



# GANNAWARRA WATERFRONT MASTERPLANS

FINAL REPORT | GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL | MARCH 2019

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## READING NOTE

The Masterplan is not a “detailed design”, but is a document that sets out how a particular area can develop and redevelop into the future. It is a high level plan intended to set out objectives and strategies to manage development and change over time and is a process that defines what is important about a place and how its character and quality can be conserved, improved and enhanced.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

Gannawarra Shire Council is seeking to better utilise the natural environment of the Kerang Lakes (Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm), Murray River precinct at Koondrook and the Gunbower Creek precinct in Cohuna to maximise their tourism, recreation, commercial and residential opportunities. These precincts are collectively referred to in this report as the waterfront precincts.

Gannawarra Shire Council engaged urban planning, tourism and economic consultancy Urban Enterprise in 2018 to prepare concept masterplans for these precincts to guide their future development.

Gannawarra Shire is located approximately 220km north west of Melbourne CBD (approximately 3-hours' drive), on the NSW and Victoria border. Its primary towns include Kerang, Cohuna and Koondrook. The Murray River is located on the northern border of the Shire, together with the Gunbower Creek, this area provides a significant forest and national park environment.

Gannawarra Shire is abundant in rivers, lakes, wetlands and forests. Popular tourist activities include water skiing, camping, fishing, boating and other nature-based activities.



## 1.2. THE WATERFRONT PRECINCTS

The waterfront precinct study areas include Kerang Lakes (Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm), the Murray River Precinct at Koondrook and the Gunbower Creek Precinct in Cohuna.

### KERANG LAKES

**Kangaroo Lake** - Kangaroo Lake is one of the largest permanent freshwater lakes, supplied by the Torrumbarry Irrigation System. It lies on the western side of the Murray Valley Highway between Swan Hill and Kerang. The lake is managed by Goulburn-Murray Water.

Kangaroo Lake is a popular destination for power boating, water-skiing, fishing, swimming and general recreational activities.

The Lake is generally surrounded by farming land, with some residential properties fronting the lake, these are primarily located on the south-west side of the Lake.

The Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park provides the only formal accommodation adjacent to the Lake, located at the juncture of the Murray Valley Highway and Mystic Park East Road.

Kangaroo Lake has hosted a number of events for Ski Racing Victoria.

**Lake Charm** - Lake Charm is one of a group of natural lakes north of Kerang. Lake Charm is a part of the Victorian Mid Murray Storage system and is managed by Goulburn Murray Water.

Lake Charm has links to the indigenous community. The Lake takes its name from a former local indigenous tribal chief named Chief Cham.

Lake Charm is a popular destination for water-based activities including water-skiing, swimming, recreational boating and powerboating and fishing. It is the main lake for Ski-Racing Victoria, hosting four events a year.

Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm are part of the Kerang Wetlands Ramsar site. The wetlands system consists of 23 marshes, lakes and swamps. The Ramsar site contains black box, river red gum and tangled lignum vegetation communities and is an important breeding ground for a diverse range of waterbird species, and a habitat for indigenous flora and other native fauna species.<sup>1</sup>

The wetlands system is generally surrounded by rural agriculture, including cattle, sheep grazing, irrigated crops and pasture, vineyards and orchards.

### **MURRAY RIVER PRECINCT, KOONDRUCK**

The Murray River Precinct is located on the north-eastern edge of Koondrook, bordering the Murray River and intersecting with the Gunbower Creek. The precinct stretches from the Arbuthnot River Redgum Sawmill in the north to the proposed nature-based tourism hub on the Gunbower Creek in the south-east. The retail centre of Koondrook abuts the precinct.

The precinct is currently used for recreation, fishing, boating, camping, hospitality, tourism and commercial uses.

Council has undertaken significant work in Koondrook to develop the town as a tourism destination, which will also support new commercial and residential investment.

Recent projects include the Koondrook Wharf development, which opened in late 2016 and the proposed Nature Based Tourism hub and Gunbower Creek pedestrian crossing.

### **GUNBOWER CREEK PRECINCT, COHUNA**

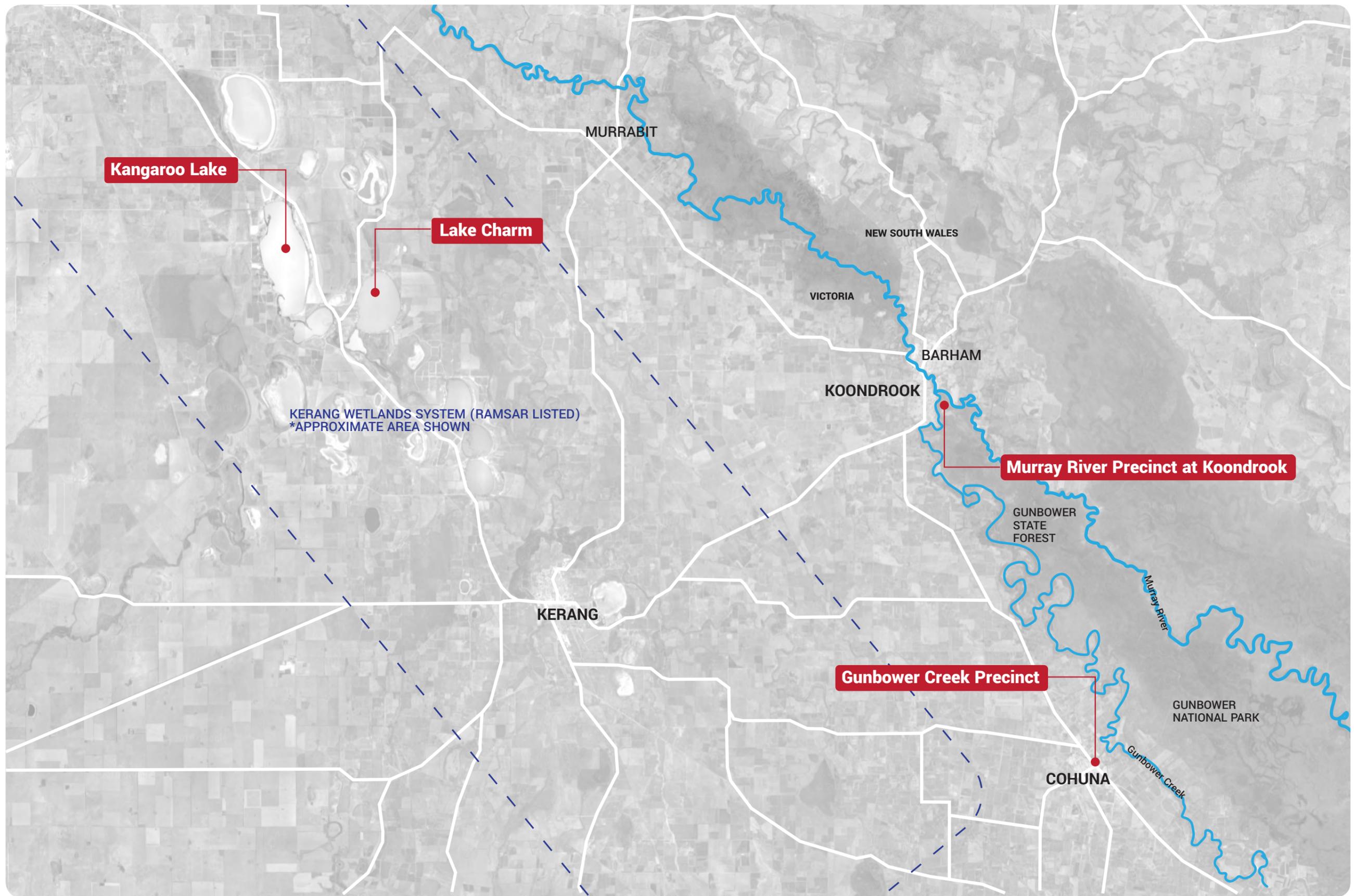
Located on the Gunbower Creek, Cohuna is a town with significant potential for increased tourism. The main street fronts the Gunbower Creek providing striking visual amenity.

Council is the committee of management for the Cohuna Recreation Reserve. The precinct has direct linkages to the Gunbower State Forest and National Park.

The precinct has significant potential to be utilised more highly for tourism, recreation and commercial purposes, including improving linkages to the town centre and tourism product outside the precinct including accommodation, trails and water skiing.

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<sup>1</sup> Kerang Wetlands Ramsar Site Ecological Character Description 2011



### 1.3. AIMS OF THE WATERFRONT MASTERPLANS

A number of aims were identified at the beginning of the project and identified in the project brief, these included:

- To provide suitable infrastructure that will support a variety of tourism, recreation, lifestyle and commercial pursuits.
- Assist in determining the issues in developing infrastructure around the waterfront locations.
- Provide the basis for securing funding to construct a range of infrastructure related projects.

### 1.4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The concept masterplans prepared through this project will aim to identify projects that will lead to strong economic development outcomes for Gannawarra Shire.

The overarching objectives for the waterfront masterplans include:

- Increase visitation and visitor expenditure;
- Attract and appeal to new visitor markets;
- Attract private and public-sector investment;
- Increase and improve access and connections;
- Improve the built environment and support the natural environment;
- Attract business investment;
- Improve liveability and **employment opportunities for residents and;**
- Develop themes and a consistent brand.

The masterplans will seek to identify projects that have the greatest potential to drive realisation of the above outcomes. Given the project investigates four precincts with different contexts, characteristics, attractions and visitor markets, each precinct masterplan will respond to the above objectives in a unique way.

### 1.5. PROCESS

The preparation of this masterplan has involved the process as outlined below:

- **Phase 1: Consultation Stage 1:**
  - One on one meetings with community;
  - Workshop with Council;
  - Meetings with stakeholders;
  - Councillor presentation and workshop;
- **Phase 2: Background Work and Analysis**
  - Technical analysis including background research and analysis;
- **Phase 3: Consultation Stage 2:**
  - Group meetings and community drop in sessions.
  - Further detailed site visits.
- **Phase 4: Background and Concept Plan Discussion Paper**
  - A Background and Concept Discussion Paper was prepared, which included background analysis and high-level concept plans to incite discussion. The report was consulted by Council with community members and interested parties relating to at each masterplan area and feedback was provided to Urban Enterprise.
- **Phase 5: Draft Masterplan Report**
  - The Draft Masterplan report has been prepared based on feedback of the Concept Plan Discussion Paper. A final masterplan report will be prepared based on feedback and consultation of the draft.
- **Phase 6: Final Masterplan Report (This Report)**

## 1.6. CONSULTATION

Consultation with the community and stakeholders is a key component in developing the masterplans for the waterfront precincts. The project has involved an extensive community consultation process to date. Community consultation to date has included:

- **One on one and group meetings on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of March at Kangaroo Lake, Lake Charm, Cohuna and Koondrook** – These sessions were used as an opportunity to gain a preliminary understanding of the precinct and the issues and opportunities relevant to each waterfront precinct. Consultation on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> also included one on one meetings and workshops with site users, businesses, community groups, Council and Councillors and other government agency stakeholders (Parks Victoria, Goulburn Murray Water).
- **Community drop in sessions held on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of May in Cohuna (Gateway Cohuna), Koondrook (Mates Royal Hotel) and at the Kerang Lakes (Lake Charm Hall)** – These sessions were used as an opportunity to discuss the opportunities for the sites, workshop ideas for each of the waterfront precincts and prioritise opportunities.
- **Community progress group meetings held on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of May in Cohuna (Gateway Cohuna), Koondrook (Mates Royal Hotel) and Kerang Lakes (Lake Charm Hall)** - These sessions were used as an opportunity to discuss the opportunities for the sites, workshop ideas for each of the waterfront precincts and prioritise opportunities.

It is estimated that approximately 100 people have been involved with the consultation process to date, including from the community, Council and government,

Consultation to date has formed an invaluable component of the study. Many exciting ideas were contributed to the project either in person, by written submission, over the phone or a combination of all of the above. The opportunities identified for each of the waterfront precincts are largely a result of ideas contributed through the consultation process.



## PART A: BACKGROUND

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## 2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides a review of relevant strategic planning and policy documents to assist in the preparation of the Masterplans.

### 2.2. STATE GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES AND PLANS

#### VICTORIA'S 2020 TOURISM STRATEGY, 2013- 2016

The tourism industry is recognised as an important economic driver for Victoria, contributing an estimated \$19.1 billion to the economy and generating employment of more than 200,000 people (including both direct and indirect impacts). Victoria's 2020 Tourism Strategy provides a clear vision about how the tourism industry can increase its economic and social contribution to the State.

The Strategy is underpinned by the following:

- Increasing our focus on growth markets such as China in the short to medium term, and India, Malaysia and Indonesia in the medium to long term;
- Building stronger collaboration between the Victorian Government and the regions to ensure State wide priorities are met, whilst actively supporting the regional tourism industry to address local issues;
- Increasing the tourism benefit of major business events; and
- Identifying and realising key tourism investments.

#### VICTORIAN VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY, 2016

The Victorian visitor economy has been growing strongly in comparison to New South Wales and Queensland since 2010. The *Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy* (2016), prepared by the Victorian State Government highlights the key to this success

is the diversity in product on offer in Victoria and recognises the need to strengthen this diversity.

The Strategy provides an ambitious goal to grow tourism expenditure across the State by 2024/2025 to \$36.5 billion and a strong focus to achieve this is by increasing visitor nights and encouraging international guests to explore regional Victoria.

Relevant areas to this project for which the Strategy aims to support growth includes:

- Facilitating investment in tourism product and services;
- A focus on regional Victoria across all activities;
- A wider calendar of events that encourages visitor dispersal across Victoria;
- Visitor experiences tailored to the preferences of visitors from Asia;
- Investing in key public infrastructure and roads.

#### PROTECTING VICTORIA'S ENVIRONMENT – BIODIVERSITY 2037

The Plan recognises that while Victoria's nature- based tourism industry is thriving and should be further promoted, it is also highly vulnerable to the future impacts of biodiversity loss. Tourism needs to be managed to ensure that sensitive areas do not receive too many visitors, and that such areas are well managed and resilient.

#### VICTORIA'S ABORIGINAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Victoria's *Aboriginal Tourism Development Strategy 2013-23* identifies that there is a high demand for Aboriginal experiences, significant amongst international markets, particularly Western Hemisphere markets such as the United Kingdom and Europe. Aboriginal tourism is seen as a motivator for travel to Australia for these visitors. The vision is that regional Victoria will boast a growing Aboriginal tourism industry that showcases Victoria's unique Aboriginal history, cultural expression and diversity to a global audience. Visitors are seeking experiences that are positive and that highlight the unique aspects of the culture.

## 2.3. REGIONAL PLANS

### MURRAY REGION TOURISM DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018

The *Murray Region Destination Management Plan* (DMP) provides a strategic approach to prioritising key tourism experiences and product development in the Murray Region. This project is identified as a priority project in the Murray DMP.

Development themes include:

<p><b>Theme 1: The River</b> - Promote and develop the river as the unique and essential element of the region's tourism offer, including passive, active and social uses of the river and its banks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riverfront precinct and parklands enhancements and commercial activation.</li> <li>• Boat ramps, wharves and jetties.</li> <li>• Water-based tour operators.</li> <li>• Other water-based experiences.</li> <li>• Interpretation of the Murray River.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 2: Nature Based</b> - Ensure that nature-based assets deliver high quality activities and experiences through improvements to infrastructure and the development of innovative tourism products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in parks infrastructure that support nature-based tourism such as roads, picnic areas, camping sites, toilets.</li> <li>• Investment in walking and cycling trails.</li> <li>• Cultural heritage interpretation.</li> <li>• Educational tours and operators.</li> <li>• Eco and adventure tour operators.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 3: Sport and Recreation</b> - Strengthen and increase the prominence of sport and recreation tourism in the Murray through facility renewal and attraction of new investment in infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in supporting golfing infrastructure such as club houses, food and beverage, and accommodation.</li> <li>• Investment in sports and recreation facilities and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Investment in sports clubs.</li> <li>• Capacity building in event managers to host/run major competitions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 4: Food, Drink and Agribusiness</b> - Improve the Murray's food and drink offer by encouraging primary producers to develop tourism infrastructure, promoting the use of local produce and the development of diverse and unique dining experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in craft beverage (Cideries, Breweries, Distilleries)</li> <li>• Winery cellar doors and tourism facilities</li> <li>• Destination dining businesses.</li> <li>• Quality food establishments focusing on local produce.</li> <li>• Agritourism, farm gate, and taste trails.</li> <li>• New food and wine events.</li> <li>• Capacity and workforce building in the hospitality sector.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Theme 5: Arts, Heritage and Culture</b> - Provide unique Murray heritage experiences through improvement and modernisation of existing heritage icons and strengthening heritage interpretation linked to Indigenous, military history, immigration, river trade and transport, pioneers and irrigation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in heritage assets and improved interpretation.</li> <li>• Repurposing heritage buildings and heritage sites for tourism use.</li> <li>• Digital interpretation of heritage.</li> <li>• Investment and expansion of art galleries.</li> <li>• Investment and expansion of performance facilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 6: Festivals, Events and Conferences</b> - Promote an increase in year-round visitation to the Murray through event facility investment and coordinated development and promotion of a series of events and conferences linked to the Murray's tourism strengths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events and festival infrastructure.</li> <li>• Business event venues.</li> <li>• Marketing of business events in the region.</li> <li>• Visitor accommodation targeting the business events market.</li> <li>• Development of new events and festivals, particularly outside of peak periods.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 7: Accommodation</b> - To diversify the accommodation base in the Murray Region to appeal to a range of target visitor segments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinvestment and repositioning motel accommodation to contemporary market need.</li> <li>• Reinvestment in tourist parks to cater for family markets, e.g. self-contained cabins, family facilities etc.</li> <li>• Infrastructure to ensure the ongoing sustainability of camping sites.</li> <li>• Investment in interesting and motivational accommodation such as eco-tourism and wellness accommodation.</li> <li>• Investment in large branded resorts and facilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Theme 8: Infrastructure, Transport and Servicing</b> - Ensure that the Murray provides critical infrastructure to maintain and strengthen accessibility for visitors to the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airport investment and upgrades to meet future demand.</li> <li>• Road and highway investment such as lane widening, turning lanes, access roads etc. (e.g. Murray Valley Highway).</li> <li>• Consistent signage.</li> <li>• Improved telecommunications infrastructure and addressing regional blackspots.</li> <li>• Digital infrastructure (e.g. Wi-Fi availability).</li> <li>• Township gateway improvement.</li> <li>• Township streetscape improvements.</li> <li>• Improved visitor information services.</li> </ul>

Source: Murray Region DMP

## 2.4. COUNCIL STRATEGIES AND PLANS

### GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021 (2017)

The Council Plan identifies key areas of focus for Gannawarra Shire as expressed by the Community. Waterfront development is specifically identified as a priority area for the Kerang Lakes and Cohuna, whilst riverfront development is identified as a priority for Koondrook.

Key relevant areas of focus relevant to this project include:

- Economic Diversity, Growth and Prosperity:
  - Strategy 2: Utilise the environs of the rivers, lakes and forests for development opportunities.
  - Strategy 3: Encourage accommodation options suited to a variety of target markets.
  - Strategy 6: Support the local tourism industry to provide high quality visitor experiences.
  - Strategy 7: Maximise the natural environment to deliver high quality visitor and community expectations.
- Sustainable Natural and Built Environment:
  - Strategy 3: Promote, conserve and celebrate our community's rich and diverse heritage and culture.
- Strong, Healthy Communities:
  - Strategy 2: Provide a range of opportunities that promote active and healthy lifestyles and social connectedness.

### GANNAWARRA SHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2011-2015 (2011)

The Gannawarra Shire Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is the most up to date EDS for the shire. The development of tourism product and infrastructure is noted as a key strategic direction to promote economic growth in the Shire.

### GANNAWARRA 2025 (2010)

Gannawarra 2025 was prepared as a guiding document outlining the strategic community plan for the Gannawarra Shire to 2025. Key relevant strategic platforms include to revitalise towns into vibrant places and foster economic prosperity through diversity.

### COHUNA VISION

The Cohuna Vision Plan lists a number of projects for the study area of the Gunbower Creek precinct in Cohuna. Projects include:

- Flora Park – a nature park attraction inspired by the Gunbower red gum forest.
- Garden Park – ‘Cohuna’s showroom’ – a place for visitors, events, performances and activities.
- The Gateway Centre – a tourist information centre as well as a place for seminars, classes and meetings.
- Creekside Linger Nodes – New features including boardwalks, bird hides and other spaces, creek side lounges.
- Interim Recreation Vehicle (RV) Parking – An interim site for RV parking which has been implemented.
- Streetscape – Streetscape improvements including improved pedestrian access, places to sit, plantings and external merchandise.
- Crossings – Crossings on the Murray Valley Highway will be reviewed and designed to ensure safe passage for pedestrians, cyclists, ‘gopher’ drivers and drivers.

The Cohuna Vision is included in Appendix A.

### CREATIVE ARTS AND ACTIVATION STRATEGY 2016-2020

The *Gannawarra Creative Arts and Activation Strategy* reflects Council's commitment to regional growth and economic development and the recognition that creative arts and activity promote innovation, entrepreneurship and attract new business, residents and visitors. Amongst the strategies to promote arts and culture in the

Shire, specific to this project includes to 'program and promote the Koondrook Wharf and River as a major venue for arts and cultural events'.

### **GANNAWARRA ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2013-2016**

The *Gannawarra Environmental Sustainability Strategy* identifies priorities and actions that balance the environmental, social and economic needs of the Shire.

Water is identified as providing exciting eco-tourism opportunities for Gannawarra Shire. Conservation of waterways is highlighted as key to supporting native flora and fauna and in attracting more visitors and residents to the Shire.

Pertinent Actions identified in the Strategy include:

- Introduce Water Sensitive Urban Design into the planning process to ensure new developments do not compromise water quality or deteriorate wetlands in the Shire;
- Advocate and promote the Shire's wetlands and use of waterways for tourism and water sports activities; and
- Improve access to the significant wetland areas of the Shire, whilst balancing the need to protect these assets.

In regard to Land Use, Planning and Management, Gannawarra Shire has identified the demand for residential, rural residential and tourism development throughout the Shire, particularly adjacent to lakes and waterways. It is recognised in the Strategy that such development has the potential to attract new residents to the Shire to take advantage of Gannawarra's lifestyle and environment and to stimulate and sustain rural communities and economy.

Relevant Actions in regard to Land Use, Planning and Management, identified include:

- Encourage developments to embrace environmentally sustainable design principles.
- Investigate synergies between food production and tourism opportunities to encourage diversification in key sectors.

The Strategy also recognises the rich indigenous heritage of the Shire and the importance protecting the Shires network of wetlands. In particular, Kerang Lakes is

recognised for its status of national significance for migratory birds (International Convention on Wetlands, the Ramsar convention).

### **INTEGRATED COMMUNITY PLAN**

The Integrated Community Plan assists in setting a framework for sustainable change in Gannawarra. It reflects the aspirations and priorities of the community and draws them together to provide an integrated community response to the challenges and opportunities facing the Shire. The Plan contains a number of projects relevant to the waterfront precincts, these include:

Relevant Projects identified for **Cohuna** include:

- Consider options for the maintenance and redevelopment of the local community swimming pool.
- Development of current and new walking and cycling tracks and trails including the installation of outdoor exercise equipment, wildlife observation platforms, bridges to create linkages and heritage signage.
- Development of local natural assets to maximise tourism opportunities i.e. Gunbower Creek Nature Cruises, Ski Run Facilities and Gunbower Forest.
- Creation of RV Friendly Township.

Projects identified for **Koondrook** include:

- Townscape and environmental upgrades to key gateways.
- Delivery of the Koondrook Wharf and associated facilities (project delivered).
- Continue to support the future development of Koondrook Memorial Hall, Historical Society and Sawmill precinct.
- Building upon natural, indigenous and heritage assets, develop the local tourism infrastructure (including targeted marketing/branding, the provision of tourist information, new signage/interpretation items and establishment of the Kerang – Koondrook Rail Trail).
- Identify opportunities for improved access to key natural assets (e.g. Gunbower Creek and Forest, Murray River and tracks and trails network) to encourage increased usage.

- Support proposals which enhance the vitality and viability of town centre uses, including new developments, public realm works, and business infrastructure improvements.
- Support existing local events (e.g. Farmers Market) and consider opportunities for new events.

Projects identified for the **Lakes** District include:

- Develop initiatives which maximise the local economic and social benefit of key natural and tourism assets (e.g. Kerang Lakes, Ibis Rookery etc.).
- Identify opportunities for arts installation and community arts projects to drive economic development.
- Identify measures to sustain and improve key local services and facilities, including new methods of delivery and improved accessibility.
- Explore opportunities for new aquatic attractions (e.g. canoe trails, boat ramps, fishing platforms, interpretive facilities etc.).
- Building on the unique place based characteristics of the area, develop a strong branding and marketing identity to raise awareness of the area and its assets to a wider audience.
- Identify projects which have the capacity to enhance the vitality and viability of the district centres, including public art, landscaping and works to key buildings and spaces.
- Support existing local events (e.g. Ski Racing Victoria Championships) and consider opportunities for new events which have the capacity to support local economic and social development.
- Work with the existing and emerging land use planning framework to advocate for new developments which will support residential and tourism activities.

### **LODDON MALLEE NORTH REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN**

The Plan identifies the important role that Kerang plays as a sub-regional service provider and the need to support growth in Kerang. Nature-based tourism and solar energy have been identified as opportunities to diversify the economy.

Cohuna is recognised as a significant tourist area, which includes significant cultural heritage places and landscapes. Cohuna will grow through development close to existing services and utilities.

Relevant Challenges for growth include:

- The uneven distribution of both population and economic growth across the region, and the need to support smaller communities ensuring land supply for employment and housing in appropriate locations.
- Adapting to the potential risks and opportunities associated with climate change.
- Protecting and enhancing the environmental, cultural heritage, social assets and natural resources of the region to grow the economy.
- Encouraging residential and commercial growth in centres throughout the region enabling residents to access employment, education and services, including from dispersed settlements.

### **RECREATION RESERVES MASTERPLANS, 2010 [NEW DRAFT BEING DEVELOPED]**

The Recreation Reserves Master Plan was carried out by Simon Leisure Consulting, a sports and recreation planning firm, to provide clear direction for the use and development of the Cohuna Recreation Reserve, which includes the ovals and facilities north of the study area. The Masterplan provides for \$1.5 million worth of upgrades to the Reserve, across 25 separate but interconnected projects across the reserve. Recommended improvements included an upgrade to the existing walking/jogging track around the perimeter of the reserve as well as installation of directional signage and fitness equipment.

It is understood that a new draft report is currently being developed.

### **STRATEGIC TOURISM PLAN 2015-2020**

The *Strategic Tourism Plan* is a five-year plan to guide all tourism activities undertaken by Council to promote further growth within the local tourism industry.

In regard to infrastructure and environment the Plan highlights that nature-based experiences are the strength of tourism in the Gannawarra Shire, with fishing,

camping, passive recreation and water sports providing the driver of visitation. Further, many waterways are now hosting cruise boats, planning replica paddle steamers and seeking to develop a higher class of tourism product for the more discerning visitors. Emerging opportunities are evolving in adventure tourism with mountain biking, canoeing and orienteering. The Murray River, Gunbower Forest and Kerang Lakes are identified as the key environmental assets providing a base for nature base tourism.

A summary of the relevant tourism topics and strategic issues in regard infrastructure and environment is provided below.

Topic	Strategic Issues	Action
<b>Kerang Lakes facility upgrades</b>	There are many opportunities to improve visitor facilities at the Kerang Lakes for a range of activities, including events. Family friendly experiences should be a priority.	Develop a Tourism and Recreation Master Plan in conjunction with other authorities and stakeholders that identifies and prioritises key visitor amenities and infrastructure requirements for the lakes to meet the needs of visitors and the local community, including events. Also consider management and promotional requirements.
<b>National Park/ State Forest – Mountain biking &amp; orienteering</b>	There is an opportunity to develop a mountain bike trail in Gunbower National Park and/or Gunbower Creek.	Work with Parks Victoria and DELWP to investigate opportunities to develop a mountain bike – orienteering trail in the national park and / or state forest. Investigate opportunities for a mountain bike event- Cohuna to Koondrook, within the Gunbower forest.
<b>Koondrook Wharf</b>	Demand for a wharf at Koondrook has been driven by the communities desire to recognise the riverboat history and to provide a facility for current day commercial vessels and recreational activities.	Council to work with all stakeholders, regulatory authorities and the State Government to manage the design and construction of a wharf on the Murray River at Koondrook (project completed).
<b>Koondrook Caravan park upgrade</b>	Enhancing the amenities at the Koondrook Caravan Park will cater for a broader range of visitors seeking tourism experiences close to nature.	Develop a strategic development plan for the caravan park that provides a guide for maximising the accommodation options within the park while improving the amenities and landscaping of the park.

<b>Town-based cycle trails</b>	Koondrook Development Association has undertaken considerable work to develop cycling / walking trails along the Murray River and linking natural attractions. Further work is required to connect routes into loops.	Connect trails to establish looped routes that link key town and natural attractions. This may involve infrastructure such as bridges, signage, etc.
<b>Kerang-Koondrook Cycle Trail</b>	Establish an off-road cycle trail between Kerang and Koondrook. This would work as a feeder route to the Murray Adventure Trail at Koondrook, as well as connect the two towns.	Undertake a feasibility study to investigate the establishment of a cycle trail between Kerang and Koondrook. If feasible, secure funding. Develop and maintain the trail.

In terms of Business and Hospitality the construction of the Koondrook Wharf is seen not only as a key item of infrastructure but also as an enabler and driver of new business development. Strong interest from the commercial business sector is already evident and development of the surrounding river precinct will be a major drawcard for further tourism products and new business.

Improved food and hospitality businesses, cruise vessels on the river, the development of farm-based food businesses and new accommodation options are all recognised as priority areas to grow tourism within the Shire.

The Strategy recognises that there is opportunity for business development linked to the environment, indigenous and European history and heritage. The local tourism industry requires a strong and creative retail sector to best support tourism. Hospitality businesses need to adopt a greater food and wine presence to service the changing visitor markets, accommodation providers need to consider a wider range of options including wilderness tents and five-star cabin and unit accommodation close to nature. The tourist market is now demanding higher quality services and competition between destinations is strong.

A summary of the relevant tourism topics and strategic issues in regard Business and Hospitality is provided below.

Topic	Strategic Issues	Action
<b>Tourism businesses at Koondrook Wharf</b>	The proposed Koondrook Wharf will open up new opportunities for business ventures that require access to the river, such as an outdoor adventure hub for canoe / kayak / bike / fishing equipment hire and guided tours. Arts & culture, accommodation and dining & hospitality businesses.	Investigate and facilitate business opportunities associated with the Koondrook Wharf and seek private sector investment where appropriate. Utilise historic buildings within and close to the Wharf precinct for new business developments.
<b>Retail Precinct</b>	Cohuna has potential to further develop into a boutique shopping precinct complemented by views across to Gunbower Creek.	Prepare a retail investment prospectus to encourage the establishment of shops, galleries and cafes that meet the needs of the local community and visitors.
<b>Cruise Vessels</b>	The proposed Koondrook Wharf will open up the port to a variety of cruise vessels that are operated by private and public organisations. A number of new cruise businesses are proposed to operate in the shire providing much needed opportunities to increase length of stay and yield.	Support the establishment of new cruise businesses in the shire. Murray River & Gunbower Creek. Support cruise vessels and commercial watercraft to use Koondrook Wharf.
<b>Accommodation upgrades</b>	Lack of "designated" free camping options in some locations across the Shire. Kerang, Cohuna, Murrabit, Koondrook A need for more up-market accommodation opportunities within the major towns of Kerang, Cohuna and Koondrook.	Review the current locations available for free camping at key locations across the municipality and develop options that will encourage increased visitation. Develop a policy to support this activity. Facilitate new accommodation opportunities utilising commercial developers and existing accommodation providers in Kerang, Cohuna, Koondrook and Kerang Lakes
<b>Food &amp; Wine Culture in hospitality businesses</b>	Food and Wine is a major drawcard for tourism and the area has the opportunity to build on the	Work with the local business community to develop a greater food and wine focus across the Shire that better utilises locally grown food

	availability of local food and local wine grape growers.	products and better caters for visitor needs
<b>Family Activities Kerang, Cohuna, Koondrook</b>	Very limited number of family activities in Cohuna beyond self-organised watersports. Limited activities in many tourism towns for younger age group.	Support the local community to provide family activities, such as bike hire, fishing equipment hire, free outdoor games in public areas, etc.
<b>Aboriginal Culture Visitor experience</b>	Opportunity to develop Aboriginal cultural experiences to promote the heritage of the region's first peoples, and to enhance visitor satisfaction.	Support local Aboriginal organisations and individuals to develop cultural experiences, such as tours, interpretive information, displays of artworks and artefacts, etc.

## GANNAWARRA URBAN AND RURAL STRATEGY PLAN, 2007

The Strategy was developed to direct demand for residential and rural residential development to existing settlements, to build upon these communities and offer attractive residential opportunities. The Plan seeks to address the declining population (at time of writing) by supporting the opportunities for attractive residential development, based on one of the key assets of the municipality including waterfront development.

The Strategy notes that Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm immediate surrounds should be the focus for lakeside development (low density residential and rural living) subject to the appropriate management of effluent, protection of adjoining farming activities, protection of environmental values and landscape, and access to infrastructure.

## 2.5. GANNAWARRA PLANNING SCHEME

The following provides a summary of relevant planning policy from the Gannawarra Planning Scheme.

### CLAUSE 21.06 BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

#### Post Contact Heritage

**Objective:** To protect, maintain and enhance the municipality's local post-contact heritage including historic buildings, precincts and places.

#### Aboriginal Heritage

**Objective:** To protect, maintain and enhance the municipality's local Aboriginal heritage.

### CLAUSE 21.08 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Commercial Development

**Objective:** To provide for planned development and physical improvement in the retail centres of Kerang, Cohuna and Koondrook, which is integrated with existing retailing and is based on good urban design principles, to maximise levels of service, tourist visitation and trade.

#### Tourism

**Objective:** To develop and expand tourist facilities, recreational activities and accommodation facilities, while protecting and enhancing natural and built assets and strengthening the role and return from tourism development (particularly based on the area's natural and cultural heritage).

### CLAUSE 21.03 ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE VALUES

#### Native Vegetation

**Objective:** – To protect and enhance remnant native vegetation and native flora and fauna habitat and promote development of linkages between areas containing remnant vegetation.

#### Natural Assets

**Objectives:** To protect and maintain natural assets including soil and water for farming, landscape values and amenity while facilitating sensitive development.

To protect and enhance areas of public land, including forests, stream environs, lakesides and reserves.

To recognise the important functions of rivers, lakes and wetland areas, including flora and fauna habitat, recreation, landscape, water supply, water filtration, water storage and drainage.

#### Murray River Environs

**Objective:** To manage the Murray River corridor's environmental values and resource capacity.

### CLAUSE 21.04 ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

#### Flooding

**Objective:** To manage flooding and floodplains so as to minimise loss and damage to property and infrastructure, and to preserve the function of floodplains to convey and store floodwater.

#### Fire Risk

**Objective:** To manage the risks of fire hazard including bushfires and grass and crop fires.

### CLAUSE 21.07 HOUSING

#### Rural Residential

**Objective:** To locate rural living development in appropriate locations identified in a strategy, so as to avoid interface conflicts with other land uses and development and environmental assets.

To manage rural residential development in farming areas in terms of its impact on commercial farming and protection from hazards.

Further strategic work included in Clause 21.07 includes the consideration of the implementation of the *Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy* by amending the Planning Scheme to provide additional land for rural residential development.

## CLAUSE 21.10 INFRASTRUCTURE

### Renewable Energy

**Objective:** To increase energy supplies from renewable sources, particularly from solar generation of electricity, and reduce dependence in fossil fuels.

### Community Infrastructure

**Objectives:** To meet identified community aims and objectives and ensure provision of community services where relevant to the use and development of land.

To use planning decisions to maintain and enhance the wellbeing and health of residents.

To provide a range of attractive, accessible, safe and well maintained passive and active open space and recreation facilities to cater for the needs of residents and visitors.

## CLAUSE 22.01 KOONDROOK HERITAGE

This policy applies to all buildings, sites, places and landscapes of heritage significance in Koondrook

The places or components of Koondrook's heritage that remain include:

- The Shire tramway (including sidings, station building, platform and weighbridge).
- The wharf site (including associated shipping shed and platform).
- The sawmill.
- The shops and non-residential buildings (identified on the attached list).
- The red gum trees along the river and creek frontages.
- The lift span bridge (over the Murray River to Barham).

**Objectives:** To preserve and enhance the remaining elements of Koondrook's history, particularly the buildings, sites and objects listed in the table to this policy.

To undertake or facilitate improvements as listed below in order to preserve and enhance Koondrook's heritage values and re-instate known heritage elements which have been removed or destroyed.

## CLAUSE 21.11 LOCAL AREAS

**Cohuna** – Relevant extracts include:

- Ensure that urban development is generally consistent with the Cohuna Structure Plan.
- Encourage development of Cohuna as a tourist stopover destination by enhancing the streetscape of the town centre precinct adjacent to the riverside park; establishing the Gunbower walking trail; identifying tourist development sites near Gunbower Creek and the town centre; and improving the visual image of highway entrances.

**Koondrook** – Relevant extracts include:

- Ensure that urban development is generally consistent with the Koondrook Structure Plan.
- Ensure that all new development within the Koondrook town centre is consistent with the Koondrook Heritage Policy.
- Strongly encourage tourism development based on Koondrook's heritage, historic wharf and river location.

## CLAUSE 21.02 SETTLEMENT

**Objective:** To promote and provide attractive streetscapes and presentation in towns.

## CLAUSE 21.09 TRANSPORT

### Personal Travel

**Objectives:** To provide a variety of tracks for pedestrians and cyclists, offering recreational opportunities as well as convenient paths of local travel.

## 2.6. ZONES AND OVERLAYS

The following provides an analysis of zones and overlays as they relate to each of the waterfront masterplan precincts, including potential constraints on land use and/or development. Each precinct contains different considerations in relation to planning constraints and opportunities.

Detailed zones and overlays maps are provided for each waterfront precinct within Part B of the report.

### 2.6.1. ZONES

Table 1 shows the zones applicable to each precinct. Relevant zones include the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ), Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z), the Farming Zone (FZ), the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ), the General Residential Zone (GRZ) and the Special Use Zone (SUZ).

**TABLE 1** SUMMARY OF APPLICABLE ZONES

Precinct	PPRZ	C1Z	FZ	PCRZ	GRZ	SUZ
Kangaroo Lake			✓	✓		
Lake Charm			✓	✓		
Koondrook	✓	✓			✓	✓
Cohuna	✓	✓			✓	

#### PUBLIC PARK AND RECREATION ZONE (PPRZ)

The PPRZ is primarily applicable to the Murray River Precinct at Koondrook and the Gunbower Creek Precinct at Cohuna.

The purpose of the PPRZ is:

- To recognise areas for public recreation and open space.
- To protect and conserve areas of significance where appropriate.
- To provide for commercial uses where appropriate.

Potential land uses achievable under the PPRZ include informal outdoor and active recreation, retail, office and leisure and recreation. Many uses require certain conditions to be met. A summary of the table of uses for the PPRZ can be found in Appendix B.

#### COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE (C1Z)

The C1Z relates to the Murray River Precinct at Koondrook and the Gunbower Creek Precinct at Cohuna.

The purpose of the C1Z is:

- To create vibrant mixed use commercial centre for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses; and
- To provide for residential uses at densities complementary to the role and scale of the commercial centre.

The C1Z provides significant flexibility in terms of land use and is associated with the town centres of Koondrook and Cohuna. The C1Z is particularly supportive of tourism uses, including accommodation, retail and food and beverage establishments. A summary of the table of uses for the C1Z can be found in Appendix B.

#### FARMING ZONE (FZ)

The FZ relates to the Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm precincts. Much of the land surrounding both lakes is zoned FZ.

The purpose of the FZ is:

- To provide for the use of land for agriculture;
- To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.
- To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture;
- To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities;
- To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.

Under the FZ some non-agricultural uses may be permitted. These include camping and caravan parks, bed and breakfast, group accommodation, leisure and recreation, hotel and restaurant. A summary of the table of uses for the FZ can be found in Appendix B.

### **PUBLIC CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE ZONE (PCRZ)**

The waterbodies of Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm are covered by the PCRZ.

The purpose of the PCRZ is:

- To protect and conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, scientific, landscape, habitat or cultural values;
- To provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural environment with minimal degradation of the natural environment or natural processes;
- To provide for appropriate resource based uses.

The zone is accommodating to water access infrastructure including boat launching facilities, jetties, pontoons and piers. Other possible tourism uses include camping and caravan parks. A summary of the table of uses for the PCRZ can be found in Appendix B.

### **GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE (GRZ)**

Residential areas surrounding the Murray River Precinct at Koondrook and the Gunbower Creek precinct in Cohuna are generally zone GRZ1, facilitating residential development.

### **SPECIAL USE ZONE (SUZ)**

The SUZ relates to the Murray River Precinct at Koondrook, where the caravan park occupies land zoned SUZ. The purpose of the SUZ is to recognise or provide for the use and development of land for specific purposes as identified in a Schedule to the zone.

The land relating to the caravan park is subject to Schedule 4 of the SUZ. Permitted uses under the SUZ include camping and caravan park and others. Relevant uses under the zone that are possible but require a permit, include accommodation and retail premises.

A summary of the table of uses for the SUZ can be found in Appendix B.

### **2.6.2. OVERLAYS**

Table 2 shows the overlays applicable to each precinct. Relevant overlays include the Environmental Sensitivity Overlay (ESO), Rural Floodway Overlay (RFO), Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO), Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), Heritage Overlay (HO) and Areas of Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity.

**TABLE 2** SUMMARY OF APPLICABLE OVERLAYS

Precinct	ESO	RFO	LSIO	BMO	HO	VPO	Areas of Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity
Kangaroo Lake	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Lake Charm	✓	✓	✓				✓
Koondrook	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Cohuna	✓						✓

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY OVERLAY (ESO)**

The ESO affects all precincts. The purpose of the ESO is to identify areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints and to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

There are various schedules to the ESO which apply to different precincts.

### **RURAL FLOODWAY OVERLAY (RFO)**

The RFO applies to Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm. The purpose of the RFO is to identify areas that are at risk of flooding, ensure any development maintains free passage of floodwaters and to protect and improve waterway health.

Under the RFO a permit is required to construct or carry out works unless specifically exempt in the schedule to the overlay.

### **LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY (LSIO)**

The LSIO applies to the Murray River Precinct at Koondrook. Similarly, to the RFO, the LSIO identifies flood prone land and ensures development maintains free passage of floodwaters and protects and improves water quality.

The LSIO requires a permit to construct or carry out works, unless specifically exempt in a schedule to the overlay.

### **BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT OVERLAY (BMO)**

The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to the Murray River precinct at Koondrook. The purpose of the overlay is to identify areas where bushfires may pose a hazard to protect human life and to ensure that development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.

Under the BMO a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works associated with accommodation, leisure and recreation. Retail premises and others.

### **HERITAGE OVERLAY (HO)**

The HO applies to the Murray River precinct at Koondrook. The purpose of the HO is to conserve and enhance heritage places and ensure development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.

The HO generally requires a permit for building and works affected by the HO.

### **AREAS OF ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE SENSITIVITY**

Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity are registered Aboriginal cultural heritage places, as well as landforms and land categories that are generally regarded as more likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity include land within 50 metres of registered cultural heritage places, land within 200 metres of waterways and other locations as defined in the regulations.

All precincts are subject to cultural heritage sensitivity. The precincts may require the preparation of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), which is a written report, containing an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed activity on Aboriginal cultural heritage. It outlines measures to be taken before, during and after an activity in order to manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in the activity area.

### **VEGETATION PROTECTION OVERLAY (VPO)**

The eastern bank of Kangaroo Lake is covered by the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO). The VPO is in place to protect areas of significant vegetation and preserve existing trees and other vegetation. This does not apply to noxious weeds. The willow trees along the banks of the lake are classified as noxious weeds.

### 3. TOURISM PRODUCT

#### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides an overview of tourism product and accommodation in the Murray region and Gannawarra Shire to provide context to the masterplan precincts and identify potential tourism opportunities that could be leveraged through development of the master plans.

#### 3.2. MURRAY REGION PRODUCT STRENGTHS

The Murray Region DMP identifies a number of strengths that define perceptions of the tourism product across the Murray region. Table 3 identifies that at a regional level, the Murray region’s primary product strengths include water sports, food, wine and produce, fishing, houseboats/ river cruises, golf, festivals and events and history and heritage. The Murray Region has secondary product strengths in nature-based and business events and emerging strengths in Indigenous, arts and culture and adventure.

**TABLE 3** MURRAY REGION PRODUCT STRENGTHS

Watersports	Primary
Food, Wine and Produce	
Fishing	
Houseboats / River cruises	
Golf	
Festivals and Events	
History and Heritage	Secondary
Nature Based	
Business Events	Emerging
Indigenous	
Arts and Culture	
Adventure	

Source: Murray DMP 2012, Urban Enterprise 2018

#### 3.3. GANNAWARRA

Gannawarra Shire has existing primary, secondary and/or emerging strengths across the following product categories:

Primary	Secondary	Emerging
Watersports Nature Based Tourism Adventure	History and Heritage Golf Events	Food and Wine

An overview of the Shires key products and experiences is provided below.

##### WATER-BASED

The Shire boasts two major rivers the Loddon and Murray, creeks (Gunbower Creek) as well as 57 lakes, swamps and marshes, forming one of Australia’s largest and most important wetland areas which typically changes during wet and dry seasons. The Murray River and Gunbower Creek environs, Kerang Wetlands and extensive system of waterways are a primary tourism product for the Shire and provide the setting for a number of passive nature-based and adventure sports uses.

Waterskiing, fishing, kayaking/canoeing, powerboating, recreational boating and swimming are all popular on water activities in Gannawarra Shire.

##### NATURE-BASED

The riparian environments of Gannawarra Shire including the Murray River, Gunbower Island (Gunbower State Forest and National Park) and Kerang Wetlands provide an abundance of opportunities for nature-based activities including walking, hiking, cycling, bird watching, camping, boating, 4WDing and swimming.

Key features of the natural assets of Gannawarra Shire include:

- Gunbower Island, including the Gunbower State Forest and National Park is a unique natural river red gum environment that provides an old growth river red gum forest. The area is known for its diverse native birdlife, kangaroos and emus, walking/cycling/4WD tracks, camping and on water activities.
- River Cruises. Cohuna Nature Cruises operates the Egret river cruise along Gunbower Creek. Wetlander Cruises also operate dining cruises along Gunbower Creek from Cohuna/Koondrook.
- The Kerang Wetlands system are internationally recognised through the Ramsar convention for their significance in the global migratory habits of many bird species. There is a bird hide at the Ibis Rookery at Middle Lake.

## ADVENTURE SPORTS

Gannawarra Shire has an existing and emerging adventure sports product, including:

- Fishing - Significant fishing opportunities exist including on the Murray River, Gunbower Creek and Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm.
- Boating and water-skiing – Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek are popular destinations for water skiers and power boats. Boating and water skiing is a significant driver of visitation during the warmer periods of the year.
- Canoeing, Kayaking and Paddle boarding, including tourism providers such as:
  - Cohuna Adventures hire tandem kayaks and canoes, single kayaks and stand up paddleboards;
  - Murray River Adventures (Sydney Harbour Kayaks); and
  - The Gunbower Island Canoe Trail meanders through wetlands and is home to many waterbirds, wildlife and aquatic plants.
- Free camping. There are many places to camp along the banks of the Murray and on Gunbower Island on the Gunbower Creek.
- Mountain Biking. Mountain biking is an emerging product in Gannawarra Shire, including through the tracks and trails of the Gunbower Island.

The Murray River Adventure Trail is an adventure touring route that spans from Mildura to Corryong along the Murray Valley Highway and travels by Lake Charm,

Kerang, Cohuna and the Gunbower National Park. This project provides opportunity to leverage this product, particularly between Koondrook and Cohuna.

## HISTORY AND HERITAGE

### INDIGENOUS

There is a strong indigenous relationship to the waterways and land in Gannawarra Shire. The Barapa Barapa and Yorta Yorta groups are the traditional custodians and there remains a proud community culture and knowledge of country. Many of the place names (including the word Gannawarra) are derived from local language. Cultural heritage places of particular significance include Gunbower Island scarred trees and Kerang Lakes.

### TIMBER PRODUCTION

The first European exploration of the area was in the Cohuna and Kerang districts by Major Mitchell in 1836, with squatters being able to take up leases in the area from the early 1840s. Koondrook was historically a bustling paddle steamer river port and sawmilling town and provides visitors with a glimpse of life on the Murray in the past. The Koondrook Barham Redgum Statue River Walk celebrates the historic importance of the local redgum industry.

### AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

There are a number of historic buildings in Cohuna, Kerang and Koondrook that reflect the historic development and major agricultural industry of the region.

### GOLF

The Cohuna Golf Club and the Kerang Golf Club are both located within the Gannawarra Shire. Other golf clubs in close proximity to the Shire include:

- Barham Golf and Sports Club;
- Rich River Golf Club; and
- Murray Downs, Swan Hill.

## FOOD, WINE AND PRODUCE

There is an emerging café and pub culture in Gannawarra Shire, in particular in Koondrook, however there are a limited number of restaurants.

The Mystic Park hotel also provides quality pub food, servicing the Kerang Lakes Area.

The Shire is a productive agricultural region including dairy, wheat, barley, oats, canola and sheep. Local produce can be purchased at local markets.

## EVENTS

Key events for the Shire include:

- The monthly Murrabit Country market - Victoria's largest country market, attracting around 200 site holders from across the state selling diverse wares.
- State and National water skiing events and titles at Lake Charm, with some events held at Kangaroo Lake.
- The annual 'Quamby Tractor Pull' at Quambatook;
- Silo-cinema at Quambatook;
- Cohuna Events (i.e. Big Cohuna Festival, Farmers and Makers Market, Cohuna Unlocked, Bridge to Bridge Swimming event);
- Boxing Day and Easter Saturday horse racing at the Kerang Turf Club;
- Local theatre and arts events across the region.

## 3.4. ACCOMMODATION

A high level audit of accommodation providers was undertaken for the townships of Cohuna, Koondrook/Barham, Kerang and the Lakes area (Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm). The purpose of the accommodation audit is to quantify accommodation in the region by type of establishment and to ultimately identify potential gaps in the provision of accommodation in the region. The waterfront precincts may ultimately be able to serve a role in meeting identified gaps in accommodation.

The following table summarises the findings of the accommodation audit.

**TABLE 4** ACCOMMODATION AUDIT

Type	Number of Establishments	Rooms	Average Price Per Night
<b>Koondrook/ Barham</b>			
Motel / Motor Inn	6	122	\$104
Caravan Park	2	NA	NA
<b>Cohuna</b>			
Caravan Park	1	16 (Cabins)	NA
Motel / Motor Inn	2	32	\$100
Serviced Apartments	1	4	\$120
<b>Kerang Lakes</b>			
Caravan Parks	3	24 (Cabins)	NA
B&B	1	3	\$89
Camper sites	1	NA	\$20
<b>Kerang</b>			
Motel / Motor Inn	3	53	\$128
Caravan Park	2	16 (Cabins)	NA

In addition to formal accommodation establishments, there was also 7 active Airbnb rentals in Gannawarra Shire.<sup>2</sup> Across these rentals the average daily rate was \$200. The occupancy rate for Airbnb listings across the region was 52%.

Gannawarra Shire is also a highly popular area for camping, including through the Gunbower State Forest.

Overall, there is a limited supply of contemporary accommodation typologies across Gannawarra Shire, with the majority of accommodation being older style motels/motor inns or caravan parks. Generally, there appears to be gaps in higher quality self-contained accommodation, servicing both the holiday/leisure market as well as business visitors.

The following provides a more detailed overview of accommodation provision by location:

#### **3.4.1. KOONDROOK / BARHAM**

There was a total of 6 motels/motor inns identified across Koondrook and Barham, 5 of which are located in Barham.

The Murray Waters Motor Inn and Apartments is located in Koondrook, providing 18 rooms at an average price of \$132 per night. The Motor Inn is the most recent accommodation establishment developed in Gannawarra Shire. It includes well-presented rooms in a unique location right on the Murray River.

The majority of motel/motor inn accommodation providers are located in Barham, emphasising its relationship with Koondrook as a larger service town. The majority of motels/motor inns in Barham are rated around 3-3.5 star.

Koondrook also includes a caravan park. The caravan park is council owned, however, is leased to a private operator.

Additional accommodation in Koondrook includes the proposed glamping sites as part of the nature-based tourism hub in Koondrook, which will be located on the banks of the Gunbower Creek.

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<sup>2</sup> AirDNA

The Gunbower State Forest and National Park is also popular for camping.

Koondrook is generally well supplied with accommodation, particularly given the proposed glamping accommodation as part of the nature-based tourism hub. However, there may be opportunity for more waterfront accommodation in the future, which could be delivered as part of the Koondrook Caravan Park in the form of waterfront cabins. There may also be opportunity for self-contained eco accommodation, aligning to the nature-based setting of Koondrook.

#### **3.4.2. COHUNA**

There is a limited supply of accommodation in Cohuna, with only 2 motels and 1 serviced apartment establishment identified equating to approximately 32 rooms, priced at an average of between \$100-\$120 per night.

The Cohuna Caravan Park provides the greatest concentration of accommodation in Cohuna, however, the majority of the sites in the caravan park are designated as annual sites. There are 16 cabins available to the holiday market, the majority of which are located adjacent to the Gunbower Creek.

Cohuna also includes a site on the Gunbower Creek for free RV camping.

Cohuna appears to be undersupplied with accommodation, particularly accommodation targeting the holiday/leisure market, this could include self-contained hotels rooms and serviced apartments. Based on discussions with the Caravan Park manager, demand has been strong at the caravan park, particularly in the peak holiday periods. The high proportion of annual sites has meant limited availability of sites for the short-stay/holiday leisure visitor. There may be demand for an expansion of the existing caravan park to cater to more holiday/leisure visitors.

## KERANG LAKES

The Kerang Lakes includes accommodation at Lake Charm and Kangaroo Lake. There are two caravan parks located at lake Charm (Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park and Pelican Waters Caravan Park), one caravan park located at Kangaroo Lake (Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park) and one Caravan Park located at Racecourse Lake.

The Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park includes 48 occupied annual sites and 13 cabins.

Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park includes 85 annual sites. There are no cabins available for casual hire. Pelican Waters Caravan Park contains 48 annual sites and has 11 cabins available for rent.

There is also a bed and breakfast (Charm Lodge), located on Lake Charm. Anecdotally, this business attracts a range of visitor types and has hosted international visitors from Asia.

There is also a small caravan park located adjacent to Racecourse Lake and the Lake Charm General Store on the on the Murray Valley Highway.

Caravan Parks generally cater to repeat visitors at these locations, including annual site holders.

The Mystic Park Hotel also has hotel style accommodation, located 5-10 minutes from Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm.

There may be opportunity for more accommodation targeted to the holiday/leisure market and nature-based tourism visitors, including the provision of cabin accommodation. On farm accommodation along the foreshore areas could also be encouraged, including B&B accommodation or self-contained Airbnb accommodation rentals.

## KERANG

Although Kerang is not a location for the waterfront masterplans project, it provides important context for the overall type and supply of accommodation in the region. There were 3 motels/motor inns identified in Kerang, equating to 53 rooms, the majority of which are older style establishments. There were also 2 caravan parks identified in Kerang.

## 3.5. KEY FINDINGS

Gannawarra Shire is abundant in nature-based tourism product, driven by the Murray River environs, Gunbower Island (Gunbower State Forest and National Park) and Kerang Wetlands system. These areas provide many opportunities of nature-based activities and complementary activities including walking, hiking, cycling, camping, skiing, bird watching, fishing, power boating and kayaking/canoeing.

There is opportunity to further leverage these natural assets for increased visitation as well as complementary tourism product including hospitality, arts and culture.

Accommodation in the region primarily includes caravan parks and traditional motels and motor inns. There is opportunity for new quality accommodation which targets new visitor markets, including nature-based visitors seeking authentic and immersive experiences. The accommodation gaps in Cohuna are most evident, with limited provision of accommodation other than caravan parks and free RV camping.

Accommodation opportunities include:

**Koondrook:** Waterfront accommodation including waterfront cabins, self-contained eco accommodation, expansion of glamping.

**Cohuna:** Quality 4-star self-contained accommodation, eco-villas, caravan and camping sites, cabins and glamping sites. Waterfront locations would be preferred to provide a unique setting and driver of demand.

**Kerang Lakes:** Caravan park cabins and sites, on farm accommodation (Self-contained rentals, Airbnb, B&Bs). Mystic Park hotel accommodation.

## 4. VISITOR MARKET ANALYSIS

### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides an analysis of the visitor market to Gannawarra Shire. This section utilises data sourced from Tourism Research Australia's (TRA) National Visitor Survey (NVS), focussing on the domestic visitation market.

### 4.2. DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT VISITOR MARKET

The following provides an analysis of domestic overnight visitors to Gannawarra Shire. Domestic overnight visitors are 15 years of age or over and must have stayed overnight at least 40km from home.

#### VISITATION

The Gannawarra Shire attracted an average of 56,921 annual domestic overnight visitors over the past 5 years, staying an average of 2.8 nights per visitor. This equates to an average of 159,710 visitor nights per year.

**TABLE 5** VISITATION

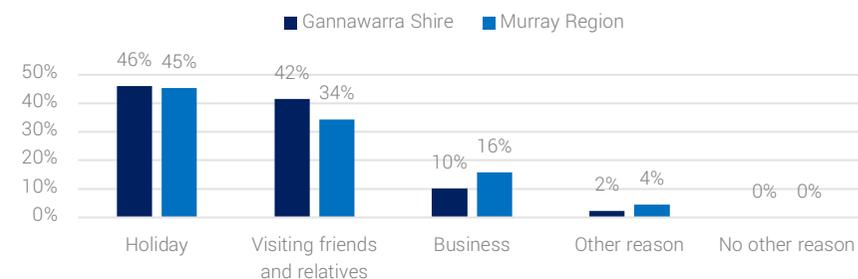
	Gannawarra Shire
Overnight Visitation (5 Year Average)	56,921
Visitor Nights (5 Year Average)	159,710
Average Length of Stay (5 Year Average)	2.8

Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

#### PURPOSE OF VISIT

The majority of overnight visitors to Gannawarra Shire visit for holiday purposes (46%), followed by visiting friends and relatives (42%) and 10% of visitors for business purposes. The Murray region attracts a higher proportion of business visitors compared to Gannawarra (+6%).

**FIGURE 1** PURPOSE OF VISIT

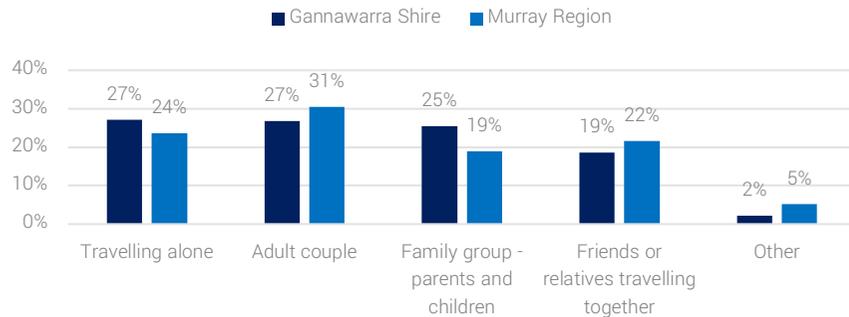


Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

#### TRAVEL PARTY

The most common types of visitors to Gannawarra Shire include people travelling alone (27%), adult couples (27%), family groups (25%) and friends or relatives travelling together (19%). There is a fairly even distribution of visitor types across Gannawarra Shire. The Murray region attracts a higher proportion of adult couples and friends or relatives travelling together when compared to Gannawarra Shire.

**FIGURE 2 TRAVEL PARTY**

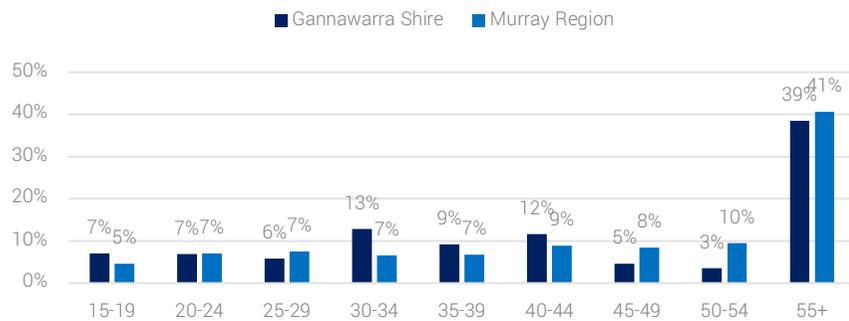


Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

**AGE GROUP**

The majority of domestic overnight visitors to Gannawarra Shire are aged over 55 years (39%), which aligns with the age profile of visitors to the Murray region.

**FIGURE 3 AGE GROUP**



Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

**VISITOR ORIGIN**

The majority of domestic overnight visitors to Gannawarra Shire originate in regional Victoria (58%), followed by metropolitan Melbourne (26%). Gannawarra Shire attracts a higher proportion of visitors from regional Victoria when compared to the Murray Region. Interstate markets are a relatively minor market when compared to Victorian markets. New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia provide an even distribution of visitors to Gannawarra Shire.

The Murray region attracts a higher proportion of visitors from metropolitan Melbourne and New South Wales.

**TABLE 6 VISITOR ORIGIN**

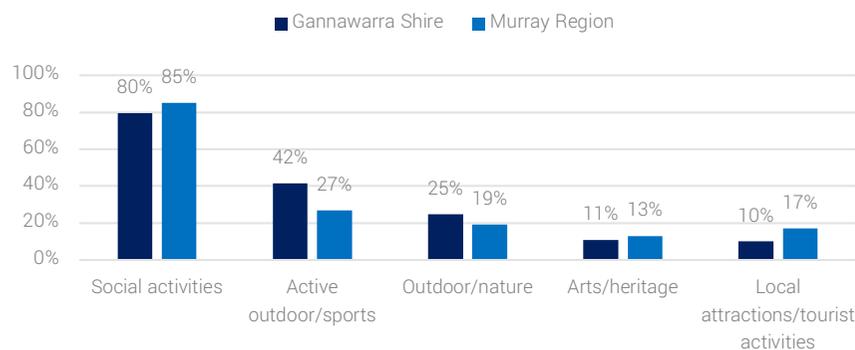
	Gannawarra Shire	Murray Region
<b>Victoria</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<i>Regional Victoria</i>	<i>58%</i>	<i>36%</i>
<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>31%</i>
<b>New South Wales</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>South Australia</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Northern Territory</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Western Australia</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Tasmania</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

**VISITOR ACTIVITIES**

The most popular activities in Gannawarra for overnight visitors include social activities (80%), active outdoor/sports (42%) and outdoor/nature activities (25%). One of the primary drivers of social activities is seeing friends and relatives, these activities therefore align to the visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market. A higher proportion of visitors to Gannawarra Shire undertake active outdoor/sports and outdoor/nature activities reflecting the abundance of this tourism product in the region.

**FIGURE 4 VISITOR ACTIVITIES**



Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

A breakdown of the top 20 visitor activities undertaken by overnight visitors to the Murray region staying in commercial accommodation is provided in Table 7. The sample size for individual visitor activities was too small to report on for Gannawarra Shire.

The most common activities include eating out at restaurants/cafes (68%), going to pubs (33%), sightseeing (27%), visiting friends and relatives (20%) and going shopping for pleasure (20%).

The activities most related to the waterfront masterplans include eating out at cafes/restaurants, bushwalking/rainforest walks, fishing, charter boat or cruise, visiting national and state parks, picnics or barbecues and water activities/sports.

Many of the waterfronts already offer or provide the opportunity to leverage many of the core activities within the Murray region visitor activity profile. In particular, destinations need to be supported by a quality dining and hospitality offer. This will increase the ability to drive visitation from new market segments, including the high yielding lifestyle leader market segment.

**TABLE 7 TOP 20 VISITOR ACTIVITIES -COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATION VISITORS TO THE MURRAY REGION**

	Murray Region
Eat out / dine at a restaurant and/or cafe	68%
Pubs, clubs, discos etc.	33%
Sightseeing/looking around	27%
Visit friends & relatives	20%
Go shopping for pleasure	20%
Visit history / heritage buildings, sites or monuments	8%
Go to markets	8%
Bushwalking / rainforest walks	7%
Visit museums or art galleries	7%
Visit wineries	7%
Golf	6%
Fishing	6%
Exercise, gym or swimming	6%
Charter boat / cruise / ferry	5%
Visit national parks / state parks	5%
Picnics or BBQs	5%
Water activities / sports	5%
Go on a daytrip to another place	4%
Attend an organised sporting event	3%
Play other sports	3%

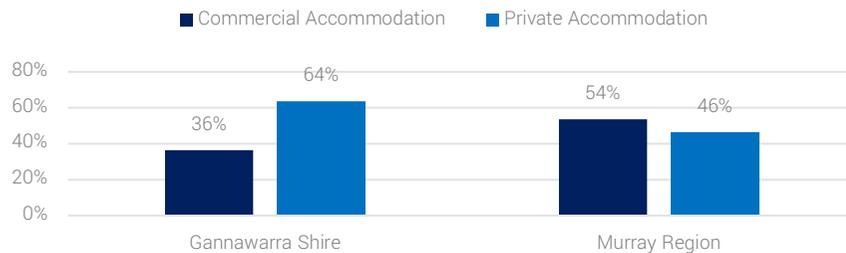
Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

## ACCOMMODATION

The majority of domestic overnight visitors to Gannawarra Shire stay in private accommodation (own property, friends or relatives property or non-commercial camping). An average of 36% of overnight visitors stay in commercial accommodation. Comparatively, over half of visitors to the Murray Region stay in commercial accommodation (54%) and 46% stay in private accommodation.

The high proportion of visitors staying in private accommodation is likely driven by the high number of free camping, particularly within the Gunbower State Forest.

**FIGURE 5** COMMERCIAL VS PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION



Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

### COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATION

Table 8 provides a profile of commercial accommodation stayed in by overnight visitors to Gannawarra Shire. The majority stay in a caravan park or commercial camping ground (56%), followed by a hotel/motel or motor inn (35%). This profile reflects the accommodation supply in Gannawarra Shire, which is predominately caravan park and motel/motor inn accommodation.

Comparatively, 64% of overnight visitors to the Murray Region stay in hotel/motel or motor inn accommodation, followed by 28% staying in caravan parks or commercial camping grounds.

This data suggests there may be an undersupply of hotel accommodation in Gannawarra Shire. Koondrook and Cohuna are key locations which could fill this accommodation typology gap.

**TABLE 8** COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATION

	Gannawarra Shire	Murray Region
Caravan park or commercial camping ground	56%	28%
Hotel/resort/motel or motor Inn	35%	64%
Guest house or Bed & Breakfast	9%	1%
Rented house/apartment/flat or unit	0%	6%
Backpacker or hostel	0%	0%
Other commercial accommodation	0%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

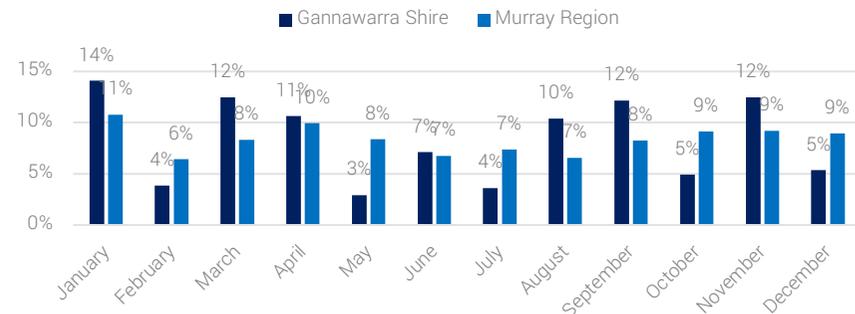
Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

### SEASONALITY

Figure 6 shows the month of the year overnight visitors returned from their trip. This provides an indication of seasonality.

The most popular months for visitation include January, March, April, August, September and November.

**FIGURE 6** SEASONALITY



Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, 2013-2017 (presented as 5-year average)

### 4.3. KEY MARKETS TO THE MURRAY REGION

The Murray River DMP provides an assessment of key visitor markets to the Murray Region, including existing and emerging markets. The following summarises these markets.

#### 4.3.1. KEY CURRENT VISITOR MARKETS<sup>3</sup>

##### VISITING FRIENDS AND RELATIVES (VFR)

The VFR market is recognised as a key visitor market, particularly for regional areas. 35% of all overnight domestic visitors to the Murray are for the purposes of visiting friends and relatives.

##### GREY NOMADS

Grey Nomads are a key market, attracted to the Murray for riverside camping and the warm climate. The region includes a number of major highways which are popular routes and stopping points for caravanners undertaking long trips. This market can be perceived as relatively low yielding; however, they are very important to smaller towns, particularly those that are RV friendly. This market is expected to increase in the future in terms of both size and spending power due to an ageing population with high levels of disposable income. This is evidenced by data indicating that Australians over the age of 55 account for 32% of the nation's gross disposable income.

##### FAMILIES

Families are a core market for the region with approximately 18% of overnight visitors travelling as a family group (parents and children). It is important that investment in family experiences and attractions is encouraged to grow this market, as well as catering to the growing population of young families in the region's major centres.

An important consideration for this market is value for money, convenience, and accessibility. The region's camping and caravan parks are an important draw for this

market, and it is important that reinvestment and improvements to the regions' parks is encouraged and facilitated.

##### BUSINESS

Business-related travel accounts for 14% of all overnight visitors to the region. The Murray includes a number of major centres and regional towns which support a large business base and facilitate high levels of business travel. Business travellers are generally considered high yielding and are particularly important for the accommodation sector in driving mid-week and off-peak occupancy. It also provides the opportunity to generate repeat visitation by encouraging business travellers to return for leisure purposes with their families.

#### 4.3.2. EMERGING VISITOR MARKETS<sup>4</sup>

##### MILLENNIALS / YOUNG TRAVELLERS

This market segment includes people aged 15–29, as well as those aged 30-34 who do not have children. Compared with other regions, the Murray currently receives a lower proportion of visitors aged under 35 years. Research undertaken by DNSW shows that there is currently low awareness of regional tourism destinations among millennials. Key factors affecting their travel choices include:

- Profoundly influenced by technology and social media.
- Seeking authentic information rather than staged advertising.
- Reliant on recommendations from friends and family, as well as social media.
- Distance is not a major barrier.
- They are seeking genuine and authentic experiences, together with a variety of active and informative ways to enjoy them. This includes experiences such as:
- Events that allow discovery of a location in a unique way.
- Nature and landscapes.
- Experiences that are unique to a specific area.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Murray River DMP, 2017 – Murray Regional Tourism Board, prepared by Urban Enterprise

<sup>4</sup> Source: Murray River DMP, 2017 – Murray Regional Tourism Board, prepared by Urban Enterprise

- Food and lifestyle.
- History of a destination with a contemporary or personalised interpretation.

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

International visitors make up just over 1% of total visitors to the Murray. There is opportunity to grow international visitation through targeted product development and marketing, with consideration to the following segments:

- **International experience seeker/self-drive market** - is identified as a key market by Tourism Australia. Experience seekers are not characterised by nationality but seek out authentic experiences which are engaging and have an educational element. They are more likely to visit regional areas, stay longer in the region, and are less attracted to 'mass packaged tourism products'. At present they do not make up a large portion of visitation to the region, however, there is an opportunity to develop personalised experiences using the region's strengths in Indigenous culture, rural Australian character, and nature-based assets.
- **Asian visitor markets** - the Murray Region's market share of the growing Asian visitor markets is currently low. In terms of inbound arrivals, Asia is expected to continue to outperform other overseas markets, brought about by increasing prosperity and the continuing transition of millions of people into consumer oriented, middle-class populations. At the national level, the latest visitor projections are for inbound Asian markets to grow by 17.4% over the next two years alone and contribute to 64% of all international visitor growth. The number of independent and self-drive Asian visitors has increased in recent years and will provide new opportunities for regional destinations. There are a number of specific product opportunities which could leverage this market (e.g. Port of Echuca). Anecdotally, visitors from Asian markets have stayed at Charm Lodge on Lake Charm.

## LIFESTYLE LEADERS

Visit Victoria has identified Lifestyle Leaders as a segment that drives a large proportion of visitation and expenditure in the State. The preferences and behavioural characteristics of this segment have underpinned Visit Victoria marketing and promotions in recent years (e.g. Wander Victoria campaign). Lifestyle Leaders are based on a mindset, are found in all regions, ages and lifecycle groups, and represent approximately a third of the Australian population aged 18+.

Lifestyle Leaders are educated, professional and progressive individuals who enjoy seeking out new information and being the first to try new products. They have a higher level of discretionary expenditure than the general population, so they can afford to indulge more often in travel, with a particular desire to escape city life and embrace nature/outdoors and new discoveries.

The Lifestyle Leader segmentation shows that they are highly motivated by the following experiences, which are primary, secondary and/or emerging strengths across the region:

- Spectacular natural landscapes and experiences with nature.
- Walks and cycling.
- Arts, culture and events.
- High quality food.
- Wineries and cellar doors.
- Local produce and farmers markets.
- History and heritage.

#### 4.4. VISITOR MARKETS BY PRECINCT

Each precinct is unique and therefore attracts unique visitor markets. The following table provides an overview of the current visitor markets to each waterfront precinct and consideration of the potential future growth markets to each precinct achievable through appropriate product development and marketing. The table indicates the visitor markets aligning to the Murray River DMP.

**TABLE 9** VISITOR MARKETS BY PRECINCT

Precinct	Current Key Visitor Markets	Key Potential Growth Markets
Kerang Lakes (Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm)	Families Grey Nomads VFR Adventure Travellers	Grey Nomads Visiting Friends and Relatives Families Internationals (Asian Markets) Adventure Travellers
Murray River Precinct, Koondrook	Grey Nomads Families VFR Business/workers Adventure Travellers	Grey Nomads Families Business/workers VFR Lifestyle Leaders Young travellers Adventure Travellers Internationals
Gunbower Creek Precinct, Cohuna	Grey Nomads Families VFR Business/workers Adventure Travellers	Grey Nomads Families Business/workers VFR Lifestyle Leaders Young travellers Adventure Travellers Internationals

In addition to the visitor markets identified in Table 9, there are subsets of these markets to each precinct which are visiting for specific purposes. These specific visitation drivers are shown in the table below.

**TABLE 10** SPECIFIC DRIVERS OF VISITATION

Precinct	Specific Precinct Visitation Drivers
Kerang Lakes (Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm)	Water Skiing Boating Fishing Swimming Recreation Nature Based Tourism Adventure Tourism
Murray River Precinct, Koondrook	Nature Based Tourism (Murray River and Gunbower Creek, Gunbower Forest/National Park) Recreation Heritage Adventure Tourism
Gunbower Creek Precinct, Cohuna	Nature Based Tourism (Murray River and Gunbower Creek, Gunbower Forest/National Park) Water Skiing Recreation Adventure Tourism

#### 4.5. KEY FINDINGS

The overnight visitor market to Gannawarra Shire primarily consists of holiday and VFR visitors, typically travelling as either lone person travellers, adult couples or family groups.

A lower proportion of overnight visitors to Gannawarra stay in commercial accommodation. Of those that stay in commercial accommodation a lower proportion stay in hotels and resorts compared to the Murray Region.

There is opportunity for Gannawarra Shire to attract a higher proportion of holiday leisure visitors seeking nature-based experiences, however, this will need to be supported by appropriate complementary product including dining and hospitality and supported by accommodation targeted to this market.

Each waterfront precinct is unique in terms of their visitor markets and their potential to grow and attract new visitor markets. The Kerang Lakes area is associated with power boating, water skiing and on water activities including kayaking. There is opportunity to further grow the current markets through these activities and attract new visitors for recreation activities (on water and land), including families, grey nomads and adventure travellers (kayaking/canoeing).

The major drawcard for Koondrook is the nature-based activities on offer through the Murray River, Gunbower Creek and Gunbower State Forest and National Park. Visitor markets currently include families, grey nomads, business/worker visitors and VFR visitors. Koondrook has potential to increase its reach into new visitor markets including lifestyle leaders and young travellers through the provision of appropriate infrastructure and activities. Koondrook is relatively well supported by food and dining including the café and pub and is also supported by provision of dining establishments in Barham.

Cohuna attracts visitors for specific purposes including for water-skiing, nature-based tourism, adventure and recreation and these visitors are typically families, grey nomads, adventure travellers and VFR visitors. There are also a number of business visitors to the area. Much like Koondrook, Cohuna has the potential to attract new visitor markets with appropriate investment including the lifestyle leader market and young travellers. Cohuna needs to be supported by quality

dining, accommodation and hospitality product to improve the potential attraction of these visitor markets.

## 5. ECONOMIC PROFILE

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides a brief economic profile of Gannawarra Shire using key datasets sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing. The purpose of this section of the report is to identify relevant economic trends for consideration as part of development of the waterfront masterplans.

### 5.2. POPULATION

#### POPULATION

Gannawarra Shire reported a population of 10,549 people in the 2016 Census. The population of Gannawarra Shire declined between 2006 and 2011 at a rate of -1.7%, however, population increased between 2011 and 2016 at a rate of 0.4% per annum.

**This project provides an opportunity to drive population growth through promoting tourism, improving public amenity and increasing attraction of the resident population. In particular, projects identified through the masterplan process that will drive economic growth will be most important in contributing to the sustainable economic growth of Gannawarra Shire.**

**TABLE 11** POPULATION

	2006	2011	2016
Persons	11,295	10,366	10,549
Growth Rate		-1.7%	0.4%

Source: ABS – 2016 Time Series Profile, Gannawarra Shire

### POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Victoria in Future (VIF) provides the official State government projections of population and households. The latest available Victoria in Future publication is from 2016. The publication shows the estimated 2016 population as 9,919 residents, which is at odds with the results of the 2016 ABS Census. The forecasts also show a continuing declining population with an estimated 9,497 residents in 2021 and 9,119 residents in 2026. Given that the 2016 Census population figures are not reflected in the VIF statistics, there is a question over the reliability of these population forecasts.

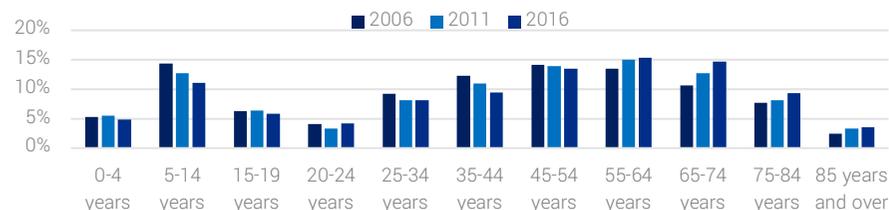
### 5.3. DEMOGRAPHICS

#### AGE PROFILE

The resident population of Gannawarra is ageing, most evidenced by the increase in the proportion of residents aged over 55 years between 2006 and 2016. People aged over 55 years represented 34% of the population in 2006, which grew to a representation of 43% of the population in 2016.

**An ageing population is common in regional Victoria. It is important to promote the retention and attraction of younger residents to the Shire. The waterfront masterplans may have a role to play in attracting younger residents through improving liveability, providing new attractions and activities, residential and employment opportunities.**

**FIGURE 7** AGE PROFILE – GANNAWARRA RESIDENTS -2006-2011-2016



Source: ABS – 2016 Time Series Profile, Gannawarra Shire

## 5.4. EMPLOYMENT

### INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT

The 2016 Census identified 4,196 employed persons in Gannawarra Shire. The largest industry of employment in 2016 was Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, comprising 25% of total employment. Other major industries include Health Care and Social Assistance (525 jobs), Retail Trade (458 jobs), Construction (322 jobs), Manufacturing (284 jobs).

Industries that showed the greatest growth in employment between 2006 and 2016 included Health Care and Social Assistance (+98 jobs), Mining (+25 jobs), Construction (+21 jobs), Accommodation and Food Services (+19 jobs), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+19 jobs) and Other Services (+17 jobs).

Whilst Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing remained the largest employing industry in 2016, the industry experienced the greatest loss in jobs (-392 jobs) between 2006 and 2011, followed by Manufacturing (-170 jobs) and Retail Trade (-100 jobs).

**TABLE 12** GANNAWARRA SHIRE RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT

	2006	2011	2016	Change 2006- 2016
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,450	1,047	1,058	-392
Mining	25	44	50	25
Manufacturing	454	341	284	-170
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	100	110	86	-14
Construction	301	300	322	21
Wholesale Trade	142	108	86	-56
Retail Trade	558	509	458	-100
Accommodation and Food Services	174	205	193	19
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	186	196	179	-7
Information Media and Telecommunications	26	22	19	-7
Financial and Insurance Services	80	75	54	-26
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	35	19	23	-12
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	104	103	123	19
Administrative and Support Services	75	77	79	4
Public Administration and Safety	217	226	219	2
Education and Training	255	242	246	-9
Health Care and Social Assistance	427	460	525	98
Arts and Recreation Services	31	30	39	8
Other Services	136	162	153	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,776</b>	<b>4,276</b>	<b>4,196</b>	<b>-580</b>

Source: ABS – 2016 Time Series Profile, Gannawarra Shire

## 5.5. KEY FINDINGS

The economic profile shows that traditional industry sectors of the Gannawarra Shire economy have been declining in terms of jobs, including Agriculture and Manufacturing. This is not necessarily unique to Gannawarra Shire, with decline in traditional manufacturing industries linked to globalisation and amalgamation of farms leading to a decline in employment in the Agriculture sector. It does however, emphasise the need to continually diversify the local economy. Tourism is a key sector of the Gannawarra Shire economy and a strategic growth sector. There were an additional 19 jobs in the Accommodation and Food Services sector between 2006 and 2016, although somewhat modest growth it was the fourth highest jobs growth sector in Gannawarra Shire for larger industry sectors (over 100 people employed). Gannawarra Shire also has some significant tourism assets, which provide significant potential for continued growth in the tourism sector over time. Growth in the tourism sector will need to be supported by appropriate product and infrastructure investment, both from the public and private sector and supported by skilled workers in tourism and hospitality.

## 6. RESIDENTIAL

### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides a brief overview of the residential market in Gannawarra Shire, particularly in relation to determining potential residential opportunities for the waterfront precincts including residential waterfront developments.

There has been longstanding interest from the community in facilitating waterfront development, particularly alongside Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm. These sites were included as part of an Environs Strategy prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff prepared in 2013. This is outlined in more detail below.

#### BACKGROUND STUDIES

In 2013, Gannawarra Shire Council commissioned the preparation of the *Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy* to provide guidance and set the overall direction for future growth, development and infrastructure investments within the Lakes and Creek Environs over the next 20 years.

The study indicated potential development areas within the Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek environs.

The study included the development of principles to guide development within the Lakes and Creek environs, these are summarised below:

1. Encourage a planned approach to development, avoiding adhoc decisions.
2. Land use change and new developments must demonstrate how they will protect and enhance the existing natural, cultural, historic features, native vegetation and landscape values of the area and reinforce the character of the Lakes and Creek Environs.
3. Provide for rural-living, low-density residential and tourism development surrounding the Lakes and Creek in accordance with the Development

Framework Plans which consolidates existing development areas, taking advantage of the natural Lake/Creek rural settings.

4. Where it is proposed to locate development outside of the areas identified for “Development Potential” in the Development Framework Plans, it must be demonstrated that:
  - a. There is a demand for the development;
  - b. Infrastructural demands of the development can be provided for and met in a cost-effective manner;
  - c. The development will not jeopardise the existing or future use of suitable agricultural land;
  - d. The development proposal must meet all other development principles under this Environs Strategy.
5. Development should be avoided in areas known to be:
  - a. Subject to flooding or inundation;
  - b. Environmentally sensitive or have significant environmental values;
  - c. Culturally or historically significant or have significant values;
  - d. Subject to wildfire risks.
6. Avoid development of land which has been identified as being particularly suitable for agricultural land uses. Any development within the Lakes and Creek Environs will need to demonstrate that it will not compromise existing agricultural land uses on the subject site or on surroundings sites.
7. The wastewater, infrastructural and utility requirements of future development must be adequately met and provided for in a cost-effective manner.
8. Developments must provide attractive, safe and functional open spaces that integrate with existing developments and enhance the recreational opportunities of the existing waterbodies.
9. The management of the Lakes and Creek Environs needs to be undertaken in a coordinated manner with Council, the local community, key stakeholders and

visitors working collaboratively to protect the natural and physical features and to maximise the long term environmental, economic and social benefits of these areas.

The study included an implementation plan, including the action to introduce an **Municipal Strategic Statement** reference (or clause) and a Local Policy into the Gannawarra Planning Scheme in which the Environs Strategy is referenced.

## 6.2. DEMAND INDICATORS

### POPULATION AND AGE STRUCTURE

The analysis of population in Gannawarra Shire is included in section 5. The data showed that the population had declined between 2006 and 2011, however, the trend in declining population reversed between the 2011 and 2016 census periods, growing by an average of 0.4% per annum, showing positive signs for future population growth.

The population is ageing, with a 10% increase in the proportion of residents aged over 55 years between the 2006 and 2016 Census periods.

### SUPPLY

The ABS Census reported a total of 4,997 private dwellings in 2016 compared to 5,010 private dwellings in 2011. Occupied private dwellings are reported to have increased whilst unoccupied dwellings decreased between 2011 and 2016. This data should be relied on with caution, given the reported decline in total dwellings between 2011 and 2016.

**TABLE 13** OCCUPIED AND UNOCCUPIED DWELLINGS 2011-2016

	2011	2016
Occupied Private Dwellings	4,163	4,224
Unoccupied Private Dwellings	847	773
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,010</b>	<b>4,997</b>

Source: ABS 2011, 2016 – Community Profiles Gannawarra Shire

### HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

61% of the housing stock in Gannawarra Shire was occupied by Family Households in 2016, followed by 30% lone person households. Between 2006 and 2011, family households reduced by 298 households, lone person households increased by 148 and other households increased by 192.

**TABLE 14** GANNAWARRA SHIRE – HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Family Households	3,050	68%	2,768	63%	2,752	61%
Lone Person Households	1,222	27%	1,326	30%	1,370	30%
Group Households	89	2%	66	2%	88	2%
Other Households	103	2%	192	5%	295	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,464</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,352</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,505</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ABS – 2016 Time Series Profile, Gannawarra Shire

### DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS

The housing stock of Gannawarra Shire comprises a high proportion of separate houses, reported at 95% in 2016.

**TABLE 15** GANNAWARRA DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS

	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Separate House	4,161	93%	4,037	93%	4,285	95%
Semi-detached, row or terrace house	55	1%	65	2%	6	0%
Flat, unit or apartment	156	3%	150	4%	135	3%
Other dwelling	92	2%	97	2%	70	2%
Dwelling structure not stated	0	0%	3	0%	9	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,464</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,352</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,505</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ABS – 2016 Time Series Profile, Gannawarra Shire

## SUPPLY OF WATERFRONT PROPERTIES

There is a limited supply of waterfront residential properties in Gannawarra Shire. Locations where waterfront development exists includes:

### Creek and Riverfront Development:

- **Cohuna** – residential subdivisions exist along Gunbower Creek near Cohuna, including Island Rise and Murray Sound. Murray Sound is the most recent residential subdivision, consisting of a 70 lot (approx.) subdivision, with 6 lots sold. Current lots for sale (non-waterfront) are generally priced at around \$80,000 with lots generally sized at 800m<sup>2</sup>. All waterfront lots released have been sold. Anecdotally, take up of lots has generally been slow since project commencement.
- **Koondrook** – There are a number of residential properties with frontage to the Gunbower Creek in Koondrook to the south of the town centre and north of the town centre towards Barham.
- **Kerang** – There are a limited number of residential lots near the Loddon River in Kerang.
- **Quambatook** – There are a small number of residential properties on the Avoca River in Quambatook.

### Lakes

- **Lake Charm and Kangaroo Lake** – Single dwellings exist along the lake front in certain locations at Lake Charm and Kangaroo Lake. These are part of historical subdivisions of farming land. No new residential developments currently exist in these locations.

### Lake Boga – Haven

A recent example of lake front residential development is ‘Haven’ development at Lake Boga, located 15 kilometres north-west of Kangaroo Lake and 14 kilometres south-east of Swan Hill. The masterplan includes a 61 lot subdivision. 10 lots were released as part of the Stage 1 development in November 2015. Stage 1 was sold out as of April 2018. An average of 4 lots were sold per year. These are sized at

1800m<sup>2</sup> and provide 20-22 metres of lake frontage. Lots were priced at \$265,000 per lot.

The development is fully serviced with electricity, town water and reticulated sewer.

## PROPERTY PRICES [GANNAWARRA SHIRE]

Table 16 summarises the residential house and vacant block sales and median sales values between 2006 and 2016 for Gannawarra Shire. Median house prices and vacant block prices have generally been trending up since 2006. 2015 recorded the highest median prices, with a minor decline to 2016.

**TABLE 16** RESIDENTIAL SALES AND MEDIAN VALUES – GANNAWARRA SHIRE

	Houses		Vacant Blocks	
	# Sales	Median Price	# Sales	Median Price
<b>2006</b>	143	\$145,000	39	\$50,000
<b>2007</b>	153	\$135,000	46	\$61,000
<b>2008</b>	93	\$140,000	37	\$52,000
<b>2009</b>	120	\$139,000	27	\$52,000
<b>2010</b>	109	\$145,002	48	\$52,000
<b>2011</b>	90	\$149,000	27	\$50,000
<b>2012</b>	124	\$148,500	26	\$50,500
<b>2013</b>	134	\$141,250	29	\$55,000
<b>2014</b>	148	\$145,000	31	\$54,000
<b>2015</b>	138	\$162,250	18	\$61,376
<b>2016</b>	145	\$160,000	19	\$49,500
<b>2017</b>	29*	\$160,000	-	-

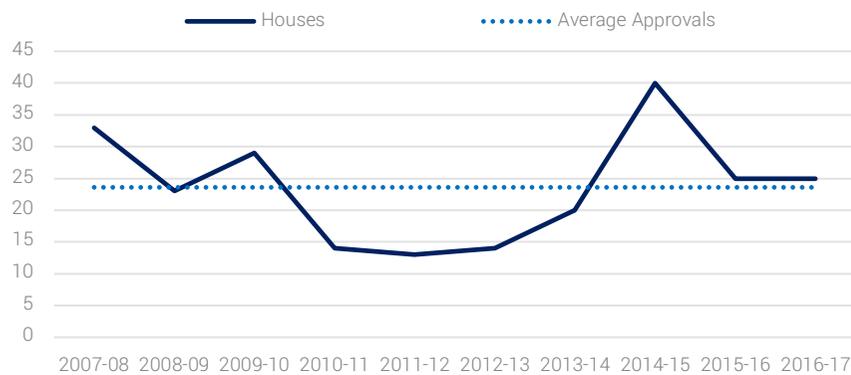
\*Statistics for 2017 are preliminary only and based on limited sales

Source: A Guide to Property Values, Valuer-General Victoria 2016

## RESIDENTIAL BUILDING APPROVALS

Figure 8 shows the residential building approvals in Gannawarra Shire for the previous 10 years. Residential building approvals generally declined between 2007-08 and 2011-12, however began to recover in 2012-13. Over the ten-year period, there have been an average of 24 residential building approvals per annum.

**FIGURE 8** RESIDENTIAL BUILDING APPROVALS



Source: Profile id. Gannawarra Shire – ABS, Building Approvals, Australia

## 6.3. KEY FINDINGS

Headline indicators of demand for residential property including population growth and property pricing seem to indicate subdued demand for residential development.

Locations with recent waterfront subdivision (Cohuna and Lake Boga) suggest that waterfront properties are in most demand compared to those properties that do not have a waterfront siting. Waterfront properties as part of Stage 1 development of Haven (Lake Boga) were sold at around \$147 per square metre and properties in Murray Sound (Cohuna) ranged from approximately \$100-\$150 per square metre.

There may be opportunity for lifestyle residential lots in strategic locations around Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm, however, a more detailed study of demand is required beyond what is within the scope of this project.

Areas proposed for further investigation of residential subdivision are outlined in the *Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy (2013)*. This area may be suited for lifestyle residential development as well as tourism development, however, a Planning Scheme Amendment would be required to facilitate development. Willing landowners who wish to develop their land will need to undertake further strategic work to assess the suitability of sites.



## PART B: CONCEPT MASTERPLANS

## 7. KANGAROO LAKE

### 7.1. OVERVIEW

Kangaroo Lake is located 20 kilometres north west of Kerang, on the western side of the Murray Valley Highway and forms part of the Kerang Wetlands. The lake is managed by Goulburn-Murray Water and is a large, deep and permanent water storage as part of the Torrumbarry Irrigation system.

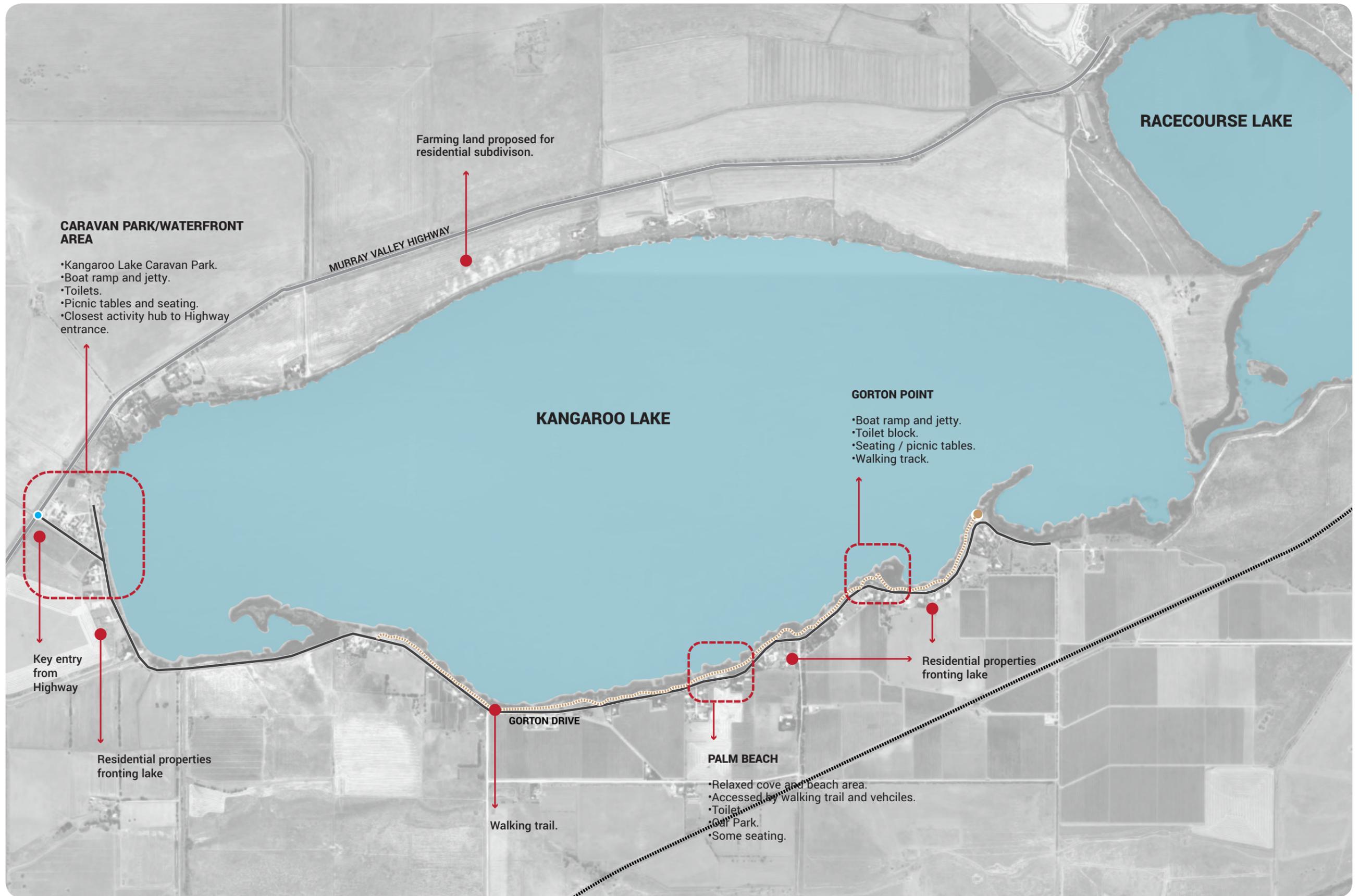
Kangaroo Lake is home to a variety of fauna and flora, including bird life and native vegetation.

Kangaroo Lake is a popular destination for power boating, water-skiing, fishing, swimming and general recreational activities.

The northern end of Kangaroo Lake is the primary area for consideration as part of the master plan. This area includes the Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park, access ramp and jetty and public toilets.

Other notable activity nodes along the western shore include Palm Beach and Gorton Point. Palm Beach is a small cove area and includes a public toilet and car parking. Gorton Point is the southernmost activity node. It includes a boat ramp and jetty, toilet block, seating and picnic tables.

A context map of Kangaroo Lake and these areas is provided on the following page.



## 7.2. PLANNING

The following provides a summary of the zones and overlays which apply to Kangaroo Lake.

### ZONES

The lake is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). The land surrounding the lake is zoned Farming Zone (FZ).

### OVERLAYS

Kangaroo Lake includes a number of overlays, including the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO4 and ESO3), Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO), Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO1), Rural Floodway Overlay (RFO).

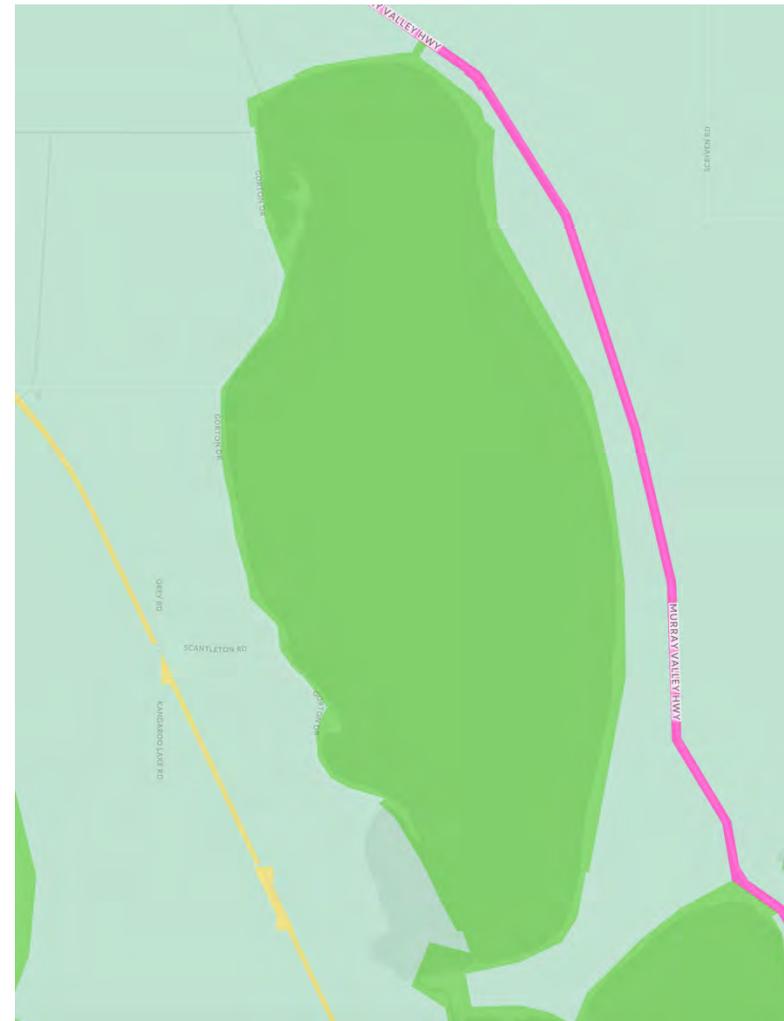
### RAMSAR

Kangaroo Lake forms part of the Kerang Wetlands Ramsar site. The Kerang Wetlands was designated as a Ramsar site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention).

The Ramsar site contains black box, river red gum and tangled lignum vegetation communities and contains important feeding and nesting habitat for a diverse array for native waterbird species. As well as its importance for waterbirds, the Ramsar site provides important habitat for indigenous flora and other native fauna species. The Ramsar site is also significant economically, culturally, spiritually and for recreation.<sup>5</sup>

The *Kerang Lakes Wetlands Ramsar Site Ecological Character Description (2011)* provides a summary of the threats to the Ramsar site, these include presence of pest plants and animals, altered watering regimes, change in surrounding land use, unsustainable recreation activities, changes to level and trend in surface water quality, climate change and bed and bank erosion.

FIGURE 9 KANGAROO LAKE ZONES



<sup>5</sup> Kellogg, Brown and Root Pty Ltd, Kerang Wetlands Ramsar Site Ecological Character Description, 2011

### 7.3. OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The water and foreshore area at Kangaroo Lake are Crown Land. Goulburn Murray Water manage the water asset and associated water infrastructure whilst Council is the committee of management for the foreshore area.

There is also a parcel of Crown Land near the Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park, fronting Mystic Park East Road, two parcels of land adjacent to the Caravan Park to the east and an easement running north-south from the Murray Valley Highway to the Lake.

The Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park is owned and managed by a private operator.

### 7.4. EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### 7.4.1. KANGAROO LAKE

##### USES AND ACTIVITIES

- **Caravan Park** – The Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park is located on the northern banks of the shore, fronting Lake View Road. The Caravan Park includes a mix of annual sites and holiday sites. There are currently 48 occupied annual sites and 13 cabins. The Caravan Park has recently been purchased by new owners (September 2017). The new owners are making improvements to the caravan park, including a recently completed BBQ shelter, installation of two new cabins and upgrading the presentation of the park. The park includes a small convenience shop/kiosk, which sells some grocery items and some takeaway food and coffee. There is a function space/recreation room with an open fire, billiards and table tennis. Visitors to the caravan park come from various locations across Victoria and interstate, including some international visitors.
- **Boating and Water Skiing** – Kangaroo Lake is a popular destination for boating and water skiing. The lake has hosted a number of Ski Racing Victoria events. It is an important asset for Ski Racing Victoria for hosting events and as a back-up location for events that cannot be held at Lake Charm. Boat launching is

possible from the **North end** foreshore and Gorton Point. The lake is also used for kayaking and canoeing.

- **Fishing** – The lake is used for recreational fishing, both from boats, the shoreline and jetties.
- **Swimming** – The lake is a popular swimming destination in the warmer months of the year.
- **Walking Trails** – The lake includes a walking/cycling trail along the eastern bank servicing the residential properties fronting the lake in this location and visitors. The walking trail does not currently connect to the northern precinct.
- **Palm Beach** – Palm Beach is an existing activity node along the eastern shore. It includes an existing car park, toilet block, picnic tables, a grassed area and visitor information structure, which appears underutilised/abandoned.
- **Gorton Point** – Gorton Point is an existing activity node located at the southern end of the eastern shoreline. Gorton Point includes a jetty, boat ramp, toilets, picnic tables, open grassed areas and a walking track.

##### SURROUNDING USES AND LINKAGES

- **Farming** – The majority of land surrounding Kangaroo Lake is occupied by farms used for cropping, grazing, vineyards or orchards. The majority of vineyards are owned by Brown Brothers Winery and are located to the west of the Lake.
- **Residential properties** – There are a number of residential properties fronting the lake, primarily distributed along the western shoreline, accessed via Gorton Drive. These properties are located in the Farming Zone.
- **Lake Charm** – Lake Charm is located approximately 2.5 kilometres east of Kangaroo Lake. There are synergies between Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm including their use for boating and water-skiing. Kangaroo Lake has been used as backup for ski racing Victoria events in times when Lake Charm cannot be utilised.
- **Racecourse Lake** – Racecourse Lake is connected to Kangaroo Lake to the south.
- **Kerang Wetlands Ramsar Site** – Kangaroo Lake is part of the Kerang Wetlands Ramsar site. The Ramsar site contains 23 named marshes, lakes and swamps.

The wetlands contain black box, river red gum and tangled lignum vegetation communities and contain important feeding and nesting habitat for a diverse range of native waterbird species.

### EXISTING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

There are some existing, planned or proposed projects relating to the precinct, these include:

- **Demolition of toilet block on caravan park servicing public** – There are plans to remove the toilet block along the waterfront on the caravan park land.
- **Residential development to the east** – There have been proposals for residential development along the waterfront on the eastern side of the lake. This would require a planning scheme amendment. These opportunities are detailed in the *Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy* (2013).

### CIRCULATION

- **Access Point** – Mystic Park East Road is the main vehicle access road to the lake from the Murray Valley Highway.
- **Roads** – Lake View Road is the key road along the lake in front of the caravan park. The road is accessed via Mystic Park East Road. Mystic Park East Road travels west from the Murray Valley Highway and turns into Gorton Drive, which travels south along the western frontage of the lake, providing access to residential properties, farms, Palm Beach and Gorton Point. The roads appear to have been recently resurfaced.
- **Pedestrians/cycling** – There is a gravel walking trail along the western lake front. This track terminates near Gorton Point and does not loop back. It is not connected to the northern precinct / caravan park area.
- **Car parking** – Car parking in the northern precinct along the caravan park and boat launching precinct is informal. Anecdotally, people tend to park their car in front of their space on the waterfront or where their boat is moored. There is a formal car parking area at Palm Beach as well as an informal parking area closer

to the foreshore. The car parking at Gorton Point is informal and distributed throughout the precinct.

### VIEWS AND VISTAS

There are expansive views across the lake from the shoreline, which are only interrupted by vegetation along the lake front.

The Lake can be seen from the Murray Valley Highway and as approaching the lake from Mystic Park East Road.

### 7.4.2. CARAVAN PARK & WATERFRONT AREA

An existing conditions plan is provided for the Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park and Waterfront area on the following page.

#### BUILDINGS AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park:**
  - **BBQ Pavilion** – A newly constructed large BBQ pavilion.
  - **Function Centre/Games and Recreation Room** – An indoor recreation room, used for functions and gatherings. The room includes a billiards table, open fire and table tennis table.
  - **Convenience/takeaway food shop** – There is a small convenience/takeaway food shop located near the entrance to the park.
  - **Amenity Block** – The caravan park includes an amenity block located near the centre of the site.
  - **Toilet Block** – There is an existing toilet block in poor condition located to the south of the caravan park site. The toilet block, although located on the caravan park site is used by the public and visitors to the lake.
- **Public Toilets** – There is a small public toilet located at the south end of Mystic Park Road, between the water and Lake View Road. This toilet block partially obstructs views to the lake as you enter via Mystic Park East Road.
- **Boat ramps / Jetties** – A boat ramp/jetty is located to the south of the caravan park, which provides water access for boating and water skiing. The boat ramp is highly utilised. When the water becomes choppy due to wind, it can be difficult to get boats out of the water, posing a safety issue. There are a number of smaller, informal jetties located along the lake front, some which appear to be private jetties servicing some residential properties along the lake.

- **Picnic Tables** – There are a limited number of picnic tables located along the waterfront.

#### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

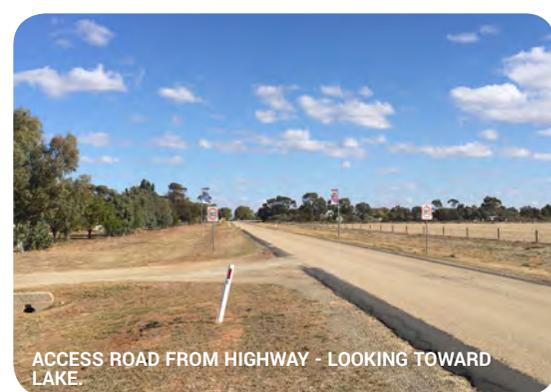
- **Willow trees** – There are a large number of willow trees along the lake front. These trees provide an aesthetic quality to the lakefront, provide shade and assist in erosion control along the foreshore. Various species of willow trees are considered a weed species as they can degrade the condition of rivers and riparian land, can reduce the supply of habitat and food for fish, consume large quantities of water.<sup>6</sup> Over the last 20 years, catchment management authorities have been removing willows along many Victorian waterways. However, the Willow Trees along Kangaroo Lake appear to be primarily Weeping Willows, which do not pose as significant environmental threat as other species. In any case, these trees could be replaced with native species.
- **Palm trees** – There are a large number of Canary Island palm trees located on the water's edge of Kangaroo lake. These palms are an introduced species and can often be difficult to remove. There is potential for these to be removed and relocated.
- **Open areas** – The lakefront includes some grassed areas close to the foreshore, however, the extent of the grassed areas appears to have been eroded by vehicles parking at the foreshore.
- **Native trees** – The southern border of the caravan park is lined with native trees. Natives trees are also scattered intermittently along the eastern shore.

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<sup>6</sup> DELWP, Managing Willows in Victoria, 2016



KANGAROO LAKE SITE PHOTOS



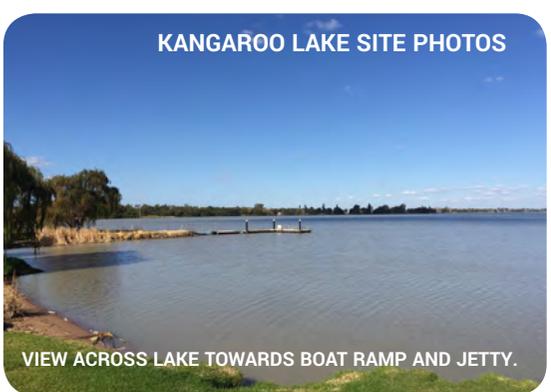
ACCESS ROAD FROM HIGHWAY - LOOKING TOWARD LAKE.



CARAVAN FRONTAGE TO LAKE WITH TOILET BLOCK.



VIEW TO THE EAST ALONG CARAVAN PARK FORESHORE.



VIEW ACROSS LAKE TOWARDS BOAT RAMP AND JETTY.



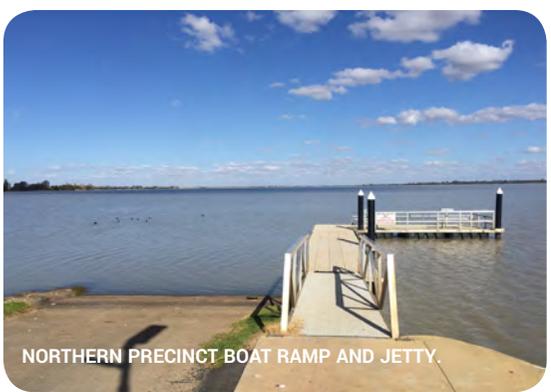
TOILET BLOCK AND SIGNAGE AT END OF MYSTIC PARK EAST ROAD.



VIEW FROM EASTERN SECTION OF PRECINCT.



LOOKING EAST, SHOWING CARAVAN PARK, ROAD AND FORESHORE. EROSION OF GRASS AREAS.



NORTHERN PRECINCT BOAT RAMP AND JETTY.



PROTECTED COVE, SHADE AND BOLLARDS RESTRICTING VEHICLE ACCESS AT PALM BEACH.



ENTRANCE TO PALM BEACH FROM GORTON DRIVE. ROADWAY INTERSECTS WITH PEDESTRIAN PATH.



TOILET BLOCK AT PALM BEACH, BESIDE ROADWAY AND CAR PARK.



FORMER INFORMATION PAVILION AT PALM BEACH.



TWO TYPES OF SIGNAGE AT GORTON POINT.



BOAT RAMP AND JETTY AT GORTON POINT.



VEHICLE/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, TOILET BLOCK (RIGHT) WITH SEPTIC ISSUES AT GORTON POINT.



PROPOSED SITE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG EASTERN FORESHORE, REQUIRES PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT TO REZONE FOR DEVELOPMENT.

## 7.5. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

The following provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to Kangaroo Lake by area of interest.

### 7.5.1. KANGAROO LAKE (GENERAL)

#### Strengths:

- Permanent water storage.
- Access from Murray Valley Highway.
- Existing tourism uses (water skiing, boating, fishing, swimming, recreation).
- Existing activity nodes.
- Water infrastructure (boat ramps/jetties).
- Views across the lake from most foreshore locations.
- Willow trees provide foreshore amenity and shade.

#### Weaknesses:

- Distance from major town centres and services.
- Seasonal visitation.
- Lack of commercial amenity.
- Ageing and declining infrastructure.
- Presentation and amenity of foreshore in sections.
- Lack of amenity and visitor infrastructure in some locations.
- Limited interpretation and directional signage.
- Poor walking/cycling connectivity in some areas.
- Public furniture is inconsistent.
- “out and back” walking track (no loop).

#### Opportunities:

- New and linked walking tracks/trails.
- New/improved visitor infrastructure.

- Further activation, establishment of activity nodes.
- Wayfinding and interpretive signage.
- Lakefront residential development (east side of Lake).
- On water events.
- Improvement of foreshore presentation.
- Improve on water safety conditions.
- Themes and branding (public art, materials, vegetation).
- Hub for kayak/canoe trails through the Kerang Wetlands system.

#### Threats:

- Bank erosion.
- Declining local population.
- No “Land On Water Management Plan”.
- Vehicle speed along Murray Valley Highway.
- Attraction of anti-social behaviour.

### 7.5.2. CARAVAN PARK AND FORESHORE AREA (NORTH)

#### Strengths:

- Caravan park with proactive owner and operator.
- Existing water access infrastructure.
- Sealed road.
- Shaded areas.
- Some public furniture (picnic trees).

#### Weaknesses:

- Informal car parking.
- Public furniture is inconsistent.
- Safety issues with boat access during extreme weather / choppy water conditions.

- Limited caravan accommodation maximising lake front views.
- Toilet block on arrival partially blocks views of Lake.
- Condition/quality of toilet block on Caravan Park site near waterfront.
- Lack of connectivity to existing walking/cycling track.
- Limited sense of arrival at a destination.
- High exposure to windy conditions.
- Presence on Murray Valley Highway.
- Presentation of foreshore.

#### **Opportunities:**

- Strengthen as primary activity node.
- Cabin accommodation along lake front at Caravan Park.
- Gateway/entrance treatments.
- New commercial ventures (Ski Racing Victoria facility opportunities, realignment of caravan park café/general store).
- Formalisation/increase car parking capacity.
- New activities/zones for children.
- Improve water access safety for boats.
- Foreshore improvements.
- New activities.

#### **Threats:**

- Capacity during events.
- Grassed area along foreshore eroded by vehicle parking.
- Safety issues relating to boat ramp access during rough conditions.

### **7.5.3. PALM BEACH**

#### **Strengths:**

- Existing “beach like” setting, including grassed areas.

- Formal car park.
- Existing toilet block.
- Protected ‘cove’ area.
- Pedestrian path access.
- Passive surveillance and caretakers (residential properties).

#### **Weaknesses:**

- Limited/consistency of public furniture.
- Ambiguous vehicle/pedestrian path access at foreshore area.
- Limited wayfinding/directional signage.
- Run down visitor information building/kiosk.

#### **Opportunities:**

- Strengthen as “relaxed” visitor activity node.
- Clarification of walking/vehicle access arrangements and car parking areas.
- Improve amenity and infrastructure.
- Improve wayfinding signage.
- Build on relaxed setting.

#### **Threats:**

- Increased degradation of existing infrastructure.

### **7.5.4. GORTON POINT**

#### **Strengths:**

- Water access infrastructure (boat ramp and jetty).
- Open grassed areas.
- Vegetation.
- Walking track access.
- Passive surveillance and caretakers (residential properties).

**Weaknesses:**

- Access and car parking arrangements/formalisation.
- Toilet block (septic tank issues).

**Opportunities:**

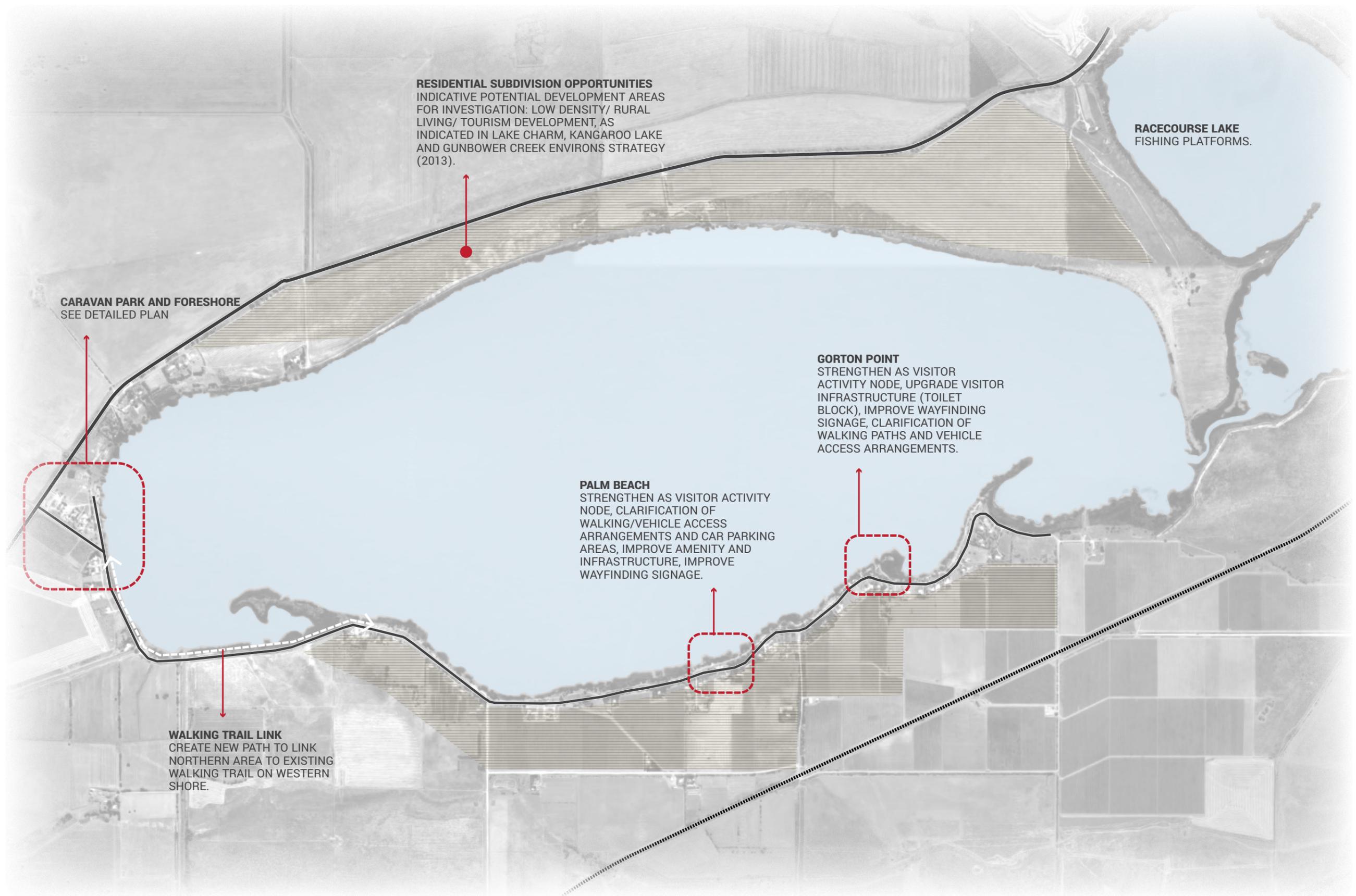
- Strengthen as "active" visitor activity node.
- Upgrade visitor infrastructure (toilet block).
- Improve wayfinding signage.
- Clarification of walking paths and vehicle access arrangements.

**Threats:**

- Increased degradation of existing infrastructure.

**7.6. CONCEPT MASTERPLANS**

Two concept masterplans have been prepared for Kangaroo Lake including a broader precinct opportunity plan and a concept masterplan for the Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park and Waterfront area.



**RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION OPPORTUNITIES**  
 INDICATIVE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS FOR INVESTIGATION: LOW DENSITY/ RURAL LIVING/ TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, AS INDICATED IN LAKE CHARM, KANGAROO LAKE AND GUNBOWER CREEK ENVIRONS STRATEGY (2013).

**RACECOURSE LAKE FISHING PLATFORMS.**

**CARAVAN PARK AND FORESHORE**  
 SEE DETAILED PLAN

**GORTON POINT**  
 STRENGTHEN AS VISITOR ACTIVITY NODE, UPGRADE VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE (TOILET BLOCK), IMPROVE WAYFINDING SIGNAGE, CLARIFICATION OF WALKING PATHS AND VEHICLE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS.

**PALM BEACH**  
 STRENGTHEN AS VISITOR ACTIVITY NODE, CLARIFICATION OF WALKING/VEHICLE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND CAR PARKING AREAS, IMPROVE AMENITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE, IMPROVE WAYFINDING SIGNAGE.

**WALKING TRAIL LINK**  
 CREATE NEW PATH TO LINK NORTHERN AREA TO EXISTING WALKING TRAIL ON WESTERN SHORE.

INDICATIVE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS FOR INVESTIGATION: LOW DENSITY/ RURAL LIVING/TOURISM DEVELOPMENT (AS INDICATED IN LAKE CHARM, KANGAROO LAKE AND GUNBOWER CREEK ENVIRONS STRATEGY, 2013)



GATEWAY ENTRANCE  
FEATURE/SIGNAGE

RECEPTION/ OFFICE

CARAVAN FUNCTIONS/  
GAMES ROOM

AMENITIES

EXISTING BBQ PAVILION

CAMPING AREA/ FUTURE  
EXPANSION AREA

NEW PLANTINGS  
SCREENING SERVICE AREA

CARAVAN SHED/SERVICES

WATERFRONT CABINS

LONG VEHICLE TURNING  
AREA

FAMILY FRIENDLY PLAY  
SPACE, TOILETS

FORMALISED  
LONG VEHICLE PARKING

SAFE SWIMMING AREA/  
JETTY/KAYAK LAUNCHING

IMPROVED SEATING/ NEW  
BBQ SHELTERS ON LAKE  
FRONT

INCREASE CAPACITY OF  
BOAT RAMP

NEW TREE PLANTINGS

MULTIPURPOSE PAVILION  
- OPPORTUNITY FOR  
SKI RACING VICTORIA  
HUB, SEASONAL CAFE/  
TAKEAWAY, TOILETS,  
PADDLE BOAT/CANOE HIRE,  
FUNCTIONS/EVENTS SPACE

NEW FORMALISED SHARED  
PATH (WALKING CYCLING)  
TO GORTON POINT

FORMALISED CAR  
PARKING

EXISTING PUBLIC  
TOILET

NEW JETTY/KAYAK  
LAUNCHING

MOORINGS

INVESTIGATE FEASIBILITY  
OF BREAKWATER/JETTY/  
BOAT MOTEL

## 7.7. KEY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

### 7.7.1. CARAVAN PARK AND WATERFRONT AREA

#### MULTIPURPOSE PAVILION

There is opportunity for a multipurpose pavilion to be located within the Kangaroo Lake caravan Park foreshore area, which could be utilised for a number of uses including hosting events (Ski-Racing Victoria), a seasonal café/takeaway kiosk store (which could be operated by the caravan park owners/managers) or a kitchenette for self-catering events, toilets, kayak/canoe/paddle board hire and a private function and events space that could be leased out for private and commercial events.

This hub would strengthen this precinct as a key activity node and assist in attracting other events to the Lake.

This opportunity is also provided for within the Lake Charm foreshore masterplan. Two potential locations have been provided in these masterplans to ensure the highest potential opportunity in securing a permanent space for Ski-Racing Victoria to ensure continued events in the lakes area as well as improving the facilities available to locals and visitors.

#### FORESHORE IMPROVEMENTS

The masterplan proposes a number of improvements to the foreshore area, key proposals include:

- Formalised car parking including long vehicle parking – this will assist in directing vehicles off the grassed foreshore area, allowing the grassed area to regenerate and extend north.
- New/improved seating and BBQ shelters.
- A children's playground to the east with toilets.
- Walking/cycling trail – formalised walking/cycling trail along the foreshore, which links to the existing path along the western foreshore.

#### ON WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Water access is a key driver of visitation to the lakes, improving water access and the ability for visitors to engage with the lake will increase activation of the lake. Key on water infrastructure proposals include:

- New jetties/fishing platforms/ kayak/canoe launching;
- Moorings for boats, strategically distributed along the foreshore;
- Expanded boat ramp capacity to increase access and improve safety in dangerous conditions;
- A breakwater/boat motel, which could also be utilised as a fishing platform.
- Safe swimming area – located to the east near the children's play area.

This precinct can be utilised as a hub for kayakers / canoers exploring the Kerang Wetlands system. Kayak/canoe launching areas as well as information relating to accessible areas and kayak trails could be developed to strengthen this location as a hub for this activity.

#### WATERFRONT CABIN ACCOMMODATION

The masterplan includes provision of the potential for future cabins along the foreshore at Kangaroo Lake within the Caravan Park. This location provides views across the lake. Cabin accommodation could be implemented over time in line with market demand. Cabin accommodation could be utilised by new visitors to the region as well as utilised on event days.

### 7.7.2. STUDY AREA

#### FORESHORE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There may be opportunity to develop parts of the Kangaroo Lake foreshore for low density residential/rural living and/or tourism development as noted in the *Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy* (2013). This strategy identifies key areas for further investigation and required next steps in order to more robustly define this opportunity. Some strategic sites along the Kangaroo Lake

foreshore provide excellent views across the lake, which would be favourable for potential residential or tourism development.

### **PALM BEACH AND GORTON POINT**

Palm Beach and Gorton Point are key visitor activity nodes on the western shore of Kangaroo Lake. Infrastructure at the locations could be improved to increase the amenity and attractiveness of these locations as visitor nodes. Improvement of these areas will also distribute activity along the waterfront, freeing up infrastructure capacity at the northern precinct.

### **SHARED PATH**

There is opportunity to explore the development of a new shared path which would connect to the existing path along the western foreshore. This would provide a continuous track for walking and cycling from the northern activity node to Gorton Point. The shared path should include directional/wayfinding signage and could include interpretive signage or interactive elements relating to local flora and fauna and indigenous history. The shared path could also include introduction of strategically located exercise stations.

The caravan park and foreshore area would provide a natural hub for commencement of walks and rides along the path.



GATEWAY ENTRANCE FEATURE (RAMMED EARTH)



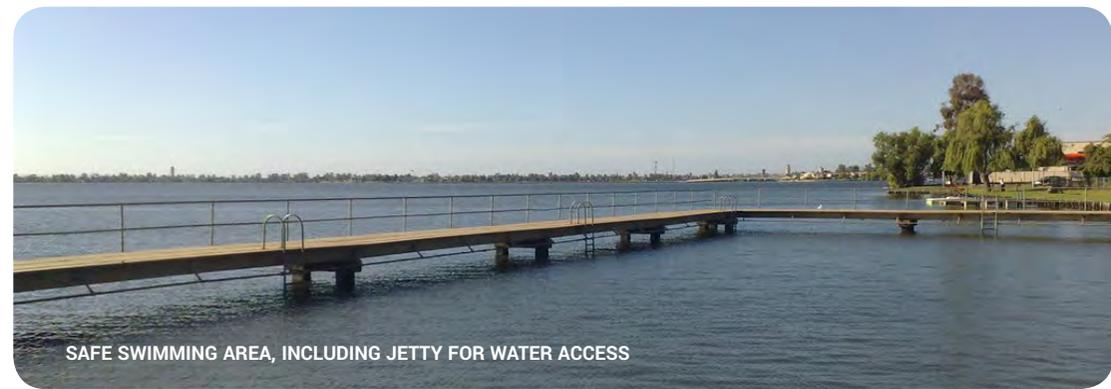
TREE PLANTINGS ALONG KEY ACCESS ROAD TO CREATE AVENUE



USE OF BOLLARDS TO PROTECT FORESHORE FROM VEHICLE ACCESS



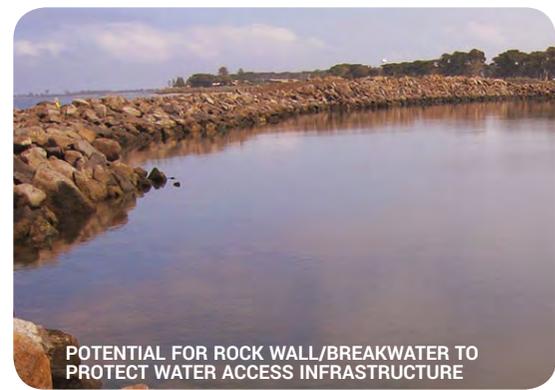
CARAVAN PARK CABIN ACCOMMODATION FRONTING LAKE



SAFE SWIMMING AREA, INCLUDING JETTY FOR WATER ACCESS



NEW PARK AREA AND CHILDRENS PLAY SPACE, WESTERN END OF THE PRECINCT



POTENTIAL FOR ROCK WALL/BREAKWATER TO PROTECT WATER ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE



MULTI-PURPOSE HUB/PAVILLION

## 8. LAKE CHARM

### 8.1. OVERVIEW

Lake Charm is located approximately 17 kilometres north west of Kerang and forms part of the Kerang Wetlands. It is also located south-east of Kangaroo Lake on the eastern side of the Murray Valley Highway.

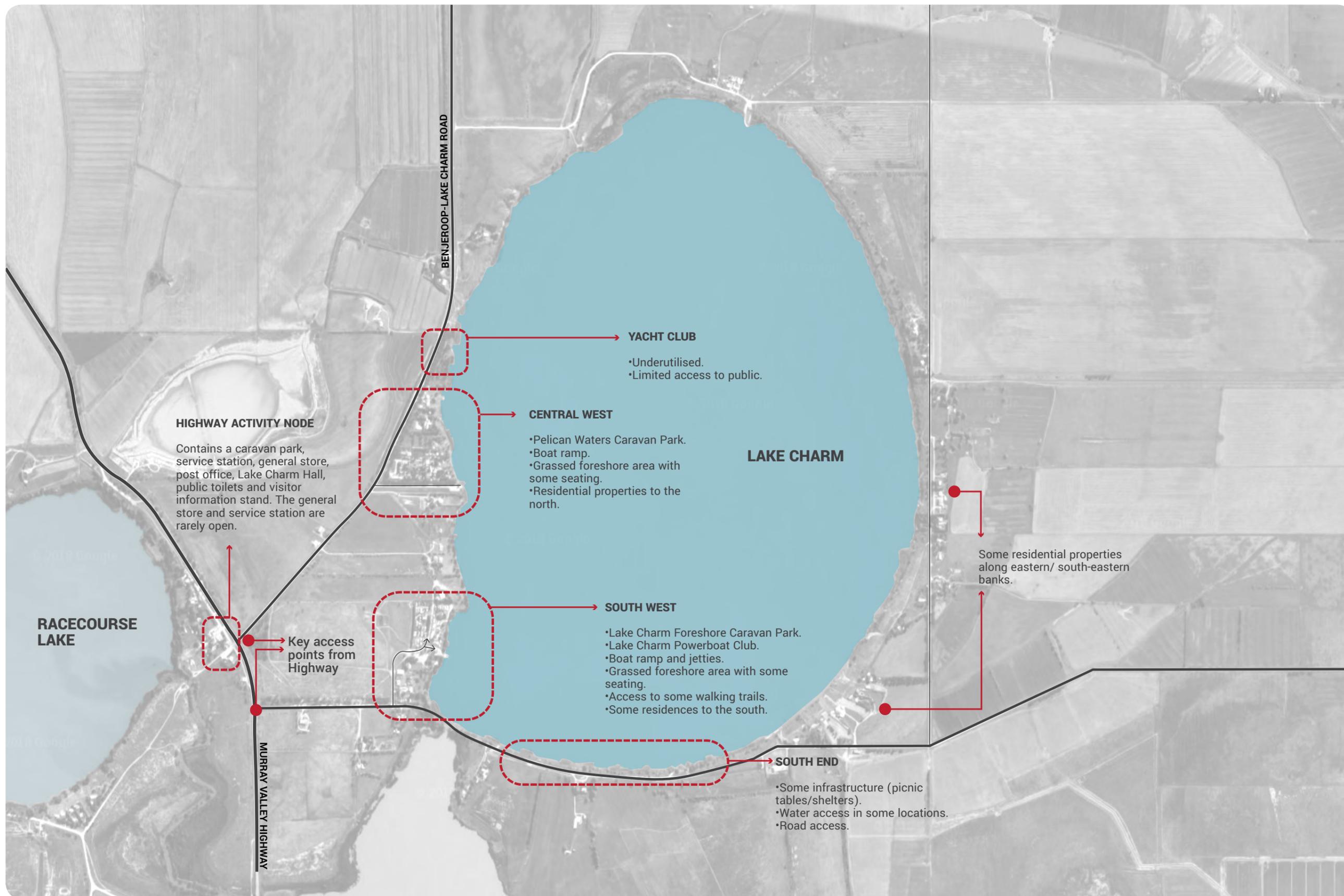
Lake Charm is a popular destination for water-based activities including water-skiing, swimming, recreational boating and powerboating and fishing. It is one of Ski-Racing Victoria's main event lakes, hosting four events a year.

Key areas within the Lake Charm study area include the **Yacht Club, Central West area** (including Caravan Park, boat access and foreshore), **South-West area** (including the Lake Charm Caravan Park, powerboat club, boat ramp and foreshore) the **South End** (including accessible foreshore and some limited infrastructure such as seating) and the **Highway Activity Node** (including service centre, general store, caravan park, Lake Charm Hall, public toilets and unattended visitor information area).

The **South West area** is the current primary visitor activity node of Lake Charm. This area is a key focus for the concept masterplan. The **South End** is a key area which the community would like to see further developed for tourism uses and activities. This area is also a key precinct of focus for the concept masterplan.

There are two caravan parks located at Lake Charm, accessed via two separate roads. Pelican Waters Caravan Park is located on the western foreshore in the central area of the lake and Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park is located in the south west.

A third caravan park is located on the western side of the Murray Valley Highway, adjacent to the Lake Charm general store and town hall. These are located toward the south-western area of the lake. This area is the primary area for investigation as part of the masterplan.



## 8.2. PLANNING

The following provides a summary of the zones and overlays which apply to Lake Charm. Maps of the zones and overlays for each precinct are provided on the following pages.

### ZONES

Lake Charm is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). The majority of land surrounding the lake is zoned Farming Zone (FZ). The Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park is in the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).

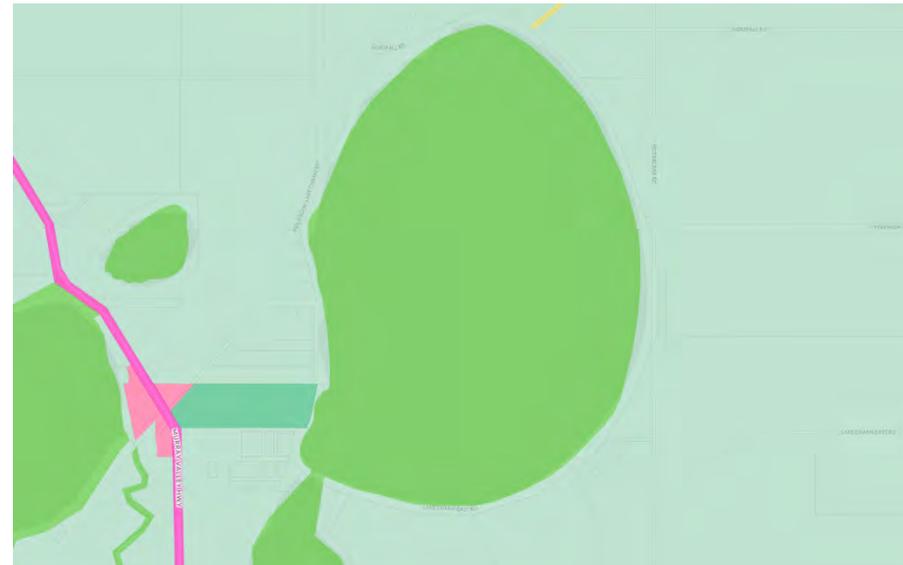
### OVERLAYS

Lake Charm is subject to the Rural Floodway Overlay (RFO) and Environmental Sensitivity Overlay (ESO3 and ESO4).

### RAMSAR LISTING

Like Kangaroo Lake, Lake Charm also forms part of the Kerang Wetlands Ramsar site.

FIGURE 10 LAKE CHARM ZONE MAP



## 8.3. OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

A large portion of the South West precinct is Crown Land, including the foreshore area, caravan park and recreation reserve west of the caravan park.

The caravan park is owned by DELWP and run by the Foreshore Management Committee.

The foreshore in the Central West area is Crown Land and DELWP is the committee of management.

The South End is Crown Land and Goulburn Murray Water are the land manager.

## 8.4. EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 8.4.1. LAKE CHARM (GENERAL)

#### USES AND ACTIVITIES

- **Caravan Parks** – There are two caravan parks on the western shoreline of Lake Charm and one located on the Murray Valley Highway adjacent to Racecourse Lake. Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park is located to the south-west of Lake Charm. The park is on land managed by DELWP. There are currently 85 annual sites in the park, which are limited to 90 nights use per year. There are no casual cabins for rent. Pelican Waters Caravan Park is located approximately 500 metres north of Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park. This park contains 48 annual sites and there are 11 cabins available for rent. Both caravan parks maintain the foreshore area in front of the caravan parks. The caravan park adjacent to Racecourse Lake is a smaller park, adjacent to the general store/service station.
- **Water Skiing** – Lake Charm provides an ideal location for water skiing and Ski Racing Victoria hosts four water skiing events at Lake Charm per year. The boat ramp within the South-West precinct is used for access.
- **Boating** – Lake Charm is used widely for boating purposes both powerboating, recreational boating and fishing. Lake Charm hosts one powerboat race per year.
- **Fishing** – The lake is utilised for recreational fishing, both from the shore and from boats. The lake has also hosted fishing events.
- **Swimming** – The lake is used for swimming during the warmer months of the year.
- **Picnics** – The grassed foreshore area in the South West precinct provides an ideal environment for picnics and activities by the lakeside. The Central West area also provides this opportunity, however, is less frequented by public visitors.
- **Walking Trail** – There is approximately 2.5 kilometres of walking trails to the west of the South West precinct. This trail does not traverse the lake front, however connects to the caravan park along the northern boundary.

- **Yacht Club** – The Lake Charm Yacht Club is located north on the western bank in the northern section of Lake Charm. It is on Crown Land and provides limited access to the public.

#### SURROUNDING USES AND LINKAGES

Lake Charm is surrounded by the following land uses:

- **Farming** – The majority of land surrounding Lake Charm is used for farming purposes. Recent agricultural development includes commercial cotton growing, which is the only location in Victoria. The region also includes orchards and vineyards.
- **Residential Dwellings** – There are a number of residential properties fronting the lake. These are primarily located on the southern half of the lake on the eastern, southern and western foreshores in the Farming Zone.
- **Lake Charm Salt** – The Lake Charm Salt company is located on the primary access road into the southern precinct. They supply a range of palletised salt in large quantities.
- **Kerang Wetlands Ramsar Site** – Kangaroo Lake is part of the Kerang Wetlands Ramsar site. The Ramsar site contains 23 named marshes, lakes and swamps. The wetlands contain black box, river red gum and tangled lignum vegetation communities and contain important feeding and nesting habitat for a diverse range of native waterbird species.

#### EXISTING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

There were no planned projects of note during preparation of the Masterplan.

## CIRCULATION

There are two key access roads to Lake Charm from the Murray Valley Highway, including via Lake Charm East Road and Benjeroop-Lake Charm Road. The access intersections off Murray Valley Highway require review to determine the need to improve safety. The Murray Valley Highway also has a speed limit of 90km per hour.

The South West area is accessed via Park Road off Lake Charm East Road. Park Road provides access to the foreshore area including the caravan park, boat launching and car parking. Park Road runs through the Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park. It is a publicly accessible road, which services the caravan park, a dwelling and a small foreshore car parking area.

There is informal car parking provided within the South West area located adjacent to the boat launching facility and a small carpark located to the north west of the caravan park.

The Central West area is accessed via Boat Ramp Road, which is located off Benjeroop-Lake Charm Road. Boat Ramp Road provides access to the Pelican Waters Caravan Park and to the boat ramp and car park. An open, informal car parking area is provided adjacent to the boat ramp on the south side of Boat Ramp Road.

The South End is accessed via Lake Charm East Road. The road is primarily unsealed, however, parts have recently been upgraded with a bitumen surface. There is no formal car parking in the South End area. Vehicles park along the roadside verges.

## VIEWS AND VISTAS

Once on the foreshore in the South West, Central West and South End precincts, there are extensive views across Lake Charm.

On approach via Lake Charm East Road and Benjeroop-Lake Charm Road the lake is not visible. The lake cannot be seen from the Murray Valley Highway, making signage an important consideration in advertising the lake.

#### 8.4.2. SOUTH WEST AREA

##### BUILDINGS AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park** - Includes 85 annual sites, two toilet blocks located at the southern end of the caravan park, a small convenience shop and office for the caravan park.
- **Boat ramp and Jetty** – There is a boat ramp and jetty providing water access, located between the caravan park and Lake Charm Power Boat Club.
- **Car Park** – An informal car park services the foreshore and boat launching area.
- **Picnic Tables** – there are approximately 5 picnic tables along the foreshore area. These tables vary in design.
- **Playground** – A small children’s playground is located along the foreshore.
- **Outdoor BBQs** – There is an electric BBQ located along the foreshore. At the time of the site visit, the BBQ was not working and was damaged.
- **Tennis Club** – The tennis club located to the west of the southern precinct includes club rooms and four tennis courts. The courts and clubrooms are currently not utilised and have fallen into disrepair.
- **Lake Charm Power Boat Club** – The Lake Charm powerboat club is located adjacent to the boat launching facility. The powerboat club includes some on site camping accommodation for members and a parking area at the rear.

##### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- **Open Grassed Areas** – The foreshore is planted with lush green grass, providing an inviting environment for relaxing, picnics and recreation activities.
- **Native Trees** – The foreshore includes native vegetation, including large trees along the foreshore.
- **Palm Trees** – The foreshore includes a row of tall palm trees, providing a beach like setting along the foreshore.

#### 8.4.3. SOUTH END

##### BUILDINGS AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Sheltered Seating Areas** – There are some single sheltered seating areas along the south end foreshore, including bins.

##### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- **Native vegetation and grasses** – The south end includes a mix of native trees and grasses along the foreshore. Some areas of the foreshore are inaccessible due to vegetation. Parts of the south end provide open grassed areas, which provide good locations for water access and amenity improvements.

#### 8.4.4. CENTRAL WEST

##### BUILDINGS AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Pelican Waters Caravan Park** - Includes 48 annual sites and 11 cabins.
- **Boat Ramp** – A boat ramp adjacent to the caravan park provides water access.
- **Car park** – A car park is provided adjacent to the boat ramp.

##### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- **Native trees** – The main access road includes a row of native trees on the south side of the caravan park. This delineates the caravan park from the roadway.
- **Foreshore** – the foreshore is characterised by an open grassed area and includes scattered vegetation.

Existing conditions plans for the South West Area and South End are provided on the following pages.



FARMING

RESIDENCE

PARKLAND SETTING

SMALL CAR PARK

CARAVAN PARK

FORESHORE AREA  
(PICNIC TABLES, TALL  
PALM TREES)

TOILET BLOCKS

INFORMAL CAR  
PARKING AREAS

INTERPRETIVE  
SIGNAGE

BOAT RAMP AND  
PONTOONS

POWER BOAT CLUB  
AND CARAVAN SITES

TENNIS COURTS  
AND TENNIS CLUB  
BUILDINGS

RESIDENCES

ACCESS VIA LAKE  
CHARM EAST ROAD

ROAD RECENTLY  
RESURFACED

RECREATION RESERVE

INFORMAL CAR  
PARKING AREAS

WALKING TRAIL

PARK ROAD

LAKE CHARM EAST ROAD



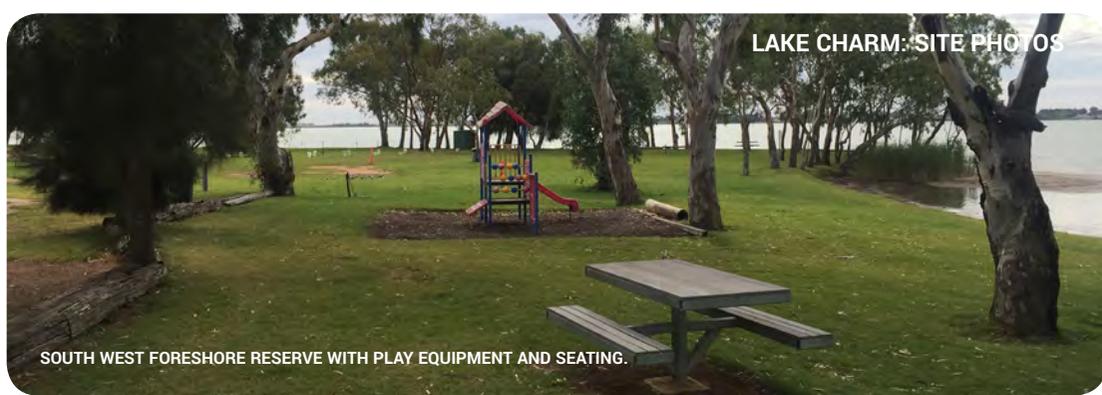




SOUTH WEST FORESHORE AREA WITH NATURAL BEACH AND OPEN GRASS AREAS.



SOUTH WEST BOAT RAMP AND JETTIES. BOAT RAMP AT GRADUAL INCLINE.



SOUTH WEST FORESHORE RESERVE WITH PLAY EQUIPMENT AND SEATING.



SOUTH WEST PRECINCT TENNIS CLUB AND CRICKET NETS. UNDERUTILISED AND DEGRADING ASSET. INFORMAL CAR PARKING AREA.



VIEW LOOKING SOUTH TOWARD TOILET BLOCKS AND BOAT RAMP AT SOUTH WEST PRECINCT



POWER BOAT CLUB "MEMBERS ONLY" AREA AT SOUTH WEST PRECINCT



ROAD ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS TO SOUTH WEST PRECINCT ARE UNCLEAR.



SOUTH WEST PRECINCT TREE AREA BETWEEN ACCESS ROADS. UNDEFINED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS.



CENTRAL WEST CARAVAN PARK BOUNDARY AND FENCED AREA ACCESS TO PUBLIC FORESHORE.



FENCING ALONG PUBLIC FORESHORE. PROVIDES APPEARANCE OF PRIVATISED FORESHORE AT CENTRAL WEST PRECINCT.



SOUTH END FORESHORE



SHELTERED SEATING AT SOUTH END

## 8.5. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

The following provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to Lake Charm by area of interest.

### 8.5.1. LAKE CHARM (GENERAL)

#### Strengths:

- Part of the irrigation network so has a permanent water storage.
- Highly popular for water skiing. Utilised by Ski Racing Victoria for events.
- Existing assets and infrastructure including caravan parks and water access infrastructure.
- Small information shelter.
- Community Hall.
- Primary School.

#### Weaknesses:

- Wayfinding and directional signage.
- Areas of the foreshore appear “private”
- Clarity around the usage of some spaces.
- No formalised tracks or trails on the foreshore.
- Limited gateway treatment or site identifier.
- Can't see lake from the Highway.
- Limited local services available (service centre and general store generally not in operation).

#### Opportunities:

- Greater utilisation of foreshore areas.
- Walking/cycling trails, linking activity areas and other lakes.
- Commercial opportunities.

- Attraction of new operator/redevelopment of Lake Charm Service Centre and General Store.
- Recreation development opportunities.
- Hub for kayak/canoe trails through the Kerang Wetlands system.

#### Threats:

- Declining local population to support commercial opportunities and community facilities e.g. primary school.
- Risk of drought affecting water storage levels.

### 8.5.2. SOUTH WEST PRECINCT

#### Strengths:

- Presentation of foreshore with large open grass areas and some public furniture (picnic tables, bench seats).
- Well maintained and presented caravan park.
- Access to walking track west of Caravan Park.
- Utilised for events.
- Water access infrastructure (boat ramp and pontoons).

#### Weaknesses:

- Lack of sites available in Caravan Park for short term stays/holiday visitors.
- Access arrangements to foreshore area, including lack of wayfinding signage.
- Road alignment.
- Delineation of car parking areas.
- Appearance of privatised foreshore areas.
- Food/beverage options.
- No formalised tracks or trails on foreshore.
- Limited BBQs / not operational.
- Caravan park toilets utilised by the public and sub-standard toilets and amenities.
- Appearance of tennis courts, degrading infrastructure and underutilised.

**Opportunities:**

- Formalisation and clarification of road access and car parking arrangements.
- Walking trails to link with key visitor nodes and existing trails to the west. Consider interpretive signage.
- Lake front multipurpose pavilion including potential kiosk/ takeaway store/kitchenette, toilets, showers, Ski Racing Victoria events, private and commercial functions and events.
- Waterfront cabins to cater to holiday and short stay visitors.
- Other accommodation opportunities (glamping);
- Upgraded, new and consistent visitor amenities and public furniture (seating/BBQs/signage).
- Utilisation of tennis courts area for improved recreation.
- Improvement and expansion to park area, create family friendly zone.
- Recreation activities and development of infrastructure.
- Bike/Walking track linking to Kerang.

**Threats:**

- Appearance of privatisation of foreshore.
- Risk of drought affecting water storage levels and ability to host a range of on water recreation activities.
- Bank erosion.

**8.5.3. CENTRAL WEST****Strengths:**

- Presentation of foreshore.
- Well maintained and presented caravan park.

**Weaknesses:**

- Quality of jetty from foreshore.
- Appearance of privatised foreshore.

- Limited visitor infrastructure.
- Unclear delineation of car parking areas.

**Opportunities:**

- Increase foreshore access.
- Walking trails.
- Increase short stay accommodation in caravan park.
- Upgraded/new visitor amenities and public furniture.
- New pontoons for boat ramp.

**Threats:**

- Increased appearance of privatisation of foreshore.
- Bank erosion.

**8.5.4. SOUTH END****Strengths:**

- Water access possible.
- Road access available.
- Not high in defined uses, providing opportunity for more recreation-based activity.
- Some existing infrastructure and amenity (sheltered picnic tables).
- Foreshore clearly appears as publicly accessible land.

**Weaknesses:**

- Unkept presentation in some areas.
- Limited directional signage.
- No defined car parking areas.
- No toilets.
- GMW land manager

**Opportunities:**

- Creation of areas for passive recreation (e.g. swimming, fishing, relaxing).
- Link to walking trails.
- Improve directional signage.
- New and consistent visitor amenity (seating, BBQs, toilets).
- Fishing platforms.
- Toilets.
- Utilise as kayak/canoe launching hub.
- Include linkages to Reedy Lake, Ibis Rookery and Lake Tutchewop.

**8.5.5. YACHT CLUB****Strengths:**

- Existing asset which could be more highly utilised.
- Views from higher point on lake.

**Weaknesses:**

- Limited public access. Appears as if private land.
- Lack of signage.

**Opportunities:**

- Increase public access.
- Consider linking to walking track along foreshore.

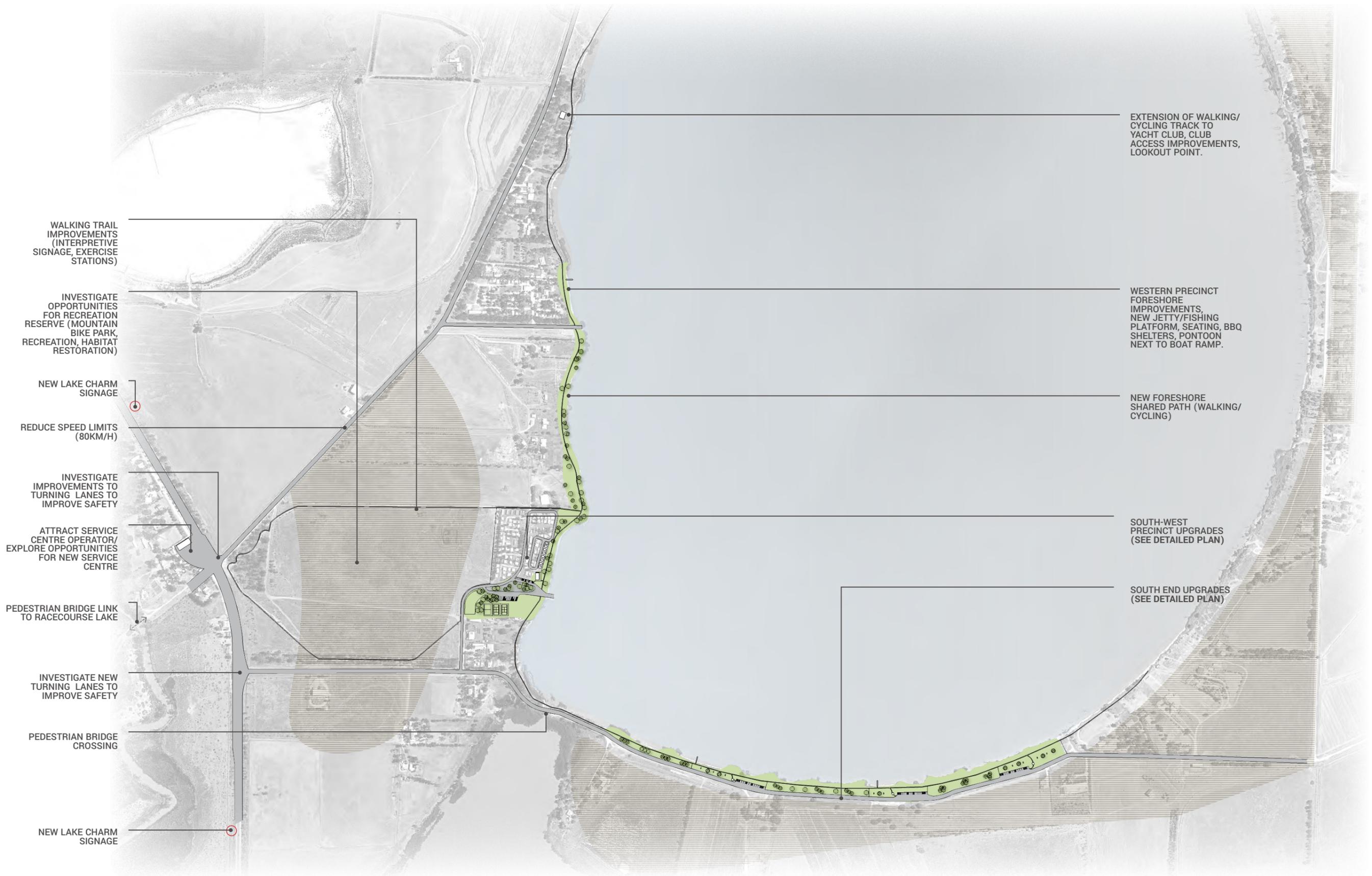
**Threats:**

- Underutilised asset by visitor markets.

**8.6. CONCEPT MASTERPLANS**

Three concept masterplans have been prepared for Lake Charm, including:

- Lake Charm Broader Opportunities Plan – providing an overview of projects proposed at a wider scale;
- South West Precinct Concept Masterplan; and
- South End Precinct Concept Masterplan.



INDICATIVE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS FOR INVESTIGATION: LOW DENSITY/ RURAL LIVING/TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
 (AS INDICATED IN LAKE CHARM, KANGAROO LAKE AND GUNBOWER CREEK ENVIRONS STRATEGY, 2013)





## 8.7. KEY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

### 8.7.1. STUDY AREA

#### RESIDENTIAL/TOURISM FORESHORE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There may be opportunity to develop parts of the Lake Charm foreshore for low density residential/rural living and/or tourism development as noted in the *Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy* (2013). This strategy identifies key areas for further investigation and required next steps in order to more robustly define this opportunity. Key areas most relevant to the concept masterplan includes the south end. The south end provides good views across Lake Charm. Future development of the south end would increase the amenity and improve conditions for investment in redevelopment.

#### SERVICE CENTRE/GENERAL STORE

The current service centre and general store is in need of activation, refurbishment or redevelopment. There is opportunity for this site to capture a greater proportion of vehicles travelling along the Murray Valley Highway, as well as provide local convenience goods to the local population and visitors.

If this site is restricted for development, Council may wish to investigate potential alternative sites for this opportunity.

#### VEHICLE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Current access arrangements to Lake Charm from the Murray Valley Highway are poor. There is no right hand turn lane to Lake Charm East Road and the right turning lane on Benjeroop-Lake Charm Road follows a bend on the Murray Valley Highway and could require modification.

There is also no left turning lane to Lake Charm East Road or Benjeroop Lake Charm Road. It is recommended these key intersections are reviewed by a Traffic Engineer.

#### SHARED PATH

A new shared path which connects key activity nodes along the Lake Charm Foreshore is proposed. This would be a shared path for both walking and cycling. A shared path along the western shoreline would increase access to the public to the waterfront and provide increased opportunity for recreation.

Key destinations to link through early works would include the South West Precinct and the South End precinct. The trail could eventually provide a looped walk/cycle around the lake.

The shared path could also be extended to other areas, including potentially linking to other lakes and towns (Kerang, Koondrook and Cohuna).

The shared path could include interpretive signage or interactive elements relating to local flora and fauna and indigenous history. The shared path could also include introduction of strategically located exercise stations around Lake Charm.

The potential location and alignment of the shared path/trail would need to be assessed in further detail.

#### SIGNAGE

Lake Charm is largely obscured from view when travelling along the Murray Valley Highway. Strategic and effective signage is required on the Highway to notify visitors of key activity / recreation nodes. This could be implemented in line with future development of key precincts.

#### RECREATION RESERVE

The recreation reserve located to the west of Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan park is a strategic piece of land which may present opportunity for future tourism and recreation development. There is currently a walking trail around the reserve, which could be improved. Other opportunities could also be explored for this piece of land such as a mountain bike park.

A golf course was mentioned through consultation as a potential opportunity for this site. An 18-hole golf course typically requires around 120-180 acres of land. The

recreation reserve has approximately 65 acres of useable land, making it insufficient for an 18-hole course. Other golfing opportunities raised through consultation include a small 9-hole course, driving range or “hole in one” course, however, these proposals would need to be commercially viable in order to be achievable, including the attraction of a willing developer and operator.

### **8.7.2. SOUTH WEST**

#### **MULTIPURPOSE PAVILION**

There is opportunity for a multipurpose pavilion to be located within the South West Precinct, which could be utilised for a number of uses including hosting events (Ski-Racing Victoria), a seasonal café/takeaway kiosk store (which could be operated by the caravan park owners/managers) or a kitchenette for self-catering events, toilets/showers/changerooms, kayak/canoe/paddle board hire and a private function and events space that could be leased out for private functions (weddings, birthdays) and commercial events.

This hub would strengthen this precinct as a key activity node and assist in attracting other events to the Lake.

This opportunity is also provided for within the Kangaroo Lake foreshore masterplan. Two potential locations have been provided in these masterplans to ensure the highest potential opportunity in securing a permanent space for Ski-Racing Victoria to ensure continued events in the lakes area as well as improving the facilities available to locals and visitors.

There may be opportunity to explore the development of a multipurpose pavilion to also include the power boat club. This may then open up potential foreshore land for other uses such as glamping or high-quality cabin sites on the lake front. The pavilion could also be utilised as an opportunity to deliver amenities servicing the caravan park.

#### **JETTY/SAFE SWIMMING AREA AND FORESHORE PARK**

A jetty and safe swimming area is proposed to be located within the northern area of the precinct. This would provide a designated area for passive activities (i.e. not powerboating or water skiing). The safe swimming area would link to the open foreshore park area with a new children’s playground, providing a more family friendly environment. The playground could utilise natural materials to blend with the foreshore environment and create a unique play area.

#### **ACCESS AND CAR PARKING FORMALISATION**

The current access and car parking arrangements within the South West precinct are not well defined. The concept masterplan provides for the formalisation of access and car parking areas, including provision of overflow car parking areas in peak periods. Signage/road markings are required to appropriately direct visitors and users to areas within the precinct.

#### **RECREATION FACILITIES**

The current tennis courts and cricket nets within the south west precinct are in very poor condition. The concept masterplan provides for the opportunity to reinvigorate this area for recreation use including publicly accessible tennis courts and a multipurpose court area (basketball/netball/rebound wall). Hard surfaces could be used so the areas are low maintenance. This area would provide an additional area of recreation activity for visitors to the caravan park and Lake Charm, including the family market.

There may be potential for the caravan park to assist in management of the improved recreation facilities.

### 8.7.3. SOUTH END

#### VISITOR ACTIVITY AND SERVICING NODES

The south end is currently limited in provision of visitor infrastructure. There is opportunity to establish visitor activity nodes along the south end foreshore which cater to more passive lake users and visitors including for swimming, BBQs, picnics, fishing, kayaking/canoeing.

Visitor activity nodes could include car parking, toilets (environmentally friendly), seating, BBQs, safe water access, and fishing platforms/kayak launching areas.

The maintenance of the foreshore should be improved to include well kept open grass areas within the activity nodes and new tree plantings along the foreshore to provide shade, improve visual amenity and improve environmental outcomes.

The south end could be serviced by a shared walking/cycling path, which links to other key destinations along the foreshore.

As is the case at Kangaroo Lake, there is opportunity for the South End to be utilised as a hub for kayakers and canoers exploring the Kerang Wetlands system in particular Third, Middle and Reedy Lakes. Kayak/canoe launching areas as well as information relating to accessible areas and kayak trails could be developed to strengthen this location as a hub for this activity.



NEW PICNIC TABLES IN FORESHORE AREAS



BOLARDS IMPLEMENTED IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS TO PROTECT FORESHORE



KAYAK LAUNCHING



ROADWAY DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE



MULTIPURPOSE PAVILION



NEW/UPGRADED TIMBER JETTIES



FAMILY PARK AREA WITH NATURAL PLAY ELEMENTS

## 9. MURRAY RIVER PRECINCT, KOONDROOK

### 9.1. OVERVIEW

The Murray River Precinct in Koondrook is located on the north-eastern edge of the town, bordering the Murray River and intersecting with the Gunbower Creek. The precinct stretches from the Arbuthnot Sawmill in the north to a proposed nature-based tourism hub on the Gunbower Creek in the east. The retail centre of Koondrook abuts the precinct.

Council has undertaken significant work in Koondrook to promote the town as a tourism destination, which will also support new commercial and residential investment. Recent projects include the Koondrook Wharf, which opened in late 2016 and the proposed Nature Based Tourism hub on the Gunbower Creek.

Koondrook is characterised by its heritage and river and creek environs. Its setting, character and strategic location lends itself to tourism development, particularly catering to holiday and leisure visitors.

Koondrook is strategically located adjacent to the Gunbower Island and State Park, which caters to nature-based visitors including for camping, bird watching, water-based activities (fishing/kayaking/canoeing), trail riding and hiking. The masterplan precinct therefore has a strong role in supporting and leveraging growth in these activities and associated visitor markets.

The Murray River Precinct at Koondrook has a very strong foundation to attract increased visitation and activity. The recent completion of the Wharf, impending development of the Nature Based Tourism Hub and new river crossing, proposed development of the former Goods Shed and existing infrastructure and setting make it an attractive proposition for new tourism investment. The key will be to activate the Precinct to provide a critical mass of activities to drive visitation, extended length of stay and expenditure.

A context map of Koondrook is provided on the following page.



## 9.2. PLANNING

The following provides a summary of the zones and overlays which apply to the Murray River precinct at Koondrook. Maps of the zones and overlays for each precinct are provided on the following pages.

### ZONES

The non-commercial areas along the Murray River Precinct in Koondrook are primarily zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). Other zones include the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z), relating to the town centre, the Special Use Zone (SUZ4) relating to the caravan park and the SUZ3 relating to the Arbutnot Red Gum Sawmill. Areas surrounding the precinct are primarily residential properties in the General Residential Zone (GRZ1).

### OVERLAYS

The precinct is subject to various overlays. An Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO1) affects areas around the Gunbower Creek. A large portion of the precinct and the Town Centre is subject to Heritage Overlay (HO14 and HO13). The majority of the precinct is also affected by a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO).

FIGURE 11 KOONDROOK ZONES



### 9.3. OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

#### OWNERSHIP

The land fronting the Murray River and land in the Gunbower Creek environs is Crown Land. Land in the south-east of the precinct forms part of the Murray River Reserve.

#### MANAGEMENT

Parks Victoria have given over responsibility to Gannawarra Shire Council to act as the committee of management for publicly owned land along the Murray River frontage in the precinct.

The Gunbower Forest is managed by Parks Victoria and DELWP.

The Murray River Reserve is managed by Parks Victoria. The reserve is required to be managed in accordance with management objectives derived from recommendations of the former Land Conservation Council (LCC), including:

- Provide opportunities for informal recreation (including camping) in a riverine environment for large numbers of people;
- Preserve and protect ecosystems to the extent that is consistent with the above;
- Apiculture be permitted;
- Allow flood mitigation and streambank protection;
- Use of existing and licensed pump and pump-line sites be permitted to continue;
- Hunting of game birds be permitted during the declared hunting period in areas specified by the land manager where conflict with other recreational users such as camping does not occur; and
- Stock access to water and grazing be permitted at the discretion of the land manager where it is compatible with zone management goals (LCC, 1985).

Importantly the Gunbower State Forest provides for greater tourism opportunities as opposed to the Gunbower National Park.

### 9.4. EXISTING CONDITIONS

An existing conditions plan for the Koondrook waterfront is provided on the following page with descriptions following.



## USES AND ACTIVITIES

- **Koondrook Wharf** – Completed in late 2016, the Koondrook Wharf is a significant asset on the waterfront and can be utilised for boating access, recreational fishing, a lookout point, seating, canoe/kayak launching and for special events.
- **Arbuthnot Sawmill** – The Arbuthnot Sawmill is a unique asset to the Koondrook riverfront area. The Sawmill has supplied red gum timber since 1889. A working river red gum sawmill, the operating sounds of the sawmill contribute to the heritage feel of the precinct. Visitors can undertake a guided tour of the sawmill, on a raised platform that overlooks the mill in operation. The Port of Echuca is home to a paddle steamer named after the founder of the Mill, Alexander Arbuthnot.
- **Former Railway Goods Shed** – The precinct includes a former railway goods shed. The Good Shed is not currently utilised, however, there are future plans for its revitalisation for a café/restaurant/events space.
- **Walking Track** – A walking and cycling track traverses the precinct, along the Murray River frontage. The track is part of the Koondrook Barham Red Gum Statue River Walk, which includes wood carvings of wildlife and people of significance to the region.
- **Apex Park** – Apex Park is central to the precinct, located between Punt Road to the west, the Murray River to the east, Arbuthnot Sawmill to the north and the former Railway Goods Shed to the south. It includes the following:
  - Open grassed Areas;
  - Two playgrounds (fenced and unfenced);
  - BBQ pavilion;
  - Picnic tables and seating;
  - Raised red gum platform; and
  - Outdoor exercise Equipment.
- **Accommodation** – There are two accommodation providers in the precinct including the Koondrook Caravan Park and Murray Waters Motor Inn and Apartments. The caravan park is Council owned and leased to a private operator.

The Murray Waters accommodation establishment includes 18 motel rooms. The future NBT hub will include six glamping sites.

- **Boating** – A boat ramp is located in the eastern part of the precinct, providing boat launching and trailer parking. The river and creek are used for recreational boating and fishing.
- **Fishing** – Fishing can be undertaken from the Koondrook Wharf, from the shoreline or from boats.
- **Commercial Properties** – Commercial properties located along Tramway Place, Punt Road and Main Street are included in the precinct area. These include properties occupied by the Arbuthnot Sawmill, the Murray Waters Accommodation establishment and General Store.
- **Small Houseboats** – small houseboats utilise the Koondrook waterfront, however, there are no formal mooring points.

## SURROUNDING USES AND LINKAGES

- **Town Centre** – The precinct is a part of the Koondrook town centre. The main active commercial area is at the north end of Main Street, this area includes the Mates Royal Hotel, café, post office, general store and accommodation establishment. The town centre provides a highly important connection to the river front precinct. This includes through leveraging commercial opportunities, visitor expenditure in town as well as providing possible sites for commercial interventions.
- **Residential** – The town of Koondrook encircles the river front precinct. As of 2016, the suburb had a population of 991 people.
- **Barham** – Barham is located on the north side of the Murray River in NSW. The town centre is located approximately 1.25 kilometres north of the riverfront precinct. Barham is a larger town centre than Koondrook and includes two small supermarkets, two pubs, other speciality stores and accommodation. Barham provides a higher level of service provision to Koondrook residents than is provided in Koondrook.
- **Gunbower Island and State Forest** – Gunbower Island is situated between Torrumbarry and Koondrook and is bounded by the Murray River and Gunbower Creek. The island consists of Gunbower National Park and Gunbower State

Forest. The island is Australia's largest inland island, providing a rich natural environment and a popular destination for nature based tourists and campers. Activities include fishing, bushwalking, camping and canoeing. The area is highly important to Aboriginal people. The local Barapa Barapa tribe occupied the site for thousands of years. Evidence of Aboriginal occupation can be found in the various scar trees cooking mounds and middens.

Importantly, the Gunbower State Forest provides for potential implementation of tourism activities and infrastructure, whilst the National Park can be more restrictive to tourism development.

There are some specific notable sites within the Gunbower Island, including:

- **Tree Tops Camp Cohuna** – Tree Tops (Spences Bridge Road, Cohuna) is located approximately 12.5 kilometres south of Koondrook on the Gunbower Creek and provides camping accommodation. It is strategically located between Koondrook and Cohuna. The camp includes a function space, which is regularly booked out for parties and functions.
- **Former Stock Yards** – There is a large area of cleared land approximately 1 kilometre south-east of the riverfront, which was previously used for stock grazing.
- **Echuca** – Echuca is located approximately 76 kilometres south-east of Koondrook. Koondrook is linked to the Echuca riverfront precinct, in part due to the Arbuthnot paddlesteamer.

## EXISTING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

- **Nature Based Tourism Hub** – A nature-based tourism hub is proposed to the south-east of the precinct, fronting Gunbower Creek. The hub will include glamping style tents, a camp kitchen and canoe platform. The project will also provide a footbridge over the Gunbower Creek, providing visitors with access to the internal tracks and trails of the Gunbower State Forest. The concept received a \$600,000 state government grant in 2017. The concept is expected to support a range of existing and new tourism initiatives, such as potential paddle steamer operation from Koondrook Wharf, kayak tours and events.

- **Goods Shed** – There is currently a proposal to convert the former Goods Shed into a restaurant/function space. This is currently in the early concept design phase.
- **Other proposals** – include an Arts Precinct, function centre and boat cruises.

## CIRCULATION

- **Access Point** – The precinct is generally accessed via road from Punt Road and Main Street. The precinct can also be accessed on foot from the north, which takes you via the Arbuthnot Sawmill. The precinct is also accessible from the water, both at the Koondrook Wharf, along the banks and at the Koondrook boat ramp.
- **Roads** – Punt Road provides the main north south road, aligning to the Murray River frontage along Apex Park. Punt Road connects to Main Street, which is the main avenue of the town. Tramway Place also traverses the waterfront area to the east.
- **Pedestrians/cycling** – Pedestrians and cyclists can utilise the track along the river frontage (Koondrook Barham Red Gum Statue River Walk) and tracks throughout Gunbower Island, including for mountain biking/bushwalking.
- **Car parking** – Formalised on street car parking is provided on Punt Road and on Main street. There is informal car parking on Tramway Place, which services users of the boat ramp as well as fishermen.

## BUILDINGS AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Koondrook Wharf** – including seating, viewing platforms and jetty;
- **Boat Ramp** – located at the juncture of Gunbower Creek and Murray River;
- **Playgrounds** – Two children's playgrounds, one fenced, one unfenced;
- **BBQ Pavilion** – large BBQ pavilion in Apex Park;
- **Arbuthnot Sawmill** – Working red gum sawmill;
- **Walking Track** – along the riverfront and through Apex Park, includes red gum carvings of local figures of historical significance and flora and fauna;
- **Former Goods Shed** – former Goods Shed located to the south of the Wharf;

- **Toilets** – public toilets, located on the south side of Arbuthnot Street;
- **Red gum stage/platform** – A raised red gum timber platform in Apex Park used as a stage during events;
- **Koondrook Caravan Park** – including 8 ensuite sites, powered and unpowered caravan sites, amenities block and two electric BBQ areas.
- **Signage** – There are a number of interpretive signs throughout the precinct, however, there is no consistent theme. Other interpretive items include the sculptures as part of the River Red Gum Walk.

### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- **River Red Gums** – The precinct is overwhelmingly defined by river red gums including along the river frontage and throughout the Gunbower Island, the Arbuthnot Red Gum Sawmill, the Koondrook Barham Red Gum Statue River Walk and the wharf, stage, seating and pavilions constructed in river red gum timber.
- **The Murray River and Gunbower Creek** – The Murray River and Gunbower Creek provide the water element to this precinct, dissecting the forest and providing relief and contrast to the dense forest.

### VIEWS AND VISTAS

The most rewarding views in this precinct are those of the Murray River and Gunbower Creek. These are achieved along the river and creek fronts as well as from strategic locations, such as the Koondrook Wharf.

**KOONDRUCK SITE PHOTOS**



**FORMER GOODS SHED PROPOSED TO BE REDEVELOPED AS A RESTAURANT AND FUNCTION SPACE.**



**FORMER CHURCH (LEFT) AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING (RIGHT).**



**EXERCISE EQUIPMENT IN APEX PARK.**



**FORMER CHURCH ON MAIN STREET, WITH PROPOSAL TO CONVERT TO ACCOMMODATION AND OUTDOOR WEDDING SPACE.**



**NATURE BASED TOURISM HUB LOCATION ON THE GUNBOWER CREEK.**



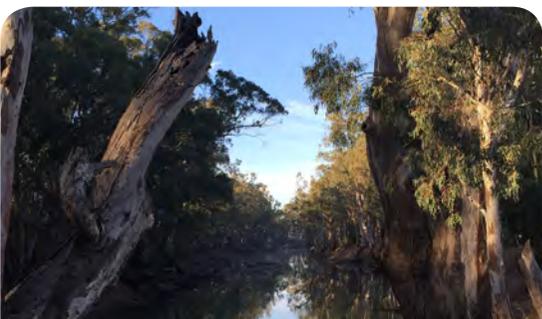
**BOAT RAMP PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE GUNBOWER AND MURRAY RIVER.**



**UNFENCED PLAYGROUND IN APEX PARK.**



**GUNBOWER CREEK CROSSING.**



**MORNING VIEW DOWN THE GUNBOWER CREEK.**



**ARBUTHNOT SAWMILL - VIEW OF OPERATIONS FROM ELEVATED VISITOR PLATFORM.**



**VIEW TOWARD MOTEL (RIGHT) AND CARAVAN PARK BEYOND. WALKING TRACK BLENDS WITH THE ROAD AND CAR PARKING IS NOT CLEARLY DEFINED.**



**FENCED PLAYGROUND IN APEX PARK.**



**KOONDRUCK WHARF ON THE MURRAY RIVER.**



**ALEXANDER ARBUTHNOT, FOUNDER OF THE ARBUTHNOT SAWMILL AS PART OF THE STATUE RIVER WALK.**



**ROYAL MATES HOTEL ON MAIN STREET.**



**VIEW OF THE KOONDRUCK WHARF. USE OF RAW MATERIALS STEEL, RIVER RED GUM AND CONCRETE.**

## 9.5. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

The following provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Koondrook river front precinct.

### Strengths:

- Existing infrastructure and tourism assets, including the wharf, Murray River, Gunbower Creek, accommodation providers, hospitality venues (pub and café), Arbuthnot Sawmill, River Red Gum Statue Walk.
- Pending tourism infrastructure investment including nature-based tourism (NBT) hub (including Creek crossing), former Goods Shed redevelopment, Arbuthnot Sawmill interest in further developing tours of the Sawmill.
- River Red Gum character and natural setting.
- Links to Gunbower Island and National Park.
- Relationship with Barham for higher order goods and services.
- Heritage character of town.
- Well maintained parkland setting.
- Quality design aesthetic of new infrastructure (Wharf development).
- Council is committee of management for riverfront area.

### Weaknesses:

- Realisation of commercial opportunities associated with wharf development. The newly constructed wharf does not contain power or sullage, which restricts the use of the wharf for commercial operations, such as overnight tours and cruises.
- Some commercial properties could be further activated, particularly along Arbuthnot Street. There may also be a need to drive additional visitation to the precinct through complementary product to the nature based and recreation activities on offer.
- Legislative requirements associated with new activities and infrastructure proposed for the Murray River and Gunbower Creek.

- Diversity of food and beverage offer.
- Directional and wayfinding signage linked to walking trails.
- Some areas of Apex Park can appear cluttered, this is a result of a number of built structures including two playgrounds, gym equipment, BBQ pavilion, red gum stage platform.
- Delineation of car parking areas near the boat ramp.
- Walking trails are 'out and back' no loops.
- There is currently no pedestrian connection to Gunbower Island in close proximity to the precinct. The nearest connection is via Island Road. This is proposed to be resolved through the Koondrook Nature Based Hub concept.
- Seasonality. The precinct, like many other tourism destinations draws its peak visitation through the holiday periods.

### Opportunities:

- Guided tours of Arbuthnot sawmill through investment in enabling infrastructure, including access and viewing platform.
- Activation and utilisation of former Goods Shed as a restaurant and events space with outdoor dining as well as potential tours and visitor servicing hub.
- Commercial activation of Koondrook Wharf for commercial operators.
- Linkages to walking and cycling tracks through Gunbower State Forest including the potential for looped tracks (short walks and long walks) and mountain bike park.
- Improved amenity and presentation in Apex Park.
- Exploration of new visitor attractions to complement existing product.
- Wayfinding and interpretive signage.
- Enhance river red gum themes.
- Activation of commercial properties and existing heritage buildings e.g. Butter Factory Border Packers.
- Extract economic benefit through local expenditure.
- Mooring points for houseboats on the Gunbower Creek and Murray River.
- Delineation of car parking areas.

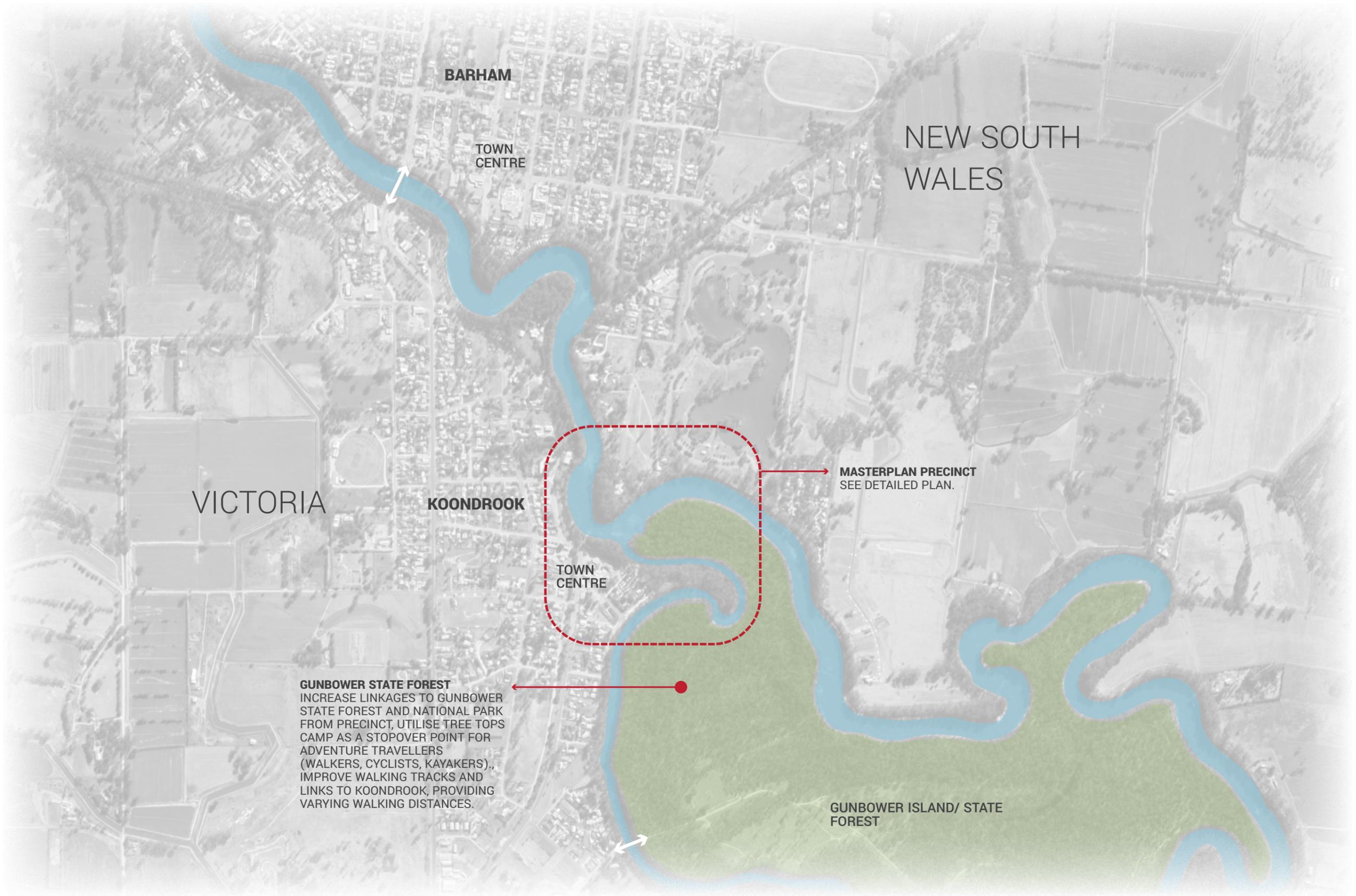
- Leverage opportunities for solar power to link to nature-based branding of Koondrook.
- Future redevelopment of caravan park and creation of strategic development sites.

**Threats:**

- River and creek bank erosion.
- River and creek accessibility due to low water levels.
- External threats (policy) to Arbuthnot river red gum Sawmill operations.
- Attraction of quality and experienced operators for tourism assets, including NBT hub and goods shed redevelopment.

## **9.6. CONCEPT MASTERPLAN**

Two concept masterplans have been prepared for the Murray River Precinct. The first is a broader opportunities plan, whilst the second, more detailed concept masterplan relates to the Koondrook waterfront area.



BARHAM

TOWN CENTRE

NEW SOUTH WALES

VICTORIA

KOONDROOK

TOWN CENTRE

MASTERPLAN PRECINCT  
SEE DETAILED PLAN.

**GUNBOWER STATE FOREST**  
INCREASE LINKAGES TO GUNBOWER STATE FOREST AND NATIONAL PARK FROM PRECINCT, UTILISE TREE TOPS CAMP AS A STOPOVER POINT FOR ADVENTURE TRAVELLERS (WALKERS, CYCLISTS, KAYAKERS), IMPROVE WALKING TRACKS AND LINKS TO KOONDROOK, PROVIDING VARYING WALKING DISTANCES.

GUNBOWER ISLAND/ STATE FOREST





ELEVATED PLATFORM  
ACCESS TO SAWMILL  
FROM RIVERSIDE  
TRACK

TIDY UP OF PARK  
AREA, NEW SHELTERED  
BBQ AREAS, REMOVE  
REDUNDANT  
EQUIPMENT

EXISTING HERITAGE  
BUILDINGS RETAINED  
AND ADAPTED TO NEW  
USES

MOORINGS

UPGRADE WHARF  
SERVICING (POWER,  
PUMP-OUT POINT)

ROAD, PATH,  
CAR PARKING  
FORMALISATION

GOODS SHED  
REFURBISHMENT (DINING/  
FUNCTION SPACE)  
+ INCORPORATION OF  
CANOE/BIKE HIRE FACILITY

ALL ABILITIES  
PLAY SPACE

OPPORTUNITY SITES  
FOR COMMERCIAL  
REDEVELOPMENT

PEDESTRIAN  
FRIENDLY ZONE

LONG TERM  
STRATEGIC  
COMMERCIAL  
REDEVELOPMENT  
SITES

UPGRADES TO  
EXISTING CARAVAN  
PARK, INCLUDING  
WATERSIDE CABINS

VIEWING DECK/FISHING  
PLATFORM

WALKING TRAIL

MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK AND  
TRAIL

FUTURE STRATEGIC  
REDEVELOPMENT SITE

CAR AND BOAT  
TRAILER PARKS

MOORINGS

PEDESTRIAN  
BRIDGE  
CROSSING

CANOE  
LAUNCHING AREA

NATURE BASED  
TOURISM HUB

NEW WALKING  
TRACK

## 9.7. KEY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

### WHARF ACTIVATION

Activation of the wharf is a key project for Koondrook. The wharf was completed in 2016, however requires power and sullage to enable commercial vessels to operate from the wharf. Upgrading the services on the wharf would enable Koondrook to become a starting point or stop off point for boat tours along the Murray River, including the potential for paddle steamer tours.

### GOODS SHED REFURBISHMENT/DEVELOPMENT

The former Goods Shed presents a strong opportunity for refurbishment and development. The Goods Shed is a heritage building and is strategically located near the Wharf and at the northern terminus of Main Street.

There is potential for the wharf to be converted to a restaurant, function and events space. This could include an outdoor component, which would enhance the attractiveness as a dining and event space.

There is also opportunity for the Goods Shed to become a hub for other tourist activities in the precinct such as a servicing point for tours along the Murray, a canoe/kayak and bike hire facility and a small visitor information presence. The feasibility of this opportunity would need to be investigated in more detail. However, the Nature Based Tourism Hub may also provide an alternative location for the incorporation of a kayak/canoe hire facility.

### NATURE BASED TOURISM HUB + PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE CROSSING

The Nature Based Tourism (NBT) Hub is progressing to implementation and designs are underway for the development of a pedestrian crossing along the Gunbower Creek.

The NBT hub will deliver six glamping sites on the Gunbower Creek. This will attract new visitor markets to Koondrook and increase market opportunities for new tourism product.

The development of the pedestrian bridge crossing over the Gunbower Creek is a major piece of infrastructure that will connect Koondrook to Gunbower Island, opening opportunities for new tourism product such as walking/cycling trails, birdwatching, hiking and mountain bike park (discussed further below).

### MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL PARK AND LINKS TO EXISTING TRAILS

There is opportunity to investigate the development of a mountain bike park on the Gunbower Island/State Forest Area in Koondrook. A mountain bike park would increase the attraction of Koondrook to the cyclist and adventure tourist market and make Koondrook a hub for this activity.

The Five Mile Mountain Bike Trail in the Murray Valley Regional Park in NSW provides a good example of this product type. The trail is 7km and is a purpose built trail.

A mountain bike park on Gunbower Island could provide a loop back to Koondrook as well as link up with existing trails in the Gunbower State Forest and National Park and link to Cohuna for those riders wishing to undertake a more extensive ride.

The Tree Tops Camp in Cohuna would provide a natural stopping, servicing and rest point for riders.

There is also opportunity for riders between Koondrook and Cohuna to switch modes of travel and convert to kayaking or canoeing from Tree Tops to Cohuna.

Supporting Koondrook as a hub for cycling of different types will also assist in the potential future to develop the Koondrook to Kerang rail trail and support the potential for mountain bike and other adventure sport events between Koondrook and Cohuna.

A feasibility study would be required to progress this opportunity including assessing appropriate locations, trail design and length and development cost.

### WALKING TRAILS

The proposed pedestrian bridge crossing over the Gunbower Creek creates opportunities for new walking trails to be developed on Gunbower Island. New walking tracks could commence in Koondrook and link back to Koondrook. The

walking track could include interpretive signage of natural flora and fauna, indigenous history and interpretation (scarred trees on Gunbower Island) and settlement history.

There could be a small elevated boardwalk near the creek crossing which is above flood water level. This would create a unique attraction when the Gunbower water level is high.

There is also opportunity to incorporate viewing platforms/lookout points which bring visitors to the waters' edge of the Murray River.

### **ALL ABILITIES PLAY SPACE**

An all abilities adventure playspace is proposed for the former Hall site. The hall was recently demolished, providing a piece of vacant Council owned land near the foreshore. The site is adjacent to the toilets, car parking and existing businesses.

An all abilities play space would be a good community asset and provide an activity for the family market.

The development of an all abilities play space would reduce the need for the two playgrounds on the foreshore area. Providing opportunity to increase the foreshore area to host public events such as markets, events, creation of picnic areas and development of new BBQ pavilions.

### **PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS**

Public realm improvements are proposed for the Koondrook waterfront areas including the alignment and formalisation of roads, footpaths, car parking areas, new plantings, raised garden beds and pedestrian friendly zones.

New public realm improvements could be delivered around the Goods Shed, providing an open terrace area, with seating overlooking the Murray River and wharf area. Contemporary lighting could activate this area at night and enhance the attraction as a dining/events space.

### **APEX PARK**

Improvements to Apex Park are also proposed including consolidation of the two play spaces to an all abilities playspace. There may be opportunity for a natural themed play space and improvements to amenities including seating, BBQ pavilions and open grass areas for picnics and events.

### **CARAVAN PARK**

The caravan park provides opportunity for future upgrade and redevelopment, including the potential for short stay cabin accommodation fronting the creek.

There may also be a long-term opportunity to consider the creation of a future strategic redevelopment site utilising some of the caravan park land with creek frontage.

### **ARBUTHNOT SAWMILL TOURS**

The Arbuthnot Sawmill is a unique attraction in Koondrook. Further promotion of the Arbuthnot Red Gum Sawmill for tourism is proposed, including through the introduction of an access ramp on the river side, connected to a new riverside track, providing access to the elevated platform within the Sawmill. This would enhance the tours of the mill, improve safety and formalise the sawmill tours in Koondrook.

### **BOAT MOORINGS**

The concept masterplan provides for new moorings within the Murray River and the Gunbower Creek to cater to houseboat visitors and cruise vessels. Enabling water vessels to stopover in Koondrook is a key consideration in attracting additional stopover and overnight stays in Koondrook.

### **EXTERNAL LINKS**

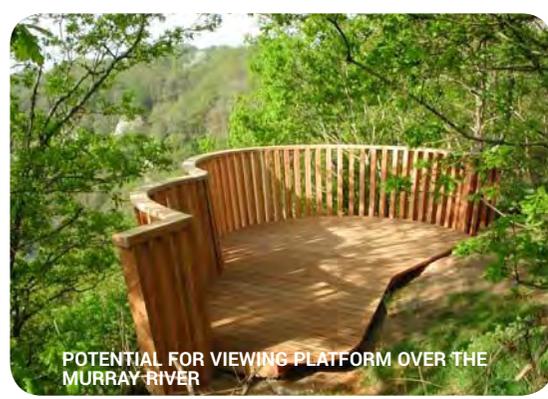
There is opportunity for Koondrook to better link to external tourism product and experiences including the Gunbower State Forest. Koondrook could be strengthened as a hub by improving the connections to the Gunbower, including new walking, cycling tracks, kayak/canoe trails and horse trails.

An area in the vicinity of Tree Tops Camp "area" could be considered for a halfway camp between Koondrook and Cohuna. This location could host unique accommodation options for nature based tourism enthusiasts.

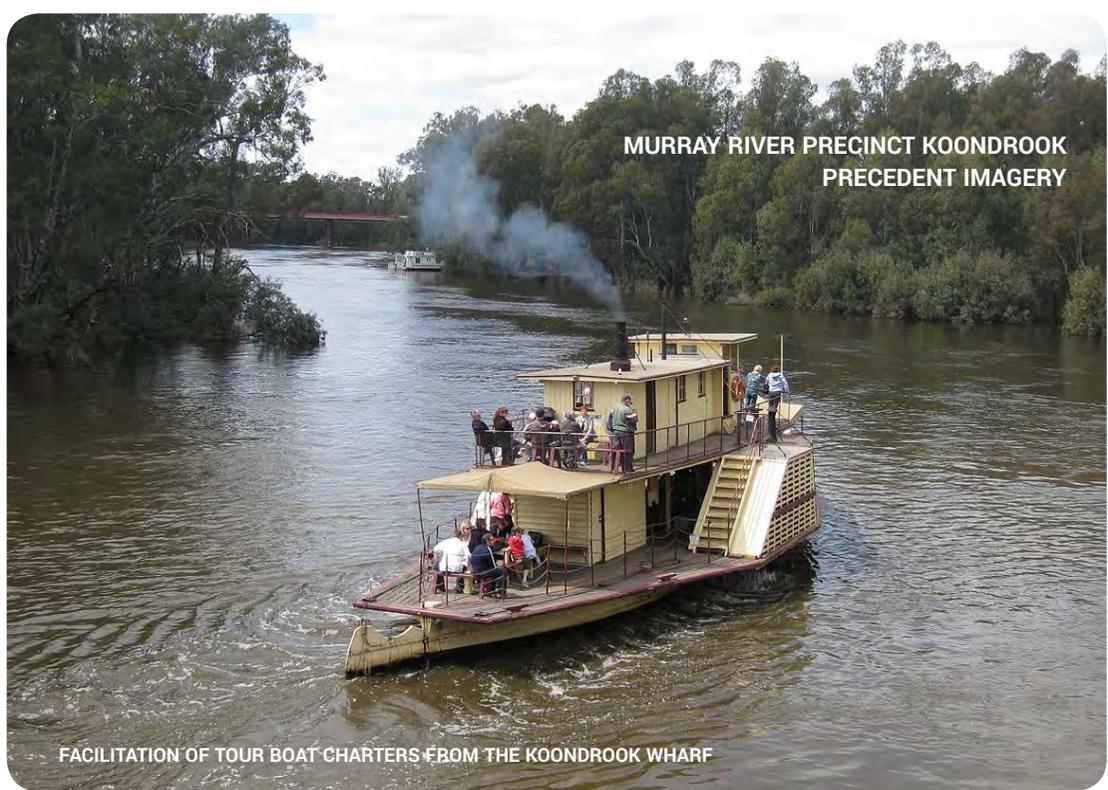
Strengthening Koondrook as a hub for cycling, kayaking/canoeing and hiking with appropriate infrastructure (trail heads, car parking, signage, facilities hire businesses) will assist development of this product.



ELEVATED PLATFORM TO ARBUTHNOT SAWMILL, CONNECTED TO RIVER SIDE TRACK



POTENTIAL FOR VIEWING PLATFORM OVER THE MURRAY RIVER



MURRAY RIVER PRECINCT KOONDROOK PRECEDENT IMAGERY

FACILITATION OF TOUR BOAT CHARTERS FROM THE KOONDROOK WHARF



POTENTIAL FOR GOODS SHED TO INCLUDE OUTDOOR DINING COMPONENT AS WELL AS PROVIDING AN EVENTS SPACE



RIVERSIDE SEATING



WAYFINDING SIGNAGE FOR WALKING TRACKS AND TRAILS



BOARDWALK TRAIL ABOVE FLOOD WATER LEVEL ON GUNBOWER ISLAND



FUTURE POTENTIAL FOR QUALITY CABINS AS PART OF CARAVAN PARK DEVELOPMENT



POTENTIAL MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK

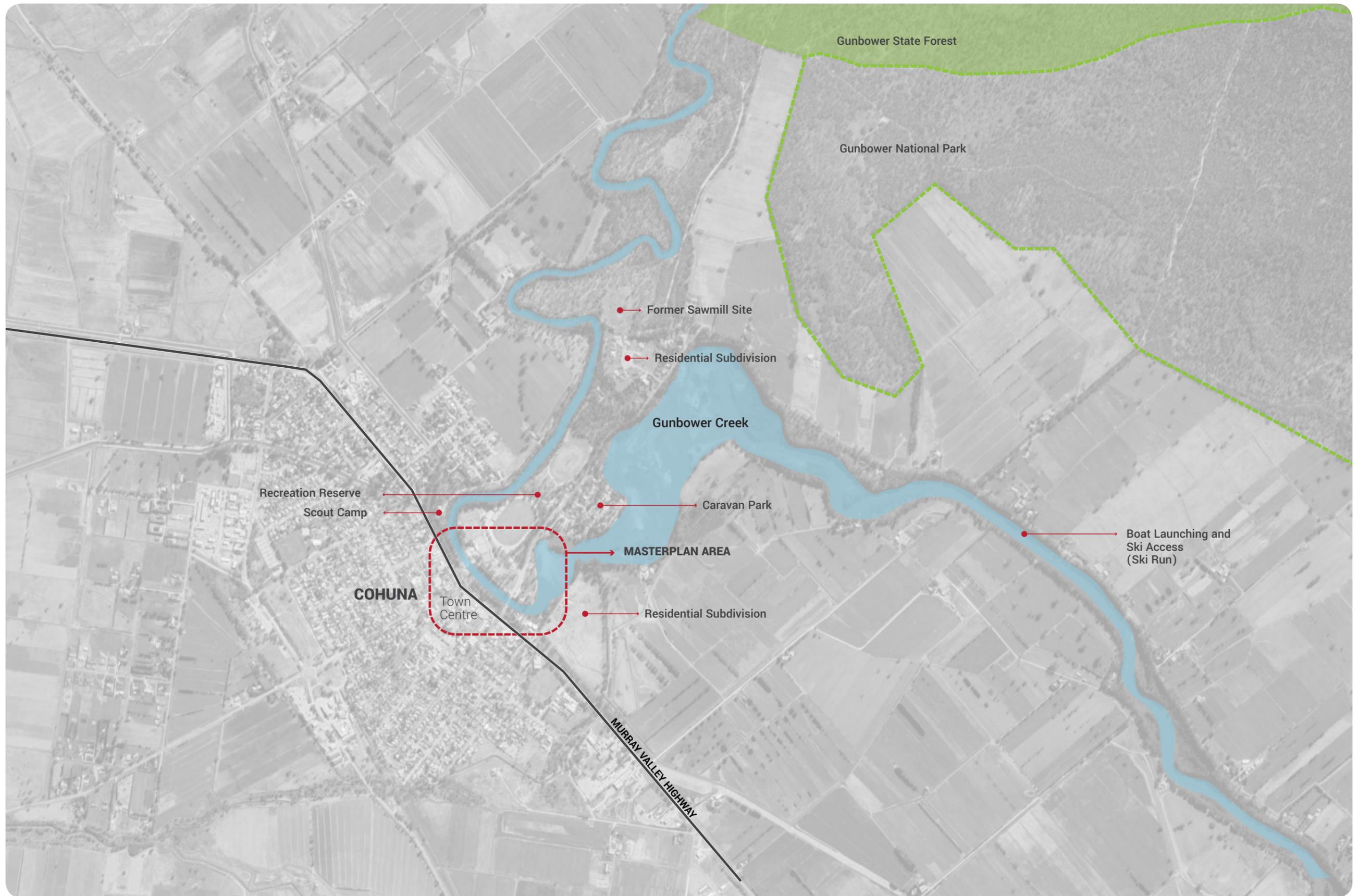
## 10. GUNBOWER CREEK PRECINCT, COHUNA

### 10.1. OVERVIEW

The Gunbower Creek precinct in Cohuna is located at the juncture of the commercial area of the town centre on the Murray Valley Highway and Gunbower Island. The key areas of the precinct include Garden Park, Apex Park and free RV Camping site. The precinct is generally bounded by the Cohuna Recreation Reserve in the north, the town centre in the south, the Cohuna Holiday Park in the north-east and the Murray Sound residential development site in the east.

The main street fronts the Gunbower Creek, providing striking visual amenity for the town centre. Cohuna has significant potential to grow its visitor economy and this precinct can play a key role in facilitating this growth.

A context map of Cohuna is provided on the following page.



## 10.2. PLANNING

The following provides a summary of the zones and overlays which apply to the Gunbower Creek Precinct at Cohuna.

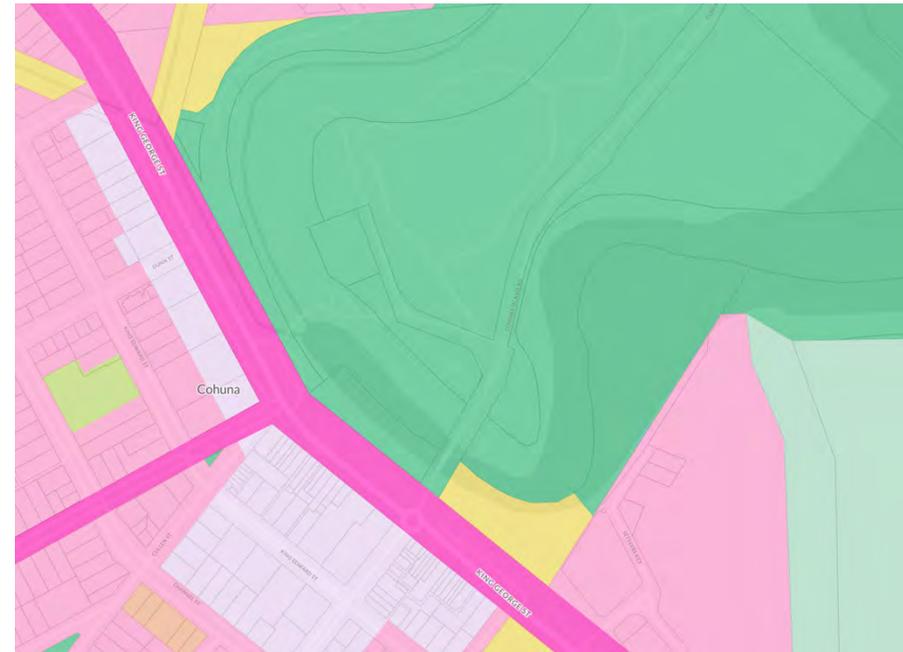
### ZONES

The precinct is primarily subject to the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) within the Gunbower Island area. The commercial areas in town are zoned Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z). These areas are surrounded by land in the General Residential Zone (GRZ).

### OVERLAYS

The precinct is covered extensively by the Environmental Significance Overlay, including ESO1, ESO2 and ESO4. The residential development to the east of the precinct is also subject to a Development Plan Overlay (DPO).

FIGURE 12 COHUNA ZONES MAP



### **10.3. OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **OWNERSHIP**

The majority of land in the precinct is Crown Land, particularly land north-east of the Murray Valley Highway covering the Gunbower Creek, parklands and recreation reserve.

Commercial and residential properties are in private ownership.

The Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre is owned and run by Council staff.

#### **MANAGEMENT**

Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) own and manage the water assets relating to the Gunbower Creek in the Cohuna precinct. GMW have advised that they are actively looking at options to increase revenue from assets that they manage. For proposed uses on the waterway, GMW would need to determine whether the proposal would impact on the waterway. If there is a proposal to operate a business on the water, GMW would enter into a lease or licence agreement with the business.

Council is the committee of Management of land fronting the Gunbower Creek, including Garden Park, Apex Park and the Cohuna Recreation Reserve. Council works with Goulburn Murray Water and other departments in management of the waterfront.

DELWP manage land further north of the Recreation Reserve, including the former Sawmill Site, which is currently leased to a private operator but is not currently occupied.

### **10.4. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

An existing conditions plan is provided on the following page and followed by descriptions.



## USES AND ACTIVITIES

- **Commercial Properties** – The precinct includes commercial properties located along the Murray Valley Highway. Commercial uses in this area include a supermarket, pub, tavern, café, banks, retailers and some restaurants.
- **Apex Park** – located on Gunbower Island, Apex Park includes open grassed areas, children’s playground, skate park, BBQ areas, swings and walking path. This area has an impressive and extensive view across Gunbower Creek.
- **Free RV Camping Area** – This large area is located on Gunbower Island, between Apex Park and the Cohuna Recreation reserve, fronting Gunbower Creek. It is currently utilised as an area for free RV parking. It has been used for free RV camping for approximately 18 months. It is steadily utilised throughout the year and is very popular in peak holiday periods.
- **Garden Park** – located between Gunbower Creek and the Murray Valley Highway, Garden Park includes native vegetation, seating, signage, the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre and sound shell. Garden Park is also utilised for events.
- **Cohuna the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre** (Gateway Cohuna) – Gateway Cohuna is located on the south side of Gunbower Creek. It is the official tourist information centre of Cohuna and is housed in a contemporary designed facility. The centre provides visitor information, hire of mountain bikes, fishing rods and has local produce for sale.
- **Walking Paths** – There are existing walking paths in the precinct, which loop as well as connect to tracks outside the precinct.
- **Gunbower Creek** – Gunbower Creek provides the water setting for the precinct, narrowing along the Murray Valley Highway frontage before opening to a large expanse of water to the east. The Gunbower Creek can dry out at certain times of the year, however, there are discussions of keeping the water level higher through the year.
- **Water Activities** – The area is popular for water activities including water skiing, kayaking, recreational boating and fishing.

## SURROUNDING USES AND LINKAGES

The precinct is surrounded or adjoins the following:

- **Cohuna Recreation Reserve** – Cohuna Recreation Reserve is located adjacent to the precinct. It includes two football/cricket ovals, bowls club, tennis club and swimming pool.
- **Cohuna Waterfront Holiday Park** – Cohuna Waterfront Holiday Park is located to the north-east of the precinct. The park includes a mix of cabins, annual sites, powered and unpowered sites. The park is well maintained. It includes a large number of annual sites, some powered sites and waterfront cabins.
- **Residential Development (East)** – There is a residential subdivision (Murray Sound) located to the east of Gunbower Creek with water frontage. The subdivision includes approximately 70 lots across the entire subdivision. There are currently 6 lots, which have been sold and houses either built or under construction.
- **Existing Residential** – The town centre is surrounded by existing residential areas.
- **Ski Run** – A boat launching area and ski-run on the Gunbower Creek is located approximately 2.7 kilometres east of the precinct. This is the main boat launching area in vicinity of the precinct and is highly popular with skiers.
- **Tree Tops Camp Cohuna** – Tree Tops (Spences Bridge Road, Cohuna) is located approximately 8.3 kilometres north-west of Cohuna on the Gunbower Creek and provides camping accommodation. It is strategically located between Cohuna and Koondrook. The camp includes a function space, which is regularly booked out for parties and functions.
- **Cohuna Golf Course** – Cohuna Golf Club is located approximately 3.8 kilometres north of the precinct. It is an 18-hole grass course.
- **Gunbower State Forest** – The Gunbower State Forest stretches from the north-west to the north east around Cohuna. It includes 4WD tracks, camping, fishing, swimming, boating and canoeing and scenic drives. Gunbower Forest Drive is a leisurely half day drive, starting at Cohuna, which links a number of historical, cultural and ecological sites.

- **Gunbower National Park** - The Gunbower National Park is largely located to the east of Cohuna and includes nature-based activities including camping, fishing, swimming, boating and canoeing and scenic drives.
- **Former Sawmill Site** – Located approximately 1.3km north east of the precinct adjacent to the Gunbower Creek is a site which was formerly used as a sawmill. The land is managed by DELWP and is leased to a commercial operator, however, the site is not in use. The site is primarily cleared of vegetation and includes some old remnant structures from the sawmill. The site is in the Public Resource and Conservation Zone (PRCZ), adjacent to a residential development in the General Residential Zone (GRZ). The cleared area of the site is approximately 2.5 hectares in area. The site may present a strategic opportunity as a visitor accommodation site in the medium to long term. However, potential issues relating to planning, existing leaseholds and management would need to be resolved.

## EXISTING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

There are plans for the redevelopment/upgrade of the toilets in Apex Park, which are located beside the skate park.

## CIRCULATION

- **Access Point** – Vehicle access to Gunbower Island is via Cohuna Island Road. This bridge also provides pedestrian access. The Cohuna Weir also provides pedestrian access across the creek to Gunbower Island.
- **Roads** – The Murray Valley Highway is the main arterial road, which separates the commercial area from the recreation area. Cohuna Island Road provides access from the town centre to Gunbower Island, as well as the caravan park and ski-run and boat launching area. Tennis Road provides access to the RV camping area, swimming pool, bowls club and tennis courts.
- **Pedestrians/cycling** – There are two walking tracks for pedestrians, one loops around Garden Park and the other around Apex Park. Cohuna Island Road bridge and the Cohuna weir provide pedestrian access across Gunbower Creek. Beyond the precinct, cyclists and walkers can use gravel roads which lead to the Gunbower State Forest and National Park.

## BUILDINGS AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

Buildings and other infrastructure on site includes the following:

- **Cohuna Gateway** – A contemporary designed tourist information centre, which also incorporates toilets and outdoor seating area.
- **Sound Shell** – There is a sound shell located in Garden Park, which is utilised when events are held in Garden Park.
- **BBQ Pavilions** – There are a number of BBQ pavilions located in Apex Park, which are ageing and dilapidated.
- **Walking Tracks** – There are some existing walking tracks in the precinct, including in Garden Park and Apex Park.
- **Playground** – a fenced children’s playground located at the northern end of Apex Park.
- **Skate Park** – a concrete skatepark located at the south end of Apex Park.
- **Car park** – There is on street parking along the Murray Valley Highway as well as a car park to the west of Gateway Cohuna, which also provides large vehicle bays. There is also a gravel car park servicing Apex Park.
- **Signage** – There are various signs in the precinct providing tourist information, Many are ageing and randomly located.
- **Seating** – There are various seats scattered in the precinct including picnic tables and standard bench seating.
- **Cohuna Weir** – The Cohuna weir was constructed in 2006 to replace the original weir built between 1908 and 1910. The weir controls the flow of water of the Gunbower Creek.

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The precinct is characterised by open grass areas with tall, established vegetation, particularly along the water frontage in Garden Park, creating an avenue along the Gunbower Creek. The precinct has a distinctive natural feel alongside the urban environment of the town centre.

## VIEWS AND VISTAS

Glimpses of the Gunbower Creek are achievable from the Murray Valley Highway, obscured by vegetation along the creek. Views are largely unobstructed alongside the creek. Views across Gunbower Creek to the east are particularly impressive from Apex Park.



VIEW ACROSS GUNBOWER CREEK TOWARD FREE RV CAMPING SITE.



COHUNA SWIMMING POOL ADJACENT TO GUNBOWER CREEK.

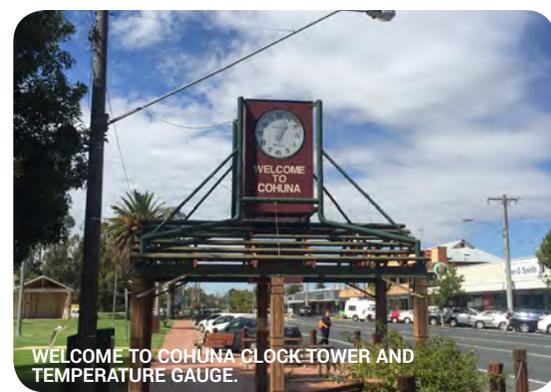


COHUNA GATEWAY TO GANNAWARRA TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE.



GUNBOWER CREEK PRECINCT COHUNA SITE PHOTOS

VIEW ACROSS GUNBOWER CREEK FROM APEX PARK.



WELCOME TO COHUNA CLOCK TOWER AND TEMPERATURE GAUGE.



FENCED PLAYGROUND IN APEX PARK.



ENTRANCE TO COHUNA RECREATION RESERVE (FOOTBALL/CRICKET OVALS AREAS).



SKATE PARK IN APEX PARK.



EXERCISE EQUIPMENT IN APEX PARK.



VIEW OF SOUND SHELL (RIGHT) AND WATER TOWER FROM GARDEN PARK.



VIEW EAST OF FREE RV CAMPING AREA (RIGHT) AND GUNBOWER CREEK (LEFT).



SKI RUN BOAT LAUNCHING AREA (OUTSIDE OF PRECINCT).



ENTRANCE ROAD TO RECREATION RESERVE.



FORMER SAWMILL SITE LOCATED NORTH OF THE PRECINCT.



GUNBOWER CREEK NORTH OF THE PRECINCT.



OLD AND NEW PARK AMENITIES IN APEX PARK.

## 10.5. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

The following provides a summary of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to the waterfront precinct at Cohuna.

### Strengths:

- Council is committee of management for the recreation reserve area, providing greater control over development outcomes.
- Unique nature-based setting of town, including creek and environs.
- Existing tourism information hub (Gateway to Gannawarra Tourism Information Centre).
- Well performing caravan park.
- Existing walking tracks and trails.
- Links to Gunbower State Forest and National Park.
- Existing tourism assets including Caravan Park, Ski-Run, Gunbower Creek, boat tours, kayak hire (summer).
- Strong destination for RV touring visitors.

### Weaknesses:

- Limited commercial accommodation (apart from Caravan Parks and free RV camping) that engages with the waterfront.
- Some ageing/dated accommodation stock.
- Limited engagement with creek through on water infrastructure including pontoons and jetties.
- Main pedestrian connection to Gunbower Island is via Cohuna Island Road, with secondary connection via weir.
- No engine driven boats allowed past Caravan Park. Tour and charter boats have a limited presence in town.
- No leveraging of creek frontage through commercial opportunities.
- Interface and relationship with Cohuna Recreation Reserve.
- No waterfront dining opportunities.

- Location of free RV camping site at prominent position of view line from town centre.
- Limited wayfinding and interpretive signage, particularly associated with walks from town.
- No private, commercial events space.
- Gaps in quality dining experiences.
- Facilities in Apex Park need improvement (BBQ Shelters, toilet block).
- Swimming pool has infrastructure issues, located adjacent to the Creek.
- Capacity issues of current ski-run area.

### Opportunities:

- Waterfront dining opportunities.
- New commercial accommodation on waterfront, exploring multiple potential sites and typologies.
- Potential for new replacement swimming pool for community and visitors.
- Linking and formalisation of tracks and trails, including wayfinding and interpretive signage.
- Increasing capacity of existing ski-run or creation of a new ski-run to increase potential ski market.
- Gateway entrance treatments to Gunbower Island.
- New children/teenager activities (expansion of skate park, flying fox, playspaces).
- Hub for tours and operators (charter boats, kayak/canoe/paddleboat hire).
- New unique pedestrian creek crossing.
- Leverage nature-based opportunities (star gazing, fishing, swimming, bird watching).
- Night time attractions.
- Relocation of RV camping site but maintain walking distance to Town.
- Accommodation.
- Linking and formalisation of walking tracks.

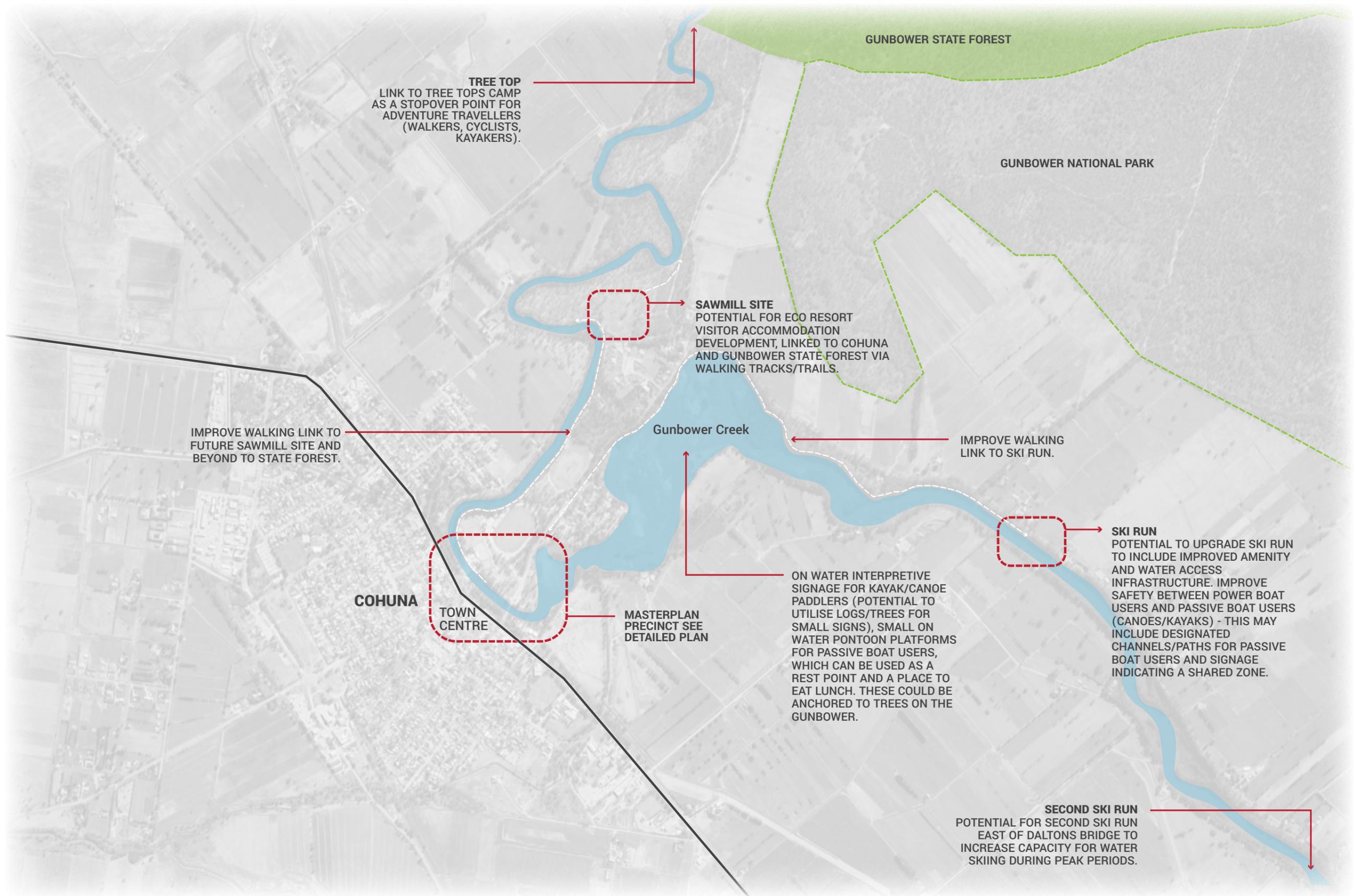
- Leverage 'solar' or green infrastructure opportunities (i.e. lighting, electric car recharge hub, sustainable designs, natural swimming pool).

**Threats:**

- Attraction of commercial investment in large scale accommodation.
- Regulatory issues surrounding implementation of some masterplan interventions.
- Capacity of caravan park for holiday and leisure visitors.
- Drought, affecting water levels of creek.
- Attraction of quality and experienced operators for key infrastructure investments/facilities.

## **10.6. CONCEPT MASTERPLANS**

Two concept masterplans have been prepared for the Cohuna waterfront. The first is a broader opportunities plan, whilst the second, more detailed concept masterplan relates to the Gunbower Creek precinct at Cohuna.





- LONG TERM RECONFIGURATION OF REC RESERVE AND NEW MULTIPURPOSE PAVILION
- POTENTIAL NEW OVAL ENTRY POINT
- NEW WALKING/ CYCLING TRACK LINKED TO GUNBOWER STATE FOREST
- FUTURE ROAD EXPANSION
- RV PARK SITE
- BOWLS CLUB/REC RESERVE POTENTIAL TO CONSIDER LONG TERM RELOCATION AND CREATION OF FUTURE WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT SITE
- ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION
- POTENTIAL 25M SWIMMING POOL SITE WITH SPLASH POOL & KIOSK (POTENTIAL NATURAL POOL)
- POTENTIAL INCORPORATION OF COFFEE KIOSK & GALLERY SPACE
- PEDESTRIAN RIVER CROSSING
- UPGRADE/RENEW GATEWAY (CLOCK) FEATURE, CREATE PED CROSSING TO CBD
- MAINTAIN GARDEN PARK FOR EVENTS (NIGHT TIME CINEMAS, PERFORMANCES, MARKETS)

- CARAVAN PARK
- POTENTIAL EXPANSION OF CARAVAN PARK TO THE SOUTH-WEST TO INCLUDE WATERFRONT CABINS
- FLYING FOX
- CANOE/KAYAK PLATFORMS/ INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
- UPGRADE/NEW PLAYGROUND
- WHARF AREA (RESTAURANT/CAFE & EVENTS SPACE, CHARTER BOAT TOURS, KAYAK/ PADDLE BOARD HIRE AND LAUNCHING)
- NATIVE GARDEN AND INTERACTIVE LANDSCAPE SPACE
- POTENTIAL BEACH (SAND) AREA
- SHELTERED BBQs
- NEW/FORMALISED CENTRAL CAR PARKING
- MULTIPURPOSE HALF COURT (BASKETBALL/ NETBALL)
- SKATE PARK UPGRADE (EXPANSION / SHADE COVER)
- GATEWAY ENTRANCE FEATURE/SIGNAGE



## 10.7. KEY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

### ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT

Cohuna has a lack of accommodation targeting some segments of the holiday leisure market (lifestyle leaders) and business visitors. The waterfront presents the opportunity to develop unique waterfront accommodation that fills a gap in the provision of accommodation.

The concept masterplan makes provision for a site for commercial accommodation development on Council managed land. This would enable Council to control the development outcomes, ensuring a quality result for the waterfront and Cohuna.

Accommodation on this site could be eco-style self-contained accommodation, which maximises views of the Gunbower Creek to the south, east and west.

The former Sawmill site also presents as a potential opportunity for accommodation development. This is discussed further under the Sawmill site opportunity.

### SWIMMING POOL

There is opportunity to consider relocating the community swimming pool within the foreshore area. The foreshore location has a number of benefits, including attracting tourists to the foreshore area during the summer months, providing a safe swimming area and activating the precinct. A small kiosk/café could be included as part of the swimming pool redevelopment.

Relocation of the swimming pool would enable new connections to be developed to the north east, including new walking trails.

There is potential to explore the opportunity of development of the pool as a natural pool, which uses natural processes through a regeneration pond to clean the water with no chemicals being required. This precinct would provide a unique attraction for visitors as well as a required piece of community infrastructure to replace the existing pool. However, a natural pool is likely to occupy a larger area, which may limit other opportunities such as accommodation development. It is also likely that development of a natural pool would be a significant investment.

### NATIVE GARDEN AND INTERACTIVE LANDSCAPE

A native garden and interactive landscape area is proposed to be located between the potential accommodation site and the potential swimming pool site. This space is based on the location of existing native trees in the precinct. It also provides a natural connection between the precinct and maintains view lines from Apex Park through the precinct.

### WHARF AREA

The concept masterplan includes the potential opportunity to develop a small wharf area in Apex Park. A new wharf area could include a restaurant/café, function and events space, visitor amenities, boat tour point and passive watercraft (kayaks/canoe/paddle boards). The proposed location provides outstanding views north-east across Gunbower Creek and can be accessed via watercraft, which would facilitate a boat tour hub as well as hire of kayaks and canoes. This area would also be an ideal location for the servicing of events such as swimming events, kayaking/canoeing events and triathlons. Facilities such as permanent storage for boat hire operators and toilets would be required.

### RV CAMP SITE

The free RV camping area is an important asset to Cohuna and is a heavily utilised space.

The concept masterplan proposes to relocate the free RV camping area to the north, utilising land as part of the recreation reserve. This would provide a location for free RV visitors within walking distance of the town centre. A combination of plantings and timber screening could be used around the perimeter of this space to improve its appearance.

There may also be opportunity to utilise the current entrance building/kiosk at the recreation reserve as an entry point to the RV camping area.

## **FUTURE EXPANSION OF COMMERCIAL AREAS / RECONFIGURATION OF RECREATION RESERVE**

The concept masterplan provides for the long term consideration of the relocation or reconfiguration of the recreation reserve (bowls/tennis) to enable future commercial development along the waterfront area. This would open up land for redevelopment, whilst providing new recreation facilities and infrastructure.

## **CARAVAN PARK CABIN ACCOMMODATION EXPANSION**

The caravan park is a popular park and is at capacity during the peak holiday. There may be opportunity in the short term to deliver new high-quality cabin accommodation on the south end of the caravan park, fronting Gunbower Creek. This location provides excellent views across the Gunbower and would assist in providing a short term solution to the provision of additional accommodation.

## **SAWMILL SITE ECO RESORT DEVELOPMENT**

As previously discussed, the former Sawmill Site, located 1.3km north-east of the precinct presents the opportunity for a strategic accommodation site. Cohuna currently has a significant accommodation gap. This site would enable the development of a unique resort accommodation offering in a nature-based setting close to the town centre. Different accommodation typologies could be established on this site and it has the potential to be staged. Linkages to the Sawmill site could also be improved including between the town, the State Forest and National Park.

It is likely that significant investment would be required to develop this site, including the attraction of a large operator. It is likely to be a longer-term strategic opportunity.

Potential issues relating to planning, existing leaseholds and management would need to be resolved in order to facilitate development of this site.

## **EXTERNAL LINKS**

There is opportunity for Cohuna to better link to external tourism product and experiences including the Gunbower State Forest and further afield to Koondrook. Cohuna could be strengthened as a hub by improving the connections to the

Gunbower State Forest including new linking walking and cycling paths, kayak, canoe and horse trails.

There is also opportunity for the precinct to act as a hub for trail visitors, including through the provision of appropriate infrastructure (trail heads, facilities hire, parking facilities, signage, accommodation).

The area in the vicinity of Tree Tops Camp could provide a midway stopping point between Cohuna and Koondrook for walkers, kayakers or cyclists. This location could include visitor eco hut accommodation and camping sites for adventure trail visitors.

Supporting Cohuna as a hub for trail visitors will assist in the potential to attract adventure sports events between Cohuna and Koondrook.

## **KAYAK/CANOE TRAIL**

There is opportunity to enhance the kayak and canoe paddler experience on the Gunbower Creek through the introduction of on water interpretive signage and resting platforms. The on water interpretive signage could be small plaques located on tree stumps in the water. There is opportunity to explore the potential for on water resting pontoons, which could be anchored to tree stumps. These would provide a resting area and lunch spot for passive boat users. These interventions could be considered as part of canoe trails and tours, which link to Tree Tops Camp and further afield to Koondrook.

## **RECREATION AND PLAY AREAS**

New and/or upgraded recreation spaces are proposed as part of the concept masterplan, including:

- Upgrades to the skate park, including a shade coverings and new features, as well as potential for a half-court basketball court.
- A new and/or upgraded quality playground adjacent to the wharf area.
- A new multipurpose court, which could be utilised for basketball and netball and also include a rebound wall.
- Beach Areas in Apex Park, including a sandy foreshore and temporary infrastructure such as bathing boxes.

## GUNBOWER PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

A new creek crossing linking Garden Park with the waterfront on the north side of the creek is proposed. This would enhance the connection of the CBD to the future accommodation development, swimming pool and RV camp site area. This could be developed as a unique design element, creating an attraction in its own right. The bridge/pontoon could also incorporate contemporary lighting to activate the site at night.

There may be opportunity to incorporate the use of the structure for events and dining into the design.

## SECOND SKI RUN

There is opportunity to increase the capacity of Cohuna to attract ski visitors, by increasing the capacity of the Gunbower Creek for skiing. The existing ski run is popular amongst skiers but is in high demand during the summer months. There is potential to implement a second ski run area beyond Daltons Bridge, which would alleviate capacity issues associated with the existing ski run. There is also opportunity to upgrade the amenity and infrastructure of the existing ski run to provide a more attractive and user-friendly space for existing and future users. There is a need to improve the safety of the creek in this area between power boats and passive boat users (kayaks/canoes). This could be achieved through the designation of paths or channels for passive boat users in high speed boat areas as well as the inclusion of signage to notify boat users that it is a shared zone.

## OTHER

Other proposals as part of the concept plan include:

- New opportunities for the Gateway Centre, including potential for a small gallery.
- New formalised car parking areas to service accommodation development, swimming pool and wharf area.
- Solar power car charging station as part of the Gateway Visitor Centre car park.
- New gateway entrance treatment and signage on Cohuna Island Bridge crossing.
- Flying fox across the Gunbower Creek to provide an activity for teenagers, this could be run as part of the caravan park.
- Improved walking paths and linkages throughout the precinct.
- New amenities and infrastructure as part of Apex Park.



WOODEN WHARF AREA FOR CANOE/KAYAK LAUNCHING AND CRUISE DEPARTURE



ZIP LINE



GUNBOWER CREEK PRECINCT COHUNA PRECEDENT IMAGERY

WATERFRONT ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY



SHADED SKATE PARK



UNIQUE PEDESTRIAN CREEK CROSSING



POTENTIAL FOR ECO CABIN ACCOMMODATION AS PART OF SAWMILL SITE DEVELOPMENT



WATERFRONT PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL (LORNE SEA BATHS)



CREEK SIDE RESTAURANT/CAFE/EVENT SPACE ON WHARF

# 11. PRIORITY PROJECTS / IMPLEMENTATION

## 11.1. INTRODUCTION

The following provides a summary of key projects identified for each of the Waterfront Precincts, including their priority level, stakeholders and required actions. Not all individual masterplan interventions are included in the table, rather projects that are most likely to achieve the highest impact in terms of visitation, revitalisation and economic development are included. This metric is also what has determined the assigned project priority level.

Priority levels relate to both importance and timing, and are as follows:

Priority 1	High/ Short Term Priority
Priority 2	Medium/ Medium Term Priority
Priority 3	Low/ Longer Term Priority

There may also be opportunity to group projects when undertaking feasibility, scoping, design or construction. The grouping of projects could be based on their spatial relationship or their operational/functional ties.

## 11.2. KANGAROO LAKE

**TABLE 17** KANGAROO LAKE PRIORITY PROJECTS

Priority	Project Title	Overview	Location	Project Lead	Partners/ Stakeholders	Actions
1	Multi-Purpose Pavilion	New multi-purpose pavilion, that could be owned by Ski Racing Victoria on Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park land	North (Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park Foreshore Precinct)	Gannawarra Shire	Ski-Racing Victoria Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park (KLCP) Goulburn Murray Water Community	Undertake feasibility study, concept design and business case
1	Foreshore Improvements	Improved foreshore presentation and amenity (seating, BBQs, car parking, children's playground, walking/cycling trail).	North (Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park Foreshore Precinct)	Gannawarra Shire	KLCP Goulburn Murray Water Community	Prepare Architectural designs / landscape plans and costings
1	On Water Infrastructure Improvements	Development of jetties, fishing platforms, boat moorings, boat ramp, breakwater/boat motel, safe swimming areas etc.	North (Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park Foreshore Precinct)	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water Community	Prepare designs / costings. Assess feasibility of larger-scale investments (i.e. breakwater/boat motel)
1	Shared Path	Shared path linking North and Eastern foreshore destinations.	North and Eastern Foreshore	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water Community	Prepare trail design and costings
2	Residential Development	Potential foreshore residential development opportunities.	<i>See Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy (2013) for required actions.</i>			
2	Waterfront Cabin Accommodation	Development of new cabin accommodation on waterfront at Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park. Potential to occur post completion of foreshore improvement works.	North (Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park Foreshore Precinct)	Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park	Gannawarra Shire	Work with Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park to deliver waterfront accommodation
2	Palm Beach and Gorton Point Upgrades	Amenity and infrastructure improvements (seating, water access, amenities).	Palm Beach and Gorton Point	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water Community	Scope improvements / upgrades
1	Arts Trail		To be determined	Gannawarra Shire	Community	Scope/Feasibility
2	Bike Track to Kerang			Gannawarra Shire	Gannawarra Shire MRT	

### 11.3. LAKE CHARM

**TABLE 18** LAKE CHARM PRIORITY PROJECTS

Priority	Project Title	Overview	Location	Project Lead	Partners/ Stakeholders	Actions
1	Multi-Purpose Pavilion	New foreshore multi-purpose pavilion, including potential hub for Ski-Racing Victoria, amenities block for Foreshore Caravan Park, kayak/canoe hire, community function centre and event space. This may also incorporate new facilities for the power boat club. (Note: The opportunity for a Ski-Racing Victoria hub is also provided for within the Kangaroo Lake Masterplan).	South West Precinct	Gannawarra Shire	Ski-Racing Victoria DELWP Caravan Park GMW Power Boat Club Foreshore Management Committee (FMC) Community	Undertake feasibility study, concept design and business case
1	Visitor Activity and Servicing Nodes	Visitor amenity nodes including car parking, toilets, seating, BBQs, safe water access, fishing platforms, kayak/canoe launching.	South End	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water Community	Scope works, prepare designs and costings
1	Shared Path	Shared path linking activity nodes along Lake Charm foreshore.	Lake Charm	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water Community	Prepare trail design and costings
1	Recreation Facilities	Redevelopment of recreation facilities including tennis court, multipurpose court (basketball/netball/rebound wall).	South West Precinct	Gannawarra Shire	Community	Scope, prepare designs and costings
1	Signage	Road signage on Murray Valley Highway.	Lake Charm	Gannawarra Shire Vic Roads	Community	Scope signage requirements, prepare designs and costings
1	Vehicle Access Arrangements	Improvement of road access arrangement (turning Lanes) from/onto Murray Valley Highway.	Lake Charm	Gannawarra Shire Vic Roads	Community	Undertake traffic assessment
2	Jetty and Safe Swimming Area	Designated safe swimming zone and jetty for fishing and passive watercraft.	South West Precinct	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water Community	Scope works, prepare designs and costings
2	Residential/Tourism Development	Potential foreshore development opportunities.	<i>See Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy (2013) for required actions</i>			
2	Access and car parking formalisation	Formalisation of access, car parking and signage.	Lake Charm Foreshore Public Caravan Park (LCFPCP) Boat Ramp Area	Gannawarra Shire LCFPCP Power Boat Club	Gannawarra Shire DELWP FMC	Scope works, prepare designs and costings
3	Service Centre/General Store	Activation/redevelop current service centre, alternatively seek private sector interest in new service centre .	Lake Charm	Gannawarra Shire Owner/Operator	-	Seek private sector investment
3	Recreation Reserve	Explore opportunities for reserve (Potential to include Mountain bike track/pump track, native park/habitat area).	South West Precinct	Gannawarra Shire	DELWP Community	Scope works and feasibility
1	Arts Trail		To be determined	Gannawarra Shire	Gannawarra Shire	Scope and feasibility
2	Bike Trail to Kerang				Gannawarra Shire MRT	

## 11.4. KOONDROOK WATERFRONT

**TABLE 19** KOONDROOK WATERFRONT PRIORITY PROJECTS

Priority	Project Title	Overview	Location	Project Lead	Partners/ Stakeholders	Actions
1	Wharf Activation	Improving wharf services to allow for commercial activation (tours, cruise boat access).	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Murray Darling Basin Authority, NSW Government	Scope works and cost upgrades
1	Boat Moorings	New boat moorings to enable vessel stopovers (i.e. houseboats).	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Murray Darling Basin Authority, NSW Government	Scope works and cost
1	Nature Based Tourism (NBT) Hub and Pedestrian Bridge Crossing	Delivery of NBT Hub and bridge pedestrian crossing (underway).	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Parks Vic.	Continue with implementation and construction
1	Mountain Bike Trail Park and Links to Existing Trails	Development of mountain bike park/pump track on Gunbower Island and assessment of feasibility of connection to Tree Tops Camp area and beyond to Cohuna.	Koondrook Waterfront / Gunbower Island.	Gannawarra Shire	Parks Vic.	Undertake Feasibility Study
1	Walking Trails	New walking trails and associated infrastructure.	Koondrook Waterfront / Gunbower Island.	Gannawarra Shire	Parks Vic.	Scope, prepare designs and costings
1	Arbuthnot Sawmill Tours	Access improvements to improve tour offer.	Koondrook Waterfront	Arbuthnot Sawmills with Gannawarra Shire	-	Scope works, prepare designs and costings
1	External Links	New linkages to Gunbower State Forest, and creation of hub in Koondrook for kayak/canoe/walking/cycling trails. Potential connection to Tree Tops Camp area and beyond to Cohuna.	Koondrook Waterfront / Gunbower Island	Gannawarra Shire	Parks Vic.	Trail alignment design, scope required works, costings
2	Goods Shed Refurbishment/Development	Development of the Goods Shed for hospitality offer. Potential servicing point for tours and hire facilities.	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire in partnership with owners/operators	-	Scope, prepare designs and costings
2	Public Realm Improvements	Road alignment and formalisation, car parking formalisation, safe pedestrian zones, raised planters, open terrace near Goods Shed.	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	-	Prepare landscape architect designs and costings
2	All Abilities Play Space	All abilities play space on former Hall site.	Koondrook	Gannawarra Shire	-	Scope works, prepare designs and costings.
3	Caravan Park	Future upgrade, delivery of waterfront cabin accommodation and long-term opportunity to create strategic redevelopment site.	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Private Operators	Prepare Caravan Park Masterplan
3	Apex Park	Amenity improvements, consolidation of play spaces, natural play elements.	Koondrook Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	-	Scope, prepare designs and costings

## 11.5. COHUNA

**TABLE 20** COHUNA WATERFRONT PRIORITY PROJECTS

Priority	Project Title	Overview	Location	Project Lead	Partners/Stakeholders	Actions
1	RV Camp Site	Relocation and development of Free RV camp site. Facilitates use of existing site for alternative purposes.	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Gannawarra Shire	Scope works, prepare designs and costings
1	Accommodation Development	Development of waterfront accommodation to fill market gap.	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water	Scoping/ Feasibility Study/ Detailed Masterplan Design
1	Swimming Pool	Relocation / development of new swimming pool.	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water	Undertake/Update Feasibility Study, including location assessment and costings.
1	Caravan Park Cabin Expansion	New high-quality cabin accommodation on the south end of Caravan Park.	Cohuna Waterfront	Caravan Park / Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water	Scope, prepare designs and costings
1	External Links	New linkages to Gunbower State Forest, and creation of hub in Koondrook for kayak/canoe/walking/cycling trails. Potential connection to Tree Tops Camp area and beyond to Koondrook.	Cohuna Waterfront / Gunbower Island	Gannawarra Shire	Parks Vic.	Trail alignment design, scope required works, costings
1	Wharf Area	Wharf area in Apex Park including restaurant/café, function and events space, visitor amenities, kayak/canoe hire. (potential to deliver as smaller scale/scope project in shorter term).	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water, Coliban Water	Feasibility Study / Designs and Costings.
2	Native Garden and Interactive Landscape	Development of native garden and interactive/sensory landscape on waterfront.	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water	Landscape design/costings (included as part of detailed Masterplan).
2	Kayak/Canoe Trail	On water interpretation as part of a kayak trail along the Gunbower Creek, utilising Cohuna as a starting point.	Gunbower Creek	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water, Parks Vic.	Feasibility Study
2	Second Ski Run	Second ski run area beyond Daltons Bridge, which would alleviate capacity issues associated with the existing ski run.	Cohuna / Gunbower Creek	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water	Feasibility Study
2	Gunbower Pedestrian Crossing	New river crossing linking Garden Park with the waterfront on the north side of the Creek.	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water, Coliban Water	Prepare designs and costings
3	Sawmill Site Development (Accommodation / Eco-Resort)	Development of Sawmill site for eco-resort.	Cohuna	Private Owner in conjunction with Gannawarra Shire and DELWP	-	Feasibility Study / Masterplan
3	Recreation / Play Areas	Recreation and play improvements (Skate park, playgrounds, multipurpose courts).	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	-	Prepare designs and costings

3	Future expansion of commercial areas/reconfiguration of recreation reserve	Long term consideration of the relocation or reconfiguration of the recreation reserve (bowls/tennis).	Cohuna Waterfront	Gannawarra Shire	Goulburn Murray Water	Consider as part of any future recreation reserve planning / facilities planning.
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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A COHUNA VISION

Please see next page.

# C O H U N A V I S I O N

The essence of Cohuna can be summarised in four words:

**FOREST**  
The town is a gateway to the nationally significant Gunbower river red gum forest

**FARMS**  
The town is surrounded by farmland, significantly contributing to the state's dairy industry

**FACTORIES**  
The town is bordered by businesses that support the regional and state economy

**FAMILY**  
The town is bound a strong sense of community and belonging

Making the most of this special place and enhancing the opportunities for the already active community drives the Future Vision Plan

**P R O J E C T S**



## 1 FLORA PARK

This site will be transformed into a nature park attraction inspired by the Gunbower red gum forest. This would bring the essence of Cohuna's natural attractions - the waterways, fish, the bush and the wildlife right into the heart of town.

Planting, sculpture, rest and play areas and trails will be designed to create a new landscape giving the visitor a taste of the riches that surround the town. The space will be planned for small children, allowing the local schools and kindergartens to use it in their programs. It will suit older people providing gentle walks and relaxing areas for those who love the outdoors. The park will be supported by new toilet facilities and lighting. Garden Park and Flora Park will celebrate people who have contributed to Cohuna through history to the present day. Contributions from groups and individuals from the earliest times will be honoured on plaques that will form a specialist walk, with opportunities to shine light on these on special occasions throughout the year. A selection process will be established to ensure that the walk reflects the community's interests and becomes an attraction in its own right. There is an opportunity to work with the indigenous community to develop an aquarium based on the cultural history around fishing.



## 2 GARDEN PARK

This is Cohuna's 'showroom'. Here the town shows off to visitors, puts on events, performances and activities and generally celebrates country living and the people who have made major contributions to the town and region.

Minor modifications to Garden Park will support these uses by better defining spaces, promoting the activities and delivering increased functionality and visual appeal. These modifications include shoring the banks and developing the creek edge to give visitors spaces to relax and enjoy the views, enhancement of the Performance Shelter, re-positioning of the seating and drinking fountain and repainting of the Cohuna Clock. Garden Park will have a special connection to the Civic hub on Anzac day when crosses are erected to commemorate those who died in wars.



## 3 THE GATEWAY CENTRE

The Gateway Centre is the ideal place to celebrate everything about Cohuna.

For tourists The Gateway Centre is already a well-used tourist information centre. It will be programmed to feature more strongly as a place for seasonal seminars, classes and meetings utilising the indoor and outdoor space and connectors to the creek and the parks.

## 4 THE COHUNA TAN TRACK

A major track looping around the northern side of Cohuna will encourage group walks, use of 'gophers', walks with pushers, as well as fun-runs and cycling.

This broad trail at 3.8 km long will be developed by linking, extending and expanding existing tracks through forest and farm settings - and will also require a new bridge over the Gunbower Creek. This will be a space that will act as a regional partner to The Tan around Melbourne's Kings Domain and Botanic Gardens hosting events and encouraging healthy exercise.



## 5 CREEKSIDE LINGER NODES

New features - such as boardwalks, bird hides and other spaces - which echo the character of the quirky creekside 'lounging rooms' will be an added attraction between town and the Ski Run making Cohuna a favoured place to settle in and enjoy a prime waterside view

Cohuna's creek walk illustrates the family side of this town. Make-shift 'lounges' already populate the creek bank where locals sit down to enjoy food, family, fishing, boating and swimming, illustrating the real pleasures of staying in this particular part of the Murray region. New features which complement the 'lounging rooms' designed to be both comfortable and distinctive, will attract locals and visitors, allow them to further enjoy the unique natural environment and further enhance the family friendly character of Cohuna. These will enhance the existing creek walk and allow greater access to nature and to creek-based events.



## 6 FACTORY AND FARM ART TRAIL

A walk along the southern edge of Cohuna will showcase the farms and 'factories' with a set of art installations that interpret the activity of the workplace and bring alive the concept of modern farming and all that supports it.

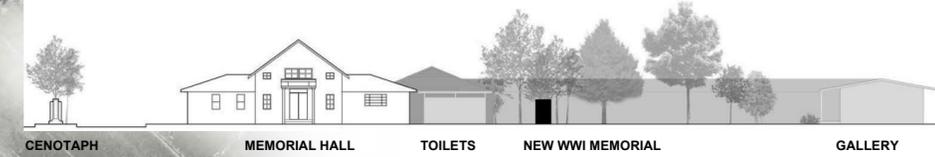
Farms and factories are special places. They are workplaces and service centres and for visitors they are intriguing; they accommodate activities that are out of the ordinary to an urban dweller. This walk, through areas of bush, park and townscape will raise awareness of the region's farming resources. Professional artists, using local materials relevant to the site, will create a series of sculptures and landscape treatments that are visually appealing and make a great photo opportunity, putting the town on the tourist map and engendering pride in the town's contribution to the economy.



## 7 THE CIVIC HUB

In the heart of town a cluster of cultural and community spaces will be redeveloped around a town square - a vibrant meeting space for locals and a visitor attraction that reflects many of the 'family' aspects of Cohuna.

The key services that locals use frequently for health, education and enjoyment will be located at the Civic Hub. This will include the library and gallery, community health services and childcare. The Hub will exemplify civic pride and commemorate significant events and historic moments. Within the Hub precinct the Memorial Hall, the cenotaph and the new WW1 memorial will be prominent, linking this site with the Flora Park 'contributions' walk. The Hub will extend to the street giving it a higher profile, engaging with visitors and supporting the existing Town Walk. A new Civic Square will enhance the experience of the memorials, support Anzac day traditions and offer a pleasant, landscaped setting for visitors.



## 8 OLDSCHOOL BUILDING

the red brick building is being considered as the site for a Cohuna cultural centre with programmed arts (visual, digital, music) and education activities and classes.

This attractive building has indoor spaces that may be suited to classes and activities, and outdoor space that has potential for gardening and environmental programs aligned with the town's rural setting. Its proximity to the school may provide opportunities for younger members to take a role in its set-up and operation.

## 9 INTERIM RECREATIONAL VEHICLE (RV) PARKING

This interim site and other sites to be investigated and evaluated, close to RV amenities and within walking distance from town will be developed and marketed to attract this growth market and encourage a longer stay.

Overflow caravan parking will also be provided for peak events eg Easter in the powered sites nearby around the existing football ground.



## 10 STREETScape

Major streets in Cohuna will be given a facelift

Main Street: the streetscape is an important component of the trader and consumer experience. Improved pedestrian access, places to sit, attractive but appropriate plantings and places to place merchandise external to the shopfront would contribute to the attraction of the main street and, importantly the view from across the street.

Channel Street: enhanced planting will enhance the residential and walking experience across town along this wide country 'boulevard'. It will create an entry to the Civic Hub and special access to the childcare facilities.

Market Street: the new Civic Hub will reach across to the cenotaph in Market Street and be enhanced to support the Hub amenity



## 11 CROSSINGS

Crossings on the Murray Valley Highway will be reviewed and designed to ensure safe passage for pedestrians, cyclists, 'gopher' drivers and drivers.

Placement of the pedestrian crossings to optimise safety and reduce unsafe behaviour is of critical importance. These will link to parking and to the most frequent journeys between Garden Park, the Gateway and the recreation facilities and the shops.

## 12 SIGNS

The road entries to Cohuna will signal to visitors that the town is welcoming and thriving.

Signage directing vehicles out of town will be located at sites that do not mar views and experiences at the centre. Improved, and accurate signage and landscape treatment will raise the profile of the town as a place to stop, rather than pass through. Directional and destination signage, both public and private, that is redundant will be removed.

## 13 RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARKING

Sites to be investigated and evaluated for RV Parking.

## APPENDIX B TABLE OF USES

**TABLE 21** PPRZ – SUMMARY OF TABLE OF USES

Use
<b>Section 1 - Permit Not Required</b>
Informal outdoor recreation, Open sports ground, Any use listed in Clause 62.01, Contractors depot, Heliport, Office, Retail premises, Store, Any other use not in Section 3
<b>Section 2 - Permit Required</b>
Contractor's depot - if the Section 1 condition is not met, Heliport - if the Section 1 condition is not met, Office - if the Section 1 condition is not met, Retail premises - if the Section 1 condition is not met, Store - if the Section 1 condition is not met
<b>Section 3- Prohibited</b>
Brothel Cinema based entertainment facility Corrective institution Display home Funeral parlour Industry Saleyard Transport terminal (other than Heliport) Veterinary centre Warehouse (other than Store)

Source: Gannawarra Shire Planning Scheme, Clause 36.02

Tables exclude conditions for each use.

**TABLE 22** C1Z – SUMMARY OF TABLE OF USES

Use
<b>Section 1 - Permit Not Required</b>
Accommodation (other than corrective institution), Art and craft centre, Child care centre, Cinema, Cinema based entertainment facility, Education centre, Exhibition centre, Home based business, Informal outdoor recreation, Office, Place of Worship, Railway, Retail Premises (other than Shop), Shop (other than Adult sex product shop), Tramway, Any use listed in Clause 62.01.

### Section 2- Permit Required

Adult sex product shop, Agriculture (other than Apiculture and Intensive animal husbandry), Industry, Leisure and recreation facility (other than Informal outdoor recreation, Major sports and recreation facility and Motor racing track) Place of assembly (other than Carnival, Cinema, Circus, Exhibition centre and Place of worship) Utility installation (other than Minor utility installation and Telecommunications facility), Warehouse, Any other use not in section 1 or 3.

### Section 3 - Prohibited

Corrective institution, Intensive animal husbandry, Major sports and recreation facility, Motor racing track

Source: Gannawarra Shire Planning Scheme, Clause 34.01

Tables exclude conditions for each use.

**TABLE 23** FZ – SUMMARY OF TABLE OF USES

Use
<b>Section 1- Permit Not Required</b>
Agriculture (other than Animal keeping, Apiculture, Intensive animal husbandry, Racing dog training, Rice growing and Timber production), Animal keeping (other than Animal boarding), Bed and breakfast, Cattle feedlot, Dependent person's unit, Dwelling (other than Bed and Breakfast), Home based business, informal outdoor recreation, Primary produce sales, Racing dog training, Railway, Rural industry (other than Abattoir and Sawmill), Rural store, Timber production, Tramway, Any use listed in Clause 62.01.
<b>Section 2- Permit Required</b>
Abattoir, Animal boarding, Broiler farm, Camping and caravan park, Car park, Cattle feedlot, Cemetery, Crematorium, Dependent person's unity, dwelling, emergency services facility, freeway service centre, group accommodation, host farm, industry, intensive animal husbandry, landscape gardening supplies, leisure and recreation, manufacturing sales, market, place of assembly, primary school, racing dog keeping,

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racing dog training, renewable energy facility, residential hotel, restaurant, rice growing, sawmill, secondary school, timber production, trade supplies, utility installation, warehouse, wind energy facility, winery.

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### Section 3- Prohibited

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Accommodation, amusement parlour, brothel, child care centre, cinema based entertainment centre, education centre, nightclub, office, retail premises.

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Source: Gannawarra Shire Planning Scheme, Clause 35.07

Tables exclude conditions for each use.

**TABLE 24** PCRZ – SUMMARY OF TABLE OF USES

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### Use

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#### Section 1- Permit Not Required

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Boat launching facility, Camping and caravan park, Caretaker's house, Car park, Informal outdoor recreation, Interpretation centre, Jetty, Kiosk, Marine dredging, Mooring pole, Open sports ground, Pier, Pontoon, Road, Utility installation (other than, Telecommunications facility), Any use listed in Clause 62.01, any other use not in section 2 or 3.

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#### Section 2- Permit Required

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Emergency services facility, renewable energy facility (other than wind energy facility), wind energy facility.

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#### Section 3 - Prohibited

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The use in Section 1 described as 'Any other use not in Section 2 or 3' – if the Section 1 condition is not met

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Source: Gannawarra Shire Planning Scheme, Clause 36.03

Tables exclude conditions for each use.

**TABLE 25** SUZ4 – SUMMARY OF TABLE OF USES

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### Use

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#### Section 1- Permit Not Required

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Apiculture, camping and caravan park, informal outdoor recreation, mineral exploration, mining, minor utility installation, natural systems, search for stone.

---

#### Section 2- Permit Required

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Accommodation (other than camping and caravan park and corrective institution), Agriculture (other than Apiculture and Intensive animal husbandry), car park, mining, place of assembly (other than exhibition centre and night club), retail premises (other than adult sex bookshop), search for stone, store, utility installation.

---

#### Section 3 - Prohibited

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Adult sex bookshop, Brothel, Cemetery, Corrective institution, Fuel depot, Freezing and cool storage, Intensive animal husbandry, Motor racing track, Night Club, Shipping container storage, Transport terminal, Warehouse (other than Store).

---

Source: Gannawarra Shire Planning Scheme, Schedule 4 to the Special Use Zone

Tables exclude conditions for each use.

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