

Dhurringile Estate Options Assessment

Prepared by Urban Enterprise for: Greater Shepparton City Council

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www.urbanenterprise.com.au

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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Part A. Background

1. Introduction

1.1. Project Background

Greater Shepparton Council (Council) have engaged Urban Enterprise to prepare an options assessment for Dhurringile Estate.

The purpose of the options assessment is to assess potential uses for Dhurringile and the appetite for Council to purchase the site.

This study is designed to equip Council with further knowledge about the site and provide detail on the strategic opportunities that exist with the sites purchase that can benefit the community.

This report includes the following:

- Overview of the site and history;
- Overview of the site's assets;
- Regional context;
- Tourism context;
- Overview of potential uses and opportunities;
- Options assessment; and
- Conclusions and recommendations.

1.2. Current Situation

In 2024, the Victorian State Government announced the closure of two prisons, including Port Phillip Prison in Truganina and Dhurringile Prison in Tatura, due to declining low security prison population since the pandemic.

As such, the State Government is looking to sell the facility, with first right of refusal going to the Local Government.

As part of first right of refusal the purchase by Council should be linked to the future use of the site for community use. The following advice is provided by the Department of Treasury with regard to this:

“Government’s intention in imposing the community purposes restriction for a sale of surplus government property to Local Government, State Government agencies and Federal Government agencies is to ensure that future use of a property provides a beneficial gain to the community, and to also ensure that no commercial profit is made from that use.”



2. Subject Site

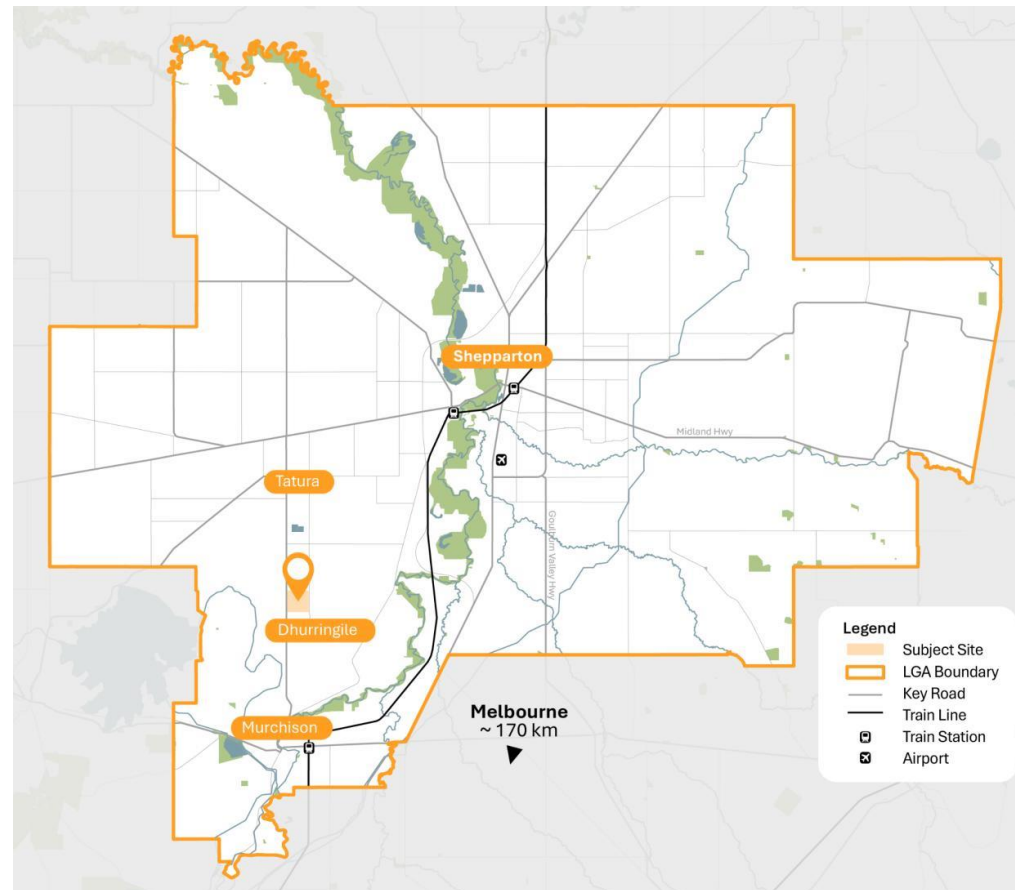
2.1. Site Location

The subject site is located in Dhurringile, a small locality within the Greater Shepparton City Council area, approximately 10 minutes north of Murchison and 10 minutes south of Tatura.

The subject site is located a 2.5 hours' drive from Melbourne, 25 minutes from Shepparton and 45 minutes from Seymour, making it a highly accessible location to Melbourne's metropolitan market and two regional cities.

Its proximity to Shepparton affords the subject site with favourable access to infrastructure, including road, air and rail transport. This includes Shepparton Aerodrome and Shepparton Railway Station.

Figure 1. Subject Site Location Context



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2025.

2.2. About the Site

The site occupies an area of approximately 259 hectares and is bordered by Murchison-Tatura Road to the west, Baulch Road to the south, Kiota Road to the north and Dhurringile Road to the East. Primary access to the site is via Murchison-Tatura Road.

Under the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme, the property is currently zoned Farming Zone (FZ) with a selection of overlays including Land Subject to Inundation (LSIO), Public Acquisition (PAO), Floodway (FO), Heritage (HO) and Specific Controls (SCO).

Around 70% of the site is used for farmland, with the remaining 30% having a significant number of built assets that were used for prison purposes.

The site is serviced by reticulated water, sewer and power suitable for high-capacity use. The farmland has a modern irrigation system with water rights.



The built assets have been maintained well. All but the historic mansion, stables and farm administration have been built after 1990. Many of the built assets are in good condition and adaptable to other uses.

Figure 2. Subject Site Boundary



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2025.

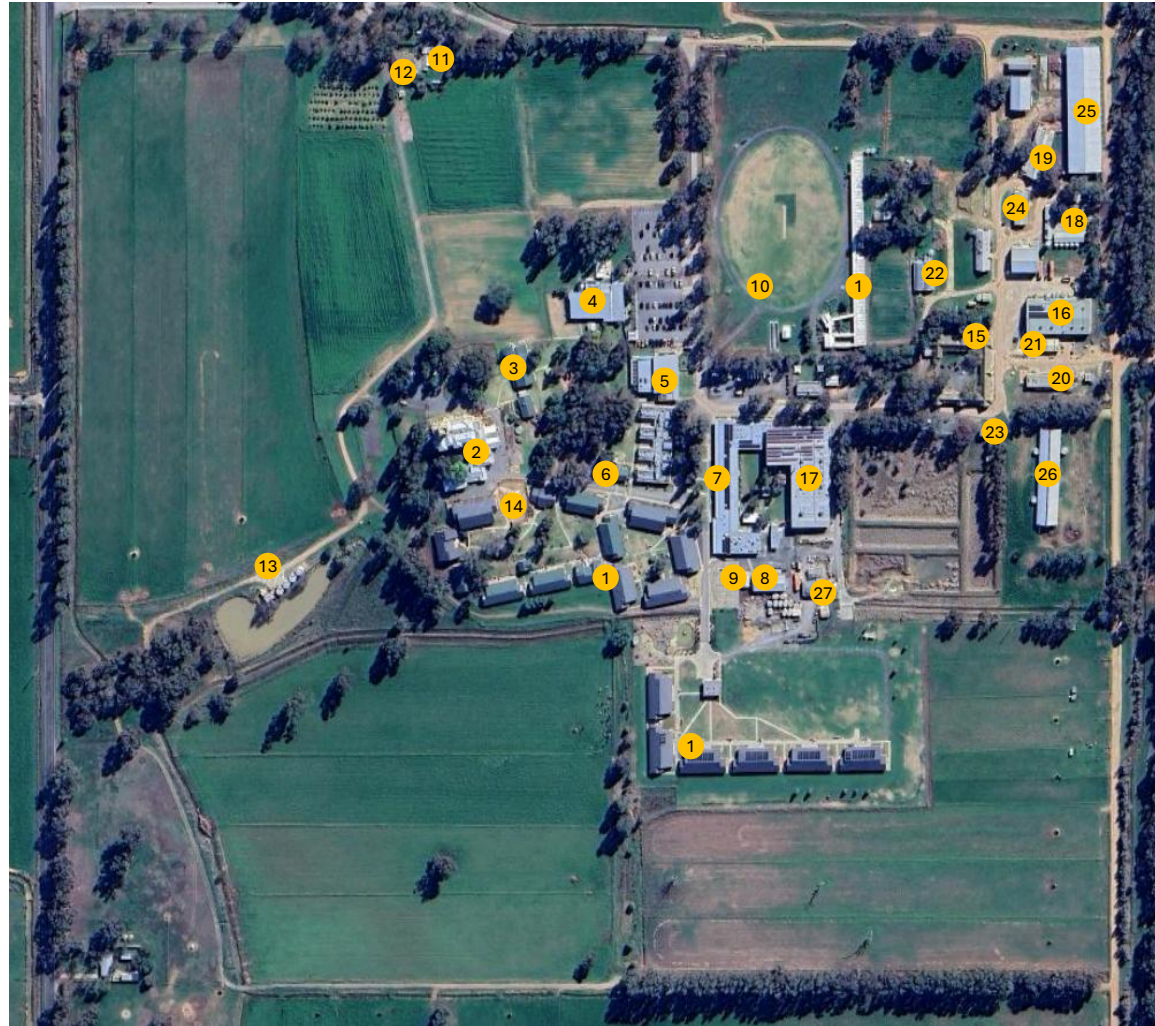
2.3. Site Features

The main facilities are located in the western central area of the site, in close proximity to Murchison-Tatura Road. The remaining area is farmland.

Figure 3 shows an aerial image of the main facilities on site, including:

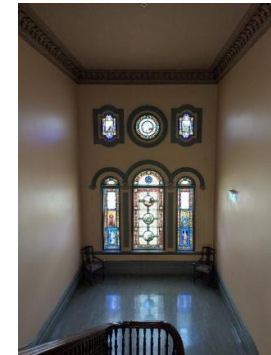
1. Self-contained Units (Former Prisoner Accommodation)
2. Dhurringile Mansion
3. Multipurpose building
4. Visits Centre
5. Gatehouse
6. Myumila Centre (PIU & Supervisors)
7. Administration Building (Laundry, Kitchen, Education/Library, Programs, Medical Centre, Reception)
8. Gymnasium
9. Music Room
10. Recreation/Oval
11. Old Dog Squad House
12. Dairy Supervisor's Residence
13. Fire Pump Shed & Storage Tanks
14. Generator/Services Area
15. Farm Administration
16. Wooden Products
17. Metal Fabrication
18. Dairy
19. Calving Shed
20. Farm Agriculture Workshop
21. Kindling Shed
22. Horticulture
23. Fuel Depot
24. Tractor Shed
25. Hay Storage Shed
26. Main Cattle Feed Lot
27. Maintenance Shed

Figure 3. Subject Site Features



Source: Compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2025.

2.4. Site Images



2.4. Site Images (Cont'd)



2.4. Site Images (Cont'd)



2.5. Overview of Key Assets

Key assets of Dhurringile that have potential for reuse/repurposing are included below.

Dhurringile mansion, stable and farm administration.

These heritage sites present opportunities for reuse as tourism assets. They are protected heritage assets and may be suitable for visitor accommodation, arts, culture, events spaces. Significant cost would be required to refurbish these sites for tourism uses, with estimates of base refurbishment of the mansion estimated at \$3 million.

Prison administration, dining halls, multipurpose buildings, kitchens and visitor facilities

There are a collection of large administration, dining halls and visitor facilities that are generally in good condition that are adaptable to community and events spaces including meeting rooms, indoor conferencing and food venues. These would support events uses on the site.

Former prison accommodation

There is former prison accommodation that is mostly in good condition that are adaptable to visitor accommodation or potentially worker housing. These facilities including 42 self contained units with multiple bedrooms, kitchens, lounge spaces and bathrooms.

The higher security prison accommodation would have more limited uses than the lower security houses.

Large sheds

There are a number of large sheds that were utilised for trades on site that are in very good condition and highly adaptable to other uses including small scale agritourism, manufacturing, farm uses or events spaces.

Training facilities

Training facilities are located on the site which include classrooms and trade training facilities. These may be useful for potential uses including school camps or meeting rooms.



Historic farm administration buildings

2.6. History of Dhurringile

Dhurringile was constructed by James Winter in 1877, consisting of a two-storey brick residence, gatehouse, brick stables and a timber shearing shed. The Winter family arrived in Australia from Scotland in 1841, settling near Ballarat. The discovery of gold on their property transformed the Winter family's lives and led to significant investment in large pastoral areas throughout northern Victoria.

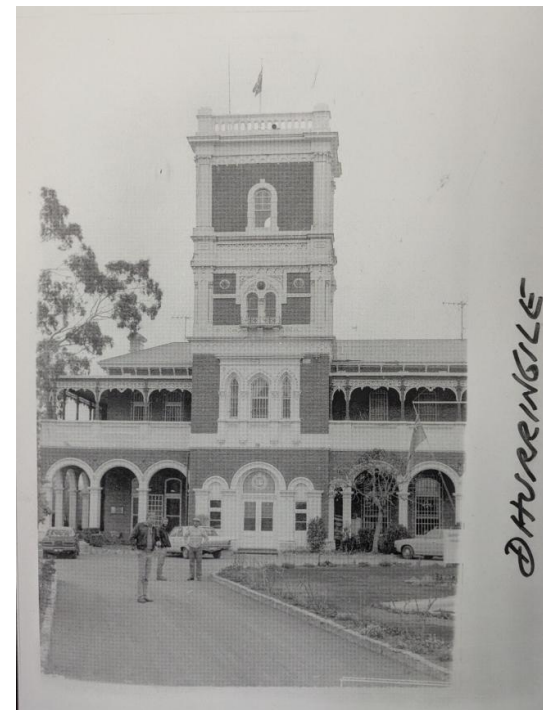
After the great Goulburn Flood of 1870 washed away James Winter's original wooden homestead, Winter selected a site away from the river for the construction of a large new towered brick mansion which he named Dhurringile. The name was taken from an Aboriginal word meaning "crouching emu." Construction lasted three years and cost £30,000. In addition to the homestead, the site contained extensive stabling, a woolshed, gas works which powered the mansion, and a village of various buildings. Winter died in 1885, and ownership of Dhurringile stayed within the family until 1907, passing through several hands until it was purchased by Vincent Vernon Hart in December 1925.

Dhurringile remained unoccupied throughout Hart's ownership until the Commonwealth Government negotiated to rent the property for use as an internment camp for German and Italian nationals. Internees were held at Dhurringile while waiting for transfer to other camps in 1940. The site was then used as a Prisoner of War Camp in 1941 for Germans captured in the Middle East. In July 1945, all German prisoners were transferred elsewhere, and the site was cleared of all military buildings.

In 1947, the site was purchased for £3,150 by the Presbyterian Church to house migrant boys from the United Kingdom whose fathers had died during World War II. At the time, the mansion was in decaying condition and required substantial repairs. The Dhurringile Rural Training Farm opened on 13 June 1951 with the intention of training resident youth in farming methods to prepare them for adult employment. The Rural Training Farm remained open despite operational and financial challenges until its closure in 1964.

The Victorian Government Penal Department then purchased Dhurringile and 116 acres of land in March 1965 for use in the rehabilitation of alcoholic prisoners. Prisoners provided labour for extensive repair and alteration works at the mansion. The site operated as a minimum-security prison under the name of H.M. Prison Dhurringile until August 2024. In recent times, the mansion itself did not house any prisoners and underwent restoration.

Today, Dhurringile houses 68 rooms and sits on a total of 259 hectares. It is significant as one of Victoria's grandest homesteads and as a prominent example of Victorian Italianate architecture. The mansion is an early demonstration of the red face brick aesthetic which arose in response to the predominant use of stucco in previous decades. Dhurringile and its outbuildings are of historical significance as an example of a substantial homestead built on the proceeds of gold discovery and consequent pastoral wealth. Its historical and social significance to Victoria is further reinforced by the multitude of uses in later decades.



Dhurringile is a highly significant heritage asset that reflects post European settlement farming in Victoria. The site name is taken from an aboriginal word meaning crouching emu. Furthermore, the site reflects the role of Tatura and Murchison in housing WW2 prisoners of war and internments. There is opportunity for the site to be a heritage destination with interpretation of first nations, early European settlement and world war two history.

3. Regional Context

3.1. City of Greater Shepparton

The City of Greater Shepparton is strategically located around 190 kilometres north of the Melbourne CBD, on the banks of the Goulburn River and at the intersection of the Midland and Goulburn Valley Highways. The municipality is located within Victoria's Goulburn Region, which incorporates the Greater Shepparton, Mitchell Shire, Murrindindi Shire and Strathbogie Shire. The region is often referred to as the 'food bowl of Australia', characterised by fertile soils, mild climate and world class irrigation system. Shepparton is the largest city in the region and acts as the primary location for services and amenity for the surrounding municipalities, including social economic and community services such as employments, education, health, retail and recreation.

There are a number of smaller townships within Greater Shepparton that play different roles, including Mooroopna, Tatura, Murchison, Merigum and Dookie.

Table 1 shows a snapshot of population projections for the City of Greater Shepparton between 2021 and 2046. The City of Greater Shepparton is projected to observe strong population growth (19.69%) over the 25-year period. This represents an increase of 11,356 people for a projected total population of 69,016. This growth will be largely driven by population expansion in the Kialla Urban Area as well as the Shepparton Urban Area. Kialla is projected to experience a 52.78% increase in its population along with an average annual growth rate of 1.71%.

Dhurringile is in the south of the Council area a small rural area and is likely to see the smallest population growth to 2046. This is likely due to the fact that there are limited housing options available, few amenities or services and no major employers.

Dhurringile Prison was a significant employer in the region and the loss of the prison has resulted in significant economic impact and loss of jobs.

Table 1: City of Greater Shepparton Population Projections Snapshot

Small Area	2021	2046	Total Change (No.)	Total Change (%)	Average Annual Growth Rate
Shepparton Urban Area	34,270	39,323	5,053	14.74%	0.55%
Mooroopna	8,311	9,508	1,197	14.40%	0.54%
Kialla Urban	7,495	11,451	3,956	52.78%	1.71%
Tatura	4,926	5,977	1,051	21.34%	0.78%
Rural South	2,658	2,757	99	3.72%	0.15%
Total	57,660	69,016	11,356	19.69%	0.72%

Source: Forecast.id City of Greater Shepparton Population Forecast, 2024.

3.2. Strategic Context

Table two provides the overarching strategic direction for the Hume Region and Greater Shepparton through the regional growth plan and Council Plan. Both plans highlight a core focus on economic development and promoting a diverse economy. The Council Plan highlights the importance of promoting agriculture and development of Shepparton as a sports and events centre. Dhurringile has potential to fulfil these two strategic directions.

Table 2: Strategic Context – Overarching Strategies

Report	Relevant Objectives	Points Relevant to Site/Future
Hume Regional Growth Plan, Victorian State Government, 2014 Provides a regional approach to land use planning in the Hume Region, which includes Greater Shepparton. Identifies opportunities to encourage and accommodate growth and to manage change in the region over the next 30 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect, maintain and enhance tourism assets. • Build on existing business and industry and attract new investment. • Support the protection of strategic farmland. • Support changing farm sizes, methods, strategies and land uses. • Maintain and enhance infrastructure supporting rural industry. • Maintain and enhance cultural heritage assets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major urban growth and development will be focussed in Shepparton, including Mooroopna and Kialla. • The Goulburn Valley is part of the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District, which is a significant agricultural area and is expected to continue to deliver a significant proportion of Victoria's agricultural product. • Further planning is needed for new and upgraded social infrastructure, including sport and recreation facilities. • A location east of Shepparton has been identified as a preferred location for the potential high-speed rail system between Melbourne and Sydney. This would enhance Shepparton's regional role and growth potential.
Council Plan 2021-2025, Greater Shepparton City Council, 2021 Goulburn Region Destination Management Plan 2024-2029, Greater Shepparton City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Strathbogie Shire Council, 2024 A plan to grow the visitor economy of the Goulburn Region. Aims to embed a sustainable governance framework that will sport strong advocacy to government. Seeks to harness the strengths of the region to enable the growth of the destination, increase investment and deliver economic and social benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant and diverse economy. Drive the visitor economy by growing visitor experiences and major events that provide employment and other opportunities to the community. • Economic development supported by agriculture and a range of industries. • Develop Shepparton Sports and Events Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to showcase the attributes of the region to encourage new investment and expand existing business.

4. Tourism Context

4.1. Visitation Overview

For the financial year 2023/24, the annual visitation to Greater Shepparton was 1.4 million, including 964,888 day trip visitors (67%), 465,957 overnight visitors (32%) and 13,210 international visitors (1%).

The Greater Shepparton tourism region is a diverse destination characterised by its rich agricultural heritage, vibrant cultural events, and significant natural assets, including the Goulburn River and surrounding wetlands. Key visitor attractions include art and cultural sites, such as the Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) and MOVE Museum, alongside outdoor recreation opportunities in parks and reserves.

4.2. Visitor Profile

Purpose of Visit

Visitors to Greater Shepparton are primarily visiting for one of two reasons, for holiday and leisure purposes (27%) and visiting their friends and relatives (VFR) (32%). There are a large percentage of business visitors (28%) and a significant number (13%) of those who are visiting for other purpose, including medical appointments and professional services. The leading activities undertaken by visitors are dining out (41%), visiting friends and relatives (29%), pubs clubs and discos (23%) and other (21%) which includes medical appointments and administrative activities.

Visitor Spend

Day trip visitors currently spend an average of \$184, whilst domestic overnight visitors spend an average of \$329. Through the introduction of new visitor experiences, there is opportunity to increase length of stay and spend in the region.

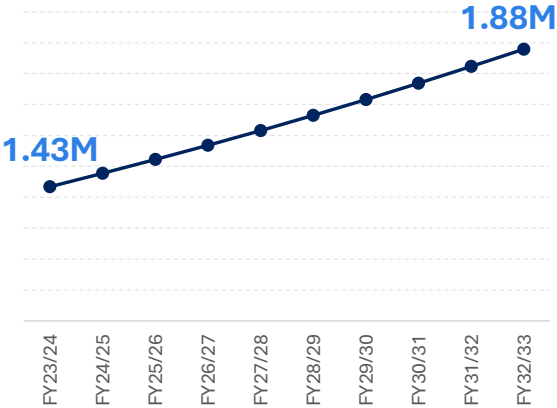
Visitor Origin

Visitors to Greater Shepparton are predominantly visiting from the Central Murray region (29%), which incorporates the LGAs of Moira and Campaspe. This localised audience is likely to make up a large proportion of visiting friends and relatives. There is also a significant share of visitors from Melbourne (27%). This is likely to be overnight visitors seeking a regional experience and may include a large proportion of business visitors. Other visitors are from the regions of Goulburn (9%), Geelong and the Bellarine (8%) and Bendigo Loddon (6%). This visitor origin information demonstrates that new visitor product needs to appeal to both day trip visitors and overnight visitors.

4.3. Visitor Projections

Visitation projections for Greater Shepparton will see an additional 444,971 visitors over the next 10 years, with total visitation expected to reach 1.88 million by 2033. Figure 4 provides forecast visitation for Greater Shepparton. This is based on Tourism Research Australia data for the financial years 2023/24 to 2032/33. The scenario presented is based on the midpoint of a number of scenarios. Forecast growth of visitation does not consider macro-economic impacts, including cost of living pressures impacting holiday and leisure travel. Introducing new products to the visitor experience in Greater Shepparton may impact the forecast and influence higher and faster growth in visitation and propensity for increased spend.

Figure 4: Visitation Projections



Source: Visitor projections based on TRA NVS data for the financial years 2023 to 2033.

4.4. Visitor Target Markets

Greater Shepparton attracts a consistent type of visitor, primarily day trip visitors (67%) who are predominantly visiting for the purpose of holiday and leisure (40%) or VFR (18%).

Drawing insights from the Helix Personas Profiling Tool data by Roy Morgan Research and supported by Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) funding, the Roy Morgan Helix Personas are a psychographic consumer segmentation and data integration tool to classify the Australian population into 54 unique personas, grouped into 6 communities.

The Helix Personas profiling segmentation has been applied to the Goulburn tourism region. The top four domestic daytrip personas in the Goulburn region are Quiet Home Life (6.8%), House Proud (5.9%), Home Improvers (5.8%) and Cautious Conservatives (5.6%). The top three domestic overnight personas are Lifestyle seekers (4.7%), Home Improvers (4.2%), Home entertainment (4.1%).

There is two common visitor audience categories for these personas, hearth and home and fair go, both middle-class Australian cohorts with the propensity to travel domestically.

The personas demonstrate that the visitors coming to the region are from a low socio-economic cohort and have limited disposable income (as in indicated in table 2). This impacts their decision to visit attractions based on price point. These target markets are important to consider when determining entry fees and pricing in retail and food outlets.

Table 3: Visitor Persona Overview

Target Market	Hearth and Home	Fair Go	Doing fine	Aspirationalists
Overview	Closest to the average Australian, life revolves around the home for these contented Australians who embrace conventional family life. Perennial home improvers, they see their homes as an expression of their status and achievements.	Struggling to make ends meet, looking for a better deal in life, making the best of things or simply pessimistic, cynical and likely to feel they get a raw deal out of life; the Fair Go community are lower income Australians.	Modest but contented, people in the Doing Fine Community are happily making their way through life and value simple pleasures. Price sensitive and light spenders, they take a pragmatic approach to what they buy.	Are hard at work building the life of their dreams. Whether they are young families or young single and couples, these ambitious, culturally diverse, up and coming Australians share the same motivations – they are status conscious and committed to creating a successful future.
Preferred type of visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daytrip • Overnight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daytrip • Overnight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daytrip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day trip
Proportion of the Australian market	24.7%	16.5%	11.8%	11.3%
Average household income	\$89,000	\$57,000	\$66,000	\$100,000

Source: Roy Morgan Helix Personas.

4.5. Tourism Product

Greater Shepparton's tourism product strengths are in sport and recreation, arts and culture, food and drink, with history/heritage and nature-based attractions.

Sport & Recreation

Greater Shepparton is recognised as one of regional Victoria's leading sport and recreation destinations and is attributed to the high level of community participation across a range of sporting activities. Some of the leading sporting activities include Shepparton Rodeo, Big V Basketball various Golf Tournaments, cycling events and hockey championships.

Arts & Culture

Shepparton has a small number of cultural attractions including:

- MOVE - Shepparton Car Museum
- Shepparton Art Museum (SAM)
- Kaiela Arts
- Moooving Art Exhibition
- Shepparton Heritage Centre
- Bangerang Cultural Centre

These attractions are supported by public art and street mural, silo art and a range of cultural events such as the Shepparton Festival and Converge on the Goulburn.

Food & Drink

A region with a strong agricultural sector, Greater Shepparton is recognised as a 'food bowl' destination. There is a growing number of high-quality and noteworthy food and beverage establishments in Greater Shepparton. Popular and well-visited restaurants and cafes include the Teller Collective, Little Lipari Ristorante, Cellar 47 Restaurant and Wine Bar, Noble Monks, Fryers Street Food Store, the Last Straw Café, Jetjas Café, Lemon Tree Café and Shepparton Brewery.

Greater Shepparton is also home to farm gate, winery and agri-tourism attractions that capitalise on the region's brand as the food-growing capital of Victoria. Attractions such as Chocolate Apple Factory, Longleat Estate, Monichino Wines and Tallis Wines.

Nature-based Attractions

The Greater Shepparton area features several significant natural attractions, including the Goulburn River, which serves as a central natural asset for the region. The river supports a range of recreational activities such as fishing, kayaking, and walking. Surrounding the river are wetlands, reserves, and parks, such as the Cussen Park wetlands in Tatura and the Shepparton Regional Park, which provide important habitats for wildlife and opportunities for passive recreation.



Should Dhurringile be developed as a visitor and events destination, it would add a significant new visitor destination product in the region. Visitor projections show an increase of 400,000 visitors to Greater Shepparton over the next 10 years demonstrating a growing market for Dhurringile. Potential uses at Dhurringile could add to the product strengths of Greater Shepparton through sports and recreation events (equine), arts and culture and food and drink. There is opportunity for Dhurringile to connect a number of these uses in one location to create a destination that has scale.

Part B: Potential Uses

5. Potential Uses Overview

5.1. Introduction

This section provides an overview of potential uses that may be considered for Dhurringile. These have been identified through discussions with Council personnel and through Urban Enterprises knowledge of the region and experience in economic development and tourism.

Uses considered in this paper include:

- Equine
- Visitor accommodation
- Aerodrome
- Arts, culture and food
- Agriculture and agritourism
- Education
- Worker housing
- Events

There may be other uses that could be explored for the site, if further detailed research were undertaken. This list although not exhaustive presents uses that are strategic to Greater Shepparton's needs and potentially align to the site's attributes.

It is envisaged that first nations groups and businesses would be offered opportunities to collocate within the precinct. This may be in relation to arts, culture and food, agriculture and education.



Historic Shed

6. Equine

6.1. Overview

Equine has a strong presence in Greater Shepparton and the broader Goulburn Valley region. It is considered a primary tourism strength due to the significant number of recreational equestrian and racing events held in the Council area. Goulburn Valley region is Victoria's leading breeding, training and racing region for both thoroughbred and harness. There are numerous recreational clubs that operate in Greater Shepparton and the broader Goulburn Valley region, catering to a range of equestrian disciplines, age groups and abilities. These groups typically conduct multiple events per annum attracting a wide-range of visitors, across Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia.

Tatura Park is a boutique and highly regarded venue in the equestrian community. Tatura Park is the most utilised equestrian venue in Greater Shepparton, highlighted by the regular events and clinics held throughout the year. Tatura Park serves a particular segment of the event market, typically accommodating local, regional and smaller state events that attract between 100 and 1,000 attendees.

Key Data

- Around **50 events** are held at Tatura Park generating a total economic output in the order of **\$7.9m**, adding **\$3.7m** to the economy, and supporting **63 (FTE) jobs**. (Source: Tatura Park Business Plan 2019-2021, Greater Shepparton City Council, October 2018)
- **73,915** estimated participants in equestrian (FY 2022/23), approximately 31% of total participation in Australia. (Source: AusPlay, 2025)
- **4,786** Victorian members of Equestrian Australia (FY 2022/23), approximately 21% of total memberships in Australia. (Source: Equestrian Australia, Annual Report 2022-23)
- Tatura Park is historically a break even facility where the costs to operate the facility are covered by the revenue generated from events.

6.2. Strategic Context

Local

Tatura Park Business Plan 2019 -2021

Tatura Park Business Plan considered improvements to the management, operation and financial position over the 3-year period. Tatura Park is located approximately 20 km west of Shepparton's CBD, and is accessible via the Midland Highway and is the most utilised venue for equestrian related activity in the Council area. The action plan identified key capital works, refined fees and charges, streamlining of uses on site and development of a marketing strategy. It should be noted that the business plan was due for implementation over the pandemic.

Goulburn Valley Harness & Greyhound Racing Precinct Feasibility Study & Masterplan

The Goulburn Valley Harness & Greyhound Racing Precinct Feasibility Study & Masterplan was prepared in 2016. The report was prepared to guide the future development of the Goulburn Valley Harness and Greyhound Precinct and surrounding investigation area. Some opportunities identified in the report, as relevant to this project, included:

- Opportunity for Goulburn Valley Harness and Greyhound Precinct to become a premier racing precinct in Victoria.
- Opportunity exists to create a regionally significant recreational equine precinct.
- A range of accommodation segments may be considered which appeal to different market needs, including self-contained accommodation (farm stay/nature based), caravan park with potential equine holding infrastructure, 4-star motel/hotel, B&B's.

Sports City Masterplan

Sports City Masterplan identifies the need for delivery of four soccer fields, parking, access roads, club rooms and supporting infrastructure. The costs for this are high due to the need to extend all infrastructure servicing north of the existing precinct. There would be major efficiencies if the new sports fields could be located at WB Hunter reserve, however this would require the relocation of the existing equine facilities there to another site.

State

Equestrian Victoria Strategic Plan 2018-2023

Equestrian Victoria is the peak body for horse sports in Victoria and is the state body of Equestrian Australia. Four strategic pillars make up the foundation of this strategy Industry Leadership, Sport Development, Facility Oversight and Organisational Excellence. This strategy supports growth of Equestrian Sport Facilities across the state.

6.3. Strategic Considerations

- Physical space constraints within the Tatura Park Exhibition and Events Complex, restricting the potential for further development and expansion of the facility. The constraints of the site limit capacity of participants and spectators which could provide opportunity for a larger site to be considered in another part of the region.
- Limited availability of additional land surrounding Tatura Park, a limiting factor for future growth.
- Tatura Park currently offers limited scope for increased capacity or infrastructure development.
- Appears to be increasing demand for high quality Equine facilities.
- There are plans to invest in expansion of sports City to the north of the existing precinct. This is at exceptionally high cost due to the need for additional car parking, club rooms and extension of service. Should WB hunter be considered as an expansion location instead, this would significantly minimise costs.
- Opportunity to collocate equine uses including Tatura park and WB Hunter equine reserve.

6.4. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

National Equestrian Centre, Werribee, Victoria

The Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre (WPNEC), is located in Werribee, Victoria. WPNEC is an international standard sporting facility for equestrian events and is the designated State Centre for equestrian activity in Victoria.

The facility is based on 34 hectares of Crown Land within the Werribee Park Precinct, alongside Werribee Mansion, Werribee Zoo, Werribee Golf Course, the State Rose Garden and Shadowfax Winery. The WPNEC attracts approximately 50,000 competitors and spectators annually and hosts a significant number of events.

WPNEC is managed under a board structure, comprising three directors from Equestrian Victoria and three directors from Polo Victoria. Unlike other competitor facilities, Werribee Park has a greater focus on major equestrian events and elite training.

WPNEC includes the following facilities:

- Two indoor arenas;
- Two polo fields;
- The Chirnside field;
- Two show jumping arenas;
- Warm up areas and three stable blocks (accommodation up to 201 horses);
- Two general-purpose areas;
- Five sand dressage arenas (20m x 60m);
- Cross country course including obstacles;
- Central amenities block and conference rooms;
- Camping areas (147 powered sites and 170 unpowered sites with toilet/shower facilities); and
- Car and float parking.



Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre, Tamworth, NSW

The Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) is located in Tamworth, New South Wales. The equine and livestock events complex was built in 2008 at a cost of approximately \$30 million.

AELEC is supported by Tamworth Regional Council and hosts a number of sporting events, including show jumping, hacking, dressage, rodeo, camp drafting, team penning, cutting, ponies, harness, miniatures, alpacas and dogs.

Each year, AELEC attracts 7,000 competitors, 9,000 horses, 16,000 head of cattle, 120,000 visitors nights and \$17 million in economic benefits.

Key facilities with the AELEC include:

- **Indoor arena**, with tiered seating for 3,360 people, as well as a concourse area, a mezzanine area, sound and lighting systems, broadcasting and judges box overhangs the arena and undercroft stock holding yards.
- **Sales ring**, seating approximately 562 people, with additional standing room. Sales ring can also be used as indoor warm up arena.
- **478 stables**, with horse wash bays. An education/training building, with a lecture theatre, with tiered seating for 44 people, a veterinary room, utilities room, meeting room and shower and toilet facilities.
- A number of **outdoor facilities** including camp draft arena, two outdoor arenas, horse sporting fields, undercover cattle handling yards, outdoor exhibition, trade and field day areas, two show jumping and dressage areas, 187 powered parking bays, non-powered camping, parking and truck wash and exhibition lawn areas.

Queensland State Equestrian Centre, Caboolture, Queensland

The Queensland State Equestrian Centre (QSEC) is located in Caboolture, Queensland, 45 minutes from the Brisbane CBD. The facility opened in 2011 and includes:

- Warm up areas including a fully lit, 60m x 20m sand warm up arena;
- 4 all-weather, sand dressage arenas with covered viewing areas;
- 154 stables with anti-slip rubber matting;
- 11 wash bays;
- 55 camp sites with power and water access;
- Additional 'informal' camp sites;
- Large camping amenities block;
- 3 meeting/training rooms;
- A licenced bar; and
- 2 fully equipped cafes.

QSEC hosts a variety of events, including equestrian events, rodeos, exhibitions, training, concerts and shows. The QSEC hosted more than 90 events in 2015/16



There is opportunity to collocate Tatura Park and WB Hunter equine facilities into one equine precinct that has capacity to grow and support local equine recreation and equine and other livestock events.

6.5. Example Equestrian Centre Design – Wagga Wagga

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.



Urban Enterprise undertook a feasibility study for the Wagga Wagga Equine Exhibition and Events Centre Precinct. The concept is similar to the opportunity that exists for Dhurringile. The total project cost was estimated at around \$26 million with contingencies. Given the infrastructure that can be repurposed at Dhurringile and the opportunity to relocate infrastructure from Tatura Park, the project costs may be reduced significantly.

7. Visitor Accommodation

7.1. Overview

The capacity to accommodate overnight visitors is a significant constraint for Greater Shepparton, and regional Victoria as a whole.

In 2023, it was estimated the supply of commercial accommodation to be approximately 50 establishments, 888 rooms and 2,765 bed spaces. Majority of the commercial accommodation stock within Greater Shepparton includes hotels and motels, predominantly of a 'standard' quality. This is followed by caravans and holiday parks. In recent years there has been little investment in visitor accommodation in the region.

Key Data

- **466,000 overnight visitors** to Greater Shepparton (FY23/24) or 32% of overall visitation.
- **134 listings** with short-term accommodation booking sites, including Airbnb and Stayz. (Source: AirDNA, 2025)
- **50 accommodation facilities** in Greater Shepparton, 54% of which are hotel/motels.

Table 4: Commercial Accommodation Supply, 2023

Type	Facilities	Rooms	Bed Spaces
Hotels/motels	27 (54%)	613 (69%)	1,652 (60%)
Caravan/holiday parks	10 (10%)	151 (17%)*	696 (25%)
Apartments/self-contained	9 (18%)	108 (12%)	321 (12%)
B&B	3 (6%)	6 (0.7%)	16 (1%)
Group accommodation	1 (2%)	10 (1%)	80 (3%)
Total	50	888	2,765

Source: Accommodation audit, Greater Shepparton City Council, 2018, updated by Urban Enterprise 2023.

*Excludes caravan/camping sites.

7.2. Strategic Context

Local

The Greater Shepparton Accommodation Opportunity Study

The Greater Shepparton Accommodation Opportunity Study was prepared by Urban Enterprise in 2019 for the Greater Shepparton area. The aim of the Study is to identify and assess accommodation opportunities for the future provision of commercial accommodation types relevant to the current and future visitor market.

Key findings from the accommodation supply and demand analysis include:

- The existing accommodation stock in Greater Shepparton is largely standard hotels and motels.
- There are opportunities to increase the provision of accommodation in Greater Shepparton's smaller towns, including Murchison, Mooroopna and Tatura, and other rural areas.
- Business and event visitors are increasing.
- The operating environment is improving and the outlook for the sector is positive.
- The forecast growth in overnight visitation will continue to drive demand for accommodation.

The study identified opportunities for future accommodation provision and development in Greater Shepparton. Those relevant to the project site include large-scale, high-quality branded hotel and group accommodation and camp facility. These opportunities have been explored in further detail in this section.

Key opportunities include:

- A high-quality branded hotel (4–4.5 star) with conference facilities
- Support and strengthen the cabin / holiday park market;
- Nature-based cabin/self-contained accommodation near the Goulburn River /
- parkland
- Farm stay / bed and breakfast accommodation in Greater Shepparton's smaller townships and rural areas (Murchison, Tatura, Mooroopna).

Greater Shepparton Economic Prosperity Strategy 2025-2029 (Draft)

The Greater Shepparton Economic Prosperity Strategy 2025-2029 was prepared by Urban Enterprise and is an overarching strategy document that guides Greater Shepparton City Council's response to the evolving economic and social landscape.

Through consultation and research, the Strategy identifies a significant gap in commercial accommodation stock to cater to the business and holiday/ leisure market. Additionally, the lack of beds is a barrier for several events, as it constrains event capacity.

The Strategy is based on 4 key themes. The theme relevant to accommodation development in Greater Shepparton is Theme 4: A Leading Regional Visitor and Major Events Destination. Specific strategic and actions relevant to accommodation development opportunities include the following strategy direction 15, Accommodating for Visitor Growth.

7.3. Strategic Considerations

- Projected growth of an additional 400,000 visitors to Greater Shepparton shows growing demand for visitor accommodation.
- Key gaps in visitor accommodation suited to Dhurringile include hotel and self-contained accommodation.
- Visitor accommodation at Dhurringile would only work with further development of product and events on the precinct given its isolation.
- There is opportunity for accommodation to support visitation to the Murchison-Tatura corridor of Greater Shepparton.

7.4. Example of Existing Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

Group Accommodation / Camping Facility

A key accommodation gap identified in the Greater Shepparton Accommodation Opportunities Study is a group accommodation / camp facility. There are two group accommodation facilities that currently exist in Greater Shepparton, including Melbourne University's campus in Dookie and Wahroonga Lodge in Ardmara. Accommodation at Melbourne University is often unavailable depending on the number of students at the facility.

There is an opportunity to develop a group accommodation and camping facility that could be used to facilitate school and other groups, as well as meet the demand for low-cost group accommodation in Greater Shepparton.

Camp Marysville

Camp Marysville is located 90 minutes from Melbourne in the town of Marysville. Camp Marysville is an outdoor education facility, open to students for day-camps or 3-to-5-day camps. The camp hosts school group, youth groups, community diners,

The camp, operated by The Outdoor Education Group, can accommodate up to 240 people across a number of cabins, sleeping between 6 to 8 people each, and a number of self-contained leader lodges, sleeping up to 2 to 3. There is also the option for camping in tents, set up by Camp Marysville for guests.

On the site is also dining facilities with a commercial kitchen and a hall that can host up to 250 guests. This facility is available for hire to school groups, youth groups, community dinners, weddings and conferences.



Large-scale, High-quality Branded Hotel

A key accommodation gap in Greater Shepparton, as identified in The Greater Shepparton Accommodation Opportunities Study, is a large-scale, high-quality branded hotel (4 – 4.5 star).

Given that the business and corporate visitor markets are growing, an accommodation establishment of this type and scale, as well as the provision of conference / function facilities, presents as the key opportunity for the accommodation sector in Greater Shepparton.

There are benefits of such a facility being located in proximity to Greater Shepparton's CBD to provide visitors with access to retail, entertainment and hospitality amenity in the CBD. However, a self-contained site with some retail and dining provision can support visitors whilst on site.

Lancemore Mansion Hotel, Werribee Park

The Lancemore Mansion Hotel is located within Werribee Park, an 1870 historic mansion surrounded by 10 acres of formal English gardens, 30 minutes from Melbourne CBD.

The 5-star hotel, operated by the Lancemore Group, has 91 guest rooms as well as an onsite restaurant, bars, day spa, pool and gymnasium.

In addition to the visitor accommodation, the hotel contains 9 flexible and contemporary conference spaces. The largest of the conference spaces has the capacity to host up to 250 guests (banquet style) and 530 guests (cocktail-style).



Integrated Resort/ Holiday Park

Integrated resort is used a case study here as the Dhurringile has a number of existing assets that would support this including the mansion and existing self contained accommodation which was former prison housing. This format would suit a number of market typologies and potentially events visitor to the site if this were identified as a focus for future use.

RACV Inverloch

RACV Inverloch Resort is, approximately 2 hours from Melbourne CBD. The resorts offers a variety of accommodation options to visitors, including resort rooms, cabins or villas, or caravan park spots.

Onsite is a restaurant, Radius Restaurant, as well as a bar, Zenith Lounge.

Facilities on site include a tennis court, walking trails, fitness centre, pool, spa, sauna, playground and games room. The resort also has the capacity to host both large- and small-scale events, accommodating up to 280 guests cocktail style and 200 guest banquet style.



Opportunity to utilise existing assets including the Dhurringile Mansion and former prison housing for visitor accommodation. Co-location with other product and event facilities is critical for the feasibility of visitor accommodation in the precinct. Opportunities include hotel, self contained units and holiday park/camping. Accommodation development and operations may be outsourced to a private operator.

8. Aerodrome

8.1. Overview

The Aerodrome has been in operation since the early 1950's and is owned and operated by Council. The Aerodrome is used primarily for flying training, charters, private and aerial work, emergency services and limited air freight.

The Shepparton Aerodrome is located 8 km from the city centre on Melbourne Road, Kialla. The aerodrome has two active runways:

- The 18-36 Runway is 1380m with a sealed width of 18m and was reconstructed in 1992 to withstand a turbo prop SAAB 340. Each end of the main runway is fitted with a PAPI system.
- The 09-27 Runway is gravel pavement with a length of 423m and width of 30m.

The area of the current site is 44 hectares or 446,023.22 m² on the site measuring 1.65km long and 300m wide.

Key Data

There are 334 aerodromes in Australia certified by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), 38 of these are in Victoria predominantly operated by the LGA.

Mangalore Airport is a privately owned airport 40 minutes south of the Shepparton aerodrome offering similar services.

8.2. Strategic Context

Local

Greater Shepparton Economic Prosperity Strategy (2025 – 2029)

This strategy identified in theme three business development and industry attraction, project 14.6 that a strategic review be undertaken to examine feasible opportunities for the asset to support business investment, growth and diversity. This could result in looking for a site for relocation. Additional land would need to be acquired for the Dhurringile site to be considered for such as move.

State

The Victorian Planning Authority developed the Shepparton and **Mooroopna Regional City Growth Plan 2050** in partnership with Greater Shepparton City Council. This plan aims to guide sustainable development in the area and address challenges relating to housing, employment, infrastructure, services and This Plan identified the Shepparton aerodrome as a site for strategic long term growth opportunities, recommending relocation of the aerodrome to free up the land for further development.

The plan identified opportunities for passenger and freight movements which would require public and private investment to acquire a suitable site and develop it appropriately.

The plan identified that this relocation would require significant investment to be realised.

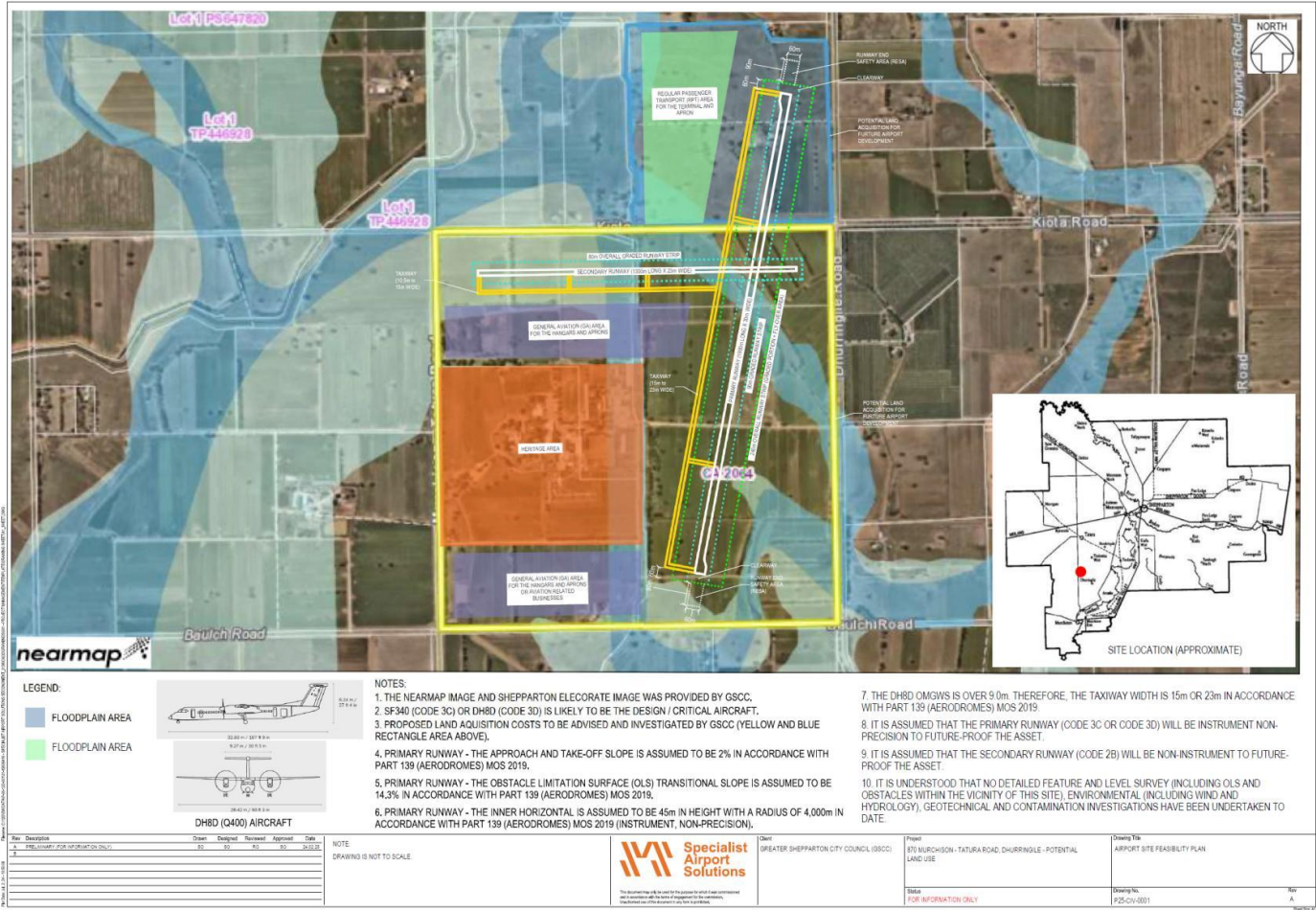
8.3. Strategic Considerations

- Expansion of the Aerodrome is constrained in the current location.
- Current site is prime residential land and vacating it would allow for seamless expansion of the existing developments.
- Proximity to the CBD is valuable for commercial passengers.
- The cost of relocation would be significant despite offset from sale of existing site.
- Relocation could provide greater economic opportunities for commercial uses and reduce negative amenity impacts.
- Availability of suitable relocation site.
- Relocation may increase job opportunities particularly during the development and construction phase.

8.4. Aerodrome Planning Considerations

The plan figure 5 was generated by Specialist Airport Solutions for Greater Shepparton City Council and clearly demonstrates the use of the land should an aerodrome be considered. The plan indicates that additional land will need to be acquired to accommodate the length of the runway.

Figure 5: Analysis of Land Requirements to support Aerodrome



8.5. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

Yarrowonga Aerodrome

The aerodrome is operated by Moira Shire Council and is located just 5 minutes drive from the Yarrowonga CBD. The aerodrome has two runways – one sealed (approx. 1.36km) and one a natural surface. Total area of the aerodrome is 96 hectares or 963,136.57 m².

A number of aviation related businesses operate in the vicinity of the airport.

There are no commercial passenger services currently operating from the Aerodrome. The terminal is accessible to pilots with bookings at the aerodrome.

The terminal building has standard amenities (toilets, tea and coffee facilities) and a bookable meeting room that can accommodate approximate 25 people.



Kyneton Airfield

The Kyneton Airfield was first constructed as an agricultural airstrip in the early 1960s to service the needs of local farmers for crop dusting. Today, the airfield is owned by Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC) and is currently operated by Kyneton Aero Club (KAC) under a service agreement.

The airfield has two runways one sealed (north-south) and one unsealed grass runway that runs east - west. The Airfield has a Masterplan that was developed in 2019 and identifies improvements to runways as key actions.

There are approximately 35 private hangers located at the airfield with lease arrangements managed through Council.

The airfield is used for General Aviation (GA) including recreational flying, flight training provided by the KAC's flight school, as well as occasional charter, aerial ambulance, and aerial firefighting activities undertaken by contractors on behalf of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Emergency Management Victoria.



Mount Gambier Regional Airport

This regional airport is operated by the District of Grant and is located 10 minutes from the Mount Gambier CBD. Each year approximately 80,000 people fly in and out of the airport. Onsite facilities include café, toilets, check in facilities.

There are two commercial passenger services operating out of the airport Regional Express Airlines (REX) and QantasLink. Both airlines provides services between Melbourne and Adelaide International Airports. The Royal Flying Doctors operate services from the airport.

The airport has three sealed runways and is anticipating growth and improvements in these in line with the Mount gambier Regional Airport Master Plan 2025 – 2035.

The airport underwent a significant redevelopment commencing in 2017 and completed in 2021. Federal, State and local Government contributed to the \$9.2M project. The project included a runway extension, ground lighting, constructions of a heavy aircraft parking area and improvements to the visitor terminal. Economic modelling estimated that the airport redevelopment would boost the economy but at least \$36.5m over 25 years.



If the aerodrome were located at Dhurringile, additional land would be required to support it. The aerodrome and supporting hangers and infrastructure would utilise most of the greenfield land on the site and there are unlikely to be many alternative uses for the former prison assets that would be compatible with the aerodrome use.

9. Arts, Culture & Food

9.1. Overview

The Greater Shepparton region has an established arts, culture, and food strength due to its diverse community, rich cultural heritage, and thriving agricultural industry.

The region is one of the most multicultural regions in Victoria, with a significant population of people from Italian, Greek, Afghan, Indian, Sudanese, and many other backgrounds. This diversity creates opportunities for unique cultural projects, festivals, and food experiences that celebrate different traditions and stories.

The traditional owners the Yorta Yorta people, have a deep presence and connection to country that can be explored and shared through art, storytelling, and heritage projects. There is growth in Aboriginal-led initiatives, including public art, cultural tourism, and traditional food experiences.

As a major food bowl of Australia, Greater Shepparton is renowned for its fruit orchards, dairy farms, and wineries. The local produce provides a strong foundation for food festivals, farm-to-table dining, cooking workshops, and agritourism experiences.

The region has a growing arts scene, with projects like the Shepparton Art Museum (SAM), street art, and public sculptures gaining recognition. There's strong community support for artistic expression, with galleries, artist collectives, and events such as the Shepparton Festival fostering local talent.

Key Data

- Tourism Research Australia data indicates that more than 10% of visitors engage in arts and culture activities when in the Greater Shepparton area.
- In 2022/23 the Shepparton Art Museum saw 94,027 overall visitors and 152 events.
- The creative industries contribute \$40.3 billion to the Victorian economy, the equivalent to 7.5% of the total state economy.
- Almost one in 12 Victorian workers are estimated to be employed in the creative sector equalling 318,244 people and translates to 8.6% of the total Victorian workforce.

9.2. Strategic Context

Local

The Greater Shepparton Economic Prosperity Strategy 2025 – 2029 is strategic document designed to support economic prosperity, development and growth for the region over the next five years. Theme four – 'A leading regional visitor and events destination' relates directly to the development of arts and culture sector in the Greater Shepparton area. Specifically, strategic direction identifies that 'High-quality facilities and infrastructure are needed to support existing and attract new major events.' Strategic direction 15 identifies the opportunity for visitor growth and the need for contemporary and quality commercial accommodation. This will also grow the number of overnight stays, allowing the municipality to capture increasing visitor yield and grow the value of the visitor economy.

The Dhurringile property presents an opportunity that aligns to the types of strategic actions that can support arts and culture activities and development of the visitor economy.

Creative City Strategy 2022 – 2027

The Greater Shepparton Creative City Strategy serves as a roadmap to unlock, support and drive the creative potential of the region that will guide policy, planning, decision-making and investment.

Dhurringile could assist in the delivery of many of the underlying Directions in the Creative City Strategy including: creating creative spaces, furthering cultural tourism, supporting creative businesses, promoting active participation and championing First Nations art and culture.

State

Experience Victoria 2033 is the state's strategic plan to strengthen Victoria's visitor economy through five key pillars: First Peoples-led experiences, wellness, arts and culture, food and drink, and nature. In Greater Shepparton, this plan aligns with the region's strengths, particularly in First Nations experiences such as Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Adventures, the Mooroopna Aboriginal Walk, Aboriginal Street Art installations, the Australian Botanic Gardens, Kaiela Arts, and the Bangerang Cultural Centre. The region's arts and culture prestige is completed with the highly regarded Shepparton Art Museum, renowned for its significant Australian ceramics collection and nationally significant Indigenous art. Additionally, informal cultural experiences thrive with a vibrant regional events calendar. Greater Shepparton's rich food production and growing dining scene further enhance its appeal as a foodie destination, offering some of the freshest and highest-quality produce in the country.

9.3. Strategic Considerations

- There are limited large scale event venues that would be suitable to attract major commercial events in Shepparton.
- The delivery of arts and culture activities and events at Dhurringile encourages visitor dispersal throughout the region although there is limited to no amenities accommodation and eateries in the area.
- Public transport does not exist to the site at present, some services may need to be considered for ease of visitor movement should the property be developed into an arts facility.
- Employment opportunities could exist should the site be developed into an attraction and/or event site.

9.4. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

The Mill at Castlemaine

This is a privately owned historic site that houses 40+ artisan makers. The site is in an old Woollen Mill 3 minutes drive from the town centre. There is a food precinct on site with individual small businesses including a Viennese coffeehouse and coffee roastery, winemakers, sourdough baker, craft brewery, smallgoods maker, cheese and dairy producer, chocolatier and ice cream maker. There is an artisan precinct which includes makers of furniture, bath soaks and perfumery, comfy underwear, wool-centric clothing, mosaics and an ethical florist. In the vintage precinct is the Castlemaine Vintage Bazaar, a market-style spaces selling vintage, re-purposed, hand-made and second-hand goods.

The site provides makers with a cost-effective place to create and sell their wares and attracts visitors and locals to the on site businesses. The Mill is open 7 days a week and is adjacent to other visitor attractions and amenities including the Big 4 Castlemaine Caravan park, The Bridge Hotel, Botanic Gardens and Public Swimming Pool.



Abbotsford Convent, Abbotsford, Melbourne

Abbotsford Convent is a leading example of adaptive reuse, transforming a historic 19th-century convent into a thriving arts, cultural, and food precinct while preserving its heritage significance. Recognised as Australia's largest multi-arts precinct, the Convent balances conservation with innovation, maintaining its heritage-listed buildings and lush gardens while providing space for over 100 artists, creatives, and social enterprises. The precinct hosts art exhibitions, performances, and workshops, fostering a dynamic cultural hub. It also champions food culture, with renowned eateries like Lentil As Anything and Cam's Kiosk offering diverse dining experiences. Through careful curation, the Convent seamlessly integrates heritage protection with contemporary creativity, making it a model for sustainable cultural precincts.



Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), Hobart, Tasmania

This world-renowned museum is a multi-use site that incorporates art, culture, food, accommodation and events on one site. MONA was designed to be explored and revisited not just a single visit destination.

The site and facility is privately owned by David Walsh, it is the largest privately owned museum in Australia.

The museum itself has 10,000 sqm of floor area over 3 levels. The museum is integrated with heritage listed Moorilla Estate. The entire site covers approximately 3.5 hectares.

Facilities include restaurants, winery, cellar door, five-star accommodation, museum, library, tennis court, bars, recording studio and open event terrace.

The site is located on the Derwent River and is accessible by road and ferry service from Hobart CBD.



Grazeland, Spotswood, Melbourne, Victoria

Located 5 km from the Melbourne CBD Grazeland is dubbed a playground for foodies. Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday each week there are more than 40 plus food vendors on site selling a wide variety of food and drink. The site is 10,000 sqm with an arched roofing over two main halls. Vendors operate out of shipping containers which links to the site being a former shipping yard. The investment to establish Grazeland in 2020 was \$4 million.

To complement the food offering there are big screens and stages that regularly host entertainment for all demographics.

Grazeland is accessible by car, train and ferry and bike.

**St Andrews Brewery, Fingal, Victoria**

The St Andrews Beach Fingal Brewery is located on the Mornington Peninsula 90 minutes from Melbourne. The site has a range of different dining options the beer garden is a general walk in/no booking required area, the stables are reserved for groups of 5 to 20 people, the birdcage is for functions and there are picnic spaces available for booking with a set menu.

This property was formerly a racetrack and stables for one of Australia's leading horse racing families. In 2015 the property was converted into a Brewery. The property is 92 acres and supports 8,000 apple and pear trees and hops. The operation is open 7 days a week from 11am to 6pm from Sunday to Wednesday and 11am to 9pm from Thursday to Saturday.

**Euroa Butter Factory, Euroa, Victoria**

The historic Butter Factory was built in 1901 and is currently operating as a Wedding Venue and accommodation house less than 2 hours from Melbourne. There are four distinct function spaces on the property The Old Factory Floor with a capacity of 100 guests (seated), the Hedged Garden able to accommodate up to 160 seated guests, the Plane Trees for an outdoor wedding ceremony and cocktail party and the engine room an intimate space for 40 guests. The property is 2.02 hectares and is privately owned.



Dhurringile has a number of assets that could be utilised for food, arts and culture enterprise. This includes the historic farm administration building and various prison buildings. The establishment of multiple enterprises in one location would provide a destination of scale to attract visitors.

10. Agriculture

10.1. Overview

The site contains around 200 hectares of agricultural land which also has access to 640 megalitres of irrigation water annually. The irrigation system has recently had \$1.2 million spent on it and is in excellent operating order.

Key Data

- The Victorian agricultural economy is worth \$15.9 Billion and supports 81,000 jobs.
- Greater Shepparton is a major player in the State's agriculture sector, agriculture is worth \$729 million and the agriculture forestry and fishing sector employs over 3000 workers.

10.2. Strategic Context

Local

Key local plans that highlight the importance of the agriculture sector that need to be considered:

- Regional Rural Land Use Strategy, 2010
- Greater Shepparton Tourism, Economic Development and Events Strategy

Key local plans acknowledge the importance of the agricultural sector to Greater Shepparton. The importance of agriculture sector is linked to other key industries of Shepparton including food and beverage manufacturing and transport and storage.

Irrigated agricultural is a key driver of horticultural sector and dairy in the Goulburn Valley and Dhurringile, having access to a significant irrigated water supply presents opportunity for horticultural production.

State

Victorian agriculture is already a significant contributor to our economy and communities. The Victorian Government wants to build on this to position the sector as an engine of growth in our recovering economy.

The vision for the State's agricultural sector in Victoria in the State Governments plan "Strong, Innovative, Sustainable" is:

- An engine of growth for the Victorian economy: attracting investment, supporting jobs and helping communities thrive
- Creative, resilient and responsive to challenges and opportunities, capitalising on technological advancement and new ways of doing things
- A front runner in low-emission food and fibre production Australia's agriculture exports centre, providing high-quality, sought after agriculture produce to diverse markets around the world
- Home to diverse and innovative careers, attracting the best and brightest to our farms and regions.

10.3. Strategic Considerations

- There is substantial water supply on the property – 640 megalitres which can support future agricultural production.
- Dhurringile recently supported a small dairy production which was operated by inmates of the property. The dairy has been sold off however there remains opportunity to reinstate this in the future.
- Many of the surrounding farms are cropping or raising cattle, there is however opportunity in the district for horticulture with some surrounding properties growing peaches, apples and nectarines, flowers.
- Given the level of infrastructure that exists on the site, there is opportunity to undertake downstream processing of agricultural products in the sheds on site.
- Dhurringile has access to reticulated water and sewer and has the capacity to support enterprises without needing significant investment in services.
- There may be opportunity to establish an integrated farming and tourism venture on the site, leveraging off the ability to produce, manufacture and retail on site given the level of infrastructure.
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative are known to have interest in the agricultural land at Dhurringile.
- The site would potentially be suited as an agricultural college given the assets that exist. However Dookie Agricultural College is already within the Greater Shepparton LGA and it is unlikely that another similar facility is needed. Dookie is owned by the University of Melbourne and anecdotal evidence suggests that many regional colleges and university have struggled due to the development of online learning.

10.4. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

Beerenberg Farm, Adelaide Hills

Beerenberg Strawberry Farm in Hahndorf, South Australia, exemplifies successful agritourism, evolving from a family-run farm into a globally recognized brand. Established in 1839, Beerenberg specialises in premium jams, sauces, and condiments. Its pick-your-own (PYO) strawberry attraction draws thousands of visitors annually, enhancing Adelaide Hills tourism while supporting its strong export business.

Beerenberg thrives on experience-based tourism, leveraging its reputation for quality to drive retail sales and exports. The farm's commitment to sustainability and innovation aligns with consumer demand for transparency. It creates jobs, supports local supply chains, and bolsters South Australia's agritourism sector.

As a premier tourist destination, Beerenberg contributes to regional economic growth. Visitors engaging in PYO experiences boost local businesses, while the farm fosters job creation and skills development. Future investment opportunities include enhanced visitor facilities, expanded PYO offerings, and smart farming technology to improve efficiency and engagement. Collaborations with tourism operators and food brands can further elevate market reach.

Beerenberg Strawberry Farm showcases how traditional farming can successfully integrate tourism while maintaining retail and export growth. Its heritage, brand strength, and immersive tourism experiences make it a compelling investment in agritourism.



Frioheimar (Tomato farm), Iceland

In Iceland tomatoes are able to be grown all year round despite the inclement weather through the use of artificial lighting and greenhouses.

There is also a small café, gift shop, wine bar and bistro and visitor greenhouse tours to learn about the growing of tomatoes in these conditions.

Producing two tonnes of tomatoes per day, the first-class crop go to market and the second-class (misshapen, smaller, scarred) go to the kitchen where they are made into dishes and products. Even those that don't perfectly ripen are used in the kitchen as green tomatoes.

100% of electricity and heating are met with renewables. The farm has abundant supplies of geothermal water, which provides heat to the greenhouses. The borehole is 200 metres from the greenhouses and the water flows into them at about 95°C. In order to maximise sunlight in the greenhouses, the glass panes are only 4 mm thick, so a huge amount of hot water is needed – about 100,000 tons per year.

In 1995 there was one employee in 20 years they have grown to 70 full time employees.



Tatura SmartFarm

Located a 20-hectare farm just outside of the township of Tatura is the Tatura SmartFarm. This property is owned and operated by Agriculture Victoria which is the State Government department responsible for all agricultural matters.

The SmartFarm is a research facility that focuses on technology and data to inform, test and showcase innovative agricultural practices. The aim is to use these testing sites to improve productivity and sustainability across farming sectors. In the Goulburn valley the Smartfarm focuses on horticulture. They also provide educational opportunities for farmers to learn about new practices and technologies they could implement on their own farms. Services offered include:

- Innovation projects for co-design and innovation in agriculture.
- On-site co-location of agricultural businesses with Agriculture Victoria.
- AgTech is available via costed services to test out new AgTech or farmers and scientists can inspect what is currently happening on site.
- Events can be hosted at the SmartFarm, facilities are suitable for national and international scientific and agricultural meetings and conferences.
- National and international visitors are welcome including scientists, students, and those in the agriculture industry.
- Tours of Tatura SmartFarm are available to find out how the farm is increasing value in the Victorian economy and creating new opportunities for agriculture through research and innovation.



Dhurringile presents opportunity for farming and agritourism uses. Irrigation on the site will support high value agriculture uses including horticulture and dairy.

11. Education

11.1. Overview

There is opportunity for the project site to be utilised for educational purposes, to align with the region's strengths in agriculture, first nations heritage, sustainability, and nature.

The current infrastructure onsite would lend itself to group accommodation with indoor and outdoor spaces relevant for educational activities. Anecdotally there appears to be a shortage of large facilities and group accommodation in the region and there are definite benefits to establishing group accommodation, school camps and short-term education activities such as onsite retreats or workshops.

Key Data

- According to the Australian Camps Association there are more than 190 camps across Victoria offering group experiences. They provide 24,000 beds and provide education programs to more than 145,000 primary and secondary school students p.a.
- Camps are almost universally located in regional Victoria, and thus rely on local communities for support services (activity, catering, housekeeping and maintenance staff, transport and food supplies).

11.2. Strategic Context

Local

Greater Shepparton Economic Prosperity Strategy (2025 – 29)

This Strategy guides regional growth by identifying opportunities to promote economic and community development. Enhancing accommodation facilities is a key component, supporting both the visitor economy and local residents, including students.

State

Experience Victoria 2033

This document aims to shape the future of Victoria's visitor economy over the next decade, emphasizing product priorities such as nature-based tourism and First Peoples-led experiences. Investments aligned with this strategy can enhance infrastructure supporting educational tourism, including accommodations suitable for student groups.

Victorian Department of Education Strategic Plan 2024-28 identifies Strengthening safety, wellbeing and engagement as a focus area articulated as 'having the right support and services in place to meet the needs of each child and young person, including keeping them safe from harm'. This includes a School saving bonus that families can use to cover the cost of camps and excursions making them more attractive and accessible.

Shepparton Education Plan

Development of the plan began in 2017, with a vision of transforming student outcomes by empowering all students to learn and achieve, experience high quality teaching and the best conditions for lifelong learning. The State Government has invested substantially in new assets to support this plan. Education use of Dhurringile would need to consider this plan.

11.3. Strategic Considerations

- Leverage pre-existing buildings, most of which are in a suitable condition and fit for purpose however some costs may be incurred to bring them in line with any compliance and safety regulations.
- Suitable supporting services such as catering, housekeeping, laundry would be required.
- Workforce shortages may restrict the ability to scale this business.
- This would increase destination awareness and potentially lead to return visitation if students encourage family visits based on a quality experience.

11.4. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

School Camp

As discussed in Section 7 (Visitor Accommodation), a key accommodation gap identified in the Greater Shepparton Accommodation Opportunities Study is a group accommodation/camp facility. There are two group accommodation facilities that currently exist in Grater Shepparton, including Melbourne University’s campus in Dookie and Wahroonga Lodge in Ardmona. Accommodation at Melbourne University is often unavailable depending on the number of students at the facility.

There is an opportunity to develop a group accommodation and camping facility that could be used to facilitate school and other groups, as well as meet the demand for low-cost group accommodation in Greater Shepparton.

Camp Toolangi

Camp Toolangi is located 90 minutes from Melbourne. Camp Marysville is an outdoor education facility, open to students for day-camps or 3-to-5-day camps. The camp hosts school group, youth groups, community diners, The camp, operated by Bindaree, an accredited outdoor education provider, can accommodate up to 147 people across a number of cabins and lodges, each sleeping between 5 to 7 people. In addition to the accommodation, there is also a dining hall for up to 150 people, recreational hall, meeting room, enclosed basketball court and beach volleyball court.

Hosted by Bindaree, groups can participate in a number of activities, including flying fox, bushwalking, high ropes course, low ropes course, orienteering, raft building, climbing tour and abseiling, archery, canoeing, mountain biking and a number of other activates.



Agriculture College or Institution

An opportunity for the project site is an agriculture college or institute, due to the number of suitable facilities, including halls, workshop spaces, agriculture facilities, accommodation and education/administration spaces. A similar facilities, already in operation in Greater Shepparton is Melbourne Universities Dookie Campus.

Longerenong Agricultural College

Longerenong Agricultural College is situated on a commercial farm in Longerenong, Victoria, approximately 15 minutes from Horsham. Students have the advantage of gaining hands-on and practical experience.

The college offers a range of education options from online to full-time courses and apprenticeships to shape the next generation of agriculture professionals.

Students also have access to on-site student accommodation. All rooms are single rooms equipped with essential furnishings including a bed, desk and fridge. Students share bathrooms, kitchenettes and lounges.

There are a number of facilities on campus, including auditorium, conference centre, meeting rooms, a dining room, 3-storey study centre, Digital Innovation Centre/Data Farm, engineering facility, equine paddocks, vehicle training centre, classrooms and workshop spaces and a computer lab.



Hospitality College or Institution

A regional hospitality education centre could assist to develop a workforce pipeline of hospitality professional for regional Victoria. This could deliver short and long term accredited and non accredited course to fill skills gaps for existing hospitality workers and attract new students to the sector.

International College of Management Sydney (ICMS)

The ICMS Northern Beaches or ‘castle campus’ is a Sydney landmark dating back to the 19th Century. The imposing structure in Manly won worldwide acclaim when it was built by the Catholic Church between 1885 and 1889. The building, with its Gothic style and romantic central bell tower, holds a commanding position overlooking the Sydney Harbour and Pacific Ocean. The entire estate covers 20 hectares of parkland.

The campus has accommodation and general student facilities plus a library, café, bar and sporting facilities. A shuttle bus services main transport hubs 4 times per day. A restaurant is on site for practical hospitality training and is open to the public to give the students real life experience and is available for function bookings.



There exists opportunity for Dhurringile to support education uses such as school camps. Assets on the site are well suited to this use.

12. Worker Housing

12.1. Overview

Victoria is facing a significant shortage of worker housing accommodation, particularly in regional areas where industries such as agriculture, tourism, and construction rely on seasonal and skilled workers. The demand for affordable rental properties has surged, driven by population growth, rising housing costs, and limited investment in purpose-built worker accommodation. Many regional towns struggle to attract and retain workers due to a lack of suitable housing, impacting local businesses and economic growth. Government initiatives, including grants and planning reforms, aim to address the issue, but challenges remain in balancing development, infrastructure, and community needs to ensure sustainable workforce housing solutions.

The current Regional Worker Accommodation Fund is available to support the provision and development of worker accommodation. The fund provides new housing and accommodation for regional communities where workers in key industries and their families are struggling to find places to live. The fund supports employers to attract and retain workers by supporting projects that create more affordable housing and accommodation. This will stimulate economic growth and support our regions to thrive. The fund supports the delivery of housing, accommodation and related infrastructure, across all Victorian rural and regional Local Government Areas. 20 housing projects were funded across Victoria in 2024.

Key Data

- Regional Victoria will account for 21.4% of new workers expected (or 75,000) by 2026. The Goulburn Region is expected to attract 7,600.

12.2. Strategic Context

Local

Greater Shepparton City Council Affordable Housing Strategy: Houses for people 2020

This strategy identifies that Greater Shepparton has an estimated shortfall of at least 1,700 dwellings required to ensure existing very low to low-income residents are not homeless or in housing stress. Action F2 Investigates opportunities to enhance and increase Council's investment and allocation of resources may be somewhat addressed through the acquisition of new sites such as Dhurringile.

State

Goulburn Regional Economic Development Strategy (2022)

This strategy recognises that adequate housing is critical for economic participation and for attracting skilled migrants to the region. This strategy also identifies the role of Shepparton as the regional capital and industry hub. This project could provide solutions in affordable work accommodation particularly for seasonal workers.

12.3. Strategic Considerations

- Existing buildings on site could be utilised as they generally in good condition.
- The location and site facilities are well suited to seasonal worker housing for individuals, couples or small families.
- Connectivity to services and amenities such as health care, social services and community facilities.
- There are issues with housing workers in a remote locations particularly the lack of access to infrastructure, community services, education transport and recreation.

12.4. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

Port Fairy , Koroit and Mortlake, Moyne Shire Council

Local business and industry can register their interest in council's worker accommodation in Koroit and Mortlake.

A shortage of affordable accommodation and skilled workers led to council finding new ways to support business and industry. Council invested in five new studio-style cabins at Mortlake Caravan Park, and another five cabins at Koroit to come online soon.

Each cabin has a queen-sized bed, living space with a couch, kitchenette with cooking facilities, flat-screen TV, air conditioning. Tenants can access the communal facilities at the caravan parks including laundry, barbeques, dining areas and gardens. Both the Mortlake and Koroit parks are centrally located and within walking distance to local shops, services and attractions.

Council also launched the Work and Play initiative in Port Fairy to attract and accommodation staff for local businesses. Businesses were able to lease a place for workers at a discounted rate at Southcombe Lodge for an 8-week period, to accommodate the busy summer period. In it's first year this program attracted 25 new workers and supported 11 local businesses.



Sorrento Lodge, Victoria

The investors at the Intercontinental Hotel recognised the lack of available and affordable worker accommodation on the Mornington Peninsula particularly during peak season when larger workforces are required. The investors too a proactive approach and purchased a nearby vacant aged care facility to convert into worker accommodation.

The fit out of this facility named Sorrento Lodge, is anticipated to be dormitory style accommodation for staff. There are 35 rooms with ensuites and 10 car parks that guests can lease. A local Mornington Peninsula worker or business, has no timeframe in which they can stay at Sorrento Lodge. Long-term stays will require to be on a rooming house agreement and will be bounded by the terms and conditions of that agreement.

Sorrento Lodge has a large shared communal kitchen with plenty of cooking facilities to cater for all guests staying at the property. There are no cooking facilities in any of the rooms. Kitchen & dining areas are open between 6:00am – 10:00pm, every day.



Riviera Farms, Wellington Shire Council

Riviera Farms in Wellington Shire needed to develop sustainable, fit-for-purpose housing for seasonal workers. Tiny houses proved to be an innovative option as they provide a moveable solution that could be jointly shared across different sites in the area. Tiny houses also provide the ability to tap into tourism, allowing farms to diversify towards 'farm stays' when in a seasonal lull.

Wellington Shire Council worked collaboratively with Riviera Farms who developed high-quality camps for seasonal workers from Vanuatu so they could maximize their take home pay. Further support for workers included meals, tours of the local area and social activities.

The Council also arranged tours of the workforce housing solution for Councillors so they were equipped to engage with local communities on the solution.



Former prison housing is well suited to worker housing and may support seasonable fruit pickers or farm labourers. The isolation of the site however is unlikely to be suited to permanent worker housing solutions given poor access issues to community services, recreation, health, education and transport.

13. Events

13.1. Overview

Regional events are a significant contributor to communities boosting jobs, attracting visitors, injecting funds into the economy, fostering civic pride and raising public awareness of the destination.

Large scale regional event sites provide a platform for showcasing regional industries, fostering innovation, and creating networking opportunities for businesses. Strategic investment in these sites ensures their sustainability and long-term benefits, making them valuable assets for regional Victoria.

Urban Enterprise conducted an economic impact assessment of events in Greater Shepparton in 2023/24 which showed that sporting events generated the highest economic output and supports the highest level of employment out of all event types. In total 400 jobs are created from the 132 major events held. The total (direct and indirect) outputs from all the major events is \$62.4m.

Arts/ Culture/ Food events generated the second highest economic impact and number of jobs, despite only delivering 18 events. This suggests that Arts/ Culture/ Food events were well attended and high yielding.

Events held at Shepparton Showgrounds and the Shepparton Sports Precinct Lake accounted for 76% of the total economic output in 2023/24, highlighting the importance of these venues to support the events program.

The Major Events Program in 2023/24 generated the highest economic impact over the past five years. Compared to the pre-pandemic average, the 2023/24 financial year accommodated nearly 100 fewer events but generated over \$12 million more in output and created 50 additional jobs. This highlights that events are generally capturing a higher a yield for visitors, particularly overnight visitors.

13.2. Strategic Context

Local

Greater Shepparton Economic Prosperity Strategy (2025-2029)

This is the strategy that will guide Council's direction in supporting and growing the regions economy. Theme 4 identifies increasing the value of the economy through a strong events sector that caters to diverse visitor market. This project could provide a large event venue which allows for major events to be attracted to a region leading to increased visitation, opportunities for dispersal and visitor spend.

State

Creative State 2025

This is an integrated strategy to address longstanding and new challenges facing our creative industries and to grow their contribution to our society, economy and culture. Supported by a four-year budget of \$288 million, it is a strategy designed to enrich the lives of all Victorians. Creative State 2025 will put Victoria's First Peoples art, culture and history at the heart of what we do, ensure everybody is able to access and benefit from Victoria's rich creative opportunities, deliver fair pay and secure work, and find new ways to lessen the environmental impact of the sector. This aligns with activation of historic and cultural sites and celebrating culture in regional areas.

National

Thrive 2030

THRIVE 2030 is Australia's national strategy for the long-term sustainable growth of the visitor economy. The Strategy is industry-led and government enabled to drive success in the tourism industry across the nation, delivering quality experiences for visitors and providing jobs, growth and infrastructure that benefit Australian communities. This aligns with this project by repurposing existing infrastructure and growing unique, high quality diverse products to attract and satisfy visitors.

13.3. Strategic Considerations

- Existing buildings on site could be repurposed as event facilities
- Large open spaces could accommodate temporary accommodation such as camping
- Currently there is no large event venue in the region that could support 5,000 plus attendees
- Waste management – sewer, water supply
- Event infrastructure – power and water
- Noise impacts may affect surrounding properties
- Investment may be required to prepare the site for major events and be attractive and cost effective for event attraction
- Partnership opportunities with major event organisers
- Funding opportunities available for event attraction and deliver such as the regional events fund.

13.4. Case Studies

The following provides a summary of the case study facilities.

Elmore Events Centre, Elmore, Victoria

The community owned site is 154 hectares with large outdoor spaces and a selection of purpose-built buildings plus an airstrip. Events such as the annual Elmore Field Days, run onsite since the 1980's, attracts more than 27,000 visitors daily (3-day event). Another major event hosted on site is the Australia Scout Jamboree, a 10-day camping event with over 15,000 participants. 32 hectares of the site are dedicated to the camping area with supporting facilities such as toilet and shower blocks, underground power and water supplies and dump points.

The Elmore Equestrian Park is located here with a large indoor arena, stables and yards, dressage arenas, grassed arena, round yards, stallion yards and wash bays. Camping facilities and ample parking are also part of this facility.

The facility hosts:

- Caravan Club Events & Rallies
- Club & Community Events
- Conferences & Exhibitions
- Food & Music Festivals
- Industry & Trade Shows
- Jamborees
- Markets
- Vehicle Rallies



Hanging Rock Concert Series, Macedon Ranges, Victoria

Macedon Ranges Shire Council and Frontier Touring developed a partnership to deliver a series of concerts at the iconic natural attraction of Hanging Rock Reserve.

Over a 12-year period of the partnership, 11 concerts were held in the East Paddock which over the time was developed into a facility that hosted major events through investment from Council and Frontier Touring.

The concert line up included international acts:

- Leonard Cohen (2010)
- Rod Stewart (2012)
- Bruce Springsteen and the E Street band (2013)
- The Eagles (2015)
- Rod Stewart (2015)
- Cold Chisel (2015)
- Bruce Springsteen and the E Street band (2017)
- Midnight Oil (2017)
- Elton John (2020)
- First & Forever (2022)
- Nick Cave & Warren Ellis (2022)

An economic impact assessment of the two days of the 2013 Bruce Springsteen concert was undertaken to determine that \$9.3m of visitor expenditure could be attributed to the concerts (direct and indirect). This activity also generated 29 FTE jobs in the Shire.



Lardner Park, near Warragul, Victoria

Lardner Park is situated 12 kilometres from Warragul off the Princes Freeway (M1) approximately 90 minutes from Melbourne.

The 121-hectare property offers diverse events spaces - 5,000sqm of flexible undercover pavilions, outdoor open space, cattle yards, camping facilities for up to 25,000, conference centre for 1,000 delegates agricultural research and development, pop up church for weddings, onsite 4WD facilities. The site can cater to a wide range of events including international music festivals, schools functions, physical sport challenges, markets, conferences, camping and 4WD shows and exhibitions.

Of the 150 events held annually, Farmworld is one of the largest attracting over 40,000 attendees annually similar to a Filed Day event. Part of the program includes a rodeo with 5,000 tickets available in 2023.

Governed by a voluntary Board and Committee, Lardner Park reinvests 100% back into the organisation for farm operations, agribusiness development, facility development and maintenance, and community event support.

It is estimated that 230,000 patrons and 100,000 bed nights are generated from the facility.



The site is well suited as a large-scale events venue, there is significant infrastructure and assets on site that can support this use and its isolation from urban areas means that amenity impacts on residents are minimised.

Part C:

Options Assessment & Recommendations

14. Assessment Process

14.1. Overview

This section assess the various use opportunities identified for Dhurringile. It analyses the issues and opportunities with each identified use and assesses these against criteria in order to identify uses best suited to the project site.

This assessment is not exhaustive and does not include community and stakeholder engagement, market assessment, planning assessment or financial assessment. It is based on known information through past strategies and work undertake for Council and through site visits.

The chart to the right provides an overview of Urban Enterprises assessment that has led to our recommendation.

- 1 Workshop and site visit to identify potential candidate uses with regard to the future needs of Greater Shepparton.
- 2 Analysis of uses, with consideration of policy and strategy and general market need and case studies.
- 3 Identification of issues and opportunities, economic and community benefits for each use identified.
- 4 Multi criteria analysis to identify best fit uses.
- 5 Identification of pros and cons for purchase of site.
- 6 Risk assessment to risk level and opportunities for risk mitigation.
- 7 Conclusions & Recommendations.
- 8 Recommended Staging & Next Steps.

15. Issues & Opportunities – Potential Uses

15.1. Overview

The table below provides a summary of issues and opportunities for existing uses. This draws on the assessment of each use and is considered in the multi criteria analysis.

Table 5: Summary of Issues & Opportunities Relating to Uses

Use	Issues	Opportunities
Equine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs associated with relocation of facilities from other equine precincts. Cost associated with establishment of new state of the art facilities. Unknown levels of future commitment to State Equine Centre in Werribee. Lack of connection with a township, services and retail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colocation of Tatura park with other equine facilities – pony club and equestrian. Opportunity for visitor accommodation, food and beverage within the precinct to strengthen the precinct.
Visitor Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs associated with heritage restoration of the mansion and costs associated with establishing accommodation in a heritage building. Isolated location away from townships. Lack of tourism product to support accommodation demand around the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilising the mansion to support a hotel facility. Opportunity to consider a range of accommodation uses – hotel rooms, self contained accommodation, tourist park. Opportunity to include conference and event venues, utilising existing facilities.
Aerodrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs associated with relocation of aerodrome. Requirement to purchase another site to support relocation. Potential impacts on surrounding landowners, with no buffer from other agricultural uses. Difficulty finding uses that can be collocated with an aerodrome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frees up space at the existing aerodrome which can be used for more appropriate urban uses. Opportunity to expand operation.
Arts, Culture & Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated location and small local catchment. Costs associated with refitting existing buildings and facilities. Heritage buildings will be costly to refit for contemporary building code. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a precinct that services visitors to the site Collocation of uses will create a strong precinct that motivates visitation Opportunity to collocate with events, equine uses and visitor accommodation Opportunity to utilise heritage buildings to create high amenity tourism experiences.
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dairy manufacturing equipment has been removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land is irrigated and has substantial water rights which can support a range of agricultural uses. Opportunity to investigate higher intensive horticultural uses. Strong synergies between horticulture and agritourism opportunities.
Worker Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated location is an issue if worker transport is required and strategic. direction for worker housing highlights preference to be located in areas that are accessible to services and transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for worker housing is well documented and there is likely to be strong demand to utilise houses if they were provided. Opportunity to support agricultural workers on the site. Self contained former prison housing is ideal to be utilised as worker housing.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential collocation conflicts with other site uses, given school students may be housed on site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are many assets on the site that would be conducive to education or camp purposes this includes former prison housing, large dining areas, commercial kitchens and training facilities on site.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for further investment in open air events site and supporting infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilisation of existing assets to support events including business events Opportunity to provide visitor accommodation on site.

16. Economic & Community Benefit Assessment

Table 6: Summary of Community and Economic Benefit Relating to Uses

Use	Community Benefit	Economic Benefit
Equine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports projected growth in equine recreation • Encourages activity for local residents resulting in health and well being benefits • Opportunity to free up recreation land in Tatura and Shepparton to accommodate other active recreation • Reduces amenity impacts from large scale equine and cattle events in Tatura • Cost saving to Council by relocating WB Hunter equine activities allowing relocation of sports fields without expensive infrastructure provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to support larger and more events at Dhurringile than Tatura Park, leading to increased visitation to Greater Shepparton and increase expenditure • Encourage greater levels of visitation to Murchison
Visitor Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs in visitor accommodation • Visitor accommodation to support visiting friends and relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major investment in accommodation will support construction jobs • Visitor accommodation fulfils a gap in accommodation in the western part of the municipality • Strengths the tourism credentials of Tatura and Murchison • Increased visitor expenditure from overnight visitors
Aerodrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation supports population growth in Shepparton, by freeing up land within the urban area • Reduces amenity impacts on Shepparton residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports longer term growth in Shepparton and may support more commercial activity
Arts, Culture & Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a destination for residents improving lifestyles attributes for Greater Shepparton's towns. • Supports community engagement in arts and cultural activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens the arts and cultural credentials of Greater Shepparton – a key focus for the visitor economy • Drives additional expenditure from visitors • Creates a new visitor destination motivating new visitors to the region
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local food supply chains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drives expenditure through potential farm gate activity • Opportunity for value adding within the site leading to greater output and jobs
Worker Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports housing for disadvantaged workers and temporary workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports much needed labour in rural areas
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity for upskilling for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to attract visitors for educational purposes
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports community events • Opportunity for residents to engage in large scale events that may not have otherwise been attracted to Greater Shepparton (e.g: large open air music events and festivals). 	

17. Multi Criteria Analysis of Uses

17.1. Overview

In order to identify the most suitable uses for the Dhurringile a set of criteria has been identified which considers, physical suitability, likely impacts on surrounding uses, alignment to strategic need, likely negative environmental impacts, economic benefit, tourism benefit, community benefit. These are described below with assessment of potential uses following.

17.2. Criteria

Physical Suitability

This considered where the proposed use will physically fit on the site without creating significant amenity impacts on surrounding uses.

Impact on Surrounding Properties & Uses

Consideration of what negative impacts the use may have on surrounding properties, given the agricultural uses that currently exist in the surrounding area.

Alignment to Strategic Land Use Need

The use aligns clearly to the short, medium or long term needs of Greater Shepparton community. The site presents a solution to existing known land use constraints and will support positive land use outcomes.

Location Suitability

Consideration of whether the general location is suitable for the use. I.e.: impact of the isolated location on the feasibility and appropriate of the use.

Cost to Council

Consideration of potential capital and ongoing cost to council is an important consideration. Where capital costs can be reduced by outsourcing to the private sector, or where grant funding could be acquired is considered. Consideration is also made to where operational efficiencies can be gained or relocation of uses to the site may create other financial benefit through land sale or cost savings.

Colocation Opportunities

The use will also support colocation opportunities with other compatible uses to create a precinct of scale.

Environmental Impacts

Consideration of whether the use may result in positive or negative environmental impacts. This includes removal of vegetation, potential erosion impacts, emission impacts, contamination impacts, water quality impacts etc.

Economic Benefit

The potential use will deliver improved economic benefits to the Greater Shepparton economy through new jobs, business attraction or growing visitors and spend.

Tourism Benefit

Any proposed uses support tourism benefit and align to the product strengths or needs of Greater Shepparton's visitor economy and that of the Goulburn Valley tourism region.

Community Benefit

Community benefit is delivered through supporting local community organisations, delivering job opportunities, alignment to community need, supporting improved community engagement and amenity.

Alignment to Requirements of First Right Of Refusal

Alignment to the following: *"Government's intention in imposing the community purposes restriction for a sale of surplus government property to Councils is to ensure that future use of a property provides a beneficial gain to the community, and to also ensure that no commercial profit is made from that use."*

17.3. Scoring

The assessment matrix on the following page ranks each of the nine uses identified as potential options for the site. A score out of 10 is provided for against each of the criteria, this relates to how well each use positively responds to the criteria.

- 0 – Lowest score/ the use does not respond positively at all to the identified criteria.
- 10 – Highest score – the use responds very positively to the criteria.

This scoring system is subjective and relates to known information relating to each of the potential uses.

Additional work is required to analyse the suitability and feasibility of these uses.

17.4. Assessment Against MCA

Table 7: Assessment Matrix

	Equine	Visitor Accommodation	Aerodrome	Arts, Culture & Food	Agriculture	Worker Housing	Education	Events
Physical Suitability This considered whether the proposed use will physically fit on the site without creating significant amenity impacts on surrounding uses.	8	10	0	10	10	10	9	6
High Asset Utilisation The alignment of the proposed use with the current assets on the site – whether it adequately aligns and uses the property assets. This also considers opportunity cost, where one use may impact the utilisation of the assets due to conflict	8	9	0	5	7	7	8	5
Negative Impact on Surrounding Properties and Uses Consideration of what negative impacts the use may have on surrounding properties, given the agricultural uses that currently exist in the surrounding area.	7	7	0	9	9	8	7	5
Alignment to Strategic Land Use Need The use aligns clearly to the short, medium or long term needs of Greater Shepparton community. The site presents a solution to existing known land use constraints and will support positive land use outcomes.	8	6	8	4	5	3	5	7
Potential Environmental Impacts Consideration of whether the use may result in positive or negative environmental impacts. This includes removal of vegetation, noise, potential erosion impacts, emission impacts, contamination impacts, water quality impacts etc.	7	6	2	7	7	7	6	4
Economic Benefit The potential use will deliver improved economic benefits to the Greater Shepparton economy through new jobs, business attraction or growing visitors and spend.	7	9	6	4	5	6	6	9
Tourism Benefit Any proposed uses support tourism benefit and align to the product strengths or needs of Greater Shepparton's visitor economy and that of the Goulburn Valley tourism region.	10	10	5	8	2	3	7	10

17.4. Assessment Against MCA (Cont'd)

Table 7: Assessment Matrix (Cont'd)

	Equine	Visitor Accommodation	Aerodrome	Arts, Culture & Food	Agriculture	Worker Housing	Education	Events
Community Benefit Community benefit is delivered through supporting local community organisations, delivering job opportunities, alignment to community need, supporting improved community engagement and amenity.	8	5	7	5	4	7	7	6
Cost to Council Consideration of potential capital and ongoing cost to council is an important consideration. Where capital costs can be reduced by outsourcing to the private sector, or where grant funding could be acquired is considered. Consideration is also made to where operational efficiencies can be gained or relocation of uses to the site may create other financial benefit through land sale or cost savings.	2	8	1	7	9	5	8	4
Colocation Opportunities The use will also support collocation opportunities with other compatible uses to create a precinct of scale.	7	10	1	10	7	5	6	8
Location Suitability Consideration of whether the general location is suitable for the use. I.e.: impact of the isolated location on the feasibility and appropriate of the use.	7	7	8	5	10	1	5	7
First Right of Refusal Requirements. Future use of a property provides a beneficial gain to the community, and to also ensure that no commercial profit is made from that use.	9	4	6	6	4	8	7	8
Score	88	91	44	80	79	70	81	79

18. Best Fit Uses

18.1. Overview

Preliminary research and assessment reviews potential uses that may be considered for the Dhurringile site. The options assessment included a review of each use against assessment criteria to highlight best fit uses.

The following are conclusions in relation to this.

18.2. Best Fit Uses

Based on the assessment criteria, the following uses whereby best fit for the subject site.

Equine

Equine is well suited to the site given the land area available and the existing facilities that can be repurposed. Relocation of infrastructure from Tatura Park would support this opportunity. Visitor accommodation, food and beverage could also be collocated with equine uses.

Visitor Accommodation

There are gaps in visitor accommodation in Greater Shepparton, and the site has a number of assets including the mansion that could be repurposed for this use. Colocation with other tourism product, events and experiences will be critical the success of this use.

Arts, Culture & Food

There is opportunity to repurpose a number of heritage and contemporary buildings for arts, food and culture businesses. There is opportunity to create scale whereby businesses can cross pollinate each other similar to the Mill in Castlemaine.

Agriculture

The site is already used for agricultural purposes and has excellent infrastructure including irrigation and water rights to support intensive agricultural uses. This also provides opportunity for agritourism uses on site. There is also interest from Rumbalara in the agricultural land which would support and strengthen the sites connection with Greater Shepparton's first nations community.

Education

The existing assets on site are highly suitable for education uses including school camps. Former prison housing, dining area and trades school are very conducive to these uses.

Events

Whilst there are many large event spaces in Greater Shepparton, this site presents opportunity for significantly large events without creating large amenity impacts in the urban areas of Shepparton. There are also many existing facilities on the site that could be used for event purposes.

18.3. Unsuitable Uses

Based on the assessment criteria, the following uses are unlikely to be suitable for the subject site.

Aerodrome

The aerodrome would consume almost the entire site and require purchase of additional land. The existing built infrastructure on site is unlikely to be suitable for the aerodrome and there are limited other uses that could be collocated with the aerodrome.

Worker housing

Whilst the former prison housing is well suited to worker housing, the isolated location is not a favoured location for worker housing given the poor access to services and transport and could lead to greater social isolation for potentially vulnerable workers.

18.4 Recommended Uses

Further work is required to assess the feasibility of uses, however, on the assessment of uses undertaken in this report, Dhurringile is best suited to the establishment of an equine, events and tourism precinct. This will support freeing up of strategic sites within Tatura and Shepparton for future growth and maximise the assets at Dhurringile, as well as drive community and economic benefit.

Further work is required to determine the comparability of existing uses on the site and the sites capacity to support these uses together.

Initial assessment shows the following uses would complement each other and create a cohesive events and tourism precinct:

- **Equine.** Establishment of an equine precinct, collocating uses currently held at Tatura Park and WB Hunter Reserve. This would also include relocating infrastructure from Tatura Park and utilising existing infrastructure.
- **Visitor Accommodation.** Redevelopment of the historic mansion for use as hotel, reuse of former prison housing for self contained accommodation, identifying a location for camping and caravans.
- **Arts, Culture and Food.** Repurposing the farm administration into an arts and cultural hub with food opportunities considered also.
- **Agricultural.** Areas that are not required for events and equine use may contribute to be used for agriculture, with farm gate opportunity as well.
- **Events.** The precinct would support, equine, livestock, music, exhibitions, business events, social events. Much of the existing infrastructure could be repurposed to support events.
- **Education.** Education uses may also be considered, however, it has less synergies with the above uses.

19. Pros & Cons of Council Purchase

19.1. Pros & Cons of Council Purchase

Pros of Council Purchase	Cons of Council Purchase																		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique opportunity to purchase a site for \$2.5 million which has substantial capital value through built assets and water rights. Could resolve long term issues with Tatura Park and its competing use as a recreation asset and minimise costs associated with sports City. Opportunity to establish an equine precinct that combines all equine uses in one location. Will drive visitation, expenditure and jobs in Greater Shepparton and create much needed visitor economy product that would encourage visitors to stay longer and stay overnight. Will support overnight visitation through the establishment of visitor accommodation on site. Opportunity to protect and celebrate a key piece of Greater Shepparton's history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site has an extensive number of assets that require maintenance including buildings of heritage significance. Ongoing maintenance costs of \$400,000 would need to be funded or mitigated. Cost estimates are outlined in the table below. <table> <tr> <th>Item</th><th>Cost Estimates</th></tr> <tr> <td>Building – essential safety Measures</td><td>\$120K per annum</td></tr> <tr> <td>Building Maintenance</td><td>\$120K per annum</td></tr> <tr> <td>Road maintenance (sealed and unsealed roads, carparks)</td><td>\$20K per annum</td></tr> <tr> <td>Footpath Maintenance</td><td>\$20K per annum</td></tr> <tr> <td>Cleaning (dependent on lease/usage arrangements)</td><td>\$100K plus</td></tr> <tr> <td>Fencing</td><td>Unknown</td></tr> <tr> <td>Security</td><td>Unknown</td></tr> <tr> <td>Utilities (gas, water, power)</td><td>Unknown</td></tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Justice previously undertook a heritage review to cost restorative works to the heritage buildings within the project site. The costs for these works were estimated at \$3 million. Council would need to take on the liability of these costs for restorative works. Cost to establish an equine and events infrastructure including relocation of existing infrastructure from Tatura Park. Opportunity cost relating to budget and resources being directed to Dhurringile could result in other Council being pushed out or not completed. 	Item	Cost Estimates	Building – essential safety Measures	\$120K per annum	Building Maintenance	\$120K per annum	Road maintenance (sealed and unsealed roads, carparks)	\$20K per annum	Footpath Maintenance	\$20K per annum	Cleaning (dependent on lease/usage arrangements)	\$100K plus	Fencing	Unknown	Security	Unknown	Utilities (gas, water, power)	Unknown
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20. Risk Assessment of Council Purchase

20.1. Overview

The adopted risk assessment methodology is based on the Australian Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management Principles and Guidelines. The process involves identifying:

- The likelihood of a hazard occurring;
- The consequence of a hazard occurring;
- The corresponding risk level of the hazard occurring (based on the matrix);
- Proposed mitigation measures to manage or mitigate the hazard; and
- An assessment of the effectiveness of the mitigation.

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost Certain					
Likely					
Possible					
Unlikely					
Rare					

Extreme Risk	Immediate action required to mitigate serious consequence such as death or loss of bodily functions, huge financial loss, or catastrophic effect on operations
Significant Risk	Urgent attention or investigation required to avoid severe injury, loss of production, major financial loss, major effect on operations.
Moderate Risk	Targeted, specific attention required to mitigate high financial loss, significant effect on operations.
Low Risk	Managed through routine operations or some specific interventions. These risks carry low to no financial loss or personal injury and minimal effect on operations.

20.2. Risk Assessment of Council Purchase

Risk	Detail	Risk Level	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Capital Investment Required	Capital is required to repurpose and relocate infrastructure to the site. Key costs, would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of equine and events infrastructure and repurposing of the mansion for visitor accommodation. 	●	Mitigation of costs for establishment of equine and events infrastructure can be made by relocating infrastructure from Tatura Park. Costs relating to redevelopment of the Mansion could be undertaken by a private sector investor. The community and economic uses identified for the site would be well suited to State and Federal Government Grants program.	●
Ongoing Site Maintenance	Ongoing site maintenance is estimated at above \$400k per annum.	●	These costs may be mitigated through leasing out assets including the agricultural land and mansion. These cost would also be offset as the site would house relocation of existing uses including Tatura Park and WB Hunter which already have maintenance budgets allocated. Events at the site would also drive revenue to cover asset maintenance.	●
Heritage Building Costs	A heritage report shows that \$3 million is required for improvement to heritage buildings.	●	Improvement to the Mansion as identified in the heritage report may be undertaken by the private sector if the site was leased for investment and operation.	●
Environment Risk	Environmental risk is likely to be minimal from the uses identified. The site has operated as a prison and farm and is largely cleared of native vegetation in addition the site is connected to waster water treatment plant for Tatura with adequate capacity to service for than 500 people on site permanently.	●	No mitigation measures are required	●
Community Risk	The site uses identified would have lower level risk on surrounding neighbours than the prison use and anecdotally there is strong community support for the site to be utilised as an events precinct.	●	No mitigation measures are required	●
Political Risk	There is a large opportunity cost of not purchasing the site, given the space requirements for recreation and events and competing uses in urban areas of Greater Shepparton. Anecdotally there is significant interest in the site to support community uses including recreation uses and heritage interpretation.	●	No mitigation measures are required	●
Economic Risk	The economic benefits of the uses identified are significant, the site will support growth in tourism and events and an increase in expenditure and jobs.	●	No mitigation measures are required	●
Financial Feasibility Risk	A number of the uses for the site are untested and the isolation of the site presents the largest risk to feasibility of the uses identified. Purchase of the site would potentially mean that other projects Council has in the pipeline for investment would be impacted.	●	Collocation of uses and investment in product will support the feasibility of uses. Undertaking a feasibility study that also considered operation of the uses is critical for the project.	●

21. Conclusion

21.1 Key Conclusions

- \$2.5 million purchase of the Dhurringile site presents excellent value as a property asset given the level of infrastructure and quality agricultural land on the site. Most property assets in Dhurringile have been built in the past 30 years and have potential for reuse and repurpose.
- Purchase of the site presents a significant strategic opportunity for Greater Shepparton to acquire a large land holding that can support the future recreation and community needs of Greater Shepparton and supports relocation of existing facilities that are at capacity or limiting capacity for growth, e.g. Tatura Park.
- The heritage mansion is a financial liability however it has immense cultural and heritage value for the region. It also has opportunity to be repurposed and leased to a private operator.
- There are financial liabilities relating to maintenance of the site and in particular the built assets. There are however mitigation strategies for this including:
 - Leasing of assets and agricultural land to drive revenue; and
 - Removal and demolition of assets that are not required or have no heritage value.
- **The purchase of the site presents the opportunity for a substantial long term strategic community and economic asset for Greater Shepparton. It is Urban Enterprises view that the long-term community and economic benefits outweigh the financial risks associated with the purchasing the site. Through careful planning many of these financial risks may be mitigated.**
- The process forward must consider a staged approach to site management. The first stage should consider opportunities to lease assets in the short term to offset maintenance costs.

21.2 Staging & Next Steps

Below provides an outline of indicative staging recommended by Urban Enterprise. This considers delivering further understanding to potential uses, the sites development and mitigation of maintenance and operational costs in the short term.

Stage	Tasks	Indicative Timeframe
Purchase the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate to purchase the Dhurringile 	0-3 months
Identify short term lease opportunities – up to 2 years to assist in covering site maintenance costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify assets that may be outsourced, work with an agent to assist in identifying these (agricultural land, short term housing, storage etc) Ensure the leaseholds are flexible and do not prevent future site opportunity arising from the feasibility study and masterplan. Develop leaseholds and EOI for leaseholds 	0-3 months
Feasibility study of identified uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand and need for the uses Appropriateness of the site to support the use Engagement with stakeholders and community Collocation of uses that are complimentary and demonstration of uses that 'fit' and compliment each other Operational and management considerations for the site Likely cost implications for council Planning property constraints Any community or environmental impacts Broad concept masterplan demonstrating how uses can be collocated Capital requirements Staging of development Action plan for delivery 	0-6 months
Site masterplan, business plan and business case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed site and building assessment Stakeholder engagement Identify buildings and assets that can be repurposed to identified uses Identify buildings that are surplus to requirements and present as liabilities Develop a detailed concept masterplan Prepare costings for infrastructure renewal and relocation Prepare a business operations plan and governance structure Prepare a business case with consideration of economic impact, cost benefit 	6-18 months
Delivery of site masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate funding opportunities Apply for grant funding to implement project components Undertake preliminary works and demolition of assets not required 	18 months +



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