

## 6.3 Policy Reports

### 6.3.1 Open Space Strategy

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#### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

- Notes the program of community engagement undertaken, feedback received, and subsequent changes made to the Cardinia Shire draft Open Space Strategy.
- Adopts the revised Cardinia Shire Council Open Space Strategy.
- Provides the final Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy to the community on its website and thanks the community for its feedback.

#### Attachments

1. Final Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy [6.3.1.1 - 152 pages]
2. Final Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy Summary Document [6.3.1.2 - 12 pages]
3. Summary of Stage 2 community engagement, feedback and recommendations [6.3.1.3 - 10 pages]

Final Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy

Final Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy Summary Document

Summary of Stage 2 community engagement, feedback and recommendations

#### Executive Summary

The Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy provides a framework for Cardinia Shire Council to plan, deliver and maintain open space, to create a network of enticing, inclusive, well connected, sustainable and equitable open space, that meets the current and future needs of our community.

The Strategy has been prepared utilising a collaborative approach which included two key phases of community consultation. Most recently, Stage 2 of the community consultation process, which included the exhibition of the draft strategy, has now been completed. The feedback received has been reviewed and changes made in response. The final Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy, a summary version of the Strategy, and the Summary of Stage 2 community engagement are attached for review by Councillors. The Officer recommendation is that Council formally adopt the attached Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy.

#### Background

The Victorian State Government directs in Planning Practice Note 70 "Open Space Strategies" that all open space planning and action should be based on the preparation of a comprehensive Open Space Strategy (OSS). Cardinia Shire Council does not have a current OSS. Council committed to develop an Open Space Strategy for Cardinia by July 2023 in its Council Plan 2021-2025.

Development of the Strategy has been guided by an endorsed project brief, a Project Control Group (PCG), a Cross Council Project Working Group (PWG) and feedback from Councillors. The preparation of the OSS was also informed by an extensive community engagement program.

Stage 1 of the community engagement program took place over an eight-week period between October and December 2019. This initial consultation phase sought to understand the community's current thoughts and aspirations in relation to open space. The feedback received during the first phase of consultation was used to develop the vision and objectives for the draft OSS and then the wider content and recommendations which flowed from these.

The progress of the OSS preparation was impeded during 2020 because of the flow on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the project regained momentum in 2021 with the preparation of a project brief and defined timeline for completion.

The draft OSS and a summary version of the OSS were presented to the Council briefing on 20 February 2023 where support was given to progress to community consultation. The draft was placed on public exhibition from 6 March – 2 April 2023. A detailed outline of the community consultation process, feedback received and associated recommendations in response can be found in the attached Summary of Stage 2 community engagement, feedback and recommended changes to the draft Strategy.

Council officers made recommended changes to the OSS in response to the feedback received. The revised version of the Strategy and summary document can be found attached to this report.

The purpose of the Open Space Strategy is to establish a clear and comprehensive plan for the provision and access, protection and management of public open spaces within Cardinia Shire for the next decade. This approach encompasses a wide range of considerations, including planning, design, development, and preservation, considering the unique natural and social characteristics of the area. By taking a holistic and integrated approach, the Strategy aims to ensure the responsible and sustainable management of these spaces for the benefit of the current and future community.

A key focus for the OSS has been on assessing the provision of, and access to, public open space across the Shire. Provision relates to how much open space there is, and access relates to how well connected our population is to open spaces. As part of the development of the draft OSS, provision and access benchmarks have been established to guide the planning and development of open space within the Shire and to ensure good open space outcomes for the community. The provision and access benchmarks have been applied across the whole Shire. This allows Council to understand the current open space requirements throughout the Shire, and equitably prioritise future open space and enhancements to existing open space.

The provision benchmark employed by the Open Space Strategy is 5 hectares per 1,000 head of population. This measure is further broken down into 3 hectares for passive open space and 2 hectares for active open space. These benchmarks were developed based on the local context of Cardinia Shire, comparable benchmarks across Victoria and Australia, and the required minimum standards to service the recreation and sporting needs of the community equitably and appropriately. The decision was made not to adopt a percentage land area-based benchmark to assess the provision of open space as this does not adequately account for variations in population density and associated demands on open space.

Access to open space has been measured in relation to the percentage of residents living in residentially zoned areas who are within 500m walking distance of a public open space. This measurement is based on actual walking distance, not 'as the crow flies', to provide a very

accurate and detailed understanding of access provision. For this Strategy, a walking distance of 500m to public open space was considered a practical and realistic threshold for Cardinia Shire. The walkable distance to open space takes into consideration the physical barriers to movement (such as main roads and railways), the available path and trail networks, and the location of entrances to open space. A 500m walkable catchment was identified for each open space considering these factors. All residents living within the catchment are in turn identified as having access to open space. This allows Council to identify areas and addresses that do not currently have access to open space. Currently, 85% of residents living within residentially zoned areas in Cardinia Shire have access to open space within 500 m walking distance.

For the OSS, the municipality has been divided into three main subregions: Growth, Northern Hills, and Southern. These units of analysis have been chosen to align with those used for population forecast and analysis in Profile ID. As part of the development of the OSS, analysis of provision and access to open space in Cardinia Shire has been undertaken at the Shire, Subregion and Standard Geographical unit (Profile Area) Level. The subregion and profile areas are outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1: Subregions and Profile areas utilised for Open Space provision and access analysis

Subregion	Profile Areas
Growth	Beaconsfield – Officer - Cardinia Road - Pakenham
Northern Hills	Emerald – Cockatoo – Gembrook - Beaconsfield Upper and District - Northern Rural
Southern	Southern Rural - Nar Nar Goon and Tynong – Garfield – Bunyip - Lang Lang – Koo Wee Rup

Another important aspect of the development of the draft OSS has been the establishment of an of open space classification. Open space is managed differently based on its type, function, size, the catchment from which visitors are expected to come, the needs of the community, and the level of service it provides. The types of open spaces found within the Shire include passive reserves, active reserves, natural resource areas, and linear connections. The classification of open space uses catchment and function as the main system for grouping and identifying the different open spaces across the Shire. The classifications which have been used are:

- Regional
- Township
- District
- Neighbourhood, and
- Local.

The Open Space Strategy is a 10-year strategic plan. Implementation of the Open Space Strategy over the next 10 years will assist Council to achieve enticing and inclusive open spaces that meet the needs of our current and future community. Following the adoption of the OSS, an Action Plan will be developed and aligned to Council's endorsed Council Plan and Budget. Progress on the implementation of the Open Space Strategy and the Action Plan will be reviewed every 3 years. An overall evaluation of the Open Space Strategy and its implementation will be undertaken at the completion of the ten-year period and will be considered as part of the development of a revised Open Space Strategy.

### Policy Implications

The preparation of the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy (OSS) has considered policies at the State and Local level. The OSS aligns with Council's Liveability plan, particularly with the policy domains of "Active Travel" and "Open Spaces and Places". The graphic design of the final version of the OSS directly responds to this, incorporating the Open Spaces and Places graphic

and aligning the colours of the OSS to that of the Open Spaces and Places domain from the Liveability Plan.

The vision outlined for Open Spaces and Places is: Open space in Cardinia Shire is strategically planned, developed and maintained to create a sense of place, encourage participation, protect the natural environment and promote health and wellbeing. Section 7.1 of the Liveability plan specifies that we will achieve this by strategically planning and maintaining open spaces and places to be safe, accessible, appealing and connected. The preparation of the OSS supports this outcome. The Parks Planning Team has worked closely with those responsible for the Liveability Plan to ensure the OSS and Liveability plan use consistent language and complement each other.

The preparation of the Open Space Strategy will support Clause 15.01-4 of the Cardinia Planning scheme Healthy Neighbourhoods. The objective of this clause is: To achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.

Clause 21.02-5 of the Cardinia Planning Scheme Open Space is also of relevance to the preparation of the OSS.

**Objective 1:** To ensure that land is provided and developed for a range of open space functions to meet community needs for active and passive open space (including linkages) and for the protection of the environment.

**Objective 2:** To provide open space which allows people to choose to be active in an environment that is convenient safe and pleasant. It is this clause which specifies that: A minimum public open space contribution of 8% of the land to be subdivided must be provided as part of the subdivision of land for urban residential purposes. The OSS will help inform the future content of this section of the planning scheme and aim to ensure that the contribution is adequate to support the open space needs of current and future communities.

The OSS will be the lead open space planning document for the Shire, with all other strategies looking to and stemming from this Strategy over the next 10 years. It builds on and is aligned to the State Government's Metropolitan Open Space Strategy (MOSS) and Open Space Planning and Design Guidelines, Cardinia Shire's Planning Scheme, Open Space Management Framework, and other local policies and strategies.

The Open Space Strategy supports the delivery of Cardinia Shire's Community Vision 2040, Council Plan and Liveability Plan.

## **Relevance to Council Plan**

### **2.1 We support the creation of liveable spaces and places**

2.1.1 Advocate, plan for and deliver accessible community infrastructure and services that address community need.

2.1.2 Plan and maintain safe, inclusive and connected open spaces, places and active travel routes.

### **3.1 We value our natural assets and support our biodiversity to thrive**

3.1.1 Partner with community, business and industry to take action on, and adapt to, climate change.

3.1.3 Work with community to improve and manage our natural assets, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

### **4.1 We support our productive land and employment land to grow local industries**

4.1.5 Strengthen and promote our shire's unique identity and visitor attractions.

#### **5.1 We practise responsible leadership**

5.1.1 Build trust through meaningful community engagement and transparent decision-making.

5.1.4 Maximise value for our community through efficient service delivery, innovation, strategic partnerships and advocacy.

### **Climate Emergency Consideration**

It is recognised that open space is being directly impacted upon by climate change. Whilst this Strategy does not necessarily direct how to combat climate change, it certainly supports improving open space to become more resilient in a changing environment. Council's Parks Planning Team has worked closely with the Environment team to ensure the OSS and the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy complement and support each other. One of the Objectives of the OSS is "Ensure climate change is considered when planning and delivering open space assets".

Open spaces are an integral part of the response to the climate emergency. Shade from tree canopies reduces air temperatures, and evapotranspiration from trees and other vegetation further reduces temperatures in open spaces and adjacent urban areas. Shaded walking and cycling trails promote active transport and allows the community (especially vulnerable people) to access open spaces more easily during hot weather. Urban stormwater can be captured and treated in open spaces, protecting downstream rivers and bays, and providing a sustainable resource for irrigating green spaces during droughts. Vegetation in open spaces also absorbs carbon dioxide, helping to offset greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Consultation/Communication**

There have been two key community engagement phases in the preparation of the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy:

Stage 1 - this initial consultation phase sought to understand the community's current thoughts and aspirations in relation to open space. The feedback received during the first phase of consultation was reviewed and used to inform the content of the draft OSS. Stage one of the community consultation program took place over an eight-week period between October and December 2019. This included supported playgroups, kindergarten children, primary and high school students, the general public and seniors via methods such as poster activities, listening posts and pop ups, a playgroup family event, seniors festival, spring reserve roadshow, the young leaders conference, kindergarten and school visits, early morning attendance at the Cardinia railway station, community emails, general conversation and interviews with community members and an online survey.

Stage 2 (6 March – 2 April 2023) – exhibition of the Draft Open Space Strategy and the associated summary document. This community consultation process included the following:

- Creating Cardinia webpage including the full draft, the summary document and each of the 15 profile areas separated out. The webpage was also the primary way to complete the consultation survey.
- 5 Community pop-up sessions
- External Stakeholder engagement online meetings:
  - Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
  - VicTrack
  - Parks Victoria
  - Melbourne Water
  - Traditional owners – formal engagement requested and to continue

- Feedback via Facebook post.
- Email to community stakeholders (Council committees, township groups and resident's associations)
- Mention in Council's newsletter the Connect Autumn edition.

The feedback received included:

- 24 responses to the online survey.
- 19 comments on the Facebook post
- 1 submission from a community group (Lang Lang District Business and Community Group)
- 1 written submission from an individual community member
- Comments made to Council officers at the community pop-up sessions
- Comments and recommendations from Melbourne Water, Parks Vic, and DEECA.

A detailed outline of the community consultation process, feedback received and associated recommendations in response can be found in the attached Summary of Stage 2 community engagement, feedback and recommendations.

The draft Open Space Strategy was also presented to Councillors on several occasions to seek their feedback and guidance. The feedback from Councillors ensured that the strategy was holistic and considered the needs of our diverse community.

Key feedback themes from Councillors that informed the draft OSS included:

- Providing infrastructure to support seniors and people with disabilities
- Engaging with our community
- Considering how we can support community wellbeing and improve mental health outcomes through open spaces
- Clarifying infrastructure provision across the different open space classifications
- Guidance for the delivery of new open spaces in growth areas
- Importance of recreational trails
- Advocacy and process for the implementation of the strategy
- Terminology improved to ensure broader community understanding of the strategy. Eg using the term "profile areas" to differentiate from suburbs.
- All reserves classification reviewed, including Eastone Reserve, as part of preparation of draft Open Space Strategy
- Importance of partnerships with all levels of government and supporting agencies
- Importance of supporting and enhancing biodiversity
- Bushfire and emergency management
- Ongoing maintenance of open space and infrastructure.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

As is outlined in the "Implementation Plan and Review" section of the OSS, implementation of the Open Space Strategy over the next 10 years will assist Council to achieve enticing and inclusive open spaces that meet the needs of our current and future community. Action plans will be developed and aligned to Council's endorsed Council Plan and Budget. Delivery is dependent upon sufficient funds and resources, and partnerships with other levels of government, developers, and other agencies.

Funding sources to implement the actions will include council revenue, developer contributions, developer works, open space contributions, and grant funding.

The Strategy will be implemented in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the strategy as well as via subsequently prepared action plans. The action plans will not only

consider actions to be delivered at the Shire level but also at the profile area level for the fifteen profile areas making up the Northern, Growth, and Southern subregions.

Recommendations and actions in the OSS may require adjustment to respond to unexpected changes including:

- allocation of Council resources and funding
- changes in State Government policy
- changes in land use and development trends, and
- other unexpected changes.

Progress on the implementation of the Open Space Strategy and the Action Plan will be reviewed every 3 years. An overall evaluation of the Open Space Strategy and its implementation will be undertaken at the completion of the ten-year period and will be considered as part of the development of a revised Open Space Strategy.

### **Conclusion**

The Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy provides a framework for Cardinia Shire Council to plan, deliver and maintain open space over the next ten years. The focus of the Strategy is on establishing clear targets for provision of and access to open space. The Strategy included an analysis of the existing provision of open space across the Shire, identified gaps and/or over supply, and provides the strategic direction and justification for the provision and enhancement of open space in Cardinia Shire over the next 10 years.



# Open Space Strategy

July 2023





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## Acknowledgement of Country

Cardinia Shire Council recognises and values the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people as the traditional custodians of the land that makes up Cardinia Shire.

Cardinia Shire's name is derived from the Bunurong or Wadawurrung word 'Kar-din-yarr', meaning 'look to the rising sun' or 'close to the sunrise'. Council's logo, which includes a motif of the rising sun, reflects this meaning.

Cardinia Shire Council acknowledges the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live according to their values, beliefs, and customs.

Council is committed to developing and strengthening relationships and supporting traditional land management practices of open space within the Shire. Council supports the reconciliation process, which promotes mutual respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their history, culture and ongoing connection and stewardship of this land.



## Open Space Strategy – Mayor’s Foreword

On behalf of Cardinia Shire Council, I am pleased to present Council’s Draft Open Space Strategy.

Cardinia Shire is a great place to live, work, and recreate, and our connection to open space is essential to our quality of life. Cardinia Shire’s natural environment and diverse open spaces are a source of strength from which social, economic, and environmental benefits can be realised.

In our wonderful Shire, we are lucky to have a range of different open spaces within reach for our community and visitors to experience and enjoy. From beautiful bushland areas, ornamental gardens and lakes to linear trails, parks and reserves, and even a small portion of the Western Port coastline. We have many opportunities to play, exercise, socialise, and connect with nature across our Shire – there truly is something for everyone!

As a fast-growing community with areas of high-density living, our open spaces are under pressure to ensure our community is connected to open space, and that its diverse needs are supported. We need to be ambitious if we are to protect the liveability our open spaces give us and take the pressure off our natural assets and productive land.

As outlined in our Council Plan 2021–2025, Cardinia Shire Council is committed to building a sustainable Shire for present and future generations to enjoy. We recognise that we have some significant challenges ahead, however, we are committed to building a sustainable Shire for present and future generations to enjoy.

Our vision for open space is to *‘plan, deliver and maintain enticing and inclusive open spaces across Cardinia Shire that are well connected, sustainable, and equitable, meeting the current and future needs of our community’*. Our Open Space Strategy is a key strategic document for Council, providing the framework and the direction for us to achieve this vision over the next 10 years.

I am proud that this strategy and action plan reflects the needs and aspirations of our ever-growing community, and that it will guide our important work in this space for the decade to come.

**Cr Tammy Radford**  
**Cardinia Shire Mayor 2022–23**



## Executive summary

The Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy 2023–2033 (the Strategy) provides a framework for Cardinia Shire Council to plan, deliver and maintain open space to create a network of enticing, inclusive, well connected, sustainable and equitable open space, that meets the current and future needs of our community.

Open space provides numerous benefits for our community and our natural environment. They provide places for residents and visitors to gather, enjoy recreational activities, and spend time in nature. Open spaces provide habitat for native plants and animals and contribute to the unique environment of Cardinia Shire. Open space also provides economic benefits such as increased investment linked to greener and more attractive places to live and work. When open spaces are connected by safe walking and cycling paths, they are more accessible, as residents can walk and cycle to their destination. Quality open spaces are vital to supporting the health and wellbeing of our community and the environment they live and work in.

The continuing and rapid population growth and need to support community health and wellbeing in the Shire means the role of open space is increasingly important. Climate change and urban development is placing pressure on our open spaces while accentuating their role in helping our communities adapt to climate change. Significantly increased visitation of open spaces during the COVID19 pandemic demonstrated the value the community place on open space. The context of the Shire has been considered to develop a Strategy that appropriately reflects the unique natural and social characteristics of Cardinia Shire.

This Strategy uses provision and access benchmarks to guide the planning and development of open space within the Shire to provide the best outcomes for the community. The same provision and access benchmarks are proposed across the whole Shire. This allows Council to provide an equitable amount and distribution of open space throughout the Shire and equitably prioritise future open space and enhancements to existing open space which meet the Shire's growing population and diverse community needs. Currently, 85% of residents living within residentially zoned areas in Cardinia Shire have access to open space within 500 m walking distance. Through the implementation of the Open Space Strategy, Council will continue to strive to improve this percentage.

Assessment of the existing and future open space network and recommendations for future planning, delivery and management of open space is provided for the fifteen areas that make up Cardinia Shire. This enables a focus on local priorities and provides recommendations that reflect the individual challenges and opportunities presented in each area. Council will implement a strategic process which will prioritise works considering classification of open space, quality and ability to meet community needs, available funding, and adopted policies, strategies, and master plans. Partnerships with other land managers will be critical to deliver a truly integrated open space network for our community.

The Strategy aims to optimise our community's access to open space and help to address the foresaid challenges. The Strategy focuses on the next 10 years, and positions Council to work with other levels of government, developers, local business, and the community to maximise opportunities to enhance the open space network and help the Shire to thrive in the long term. Council has consulted and engaged with the community and sought their feedback which has informed the development of the Strategy.

As we strive to provide equitable provision of and access to open space, engaging our community in the implementation of the Open Space Strategy is a key priority and vital to its success over the next 10 years.

# 1 Introduction



Our diverse open spaces are an important resource for our community. They provide places for residents and visitors to gather, enjoy recreational activities, and spend time in nature. Open spaces provide habitat for native plants and animals and contribute to the unique environment of Cardinia Shire. When open spaces are connected by safe walking and cycling paths, they are more accessible, as residents can walk and cycle to their destination. Quality open spaces are vital to supporting the health and wellbeing of our community and the environment they live and work in.

The continuing and rapid population growth and need to support community health and wellbeing in the Shire means the role of open space is increasingly important. Climate change and urban development is placing pressure on our open spaces while accentuating their role in helping our community adapt to climate change. Significantly increased visitation of open spaces during the COVID19 pandemic demonstrated the value the community place on open space.

The Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy 2023–2033 (the Strategy) provides a framework for Cardinia Shire Council (Council) to undertake the planning, delivery, and management of open spaces to create a network of well designed, safe, inclusive, and accessible public open spaces for the next 10 years.

The Strategy is aligned with the Community Vision 2040, Council Plan 2021–25 and Cardinia Shire’s Liveability Plan 2017–29 and supports several of the key strategic directions and objectives for the Shire.

**Figure 1: Barker Road Playground, Garfield**



### 1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the Open Space Strategy is to establish a clear and comprehensive plan for the provision and access, protection and management of public open spaces within Cardinia Shire for the next decade. This approach encompasses a wide range of considerations, including planning, design, development, and preservation, taking into account the unique natural and social characteristics of the area. By taking a holistic and integrated approach, the Strategy aims to ensure the responsible and sustainable management of these spaces for the benefit of the current and future community.

### 1.2 Vision and objectives for the open space network

A vision and objectives for open space in the Shire have been developed with input from the community to guide future planning and management of the open space network over the next ten years. The Strategy focuses on ensuring there is adequate provision of public open space and that our open spaces are easily accessible within our residential areas. Partnering with other land managers to deliver good open space outcomes for the community.

**Vision**  
To plan, deliver and maintain enticing and inclusive open spaces across Cardinia Shire that are well connected, sustainable, and equitable, meeting the current and future needs of our community.

Figure 2: Deep Creek Reserve, Pakenham



An aerial photograph of a lush green forest. A narrow, light-colored path or stream winds through the trees, starting from the bottom left and curving towards the center. The trees are dense and have varying shades of green, with some bare branches visible. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

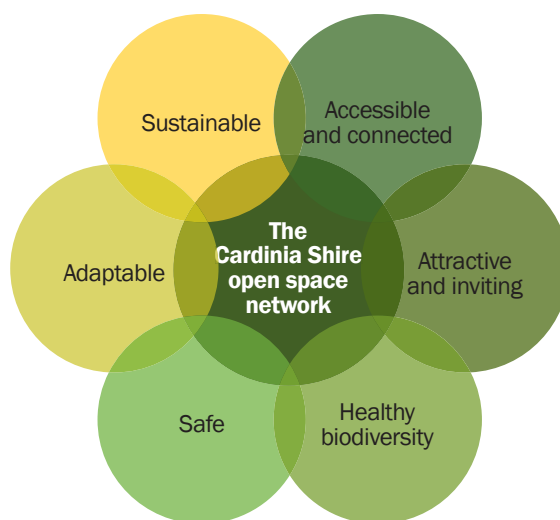
**Our Open Space Strategy is a key strategic document for Council, providing the framework and the direction for us to achieve this vision over the next 10 years.**



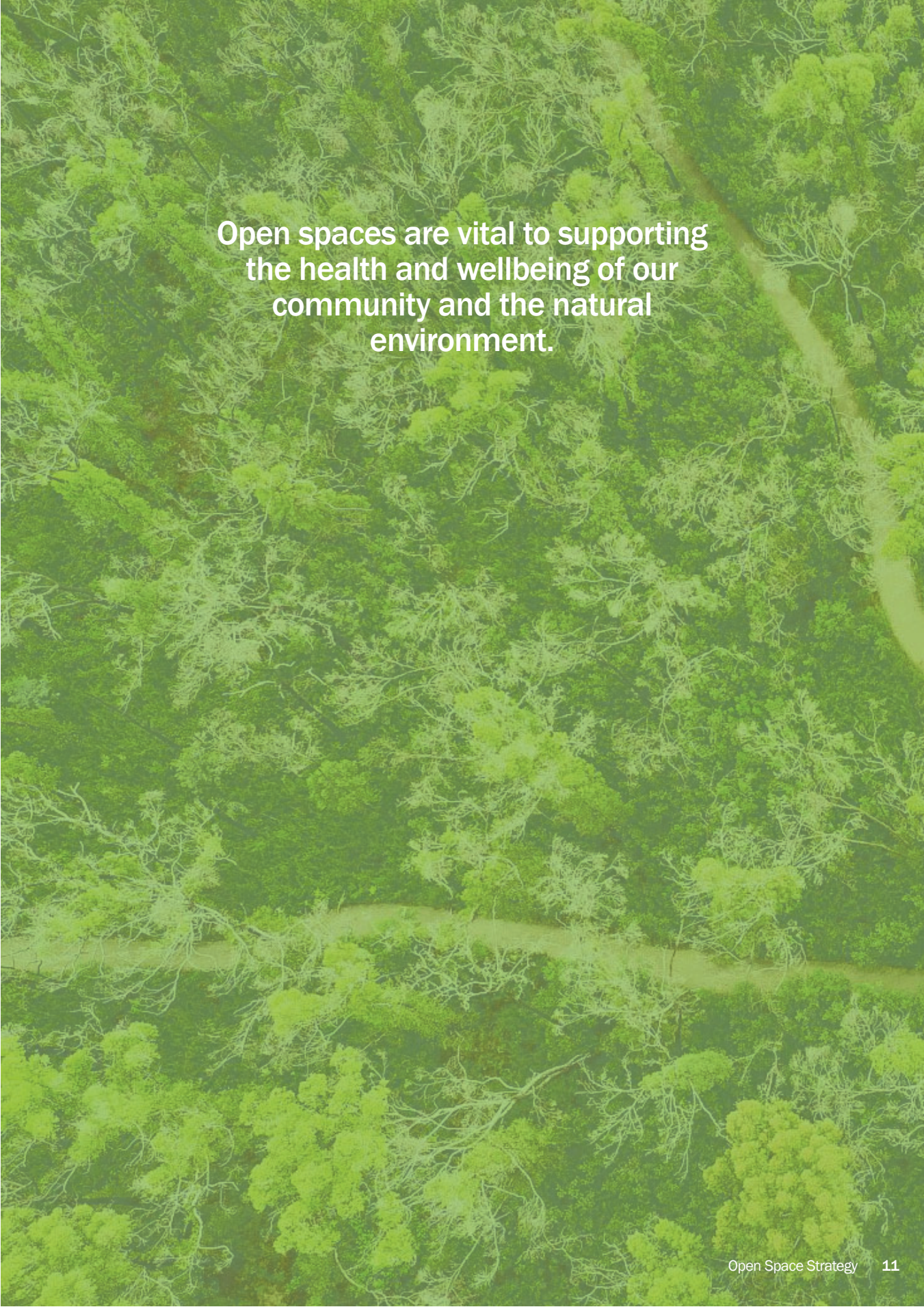
## Objectives

In addition to the vision, the following carefully considered and holistic objectives and associated recommendations of the Open Space Strategy have been developed.

Figure 3: Objectives for the open space network in Cardinia Shire



Sustainable	Adaptable	Safe	Healthy biodiversity	Attractive and inviting	Accessible and connected
<p>Manage open space in a financially sustainable manner.</p> <p>Design, construct and manage open space to reduce the impact on the natural environment.</p> <p>Ensure climate change is considered when planning and delivering open space assets.</p> <p>Integrate water sensitive urban design into open spaces.</p>	<p>Open space that is adaptable and resilient to changing recreational, environmental, cultural and community needs.</p>	<p>Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to improve safety, accessibility, natural surveillance in open space.</p> <p>Maintain appropriate fire breaks to reduce bushfire risk.</p> <p>Maintain high quality public open spaces to minimise hazards and risk of injury and increase the perception of safety.</p>	<p>Protect indigenous flora and fauna in urban landscapes to enhance biodiversity and promote environmental resilience.</p> <p>Identify and protect key environmental, social, heritage, and cultural values of public open space from the impacts of development.</p> <p>Enhance ecological connections through open space planning.</p> <p>Connect people to nature and increase stewardship of our natural environment.</p>	<p>Open space that accommodate a variety of activities and activations.</p> <p>Provide an appropriate level of infrastructure and facilities in open spaces to support different uses, interests and needs.</p> <p>Improve the visual appeal of open spaces through public art and landscaping.</p>	<p>A network of different types of open spaces, well connected to residential, employment and industrial areas.</p> <p>Open spaces are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.</p> <p>Open space corridors that connect neighbourhoods and townships with signage and wayfinding information to support community members to use active transport between destinations.</p>
<p><b>Deliver in partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve collaboration within Council, with other stakeholders and with the community to seek multiple benefits from open spaces.</li> <li>Optimise open space outcomes by aligning with State and Federal policies and strategies.</li> <li>Ensure community needs and aspirations are embedded in open space planning and implementation.</li> <li>Advocate for funding to enhance our open spaces.</li> </ul>			<p><b>Equitable planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan, develop and maintain open spaces with a consistent level of service, provision and amenity based on their classification and context.</li> <li>Support the evolving needs of communities for open space.</li> <li>Ensure that public open spaces are zoned appropriately to reflect the primary role of the land.</li> </ul>		

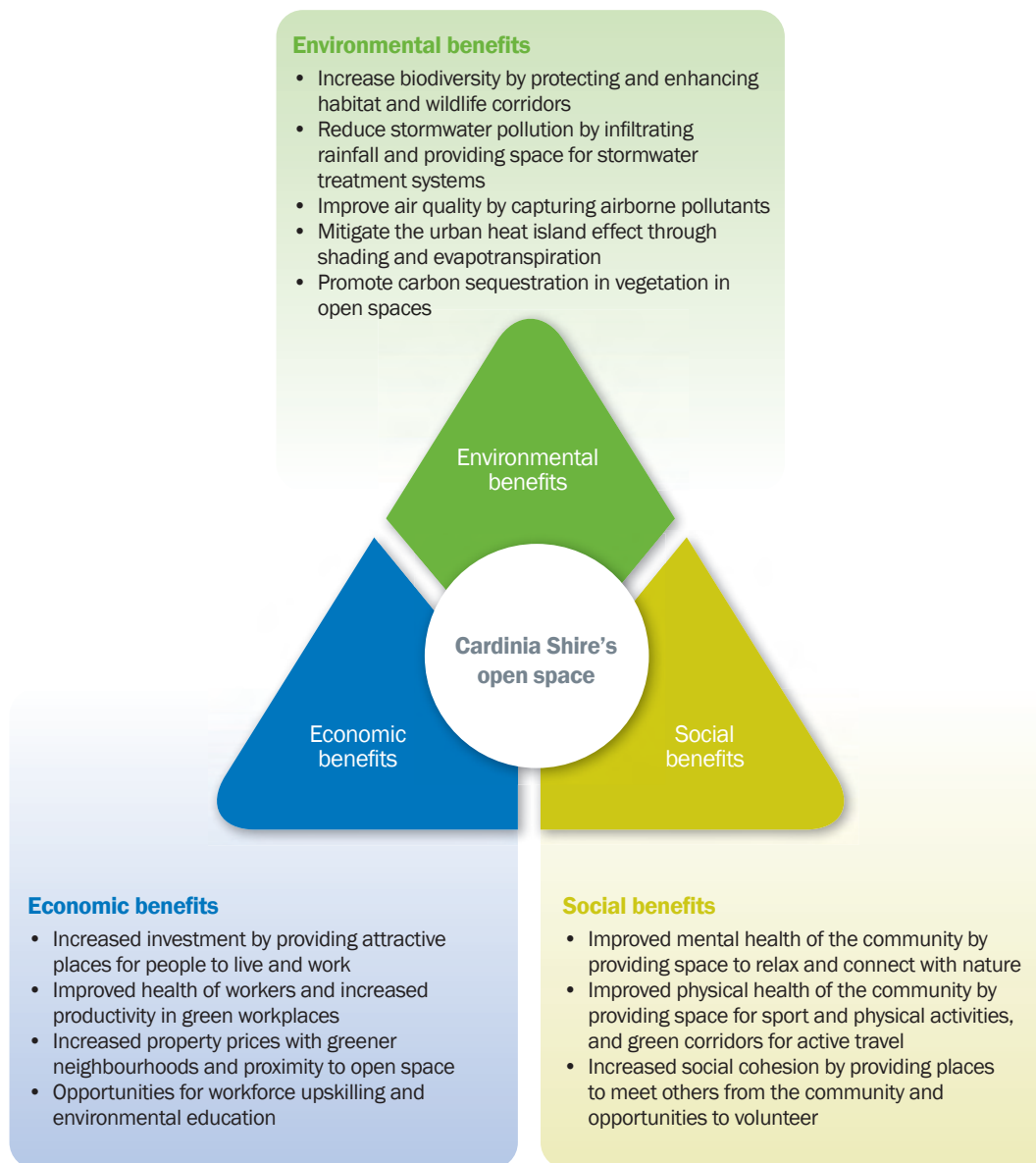
An aerial photograph of a dense, lush green forest. The trees are thick and vibrant, with a winding path or stream visible through the canopy. The overall tone is a rich, natural green.

Open spaces are vital to supporting  
the health and wellbeing of our  
community and the natural  
environment.

### 1.3 The role of and benefits provided by open space

Open space provides numerous benefits for our communities and our natural environment. The Strategy recognises the variety of benefits provided by open space, and that different benefits are provided by different types of open space.

Figure 4: The environmental, economic and social benefits of open space



## 1.4 Development of the Strategy

The development of the Open Space Strategy included the following elements:

<b>Community engagement</b>	Consultation with a variety of community groups and members to inform the Strategy
<b>Vision and objectives</b>	Development of a vision and objectives for the Cardinia Shire open space network
<b>Strategic and policy context</b>	Review of relevant Victorian strategies and policy settings Review of Council's existing strategies and policies
<b>Open space framework</b>	Development of a framework that includes the definition of open space, classification of open space, and open space benchmarks
<b>Assessment of open space network</b>	Application of the open space framework to assess the open space network
<b>Assessment of current and future need for open spaces</b>	Analysis of current and forecast gaps in open space provision and access
<b>Assessment of options to address identified gaps</b>	Identification of opportunities and options to address gaps
<b>Recommendations</b>	Prioritised recommendations to expand and enhance the open space network
<b>Implementation</b>	Development of an Action Plan for 2023–2026

## 2 Key influences and considerations



This Strategy seeks to ensure the open space network supports the needs of our community and environment and is healthy and resilient into the future. There are several key influences and considerations that need to be understood if the vision and objectives of this Strategy are to be achieved.

## 2.1 Traditional Owner values

During the initial consultation for the Open Space strategy in 2019 the conversations for the development of Cardinia Shire's second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) were also underway with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and traditional owner groups.

These consultations led to the inclusion of several actions to ensure our Registered Aboriginal Parties, Bunurong and Wurundjeri, along with our broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are included in decision making and management of open spaces within the shire. The following actions were devised in consultation and endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and Council in December 2021:

- Engage with Traditional Owners to increase understanding and use of traditional knowledge in caring for Country, including creating links with volunteer groups to increase capabilities and shared knowledge.
- Identify cultural heritage sites and assets in the shire and methods to obtain this information, to create a database of local information, i.e., through site visits and review access to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register.
- Promote the use of local Aboriginal languages (Woiwurrung and Bunurong) both internally and publicly for the naming and renaming of various Cardinia Shire features and localities, in line with Traditional Owner advice.
- Develop best practice guidelines for naming and renaming features and localities using local Aboriginal languages (Woiwurrung and Bunurong).
- Engage and work with Traditional Owner groups to develop a suite of signs to be placed in public parks and locations of cultural significance to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



### Key takeaway

- The Open Space Strategy will support the delivery of a number of Cardinia Shire's Reconciliation Action Plan actions in relation to open space management, development, education and naming.

## 2.2 Climate change resilience and sustainability

Climate change is causing more severe and frequent heatwaves, drought, rainfall, and storms. Extreme weather events have adverse effects on our ecosystems, human health, infrastructure, and economy. A changing climate will have implications for the costs of, and approaches to, maintaining and sustainably managing open spaces. Council declared a climate emergency across the Shire in 2019 in response to the overwhelming climate science which indicates that rising global temperatures are putting our local economy, people, species, and ecosystems at risk.

Open spaces form the interchange between the built and natural environments. They present a unique opportunity as an integral part of the response to the climate emergency. Vegetation in open spaces absorbs carbon dioxide, helping to offset greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change. Built assets on open space can contribute to mitigating climate change by minimising energy use and carbon emissions. Urban stormwater can be captured and treated in open spaces, protecting downstream rivers and bays, and providing a sustainable resource for irrigating green spaces and maintaining vegetation during droughts.


Shade from tree canopies reduces air temperatures, and evapotranspiration from trees and other vegetation further reduces temperatures in open spaces and adjacent urban areas. Shaded walking and cycling trails promote active transport and allow the community (especially vulnerable people) to access open spaces more easily during hot weather, reducing the dependence on fossil fuels and vehicles.

Heatwaves, drought, water restrictions and in more recent times, severe weather events including flooding and bushfires, impact the health of vegetation and fauna and reduce the positive benefits of open space. This has also impacted on the ability to undertake maintenance activities in parks and open space areas, particularly due to increased rainfall preventing vehicle access and mowing of grass. This has led to community concerns related to public perceptions of safety and amenity due to the long grass. With the varied topographical areas within Cardinia Shire, there are different challenges relating to flooding in the low-lying areas to the south, and severe storms,



Figure 5: Kurth Kiln regional park, Gembrook

strong winds, and bushfires in the northern hills and bushland areas. These weather events pose risks to natural and built assets as well as people. The creation of open space assets designed to mitigate the impacts of climate change and withstand extreme weather events will increase the viability of green spaces in the Shire. The condition of open spaces and their assets need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis to monitor their resilience against climate change. Where vegetation species are no longer surviving, they should be replaced with more climate adaptive varieties.

 <b>Key takeaway</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Open Space Strategy supports opportunities for the open space network to mitigate the impacts of climate change, and enhance resilience, adaptation, and environmental sustainability.</li> </ul>
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### 2.3 A diverse landscape

The landscape and settlement patterns in Cardinia Shire include rapidly growing new communities and employment areas within the central growth corridor, and undulating hills, flat swamp lands, native bushlands, coastline, and large tracts of rural farmland within the surrounding green wedges. The green wedge or rural areas of the Shire support a combination of agricultural, horticultural, tourism, employment and recreational uses. Small townships are found throughout the rural areas and are defined by various urban zoning. The main urban growth area is centrally located in the Shire, with limited growth expected in the rural townships. Employment areas are also increasing alongside population growth, and opportunities to incorporate open space within these traditionally baron areas should be embraced to improve outcomes for the workers and the broader environment.

Open spaces are an important element of strengthening communities through design. Open space in communities support economic development and contribute to liveability, community cohesion and pride in place. In rural areas they typically cater for visitors from the surrounding rural districts who may travel to enjoy the activities and experiences provided by open space in different townships. Although population densities are lower in the rural areas of the Shire, the provision of accessible open space is important to ensure the whole community benefits from open space. In the growth areas the challenge lies in ensuring there is enough open space to support higher numbers of people and more extensive use. Neighbourhood and local open space is critical in supporting the communities they serve.


 <b>Key takeaway</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardinia Shire has a diverse landscape and settlement pattern. The provision of quality open space is important in all communities in Cardinia Shire.</li> </ul>
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Figure 6: Mt Cannibal Flora and Fauna Reserve, Garfield North






## 2.4 Responding to population growth

Cardinia Shire has experienced rapid population growth, which is forecast to continue. At the time of the 2021 Census, the population of the Shire was 118,194 and is forecast to reach 192,248 residents by 2041<sup>1</sup> (an increase of 63%). The rapid increase in resident population is largely being accommodated within the urban growth corridor in new communities being developed within Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) developed by the Victorian Planning Authority in partnership with Council. The rural areas of the Shire are forecast to have much less population growth, although increased migration to rural townships during and after the Covid-19 pandemic is also contributing to population growth in these areas. The long-term effects of an increased proportion of people working from home are not yet clear.

The diverse nature of settlements across the Shire means there is a variety of housing typologies, from higher density and detached housing in new communities, to rural and semi-rural properties in the outer townships. In new communities, small lot sizes and preferences for larger detached homes means there is limited private open space. Reliance on open space for recreational benefits is greater in areas where access to private open space is more limited. The average area of lots for new houses in Greater Melbourne has reduced from 490 m<sup>2</sup> in 2012 to 429 m<sup>2</sup> in 2021<sup>2</sup>, further exacerbating the lack of access to private open space. Council works with and advocates to the Victorian Planning Authority to optimise accessible open space in new precincts.



**Key takeaway**

- The Open Space Strategy responds to the current and future demographics and settlement patterns. Where possible, place-specific recommendations have been made.

Figure 7: PB Ronald Reserve, Pakenham



1 <https://forecast.id.com.au/cardinia> - December 2022  
 2 <https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/new-houses-being-built-smaller-blocks>


### 2.5 Inclusive and healthy communities

Access to quality public open space and the natural environment strongly influences health and social outcomes, including social connection and cohesion, mental wellbeing, perceptions of safety, and physical wellbeing.

Outdoor meeting spaces offer the opportunity for engagement among members of the community, which increases familiarity with others and mutual interest in wellness. These spaces can support the formation and strengthening of support networks. Physical exercise increases serotonin levels, a ‘feel good’ hormone, that helps to reduce stress, and contributes to mental wellbeing. Thoughtfully designed wellbeing signage and sensory gardens in open spaces can encourage visitors to connect with nature to increase mindfulness and improve mental health.

Engaging with nature in open spaces enables the community to connect with the natural environment to enhance wellbeing and foster a sense of place, custodianship, and connection to natural history. Participating in community volunteer groups in open spaces further enhances these benefits.

Vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, women, children and young people, people who are gender diverse, migrants and refugees and people living with disabilities, may feel excluded from public spaces if they are perceived to be unsafe and unwelcoming. It is important that the needs of people experiencing social inequity or exclusion are known and understood, and central to the planning, design, and delivery of the open space network to maximise inclusion. Safe, quality, multifunctional and well-connected public open space that support all people regardless of socio-economic status, gender, age, physical ability and ethnicity is crucial for a healthy community.



**Key takeaways**

- A core objective of the Open Space Strategy is to provide an equitable amount of and access to open space across the Shire, so all residents have access to the health and wellbeing benefits of open space.
- The Strategy identifies the importance of all members of the community being able to engage in open space and activities through volunteerism.

**Figure 8: Mindfulness signage in nature reserve. Projects like this have the aim of supporting our community's mental wellbeing while in open space.**




### 2.6 Active communities

In Cardinia Shire 42% of adults do not currently participate in the recommended amount of physical activity, so providing access to a diverse range of quality open spaces and facilities to support all types of physical activity is critical in supporting community health and wellbeing. Throughout our lives we are likely to use many different types of open space, from playgrounds and active sporting facilities to places where we can have a barbeque, enjoy the natural environment, or sit down to read a book.

Open space is a crucial enabler of physical activity of all types, ranging from ‘traditional’ sports (typically undertaken in organised clubs or as individuals in competitions), to social sports (social, semi-organised, non-competitive sports activities) to active recreation (non-competitive physical activity undertaken as a leisure activity in a group or as an individual). The community’s preference for recreational activities changes over time, so it is important that the open space network is flexible and responsive to emerging trends.

Remaining active as we move into later life is crucial for maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age. There are many factors that influence healthy ageing, some of which cannot be controlled by the individual (e.g., genetics). Other factors, including the degree of physical activity, can be controlled but are reliant on access to age-appropriate facilities. Ensuring open spaces in the Shire provide support for mobility for people of all ages is important in creating active and healthy communities.

 **Key takeaway**

- The Strategy supports an open space network that provides for all types of activity, including social sport and active recreation, and is responsive to changes in preferences for recreational activities.


Figure 9: Community member using outdoor exercise equipment



### 2.7 Healthy biodiversity

Native plants and animals have an intrinsic right to exist. Cardinia Shire is home to 1,325 native plants and 414 native animals. Unfortunately, 94 native plants are listed on the state advisory list as 'rare' or 'threatened' and 63 native animals are recorded as 'rare' or 'threatened'. We have a responsibility under national and state legislation to protect our remaining native species and ensure that threatened species do not become locally extinct.

Quality of life for people is also linked to a healthy natural environment and the 'ecosystem services' that the environment provides. Ecosystem services are defined as 'the benefits provided to humans through the transformations of resources (or environmental assets, including land, water, vegetation and atmosphere) into a flow of essential goods and services, for example clean air, water, and food' (Constanza et al., 1997).

 **Key takeaway**

- The Strategy recognises the role of open space in the creation, enhancement, and protection of biodiversity. Connecting and creating habitat supports a healthy environment and connecting people with nature supports a healthy community.

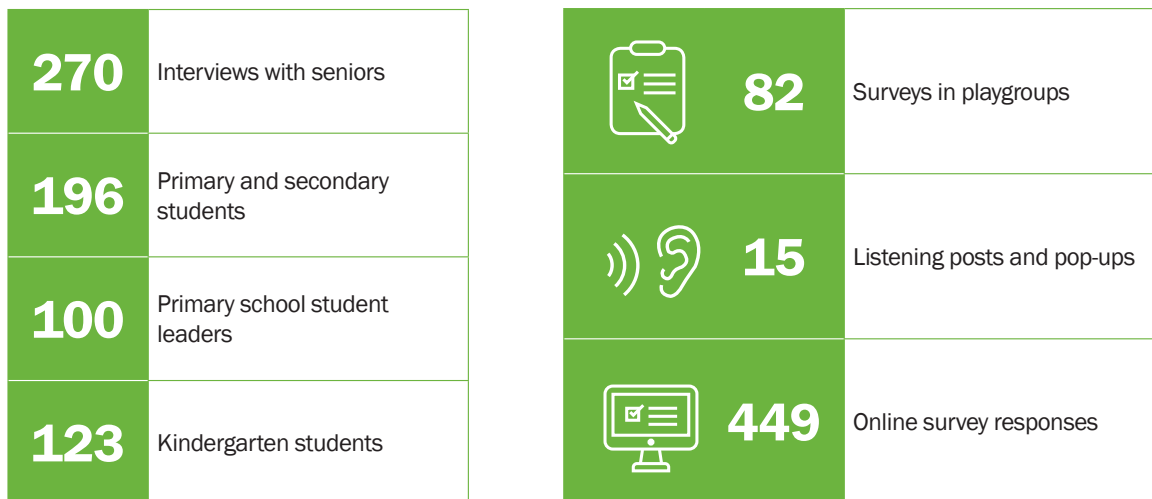
Figure 10: RJ Chambers Flora and Fauna Reserve, Pakenham Upper



### 3 Community engagement process and highlights



Council undertook extensive community engagement from October to December 2019 to gather feedback to inform the preparation of the Strategy. A range of community groups and individuals were consulted through a variety of engagement methods.



Feedback from the community highlighted opportunities and key issues that were considered in the preparation of the Strategy.

- Half of the survey respondents were happy with the current open space network, however many ideas and suggestions for improvements were provided through the various engagement methods.
- The feedback emphasised the desire for shade, public toilets, seating, barbeques, and a well-connected network of pathways for walking and cycling.
- Over 61% of survey respondents walk or cycle to get to their nearest open space
- Respondents indicated that they visit small parks close to home multiple times per week, highlighting the importance of being within easy walking distance to open space.
- The most common activities enjoyed in open space were taking children to play at a playground, going for a walk including taking dog/s for a walk on-leash, enjoying nature, bike/scooter riding on bike paths, sitting down and relaxing outdoors, having a picnic, and hanging out with friends outdoors.
- Recurring ideas provided by the community included mountain bike riding facilities, public access to equestrian facilities, obstacle/ninja courses, nature and imagination play, water splash parks, public events such as fun runs/walks, coffee vans or playgrounds near cafes, and wellness parks with an emphasis on mental health.

The Strategy includes recommendations for the open space network that take into consideration the community feedback provided during engagement activities. The feedback will also be used to inform future improvements to our open spaces.

Council undertook a second round of community engagement from March to April 2023 to seek feedback on the draft Open Space Strategy. The engagement process included an online survey, community listening posts and pop-ups, external stakeholder engagement meetings, social media posts and email notification to community groups. This feedback has been used to refine the final version of the Open Space Strategy.

## 4 Strategic planning and policy context



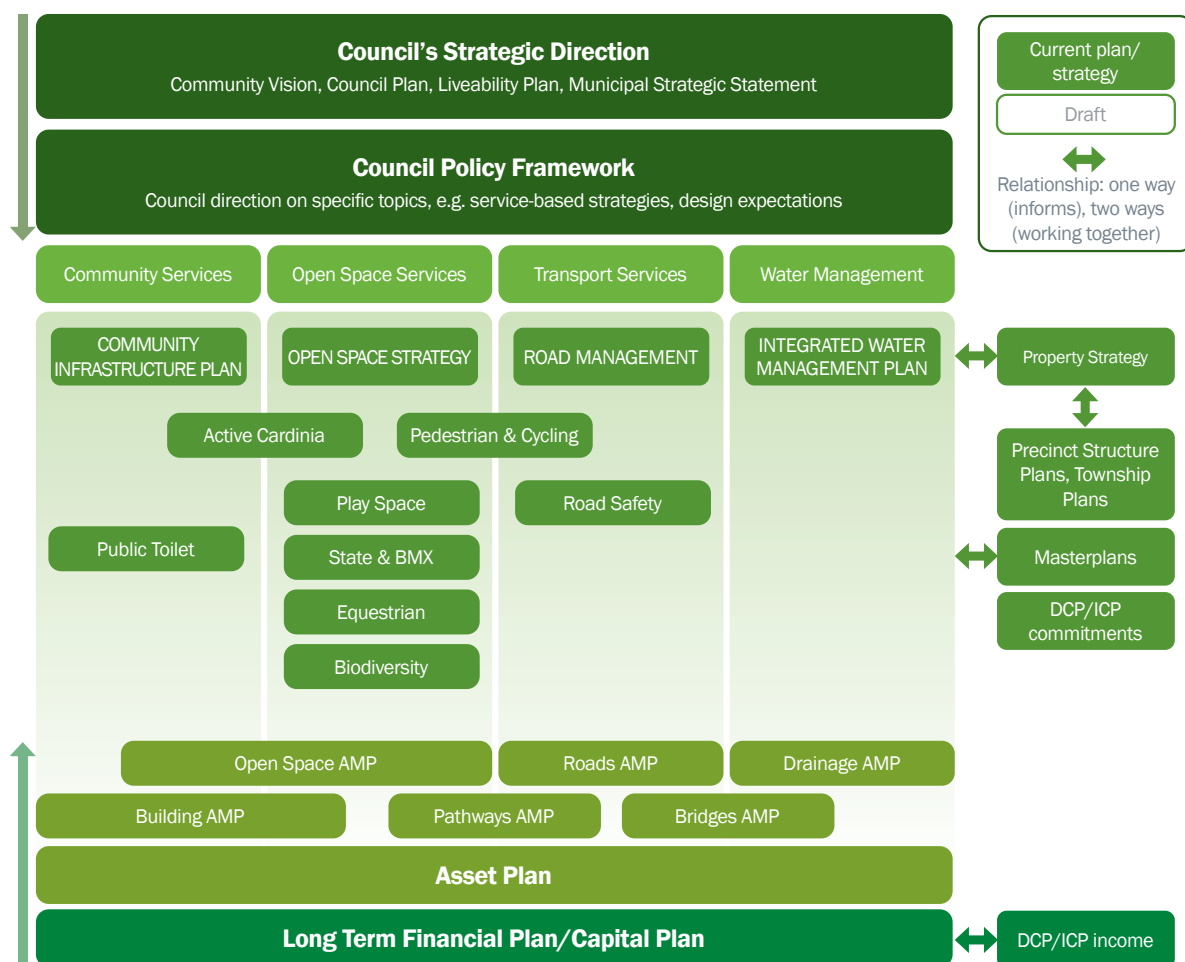
Strategic planning and policy at the state, regional and local levels influence how we plan for, fund and deliver open space in Cardinia Shire. A short summary and explanation of the relationships of relevant strategies and policies to the Open Space Strategy are detailed in Appendix 1.

The Strategy is consistent with the broader policy context set out in State Government planning documents including the strategic directions set out in Plan Melbourne 2017–2050 and the Open Space Strategy for Metropolitan Melbourne 2021; Open Space for Everyone, the open space strategy requirements of Planning Practice Note 70, and the relevant Precinct Structure Plans.

The Open Space Strategy is a key part of the delivery of Cardinia Shire’s Community Vision 2040, Council Plan and Liveability Plan, and is guided by Council planning that has been developed in collaboration with communities across the Shire.

Figure 11 below highlights the relationship of the Open Space Strategy to other key Council policy documents.

**Figure 11: Cardinia Shire Strategic Framework**





## 4.1 Delivering open space

### New areas

New open space in Cardinia Shire is primarily delivered as part of the development of new estates. Open space should be planned for and delivered in the early stages of an estate development to avoid residents moving into an area without access to open space within walking distance. If there is an identified gap in an existing area, then provision of open space to address that gap should be prioritised as part of any future development.

Most new development within Cardinia Shire occurs in the central growth corridor and is planned and delivered through Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs). The PSP determines what size and function of open space is required and the Development Contributions Plans (DCPs) and Infrastructure Contributions Plans (ICPs) determine what contributions are required to secure the required land and at times, provide for embellishment of that land. DCPS provide for land acquisition and embellishment of some, but not all, public open space sites within a PSP. Unlike DCPs, ICPs collect funds towards the acquisition of all public open space land within a PSP but do not provide any contributions towards the embellishment of the open space. Any new PSPs developed will exclusively be using ICPs to deliver open space and the embellishment costs will be met by the landowner.

Within rural townships and the established areas of Cardinia Shire, Development Plan Overlays are often used to guide development of larger vacant parcels of land, including the delivery of open space.

Under the Subdivision Act 1988 a person who applies to subdivide land for residential purposes may be required to:

- set aside up to 5% of the land for public open space, or
- pay up to 5% of the site value of the land, or
- a combination of both.

Municipal councils can specify a different contribution amount in their planning scheme through the schedule to clause 53.01 – Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision. Public open space contributions are required through planning permit conditions for most residential subdivisions of three or more lots.

Open space within Cardinia Shire is generally provided at a rate of 8% of the net developable land area except where otherwise specified through a PSP. Under the Subdivision Act 1988 up to 5% of the net developable land area can be required to be open space in industrial and commercial areas.

Type or location of subdivision	Amount of contribution for public open space
Subdivision of land for urban residential purposes.	8 per cent
Land shown as Urban Growth Zone 3 and Urban Growth Zone 4 on the planning scheme maps (Officer PSP)	5.5 percent  Land and/or cash contribution requirements must be in accordance with Section 4.5.4 of the <i>Officer Precinct Structure Plan (September 2011)</i> .
Land shown as DCP05 Schedule 5 to Clause 45.06 Development Contributions Plan Overlay on the planning scheme maps (Glismann Road, Beaconsfield)	10 per cent  To be provided in accordance with the <i>Glismann Road Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, May 2022)</i>
Employment areas	Up to 5 per cent

The Victorian Planning Authority requires the provision of a maximum of 2% of the net developable land area to be contributed as open space in new employment areas under their PSP Guidelines which results in less open space to improve the visual appearance of employment areas and less opportunities for workers to have a break, exercise or eat their meals outside. Allowing 2% is not considered sufficient to optimise the availability and benefits of open space in commercial areas and further analysis is needed to determine a more appropriate percentage.

The embellishment of any new open spaces must reflect the classification of the reserve and consider the longer-term maintenance and renewal of infrastructure at the design stage. The design should also look for opportunities to include storm water harvesting and urban agriculture where appropriate. Council actively seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment and encourage sustainable practices in the development of open space areas. The environmental assets within the site must be considered at the commencement of the planning process.

Council has produced Developer Landscape Guidelines to direct the design, approval, and implementation of landscaping in new subdivisions in Cardinia Shire, including the embellishment of open space areas. The guidelines articulate Council’s expectations at each stage of the process and aim to facilitate a straightforward and efficient landscape development process. These guidelines are due for review. As part of this review, they will be updated to ensure alignment with the Open Space Strategy.

For areas outside of a PSP, where there is sufficient open space provision or the delivery of open space is unable to occur within a development site, Council can collect a contribution of a percentage of the value of the land, as outlined above. This contribution can then be used by Council to purchase additional open space in another location or embellish existing open space within the ward area the contribution was received.

**Figure 12: Hicks Reserve, Officer**



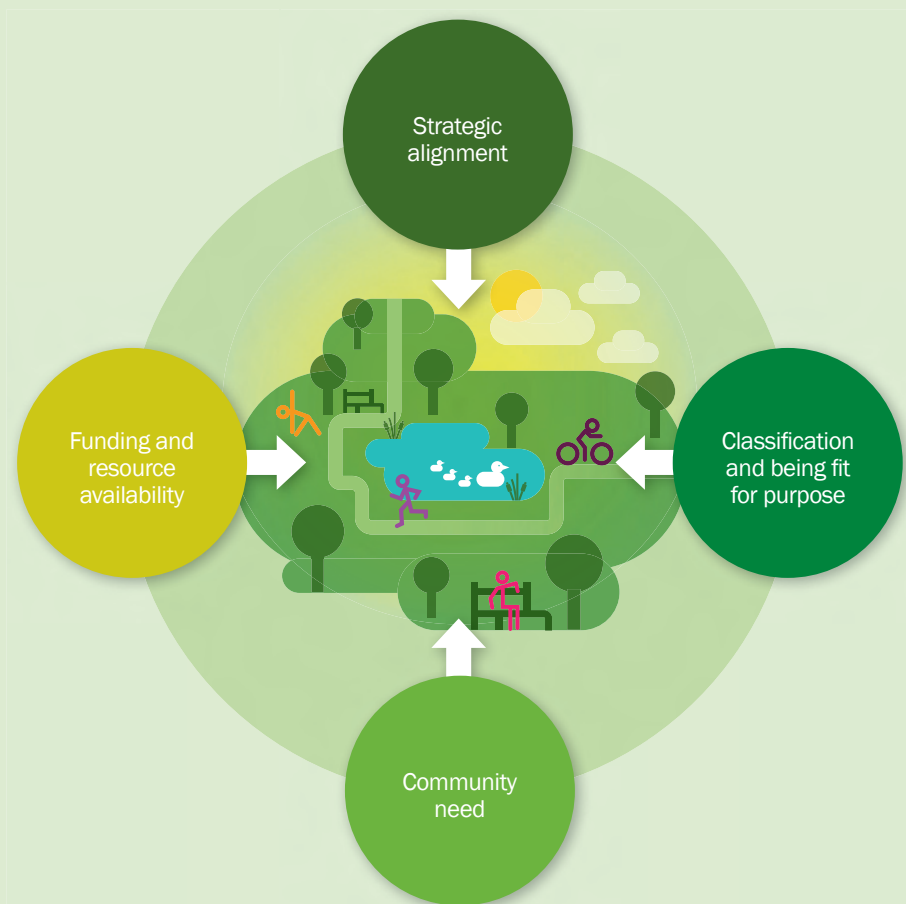
**Existing areas**

For areas where additional open space or additional access paths to existing open space are required outside of new developments, this process is led by Cardinia Shire Council and may or may not involve partnering with other landowners. The renewal and embellishment of existing open spaces is also led by Council. This is a strategic process which will prioritise works considering classification, type, asset condition and functionality assessments, available funding, and adopted policies, strategies, and master plans. The whole of life costs including acquisition, infrastructure delivery, asset renewal, asset maintenance, and end of useful life costs will be considered by Council in the development and renewal of open spaces. The embellishment of open spaces must reflect the classification of the reserve and consider the longer term maintenance and renewal of infrastructure at the design stage.

Enhancement of existing open spaces classified as district, township and regional require the preparation and adoption of a concept design and/or master plan prepared in consultation with the community to inform and guide the delivery of infrastructure and site works. Regional open space across the Shire is delivered and managed at both the Council and State Government level (relevant strategies and management plans for Parks Victoria regional open space across the Shire are provided in Appendix 1 – Strategic planning and policy context). Council will support further analysis of provision and access to regional open spaces within and adjacent to Cardinia Shire in partnership with surrounding local Councils and the State Government.

**Figure 13: Strategic process for prioritisation of renewal and embellishment of open space**

*The renewal and embellishment of existing open spaces is a holistic process that considers the following:*



**Working in partnership**

Council will work in partnership with other levels of government, commercial businesses, developers, and the community to understand the current service provision and avoid providing like for like services and replicating facilities. Local governments are required to adhere to the principles of competitive neutrality through transparent cost identification and pricing in a way that removes advantages arising from public ownership. This ensures that significant business activities of publicly owned entities compete fairly in the market.

The commercial market for physical activity, recreation and ‘community’ spaces has increased the availability of some infrastructure traditionally provided by local governments. When developing open space and recreation facilities, consideration should be given to what is being provided by the current commercial market and other service providers. This ensures variety and supports equitable access to services.

👤
**Key takeaways**

- Most new development occurs in the central growth corridor and is planned and delivered through Precinct Structure Plans.
- New open space in Cardinia Shire is primarily delivered as part of new estates directed by Council’s Landscape Developer Guidelines.
- In established areas, Development Plan Overlays are often used to guide development including the delivery of open space.
- Embellishment of new open spaces must reflect the classification of the reserve.
- Where possible, open space should be planned for and delivered at a time that will support the residents moving to the area.
- The Victorian Planning Authority requires the provision of a maximum of 2% of the net developable land area to be contributed as open space in new employment areas.
- Further investigation into provision and access to open space in employment areas to support physical activity and enhance visual amenity is required.
- The renewal and embellishment of existing open space assets are delivered by Council.
- Council supports working in partnership with other levels of government, commercial businesses, developers, and the community in the provision and embellishment of open spaces.

Figure 14: Don Jackson Reserve, Pakenham, Dog off leash area under construction



## 5 The open space framework



The Open Space Strategy has been developed to provide a clear framework for open space planning and to achieve the vision for open space in the Shire. The framework outlines the common agenda that Council, partners, and the community, will collectively work towards over the next 10 years.

The framework provides the basis for assessing the open space network across the Shire and guides consistent and equitable planning to ensure current and future needs of the community can be met. The framework is presented below (Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Cardinia Shire open space framework**

Vision			
To plan, deliver and maintain enticing and inclusive open spaces across Cardinia Shire that are well-connected, sustainable, and equitable, meeting the current and future needs of our community.			
Objectives			
Sustainable	Adaptable	Accessible and connected	Attractive and inviting
Deliver in partnership	Equitable planning	Safe	Healthy biodiversity
Classification and benchmarks			
Catchment	Function	Benchmarks	
Analysis, recommendations and implementation plan			
Gap analysis	Recommendations	Implementation plan	

### 5.1 Defining open space

For this Strategy, public open space is defined as **land that is publicly owned, freely accessible, and able to be used for recreation, leisure and/or environmental benefits**. This includes passive reserves, active reserves, natural resource areas, and linear connections.

Public open space includes public land owned and managed by Council, public land owned by other government agencies and managed by Council, and public land owned and managed by State Government agencies that meets the definition of open space.

The public open space network is complemented by other land across the Shire including restricted and encumbered public land.

Public open space is defined as land that is publicly owned, freely accessible, and able to be used for recreation, leisure and/or environmental benefits.

### 5.2 Open space type and classification

Open space is managed differently based on its function, size, the catchment from which visitors are expected to come, the needs of the community, and the level of service it provides. The classification of open space uses catchment and function as the main system for grouping and identifying the different open spaces across the Shire.

#### *Classifying open spaces by catchment*

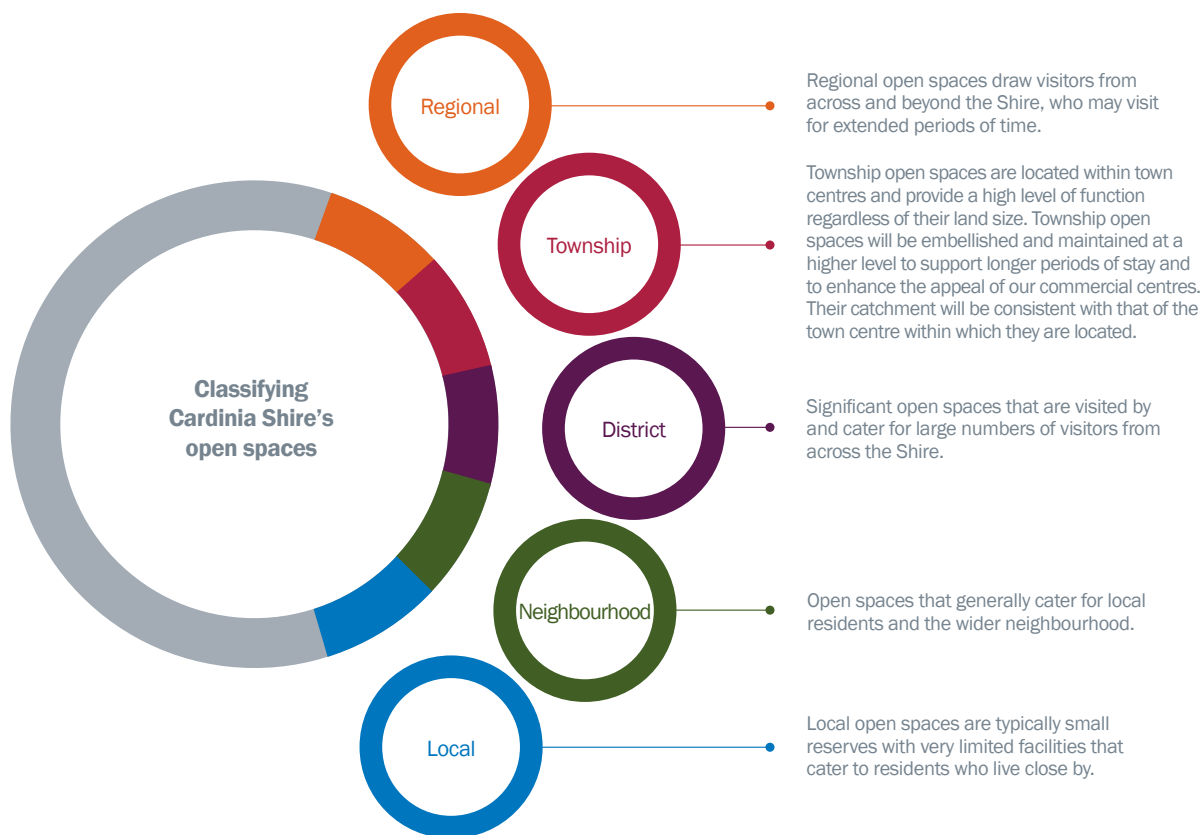
The catchment is the sphere of influence of an open space. It relates to how far users travel to use the space, and how long they may choose to stay, which affects the scale and quality of facilities required. Generally, the larger the catchment served by an open space the more intensively developed and managed the space will be.

An overview of the catchment classification of open spaces in Cardinia Shire is provided below (Figure 17), and a detailed description is provided in Appendix 2.

Figure 16: Gum leaves



Figure 17: Catchment classification of open spaces in Cardinia Shire.



The Township open space is a new classification unique to Cardinia Shire. It reflects the need to provide a high level of open space function to residents of rural townships and the surrounding districts, while recognising that many residents will not be able to walk to open spaces due to their rural location. The provision of multiple different types of open spaces in small townships is unlikely to be achievable either due to the availability of open space or it not being a financially sustainable option. Open space in this category may only be moderately sized but will be embellished and maintained to a standard which will reflect and support the community it serves. They will typically be centrally located so that surrounding commercial or community hubs within the township are supported. Similarly, township parks that are located within the more urban parts of the Shire provide a vital role in enhancing the appeal of our commercial centres.



### Classifying open spaces by type

A consistent and clear approach to classifying open space across the Shire is important for equitable open space provision, planning and development, and management. The classification of open space by type identifies the different types of open spaces found within the Shire, and what the purpose or function is of these open spaces. The types of open spaces found within the Shire include passive reserves, active reserves, natural resource areas, and linear connections. Where an open space performs multiple different functions, the dominant or primary function has been used to determine its type. The types of open space are defined in Table 1 and further detail is provided in Appendix 1.

Establishing an open space classification allows Council to have a clear indication of the different types of open space provided across the Shire and how they are to be planned, developed, and managed. For example, a regional passive reserve will attract large numbers of people from within and outside of the municipality as it often provides a unique experience and/or a range of passive and recreational opportunities. Whereas a regional natural resource area is recognised for its national and state ecological significant flora and fauna. Whilst they may attract people from outside of the municipality, natural resource areas are managed for their conservation values, and for the protection and enhancement of significant species and habitat.

**Table 1: Open space types**

Type	Definition
<b>Passive reserves</b>	Passive reserves are often referred to as “the local park” where neighbours meet, take children to play, and enjoy the outdoors in a green space. A place to rest, relax, gather, and recreate. Activities may include walking, running, dog walking, relaxing, playing, participating in unstructured sport, personal training, and similar activities. These open spaces assist in the promotion of personal enjoyment, social interaction, connection with nature, physical and mental wellbeing, and personal achievement. Passive reserves can also provide connective habitat for flora and fauna.
<b>Active reserves</b>	Active reserves are provided primarily for structured, organised team sports, and active recreation in an outdoor setting. This includes for training and competition. The provision of formal sporting facilities supports the community by providing personal enjoyment, social interaction, improving physical and mental health, supporting personal achievement and community involvement as well as providing an opportunity for expression of community pride. Active reserves can also provide connective habitat for flora and fauna.
<b>Natural resource areas</b>	The role of natural resource areas is to protect and enhance significant vegetation and habitat values. Natural resource areas may include forests, national and state parks, wildlife reserves, creek corridors, water bodies, coastal fringe, foreshore, conservation areas, and bushland reserves. The ongoing maintenance and works in these areas are often in partnership with land management agencies and Friends Groups. The primary goal of these areas is to ensure that natural values, flora and fauna, and cultural heritage is recognised and preserved, while providing recreation and tourist destinations to the community and region as a secondary purpose.
<b>Linear connections</b>	These connections link biodiversity as well as provide walking, cycling and equestrian opportunities for people. These reserves are generally linear in appearance and located along waterways, drainage lines, easements, and roads. The positive benefits to a community of more people walking and cycling rather than driving are proven and include reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced crime due to greater surveillance, reduced demand for bigger and better roadways, improved physical and mental wellbeing, and a greater appreciation and connection with the natural environment.

### Other types of open space

In addition to public open space, other land across the Shire complements the open space network, including restricted, encumbered, ancillary, publicly accessible private open space, and not fit-for-purpose open space. Examples of these supporting land types is provided in the table below. These other types of open space have not been considered in the provision analysis for the Shire.

Table 2: Other types of open space

Type	Definition
<b>Restricted</b>	Public land that could provide an open space function that is not freely accessible to the community due to leases, agreements, specialised sporting infrastructure or conservation protection overlays. Examples include public golf courses, conservation reserves and government schools.
<b>Encumbered</b>	Public land for which the primary purpose is for drainage, flood management, transport, or utilities. All encumbered open space that is accessible to the public is used as passive open space, and if maintained by Council provides a recreation function as a secondary, complementary purpose.
<b>Ancillary</b>	Other parts of the public realm and publicly owned land that can be perceived as complementing and in some cases be used as open space, but do not meet the definition of open space in this Strategy. Examples include streetscapes which are primarily set aside for transport but provide important connections between open spaces for walking and cycling.
<b>Publicly accessible private open space</b>	Land that is privately owned but available for the public to use, which includes privately owned plazas in shopping precincts and group camping sites.
<b>Not fit-for-purpose open space</b>	Open space that is publicly accessible but not used by the public because it is undeveloped, too small and/or does not provide the facilities or infrastructure to support access or activities. The primary purpose may be for something else other than public recreation, or it may be awaiting embellishment.

### 5.3 Analysis approach: provision and access benchmarks

Provision and access benchmarks guide the planning and development of open space within the Shire to provide the best outcomes for the community. The same provision and access benchmarks are proposed across the whole Shire. This allows Council to provide an equitable amount and distribution of open space throughout the Shire and equitably prioritise future open space and enhancements to existing open space which meet the Shire's growing population and diverse community needs.

Council acknowledges that the quality of open space forms an essential consideration of the open space network and will be considered as part of the recommendations of this strategy.

#### Provision of open space

Provision of open space is defined as the amount of open space and is often calculated in the form of an area of open space per person. Provision can be further understood by quantifying the type of open space area such as active and passive open spaces. While provision is only one, high-level indicator, it assists with the identification of current and future open space needs as the population grows over time.

For this strategy, the provision benchmark is 5 hectares per 1,000 head of population.

This measure is further broken down into 3 hectares for passive open space and 2 hectares for active open space. These benchmarks considered the local context of Cardinia Shire, comparable benchmarks across Victoria and Australia, and the required minimum standards to service the recreation and sporting needs of the community equitably and appropriately. The decision was made not to adopt a percentage land area-based benchmark to assess the provision of open space as this does not adequately account for variations in density and associated demands on open space.

**Access to open space**

While the overall provision of open space is important, whether residents have equal access to open space must also be considered. Access can be defined as the proportion of the community that are within walking distance to public open space. Easy and safe walking access to open space is linked to multiple benefits to the community in terms of public health, including significant increases in the percentage of people who are physically active and have improved mental health.

Access and supply of open space has been measured in relation to the percentage of residents living in residentially zoned areas who are within 500 m walking distance of a public open space. This measurement is based on walking distance, not as the crow flies, to provide a very accurate and detailed understanding of access provision. For this Strategy, a walking distance of 500 m to public open space was considered a practical and realistic threshold for Cardinia Shire. The walkable distance to open space takes into consideration the physical barriers to movement, the available path and trail networks, and the location of entrances to open space. A 500 m walkable catchment was identified for each open space considering these factors. All residents living within the catchment are in turn identified as having access to open space. This assessment included open space close to the Cardinia Shire Council boundary in adjoining Council areas. This approach allows Council to identify areas and addresses that do not currently have access to open space (i.e. are in a gap). Currently, 85% of residents living within residentially zoned areas in Cardinia Shire have access to open space within 500 m walking distance.

For the access assessment, the classification of open space was not taken into consideration as even regional parks can function as walkable open space destinations for residents. It is noted that generally larger open spaces have a larger service area and smaller open spaces have a smaller service area. Despite this, an equitable approach was implemented to be able to identify priority gap areas in a consistent way across the entire Shire.

Access and supply of open space has been measured in relation to the percentage of residents living in residentially zoned areas who are within 500 m walking distance of a public open space.

Currently, 85% of residents living within residentially zoned areas in Cardinia Shire have access to open space within 500 m walking distance.

**5.4 Addressing gaps in the open space network**

There are several mechanisms (listed in the table and described in the section below) that Council has considered to address insufficient provision and access gaps in the open space network and better support the open space needs of the community now and in the future.

**Table 3: Potential mechanisms for addressing open space shortfalls and gaps**

Gap/shortfall area	Potential mechanisms
<b>Provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver new open space</li> <li>• Increase functionality of encumbered or restricted open space</li> <li>• Enhance public not fit-for-purpose open spaces</li> <li>• Repurposing existing surplus open space to meet active/passive shortfalls</li> </ul>
<b>Access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance access to open space</li> <li>• Deliver new open space</li> <li>• Increase access to encumbered or restricted open space</li> <li>• Enhance public not fit-for-purpose open spaces</li> <li>• Enhance the quality and activation of existing open space</li> </ul>

**Deliver new open space**

Where there are gaps in provision of open space, or forecast population indicates there will be a future gap in open space provision, new open space will need to be provided. Additionally, where there are gaps in 500 m walking distance to open space that cannot be addressed through connectivity and access improvements, more open space will need to be added to the network. Potential options for delivering new open space could be through converting existing Council owned land, purchasing land or acquisition. As identified in section 4.1, a lot of new open space is delivered as part of the development of new estates. Therefore, Council has a role in advocating for new open space and identifying priority locations where gaps in provision or access exist for open space to be delivered by other agencies.

**Increase access to/functionality of encumbered or restricted open space**

Opportunities can be explored to utilise encumbered or restricted public land for open space and recreation through sharing facilities, repurposing or making them more accessible. Allowing access to encumbered or restricted open space complements the broader open space network by providing additional opportunities for the community and can address gaps in access to open space. Access to open space of this type will depend on the nature of the encumbered or restricted open space and could be limited such as for schools to outside of school hours. Joint user agreements (including memorandums of understanding (MOUs)) and partnerships with private and public entities could also be explored.

**Enhance access to open space**

Community access to open space can be impacted by physical barriers such as major roads, rail lines and waterways, as well as the orientation of adjoining development and the location of access points into open space. Opportunities could be explored to increase access by providing additional access points, improving walking connections to open space, expanding or connecting linear open spaces, and linking existing open spaces. Improving connectivity accentuates open space as a network, promotes active transport and walkable neighbourhoods, provides more opportunities for greening and cooling, and encourages use of open space.

**Enhance public not fit-for-purpose open space**

The open spaces identified as not fit-for-purpose provide an opportunity for enhancement to bring these spaces into the public open space network. Improvements could be through aspects such as a viewing platform, walking trail, basic infrastructure such as seating, or facilitating community connection to nature through educational signage.

**Enhance the quality of existing open space**

Increasing investment in existing open space to improve quality means more people have access to quality open space and the open space can support a higher intensity of use. Equity is an important consideration when investing in quality improvements to ensure there is consistency in open space delivery and maintenance.

Increased investment in quality amenities and facilities, such as planting, signage, seating, lighting, shade trees and accessible toilets and pathways allows for open space to be used by a wider range of people, for a broader range of activities, and makes open space more desirable for use throughout the day and into the evening. Quality enhancement also includes aspects beyond assets and facilities such as improving the attractiveness of the open space, and elements that contribute to safety and the sense of place.

For the purposes of this strategy, quality enhancements have been prioritised where there are gaps in walkable access that cannot be addressed through other opportunities. The "Township" classification has been assigned to open spaces which are designed to provide quality amenities and facilities to service a greater population and/or higher use. A quality assessment of the open space network will identify open spaces that require further enhancement and is a recommendation of this strategy.

## 6 Open space in Cardinia Shire

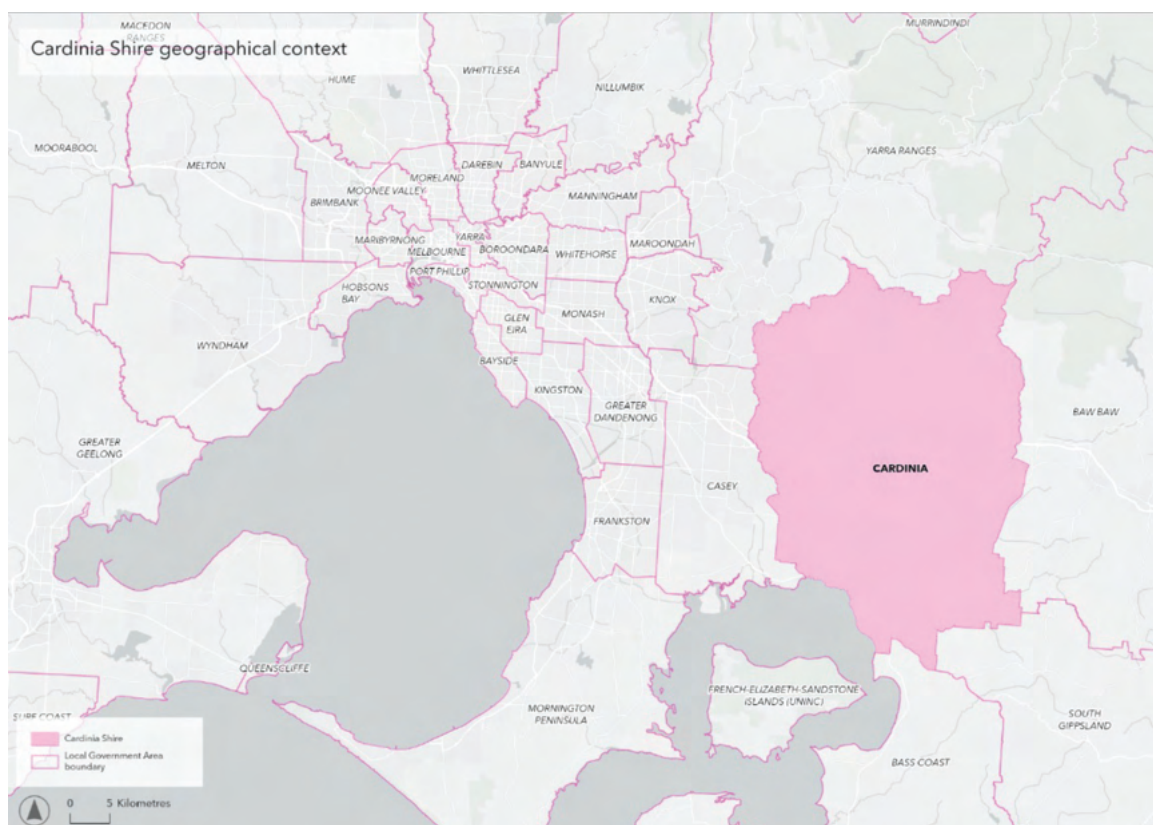


Essential to developing the Strategy was understanding the existing open space network, the unique setting and social context.

### 6.1 Our community

Cardinia Shire covers an area of approximately 1,280 square kilometres on Melbourne’s south-east fringe extending from the shore of Western Port Bay to the northern foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. Located about 55 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD, the Shire is the eastern-most local government authority in Greater Melbourne and acts as the gateway to Gippsland.

Figure 18: Location of Cardinia Shire



Cardinia Shire is one of Victoria’s fastest growing municipalities and is comprised of fast-growing urban areas and established rural areas with contrasting characteristics. Cardinia Shire has three sub-regions: the Growth sub-region, the Northern sub-region, and the Southern sub-region, reflecting the distinct geography and context of the area. The three sub-regions are further divided into fifteen distinct areas that are based on the standardised geographical units used for population forecasts.

The Growth sub-region (Beaconsfield, Officer, and Pakenham) is a fast-growing metropolitan area, with significant residential and employment precincts within the urban growth boundary. Beyond the urban growth boundary, the Northern (Hills) and Southern (Rural) sub-regions are characterised by smaller townships and rural and bushland areas.

Cardinia Shire’s population was 118,194 at the 2021 census. With population forecast modelling, Cardinia Shire is forecast to grow to 176,606 people by 2032, and 192,248 people by 2041.

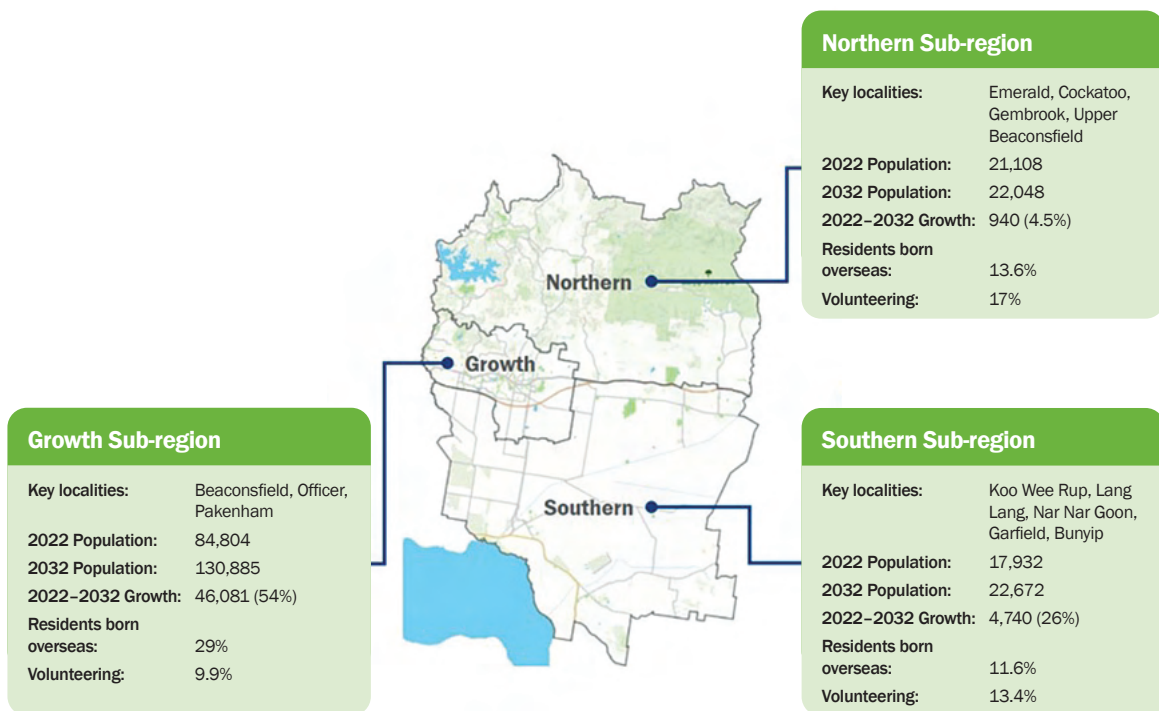
Key demographics that influence participation in recreation and the use of open space include gender, age, cultural background, income, and education. Changing patterns of settlement type and residential density also impact on open space use and demand. The following profile of the Cardinia Shire community includes key social indicators and the influence these characteristics may have on the open space network.

**Defining the sub-regions**

Cardinia Shire is a diverse municipality, with a mix of highly populated urban communities, townships, and rural areas, each with unique opportunities and challenges. The open space planning approach applied to the sub-regions has been tailored based on the distinct differences in population in terms of total population, forecast growth and density. The Growth sub-region will grow significantly between 2022 and 2032, with the need to plan for open space provision to cater for new communities.

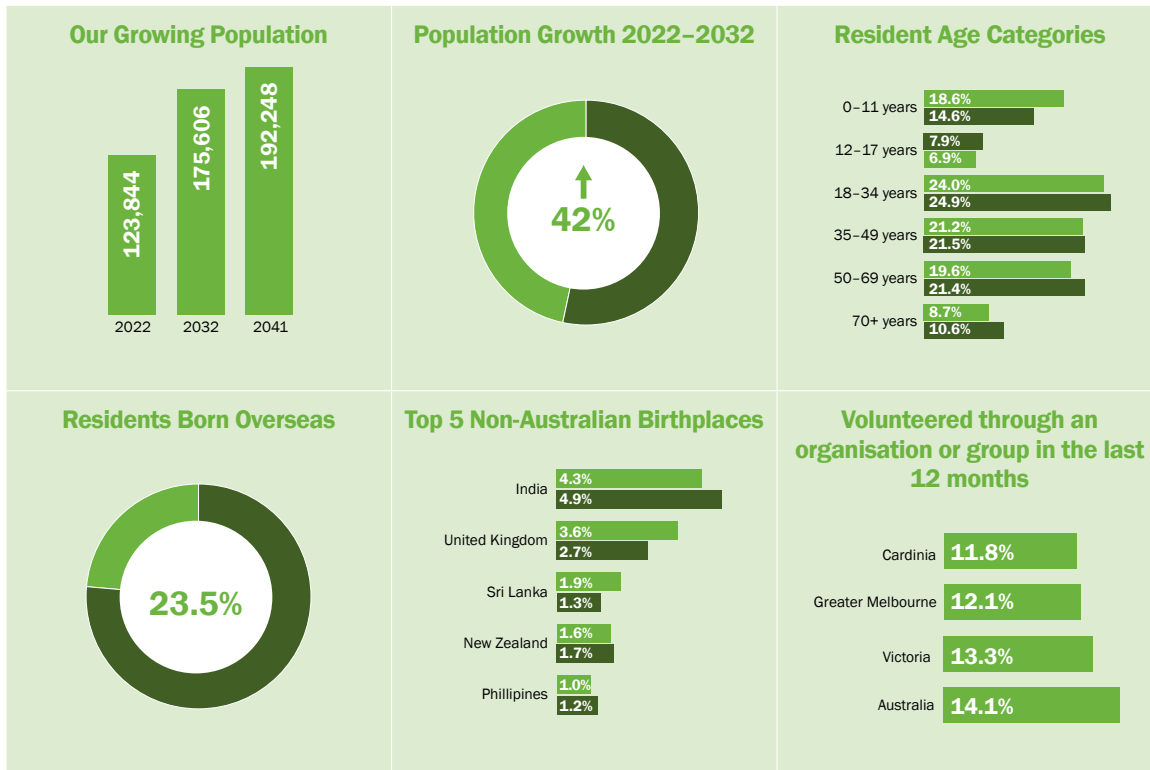
In contrast, the Northern and Southern sub-regions will have limited population growth, with planning to focus on improving access and participation opportunities in established communities.

**Figure 19: Key demographic characteristics of the sub-regions**



### The Cardinia Shire community

A snapshot of key demographic characteristics of the Shire are shown below.



● Cardinia ● Greater Melbourne

#### A growing population

##### Our Growing Population

Year	Population
2022	123,844
2032	175,606
2041	192,248

##### Population Growth 2022-2032

↑ 42%

Population increases will impact on the level of demand for specific activities, facilities and the range and quality of open spaces needed.

- Areas with higher growth rates will require a range of open spaces, both active and passive particularly larger spaces for social recreation and interaction.
- Off-road trails and pedestrian and cycle paths will need to cater for a wider range of users and be distributed to link new developments with existing facilities.
- Areas with static population growth such as northern and southern rural areas, and Beaconsfield upper may require a change in use and/or embellishment of existing open spaces to meet the changing needs of the population.



### A changing population

#### Resident Age Categories

0-11 years	18.6%
12-17 years	7.9%
18-34 years	24.0%
35-49 years	21.2%
50-69 years	19.6%
70+ years	8.7%

The Cardinia Shire has a relatively young community, with a **median age of 34 years**.

#### Elderly Population

**11%**  
population will be aged 65 years and over in 2030. This is almost the same figure in 2021 at 11.05%. While the percentage remains constant, it will be an increase of 7,500 people aged over 65.

- Young people need active recreation and open spaces for both organised and non-organised sports.
- Off-road trails should be accessible by foot from residential areas and cater for walking/cycling/prams/ mobility scooters as well as skateboards/scooters.
- Higher levels of amenity will be required in open spaces to cater for higher use, and there will be increased demand for places to walk and cycle closer to home. The need for wayfinding signage, shade, and seating will increase.
- As our population ages, facilities that support and encourage movement at all ages is important.

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### Household types

Families with dependents	38.3%
Families without dependents	24.1%
Lone persons	18.5%

**Couple families with children** is the most common household type in 2021.

#### Household Types

The proportion of household types **will remain relatively stable between 2021 and 2031**, with the majority being couples with dependents.

**8.9%**  
dwellings were medium or high density, compared to 34% in Greater Melbourne.

**90.7%**  
separate houses in Cardinia Shire in 2021.

- Couple families with dependents are generally more active and use open space with playgrounds, skateparks and other recreation facilities.
- Couples without children and lone people may require facilities to participate in social and environmental related activities, places for walking and or dog walking, and non-club-based recreation.
- Larger families may use open space more often as they provide a place for outdoor family gatherings, barbeques, and picnics. Open space should cater for this need and provide a diverse range of facilities across the Shire.
- Low density areas, particularly in rural parts of the Shire, generally mean that there will be a longer distance to travel to open space so consideration must be given to ensure there is adequate facilities to support the community to visit, play, socialise and exercise.
- Higher housing densities generally see a decrease in the size and quality of private open space, reinforcing the need to ensure open space supports a range of uses and functions including restorative, social, and recreational purposes.

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### Rich in cultural diversity

#### Top 5 Non-Australian Birthplaces

India	4.3%
United Kingdom	3.6%
Sri Lanka	1.9%
New Zealand	1.6%
Phillipines	1%

**21,074**  
people from countries where English was not first language.

**17.8%**  
speaks a language other than English at home.

**23.5%**  
people are born overseas.

**15.1%**  
people arrived from overseas from 2016 to 2021.

#### Top 5 languages spoken

1. Sinhalese
2. Hindi
3. Mandarin
4. Filipino
5. Arabic

- Open space presents an opportunity to share and celebrate the Aboriginal history of the area and support Traditional Owner rights and values in the future planning and management of open space.
- Cultural background is unlikely to be a barrier to participation in physical activity or sport, however demand and cultural diversity and interests are to be considered and embedded in open space planning.
- Understanding and engaging the community in the planning and design of open space helps to ensure they have the facilities they need.

**Income**

**22.3%**  
of households in Cardinia Shire earn less than \$1,000 per week.

**30.6%**  
of individuals in Cardinia Shire earn less than \$500 per week.

- Due to cost, lower income households may be less likely to spend money on travel, equipment, and membership fees to participate in sport and outdoor recreational activities, and therefore more likely to participate in informal activities.
- A third of adults are earning a low income, meaning that open space and recreation needs to be accessible and affordable for all members of the community.

**Employment**

Employed **93.5%**

Unemployed **4.3%**

Looking for work **2.2%**

**61%**  
worked full-time and

**32%**  
part-time

- The nature of employment may affect the capacity of residents to participate in sport and recreation activities, particularly working hours and time taken to travel to and from work. It is important to consider flexible use for how activities and infrastructure in open space are organised and provided.

**Unpaid Care**

**12.4%**  
people providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2021.

- Open space needs to be inclusive and welcoming, offering respite for people with a disability and carers as well as opportunities to play, socialise, and connect with nature.
- Open space should look to include universally designed paths, play spaces, amenities, accessible parking and drop off zones (particularly for regional parks).

**Motor Vehicles**

**65%**  
households had access to two or more motor vehicles, compared to 51% in Greater Melbourne

**2.5%**  
households with no motor vehicle.

- Neighbourhood parks require a level of infrastructure to support the local community to visit frequently, play, recreate, socialise, exercise, and connect with nature.
- Open space needs to be within walking distance to residential areas and with supporting walking and cycle infrastructure to encourage active travel and exercise and reduce reliance on vehicles for visiting open space.

## 6.2 Existing public open space

At the time of preparing this Strategy, Cardinia Shire Council manages 633 different parcels of open space providing a range of different functions. Open space covers approximately 17,201.45 ha across the Shire, and of this 927.22 ha is Council owned. The Cardinia Shire open space network is dominated by 594 passive open spaces (includes natural resource, linear connections and drainage reserves), compared with 39 active open spaces. For assessment purposes, the Shire has been divided into 3 sub-regions and 15 areas as shown below in **Table 4**.

Pakenham and Cardinia Road in the Growth sub-region have the highest number of open spaces with 196 and 146 respectively, while Nar Nar Goon, Garfield and Southern Rural in the Southern sub-region have the lowest number at 7, 13 and 13 open spaces respectively.

New public open space is being added to Council's open space network every month through new developments. It is expected that approximately 64.16 ha of new public open space will be added to the Cardinia Shire open space network by 2031. These new open spaces will offer additional recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the Shire.

**Table 4: Open space in Cardinia Shire**

Unit	Total area of open spaces (ha)	Total number of open spaces	Total area open of spaces owned by council (ha)	Total area of active open spaces (ha)	Number of active open spaces	Total area of passive open spaces (ha)	Number of passive open spaces
<b>Growth Area sub-region</b>							
Beaconsfield	19.44	31	14.29	8.51	2	10.93	29
Officer	41.45	38	36.55	10.62	2	30.84	36
Pakenham	305.29	196	36.55	12.17	2	293.12	194
Cardinia road	177.61	146	169.25	44.09	5	133.52	141
<b>Hills sub-region</b>							
Emerald	343.57	33	109.02	8.10	2	335.46	31
Cockatoo	1,117.44	22	67.29	25.62	2	1,091.82	20
Beaconsfield Upper & District	170.49	27	133.03	22.53	4	147.97	23
Gembrook	11,280.33	16	54.30	5.24	1	11,275.10	15
Northern Rural	3,410.08	29	165.80	14.84	4	3,395.24	25
<b>Rural (South and East) sub-region</b>							
Southern Rural	88.38	13	39.31	59.51	7	28.87	7
Garfield	15.72	13	2.91	12.31	1	3.41	12
Nar Nar Goon and Tynong	16.88	7	8.93	15.97	2	0.91	5
Koo Wee Rup	38.32	24	14.84	8.69	1	29.63	23
Bunyip	99.44	15	61.17	35.75	2	63.69	13
Lang Lang	77.01	21	14.45	1.04	1	75.96	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>17201.45</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>927.22</b>	<b>284.99</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16,916.47</b>	<b>594</b>

## 7 Area analysis and recommendations



Cardinia Shire has three sub-regions: the Growth sub-region, the Northern sub-region, and the Southern sub-region, reflecting the distinct geography and context of the area. The three sub-regions are further divided into fifteen profile areas that are based on the geographical units used for population demographics and forecasts.

Assessment of the existing and future open space network and recommendations for future planning, delivery and management of open space is outlined in the sections below for the fifteen profile areas. This enables a focus on local priorities and provides recommendations that reflect the individual challenges and opportunities presented in each area. The analysis and recommendations for each area is centred around the provision and access benchmarks outlined in section 5.3. *Figure 20* shows the areas that make up each of the three sub-regions.

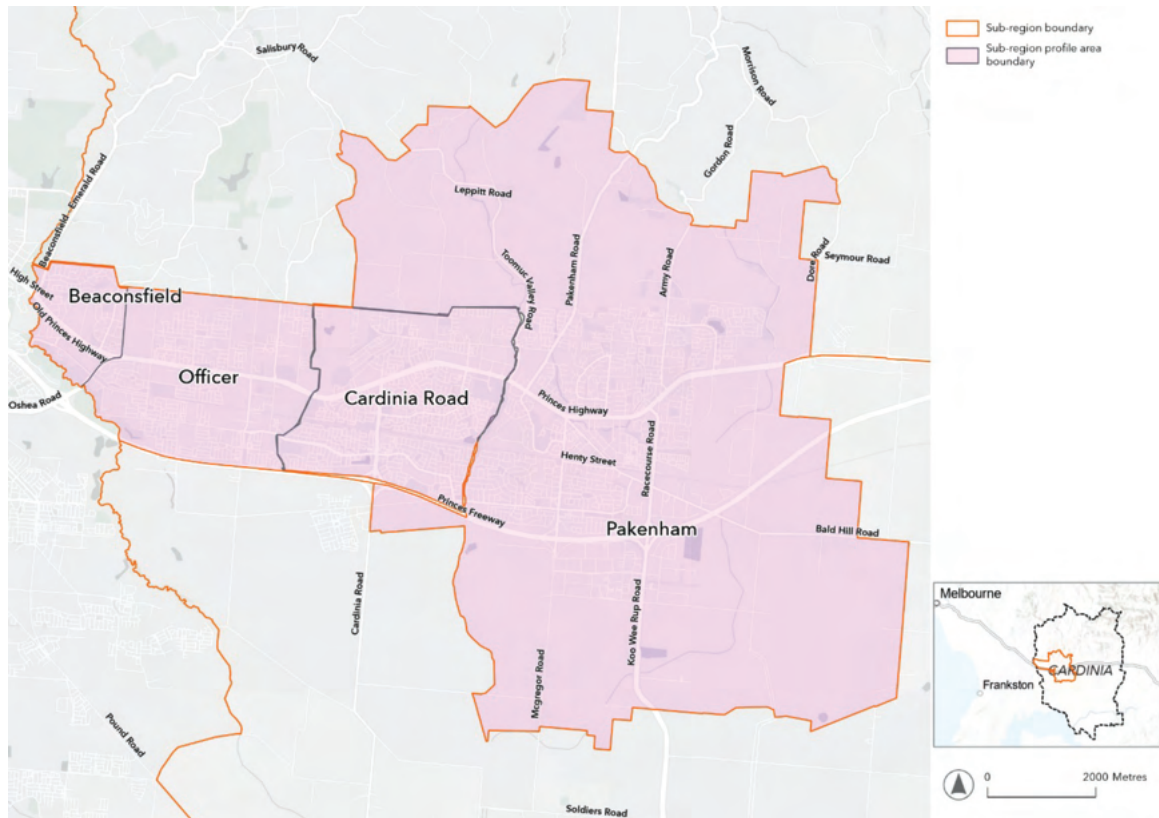
**Figure 20: Cardinia Shire sub-regions**



### 7.1 Growth sub-region

The Growth sub-region is the urban area of the Shire and is home to most of the Shire’s population. The land is predominately made up of employment and residential areas. This sub-region is expected to accommodate most of the Shire’s future residential and commercial growth. The Growth sub-region includes the profile areas of Pakenham, Cardinia Road, Officer and Beaconsfield.

Figure 21: Growth sub-region



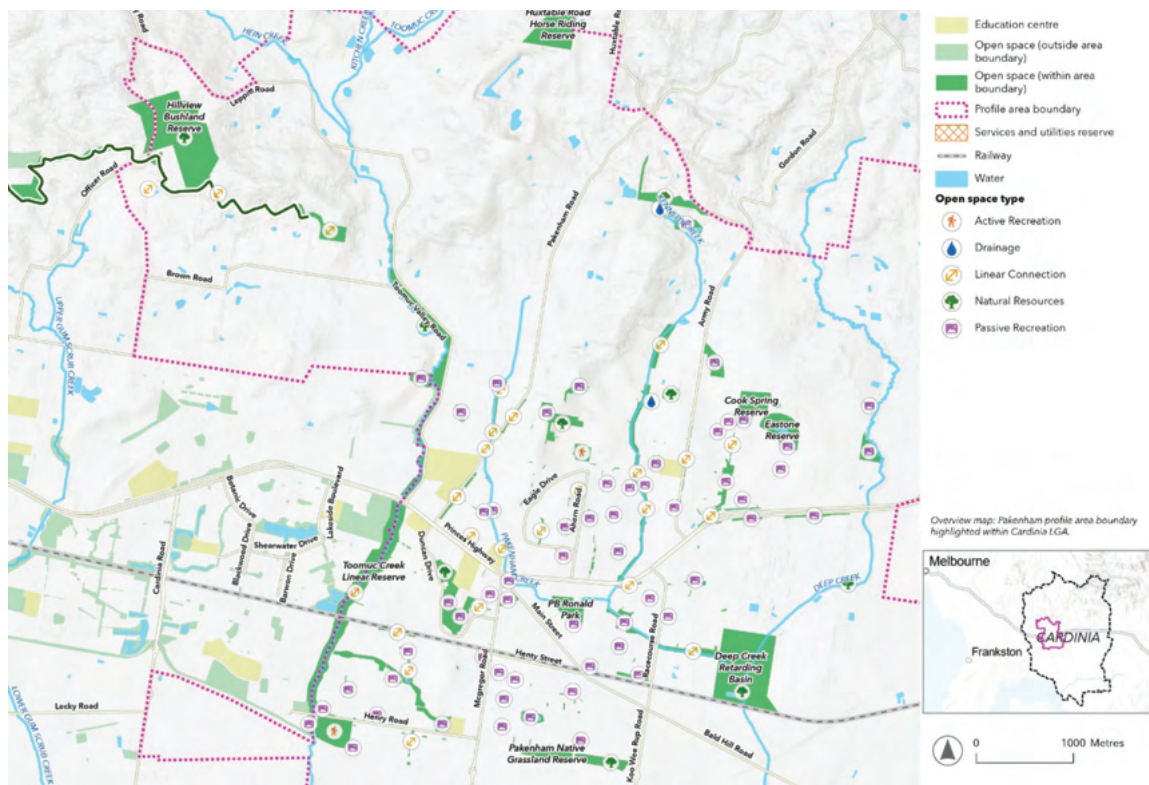
**Pakenham Profile Area**

Pakenham Area is located in the centre of the Shire and forms part of the South East Growth Corridor. The Pakenham activity centre, residential, commercial, and industrial areas are centrally located in Pakenham Area, with the north and southern areas predominately rural residential in nature. At the time of the 2021 census the population of Pakenham Area was 41,359 and this is expected to increase to 48,386 by 2031.

**Open space**

Pakenham Area has many public open spaces, with 196 open spaces making up 305 ha. The largest open space is Deep Creek Reserve at 42 ha. Public open space consists of 75 passive, 2 active, 3 drainage, 107 linear connections, and 9 natural resource areas. There are 11 restricted open spaces in Pakenham Area including six educational centres, four sports facilities and a caravan park. The total area of restricted open space is 118 ha.

**Figure 22: Open space in Pakenham Profile Area**



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in Pakenham Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 7.4 ha/1,000 residents. This is largely made up of passive open spaces. Passive open space currently exceeds the benchmark at 7 ha/1,000 residents.

The current provision of active open space is below the benchmark. To meet the active open space benchmark of 2 ha/1,000 residents an additional 71 ha of active open space is needed (increasing to 85 ha by 2031). The delivery of the additional active recreation facilities as part of the completion of the Cardinia Views Recreation Reserve will contribute to meeting the active open space needs of the Pakenham Profile area within the next 10 years.

Within the Active Cardinia Strategy measures have been identified to establish demand for sport and active recreation facilities. The framework within the Active Cardinia Strategy will determine whether additional land is required for future active open space. If additional land is proposed or considered for future active open space, sites will be investigated to identify those suitable for purchase either within the growth sub-region or outside the growth sub-region. Refer to the Active Cardinia Strategy for the framework used to establish demand.

As part of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan, several new open spaces will be delivered to support existing and future communities. A new linear open space will be provided under the proposed elevated rail as part of the State Government Level Crossing Removal Project in Pakenham. Council is advocating for a high-quality outcome which includes pathways, gathering spaces, playgrounds, exercise equipment, seating and other park infrastructure to support the local community, visitors to the township, and active transport users. The Victorian Government have committed to this open space being open and ready for everyone to enjoy in 2024.

As part of the access and provision analysis of open space in Pakenham Area, opportunities were identified to investigate open space in employment areas to support physical activity and enhance visual amenity. Further opportunities have been identified to rezone existing open space under the Cardinia Planning Scheme to a more appropriate zoning depending on location. This is to ensure the land continues to be public open space.

Figure 23: Toomuc Recreation Reserve, Pakenham

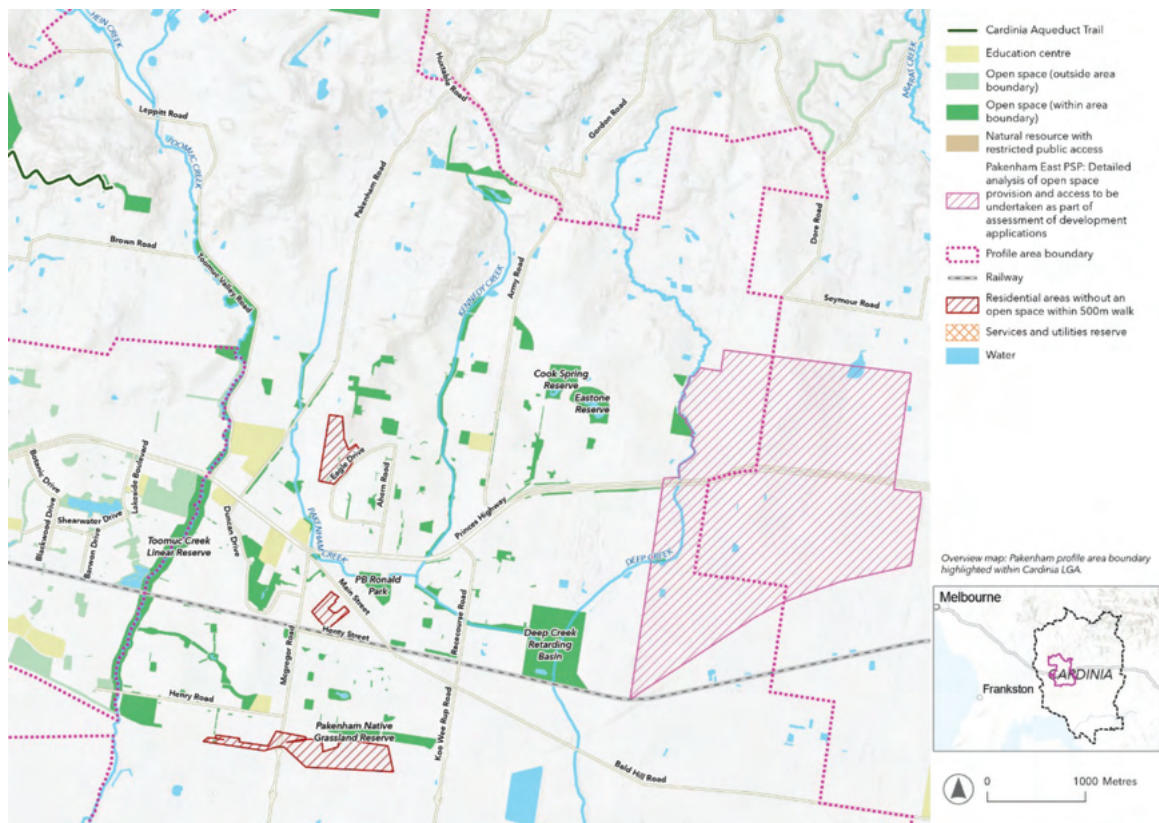




**Access to open space**

Currently, 95% of the residents in Pakenham Area have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. Access to open space in the Pakenham Area can be further increased and enhanced by; improving walkable access to Hill View Bushland Reserve for surrounding residents, exploring opportunities to improve provision and access to open space in Blue Horizons Estate and Arden Estate, future open space delivered as part of the level crossing removal project, and as part of the delivery of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan. One such desired future connection to be investigated will be from Pakenham East Railway Station into Deep Creek Reserve.

**Figure 24: Areas in Pakenham Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendations**

- The following Recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Pakenham Area;
- Explore opportunities to improve walkable access to Hill View Bushland Reserve for surrounding residents.
  - Review the planning zone of the Hill View Bushland Reserve under the Cardinia Planning Scheme to reflect its purpose as public open space.
  - Explore opportunities to improve provision and access to open space in Blue Horizons Estate and Arden Estate.
  - Support and work with developers and landowners to optimise the provision of open space outcomes that align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy to be delivered as part of the implementation of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan.
  - Explore opportunities to improve the amenity and support physical activity and use of open spaces in employment areas.
  - Engage in advocacy and partnership projects with the Level Crossing Removal Authority to enhance open space along the rail corridor.

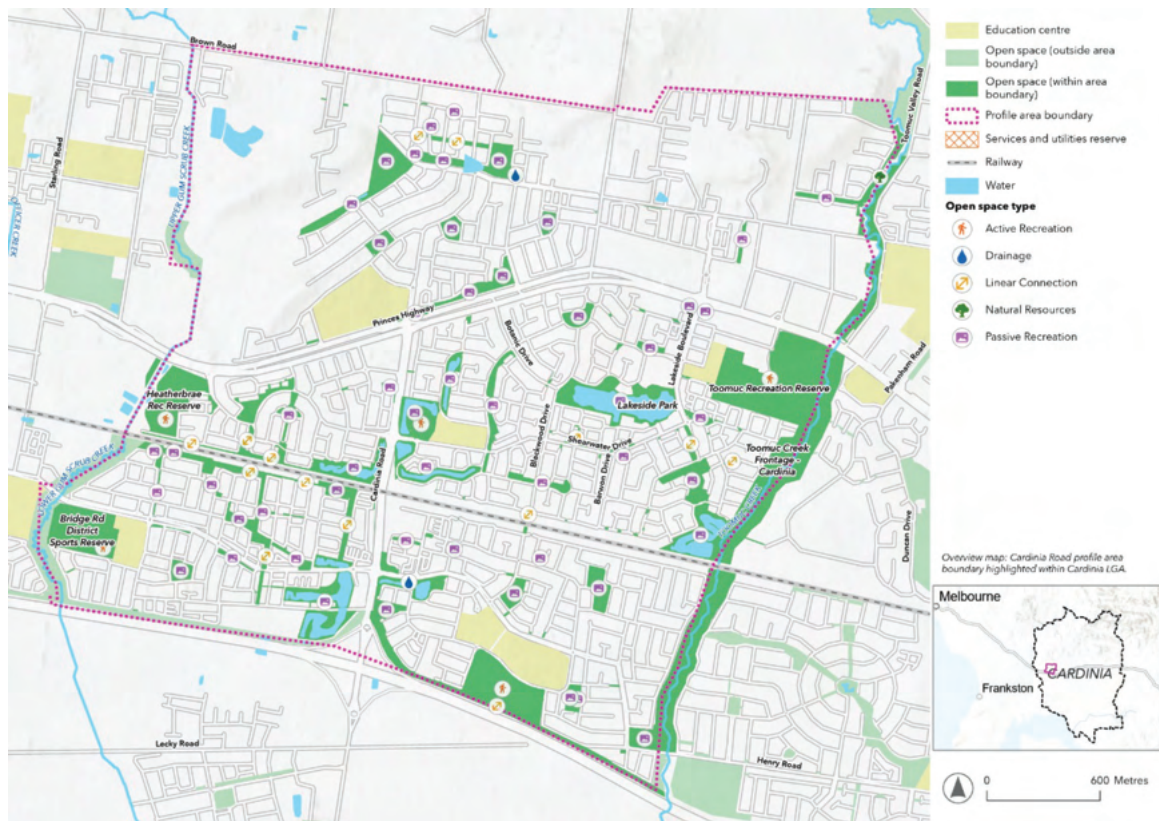
### Cardinia Road Profile Area

The Cardinia Road Area is located in the central western area of Cardinia Shire and is included in the South East Growth Corridor. The area adjoins Officer Area to the west and Pakenham Area to the north, east and south. The Cardinia Road Precinct Structure plan guides the development of this area which is predominately residential land bisected by the Princes Highway and Pakenham railway line. At the time of the 2021 census, the population of Cardinia Road Area was 25,219 with moderate population growth forecasted to 2031.

### Open space

Cardinia Road Area has a large number of public open spaces, with 146 open spaces making up a total of 178 ha of public open space. This consists of 71 passive, 5 active, 6 drainage, 62 linear, and 2 natural resource areas. The Toomuc Recreation Reserve is the largest public open space in the area at 17 ha. Officer District Park (ongoing name not yet confirmed) will be a new regional passive reserve in the area, supporting the local community as well as attracting visitors outside of the Shire due to the range of activities that are planned to be delivered.

Figure 25: Open space in Cardinia Road Profile Area



**Open space provision**

The total provision of open space in Cardinia Road Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 7 ha/1,000 residents.

The provision of passive open space also currently exceeds the provision benchmark at 5 ha/1,000 residents. Active open space is below the benchmark of 2 ha/1,000 residents. To meet the active open space benchmark for the current population an additional 6.3 ha of active open space is needed (increasing to 16 ha by 2031).

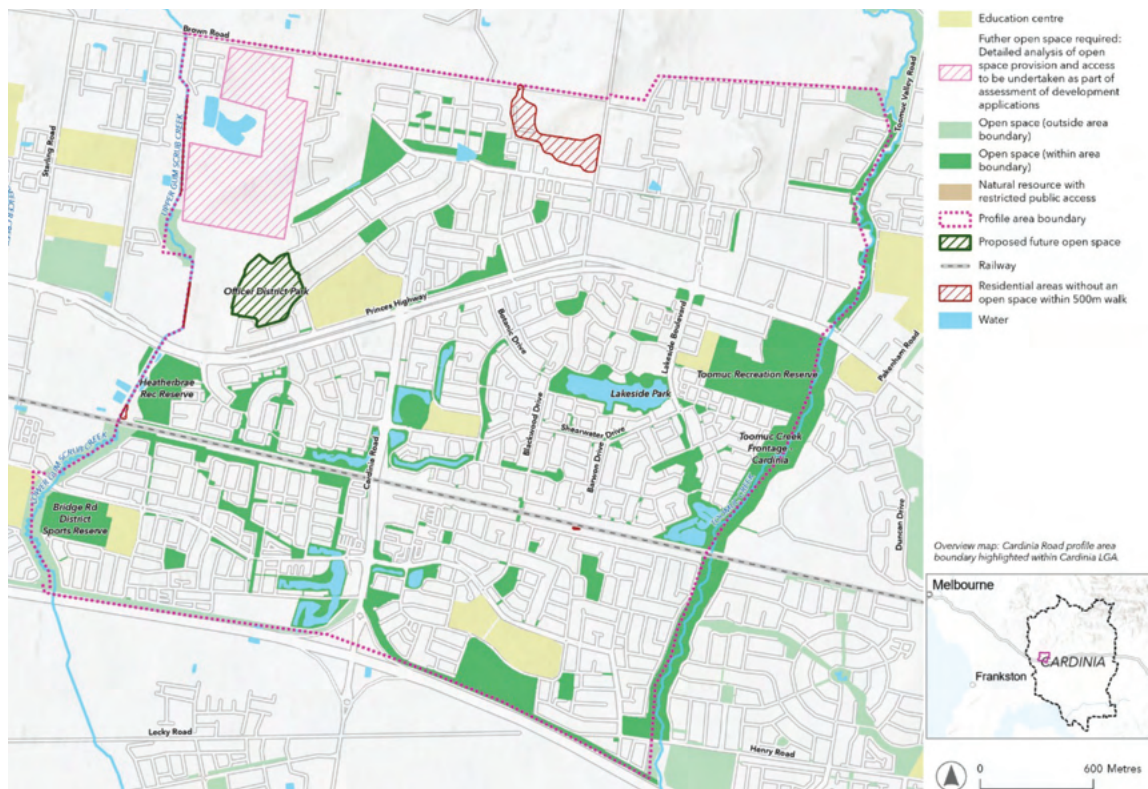
Within the Active Cardinia Strategy measures have been identified to establish demand for sport and active recreation facilities. The framework within the Active Cardinia Strategy will determine whether additional land is required for future active open space.

If additional land is proposed or considered for future active open space, appropriate sites will be investigated to purchase suitable land either within the growth sub-region or outside the growth sub-region. Please refer to the Active Cardinia Strategy for the framework used to establish demand.

**Access to open space**

Currently, 95% of the residents in Cardinia Road Area live within 500m of a public open space.

**Figure 26: Residential areas in Cardinia Road Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Cardinia Road Area.

- Support and work with developers and landowners to optimise the provision of open space outcomes that align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy to be delivered as part of the continued implementation of the Cardinia Road Precinct Structure Plan
- Progress the implementation of the Officer District Park Master plan.

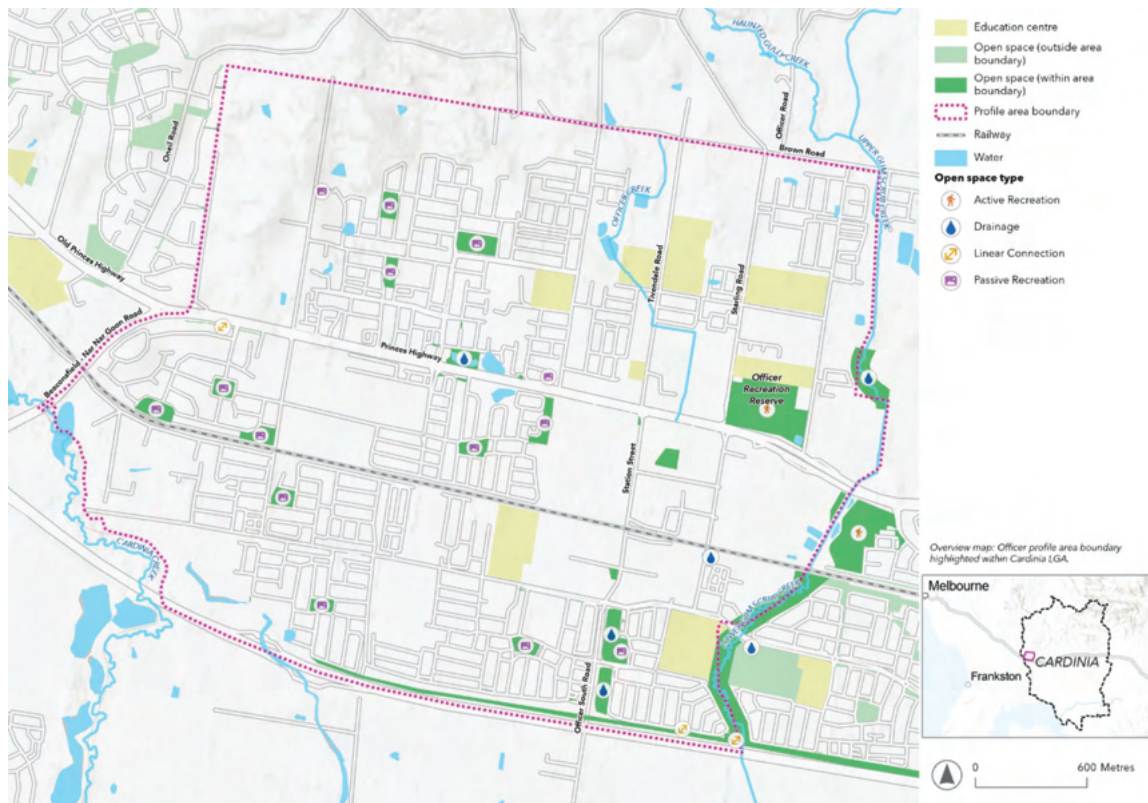
**Officer Profile Area**

Officer Area is in the western part of Cardinia Shire, between Beaconsfield Area and Pakenham Area. The area is included in the South East Growth Corridor. Officer Area is bisected by the Princes Highway and Pakenham railway line and adjoins the Princes Freeway to the south. Officer Area had a population of 14,708 at the 2021 census, and this is expected to more than double to 34,221 by 2031.

**Open space**

Officer Area has 38 public open spaces making up a total of 41 ha. This consists of 22 passive, 2 active, 6 drainage, and 8 linear open spaces. Of the open space in the area, Officer Recreation Reserve is the largest at 10 ha. There are nine restricted open spaces in Officer Area including eight education facilities and one caravan park. The total area of restricted open space is 48 ha. Four additional public open spaces will be added to the area by 2031 contributing an additional 32 ha of public open space. This consists of two active and two passive open spaces.

**Figure 27: Open space in Officer Profile Area**



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in the Officer Area is below the 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and future populations. The provision of open space is currently 2.8 ha/1,000 residents and with the expected population growth this will decrease to 2.2 ha by 2031. This 2.2 ha considers public open space planned for delivery by 2031.

The provision of both active and passive open space is below the provision benchmarks. To meet the active open space benchmark of 2 ha/1,000 residents for the current population, an additional 18.8 ha of active open space is needed (increasing to 37.1 ha by 2031 considering planned open space to be delivered by 2031).

Within the Active Cardinia Strategy measures have been identified to establish demand for sport and active recreation facilities. If additional land is considered for future active open space, sites will be investigated to identify those suitable for purchase either within the growth sub-region or outside the growth sub-region, The framework within the Active Cardinia Strategy will determine whether additional land is required for future active open space.

To meet the passive open space benchmark of 3 ha/1,000 residents for the current population, an additional 13 ha of passive open space is needed (increasing to 60 ha by 2031 considering planned open space to be delivered by 2031). New open space will be delivered as part of the implementation of the Cardinia Creek Regional Park Future Directions Plan and the implementation of the Officer Precinct Structure Plan.

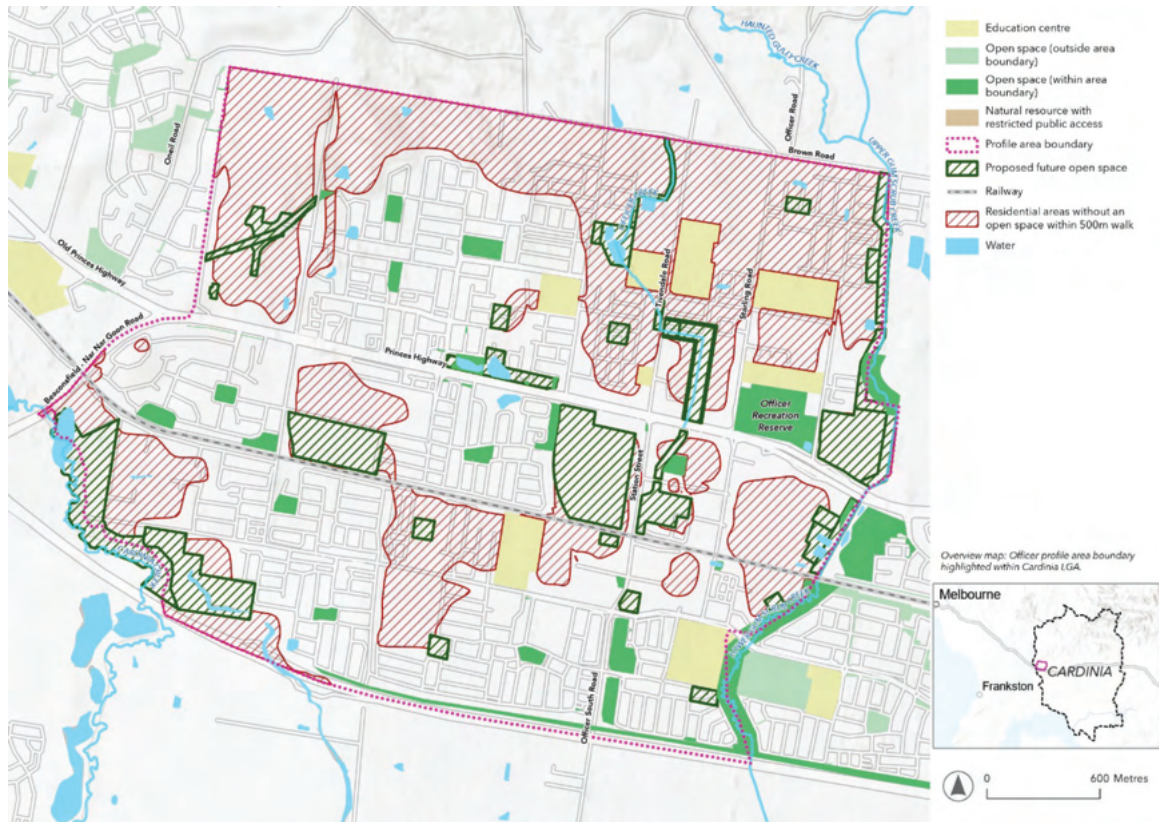
### Access to open space

Currently, 95% of the residents in Officer Area have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. However, the size of some of these open spaces is very limited and they do not have the capacity to serve larger populations in areas of higher population density. Furthermore, if passive open spaces in the Precinct Structure Plan area are not delivered concurrently with the residential areas, this percentage may decrease to approximately 70% in the next few years.

Figure 28: “Amphibitheatre”, at Aspect Wetlands, Officer



Figure 29: Residential areas in Officer Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Officer Area.

- Identify opportunities to enter into agreements with private landowners to increase access to existing open space not currently available to the public.
- Identify opportunities to improve connectivity to public open spaces (particularly within high-density neighbourhoods).
- Support and work with developers and landowners to optimise the provision of open space outcomes that align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy to be delivered as part of the continued implementation of the Officer Precinct Structure Plan.

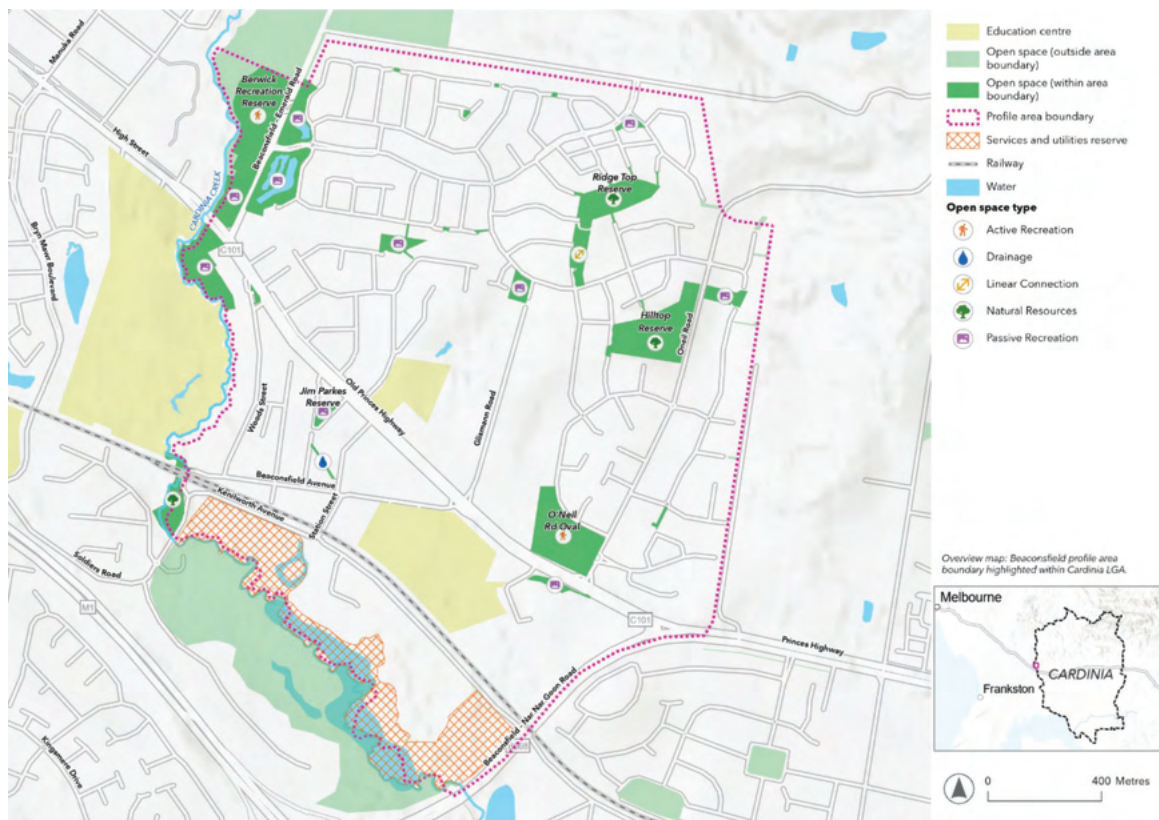
**Beaconsfield Profile Area**

Beaconsfield Area is the smallest area in the Shire and is included in the South East Growth Corridor Plan. The area is predominately residential land and adjoins Cardinia Creek to the west. At the time of the 2021 census the population of Beaconsfield Area was 4,638, with moderate population forecast to 2031.

**Open space**

There are 19 ha of public open space in Beaconsfield Area across 31 open spaces. This consists of 12 passive, 2 active, 3 drainage, 11 linear, and 3 natural resource areas. Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve is the largest open space in the area at 5 ha.

**Figure 30: Open space in Beaconsfield Profile Area**



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in Beaconsfield Area is currently below the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents. The provision of open space is currently 4.2 ha/1,000 residents. Considering the expected population growth and public open space planned for delivery by 2031, provision is expected to increase to 7.4 ha/1,000 residents, meeting the required benchmark.

Currently, the provision of both active and passive open space is below the provision benchmarks. To meet the active open space benchmark of 2 ha/1,000 residents for the current population an additional 0.8 ha of active open space is needed (increasing to 2.4 ha by 2031). Within the Active Cardinia Strategy measures have been identified to establish demand for sport and active recreation facilities. The framework within the Active Cardinia Strategy will determine whether additional land is required for future active open space.

If additional land is proposed or considered for future active open space, appropriate sites will be investigated to purchase suitable land either within the growth sub-region or outside the growth sub-region. The Active Cardinia Strategy includes the framework used to establish demand.

While the current provision of passive open space is below the benchmark of 3 ha/1,000 residents, two additional passive open spaces will be added to the area by 2031 which will mean the benchmark will be met by 2031. One new open space will be delivered as part of the Glismann Road Development Plan, and one will be delivered as part of the Cardinia Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan 2022. To further enhance the open space network in Beaconsfield Area, Jim Parkes Reserve has been reclassified as a Township Park and a master plan will be prepared to reflect this classification.

The Cardinia Creek Regional Parklands is a key linear open space starting from the northern part of Beaconsfield Area that provides sporting facilities, pathways, play spaces, passive open space, and natural resource areas. The endorsed Cardinia Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan (2022) was developed in partnership with all open space land managers and agencies along the Parklands. The Plan will guide the future enhancement of open space along this linear reserve that will link Beaconsfield to townships in the southern part of the Shire and into the City of Casey to the west.

**Figure 31: Cardinia Creek**

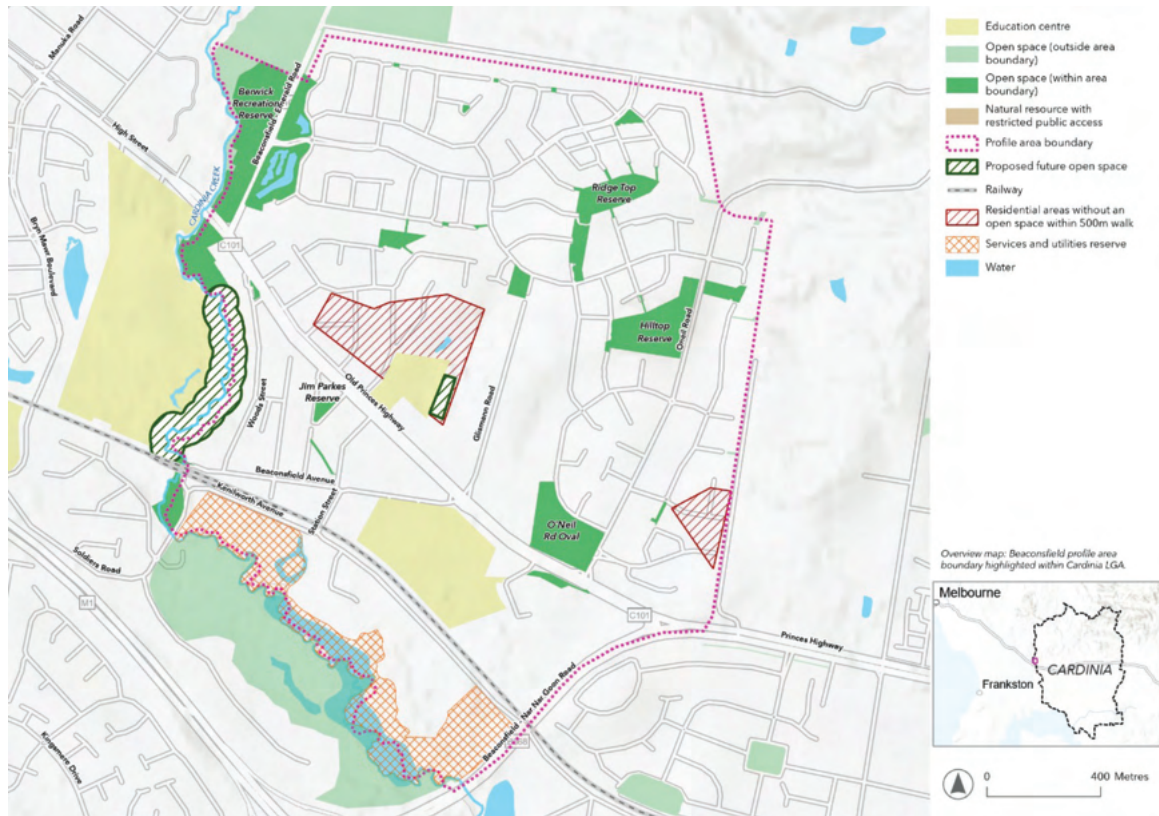




**Access to open space**

Nearly 95% of residents in Beaconsfield Area have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. Open spaces are relatively well distributed; however, the presence of barriers (freeway and train line) has significantly influenced accessibility in some areas. Open space is restricted in the eastern part of the precinct by the Princess Highway and the Pakenham train line.

**Figure 32: Residential areas in Beaconsfield Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendation**

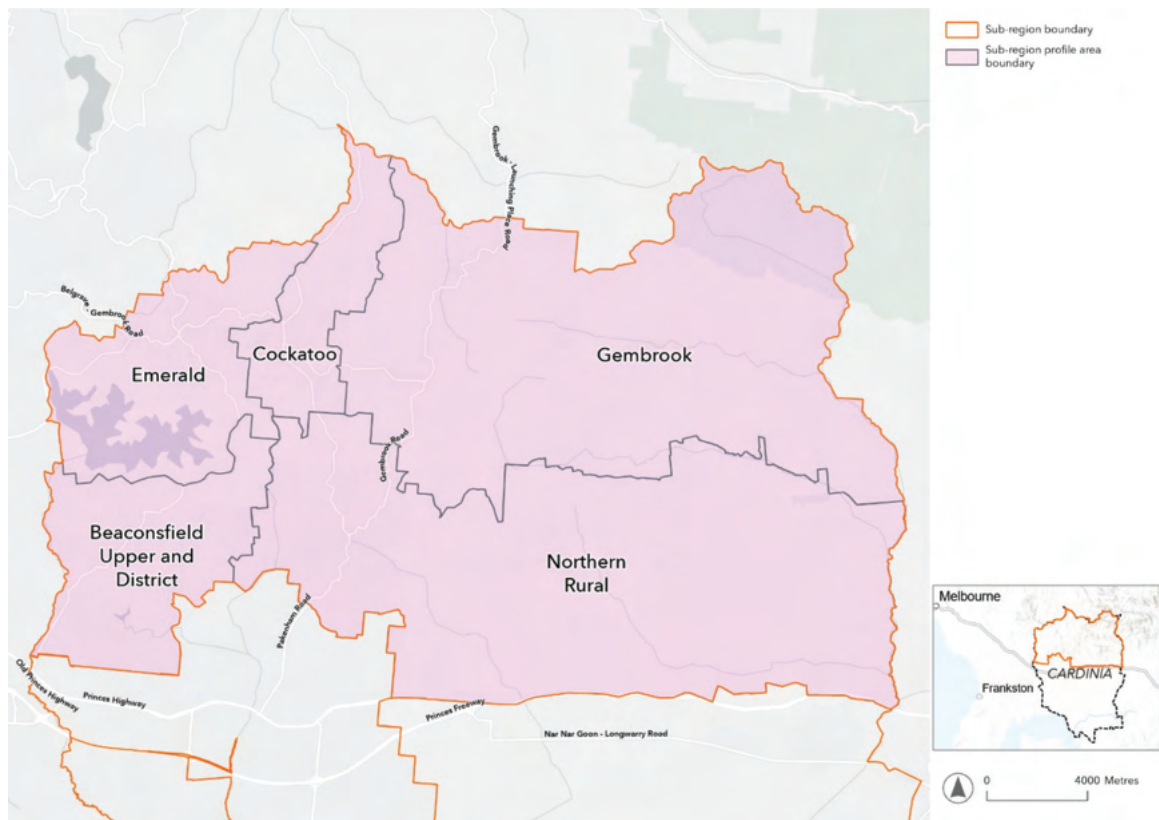
The following recommendation is proposed to enhance the open space network in Beaconsfield Area.

- Prepare a master plan for Jim Parkes Reserve to appropriately reflect its classification as a Township Park. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Advocate for and support the enhancement of the open space network in Beaconsfield Area as part of the implementation of the Cardinia Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan 2022.
- Work with developers on the delivery of a new open space as part of the implementation of the Glismann Road Development Plan.

### 7.2 Northern sub-region

The Northern sub-region consists of the northern part of the Shire, set in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. The population in this sub-region is concentrated within townships and rural residential areas. Key features of the sub-region include the Bunyip State Park and Cardinia Reservoir. Outside of the Bunyip State Park, large areas of the sub-region are zoned for rural conservation and agricultural purposes. Much of the sub-region is covered by the Environmental Significance Overlay. The Northern sub-region includes the profile areas of Emerald, Cockatoo, Beaconsfield Upper & District, Gembrook and Northern Rural.

Figure 33: Northern sub-region



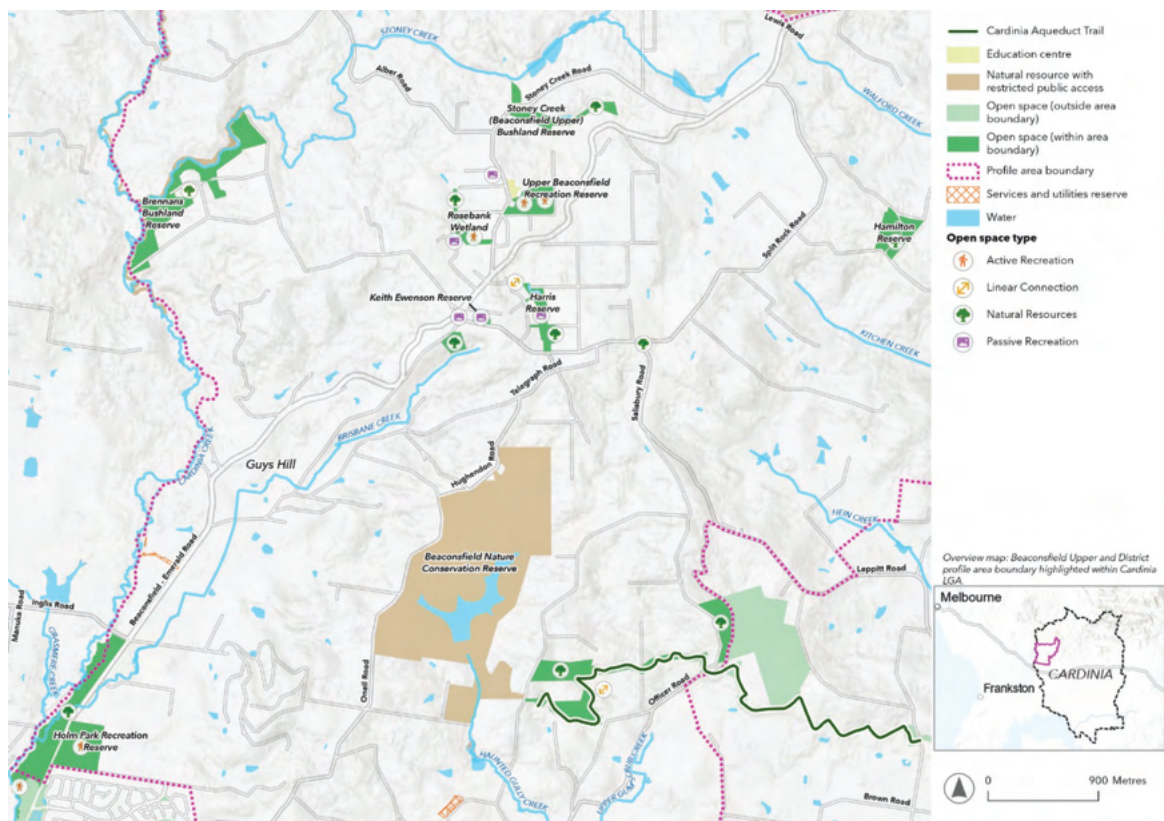
**Beaconsfield Upper and District Profile Area**

Beaconsfield Upper and District Area is located on the western side of the Shire with Emerald Area to the north, Northern Rural Area and Pakenham Area to the east, growth areas to the south, and City of Casey to the west. The population was 4,458 at the 2021 census, with a decline in population forecast to 2031.

**Open space**

There are 170 ha of public open space in the area made up of 27 open spaces. This consists of 7 passive, 4 active, 4 linear, and 12 natural resource open spaces. Hillview Bushland Reserve is the largest of the open spaces at 46 ha. Beaconsfield Upper and District Area has eight restricted open spaces, consisting of three protected areas, two golf clubs, two group camps, and a primary school. The total area of restricted open space is 462 ha. Four creek frontages in the area make up 38 ha of not fit-for-purpose open space.

**Figure 34: Open space in Beaconsfield Upper and District Profile Area**



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in Beaconsfield Upper and District Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 38 ha/1,000 residents.

The split of passive and active open space also exceeds the provision benchmarks at 33 ha/1,000 residents and 5.05 ha/1,000 residents respectively. The provision of open space in Beaconsfield Upper and District Area is sufficient to meet the needs of the existing and future population.

### Access to open space

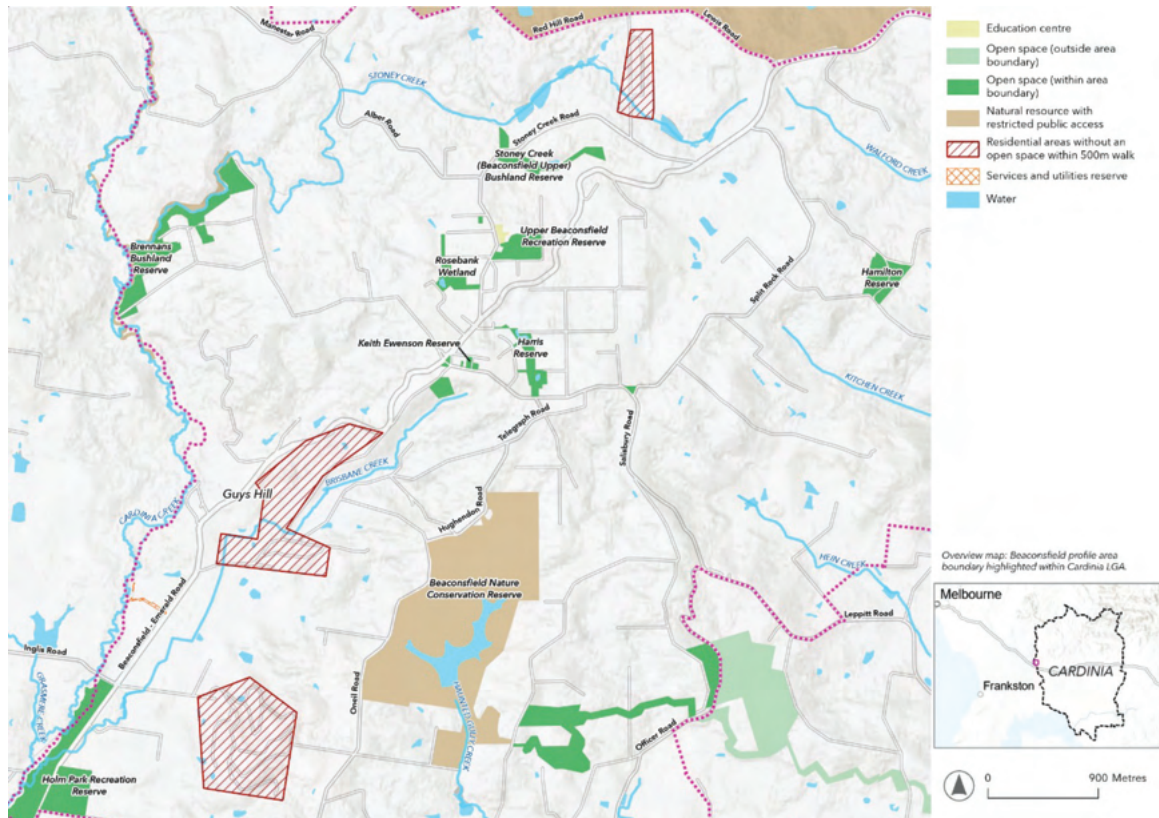
Access to public open space in Beaconsfield Upper and District Area is very good. Currently over 95% of residents in Beaconsfield Upper and District Area living in residentially zoned properties have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. To better support the open space needs of the more rural residents in this area, Keith Ewenson Reserve within the Upper Beaconsfield town centre has been classified as a Township Park and a master plan will be prepared to reflect this classification.

There is a strong desire amongst the local community to see unrestricted public access to the Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve and the enhancement of this reserve with accessible walking trails. Cardinia Shire Council will advocate for the State Government to assign the Park Manager role to a State Government Agency and also for the enhancement of recreational assets to create opportunities for the community to experience the high value natural environment. Council will also continue to advocate to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to fund the development of a long-term strategic plan for the Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve.

Figure 35: Upper Beaconsfield BMX track at Upper Beaconsfield Recreation reserve



Figure 36: Residential areas in Beaconsfield Upper and District Profile Area without an open space within 500m walking distance.



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Beaconsfield Upper and District Area.

- Rezone part of Harris Reserve and Rosebank Wetland under the Cardinia Planning Scheme to a more appropriate zone to recognise and protect their role as public open space.
- Further investigate opportunities to improve access to open space for residents living in Guys Hill.
- Investigate opportunities to provide improve access to Holm Park for residents in the adjoining green wedge zone.
- Prepare a master plan for Keith Evenson reserve, recognising its classification as a Township Park. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Continue to advocate to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to fund the development of a long-term strategic plan for the Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve.

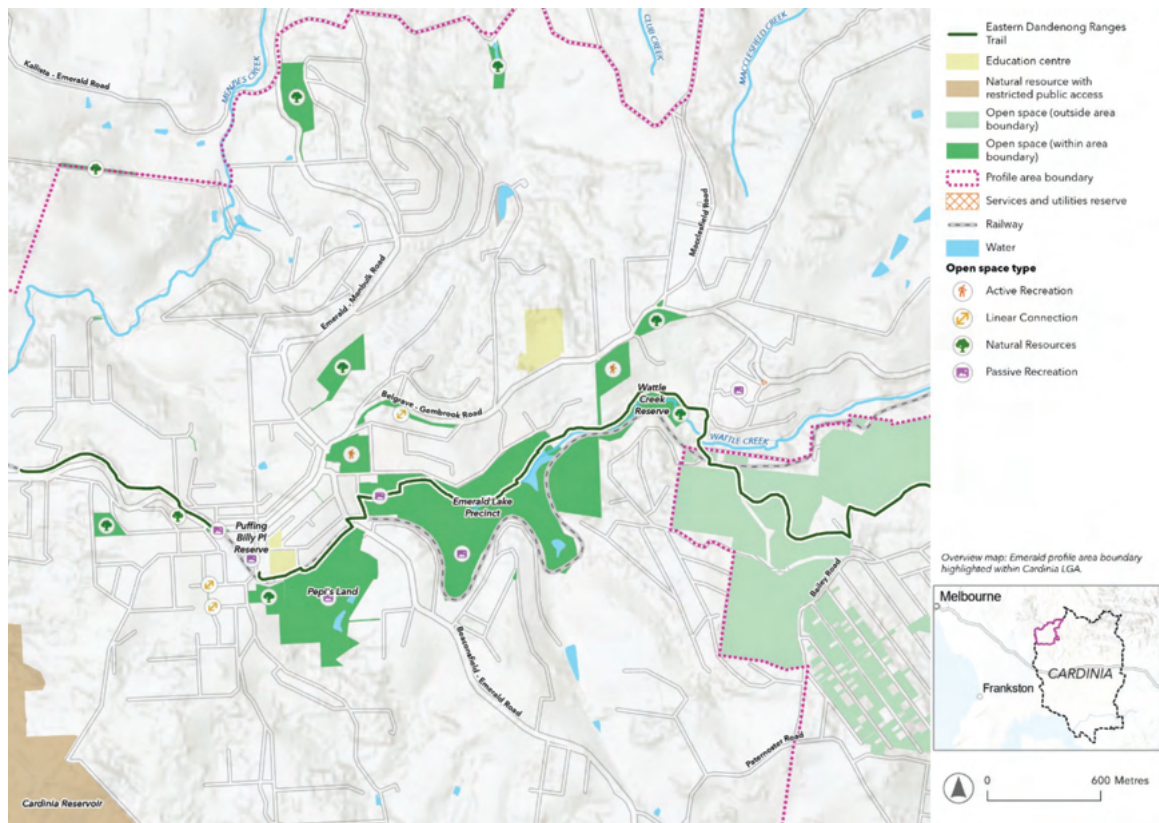
**Emerald Profile Area**

Emerald Area is in the north-western part of Cardinia Shire. The area adjoins Yarra Ranges Shire to the north and west, Cockatoo Area to the east, and Beaconsfield Upper and District Area to the south. A large portion of Emerald Area consists of the Cardinia Reservoir, Melbourne’s second-largest reservoir managed by Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water. The international tourist attraction Puffing Billy Railway runs through the middle of the area, which goes through another large open space area, the Emerald Lake Precinct (made up of Emerald Lake Park and Nobelius Heritage Park). The population was 7,285 at the 2021 census, with relatively low population growth expected to 2031.

**Open space**

Emerald Area has 33 public open spaces making up a total of 344 ha. This consists of 9 passive, 2 active, 1 drainage, 5 linear, and 16 natural resource open spaces. Cardinia Reservoir Park is the largest in the area at 208 ha. Restricted open spaces make up 14 ha in Emerald, while not fit-for-purpose open space covers 52 ha.

**Figure 37: Open space in Emerald Profile Area**



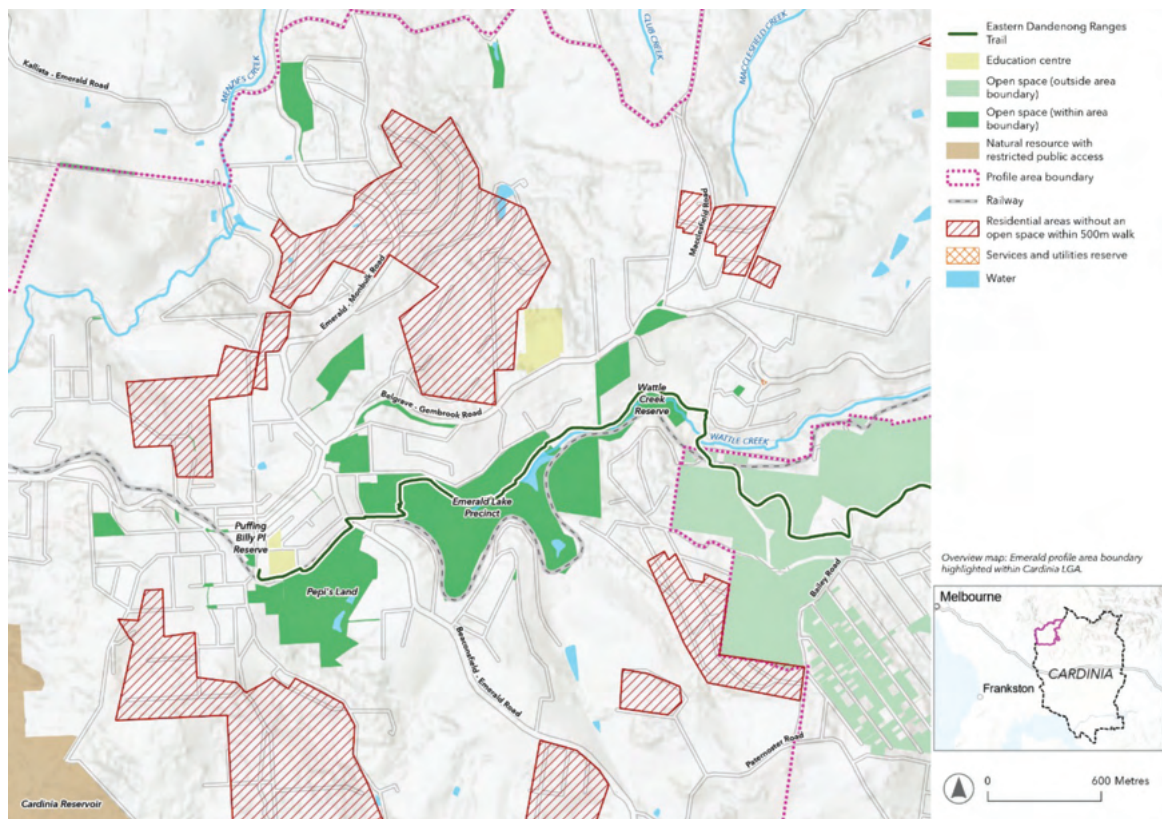
**Open space provision**

The total provision of open space in Emerald Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted populations. The provision of open space is currently 47 ha/1,000 residents. The provision of passive open space also exceeds the provision benchmark with 46 ha/1,000 residents. Conversely, the active open space in the area is below the benchmark at 1.1 ha/1,000 residents. To meet the active open space benchmark of 2 ha/1,000 residents for the current population an additional 6.5 ha of active open space is required, this will increase to 7 ha by 2031 based on population forecasts. When considered with neighbouring areas, the provision for active open space balances out within in the sub region and in accordance with the Active Cardinia Strategy. Please refer to the Active Cardinia Strategy for the framework used to establish demand.

**Access to open space**

Whilst there is good provision of passive open space in Emerald Area, there are large areas of residential properties which are not within 500m walking distance of these open spaces. Currently 60% of residents in Emerald Area living in residentially zoned properties have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. There are several factors contributing to this including: significant topographical challenges, old and inappropriate subdivision designs, and large lot sizes. The significant slopes in parts of Emerald Area make walking places from home an unviable option so even if an open space was within 500m, it still may not be achievable to create a walking path to it. To further enhance the open space network in Emerald Area, Puffing Billy Place Reserve has been reclassified as a Township Park and a master plan will be prepared to reflect this classification.

**Figure 38: Residential areas in Emerald Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



### Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed to address provision shortfall and improve access to the open space network in Emerald Area.

- Investigate the feasibility of an agreement between Council and other private and public landowners in Emerald Area to improve public access to recreation facilities. This will be further addressed in the Active Cardinia Strategy.
- Investigate opportunities to provide new access connections for residents surrounding Pepi's Land and Emerald Lake Precinct.
- Prepare a master plan for the Puffing Billy Place Reserve to support the reclassification of the park to a "Township Park".
- Investigate opportunities to improve connection and wayfinding along the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail through the Emerald township. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.

Figure 39: Pepis Land, Emerald





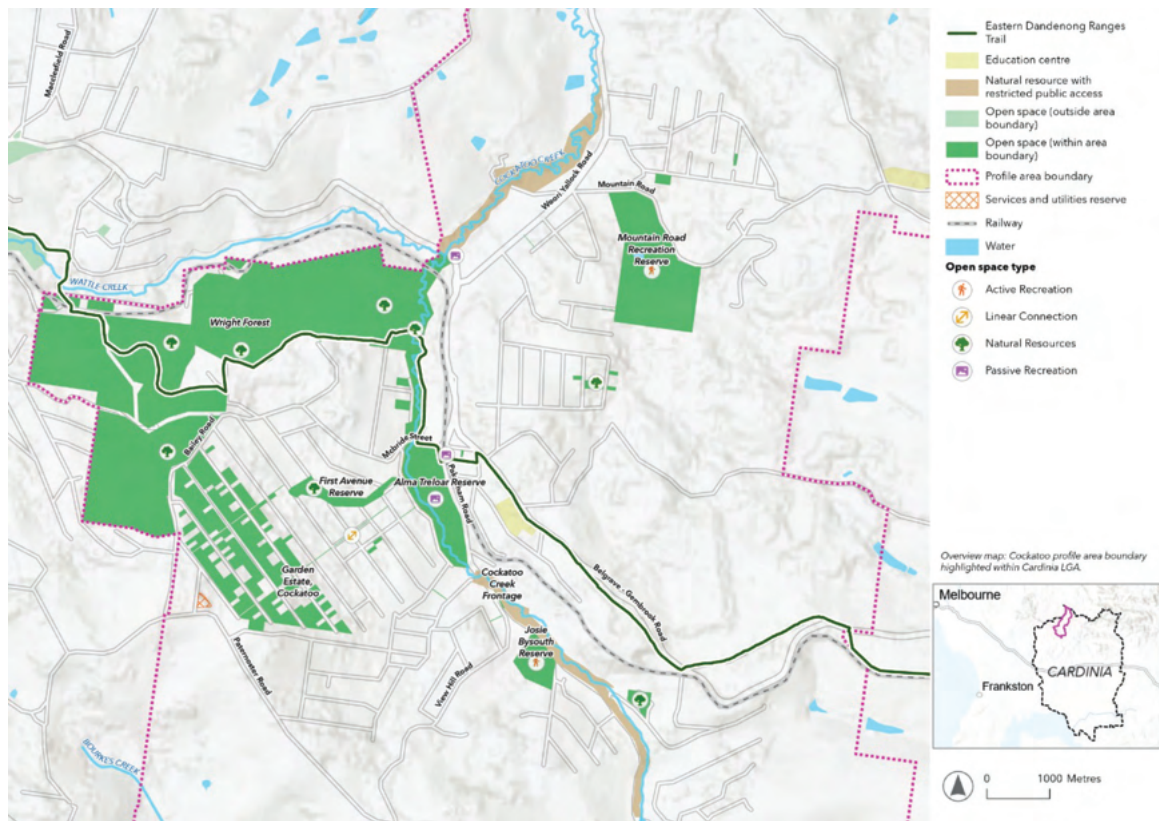
**Cockatoo Profile Area**

Cockatoo Area is located in the northern area of the Shire at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. The area is between Gembrook Area (to the east) and Emerald Area (to the west) and adjoins Yarra Ranges Shire to the north. At the time of the 2021 census the population of Cockatoo Area was 4,454.

**Open space**

There are 1,117 ha of public open space in Cockatoo Area, most of which is Parks Victoria’s Wright Forest (1,019 ha). There are 22 public open spaces across the area consisting of 3 passive, 2 active, 9 linear, and 8 natural resource open spaces. There are four restricted open spaces in Cockatoo Area including an education centre, primary school, protected area and Puffing Billy historical railway. The total area of restricted open space is 29 ha. An additional 12 not fit-for-purpose open spaces (55 ha) are present in the area including creek frontages, vacant land and protected areas.

**Figure 40: Open space in Cockatoo Profile Area**



**Open space provision**

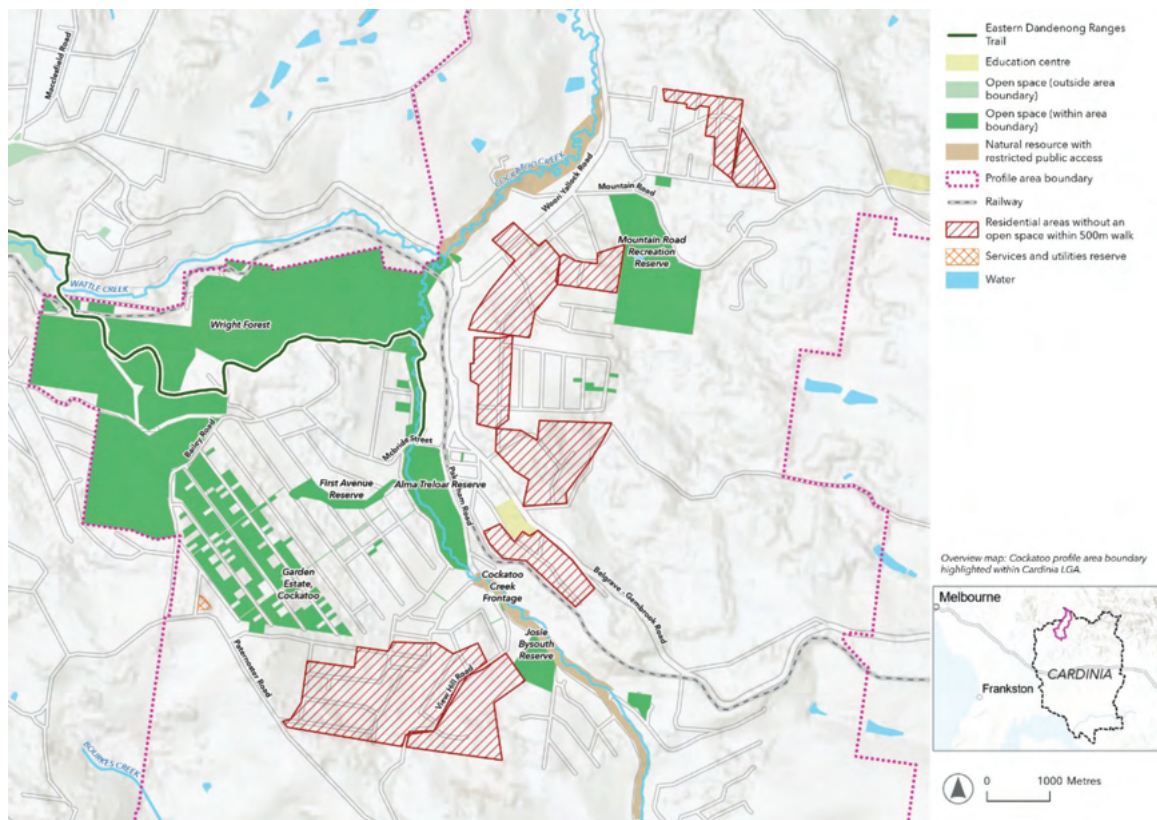
The total provision of open space in Cockatoo Area far exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 251 ha/1,000 residents.

The split of active and passive open space also exceeds the provision benchmarks with 5.8 ha/1,000 residents and 245 ha/1,000 residents respectively. The provision of open space in Cockatoo Area is sufficient to meet the needs of the existing and future population.

**Access to open space**

Whilst there is not a shortfall in terms of provision of open space in Cockatoo Area, there are residential areas which are not currently within 500m walking distance of open space. Currently 84% of residents in Cockatoo Area living in residentially zoned properties have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. There are options for improving the access to open space within Cockatoo Area and these options will be further explored as a recommendation of this strategy.

**Figure 41: Residential areas in Cockatoo Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Cockatoo Area.

- Investigate opportunities to improve access for residents surrounding Mountain Road Recreation Reserve, Josie Bysouth Reserve, Garden City Estate, First Avenue Reserve, and Alma Treloar Reserve.
- Continue to advocate to the State Government to progress the buyback of Garden City Estate for future passive open space and conservation.

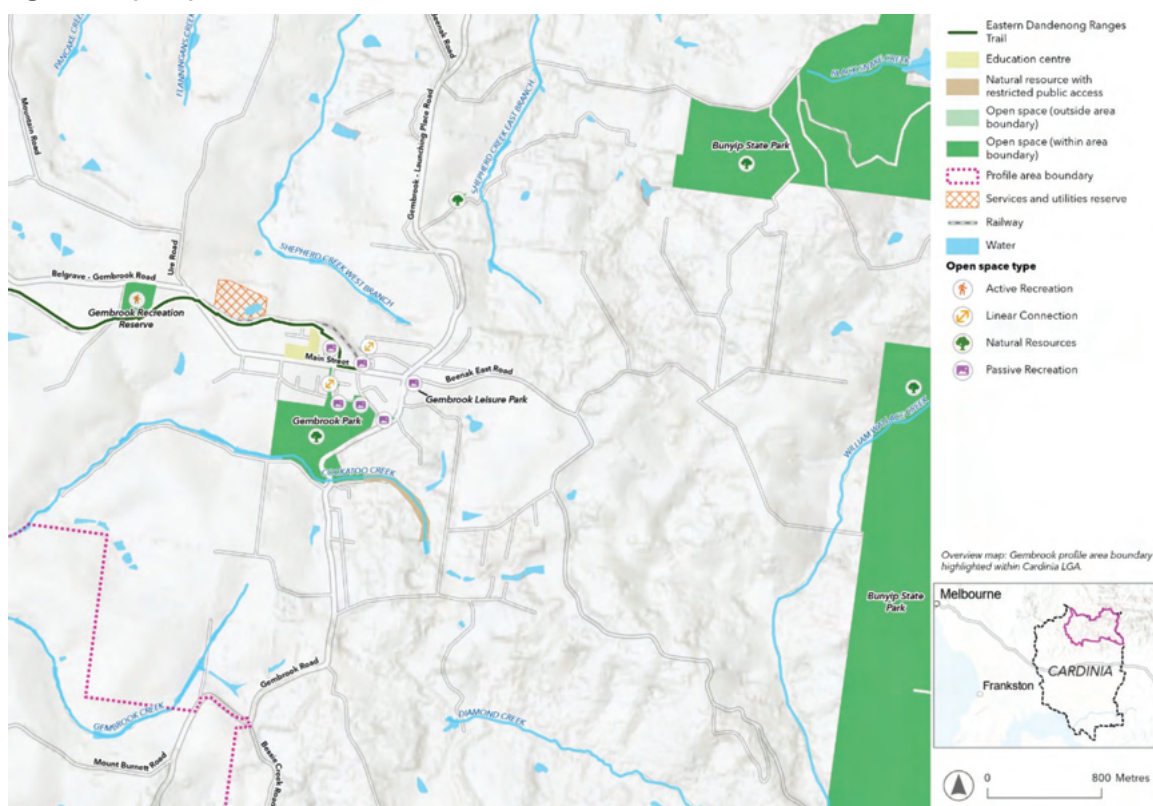
**Gembrook Profile Area**

Gembrook Area is in the northeast of Cardinia Shire adjoining Yarra Ranges Shire to the north and Baw Baw Shire to the east. The Bunyip State Park and Kurth Kiln Regional Park occupy a large portion of Gembrook Area. At the time of the 2021 census, the population of Gembrook Area was 2,478, with moderate population growth forecast to 2031.

**Open space**

There are about 11,300 ha of public open space in Gembrook Area, a large portion of which is in the Bunyip State Park (9,961 ha). There are 16 public open spaces across the area, consisting of 7 passive, 1 active, 2 linear, and 6 natural open spaces. There are five restricted open spaces in the area, totalling 64 ha. An additional 140 ha of not fit-for-purpose open space is present including creek frontages and bushland reserves.

**Figure 42: Open space in Gembrook Profile Area**



**Open space provision**

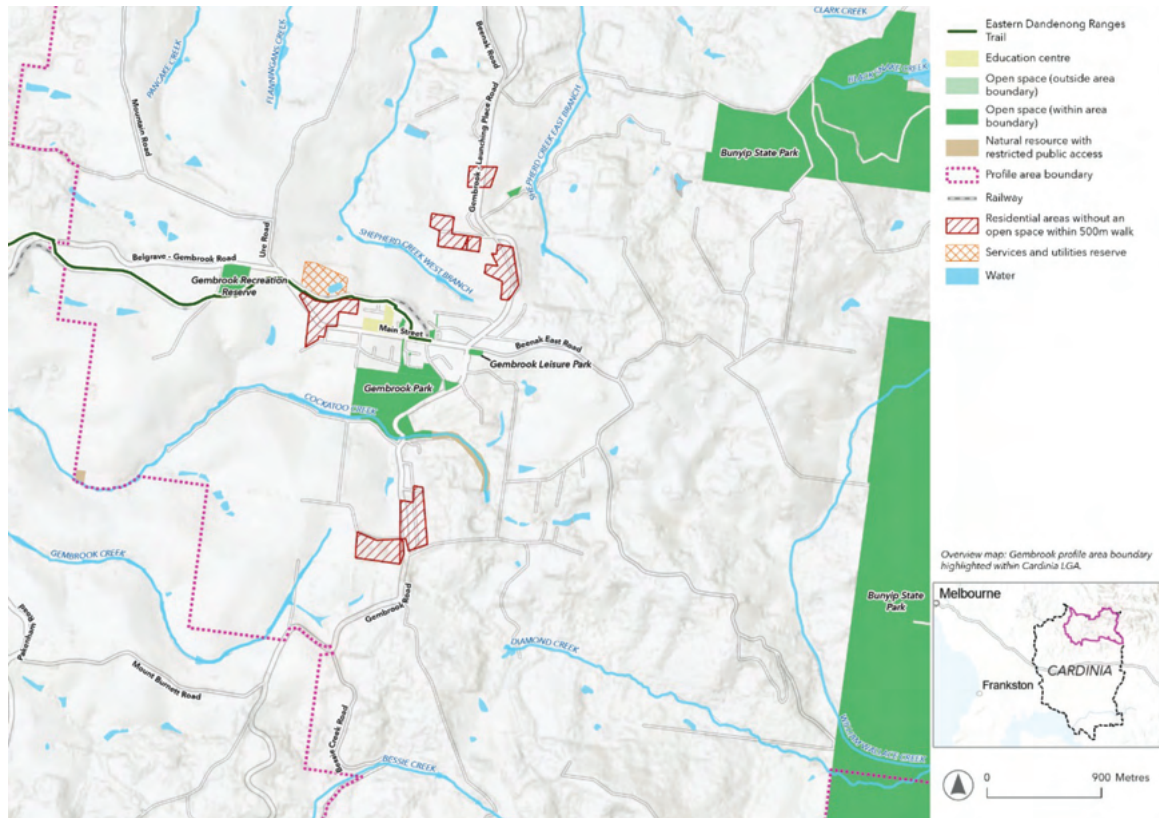
The total provision of open space in Gembrook Area far exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecast populations. Due to the large nature parks in the area the provision of open space is currently 4,552 ha/1,000 residents. The provision of passive open space far exceeds the benchmark of 3 ha/1,000 residents. Currently Gembrook Area has 4,550 ha/1,000 residents of passive open space.

Gembrook Recreation Reserve is the only active open space and contributes 2.11 ha/1,000 residents exceeding the benchmark of 2 ha. By 2031, the provision of active open space is expected to drop below the benchmark. An additional 0.12 ha will be needed to meet the benchmark. When considered with neighbouring areas, the provision for active open space balance out within in the sub region and in accordance with the Active Cardinia Strategy. Please refer to the Active Cardinia Strategy for the framework used to establish demand.

**Access to open space**

Access to open space within the residential parts of the Gembrook Area is very good with 90% of residents being within 500m walking distance of public open space. As shown in Figure 35 there are walkable access gaps in residential areas to the north, south and west of the township. Opportunities will be further explored to better connect residents in gap areas to open space through improvements to the availability of walking paths.

**Figure 43: Residential areas in Gembrook Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Gembrook Area.

- Review the planning zoning of public open spaces within Gembrook Profile Area and where required rezone to recognise and protect their role as public open spaces.
- Explore opportunities to allow public access to the existing public toilet block at the Gembrook Recreation Reserve.
- Investigate the viability of a walking path connecting Gembrook town centre to Bunyip State Park (entrance point).
- Identify opportunities to improve access for residentially zoned properties to open spaces including Gembrook Leisure Park.

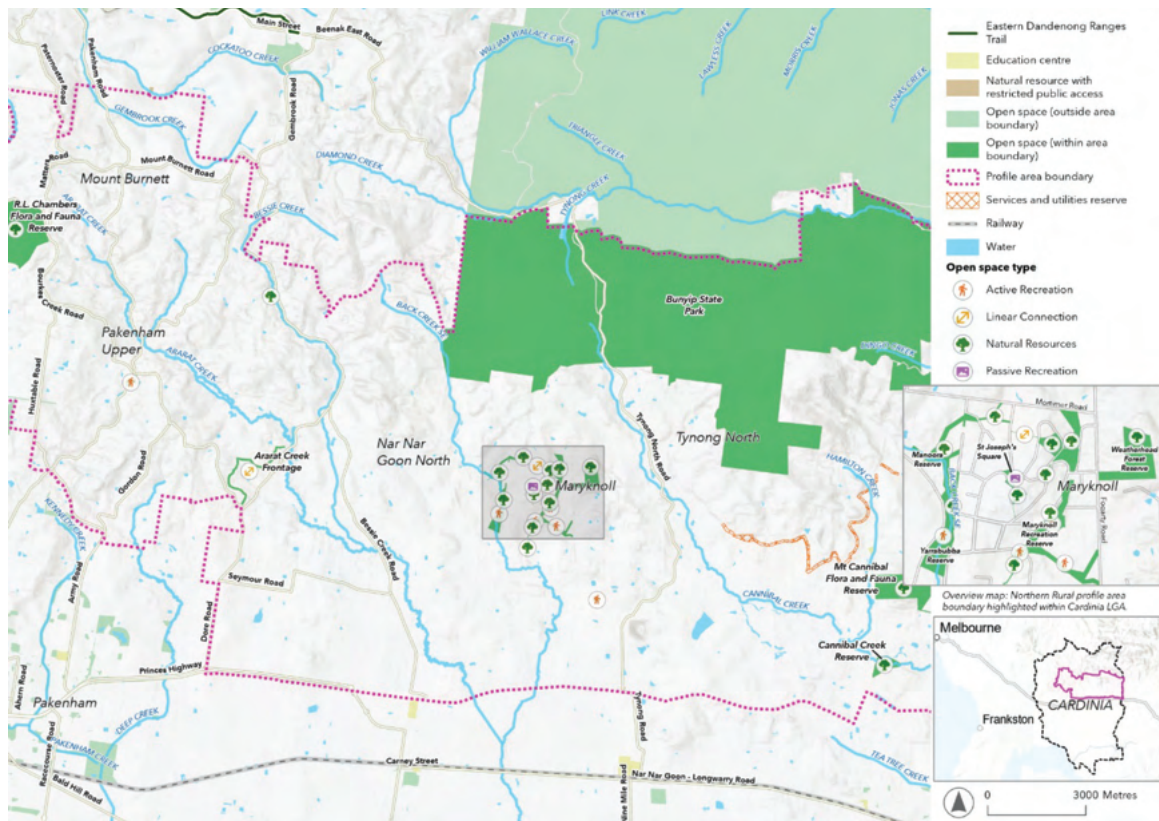
**Northern Rural Profile Area**

Northern rural Area is in the northern portion of Cardinia Shire with Gembrook to the north and Baw Baw Shire to the east. The area includes parts of the southern portion of Bunyip State Park. A portion of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure plan area is also located within the Northern Rural area. The population was 3,806 at the 2021 census, with moderate population growth forecast to 2031.

**Open space**

There are 29 public open spaces in the area totalling 3,410 ha. The Bunyip State Park is the largest in the area with 3,106 ha. There are 1 passive, 4 active, 3 linear, and 21 natural resource open spaces. Eight restricted open spaces (63 ha) are present in Northern Rural Area including two protected areas, two natural reserves, a cemetery, an equestrian facility, an education centre, and a group camp. There are 336 ha of not fit-for-purpose open space in Northern Rural Area including creek frontages and bushland reserves.

**Figure 44: Open space in Northern Rural Profile Area**



**Open space provision**

The total provision of open space in Northern Rural Area far exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The abundance of large natural resources areas means provision of open space is currently 896 ha/1,000 residents.

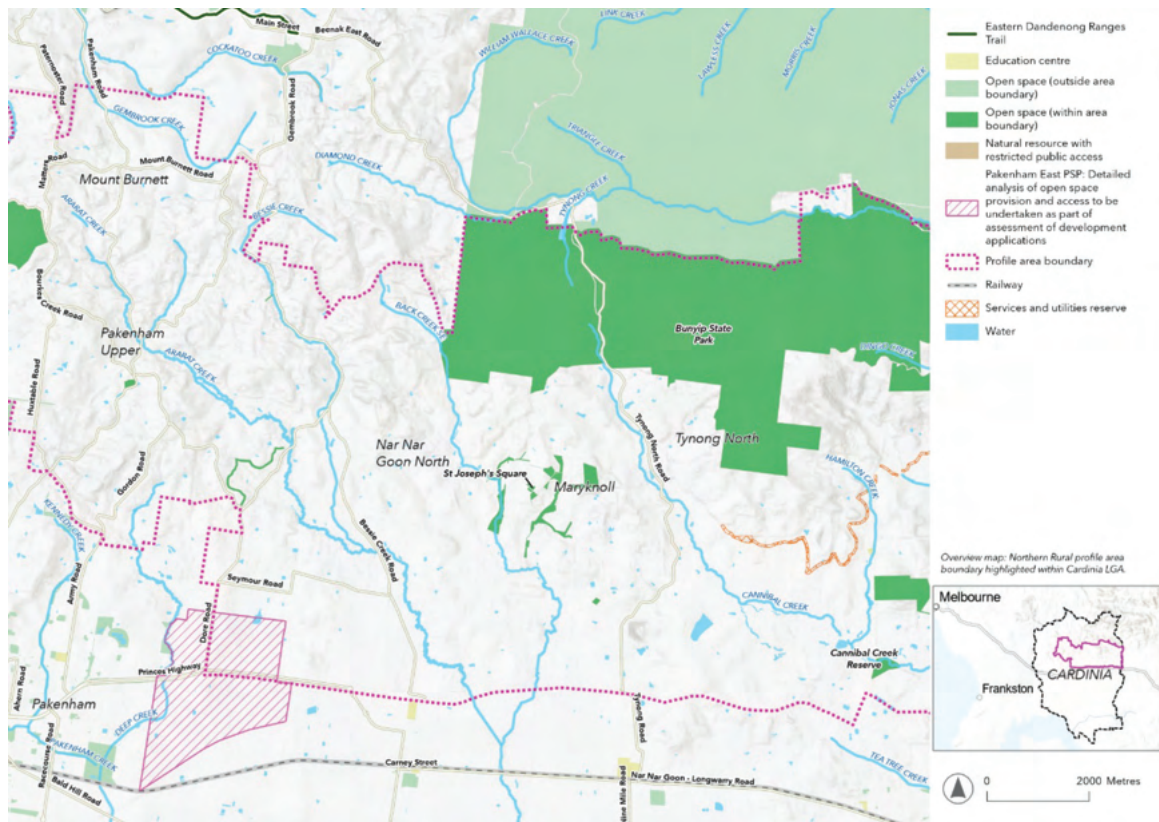
Both the provision of passive and active open space also exceeds the provision benchmarks at 892 ha/1,000 residents and 3.9 ha/1,000 residents respectively. The provision of open space in Northern Rural Area is sufficient to meet the needs of the existing and future population. St Joseph’s Square located in Maryknoll is the primary passive open space within that area and being located in the main town should be reclassified to a Township Park.

**Access to open space**

Similarly, access to open space for residential areas is good, however it is acknowledged that majority of the properties in this area are not residentially zoned. Community members are more likely to be traveling by private vehicle to utilise public open spaces, making township parks an important feature in rural areas. In order to provide a township park in northern rural, St Joseph’s square in Maryknoll has been identified. A Masterplan will be prepared to enhance this space, recognising its classification and role as a township park.

The Northern Rural Area also includes a portion of Pakenham East which sits inside the urban growth boundary and is zoned for further development. As part of the implementation of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan, several new open spaces will be delivered to support existing and future communities.

**Figure 45: Residential areas in Northern Rural Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendation**

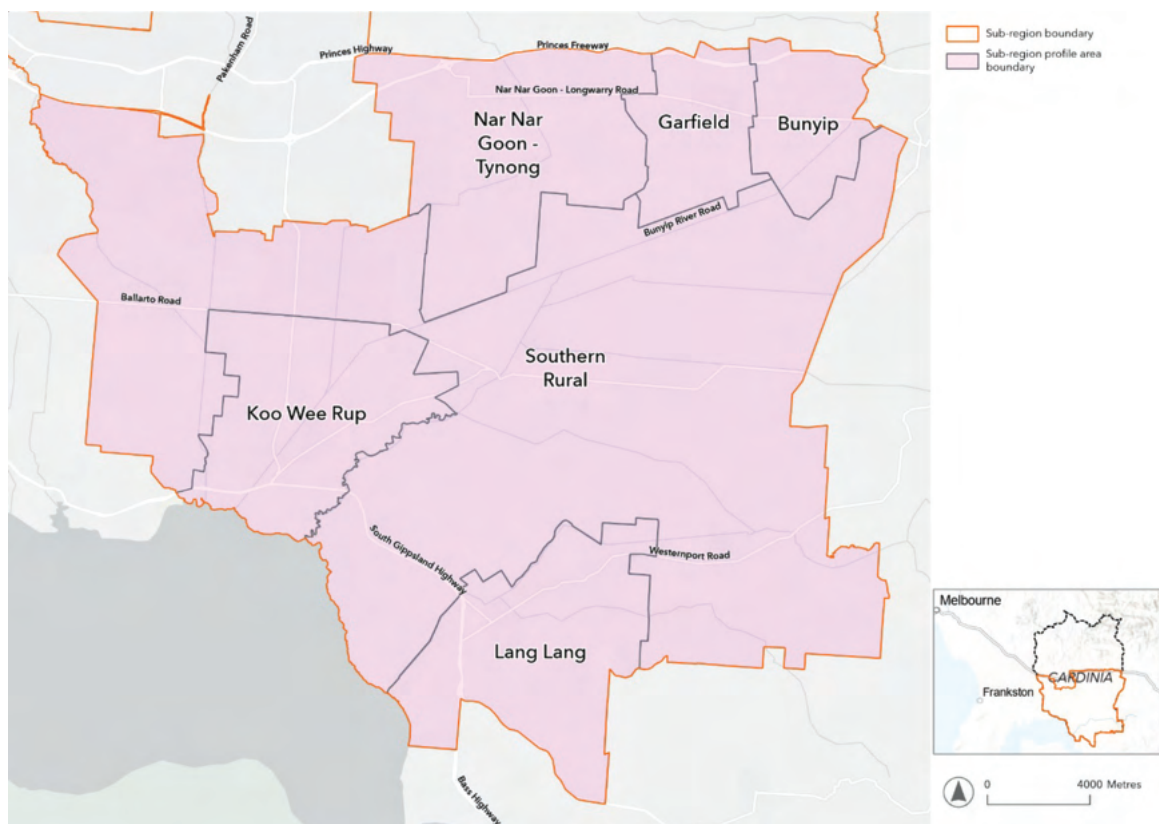
The following recommendation is proposed to enhance the open space network in Northern Rural Area.

- Prepare a master plan for St Joseph’s Square, Maryknoll recognising its classification as a Township Park. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Support and work with developers and land owners to optimise the provision of open space outcomes that align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy to be delivered as part of the implementation of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan.

### 7.3 Southern sub-region

The Southern sub-region is largely agricultural land with the population concentrated in townships and rural residential areas. The Koo Wee Rup swamp and Western Port are significant features in this southern part of the Shire. The land is generally flat alluvial plains which have been substantially cleared of vegetation. The Southern sub-region includes the profile areas of Southern Rural, Nar Nar Goon-Tynong, Garfield, Bunyip, Lang Lang and Koo Wee Rup. The north-western part of the area is located within the central urban growth area and connects to the growth corridor. Other townships in the area will accommodate some of the forecasted population growth, limited to within the existing urban growth boundaries. The north-western area includes the Officer South Employment Precinct (currently in development) and part of the Cardinia Road Employment Precinct. The central northern part of the sub-region includes a portion of the Pakenham East Precinct. There are a number of key trails desired for within the southern sub-region to create scenic and safe recreational intra-town links, as well as key north, south links.

Figure 46: Southern sub-region



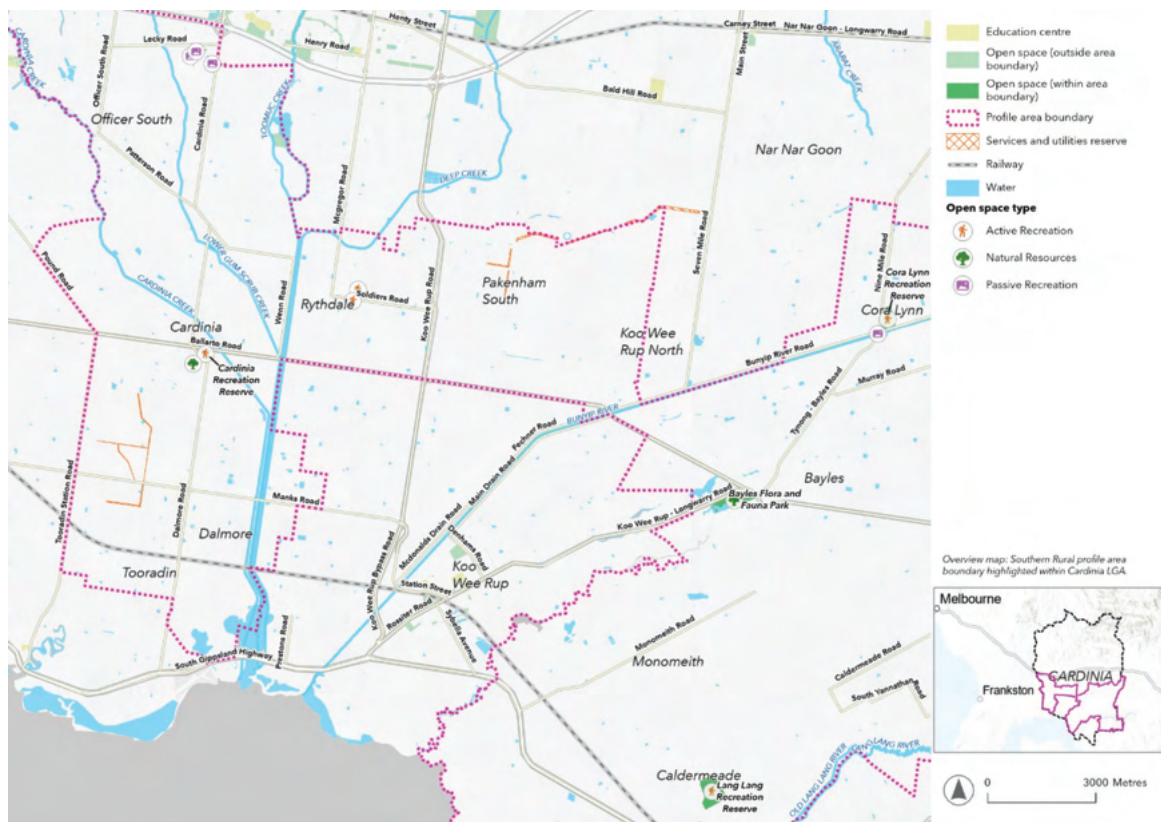
**Southern Rural Profile Area**

Southern Rural Area is the largest of the Cardinia Shire areas. The area is located to the south of Cardinia Shire making up the eastern, southern, and western boundaries of the Shire. Southern Rural Area adjoins four local government areas: Baw Baw Shire Council to the east, South Gippsland Shire Council to the south-east, Bass Coast Shire Council to the south, and the City of Casey to the west. The population was 3,246 at the 2021 census, with moderate population growth forecasted by 2031. This area includes the Precinct Structure Plan areas of Officer South Employment Precinct (currently in development by the Victorian Planning Authority) and part of the Cardinia Road Employment Precinct which provides a mix of high density residential and commercial and industrial areas.

**Open space**

There is a total of 88 ha of public open space in the area. The Lang Lang Community Sport Precinct located in Caldermeade makes up 35% of the total (30 ha). There are 13 public open spaces in Southern Rural Area, including 4 passive, 6 active, 1 linear and 2 natural resource areas. Three schools in the area contribute over 2 ha towards restricted open space. There is an additional 213 ha of encumbered and/or not fit-for-purpose open space including creek frontages, coastal and natural resource areas. There are opportunities to make use of these encumbered open spaces in future, including the proposed Southern Rail Trail alignment.

**Figure 47: Open space in Southern Rural Profile Area**





**Open space provision**

The total provision of open space in the Southern Rural Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecast populations. The provision of open space is currently 27 ha/1,000 residents.

The provision of active open space also substantially exceeds the provision benchmark, reflecting the presence of several large active recreation reserves in the area. Active open space is currently provided at 18 ha/1,000 residents. There is currently 9 ha/1,000 population of passive open space, well exceeding the benchmark of 3 ha. The provision of open space in Southern Rural Area is sufficient to meet the needs of the existing and future population, and future residential developments will contribute to the increase in open space in the townships. Ensuring open space is within 500m walking distance to residential areas is critical in the development of these areas.

Due to there not being any active open space provided in the Cardinia Road Employment Precinct Structure Plan to support the residential population of that precinct, it is considered that additional active open space will be required to be provided as part of the Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan. Council will continue to advocate for and work with the Victorian Planning Authority to achieve open space outcomes that align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy.

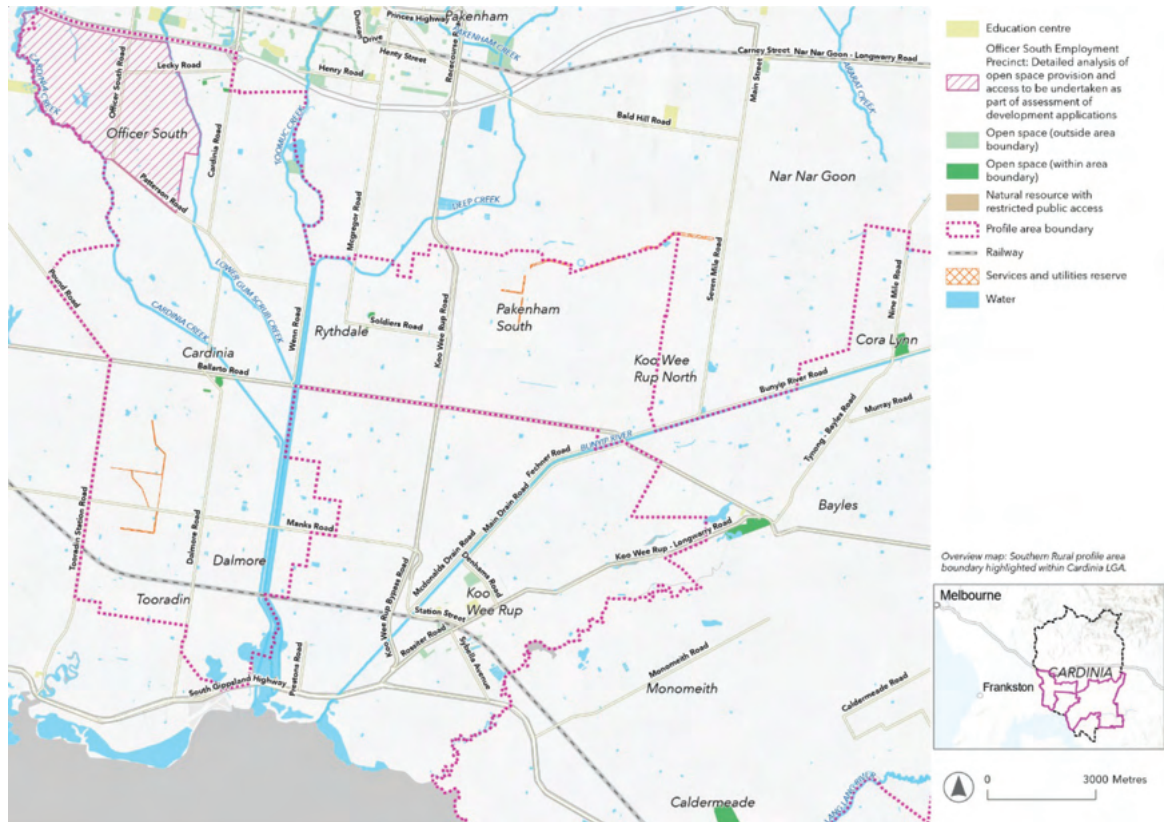
**Access to open space**

As a result of the majority of the Southern Rural Area being almost devoid of residentially zoned land there are minimal access gaps to open space within this area using the measure of 500m walking distance from residentially zoned properties. It is acknowledged however that walking is unlikely to be the way by which the majority of residents in rural areas will access public open space. Passive open space needs are likely to be met at one of the many local parks or by traveling to open space outside of the area. However, there are opportunities to improve access and use of existing encumbered drainage reserves and waterways.

Active open space needs are also likely to be met at one of the local recreation reserves or at the Lang Lang Community Sport Precinct.

The Southern Rural Area also includes the Officer South Employment Precinct and part of the Cardinia Road Employment Precinct. Although the focus of these areas is primarily on facilitating employment there are also some residential areas included or planned to be included. It is important that the provision of and access to open space in these areas aligns with the Cardinia Open Space Strategy.

Figure 48: Residential areas in Southern Rural Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk.



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Southern Rural Area.

- Continue to work with the Victorian Planning Authority on the Officer South Employment Precinct PSP to ensure provision and access standards align with the Cardinia’s Shire Open Space Strategy.
- Investigate partnerships with land managers of encumbered and undeveloped drainage reserves and waterways to provide passive recreation.

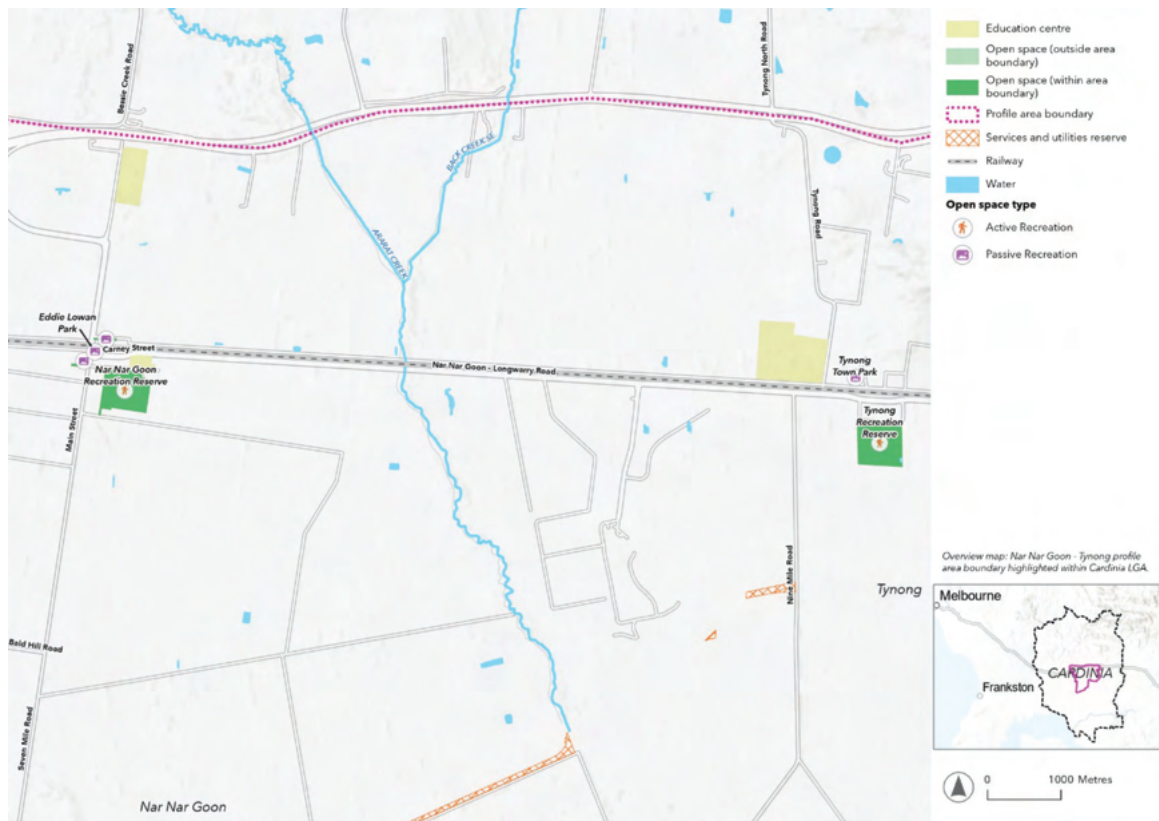
### Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Profile Area

Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area is in the centre of Cardinia Shire between Pakenham Area (to the west) and Garfield Area (to the east). Outside the Nar Nar Goon and Tynong townships, land use is predominantly agricultural, and the area is bisected by the Gippsland V-Line railway and Ararat Creek. This area includes the Mt Cannibal Flora and Fauna Reserve, a 53 hectare feature natural resource open space with breathtaking panoramic views across the Shire. The population was recorded at 1,705 at the 2021 census, with moderate population growth forecast to 2031.

### Open space

There are nearly 17 ha of public open space in the area, the majority of which is in the major reserves in Nar Nar Goon and Tynong townships. Five smaller parks (all less than 2,500m<sup>2</sup> in area) provide additional passive open space in the area. There are five restricted open spaces in the area with a total area of 207 ha which includes the Pakenham Racecourse.

Figure 49: Open space in Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Profile Area



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The provision of active open space also substantially exceeds the provision benchmark, reflecting the presence of two large active recreation reserves in the area. However, the limited number and size of the passive open spaces in the area means the provision of passive open space is well below the benchmark.

To meet the passive open space benchmark of 3 ha/1,000 residents for the current population an additional 4 ha of passive open space is needed (increasing to 5 ha by 2031). More passive open space is needed in both townships in the area. There is an opportunity to increase passive open space in the area by increasing passive recreation within the existing active recreation reserves and / or through agreements with land managers of restricted open spaces. Recreation reserves have underutilised areas and offer the opportunity to increase passive open space. Master plans of these recreation reserves will be required to realise this potential.

To further enhance the open space network in Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area, Eddie Lowan Park in Nar Nar Goon and the Tynong Town Park, have been reclassified as Township Parks, recognising their role as key open spaces in the town centres and master plans will be prepared to reflect this classification.

### Access to open space

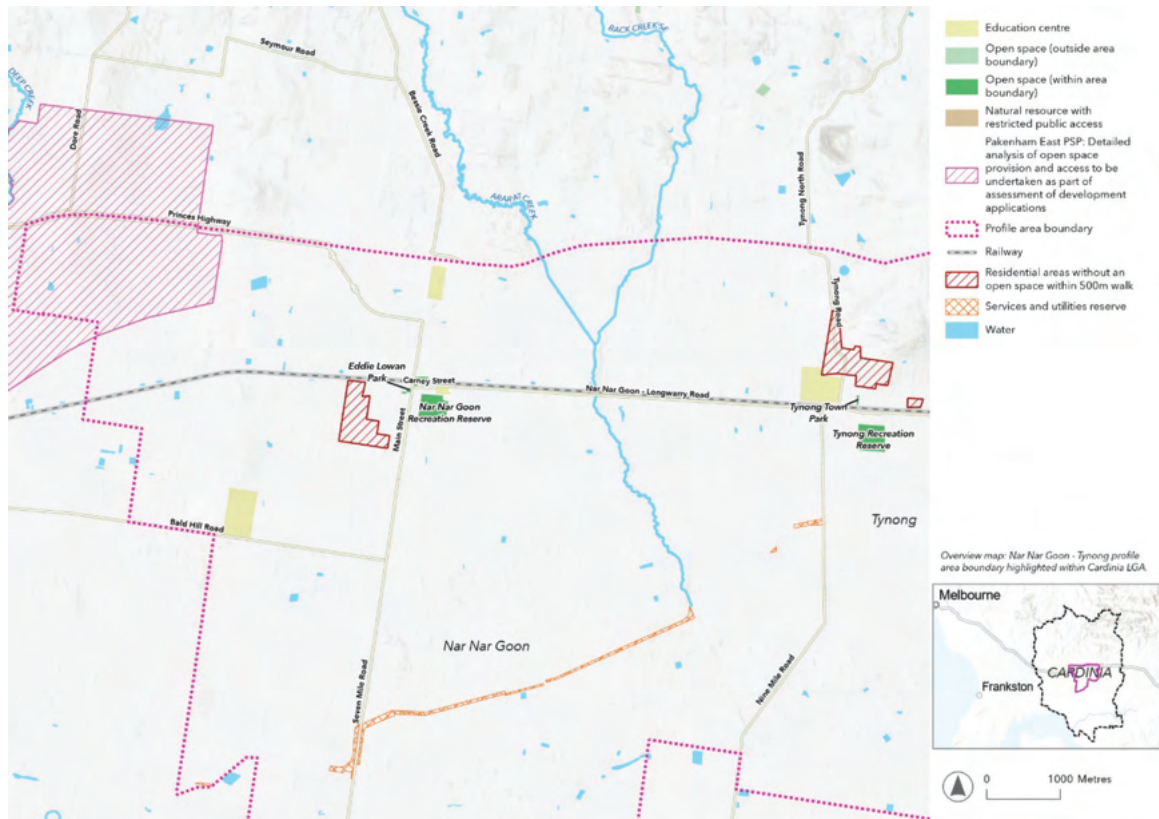
Currently 80% of residents in Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area living in residentially zoned properties have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. There are walkable access gaps in the western area of Nar Nar Goon township and the northern area of the Tynong township.

The Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area also includes a portion of Pakenham East which sits inside the urban growth boundary and is zoned for further development. As part of the implementation of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan, several new open spaces will be delivered to support existing and future communities.

Figure 50: Nar Nar Goon Recreation reserve playground



Figure 51: Residential areas in Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area.

- Develop master plans for Eddie Lowan Park in Nar Nar Goon and the Tynong Town Park recognising their role as Township Parks. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Investigate the opportunity to create new passive open space to increase residents’ access and ability to walk to open space in the western area of Nar Nar Goon.
- Prepare master plans for the Nar Nar Goon Recreation Reserve and the Tynong Recreation Reserve to improve their suitability for supporting passive recreation without compromising the primary function of the reserves for active recreation. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Support and work with developers and landowners to optimise the provision of open space outcomes that align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy to be delivered as part of the implementation of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan.

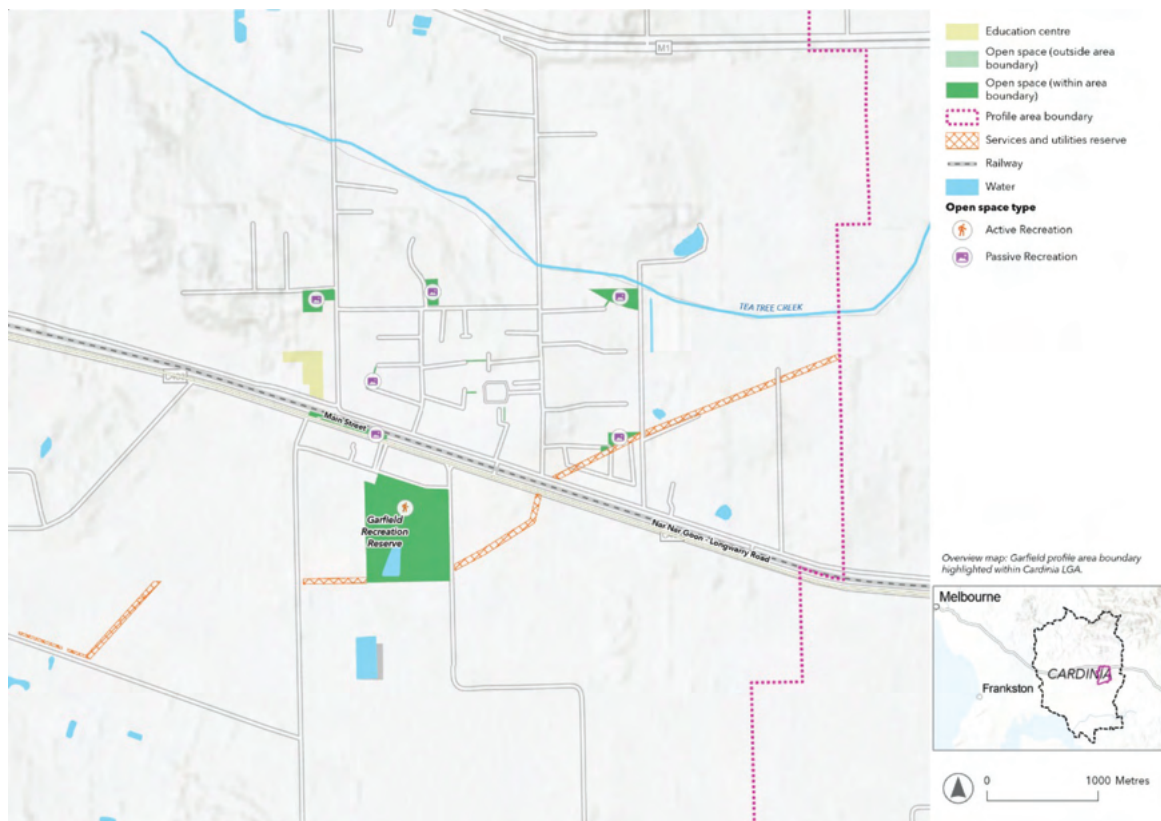
**Garfield Profile Area**

Garfield Area is in the centre of Cardinia Shire towards the eastern boundary between Bunyip Area to the east and Nar Nar Goon – Tynong Area to the west and is bisected by the Gippsland V-line railway. Outside the Garfield township, the land use in the area is predominantly agricultural with residential areas concentrated in the township. The population was 2,031 at the 2021 census, with moderate population growth forecast to 2031. The average annual population change in Garfield Area is 2.57%, which indicates that future residential areas will be denser and more populous.

**Open space**

There are nearly 16 ha of public open space in Garfield Area. The 13 public open spaces in the area include 7 passive, 1 active and 5 linear open spaces. The Garfield Recreation Reserve is the largest open space in the area totalling over 12 ha. The other 12 open spaces are all below 1 ha in size. There are three restricted open spaces in the area, the Garfield Golf Club, Garfield Primary School, and a protected reserve. The total area of restricted open space is 42 ha.

**Figure 52: Open space in Garfield Profile Area**



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in Garfield Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for the current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 7.7 ha/1,000 residents and in 2031 it will be at least 5.39ha/1000 residents (this is excluding additional open space that is likely to be included in any new residential subdivisions). The provision of active open space also exceeds the provision benchmark. Garfield Recreation Reserve is the only active open space and contributes 6 ha/1,000 residents exceeding the benchmark of 2 ha.

However, the small sizes of the passive open spaces in the area means the provision of passive open space is below the benchmark of 3 ha/1,000 residents. Passive open space provision is currently 1.7 ha/1,000 residents. To meet the passive open space benchmark for the current population an additional 2.7 ha of passive open space is needed (this will increase to 5.3 ha by 2031). It must be acknowledged however that, whilst the primary classification of the Garfield Recreation reserve is as Active open space, several passive uses (district play space, dog off leash area, skate park, fitness equipment and community garden) are supported at the reserve and acknowledged in the adopted reserve master plan. Furthermore, as new subdivisions are proposed in the area, it is important to ensure adequate open space is delivered as part of these proposals to address the gaps in passive open space.

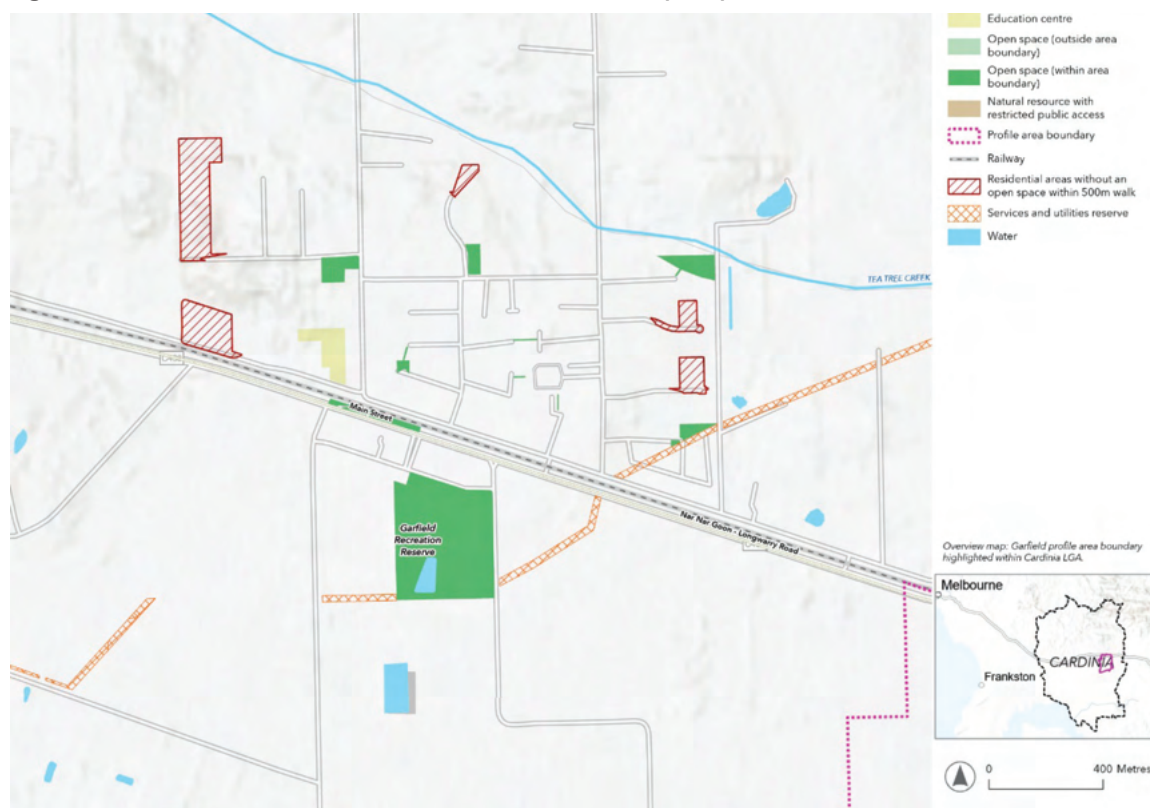
### Access to open space

Approximately 90% of existing residential properties in Garfield Area are located within 500m walking distance of public open space. The presence of several linear connections throughout the township has proven highly effective in supporting walkable access to open spaces. It is important that as new developments occur that both provision and access to open space are carefully considered and the vision, objectives and recommendations of the Cardinia Shire Council Open Space Strategy are appropriately responded to.

Figure 53: Children playing at Garfield recreation reserve



Figure 54: Residential areas in Garfield Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Garfield Area.

- Ensure public open spaces are appropriately located within new developments in Garfield Profile Area to provide access within 500m walking distance of residential properties.



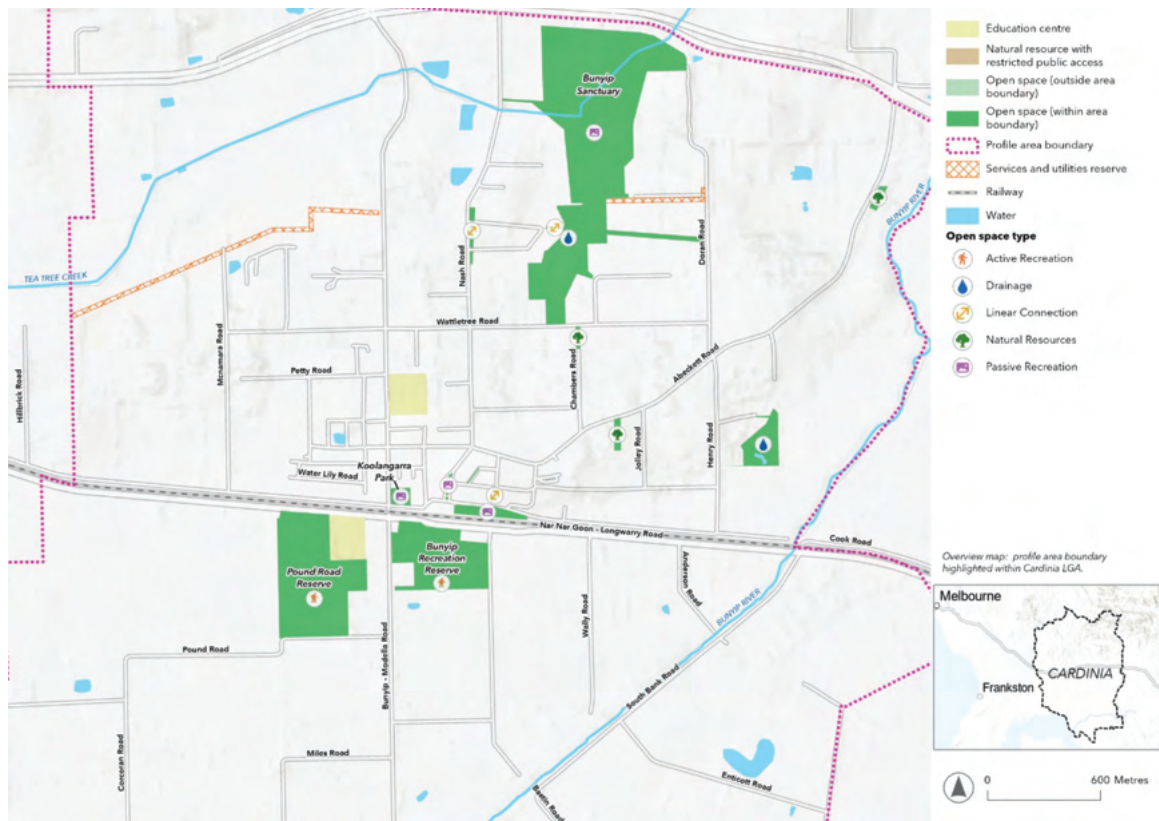
**Bunyip Profile Area**

Bunyip Area is in the central eastern part of Cardinia Shire, adjoining Northern Rural to the north, Baw Baw Shire to the east, Southern Rural to the south, and Garfield to the west. The Gippsland V-Line railway runs through the centre of Bunyip. Most of the township’s residential land is located to the north of the railway line, with mostly rural residential land to the south. At the time of the 2021 census the population of Bunyip Area was 2,019 and moderate population growth is expected by 2031.

**Open space**

There is 99 ha of public open space in Bunyip Area spread over 15 open spaces. This consists of 4 passive, 2 active, 4 linear, 2 drainage and 3 natural resource open spaces. Of the public open spaces, Bunyip Sanctuary is the largest at 51 ha. There are five restricted open spaces in the area totalling 12 ha, including two schools and a cemetery.

**Figure 55: Open space in Bunyip Profile Area**



**Open space provision**

The total provision of open space in Bunyip Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for the current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 49 ha/1,000 residents.

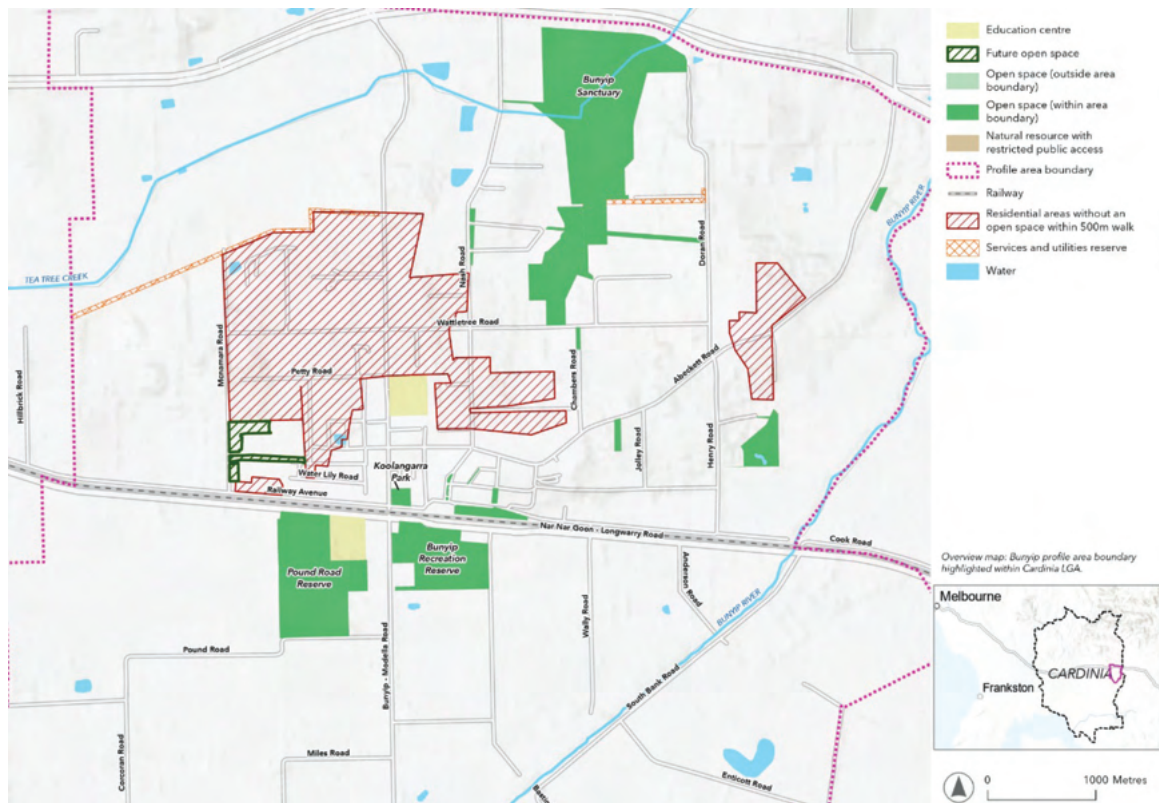
The current provision of active and passive open space exceeds the provision benchmarks. Active open space is currently 18 ha/1,000 residents, and passive open space is currently 31 ha/1,000 residents. With additional open space to be delivered as part of future residential developments and through the implementation of the Bunyip Township Strategy, the provision of open space in Bunyip Area is sufficient to meet the needs of the existing and future population.

**Access to open space**

Currently 72% of residents in Bunyip Area living in residentially zoned properties have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. As new subdivisions are proposed in the area, it is important to ensure adequate open space is delivered as part of these proposals to address and prevent further access gaps. There are also opportunities to explore public access to restricted open space in Bunyip Area through agreements with landowners and managers.

Koolangarra Park is a key open space located in the centre of the Bunyip township. It is a large open space that can accommodate a range of activities and has therefore been reclassified as a Township Park. A master plan will be required for the reserve to reflect this classification, supporting the community it serves.

**Figure 56: Residential areas in Bunyip Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk**



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Bunyip Area.

- Investigate opportunities to improve access to open space within Bunyip Profile Area through the establishment of agreements with other agencies and/or land owners.
- Prepare a master plan for Koolangarra Park recognising its role as a Township Park. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Ensure public open spaces are appropriately located within new developments in Bunyip Profile Area to provide access within 500m walking distance of residential properties.
- Explore the opportunity to develop a Bunyip River Walk path. Subsequent delivery will be considered as part of the review of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy.

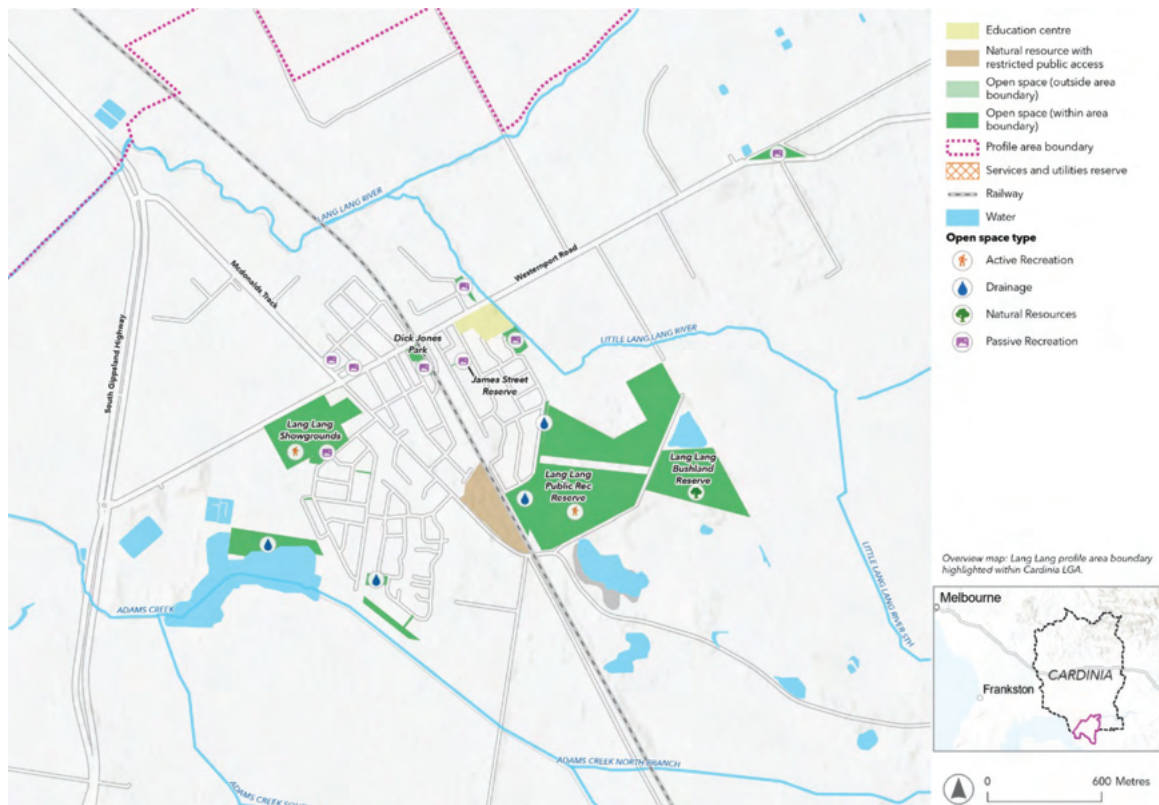
**Lang Lang Profile Area**

Lang Lang Area is in the southern most point of Cardinia Shire. The area shares a boundary with Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire. The western part of Lang Lang Area is in the Western Port Nature Conservation Reserve. The land use outside of the Lang Lang township is predominantly rural. At the time of the 2021 census the population of Lang Lang Area was 2,140, with moderate population growth forecast by 2031.

**Open space**

There are 77 ha of public open space in Lang Lang Area spread across 21 open spaces. Adams Creek Nature Conservation Reserve is the largest, making up 57 ha. There are 10 passive, 1 active, 8 drainage, 1 linear, and 1 natural resource area. There are five restricted open spaces in the area including two education facilities, a cemetery, rifle club, and bushland reserve. The total area of restricted open space is approximately 57 ha. An additional 30 ha of not fit-for-purpose / undeveloped open space is present in Lang Lang Area which includes part of the Western Port Coastal Reserve and the Lang Lang River frontage.

**Figure 57: Open space in Lang Lang Profile Area**



**Open space provision**

The total provision of open space in Lang Lang Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for current and forecasted population. The provision of open space overall is currently 36 ha/1,000 residents. The provision of passive open space also far exceeds the provision benchmark at 35 ha/1,000 residents. During the analysis of public open space, some zoning anomalies were identified. Some of the existing open spaces were not zoned appropriately to ensure ongoing protection of public open space. A review of the zoning and amendments to the Cardinia Planning Scheme will be required.

As the Lang Lang show grounds is the only active open space in the area and contributes 0.5 ha/1,000 residents, the amount of active open space does not meet the 2 ha provision benchmark when only considering facilities located within this area boundary. However, the presence of several large active recreation reserves located in the neighbouring Southern Rural Area (Southern Rural active open space is currently provided at 18 ha/1,000 residents far exceeding the benchmark in that area) is considered adequate to support the active recreation needs of the Lang Lang Area community. Please refer to the Active Cardinia Strategy for the framework used to establish demand.

**Access to open space**

More than 95% of people in residentially zoned areas in the Lang Lang Area are within 500m walking distance of public open space. An opportunity has been identified between Dick Jones and James Street Reserve, to improve access to open space as well as the town centre. The presence of part of the Western Port Coastal Reserve and the Lang Lang River frontage provides a unique visitor experience for the local and broader Cardinia community. Future opportunities are to be explored with the land manager.

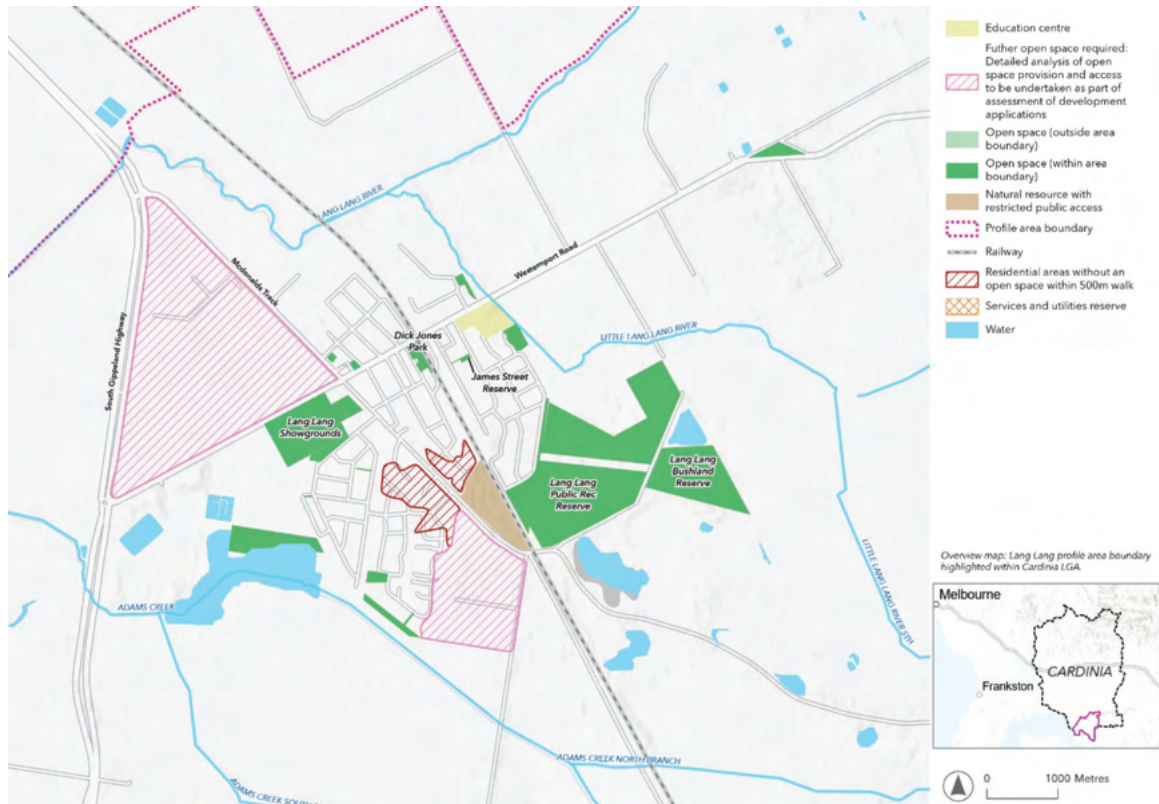
An important future trail that will connect through Lang Lang is the Southern Rail Trail. A short term priority of the delivery of this trail is to progress the design and feasibility of the Southern Rail Trail alignment from the Cardinia Shire municipal boundary at Nyora to the Lang Lang Recreation reserve. Council will advocate for funding from the State Government to facilitate its delivery.

As the town grows with new residential subdivisions, it is important to ensure passive open space is provided for in these new areas and that residents are within 500m walking distance to open space.

**Figure 58: Open Space Strategy Community consultation pop-up in Kester Kitchen Park, Lang Lang**



Figure 59: Residential areas in Lang Lang Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Lang Lang Area.

- Support and work with developers and landowners to appropriately locate public open space within new developments in Lang Lang Profile Area to provide access within 500m walking distance of residential properties.
- Explore opportunities to improve pedestrian connection between Dick Jones Park and James Street Reserve.
- Work with the land manager to explore opportunities to improve passive recreation and community enjoyment of the Lang Lang foreshore.
- Review the planning zone of public open spaces within Lang Lang Profile Area and where required rezone to recognise and protect their role as public open spaces.
- Progress the design and feasibility for the Southern Rail Trail alignment from the Cardinia Shire municipal boundary at Nyora to the Lang Lang Recreation reserve and advocate to the Victorian State Government for funding to deliver this section.

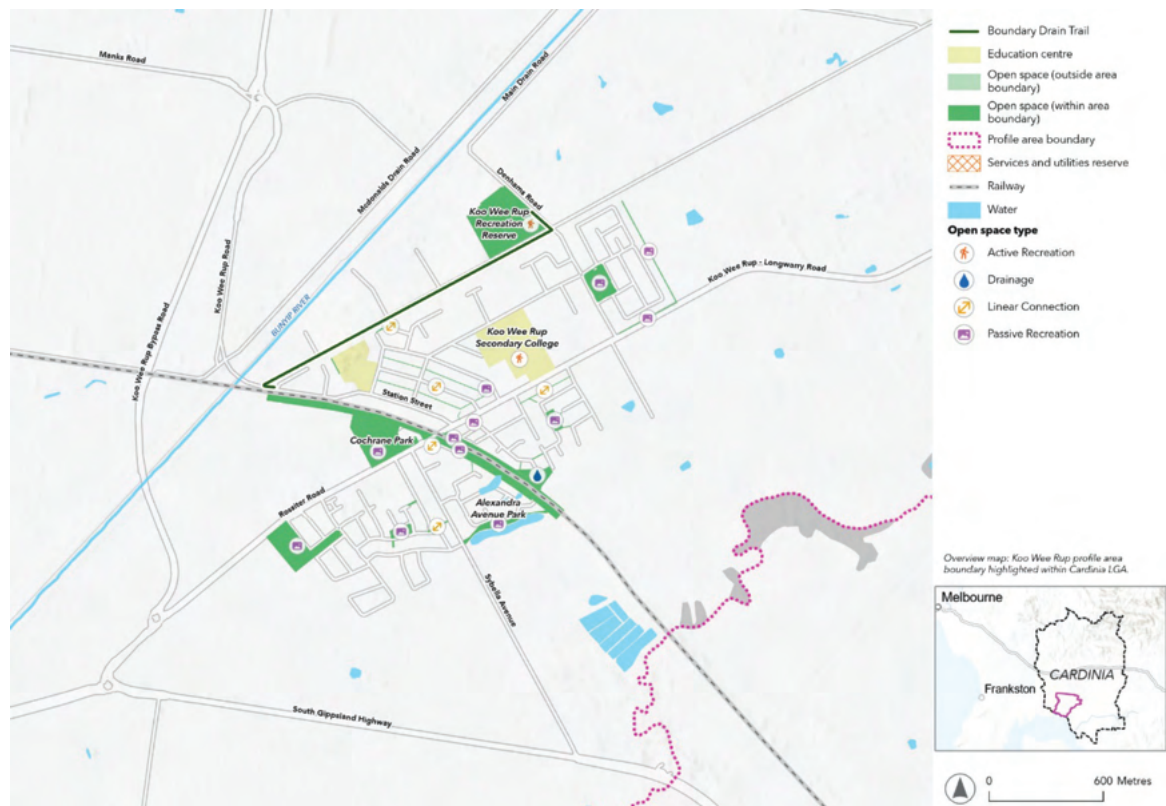
**Koo Wee Rup Profile Area**

Koo Wee Rup Area is in the south of Cardinia Shire, surrounded by Southern Rural and Western Port Bay. The population of Koo Wee Rup Area was 4,100 at the 2021 census and is expected to increase to 5,651 by 2031.

**Open space**

There are 38 ha of public open space in Koo Wee Rup Area. This is made up of 24 public open spaces consisting of 11 passive, 1 active, 2 drainage and 10 linear open spaces. The Koo Wee Rup Rail Trail (8.79 ha) and Koo Wee Rup Recreation Reserve (8.69 ha) are the largest public open spaces in the area. There are six restricted open spaces in Koo Wee Rup Area, including three schools, two sport facilities, and a protected area. The total area of restricted open space is 166 ha. An additional five not fit-for-purpose open spaces totalling 38 ha are present in the area.

**Figure 60: Open space in Koo Wee Rup Profile Area**



### Open space provision

The total provision of open space in Koo Wee Rup Area exceeds the benchmark of 5 ha/1,000 residents for the current and forecasted population. The provision of open space is currently 9 ha/1,000 residents.

The current provision of both active and passive open space exceeds the provision benchmarks, however by 2031, the amount of active open space drops below the benchmark. To meet the active open space benchmark of 2 ha/1,000 residents for the 2031 population, an additional 2.6 ha is required. Within the Active Cardinia Strategy measures have been identified to establish demand for sport and active recreation facilities. If additional land is considered for future active open space, sites will be investigated to identify those suitable for purchase either within the growth sub-region or outside the growth sub-region. The framework within the Active Cardinia Strategy will determine whether additional land is required for future active open space.

The provision of passive open space meets the target, however, to enhance the open space network, Alexandra Avenue Park has been reclassified as a Township Park due to its central location and proximity to the retail and commercial area of Koo Wee Rup. A master plan will be prepared to understand how this park can be enhanced to continue to support locals and visitors to the town. Another key open space and linear connection in Koo Wee Rup is the Boundary Drain Road walking trail. An opportunity has been identified to improve the use of this linear open space through wayfinding signage and park furniture.

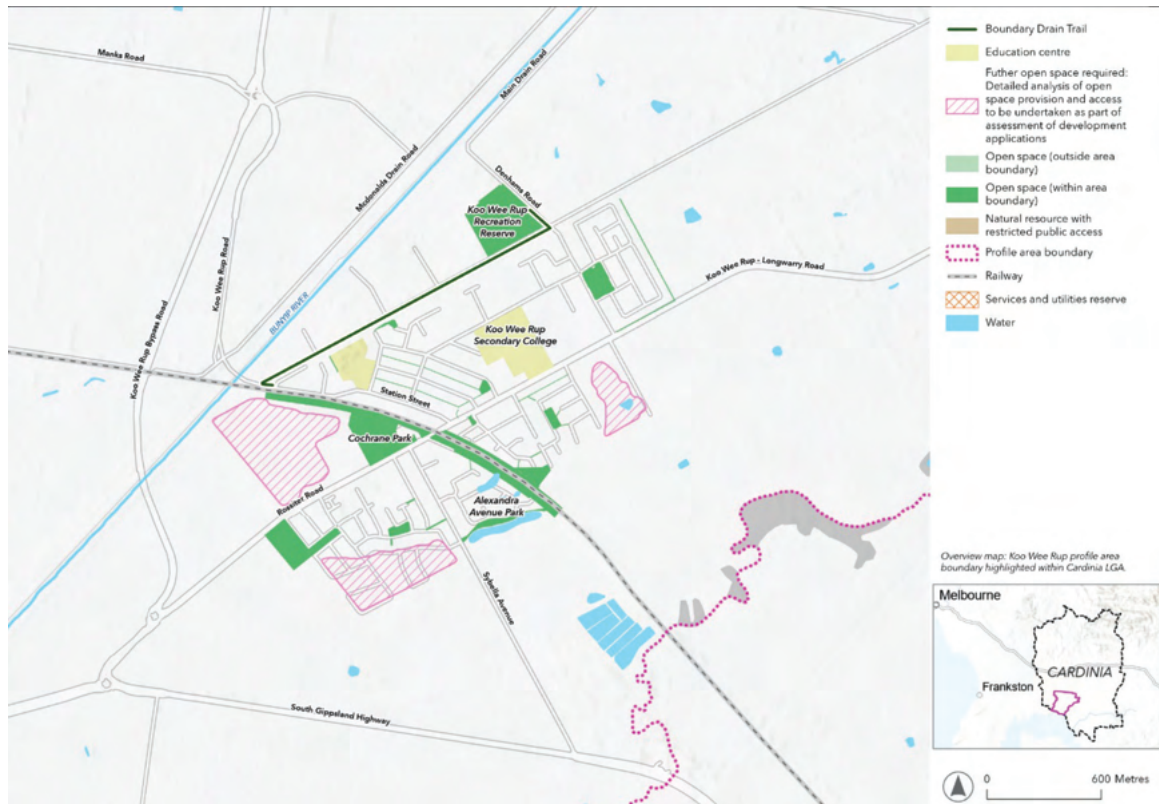
### Access to open space

Currently, 95% of residents in Koo Wee Rup Area have access to public open space within 500m walking distance. As future residential developments are delivered, it is important to ensure the provision of open space outcomes align with the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy.

Figure 61: Cochrane Park skate park, Koo Wee Rup



Figure 62: Residential areas in Koo Wee Rup Profile Area without an open space within 500m walk



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the open space network in Koo Wee Rup Area.

- Prepare a master plan for the Alexandra Avenue Park recognising its role as a Township Park. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources.
- Investigate opportunities to improve passive recreation through the provision of park furniture and wayfinding signage along the Boundary Drain Road walking trail.
- Support and advocate for the provision of additional passive open space within Koo Wee Rup Profile Area as part of new subdivisions.
- Support and work with developers and landowners to appropriately locate public open space within new developments in Koo Wee Rup Profile Area to provide access within 500m walking distance of residential properties.



## 8 Implementation plan and review



Implementation of the Open Space Strategy over the next 10 years will assist Council to achieve enticing and inclusive open spaces that meet the needs of our current and future community. Action plans will be developed and aligned to Council’s endorsed Council Plan and Budget. Delivery is dependent upon sufficient funds and resources, and partnerships with other levels of government, developers, and other agencies.

Funding sources to implement the actions will include council revenue, developer contributions, developer works, open space contributions, and grant funding.

The Strategy will be implemented in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the strategy as well as via subsequently prepared action plans. The action plans will not only consider actions to be delivered at the Shire level but also at the profile area level for the fifteen profile areas making up the Northern, Growth, and Southern sub-regions.

Recommendations and actions may require adjustment to respond to unexpected changes including:

- allocation of Council resources and funding
- changes in State Government policy
- changes in land use and development trends
- other unexpected changes.

Progress on the implementation of the Open Space Strategy and the Action Plan will be reviewed every 3 years. An overall evaluation of the Open Space Strategy and its implementation will be undertaken at the completion of the ten-year period and will be considered as part of the development of a revised Open Space Strategy.

The following table presents the general recommendations to guide the implementation of the strategy at the Shire wide level.

**Table 5: Open Space Strategy general recommendations**

	Objectives	Recommendations
<b>Adaptable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open space that is adaptable and resilient to changing recreational, environmental, cultural and community needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage the community in the planning for Council open space projects and initiatives to ensure they respond to their needs and aspirations in a sustainable way within the scope of the project.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to increase the flexibility of our open spaces creating dynamic places that can be used by multiple age groups and people of all abilities, for physical, social and environmental activities.</li> <li>• Respond to the needs of the natural environment to support biodiversity and provide opportunities to strengthen responses to climate change as part of open space planning.</li> <li>• Provide infrastructure to support emerging trends such as social sport opportunities when upgrades are undertaken, and such facilities align with the open space classification.</li> </ul>

	Objectives	Recommendations
<b>Sustainable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage open space in a financially sustainable manner.</li> <li>• Design, construct and manage open space to reduce the impact on the natural environment.</li> <li>• Ensure climate change is considered when planning and delivering open space assets.</li> <li>• Integrate water sensitive urban design measures into open spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of Council's project management framework, consider whole of life costs when undertaking Open Space projects (including construction, ongoing maintenance, and renewal costs) to ensure financial sustainability of services provided.</li> <li>• Support the implementation of the Integrated Water Management Plan by looking for opportunities to integrate water sensitive urban design measures and exploring alternative water supplies such as storm water harvesting as part of master planning for existing and new open spaces.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for the open space network to reduce impacts in flood prone areas and for any new flood mitigation areas to also act as open spaces for the local community.</li> <li>• Support the implementation of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy by:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing an Urban Forest Strategy;</li> <li>• including the use of natural, sustainably sourced, recycled and weather resilient materials in open space design and promoting increased permeability of surfaces;</li> <li>• ensuring the sustainable management, use and design of built assets and the protection of water quality and waterway health;</li> <li>• and ensuring energy is supplied from renewable sources and utilised efficiently.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Healthy biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect indigenous flora and fauna in urban landscapes to enhance biodiversity and promote environmental resilience.</li> <li>• Identify and protect key environmental, social, heritage, and cultural values of public open space from the impacts of development.</li> <li>• Enhance ecological connections through open space planning.</li> <li>• Connect people to nature and increase stewardship of our natural environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain and protect natural resource areas as valuable natural assets. Identify sensitive areas within these open spaces to protect from recreation impacts, and less sensitive areas which may provide opportunities for recreation in nature (walking, cycling, viewing platforms).</li> <li>• In line with the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Weed Management Strategy and Biolink Plan, explore opportunities to support biodiversity in open space areas, including strengthening habitat corridors, key biodiversity connections, links to and between open space.</li> <li>• Support community friends' groups and sporting Committees of management to protect, enhance and monitor remnant vegetation they manage.</li> <li>• Support habitat improvements and increase the planting of indigenous species in appropriate open spaces to enhance biodiversity and meet revegetation targets within the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.</li> </ul>

	Objectives	Recommendations
<b>Safe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to improve safety, accessibility, and natural surveillance in open space.</li> <li>• Maintain appropriate fire breaks to reduce bushfire risk.</li> <li>• Maintain high quality public open spaces to minimise hazards and risk of injury and increase the perception of safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, manage and maintain open spaces in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.</li> <li>• Reduce bushfire risks through the preparation and implementation of bushfire management plans where required for open spaces across Cardinia Shire.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessible and connected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A network of different types of open spaces, well connected to residential, employment and industrial areas</li> <li>• Open spaces are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.</li> <li>• Open space corridors that connect neighbourhoods and townships with signage and wayfinding information to support community members to utilise active transport between destinations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of residents within 500m walking distance of public open space.</li> <li>• Investigate connectivity across barriers to improve access to open space.</li> <li>• Identify, prioritise, and deliver access paths to open space as part of the annual footpath delivery program.</li> <li>• Conduct an accessibility audit to identify priority areas for enhanced accessibility, universal design, and inclusiveness as part of the master planning process for all district, township and regional open spaces.</li> <li>• Work with reserve committees that support the management of open space to ensure open space is accessible to the broader community. Where appropriate ensure facilities are open and available to support public access.</li> <li>• As part of a review of Council's Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy, undertake an assessment of regional, local, and shared use paths to identify key connections and opportunities to link to and within open spaces, provide wayfinding signage, connect neighbourhoods and townships, and provide shaded routes to encourage active transport.</li> <li>• Establish a working group to develop a policy on universal design for Council assets and open spaces.</li> </ul>
<b>Attractive and inviting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open spaces that accommodate a variety of activities and activations.</li> <li>• Provide an appropriate level of infrastructure and facilities in open spaces to support different uses, interests and needs.</li> <li>• Improve the visual appeal of open spaces through public art and landscaping.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a variety of infrastructure and facilities in open spaces in alignment with classifications (regional, township, district, neighbourhood, local).</li> <li>• Support community led Placemaking in public open space in accordance with the Cardinia Shire Council Placemaking Guide.</li> <li>• Further investigate provision and access to open space in employment areas to support physical activity and enhance visual amenity.</li> <li>• As part of upgrades to existing open spaces, identify amenity enhancement opportunities, where possible, such as through public art, landscaping, and optimising views, to enhance the visual appeal (considering Councils Arts and Culture Policy 2012).</li> <li>• Activate open space to support community connection, and active living.</li> </ul>

	Objectives	Recommendations
<b>Deliver in partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve collaboration within Council, with other stakeholders and with the community to seek multiple benefits from open spaces.</li> <li>• Optimise open space outcomes by aligning with State and Federal policies and strategies.</li> <li>• Ensure community needs and aspirations are embedded in open space planning and implementation.</li> <li>• Advocate for funding to enhance our open spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage and collaborate with the community on open space projects and strategies.</li> <li>• Investigate partnerships with land managers of encumbered and undeveloped drainage reserves and waterways to provide passive recreation.</li> <li>• Seek opportunities to share and celebrate Aboriginal heritage and culture, and opportunities to incorporate traditional land management practices in public open spaces.</li> <li>• Engage and be guided by Traditional Owners (as represented by Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation) for open space planning and naming or renaming of public open spaces.</li> <li>• Encourage collaboration across Council and with external agencies to incorporate opportunities for the open space network to provide additional functions such as water sensitive urban design, community gardens and urban agriculture projects, enhanced climate resilience, and biodiversity protection.</li> <li>• Continue to support volunteer community groups and organisations in the maintenance and enhancement of open spaces.</li> <li>• Partner with the Victorian Planning Authority in the planning for future communities in growth areas to achieve Cardinia Shire Council open space targets.</li> <li>• Engage and collaborate with other levels of Government, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, neighbouring Council's, and other external agencies on joint open space projects and strategies, including exploring recreational opportunities on encumbered land and implementing integrated water management.</li> <li>• Advocate to the State Government for more support of community committees of management and Council in the management of crown land and renewal of aging infrastructure.</li> <li>• Advocate for the delivery of the Cardinia Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan 2022.</li> <li>• Engage the education department and relevant schools across the Shire in discussions regarding the establishment of MOUs to support community use of school grounds outside of hours in areas where such an agreement would address an access gap.</li> </ul>

	Objectives	Recommendations
<b>Equitable planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan, develop and maintain open spaces with a consistent level of service, provision and amenity based on their classification and context.</li> <li>Support the evolving open space needs of communities.</li> <li>Ensure that public open spaces are zoned appropriately to reflect the primary role of the land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a network of public open spaces that supports our community to have access to open space within 500m walking distance in residential areas.</li> <li>Develop quality, innovative, community-driven master plans for district, township and regionally classified open space to provide a diverse open space network offering the community a range of opportunities to be active and stay for longer periods of time.</li> <li>Planning for new open space or enhancements to existing open space will look to provide diverse types of open space, taking into consideration nearby types of open space and community needs.</li> <li>Undertake a quality assessment of the open space network within each Profile Area and assess alignment with the associated open space classifications. As part of the assessment, identify the key environmental, social, cultural and heritage values in public open space for protection and enhancement of these values.</li> <li>Prioritise future infrastructure based on the quality assessment of the open space network, strategic alignment, and available resources and funding.</li> <li>Develop guidelines for Open Space Furniture for a standard suite of products and materials.</li> <li>Prepare planning scheme amendments to rectify zoning anomalies in the open space network.</li> <li>Review and update the Cardinia Shire Play Space Strategy.</li> <li>Review the Cardinia Shire Council Skate and BMX Strategy and the opportunity to include mountain biking and mountain boarding.</li> </ul>