

Local Area Community Profile



Portsea, Sorrento, Blairgowrie



The purpose of the Community Profile is to provide an accessible, holistic snapshot of a designated geographical area. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *small areas* (referred to as Local Areas in this document) are used to enable demographic analysis, evidence and indications of local areas. Mornington Peninsula Shire has 44 townships and 17 ABS Local Areas. Some ABS *small areas* have been merged to enable 13 (to be adopted by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council) Community Local Area Profiles for the Mornington Peninsula.

Population Snapshot



Total Population of Local Area



Percentage of population over the age of 60 years



Percentage of population who Volunteer

Income Snapshot

25.5%

Low Income Households

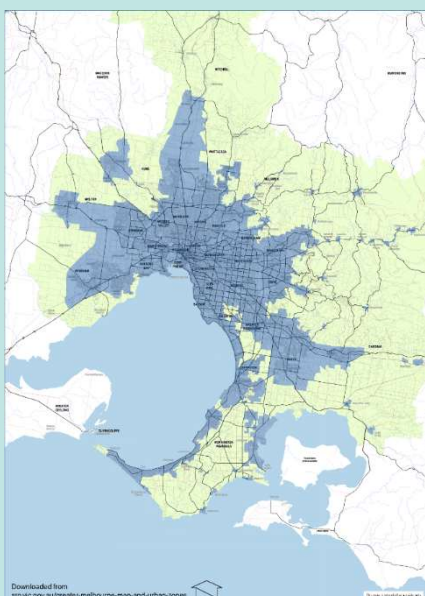
41.3%

Medium Income Households

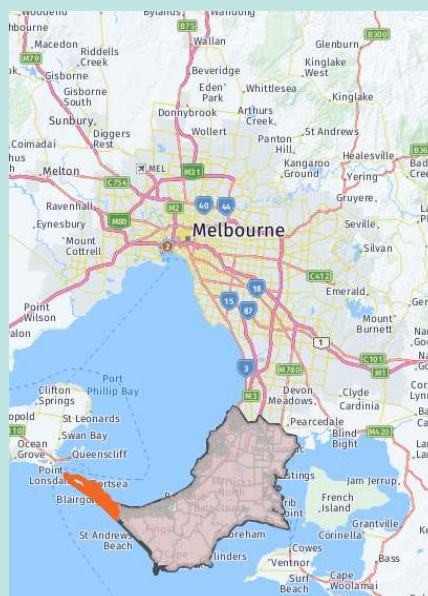
33.2%

High Income Households

Greater Melbourne Area



Mornington Peninsula
Portsea, Sorrento,
Blairgowrie Local Area



Photos on Cover L to R: Upper Left (Police Point, Point Nepean Portsea). Upper Right (Sorrento Foreshore and Beach). Bottom (Stringers Road Reserve, Blairgowrie)

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Introduction

Mornington Peninsula Shire empowered its Citizens' Panel to develop a Community Vision reflective of the collective aspirations of the community. The Citizens' Panel met over multiple sessions to develop the Community Vision, the supporting principles and to prepare advice for Council in relation to the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (the Plan). The three themes of the Plan, which set out the Council's strategic direction in alignment with the Community Vision are:

- Theme 1: A healthy natural environment and well-planned local areas and townships
- Theme 2: A robust, innovative and diverse economy; and
- Theme 3: A flourishing, healthy and connected community

Local Area Community Development Planning is a place-based approach to identifying issues and opportunities to enable the community to take collective action on those that are important to people within our communities at the local level.

“Community development considers community members to be experts in their lives and communities and values community knowledge and wisdom” (Kenny 2007). A community development approach seeks to find local solutions to community needs and build stronger more resilient communities to be able to adapt to the changing environment.

The approach:

- stems from social theory which recognises that community relationships are resources of value that can result in social benefits and a subsequent return in terms of future service sustainability, community resilience and a potential reduction in costs
- is a bottom-up (grassroots, place-based approach) rather than a top down (used for statutory requirements). The bottom-up grassroots, place-based approach is consistent with standard approaches used by governments in disadvantaged areas.
- complies with Deliberative Engagement (Local Government Act. Vic 2020)
- is firmly grounded in IAP2 principles of inform, consult, participate and empower.
- A model to involve community members in local decision making when planning for their existing needs and the future.

A community development place-based bottom-up approach to working with communities enables;

- community participation in their local communities
- a holistic approach and integration (multiple bodies of work) of engagement at a local level
- seeks community consensus for local area priorities.
 - mobilises communities resources and subsequently builds both social and human capital
 - empowers community leadership through building capacity, skills and knowledge
 - increases volunteering

- facilitates establishment of community partnerships with between key stakeholders from different sectors to be solution focused and work collaboratively for better community outcomes
- “support’s preventative, cost effective responses by building resilient communities and targeting investment based on what works locally” State Government <https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches/print-all>

What is the Community Local Area Profile?

Evidence based information has been compiled to provide Community Local Area Profiles. The profiles, which assist understanding of the social, geographic, economic, wellbeing and connectivity characteristics of the community are part of an approach to inform and enhance strengthening social inclusion, community cohesion and resilience in each of the Shire’s proposed thirteen Local Areas.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) collector districts and smaller areas have been used to document the evidence / data profiles. The community profile for Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie will inform the Local Area Community Development Approach for the Blairgowrie community, which is the pilot site for Council’s new approach to working with our communities.

The desired outcome of this work is:

Local Areas are informed, supported and empowered to identify and deliver programs and projects relevant to their local areas.

The Community Profile has been developed by the Shire’s Community Development Team utilising ABS Data (2021 census), as well as other data sources and in early consultation with the Blairgowrie Community Action Group.

Further consultation is needed with the broader Blairgowrie Community who were unable to attend a community session held on 5 June 2023 as well as engagement with Sorrento and Portsea communities.

Introduction to Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie

The townships of Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie as a Local Area are typically characterised by their uninterrupted coastline on Port Phillip Bay and Bass Strait.

Coastal bushland and woodlands are complemented by dense, informal coastal vegetation in public spaces. Residential areas are home to predominantly detached dwellings with reasonable front and side setbacks, which are often obscured from view, at the street level, due to the density of private and public realm vegetation.

Closer to the shoreline, streets have an informal character due to the lack of kerbs, footpaths and the presence of swales as well as unsealed vehicle crossovers. These streets are generally unsealed and often feature sand or gravel-based nature strips. Further

from the Bass Strait Shoreline, streets are more formalised with sealed roads and rollover kerbs (reference: Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme, C2.19 amendment)

Community Concerns Identified for Blairgowrie

Key issues for the Local Area identified during the development of the Community Profile and Consultation, include but may not be limited to:

- Climate Change
- Beach erosion
- Overdevelopment and destruction of the native vegetation
- Parking
- Environmental weeds in reserves and roadsides
- Vandalism and graffiti
- Employment opportunities
- Rising property prices and affordable housing
- Limited sporting facilities
- Appropriate residential fencing

Further consultation and collaboration to enable the first Local Area Community Development approach to working with the Shire's communities. Appendix 1 is provided to this Community Profile that identifies the current project the Blairgowrie Community Action Group is currently working on with numerous partners for the Local Area. These projects, along with input from residents who attended the 5 June 2023 Community Consultation in Blairgowrie will form the bases of broader community consultation. The Shire is respectful of the thousands of volunteer hours that have gone into improving the Blairgowrie community with key community groups listed throughout this document who have achieved so successful projects to benefit the community, these are listed in Appendix 2. In 2019 residents of this Local Area expressed the following concerns and aspirations:

Portsea Concerns and Threats	Portsea Aspirations
Change to character	Coastal character to be protected
Excessive removal of vegetation	Native vegetation to be protected and encouraged
Inappropriate development and design	
Sorrento Concerns and Threats	Sorrento Aspirations
Over development	Abundance of native vegetation
Large, building footprints for new development	Maintain streetscapes and landscaping
Inappropriate development and design	Retain unmade roads and Coastal Character
Blairgowrie Concerns and Threats	Blairgowrie Aspirations
Excessive removal of vegetation	Retain bush character and trees
Large, imposing fencing	Minimal fencing
Threat if inappropriate development and design	Retain unmade roads

(Source: Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme C2.19 amendment)

This local area is predominantly residential with a population of 5,640 people and 2,314 private occupied dwellings. This number is subject to large increases during the holiday period due to 5,171 temporary or unoccupied residences such as Airbnb, Holiday Rental and Holiday Homes. Residents over the age of 50 years make up 68.9% of this population and 30% are over 70 years of age.

Other than English, Italian is the most common language spoken at home with 1.1% of households speaking it. More than 53% of all households in this local area are family households with 16.6% of those having children. This Local Areas labour force includes 45% full time and 42.8% part time workers.

Prior to European settlement in the 1800's, the area was home to the Boon Wurrung/Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation. There are a number of registered sites of significance throughout the area and as such, approval is required under the Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972) for any development of land on those sites.

Population Statistics (ABS data)

Mornington Peninsula

- Population 169,000
- Couples with children 18,061 (26.2%)
- Couples without children 29% compared with 23.5% across Greater Melbourne
- Single parents with children 6,784 (9.8%)
- Lone person households 0.5%
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders 1.4% compared with 0.8% across Greater Melbourne
- Top 3 languages spoken: Italian 0.8%; Greek 0.9% and Mandarin 0.4%
- 13.3% of the residents on the Mornington Peninsula identify as LGBTQIA+
- The number of people who volunteer in 2021 is 20,886 (14.8%) compared to 25,660 (20.0%) in 2016.

Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie

- Population 5,600
- Percentage of people over the age of 60 years 51.8%
- Couples with children 373 (12.8%)
- Couples without children 36.5% compared with 23.5% across Greater Melbourne
- Single parents with children 111 (3.8%)
- Lone person households 24.9%
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders 0.4% compared with 0.8% across Greater Melbourne
- Top 3 languages spoken: Italian 1.1%; Greek 0.3% and German 0.3%
- Low-income households 25.5%
- Medium income households 41.3%
- High income households 33.2%

Council and Wellbeing Plan

Theme 1 - A healthy natural environment and well-planned local areas and townships

Environmental Sustainability

Open spaces and biodiversity (parks, bushland reserves, masterplans)

Access to open space is recognised as important for physical and mental health, it can be used for outdoor recreation, leisure, environmental and cultural benefits, visual amenities, and off-road active transport.

Mornington Peninsula Shire LGA has 3076.1 hectares of open space of this 1104 hectares are managed by Committees of Management and 1972 hectares are owned and managed by the Shire. Open Space makes up 4.23% of the Mornington Peninsula Shire's Local Government Area.

The Shire has 57 sporting/recreation reserves and 264 bushland reserves with 169 playgrounds in public spaces. Mornington Peninsula Shire has two National Parks:

1. Mornington Peninsula National Park and
2. Point Nepean National Park

as well as one State Park, Arthurs Seat State Park within the municipality. The Shire is currently reviewing this data in the Open Space Strategy.

This Local Area has access to a significant section of the Mornington Peninsula National Park (NP). The Park runs from Point Nepean National Park to Cape Schanck. The Blairgowrie section runs from Koonya through to Number 16 Beach. These areas contain many aboriginal middens and other areas of indigenous significance. There is some high-quality vegetation with other areas badly infested with environmental weeds. Although dogs are banned from the NP many people ignore this restriction. The NP is home to echidnas, a small population of southern brown-nosed bandicoots, snakes, and lizards, and possibly a small population of wallabies and kangaroos.

The National Parks on the Mornington Peninsula are some of the most visited in Victoria largely due to their proximity to Melbourne.



Major Reserves (foreshore, recreation, bushland)

Reserve	Location	Related Strategy/Maintenance Group
Stringer Road Reserve	Blairgowrie	Master Plan Stringers Reserve, Friends of Stringers Reserve
Slips Reserve	Blairgowrie	Friends of Slips Reserve
Whitecliffs to Camerons Bight Foreshore Reserve	Blairgowrie	Whitecliffs to Camerons Bight Foreshore Reserve Committee of Management
Roger Penman Reserve	Blairgowrie	2015-2022 Playspace Strategy Complete
EG Ritchie Memorial Flora Reserve	Blairgowrie	Nepean Conservation Group
Sid Baker Reserve	Blairgowrie	Nepean Conservation Group
Dimmicks Bushland Reserve	Blairgowrie	Nepean Conservation Group
David MacFarlan Reserve	Sorrento	MPS – Sporting Reserve
Tuckey Track Reserve	Sorrento	Nepean Conservation Group – Friends of Tuckey Track
Portsea Foreshore Reserve	Portsea	MPS
Portsea Recreation Reserve	Portsea	MPS – Sporting Reserve
Point King Foreshore Reserve	Sorrento	MPS
Park	Location	Maintained By
Mornington Peninsula National Park		Parks Victoria
Point Nepean National Park	Portsea	Parks Victoria
Sorrento Park	Sorrento	MPS
Police Point Shire Park	Portsea	Friends of Police Point. MPS
Beach	Location	Maintained By
Pearses Beach	Blairgowrie Back Beach	Parks Victoria
Dimmicks Beach	Blairgowrie	Parks Victoria
Bridgewater Bay	Blairgowrie	Parks Victoria
Fowlers Beach	Blairgowrie	MPS/Parks Victoria
Montforts Beach	Blairgowrie	MPS/Parks Victoria
Koonyah Ocean Beach	Blairgowrie	Parks Victoria
Sullivan Bay Beach	Sorrento	MPS
Sorrento Ocean Beach	Sorrento	Parks Victoria
Sorrento Front Beach	Sorrento	MPS
Portsea Ocean Beach	Portsea	Parks Victoria
Portsea Surf Beach	Portsea	Parks Victoria
Portsea Beach	Portsea	MPS
Shelly Beach	Portsea	MPS
Point King Beach	Portsea	MPS
Fishermans Beach	Portsea	MPS



Climate Change Resilience

Climate change resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for and respond to hazardous events, trends or disturbances related to changes in our climate. These impacts will disproportionately impact people on low incomes and it is important to consider communities that already facing disadvantage when building climate change resilience.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has been preparing for the potential impacts of climate change for more than a decade. The Shire's approach has been driven by the Sustainable Peninsula Initiative, developed in conjunction with the community in 2001. This initiative ensures that sustainability principles are incorporated into the Shire's operations. Key aspects of the approach have included reducing the Shire's greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and vulnerability to the potential effects of a changing climate (adaptation). The main areas of concern include longer and more severe droughts, increased intensity when it does rain, increases in average temperature, sea-level rise, higher-fire-risk weather and more frequent and intense storms.

In response to these needs, management of the beaches in this Local Area are guided by Coastal and Marine Management Plans such as the Sorrento Coastal and Marine Management Plan, Portsea Coastal and Marine Management Plan and the Whitecliffs to Camerons Bight Foreshore Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan.

Key community concerns have been raised around changing beach profiles and the loss of sand at Portsea Front Beach in particular.

Reliance on or reduction of natural resource use (gas, water electricity)

Main's power is supplied to most properties by different retailers. The electricity distributor for this area is United Energy Distribution and there is an increasing number of property owners who have installed solar panels.

During the years 2019 and 2020, 903 households and businesses in the Local Area installed Small Scale SGU Solar panels. This has an output of 4,496.97 kW (Clean Energy Regulator) battery systems do not appear to be as popular.

Many properties are now connected to reticulated gas in the Blairgowrie area.

Utilities (gas, water, sewerage & electricity)

Most properties are connected to town water supplied by Southeast Water who also supply sewerage services. Historically, many properties used septic tanks, however, these are being phased out in Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie using a pressurised system. Some properties access ground water by installing bores.

The main gas distributor is Australian Gas Networks.

Waste Management

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has a *Wastewater Management Plan 2018-2023* to address the environmental and public health risks associated with wastewater on the peninsula.

Wastewater is the term used to describe liquid waste from toilets, kitchen sinks, showers and basins.

Where there is no sewer available, households must install and maintain their own treatment systems. Wastewater disposal is a significant environmental issue on the Mornington Peninsula as the Shire has the highest number of septic systems of any Victorian Council, leaving over 22,000 properties across the Peninsula without reticulated sewerage. Many of these systems were approved decades ago and are discharging bacteria and other contaminants into groundwater and waterways. (MPS)

Waste and Wastewater make up 10% of the Mornington Peninsula's greenhouse gas emissions.

Municipal Data:

43.4% live in households that collect wastewater.

42.8% of waste from our curb side collections going to landfill compared to 57.2% being recycled or composted.

Well Planned Communities

Affordable Housing

Good quality, accessible and affordable housing reduces stress, toxins, and infectious disease, which leads to improvement in both physical and mental health. People on low to moderate incomes are increasingly unable to find affordable homes or are experiencing housing stress.

Rising house prices and rents, with limited investment in social and affordable housing, have led to an increase in the number of households experiencing housing stress, where housing costs exceed 30% of the total household income.

Ninety six percent of the dwellings in this Local Area are separate houses, with 3.4% being medium density and 0.5% high density.

Area data: (ABS 2021)

57.8% fully owned their home, compared to 28.7% across Greater Melbourne 2021

20.9% purchasing, compared to 35.6% across Greater Melbourne

10.2% renting privately compared to 26.8% across Greater Melbourne

0.1% social housing compared to 2.3% across Greater Melbourne

Portsea Median House Price	\$3,725,000
Sorrento Median House Price	\$2,295,000
Blairgowrie Median House Price	\$1,720,000
Portsea Median House Rental	\$1,300.00 per week
Sorrento Median House Rental	\$970.00 per week
Blairgowrie Median House Rental	\$697.00 per week

Mobility Roads

The main road through Blairgowrie and Sorrento is Point Nepean Road, which is the responsibility of VicRoads (State Government). The next most important road is Melbourne Road running from Dundas Street through to Sorrento, this is a Shire Council responsibility. These roads carry most of the traffic to and from the Southern Peninsula.

Other important Blairgowrie roads are Canterbury Jetty Road, St Johns Wood Road and Hughes Road providing a connection between the two main through roads, the Port Phillip Bay and Bass Strait.

Other important Sorrento roads are St Pauls Road and Ocean Beach Road which provide connection between the two main through roads and connect the two sides of the township.

In Portsea the main road is Point Nepean Road, and the next most utilised road is Hotham Road running from Normanby Road, this is a Shire Council responsibility.

Other important roads in Portsea are Back Beach Road and Franklin Road, which connect the two main through roads and either side of the township

Most of the minor roads north of the Melbourne Road are paved however south of the Melbourne Road there are a significant number of unpaved roads that are maintained by Council. Many residents in these areas wish these roads to remain unpaved. Formal groups (see Community organisations) highlight road maintenance is an issue.



Accessible public and active transport (car parks, bike paths (on and off road), footpaths, bus routes and schedules of services)

Eighty two percent of the Mornington Peninsula's Local Government Area is not serviced by adequate public transport.

The Portsea, Sorrento, Blairgowrie Local Area is currently serviced by two bus runs.

- Portsea to Frankston (788) runs approximately every 45 minutes in the mornings and peak times pm: off peak during the day and evening it reduces to an hourly service, with the last service departing at around 9:50pm from Portsea, or 11.54pm from Frankston station.
- Sorrento to Safety Beach (787) has an Intermittent timetable with varying stops and starts, which is hard for passengers to navigate. This is mainly a local service with some stops at the car ferry.



There is a Ferry Service which runs from Sorrento to Queenscliff. This operate every hour from 7am and the last is at 6pm standard, 7pm peak.

In this local area there are both on road and off-road bike lanes running along the Port Phillip Bay Foreshore.

Due to the location of this Local Area, Taxi's, Ubers and Ride Share services are limited.



Council and Wellbeing Plan

Theme 2 - A robust, innovative, and diverse economy

MP Shire's Gross Regional Product in 2021 was \$8.687 billion, up from \$8.572B in 2020. The Construction industry sector makes the greatest contribution to economic output in the region, which at \$4.1 Bil accounts for 23.03% of total output. With 9,550 jobs representing 15.33% of total employment, it is the Health Care & Social Assistance industry sector that is the region's largest employer. The Mornington Peninsula has an annual economic output of \$17.799 billion.

The top 5 industries and occupations for Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie as listed below.

Top 5 industries: (ABS 2021)

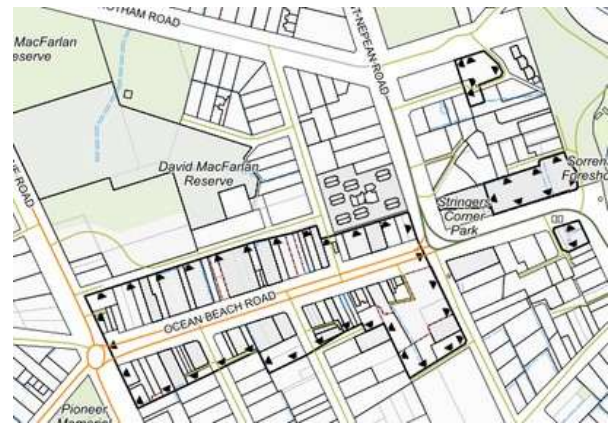
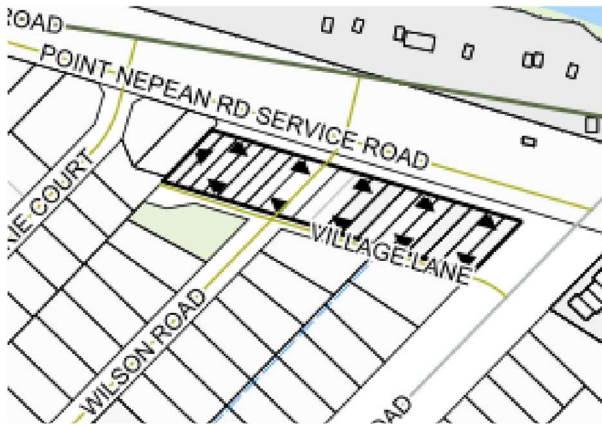
1. Construction (13.8%),
2. Professional and Scientific and Technical Services (12.9%)
3. Accommodation and Food (8.7%)
4. Retail trade (8.3%)
5. Health Care and Social Assistance (8.1%)

Top 5 occupations: (ABS 2021)

1. Professionals (26.4%),
2. Managers (24.6%)
3. Technicians and Trade workers (11.7%),
4. Community and personal service workers (7.6%)
5. Clerical and Administrative workers (10%)

Shops and Retail

Blairgowrie has a modest but generally satisfactory shopping precinct that includes a medical practice, dentist, pharmacy, hairdresser, butcher, small supermarket, coffee shops, cafes, post office milk bar and restaurants as well as gift shops who also sell some clothing. A short distance away is a service station, the Panda Restaurant and Moody's Motel. The nearest major supermarkets are in Sorrento and Rye or further afield at McCrae. There are two Coles and one Woolworths supermarket in Rosebud. There is no Chamber of Commerce for Blairgowrie; so the Blairgowrie Community Action Group represents the business community.



Blairgowrie Shopping Precinct

Sorrento Shopping Precinct

Portsea Shopping Precinct



Economic Sustainability

Local Skilled Workforce

Hiring locally has many benefits for the community, it creates jobs and provides training opportunities that may not have been possible. This helps keep money in the community and strengthens the local economy. The Mornington Peninsula has a large percentage of local workers with 70.6% of the people who work on the Peninsula also living here.

Learning and Skills in the Local Area

Early Years

The first 3 years of a child's life are critically important to their growth, providing the foundation for not only their academic success but their health and wellbeing through their whole lives.

Sorrento is the only township in this area to have Early Years Education available (Sorrento Preschool & Sorrento Community Centre), with the next closest being Rye Preschool or the Rye Community Centre.

Municipal data

- The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) conducts a national assessment every three years to see how children have developed by the time they start school. Over the 3 years between the 2018 and 2021 census the children of Mornington Peninsula have improved, with less developmentally vulnerable, this shows a reduction of 3.3%.
- In 2021 14.9% of children on the Mornington Peninsula were developmentally vulnerable and facing significant challenges in their development. This is lower than the state average of 19.9%.
- Maternal Child Health milestones – 66.8% of children attended a Maternal and Child Health Centre for the 3 1/2 year-olds in comparison to the Victorian milestones of 68.9% School Entrant Health Questionnaire (SEHQ)
- Multiple strengths indicator – MPS has a higher proportion of children that have highly developed strengths such as self-control and prosocial skills at 66% compared to 60.4% across the State (AEDC).
- Eighty seven percent of children in Point Nepean have attended an Early Childhood Education program.

Literacy

Lacking vital literacy can hold a person back at every stage of their life, from doing well at school to gaining employment, to helping their own children learn.

- 93.2% of Year 9 students were achieving national minimum standards in literacy in 2019, similar to state levels of 92.4% (VCAMS)
- 96% of Year 7 students were achieving national minimum standards in literacy in 2019, similar to state levels of 95.7% (VCAMS)
- 99% of Year 5 students were achieving national minimum standards in literacy in 2019, similar to state levels of 95.7% (VCAMS)

Education Levels

There are no Primary Schools in Blairgowrie or Portsea. Primary age children generally go to schools in Sorrento, Sorrento Primary School or St Joseph's Catholic Primary School or Rye Primary School.

The nearest secondary schools are State Government run Rosebud Secondary School or Dromana Secondary College. Dromana Special School provides education for children with additional needs.

There are also private school options located further from the Local Area and accessible by regular school bus services.

Municipal data for Local Area (ABS 2021)

- 30.6% of people over the age of 15 hold a bachelor's degree or Higher
- 12.2% of people over the age of 15 hold an Advanced Diploma or Diploma

- 14.3% of people over the age of 15 hold a Vocational Certification

Chisholm TAFE has a Rosebud Campus offering a range of courses (refer www.chisholm.edu.au/locations/mornington-peninsula for more details regarding course availability).

Generally tertiary university education requires travel to Melbourne or to the Monash University Campus in Frankston highlighting students' dependence on reliable transport and broadband. Blairgowrie is very poorly serviced by public transport and by broadband. The Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station (PNREFS) is an interdisciplinary science research and education facility and the home of the National Centre for Coasts, Environment and Climate (NCCEC) which is located within the Point Nepean National Park.

Youth Engagement

Engagement in employment and education looks at the level of participation by age and sex of the population in the labour market, or full or part-time education. A full time employed, or full-time student would be "Fully engaged", while part-time students may be fully engaged if they are also employed, or partly engaged if they are not working. Engagement in the labour and education market is highly dependent on age. Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie have 71.5% of 15-24 year old's fully engaged in education and/or the workforce. This is slightly less than Greater Melbourne's percentage of 77.4%.

Of the remaining population, 14.4% are Partially Engaged and 3% are listed as Disengaged.

Intergenerational Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is a vital part of a community's development and growth, where the emphasis on learning comes from the understanding that learning takes place over the whole course of a person's life. Formal education contributes to learning but so do the informal settings of home, the workplace, the community and society at large.

University of the Third Age (U3A) Southern Peninsula is a local provider located on the Southern Peninsula that provides education, social interaction and support to people who are generally retired and/or over the age of 55. U3A facilitates classes and programs in townships all over the Southern Peninsula area, in community centres and halls. Encouraging lifelong learning.

The Shire is delighted to support Sorrento Community Centre as one of the 13 Community Houses located across the Mornington Peninsula providing the State Government's Neighbourhood House Coordination Programs. The Shire supports our community

houses as well as the Balnarring and Flinders townships with an annual Community Partnerships subsidy as part of a collaborative partnership with the State Government, Local Government and Community House volunteer Committees of Management.

The Centre provides for Lifelong Learning and important social connections with numerous programs including but not limited to Sorrento Savvys, Chatty Café, Boomerang Bags, Book Clubs, Environment Circle and Social Game Afternoons. Children are engaged through Playgroups, Early Learning Programs and School Holiday Programs.

The Sorrento Community Centre is a local provider of Vocational Education, providing training such as First Aid, Perform CPR and Responsible Serving of Alcohol. The Centre has also developed a new affiliation with Pickleball Victoria, with the attached Stadium listed as a Pickleball sporting venue.

As an Incorporated organisation Sorrento Community Centre is pivotal to the Local Area by providing support to informal groups acting as auspice organisation for groups applying for grants and funding.



Council and Wellbeing Plan

Theme 3 - A Flourishing, Healthy and Connected Community

Mornington Peninsula Shire had an estimated population of 170,390 residents in 2021. Census data showed Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie as a Local Area had an estimated population of 5,640 residents on census night. As mentioned in the introduction to this document, this number is subject to large increases during the holiday period due to 5,171 temporary or unoccupied residences such as Airbnb, Holiday Rental and Holiday Homes. The Local Area's family structure is made up of:

- 4.9% lone persons
- 12.8% couples with children
- 25.5% of the population being older couples (65 years and over) without children.
- Single-parent families make up 3.8% of the Local Area in comparison to Mornington Peninsula Shire's 9.8%.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents make up .05% of the population with just over 36% of the population having a least one long-term health condition.

The Local Area population is significantly high in English only speaking (86.9%) families, with less than 1.1% speaking Italian and 0.3% speaking Greek or German.

Of the 5,640 residents in Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie, 36.2% reported to have at least 1 long term health condition. With the most prevalent being Arthritis (13.2%), Asthma (7.3%) and Heart Disease (6.9%).

Health of the Community

Food Security and Nutrition

Food security ensures that people always have the social, physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meet their food preferences and dietary needs for an active healthy life (UN committee on World Food Security).

Municipal data (VPHS 2020)

- 6.9% of people had run out of money to buy food in the last 12 months, higher than the state average of 5.9% 13.8% worry about food insecurity
- 16.8% consume take-away more than once a week
- 9.7% consume sugar sweetened soft drinks daily
- 56.1% did not meet daily fruit and vegetable recommendations

Accessibility of Health Services (dentists, doctors, clinics, pharmacies)

Blairgowrie has a few General Practitioners (GPs) based at South Coast Medical Centre with branches in Rye and Rosebud. There is no GP's operating out of Portsea, however there is the Sorrento Medical Centre and additional services located in Rosebud.

Sorrento and Blairgowrie both have one pharmacy and alternative services are available in Rye.

Blairgowrie has one dentist and a dental technician preparing and fitting false teeth. Other Dental services are available in Rye.

Physiotherapists are available in several places in Sorrento, Rye and Rosebud

Podiatrist services are available in Rye and Rosebud; however, clinics are all generally heavily booked and it is difficult to get services in a timely manner.

Age Care, Meals on Wheels, Nutritionists, Optometrists are available in Rosebud.

Persons requiring specialist medical services will often need to find transport to Mornington, Frankston or Melbourne.

Self-reported health status, mental health, obesity, and chronic disease

Municipal Data:

- 20% of residents on the Mornington Peninsula sought help for a mental health related problem, which is slightly higher than Victoria at 18% (Vic Population Health Survey 2017)
- 37.8% of women and 19.8% of men reported experiencing doctor diagnosed depression or anxiety, similar to Victoria at 33.6% and 21.0% respectively (Vic Population Health Survey 2017)
- 12.7% have sought professional help for mental health problem in the past 12 months, lower than Victoria at 16.0% (Vic Pop Health Survey 2017)

Additionally, data for young people shows the following prevalence for depressive symptoms for each year level:

- 15.6% for year 6 students
- 24.2% for year 7 students
- 28.7% for year 8 students
- 29.7% for year 9 students

There has been a significant increase of:

- people reporting high or very high psychological stress increasing from 14.8% to 26.2% (Victorian Population Health Survey)
- 23.6% reported low or medium life satisfaction (Vic Population Health Survey 2020)

Access to mental health are available in Blairgowrie and the neighbouring townships. Appointments are available through both online services and in person Psychologists, Psychiatrists and Counsellors.

Community Activities (involvement in sport and recreation, leisure)

When people exercise regularly it has major benefits for their physical and mental health. Exercise helps reduce the risk of noncommunicable health conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer, improves social connection and mental wellbeing (VicHealth).

Municipal data

- 39% are insufficiently physically active (compared to 44% across Victoria)
- 29.3% are overweight but not obese
- 20.7% are obese

There are no Blairgowrie based sporting teams following the demise of the Blairgowrie Tennis Club. Blairgowrie residents need to use club facilities in Rye, Sorrento or Portsea.

Sorrento has 2 football clubs, the Sorrento Football Club and the Sorrento Sharks Football Club. The Sharks also have a Netball team affiliated with them. Pickleball and Tennis Clubs are present in this township, as well as Basketball, Netball and Golf.

Blairgowrie has one oval on the Stringer Road Reserve. This oval is undersize and in poor/fair condition. It is used for junior AFL football training by Sorrento and Rye based clubs and cricket.

The Reserve has two public use tennis courts that are surfaced in asphalt and in fair condition. The tennis courts are free to use and are extensively used throughout the year and over the summer holiday period.

The reserve has significant bushland and is regularly used by walkers and as a leash free area for dogs. The bushland is significantly degraded.

There is a significant lack of sporting facilities for female players across the Local Area, Nepean ward.

There are two formal playgrounds in Blairgowrie - the Penman Reserve located behind the Blairgowrie shopping precinct and the Harry Blyth Playground. The Penman Playground has recently been rehabilitated as part of the Playground Strategy.

Community Safety

Family Violence/Respectful Relationships

Respectful relationships can help you feel connected, supported and safe. They involve trust, honesty and respect and open communication – they take effort and compromise from both people.

Family violence is any threatening, coercive, dominating, or abusive behaviour that occurs between people in family, domestic or intimate relationships. Women are nearly three times as likely as men to experience violence from a current or former partner.

Family violence not only impacts women and their children, with profound impacts on their physical and mental health, but also affects their communities isolating people from social networks, disrupting relationships, drives homelessness and reduces economic outputs.

- 35.3% of females (27.5%) (over 15 years old) did more than 15 hours unpaid domestic work per week compared to 15.5% males (10.4% GM)
- 23% of females provided unpaid childcare to their children or other children (29.5% GM) compared to 18% of males (23.5% GM).
- The Mornington Peninsula data shows that there were 2064 family violence incidents in March 2021 to March 2022, a reduction of 7.2% on the previous year that saw state-wide increases due to the pandemic. The rate per 100,000 people is 1217; lower than the state rate of 1371.4 Crime Statistics Agency of Victoria. (CSV).

Local Area Exposure to Risks (Fire, Flood, etc)

Mornington Peninsula Shire has responsibility for 70 drainage catchments and is responsible for a significant proportion of the drainage network, which includes various assets such as pits, pipes, culverts, open channels, creeks, retarding basins, wetlands, soakage pits, and flood ways. Melbourne Water also has significant responsibilities as they manage major outlets and regional drainage, which includes major riverine outlets and main outfall drains. Responsible management of these assets and collaboration with Melbourne Water is required to ensure that we understand and reduce flood risk and support our communities (Flood & Stormwater Strategy 2022).

Climate change has significant impact on rainfall and sea levels and is, therefore, a significant pressure on managing flood risk within our communities.

Climate change also impacts upon our Fire Prone areas, with increasing temperatures and heat waves making bushfires more likely to occur. Consequently, fire management strategies and works are vital to ensuring community safety and health.

Fire management works aim to reduce fuel hazard and risk to neighbouring properties from potential bushfire and focus on the removal and modification of fine fuels (vegetation thinner than your finger), as these fuels contribute most to the overall fuel hazard of a site and movement of bushfire through a landscape. (F&SS2022)

High Fire Risk Areas 2022



Flood Prone Areas 2022



Perceptions of Safety and Community Concerns

Poor perceptions of safety can reduce the amount that people walk for recreation (Foster et al. 2016) as well as having negative impacts on people’s mental health (Chong et al 2013).

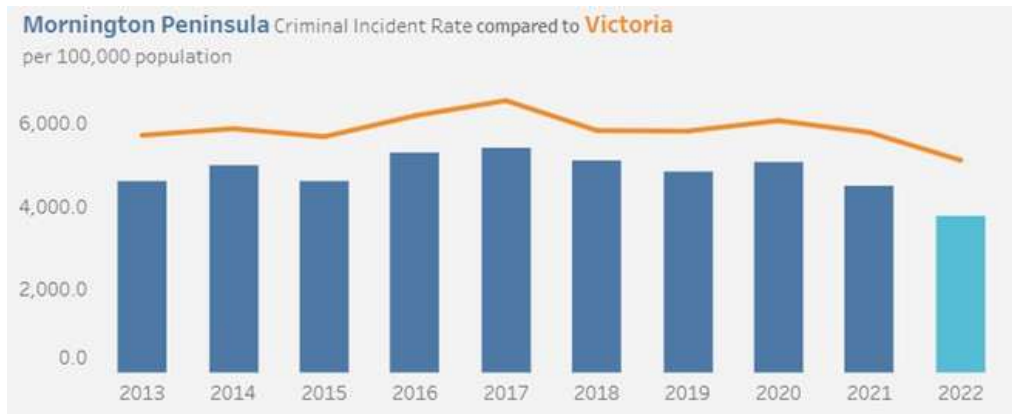
Municipal data:

- 95.8% feel safe walking during the day
- 60.8% feel safe walking at night

Crime Against Property and People

Crime statistics show total criminal incidents in 2022 in Mornington Peninsula Shire's Local Government Area were down 15.7% compared to 2021.

The top 5 offences were breach of family violence order, criminal damage, "other" theft, residential burglary, theft from a motor vehicle (CSV).



Community Strength

Accessible Community Infrastructure

There are several community facilities across the Peninsula including Libraries, Kindergartens, Cemeteries, Community Centres, Maternal Child Health Centres and Community Halls. Major community facilities within the Local Area of Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie are:

- Blairgowrie Community Hall
- Blairgowrie Community Garden
- Stringers Reserve Pavilion
- Nepean Men's Shed (mobile)
- Stringers Reserve Sports Ground
- Senior Citizens Club - Blairgowrie
- Senior Citizens Club Sorrento/Portsea Inc
- Sorrento Community Centre
- Sorrento Health Centre
- Sorrento Preschool
- Watsons Pavilion

Social Inclusion, Community Cohesion and Resilience

Social Inclusion is defined as the process of improving participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights. The Australian Social Inclusion Board defines social inclusion as having the resources, opportunities, and capabilities to:

- Learn (participate in education and training).
- Work (participate in employment, unpaid or voluntary work including family and carer responsibilities).
- Engage (connect with people, use local services and participate in local, cultural, civic and recreational activities); and have a voice (influence decisions that affect them).

Community cohesion reflects a community that 'works towards the wellbeing of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust and offers its members the opportunity of upward mobility' (source: Australian Human Rights Commission 2021).

The connectedness of a community can be described as social capital. This is a term that includes the extent of networks, shared norms and values that underpin or facilitate co-operations within or among groups and the degree to which individuals form close bonds with relations, friends and acquaintances.

Community Resilience is the sustained ability of communities to withstand, adapt to and recover from adversity. Typically, the resilience of a community reflects the extent of social inclusion and cohesion.

Municipal data:

- 32% said "yes, definitely" most people could be trusted (compared to 36.1% across Victoria) (Victorian Public Health Survey VPHS 2020).
- 61.5% said "yes, definitely" multiculturalism makes life better (compared to 63.5% across Victoria). Mornington Peninsula has a higher percentage of people who talk to their friends daily – 42.5% compared to 34% across the state. 95.9% of people had close friends or family that they talked to regularly, similar to the Victorian average of 95.2%. While this percentage is reassuringly high, this still leaves 4.1% without regular contact with close family or friends (VPHS 2020).
- While conducting consultation for the Gender Equality Strategy in 2019, the findings to the question "All men and women are respected equally in our community" found that 50% of the responders disagreed with this statement while only 13% agreed.

Mental Health and Wellbeing – Life satisfaction

23.6% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Low or medium (0-6) VS. Victoria 22.3%

51.5% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said High (7-8) VS. Victoria 49.6%

24.9% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Very high (9-10) VS. Victoria 26.9%

Feelings of Trust (Most people could be trusted)

32.0% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Yes, Definitely VS. Victoria 36.1%

55.6% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Sometimes VS. Victoria 47.7%

11.2% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Never, or not often VS. Victoria 14.2%

Tolerance of Diversity (Multiculturalism makes life in your area better)

61.5% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Yes Definitely VS. Victoria 63.5%

23.5% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Sometimes VS. Victoria 23.5%

6.6% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Never, or not often VS. Victoria 6.7%

5.7% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Not Applicable VS. Victoria 2.7%

Feelings of being valued by society

48.9% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Yes, Definitely VS. Victoria 51.6%

33.3% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Sometimes VS. Victoria 34.2%

16.6% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Never, or not often VS. Victoria 11.0%

Do you have close friends or family whom you talk to regularly?

95.9% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Yes VS. Victoria 95.2%

4.1% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said No VS. Victoria 4.7%

How often do you talk to your friends?

42.5% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Every day VS. Victoria 34.0%

41.8% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said A few times a week VS. Victoria 45.5%

13.7% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said A few times a month VS. Victoria 15.4%

How often do you talk to your family?

28.3% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Every day VS. Victoria 28.4%

46.1% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said A few times a week VS. Victoria 47.3%

19.2% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said A few times a month VS. Victoria 18.3%

3.4% of people in the Mornington Peninsula said Less than monthly VS. Victoria 3.0%

Civic Participation

Voter turnout is an indicator of civic participation. During the most recent election, the Nepean Ward had a voter participation rate of 77.47%. Boundaries of the Nepean Ward are consistent with Local Area boundaries.

Community Leadership and Volunteering

Community Leadership in local areas empowers the mobilisation of local resources through accepted governance mechanisms to achieve common goals which builds community. Generally individual leaders are seen as ‘change agents’ in communities.

Volunteering is a strong indication of community cohesion. Local, placed-based and community-led approaches are universally recognised as essential to meeting the myriad of social, economic, environmental and health challenges being faced by local communities *“prioritising a functional, appropriate, and inclusive volunteering infrastructure is needed to offer opportunities to all citizens to become agents of change and drivers of their own development – United Nations”*. Structural barriers in the volunteer sector result in an underrepresentation of diverse communities in formal volunteering, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities, First Nation communities, people from low socio-economic backgrounds and people with disabilities. Barriers include cost of living increases, inaccessible bureaucratic processes and discrimination.

While the rate for volunteering overall has been declining over the past 10 years (exacerbated by the pandemic) resulting in the loss of over 4,000 formal volunteers, the Mornington Peninsula rate of volunteering was higher than the Greater Melbourne average of 14.8% compared to 12.1% in 2021. The number of people who volunteer in 2021 is 20,886 (14.8%) in comparison to 25,660 (20%) in 2016. However, defying this trend the rate of volunteering for the Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie Local Area was 20%.

Local Area Data:

- 20.7% of residents in this Local Area volunteer.
- The volunteer in-kind hourly value is \$46.87* (Volunteering Victoria 2022)

Volunteer Groups in the Local Area include:

Volunteer/Community Group	Total Volunteers/Membership
Sorrento Chamber of Commerce	8
Sorrento Community Centre	16
Sorrento Rotary	
Lion's Club	23
Point Nepean Men's Shed	172
Nepean Ratepayers Association	6
Nepean Conservation Group	350
Nepean Historical Society	
Friends Slips Reserve	8
Rosebud Rye Rotary	
Friends of Stringers Rd Reserve	6
Probus	
Walking Groups	
Spray Point Conservation Group	8
Blairgowrie Community Action Group is representing the ratepayers of Blairgowrie plus locally based businesses.	
Blairgowrie Private Streets Maintenance Association	
Blairgowrie Community Garden	140
Blairgowrie/Tootgarook Senior Citizens Group	330

Arts and Culture

Vibrant cultural experiences enrich lives; celebrating our community identity, history and strengthening our connection to place and each other.

In the Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie Local Area there are galleries, museums, festivals and events celebrating arts and culture, including but not limited to:

- Sorrento Art Show
- Sorrento Writers Festival
- & Gallery Australia
- Manyung Gallery
- Agean Designs Gallery
- Police Point Artist in Residency
- Sorrento Museum
- Point Nepean National Park - Quarantine Station & Fort Nepean
- Nepean Historical Society Inc

There is also support and training available to the Mornington Peninsula Arts community with Council's Community Investment Funding offering Creative Grants up to \$5K as well as Performing Arts Development Grants up to \$30K, or over requiring a presentation to a panel. The Creators Network, which provides free creative networking events.

State Government & Council Master Plans and Strategies in Blairgowrie

1. Improving the Mornington Peninsula National Park (Mornington Peninsula National Park Management Plan)
2. Master Plan for the Stringer Reserve (Stringers Road Master Plan)
 - a Tennis courts
 - b Basketball and net ball practice facilities
 - c Playground
 - d Bushland and revegetation
 - e Oval
 - f Change rooms
3. Hughes Road Walking track (Pedestrian Access Strategy)
4. Penman Reserve Playground upgrade (Playspace Strategy)
5. Cycling and Active Transport (Pedestrian Access Strategy) (Ride Safe Strategy)
6. Traffic Management and Bicycle Lanes (Ride Safe Strategy)
7. Pedestrian access along Ocean Road (Pedestrian Access Strategy)
8. Upgrade of the footpath and bicycle lanes along Melbourne Road from Tiber Street to Hughes Road. (Pedestrian Access Strategy) (Ride Safe Strategy)
9. Footpath for Canterbury Road (Footpath Construction Strategy) (Pedestrian Access Strategy)
10. St Johns Wood Road Nature reserve and walking track (Pedestrian Access Strategy)

Suggested and Community Led Projects

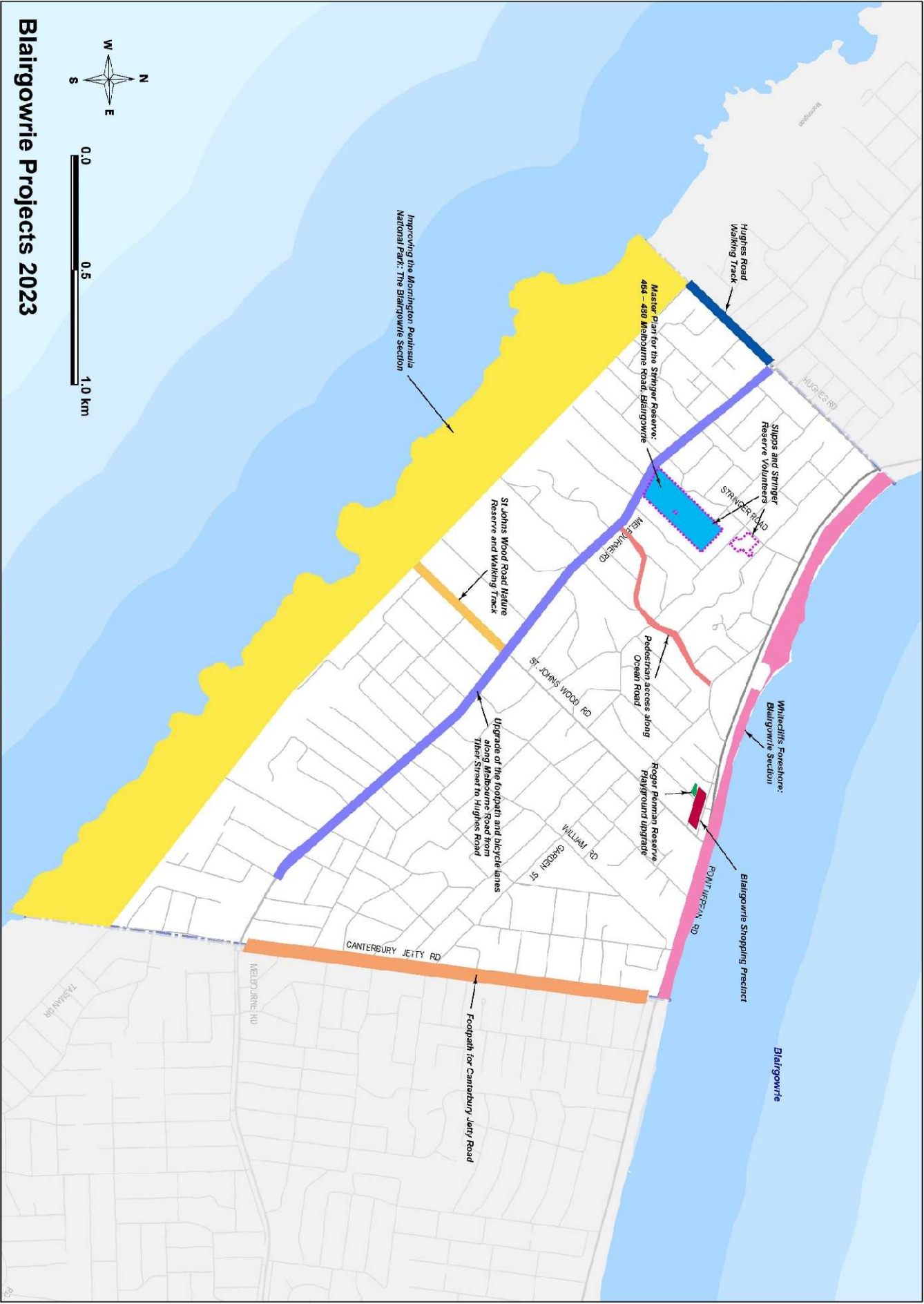
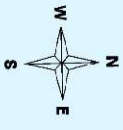
1. Whitecliffs Foreshore
2. Fire Prevention
3. Assessment of Public land in Blairgowrie
4. Blairgowrie Arts Project
5. Graffiti, Vandalism and Dumping
6. Slips and Stringer Reserve Volunteers
7. Pavilion upgrade at Stringers Reserve
8. Rebel Street BMX track and bushland reserve
9. Roadside vegetation rehabilitation

Next Steps for Blairgowrie:

Following on from our Community Forum on 5 June 2023, the following steps have been identified for the township of Blairgowrie.

- Feedback emailed through to the residents that left their email addresses on the evening and also the Blairgowrie Community Action Group, capturing the input and responses from the night.
- Youth Engagement Project in Blairgowrie.
- Broader community consultation on Suggested and Community Led Projects for Blairgowrie.
- Development of an interactive webpage (Shire's Community Development Team)

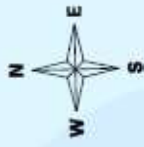
Blairgowrie Projects 2023





Port Phillip Bay

Bass Strait



Point Nepean National Park

London Bridge Rd

Back Beach Rd

Portsea

Point Nepean Rd

Hotham Rd

Sorrento

Blairgowrie

Melbourne Rd

St Johns Wood Rd

Canterbury Jentry Rd

Pines Rd

Rye

Point Nepean National Park

Mornington Peninsula National Park