

Connecting Gannawarra

# QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICT

COMMUNITY PLAN  
2024 – 2029

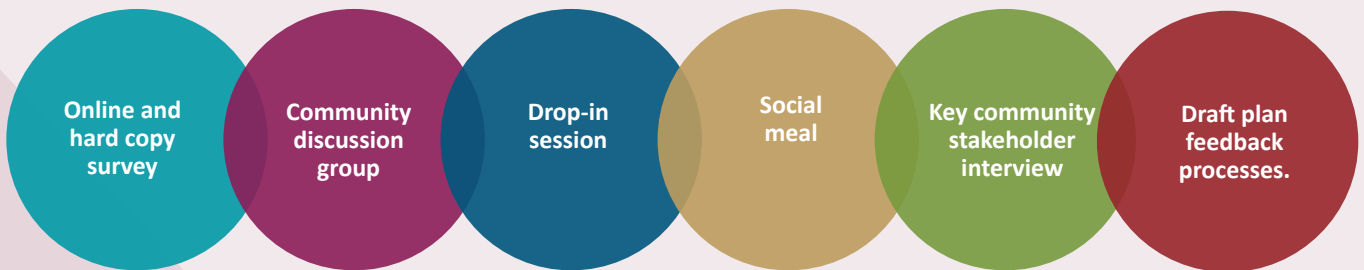


# Quambatook & District Community Plan

The Quambatook & District Community Plan 2024-2029 sets out the community's vision for the next six years.

Developed and owned by the community, the plan captures the community's voice for what is most important for them.

Community planning commenced in January 2023 and was completed in September 2023. Community members in and around Quambatook and District were invited to share their input into the planning process via a variety of methods:



The Quambatook & District Community Plan is a community owned plan that captures community aspirations across a broad range of areas (not just local government). This project was delivered with funding from the Agriculture-Dependent Community Resilience Project.

## Our Vision

In 2029, Quambatook & District will LOOK LIKE, FEEL LIKE and HAVE:

- Looking: Vibrant
- Feeling: Friendly and inclusive
- Has: a broader population – age and culture
- Thriving
- Lots of events
- A community minded and friendly hamlet in the Mallee
- Quambatook is a welcoming, productive, enthusiastic, healthy, open community
- A small and friendly town that is not full of empty buildings, where buildings are utilised to the fullest
- A place to visit in its own right
- Excellent events
- Safe, peaceful community
- Surviving
- Green, populated and energised
- Still feels like home

The Vision from the 2016 Quambatook Community Development Association Plan noted: A sustainable community, a well-maintained community, a proud community, a friendly community.

# Building On Past Work

The Quambatook and District community plan also builds on existing community plans and community consultation efforts. These include:



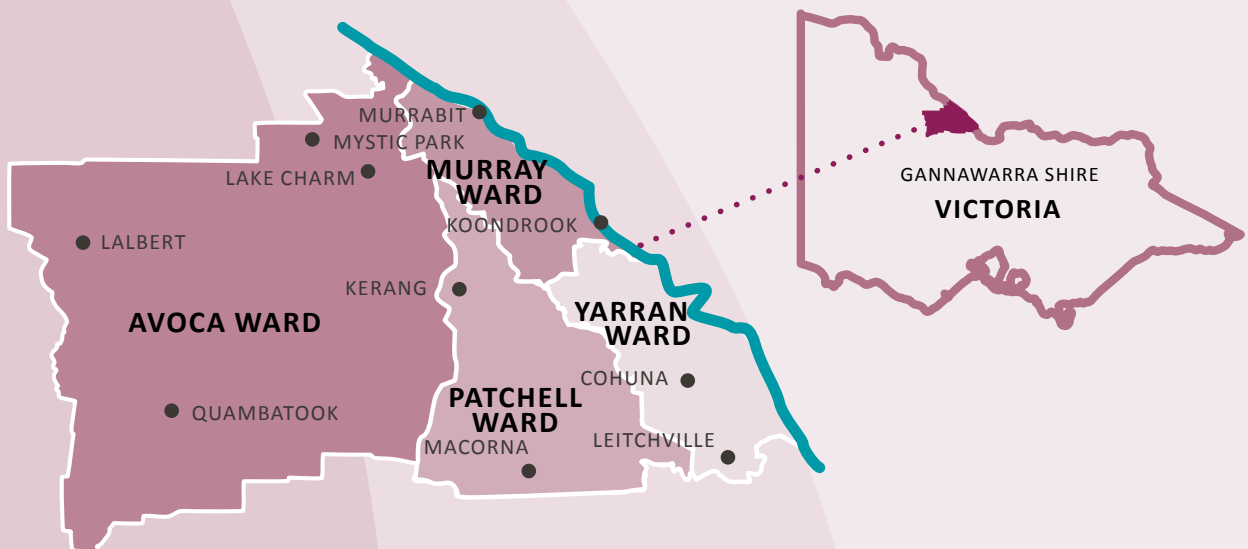
Key observations from the above documents and plans which have been considered in the development of the Quambatook & District Community Plan 2024-2029 are shown in The Quambatook & District Consultation Summary Report.

# Our District

Quambatook is located in the south-western part of the Gannawarra Shire Council in the Avoca Ward. On the banks of the Avoca River, Quambatook performs the role of a local community centre for the surrounding farming community.

Quambatook is 40km west of Kerang, 43km north of Boort and 60km south of Swan Hill. Quambatook is 297km from Melbourne.

## KEY COMMUNITY FEATURES [BUILT AND NATURAL]



# Quambatook & District

## KEY STATS & FACTS - 2021



Population  
**229**

Male **50.9%**  
Female **49.1%**  
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples **1.7%**  
(VIC 1.0%)  
Country of birth (Australia): **77.3%** (VIC 65.0%)



Age

Median age in Quambatook: **59 years** (VIC 38 years)  
Children aged 0-14 years made up **4.7%** of the population (VIC 18.0%)  
and **37.1%** of the population are aged 65 years and over (VIC 16.8%)



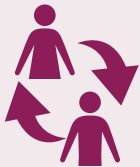
Dwellings  
**126**

**12.8%** of dwellings were unoccupied (VIC 11.1%)  
**\$80** / week was the median rent (VIC \$370)



Households

**53.7%** were family households (VIC 70.1%)  
**43.5%** (25 people) were living in single person households (VIC 25.9%)  
**2.8%** were group households (VIC 4.0%)  
**3.7%** of households had no car (VIC 7.5%)



Employment

**61.0%** worked full-time (VIC 56.2%)  
**31.7%** worked part-time (VIC 32.3%)  
**7.3%** were unemployed (VIC 5.0%)  
**4.9%** were away from work (VIC 6.5%)



Household  
Income

In Quambatook **32.7%** of households had a weekly household income of less than \$650 (VIC 16.4%) and **5.1%** of households had a weekly income of more than \$3,000 (VIC 24.2%)



Health

**7.4%** of Quambatook residents reported three or more long-term health conditions (VIC 2.9%)

# Community Consultation

**Residents living in Quambatook & District were invited to share their thoughts on the strengths, challenges and opportunities for their community.**

A range of strategies were selected from to ensure as many community members as possible could inform the development of the Quambatook & District Community Plan. Strategies included: an online and hard copy survey, a drop-in session, community discussion groups, comment boxes at frequently visited community locations, and attendance at community social meals.

**The following broad community engagement was achieved:**


- › 25 people filled in a survey
- › 9 key stakeholders and community members attended a community workshop
- › 10 people attended a social meal
- › 3 people attended a drop-in session
- › 2 people completed comment slips
- › 4 people participated in interviews
- › 6 people attended the Community Plan feedback session to provide final comments on the draft Plan.

Overall, a total of 59 people shared their thoughts, ideas and dreams for the future of Quambatook & District.

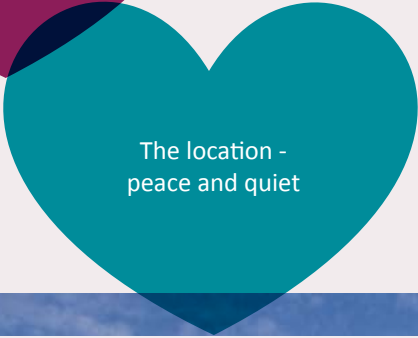


# In Quambatook & District We Love....

The top two things survey respondents liked about their community were:



The people – including friendship, community, sense of belonging and community pride / spirit / volunteering



The location - peace and quiet

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Residents who attended the community drop-in session, workshop and social meal shared that they really liked that Quambatook & District had:

- Friendly people who cared for each other and stuck together
- A strong sense of community
- A great lifestyle including its location, space and freedom, and community assets
- Good existing services including local businesses, the Quambatook Community Resource Centre and bus and the Nurse Practitioner from Northern District Community Health
- Great community events including significant events such as the Tractor Pull and Silo Cinemas

Qualities such as the people, location, volunteering and community spirit were valued and mentioned by all community members participating in the Community Planning conversations.









# Key Issues/Challenges

The most important issues/challenges that survey respondents shared were:



Additionally, residents who attended the community drop-in session, workshop and social meal shared a range of challenges/issues/threats:

-  > Lack of volunteers and volunteer burnout
-  > Road maintenance
-  > Town beautification, ageing infrastructure and maintenance costs
-  > Lack of access to health services
-  > Loss of services and clubs – closure of school, closure of football/netball club, loss of Planned Activity Group
-  > Poor internet service

Highly planned and aligned economic development to attract businesses, industry and population, volunteer burnout and ongoing assessment maintenance were common themes across consulted groups.

NOTE a complete summary of findings from the community consultation processes can be found in the Quambatook & District Consultation Summary Report.



# Our Key Priorities

Gannawarra Shire Council's 2021 - 2025 Council Plan is guided by the following Strategic Statement:

**“The Gannawarra will be renowned as an Australian destination and home of choice for its liveability and unique opportunities in innovative agriculture, renewable energy and nature-based tourism.**

**We focus on inclusive services and assets that enhance the health and wellbeing, cultural heritage, connectivity and productivity of our communities.”**

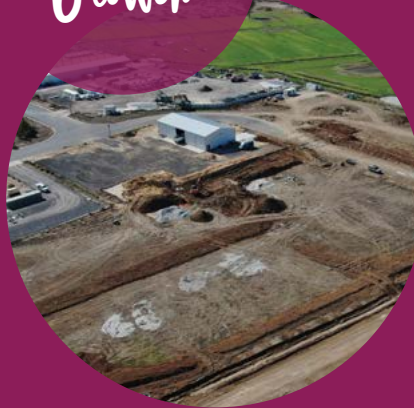
The achievement of which will be achieved through action on three goals.

## Goal 1. Liveability



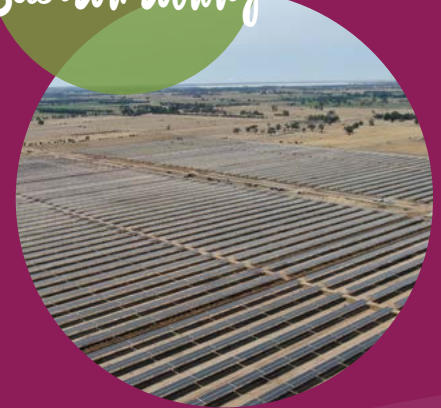
Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

## Goal 2. Growth



Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

## Goal 3. Sustainability



Achieve long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

The Quambatook and District Community Plan is couched within these goals of Liveability, Growth and Sustainability. In this way the Quambatook & District Community Plan both aligns with and extends Council's strategic focus.

# Goal 1. Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

## QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

### 1: SUPPORT, RECRUIT, RESOURCE AND REDUCE WORKLOAD ON VOLUNTEERS

1. Strengthen relationships and connections between community groups to support each other, share resources and remain viable. Form a 'Quamby Council' through merging the Quambatook Community Development Association (QCDA), Quambatook Community Resource Centre (QCRC) and other key community groups. Support the development of fit for purpose governance structures and systems.
2. Create models and opportunities to encourage new volunteers, especially younger and new residents. The QCRC Welcome Packs are highly valued, infrastructure to encourage team sports is critical (Bowls Club was noted).
3. Seek advocacy support from Council to strengthen volunteer sustainability, including through funding streams and models to support governance and planning, in and by communities.

### 2: A WELCOMING AND CONNECTED COMMUNITY WITH REASONS TO COME TOGETHER

1. Value and maintain spaces, programs and events that bring the Quambatook & District communities together. Create an achievable 'Calendar of Events' to encourage connection and share broadly.
2. Utilise regular events and activities (such as Bowls, Tuesday cuppa at the Memorial Pool/Tennis Club) to meet and welcome new community members and bring together existing community members.
3. Advocate for social programs that strengthen community inclusion and connections, noting the value of the Social Meals model delivered in Quambatook by both Gannawarra Shire Council and Quambatook Community Resource Centre.

# Goal 1. Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

## QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

### 3: ADVOCATE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF, AND ENHANCEMENTS TO, EXISTING SERVICES

1. Promote and support the Nurse Practitioner primary health delivery model provided by Northern District Community Health (NDCH).
2. The services and supports provided by the Quambatook Community Resource Centre (QCRC) are critical to the Quambatook and surrounds area. This model should be protected, promoted and built upon.
3. Work with the QCRC Community Bus model. Kerang, Boort and Swan Hill to align, where feasible, the service within interconnecting public transport options (for example the Swan Hill – Melbourne VLine train) and major events / activities.
4. Explore funding opportunities towards the replacement of the Quambatook CRC Community Bus.

### 4: ACCESSIBLE, INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND WELL-MAINTAINED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Key community assets such as the Caravan Park, Tractor Pull site, Memorial Hall, Silo Cinema site, Recreation Reserve and Quambatook Community Resource Centre are valued, maintained, inclusive, accessible and regularly utilised.
2. Maintain and seal walking tracks, monitor and repair footpaths as identified to ensure safe active transport around the Quambatook community.
3. Continue to improve the exercise equipment area, planning progressively for toilet blocks and additional assets to encourage and enable safe use.
4. Sporting Facilities are maintained and redeveloped in line with the requirements of the community.
5. Infrastructure Masterplan- develop an inventory of Council-, Community- and Trust-owned public infrastructure, complete an audit and prioritisation for maintenance, sale and re-purposing. Clarify the roles and responsibilities of infrastructure owners for their respective infrastructure assets.
6. Stay alert to funding streams for the works required on the Memorial Pool and other necessary works as identified through the Infrastructure Audit.

# Goal 1. Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

## QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

### 5: COMPLETE THE SUSTAINABLE WATER FOR QUAMBATOOK PROJECT

1. Continue to work with local and state government to create and implement a plan for the completion of the Sustainable Water for Quambatook project. Request regular updates on the progress towards completion.
2. Advocate for the dredging of the Avoca River between the two weirs to enable a volume and depth of water that ensures river health and a viable environment for native fish and wildlife species. Remove the Cumbungi growth along the banks adjacent to River St to enable the mooring of canoes and kayaks again.
3. Advocate for the important lifestyle benefits that completion of the Weir precinct provides to the Quambatook & District population. Bring back the annual fishing competition to eliminate Carp.

### 6: TOWN BEAUTIFICATION AND SIGNAGE

1. Continue a coordinated strategic approach for beautification of the Quambatook community and surrounds which honours both its heritage and future.
2. Continue to work towards themed signage, which is clear and comprehensively promotes the Quambatook community and surrounds.
3. Work with Council and community to identify and clean up untidy properties and spaces.
4. Advocate for the placement of bins at the Suttie Road Truckstop to eliminate the build-up of rubbish.

### 7: SUPPORT HEALTHY AND ENGAGED AGEING IN PLACE

1. Uphold the importance of our ageing community members, valuing their contribution to our communities across many years and current and ongoing contribution.
  2. Pursue strategies and advocate accordingly to support rurally cognisant models that enable people to age in place – facilitating their right to stay healthy, well, empowered, connected and local. The maintenance of services such as the Nurse Practitioner and QCRC are key, a coordinated visiting tradesperson every 1-2 months with residents who need works completed sharing the travel costs could be considered.
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## Goal 2. Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

### QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

#### 1: COMPLETE THE SUSTAINABLE WATER FOR QUAMBATOOK PROJECT

1. Advocate for the important tourism benefits that completion of the Weir precinct provides to the Quambatook & District communities and the Gannawarra Shire area.
2. Work with Council to stop the free camping that is currently occurring at the Weir (not at the approved site) and increase signage for and awareness of the designated free camping location. Promote the approved location on WikiCamps Australia.

#### 2: STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Encourage, support and promote opportunities for the development of new businesses and industries within and around the Quambatook community.
2. Advocate for business 'start-up' programs, education and seed funding streams into Quambatook.

#### 3: COMMUNITY WIDE RENEWABLE ENERGIES

1. Create and implement a plan for community wide renewable energy that is staged, prioritising key community assets first with battery infrastructure to share energy between assets during high use periods.
2. Following renewable energy implemented on all community assets, commence a roll-out plan for private infrastructure to maximise solar use and decrease energy costs for residents.

#### 4: DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

1. Advocate for improved mobile phone and internet services to enable residents, business and industry and visitors to access services, develop business and work and learn remotely from Quambatook and surrounds.

## Goal 2. Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

### QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

#### 5: A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT

1. Ongoing and aligned promotion of Quambatook's major events, heritage and history, including the Tractor Pull, Vintage Working Machinery day, Silo Cinemas and Rodeo. Create 'A Year in Quambatook' poster and a comprehensive communications strategy to support.
2. Advocate and apply for funding for a staged development of a John Williamson tourist precinct.
3. Showcase the Avoca River and the Quambatook area's natural assets through continuing to improve infrastructure that facilitates access to and enjoyment of these areas and their widespread promotion.
4. Continue to improve the Quambatook Caravan Park as a key community asset.
5. Explore opportunities to utilise existing community infrastructure assets, such as the school and Quambatook Recreation Reserve, during peak periods to meet accommodation demands. Consider the potential of these assets to meet the accommodation demands expected with the onset of Goschen Mineral Sands Mining.

#### 6: A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

1. Improve roads, ensuring they safely support residents and agriculture / other industry needs and equipment.
2. Attract and support outside and local business and industry that will build the economy and increase employment whilst maintaining the amenity and environmental values of the community.
3. Explore and align with feasible opportunities presented by Goschen Mineral Sands Mining and similar developments.
4. Maintain key Agricultural sector assets such as the Graincorp Bunkers and rail distribution network. Advocate for further needs and opportunities as identified.
5. Explore and support strategies which both grow local and attract outside workforce to the community of Quambatook.
6. Explore creative suggestions such as utilising existing infrastructure as a conference centre.

## Goal 2. Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

### QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

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#### 7: POPULATION STABILITY/GROWTH

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1. Continue to monitor the availability and quality of housing stock in and around the community of Quambatook. Advertise available properties widely (integrate into communications strategy). Advocate for land rezoning if required.
  2. Continue to promote the location and lifestyle assets of Quambatook & District, especially as a commuter community.
  3. Develop local campaigns which encourage the movement into the community of identified skill shortages such as key trades. Link to communications strategy.
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# Goal 3. Sustainability

Achieve long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

## QUAMBATOOK & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

### 1: PARTNER WITH GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL TO ACHIEVE GOOD GOVERNANCE

1. Develop a framework for working together with Council that includes clear communication and roles and responsibilities, and a joint strategy for ongoing community improvement that is led by community.
2. Invite Gannawarra Shire Council leadership to one meeting each year of the Quambatook Community Development Association. Dedicate this and the preceding meeting to strategic planning and set priority actions and requests for the year ahead.

### 2: PREPARE AND RESPOND TO A CHANGING CLIMATE

1. Build community resilience and strategic response to reduce the vulnerability of communities in extreme weather events (fire, flood and heat).
2. Support and promote opportunities to improve environmental outcomes- water recycling, tree planting, weed control, solar power and harvesting stormwater.
3. Plan, plant and maintain drought tolerant and low maintenance public gardens in and around Quambatook.

### 3: PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENTAL

1. Secure and stabilise water availability and delivery through the Avoca River and into the Weir.
2. Protect the health of the Avoca River, seeking balanced sustainability of use for the environment, recreation and amenity.
3. Continue to manage weeds and pest species in and around Quambatook.



# Putting Our Plan Into Action

Implementation of the Quambatook & District Community Plan will be led by the Quambatook Community Development Association in partnership with Gannawarra Shire Council with support from the Quambatook Community Resource Centre.

Relevant key community stakeholders will be invited to inform projects and activities and work together on shared priorities. Yearly progress updates on community priorities and activities will be provided to the wider community.

If you would like to get involved contact: Quambatook Community Development Association:  
QCDA3540@gmail.com

