

MOORABOOL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK

REPORT: COMMUNITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

Part A: Summary of strategic findings

Strategic Findings:

1 Primary infrastructure provider towns

Bacchus Marsh is by far the most significant provider of community infrastructure within the Shire, especially larger or 'higher order' facilities that require a large population to support them. Ballan is the secondary provider within the Shire but Ballarat is equally as significant as Ballan, providing Moorabool residents in the west with access to services and facilities. Melton and other towns such as Meredith and Trentham are within reasonable travel time/distance of some parts of the Shire and therefore play a smaller role in meeting Moorabool residents' needs.

Small towns in the west of the Shire such as Gordon, Bungaree and Wallace each provide a range of local infrastructure that together provide a network of services to rural areas.

The Travel Accessibility Assessment shows that, despite not having the full range of services within each of them, small towns in the east and west do meet the Travel Accessibility Standards due to their proximity to Bacchus Marsh and Ballarat respectively.

2 Remote towns are the least well provided for

A number of small rural towns within the Shire are underprovided with access to community infrastructure due to their small populations and long distances from larger service-provider towns. In the southwest, the area around Elaine, Clarendon and Morrisons has the poorest access to existing facilities. Blackwood, Barkstead and Korweinguboorra in the north and Mount Wallace in the south fair slightly better but still fail some of the provision standards.

Resident populations within these towns are generally too small to justify the provision of new additional infrastructure. However, in some cases, clusters of towns may have collective populations large enough to support new facilities if people are willing to travel to them.

3 Ballan - strategic review of community infrastructure provision

For its size Ballan has a significant number and good range of facilities and services. As well as servicing Ballan itself, this infrastructure also serves small towns across the rural east and west. Assessment against the Population Standards and the Travel Accessibility Standards has shown that Ballan meets most community needs in terms of quantity and travel accessibility. However, much of this infrastructure is old and no longer fit for delivering modern services.

Several key Council-owned or State Government-owned facilities are clustered to the south of Inglis Street, including the Mechanics Institute Hall, Neighbourhood House, Men's Shed, and Senior Citizens Centre. These are adjacent the Commercial Hotel, IGA supermarket, car park and CFA building and near to the Ballan RSL and McLean's Reserve. This cluster of community and commercial uses could present an opportunity for reconfiguration, regeneration and/or improved connectivity that better meets current and future community needs.

The Moorabool Shire Council offices and depot are also key infrastructure assets that could provide a wider range of public uses in the future.

The Suitability Assessment (to be conducted later in 2017) will assess the building condition and fitness for purpose of existing facilities and the Utilisation Assessment (2017-18) will determine their level of current use by the community. These findings are needed to inform any future planning for facilities in Ballan.

4 Under-provision across western Bacchus Marsh

Facilities in the township of Bacchus Marsh are mostly in the centre and along the eastern edge of town. The area of Bacchus Marsh to the west of Gisborne Road (bounded by the freeway to the north and Werribee River to the south) is comparatively very poorly provided for infrastructure. In particular the area within 1km or so radius of the junction of Halletts Way and Main Street has very few facilities. North-western Maddingley (to the north of Griffith Street) also has very little local provision.

5 Potential impact of rising rate of dementia

The Population Assessment and Travel Accessibility Assessment for 'Dementia Programs' show that the Shire's current provision of 1 facility designed for use by dementia sufferers (the Quamby Rooms in Bacchus Marsh) represents a significant shortfall against current demand. Alzheimer's Australia Victoria currently predict a 5 fold increase in the rate of dementia in Moorabool between 2017 and 2041. This increase in the rate of dementia, combined with the projected growth in residents aged 65 and over, suggests a severe future shortage in facilities designed to be suitable for use by dementia sufferers.

Current and future shortfalls relate to all measures of community need assessed by the Community Infrastructure Framework (the quantity, travel accessibility, suitability and utilisation of infrastructure).