town centre to operate effectively.</p> <p>Briefing of MPs (and prospective MPs) and calculation and promotion of the economic benefits of undertaking the investment. Continue to prioritise Council funding for the project.</p>	<p>The Halletts Way extension will be a catalytic project for the Shire's economy – increasing amenity of local residents, unlocking barriers to growth in Bacchus Marsh Town Centre.</p> <p>The infrastructure is critical to a step-change in the local economy.</p>	Construction of Halletts Way extension
2.	Continue to advocate and lobby for investment in community facilities that enhance the liveability of the Shire, especially health facilities	<p>Continue to invest in, and advocate for investment in, infrastructure that enables population growth and enhances liveability.</p> <p>This includes health facilities, aged care services, rail access, and education services.</p> <p>With regard to health infrastructure and services, lobby and advocate for the realisation of Djerriwarh Health's Masterplan for Bacchus Marsh, and Ballan and District Health Care's Masterplan. Council will help coordinate complementary service delivery between these organisations.</p> <p>Use Council's Ageing Well Strategy to prioritise and support the growth of the aged care sector in the Shire.</p>	<p>An emerging threat to local liveability in the coming decade will be sufficient infrastructure and services to respond to population growth, especially in health and education.</p> <p>Investment in health services will be a key enabler of the future 'step change' in the local economy</p>	<p>Quantity of funding made available for facilities</p> <p>Quantity of doctors in the Shire</p>
3.	Prepare design guidelines for key activity centres and industry precincts to protect liveability	Prepare design guidelines for industrial estates or activity precincts to ensure that projected development complements local character and protects amenity.	With projected pressure for industrial and commercial development, there is potential for some development to detract from the unique liveability of the Shire, especially where there is interface with residential areas.	Delivery of design guidelines
4.	Explore opportunities to support workforce capacity	Engage with Bacchus Marsh College and Adult and Community Education providers to explore:	Local businesses in key sectors – tourism, professional services reported issues with finding 'work ready' entry-level staff for many jobs. Lower educational attainment limits competitiveness of the local	Youth services has provided appropriate support and advocacy to promote increased educational,

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 'work readiness' program for relevant students, to prepare them for fully participating in the local economy.</li> <li>• How Council can support higher educational attainment amongst local youth and older adults.</li> <li>• The value of a local small business courses or entrepreneurship competitions.</li> </ul>	workforce. The need to stimulate small business establishment to achieve an economic step-change.	employment and training opportunities for young people.
5.	Plan and implement a program to connect local residents to local jobs	<p>A program could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to monitor employer experiences with recruitment through business networks</li> <li>• Assisting local job service providers to network with local employers</li> <li>• Working with Bacchus Marsh College , community and adult education services, and major employers to connect graduating students to local jobs</li> </ul> <p>The initial focus should be on the education and health sectors – both sectors have a large proportion of inward bound commuters despite the presence of large, local workforces.</p>	The key threat to liveability in the Shire is rapidly increasing outward commuter rates and associated community impacts. A 'local jobs for local people' program would help to reduce outward commuter rates.	Number of local jobs filled by local residents
6.	Continue to enhance main streets in Ballan and Bacchus Marsh	Continue to invest in enhancing the streetscapes in Bacchus Marsh and Ballan main streets. Consider street scapes as a key means of creating a 'sense of place' for these important retail centres.	A healthy retail and hospitality sector provides a pillar for a liveable local community. These streets provide a critical point of differentiation and help drive population growth to the towns.	Visitation to main streets in Bacchus Marsh and Ballan
7.	Advocate for improved facilities and extended education and training services in Moorabool.	Lobby for more focused investment in schools and identify training requirements that can be satisfied locally. Work with large training organisations to identify areas of potential for Moorabool, and the potential for an education precinct. Explore innovative partnership approaches with education providers in the wider region.	Better facilities assist with improved educational outcomes and local training provision assists local trainees and businesses	Investment in schools and training services

#	Initiative	Description	Rationale	Measure of success
8.	Implement existing tourism planning for the Shire	Implement the Destination Management Plan, recognising that many local tourism attractions and products support the liveability of smaller towns and the Shire more generally.	The liveability of Moorabool's smaller towns are linked to the services and product offered within them, and the activities around them. Many services and activities that benefit the local population are made viable by tourists. Tourism is also one of a few export-oriented sectors with strong job growth potential in the Shire. Comprehensive, existing planning has already been undertaken for the sector in the Shire.	Visitation numbers in the Shire
9.	Facilitate the development of a greater mix of housing options	<p>Opportunities for facilitating a greater mix of housing options across the Shire, that respond to the needs of a changing community include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing barriers to medium density development in well-located areas</li> <li>• Attracting aged care and independent living developers</li> <li>• Setting local targets for the local housing mix</li> </ul>	Greater housing diversity will help facilitate a mix of lifestyles in the Shire, helping to sustain population growth.	The quantity of alternative housing stock (non-detached housing) in the Shire
10 ..	Promote healthy urban design in new developments	Ensure that urban design of new housing subdivisions provides for attractive footpaths and cycleways with good connections to activity centres, parks and schools. This reflects the economic benefits of achieving this goal contained within the Municipal Public Health Plan.	<p>Creation of healthy suburbs will attract new residents and improve local lifestyles.</p> <p>Improved rates of cycling and walking</p>	

## 8.0 Developing Business Precincts

Many of the actions detailed in this Strategy relate to a number of specific precincts in the Shire. It makes sense to recognise these precincts and to ensure that they are given appropriate consideration in all of Council's policy and investment decisions. The key locations are:

- Parwan agribusiness precinct
- Bacchus Marsh town centre
- Ballan town centre
- Niche rural activity clusters in Wallace/Bungaree, Gordon, and Blackwood.

Council will designate these as core business precincts and ensure that all its decisions in these areas aim to maximise, or have regard to, sustainable investment and employment outcomes.

Each of the core business precincts will have its own land-use planning guidelines. Each will have a dedicated information available from Council's website, providing investors and residents with information about services and development opportunities.

### 8.1 Parwan Agribusiness Precinct

The Parwan agribusiness precinct will be promoted as the premier location in the Western Highway corridor for agribusiness investment. Council will continue to work, as a matter of priority, with land-owners and state government to resolve key infrastructure impediments – provision of natural gas, and road freight connections to the Western Highway, appropriate planning provisions, Class A water supply, and broadband.

In the meantime, information will be developed about the potential investments in the precinct including the scale of regional primary production and the size of the regional labour-force as well as the

availability of land and existing enterprises at the site. Key opportunities include hydroponics, mushroom production, bulk distribution and red meat processing. Marketing information will be provided via the website (including key language translations).

### 8.2 Bacchus Marsh Town Centre

Bacchus Marsh town centre is likely to provide the largest concentration of new jobs in the municipality over the coming decade, with expected growth in retailing, health services and office activities. It is vitally important that the town centre is both efficient and attractive to investors and consumers. Creating a 'sense of place' for the centre, as a key action in the retail strategy will be critical. A promotional website will present positive images of the centre, reinforcing confidence of existing traders as well as attracting new investors.

Council will investigate the supply of land within the centre for new activities. Where necessary it will consider the need for active intervention in the land market including site assembly, joint venture developments and compulsory purchase if required. Council will show confidence in the centre by locating services there when appropriate.

### 8.3 Ballan Town Centre

Ballan's centre has strong growth potential as a result of local population growth, health service investment and its growing visitor services role. Retail and industrial development will be promoted in Ballan.

Council will promote Ballan as a location for investment by tree-change professionals, tourism retailers and health service providers. It will consider the potential for new or consolidated Council services and joint ventures with the Health Service to create boutique office stock and consulting rooms.

Figure 8 Parwan Agribusiness Precinct, Strategic Context

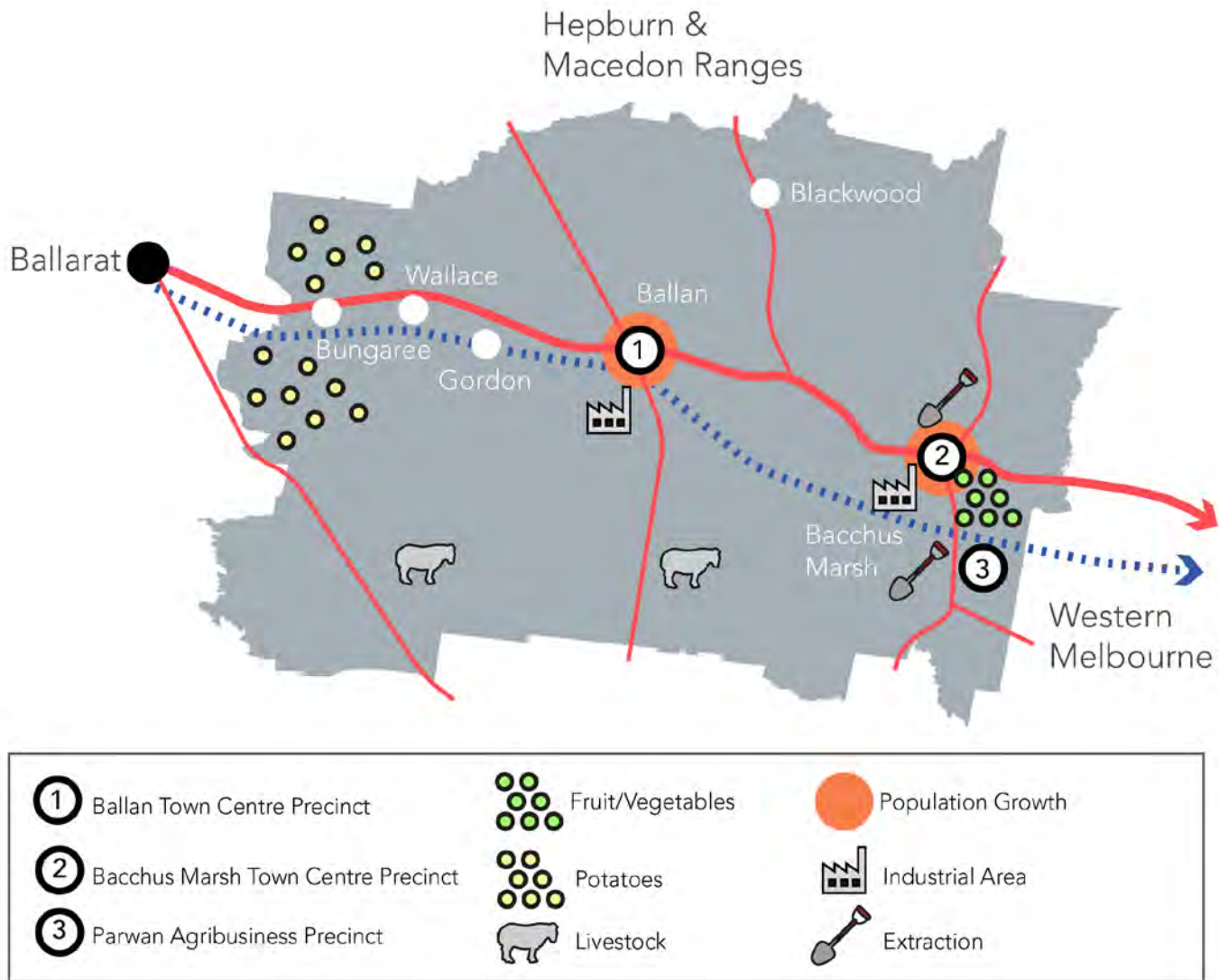
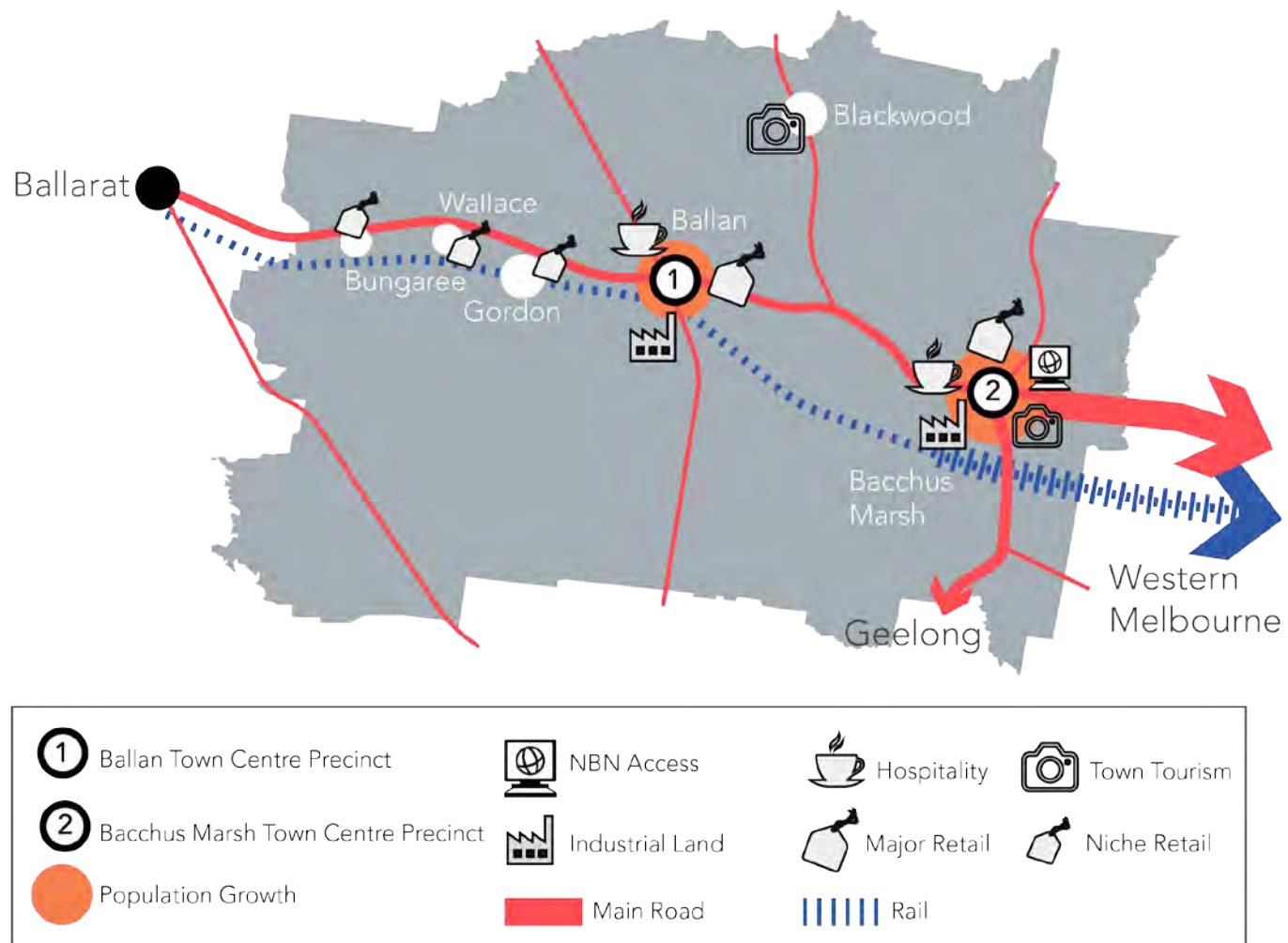




Figure 9 Priority Town Centre Precincts, Role and Context



## 9.0 Implementation and Monitoring

### 9.1 Immediate Priorities

The extensive list of initiatives in this Strategy provides flexibility to assist Council in responding to changing circumstances such as shifts in Government policy and funding. Nonetheless, given our limited resources it is necessary to prioritise the actions that will deliver the biggest impact on our core objectives for the resources expended. The priorities for the first years of implementation are detailed on the following page.

In addition to these priorities, the Economic Development unit will provide assistance to individual businesses, especially as they negotiate the development approvals process, and be responsive to rapid changes in the local business environment, and adapt priorities accordingly.

### 9.2 Resourcing and organisation

Presently, the Economic Development unit consists of two officers. There is a need to boost this complement – as resources allow - in order to achieve the ambitions of the Economic Development Strategy. As the Shire benefits from a rapidly increasing population and business numbers, additional economic development resourcing will be both required and more viable.

Priority	Increase local jobs	Promote a diverse economy	Build workforce capacity	Priority Precinct	Impact of this investment on the Moorabool economy, cost and risk? <sup>8</sup>
Prioritise and advocate for investment in infrastructure that resolves traffic circulation in Bacchus Marsh	○○	○		○○	High impact, high cost, low risk
Resolve gas, water, freight and other infrastructure issues in the Parwan Precinct to enable investment	○○	○		○○	High impact, high cost, high risk
Investigate the viability of sector/interest specific local business networks, consider the early establishment of a retail grouping in Bacchus Marsh		○○		○○	Medium impact, low cost, low risk
Develop an online presence and promotional material for the priority business precincts	○	○		○○	Medium impact, low cost, low risk
Establish industry-led local business networking opportunities (business breakfasts and awards)		○	○		Medium impact, low cost, low risk
Support agricultural exports through marketing and networks	○	○	○	○	Medium impact, medium cost, low risk

<sup>8</sup> It is not possible to accurately quantify the long-term impacts of many indirect activities. However, consideration has been given to the analysis of individual, potential investments as detailed within the Background Report, as well as potential to indirectly contribute to targets detailed at Section 2.2

Priority	Increase local jobs	Promote a diverse economy	Build workforce capacity	Priority Precinct	Impact of this investment on the Moorabool economy, cost and risk? <sup>9</sup>
Advocate for investment in health facilities – including a service investment plan for the Shire (in partnership with services) and precinct planning	○	○	○	○○	High impact, medium cost, medium risk
Explore options for expediting commercial land development in Bacchus Marsh town centre	○○	○		○○	High impact, medium cost, medium risk
Explore opportunities to support workforce capacity partnerships	○	○	○○		Long-term impact, medium cost, low risk
Explore opportunities to participate in regional groupings in western Melbourne/adjointing LGAs	○	○	○		High impact, low cost, low risk

<sup>9</sup> It is not possible to accurately quantify the long-term impacts of many indirect activities. However, consideration has been given to the analysis of individual, potential investments as detailed within the Background Report, as well as potential to indirectly contribute to targets detailed at Section 2.2

### 9.3 Monitoring tasks

Each action in this strategy has its own performance criteria or ‘measure of success’. A series of broad targets for economic progress are presented in the introduction to this strategy (see section 2.2) and these will be monitored and reported on as data becomes available following the reporting of each Census of Population and Housing. In addition, annual indicators will be assessed including the population growth, number of businesses, unemployment rate, value of building approvals. These indicators will be compared with the region and with other peri-urban municipalities around Melbourne. Ongoing monitoring tasks are detailed below.

Monitoring Task	Description	Rationale
1. Undertake an annual review of key economic indicators, including Strategy targets	<p>Indicators that should be monitored annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployment</li> <li>• Estimated Residential Population</li> <li>• Number of active businesses</li> <li>• Building approvals</li> </ul> <p>Indicators that should be updated every five years (post Census):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of local jobs for each local worker</li> <li>• The number of workers commuting outside the Shire</li> <li>• The diversity of local industry<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• The number of active, local small businesses<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• The number of young adults with skills<sup>12</sup></li> <li>• The diversity of our resident workforce<sup>13</sup></li> </ul>	Monitoring economic health and trajectory of the economy to adapt to changing conditions
2. Conduct an annual local business survey	<p>Using business networks, conduct an annual business survey that seeks to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business performance, outlook and sentiment</li> <li>• Barriers to business growth</li> <li>• Location of supply chain inputs and outputs</li> <li>• Business support needs and preferences</li> <li>• Perception of Council services and performance</li> </ul>	Necessary to respond to business needs in the Shire and adapt programs and approach accordingly
3. Provide resources for tourism market monitoring and visitor monitoring (e.g. at the Feast of March).	Undertake visitor surveys to inform tourism planning and monitor performance	Necessary to understand the visitor market and adapt marketing and priorities

<sup>10</sup> Measured using the Herfindahl Index, Place of Work

<sup>11</sup> Businesses with less than five employees and recent Business Activity Statement.

<sup>12</sup> Proportion of 25 to 34 year olds with Cert II qualification or above

<sup>13</sup> Measured using the Herfindahl Index, Place of Usual Residence. This should be read in conjunction with the local unemployment rate to understand any structural changes in industries.

Attachment A: Moorabool 2041 Framework

**Urban Growth Strategy**

Bacchus Marsh, Darley, Maddingley, Parwan, Bences Road, Long Forrest & Hopetoun Park

**Developing Moorabool 2041**

**Small Towns Strategy**

