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AGENDA

SCHEDULED MEETING OF COUNCIL **FOR** **WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2024** **TO BE HELD AT YARRAWONGA SENIOR CITIZENS 27 HOVELL STREET YARRAWONGA** **COMMENCING AT 4.30PM**

RECORDING

Consistent with section 12.3 of our Governance Rules, Council officers have been authorised to record the public session of this meeting using an audio recording device.

LIVE STREAMING

Council meetings will now be lived streamed to allow those interested in viewing proceedings greater access to Council decisions and debate, without attending the meeting in person.

1. WELCOME CALLING TO ORDER – CEO

2. PRAYER

Almighty God we humbly ask you to guide our deliberations for the welfare and benefit of the Moira Shire and its people whom we serve.

Amen

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

We, the Moira Shire Council, acknowledges the traditional owners of the land upon which we meet and pay our respects to their Elders both past and present.

4. APOLOGIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

5. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Recommendation: That the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 28 August 2024, as presented, be adopted.

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FILE NO: F20/196
4. CUSTOMER FOCUSED AND RESPONSIVE

ITEM NO: 9.1.1
(EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ROBYN BONADDIO)
(CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MATTHEW
MORGAN)

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION POLICY

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Community Recognition Policy as shown in Attachment 1.

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement from Council on the draft Community Recognition Policy.

The purpose of the Community Recognition Policy is to provide a consistent approach to the recognition of community members' contribution to the Moira Shire community and their significant birthdays and achievements.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no officer conflicts of interest considerations associated with this report.

3. Background & Context

The Community Recognition Policy was first adopted in September 2019. The policy was developed to provide a consistent approach to the recognition of community members' contribution to the Moira Shire community and their significant birthdays and achievements.

A review of this policy has been undertaken with the following minor amendments made:

- Policy content converted into new Policy template.
- Some of the content moved around to improve the flow of the document.

This policy is to be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

This policy applies to all Moira Shire Council residents, Administrators, and staff.

4. Issues

Feedback has been received from the Governance and Communications and Marketing departments with no issues identified.

5. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

4. Customer focused and responsive

4.03 Our service standards and service delivery models will be of a high standard and meet community needs.

5. Transparent and accountable governance

5.05 We will be transparent, inclusive, responsive and accessible when engaging with the community

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COMMUNITY RECOGNITION POLICY (cont'd)

6. External Engagement

Engagement (who did you engage with?)	Feedback
External NIL	

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

Council's Discretionary Expenditure Policy will be followed where there are expenses incurred as part of implementation of this policy.

8. Risk & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Financial	There are no financial risks to consider
Economic (regional context or broader economic impact)	There are no economic risks to consider
Environmental	There are no environmental risks to consider
Reputational	The policy ensures transparent and accountable governance.
Legislative Compliance	This policy is developed in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>

9. Conclusion

The draft policy aims to establish a clear and concise direction on recognition with state and commonwealth polices and protocols and will be provided to Council for consideration.

Attachments

- 1 Draft Community Recognition Policy

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DRAFT COMMUNITY RECOGNITION POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Community Recognition Policy

Moira Shire Council

Draft Community Recognition Policy

Policy type	Council
Version Number	xx
Responsible Director	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Officer	Executive Assistant to the CEO
Date adopted by Council	
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Administrative changes do not materially alter the document (such as spelling/typographical errors, change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department). Administrative updates can be made in accordance with the Policy Framework Guidelines.

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DRAFT COMMUNITY RECOGNITION POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Community Recognition Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent approach to the recognition of the achievements and milestones of members of the Moira Shire community whose outstanding service has enriched the community.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Moira Shire Council employees including volunteers, consultants, contractors, Administrators, Councillors and residents of Moira Shire Council.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Community members	Residents of the Moira Shire.
Community organisation	An incorporated "not for profit" group or organisation within Moira Shire.
Community recognition	The acknowledgement of a notable achievement and brings attention to the contribution made by an individual or group to the community.
Council	Moira Shire Council.
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor is the elected head of the municipality (When the Mayor is referred to in the policy while under administration, the Chair Administrator assume the same duties)
Significant achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian honours. Recognition of a community member at a state, national or international level in their field. Fundraising by a community member or community organisation for community assets, events or services within the Moira Shire.
Significant birthdays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birthday – 90, 100 years

POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to recognising the contributions and achievements of the Moira Shire community. Community members and community organisations are eligible to receive a Certificate of Congratulations from Council for a significant achievement or milestone in accordance with this policy.

Significant achievements

Council may on occasion become aware of a significant achievement of a community member or community organisation. Requests for recognition of a significant achievement as defined in this policy, can also made to Council in writing. Written requests must outline what the significant achievement is and provide supporting evidence.

For significant achievements that meet the requirements in this policy, Council will invite the recipient to attend a future Scheduled Council Meeting to be presented with a Certificate. If the recipient chooses to attend, the Certificate presentation will be included on the official Council Meeting Agenda.

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DRAFT COMMUNITY RECOGNITION POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Community Recognition Policy

The Certificate will then be presented by the Mayor at the Scheduled Council Meeting.

Where the recipient chooses not to attend, the Certificate will be forwarded to the recipient or presented in person, as determined by the Mayor.

Significant milestones

All requests for recognition of a significant milestone as defined in this policy, must be received by Council in writing and provide supporting evidence. A certificate will be provided to individuals who meet the criteria for this award.

The Certificate will be forwarded to the recipient or presented in person, as determined by the Mayor.

Process

All requests will be assessed and actioned by the Office of the CEO and further information or supporting documentation may be requested in support of the application.

Should the request not meet the requirements of this policy; the nominee will be advised in writing as to the reasons why the request has been rejected.

All requests require a minimum of seven working days' notice and can be made up to six months after the milestone or achievement.

Other forms of recognition

In addition to recognition for significant achievements and significant milestones under this policy, community members and community organisations may also be eligible to be nominated through Australia Day Awards or other awards ceremonies delivered by Council.

Other requests to recognise individuals and/or achievements not addressed by this policy are at the discretion of the CEO or Mayor

Recognition from other dignitaries

Nominees requesting congratulatory messages from the Premier, Prime Minister, Governor of Victoria, the Governor General or The King will be referred to the Department of Premier and Cabinet office or their local state or federal member of parliament to complete the appropriate application.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Office of the CEO will monitor compliance with this policy. Any detected instances of recognition that do not comply with this policy will be reported to the Chief Executive Officer to determine outcome.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Discretionary Expenditure Policy
Procurement Guidelines
Volunteering Policy
Memorials and Plaques Policy
Privacy Policy

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DRAFT COMMUNITY RECOGNITION POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Community Recognition Policy

REFERENCES

Governor General of Australia website
Governor of Victoria website

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Date
1	Original Policy adopted	Council	25/09/2019
2	Policy review. Updates include expanding on the process for greater clarity and inclusion of other forms of recognition and recognition from other dignitaries.	Council	

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.1
(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 21 AUGUST 2024

Recommendation

That Council accepts the minutes of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting held on 21 August 2024 shown as Attachment 1.

1. Executive Summary

The responsibility for assisting Council with its obligations regarding CEO employment, performance and remuneration is delivered through the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.

The purpose of this report is to present the minutes of the recent CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee including recommendations for Council to consider.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no conflict of interest declarations to consider.

3. Background & Context

The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee was established in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and provides direction and guidance on the management of the life cycle of the Chief Executive Officer's employment including recruitment, performance and end of contract processes.

In accordance with the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Policy, the Committee is to hold meetings as often as is necessary to:

- consider documentation relevant to the CEO's performance and remuneration;
- prepare documentation relevant to the CEO's employment and remuneration, including, where that documentation concerns matters outside the Committee's delegation, Council reports and contractual documents, for the approval of Council; and
- review the Remuneration Package and conditions of employment of the CEO.

The purpose of the meeting held on 21 August 2024 was to review the progress towards to the achievement of the actions within the CEO Performance Plan 2023/2024 as endorsed by Council on 22 November 2023.

4. Issues

There are no issues to consider.

5. Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with the Council Plan objective of Transparent and Accountable Governance.

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ITEM NO: 9.2.1
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PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

**CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 21
AUGUST 2024 (cont'd)**

6. External Engagement

The CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee met on 21 August 2024.

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee operate within operational budget.

8. Risk & Mitigation

There are no risk implications to consider.

9. Conclusion

This report provides the minutes of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee of meeting held on 21 August 2024.

It is recommended that Council note the minutes and endorse the recommendations contained within the attached minutes.

Attachments

- 1 Minutes - CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee - *printed in separate document*

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.2
(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Public Interest Disclosure Policy as shown in attachment 1.

1. Executive Summary

The Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Policy), (previously known as the Whistleblower Policy) has been reviewed in line with the scheduled review period and following an Internal Audit conducted in April 2023, providing several recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the Policy.

The Policy ensures that Council has an effective process for facilitating the receipt of public interest disclosures and the assessment and notification of those disclosures.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no conflict-of-interest declarations to consider.

3. Background & Context

An Internal Audit conducted in April 2023 observed that the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower) Policy did not meet all the elements of the *Fraud and Corruption Control Standard* and recommended that Council revise the Policy to address:

- Requirements for feedback to be provided to whistleblowers.
- Monitoring of the whistleblower management systems performance and effectiveness.
- Position regarding rewarding whistleblowers for reporting conduct.

It was also observed that there was a risk that individuals may not be aware of their rights in making a public interest disclosure, discouraging them from coming forward caused by the Policy being developed in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act, which does not require best practice under the Standard.

The review of the Policy has taken the recommendations into consideration by enhancing the 'Managing Welfare' section and including a 'Monitoring and Evaluation' section.

The position on providing compensation or reward to people making a disclosure is also identified in the Policy.

The Policy is supported by a Public Interest Disclosure Procedure that provides greater detail in relation to the process, roles, responsibilities and contact details for other agencies.

4. Issues

In the past, a person who made a public interest disclosure was known as a whistleblower. This term is no longer used and has been removed from the Policy.

5. Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with the Council Plan Objective of Transparent and Accountable Governance.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.2
(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

6. External Engagement

The initial review was conducted by an external consultant as part of the Policy Review program currently underway.

External engagement to inform the development of this Policy was not conducted in accordance with Councils Community Engagement Policy as the basis of this Policy is legislated however Council will maintain and promote awareness of its procedures for people to make a public interest disclosure.

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

There are no budget considerations.

8. Risk & Mitigation

Reviewing and enhancing the Policy mitigates the risk of an effective process and provides guidance to staff on their roles and responsibilities.

9. Conclusion

The draft Public Interest Disclosure Policy has been reviewed following an internal audit and is presented for consideration by Council.

Attachments

- 1 Draft Public Interest Disclosure

FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.2
**(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)**
**(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)**

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

Moira Shire Council
Draft Public Interest Disclosure Policy

Policy type	Council
Version Number	
Responsible Director	Corporate Performance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance, Risk and Performance
Date adopted by Council	
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Administrative changes do not materially alter the document (such as spelling/typographical errors, change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department). Administrative updates can be made in accordance with the Policy Framework Guidelines.



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PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure there is an effective process for facilitating the receipt of public interest disclosures, their assessment and notification; and
- provide protection for those who make a disclosure and those who might be cooperating in a public interest disclosure, consistent with Council's obligations under the [Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 \(Act\)](#) and the [Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 \(IBAC Act\)](#).

SCOPE

This policy applies to Moira Shire Council's Public Officers (which includes Councillors/Administrators, employees, contractors, volunteers and committee members).

Council can receive public interest disclosures that relate to Moira Shire Council, but disclosures relating to Councillors must be made directly to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) or the Victorian Ombudsman.

Council may receive public interest disclosures that do not relate to Moira Shire Council. This policy includes handling of misdirected disclosures.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Public Interest Disclosure (PID)	A disclosure by a natural person of information that shows / tends to show or information that the person reasonably believes shows / tends to show improper conduct or detrimental action.
Public Interest Complaint (PIC)	A Public Interest Disclosure that has been determined by the IBAC, the Victorian Inspectorate or the Integrity and Oversight Committee (IOC) to be a Public Interest Complaint.
Council	Moira Shire Council.
Councillor	A person who holds the office of member of Council as defined by the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . Including Administrators in accordance with the <i>Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023</i> .
Public Officer	Moira Shire Council's Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers, committee members.
Entity	could mean; the IBAC; the Victorian Ombudsman; the Local Government Inspectorate; Victoria Police.
Improper conduct	As defined by section 4 of the <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012</i> . Corrupt conduct and/or any of the following conduct by a public officer or public body in their capacity as a public officer or public body that would constitute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a criminal offence. • serious professional misconduct. • dishonest performance of public functions. • an intentional breach or reckless breach of public trust.

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ITEM NO: 9.2.2
(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
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PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an intentional or reckless misuse of information or material acquired in the course of the performance of public functions. • a substantial mismanagement of public resources. • a substantial risk to the health or safety of one or more persons. • a substantial risk to the environment.
Corrupt Conduct	<p>As defined by section 4 of the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011 and includes conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of any person that adversely affects the honest performance by a public officer of a public body of their functions; or • of a public officer or public body that constitutes or involves the dishonest performance of their functions; or • of a public officer or public body that constitutes or involves knowingly or recklessly breaching public trust; or • of a public officer or public body that involves the misuse of information or material acquired in the course of the performance of their functions, or • that could constitute a conspiracy of an attempt to engage in any conduct referred to above. • being conduct that would, if the facts were found proved beyond a reasonable doubt, constitute a relevant offence.
Misdirected disclosure	<p>A disclosure made to an entity which ordinarily can receive PIDs and which the discloser believed to be the correct place for the disclosure but is not the correct place for that particular disclosure. The disclosure can be notified to the IBAC for assessment as a PIC and will receive the protections of the public interest disclosure regime.</p>
Detrimental Action	<p>Includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) action causing injury, loss or damage; b) intimidation or harassment; c) discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business, including the taking of disciplinary action.
Discloser	<p>Person who makes a disclosure.</p>
Co-operator	<p>Someone who cooperates or intends to cooperate with an investigation of a disclosure.</p>
In Private	<p>Circumstances in which a person making a disclosure reasonably believes that the only persons who are present or able to listen to the disclosure at the time it is made are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the person making the disclosure; b) one or more person to whom the disclosure can be made in accordance with the Act and the Regulations; and/or

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PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

	c) an Australian legal practitioner (if any) representing the person making the disclosure.
Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator (PIDC)	Provides a local point of contact for individuals seeking general information about protected disclosures and is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging direct reporting of concerns to the IBAC but can receive and notify the IBAC of potential public interest disclosures regarding Council's Public Officers. • assisting IBAC investigators. • ensuring the welfare of disclosers by appointing welfare officers as required. • working to make Public Officers aware of the public interest disclosure legislation.
Welfare Officer	Means a person appointed by the PIDC to manage the welfare of people who have made a disclosure, those who are the subject of a disclosure and potential co-operator/s.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council values transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices and does not tolerate improper conduct by its people, or the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

Council will:

- maintain and promote awareness of its procedures for people to make public interest disclosures.
- take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making the disclosure.
- afford natural justice to the person or body who is the subject of the disclosure.

To support this commitment Council will:

- raise Public Officers' awareness of their responsibilities to disclose, their rights if they do disclose, how to make disclosures and the welfare supports available.
- encourage internal and external disclosers to report their concerns to the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman in the first instance to minimise the risks to confidentiality and independence.
- provide appropriate support and assistance to investigating entities by identifying a person to act as the PIDC.
- provide a process to manage the welfare of people who have made a disclosure, those who are the subject of a disclosure and potential co-operator/s by identifying a person to act as the Welfare Officer.
- provide information to guide reporting of disclosures to the appropriate authority if the disclosure does not concern Public Officers.

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PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

Disclosure handling

Who can make a disclosure	Disclosures can only be made by natural person(s), not companies or businesses.
How to make a disclosure	Must be made verbally, in writing, or in some cases, online. It may be made anonymously. It must be made in private.
Who can disclosures be made about	Must be made only about the conduct of public bodies or public officers performing public functions.
What can disclosures be made about	Must be about improper conduct or detrimental action taken against a person in reprisal for making a disclosure.

To whom can disclosures be made

Subject of the disclosure	Disclose to
Councillors	Must be made to the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman. Council cannot receive these disclosures.
Council Public Officers	Disclosers should report their concerns directly to the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman in the first instance. Council's PIDC can receive disclosures, however the discloser will be encouraged to report to the relevant agency first.
Non-Council Public Officers	Disclosers should report their concerns directly to the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman in the first instance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Moira Shire Public Interest Disclosure Procedures](#) as it provides a greater level of detail in relation to the process, roles, responsibilities and contact details for other agencies.

Misdirected disclosures

If Council receives a misdirected disclosure and the discloser believes Council is the right entity for the disclosure, the PIDC will consider if the disclosure is a potential public interest disclosure and notify those disclosures to the appropriate entity within 28 days.

If Council receives a misdirected disclosure and that person knows Council is not the entity for the disclosure, the PIDC will advise the discloser what entity can receive the disclosure.

If Council receives a disclosure regarding the conduct of the Councillor(s), the discloser will be immediately advised to disclose their concerns to the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman.

Maintaining confidentiality

The PID Act requires information about the identity of a discloser and the content of a public interest disclosure to be kept confidential.

To minimise the risk of the identity of a discloser being revealed inadvertently, Council recommends individuals make their disclosure to the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman in the first instance.

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PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

Managing disclosures made to Council

In receiving and handling disclosures, Council and the PIDC will:

- remind Public Officers that if they make a disclosure, they should keep it confidential.
- limit the number of people who can be made aware of the discloser's identity, or information that could identify the discloser.
- ensure secure electronic or paper filing system for the receipt, storage, assessment and notification of public disclosures.
- develop a risk management plan for every disclosure to manage the risk of confidentiality breaches.
- assist the investigating entity.

Managing welfare

In receiving a public interest disclosure Council will enact appropriate:

- welfare strategies that consider the welfare of disclosers and co-operator/s and people who are the subject of disclosures.
- processes to protect disclosers from reprisal.
- actions to ensure that disclosers, co-operator/s and people who are the subject of disclosures are kept informed of the process, the actions being taken and the ongoing progress of the disclosure. There will be circumstances in which this will not be appropriate and the PIDC will clearly document this as part of the disclosure.

Detrimental Action (Reprisals)

Council will not tolerate any reprisal action against Public Officers or members of the community who report wrongdoing. Council will act to protect Public Officers who report wrongdoing from detrimental action.

If it is found that a Public Officer that has made a disclosure has experienced reprisals arising from their disclosures, it will constitute detrimental action and be reportable under the Public Interest Disclosure Scheme. It is also a criminal offence. Detrimental action is considered misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The procedures and systems that underpin this policy will be subject to a mid-cycle review by the Manager Governance, Risk and Performance and updated when either of the following occur:

- Opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the procedures and systems are identified.
- The related information is amended or replaced.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Moirā Shire Council) Act 2023

Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006

Protected Disclosure Act 2012 (Public Interest Disclosures)

Protected Disclosure Regulations 2013

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011

Public Administration Act 2004 (for definitions)

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Public Interest Disclosure Procedure

Administrator Code of Conduct 2023

Employee Code of Conduct

Fraud Prevention and Control Policy

FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.2
**(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)**
**(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)**

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Public Interest Disclosure

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption – Guidelines for making and handling public interest disclosures 2020

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption – Guidelines for public interest disclosure welfare management 2020

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Date
1	Original Policy adopted	Council	
2	Changes made to original policy included: 1. Addition of monitoring and evaluation processes. 2. Providing ongoing communication and feedback as part of the welfare of disclosures	Council	

DRAFT

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
(GOVERNANCE AND RISK COORDINATOR,
NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Recommendation

That Council adopt:

1. the Councillor Expense and Support Policy as shown in attachment 1; and
2. the Councillor Professional Development Policy as shown in attachment 2.

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council adoption of the Councillor Expense and Support Policy and the Councillor Professional Development Policy.

The purpose of the Councillor Expense and Support Policy is to support Councillors (including Administrators) and members of delegated committees to perform their role, as defined in the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and the *Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023* (the Moira Act), by ensuring proper use of funds and that reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their role are reimbursed. This policy is intended to ensure that Councillors and members of delegated committees are supported to perform their duties.

The Councillor Professional Development Policy describes the support available to Administrators to assist them in undertaking relevant professional training and development to enhance/assist their performance and leadership on behalf of the Moira Shire community.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There is no officer conflict of interest.

3. Background & Context

The policies were last reviewed in 2019 & 2020 and were developed to provide a consistent approach in dealing with Councillor expenses, support and professional development as defined in the Act.

A review of these policies has been undertaken with the following amendments made:

- Policy content converted into new policy template.
- Inclusion of Administrators.
- Responsible Officer changed from Manager Finance to Manager Governance & Performance.

Following internal review these policies are presented for consideration by Council.

4. Issues

No issues identified.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
(GOVERNANCE AND RISK COORDINATOR,
NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

Council Plan

5. Transparent and accountable governance

5.04 We will provide a safe and productive, and supportive workspace to foster ingenuity, diversity and enthusiasm.

5. Strategic Alignment

6. External Engagement

External consultation is not required.

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

Financial considerations are included in the 2024/25 Budget.

8. Risk & Mitigation

Risk

Financial

Mitigation

Financial considerations are incorporated in the adopted 2024/25 Budget

Economic (regional context or broader economic impact)

N/A

Environmental

N/A

Reputational

Legislative Compliance

Guided by the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023*.

9. Conclusion

That Council consider the adoption of the Councillor Expense & Support Policy and the Councillor Professional Development Policy.

Attachments

- 1 Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy
- 2 Draft Councillor Professional Development Policy

FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)**
**(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

Moira Shire Council
Councillor Expense and Support Policy

Policy type	Council
Version Number	2
Responsible Director	Director Corporate Performance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance & Performance
Date adopted by Council	
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Administrative changes do not materially alter the document (such as spelling/typographical errors, change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department). Administrative updates can be made in accordance with the Policy Framework Guidelines.



FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

PURPOSE

This policy supports Councillors/Administrators and members of delegated committees to perform their role, as defined under the *Local Government Act 2020*, by ensuring that expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their role are reimbursed. The policy also provides guidance on:

- entitlements.
- processes for reimbursement.
- reporting requirements.

The policy is intended to ensure that Councillors/Administrators and members of delegated committees are supported to perform their duties without disadvantage and ensuring appropriate use of public funds.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Moira Shire Councillors/Administrators, members of delegated committees and staff responsible for administering the reimbursement process.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Councillor	A person who holds the office of member of Council as defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . Including Administrators in accordance with <i>Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023</i> .
Personal Expenses	Out of pocket expenses incurred by Councillors that are not related to their duties as a Councillor. This may include attendance at an event in a personal capacity and not as the council representative.
Councillor Expenses	Expenses incurred in the performance of council duties as described in section 41 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and eligible for reimbursement.
Carer	A carer is defined under section 4 of the <i>Carers Recognition Act 2020</i> .
Duties as a Councillor	The duties of a Councillor include those that are defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , as the duties performed by a Councillor that are necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of a council having regard to any relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial guidelines or Council policies.
Delegated Committee	Delegated committees are defined under section 63 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . For example Audit & Risk Committee.
Authorised meetings and functions	Meetings and activities or bodies to which a Councillor is formally appointed by the council, including, delegated Committees, Advisory Committees and representative bodies or as directed by the Mayor.

FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

For the purpose of this policy the duties of a Councillor are deemed to include Councillor attendance at meetings and functions that have a demonstrable benefit to the community in that the attendance is necessary to assist the Council to:

- achieve its key commitments under the Council Plan; and/or
- meet its role, functions and responsibilities.

Examples include:

- meetings of the Council or its committees.
- meetings, briefing sessions and civic or ceremonial functions convened by the Mayor, Councillor or the Council.
- meetings of community groups, organisations and statutory authorities to which a Councillor has been appointed as a Council representative.
- a meeting, function or other official role as a representative of the Mayor or the Council.

EXPENSE TYPES

Travel	<p>When attending events that form part of the Councillors' official duties or professional development, Councillors will be provided with a Council vehicle or may choose to use public transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of a Council vehicle must be in accordance with Council's Motor Vehicle Policy and related documents including Conditions of Use. • A personal vehicle may be used if a pool vehicle is not available, or its use is unreasonable or impractical.
Private vehicle use	<p>Councillors using a private vehicle to carry out official Council duties will be reimbursed travel expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the per kilometre business rate set by the Australian Taxation Office, and • may be eligible be paid remote travel (allowance) more than 50kms away from their primary residence. <p>The reimbursement of private vehicle expenses will be calculated using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a completed logbook submitted by the Councillor or • the most direct route using a mapping system, or • if reasonable alternative modes of transport are more cost effective, the reimbursement will be limited to the cost of the alternative mode.

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**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

Carer and dependent-related expenses	<p>Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of childcare is reasonably required for a Councillor or member of a delegated committee to perform their role.</p> <p>This also applies to the care of dependent/s, while the Councillor or delegated committee member is undertaking their official duties; and may include expenses such as hourly fees and booking fees, if applicable.</p> <p>Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of carer services is reasonably required when a Councillors or delegated committee member who is a carer (see Definitions) incurs reasonable expenses in the performance of their duties.</p> <p>Payments for carer and childcare services will not be made to a person who resides with the Councillor or delegated committee member; has any financial or pecuniary interest with the Councillor or delegated committee member; or has a relationship with the Councillor, delegated committee member or their partner.</p>
Overseas travel	<p>Council will fund overseas travel in accordance with the relevant Council resolution determined in an open meeting of Council.</p> <p>The proposal presented to Council for its consideration must include specific details regarding the objectives of the travel, its potential community benefits and detailed costing.</p>
Accommodation	<p>Council will pay for accommodation for Council business or professional development if fatigue or driver safety is a reasonable concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation within the municipality will need approval by the Chief Executive Officer. • The standard of accommodation will include a standard room or four-star equivalent.
Meal Allowance	<p>If traveling for Council business or attending professional development, Councillors may be entitled to claim reimbursement of reasonable cost of meals, excluding alcohol.</p> <p>Council will pay for or reimburse the actual cost to a maximum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast: \$30 • Lunch: \$30 • Dinner: \$50
Partner reimbursement	<p>Council events may include the invitation for a Councillor's partner. In this case, the costs of the partners' attendance will be met by council.</p>
Professional memberships	<p>Councillors may be eligible to have professional memberships reimbursed by Council if the CEO determines that the membership will directly benefit the Council.</p> <p>A Councillor may request a contribution to the cost of the professional membership. Council will consider the request upon receipt of the paid tax invoice provided by the Councillor and with completion of Councillor's Reimbursement Form.</p>

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**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

Legal Advice	<p>Council will only meet legal expenses incurred as a result of a Councillor executing their official duties. Councillors need to be aware of their role and responsibilities under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>.</p> <p>If a Councillor requires legal advice in connection with their function as Councillor:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Councillor may submit a Notice of Motion requesting that Council facilitate and fund such legal advice; or 2. The Chief Executive Officer may facilitate such legal advice and confirm that Council will meet expenses if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) appropriate to do so taking into the consideration the same criteria used by Council (below); and b) the Councillor requirement for legal advice cannot be deferred until the lodgement or consideration of a Notice of Motion. 3. Council will evaluate any requirement by a Councillor for legal advice against the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the extent to which the subject-matter of the advice required relates to the Councillor functions as a Councillors; b) the extent to which the subject-matter of the advice required relates to a matter before council or the representative role as a Councillors; c) the extent to which the subject-matter of the advice required will or is likely to be of interest to all Councillors; d) the public interest; and e) any other relevant considerations. 4. In the event that legal advice relates to a writ, action or pending action against a Councillor or Councillors, the Councillor or Councillors must supply a copy of the writ or action or provide the information which may lead to an action to the Chief Executive Officer, who will advise Council's insurers as soon as possible, in accordance with Council's insurance policy conditions.
Other Expenditure	<p>Any expenditure not specified in this policy will be the responsibility of the Councillor, except where the Chief Executive Officer grants approval.</p>

FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

ACTIVITIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Where the activity is attended by a Councillor:

- on a voluntary basis; or
- without prior authorisation or delegation of the Chief Executive Officer; or
- where there is no resolution or policy position of the Council in support of attendance,

then the activity will not be deemed to be “performing duties as a Councillor or delegated committee member” and associated costs should be considered to be met from the Councillors remuneration.

Where there is uncertainty as to whether costs should be met from the Councillors remuneration the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for determination.

The payment of Councillors’ remuneration and reimbursement of Councillor expenses may have taxation implications, which are the responsibility of individual Councillors.

COUNCIL WILL NOT REIMBURSE

- Parking, traffic, or other fines and penalties.
- Costs associated with the purchase of alcohol.
- Expenses normally recoverable from a third party.
- Expenses that are not incurred for council purposes.
- Late payment interest on credit cards.
- Claims made more than five business days after the date of the expense was incurred unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.
- Expenses such as consumption of minibar items incurred while staying in accommodation.
- Any unlawful or accidental damage caused in an accommodation venue.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CLAIMING REIMBURSEMENT

Section 40 and 41 of the Act defines the base requirements for Councillors seeking reimbursement of expenses.

Process

This policy requires applications for reimbursement to be made in writing.

In seeking reimbursement, Councillors must ensure:

- Claims are to be submitted within five business days after the expense has been incurred.
- Claims include sufficient detail to demonstrate that the expense for which reimbursement is being claimed is a reasonable bona fide expense incurred while performing their council duties.
- Applications are made in writing using the Councillor Expense Reimbursement form.
- claims are accompanied by original receipts and/or tax invoices which clearly identify the name of the payee and ABN where applicable.
- If receipts cannot be produced, a statutory declaration must be provided.

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**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM PERIOD

Councillors will not reimburse claims made outside of the timeframes specified.

If a Councillor does not claim an expense within the designated timeframe, the expense cannot be claimed as an additional amount for an alternate expense.

ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Councillors will be provided with the following support in performing their duties as a Councillor:

- Tablet computer (including data allowance)
- Mobile phone (optional)
- Stationary
- Access to copier/printer/scanner
- Name badge
- Business cards
- Administration support
- Access to meeting rooms
- Access to Pool vehicle
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Office
- Vehicle including fuel card (Mayor)

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

All Councillors will be provided with appropriate administrative support.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Quarterly reports of all Councillor and delegated committee member expenses will be provided to an open meeting of Council, and the Council's Audit and Risk Committee.

The report will include:

- expenses incurred by Councillors during the quarter.
- reimbursement claims made by Councillors during the quarter.

Audits of Councillor expenses and reimbursements may be carried out from time to time as part of Council's annual audit program.

Council commits to monitoring processes and decision making to understand the overall success of the policy's implementation.

A periodic review of the policy will be undertaken to ensure any changes required to strengthen or update the policy are made in a timely manner.

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Moira Shire Council is publicly accountable for the use of its funds and all staff exercising financial authority under delegation have the responsibility for ensuring that approvals accordance with Council's policies.

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GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSE & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Draft Councillor Expense and Support Policy

RELATED LEGISLATION

Carers Recognition Act 2012
Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
Freedom of Information Act 1982
Local Government Act 2020
Local Government (Moirā Shire Council) Act 2023
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
Equal Opportunity Act 2010
Gender Equality Act 2020

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Public Transparency Policy
Fraud Prevention and Control Policy
Governance Rules

REFERENCES

Administrator Code of Conduct
Governance Rules
Audit & Risk Committee Charter
Motor Vehicle Policy and Conditions of Use for a Council Motor Vehicle

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Date
1	New Councillor Expense and Support Policy developed to comply with Local Government Act 2020.	Council	26/08/2020
2	Scheduled policy review.	Council	xxxx

FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)**
**(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

**COUNCILLOR EXPENSES & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [2] - Draft Councillor Professional Development Policy

Moira Shire Council
Draft Councillor Professional Development Policy

Policy type	Council
Version Number	03
Responsible Director	Director Corporate Performance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance, Risk and Performance
Date adopted by Council	
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Administrative changes do not materially alter the document (such as spelling/typographical errors, change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department). Administrative updates can be made in accordance with the Policy Framework Guidelines.



FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
**(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)**
**(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)**

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [2] - Draft Councillor Professional Development Policy

PURPOSE

This policy describes the support available to Councillors / Administrators to assist them in undertaking relevant professional training and development to enhance their performance and leadership on behalf of the Moira Shire community.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Moira Shire Councillors / Administrators and staff responsible for administering the process.

The policy does not apply to professional development programs initiated by Council such as Councillors' / Administrators' induction.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Councillor	A person who holds the office of member of Council as defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . Including Administrators in accordance with <i>Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023</i> .
Personal Expenses	Out of pocket expenses incurred by Councillors that are not related to their duties as a Councillor. This may include attendance at an event in a personal capacity and not as the council representative.
Councillor Expenses	Expenses incurred in the performance of Council duties as described in section 41 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and eligible for reimbursement.
Duties as a Councillor	The duties of a Councillor include those that are defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , as the duties performed by a Councillor that are necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of a Council having regard to any relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial guidelines or Council policies.
Professional Development	Learning that leads to or emphasises education in a specific professional career field or builds practical job applicable skills.
Training	The process of increasing the knowledge and skills of an employee or Councillor for doing a particular job. It seeks to improve the job performance and work behaviour of those trained.

POLICY STATEMENT

Application for Professional Development

Councillors can request support under this policy to attend professional development activities. The request must be:

- provided in writing using the Professional Development Application Form;
- addressed to the CEO; and
- received at least 7 business days prior to the close of registrations.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [2] - Draft Councillor Professional Development Policy

An application must:

- detail the benefit to Council and/or Moira Shire community that will result from the professional development.
- include relevant information about the program e.g., program brochure including cost, time commitments and associated expenses that may be incurred such as accommodation and travel.
- demonstrate that the Councillor fulfills any eligibility or prior learning requirements that may apply.
- demonstrate that the training can be completed within the term of office.

Funding

- Each Councillor may access up to \$5000 per financial year to fund approved professional development activities which excludes mandatory training such as inductions.
- Approved professional development activities are consistent with the duties of a Councillor and therefore Councillors may apply for reimbursement of associated expenses via the Councillor Expenses and Support Policy.
- With the approval of the Chief Executive Officer, Councillors may access additional funding in a specific year provided the expenditure does not exceed \$20,000 across the four-year term of office, or pro-rata equivalent for Councillors appointed between general elections.

Application assessment and approval

This policy outlines the guidelines to ensure that Councillors are provided the opportunity to attend training programs, conferences and functions to support any professional development.

In assessing a Councillor's professional development application, the CEO will consider:

- the relevance to the role and development of the Councillor
- and whether the participation will:
 - Provide information on a contemporary issue, so that Council can contribute to discussion or debate;
 - Put forward Council's viewpoint during formation of a collaborative policy, or stance on an issue;
 - Meet community expectations that Council representation is necessary for the benefit of the community;
 - Deliver economic development opportunities; or
 - Provide improvements to the built, social, economic and natural well-being of our community.

Accountability

Councillors will provide a written report to the next Scheduled Council Meeting following completion of the professional development activity.

The report will include:

- Details of course topic, content, location, date and duration;
- Relevance of Conference/Workshop/Training Session to Council's business and Councillor's personal development requirements;
- Total costs covering course, course material, travel, accommodation and any other expenses for the Councillor; and
- Benefits from attendance.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.3
(GOVERNANCE AND RISK
COORDINATOR, NANCY MUSTICA)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES & SUPPORT POLICY AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [2] - Draft Councillor Professional Development Policy

Reimbursement to Council

Councillors are required to advise of and reimburse Council for private expenses incurred in the use of Council resources. This may include private use of a Council provided mobile phone, accommodation or any other expense as mentioned in this policy.

No new training or training expenses will be approved, in the final six months of a Councillor term.

Organisation responsibilities

Council is publicly accountable for the use of its funds and all staff exercising financial authority under delegation have the responsibility for ensuring that approvals accord with Council's policies.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Moirā Shire Council) Act 2023

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Administrator Code of Conduct
Fraud Prevention and Control Policy
Governance Rules
Annual Budget
Procurement Policy and Guidelines

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Date
1	Councillor Professional Development Policy developed.	Council	19/08/2013
2	Scheduled policy review.	Council	27/11/2019
3	Scheduled policy review.	Council	Xxxx

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the Treasury Management Policy as shown in Attachment 1; and
2. Revoke the Investment and Cash Management Policy and Loan Borrowings Policy, as these are superseded by the draft Treasury Management Policy.

1. Executive Summary

This paper is seeking Council's endorsement of the newly prepared draft Treasury Management Policy ('the Policy'). The purpose of the Policy is to:

- Establish objectives and principles that outline when it is appropriate for Council to undertake borrowings within a sound financial management framework.
- Confirm Council's commitment to ensuring their cash is managed and investments are made in an appropriate, transparent, and ethical manner.
- Ensure particular emphasis is placed with the objective to optimises returns on investment earning within approved risk guidelines and ensure the security of funds.
- Ensure Council adheres to the provisions of the Local Government Act 2020; and
- Ensure Council operates within the relevant prudential guidelines of the Victorian Government, as monitored by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, as well as its own long-term sustainability metrics.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no officer conflicts regarding this report.

3. Background & Context

Upon internal review of the Loan Borrowings Policy, it was suggested that Council adopt a Treasury Management Policy, which is a consolidation of both the Loan Borrowing Policy and Investment & Cash Management Policy.

The new Treasury Management Policy guides Council's decision making regarding the financing of its strategic objectives, as covered by its Long-term Financial Plan and Annual Business Plan and Budget, and management of its cash investments.

The Loan Borrowings Policy was previously revised and adopted by Council on 16 December 2020. As part of the development of the Policy, the following key changes have been made to the borrowings sections:

- Definitions have been included into the Policy template.
- The Policy template has been updated to align with Council's new template style.
- Oversight controls of the loan register have been updated in the Policy.
- Borrowing structure preference, being Principal and Interest, documented in the Policy.

**FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

**ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)**

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

- Provided clarification that Council and the Audit & Risk Committee will be advised of loan agreements executed or changes made to loan structures.
- Leases have been included in the Policy as a form of financing arrangement.
- Bank covenant reporting to ELT has also been included in the Policy; and
- Council’s borrowings target indicators from the 2021-2031 Adopted Financial Plan have been included in the Financial Performance Measures table.
- Principles have been simplified.
- Restrictions pertaining to the term and type of borrowings have been removed and replaced with a market analysis to guide decision making.
- Requirements to remove financial securities upon closure of a loan facility have been documented in the policy.
- Roles and responsibilities have been included in the policy.

The Investment and Cash Management Policy was previously revised and adopted by Council on 27 March 2019. As part of the development of the Policy, the following key changes have been made to the investment sections:

- Investment strategy principles simplified.
- Term and amount investment restrictions based on credit ratings changed from a fixed based approach to more of a risk-based approach to better align with risk appetite statement.
- Delegations noted in the policy.
- Liquidity risk management noted in the policy.

The Policy was tabled with Council’s Audit & Risk Committee on 19 September 2024 where it was recommended to Council for adoption, subject to recommended grammatical and illustrative changes. These recommended changes have been reflected in the draft Policy presented in Attachment 1.

4. Issues

There are no issues to note.

5. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

5. Transparent and accountable governance

5.01 Our decisions will be evidence-based, financially viable, and for the longer term

6. External Engagement

Engagement

External NIL

Feedback

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

To ensure compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Policy requires that all loan borrowings must be included in the budget or a revised budget and authorised by Council resolution.

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ITEM NO: 9.2.4
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(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

8. Risk & Mitigation

Risk

Financial viability

Mitigation

Borrowings can be an effective mechanism to reduce risks associated with financial viability and liquidity when used appropriately and sustainability. Forecasting borrowing structures prior to entering loan arrangements will ensure that Council can sustain loan terms over the life of the arrangement.

The policy specifically addresses liquidity risk and controls that Council must have in place to mitigate this risk through its investment and borrowing activities.

Breach of legislation

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that a Council cannot borrow money unless the proposed borrowings were included in the budget or a revised budget.

As part of Council's long term financial planning, borrowing strategies are included to fund major projects and support Council's cash flow requirements. Recommendation of borrowing structures then form part of Council's annual budget cycle.

The way funds are invested is also prescribed in the *Local Government Act 2020*. Eligible investment options have been noted within the policy to ensure alignment with the Act.

9. Conclusion

The Treasury Management Policy guides Council's decision making regarding the financing of its strategic objectives, as covered by its Long-term Financial Plan and Annual Business Plan and Budget, and management of its cash investments.

The Policy seeks to establish objectives and principles that outline when it is appropriate for Council to undertake borrowings or investment activity within a sound financial management framework, whilst adhering to the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020* and prudential requirements of the Victorian Government.

Attachments

1 DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

Moira Shire Council
Treasury Management Policy

Policy type	Council
Version Number	1.0
Responsible Director	Director Corporate Performance
Responsible Officer	Manager Finance
Date adopted by Council	
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Administrative changes do not materially alter the document (such as spelling/typographical errors, change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department). Administrative updates can be made in accordance with the Policy Framework Guidelines.



FILE NO:
**5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE**

ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
**(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)**

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Treasury Management Policy is to ensure Council is managing its financial risk for borrowing and investment activities and to:

- Establish objectives and principles that outline when it is appropriate for Council to undertake borrowings within a sound financial management framework.
- Confirm Council's commitment to ensuring its cash is managed and investments are made in an appropriate, transparent, and ethical manner.
- Ensure particular emphasis is placed with the objective to optimise returns on investment earning within approved risk guidelines and ensure the security of funds.
- Ensure Council adheres to the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*; and
- Ensure Council operates within the relevant prudential guidelines of the Victorian Government, as monitored by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, as well as its own long-term sustainability metrics.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Council when considering and determining the annual budget or alongside other relevant Council decision that concerns borrowings from external financial institutions, cash management and investment activities.

Council must consider this policy when:

- considering new borrowings,
- considering investment options,
- considering cash management options, and
- refinancing existing borrowings (where long-term benefits of refinancing are greater than the cost of the existing loan) as approved by Council resolution.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Act	Refers to the Local Government Act 2020.
ADI	Authorised Deposit-taking Institution licensed by the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority (APRA)
Council	Moira Shire Council
Council Resolution	Refers to a Council resolution to adopt either Council's annual budget or revised budget, which reflects the proposed borrowing structure that Council will adopt as part of its financing strategy.
Counter Party	A legal and financial term which refers to the other individual or institution to an agreement or contract.
Credit Rating	A forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation, a specific class of financial obligations, or a specific financial program. It takes into consideration the creditworthiness of guarantors, insurers or other forms of credit enhancement on the obligation and considers the currency in which the obligation is denominated.
Credit Risk	The risk that the financial institution will not fulfil their obligations under the financial instrument resulting in monetary loss.
Fixed Rate Loan	A loan that attracts a fixed pre-determined interest rate throughout the term of the loan

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ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

Term	Definition
Investments	Arrangements that are undertaken or acquired for producing income.
Interest Rate Risk	The risk that the fair value or future cash flows of an investment will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.
Investment Portfolio	A collection of investments.
Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF)	Is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils.
Long Term Financial Plan	Is defined as per the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> Part 4, Section 91.
Preservation of Capital	An investment strategy with the primary goal of preventing losses in an investment portfolio's total value.
Speculative	Involves deliberately taking a higher risk in the hope of making an extraordinary gain.
Surplus Cash	Funds that are deemed surplus to operations for the immediate period.
Variable Rate Loan	A loan that attracts an interest rate linked to a variable benchmark.
Yield	The annual rate of return on an investment.

PRINCIPLES

This Policy provides direction in relation to the treasury function and establishes a decision framework with principles to ensure that a borrowing and investment strategy is followed.

Borrowing Strategy Principles

The following principles and assumptions contribute to the borrowing strategy:

- Financial risks are monitored and managed prudently having regard to economic circumstances.
- Financial policies and strategic plans, including the Annual Budget and the Long-Term Financial Plan, provide stability and predictability for the financial impact on Council to ensure long-term borrowings are sustainable.
- Appropriate funds are available at the appropriate time to support the delivery of Council's strategic objectives.
- Optimum times to borrow, considering interest rates, construction cost inflation rates, and the need to provide economic stimulus are considered.
- Council seeks to minimise borrowing costs.
- Where applicable, the structure of the borrowing is appropriate for the nature of the assets being funded.
- Inter-generational approaches are considered as part of determining the most appropriate way to fund activities.
- Council will complete an analysis of the market to enable a recommendation on the loan term (number of years) and interest rate type (fixed or variable).
- Council will not borrow funds for operating expenditure.

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5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
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ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

Investment Strategy Principles

Council will be conservative with the investment of working capital and other available funds with respect to the time horizon required for use of these funds.

While exercising the power to invest, priority is to be given to preservation of capital, liquidity, and return on investment in accordance with these guiding principles:

- Preservation of capital is the principal objective of the investment portfolio. Funds are to be invested in a manner that seeks to ensure security of the investment portfolio. This includes managing credit and interest rate risk within approved thresholds and parameters.
- The investment portfolio will ensure there is sufficient liquidity to meet all reasonably anticipated cash flow requirements, as and when they fall due, without incurring costs due to the unanticipated early maturity of investments.
- Investments are expected to achieve a prudent rate of return that considers Council's risk tolerance. Return on investment will be monitored and compared to the benchmark set and the prevailing market rate for the investment category.

As custodians of public money this policy aims to balance the security of investments, rate of return, and commitment to supporting environmentally and socially responsible investments.

POLICY STATEMENT

Legislative Requirements

- Council will develop a Financial Plan, which incorporates a borrowing strategy as per the Model Financial Plan, in line with the requirements of Section 91 of the Act.
- Council will not borrow money unless the proposed borrowings have been included in a budget or a revised budget, approved by Council, as per Section 104 of the Act.
- All borrowings must be approved by Council, and Section 11(2)(l) of the Act stipulates that Council cannot delegate the power to approve borrowings.
- Council will ensure compliance with legislation governing investments, in particular Section 101 and 103 of the Act.
- Council must adhere to the financial management principles of the Act.

Determining Appropriate Lending Institution

Following the Council resolution to authorise borrowings, requests will be made to appropriate lending institutions, (in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy), inviting written quotations on Council's borrowing requirements.

This requirement is exempted if the loan borrowing is sought from a State or Commonwealth Government loans scheme which is designed to allow Council to invest in community infrastructure or services. Generally, these will be at a discounted rate to funds sought from commercial lending institutions.

Borrowing Arrangements

When entering borrowing arrangements, Council will seek to minimise interest costs over the long term without introducing undue volatility in annual interest costs.

Principal & Interest repayments are preferred to Interest only repayments. This is because:

- Repayments under this structure result in an overall reduction in interest cost over the life of the loan.

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ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

- Council's revenue sources and operating expenditures are relatively stable, meaning interest only loans offer limited benefits in the long term; and
- Stability and reliability in Council's budgeting for borrowings, repayments and interest allows Council to ensure consistent service delivery.

When planning future borrowings, it is imperative that a market analysis is undertaken to determine the most appropriate term and interest rate type (fixed or variable). This analysis must also consider whether an offset account could be utilised by Council to redirect invested funds to reduce the future cost of borrowings.

Council's borrowings will be appropriately structured to constrain risk and will be consistent with the following parameters:

- Council will consider the appropriateness of the various types of debt products available,
- Council is to maintain a repayment schedule consistent with "principal and interest" repayment calculations, and
- Loan repayments made on a regular schedule: e.g. monthly, quarterly or otherwise determined at the time of entering the loan agreement. Consideration will be given to the efficiency of a payment schedule while minimising interest costs.

Through the quarterly finance reporting, Council and Council's Audit and Risk Committee will be notified of loan details when loan agreements are executed or if any changes to the structure of the loan occur during the loan term.

Short-term Financing Arrangements

To support day-to-day liquidity or respond to immediate working capital constraints, Council may utilise an overdraft facility. This facility is treated separate to borrowings, which are generally long-term in nature and must adhere to legislative requirements.

Repayment Arrangements

Council will retain the option to refinance loans following the completion of the initial loan term.

Council will ensure that on the repayment of any loan borrowings, that all the necessary actions are taken to finalise the loan. This will include any securities against loans being held by the lending institution are wound up and returned to Council.

Prudential Control

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) outlines the measures that must be reported in Council's Annual Report. This framework includes financial performance measures of Council, and specific to this policy, includes measures in relation to borrowings.

For sound financial management, Council must maintain a level of loan borrowings that ensures it stays within the target ratios as defined within Council's Adopted Financial Plan, which are informed by the metrics reported under the LGPRF.

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ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

Leases

Leasing as a funding option forms part of Council's overall borrowing strategy therefore it should follow Council's Treasury Management Policy. There are two types of leases:

1. An operating lease is where Council hires the asset for a set fee per period and at the end of the agreed time ownership of the asset remains with the lessor or the hire company. Council can terminate the lease at any time without incurring a penalty.
2. A finance lease is where Council agrees to a series of payments and a residual value for the asset. There is a penalty for terminating the agreement prior to the finishing date. At the end of the period, it is expected that Council purchase the asset for the agreed residual value.

Council will undertake a lease versus buy analysis to determine the appropriate financing structure for assets:

- Which diminish in value quickly (e.g. motor vehicles, plant and IT equipment);
- Where assets will be disposed of in a short timeframe; and/or
- Where the lease option transfers responsibilities to the asset owner for maintenance and disposal.

Cash and Investment Management

Council will ensure surplus cash is invested in a manner which provides the highest investment return with the maximum security, whilst ensuring daily cash flow needs are met.

This Policy also aims to support Council's strategic goals, generate additional revenue as an alternate source of income to Council, to minimise costs or to realise one-off or perpetual financial gains.

Decisions to invest surplus cash in investments to maximise future returns will be made within the following parameters:

1. Diversification will be pursued with the purpose to reduce the overall risk of the portfolio whilst attaining a maximum rate of return. Investments will be diversified by institution. The selection and acceptance of an investment offer will have regard not only to the highest rate of interest quoted, but also to the need to 'spread' investments. In selecting authorised investments, consideration will be given to credit rating of the counter party.
2. To control the credit risk on the entire portfolio in line with Council's Risk Appetite Statement, the following credit framework limits the percentage of the portfolio exposed to any credit rating category. To protect the principal amount of investments, funds must only be invested with institutions and products with a minimum Standard and Poor's (S&P) credit rating of BBB- or better.

Credit Rating (S&P)	Maximum % of total investments	Maximum % of funds with one institution	Maximum Term
AAA to AA-	100%	40%	2 years
A+ to A	100%	20%	2 years
A- to BBB+	70%	15%	1 year
BBB to BBB-	20%	5%	1 year

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5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
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ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

Where the exposure limit of an investment category is exceeded because of an investment being redeemed, the exposure parameters are to be adjusted at the next available opportunity when funds can be reinvested.

Risk tolerances will be reviewed ongoing to adapt to changes in market conditions and respond to changes in Council Risk Appetite. Should changes to risk tolerances be proposed, these will be presented to Council with an opportunity cost model to understand the financial implications of adjusting tolerances against perceived market risks.

- Investments must be made in Australian dollars.

The term to maturity of any Council investment may range from "at call" to 24 months, considering anticipated cash requirements and prevailing market conditions at the time of the investment. Exposure to risk will be minimised by investing in a range of low-risk investment products within the constraints of section 103 of the Act.

In instances where rate parity exists between institutions whose credit ratings meet the risk tolerances within this policy, investment preference will be awarded to those organisations that provide a direct return to our local communities.

Eligible Investments

When considering investment options, Council must adhere to section 103 of the Act which outlines the authorised manner of investment of public funds. This includes:

- in Government securities of the Commonwealth; and*
- in securities guaranteed by the Government of Victoria; and*
- with an ADI; and*
- with any financial institution guaranteed by the Government of Victoria; and*
- on deposit with an eligible money market dealer within the meaning of the Corporations Act; and*
- in any other manner approved by the Minister, either generally or specifically, to be an authorised manner of investment for the purposes of this section.*

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk refers to the potential difficulty Council may face in meeting its short-term financial obligations due to an inability to convert assets into cash without incurring a loss.

Liquidity Risk will be managed by:

- Maintaining a monthly cash flow forecast to assess the short, medium, and long-term cash flow requirements of Council.
- Having a liquidity target for a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained.
- Having a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid investments.
- Monitoring of budget to actual performance monthly.
- Set limits on direct borrowings and loan guarantees relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council must approve all borrowings and can authorise the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to execute all documents necessary to give effect to Council's resolution to borrow funds.

The Director Corporate Performance will oversee the monitoring of this policy during the annual review of Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, Annual Budget, and Annual Report. These documents provide insights into Council's loan portfolio, current borrowings, and financial sustainability metrics.

The Manager Finance will ensure that repayment schedules are properly documented in Council's finance system so future payments are properly split between principal and interest payable and any financial securities against loans fully repaid are wound up and returned to Council.

Delegations

Delegation to enter a loan borrowing or overdraft facility on behalf of Council resides with the Director Corporate Performance unless the Council resolution states otherwise.

S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation by the Chief Executive Officer specifies those Officers who have authority to invest money on behalf of Council in accordance with Section 103 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The application of this policy will be monitored through the review of the Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, Annual Budget development and Annual Financial Statements. These documents report on Council's loan portfolio and identify current and proposed borrowings.

Covenants

Should the borrowing arrangement entered contain any covenants, these will be monitored and reported to the Executive Leadership Team as part of the monthly management reporting.

Monitoring of covenants must also form part of financial forecasting to ensure the future decisions do not result in a breach of covenants.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) s.101, s.104
Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
AASB 7 Financial Instruments Disclosure;
AASB 9 Financial Instruments;
AASB13 Fair Value Measurement;
AASB132 Financial Instruments Presentation; and
AASB136 Impairment of Assets.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Financial Plan 2021 - 2031
Procurement Policy
Risk Management Policy

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.4
(MANAGER FINANCE, BEAU MITTNER)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT_Treasury Management Policy

REFERENCES

Moira Shire Council Plan

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Date
1.0	Original Policy adopted	Council	XX 2024

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.5
(PROCUREMENT OFFICER, LISA KNIGHT)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

CONTRACTS AWARDED UNDER CEO DELEGATION

Recommendation

That Council note the quarterly report for contracts awarded under CEO delegation for the period 1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024.

1. Executive Summary

Council's *Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer* was adopted on 27 March 2024 which provides a delegation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to award contracts up to the value of \$500,000.

This report lists all contracts awarded under the CEO delegation for the period 1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There is no officer conflict of interest considerations.

3. Background & Context

In accordance with Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council adopted a Procurement Policy ('Policy') on 27 October 2021. One of the Policy's objectives is to achieve an outcome of 'High standards of probity, transparency, accountability and risk management'.

Council's Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, adopted on 27 October 2021, confirms a delegation to the CEO to award contracts up to the value of \$350,000 (exc. GST). As purchases between \$150,001 - \$350,000 (exc. GST) must be approved by the CEO, this report highlights contracts awarded within this delegation threshold. This delegation was updated to \$500,000 (exc. GST) during the Council meeting held on 27 March 2024.

Under Appendix A of the Policy, purchases between \$150,001 - \$350,000 (exc. GST) must follow an advertised Request for Quote (RFQ) process unless an eligible procurement exemption applies.

The below table lists the contracts awarded under delegation between 1 April 2024 - 30 June 2024.

Contract Number	Contract Title	Contract Value Ex gst	Awarded To
C001/24	Watermain Replacement – Harcourt Street, Nathalia	\$207,721.64	Jarvis Delahey Contractors Pty Ltd
C013/24	Retention Basin Upgrade – Paterson Street, Numurkah	\$194,236.00	BR Excavations Pty Ltd
C007/24	Shoulder Resheet – Carmichaels Road, Bundalong	\$439,998.00	Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd
C015/24	Toilet Renewal Program – Waaia Recreation Reserve	\$267,000.00	Envirodome Pty Ltd

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.5
(PROCUREMENT OFFICER, LISA KNIGHT)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE EVA SALIB)

CONTRACTS AWARDED UNDER CEO DELEGATION (cont'd)

4. Issues

No issues were raised within the contracts awarded under delegation.

5. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

5. Transparent and accountable
governance

This report details the advertised RFQs that have been awarded or renewed under delegated authority. Under the Strategic Objective Pillar 5, communicating decisions made under delegation allows for greater transparency.

6. External Engagement

External Consultation was not required.

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

The Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer includes a delegation to award a contract for goods, services or works to \$500,000 (exc. GST), provided the costs are included in Council's approved budget.

8. Risk & Mitigation

The Procurement Policy provides guidance to the entire organisation on procurement practices that set a tone for a framework that upholds accountability and transparency. The policy is therefore a critical component of Council's overall risk management framework.

The Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer supports Council's management of business risk and commitment to good governance.

9. Conclusion

This report details the contracts awarded under the CEO delegation for the period 1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024. Contracts were awarded through an advertised or invited procurement process.

Attachments

Nil

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.6
(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

APPOINTMENT OF TWO EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Recommendation

That Council appoint Rita Ruyters and Christine Nguyen as External Independent Members to the Audit & Risk Committee.

1. Executive Summary

The Audit & Risk Committee comprises a maximum of seven members including two Administrators, and a minimum of three to a maximum of five external independent members, of which there are currently two vacant positions.

This report recommends the appointment of two new external independent members to the Audit & Risk Committee.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no conflict-of-interest disclosures in relation to these appointments to the Audit & Risk Committee.

3. Background & Context

Two vacancies are available on the Audit & Risk Committee in accordance with the Charter and expressions of interest for the external independent membership were publicly advertised in August with advertisements published in the local newspapers, Shepparton News, Border Mail, on our corporate website and on the SEEK website.

Council received 18 expressions of interest which were evaluated by the CEO and Chair Administrator, in accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

External Independent Members should have senior business experience, be a qualified accountant or have significant financial management/reporting knowledge and experience and be conversant with the Local Government financial and other reporting requirements.

Considering these requirements, at the conclusion of evaluating the applications, conducting interviews, reference checks and relevant probity checks, the CEO and Chair Administrator recommend the appointment of Rita Ruyters and Christine Nguyen to the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.2.6
(MANAGER GOVERNANCE, RISK AND
PERFORMANCE, AMANDA CHADWICK)
(ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE
PERFORMANCE, EVA SALIB)

APPOINTMENT OF TWO EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE (cont'd)

4. Issues

There are no issues to consider in relation to this report.

5. Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with the Council Plan objective of Transparent and Accountable Governance.

6. External Engagement

Engagement (who did you engage with?)	Feedback
External External consultation occurred through the public advertising of the vacancies.	18 expressions of interest were received.

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

The remuneration for external independent members is within operational budgets.

8. Risk & Mitigation

A full complement of Audit and Risk Committee members ensures the achievement of the committee responsibilities under the Charter and provides a diverse range of skills and experience to the discussions.

9. Conclusion

Following a public advertisement process and review of 18 expressions of interest, it is recommended to appoint Rita Ruyters and Christine Nguyen as an External Independent Members to the Audit & Risk Committee.

Attachments

- 1 Rita Ruyters - Confidential Resume - *printed in separate document*
- 2 Christine Nguyen - Confidential Resume - *printed in separate document*

FILE NO:
4. CUSTOMER FOCUSED AND RESPONSIVE

ITEM NO: 9.3.1
(DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SCOTT WILLIAMS)

KATUNGA RECREATION RESERVE FACILITY IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

Recommendation

That Council in accordance with the Carry Forward Capital Works Policy, carry forward the previously budgeted amount of \$556,000 from the 2023/24 budget for inclusion in the first quarterly review of the 2024/25 budget to enable facility improvements at the Katunga Recreation Reserve.

1. Executive Summary

The Katunga Recreation Reserve Change Room construction project has been a priority project for Council and was included in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Council budgets (subject to external funding).

However, it has been unable to be delivered due to the availability of successful grant opportunities to make up the balance of the total project costs. Further, construction costs have escalated to the point where the cost-benefit of delivering the project (as designed) is no longer favorable.

Meanwhile, the condition of the change room and social room facilities continues to deteriorate. Council officers have investigated alternative available options to deliver improvements to the facilities.

Funding is required in order to deliver these improvements, either by leveraging Councils contribution to apply for funding under the Growing Regions Program or renovations to the existing facilities.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

None

3. Background & Context

The 2023/24 budgeted project involves the demolition of the existing change room building and replacement with a new building, compliant with AFL Victoria Facility Guidelines. The Katunga Community have been expecting this project to progress for a number of years.

A business case was approved for the 2023/24 budget, based off a Quantity Survey (QS) received in 2023 (totaling approx. \$1.2m). The business case included revised costings, contingencies and a more realistic reflection of the grant opportunities available. However, a subsequent QS report was received in 2024, which showed a significant increase from the previous QS, totaling approx. \$2.4m.

The architecturally designed option is no longer feasible due to cost. As such, Council officers have investigated alternative available options to deliver improvements to the facilities. These options are summarized below:

Option1: Apply for Growing Regions Program

This option would see the existing change rooms demolished and replaced with an AFL compliant modular building by Ausco.

FILE NO:
4. CUSTOMER FOCUSED AND RESPONSIVE

ITEM NO: 9.3.1
(DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SCOTT WILLIAMS)

KATUNGA RECREATION RESERVE FACILITY IMPROVEMENT FUNDING (cont'd)

Total cost is approximately \$1.2m (example images below)



Option 2: Renovate existing change rooms and social rooms

This option would see the previously allocated \$556,000 used to replace the roof and asbestos ceiling on the changeroom building. The remainder of the funds would be used in consultation with the Reserve Community Asset Committee and User Groups to make improvements to the shower/ toilet facilities and kitchen/ social room facilities.

The Katunga Football Netball Club have committed to putting forward a significant financial contribution towards either option.

4. Issues

The Katunga Football Netball Club has 240 Players in total. 2 Senior Male Teams, 4 Senior Female Teams, 3 Junior Male Teams and 4 Junior Female Teams (13 Teams).

Both the change room facilities and the social room facilities are in dire need of renovation or replacement. Little maintenance has been undertaken on these facilities in recent times, due to the uncertainty of whether the building/ buildings would be replaced.

Action is required to address the maintenance/ renewal needs at Katunga Recreation Reserve in the very near future.

5. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

4. Customer focused and responsive

To provide, renew and maintain a diverse network of assets that are safe, efficient and accessible

6. External Engagement

Engagement (who did you engage with?)
External Reserve Community Asset Committee (CAC) and User Groups

Feedback
The CAC accepts that delivering the \$2.4m option is not viable and are open to both options.

FILE NO:
4. CUSTOMER FOCUSED AND RESPONSIVE

ITEM NO: 9.3.1
(DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SCOTT WILLIAMS)

KATUNGA RECREATION RESERVE FACILITY IMPROVEMENT FUNDING (cont'd)

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

The previously budgeted \$556,000 was not carried forward to 2024/25 due to not successfully realising the balance of funding required to deliver the full scope of works, along with the increased cost of delivering the project as per the updated QS. Further discussions were required to be undertaken with the CAC prior to bringing the matter back for Council consideration.

The Growing Regions Program Grant presents an unplanned but worthwhile opportunity. However, applications close 10th October 2024, allowing minimal time for an application to be prepared and submitted.

Therefore, it is proposed that Council in accordance with the Carry Forward Capital Works Policy, carry forward the previously budgeted amount of \$556,000 from the 2023/24 budget for inclusion in the first quarterly review of the 2024/25. This would allow the preparation and submission of a grant application, and if unsuccessful proceeding with scoping and delivering upgrade works to the existing building, ideally before the commencement of the 2025 football season.

8. Risk & Mitigation

Risk

Financial

Mitigation

Applying for funding or renovating the existing buildings will provide improved value-for money for Council. If not addressed urgently, costs to renew will continue to escalate

Reputational

The Katunga Community have been expecting this project to progress for a number of years. An opportunity exists for Council to deliver on a committed project.

9. Conclusion

It is the officer's recommendation that Council carry forward the previously budgeted amount of \$556,000 from the 2023/24 budget for inclusion in the first quarterly review of the 2024/25 budget to enable facility improvements at the Katunga Recreation Reserve.

Attachments

Nil

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.4.1
(PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR, LISA
KNIGHT)
(DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE, RACHAEL
GADD)

C009/23 - SPRAY SEALING AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES - 2024/2025 PROGRAM

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Award the 2024/2025 annual reseal works program under contract C009/23—Spray Sealing and Associated Services in accordance with unit rates as provided in attachment 2 to Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd for a lump sum of up to \$1,000,000 ex GST;
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the contract documents.

1. Executive Summary

Council has traditionally undertaken an individual tender process to procure services for the annual sealed road bituminous resealing program.

This year Council had an opportunity to participate in a collaborative procurement process with five regional Councils to establish a standing panel of contractors to provide spray sealing and associated services.

The five participating regional councils are:

- City of Wodonga
- Benalla Rural City
- Rural City of Wangaratta
- Towong Shire Council
- Moira Shire Council

Procurement Australia acted as the agent for seeking tenders for Contract 2609/0338—Spray Sealing and Associated Services North East RPEN (Regional Procurement Excellence Network).

2. Conflict of interest declaration

No conflicts of interest were identified during this process.

3. Background & Context

The Moira Shire Council effectively manages a substantial road network spanning 3,666 kilometres, with 1,099 kilometres of sealed roads, 1,667 kilometres of gravel roads, and 900 kilometres of gravel farm access roads. As per Council's asset management policy and regular condition inspections a strategic approach is taken to maintain the sealed road network with an annual spray sealing contract supporting this approach. The upcoming 2024/25 program aims to renew 171,961 square meters of sealed roads. This consistent effort reflects the Council's impressive track record of renewing 2% of assets annually, which is in line with the strategic asset lifecycle value optimisation.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

ITEM NO: 9.4.1
(PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR, LISA
KNIGHT)
(DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE, RACHAEL
GADD)

**C009/23 - SPRAY SEALING AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES - 2024/2025 PROGRAM
(cont'd)**

Contract Details

The schedule of rates standing panel contract commenced on 1 October 2023 for an initial term of 3 years. Upon mutual agreement, the Contract can be extended by 1 + 1 years.

Standing panel members were invited to submit a response, with all submissions to be received by 5 July 2024.

Receipt of Tenders

Five tender submissions were received.

Supervision

Superintendent – Manager Operations

Superintendent Representative – Superintendent Works and Services

Panel Membership

The following positions independently evaluated the submissions:

- Manager Operations
- Superintendent Works and Services
- Assets Systems and Infrastructure Engineer

The Procurement Coordinator moderated the evaluation.

Non-conforming tenders

No submissions were deemed non-conforming.

Tender Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Weighting
Price	60%
Ability to meet timeframes	20%
Work practices and methodology	15%
Contribution to local economy and benefit to local region	5%

A summary of the evaluation is provided in the confidential attachment.

FILE NO:
5. TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
GOVERNANCE

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(PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR, LISA
KNIGHT)
(DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE, RACHAEL
GADD)

**C009/23 - SPRAY SEALING AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES - 2024/2025 PROGRAM
(cont'd)**

4. Issues

No issues to report.

5. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

5. Transparent and
accountable governance

The Council Plan addresses the need for a well-run Council by implementing a transparent, engaging and accountable governance structure for current and future generations. The processes undertaken to award the contract meet the legislative and policy requirements relating to procurement and tendering.

6. External Engagement

A public tender process was undertaken.

7. Budget / Financial Considerations

The budget for re-sealing in 2024/25 is \$1,000,000.

8. Risk & Mitigation

The condition report from Shepperd's Services categorises roads with a condition score exceeding 70 as a high priority and those with a score over 90 as critical. The report identifies 35 road sections with a condition score of over 90 and 134 road sections with over 70. An annual reseal program is an important approach to ensuring the percentage of sealed road surfaces outside of an acceptable condition rating are renewed within an acceptable timeframe. An annual reseal program is used to mitigate this risk.

9. Conclusion

After considering the submissions, including price and specification requirements, the evaluation panel recommends that C009/23—Spray Sealing and Associated Services be awarded to Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd for a lump sum of \$1,000,000 ex GST which is inclusive of the reinstatement of line marking.

Attachments

- 1 Appendix A (Confidential) - *printed in separate document*
- 2 Confidential Primal Surfacing - scheduled of rates - *printed in separate document*

FILE NO:
3. A CLEAN GREEN ENVIRONMENT

ITEM NO: 9.5.1
(ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL OFFICER, TIM
DEVLIN)
(DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
BRYAN SWORD)

INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Integrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 - 2026 as shown in attachment 1.

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of an Integrated Mosquito Management Plan for Moira Shire Council is to guide the activities and control measures that are to be undertaken in response to mosquito breeding, detection of virus in mosquito populations and/or the detection of human cases of mosquito-borne diseases.

By adopting this plan Moira Shire Council can aim to minimize mosquito-borne diseases, reduce nuisance levels, and improve overall public health and quality of life.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no conflict of interest issues to consider within this report.

3. Background & Context

The Victorian Arbovirus Disease Control Program (VADCP) is a state-wide collaborative program run by the Department of Health to minimize mosquito breeding and increase the detection of virus in mosquito populations. Moira Shire Council has participated in the VADCP for over 23 years.

Effective mosquito management requires an integrated approach. The Integrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 - 2026 incorporates policies, guidelines, practices and risk management strategies. This Plan has been developed with the assistance of the Department of Health and is a requirement to continue to receive funding from the State Government for this program.

Moira Shire Council is involved in the program typically from October to April each year, dependent on weather conditions and mosquito population patterns. The overall management of the program is the responsibility of the Waste and Sustainability department within Council.

4. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

3. A clean green environment 3.06 Our natural and outdoor spaces will provide quality habitat for plants and animals as well as be places for people to enjoy.

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3. A CLEAN GREEN ENVIRONMENT

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(ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL OFFICER, TIM
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(DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
BRYAN SWORD)

INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

5. External Engagement

Engagement

Feedback

External Department of Health, Victoria Operates and funds a state-wide mosquito surveillance system to monitor and lab test mosquitoes for any viruses they may carry. Moira receives test results every week.

6. Budget / Financial Considerations

The Victorian Arbovirus Disease Control Program is managed and funded by Department of Health. As per the most current service agreement with Department of Health, Moira Shire Council receives \$35,000 to fund the program annually.

The cost to Council to deliver this program annually is \$46,820 (ex GST). This is further broken down below. The position undertakes regular monitoring and reporting plus education and advice to landowners and the community.

Item	Cost (ex GST)
Wages	\$33,340
Vehicle	\$7,480
Materials	\$6,000
Total	\$46,820

7. Risk & Mitigation

Risk

Mitigation

Environmental impact on natural ecosystems and animals through the use of inappropriate chemical treatment.

Chemical handling training is essential for the responsible officer to ensure that chemicals are used safely and effectively.

Legislative Compliance

- *Emergency Management Act 2013* requires Local Governments to have arrangements in place to prevent, respond to and recover from any emergencies that could occur in the municipality.
- *Local Government Act 2020* outlines the responsibility of Local Governments to protect public health in emergencies.
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* states that Local Governments function is to 'seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district.'
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019*. Under these Regulations landowners and occupiers have a duty to control mosquito breeding grounds on its premises.

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

8. Conclusion

The Integrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 - 2026 will enhance our community's health and well-being by effectively controlling mosquito populations through a balanced approach. The Plan's comprehensive strategies ensure sustainable and proactive management, aligning with our environmental and public health goals.

Attachments

- 1 DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026



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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

Endorsement

The Moira Shire Council has developed this Integrated Mosquito Management Plan (IMMP) to guide the activities and control measures that are to be undertaken in response to mosquito breeding, detection of virus in mosquito populations and/or the detection of human cases of mosquito-borne diseases.



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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

Forward

This document has been developed by Moira Shire Council with assistance from the Department of Health.

There are approximately 100 distinct species of mosquitoes found across Victoria. Mosquitoes can occupy a variety of niche habitats, possess adaptable breeding cycles, and acquire nutrients from a variety of both animal and plant species. Female mosquitoes feed on animals, including humans to obtain protein from blood meals for the development of eggs. They are recognised as vector for the transmission of some viruses and parasites that cause diseases. Regardless of the ability for mosquitoes to transmit disease, biting mosquitoes pose a nuisance risk often causing localised irritation and allergic responses which affect personal comfort and wellbeing. For these reasons mosquito management functions and powers are specifically outlined within the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)* and associated *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations (2019)* to ensure municipalities are adequately able to protect residents from mosquito and related public health risks and promote and maintain community wellbeing.

Following the significant rainfall and associated flooding events across Victoria in September 2016, the largest Ross River Virus (RRV) outbreak ever recorded in Victoria occurred. Although the majority of RRV was acquired in rural settings, there were several cases that had not travelled outside of the metropolitan areas of Melbourne. Analysis of the 2016-2017 arbovirus season shows a changing geographic distribution of cases with more cases in the urban fringe. It was the first time a mosquito trapped in the Melbourne metropolitan area was detected with RRV.

Again, following flooding across north central Victoria in October 2022, an outbreak of Murray Valley encephalitis occurred, a potentially fatal disease that has not been detected in humans since 1974. Detections of Murray Valley encephalitis from mosquitoes were found from Wodonga to Mildura and in north central Local Government Authorities. Several human cases were also reported, some being fatal. The importance of mosquito surveillance by Local Government Authorities was pivotal in describing the spread of disease in mosquito populations, leading to implementation of a range of control measures.

In addition, the exotic Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) was detected in piggeries across South-eastern Australia for the first time in February 2022. Mosquito surveillance is important in determining the extent of spread of the virus, the impact on commercial piggeries and the potential for human disease.

The development of a mosquito management plan is a method for council to define the types of mosquitoes, the permanent and temporary breeding grounds, and the expected nuisance implication the municipality may encounter. The plan also enables council to consider the types of surveillance, management, and intervention strategies available and appropriately cost the agreed measures.

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

1.Introduction

The Victorian Government through the Department of Health are responsible for the Victorian Arbovirus Disease Control Program (VADCP). The purpose of this program is to monitor and reduce the public health risks associated with mosquito-borne diseases. This is done by assisting high-risk Local Governments to conduct surveillance, mosquito control and community education. The Moira Shire Council has been involved in mosquito surveillance and management since 2001.

The Moira Shire Council are committed to providing a best practice Integrated Mosquito Management Plan that documents the surveillance and management of mosquito populations to reduce the risk of mosquito-borne diseases to its residents.

2. Municipal Profile

- Location: Northern Victoria Region of Victoria, Australia
- Size: 4,045 square kilometres
- Population: 30,522
- Key town centres: Yarrowonga, Cobram, Numurkah, Nathalia, and Barmah

The Moira Shire Council experiences temperatures consistently high in the summer months along with a relatively medium rainfall, mostly experienced from October to March. The mean maximum temperatures varies from 23 °C with mean minimum temperatures during the winter months of 9 °C. The mean annual rainfall for Moira Shire is 481.9mm.

The varied natural environment in the Moira Shire region provides for a wide range of temporary, seasonal and permanent mosquito breeding sites. Some of the environmental variances that can greatly impact the mosquito numbers are:

- rainfall and flood events
- temperature
- humidity

All of these weather factors play a significant role in mosquito management and need to be considered during the implementation of the program. Even with an IMMP in place, there will be occasions when mosquito management is not effective due to factors such as unfavourable environmental conditions. Ineffective control, combined with the close proximity of residential areas to natural breeding areas mean, despite best efforts, there will be times when a significant mosquito nuisance will result.

The Moira Shire Council mosquito management program typically runs from October to April each year, dependent on weather conditions and mosquito population patterns. The overall management of the program is the responsibility of the Waste and Sustainability department within council.

3. Purpose

The following principles guide the Integrated Mosquito Management Plan (IMMP):

- Mosquito management incorporates the health, environmental and socio-economic values within the municipality.
- Disease control is the primary focus; however, reduction of nuisance mosquitoes is a legitimate aspect of improved community wellbeing and amenity;

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

- An emergency response may be needed in the event of an outbreak of mosquito-borne disease in the region.
- Mosquitoes are an important part of the ecosystem, and their management (including treatments) may have both positive and negative impacts on the environment; management options will try to minimize negative impacts;
- Effective mosquito management requires the cooperation and coordination of all stakeholders; and
- Treatment of mosquito larvae and/or adults is an on-going activity that requires a consistent approach and review across seasons.

The objectives of the IMMP are:

- to identify breeding areas and potential breeding locations;
- to provide an easy access document to convey information to future staff.
- to detail Councils/Shires mosquito management actions and guidelines in order to inform key stakeholders (ex. state government departments, internal staff, community members, land developers, etc);

4. Mosquito lifecycle

The lifecycle of the mosquito includes four development stages - egg, wriggler (larva), tumbler (pupa) and finally adult. This whole cycle from hatching egg to flying adult can take as little as 5-7 days in summer (fig 2). During colder months, the life cycle may take several weeks. Mosquitoes can breed in any type of standing water. Different species of mosquitoes will breed in different environments, from natural and man-made water bodies to a variety of water-holding containers, and from fresh to brackish or even saltwater.

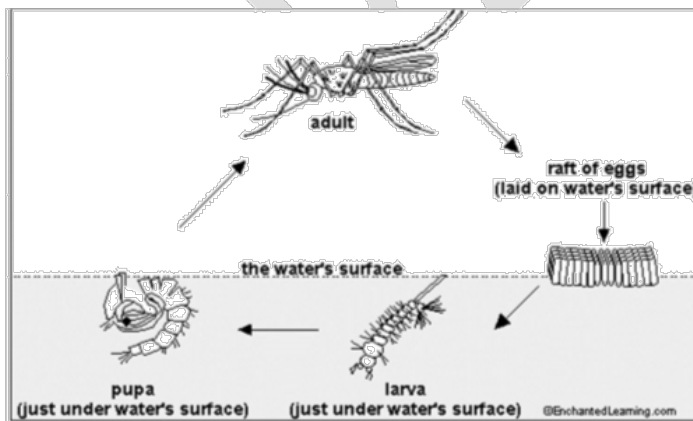


Fig 2. Life Cycle of the Mosquito, taken from Enchanted Learning – Available at: <https://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/insects/mosquito/>

Eggs - The adult female mosquito lays eggs which then float on the surface of the water or alternately they are laid on soil or plants depending on the species of mosquito. *Culex* and *Anopheles* spp. lay their eggs on the surface of the water whereas *Aedes* spp. lay their eggs on damp soil that is then flooded by water following rain and/or flood events. On average, eggs hatch into larvae within 48 hours.

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

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Larvae - Larvae, otherwise known as wrigglers, live in the water and come to the surface to breathe. They tend to concentrate in shallow waters where they gain most shelter from larger predators. The larvae pass through four development stages, otherwise known as instars. They shed their skin and grow in size following each stage. Following the fourth instar stage, they change into a pupa.

Pupae - Mosquito pupae are otherwise known as tumblers because of their swimming action and their shape. This is a resting stage, and it is the time when the mosquito turns into an adult. The pupae do not feed, and the adult emerges after approximately two days.

Adult - Following the pupae stage, the adult mosquito emerges and rests on the surface of the water to allow itself to dry before it can fly. Some species of adult mosquitoes are known to travel 3km or more from a breeding site in search of a blood meal. As a result, residents living at a distance from the breeding sites (as well as those close by) may be affected.

5. Mosquito-borne diseases of Importance in Victoria

There are several endemic mosquito-borne diseases of public health importance within Victoria. The most common are the alphaviruses including Ross River virus (RRV) and Barmah Forest virus (BFV). Under suitable climatic conditions, the flaviviruses, including Murray Valley encephalitis virus (MVE) and West Nile (Kunjin substrain) virus (WNV_(Kun)) can develop and be transmitted by mosquitoes (See Table 1).

In addition, the previously exotic Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) was detected in central Victoria in February 2022. Other mosquito-borne diseases reported in Victoria (such as Dengue Fever, Malaria, Zika virus, West Nile virus, Chikungunya, etc.) have been acquired interstate or overseas. The Department follows up all exotic disease notifications to ensure recent travel to overseas locations.

Historical data regarding rates of disease for the common mosquito borne diseases, such as Ross River Virus, Barmah Forest Virus and Murray Valley Encephalitis is available. Arbovirus cases are summarised weekly and made publicly available by DHHS through the following website: [Mosquito surveillance report | health.vic.gov.au](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mosquito-surveillance-report).

Table 1: Current mosquito—borne diseases of concern throughout Victoria with an indication of symptoms and distribution:

Virus Genus	Name of the virus (abbreviation)	Comments
Alphavirus	Ross River virus (RRV)	Ross River virus causes a polyarthritic disease in humans with symptoms of infection including fever, chills, headache, muscles and joint pains, stiffness or swelling (particularly in the morning), rash on the body, arms, or legs and fatigue (tired or weakness). Symptoms usually persist for 6-8 weeks, occasionally people will experience symptoms for months, rarely years. RRV disease is considered endemic throughout most parts of Victoria, particularly around inland waterways, and coastal regions, but not in metropolitan Melbourne. Epidemics usually follow heavy rains, or high tides that inundate salt marshes or coastal wetlands.

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

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Alphavirus	Barmah Forest Virus (BFV)	<p>Symptoms of Barmah Forest virus is very similar to RRV; however, the body rash is often more commonly associated with BFV. Again, symptoms may last 6-8 weeks occasionally months.</p> <p>BFV disease is considered endemic throughout Victoria. Outbreaks have been reported in Victoria throughout the Murray Valley and the Gippsland areas. In Victoria, the number of notified cases per year varies widely depending on seasonal and other conditions.</p>
Flavivirus	Murray Valley encephalitis virus (MVEV)	<p>MVE virus is endemic in northern Australia where sporadic cases or small outbreaks of MVE occur every few years, usually at the end of the wet season. Seven outbreaks of MVE have occurred at irregular intervals in south-eastern Australia since 1917. The most recent was in 2023. During those times, there was heavy rainfall leading to widespread flooding, which promoted large increases in water bird and vector mosquito populations. MVE virus is amplified in the bird-mosquito-bird cycle, and humans became infected when bitten by mosquitoes carrying the virus.</p> <p>Murray Valley encephalitis is potentially fatal. MVE usually starts with headache, fever, nausea, vomiting and myalgia. People with severe infection may develop drowsiness, confusion or meningism with severe headache, neck stiffness and photophobia. If medical treatment is not sought immediately, people may experience fits or seizures, fall into a coma and may die from this virus.</p>
Flavivirus	West Nile (Kunjin substrain) virus (WNV_(Kun))	<p>West Nile virus (Kunjin substrain) has many similarities to MVE virus, and these two viruses can only be distinguished by virological tests. This distinction is important during periods when weather patterns and other surveillance indicators suggest that an outbreak of MVE virus may be imminent in south-east Australia. MVE has a higher mortality rate and can be more prevalent than WNV(KUN).</p>
Flavivirus	Japanese encephalitis Virus (JEV)	<p>The occurrence of JEV disease in Papua New Guinea and probable spread from there to cause disease in the Torres Strait islands poses a significant threat to Australia. JEV was first detected in South-eastern Australia (Victoria) in February 2022 and is currently thought to still be circulating in the environment.</p> <p>Initial symptoms often include fever, headache, and vomiting. Mental status changes, neurologic symptoms, weakness, and movement disorders might develop over the next few days. Seizures are common, especially among children. Among patients who develop encephalitis (infection of the brain), 20% – 30% are fatal.</p>

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6. Legislation

The following Acts outline the responsibility of Local Governments when it comes to preventing and responding to mosquito-borne disease outbreaks and management of mosquito population numbers:

Emergency Management Act 2013 requires Local Governments to have arrangements in place to prevent, respond to and recover from any emergencies that could occur in the municipality. Available at: <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/emergency-management-act-2013/020>

Local Government Act 2020 outlines the responsibility of Local Governments to protect public health in emergencies. Available at: <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020/018>

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 states that Local Governments function is to 'seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district.' Available at: [Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 \(legislation.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au)

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations landowners and occupiers have a duty to control mosquito breeding grounds on its premises (which includes land, whether or not vacant) under regulation 15 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (The Regulations). This means that as the landowner/occupier **must** take reasonable steps to:

1. control any mosquito breeding ground (being a place where mosquito eggs, larvae or pupae are present) on the premises; and
2. abate any conditions (including artificial, natural, permanent or temporary conditions) on the premises that are conducive to the establishment of a mosquito breeding ground.

It is an offence of 10 penalty units for an occupier of premises to fail to discharge its duty under Regulation 15.

As guidance to the landowner / occupier, the Department considers 'reasonable steps' under regulation 15 to include an urgent need to control the mosquito population in the relevant areas managed by the landowner/occupier.

Compliance with regulation 15

If compliance with the duties as outlined in Regulation 15 are not demonstrated, the Department reserves the right to exercise the powers of direction (outlined below).

Powers of authorised officers

Regulation 16(1) of the Regulations provides powers to authorised officers appointed by Council to direct an occupier of premises to take specified steps if the Authorised Officer believes on reasonable grounds that:

1. there is a mosquito breeding ground on the premises; or
2. conditions on the premises may lead to the establishment of a mosquito breeding ground.

The Authorised Officer may direct the occupier to do all or any of the following under regulation 16(2):

1. take specified steps to control any mosquito breeding ground on the premises;
2. take specified steps to control the adult mosquito population on the premises;
3. take specified steps to abate any conditions.

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A direction given under regulation 16(2) must be complied with by the person who receives the direction pursuant to Regulation 16(5). It is an offence of 20 penalty units to not comply with the direction.

The same powers as set out under regulation 16 are given to 'any other Authorised Officer' under Regulation 17.

Other Legislation:

A range of other legislation may need to be considered by Local Governments when performing mosquito management. Some of the legislation is listed below.

RAMSAR

The Ramsar Convention encourages the designation of sites containing representative, rare or unique wetlands, or wetlands that are important for conserving biological diversity. The Treaty, first signed in Ramsar, Iran, now incorporates agreements across 172 countries. Once designated, these sites are added to the Convention's List of Wetlands of International Importance and become known as Ramsar sites.

A list of RAMSAR sites for Australia can be found at: [https://rsis.ramsar.org/rsi-search/?f\[0\]=regionCountry_en_ss%3AAustralia&pagetab=1](https://rsis.ramsar.org/rsi-search/?f[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3AAustralia&pagetab=1)

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's environmental legislation. It covers environmental assessment and approvals, protects significant biodiversity and integrates the management of important natural and cultural places. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00777>

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

The purpose of the Act is to provide for the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage of Victoria. The Act creates a framework to identify the most important Aboriginal heritage in Victoria and regulates changes to those places. The Act can be found at:

<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/aboriginal-heritage-act-2006/026>

7. Stakeholders/partners Roles and Responsibilities

In Victoria, the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (the Regulations) outline responsibilities for mosquito management. Mosquito management is the responsibility of all landowners or land occupiers. This applies to land owned/managed by both the public sector or government, or private residents, businesses and organisations.

7.1. Role of local governments

As a landowner and occupier of public land, local governments have responsibility for mosquito management in these public spaces. Much of this land is in populated areas, closely connected to residential areas, places of business, and recreational areas.

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In addition to their responsibilities as a landowner/occupier, local government also plays a role in administering other mosquito-related components of state legislation and regulations. This can include managing and investigating nuisance complaints and issuing improvement notices and infringements to other landowners/occupiers to ensure compliance with their mosquito management responsibilities.

Local government also plays a key role in outbreak management and mitigating public health disease risks and work closely with the Department of Health on these matters.

7.2. Role of the Department of Health

The Department of Health monitors mosquito-borne diseases and oversees a range of activities that reduce the risk to the Victorian community. The Department of Health:

- operates and funds a state-wide mosquito surveillance system to monitor mosquitoes, their numbers and the viruses they carry, delivered through local councils
- in conjunction with Local Public Health Units, conducts state-wide human disease surveillance and investigates all cases of mosquito-borne disease
- analyses surveillance data and intelligence from multiples sources and conducts risks assessments
- develops risk mitigation strategies
- funds an emergency response high-capacity vector control equipment program
- supports and funds local government to participate in outbreak management response
- delivers a public health campaign designed to reduce mosquito biting
- liaises and engages with national bodies, other state and territory jurisdictions and state agencies
- manages incidents and emergencies

The Department of Health also works closely with other government departments and agencies, such as the Department of Education, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Parks Victoria, Agriculture Victoria and other key agencies to promote mosquito management and mosquito bite prevention across a range of community settings in Victoria.

7.3. Role of private landowner/occupier

Private landowners and occupiers are responsible for mosquito management on a range of land, including domestic, commercial and agricultural.

In urban settings, mosquito management can often include a range of simple strategies that effectively reduce mosquito activity, such as removing and preventing breeding sites, and maintaining and cleaning the property to prevent adult mosquitoes from seeking refuge.

In agricultural settings, mosquito management can often be more difficult due to the size and geography of a property, presence of dams and troughs and intentional widespread water use. Agricultural landowners/occupiers are responsible for mosquito management and ensuring that measures are taken e.g., installation of efficient watering systems, that prevent increased mosquito-borne disease risk to the wider community.

7.4. Role of public sector landowner/occupier

All public sector landowners and occupiers are responsible for their own mosquito management and ensuring mosquito disease risk originating on their land is not impacting the community or members of the public accessing these public places.

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8. Integrated Mosquito Management

Through a combination of surveillance, chemical control, physical control and mosquito bite prevention, an integrated mosquito management approach can prevent and control both nuisance and disease carrying mosquitoes that spread disease. Everyone has a responsibility to help manage the risks posed by mosquitoes.

8.1. Surveillance

Mosquito monitoring provides important information on the activity of vector and pest mosquito species. It also provides triggers for public health warnings and an assessment of necessary mosquito control activities.

Moira Shire Council undertake adult mosquito surveillance for approximately 23 weeks between October and April each year, depending on weather conditions and mosquito numbers. Staff undertake regular trapping of adult mosquitoes at a range of sites to identify the species composition, potential abundance of vectors of disease and to inform any control measures that need to be undertaken.

In addition Moira Shire Council monitor mosquito breeding sites by undertaking larval sampling. Weekly dipping of waterways provides an indication of the abundance of mosquito larvae developing in a range of waterways within the municipality and provides an indication of future mosquito populations. High abundances of larvae may need control measures to be implemented.

Moira Shire Council investigate complaints and enquiries made by the community regarding potential breeding sites or nuisance biting mosquitoes.

A data collection tool known as the "Atlas of Medical Entomology" has been developed to report mosquito surveillance activities to the Department of Health. This tool has an Application (app) that allows an officer to enter information about surveillance and trapping directly into the app whilst in the field. Moira Shire Council officers began the use of this app by entering trapping locations and results in the 2014/15 season. This allows Council staff to review trends in mosquito abundance, species composition and vectors of disease and plays an important role in reporting to council. Queries about how to access the Atlas of Medical Entomology can be directed to publichealthentomology@health.vic.gov.au.

Mosquito Surveillance within the Moira Shire Council is carried out through a range of activities as detailed below.

8.1.1. Monitoring larval mosquito breeding sites

The location of potential mosquito breeding sites is based on levels of mosquito activity identified in previous years, along with any complaints received by Council. Rainfall, tides, river, creek and wetland conditions, man-made infrastructure including drainage lines are considered when determining potential breeding sites.

Mosquitoes can breed in several locations dependent on the species, including:

- Saltmarsh – coastal. Saline or brackish. Fresh or muddy (not prevalent in our municipality)
- Freshwater – rivers, lakes, inland or coastal. Flooded areas. Clean, polluted or potable
- Shallow flooded plains and grassland.
- Vegetated margins of permanent or temporary lakes, ponds, drains, creeks etc.
- Roadside drains

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- Constructed wetlands.
- Irrigation ditches
- Agricultural land.

Other significant sites for mosquito breeding include containers around the home including bird baths, animal water bowls/troughs, wheelbarrows, watering cans, pot plant plates and trays, septic tanks, drains and gutters, water tanks, BBQ pits, air conditioner trays, neglected swimming pools and ponds.

Council staff check known breeding sites throughout the municipality by conducting visual inspections and dipping for larvae. A list of all known breeding sites (See Appendix 1 for Moira Shire Council larval breeding site), that is added to are monitored as needed. Breeding sites found to be active with mosquito larvae may be referred for larvicide treatment.

8.1.2. Adult Mosquito Monitoring

Trapping of adult mosquitoes with encephalitis virus surveillance carbon dioxide traps (EVS CO₂ traps) is performed weekly throughout the mosquito season at predetermined locations (See Appendix 2 for Moira Shire Council adult trapping sites). These locations are adjacent to known mosquito breeding sites. Trapping provides information on mosquito numbers present and allow for species identification and virus isolation.

Trapping is carried out weekly to develop a long-term knowledge and analysis of patterns/trends associated with climatic variables and provides an early warning for disease occurrence.

In addition, additional traps can be deployed to investigate potential mosquito breeding sites, harbourage locations or public complaints, as the need arises.

Mosquito traps are set in a consistent manner each week to provide a sample of the density of mosquitoes, the species of mosquitoes present in the environment, whether they are male or female (only female mosquitoes bite) and whether these mosquitoes are carrying viruses that may be transmitted to humans.

Apart from the strategic traps, trapping of mosquitoes for the purpose of determining ongoing control measures occurs at various locations throughout the Moira Shire Council on a regular basis.

8.1.3. Review of Surveillance data

Data collected from adult and larval trapping is reviewed regularly to determine trends in abundance and species composition of the mosquito fauna to inform the implementation of control measures. Mosquitoes collected in adult traps are sent to the Department's virology testing laboratory identification and detection of viruses. The benefits of this is the provision of clear, accurate data and species identification for council and the Department of Health.

This data is reviewed regularly to examine patterns in abundance and species composition to inform control activities. Adult mosquito trapping data for the Moira Shire Council is presented below for the period 1/11/2022 to 22/1/2024.

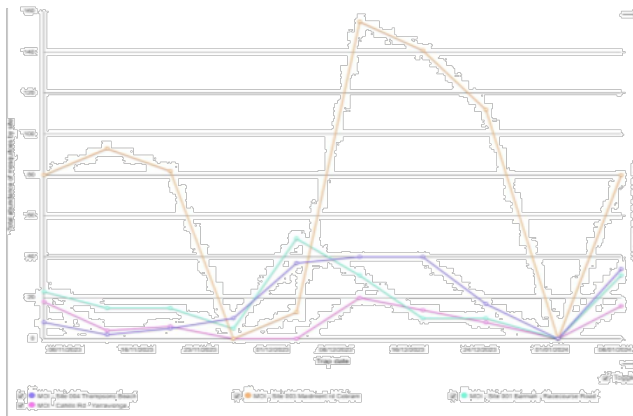
Figure 1: Abundance of mosquitoes collected from adult surveillance traps within the Moira Shire Council.

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8.1.4. Complaint Investigation

When mosquito numbers are high Council often receive complaints from the community about potential breeding sites.

When a complaint is received by Moira Shire Council, details of the complaint are forwarded to Councils Mosquito Monitor who will then investigate the complaint. This may include attending the complainant's property to discuss the details of the complaint with them. If the complaint is about another property or breeding on public land the mosquito monitor will attend the location and investigate the concerns raised.

The investigation may include larval dipping and treatment of the breeding site.

Alternatively, an adult trap may be placed in the area overnight to determine the extent of the issue and the mosquitoes that are causing the nuisance. Managing complaints in this way is an excellent opportunity to connect the local community with the mosquito management program and provide education on personal protection and reducing breeding around the home.

8.2. Control methods

When high mosquito abundances are detected, virus is found within trapped mosquitoes, breeding sites indicate potential emergence of a high number of mosquitoes, or a human case of disease is notified, mosquito control methods may need to be implemented. This will be determined by a risk assessment of the area including its proximity to human and animal populations and a determination made as whether treatment is required and what the best type of treatment may be. It may be determined that no treatment is required due to natural predators being present in the environment or minimal breeding activity.

There are many types of control methods that can be used by councils (see Table 2) for an overview.

Table 2: The four main types of mosquito control that can be used as part of an Integrated Mosquito Management Plan.

Physical (source reduction)	Alteration of the breeding site to minimise or prevent mosquito breeding. This may include the removal of vegetation or other works to make the water flow more freely.
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Biological	Use of biological means to reduce mosquito populations. This may involve introduction of predators like fish or other water insects.
Chemical	Use of chemicals to reduce mosquito populations, both larvae and adult treatment.
Personal Protection (behavioural control)	Use of communication to protect the community from mosquito bites.

8.2.1. Physical control (source reduction)

Physical control relies on reducing or eliminating mosquito breeding sites. This has advantages over other control measures in providing long-term solutions that can reduce mosquito numbers for months to years into the future. However, they can be expensive, may require specialised equipment and often need environmental approvals from various Government bodies.

Examples of physical control may include:

- physically filling low lying depressions with soil or sand to permanent remove breeding habitat;
- draining areas with water-holding capacity by opening channels to natural wetlands or river systems allowing pooling water to drain;
- maintenance of drainage systems to ensure free-flowing water and allow natural predators to consume mosquito larvae; and
- removal of emergent vegetation allowing predators access to consume mosquito larvae and removing larval development habitat.

8.2.2. Land use planning

Town Planning is imperative for minimising potential mosquito-borne diseases. It is important that consideration be given to the types of land-use, planning and future developments or infrastructure, that are proposed particularly if in close proximity to natural mosquito breeding sites. Land-use planning should consider the impact of mosquitoes and the potential for mosquito-borne disease transmission to future residents/tourists to reduce the incidence of disease, impact on amenity, and potential cost to council and ratepayers for the control of mosquito populations.

Land use planning decisions should consider the following:

- Proximity to wetlands;
- Addition of buffer areas to limit exposure to mosquitoes if near breeding sites;
- Appropriate drainage (type, size, and displacement of water);
- Minimisation of constructed wetlands/water sensitive urban design or ensure regular maintenance through vegetation removal to limit mosquito breeding;
- Appropriate design of water holding systems to ensure mosquito control is feasible, when required (including water tanks, sewage lagoons, man-made lakes, and ponds); and
- Ensure mosquito control options are feasible, viable and sustainable

8.3. Biological Control

Biological Control uses parasites, predators, and pathogens to reduce mosquito populations. The most successful biocontrol agents to date are natural predators of mosquito larvae (e.g., fish). Biological control is not used regularly in Australia due to the costs of maintaining populations of natural predators (e.g., breeding and maintaining fish stocks). In addition, years of research is required to demonstrate their

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effectiveness of biological control agents or sterile release programs to ensure their safety and any potential impacts on the environment.

Current trials are underway in the use of Wolbachia bacteria that can be passed between mosquitoes but reduce the amplification of virus within mosquitoes reducing transmission and spread of viruses.

Currently, biological control agents are not readily available for mosquito control, however, these strategies will be considered in future as they develop.

8.4. Chemical control

Chemical control is the application of products designed to kill adult and juvenile mosquitoes. It is used to manage mosquito populations and when there is an increased risk of transmission of mosquito-borne diseases.

All products used for chemical control must be approved for use in Australia by the [Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority \(APVMA\)](#). Specific information on registered products, including the active ingredient, and label information, can be accessed through the AVPMA's [Public Chemical Registrations Information System Search \(PubCRIS\)](#) database.

The use of any chemical must be applied as specified on the product label. The label will also specify the safety precautions that need to be undertaken when applying chemical products. This includes the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Chemical control applicators must meet a range of legislative and regulatory requirements to ensure products are used and stored effectively and safely. The department provides a range of training to help local council officers meet these requirements.

8.4.1. Chemical control (larvicides)

Larvicides kill or disrupt the development of mosquito larvae, resulting in death before the adult mosquito can emerge and pose a potential health risk to humans. Larvicides are specifically designed to target mosquito larvae and have little to no impact on other aquatic organisms or ecosystems. Therefore, the impact on the environment is negligible.

Mosquito breeding sites (such as ponds, slow moving water, stagnant water) often contain high numbers of mosquito larvae that can be targeted for treatment before they emerge as adults. For these reasons, larvicides are the preferred control option over adulticides, if chemical control is deemed to be the most appropriate management strategy as it is more efficient to treat the mosquitoes as larvae, while they are contained within an aquatic environment.

The following larvicides are currently used as part of the Council's mosquito management program:

S-methoprene is an insect growth regulator that is absorbed by the larvae and prevents the larvae from emerging from the pupal stage. The Shire applies this product in accordance with the required application rates throughout the mosquito season. This product is available in several different formulations, including slow release briquets, which can provide ongoing control for up to 150 days under certain environmental conditions.

Bacillus thuringensis israelensis (Bti) contains spores and endotoxins of naturally occurring bacterium. These spores and endotoxins are ingested by mosquito larvae, resulting in death within 24 hours. Bti is toxic only to the larvae of certain species i.e., dipteran (true flies). It does not harm other aquatic, marine or terrestrial fauna. Bti is not advised when organic content in the water being treated is high, as the product becomes silted over and the chemical cannot be released.

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Bacillus Sphaericus (Bs) similarly contains spores and endotoxins from a naturally occurring bacterium that are ingested by mosquito larvae leading to death. The advantage of Bs is that it can be used in high organic content waters, such as sewage lagoons, for the control of mosquito larvae.

8.4.2. Adulticides

Where public health risk is increased from high adult mosquito numbers or virus has been detected circulating in the mosquito population (through mosquito virus testing or the notification of a human case), it is important to kill adult mosquitoes to reduce the spread of disease and protect communities.

Adulticiding may also be required after flooding that leads to large widespread mosquito breeding that cannot be adequately treated with larvicides due to the sheer area of water and amount of chemical required for a successful treatment. Larvicide becomes increasingly difficult to apply due to lack of ability to access affected water bodies and the size of the habitat that requires treatment.

Adulticide applications may include space spraying (also known as fogging) and/or residual barrier treatments.

8.4.3. Space Spraying (Fogging/misting)

Fogging involves the application of an adulticide using a natural or synthetic pyrethroid chemical, as a cloud or mist that hangs in the air and kills mosquitoes, much like fly sprays used at home. The chemicals used disrupt the nervous system of the mosquito, resulting in their paralysis and death. Fogging is the only means of killing adult mosquitoes that are known to be carrying disease, and it is important to use it when the risk of mosquito-borne diseases is present.

As adulticides can impact other insects, particularly those smaller than a mosquito, fogging is only recommended when there is an elevated public health disease risk. Fogging activities are only performed when mosquitoes are active, typically around dawn and dusk, which also minimises the impact on other non-target insects that are not active at these times of the day.

Like fly spray, fogging will knock down mosquitoes in a particular area and reduce mosquito biting for 2-3 days. It may be performed as a single treatment, for example to remove mosquitoes from parkland hosting a large festival, or as repeat treatments, for example, in bushland adjoining a town.

Fogging products are registered for use in domestic settings as fly spray. Any fogging activities undertaken to reduce mosquito-borne disease risk are undertaken with careful consideration of the environment, weather and other factors that impact their success. Fogging activities are planned appropriately to ensure wind conditions are optimal, there is no rain, and the product will not drift over wetlands or water bodies where fish may be present. It should be noted that the environmental impact, particularly on natural wetland/marsh areas can be significant and is undesirable.

The following adulticides are currently used as part of the Moira Shire Council mosquito management program:

Pyrethrins and synthetic pyrethroids – the chemicals used in ULV and thermal foggers and are used as a space spray for the control of adult mosquitoes and flies.

Pyrethrins – is the active ingredient pyrethrum, the natural pest repellent from flowers of certain Chrysanthemum species. Pyrethrins are mixed with synergists and act on contact, quickly affecting the nervous system to 'knockdown' the pest insects. Pyrethrins break down in sunlight and air and are not very persistent in the environment.

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Synthetic Pyrethroids – are synthetic versions of naturally occurring pyrethrins. The mode of action of pyrethroids is identical to pyrethrins, they affect the sodium channels in nerve cells and cause and overstimulation of the nervous system.

8.4.4. Residual barrier treatments

Residual barrier treatments involve the application of a synthetic pyrethroid to a surface where adult mosquitoes may land. This may include internal/external building walls, eaves, fences, vegetation or foliage. When applied, the product binds to surfaces and can provide mosquito control for up to 6-8 weeks.

Barrier treatments cannot be applied on a wide scale like fogging. They are reserved for smaller, targeted areas to protect groups of people from mosquitoes entering their space. This often includes applications surrounding popular or regularly used locations, such as campgrounds, public toilets, and BBQ or playground areas.

Barrier products are registered for use in domestic settings as surface sprays. Some are only registered for crawling insects, not flying insects. Residents can also have these treatments applied by a licenced pest control operator.

The following adulticides are currently used as part of the Moira Shire Council mosquito management program:

Bifenthrin – this is an insecticide that is used as a barrier treatment. The chemical is sprayed on surfaces such as dense vegetation and walls/fences to kill mosquitoes that land on the surface.

8.5. Personal Protection – Behavioural Control

Community education is a major component of Moira Shire Council control strategy. The public health message regarding mosquitoes is a primary focus for the community and visitors to the region. Information is available on Councils website, at Councils Customer Service Centres and is disseminated at local tourist locations (i.e. caravan parks etc.) as required.

Mosquito bite prevention includes education to raise public awareness and modify behaviour to reduce contact with mosquitoes. This is often achieved through community education campaigns and media releases or alerts. Local governments play a key role in informing their residents of the current public health disease risks and actions they can take to reduce contact with mosquitoes.

You can prevent mosquito bites by:

- wearing long, loose fitting clothes outdoors;
- using effective mosquito repellents containing picaridin or DEET on all exposed skin;
- trying to limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are about;
- using 'knockdown' fly sprays and plug-in repellent devices indoors; and
- sleeping under mosquito nets treated with insecticides if you don't have flywire screens on windows in your home or are sleeping in an untreated tent or out in the open.

9. Communications plan

Communication is an integral part of managing mosquito-borne disease risks. The information delivered must be useful, timely, accurate, consistent and accessible.

The Department of Health issues communication messages via its 'Summer Hazards' campaign across the wider region to ensure that the key messages and information are disseminated as widely as possible and to achieve a level on ongoing education through consistent messaging. The department has created

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a stakeholder package of communication tools that are used by the Moira Shire Council when mosquito abundances increase or there is a detection of virus in trapped mosquitoes, or a human case notified. The stakeholder pack can be found at:

Summer Hazards Info pack: [Current campaigns from the Department of Health](#)

Council will communicate information about the risks of mosquitoes and preventative measures before the mosquito season begins. These messages will start to be disseminated through Council's existing networks and communication channels prior to the start of summer, or earlier where appropriate.

9.1. Summer Hazards – Mosquitoes can spread serious diseases

Moira Shire Council will undertake a consistent public messaging campaign based on the Victorian "Summer Hazards" messages to encourage community members and visitors to the area to protect themselves from being bitten – cover up, wear loose fitting, light coloured clothing, apply repellents, reduce exposure at dawn and dusk, as well as information on measures for reducing mosquito breeding around the home.

Table 3: The key messages that make a good communication plan for mosquito awareness in the community.

Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cover-up and wear loose fitting, light-coloured clothing when outdoors ➤ Use an insect repellent containing DEET (diethyltoluamide) or picaridin ➤ Avoid being outdoors at dusk and dawn
Home Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain flywire screens ➤ Use knockdown insect sprays ➤ Sleep under mosquito nets ➤ Use repellents such as Citronella or mosquito coils ➤ Use of residual surface sprays in high use areas (e.g. outdoor toilet, shelters or around doorways)
Maintain Private Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clean up potential breeding sites around the home - remove rubbish and other waste containers, empty pot plant trays, replenish birdbaths, animal water bowls at least once per week) ➤ Don't over water ➤ Improve drainage to stop water pooling or leaking ➤ Maintain buildings (e.g., clean gutters, unblock drains) ➤ Keep swimming pools well maintained ➤ Keep fishponds tidy with minimal vegetation ➤ Keep lawns and gardens trimmed back
Employee Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure staff are educated on personal protection ➤ Provide appropriate repellents ➤ Wear suitable clothing ➤ Roster tasks to try and avoid being outdoors during dusk and dawn periods.

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9.2. Media and Communications

The Moira Shire Council develop and issue media releases at the beginning of the program and again prior to the summer holiday period. Working with the media is an important component of community education because it provides an opportunity for the dissemination of accurate information on mosquitoes and personal protection strategies, as well as opportunities to publicise the local mosquito management program and raise awareness.

Moira Shire Council supports local events and encourages all community groups and organisers of events to supply information to people attending their events about the importance of protecting themselves. Councils are able to assist with the provision of information to event organisers to be distributed at events during periods where mosquito numbers are of concern.

Further information can be found at: [Protect yourself from mosquito-borne disease - Better Health Channel.](#)

9.3. Event Planning

Moira Shire Council may host local, state and nationally significant events where mass gatherings may occur for extended periods. Examples of sites where such outdoor events may occur including, but are not limited to:

- Australia Day Awards
- District Town Events
- Citizenship Ceremony
- International Women's Day
- Cultural Diversity Week
- National Youth Week
- Regional Arts Forum
- Reconciliation Week
- Creative Recovery Workshops
- Volunteers Week
- Refugee Week
- Regional Arts Forum
- Naidoc Week
- Names of Barmah
- Children's Book Week
- Battle of the Bands
- Seniors Week
- Skateboard Workshop & Music (Part of Food bowl Festival)
- Youth Council Meetings
- Moira's Got Talent
- Walk to School
- 16 Days of Activism to end violence against women
- Emergency Forum. For Women
- Tri-State Games
- International Day for People with a Disability
- Arts in Nathalia

Moira Shire Council Communications & Events Team, Mosquito Surveillance Officer and as well as private event organisers, should work together to discuss the location, number of expected attendees, date of the event, bump in and bump out times. The Mosquito Surveillance Team will assess the site for conditions favourable to mosquito breeding and risk of arbovirus disease. The Mosquito Surveillance Team may undertake

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actions to understand and control any mosquito risks or may pass on additional requirements to event organisers to provide mosquito repellent if the events are to be housed outside in close proximity to mosquito breeding sites.

10. Risk Assessment and Management

10.1 Community Implications

There are several potential implications for council and the community if the risks of mosquito nuisance and mosquito-borne disease are not managed appropriately. Table 4 below consist of some potential public health issues councils must consider.

Table 4: Common issues that should be considered when developing a risk-based assessment approach for the management of mosquitoes.

Social and Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase in disease cases and possible Murray Valley Encephalitis, West Nile (Kunjin substrain), Ross River and Barmah Forest virus outbreaks. ➤ Increased morbidity and mortality rates within the community ➤ Loss of amenity and outdoor enjoyment due to increase in nuisance mosquitos. ➤ Loss of income for individuals who are unable to work due to illness. ➤ Reduction in numbers of visitors to the region. ➤ Financial implications for businesses due reduction in tourism to the area and staff illness.
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Impact on natural ecosystems and animals through the use of inappropriate chemical treatment.
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legal implications for council if not meeting obligations under the <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i> in the protection of the health of the community.

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10.2. Risk Assessment

10.2.1. Individual Site Assessment

Mosquito management programs are based on public health risk, so it is important that each site is assessed throughout the season to determine the action required. Each site will be different, so it is essential that the mosquito monitor physically assesses all possible breeding sites before making a decision on what level of response is required. This ensures that the public health risk is managed as well as being cost effective for council.

The following factors must be considered in determining what action is required:

- Assessment of the physical site
- Weather conditions
- Incidence of disease (RRV, BFV, MVE, WNV(Kun), JEV)
- Population numbers
- Species trapped in adult traps
- Historical data associated with breeding sites

Following the assessment, the mosquito monitor will determine if control methods are required.

10.2.2. Operational Risk Assessment

Throughout the mosquito season, council staff will review mosquito abundance and species composition data, public complaints, detections of virus in mosquito populations and notification of human cases of disease. This information will assist in determining the control options that should be considered to manage the risk. As a guide to the risk and potential control options the following table will be consulted as a risk assessment and mitigation guide. This assessment will be based on the current conditions and advice provided by the Department of Health.

10.2.3 Risk ratings

The risk ratings below form a guide to the activities that should be undertaken to reduce the risk of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne disease risks to the community depending on the risk categories defined in the table below. However, it is noted that the activities that may be undertaken will include risk assessment of sites, climate, geography, presence of disease vectors, host populations and other factors that may alter the immediate control actions to be undertaken. The following remediation actions provide a guide for Council staff considering the above factors.

Further advice can be sought from the Public Health Entomology team at:
publichealthentomology@health.vic.gov.au

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Table 5: Risk matrix based on adult mosquito abundance and various levels of risk based on the detection of diseases in mosquitoes, public complaints, human cases of disease or combinations of these factors.

Risk categories:	Mosquito abundance				
	Low (<50)	Moderate (50-99)	High (100-999)	Very High (1000-9999)	Extreme (10000+)
Presence of disease					
No detections of virus in mosquitoes/no human cases of disease	LOW	LOW	Medium	Medium	Medium
Public complaints (any complaints at all? Or a certain number)	LOW	LOW	Medium	Medium	Medium
Virus detection in mosquitoes in your Council area. (in local government area or Victoria in general?)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Human case of disease in your Council area. (in local government area or Victoria in general?)	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Virus detected in mosquitoes and human cases of disease in your Council area. (in local government area or Victoria in General)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme

Low - maintain regular mosquito surveillance of adult and larval mosquito populations. Conduct ground surveillance to detect mosquito breeding sites. Consider physical control options to ensure water is not pooling, drainage and water holding structures are appropriately designed to minimise larval breeding.

Medium- Maintain regular mosquito surveillance of adult and larval mosquito populations. Conduct ground surveillance to detect mosquito breeding sites. Consider physical control options to ensure water is not pooling, drainage and water holding infrastructure are appropriately designed to minimise larval breeding. Conduct chemical control with larvicides if breeding found in moderate to high numbers.

High- Maintain regular mosquito surveillance of adult and larval mosquito populations. Conduct ground surveillance to detect mosquito breeding sites. Consider physical control options to ensure water is not pooling, drainage and water holding infrastructure are appropriately designed to minimise larval breeding. Conduct chemical control with larvicides if breeding found in moderate to high numbers. Initiate communication strategies to warn the public of the risk from mosquito bites and the presence of virus/human cases. Initiate social media campaigns and erect signage in high-risk locations. Consider the use of residual sprays around communal infrastructure (camping sites/sports ovals/public spaces) to minimise adult mosquitoes.

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Extreme - maintain regular mosquito surveillance of adult and larval mosquito populations. Conduct ground surveillance to detect mosquito breeding sites. Consider physical control options to ensure water is not pooling, drainage and water holding infrastructure are appropriately designed to minimise larval breeding. Conduct chemical control with larvicides if breeding found in moderate to high numbers. Initiate communication strategies to warn the public of the risk from mosquito bites and the presence of virus/human cases. Initiate social media campaigns and erect signage in high-risk locations. Consider the use of residual sprays around communal infrastructure (camping sites/sports ovals/public spaces) to minimise adult mosquitoes. Consider the use of space spraying (fogging) of public spaces to provide a buffer between residential areas or highly used infrastructure and known mosquito breeding sites.

11. Emergency Management

The Department of Health are responsible for initiating an emergency control program to minimise the incidence and spread of arboviruses. An emergency control program will be carried out if DH considers that there is an actual or potential outbreak of MVE and/or a very high incidence of RRV or BFV in a particular area or region.

This is likely to involve council's current level of activity as well as additional monitoring of breeding sites, adult trapping, and adult spraying of mosquitoes. It is important to ensure that adequate chemicals and equipment for adulticiding are available in the event that these are required. An assessment of the risk to public health will need to be carried out for each location that adulticiding will be carried out to determine the priority in which they are completed.

In the event of increased disease risk adulticiding prior to large scale community events will be considered. A risk assessment will be completed prior to any spraying occurring in the lead up to an event where a large group of people are expected to congregate.

12. Resourcing

It is important that Councils have appropriate resourcing for mosquito management and surveillance activities. The Moira Shire Council understand that mosquito Surveillance and control activities are of importance in protecting the public from mosquito-borne diseases in our jurisdiction and make a commitment to undertake mosquito surveillance and management to protect public health. The table below details resources provided by Moira Shire Council and the department in ensuring suitable human resources, budget, equipment, and chemical is available for mosquito management to support the mosquito management program (Table 6).

Table 6: Provision of human resources, finances, equipment, safety and training for mosquito management in Moira Shire Council.

Human Resource	A dedicated staff member to perform mosquito management activities.
Budget	The budget for mosquito management should consider the following expenditure types. There can be considerable variation on resourcing required from year to year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Salaries and on-costs ➤ Plant and equipment, including purchase and maintenance of mosquito monitoring equipment, vector control application equipment

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chemical purchases-including vector control products ➤ Consumables-postage and packaging materials for posting mosquito specimens. purchase of dry ice or maintenance of dry ice making capabilities ➤ OHS- personal protective equipment ➤ Vehicle hire, maintenance, registration, and fuel expenses. ➤ Training requirements for staff ➤ IT requirements for staff (mobile phone, tablet, laptop, mobile data etc).
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dedicated vehicle for mosquito management, ideally with separated cab for transporting dry ice and chemicals ➤ Vector control application equipment (backpacks, foggers, stakes, floats) ➤ Microscope ➤ Mosquito Traps and batteries ➤ Larval monitoring equipment- telescopic ladles, specimen jars, ➤ Express post bags, soft eskis, ice bricks, petri dishes, bubble wrap ➤ Dry ice handling and storage equipment (gloves, eye protection, foam eski, CO2 cannister storage, snowpack) ➤ Stationery and labels ➤ PPE and safety equipment.
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adhere to internal OHS and safety policies and procedures- list them here (SWMS, SDS, working alone policy, etc.)
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal local government training requirements- could include Department of Health Mosquito Management Training Course ➤ Training on the use of vector control application equipment ➤ Chemical Handling certificate ➤ Any internal operational or OHS training requirements

13. Review process

An annual review of this Integrated Mosquito Management Plan will be undertaken prior to each summer season. The review will:

- Take into account changes in disease occurrence and incidence at state and local level
- Review mosquito abundance and species diversity
- Review environmental triggers that led to enhanced mosquito breeding.
- Assess the overall success of management actions and activities (reviewing frequency of treatments, treatment type, communications, and other interventions)
- Involve relevant stakeholders
- Assess whether actions contained in the plan continue to have effective outcomes; and
- Inform revision and improvement of the plan

14. References

Webb, C., Doggett, S., and Russell, R. (2016). *A guide to Mosquitoes of Australia*. Clayton South, VIC: CSIRO Publishing.

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Appendix 1: Larval Mosquito surveillance – dipping sites

Larval - Abundance Report



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Figure 2: Mosquito dipping (sampling) locations for the Moira Shire Council 2014 to 2024

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Table 7: List of main Moira Shire Council mosquito larval breeding sites.

Breeding Site number	Breeding site name	GPS location	Type of wetland (river, creek, retarding basin, dam, sewage, etc)	Tidal or rainfall influence	Monitoring frequency (weekly, fortnightly, monthly, as needed)	Treatment triggers (number of larvae, tides, rainfall etc)	Treatment options/methods deployed	Notes
447	Tunnock Road - Numurkah	- 36.0952133168 5171 145.455982446 6378	Drain, Golf club	rainfall	as needed	number of larvae, rainfall etc)	Prolink Pellets	
221	Botts Rd - Yarrawonga	- 36.0127960216 7839 146.031407475 43875	Drains, Development sites	Rainfall, Farm irrigation overflow	as needed	number of larvae, rainfall etc)	Prolink Pellets	
1195	Moira Lakes Rd, Barmah	- 36.0054997785 01466 144.962473511 68222	Road verge river	rainfall	as needed	number of larvae, rainfall etc)	Prolink Pellets	
174	River Road - Cobram	- 35.9222483179 3542 145.670784473 38645	River, gutters	rainfall	as needed	number of larvae, rainfall etc)	Prolink Pellets	
594	Davis Lane - Strathmerton	- 35.8913784597 31826 145.488200712 20234	Dam, drain	rainfall	as needed	number of larvae, rainfall etc)	Prolink Pellets	

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Appendix 2: Adult mosquito surveillance – EVS CO₂ Trap Sites

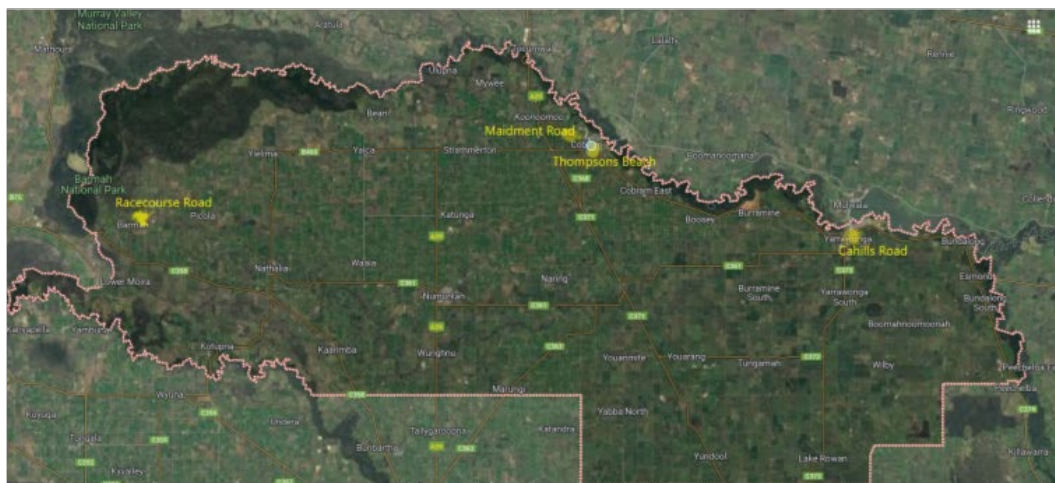


Figure 3: Location of adult mosquito surveillance sites for the Moira Shire Council.

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Table 8: List of Moira Shire Council adult mosquito surveillance sites.

Adult surveillance Site number	Adult surveillance site name	GPS location	Type of habitat (bushland close to river, creek, retarding basin, dam, sewage, etc)	Tidal or rainfall influence	Monitoring frequency (weekly, fortnightly, monthly, as needed)	Treatment triggers (number of adults, disease detections, human cases, tides, rainfall etc)	Treatment options / methods deployed	Notes
1	Barmah	- 36.0079653203926 85, 144.966665270237 83	Bushland, Landfill, Close to river		Weekly	number of adults, disease detections, human cases	Larvicide Adulticide	
2	Maidment Rd	- 35.8991637739956 4, 145.627436290838 63	Water treatment plant		Weekly	number of adults, disease detections, human cases	Larvicide Adulticide	
3	Thompsons Beach	- 35.9137678200042 8, 145.666436430031 3	River, Bushland		Weekly	number of adults, disease detections, human cases	Larvicide Adulticide	
4	Cahills Rd	- 36.0261683292876 1, 146.016591953154 18	Residential		Weekly	number of adults, disease detections, human cases	Larvicide Adulticide	

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Appendix 3: Mosquito Species of Interest

These mosquito species are commonly found throughout the Moira Shire Council, some are known to transmit vector-borne disease, and others are known nuisance mosquitoes.

Table 9: List of commonly trapped mosquito species found within the Moira Shire Council.

Mosquito Name	Description
<i>Culex annulirostris</i>	Breed in fresh water however they are also capable of breeding in drains and constructed water bodies. Adult females mainly feed at dusk and night and to a lesser extent at dawn and are capable of transmitting vector borne diseases such as Ross River virus (RRV), Barmah Forest virus (BFV), Murray Valley Encephalitis virus (MVEV), West Nile (Kunjin substrain) (WNV _(KUNJ)) and Japanese encephalitis (JEV) virus. This species of mosquito normally appears after <i>Culex australicus</i> . They are a medium sized mosquito with a white band located on their proboscis. Dependent on weather conditions, they can travel medium to long distances, ranging between 2km to 10km in distance.
<i>Aedes camptorhynchus</i>	Adults can be active throughout the year and are known saltwater species although they are thought to breed in some freshwater environments. They feed throughout the day and night and are vicious biters.
<i>Culex australicus</i>	<i>Culex australicus</i> are a medium sized mosquito, normally brownish in colouration. They are known vectors of Ross River virus (RRV), Barmah Forest virus (BFV), Murray Valley Encephalitis virus (MVEV) and Kunjin virus however they are not known to readily bite humans, more known to feed off rabbits and birds. They are more prevalent in freshwater grassy ground pools and permanent well-vegetated ponds. Most common in the environment during Spring and Autumn. Usually seen after first flood events. They are known to harbour in paddocks and forest type environments. Known to be a precursor species for <i>Culex annulirostris</i> .
<i>Aedes sagax</i>	This species of mosquito breeds in fresh waters, along with roadside ditches. They are known as a pest mosquito and readily bite humans. They are a larger sized mosquito who predominately enter the environment following large rain or flood events.
<i>Aedes notoscriptus</i>	Readily attack humans night and day and are known to be a vector of dog heartworm. Their human vector status is generally unknown. They are known as 'container breeders' and are found to harbour in shaded areas. They are known to attack during the day and tend to be aggressive in nature. They travel short distances, ranging between 200 metres to 500 metres. Their distinguishing features include black and white stripes, including a white band on their proboscis.

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<i>Aedes vittiger</i>	Readily attack humans and other animals often during the day but also at evening and night. Are known to be a significant pest in irrigation areas and after flood events. Commonly known as a nuisance pest and can be ferocious when attacking. Known as day biters
<i>Culex quinquefasciatus</i>	Like to breed in manmade polluted/organic water features including stormwater drains, tyres, drums, disused swimming pools, rainwater tanks and septic tank systems. They are attracted to indoor environments and like to attack at night. They are capable of travelling medium distances ranging between 1-2kms. They are a medium sized mosquito and are a brown/golden coloured. They are known to make a loud audible buzzing noise.

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Appendix 4: Chemical register

Table 10: Chemical stocks held by Moira Shire Council at the start of the 2023/24 mosquito season.

Chemical Name	Formulation	Storage location	Supplier	SDS available	SDS expiration date	Hazardous substance (Y/N)	Quantity of chemical in stock
ProLink	Pellets	Cobram Works Depot	Pacific Biologics	YES	July 2024	N	31KGS
ProLink	Briquets	Cobram Works Depot	Pacific Biologics	YES	July 2024	N	100 briquets
Paraffin Oil	Liquid	Cobram Works Depot	Pacific Biologics	YES	NA	N	15LT
Pyrocide	Liquid	Cobram Works Depot	Pacific Biologics	YES	NA	Y	5LT
Twilight	Liquid	Cobram Works Depot	Pacific Biologics	YES	NA	Y	5LT
Teknar 1200 SC	Liquid	Cobram Works Depot	Pacific Biologics	YES	14 August 2024	Y	10LT

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Table 11: Chemical stocks held by Moira Shire Council at the end of the 2023/24 mosquito season.

Chemical Name	Formulation	Storage location	Supplier	SDS available	SDS expiration date	Hazardous substance (y/n)	Quantity of chemical in stock

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Appendix 5: Example of record keeping for chemical applications

Table 12: Mosquito treatments undertaken by the Moira Shire Council during the 2022-23 season.

Date of Application	Start and Finish Time of Application	Wind Speed Recorded	Wind Direction Measured	Product Used	Treatment Situation Product used	Address/location of the area that the chemical was used	Application Rate	Content of Used/Used	Employee (Full Name)
28/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	14kmph	N	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Benthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Strathmerton Primary School Strathmerton Lions Park Toilet block Recreation Reserve Service Road tree screen (east and west)	50ml - Benthrin 2L - Water	7L	Tim Devlin
29/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	16kmph	NW	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Benthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Yarroweyah Memorial Hall/Bus Stop Recreation Reserve	50ml - Benthrin 2L - Water	2L	Tim Devlin
29/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	15kmph	NW	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Benthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Wuungu Grahams Park Public toilets	50ml -Benthrin 2L - Water	1.5L	Tim Devlin
30/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	16kmph	N	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Benthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Yarrowonga Weir track Near caravan park Back of Recreation Reserve Yarrowonga Foreshore	50ml -Benthrin 2L - Water	1.5L	Tim Devlin

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31/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	13kmph	NW	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Bithenthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Yarrowonga Foresshore Public toilets	50ml -Bithenthrin 2L - Water	1.5L	Tim Devlin
06/04/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	1.1kmph	NW	* Pyroicide *Parrafin Oil	ULV Fogging	Strathmerton Recreation Reserve Koonoomoo Recreation Reserve Yarroweyah Recreation Reserve	400ml – Pyroicide 2L Parrafin Oil	2.4L	Tim Devlin Graeme Murray
07/04/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	12kmph	NW	* Pyroicide *Parrafin Oil	ULV Fogging	Wunghnu Recreation Reserve Waiaia Recreation Reserve	400ml – Pyroicide 2L Parrafin Oil	2.4L	Tim Devlin Graeme Murray
28/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	14kmph	N	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Bithenthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Strathmerton Primary School Strathmerton Lions Park Toilet block Recreation Reserve Service Road tree screen (east and west)	50ml - Bithenthrin 2L - Water	7L	Tim Devlin
29/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	16kmph	NW	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Bithenthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Yarroweyah Memorial Hall/Bus Stop Recreation Reserve	50ml - Bithenthrin 2L - Water	2L	Tim Devlin
29/03/2022	Start: 8:30am Finish: 5:30pm	15kmph	NW	*Barmac Out Of Bounds (Bithenthrin)	Mosquito Residual Barrier	Wunghnu Grahams Park Public toilets	50ml -Bithenthrin 2L - Water	1.5L	Tim Devlin

FILE NO:
3. A CLEAN GREEN ENVIRONMENT

ITEM NO: 9.5.1
(ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL OFFICER,
TIM DEVLIN)
(DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT BRYAN SWORD)

INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

Appendix 6: Staff training records

Table 13: List of training undertaken by staff in the Moira Shire Council for the 2023/24 mosquito season.

Officer name	Date	Type of training (i.e., name of course)	Duration (hrs)	Comments
Tim Devlin	13/12/2023	Vector Control Application Equipment Training	4hrs	Cameron Skedd, APC Tri-Star
	14/12/2023		4hrs	

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

Appendix 7: Equipment register

Table 14: List of equipment (assets) used by Moira Shire Council for mosquito Surveillance and control activities.

Equipment	Quantity	Brand/Model	Features	DHHS asset number/LGA identifier	Approx. year of purchase	Overall condition	Comments
Field surveillance equipment							
EVS light traps	3	Australian Entomological Supplies	EVS light traps		2020	Average	
PB light traps	4	Pacific Biologics	PB light traps		2022	Good	
Rechargeable batteries	4	Drypower	Rechargeable batteries		2023	Average	
Battery chargers	4	Enecharger	Battery chargers		2023	Good	
Delivery cooler bags	Seasons worth	Woolworths	Delivery cooler bags		2020	Good	
Ice bricks for cooler bags	Seasons worth	Woolworths	Ice bricks for cooler bags		2020	Good	
Petri dishes	100	LabDirect			2024	Good	

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

Lab Equipment						
Microscope	1	Nikon				Good
Mosquito emergence container	5	Toral Plastics				Good
Snowpack	2		Dry ice brick maker			Bad Use with Liquid CO2 Cannister, *when dry ice pellets are not available
Vector Control Application Equipment						
Backpack Granule Applicator	1	Guarany 11L	Liquid/Granule/Neb		MSP 578	2017 Good
Backpack- Liquid Applicator	1	Guarany 11L	Liquid/Nebuliser		MSP579	2017 Good
Fogging equipment						
Cougar ULV Fogger	1	Cougar	SmartFlow II		WSP589	2017 Good

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INTEGRATED MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026 (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - DRAFT - Intergrated Mosquito Management Plan 2024 -2026

Appendix 8: SOPs and other documents in use

Table 15: List of Standard Operating procedures used by Moira Shire Council for mosquito surveillance and control activities.

Document Name	Implemented on: (date)	Document owner:
Adult Mosquito Surveillance		
Mosquito Monitoring and Management Procedure 2024/2025	July 2024	Moira Shire Council
EVS-CO2-trap-Standard Operating-Procedure 2024/2025	July 2024	Moira Shire Council
Mosquito Atlas		
Using Atlas to log specimens	May 2021	Department of Heath

FILE NO:
2. A DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC ECONOMY

ITEM NO: 9.5.2
(DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
BRYAN SWORD)

NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the Numurkah – Strathmerton Corridor Background Report, April 2024 as shown in attachment 1.
2. Endorse the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy - Discussion Paper as shown in attachment 2.
3. Authorise officers to commence community engagement on the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy - Discussion Paper for a minimum of six weeks in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

1. Executive Summary

In October 2022, Council was awarded \$131,000 of funding by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) under the Streamlining for Growth Program (SfG) to investigate and support the economic and employment growth within the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor (the Growth Corridor) through the preparation of the Growth Corridor Plan.

The Discussion Paper is the Council's first major step in involving the community in creating the Growth Corridor Plan. The purpose of the Discussion Paper is to explore the key issues confronting the Corridor and invite the community to consider the Corridor's future.

This report provides context for the preparation of the Corridor Discussion Paper and seeks approval to commence a period of community consultation for a minimum of six (6) weeks.

2. Conflict of interest declaration

There are no conflict of interest declarations to consider.

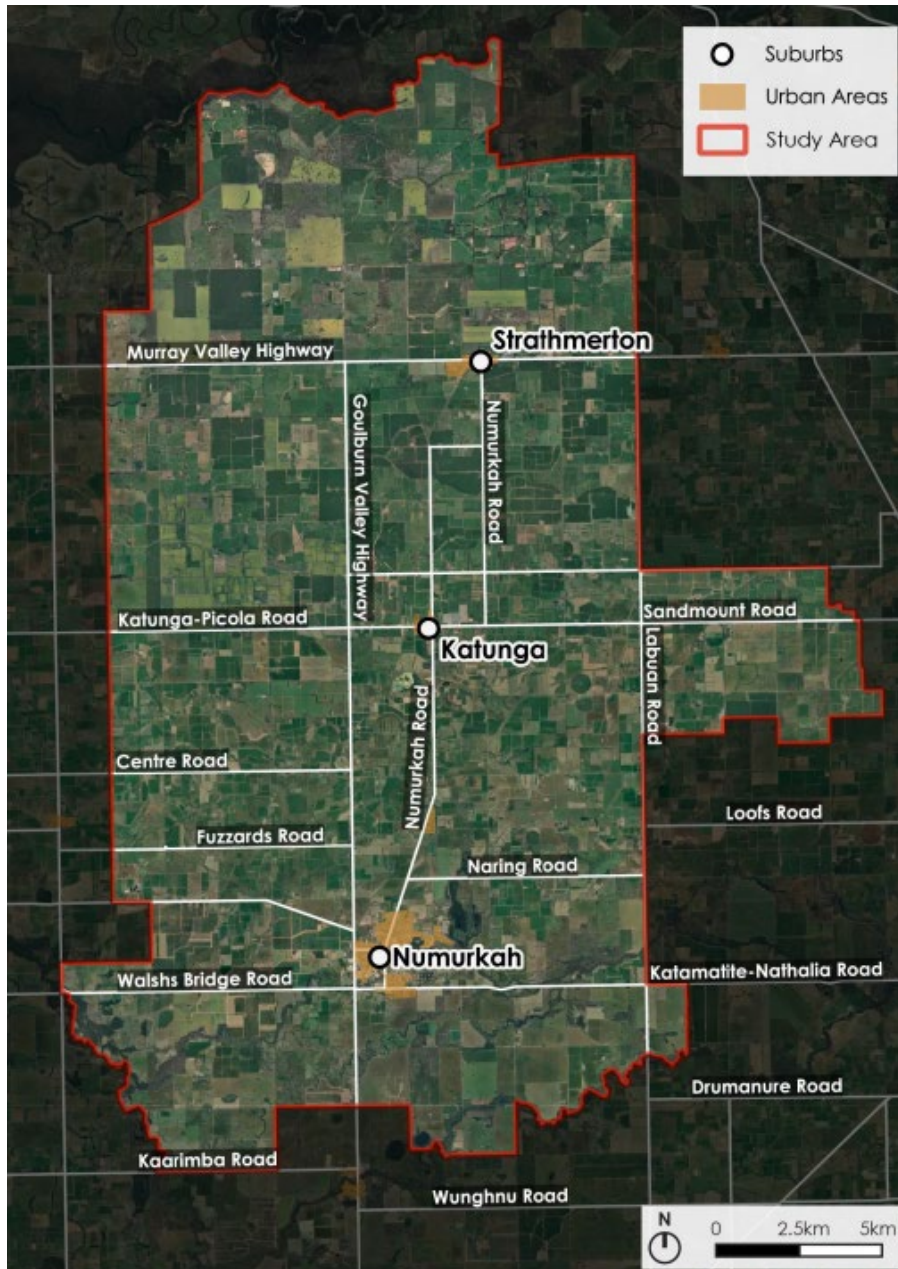
3. Background & Context

The Growth Corridor is an area around the Goulburn Valley Highway, a principal freight route, stretching from Wunghnu to Strathmerton. The Growth Corridor is strategically located in the center of major regional settlements including Cobram, Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga, Yarrawonga and the border towns of New South Wales such as Tocumwal. The Growth Corridor includes Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton, areas which are historically associated with primary production in which local produce is ultimately distributed across eastern Australia.

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY
- DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**



The Growth Corridor Plan is envisioned as a combined economic development and land use strategy plan, intended to champion the region as an important economic region and drive economic growth. The Growth Corridor Plan will evaluate and deliver a combination of development planning reforms, economic development objectives and initiatives and an advocacy agenda to support and direct the long-term growth of the Corridor as a major food bowl and energy hub in Victoria.

In August 2023 Council appointed Charter Keck Cramer to develop the Growth Corridor Plan. In preparing the Growth Corridor Plan, Charter Keck Cramer, have prepared:

- *Numurkah – Strathmerton Corridor Background Report, April 2024.*
- *Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy Discussion Paper, August 2024.*

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY
- DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

The Background Report acknowledges that the Corridor is home to an estimated 6,700 residents, employs in the order of 3000 workers and contributes an estimated \$1.1 billion to the economic output annually, largely through agricultural and manufacturing sectors.

The Background Report identifies that the key influences on growth in the Corridor relate to workforce and labour shortages, key worker and general housing shortages and the changing landscape of water entitlements. It is important to note that the Background Report has identified that it is not necessary to rezone land to support economic growth in the Corridor.

The Discussion Paper is the Council's first major step in involving the community in creating the Growth Corridor Plan. The Discussion Paper seeks to explore the key issues confronting growth in the Corridor and invites the community to consider the Corridor's future.

The Discussion Paper seeks to canvas feedback from the community on ten (10) initiatives or options that are designed to support growth in the Corridor. Presented in the Discussion Paper as 'Strategic Moves', the Paper seeks to canvas community views on the following ten (10) options / initiatives:

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY
- DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

1. Creating the conditions to grow	This initiative focuses on spurring on housing development through the provision and organisation of infrastructure. An example of this is the Numurkah North Stormwater Management Strategy and continued advocacy for Sewer in Katunga.
2. Actively support the development of purpose-built key worker housing.	In acknowledgement of the ongoing need for imported labour in the Corridor, this initiative entails the development of a land use planning policy to promote the development of key worker housing in proximity to the Corridor's settlements.
3. Support the delivery of new industrial lots.	Supporting and encouraging the development of a new large format industrial facility. This may provide an opportunity in the future to support a neighbourhood battery that is used to store and distribute energy to the township.
4. Promote Katunga as a leading horticultural township.	This initiative focuses on the development of policy support for the ongoing development of indoor horticulture at Katunga and associated support for the development of support industries, infrastructure and housing at Katunga to support the evolution of the industry.
5. Support the orderly development of Strathmerton.	This concept is two-fold, providing a Strathmerton Town Boundary and exploring options for a policy on non-farming uses in the farming zone.
6. Establish long term growth options in Katunga.	This initiative entails identifying land in Katunga for future residential expansion land. The rezoning and development of this expansion land would be subject to the provision of sewerage services.
7. Expand medium term industrial development options.	This initiative supports bringing forward the timing of industrial expansion land in Numurkah. This would result in a larger industrial expansion area with a larger and potentially more competitive and diverse industrial land market.
8. Champion the Corridor as a location to live and grow.	Through Council advocacy and economic development, there is a compelling and significant opportunity to promote the affordability advantages of the Corridor to households currently struggling with cost of living pressures and high mortgage rates.
9. Enhance Lake Numurkah as a priority civic and natural asset.	This initiative entails supporting and advocating for improving the appearance and quality of Lake Numurkah as the most significant natural destination in the Corridor to help elevate the attractiveness of the Corridor as a destination and improve perceptions of the Corridor's liveability.
10. Update the Corridor's population and employment statistics.	This initiative relates to the Council and government ensuring future data collection on population and workers is accurate and comprehensive.

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY
- DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

Once endorsed, the Growth Corridor Discussion Paper will be the subject of community consultation for a minimum of six (6) weeks. Feedback and insight gained from the community consultation process will be used to inform the development of the Corridor Plan.

4. Strategic Alignment

Council Plan

- 2. A diverse and dynamic economy
 - 2.01. - We support new and existing businesses to grow and prosper
 - 2.04. - We advocate for the provision of essential infrastructure including energy supply, digital connectivity and transport services.
 - 2.05. - We plan for sustainable development and growth which balances economic, environmental and social considerations.

5. External Engagement

Engagement

External Corridor business
community

Feedback

Charter Keck Cramer and Economic Development Officers have engaged with major businesses operating within the Corridor.

6. Budget / Financial Considerations

The Council was awarded a VPA grant of \$131,000 to complete the project and committed a cash contribution of \$40,000 and in-kind contribution of \$83,500 for the project. Council received a lump sum payment of the funds from the VPA in May 2023.

7. Risk & Mitigation

Financial There is a risk that the Corridor Discussion Paper could result in expectation that all initiatives be delivered.

The document clearly identifies that its role to promote community feedback, and any ideas canvased are aspirational, and the feasibility of each project will need to be further explored.

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY
- DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

8. Conclusion

The Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy - Discussion Paper is an important milestone for developing a meaningful plan for the future of the Corridor.

Following endorsement of the Growth Corridor Discussion Paper, the document will be used to engage with the community and used to formulate the draft Corridor Plan.

Attachments

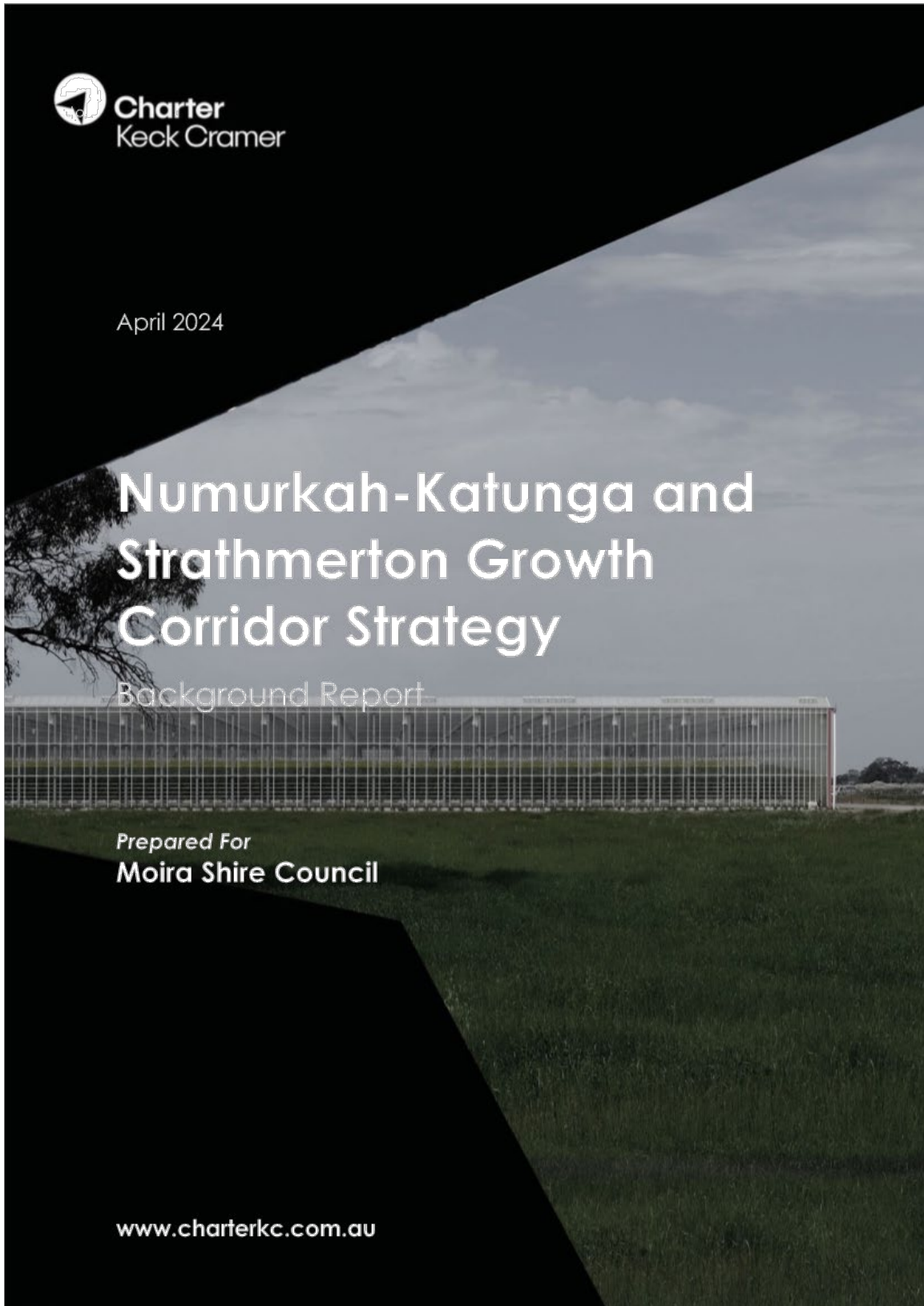
- 1 Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024
- 2 Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy Discussion Paper

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Plan

Numurkah – Strathmerton Corridor Background Report

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NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



1.1 Instructing Party

Instructing Party	Moira Shire Council
Address	PO Box 578, Cobram VIC, 3643
Email	info@moira.vic.gov.au
Telephone	(03) 5871 9222

1.2 Purpose

This report has been prepared for Moira Shire Council and serves as the background report for the Numurkah-Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy. The report helps profile the population, employment and economy, identifying the key issues and opportunities that should be addressed by the ultimate strategy.

1.3 Terms of Reference

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the party to whom it is addressed and for no other purpose. No responsibility is accepted for any third party who may use or rely on the whole or any part of the content of this report. It should be noted that any subsequent amendments or changes in any form to this report would only be notified to and known by the parties to whom it is addressed. This report has been carefully prepared by Charter Keck Cramer Strategic Research and the information contained herein should not be relied upon to replace professional advice on specific matters.

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1.4 Our Reference

Charter Contact	Simon Micmacher
Report Author	Simon Micmacher, Jimmy Zhang

Acknowledgement of Country

Moira Shire Council acknowledges the Yorta Yorta people as the traditional custodians of the land in which we live and work and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, culture, tradition and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contribute to our community.

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NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



Key Insights

Moira Shire is developing a Corridor Strategy for the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor.

As a pivotal resource to support the development of the Corridor Strategy this background report explores the policy, demographic, land supply and economic status of the Corridor.

Key insights are as follows:

Strategic Planning

- Over the past 15 years Numurkah has been subject to two major strategic planning reviews. The *Numurkah Strategy Plan 2010 (CPG)* and the *Major Towns' Strategy Plan Review 2018 (SD Planning)*.
- The 2010 plan resulted in the expansion of Numurkah's township boundary to its north and north west via the addition of new residential and industrial land. The plan also identified further future expansion land which is now identified in the Moira Shire Planning Scheme at Clause 11.01-1L-05.
- The 2018 Plan concluded that Numurkah did not require any further residential or industrial land due to a lack of development and growth in the intervening years. The Plan also identified the need for the township to be subject to a retail audit.
- As per the 2018 Plan, this background work identifies limited residential and industrial change since 2010 and notes that Numurkah has not experienced the scale of population growth projected in 2010.

Economic Planning

- The *Goulburn Economic Development Strategy (2022)* is the most current regional economic development plan. The key economic strengths and opportunities identified in the strategy align with opportunities evident in the Corridor, particularly opportunities in energy and primary production innovation.
- Similarly, the *Moira Economic Opportunities Study 2023 (REMPAN)* identifies energy and primary production as key propulsive industry sectors.
- The Corridor's economy benefits from access to water and access to labour through the PALM Islander scheme and other temporary worker schemes.
- There is a strong alignment between regional and local economic priorities and perceived opportunities.

Corridor Demography and Economy

- Since 2016, the Corridor has experienced minimal population and employment growth particularly when compared with growth in nearby settlements at Shepparton, Cobram and Yarrawonga. Similarly, the Corridor is not a focus for significant housing growth.
- Recent minimal growth has influenced population projections for the Corridor which anticipate that the next 15 years will entail limited population growth.
- The Corridor's population, however, may have been significantly undercounted as it seems likely that significant numbers of temporary workers were not counted in the recent 2021 Census.
- The availability of labour in the Corridor is an issue for business which is reflected in the Corridor's historically low unemployment rate and the views expressed by business during project consultation.
- Many of the Corridor's major employers plan to expand operations and workforce. The availability of worker housing is a key barrier and challenge in attracting staff.
- The outlook for the Corridor's population and employment is likely to be more favourable if more housing was available both for rent and purchase.
- A future strategy might explore way in which the Shire can boost key worker housing development.

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



Land Supply

- There is sufficient residential and industrial vacant land supply in the Corridor to accommodate future growth for at least 15 years. No further land requires rezoning at this time.
- There is however a critical issue with the supply of serviced available lots for development both industrial and residential.
- The future strategy needs to address ways in which to support the development of serviced developable lots.
- There are also significant industrial uses in the Farming Zone in the Corridor that require review and potential planning reforms.
- A review of retail floor space indicates potential demand for new bulky goods floor space in Numurkah.

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NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



1.0 Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor Plan

The Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor (The Corridor) is one of Victoria's leading food bowl and emerging energy hubs. The Corridor's rich alluvial soils, water, abundant sunshine and long standing skill in food manufacturing and irrigation have help found a diverse and growing economy and community.

Today, the Corridor sits at the leading edge of significant change. Changes in primary production, energy generation, irrigation and climate compel the Corridor and its community to continue to adapt and to leverage from a wide range of changing forces.

The Moira Shire aims to position the Corridor to thrive.

1.1 The Shire is developing a Corridor Plan

Moira Shire is developing a "Growth Corridor Plan" for the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor.

It is imperative that the Corridor's economic, housing and industrial settings ensure business and the community benefit from ongoing change.

The Corridor Plan will incorporate a combination of development planning reforms, economic development objectives and initiatives and an advocacy agenda to support and direct the long-term growth of the Corridor as a major food bowl and energy hub in Victoria.

Charter Keck Cramer has been commissioned by Moira Shire to develop a Corridor Plan for the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor.

1.2 Project Goals

The Corridor Plan aims to spur and direct the future of the settlements along the Corridor via specific policy, investment and attraction initiatives.

Table 1: The Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor Plan Project Goals

Focus	Objective	Strategy Implication
Economic Development	Support ongoing economic development, innovation and growth throughout the Corridor.	Ensure the Corridor Plan prioritises the needs of the industry sectors that are essential to the prosperity of the Corridor.
Advocacy	Advocate for growth enabling infrastructure investment and public policy reform that will benefit the corridor.	Develop a housing, transport and energy infrastructure advocacy agenda.
Development Planning	Ensure land use settings and policy direction enable the Corridor to accommodate growth and respond to demand enabling the Corridor to achieve its full potential.	Develop a strategic suite of justified planning reforms.

1.3 Purpose of the Background Report

The purpose of this report is to compile comprehensive data and analysis that serves as the project's founding information resource from which the justification for the project's key initiatives and big moves are derived.

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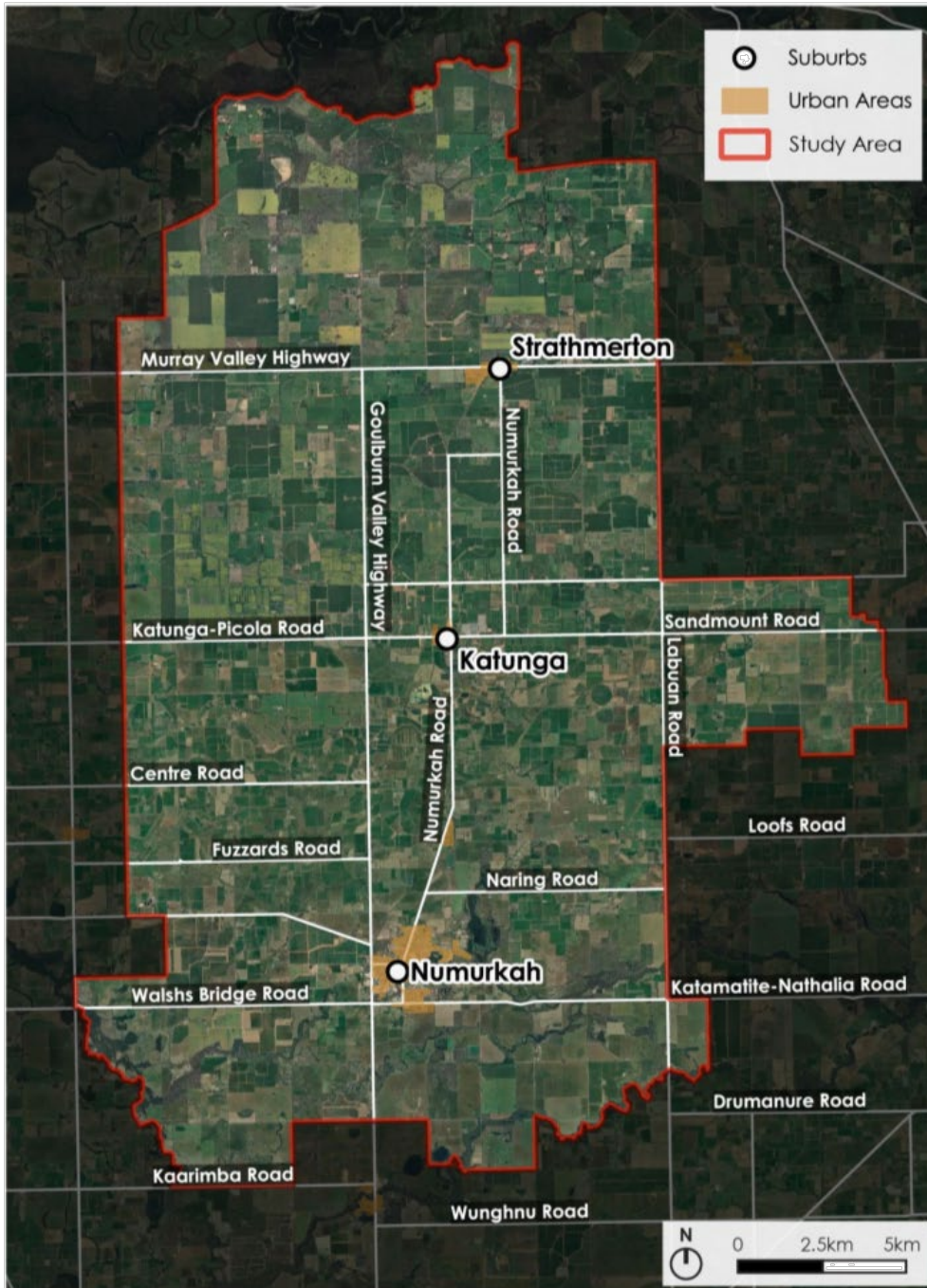
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Figure 1: Study Area



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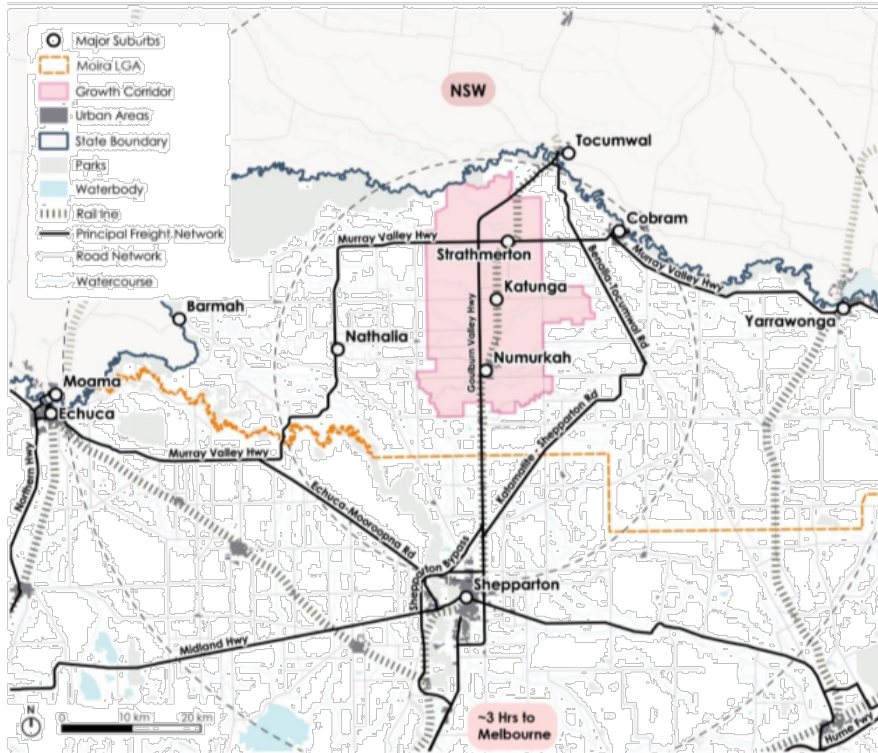
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ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



Figure 2: Study Region Context



Source: Charter Keck Cramer

1.4 What is a growth corridor?

A growth corridor is a dedicated area designated for investment to further economic growth and development. Growth corridors are often centred along a major transport route which acts as a pivotal hub connecting local industry networks to broader markets and opportunity. The continued investment, development and economic connectivity of the corridor intensifies the gravity of the location, thereby further attracting population and employment growth to the corridor.

The Numurkah – Strathmerton Growth Corridor is an area bounded by the Goulburn Valley Highway, a principal freight route, stretching from Wunghnu to Strathmerton. The designated study region includes Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton, areas which are historically associated with primary production in which local produce is ultimately distributed across eastern Australia.

The study region is strategically located in the centre of major regional settlements including Cobram, Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga, Yarrowonga and the border towns of New South Wales such as Tocumwal (illustrated in Figure 2).

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ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



2.0 Strategic Context: Land Use, Public Policy and Economy

This section summarises the key land use and economic development policies and frameworks that guide the overall strategic direction of Moira Shire with specific reference to their impact and influence on Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton.

The following reviews and summarises critical land use, economic and public policy that impact on the Corridor's current and future settlement planning, economic development and public administration. These policies provide important contextual considerations for the ultimate Corridor strategy.

Land Use Planning

The structure and land development outlook for each of the Corridor's settlements is informed and directed by a series of overarching regional, Shire wide and local settlement strategies. These are profiled as follows.

2.1 Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014)

The *Hume Regional Growth Plan* continues to set the strategic direction for land use planning for north-eastern region of Victoria.

Moira Shire is situated in the Goulburn Valley subregion with Shepparton identified as the region's major urban growth and development centre including Mooroopna and Kialla.

Shepparton as the major regional city is targeted to cater for significant growth including expanded commercial, industrial and urban services. Within the plan, Numurkah is identified as a key sub-regional settlement. Numurkah is identified as positioned to accommodate future population growth, with its role in providing tree-change and lifestyle opportunities for major tourism destinations of the region.

The Goulburn Valley region is identified as a strategic agricultural area of national/state significance. The region's soil quality and water supply underpin widespread primary production.

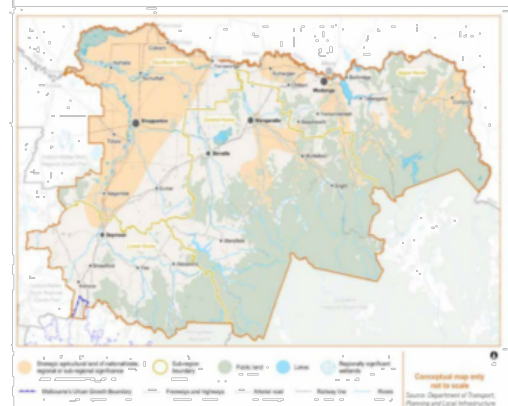
The strategy seeks to protect agricultural uses from residential encroachment to ensure agriculture remains a viable industry, while also providing certainty for investors and businesses of its protection. Population growth is therefore directed to established townships and centres while rural residential lifestyle development is discouraged.

Overall regional settlement planning focuses on four key directions:

- Directing future population growth to settlements with greatest capacity to accommodate growth.
- Maximise the use of existing infrastructure and services and facilitate strategic investment in future infrastructure and services.
- Retain productive rural land for agriculture and other compatible rural uses.
- Ensure efficient use of land use planning resources in the region.

For the Corridor Plan, the *Hume Regional Growth Plan* establishes enduring directions related to settlement planning whilst also championing primary production as the region's leading economic sector.

Figure 3: Strategic Agriculture Land Hume



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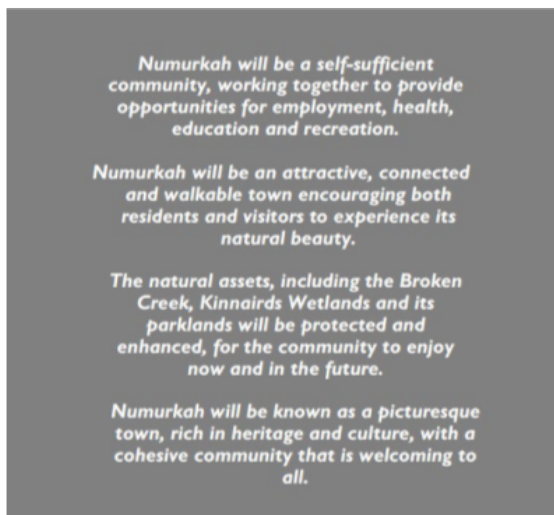
2.2 Numurkah Strategy Plan 2010

The Numurkah Strategy Plan (January 2010) is a land use focused document that provides planning directions in relation to:

- Residential Land
- Commercial Land
- Industrial Land
- Open Space and Recreation
- Traffic and Transport
- Community Facilities
- Rural and Agricultural Land

The Plan resulted in a series of land use zoning, land uses and land supply recommendations which continue to guide the township's development and settlement structure in 2024. The Plan's settlement vision for Numurkah is as follows:

Figure 4: Numurkah Strategy Plan Vision



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Numurkah Strategy Plan - Residential Recommendations

The *Plan* assesses residential land supply and the capacity of the township to accommodate projected demand.

To identify future demand, the *Plan* projects future population growth based on trend growth (2% per annum) and above trend growth (3% per annum). Each projection results in a future growth scenario for the township that establishes a future housing and land demand projections.

Based on the growth scenarios detailed below, the *Plan* concludes that the township requires between 78 and 109 hectares of land to ensure that the township incorporates at least 10 years of zoned land supply. This range reflects the amount of land needed to accommodate both trend and high growth population projections.

Figure 5: Residential Land 2% Population Growth Per Annum

Year	Population	Occupancy Rate	Equivalent Dwellings	No. of New Dwellings Based on Population	No. of New Dwellings Based on Building Approval Trends	Land Area (ha) required for residential Demand (Average of population projection & approval trends)
2006	3,636	2.40	1,533			
2011	4,000	2.31	1,732	199	150	23
2016	4,400	2.22	1,982	250	150	27
2021	4,840	2.15	2,251	269	150	28
2026	5,324	2.01	2,649	398	150	37
TOTALS				1,116 dwellings (Equivalent to 149ha)	600 dwellings (Equivalent to 80ha)	115 hectares

Figure 6: Residential Land 3% Population Growth Per Annum

Year	Population	Occupancy Rate	Equivalent Dwellings	No. of New Dwellings Based on Population	No. of New Dwellings Based on Building Approval Trends	Land Area (ha) required for residential Demand (Average of population projection & approval trends)
2006	3,636	2.40	1,533			
2011	4,181	2.31	1,810	277	200	32
2016	4,808	2.22	2,166	356	200	37
2021	5,529	2.15	2,572	406	200	40
2026	6,358	2.01	3,163	591	200	53
TOTALS				1,630 dwellings (Equivalent to 217ha)	800 dwellings (Equivalent to 107ha)	162 hectares

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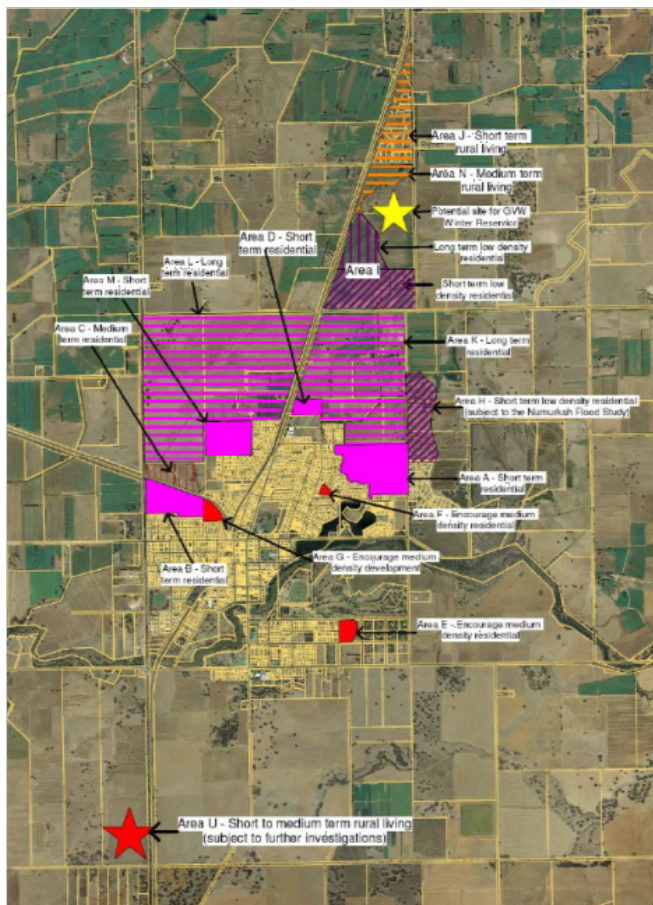
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The Plan identifies future residential expansion areas to support short-, medium- and long-term growth and resulting housing demand. As a result of the township's hydrology, the focus of future growth is primarily towards the townships north.

Figure 7: Residential Land Use Plan Numurkah Strategy Plan



Rezoning of Residential Land 2011

At 2010, Numurkah incorporated 63 hectares of vacant residential land. In implementing the Plan, Council sought to rezone a 58 hectares of farming land for residential purposes, which included 22 hectares of land that had already been developed for residential purposes. When combined with existing vacant land at 2010 (63 hectares), the implementation of the Plan via amendment C63 in 2011 resulted in approximately 100 hectares of residential land supply in Numurkah.

The township's residential expansion assumed annual consumption of residential land at a rate of between 4 to 10 hectares per annum. As measured in 2024, the scale of residential land take-up since 2010 has been significantly lower than projected in the Plan. As such, there is a significant discrepancy between the Plan's residential growth projections and subsequent limited on the ground development.

This project incorporates engagement with local industry, including industry involved in land development. According to industry and administrative sources, the development of vacant residential land in Numurkah has been impacted by drainage issues and the need for an overarching approach to

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drainage prior to development. To progress the Corridor Plan, there is a need to further understand the barriers that may be inhibiting residential development and how these might be addressed.

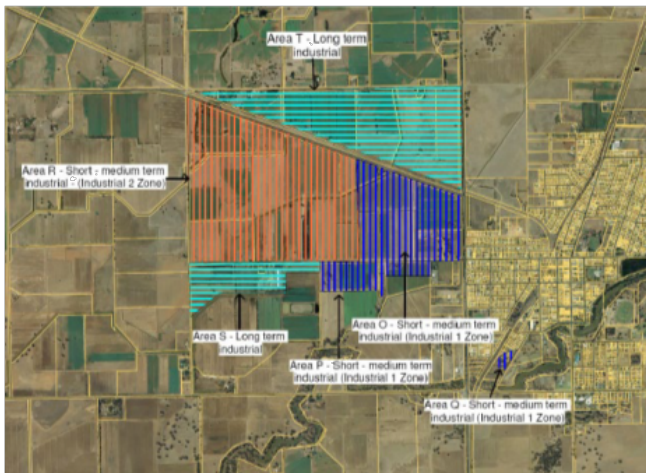
It is important to note that not all expansion areas identified in the Strategy Plan were rezoned in 2011. Unzoned future residential expansion areas establish the residential land supply directions in the current Numurkah Framework Plan at Clause 11 of the Moira Shire Planning Scheme.

2.3 Industrial Land

The Plan also includes directions in relation to industrial land supply. In the early and mid-2000s, demand and supply of industrial land was the focus of successive land supply studies. These are subject to detailed review within the Plan. As a result of this review and in particular the conclusions of the *Industrial Zones Review Revisited 2007 (Maunsell)*, the Strategy Plan concludes that further land should be made available for industrial development. It follows that the Strategy Plan identifies logical expansion areas to the west of Goulburn Valley Highway not impacted by flooding risk (see map below).

The impetus for expanding industrial land availability seems to be based on the potential to induce new business and investment to the Shire (and not expressed industrial demand).

Figure 8: Industrial Land Expansion Areas Numurkah Strategy Plan



The Strategy Plan recommends the rezoning of land to the south of Katamatite Nathalia Road, totalling approximately 88 hectares of new industrial land. This land was rezoned as part of C63 in 2011. A series of land parcels not put forward for rezoning in 2011 were identified as future medium- and long-term industrial land supply. Future industrial land supply is identified in the current Numurkah Framework Plan at Clause 11 of the Moira Shire Planning Scheme. The rationale for sequencing industrial land supply as either medium- or long-term industrial land supply is not detailed in the Strategy.

As with rezoned residential expansion areas, there has been limited take up of new industrial land supply. Likewise, there is a need to investigate the reasons for the lack of take up of industrial land over the past decade.

2.4 Commercial Land

The Strategy Plan acknowledges the influence of Greater Shepparton on retail expenditure in the township.

According to a 1997 report, approximately 50% of the Numurkah's retail expenditure leaks to Shepparton.

At the time of the development of the Plan, community consultation emphasised the need to diversify Numurkah's retail offer. The Strategy Plan also acknowledges the lack of land to accommodate large format retail uses.

The Strategy Plan recommends a retail audit and floor space analysis to review the supply of and demand for retail floor space. Unlike industrial and residential uses, the Strategy Plan does not identify the

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need to expand land supportive of retail and commercial uses. The *Strategy Plan's* commercial and retail recommendations primarily relate to place making and infrastructure and the positive impact of growing the township's tourism sector on retail demand.

There is a need to further explore the status of retail and commercial uses in the township and in particular views on the retail offer and opportunities for expansion. Notably, as part of the development of the Corridor Plan, Numurkah's retail footprint is subject to a formal retail floor space assessment as documented in this background report.

Amendment C63 to the Moira Planning Scheme

The *Strategy Plan's* proposed Residential and Industrial rezonings and associated policy directions were implemented into the Moira Planning scheme as part of Amendment C63 to the Moira Planning Scheme. The amendment was reviewed by a planning panel in February 2011. The majority of the amendment's proposed changes were supported by the panel.

The current and future availability of residential and industrial land supply is the direct result of the 2011 amendment. As discussed, the scale of development since the amendment has not matched the scale of change anticipated in the 2010 *Strategy Plan*.

2.5 Major Towns' Strategy Plan Review 2018

The Shire's four largest settlements are Yarrawonga, Cobram, Numurkah and Nathalia. In 2018, the Shire reviewed strategic and settlement planning for each of these towns.

At the time, settlement plans for each of the townships had been in place for each of the townships for between 7 to 13 years. The table below summarises the Strategy's key findings for Numurkah.

Table 2: Numurkah Recommendations Major Towns' Strategy Plan Review 2018

Implementation	Council have acted on many of the recommendations of the 2010 Strategy Plan including: Implementation of strategy plan into Planning Scheme Associated rezonings.
Growth	Population growth has been much slower than population growth forecast in the Strategy Plan.
Residential	There is no requirement for additional residential land.
Industrial	Existing industrial areas have been constrained by landowner uses (i.e. farming occurring and no 'appetite' for industrial development to occur on key sites). Rezoning of future industrial land is recommended to support short term industrial development.
Retail/Commercial	No further retail areas are required.
Other Influences	Flooding risk has constrained development in some areas over the past seven years. A shift to solar energy opportunities has occurred in the areas surrounding Numurkah. This will impact on the need for industrial land to attract and support allied businesses.

The Millennium drought, the growth of tourism, and the growth of solar investment are identified as key drivers of change within the Shire's individual townships.

The Strategy reviewed the findings of the *Numurkah Strategy Plan of 2010* and found that the plan's directions remain current. According to the Strategy, Numurkah's total population had not changed over the previous decade. The Strategy portrays this as inconsistent with the decade of growth prior to 2008.

Based on limited take-up of residentially zoned land, the Strategy concludes that no further residential land supply is needed. Nonetheless, the Strategy observes the need to encourage the development of smaller dwellings for an ageing population, smaller households and transient workers.

Due to limited population growth, the Strategy similarly concludes that no further retail or commercial floor space is needed and that any future demand might be accommodated within the existing supply of retail and commercial land.

The Strategy also reviewed the supply of the township's industrial land and identifies supply of over 65 hectares of vacant zoned industrial land. Based on the observation that the owner of the vacant industrial land was not committed to developing the land (page 41), the Strategy recommends:

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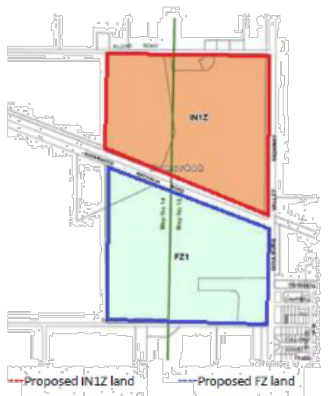


Having undertaken consultation with landowners, it is considered appropriate to back zone an area, that was previously identified and rezoned for industrial uses, to the Farming Zone. It is necessary to identify an additional area to meet the demand for Industrial 1 Zone land.

As a result, the Strategy recommended that industrial land to the north of Saxon Street (20 and 42 Saxon Street) should be rezoned from the Industrial Zone to the Farming Zone and that land to the north of Katamatite – Nathalia Road be rezoned to the industrial Zone (2123 Katamatite-Nathalia Road, 39 and 59 Allens Road, TP786691 Allens Road and Goulburn Valley Highway).

At the time of report, the area was subject to a number of solar array development initiatives which were considered to provide an opportunity to attract allied businesses to the area. At 2024, there is minimal evidence of allied solar energy businesses locating the Corridor following the deliver of solar array infrastructure.

Figure 9: Proposed Rezoning Major Towns Review 2018 – Not Approved



Amendment C93 – 2022

In 2022, Council sought to implement the findings of the Strategy into the Moira Planning Scheme. This included the proposed back zoning of existing industrial zoned land to the Farming Zone and the associated zoning of farming land along Katamatite – Nathalia Road to the industrial zone.

Planning Panels Victoria did not ultimately support these changes and associated changes to the designation of future industrial land. Accordingly, the Panel determined that the zoning changes were unsupported by evidence. The Panel observed the following:

A contemporary supply and demand analysis is needed to determine if additional industrial land is needed in Numurkah.

It is premature to rezone new land for industry in Numurkah without a contemporary supply and demand analysis.

As a result, the proposed back zoning of industrial land to farming and vice versa did not proceed. Likewise, proposed changes to the Numurkah Framework Plan in relation to changes to the designation of future industrial land supply as short-, medium- and long-term land supply did not proceed.

It should be noted that the Shire's view that vacant industrial land was being 'land banked' was disputed by submitters to the Panel. The Panel also observed that the Strategy lacked meaningful analysis to support proposed changes to the Numurkah Framework Plan.

It follows that proposed industrial land changes in Amendment C93 were not supported by Panel and did not result in any change to Numurkah's planning settings within the Moira Planning Scheme.

2.6 Municipal Strategic Statement – Moira Planning Scheme

The Shire's Planning Scheme directs the location, scale and form of future development. Settlement policy at Clause 11 provides overarching settlement directions for the Shire. Similar to that of many rural

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shires, these directions seek to consolidate development within existing settlement boundaries and within towns with reticulated sewerage systems and established community facilities.

The Shire's planning scheme supports retail and industrial growth in urban areas and infill residential development. Equally, settlement directions seek to limit residential encroachment in primary production areas.

Within the Scheme, Numurkah is identified as one of the Shire's four principal towns best positioned to support the Shire's growth. Numurkah is depicted as an attractive residential lifestyle location, favoured for its locational proximity to Shepparton, Cobram and Nathalia, with access to existing health, education and sporting facilities.

Smaller towns may also be capable of supporting growth depending on available infrastructure. Strathmerton is serviced by water and sewerage services. Katunga is a smaller village with groundwater and reticulated gas supply but no reticulated sewerage.

"Numurkah is an attractive residential lifestyle location thanks to its health, education and sporting facilities and its convenient location from Shepparton, Cobram and Nathalia. Agriculture and processing industries drive local employment and the broader economy with major oilseed processors and rail freight servicing the town. Numurkah is also home to the Kinnaird's Wetlands."
Moira Municipal Strategic Statement

Council's overall strategic directions can be summarised as follows:

Moira Shire: Settlement Directions (Clause 11)

- Residential intensification is directed towards urban centres with existing infrastructure capable of hosting intensification and there is no demonstrable impact to surrounding rural activities.
- Ensure that development adapts to the impact of climate change and minimise impacts of natural hazards.
- The Murray River and its environs is protected, recognising its importance to nature conservation, flooding, economic development, recreation and tourism.
- Council seeks to maintain agriculture as the major economic driver in the region.
- Farming Areas are protected from fragmentation by residential and hobbyist farming. This can disrupt the scalability of agribusiness which inhibits expansion and economic growth.
- Tourism development will be led by Yarrowonga and encourage tourism-based activities in the rural activity zone that are directly related to primary production and local environmental attributes.
- Ensure water management protects the quality of the water, sustainable practices are adopted and development discharges are treated.

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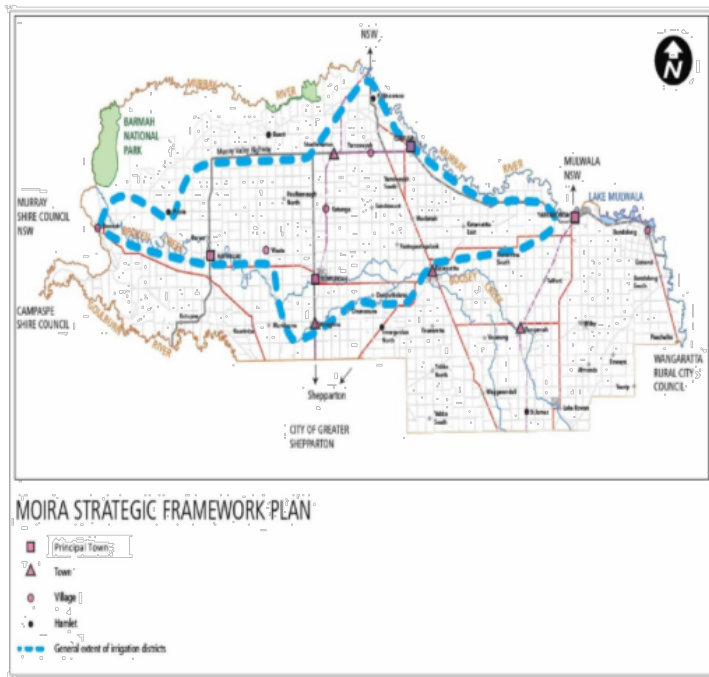
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Figure 10: Moira Strategic Framework Plan



Source: CI 0.2.04 Moira Planning Scheme

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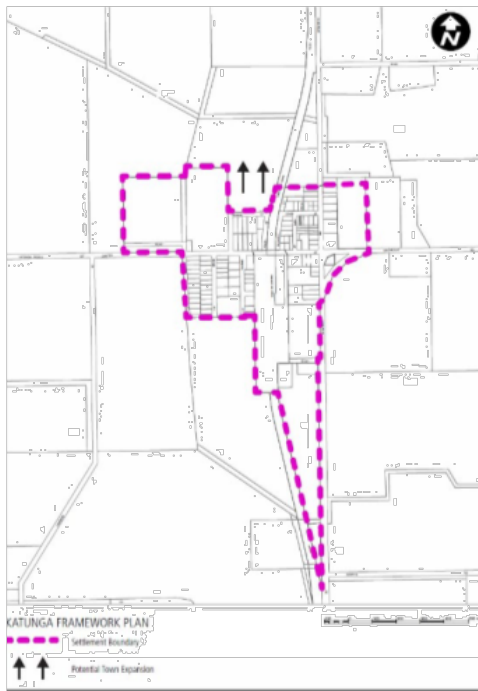


The Planning Scheme includes individual settlement strategies for Katunga and Numurkah. Strathmerton is yet to be subject to framework planning or settlement strategy.

Katunga Framework Plan

The Katunga Framework Plan identifies a town boundary which primarily comprises land zoned for residential purposes. The plan identifies a preferred expansion direction to the township's north.

Figure 11: Katunga Framework Plan (Clause 11)



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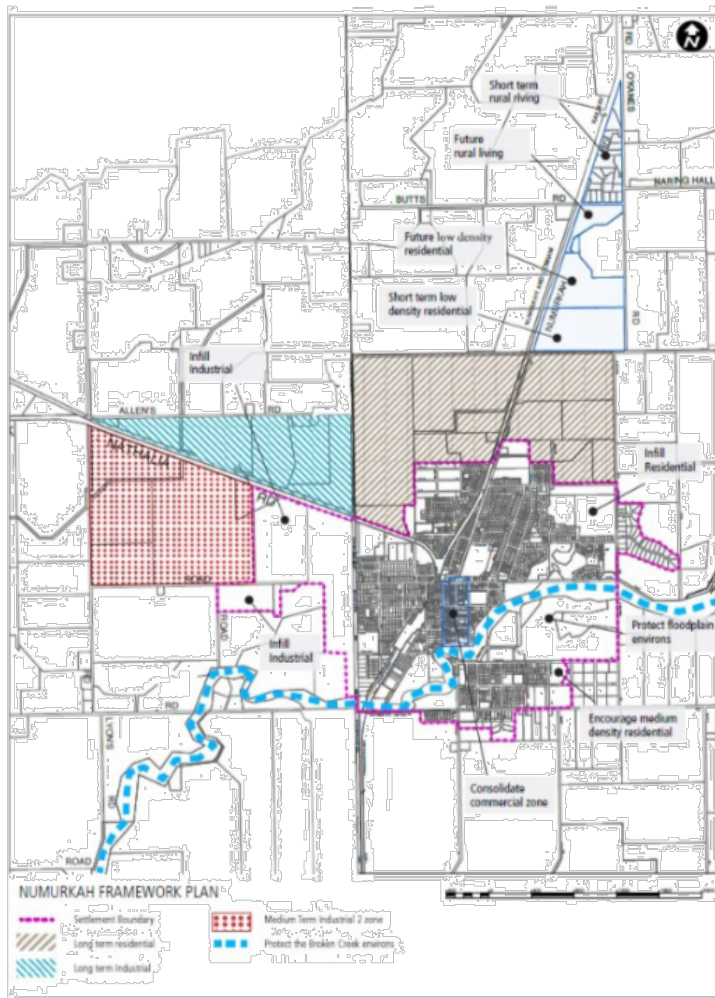


Numurkah Framework Plan

The Numurkah Framework plan identifies land for industrial and residential expansion primarily to the township's north and north-west, which are areas less subject to inundation risks. Expansion land includes land identified for medium- and long-term industrial land supply and residential land identified for different residential densities.

The Framework Plan derives from the township vision and associated land supply recommendations detailed in the 2010 *Numurkah Strategy Plan*.

Figure 12 Numurkah Framework Plan



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Economic Development

The Corridor's economic growth is subject to and guided by the priorities and objectives detailed in both regional and local economic development plans. Overarching economic development plans are detailed as follows.

2.7 Goulburn Economic Development Strategy (2022)

The *Goulburn Economic Development Strategy 2022* (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)) is one of nine State government regional Economic Development strategies.

The *Strategy* details medium- to long-term directions to support the region's economic development. The region is comprised of the North South corridor of municipalities along the Goulburn Valley Highway which includes the Shires of Greater Shepparton, Moira, Mitchell, Strathbogie and Murrindindi. At 2020, the region supported a population of 170,000 people of which 18% of the region's population lived in Moira Shire. Greater Shepparton is the region's largest municipality by population as well as including the region's largest township.



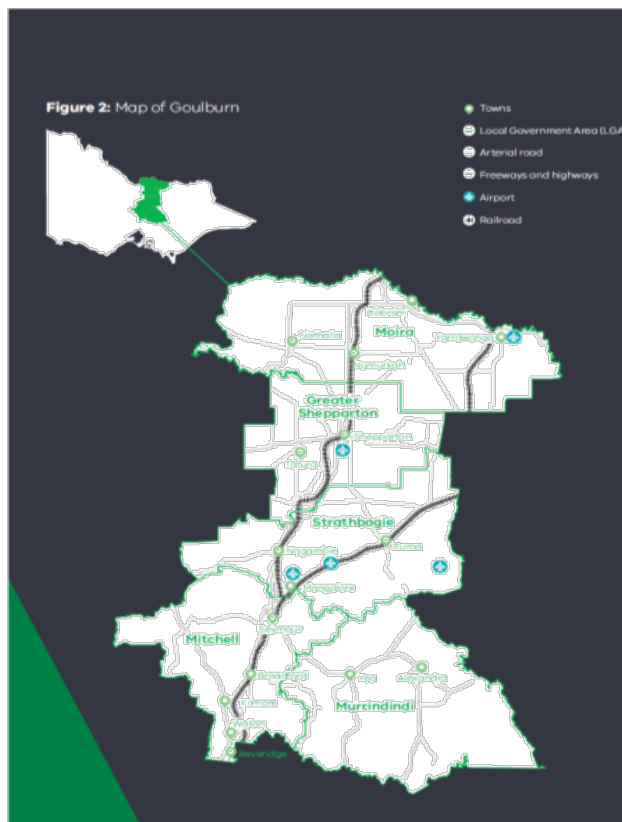
The grouping/region incorporates substantial land within Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID). The GMID is the largest irrigation system in Victoria, covering 9,950 square kilometres and accounts for more than 70 per cent of water stored in Victoria and 90 per cent of water used in irrigation across the state. The GMID is considered to be a critical asset to the future security of agriculture in Victoria and according to the *Strategy* defines the region as Australia's 'food bowl'.

Approximately 78% of the region's land supports primary production which includes horticulture, dairy, cropping and livestock grazing. Primary production is complemented by substantive food processing capability, which is primarily located within Greater Shepparton.

In profiling the region's economy, the *Strategy* identifies significant specialisation and comparative advantage in agriculture and food manufacturing. International export value from the region has steadily increased over the past decade from \$812.2 million in 2010 to \$1.2 billion in 2020.

Top export commodities in 2020 include:

- Manufacturing, valued at \$640.0 million. This is predominately food product manufacturing which is valued at \$544.0 million.
- Agriculture, valued at \$300 million.
- Food and accommodation services \$60 million



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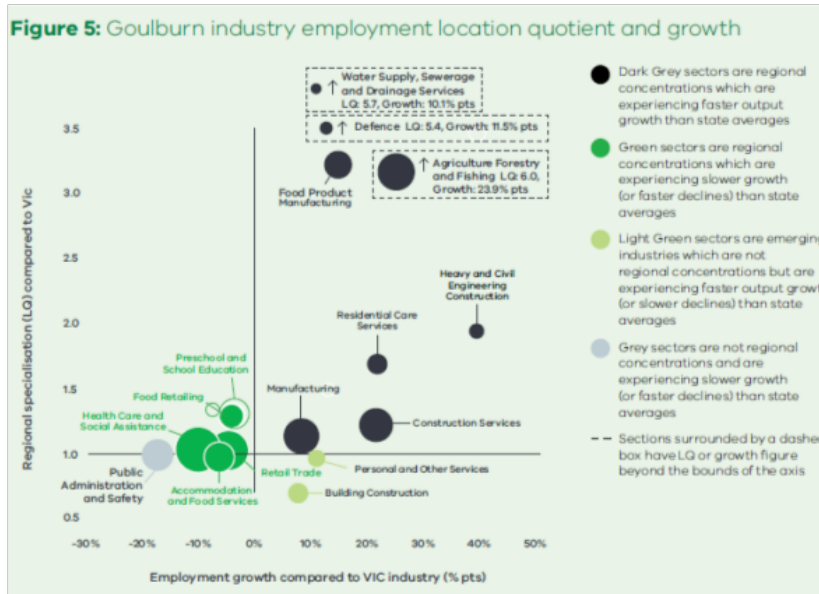
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The region enjoys economic specialisation in food manufacturing and agriculture which are also areas of growing economic output.



The region includes two main high voltage transmission lines and five major electrical terminal stations which has attracted renewable energy investment. The Victorian Central North Renewable Energy Zone is within the Goulburn region and has been identified for potential investment to expand network capacity.

The Corridor shares each of the economic advantages identified in the regional strategy including primary production and energy advantages. Equally, the Corridor is also impacted by the same key worker housing and access to labour issues identified in the regional strategy.

Figure 13: Victorian Renewable Energy Zones



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Strategic Directions

The Strategy identifies 4 overarching Strategic development directions for the region. These relate to primary production, energy, visitor economy and the championing the growth of Shepparton as a regional capital.

The directions entail a number of direct implications for the Corridor and the Corridor's future development aspirations.

The following assesses the implications of the Goulburn Economic Development Strategy's economic aspirations for the Corridor.

Table 3: Overarching regional priorities will directly inform the Corridor Strategy

Goulburn's strategic directions



Strategic Direction	Strategy Actions	Corridor Plan Implications
<p>Direction 1 Enhance productivity and resilience in the agriculture and food product manufacturing sectors.</p> <p>Why? The region's economy is founded on primary production which includes extensive primary production and processing networks.</p> <p>Agriculture comprises the region's largest economic sector which includes numerous specialised businesses and sub sectors.</p>	<p>Emphasise food quality and food standards to grow international exports.</p> <p>Embrace new food manufacturing technology.</p> <p>Diversify and intensify agriculture including expanding indoor horticulture.</p> <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workers and skills - Climate change - Technology 	<p>The Corridor encapsulates each of the economic advantages, outlook, opportunities, and risks detailed in the regional Strategy.</p> <p>The strategy does not address the topics of water access and farm consolidation.</p> <p>The Corridor is comprised of primary production communities. The Corridor therefore shares the same economic foundations and outlook as the broader region.</p>
<p>Direction 2 Focus on continued growth and development of the visitor economy, leveraging natural assets and Aboriginal heritage.</p> <p>Why? The regions parks and waterways are major visitor attractors.</p>	<p>Continue to create unique visitor economy experiences.</p> <p>Promote Aboriginal arts and heritage.</p> <p>Creating experiences and attractions founded on produce and agriculture.</p>	<p>The Corridor has the potential to support agritourism growth linking farmers to consumers and other related food bowl experiences.</p>
<p>Direction 3 Strengthen renewable energy generation and the role of the circular economy.</p> <p>Why? Abundant sunshine in conjunction with established energy infrastructure provide an opportunity to grow renewable energy investment and a low emissions economy.</p> <p>Primary production provides circular economy and bioenergy investment opportunities.</p>	<p>The Hume Renewable Energy Roadmap identifies solar and bioenergy as a key priority for the region and hydropower as an emerging opportunity.</p> <p>The Goulburn Murray Resilience Strategy identifies the 'circular economy' as a priority.</p> <p>The Victorian government aims to transition to net-zero emissions settings.</p> <p>The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) identified two renewable energy zones that cross into the Goulburn region: The Ovens Murray and Central North zones. The zones are intended to provide certainty in renewable investment.</p>	<p>The Corridor incorporates significant renewable energy infrastructure which has the potential to grow subject to infrastructure capability.</p> <p>The horticulture, food processing and cropping sectors provide opportunities to support biofuel industry.</p>
<p>Direction 4 Leverage Greater Shepparton as the regional capital and industry hub.</p> <p>Why? Greater Shepparton is the key centre in the Goulburn region and is the fifth largest regional capital in Victoria. Greater Shepparton is home to a number</p>	<p>Ongoing development of infrastructure and agglomeration of health and education services</p> <p>Support access to education and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>The Corridor is 30 minutes from Greater Shepparton CBD via private vehicle.</p> <p>The Corridor's proximity to Greater Shepparton enables the Corridor to function as residential base for Greater Shepparton workers.</p>

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Strategic Direction	Strategy Actions	Corridor Plan Implications
of internationally renowned food processing industries are established in the Greater Shepparton area.		Established primary production networks and synergies between the Corridor and Greater Shepparton might be enhanced and strengthened. The growth of Shepparton will ultimately enhance housing and agricultural demand in the Corridor.

Circular economy: A circular economy seeks to reduce the environmental impacts of production and consumption, while enabling economic growth through more productive uses of natural resources.

2.8 Moira Shire Economic Development Strategy (2019-2023)

The current Moira Shire *Economic Development Strategy 2019 to 2023* provides directions to enable economic growth and investment across the Shire, ensuring community, business and Council have clarity and direction with regards to the Shire's future economic development activities.

The strategy identifies five priorities:

- Priority 1: Enhancing Infrastructure and land – ensuring sites across the Shire are 'shovel ready' and conducive for investment.
- Priority 2: Providing information, learning and networking – helping businesses become more resilient and innovative; to grow the strength of the economy through knowledge sharing.
- Priority 3: Encouraging growth, diversification, and innovation – diversification is an economic strategy to create a more resilient and innovative economy that is not overly reliant on one industry. The Shire seeks to ensure new economic sectors can establish and thrive within Moira.
- Priority 4: Fostering the visitor economy – this priority places an emphasis on improving Moira as a tourism destination which encourages expenditure in the region for local businesses to capture.
- Priority 5: Making great places for people – enhancing civic amenity and placemaking initiatives helps make Moira more attractive for residents, workers and businesses.

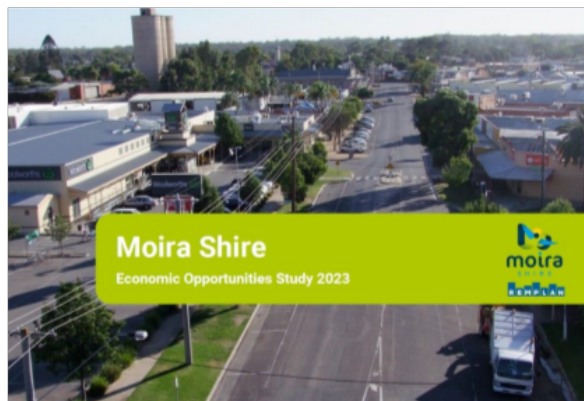
While each of the priorities above will ultimately inform the future *Corridor Plan*, Priority 1 in relation to the need for land and development ready land to support economic activity strongly aligns with the focus of background work to support the land use component of the Corridor Plan. Similarly, Priority 3 in relation to economic diversification and innovation aligns with growing agricultural diversification evident in the Corridor, particularly in relation to indoor horticulture.

2.9 Economic Opportunities Study 2023 (REMPAN)

The Study identifies the Shire's key growth sectors whilst also detailing strategies and initiatives to promote economic expansion.

In exploring economic opportunities, the Study identifies key areas of economic specialisation. As might be expected, the Shire's economy incorporates high levels of specialisation in primary production including grazing, dairy production and horticulture (identified as other agriculture).

As a primary production area, it can be assumed that the Corridor's economy incorporates the same levels of primary production specialisation as the broader Shire.



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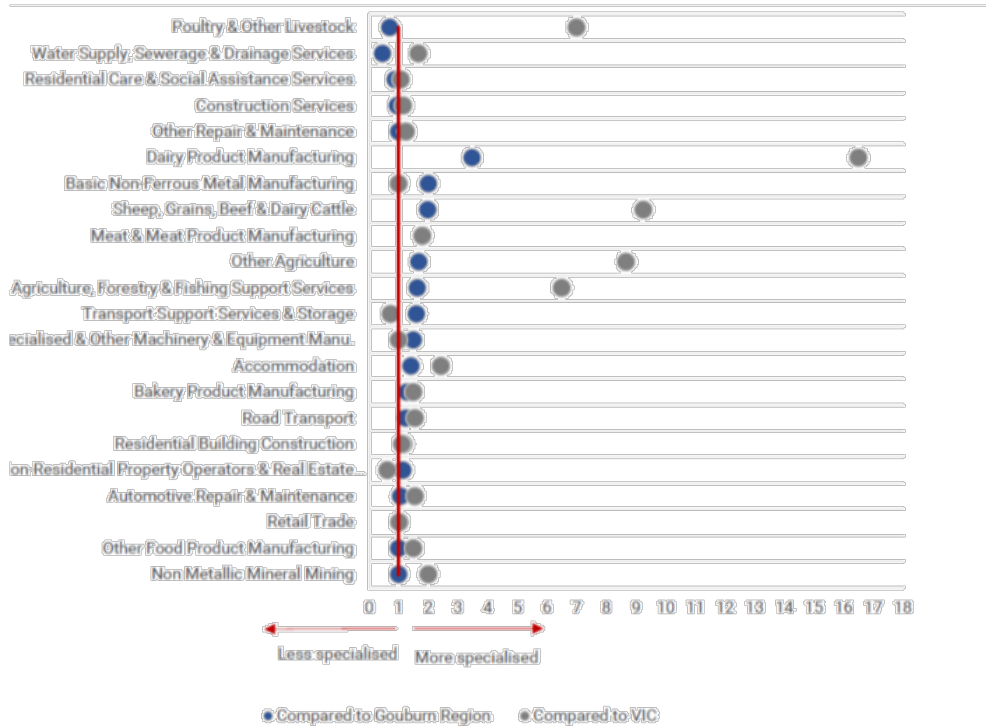
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Figure 14: Workforce specialisation (location quotient), Moira Shire (REMPLAN)



Looking to the future, the study applies econometric techniques to identify and rank sectors of growing economic opportunity (referred to as areas of economic propulsion). According to the study, the Sheep, Grains, Beef & Dairy Cattle and Construction sectors provide ongoing and significant economic expansion opportunity. Similarly, due to both supply chain opportunities and specialisation, Other Agriculture (i.e. crop growing and horticulture), Real Estate Services (residential and non-residential) and Transport are also seen as growing sectors.

The findings confirm on the ground project observations and consultation insights resulting from project engagement activity in which horticulture, cropping and transportation are seen as both areas of unique specialisation in the Corridor and potential areas of economic growth.

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Figure 15: Opportunity and capability matrix (REMPAN)

Opportunity (supply chain gap)			Industry sub-sector opportunities	Local capability		
Moira (S)	Goulburn Region	Surrounding LGAs		Business entries	Key propulsive sector	Regional specialisation
✓	✓	✓	(Sheep) Grains, Beef & Dairy Cattle	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	Construction Services	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	Other Agriculture	✓	☐	✓
✓	✓	✓	Non-Residential Property Operators & Real Estate Serv.	✓	☐	✓
✓	✓	✓	Transport Support Services & Storage	✓	☐	✓
✓	✓	✓	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	✓	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Wholesale/Trade	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Auxiliary Finance & Insurance Services	✓	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Rental & Hiring Services (except real estate)	✓	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Structural Metal Product Manufacturing	✓	☐	☐
✓	✓	☐	Other Food Product Manufacturing	☐	☐	✓
✓	☐	☐	Road Transport	✓	☐	✓
✓	✓	✓	Finance	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Non Ferrous Metal Ore Mining	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Petroleum & Coal Product Manufacturing	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Administration & Support Services	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Polymer Product Manufacturing	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Prof. Scientific, Computer & Electronic Equip. Manu.	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Telecommunication Services	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Computer Systems Design & Related Services	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Veterinary Pharmaceutical Product Manufacturing	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Oil & Gas Extraction	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Electrical Equipment Manufacturing	☐	☐	☐
✓	✓	✓	Electricity Distribution	☐	☐	☐
✓	☐	☐	Paper Product Manufacturing	☐	☐	☐

The study concludes with detailed analysis of the Shire's growth sectors - agriculture, food production, solar energy, tourism and residential growth. According to the Study, there is an opportunity to further stimulate the Shire's population growth by boosting the Shire's attractiveness through investment in liveability and amenity improvements. A growing population will help grow underlying local services and consumer demand while expanding the Shire's pool of labour. The Study identifies improved NBN services and support for residential development as opportunities to stimulate population growth. Tourism is also identified as an important growth sector requiring the Shire's support.

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Agricultural Outlook

Moira Shire is a vibrant community known for its rich agricultural heritage in the "Food Bowl" of Australia. Extending from the iconic Barmah Forest in the west of the shire, along the Murray River to Bundalong in the East, and south to Lake Rowan and Wunghnu.

The Shire's weather, water supply, accessibility and flat fertile land support a diverse agricultural sector that includes sheep and beef farming, dairy producers and cropping, and a growing number of fruit and vegetable producers.

The Shire's access to water is a key advantage. The Shire is within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District before the Barmah Choke while the Corridor has the dual water benefit of also having access to the Katunga Deep Lead Bore. In addition, the Shire and Corridor is situated on two major transport routes North South, the Goulburn Valley / Newell Highway and East West, the Murray Goulburn Highway.

The Shire and, in particular, the Corridor is now subject to significant corporate agricultural investment. In the recent past, we have seen the sale of Katunga Fresh, one of Australia's largest suppliers of tomatoes, to Centuria Capital Group for around \$100 million. New capital will result in the addition of new glasshouses and increase the productivity of this lucrative crop.

Qantas Superannuation has allocated \$150 million to two GoFarm assets including Sandmount Farms, Katunga. With \$1.1 billion in assets under management, GoFarm is Australia's largest producer of field tomatoes, and one of the top producers of almonds and farm grains, oilseeds, pulses, citrus and wine grapes. They have five more major projects to undertake in Moira Shire over the next five years, in their almond farms, as well as making substantial improvements to their citrus orchards and field tomato farms.

The Warakiri Farmland Fund is one of the largest owners of modern and high-density stone fruit orchards in the country including assets in partnership with fresh fruit market leader W. F. Montague Pty Ltd. They currently have a 20-year leaseback arrangement with Montagues for two large orchards around Numurkah, investing over \$30 million in the region. Montague plans to expand its stonefruit production footprint to be one of the largest growers of premium plums, nectarines, apricots and peaches in Australia.

Ongoing corporate investment is changing the region's agricultural sector resulting in larger vertically integrated farms. Larger farms linked to national and global networks generally provide access to capital and infrastructure investment, support new management practices and career opportunities for workers and can help accelerate the adoption of new technology and agricultural innovations.

Agricultural/Primary Production Outlook	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - irrigation districts and Katunga Deep Lead water resource - diverse and established agricultural sector, including horticulture (protected and field), - irrigated/dryland cropping, meat, and dairy - established processing networks - large scale high productivity farms - availability of agricultural land - strong protections (policy and regulation) for agricultural land
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - environmental and climate change is a threat to all agricultural regions. - water demand and water uncertainty - availability of worker housing
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - position Moira as the key Northern Victorian agricultural region and driver of the Victorian Foodbowl. - circular economy opportunities - biochar for renewable energy, as humus or fertiliser, and feed supplement in agriculture. - growing agriculture focused industrial base - growing local supply-chains

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Agricultural Innovation

The primary production and agriculture sector is undergoing significant change both through consolidation of farms and through the introduction of new capital and technology. Increasingly, contemporary agriculture is subject to smart technology and new energy inputs that both increase productivity and reduce costs.

Innovation	Description	Farm Application
Internet of Things	Devices fitted with sensors to measure and provide data. These technologies collect and transfer information from devices to central management systems.	Further automate watering systems Potential for robotic tractors and milkers Supports 24 hour operations
Solar Energy	The collection and use of energy and heat.	Use of solar energy to power water pumps, lights and sprinklers. The use of thermal solar to provide heat to crops, livestock buildings and horticulture operations. Solar grazing (mostly compatible with sheep grazing)
Bioenergy	Energy generated through the organic decay of waste material such as manure, straw or vegetable waste.	Collection of bioenergy turns agricultural waste into a source of energy particular gas based energy.
Batteries	Storage of on farm generated energy.	Opportunity to reduce peak demand charges and increases the use of clean energy.
Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA)	Production of primary produce in a controlled indoor environment that is largely independent of weather conditions.	Indoor horticulture including vertical farming. Results in high productivity production of vegetables and consistent quality. Requires significant energy.

Solar Arrays

In conjunction with agricultural expansion, the Study identifies associated opportunities to support primary production processing and manufacturing expansion and innovation via supporting industrial expansion through land use planning reform, integration with the Shepparton North Industrial precinct (structure plan still under preparation) and by exploring the use of waste streams for circular economy and productive applications.

The Shire is a focus of significant investment in solar energy infrastructure. High levels of solar radiation, flat topography and established transmission infrastructure provide the pre-conditions to expand solar energy generation and to combine agri-business with energy production. The Study contends that the Shire is positioned to lead agrisolar development in Victoria, integrating the retention of agricultural output and local renewable energy generation. The Shire is within the Victorian Central North Renewable Energy Zone.

It should be noted, however, that the impact of the growth of large format solar arrays has fallen heavily on rural communities. A number of issues in relation to the development, growth and maintenance of solar arrays have been identified which include:

- Infrastructure issues including a lack of transmission lines affecting the distribution of solar energy
- Financial challenges associated with the high initial costs of installing substantial solar arrays.
- A lack of expertise in rural communities in both installation and maintenance which is not supported by local training.
- The impact of extreme and unpredictable weather conditions such as heavy rain and bushfires on solar arrays.
- The impact of solar arrays on landscape and the continuity of agricultural practices.

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Energy Outlook	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Shire enjoys substantial solar radiation - recognised Renewable Energy Zone. - established co-generation industry in the region. - established agrisolar industry in the region
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing transmission network constraining large scale renewable generation. - strategic agricultural land - potential negative community sentiment - disruption to local farming practices. - skilled worker shortages. - lack of transmission network within Moira to support supply to state grid.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skilled workers attracted to region to support growth in renewables. - local/community-based battery storage systems and smart grids to coordinate and better integrate the already high levels of roof-top solar across Moira. - leading agrisolar development in Victoria, integrating the retention of agricultural output and local renewable energy generation. - promotion, development and support of the renewables industry through identification of clusters of industrial businesses that would benefit from establishing a renewable energy industrial precinct. - advocate for transmission across the region. - Victorian Government development of a Transmission Investment Framework.

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Public Policy and Infrastructure

Federal and state public policy directly impacts the region particularly in relation to the availability of labour and the allocation of capital. Public policy most directly relevant to the corridor is discussed as follows.

PALM Scheme

The *Pacific-Australia Labor Mobility (PALM) Scheme* allows eligible businesses to recruit unskilled, low-skill and semi-skilled workers from 9 Pacific islands and Timor Leste. The scheme grants access to a broader labour pool for rural and regional businesses to fill gaps in the labour force market, while simultaneously providing an opportunity for Pacific and Timor Leste islanders to develop their skills and send income home. It is estimated approximately 35,000 PALM scheme workers are in Australia, a portion of whom within Moira.

The Australian government has announced an intention to expand the PALM scheme service, by continuing to deliver for employers, workers and their families. Expansion of the scheme, in alignment with business growth of the region, is expected to grow the population of the corridor.

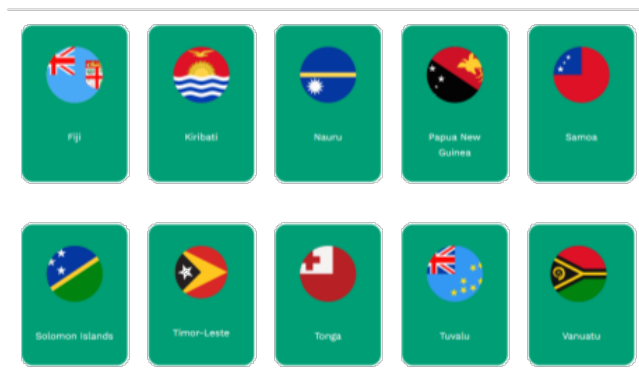
Through the PALM scheme, eligible businesses can recruit workers for short-term jobs for up to 9 months or long-term roles for between one and 4 years in unskilled, low-skilled and semi-skilled positions. The scheme targets industries that are unlikely to displace Australian workers.

All participating workers have the same rights and protections as Australian workers. Workers are also encouraged and supported to connect to their local communities across Australia. Currently the Federal government is establishing a family accompaniment pilot which will offer up to 200 long-term PALM scheme workers the opportunity to bring their families to Australia. There is the potential for government to also update housing requirements related to PALM workers which within the Corridor will trigger further need for more housing.

Temporary labour in the region and Corridor is also supported by the *Seasonal Worker Programme*, which offers employers in the horticulture and agriculture sectors and in selected locations in the accommodation sector access to workforce when there is not enough local Australian labour to meet seasonal demand.

A number of major industries in the Corridor and region are dependent on PALM worker labour as well as the *Seasonal Worker Programme*. Shepparton is home to numerous labour hire companies that specialise in labour force recruitment through these schemes. Government is planning to expand temporary work arrangements to include new countries such as Vietnam. Expansion of the scheme will require additional accommodation to support the living conditions of these workers.

Figure 16: PALM Scheme Participating Countries



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Murray Darling Basin Plan

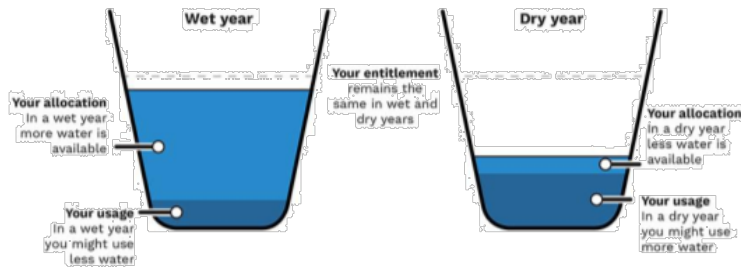
The Murray–Darling Basin is the largest and most complex river system in Australia. It covers 1 million square kilometres of south-eastern Australia, across New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory.

According to the Federal government, the river system:

- provides drinking water for over 3 million Australians
- supports the production of one third of Australia's food
- is home to more than 50 First Nation custodians
- supports 120 different species of waterbirds, more than 50 native fish species and millions of trees, some of which are hundreds of years old

The Basin Plan sets the amount of water that can be taken from the Basin each year. In the River Murray system, the Murray–Darling Basin Authority calculates how much water belongs to each of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia before the states calculate water availability for allocations. State governments are responsible for allocating water. Each state approaches allocations differently. Basin state governments allocate water within each water catchment, depending on how much water is available.

Water availability via allocations is a critical economic determinant within the Shire and the Corridor. The Basin Plan is due for review in 2026.



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Water Buybacks

The river system is subject to targets for water to be returned to the rivers to support the environmental health of the system. Buying water entitlements (commonly referred to as “water buybacks”) entails is a key method of achieving targets. This involves the government buying “water entitlements” which are the right to take a certain volume of water from the river each year – from people who want to sell them.

Water buybacks have a great impact on irrigation communities, affecting the social and economic life of rural communities by reducing water availability for agriculture. This has the potential to reduce crop yields and agricultural production, further putting pressure on water prices and the cost-of-living crisis.

As water is essential for irrigation communities, the reduction also affects the local economy, not only for farmers but related businesses due to decreased demand for goods and services flowing into towns from the agricultural sector. A more limited local spending pool restrains the local economy and opportunities for towns to attract new investment.

More broadly, decreased agricultural output has the potential to adversely impact on the quantity of overall food production and, in turn, prices. Achieving a balance between the environment and agricultural production is a key focus in the Shire and key area of community advocacy and communication to State and Federal governments.

The Productivity Commission have pointed out the need for structural adjustment programs to assist communities impacted by water buy backs. Access to water is central to the Shire’s agricultural and manufacturing industries. As such Moira Shire is intent on promoting fair treatment of water accessibility for users and the environment.

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3.0 Corridor Profile: Economy and Population

The following profiles the Corridor's economy and population by drawing on a range of publicly available data. The profiles focus on establishing key trends in relation to growth and change and future projected change for the Corridor and broader Shire.

3.1 Economic Profile

Extensive irrigation infrastructure and water, fertile soils, flat developable land and abundant sunshine provide the preconditions for the Shire's substantive and growing primary production economy.

Cropping, livestock grazing, dairy production and horticulture and associated food processing manufacturing comprise the core of the Shire's economy by value and employment with many businesses that service primary industry including logistics, trade supplies, fabrication and construction highly dependent on the fortunes and expenditure of primary production enterprise. At 2021, primary production and manufacturing employment comprises a third of the Shire's jobs, approximately 3,540 of the Shire's 11,400 jobs.

As the Shire has urbanized and its population has grown, the Shire's health, education and social service sectors have also grown and now comprise 1 in 5 local jobs. The attractiveness of the Shire as a tourist destination supports a significant and growing part of the Shire's economy in the form of accommodation and hospitality jobs.

3.2 The Corridor Economy

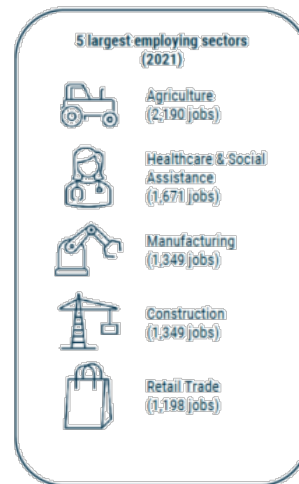
The following profiles key elements of the Corridor's economy.

The Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor, like the broader Moira Shire, is primarily an agricultural and horticulture economy. The Corridor is located within the Southern Murray Darling Basin, the Corridor has access to deep water aquifers, interconnected irrigation channels and a stable climate ensuring agricultural activity is well nourished.

Access to water, flat terrain and sunshine has provided the necessary conditions for agricultural and affiliated businesses to continue to invest into the region.

Locationally, the Corridor is located at the heart of regional cities of the north. Within 30 minutes of major regional cities of Shepparton, Cobram, Yarrawonga, Echuca and Moama. Melbourne is a three hour drive away. The Corridor enjoys direct freight networks across Australia's east.

The benefits of the natural landscape and locational advantages have helped flourish an agricultural economy and supported growth of existing settlements. The Corridor is an increasingly important part of Victoria's food bowl, supplying domestic fruits, vegetables and dairy product. Increased investment in the green technology sector has seen the establishment of land areas that support vast solar energy arrays which are evidence of the Corridor's role in a broader transition towards a net neutral economy.



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3.3 Corridor Employment: Industry of Employment (Jobs)

The Corridor's primary production economy strongly resembles that of the broader Shire.

At 2021, the Corridor supported approximately 23% of the Shire's jobs with the majority of Corridor jobs in agriculture and manufacturing. At 2021, the Corridor supported just under 2,700 jobs.

The three largest employment industries in the Corridor in 2021 included Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (470 jobs), Manufacturing (302 jobs) and Health Care and Social Assistance (424 jobs).

Figure 17: Changes in Industry of Employment 2016-2021- Numurkah – Strathmerton Corridor

SAL (UR)	Strathmerton	Katunga	Numurkah	Growth Corridor	%	Change Since 2016
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	77	193	200	470	17%	-23
Mining	0	0	7	7	0%	3
Manufacturing	85	46	171	302	11%	-58
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	3	10	30	43	2%	-6
Construction	51	29	147	227	8%	13
Wholesale Trade	16	11	30	57	2%	9
Retail Trade	41	34	178	253	9%	-21
Accommodation and Food Services	27	13	100	140	5%	2
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	27	24	108	159	6%	21
Information Media and Telecommunications	3	3	18	24	1%	5
Financial and Insurance Services	8	3	28	39	1%	9
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	3	0	13	16	1%	-20
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	11	15	55	81	3%	18
Administrative and Support Services	10	4	44	58	2%	9
Public Administration and Safety	14	3	60	77	3%	-9
Education and Training	23	16	140	179	7%	-19
Health Care and Social Assistance	50	65	309	424	16%	92
Arts and Recreation Services	8	0	16	24	1%	5
Other Services	16	17	82	115	4%	15
	473	486	1736	2695		45

Source: Charter Keck Cramer, ABS

For the 2016 to 2021 period, the Corridor's job growth was driven by growth in health (+92 jobs); Transport (+21 jobs); and Professional jobs (+18 jobs). were the industries that have experienced the most job growth. At the same time, the Census records job loses in agriculture and manufacturing sectors.

Figure 18: Growth Corridor Employment Change by Suburb 2016-2021

	Strathmerton	Katunga	Numurkah	Growth Corridor
2016	471	450	1729	2650
2021	473	486	1736	2695
Change	2	36	7	45

Source: ABS

Corridor employment trends somewhat align with broader Shire wide trends which saw the Shire add numerous health, education, construction and transport jobs over the 2016 to 2021 period. Over this period the Shire added 876 jobs with approximately 45 of these jobs (5%) in the Corridor. Notably, over

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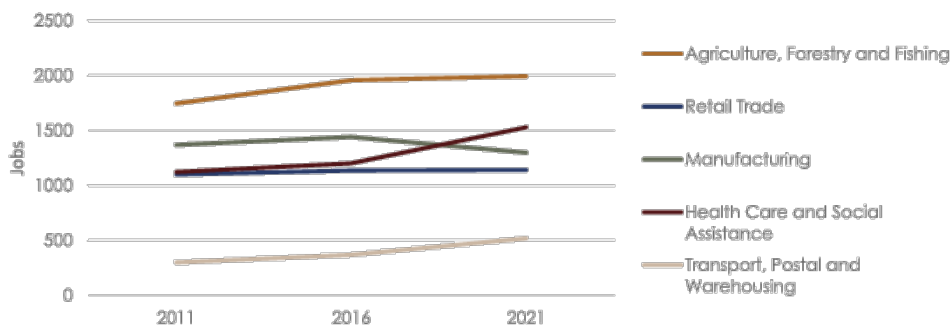
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this period, manufacturing jobs across the Shire declined by over 140 jobs with near on 60 of manufacturing job loses occurring in the Corridor.

Figure 19: Employment Change by Industry 2011 - 2021



Comparison of Employment Census Data and Australian Business Register Data

Charter has reviewed employment Census outcomes for the Corridor against employment identified in Australian Business Register data. The comparison identifies a potential and significant undercount of the number of agriculture and manufacturing jobs in the Corridor.

The 2021 Census data demonstrates a net decline in numerous industries throughout the Corridor across the census years. Based on ABR Data, Council information and conversation with the Corridor based businesses, Charter believes the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector for example, employs approximately 715 people, which is greater than the 470 people counted in the census. Similarly, ABR data suggests the manufacturing sector employs around 400 people compared to the Census estimate of 300. Both agriculture and manufacturing are the biggest employers and economic generators of the region and will likely continue to grow into the future due to the favourable environmental and location factors that support these businesses. Under counts may be the result of the prevalence of temporary workers throughout the Corridor and the potential impact of Covid restrictions on Census collection.

The 2021 employment count in Katunga illustrates the potential discrepancy in employment data. Based on ongoing horticulture related investment over the past decade, it's likely that Katunga's agricultural workforce has grown significantly. Yet, according to Census data, Katunga's total employment however did not grow.

Similarly, Strathmerton's food manufacturing work force is likely to be far greater than has been recorded in the Census as the Bega factory alone supports a workforce that exceeds the 2021 count of 85 manufacturing workers in Strathmerton. Likewise, the count of transport workers in Strathmerton (27 workers) would seem to be a significant under estimate given that the two largest transport enterprises in Strathmerton employ well in excess of this number of workers.

Overall, the Corridor is likely to incorporate more than 3,300 jobs when identified under counts are considered.

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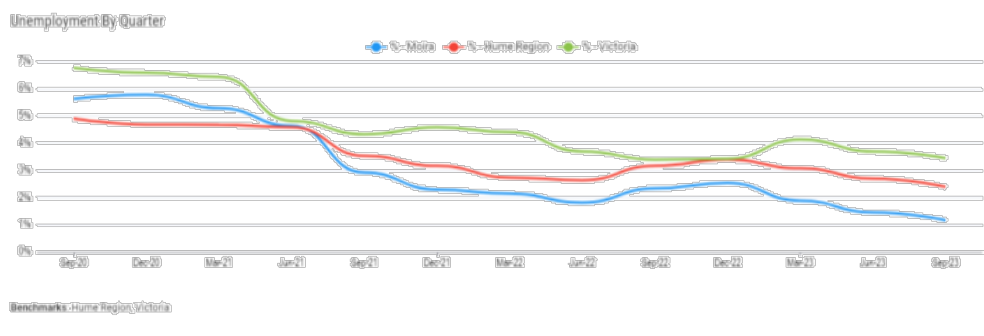
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3.4 Labour Force and Unemployment

Since 2020 the Shire has experienced a significant decline in its rate of unemployment which at September 2023 was estimated at 1.2%. The Shire's unemployment rate is significantly lower than both regional and Victorian average. It should be noted that the as a relatively older Shire with a median age of 48 years (compared to the Victorian median of 38 years), the Shire's relatively low unemployment also reflects its relatively low participation rate of 52% compared with the Victorian average of 62%.

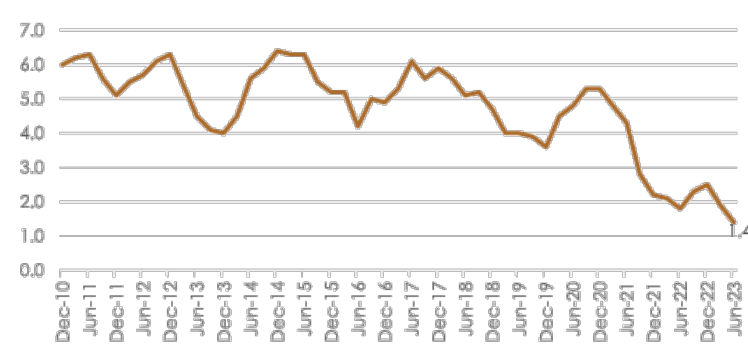
Figure 20: Unemployment Rate Moira, Hume and Victoria



Over the course of the project engagement, business has repeatedly identified access to staff and labour as a critical business issue. The Corridor's current unemployment is indicative of a limited labour market. At present, Numurkah's unemployment rate is 1.4% which over the past decade has declined from above 6%. As with the broader Shire, the Corridor's labour market reflects a very low participation rate and a correspondingly high median age – Numurkah's median age at 2021 was 50 years of age and its workforce participation rate was approximately 48%.

Overall, the availability of new labour in the Shire and Corridor is currently very limited which reflects relatively low workforce participation and a relatively older population while also pointing to the need to attract younger workers to the region.

Figure 21: Unemployment Rate - Numurkah



*Data is represented at the SA2 level for the Jun-23 Release
Source: National Skills Commission, Small Area Labour Markets

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3.5 Demographic Profile

3.5.1 Victoria Population Growth

The Shire's and Corridor's recent population growth has been impacted by broader growth and change in the regional and state population.

In 2022, Victoria's population was estimated to be 6.6 million, with 5 million residents based in Greater Melbourne and 1.5 million located in regional Victoria. Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Victoria was averaging a 2% growth rate per year, with +98,000 residents establishing with Greater Melbourne and +19,000 to the Rest of Victoria. From 2020 onwards, Greater Melbourne's population saw the first population decline in Victoria's recent history as the federal government enforced border closures in attempt to contain the spread of infection. While Greater Melbourne's annual population rate declined by 1.7%, Regional Victoria's population continued to grow at 1.4%. Metropolitan locations began to decentralise, spurred by a change in living preferences with the increased adoption of work-from-home policies and a preference of residents to live in tree-change and sea-change locations.

As of 2023, population growth is expected to rebound strongly. With international migration returning, Victoria is expected to absorb up to 500,000 additional residents between 2022-2023. Regional Victorian locations are expected to continue to grow steadily, as flexible work arrangements remain in a post-covid economy.

Figure 22: Victoria Population - Estimated Residential Population



Source: ABS, Charter Keck Cramer

3.5.2 Growth Corridor Population

Table 1 incorporates population data at the suburb level, benchmarked against Moira Shire Council and the broader Goulbourn Region. The data highlights:

- At 2021, the Goulburn Region's population (comprised of the Shire's Moira, Greater Shepparton, Strathbogrie, Murrindindi and Mitchell) was 175,043 residents.
- At 2021, Moira Shire Council's population was 30,522 people which had been growing at an average annual rate of 0.8%, or 240 people per annum.
- At 2021, the growth Corridor's population, comprised of the suburbs of Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton, is 6700 persons. This represents approximately 17% of the Shire's total population.
- Over the 2016 to 2021 period, the Corridor added approximately 35 new residents per year.
- Numurkah is the Corridor's most significant settlement with approximately 4,600 residents. The township accommodates approximately 15% of the municipal population and has grown the fastest relative to other suburbs in the Corridor, adding approximately 25 people per year.
- Katunga and Strathmerton have seen minimal growth. These settlements represent a small portion of Moira's total population.

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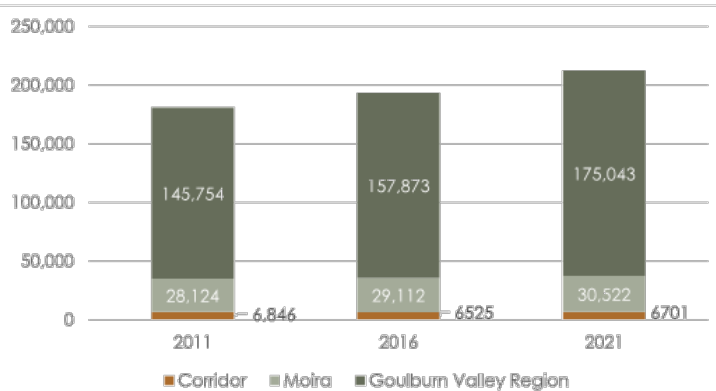
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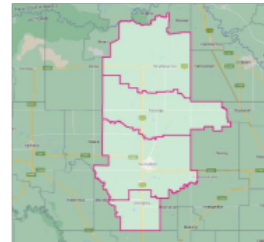
Figure 23: Regional Population Comparison 2011-2021



Source: ABS, URP

Table 4: Historical Population Change at a Suburb Level 2016-21

Population (Suburb)	2016	2021	Change	%	Annual Change	AAGR
Numurkah	4,477	4,604	127	2.8%	25	0.6%
Katunga	996	1,025	29	2.8%	6	0.6%
Strathmerton	1,052	1,072	20	1.9%	4	0.4%
Corridor	6,525	6,701	176	2.7%	35.2	0.5%
Moira (LGA)	29,112	30,522	1,410	4.8%	282	1.0%



Source: ABS, URP, CKC

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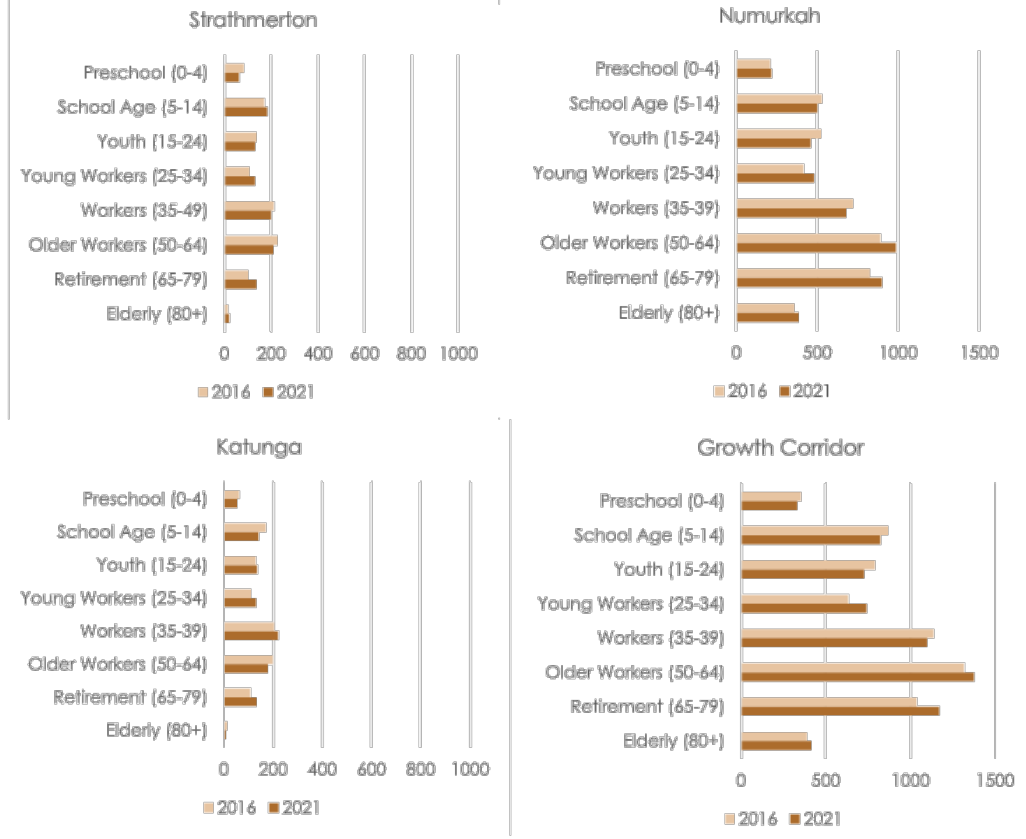


3.6 Historical Age Structure

These areas combine to create a 'growth corridor' total. The findings identified:

- Numurkah is the largest town within the Growth Corridor, but also the oldest with a median age of 48. Numurkah's population is ageing, with the number of older cohorts led by retirees and older workers (+198) growing. Conversely, younger age cohorts have declined, albeit that prime age workers of between 25 to 34 years of age have grown.
- Both Strathmerton and Katunga are relatively young in total population compared to Numurkah with median ages of 38 and 36 respectively. Strathmerton has seen a slight increase in younger age cohorts (workers and youth) as well as increased number of retirees. Katunga has seen growth in its prime working age cohorts of between 25 to 49 years which is likely to reflect temporary worker migration. Katunga's school age and preschool cohorts have declined in number.
- Overall, the Corridor's population is ageing. The Corridor is experiencing increases in older workers and retirement cohorts. Conversely, the number of children and teenagers living in the Corridor has declined. The number of young workers (those aged 25-34) has increased (+103). The Corridor should aim to help young workers to stay within the Shire particularly as they enter into family formation.

Figure 24: Life Stage Changes 2016-2021



Source: ABS URP; Charter Keck Cramer

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3.7 Country of Birth

The vast majority of the Corridor's population was born in Australia. Katunga has a higher share of residents arriving from the Philippines (3%), Taiwan (2.9%) and the Netherlands (1%).

Figure 25: Country of Birth Growth Corridor Areas (Suburb)

	Strathmerton	Katunga	Numurkah	Regional Victoria
Australia	92.9%	88.3%	92.6%	81%
New Zealand	2.0%	2.2%	1.2%	2.60%
England	1.5%	1.3%	2.2%	1%
Philippines	0.4%	3.0%	0.5%	0.60%
Netherlands	0.3%	1.0%	0.5%	0.30%

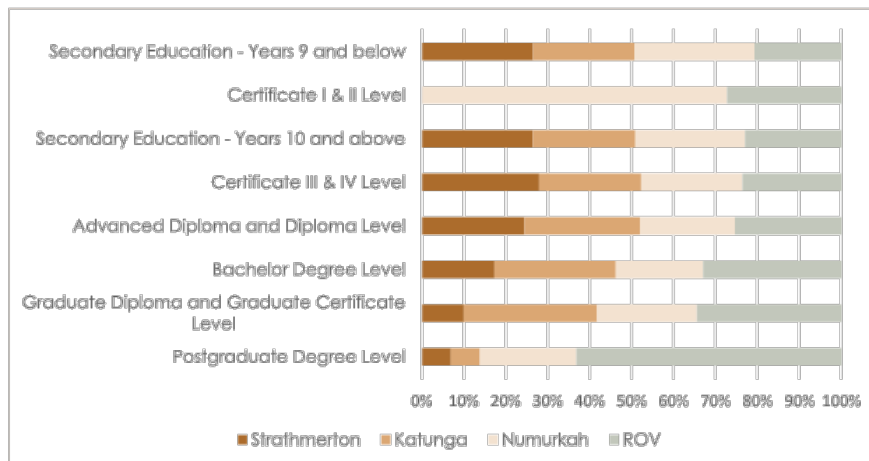
Source: ABS, Charter Keck Cramer

3.8 Educational Attainment

The Corridor's has high numbers of residents that have completed secondary education but relative to Victoria and Regional Victoria fewer residents with post-secondary qualifications:

- Residents of the study area have a higher proportion of the population complete secondary school as their highest form of education (38.7% average) compared to Regional Victoria (34.6%).
- Fewer residents receive or go on to pursue tertiary education. Tertiary education includes a bachelor's degree, a graduate diploma and postgraduate degrees. Katunga proportionally has a greater proportion of residents who receive higher education with a total of 15.6%, followed by Numurkah 12.2% and Strathmerton 8.6%. This is lower than Regional Victoria's average of 20.7%.

Figure 26: Educational Attainment in the Growth Corridor



Source: ABS 2021, Charter Keck Cramer

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3.9 Occupation

When comparing the occupation profile of the growth corridor against Regional Victoria, Labourers and Managers represent a higher percentage of the study areas workforce. It is Charters view there are potential data limitations which skew the occupation mix across the study area. Katunga for example, has an estimated workforce of 500 - of which 27% are Managers. As discussed earlier, employment data on Katunga is likely to under represent the number of labourers in and around the township.

Numurkah has a recorded workforce of 1755 workers, and when compared to Regional Victoria, demonstrates a greater alignment across categories, noting a greater Labour intensive workforce and less proportion of residents employed in professional services.

Overall, the Corridor incorporates a significantly more resident workers involved in work that is classified as Labour and Driver/Machinery operator when compared with regional Victoria. Conversely, the Corridor incorporates a lower proportion of residents delivering professional services than regional Victoria.

Figure 27: Occupation Proportions 2021

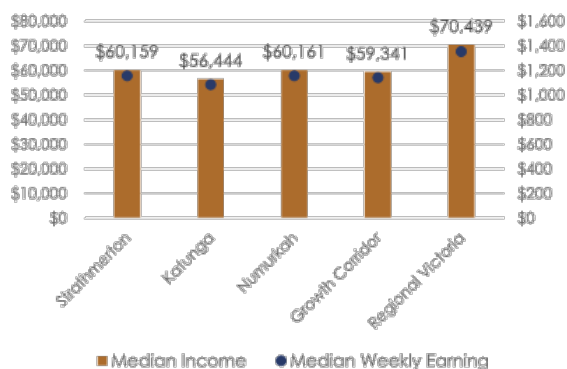
SAL (UR)	Strathmerton	Katunga	Numurkah	Growth Corridor	ROV
Managers	19%	27%	14%	17%	15%
Professionals	9%	9%	15%	13%	19%
Technicians and Trades Workers	14%	12%	15%	14%	15%
Community and Personal Service Workers	11%	10%	13%	12%	13%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	8%	6%	11%	9%	11%
Sales Workers	9%	6%	8%	8%	9%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	9%	10%	8%	8%	6%
Labourers	20%	20%	16%	18%	12%
Resident Worker Population (Aged 15+)	497	505	1755	2751	702793

Source: ABS, Charter Keck Cramer

3.10 Income

The median income for Full-time workers within the Growth Corridor (\$59k) is significantly lower than that of the Regional Victorian median (\$70k). Workers in Katunga have the lowest annual incomes (\$56k), with Strathmerton and Numurkah averaging \$60k per annum.

Figure 28: Median Earnings for Full-time workers



Source: ABS 2021, Charter Keck Cramer

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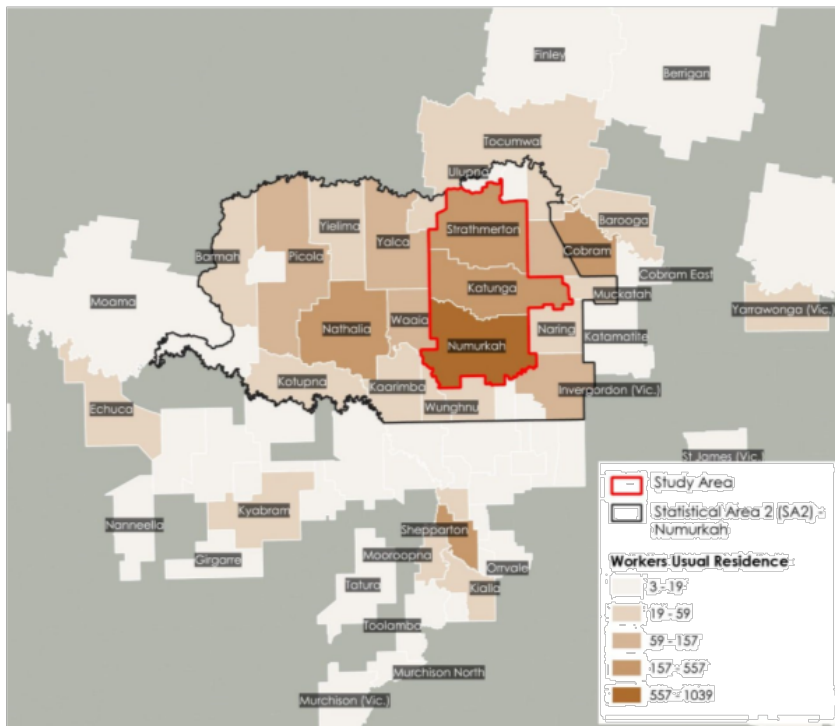
3.11 Journey to work

The figure below depicts the work location of workers that live in the Numurkah SA2 (indicated by the red boundary in the map below).

The smallest data area available for Place of Work (POW) Data is at the SA2 level and has been used to explore the location of workers within the growth corridor. The findings demonstrate:

- At 2021 there were 4388 resident workers identified within the Numurkah SA2.
- Approximately 73% of worker residents also work in the Numurkah SA2. There is therefore a high level of workforce self containment within the Corridor.
- Workers mainly live within Numurkah (1039), Nathalia (557), Katunga (346), Shepparton (261) and Strathmerton (233).
- Within the study region, approximately 703 residents work in Shepparton/ Shepparton North.

Figure 29: Workers Place of Residence - Numurkah SA2



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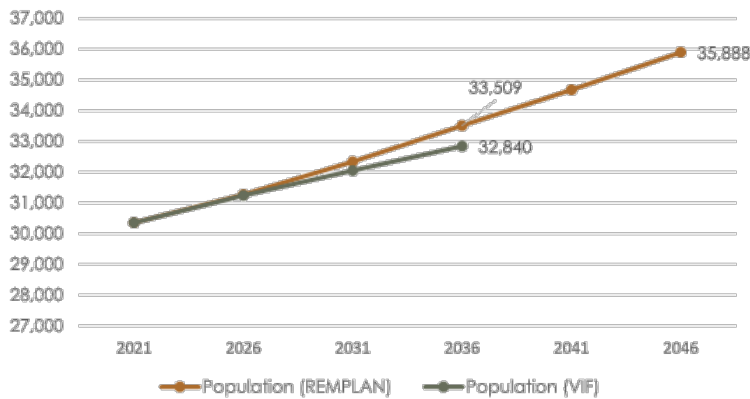
3.13 Population Outlook

3.13.1 Local Government Area Population Projections

Population growth and ongoing change to the Shire's age profile are central to understanding future demand for housing, floor space and urban services. Population projections provide a forecast estimate of the number of residents project to reside in the Shire – which help identify the potential need for different land uses. At the municipal level, the Shire's population is expected to grow as follows:

- REPLAN population forecasts project that the Shire's population will grow by +3,158 people by 2036, at an annual average growth rate of 2% or +632 residents per year.
- Victoria in Future (VIF2023) population forecasts released by the Victorian State government project growth of +2,490 residents, at an AAGR of 1.6% which equates to approximately 498 residents per year. The forecasts are projected to 2036.

Figure 30: Population Projections Mairā Shire



Source: REPLAN;
VIF; Charter Keck

Cramer

3.13.2 Small Area Projections

Population projection data prepared by REPLAN provides small area growth projections. The forecasts do not provide a dedicated projection for the Corridor. As a result, Charter has adopted a best-fit approach to understand potential growth of the study area. This 'best-fit' approach attributes Numurkah, Greater Cobram and Greater Yarrawonga as the study region.

The small region population projections highlight the following findings:

- Yarrawonga is projected to accommodate the majority of population growth within the Shire by 2041, absorbing 67% of total population change. This is followed by the rural components of Yarrawonga (13%) and Cobram (6%).
- The Growth Corridor Region (Numurkah, Greater Numurkah and Greater Strathmerton) represent a total of 12% of total population change. Over a 20 year period, the Corridor is expected to increase by approximately 509 residents, or 25 residents per year.
- Numurkah is expected to be the prime focus for the Corridor's population growth at 308 residents, while Greater Cobram (which includes Strathmerton) is projected to grow by 173 residents and Greater Numurkah (Katunga, Wunghnu) by 28 residents.
- The population projections suggest the growth Corridor plays a small role in accommodating population growth relative to other settlements in the Shire. The projections are informed by recent minimal population growth trends within the Corridor. Stronger growth will influence future projections in a positive direction.

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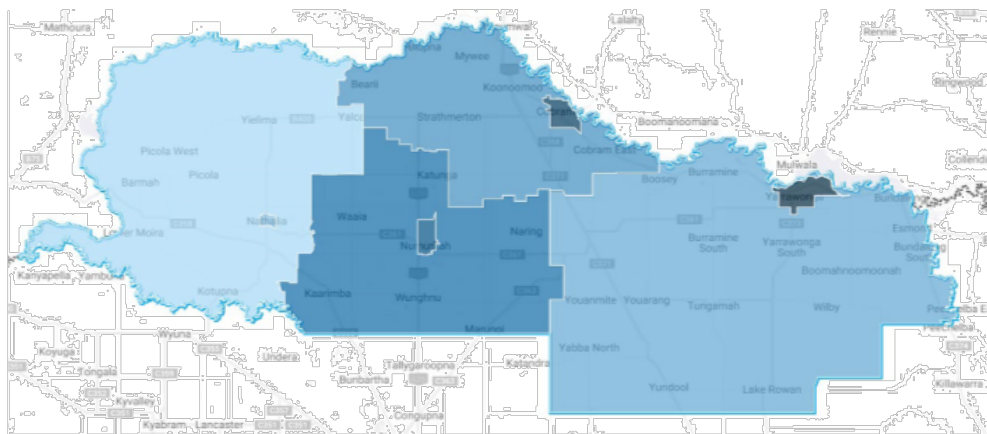
Table 5: Small Area Population Forecast REMPLAN 2021-2041

	2021	2041	Change	Per Year	Proportion of Total Change
Cobram	5,681	5,943	262	13.1	6%
Nathalia	1,610	1,634	24	1.2	1%
Numurkah	3,889	4,197	308*	15.4	7%
Yarrowonga	8,477	11,381	2,904	145.2	67%
Greater Cobram	3,247	3,420	173*	8.65	4%
Greater Nathalia	1,267	1,327	60	3	1%
Greater Numurkah	3,243	3,271	28*	1.4	1%
Greater Yarrowonga	2,937	3,501	564	28.2	13%
Total	30,351	34,674	4,323	216.15	
Growth Corridor	10,379	10,888	509*	25	12%

Source: REMPLAN; Charter Keck Cramer

*includes areas outside the Corridor

Figure 31: REMPLAN Forecast areas



Source: REMPLAN; Charter Keck Cramer

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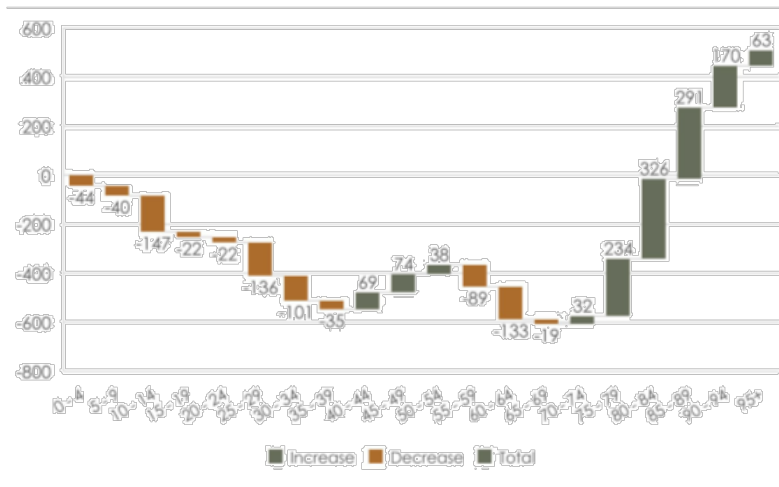
3.14 Future Age Structure

The figure below illustrates the cumulative impact of projected population change across Numurkah, Greater Numurkah and Greater Cobram regions (which for the purposes of this population analysis combine to make up the study area). Based on the REMPLAN Forecasts, the waterfall chart illustrates that the Corridor is projected to grow its overall number of older age cohorts, while conversely younger cohorts are expected to decline.

Anecdotal discussions with local businesses found younger age groups often leave the Shire in pursuit of higher education and training, often permanently relocating to their new location. Without younger households returning to the Shire, the population profile of the Corridor continues to age which will have significant consequences on the continued welfare of the township.

One way government policy has looked to combat gaps in the labour market is by encouraging the Pacific-Australia Labor Mobility (PALM) Scheme which allows eligible businesses to recruit unskilled, low skill and semi-skilled workers from the Pacific Islands into Australia. Many agricultural businesses within Moira Shire use this scheme to fill labour gaps within their businesses, which is one way of attracting labor into the Corridor's economy and community. This however is only a temporary solution to the Corridor's population outlook which is set to include further growth in aged cohorts and in turn potential labour force shortages. A critical priority for the Corridor is to unlock residential growth to attract new residents.

Figure 32: Changes in five year age group projections for the Growth Corridor 2021 – 2041



Source: REMPLAN Forecast Areas, Charter Keck Cramer

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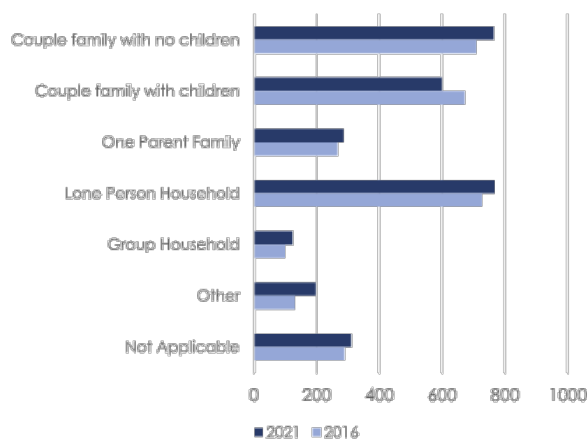


3.15 Housing Profile

Changes to the Corridor's household structure resemble reflect changes resulting from the Corridor's aging. Key insights are as follows:

- In 2021, there were 3047 households within the Corridor, a growing proportion of which are households without children.
- Since the previous census, couples without children households increased (+55) and couple family with children households decreased (-73).
- Lone Person Households represent the most prevalent household type within the Corridor with 768 dwellings occupied by a single person.
- The average household size of the Corridor is 2.2 people per dwelling which is lower than that of Moira Shire at 2.3 people per dwelling and the Rest of Victoria's which is 2.4 people per dwelling.

Figure 33: Household Change 2016-2021 Growth Corridor



Source: ABS; combines SAL Katunga, Strathmerton, Numurkah

3.16 Dwelling Growth and Composition

The Corridor is primarily made up of detached housing (90%). The Corridor has added approximately 33 dwellings each year since the 2016 census – most of which within Numurkah.

Figure 34: Dwelling Growth 2016-2021

	Numurkah	Katunga	Strathmerton	Total	%
Detached Housing	1917	411	422	2752	90%
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse	238	5	10	258	8%
Other	43	0	0	39	1%
Total	2198	416	432	3049	
Change 2016-2021	+101	+26	+19	+166	

Source: ABS

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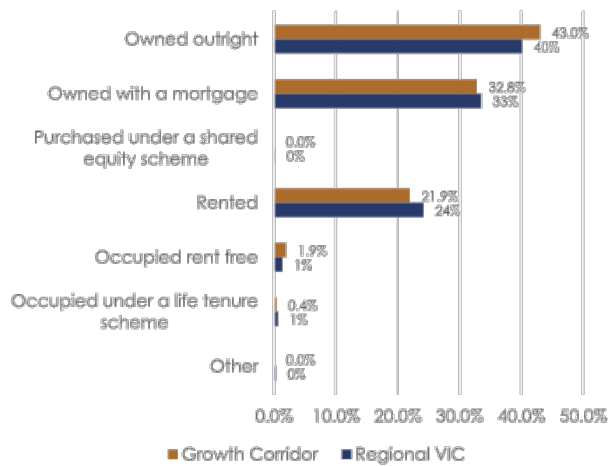
3.17 Tenure

The Corridor incorporates high numbers of home owners.

Numurkah, as an older settlement, includes high numbers of residents that own their dwelling outright.

The profile of residents in Strathmerton and Katunga are slightly younger, and thereby include greater numbers of mortgagees.

Figure 35: Tenure Profile Growth Corridor 2021



Source: ABS; Charter Keck Cramer

3.18 House Price and Sales

The Corridor's housing is known to be some of the most affordable housing within Victoria. Prior to 2020, Numurkah's detached housing market had a median house price of \$210,000 which had been growing at a 10-year average annual rate of 6.2%. Post pandemic, house price values doubled and have now reached a median house price of \$400,000. While the price of housing in Numurkah has grown exponentially, the market is still significantly cheaper than Regional Victoria's median price of \$579,000.

Numurkah is the Corridor's largest settlement and its most active housing market. Since the 2000's, the township has transacted up to 100 sales per annum. Meanwhile, Katunga and Strathmerton which are much smaller towns, have averaged 14 and 16 sales per annum respectively.

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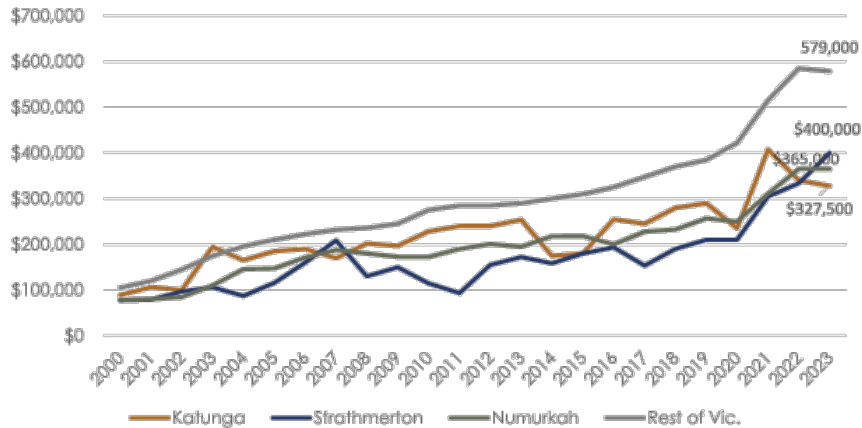
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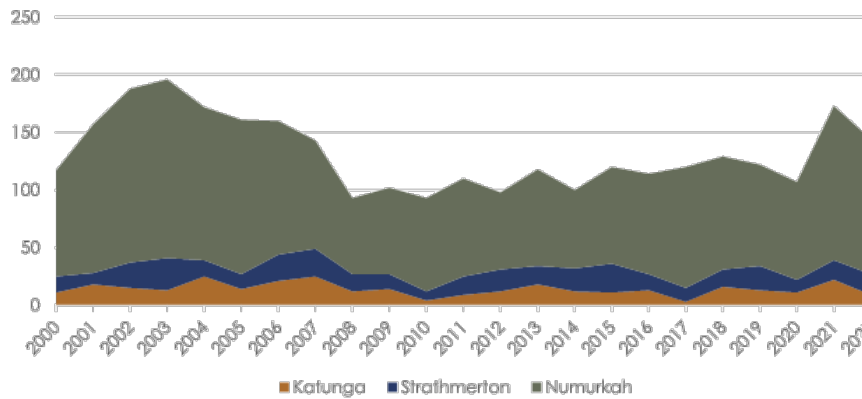


Figure 36: Median House Price 2000- Sept 2023



Source: RPM, VG, Pricerfinder, Charter Keck Cramer

Figure 37: Housing Sales Growth Corridor



Source: Pricerfinder, Charter Keck Cramer

3.19 Rents

In the context of Victoria's rental market, Numurkah also represents one of the most affordable rental suburbs. The data assessed primarily focuses on the three bedroom market as it is most prevalent product.

In 2020, the pandemic sparked the decentralisation of major capital cities spiking significant price growth across regional and rural locations. Numurkah's 3-bedroom rental market had a median rental price of \$269 per week at 2020 rising 36% to \$365 per week by September 2023. Similar price growth can be seen in Katunga increasing from \$266 p.w. to \$347 p.w. There were minimal rental contracts signed in Strathmerton during this period (potentially owing to a lack of available stock).

In Numurkah, two bedroom housing rose 30% over the post-covid period from \$192 p.w. to \$267 p.w. Two-bedroom dwelling stock is generally \$80-\$100 p.w. less than three-bedroom stock.

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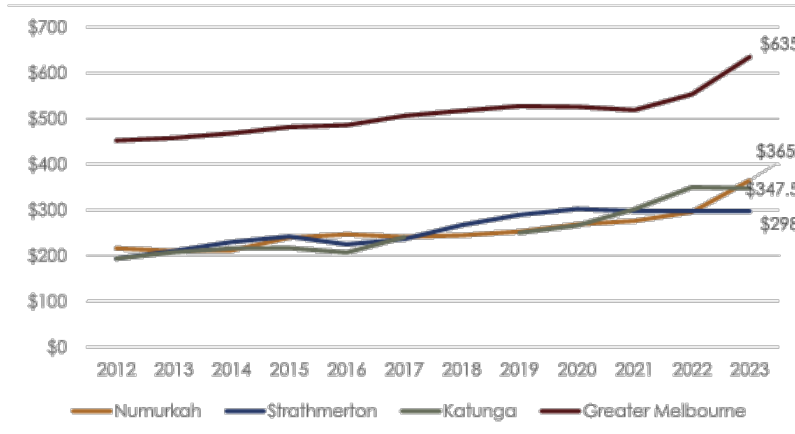
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Figure 38: Rental Price Per Week Growth Corridor



Source: SQM, Charter Keck Cramer

3.19.1 Vacancy Rates

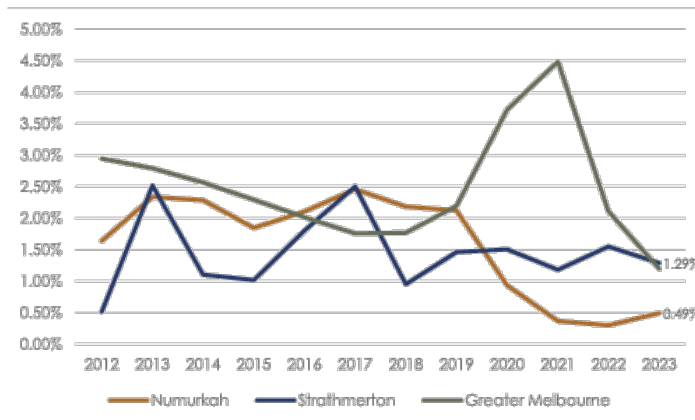
Vacancy rates is a market metric for assessing the amount of rental supply available on the market. The rate is determined by dividing the number of properties listed on the rental market by the total amount of rental stock.

The vacancy rate is considered to be at equilibrium when around 3% of stock is available for rental. This represents a balanced market where there is not an excess amount of stock, while also granting new residents an ability to live within a particular location.

Numurkah currently has a vacant rate of 0.5% while Strathmerton is at 1.5%. This represents extremely limited rental market which is likely reflected in increasing prices.

During the project engagement, business identified a lack of rental accommodation as key impediment economic activity and employment growth. A lack of rental accommodation has significant adverse impacts on the capacity of enterprise to recruit staff. Likewise, a lack of available rentals limits the opportunity for households to move to the area before making a longer term commitment to the area.

Figure 39: Vacancy Rate Growth Corridor



Source: SQM

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3.20 Planning Approvals – New Dwellings

Analysis of planning approvals by SA2 identified the following:

- The momentum in dwelling approval activity increased post Covid in 2021. Prior to Covid in 2020, Moira Shire averaged 193 dwellings per annum. Moira has experienced a Post covid building boom with approvals growing to 230 dwellings per annum. To August 2024, Moira has experienced 263 approvals and is on track to experience record housing growth.
- Yarrawonga is the most active residential market in the Shire and continues to grow its housing supply, averaging 112 dwelling approvals per annum.
- The Numurkah SA2 is a small development market, averaging 33 dwellings per annum. 2023 was a relatively quiet year for Numurkah SA2, having only received 19 dwelling approvals over the year. We note that so far in 2024, 43 dwellings have been approved across Numurkah SA2 which suggests a return to above trend growth.

It is important to note that not all dwelling approvals result in construction and that there is often a 12 month lag (or longer) between the granting of a permit and the commencement of development.

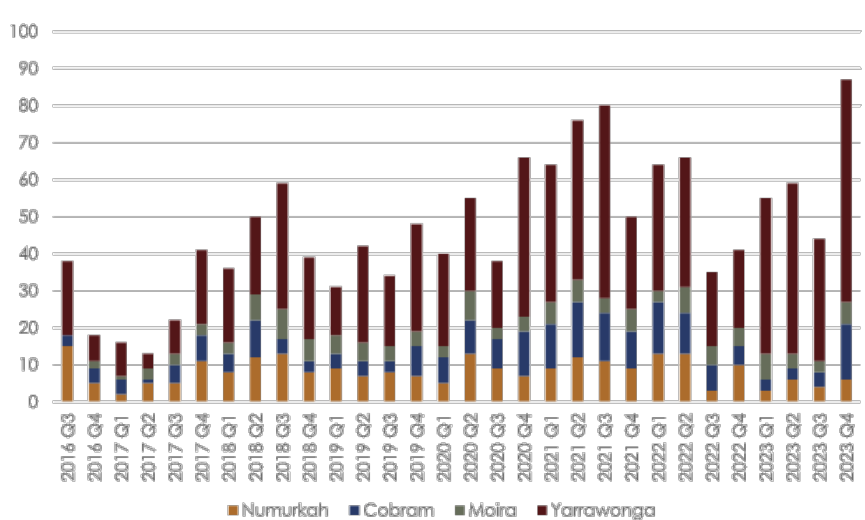
Table 6: Dwelling Approvals Per Annum

Area (SA2)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Average (7 Yrs)
Numurkah*	23	41	31	34	41	39	19	33
Cobram	17	22	19	36	50	37	25	29
Moira (SA2)	10	24	18	18	22	20	20	19
Yarrawonga	42	97	87	111	157	110	181	112
Moira (LGA)	92	184	155	199	270	206	245	193

Source: ABS; Charter Keck Cramer

*Moira SA2 represents the rural components of Yarrawonga, includes Tungamah, Lake Rowan, Bundalong South, Katamatite. Numurkah SA2 includes Nathalia Strathmerton, Katunga.

Figure 40: Moira Dwelling Approvals by SA2 2016-2023 per Quarter



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Source: ABS; Charter Keck Cramer

3.21 Residential Agent Insights

Consultation was undertaken with Corridor residential and land real estate agents to gain insight into market activity and wider development considerations. According to agents:

- There are limited development ready residential titled lots currently available, with multiple agents stating there are only 2-3 remaining lots available in Numurkah.
- Agents contend that if lots were available for sale, they would attract demand.
- Infrastructure and drainage issues are constraining development. A comprehensive drainage plan for new development areas will enable development to progress.
- Purchasers are generally split between new residents migrating from Melbourne for tree-change purposes and existing residents looking to upgrade to better quality or larger lots.
- Agents believe there is strong interest in low density housing.
- The construction of new dwellings has generally dwindled in light of broader macro-economic impacts, particularly the rise of interest rates, and higher construction costs. The lack of new housing delivery has also meant existing homes have seen a greater increase in value.
- Since COVID-19, the corridor has seen a surge in buyer interest compared to the previous decade. Interest in industrial land lots has particularly elevated, while the retail sectors has seen 3-4 recent retail transactions take place.

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4.0 Land Supply Assessment

Previous statutory processes related to the Corridor emphasised the need for any proposed changes to land supply conditions to be supported by land demand and supply analysis.

This section explores the adequacy and availability of residential and industrial land supply within the Corridor in the context of broader regional change.

4.1 Residential Land Assessment November 2023

The table below quantifies residential land uses by Zones.

At 2024 Numurkah, incorporated approximately 364 ha of residential land, 80% of which within the General Residential Zone. All residential land within Strathmerton and Katunga is within Township Zone, which comprise 24% of total residential land supply in the Corridor.

Table 7: Zoned Residential Land by Suburb 2023 (Hectares)

Suburb	CI Z	GRZ1	LDRZ	MUZ	TZ	Grand Total
Numurkah	14.2	284.9	50.7	3.2	-	363.6
Katunga	-	-	-	-	43.3	43.3
Strathmerton	-	-	-	-	68.5	68.5
Corridor Total	14.2	284.9	50.7	3.2	111.8	475.4
%	3%	60%	11%	1%	24%	

Based on Moira Shire Council Permit Data and a review of existing subdivision patterns Charter estimates that the Corridor at 2024 incorporated capacity for an additional 1100 lots within zoned land. As can be seen in the table below the vast majority of potential future lot supply is located in the township of Numurkah.

Additional unzoned lot capacity is identified within the Moira Shire Planning Scheme. As discussed earlier, Numurkah's Settlement Framework identifies areas for future residential expansion. Future residential expansion in locations identified for standard development densities have the potential to support a further 2000+ lots (assuming the application of the General Residential Zone). Additionally, future residential expansion in areas identified for low density development provide capacity for a further 67 residential lots (assuming the application of the Low Density Residential Zone).

Table 8: Residential Lot Availability 2023

Suburb	GRZ	LDRZ	TZ	Total Lots
Numurkah	693	67	0	760
Katunga	0	0	133	133
Strathmerton	0	0	207	207
Corridor	693	67	340	1100
Cobram	1,456	269	0	1187
Yarawonga	-	-	-	4640*
Total	2,150	336	340	6927

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

*MacroPlanDimaI undertook a residential land assessment for Yarawonga in 2017 and estimated a lot capacity of 5200. Adopting an average lot consumption of 112 dwellings per annum, there is estimated supply of 4640 lots remaining.

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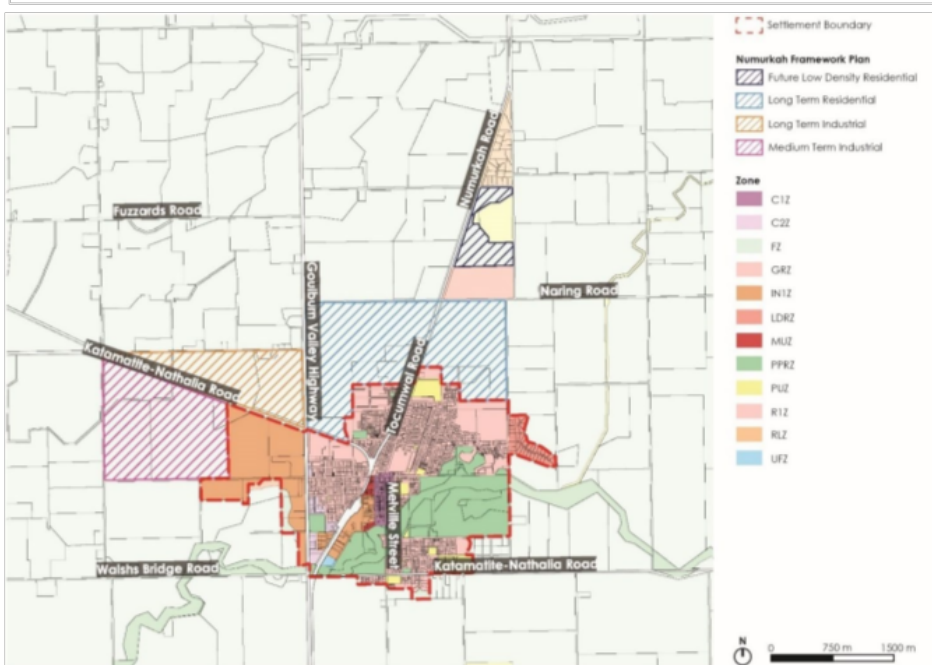


Other larger settlements, such as Cobram and Yarrawonga, also have ample capacity to accommodate future growth to the region with potential for 1200 and 4600 lots respectively.

Figure 42: Katunga Planning Zones



Figure 41: Numurkah Settlement Framework



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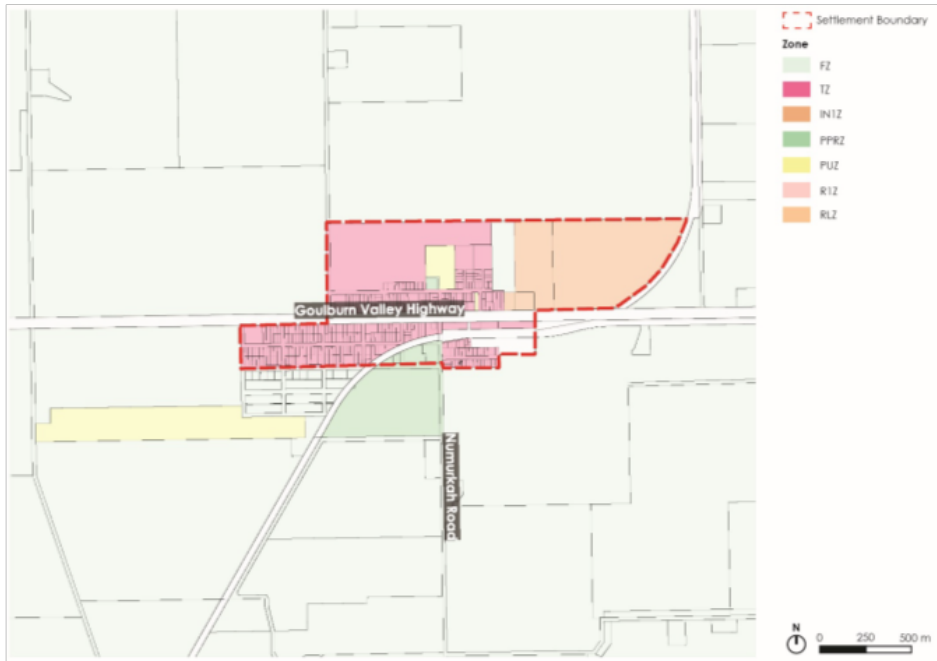
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Figure 43: Strathmerton Planning Zones



A key question that underpins Corridor planning is whether there is sufficient land to support future identified residential demand. To determine this, the theoretical supply of zoned lots needs to be assessed in relation to future demand.

Each of REMPLAN (private industry) and Victoria in Future (state government) provide population and resulting dwelling demand projections for Moira Shire and the settlements and rural areas that make up the Shire.

There is no specific geographical analysis for the townships that make up the Corridor. Nonetheless, future residential demand can be approximated from published projections.

The REMPLAN residential demand projection is detailed below. To 2041 REMPLAN projects that the Shire's population will grow by 4,300 people to a population of over 34,600 people while at the same time average household size will decline. Population growth and household change results in projected housing demand for approximately 3,300 new dwellings to 2041. The vast majority of future residential demand is projected to be focused in Yarrawonga and areas surrounding Yarrawonga (70% of demand).

Numurkah, Greater Numurkah and Greater Cobram (which for the purposes of this analysis comprise the Corridor) are projected to attract demand for approximately 525 dwellings to 2041. This is as a result of declining household size and population growth of 520 residents.

Assuming that the vast majority of future residential demand in the Numurkah, Greater Numurkah and Greater Cobram areas is focused within the Corridor, at 2024 the Corridor currently incorporates over 20 years of residential land supply. Specific REMPLAN projections for the township of Numurkah project demand for an additional 234 dwellings to 2041. At 2024 Numurkah incorporated an estimated 760 zoned residential lots which equates to over 25 years of potential supply.

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Figure 44: REMPLAN Dwelling Demand Projections Moira Shire

	2021	2041	Change 2021 - 41	
			Dwellings	% change
Moira Shire	14,928	18,227	3,299	22.1%
Cobram	2,833	3,181	348	12.3%
Greater Cobram	1,462	1,640	178	12.2%
Nathalia	791	827	36	4.6%
Greater Nathalia	684	766	82	12.0%
Numurkah	1,892	2,126	234	12.4%
Greater Numurkah	1,386	1,498	112	8.1%
Yarrawonga	4,332	6,227	1,895	43.7%
Greater Yarrawonga	1,548	1,962	414	26.7%

Victorian State Government population and dwelling projections, Victoria in Future, provide another demand case to assess the adequacy of the Corridor's residential land supply. The ViF projection identifies the need for a further 422 dwellings to 2036 for the Numurkah Sa2 which is an area that includes the settlements of Nathalia, Numurkah, Katunga and Wunghnu and Strathmerton.

The projection anticipates population growth of 358 residents to 2036 and a decline in average household size from 2.36 people per household in 2021 to 2.21 people in 2036. Based on existing land supply within the Corridor of approximately 1100 zoned vacant lots there is sufficient land supply to accommodate ViF residential demand for over 25 years.

Table 9: Numurkah Sa2 ViF 2023 Dwelling Demand Projection

	2021	2036
Average household size	2.35	2.21
Private Dwellings	5877	6299

As per the findings of the *Major Towns' Strategy 2018* the above residential land supply review suggests that no further zoned land is needed to accommodate projected growth. The Corridor currently includes the potential for approximately 1100 residentially zoned lots. Based on the 2024 supply of zoned lots and projected demand no further rezoning of residential land is currently needed. Notwithstanding this, the future Strategy needs to explore options to support residential growth as follows:

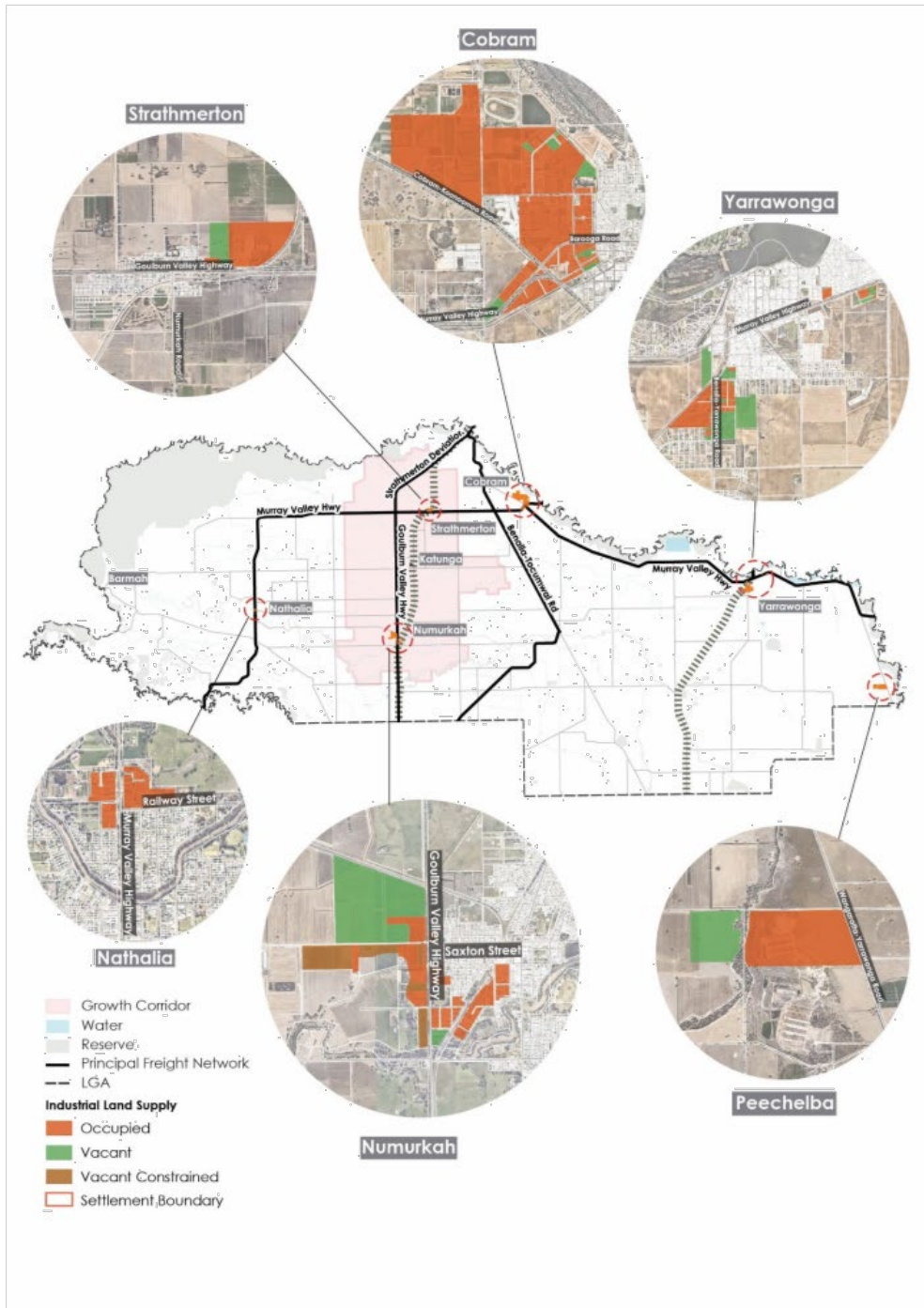
- **Serviced lots:** There is a need to identify initiatives and options to support the delivery of serviced residential and industrial lots (the supply of industrial lots will be discussed shortly). The availability of serviced lots is a critical and central issue for the future growth and development of the Corridor.
- **Key worker housing:** There is a clear and critical relationship between labour, economic growth, and housing. Throughout the project consultation, businesses have identified the lack of available housing as a key issue impacting employment and economic activity. There is an opportunity for the Strategy to identify opportunities to support the provision of key worker housing.
- **Demonstrating demand and the need for residential supply:** There may be significant unmet demand for housing in the Shire and Corridor that is not apparent in current population and housing projections. The future Strategy provides an opportunity to update population and housing projections that account for the growth of temporary workers resulting from ongoing industry investment.

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4.2 Industrial Land Supply

As of November 2023, Moira Shire Council incorporated 702 hectares of zoned industrial land of which 167 hectares was within the Corridor. The majority of the Shire's industrial land is within the Industrial 1 Zone (58%), followed by the Industrial 2 Zone (30%) and Commercial 2 Zone (10%).

Table 10: Moira Industrial Land Supply by Zone Nov 2023

Suburb	IN1Z (h.a.)	IN2Z (h.a.)	IN3Z (h.a.)	C2Z (h.a.)	Grand Total (h.a.)	%
Cobram	145	93	-	41	278	40%
Nathalia	10	-	2	-	12	2%
Numurkah	119	-	-	8	127	18%
Peechelba	-	120	-	-	120	17%
Strathmerton	40	-	-	-	40	6%
Yarrawonga (Vic.)	96	-	7	22	125	18%
Grand Total	410	213	9	70	702	
	58%	30%	1%	10%		

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

Within the Corridor Numurkah incorporates 127 hectares of industrial land, while Strathmerton includes 40 hectares of land.

Figure 45: Numurkah Industrial Land Supply

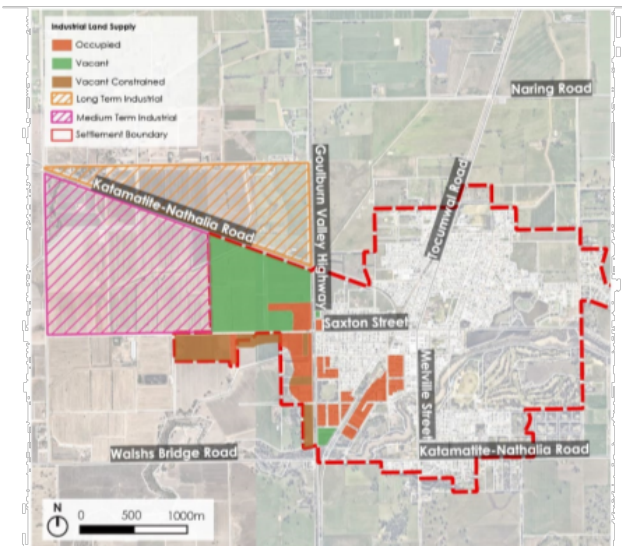


Table 11: Growth Corridor Land Supply Status by Zone (Ha)

		Occupied	Vacant	Vacant Constrained	Grand Total
Numurkah	C2Z	5.9	2.3	-	8.2
	IN1Z	37.4	58.4	23.2	119.0
	Sub-total	43.3	60.7	23.2	127.2
Strathmerton	IN1Z	30.5	9.2	-	39.7
Total		73.8	69.9	23.2	167

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

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According to Charter analysis, at November 2023, the Shire incorporated 497 hectares (70%) of occupied zoned industrial land while 181 hectares of the Shire's zoned industrial land was identified as vacant (30%).

Numurkah incorporates the largest amount of vacant industrial land supply in the Shire with 84 hectares of zoned vacant land. Of this vacant land 23 hectares is within the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and therefore subject to flooding risk. Strathmerton has approximately 9.2 hectares of vacant industrial land. Within the Corridor, 53% of zoned industrial land is vacant.

Cobram is the Shire's most active industrial market with limited vacant land. This is followed by Peechelba (primarily livestock uses) and Yarrawonga which has 96 hectares of occupied land. Both Numurkah and Yarrawonga have the greatest capacity for industrial growth in the Shire, with an available land supply of 83.9 hectares and 64.8 hectares, respectively.

Table 12: Moira Industrial Land Supply by Status Nov 2023

Row Labels	Occupied	%	Vacant	%	Grand Total
Cobram	266.3		11.8		278.1
Nathalia	12.0				12.0
Numurkah	43.3		83.9		127.2
Peechelba	84.7		35.3		120.0
Strathmerton	30.5		9.2		39.7
Yarrawonga (Vic.)	60.0		64.8		124.8
Grand Total Moira	496.8		181.8		701.8
		71%		29%	
Corridor	73.8	44%	93.1	56%	166.9

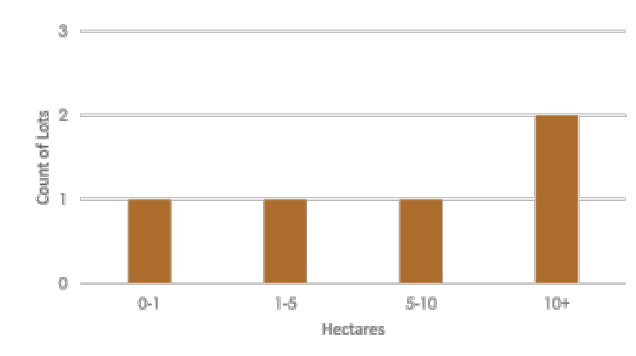
Source: Charter Keck Cramer

4.3 Industrial Land Demand

A key question is whether there is sufficient industrial land supply to accommodate future demand.

At present the Corridor incorporates 93 hectares of vacant industrial land which is comprised of 4 lots in excess of 1 hectare.

Figure 46: Corridor Vacant Land Parcels by Lot Size



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Charter has reviewed industrial development across the Corridor since 2010 which therefore captures the impact of the expansion of industrial land in Numurkah following the 2011 rezoning. The review identified the following changes over the 2010 to 2023 period:

- There has been no take-up of new broadhectare industrial land to the west of the Goulburn Valley Highway since rezoning in 2011.*
- Established industrial land in Numurkah has been subject to a small number of industrial infill development projects. Since 2010, the industrial area bounded by Nelson, Needham and Pavey Streets has added two new industrial buildings (totaling 2000 sqms), a new industrial building was developed at 3325 Goulburn Valley Hwy (approximately 1500 sqms) and the Graincorp site at McDonald Street underwent significant expansion.
- Industrial land in Strathmerton has not been subject to industrial expansion.
- Land zoned for farming purposes in Strathmerton has been subject to new industrial transport focused development.

* Since 2011 rezoned industrial land has not been made publicly available for sale which may have demonstrated the attractiveness of this land for industrial development by industrial land developers.

Table 13: Industrial Development 2010 and 2023

Industrial Area	2010	2023
McDonald St		
Irrigation Rd and Goulburn Valley Hwy		
Nelson, Needham and Pavey Streets		

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The review identifies ongoing industrial investment in existing industrial areas but no evidence of broadhectare industrial expansion. At 2024 there is no compelling evidence to suggest that new broadhectare industrial land is needed. This is based on:

- A lack of broadhectare industrial land consumption since 2011.
- A lack of growth in industrial related employment over the 2016 to 2021 period within the Corridor (each of the Corridor's manufacturing and energy employment for instance declined over this time and wholesale trade and construction employment were largely static).
- Occupied industrial land in both Strathmerton and occupied industrial land to the West of the Goulburn Valley Highway Numurkah includes significant underutilized land providing further development capacity in addition to the supply of vacant land.
- Capacity to accommodate future industrial demand under high growth/optimistic industrial land consumption assumptions. A high growth optimistic scenario anticipates significant manufacturing, construction, transport, and wholesaling employment growth resulting in land demand approximating demand of 2 hectares per annum. Under these circumstances the Corridor incorporates sufficient industrial for over 25 years under highly favourable demand assumptions.

Notwithstanding the above conclusion, the future strategy provides the opportunity to address a number of potential issues and options related to industrial land as follows:

- *Industrial uses in the Farming Zone:* The Corridor currently supports significant manufacturing and transport uses both existing and newly established in the Farming Zone. Moreover, protected horticulture uses in Katunga while agriculturally focused entail substantive industrial built form and infrastructure. A future Strategy may explore (a) rezoning industrial uses in the Farming Zone to the industrial zone to enable further expansion and certainty of use and development and (b) the development of policy in relation to industrial uses in the Farming Zone.
- *Development Ready Land:* Both residential and industrial development is constrained by the lack of serviced vacant industrial lots (and not the overall supply of vacant land). We note that Council has funded feasibility analysis to support the servicing of broadhectare industrial land in Numurkah. A potential focus of the Strategy is the exploration and identification of initiatives to support development ready land supply to unlock development.
- *Unmet Industrial Demand:* While the above does not present a compelling case for new industrial land supply, the need for new industrial land has been, nonetheless, repeatedly identified by respondents during the project consultation. Potentially there is unmet industrial demand in the Corridor that is awaiting the development of serviced industrial land. Moreover, there may also be an opportunity to induce industrial investment to the Corridor through the provision of serviced lots.

A Lack of Serviced Lots is a Critical Issue

The land supply analysis identifies a lack of serviced developable industrial and residential lots. In relation to industrial land a lack of serviced industrial lots:

- Adversely impacts on business and employment growth, pushing businesses outside the municipality.
- Industrial land is needed to support the adoption of new energy infrastructure and circular economy activities.
- A competitive strength of the Shire is its abundant sunshine, access to water supply and affordable land. This is a significant business attractor, however, in the Corridor's established urban settlements a lack of serviced land limits the opportunity to attract workers and businesses integrated into surrounding primary production growth.

Likewise, a lack of serviced residential land is limiting housing for workers and the capacity of the Corridor to induce and attract new households to a location in need of labour.

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5.0 Retail Floor Space Assessment

This section seeks to identify the adequacy of retail floor space in the Corridor and the potential need for further floor space expansion to 2041. The assessment accords with the recommendations of the 2011 *Numurkah Strategy Plan* which recommended an audit of retail provision in the township.

As the largest settlement in the Corridor the assessment focuses on Numurkah which is the Corridor's primary retail centre. Numurkah currently functions as neighborhood retail location serving the daily grocery, catering and general retailing needs of local residents.

5.1 Retail Floorspace Demand

5.1.1 Retail Floorspace methodology

The method for estimating retail floor space demand entails a series of analytical steps as follows:

- ↳ Defining the township's retail catchment
- ↳ Measuring the factors that will influence retail demand including:
 - projected population growth
 - Numurkah's role in the region's retail hierarchy
 - Non-residential attractors to Numurkah including visitor attractors.
 - Calculating the total retail expenditure pool
 - Estimating floorspace demand through turnover density conversions based on the total projected expenditure pool.

5.2 Defining Retail Catchments

Charter has delineated a number of trade area boundaries to simulate the capture of household and visitor retail expenditure within the Corridor.

The retail demand assessment method entails defining primary, secondary and third trade catchment areas. The primary catchment is the area in which households have the highest probability of using physical retail and commercial infrastructure. The secondary and third trade areas are also likely to attract retail expenditure from households that live in these areas, however, owing to their distance from the subject retail area (Numurkah township) and the presence of other competing retail locations, the propensity of households that live in the secondary and third trade areas to shop in the subject retail area is lower than that of the primary trade area.

The township of Numurkah is designated as the Primary Trade Area (PTA). The Secondary Trade Area (STA) encompasses land immediately surrounding the township as well as the settlement of Katunga. The Third Trade Area (TTA) encompasses land 10 kilometres and beyond from the township. The further the distance from the PTA, the less expenditure is expected to be captured by the retail centre.

The defined retail catchments are depicted in the map overleaf.

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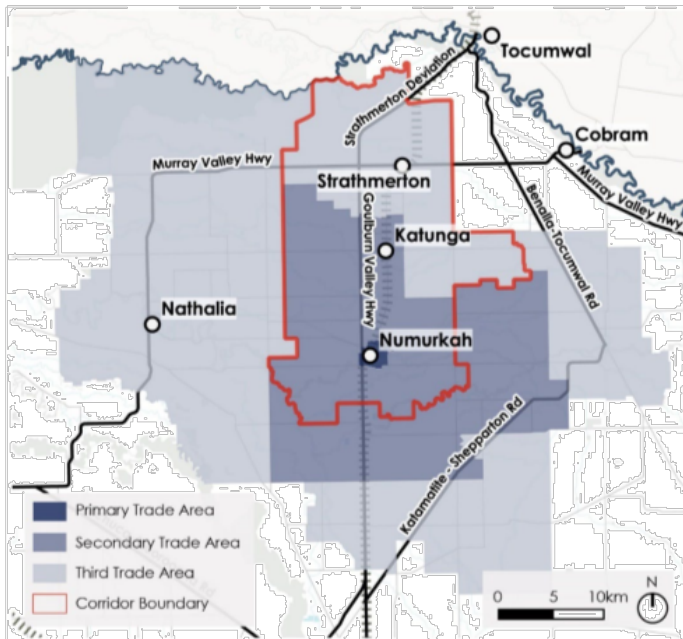
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Figure 47: Retail Catchments



Source: Charter Keck Cramer

5.3 Population and Retail Expenditure

The population of each trade area catchment and the potential purchasing power of current and future population is a key determinant in calculating the pool of total retail expenditure. As population grows, the potential pool of retail expenditure also grows, in turn, increasing the theoretical demand for retail services and floorspace.

Household income, population and future population growth is therefore a key determinant of floorspace demand which is directly related to the potential pool of retail expenditure in a location. The table below projects population growth for the designated trade areas utilising the REMPLAN population projection to 2041.

As discussed earlier, the REMPLAN population projection for the Corridor projects limited population growth. Numurkah's primary trade area is estimated to grow by approximately 15 residents per year to 2041. The secondary and third trade areas are projected to add approximately 20 residents per annum.

Table 14: Population growth by retail catchment

Catchment	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Change	
						No.	AAGR
PTA	3793	3866	3940	4016	4093	300	0.38%
STA	2629	2644	2660	2675	2691	62	0.12%
TTA	6929	7010	7091	7174	7257	328	0.23%
Maira Shira (LGA)	30,351	31,264	32,332	33,509	34,674	4,323	0.7%

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

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5.4 Retail Hierarchy

The retail hierarchy emerges from the scale, range and quality of retail and commercial locations relative to other locations. In general, locations with a greater quantity and range of attractions and retail infrastructure are more likely to attract higher numbers of consumers and therefore sit closer to the apex of the regional retail hierarchy while locations with more limited retail infrastructure attract a smaller number of consumers and sit lower on the hierarchy.

Numurkah is considered to be equivalent to a neighbourhood centre as it services the retail needs of the local community and potential visitors to the town centre. In the context of the broader region, Shepparton and Cobram are higher order retail centres that attract households from across the region due to the density and variety of their retail floor space.

Table 15: Regional Retail Hierarchy

Location	Retail Type	Anchors	Description
Shepparton	Regional Centre	Target Village Cinemas Coles Woolworths Kmart Woolworths	With an estimated residential population of 69,000, the City of Greater Shepparton is the major regional city of Northern Victoria. The city contains a vast array of department stores, shopping strips, catering, speciality stores and restricted retail. Travelling west of the Goulburn River customers have access to large format bulky goods, homeware and furniture stores. Shepparton is the highest order retail destination for residents of the Corridor.
Cobram – Berooga	Major	Woolworths Coles Kmart Cobram Cinema	The second major destination for the growth corridor is Cobram – Berooga. The Cobram township includes full-line supermarkets, discount department stores, general retail and catering. Retail floorspace is expanding with the new Cobra Shopping Centre, which includes additional full-line supermarkets and speciality stores. For larger format, bulky goods, industrial land situated along Murray Valley Hwy and Broadway Street supports car dealerships, restricted goods and trade supplies. Berooga includes primarily tourism related retail.
Numurkah	Local	Ritchies IGA	Centred along Melville Street, the corridor is a small retail strip which includes two small grocers, speciality stores and office uses. The township includes food and catering venues.
Strathmerton	Local	-	Strathmerton provides food, drink and fuel convenience shopping.
Yarrawonga	Major	Woolworths Kmart Hub Ritchies IGA	Yarrawonga is a primary tourism and visitor economy destination along the Murray River and east of the corridor. The retail strip along Belmont Street contains a full-line supermarket, grocery, restaurants, speciality stores and services.
Echuca – Moama	Major	Woolworths ALDI Coles BIG W KMART	The twin towns of Echuca and Moama are bound by the Murray River. The towns are also a major tourism destination. Retail is focused along Annesley and Hare Streets which include full-line supermarkets, department stores, food and drink and general retail outlets.

5.4.1 Retail Expenditure

The next step in the retail floor space methodology entails estimating the total pool of retail expenditure to 2041. This entails identifying the potential expenditure pool of residents living within the PTA, STA and TTA the expenditure pool of projected visitors.

The retail expenditure of residents has been estimated using *Marketinfo* data which is an industry standard resource which micro-simulates the estimated annual retail expenditure of residents based on a range of demographic and socio-economic variables.

At 2021, per capita retail expenditure for residents within the PTA was estimated to be approximately \$12,560 per annum which is lower than Regional Victoria's average of \$13,142.

Table 16: Retail Expenditure Per Capita at 2021

Trade Area	Supermarket (Groceries Food and Non-Food)	Catering (Café & Restaurant)	Speciality (Food and Groceries)	Speciality (General Retail)	Liquor (Bottleshop)	Fashion & Apparel	Other	Total
PTA	\$2,322.13	\$1,323.62	\$3,483.20	\$1,589.18	\$711.22	\$1,164.91	\$1,965.80	\$12,560.06
Rest of Vic	\$2,305.81	\$1,474.22	\$3,458.71	\$1,666.55	\$742.80	\$1,298.49	\$2,195.68	\$13,142.26

Source: Marketinfo; Charter Keck Cramer

*Other includes Bulky Goods, Furniture and Hardware and Garden Supplies

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ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



5.4.2 Retail Supply

A floorspace audit has been conducted on the main commercial strip along Melville Street in Numurkah. The floorspace analysis is based on Gross Building Area (GBA) as specified in the Moira Rates Database. The floorspace assessment was conducted for all lots within the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z).

The commercial centre approximately occupies 10,518 sqm of retail floorspace. At November 2023, there was an estimated vacancy rate of 4% or the equivalent of three individual shops. The largest occupants of retail floorspace in the township include general retail (2,768 sqm), catering (1,890 sqm) and grocery stores (1,650 sqm).

While the township's commercial centre aims to facilitate a Main Street for retail uses, it also includes a variety of different population service uses. There is approximately 7000 sqm of space that supports various uses including banks, community halls, art galleries, a library and health uses. The Centre also contains multiple detached houses with 37 individual residential properties.

Table 17: Retail Floorspace Supply

Trade Area	Supermarket (Groceries Food and Non-Food)	Catering (Café & Restaurant)	Speciality (Food and Groceries)	Speciality (General Retail)	Liquor (Bottleshop)	Fashion & Apparel	Other (Bulky Goods, Retail Services)	Vacant	Total
PTA	1650	1890	255	2768	700	420	2400	435	10,518
%	16%	18%	2%	26%	7%	4%	23%	4%	

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

*Other includes Bulky Goods, Furniture and Hardware and Garden Supplies

5.4.3 Estimated Floorspace Demand

In this step, the identified theoretical pool of retail expenditure is translated into a projected demand for retail floorspace over a 20-year horizon.

The model draws on assumptions in relation to retail expenditure per person, the captures of retail expenditure within each trade area, population and tourism projections, the ultimate expenditure pool, and turnover based floor space densities for individual retail categories to define retail floor space demand.

Projected demand for retail floor space is then reconciled with existing floorspace supply to ascertain if the township requires additional retail floorspace need.

Table 18: Retail Floorspace by Type Numurkah

Category	a. 2021 Demand Projection	b. 2041 Demand Projection	c. Growth (a-b)	d. Existing Supply (Nov 2023)	e. Retail Need 2041 (c-d)
Supermarket (Groceries Food and Non-Food)	1,439	1,571	132	1650	Adequate
Catering (Café & Restaurant)	935	1,020	84	1890	Adequate
Speciality Food	354	387	33	255	+132
Speciality - Other	1,733	2,049	315	2768	Adequate
Liquor (Bottleshop)	110	121	10	700	Adequate
Fashion & Apparel	428	468	40	420	Adequate
Furniture	389	552	163	350	+202
Bulky Goods - Other	2,898	3,161	263	1050	+2,861
Hardware & Garden	1,511	2140	137	1000	+648
Vacant				435	
Total	9,798	10,976	1,178	10,518	1,208

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
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The findings indicate the township and in turn the Corridor currently has an adequate supply in most categories of retail floor space including supermarket, catering, restaurant, bottle shop and specialty store floor space based on existing and projected population.

The model suggests that the existing supply of retail floor space in these categories is able absorb future demand resulting from population growth. In contrast, the model identifies a potential undersupply of bulky good floor space including hardware, furniture and garden supplies, and other bulky good uses such as auto supplies and wholesaling.

It is important to note that the model is highly sensitive to population and projected population growth over the identified period. The potential undercount of the Corridor's population as a result of the exclusion of temporary workers impacts on the model and the potential expenditure pool and the final modelling results.

As discussed, the primary catchment is expected to grow by 15 residents per year over a 20-year period, which results in minimum expenditure growth in the centre and ultimately floorspace demand. During this time, centres such as Shepparton and Cobram are projected to experience greater and more rapid growth, further enhancing the attractiveness of these centres as retail destinations.

The above provides key implications for the development of the Strategy as follows:

- **Bulky goods:** Discussion and potential identification of a potential bulky goods and trades area. The modelling results suggest that there is potentially sufficient demand to identify a bulky goods expansion area in the township. This, however, may represent a risk for the township's Main Street as it may direct merchandise expenditure away from the Main Street. This is a topic that might be explored in the Strategy.
- **Commercially zoned residential dwellings:** Identification of residential houses in the commercial zone that might be considered for rezoning into a residential zone.
- **Future commercial expansion area:** Identification of a potential commercial expansion area if floor space demand warrants further expansion.
- **Retail expansion:** It is important to test with the local community potential demand for new retail floor space in Strathmerton.

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ATTACHMENT No [1] - Numurkah - Strathmerton Background Report 2024



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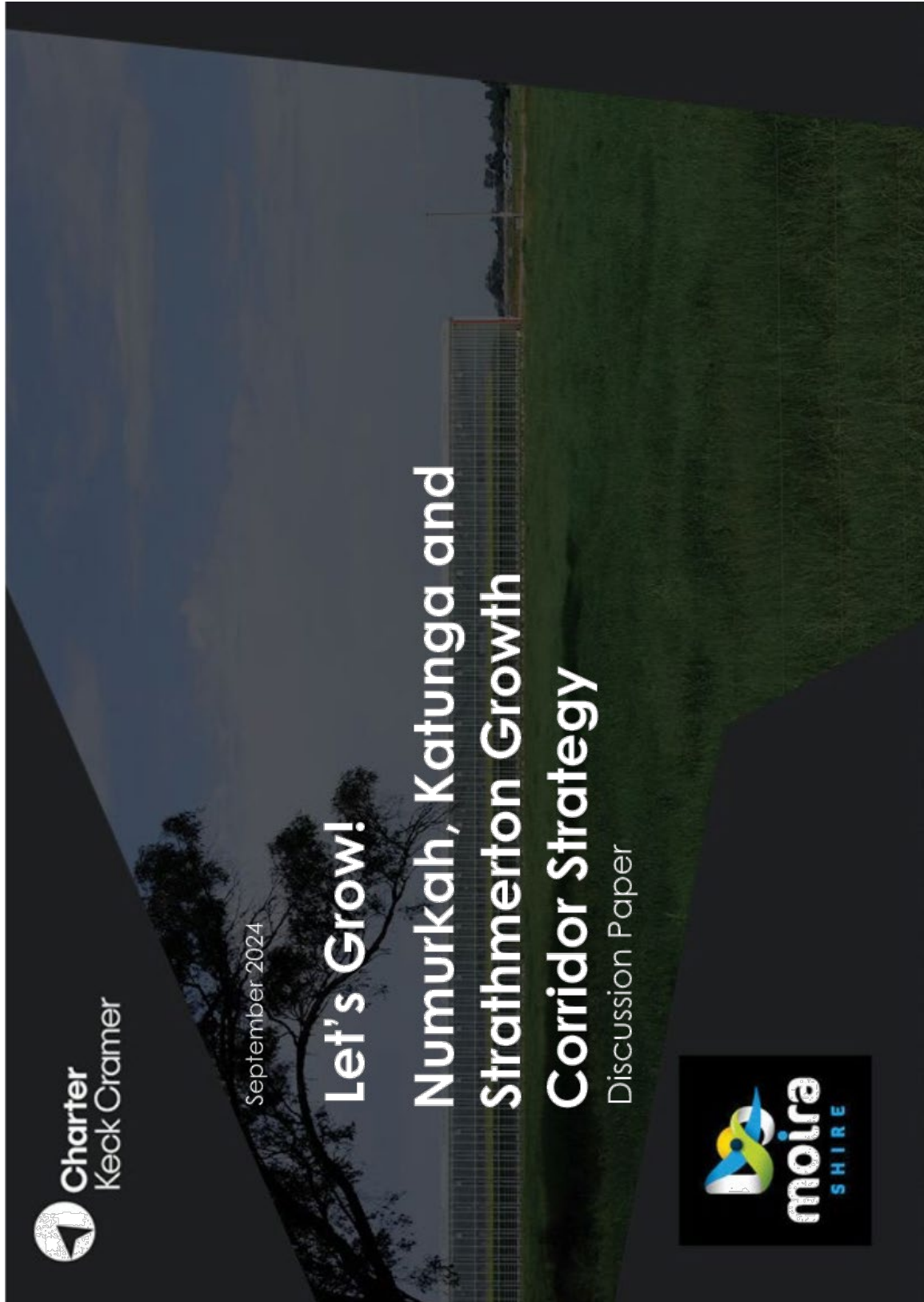
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Acknowledgement of Country

Moira Shire Council acknowledges the Yorta Yorta people as the traditional custodians of the land in which we live and work and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, culture, tradition and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contribute to our community.



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**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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Did You Know?

Did you know that the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor employs over 3,000 people and that the Corridor contributes an estimated \$1.1 billion in economic output annually primarily through agriculture and manufacturing.

At 2021 the Corridor was home to 6700 residents with the majority of residents living in Numurkah which is a town of 4,600 residents.



Seeking Your Views: Shaping Our Future

The Shire of Moira is exploring the future of the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor and we want to hear from you.

The Corridor's flat and fertile topography, access to water and abundant sunshine is a magnet for agricultural investment. On a daily basis, the Corridor's industries provide households across the nation with fresh produce.

New investment is transforming the scale and productivity of farming which has resulted in significant generational change in local farming families whilst also creating new opportunities and networks for local workers. At 2023, the Corridor's unemployment rate was 0.8%, which theoretically means that there is a job for every resident worker.

Critically, the scale of recent agricultural investment has not been matched by equivalent investment in civic, urban and housing development in the Corridor's towns of Katunga, Numurkah and Strathmerton. Because of this, the Corridor lacks housing and new industrial floor space.

A lack of housing is a barrier to attracting new staff and residents to the Corridor and, in the long term, will limit the Corridor's capacity to rejuvenate its aging population. The Corridor's rental vacancy rate is currently below 2% which means that only 2 in every 100 rentals is available for new tenants, which is far less than the Corridor needs.

We invite your views :

- What is your big idea for improving the Corridor?
- How can we attract younger households back to the Corridor?
- Do you support initiatives to promote key worker housing?
- How can we unlock land for new housing and new industry?
- How can we improve the amenity of Katunga, Numurkah and Strathmerton?



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**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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Let's Grow! Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton

The settlements and agricultural areas of Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton form a unique growth corridor which is home to 6,700 residents and 2,700 jobs.

The Corridor confronts opportunities and challenges.

Opportunities

- Affordable housing
- Land for residential and industrial development
- A growing and innovative agricultural sector
- Attractive townships
- Jobs growth

Challenges

- Attracting skills and labour
- Housing shortage
- Water uncertainty
- A lack of development ready lots
- An aging community

Strategic Move 1

Let's grow our settlements

Facilitate housing supply by addressing infrastructure constraints.

Strategic Move 2

Let's grow our key worker housing

Actively support the development of purpose built key worker housing.

Strategic Move 3

Encourage Industrial Growth

Support the delivery of new industrial lots.

Strategic Move 4

Katunga is a centre of horticultural excellence

Promote Katunga as a leading horticultural township.

Strategic Move 5

Establish the Strathmerton Town Boundary

Support the orderly development of Strathmerton.

Strategic Move 6

Investigate Katunga Residential Expansion Land

Establish long term growth options in Katunga.

Strategic Move 7

Bring Forward the Timing of Industrial Expansion Land in Numurkah

Expand medium term industrial development options.

Strategic Move 8

Promote the Corridor as an affordable and liveable destination

Champion the Corridor as a location to live and grow.

Strategic Move 9

Improve Lake Numurkah

Enhance Lake Numurkah as a priority civic and natural asset.

Strategic Move 10

Improve Worker and Person Census

Update the Corridor's population and employment statistics.

Strategic Moves

We want to hear from you and your ideas on how we can help the Corridor grow sustainably. To start the conversation this document details ten strategic moves.

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**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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1.0 Lets Grow! Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor Plan

Moira Shire is developing a "Growth Corridor Plan" for the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor.

The Corridor Plan will provide long term directions to both guide and support the long term development of the Corridor.

The Corridor Plan will incorporate a combination of development planning reforms, initiatives to support economic and housing development and an advocacy agenda to support and direct the long-term growth of the Corridor as a major food bowl and energy hub in Victoria.

By providing land use certainty and united economic development directions, the Corridor Plan will deliver investment certainty whilst also instilling reforms that will shape the future role and form of Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton.

This paper canvasses key issues confronting the Corridor and 12 initiatives to help guide the Corridor's evolution.



Table 1: The Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor Plan Project Goals

Focus	Objective	What we will do?
Economic Development	Support ongoing economic development, innovation and growth throughout the Corridor.	Ensure the Corridor Plan prioritises the needs of the industry sectors that are essential to the prosperity of the Corridor.
Advocacy	Advocate for growth enabling infrastructure investment and public policy reform that will benefit the corridor.	Develop a housing, transport and energy infrastructure advocacy agenda.
Development Planning	Ensure land use settings and policy direction enable the Corridor to accommodate growth and respond to demand enabling the Corridor to achieve its full potential.	Develop a strategic suite of justified planning reforms

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**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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1.1 Why is a Corridor strategy needed?

Council have embarked on the development of the Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor Plan which will set a clear direction for the Corridor over the next 20 years. The Strategy will provide residents, businesses and stakeholders clarity on the future role and outlook of the Corridor.

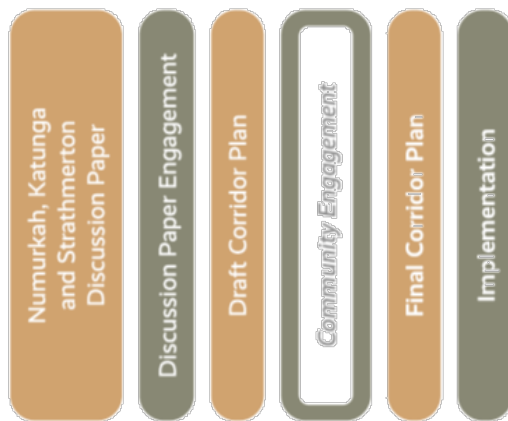
This paper is the first step in the development of the Corridor strategy and aims to stimulate debate and thoughts on the long-term direction of the Corridor's townships, industries and agricultural land to ensure the Corridor is positioned for prosperity.

Your thoughts and responses to the concepts and initiatives detailed in this paper are welcomed.

Let us know:

- If you are aware of opportunities and initiatives that will help shape, secure and support the Shire's industrial industries
- If you believe we are on the right track and why?
- Additional issues we should consider?

Figure 1: Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Corridor Plan Timeline



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**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
Discussion Paper**

2.0 Corridor Profile

The Corridor is one of Victoria's leading agricultural areas and one of the few locations in Victoria not dependent on population growth for its economic development and prosperity.

The Corridor's approximately 535 sqm kilometres comprises primarily flat agricultural land. Fertile soils, abundant sunshine and access to water support a growing primary produce industry supplying state, national and international households with high quality food – mainly fruit, vegetables and dairy produce.

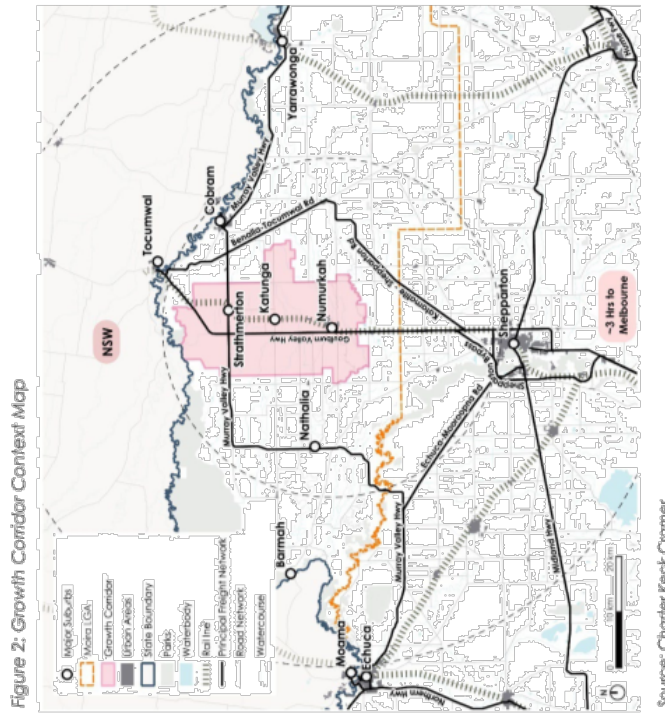
A number of Australia's largest primary produce corporations including Bega, Go Farm and GrainCorp operate within the Corridor, which is also home to major agricultural service industries such as Booths transport. As will be discussed, owing to the scale of enterprise in the Corridor, there are more jobs in the Corridor than local workers.

The Corridor is situated in a transport sweet spot with the Murray Valley Highway and Goulburn Valley Highway enabling the Corridor's produce to reach markets across Australia's eastern seaboard within a 24 hour road trip.

The outlook for the Corridor is extremely positive with recent multi-million dollar investment affirming the Corridor's capacity to manage the dynamics of variable seasonal conditions, workforce availability, primary produce prices, government policy and technological change.

However, the Corridor's resident population is aging and needs to renew. Strathmerton, Katunga and Numurkah function as primary production service centres connected to the dynamics of surrounding industries.

At 2021, the Corridor was home to 6,700 residents, 2,700 households and 2,700 jobs¹.



¹ As per appendix 1 there is likely to be as many as 3,300 more jobs in the Corridor than recorded in the 2021 Australian Census. This is owing to the significant volume of temporary workers in the Corridor's 6,700 residents at 2021 resulting in a likely under count.

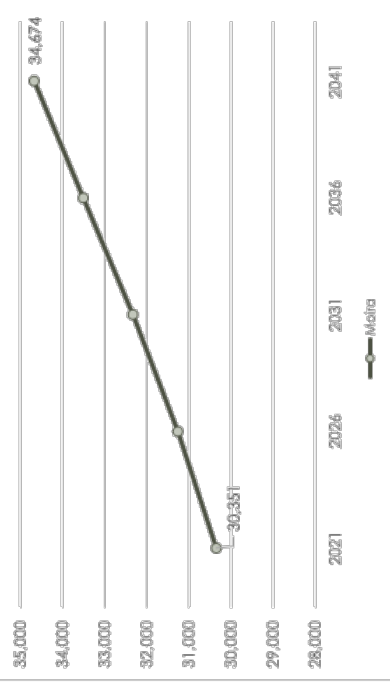
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Figure 3: Population Projections Growth Corridor and Moira (2021 – 2041)



Source: ABS; Charter Keck Cramer, REMPLAN.

Table 2: Historical Population and Median Age

Municipality	Population 2016	Population 2021	Growth Rate (5 Yrs)	Median Age (at 2021)
Strathmerton (Suburb)	1,052	1,072	0.4%	36
Katunga (Suburb)	976	1,025	0.6%	36
Numurkah (Suburb)	4,477	4,604	0.6%	46
Corridor	6,525	6,701	0.5%	45
Cobram (Suburb)	6,014	6,465	1.5%	48
Yarrowanga (Suburb)	7,930	8,661	1.8%	52
Moira LGA	29,108	30,522	1.0%	48
Goulburn Valley Region	157,867	175,044	2.1%	41

Source: URIP; ABS; Charter Keck Cramer

A growing economy and an aging population

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) at 2021, the Corridor was home to 6,700 people.

The Corridor's pre and post pandemic populations are very similar with the Corridor adding approximately 175 new residents between 2016 and 2021. The Corridor is home to 22% of Moira Shire's population, which at 2023 totalled 30,755 people. Yarrowanga is the Shire's largest population centre with 8,400 residents and is also the Shire's primary population growth attractor, adding 145 residents per annum since 2016.

Like the broader Moira community, the Corridor's community is relatively aged. The Corridor's overall median age is 45 years. Yet, the Corridor includes younger worker focused settlements at Strathmerton (median age 38) and Katunga (median age 36). The Regional Victoria's median age is 43.

The Shire and Corridor are located within Victoria's broader food bowl region, which is home to approximately 175,000 people, of which Greater Shepparton is the region's largest population centre with near on 70,000 residents.

The corridor needs new (younger) residents

To sustain its community and economy the Shire will need to continue to attract new young households. Despite its abundant employment opportunities and relatively affordable housing, the Corridor is not a major population attractor for permanent residents.

To 2041, the Corridor's population is projected to add approximately 500 net additional residents (faking into account migration in and out of the Corridor, births and natural attrition).

Critically, as the Corridor grows it is projected to age with the proportion of residents in all 50+ age groups growing and all younger age groups declining. The Corridor will therefore continue to be dependent on external workers to sustain its economy.

Significant population aging will occur throughout the Shire. By 2036, the number of people aged 80+ years living in the Shire is expected to more than double from approximately 2,130 people in 2021 to 4,450 people.

Given its age profile, the Shire's growth is dependent on migration to the region. Ongoing migration to the Shire is projected to attract *4,000 new residents to 2041.

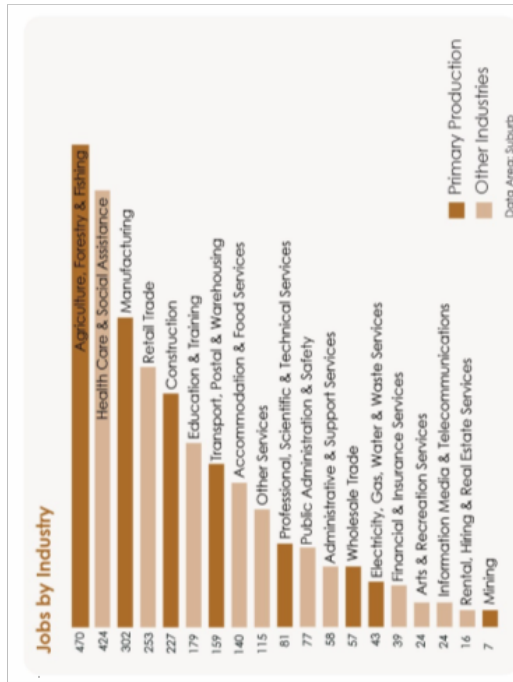
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Figure 5: Economic Indicators and Industry of Employment



A job for every worker

The Corridor is an employment rich area. As might be expected, the agricultural sector leads the Corridor's employment with 1 in 3 Corridor jobs involved in primary production, processing or distribution.

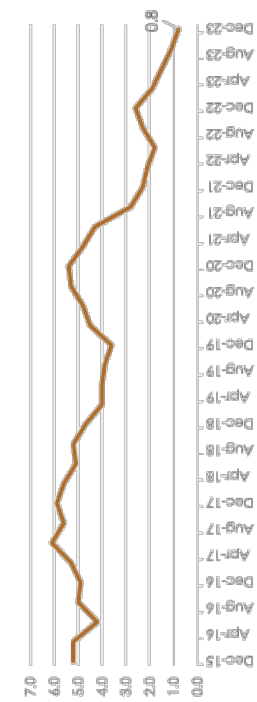
Health is a major and growing sector adding over 90 jobs in the 2016 to 2021 period.

The Corridor is a high employment location with significant labour demand. The strength of local labour demand is evident in the Corridor's 0.8% unemployment rate (December 2023). Unemployment is in long term decline – in the previous decade 5% of the Corridor's workforce was regularly unemployed. Moira's unemployment rate at December 2023 was also 0.8%.

The strength of local labour demand partly reflects the municipality's older age profile and its impact on workforce participation. The Corridor's participation rate is 53% while the Shire's participation rate is 54%. Effectively only 1 in every 2 people over the age of 15 are currently participating in the workforce, which is well below the state and national average. Low participation is influenced by the Corridor's older age structure. The Corridor and Shire incorporate higher numbers of older workers in its workforce who support the productivity of the economy through a life time of developing knowledge and skill. Ongoing aging will, nonetheless, result in further declines in workforce participation and, in turn, increased dependence on imported labour.

At 2021, there were 11,400 jobs across Moira Shire.

Figure 4: Unemployment Rate Numurkah (SA2)

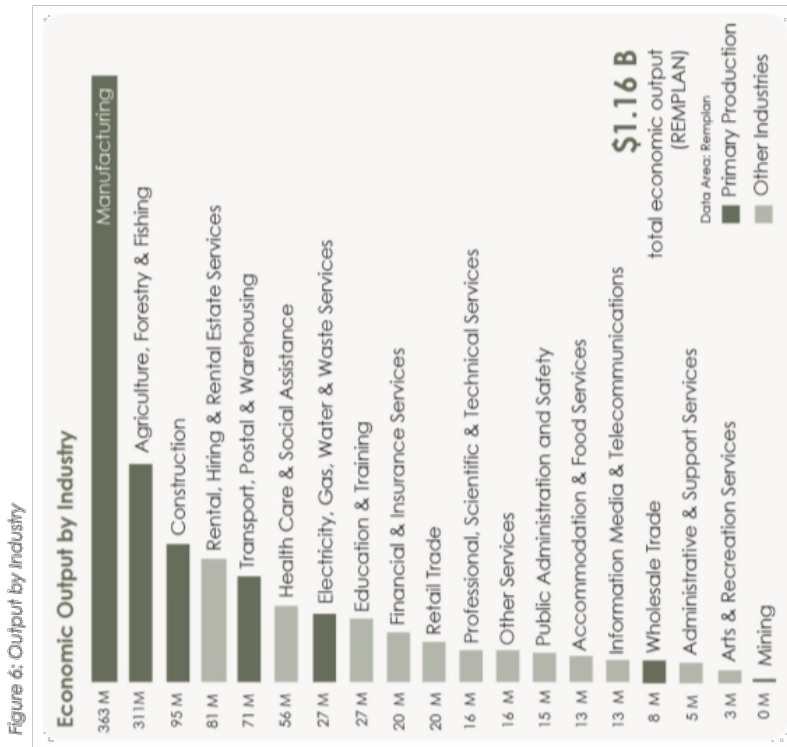


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A skilled and innovative Manufacturing and Agricultural sector
The Corridor delivers an estimated \$1.1 billion in economic output per annum equating to a quarter of the Shire's estimate \$4.7 billion per annum.

Manufacturing and agriculture create the vast majority of the Corridor's output at approximately \$670 million per annum. These sectors also lead the Shire's economic output and economy.

The Corridor incorporates highly skilled fabricators that manufacture equipment and parts that support agricultural production across the nation. Impressively, the Corridor is also home to rapidly growing and highly innovative horticultural sector that at specific times of the year is responsible for high volumes of the nation's vegetable produce. The Corridor's horticultural sector is emblematic of ongoing change in agricultural operations in which technology, the re-use of inputs, and extended hours of operation are central to primary production efficiency and productivity.

As per the findings of The Economic Opportunities Study 2023 (REMPPLAN), the Shire enjoys high levels of specialisation in primary production including grazing, dairy production and horticulture. According to the study, the sheep, grains, beef and dairy cattle and construction sectors provide ongoing and significant economic expansion opportunities. Due to both supply chain opportunities and specialisation, crop growing and horticulture are also seen to provide high growth opportunities.

Recent investment in the Corridor's horticultural and cropping sectors affirm the positive outlook for these sectors.

Table 3: Labour Force by Life Stage at 2021

Life Stage	Corridor	Regional Victoria	% Difference
Youth and Tertiary (15-24)	10.9%	10.7%	+0.2%
Young Professional (25-34)	11.1%	11.7%	-0.6%
Workers (35 - 49)	16.4%	17.6%	-1.1%
Older Workers (50-64)	20.6%	20.1%	+0.5%
Retirement (65-79)	17.5%	16.6%	+0.7%
Elderly (80+)	6.2%	5.5%	+0.7%

Source: ABS, Charter Kock Chamber

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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Suburb Profiles



Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy Discussion Paper

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Business Engagement - What We Heard

Labour

"Temporary workers should be included in the community, they are integral to the community, they do the work and they need to do it. Full-time Australian residents don't want to do that work. Agriculture needs to be picked, it is a big part of the economy. They need transient workers for their business to be sustainable."

"Businesses are driving in people from 30-50km away for labour. People leave the area and tend not to come back."

"Attracting quality staff is an issue."

Housing and Workers

"Contractors are asking whether there is a housing solution. This is going to be a big problem (housing)."

Full time employee from Melbourne can't find accommodation in Katunga. Agents have 30 people on the rental waiting list.

"More employment will require more houses."

"Sensible options for accommodation are needed — we could employ 400 people but we will need lots of accommodation, and a lot more infrastructure."

Business Outlook

"We want to invest in country Victoria which is very profitable."

"Demand for services is slowly increasing. It fluctuates with the economy, as interest rates go up work goes down, more constrained environment with interest rates higher."

"We have major expansion plans."

"A good season in primary production influences the entire community."

"We try to invest as much as we can locally."

Amenity

(Numurkah) looks a little unloved, doesn't look nice. (Numurkah is a rural community that has been sheltered from change, a lot of other areas have experienced a lot of change, bring the community along.

Both the quality of housing and number of available housing is an issue.

A taskforce is needed to progress, the development of the town. Nothing happens around here because Yarrawonga and Cobram are out competing Numurkah.

We want our children to come back and return and have a good feeling to return. We need more things that create a good sentiment around the place. Simple things to make life better in the towns

Subdivide land and sell it to workers, but the agricultural protection policy is really hard and it takes years.

Workers want to live within proximity to work but there's no subdivided lots for them to build on.

Primary Production

The region's irrigation and soil are incredible.

The farms still employ a lot of people. The working capacity for growth is there. The soil is really good. Every year the farming sector continues to grow. Harvest time is October, November and December.

Every year the farming sector continues to grow.

Horticulture is already growing bigger and will continue.

There used to be small dairy farms. Farms have now grown to 2000 acres from 300 acres. Competition has grown. Consolidation of farms means there is less diversity of customers in some areas.

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3.0 A Changing Corridor

The Corridor and broader Shire are impacted by overlapping forces and trends that require long term land use, economic development and social responses.

Influence 1: Sustaining the Corridor's Workforce

The Corridor faces significant challenges in both sustaining and growing its workforce in response to ongoing demand. The combination of industry expansion, the increased specialisation and the Corridor's aging population each entail significant workforce challenges.

Over the course of the project engagement, business has repeatedly identified access to staff as an ongoing and critical issue. As with the broader Shire, the Corridor's labour market is beset by low workforce participation. Numurkah's workforce participation at 2021 was approximately 48%. Less than half of the township's adults are engaged in the workforce and with a median age of 50, participation is likely to further decline in the coming years.

The Corridor is therefore dependent on imported labour. The Pacific-Australia Labor Mobility (PALM) Scheme and the Seasonal Worker Programme are critical programs that help sustain the Corridor economy.

Foreign workers contribute to the diversity of the Shire with some workers eventually becoming Corridor residents and commencing families in the Corridor. According to the 2021 Census, 3% of Katunga's resident population was born in the Philippines. However, the majority of temporary workers will eventually leave the Shire either because of visa conditions and/or the need and desire to return home.

The Corridor currently supports high numbers of older workers which are a valuable resource for the Corridor's and Shire's economy. As workers age and the economy of the Shire expands new workers will continue to be needed. Rejuvenating the Corridor's demography and sustaining the Corridor's workforce are, therefore, identified as a key priority that entail a wide range of responses to social, accommodation and liveability challenges.

The PALM Islander Scheme

The Pacific-Australia Labor Mobility (PALM) Scheme allows eligible businesses to recruit unskilled, low-skill and semi-skilled workers from 9 Pacific Islands and Timor-Leste. The scheme enables rural and regional businesses to fill gaps in the labour force market. It is estimated approximately 35,000 PALM scheme workers are in Australia, a portion of whom are within Moira.

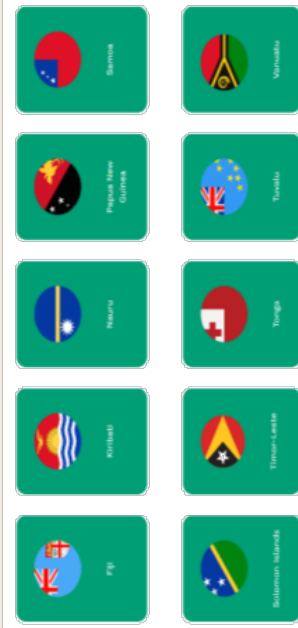
Through the PALM scheme, eligible businesses can recruit workers for short-term jobs for up to 9 months or long-term roles for between one and 4 years in unskilled, low-skilled and semi-skilled positions. The scheme targets industries that are unlikely to displace Australian workers.

The Federal government is establishing a family accompaniment pilot which will offer up to 200 long-term PALM scheme workers the opportunity to bring their families to Australia. There is the potential for government to also update housing requirements related to PALM workers which within the Corridor will trigger further need for more housing.

Temporary labour in the region and Corridor is also supported by the Seasonal Worker Programme, which offers employers in the horticulture and agriculture sectors and in selected locations in the accommodation sector access to workforce when there is not enough local Australian labour to meet seasonal demand.

A number of major industries in the Corridor and region are dependent on PALM worker labour as well as the Seasonal Worker Programme. Temporary work arrangements may in the future include new countries such as Vietnam.

Figure 7: PALM Scheme Participating Nations



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Influence 3: Development Ready Lots for New Houses

The Corridor incorporates substantial greenfield land to support the development of new housing. Together, Katunga (130 lots), Strathmerton (200) and Numurkah (760) lots, incorporate the capacity for approximately 1,100 new residential lots.*

Much of this capacity was created in 2011, Numurkah's township boundary expanded by 146 hectares to enable new residential and industrial development. Over the last 13 years, this land has seen minimal development. The Corridor currently averages 15 net new dwellings per annum.

Figure 9: Corridor Dwelling Approvals (Net New Dwellings)

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Annual Average
Approvals	7	11	6	12	16	47	10	15

Source: Victoria Building Authority, CKC

Today, there is potential for the Corridor's housing supply to expand well beyond recent trends. There are currently nearly 300 approved lots in Numurkah and further applications that may see approved lots grow beyond 450 lots. At 2024, however, only two of 10 potential subdivision projects in Numurkah are currently active with both active projects dating from 2017. One of the key reasons for this is infrastructure.

According to industry and administrative sources, new drainage in Numurkah and sewerage infrastructure in Katunga is needed to spur the development of vacant residential and township land. In Katunga, despite ongoing worker growth, the township has seen 11 new dwellings since 2016. A key reason for this is the lack of sewer services in the township.



The Corridor incorporates plentiful zoned residential and industrial land. To convert this land into the houses and industry that will grow and renew the Corridor's population, the Corridor requires new infrastructure.

* This estimate assumes the provision of development enabling infrastructure.

Influence 2: Unmet Housing Demand

Substantive investment in the Corridor's agricultural sector, which in the recent past totals more than \$250 million, has not been matched by complimentary urban investment particularly in housing and associated service space.

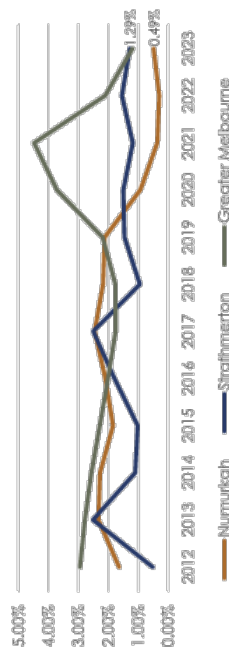
For example, Katunga's growing horticultural footprint which now equates to over 30 hectares of indoor infrastructure has not been matched by associated housing and civic investment in the township needed to support an ever-growing workforce.

There is a fundamental disconnection between the outlook for the Corridor's economy, the growth of its townships and in particular (but not only), the availability of quality housing. Local industry has repeatedly expressed frustration with the lack of housing options for workers. Through the project engagement we have been repeatedly told that a shortage of housing is a major issue, that rental waiting lists are extremely long, and that work is being deferred because labourers cannot find accommodation. In addition, we heard that there are perceptions that the civic amenity and look of towns is in decline.

At 2023, the Corridor's rental vacancy rate was approximately 1.3%, meaning that only 1 in 100 rental properties are vacant or available for rent. This is insufficient to enable workers and households to successfully migrate to the Corridor and to experience the Corridor lifestyle prior to making a long term commitment.

Labour supply and housing are linked. Regional settlements that urgently need labour cannot fill job vacancies without diverse housing to accommodate workers. Across regional Australia, an acute shortage of housing options has led regional Councils, including the Surf Coast and Colac Otway Shire Councils, to formally declare a "housing crisis". The housing crisis across metropolitan and regional Australia is a genuine social and economic problem resulting from a dearth of affordable and diverse housing options in many communities. The Corridor is part of this story.

Figure 8: Rental Vacancy Rate



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Solar Arrays

The Corridor is also a focus of significant investment in solar energy infrastructure. High levels of solar radiation, flat topography and established transmission infrastructure provide the pre-conditions for the generation of significant energy. The Shire is within the Victorian Central North Renewable Energy Zone which may attract transmission investment in the future.

The impact of the growth of large format solar arrays has fallen heavily on rural communities. Integrating the retention of agricultural output and local renewable energy generation is another challenge that rural communities need to address.

Table 4: Primary Production Outlook

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - irrigation districts and Katunga Deep Lead water resource - diverse and established agricultural sector, including horticulture (protected and field) - irrigated/dryland cropping, meat, and dairy - established processing networks - large scale high productivity farms - availability of agricultural land - strong protections (policy and regulation) for agricultural land
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - environmental and climate change is a threat to all agricultural regions. - water demand and water policy uncertainty - availability of workers and worker housing
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - position Moira as the key Northern Victorian agricultural region and driver of the Victorian Foodbowl. - circular economy opportunities - biochar for renewable energy, as humus or fertiliser, and feed supplement in agriculture. - growing agriculture focused industrial base - growing supply-chains and networks - embrace agricultural innovation and technologies to achieve increased productivity

Influence 3: Agricultural Change and Adaptation

Increased competition and market instability, greater climate volatility and drought events have made primary production more complex. Equally, the global competition requires a dedication to efficiency which in itself requires high levels of expertise, technological proficiency and significant capital.

The signs of change and transformation are evident throughout the Corridor – including physical infrastructure such as solar arrays, bio-energy digesters, Tesla batteries; and changing work practices including 24 hour farming and farm amalgamations. The Corridor is therefore emblematic of the changes impacting on agriculture.

Change has led to decline in specific sectors including the decline of sub 300 acre dairy farms, smaller scale outdoor horticulture establishments and the disruption of multi-generational farming families. The number of dairy farms across Victoria is in decline having fallen to 2,774 in FY 2022/23 from 3,881 five years earlier.

Change has also delivered benefits. Where smaller operators who consolidate become employed directly by the larger producer there are several benefits – most notably, the opportunity for more stable income, the potential to work in management positions and to upgrade skills. In addition, larger farms linked to national and global networks generally provide access to capital and infrastructure investment, support new management practices and career opportunities for workers and can help accelerate the adoption of new technology and agricultural innovations.

Further change and complexity should be expected as:

- primary production decision making is further guided by interlinked sensors and predictive data as the internet of things informs work practices.
- supply chains and inputs are continually refined.
- energy and water efficiency technology becomes an increasingly essential part of agricultural operations.

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A more limited local spending pool restrains the local economy and opportunities for towns to attract new investment. More broadly, decreased agricultural output has the potential to adversely impact the quantity of overall food production and, in turn, prices. Achieving a balance between the environment and agricultural production is a key focus in the Shire and key area of community advocacy and communication to State and Federal governments.

In 2023, Federal legislation removed a cap on the amount of water that can be purchased to meet the environmental water targets across the Murray-Darling Basin, and in February 2024, the Federal government completed the buyback of 26 gigalitres of water at an estimated cost of \$205 million. A further 450 gigalitres must be found for the environment by 2027. The future of this policy, and the targets set by Federal government, will have a fundamental impact on the future and prosperity of the Corridor and wider Shire.

The Productivity Commission have pointed out the need for structural adjustment programs to assist communities impacted by water buybacks. Access to water is central to the Shire's agricultural and manufacturing industries. As such, Moira Shire is intent on promoting fair treatment of water accessibility for users and the environment.

Economic Impacts of Water Buy Backs

To achieve basin plan targets further water buy backs are under consideration. For the Shire and northern Victoria, further buy backs entail economic risks including a loss of economic output and employment.

According to analysis by Frontier Economics a further 450 giga litre buy back risks the loss of 690 full time jobs and over \$200 million in output annually.² Buy backs also entail a range of supply chain impacts on a wide range of sectors including transport and logistics, machinery, packaging, animal feed suppliers, and financial services. As a result, the Corridor community and broader Shire is concerned about the potential adverse impacts of buy backs.

Influence 4: Water Policy
The Corridor and broader Shire benefit from its access to water which is fundamental to Corridor industry. Water policy and water entitlements are key influences on Corridor life and the outlook for the community.

Murray-Darling Basin Plan Review 2026

The Murray-Darling Basin Plan sets the amount of water that can be taken from the Basin each year. In the River Murray system, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority calculates how much water belongs to each of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia before the states calculate water availability for allocations. State governments are responsible for allocating water within each catchment, depending on how much water is available, and each state approaches the allocations process differently.

Water availability via allocations is a critical economic determinant within the Shire and the Corridor. The Basin Plan, which was developed in 2012, is due for review in 2026. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority has warned that there will be less water available for irrigators and the environment, with CSIRO modelling suggesting a likely 20-30% decrease in future river inflows due to climate change. As well as climate change, the 2026 review will focus on sustainable water limits, First Nations and regulatory design. The MDBA is due to release an 'early insights' paper in mid-2024 to share its thinking on the review. The outcome of the review and the allocations that will ultimately be assigned to the Corridor and broader Shire are critical to the future and prosperity of the region.

Water Entitlements

The river system is subject to targets for water to be returned to the rivers to support the environmental health of the system. Buying water entitlements (commonly referred to as 'water buybacks') is a key method of achieving targets. This involves the government buying 'water entitlements' which are the right to take a certain volume of water from the river each year – from people who want to sell them.

Water buybacks impact on irrigation communities, affecting the social and economic life of rural communities by reducing water availability for agriculture. This has the potential to reduce crop yields and agricultural production, further putting pressure on water prices and the cost-of-living crisis.

As water is essential for irrigation communities, the reduction also affects the local economy, not only for farmers but related businesses, due to decreased demand for goods and services flowing into towns from the agricultural sector.

² Social and economic impacts of Basin Plan water recovery in Victoria, 2022 – Frontier Economics

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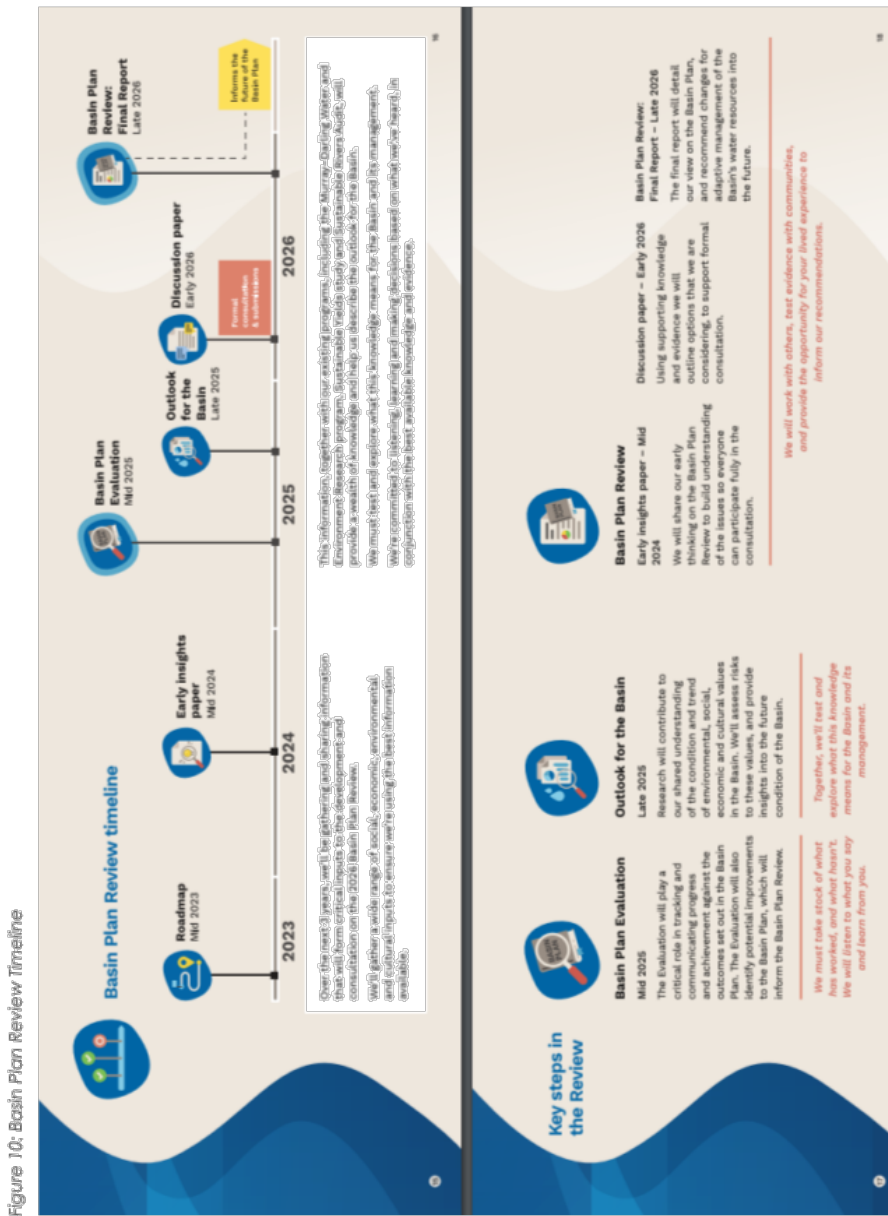


Figure 10: Basin Plan Review Timeline

Source: Murray Darling Basin Authority – 2026 Basin Plan Review

Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy Discussion Paper

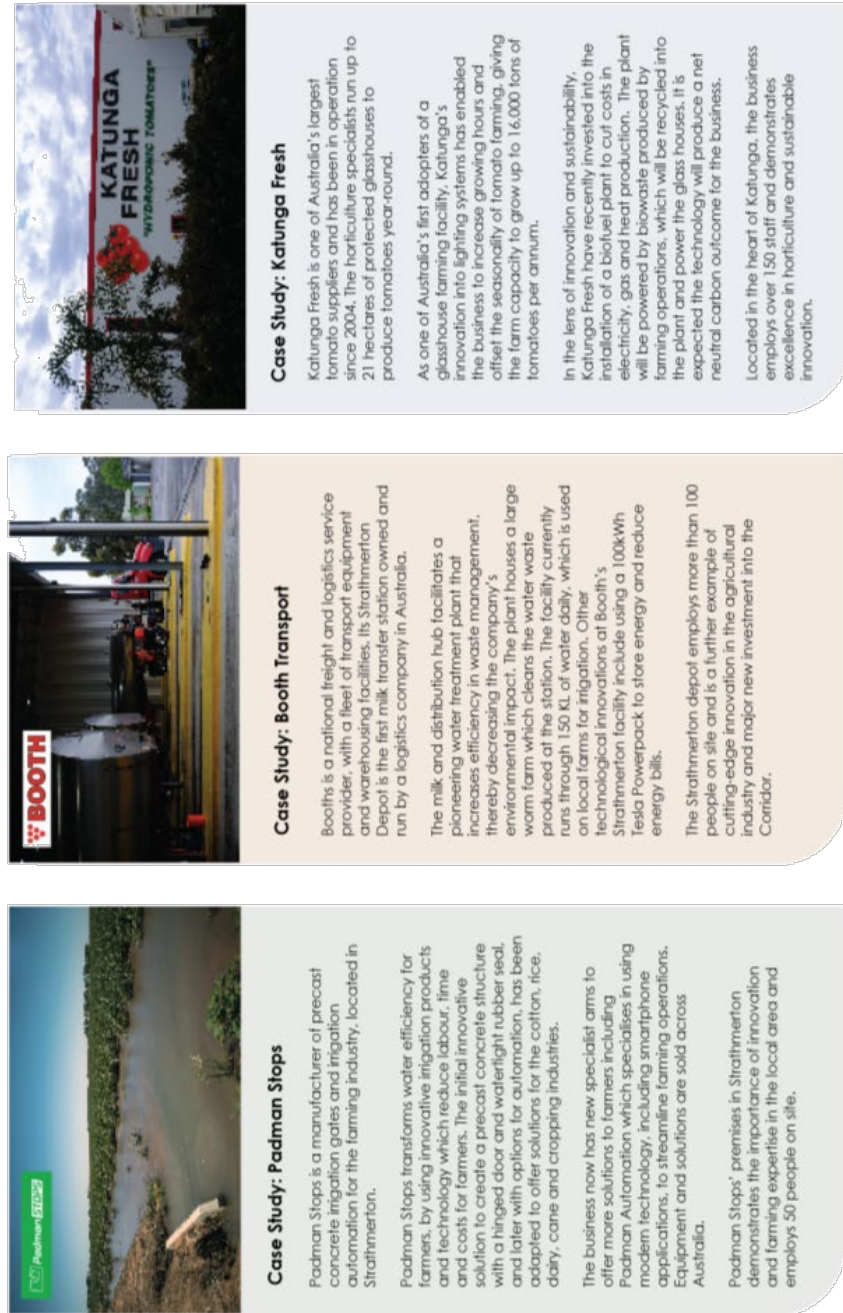
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Figure 11: Corridor Business Case Studies



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4.0 Setting Up For Success

We invite you, our community, to discuss your experience of the Corridor and how we can respond to emerging issues and opportunities to sustainably grow.

To commence the process of developing a Corridor strategy the Shire is canvassing a range of strategic options:

- Strategic Move 1: Create the Conditions to Grow
- Strategic Move 2: Refresh and Update Corridor Planning
- Strategic Move 3: Promote and Improve the Corridor

In engaging with the insights and initiatives, we encourage you to express your own ideas on how to improve the Corridor.

The issues and responses detailed in this report are only a start.



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Create the Conditions to Grow

The Corridor is a vibrant primary production community of 6,700 people with three urban centres at Katunga, Strathmerton and Numurkah. The Corridor's abundant jobs, housing affordability and fertile agricultural lands position the Corridor to grow and renew its community, economy and ultimately its role in regional Victoria.

How can we pursue opportunities and lift constraints to achieve our potential? The following initiatives are a starting point in this conversation.

Strategic Move 1

Let's grow our settlements

The Corridor includes vacant urban land ready to support the growth of our community. At 2024, for instance, Numurkah incorporates 450+ approved and proposed housing development lots which are ready to propel the Corridor's population by a 1000 residents. This initiative focuses on spurring on housing development through the provision and organisation of infrastructure.

While the Moira Shire Council is not a developer the Shire can support lot and house delivery by managing the delivery of growth enabling infrastructure.

Drainage - Numurkah

Drainage infrastructure manages the flow of water within sites and across larger areas to prevent flooding. In Numurkah, drainage and storm water management is essential to converting Numurkah's development proposals into development ready lots.

Numurkah requires a comprehensive drainage plan for greenfield land parcels that results in best practice stormwater management by:

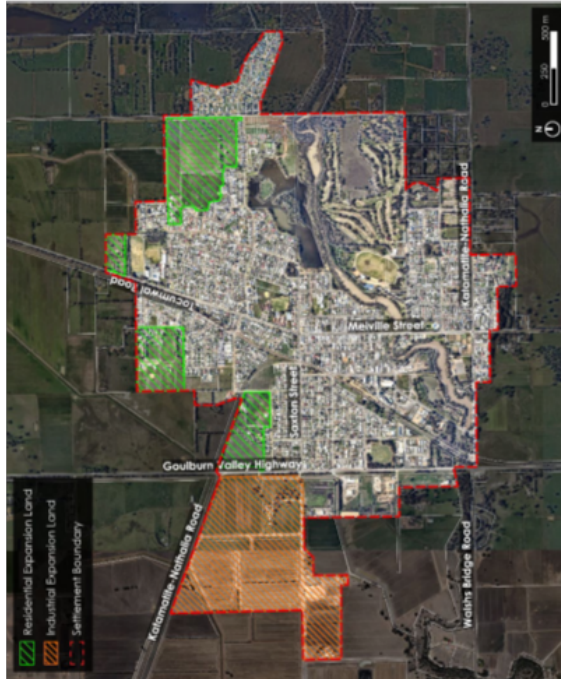
- providing comprehensive guidance as to how new development precincts will capture, manage and convey water flows
- identifies water management responsibilities.
- minimises the scale of site works and land interventions

**Stormwater Management 2024,
Waffle Drive, Numurkah**

Moira Shire is already advancing drainage planning for Numurkah. In August 2024, the Shire published the Numurkah Stormwater Management Strategy which provides a plan to support sustainable residential development in the north of Numurkah.

The Stormwater Management Plan demonstrates Council's proactive development approach which might be replicated for Numurkah's other residential growth parcels. See: [Numurkah Stormwater Management Strategy](#). [Moira Matters](#)

Figure 12: Numurkah Residential and Industrial Expansion Areas



Source: Charter Keck Cramer

Do you have ideas as to how we can increase the volume of serviced lots? We would like to hear from you.

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Figure 13: Katunga Potential Residential Intensification Land



Sewer - Katunga

Katunga is a settlement of approximately 1000 people at 2021 with a relatively young median age of 38 (Numurkah's median age is 50).

The past decade has seen the ongoing expansion of indoor horticulture in Katunga. There is now over 41 hectares of indoor horticultural facilities in direct proximity to the Katunga township. These facilities export produce across Australia and represent agricultural innovation in their adoption of energy efficient technology and circular economy processes. Katunga's indoor horticulture operations are a major economic asset for the Corridor generating local demand for transport and engineering services.

New investment will see Katunga's indoor horticulture undergo ongoing growth. It follows that Katunga needs new housing to:

- house its existing workforce
- improve the quality of the township's accommodation
- secure new investment
- grow Katunga's workforce
- attract international and local workers
- integrate workers into the Corridor community.

Katunga incorporates potential development sites that might support key worker housing and general market housing.

The township includes 14 hectares of largely vacant lots that might be developed for housing. Development however is constrained due to a lack of sewer. This initiative therefore seeks to:

- Investigate sewerage infrastructure requirements in Katunga.
- work with service authorities to clarify infrastructure requirements and promote the upgrading of Katunga as settlement that warrants further infrastructure investment.

How can we grow housing supply in Katunga and other settlements? How can we make the business case for sewerage infrastructure in Katunga. We want to hear from you.

Let's Grow by Boosting Residential and Industrial Lot Supply

There is a lack of serviced developable industrial and residential lots throughout the Corridor. The provision of serviced lots will:

- Create opportunity for households to develop housing.
- Create opportunities to grow the local labour force.
- Create options for young households.
- Ensure the vibrance of our agriculture economy is matched by vibrant towns.

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Is There Unmet Housing Demand?

Moira is undergoing a period of sustained population and housing growth. Moira has emerged from the pandemic as an important population and housing destination in regional Victoria.

Prior to the pandemic, Moira averaged approximately 150 new dwelling approvals per annum. Since 2021, approvals have increased to above 250 dwellings per annum.

Figure 14: Moira Shire Building Approvals



Source: CKC, ABS

As explained earlier, approvals within the Corridor are yet to replicate the strength of growth along the Murray River settlements of Cobram and Yarrawonga which is the current focus of the Shire's growth. Discussions with Corridor employers suggest that there is potentially significant unmet housing need in the Corridor. Likewise, the recent success of the Corridor's largest new housing development at Vera Close, Numurkah indicates strong underlying demand. The 28 dwelling subdivision was developed in 2023 and is now fully occupied, suggesting significant underlying demand for new high quality housing and, in particular, new medium density housing options.

What do you think? Does the Corridor lack new housing options? Is there unmet demand for new housing?

Figure 15: Vera Close Development, Numurkah



Source: Vestbuild

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Figure 16: Warrumbool Key Worker Example



Strategic Move 2

**Let's grow our
key worker housing**

The Corridor supports primary industries that require significant imported temporary labour.

In acknowledgement of the ongoing need for imported labour this initiative entails the development of a land use planning policy to promote the development of key worker housing in proximity to the Corridor's settlements.

Encouraging the growth of high quality key worker housing particularly within or near existing settlements will help ensure our growing economy also activates and invigorates our towns.

A future strategy to guide the development and growth of the Corridor will seek to establish supportive and favourable conditions for the development of key worker housing by:

- Providing clear policy support for key worker housing development
- Supporting the development of zoned and yet to be zoned residential expansion land in Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton for the development of key worker facilities.
- Providing guidance on the density, design and quality of new key worker housing within townships.
- Supporting the development of secondary dwellings for key worker housing.
- Encouraging the development of contemporary key worker housing modules in Katunga, Numurkah and Strathmerton on underutilised residential and township land provided there is adequate services.
- Investigating opportunities available via State government's \$150 million Regional Worker Accommodation Fund.
- Encouraging social housing providers to incorporate key worker housing in their investment strategies.

What do you think about the delivery of purpose built key worker housing? Are you aware of any other locations in which key worker housing development might be appropriate? Let us know.

FILE NO:
2. A DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC ECONOMY

ITEM NO: 9.5.2
(DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT BRYAN SWORD)

**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
Discussion Paper**

Key Worker and Affordable Housing

Warrambool City Council will lease out 15,000sqm of its land to create 50 self-contained key worker housing units.

With the housing crisis adversely affecting Warrambool, there is limited capacity for local organisations and businesses to attract essential personnel.

Council is now collaborating with a consortium headed by community housing agency Haven Home Safe to deliver key worker housing on a Council site. The project is backed by the Housing Australia Future Fund which will support the delivery of the project financially.

The project will ultimately provide a clear exemplar of Council, community housing and government working together in delivering housing for essential workers.



Supporting Key Worker Housing Growth in Our Settlements
There is an opportunity to support primary producers and investors to develop high quality key worker housing in our settlements. Numurkah incorporates long term expansion land that is not currently zoned for residential purposes but is identified in the Moira planning scheme for future residential growth when needed.

This land might be strategically identified as land supported for the development of key worker housing. Likewise, potential expansion land in Katunga might also be explicitly identified for key worker housing development. In progressing a supportive key worker housing policy and identifying land for key worker uses we need to:

- Seek community views on the best locations to develop dedicated key worker facilities.
- Understand industry views and support for the initiative.
- Engage with other Councils that have embarked on key worker housing initiatives such as Warrambool, Moyness and Corangamite to gather insights and understand potential pathways.

The delivery of key worker housing within the Corridor's townships will help demonstrate the way in which townships can integrate key workers into the life of the community whilst also demonstrating the use of vacant township sites in supporting much needed worker housing.

What is Dedicated Key Worker Housing?

Part of the regional housing solution entails purpose built dedicated key worker housing. This is housing suitable for workers without existing and established roots in the region who are embarking on delivering key services and skills. This housing needs to be affordable and provide internal amenity and thermal comfort and security. Key workers need to be in proximity to their work so it's also important that this housing is centrally located and accessible to services and consumer amenity.

But we also note that dedicated key worker housing is only a small part of the solution to the wider housing challenge. However, dedicated key worker housing can provide a great starting point and launch pad for workers who may ultimately settle in our community on a more permanent basis.

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NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy Discussion Paper

Strategic Move 3

Encourage Industrial Growth

The Corridor lacks:

- Contemporary industrial floor space: There is a shortage of space to support trades, automotive and machinery services, agri-business and mining services.
- Large format retail floor space: This is needed to support local demand for hardware, homeware and furniture sales.

The Corridor's main industrial precinct in Numurkah is effectively fully occupied. The development of vacant industrial land to the west of the Goulburn Valley Highway in Numurkah for contemporary industrial uses will provide much needed opportunity to attract business to the Corridor whilst also enabling new business to expand and for existing residents to commence an enterprise.

A new industrial facility might also support large format retail and wholesale uses. Additionally, a new industrial facility may also, in the future, provide opportunity to support a neighbourhood battery that is used to store and distribute energy to the township.

What do you think about industrial growth in the Corridor? Do you support the development of mixed industrial and retail uses on vacant industrial land to the west of the Goulburn Valley Highway? Let us know your thoughts.

Figure 17: Contemporary Industrial Business Park



Numurkah, Katunga and Strathmerton Growth Corridor Plan
Discussion Paper

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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)**

**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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Refresh Corridor Planning

The development of a future Corridor plan provides the opportunity to reform land use planning to reflect on the ground conditions and to ensure that the Corridor is positioned to benefit from its strengths.

Strategic Move 4

Katunga is a centre of horticultural excellence

Access to the Katunga Deep Lead Bore has supported the emergence of a substantive and nationally significant indoor horticultural operations in direct proximity to the Katunga township.

This initiative focuses on the development of policy support for the ongoing development of indoor horticulture at Katunga and associated support for the development of support industries, infrastructure and housing at Katunga to support the evolution of the industry.

A future Corridor strategy and associated policy would acknowledge the success of the industry to date whilst also seeking to work with industry to:

- Identify the future scale of growth of indoor infrastructure in line with industry growth aspirations
- Support the upgrade of sewerage infrastructure to support township growth
- Support the development of housing and support services in Katunga
- Support related commercial activity as the community grows
- Promote Katunga's unique specialisation in indoor horticulture and its technological sophistication as a regional asset and exemplar of agricultural innovation.

Recognising Katunga as a major indoor horticulture centre is important in ensuring that land use conditions in the town enable the township to grow and evolve in keeping with the ongoing investment in indoor facilities and the associated growth of workforce. Concurrently, working with indoor horticulture operators will provide council with key information on the timing and scale of future investment and growth and its implications for labour.

Should we encourage the growth and evolution of indoor horticulture at Katunga as key part of the Corridor's identity?

What is Indoor Agriculture?

Indoor agriculture, also known as indoor farming, is the practice of growing plants and crops in a controlled environment, such as a glasshouse or a vertical farm. The development of glasshouse produce has been led by countries such as the Netherlands, in order to protect against cold weather, and enable crops to grow year-round. The technology has been adapted to suit Victoria's climate, and while the facilities are costly to build, they have several advantages over traditional farming. These are highlighted below:

Crops can be produced 365 days a year, regardless of the weather or season. This is especially important given the increased incidence of extreme weather events in Australia.

- Due to the ability to control conditions, and in some facilities grow vertically, indoor farms can produce a higher yield than outdoor farms.
- Reduced water usage makes indoor agriculture more sustainable. Katunga Fresh, one of Australia's largest suppliers of tomatoes, has a 21 hectare glasshouse facility in Katunga, which has the capacity to produce 16,000 tons of truss tomatoes each year, and supplies major supermarkets with year round produce. Due to the high costs of heating associated with indoor agriculture, Katunga Fresh has adopted a low-cost, clean energy operation using latest quad gen technology.
- Crop quality is greater and shelf life is longer, due to the controlled growing conditions and reduced handling.
- Indoor farms can be built close to consumers, which reduces transport costs and increases freshness and shelf life.

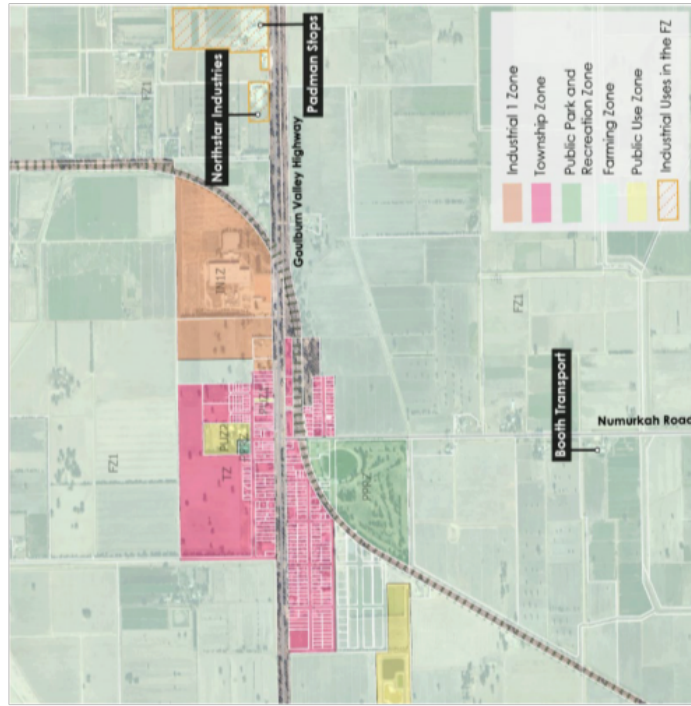
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**NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR
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**ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy
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Figure 18: Strathmerton Zoning and Land Uses 2024



Source: Charley Keck Cramer

Strategic Move 5

**Establish the Strathmerton
Town Boundary**

The Numurkah and Katunga townships are defined by a town boundary while the Strathmerton township is currently not defined by a boundary. This is not necessarily an issue for the growth and development of the township. However, through the development of a Corridor plan there is an opportunity to define Strathmerton's town boundary which might also include the identification of long term expansion land.

Industrial uses in the Farm Zone

Strathmerton includes a number of nationally significant industrial facilities that currently operate from the Farming Zone. Industry currently operating in Strathmerton's Farming Zone includes Padman Stops, Booths Transport and Northstar Industries which are each major employers with significant facilities.

To support and manage ongoing industrial uses in the Farming Zone in Strathmerton, the Corridor plan might also include policy in relation to the use and development of farming land for industrial purposes.

Under existing land use regulation the Farming Zone generally supports industrial uses. If, however, existing industry sought to expand, or change use or add different operations, the Farming Zone may create a barrier to change. A new policy will aim to help local industries manage change.

What are your views on the establishment of a town boundary for Strathmerton?

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Figure 19: Katunga Future Residential Expansion Area Investigation Land



Strategic Move 6

Investigate Katunga Residential Expansion Land

Owing to its growing workforce, Katunga has significant potential to urbanise and transform.

The Katunga township includes approximately 14 hectares of infill development land in the Township Zone to support new housing. This initiative formally identifies future residential expansion land along George Street, Katunga that in the long term will support Katunga's growth.

The Corridor plan would identify this land as future residential expansion land. The rezoning and development of this expansion land would be subject to the provision of sewerage services and demonstrated residential demand as evident through on the ground housing development of existing infill lots. The land might also be prioritised for key worker housing development.

What do you think about identifying future expansion land in Katunga?

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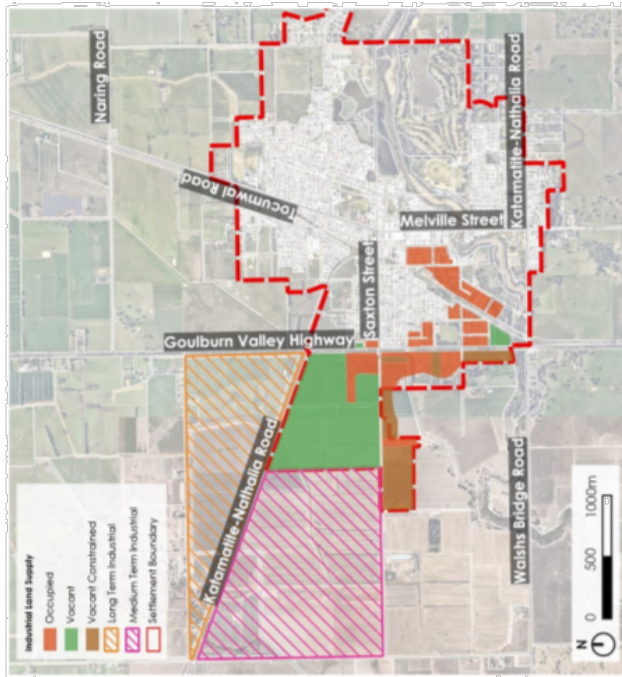


Figure 20: Industrial Land Supply Map – Current Settings

Source: Charter Keck Cramer

**Bring Forward the Timing of
Industrial Expansion Land in
Numurkah**

Strategic Move 7

Long term planning for industrial land in Numurkah identifies land to the south of Katamalite – Nathalia Road as the preferred location for medium term industrial expansion and land to the north of Katamalite – Nathalia Road as preferred for long term industrial expansion.

This initiative supports medium term industrial expansion for land that is both to the south and north of Katamalite- Nathalia Road. This would result in a larger industrial expansion area with a larger and potentially more competitive and diverse industrial land market.

The initiative requires a change to the Moira Planning Scheme as under current policy only land to the south of Katamalite- Nathalia Road is identified as a medium term expansion area. An updated scheme would result in land to the north of Katamalite- Nathalia Road being supported for industrial development in the medium term.

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Promote and Improve the Corridor

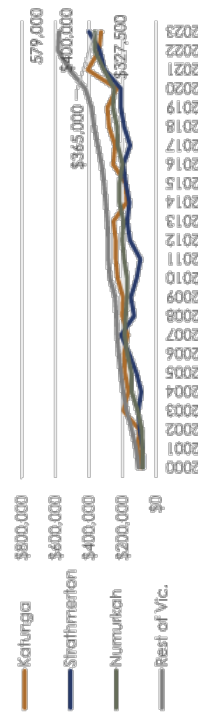
The Corridor's plentiful jobs and relatively affordable housing are major advantages. The Corridor's main retail area at Melville Street includes a wide range of retail outlets and services and the community is supported by a regional hospital and a number of schools. The Corridor is also home to vibrant and active sporting clubs and water based recreational opportunities are in close proximity. Likewise, Shepparton is a major regional centre within a 30 minute car trip.

Strategic Move 8
Promote the Corridor as an affordable and liveable destination

When compared with the rest of Victoria the Corridor's housing market is highly affordable. This combined with the strength of the local job market should be promoted as a major attractor to Victorian and New South Wales households in the midst of an unprecedented cost of living crisis resulting from high inflation and high interest rates.

Through Council advocacy and economic development, there is a compelling and significant opportunity to promote the affordability advantages of the Corridor to households currently struggling with cost of living pressures and high mortgage rates. There is also an opportunity to promote the affordability of the Shire to former residents of the Corridor especially younger residents living in big cities likely to be impacted by cost living pressures. Again, the lack of rental accommodation limits the capacity of new households to explore the Corridor before making a permanent commitment.

Figure 21: Median House Price Corridor



Strategic Move 9
Improve Lake Numurkah

The Corridor's flat topography results in few natural landmarks that function as key natural destinations. Lake Numurkah and Broken Creek are core natural features for the Corridor. Within the Numurkah township the lake appears to be in relatively poor condition which, in turn, creates poor perceptions of the town and Corridor and impacts on the self-perception of residents.

Improving the appearance and quality of Lake Numurkah as the most significant natural destination in the Corridor will help elevate the attractiveness of the Corridor as a destination and improve perceptions of the Corridor's liveability.

How can we improve the amenity and presentation of our townships? Are there other locations that require improvement? Do you have ideas?

Strategic Move 10
Improve Worker and Person Census

The number of residents and workers in the Corridor may be under represented in official Australian government statistics.

Inaccurate population and worker data undermines the business case for investment, government support and unduly creates perceptions of decline when in fact on the ground observations suggest growth and change.

This initiative relates to the Shire and government ensuring future data collection on population and workers is accurate and comprehensive. Specifically, the Shire should encourage businesses to publish data on local workforce and workers to support Council advocacy and the investment decision of major water and infrastructure authorities that generally lack information on growth and change in the Corridor.

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NUMURKAH, KATUNGA AND STRATHMERTON GROWTH CORRIDOR STRATEGY - DISCUSSION PAPER (cont'd)

ATTACHMENT No [2] - Moira Shire Numurkah Strathmerton Corridor Strategy Discussion Paper

5.0 Next Steps

This discussion paper is an introduction into the importance of the economic Corridor of Numurkah-Strathmerton. It is to inform our community that this work is currently being undertaken and to stimulate your thinking on what the Shire needs for industry.

Once we have collected your opinions and feedback, our next phase will be delivering a draft version of the Numurkah-Strathmerton Growth Corridor Strategy, before again, engaging our community and businesses for their feedback. Our intention is to provide clear directions and guidance on the future of our Corridor's land uses.

Contact Us

To find out more, ask about the strategy, or share your thoughts, all are welcome to contact us:

By email: info@moira.vic.gov.au

By phone: (03) 5871 9222 and ask for Strategic Planning

By post: Strategic Planning, PO Box 578, Cobram Vic 3643

Council's Customer Service area

Cobram Service Centre

Address: 44 Station Street, Cobram

Office Open: Monday to Friday 9am - 4:30pm



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6.0 Appendix

Comparison of Employment Census Data and Australian Business Register Data

Charter has reviewed employment Census outcomes for the Corridor against employment identified in Australian Business Register data. The comparison identifies a potential and significant undercount of the number of agriculture and manufacturing jobs in the Corridor.

The 2021 Census data demonstrates a net decline in numerous industries throughout the Corridor across the census years. Based on ABR Data, Council information and conversation with the Corridor based businesses, Charter believes the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector for example, employs approximately 715 people, which is greater than the 470 people counted in the census. Similarly, ABR data suggests the manufacturing sector employs around 400 people compared to the Census estimate of 300. Both agriculture and manufacturing are the biggest employers and economic generators of the region and will likely continue to grow into the future due to the favourable environmental and location factors that support these businesses. Under counts may be the result of the prevalence of temporary workers throughout the Corridor and the potential impact of Covid restrictions on Census collection.

The 2021 employment count in Katunga illustrates the potential discrepancy in employment data. Based on ongoing horticulture related investment over the past decade, it's likely that Katunga's agricultural workforce has grown significantly. Yet, according to Census data, Katunga's total employment however did not grow.

Similarly, Strathmerton's food manufacturing work force is likely to be far greater than has been recorded in the Census as the Bega factory alone supports a workforce that exceeds the 2021 count of 85 manufacturing workers in Strathmerton. Likewise, the count of transport workers in Strathmerton (27 workers) would seem to be a significant under estimate given that the two largest transport enterprises in Strathmerton employ well in excess of this number of workers.

Overall, the Corridor is likely to incorporate more than 3,300 jobs when identified under counts are considered.

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FILE NO: VARIOUS

ITEM NO: 15

URGENT BUSINESS**7.4. Urgent business**

(1) If the Agenda for a Meeting makes provision for urgent business, business cannot be admitted as Urgent Business other than by resolution of Council and only then if:

- (a) It relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the Agenda; and
- (b) deferring the item until the next Meeting will mean a decision on the item will not have any effect on the matter; or
- (c) the item involves a matter of urgency as determined by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- (d) it cannot be addressed through an operational service request process.
- (e) the matter does not:
 - substantially affect the levels of Council service;
 - commit Council to significant expenditure not included in the adopted budget;
 - establish or amend Council Policy; or
 - commit Council to any contractual arrangement.

(2) A Councillor proposing a matter be admitted as urgent business must lodge it in writing to the Chief Executive Officer four (4) hours prior to the Meeting.

(3) The Chief Executive Officer will advise the Mayor of any matter he or she determines appropriate for Council to consider admitting as urgent business.