CW.5 ATTACHMENT

# Macedon Ranges Shire Council
# Gisborne Early Years Feasibility Study

Draft 2012

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## Macedon Ranges Shire Council's Integrated Children's Services Philosophy

*We aim to provide an environment that fosters relationships between families, services and the broader community.*

*We believe in offering an integrated, collaborative service delivery that crosses disciplinary boundaries and encourages families to move between programs and services, both permanent and visiting.*

## Project Steering Group

The Gisborne Early Years Feasibility Study has been managed by a Project Steering Group comprising the Manager Community Services; Early Years Services Coordinator and (Acting) Maternal and Child Health Coordinator.

The Project Steering Group and the consultants would like to thank the residents of Gisborne and surrounds and the service providers who contributed to the development of this study.

*We acknowledge the lands of the Dja Dja Wrung and Wurundjeri peoples and wish to acknowledge them as the traditional owners.*

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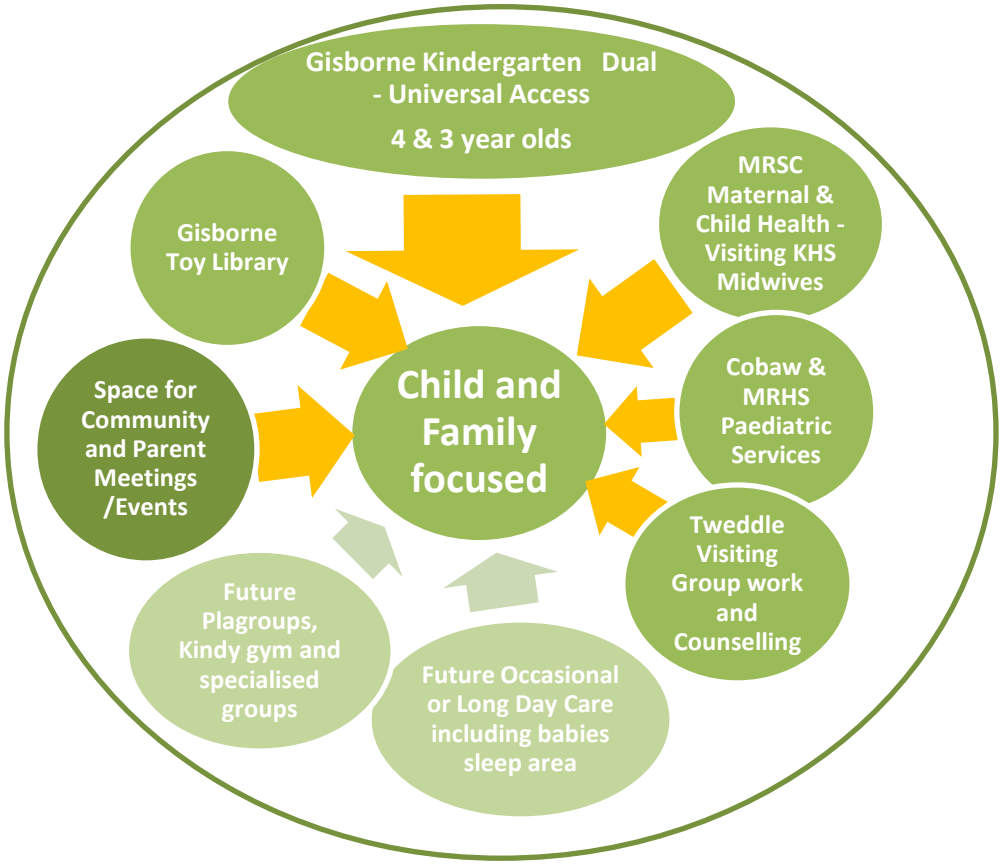
## Executive Summary

The Gisborne Early Years Feasibility Study aims to incorporate the vision of the Macedon Ranges Early Years Plan in a setting that invites children and families to actively engage in positive, early years' development.

The proposed integrated child and family centre aims to provide:

- A dual kindergarten with capacity to provide Universal Access for 4 year olds
- Three year old kindergarten
- Opportunities for families to feel part of a community and to utilise meeting and event spaces in a child friendly setting
- Access to maternal and child health, paediatric and family services, in a non-institutionalised setting, particularly for families that may not be aware of these services or normally use these supports
- Multipurpose spaces based on the Guiding Principles for the Establishment And Operation of Integrated Children's Centres, and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, whilst providing for staffing ratios
- Spaces for community groups
- For future growth in the demand for child and family services including occasional and long day care, play groups, toy library and specialised activities

**Figure 1: The *Integrated* Concept – Gisborne Child and Family Centre**



# The Project

## Project Background

Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC) manages two kindergartens in Gisborne:

- Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten in the north
- Gisborne Kindergarten on Grant Avenue in the south

Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten has the capacity to accommodate the moderate population growth projected for Gisborne. Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten can also meet the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) requirement to provide every child with access to 15 hours of kindergarten per week by mid-2013.

Gisborne Kindergarten cannot meet either of these demands; it is currently at maximum capacity. Operating a service from this site is not sustainable as it is landlocked and there is no scope for expansion. Council therefore needs to identify an alternative location for a kindergarten that services the south side of Gisborne.

Council also manages the Maternal and Child Health service in Gisborne. Currently this service is operating from a rented property close to other primary health care services and the Gisborne central business district. It is timely to consider integrating the Maternal and Child Health and kindergarten services.

Clark Phillips Pty Ltd (Clark Phillips) has been engaged by Macedon Ranges Shire Council to undertake the Gisborne Early Years Feasibility Study. The consultant team includes Baade Harbour Australia (Architects) who have prepared the locality plans and the cost estimates for the feasibility purposes.

## Project Scope

There are two parts to this study:

- Assessment of the suitability of shortlisted sites for an integrated children's services hub that services the south side of Gisborne. The hub will include Maternal and Child Health and a kindergarten service offering 3 and 4 year old programs.
- Investigation into the feasibility of including other existing family and children's services in the integrated children's services hub.

These two aspects are intrinsically linked and have been considered together.

The study has been managed by a Project Steering Group comprising the Manager Community Services, Early Years Services Coordinator and (Acting) Maternal and Child Health Coordinator.

The Manager Community Services was responsible for monitoring the study and making sure the requirements of the Consultant Brief were met.

## Project Outcomes

The structure of the report includes:

*Section 1* provides an overview of the Victorian and Australian Government policy and planning context for early years' services, under the Council of Australian Government agreements; consideration of relevant findings from Australian and International best practice; the application of the Macedon Ranges Early Years Plan strategies; and the Infrastructure Plan implications for the south of Gisborne and rural balance catchment area.

*Section 2* reviews demographic growth, provides a demographic profile for the 0-9 year age group, and considers the impact on the demand for kindergarten, preschool and early years development services. The study builds on the local planning processes of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC).Regional and sub-regional service data and planning were considered to ensure that the concept recommended complements existing policy, aspirations, goals and culture.

The review included but was not limited to:

- MRSC, Local Government Area and Towns Population Projections 2006-2036, July 2009
- MRSC, Gisborne Population Projections 2006-2036, 2009
- MRSC, Children's and Young People's Service Needs in the Macedon Ranges Shire, July 2009
- MRCS Gisborne Outline Development Plan, September 2009
- MRCS, Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy, July 2011
- MRCS, Universal Access in Macedon Ranges Implementation Plan
- An examination of the residential catchment area of children enrolled at the Gisborne Kindergarten over the last four years

The findings:

- MRSC and the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), Victoria, underestimated the total population growth in the Shire between 2006 and 2011.
- The ABS Census data confirms that there has been growth in both the 0-4 (4.1%) and 5-9 year (2.6%) old populations across the Shire during the last census period.
- In the Macedon Ranges (S)-Balance Statistical Local Area (SLA) the growth in the 0-4 (9.5%) and 5-9 (5.3%) year old populations has increased by more than twice that of the Shire.
- The majority of the population growth for the early years population has occurred in the Macedon Ranges (S)-Balance SLA, and there has been steady growth in the Macedon Ranges (S)-Kyneton SLA. The Macedon Ranges (S) - Romsey SLA has an ageing profile with a decline in the 0-4 (-4.8%) and 5-9 (-0.8%) years populations.
- Confirmed the immediate need to expand the number of licensed early education and care places in Gisborne.

*Section 3* summarises the findings from the consultation undertaken with the Gisborne Kindergarten families, Gisborne Toy Library, Playgroups, Long Day Care service providers, other Kindergarten's in the catchment, Maternal and Child Health, Primary Schools, Health and Family service providers and key stakeholders. The needs analysis was also informed by the Macedon Ranges Early Parenting/ Childhood Services Mapping project, 2012. This section draws together the community and services needs assessment.

The findings:

- Parents are travelling to Greater Melbourne to access a Paediatrician
- There is a strong commitment to the integrated service model by service and community stakeholders
- Parents are engaged and active participants in the planning and governance processes
- Services and organisations have been engaged in the centre planning since 2009 and have a clear understanding of how the integrated services will achieve the desired outcomes by sharing a common philosophy, ensuring professional practice is based on respectful relationships

**Gisborne Kindergarten – Grant Avenue**

In March 2010, MRSC undertook a Planning for the Introduction of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education for the Grant Avenue Kindergarten study.[i] The Grant Avenue Kindergarten is owned by the MRSC and licensed for 28 children per session.

The centre operates as a single isolated service and has no capacity to accommodate any other community services or activities on the site. The facility opened in 1978 and does not reflect contemporary standards:

- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (COAG, December 2009)
- Evaluation of Victorian Children's Centres (DEECD, February, 2010) &Growing, Learning and Thriving (DEECD, 2009)
- Early Childhood Education National Partnership (COAG, 2008)
- National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care National Partnership (COAG, 2009)

The building has ongoing maintenance issues. The building is landlocked and the site is only 800m$^2$. There is not scope for expansion.

The site is set within a residential subdivision, approximately two kilometres from the CBD, accessed by a minor road with no dedicated parking. It is located on a bend which has caused considerable traffic issues. It is not centrally located for walkability.

MRSC has been identified for closure and replacement.[ii] The transition to Universal Access will need to be implemented by 2013 and will constrain the times available for use by the 3 year old kindergarten program. Depending on the timetabling this may require Council to find alternative venues for the 3 year old program.

*Section 4* provides the service plan and functional brief to ensure the concept delivers the outcomes. The service plan outlines the services and programs that service providers have prioritised for inclusion in the integrated child and family centre. A review of the Grant Avenue Kindergarten – Gisborne, Site and Change Management Plan 2010 and the Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, May 2010 were undertaken to clearly identify the issues to be addressed.[iii] The service plan allows for the continued growth in demand for education and care places in Gisborne by providing capacity to include 99 licenced places as required.

There are 243 long day care places in Gisborne and New Gisborne. Currently these places are meeting the demand for long day care places. Given the township and surrounding rural balance population growth, and with over 50% of the Gisborne working population working outside of the Shire, it is estimated that increased demand for long day care integrated with Kindergarten will impact on infrastructure demand between 2016-2021.

Council has worked with its communities, establishing Gisborne and Kyneton as the principal community services centres that respectively take responsibility for integrated human services provision in the south and north of the Shire. The service plan provides for the local community and the broader sub-regional role.

As a rural SLA with a strong commuter employment base and growing number of dual working parent households there is a need for an integrated children's and family centre, and further development of localism and community based governance. This new community infrastructure would respond to revised intra-Census growth estimates of an additional 122 children (Gisborne SA2) aged between *0-4* years of age.

*Section 5* provides the site analysis and provides a cost/benefit analysis to guide the recommendations. A' potential sites review' was conducted to identify the preferred site for the centre with the view to provide accessibility for families in the potential catchment area. The review considered the zoning and overlay controls as set out in the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme; bushfire risk; and traffic flow management through consultation with planning and relevant authorities.

The Daly Reserve was rated as the most suitable site for an integrated children's services hub that services the south side of Gisborne.

**Recommended Site – The Daly Reserve**

The location and setting are critical to the delivery of the outcomes. The Macedon Ranges Shire Council's, **Gisborne Outline Development Plan (ODP), September 2009** identified the need for the design to be reflective of the semi-rural character of the Shire. Consultation and research reinforced this priority in the criteria for decision making. This resulted in the site selection considering the visualisation of natural settings, and maintaining close proximity for children and families to the education precinct, in addition to the other planning requirements.

The Daly Reserve is located at 63 Howey Street, Gisborne [Refer to Figure 2] – PT Lot 2 LP 128055 P/Gisborne PT V9290, F651 (excludes the heritage area of the historic Orchard and Farm House and the Aitken Road Reserve).

The site is located in the 'Education Precinct' immediately south of town centre.

The site is owned by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. The Integrated Child and Family Centre would be owned by Council. The site is zoned Public Use Zone 6 (PUZ6) and has a total area of 4.02ha (including Gisborne 1st Scouts Group Hall and treed areas).

The site is currently underutilised. Co-location with the 1st Gisborne Scouts Group on the site provides the opportunity for day and after school and evening programs to be conducted.

The Daly Reserve provides an idyllic setting, providing the rural ambience and protection from the winds for the children.

The development would provide for re-vegetation, according to the planning requirements to replace any trees that may need to be removed. A planning permit for removal of vegetation and planned replanting would be submitted.

The site provides excellent access and walkability to social infrastructure. The site is:

- Adjacent to the historic farm house and orchard which will provide scope for children's engagement in the orchard
- In walking distance to local schools
- In proximity to the Gisborne Aquatic Centre
- Surrounded by passive open space
- Howey Street connects to the planned Gisborne walking trail

Residents from South Gisborne and the surrounding rural balance areas have easy access along the Melton-Gisborne Road and from Melbourne Road.

The Reserve is not subject to flooding, has excellent landscaping and shaded garden areas to create play areas for each age group. Parents and Friends of the Daly Reserve could assist Council to better utilise the site and promote family friendly usage.

A total of six sites were investigated in detail. Two optional sites have been identified for consideration, should the preferred site at the Daly Reserve not be selected by Council and the community.

The option of the Macedon Ranges Health Service site/s at 10 Neal Street, and the 97-99 Willowbank Road site in Gisborne provide a contingency plan.

*Section 6* provides the development plan and associated documentation for the recommended site for implementation, including:

- Accommodation schedule
- Concept locality plans
- Cost Estimates and Analyses

The recommended concept is planned to provide a welcoming environment for all families that engages children and families in a natural and non-threatening setting. In addition the model has the flexibility to meet local needs, and to provide a municipal and sub-regional role,

in response to changing demographics. [Refer to Section 5]The infrastructure concept encourages participation of families in the development and provision of activities and services by providing flexible spaces to accommodate changing functions and service delivery needs of the community.

## Gisborne Child and Family Centre

The concept aims to maximise utilisation in order to promote economic viability. The co-location of services enables the cost of utilities to be shared, further improving the economic viability of the complex.

The concept encourages an appreciation of the environment and the importance of healthy, active lifestyles to be engendered at an early age, by providing a setting that welcomes the outdoors in.

**Project cost**

The Capital Project is costed at$4,401,000 as of December 2013, with the project going out to Tender at March 2013.

It is recommended that the project be funded across two MRSC budget periods as one continuous build to prevent the additional cost of escalation in construction and to ensure that places are available to meet the growth in demand. The Grant Avenue Kindergarten property is recommended to be sold so that the proceeds can be allocated towards the new Integrated Children's Hub.

The concept provides spaces for individual consulting, group activity and larger multipurpose spaces for:

- Assessment of health and development of children from birth to six years with play observation capacity
- Information to assist maternal health and wellbeing
- Referral to other children's service
- Referral to other health professionals and agencies
- Assistance to further develop parenting skills and confidence
- Education and support through a range of parenting groups
- Referral and advice on Council's immunization program

**Sustainable design and future Universal Access capacity**

The sustainable design and landscaping will ensure that the exotic trees and native vegetation are retained and that if vegetation is required to be removed sensitive replanting of five trees for the loss of one will be implemented. The aim is to provide a natural setting located near the orchard. The Gisborne Child and Family Centre will provide an asset for all members of the community.

The total project Gross Area is approximately 4,000m$^2$including 40 spaces for car parking according to the Clause 52.06 of the planning scheme[iv]. This leaves a total of 6,020m$^2$ treed and open space on the reserve. The concept design has been prepared in accordance with

NQF service and facility requisites for both indoor program delivery and external play area use.

The sustainable design includes the following key service delivery areas conforming to Universal Access and the National Partnership for Early Childhood Education and Care standards.

Zone 1: Dual Kindergarten for 4 year old Universal Access and 3 year old preschool compliant with the NQF and Standards

Zone 2: A multipurpose zone that is designed to cater for future growth in child care services as required. It is designed to be utilised by community groups, Tweddle attachment programs, Gisborne Toy Library, Noah's Ark visiting service, Play groups, occasional care and other community purposes. The multipurpose zone includes a baby sleep area if required and can be divided into smaller and larger spaces as needed.

Zone 3: This zone is designed for integrated early years services including two maternal and child health consulting rooms and a shared consulting room for visiting and integrated services, forming the paediatric service for the southern part of the Shire, including Cobaw Health Services Paediatric Team, Macedon Ranges Health Service Speech Therapy, and Kyneton Health Services Midwifery Services.

Zone 4: This zone provides a multipurpose space for early intervention group activity, meetings and community meeting space.

The facility provides 503 m² of flexible space across zones 2 and 3 for a wide array of early years' service delivery and community meeting spaces. The combination of the site and the open space provides an ideal opportunity for the community to develop a 'Friends of the Daly Reserve' group to better utilise the reserve.

There will be a single entrance that promotes children's engagement with the integrated centre. The shared reception, an integrated centre staff room and amenities and integrated kindergarten office, are designed to enhance the integrated service model by promoting team work. Kitchens, toilets and lockers are to be located to promote safe and efficient access by staff and children appropriately. The multipurpose capacity is aimed to provide flexibility and maximum utilisation.

The Gisborne Children's and Family Centre would use an integrated long day care/kindergarten provision model for the third children's zone, using a cluster based service management approach, i.e. a maximising of the Victorian Government's integrated services provision model based on the *Every Child Matters* approach to centre-based provision.

*Section 7* summarises the recommendations for consideration including recommendations, for Governance and Management arrangements.

The early years are an important time for learning, growth and development. Council's Early Years Service has been established to support families with young children to help all parents give their child the best start in life.

The success of the children's and family centre is the extent to which the outcomes for children and families are met, including:

- Improvement in the health and wellbeing of children and families
- Improvement in the development of children
- Improvement in parenting skills
- Increase in families' social networking

These goals are best addressed by providing a centre that enables:

- The strengthening of support services to families
- Improved access to traditionally-hard-to reach services for families
- Families to move between programs and services
- The provision of services that are sensitive and responsive to family and community cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity

The proposed integrated children's and family centre will bring together the developing and evolving range of services available in the Shire. This will include community groups, non-government organisations, and public and private health professionals. All users will be encouraged to work in a multi-agency way as part of the Macedon Ranges Early Years Parenting /Childhood network to provide services and support to children and families.

# 1. Policy and planning context

The strengthening of early childhood education and care providing the opportunities for each Australian child to have the best possible beginning to 'their learning' is a shared objective of all levels of government.

## 1.1 Integrated Children's and Family Centres

An integrated child and family centre provides opportunities for families to feel part of a community and to access services they may not be aware of or normally use. Such centres play an important role in supporting resilient families and communities. Children and families at risk can be assisted and problems prevented.

The Victorian Government supports an integrated model of children's centres.

**Figure 3 Victorian Government Integrated Children's' Services Model**

**Source: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development*

An early years hub can provide a range of experiences and settings for children and families to positively enhance early years development and achieve school readiness. Providing a range of activities and services in the one location improves accessibility and capacity for the catchment area.

The concept of focal hubs providing connectedness for communities and families has been successfully implemented in the development of children's services and community infrastructure.

This study has incorporated the detailed planning undertaken by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and service providers, and consultation with local families and organisations to identify the most beneficial mix of activity and services to meet the needs identified. The feasibility study has investigated the options that would offer an integrated, collaborative service delivery that crosses disciplinary boundaries and encourages families to move between programs and services, both permanent and visiting within the local community.

The Victorian Government aims to achieve the introduction of Universal Access to early education' providing 15 hours of kindergarten education per week for all 4 year olds. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) has been working closely with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council to support kindergartens and long day care centres to understand and plan for the implementation of 'Universal Access'.

The co-location of children's services enables cross discipline collaboration within the centre and linkages with other services, which may broaden knowledge and skills, and enhance service delivery.

Shared consultation spaces enable a diverse range of services to be provided from a multi-use facility, including:

- Maternal and Child Health
- Early intervention services
- Family support services
- Visiting health professionals
- Community health and health promotion

## 1.2 Government directions

Early childhood is recognised by all Australian Governments as an area for national reform.

There is clear evidence that the early years of a child's life are important for present and future health, development and wellbeing. Increasing the focus of these early years and comprehending their significance will improve the productivity of our nation as a whole[v].

In Australia, nearly 870,000 children are in some form of approved early childhood education and care (Long day care, family day care, in-home care, outside school hours care and occasional care services, approved by the Australian Government to receive Child Care Benefit on behalf of family). On average, those children are spending 17 hours each week in early childhood education and care. There are nearly 14,000 approved service providers offering formal early childhood education and care around Australia – a number that will continue to grow.

In Victoria in 2011, there were 68,327 episodes of preschool program provided to children enrolled in a preschool program. Seventeen per cent of these episodes were provided in local government run kindergartens[vi].

Two National Partnership Agreements have been endorsed through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) – the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education and the Indigenous Early Childhood National Partnership Agreement.

### National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education

Funding will ensure every child has access to quality early education program in the year prior to formal school by 2013. The Victorian government will be funded to implement the Universal Access commitment through bilateral agreements. Every child is to have access to a preschool program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year (600 hours per year).

Gisborne Kindergarten will have difficulty maintaining access for three year olds whilst providing the two kindergarten groups for four year olds, and will not have capacity for the projected growth in demand from the south of Gisborne and rural balance populations.

### Indigenous Early Childhood National Partnership Agreement

This Agreement is the next step in achieving the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Closing the Gap targets for Indigenous children. Contributions include: increasing access to and use of maternal and child health services by Indigenous families; improving access to antenatal care, pre-pregnancy health, teenage sexual health and reproductive health; and establishing a minimum of 35 Children and Family Centres across Australia over five years by June 2014.[vii] There were 15 Indigenous children aged 0-4 years identified in the 2011 Census resident in the Macedon Ranges Shire.[viii]

### Early Years Learning Framework

On 2 July 2009, COAG endorsed the Early Years Learning Framework. The framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young people's learning from birth to five years of age as well as their transition to school. The Early Years Learning Framework is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early education and care.

### National Quality Framework

On 7 December 2009, COAG established a National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care and school age care. Under this framework, all Australian governments have agreed to:[ix]

- Streamlined regulatory arrangements
- A new National Quality Standard
- Improved staff to child ratios
- A more qualified early childhood workforce
- A transparent ratings system, providing families with information about their child's early childhood service
- A new national body to guide implementation and management of the Framework

### National Quality Standards

The National Quality Standard contains guiding principles, quality areas, standards and elements. There are seven quality areas:[x]

- Educational program and practice

- Children's health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements (including qualifications and staff-to-child ratios)
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management

### Legislative Framework

The National Quality Framework (NQF), introduced from 1 January 2012, applies to family day care, long day care; outside school hours care services and preschools (kindergartens) across Australia. These services are referred to as education and care services.

The NQF was established under an applied law system, comprised of the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations which include Specific Provisions for the states and territories.

The National Law and Regulations include:

- Processes for obtaining provider approvals, service approvals and supervisor certificates
- Minimum operating requirements for education and care services, relating to matters such as staffing, physical environment and educational programs
- A new National Quality Standard, against which services will be quality assessed and rated

The National Law also established the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), which is responsible for ensuring that the NQF is implemented consistently across all states and territories.

The Ministerial Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) oversees the NQF, and will review the performance of the ACECQA.

Each state and territory government is responsible for legislation under which child care services are licensed. In Victoria, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) is the regulatory authority[xi].

### Funding

The Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) funds most child care services through the Child Care Support Program.

In Victoria, kindergarten funding is provided by the state government as detailed in *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria, 2010 – 2012*[xii].

### Victorian Government

All limited hours and short term licensed services, a small number of other services that currently hold a standard licence including budget-based services not funded for Child Care Benefit, occasional care, early childhood intervention, and mobile services, and a small number of school holiday care programs (Victorian Children's Services), continue to be required to operate under the Victorian

**Maternal and Child Health Services**

The Victorian Government early years policy recognises that quality early childhood experiences, the home environment, access to health services and participation in learning and care programs such as the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program all directly influence a child's health and development.[xiii]

The Victorian MCH Service is a universal service available for all families with children from birth to school age through a schedule of consultations at key ages and stages, and other activities including parent groups. Additional support is also available through the Enhanced MCH Service, which responds to disadvantaged children and families. Both the Universal MCH Service and the Enhanced MCH Service are supported by the 24-hour MCH Line.

The MCH Service provides a schedule of contacts and activities for all families, with an emphasis on prevention, health promotion, early detection, and intervention where necessary. In addition, the MCH Service provides a universal platform that can:

- Help to identify children and families who require further assessment, intervention, referral and/or support
- Bring families together, foster social networks, support playgroups and strengthen local community connections
- Deliver other services and supports, such as family support services and immunisation programs

MCH service providers have the flexibility to design innovative service models that support service integration and collaboration while maintaining the universal nature of the service. Strategies that promote service integration include co-locating services, establishing interdisciplinary teams, sharing protocols and using common assessment frameworks and referral tools, as well as joint service delivery.

## 1.3 Macedon Ranges Shire Council

At a Gisborne/south Gisborne level there are significant Shire plans and strategies that have major input into determining both an early years services model and capital delivery options.

**The Council Plan 2009-2013** has four major themes that each directly impact on the nature of an Integrated Children's Centre in Gisborne, i.e. the commitments to:

- Sustainable Living - Economic Vitality derived from Sustainable Principles
- Community Wellbeing - Healthy, vibrant and resilient communities
- Sustainable Environment and Infrastructure - Safe, functional assets and a protected natural environment, and
- Responsible Governance - Transparent and accountable leadership and democratic decision-making

The **Family & Children's Strategy 2009-2012** is Council's plan for securing the best possible services and opportunities for the Shire's children and their families.

The objectives of the Strategy fall into four categories.

**Figure 4 Objectives Macedon Ranges Shire Council Children's Strategy 2009-2012**

| Category | Objectives |
|---|---|
| *Children* | • To enhance the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of children<br>• To support a child's right to express their views, to be heard with respect and consideration, and to actively contribute to their community |
| *Families* | • To ensure that families can easily access information about the range of community services, facilities and activities available<br>• To contribute to the development of confident and competent parents |
| *Communities* | • To promote family-friendly communities<br>• To provide support to community-initiated groups, programs and activities which encourage healthy children and families |
| *Service Providers* | • To facilitate the development of strong partnerships between providers of early childhood services<br>• To assist providers of early childhood services to strengthen their professional skills |

A major emphasis is placed on collaboration between all levels of government in order to secure safe and happy futures for children, i.e. 'it is clear that governing bodies at all levels of government have an integral role to play in securing the best future for young children. By investing time, money and other resources in early childhood (birth to eight years), local government authorities can contribute to the development of self-assured, happy and healthy children.'

The Gisborne Outline Development Plan (ODP) provides a clear, long term framework to guide the future residential, commercial and industrial development. The ODP's observation that South Gisborne itself, is some travelling distance from current social infrastructure and Gisborne's Urban Centre, supports the need for a quality integrated services facility with a holistic range of programs accessible to residents south of Gisborne and in surrounding areas.

In terms of design, the ODP states that all planned Centres should be 'reflective of the semi-rural character of Gisborne/New Gisborne'.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council **Early Year's Infrastructure Plan 2009-2019** recommended- 'The replacement of Grant Avenue Kindergarten to a more central Gisborne location, on a site adequate to incorporate a double kindergarten facility and enable complimentary early year's services to be offered from this central site.'

**The (Draft) Settlement Strategy, July 2011** shows that Gisborne will retain and expand in its focal point role within the Shire, becoming a Regional Centre by 2036. As the critical urban centre, Gisborne requires community facilities and services that respond both at a neighbourhood level and potentially at a Shire level. Operation at the latter level means that residents do not have to continually access Greater Melbourne, with long waiting lists, for

more complex service delivery (example: early onset health issues with young children) but instead, have the assurance of local accessibility.

The Gisborne Integrated Child and Family Centre has been developed to service the south of Gisborne and rural balance catering for the local community and the Shire functionality role for the surrounding rural areas.

The dual role was reinforced by the Macedon Ranges Early Parenting/Childhood Project Services Mapping which found the need to address the gaps in services and develop a Paediatric Capacity by bringing services to Gisborne to service the south and Kyneton to service the north of the Shire.[xiv]

**The Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2009-2013** emphasises the need for all facilities to be accessible to all people regardless of impairment or impediment.

**The Shire's Health & Wellbeing Plan 2009 – 2013** embraces a social model of health. This has been considered in planning for the south Gisborne facility.

## 1.4 The Centre for Community Child Health – Royal Children's Hospital

The Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) undertook a study into effective models of integrated service Hubs differentiated between *co-location* of services focused on individual children; *collaboration* between services that share values and beliefs; and *integration* of services which provide a real partnership to support children and families.

The CCCH found that there was a need for integration because:

- Families are more diverse, there have been profound changes in conditions and complexity of raising children
- Service systems have not altered significantly
- Children and families missing out on services
- Children arriving at school poorly equipped to take advantage of the opportunities offered
- The early years are profoundly important, it becomes increasingly difficult to change trajectories as children grow older
- Investments in early childhood services are cost effective, yielding long-term benefits that are disproportionate to the original cost

The study identified changes that were occurring internationally:

- Sure Start (UK)
- Every Child Matters policy framework (UK)
- Toronto First Duty (Canada)
- Healthy Child Manitoba Strategy (Canada)
- Schools of the 21st Century (US)
- Child Friendly Cities (world-wide)

Changes occurring in other States:

*Queensland*

- Consolidation of EY's services into a single department
- Early Years Centres (Integrated Children's Centres)

*South Australia*

- Consolidation of EY's services into a single department
- Every Chance for Every Child
- Children's Centres (Integrated Children's Centres)

*Tasmania*

- Child and Family Centres (Integrated Children's Centres)
- Launching Into Learning

*New South Wales*

- Families NSW whole-of-government prevention and early intervention strategy
- Schools as Community Centres (Integrated Children's Centres)

*Western Australia*

- Child and Parent Centres (10, based in schools)

The CCCH has developed the following resources to support Integrated Children Centre development:

- Evaluation of Victorian Children's Centres – A Literature Review
- Evaluation of Victorian Children's Centres: Framework to support the establishment and operation of Children's Centres

The CCCH defines an Integrated early childhood education and care centre as including the following: Childcare, Preschool, MCH, Family Support, Playgroup, Out of School Hours, drop in capacity, soft entry points (e.g. spaces and activities to promote families meeting with other families, toy library, community kitchen), central intake, information provision, and outreach capacity.

**Findings:**

- An integrated child and family centre should provide spaces that engage children and families from the 'soft entry spaces' to the active participation in learning and development
- The centre should promote and enhance effective integration of service providers by facilitating partnership development activities
- Effective partnerships do not imply a loss of autonomy or integrity of an organisation.

# 2. Demographic Profile

Macedon Ranges Shire (the Shire) is approximately 45 minutes north-west of Melbourne. The Shire covers an area of approximately 1,747 square kilometres and had a population of 41,860, at June 2011.[xv]

Relative to other areas of Victoria, the Shire retains large areas of native vegetation. Due to its proximity to Melbourne, the southern part of the Shire has a significant commuter population who travel to Melbourne for work. The northern part of the Shire is agricultural including sheep and cattle grazing and broad-acre cropping, as well as various manufacturing operations linked to the many wineries and specialty farms.

Gisborne is in the south of the Shire, approximately 54 kilometres north-west of Melbourne. The town of Gisborne retains a village feel with heritage buildings, street plantings of European trees and a network of open space areas along Jackson's Creek. A railway station is located at New Gisborne on the east side of the Calder Freeway. The Calder Freeway and the fast train V/Line service run the length of the Shire.

**Figure 5 Map of the Macedon Ranges Shire**

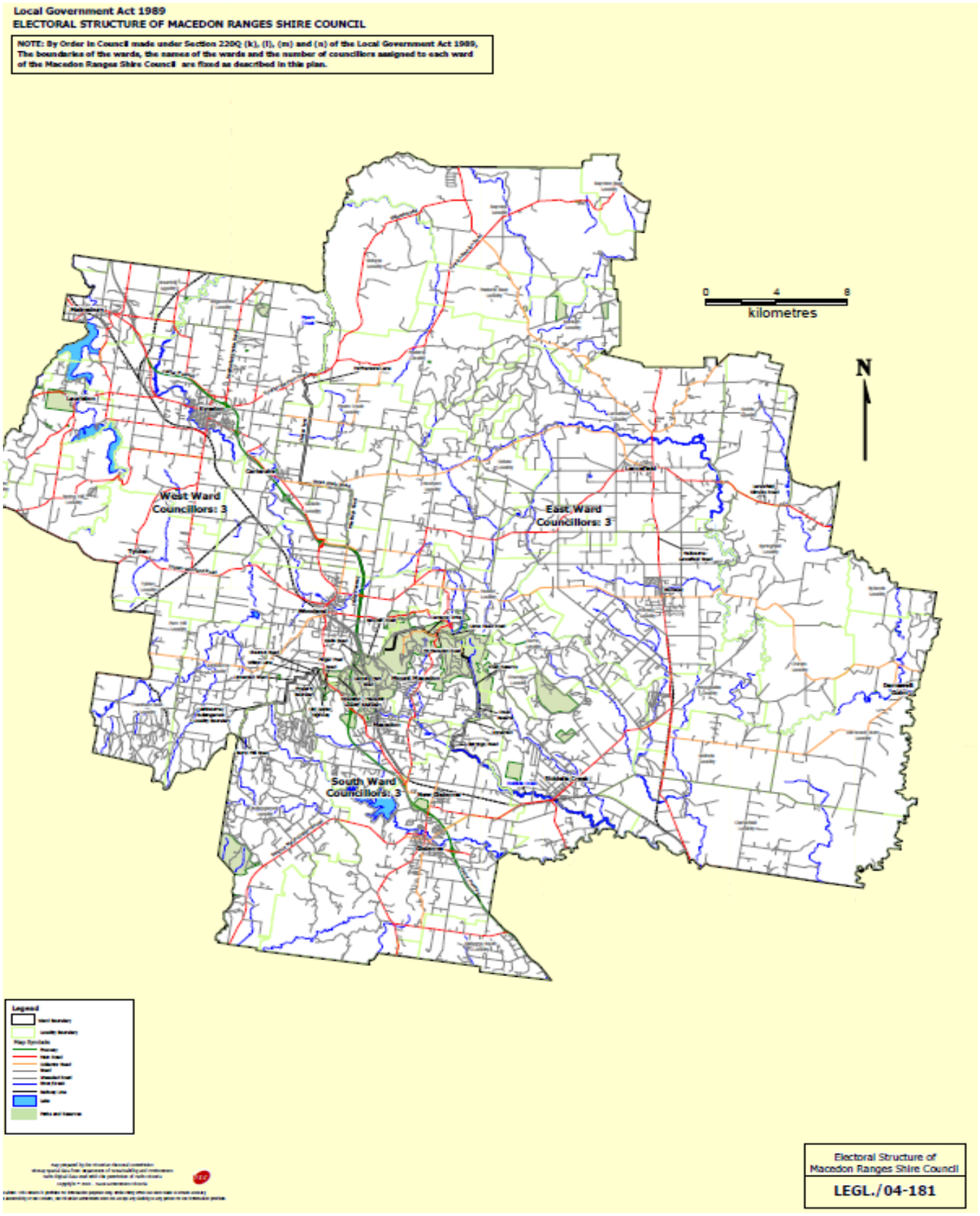
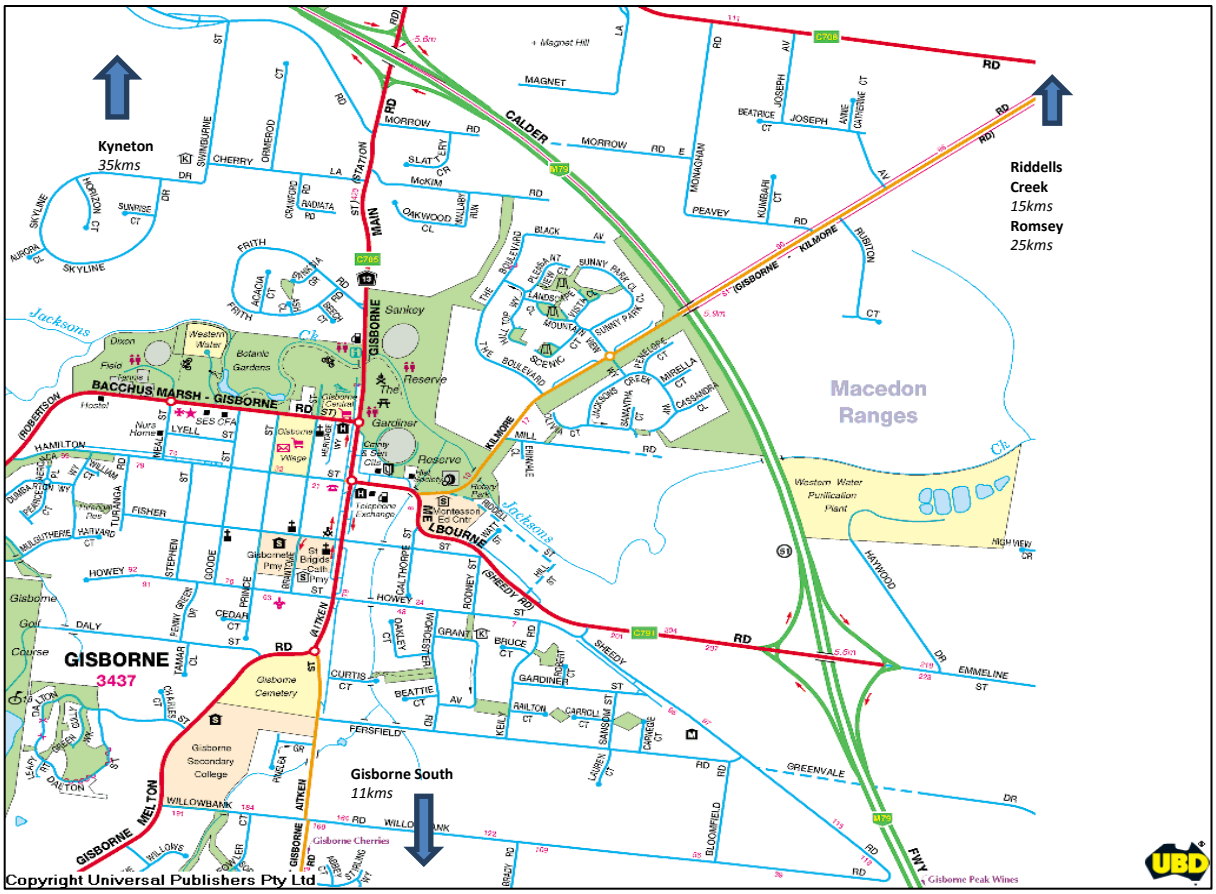


**Figure 6 Gisborne and localities**




According to the Gisborne Demographic Profile, in 2006, compared to the rest of the Shire, Gisborne had the:[xvi]

- Largest population in the Shire with 6,398 residents
- Second fastest average annual population growth rate at 3.5 per cent per annum
- Fastest average annual growth in the number of private dwellings at 4.7% per annum

According to the ABS Census 2011, the Gisborne State Suburb population had grown to 7,289 people of which:

- There were 496 children aged 0-4 years representing 6.8% of the population compared with Victoria 6.6%
- 151 children aged 3 and 4 years attended an educational program representing 7.5% compared with Victoria 7.1%
- The median age was 38 years
- The average household size was 2.8 people

*(Note: These statistical classifications refer to different sized geographical areas and are not able to be compared. However, both statistics demonstrate population growth.)*

## 2.1 Review of demographic data

Whilst there are differences in population numbers and for growth in certain age groups using differing data sets, **it is important to note that both the overall number and the proportion of the early years' population (0-9 years) are growing.** With small numbers, small numerical changes can result in a significant percentage change. For future planning, it is important to consider trends.

Council has undertaken a number of studies to inform planning at shire-wide and local levels. Key reports have been produced, including:

- Macedon Ranges Shire, *Local Government Area and Towns Population Projections 2006-2036*, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, July 2009
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council, *Gisborne Population Projections 2006 – 2036*, 2009
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council, *Children's and young People's Services Needs in the Macedon Ranges Shire*, July 2009

### Shirewide demographics

Regarding population projections for 2011, the base population at 2006 used by Council differs from that used by the Victorian Government Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), Victoria in Future population projections (2012).

MRSC used the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census Usual Resident Population at June 2006; DPCD used the ABS **Estimated Resident Population** at 30 June 2006.MRSC projections for the total population are for a 6.9 per cent growth over the period and DPCD projections for a 7.3 per cent growth.

**Table 1 MRCS data Macedon Ranges (S) early years population change, 2006 -11:**

| Age Group | Year 2006 | Year 2011 | Change 2006-11 | % Change 2006-11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-4 Years | 2,591 | 2,722 | 131 | 5.1% |
| 5-9 Years | 3,004 | 2,998 | -6 | -0.2% |
| Total Pop | 38,360 | 41,005 | 2,645 | 6.9% |

The first round of data from the ABS 2011 Census was released in June 2012. The 2011 **Usual Resident Population (URP)** of the Shire was 41,860 indicating a growth of 3,500 residents (9.1%) in the Shire over the five year period. Note the estimated residential populations had not been released at the time of writing this report. The URP is expected to be lower than the ERP for the Shire in 2012.

In conclusion the growth in total population has been greater than the MRSC and DPCD projections for 2011.

**ABS Census 2011**

The first round of data from the ABS 2011 Census was released in June 2012. The 2011 **usual resident population** of the Shire was 41,860 indicating a growth of 3,500 residents (9.1%) in the Shire over the five year period.

**Table 2 ABS Census Macedon Ranges (S) population change, 2006 -11**

| Age Group | Year 2006 | Year 2011 | Change 2006-11 | % Change 2006-11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-4 Years | 2,591 | 2,697 | 106 | 4.1% |
| 5-9 Years | 3,004 | 3,082 | 78 | 2.6% |
| Total Pop | 38,360 | 41,860 | 3,500 | 9.1% |

**This demonstrates that both Council and DPCD underestimated the growth in total population for the Shire.**

Census data shows a growth in both the 0-4 years (4.1%) and 5-9 years (2.6%)populations across the Shire, between 2006 and 2011.

## Smaller Area Data

The ABS is progressively releasing data from the 2011 Census. Currently, time series data are available at a Statistical Local Area (SLA) level and at a smaller Statistical Area 2 (SA2) level.

**Statistical Local Area (SLA)**

There are three SLAs in the Macedon Ranges Shire. These include:

- Macedon Ranges (S) – Balance SLA which includes the Gisborne township
- Macedon Ranges (S) – Kyneton
- Macedon Ranges (S) – Romsey

*Macedon Ranges (S)-Balance SLA*

In the Macedon Ranges (S)-Balance SLA the overall population has increased at a similar rate to that of the Shire, whilst both the 0-4 and 5-9 years populations have increased **at over twice** that of the Shire. The following data indicates that majority of the early years growth is occurring in the Balance SLA (which includes Gisborne).

**Table 3 ABS Census 2011: Macedon Ranges (S) – Balance early years population change, 2006 -11:**

| Age Group | Year 2006 | Year 2011 | Change 2006-11 | % Change 2006-11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-4 Years | 1,289 | 1,411 | **122** | **9.5%** |
| 5-9 Years | 1,558 | 1,641 | 83 | 5.3% |
| Total Pop | 19,261 | 21,081 | 1,820 | 9.4% |

*Macedon Ranges (S) – Kyneton (SLA)*

For the Macedon Ranges (S) – Kyneton (SLA) over the five-year period:

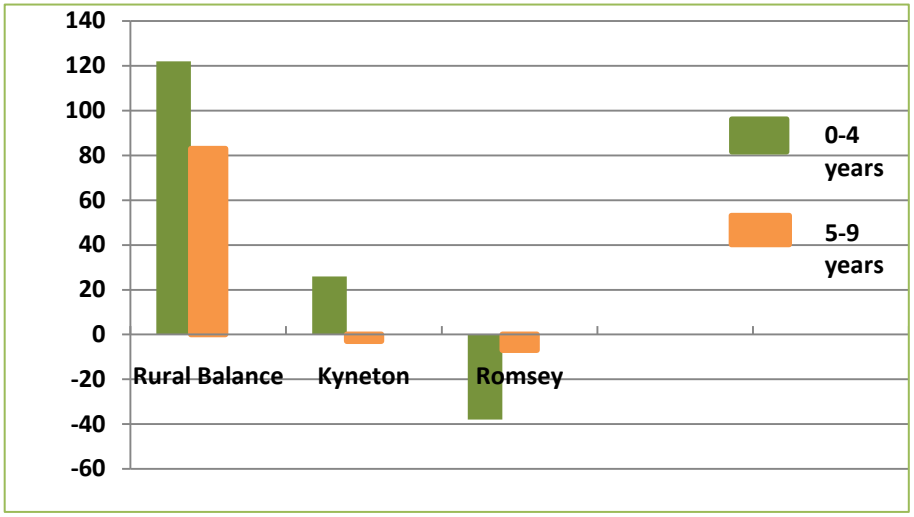
- The 0-4 years population increased by 26 (5.2%)
- The 5-9 years population **decreased** by 3 (0.6%)
- The total population increased by 690 (8.4%)

*Macedon Ranges (S) – Romsey (SLA)*

For the Macedon Ranges (S) – Romsey (SLA) over the five-year period:

- The 0-4 years population **decreased** by 38 persons (4.8%)
- The 5-9 years population **decreased** by 7 persons (0.8%)
- The total population increased by 996 persons (9.2%)

**Figure 7 Comparative growth in 0-4 and 5-9 year old populations ABS Census 2006-2011**




In summary, the growth in the Shire's 0-4 years population of 110 children has largely occurred in the Balance SLA. The chart demonstrates that the growth across the Shire is not equally distributed. The priority localities for early years services and social infrastructure should reflect this.

**Gisborne Statistical Area 2**

The SA2 area is smaller again and includes, New Gisborne, Gisborne and Gisborne South.

**Table 4 ABS Census 2011: Gisborne (SA2) early years population* change, 2006 -11**

| Age Group | Year | | Change | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2006 | 2011 | 2006-11 | 2006-11 |
| 0-4 Years | 647 | 786 | **139** | 21.5% |
| 5-9 Years | 761 | 871 | 110 | 14.5% |
| Total Pop | 9,227 | 10,824 | 1,597 | 17.3% |

* Note: These figures are provided as Enumerated Population

The above table highlights the growth in the Gisborne catchment area and highlights the immediate need to address the demand for early years education and care.

## Projected Population

The following table shows base year populations, estimates and projections according to MRSC and State Government DPCD, prior to the ABS Census 2011 releases.

**Table 5 MRSC and DPCD Shirewide population projections, 2006 to 2026**

| e | Year | | | | | %Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 | 2011-26 |
| MRSC | 38,360 | 41,005 | 43,872 | 46,970 | 50,380 | 14.5% |
| DPCD | 39,989 | 42,898 | 46,152 | 49,898 | 54,039 | 16.3% |

The data sets show similar trends across the 20-year period.

**Shire Early Years' Population Change 2006-2026**

Over the 20 year period, Council projects an increase of 503 children aged 0-4 years (18.5%) and 484 aged 5-9 years (16.1%).

Whilst these figures are higher than the DPCD figures (which project an increase of 348 children aged 0-4 years (12.5%) and 450 aged 5-9 years (13.9%)), both sets of data project similar growth in both age groups indicating an increasing demand for early years' services in the Shire.

**Figure 8 Macedon Ranges Shire - 0-4 years' projected population**

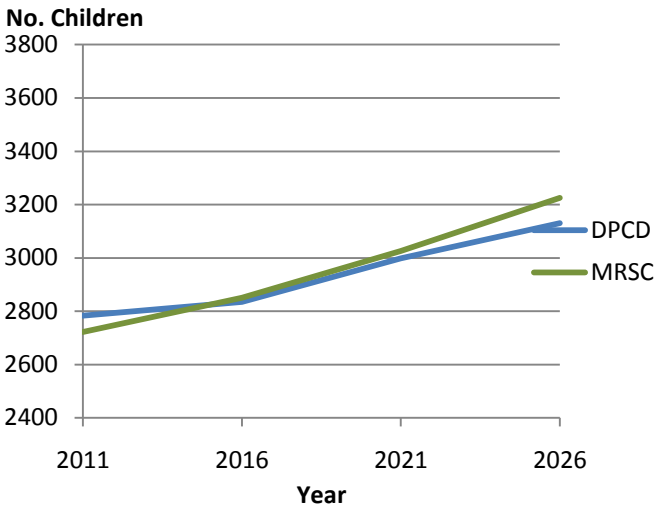
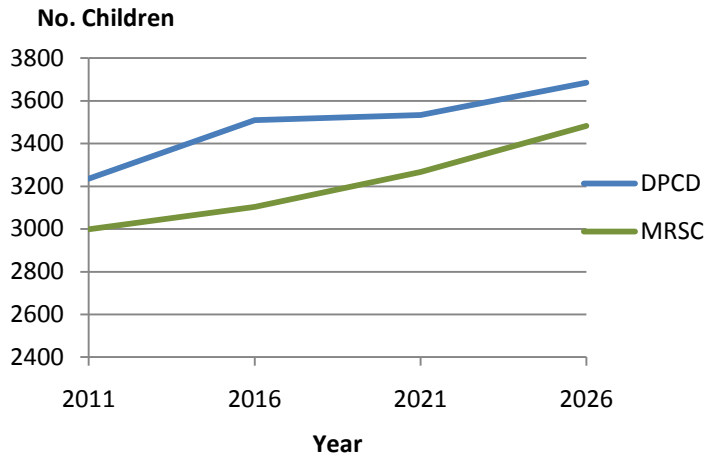


**Figure 9 Macedon Ranges Shire: 5-9 years' population projections**




**Gisborne Projected Population Change**

The following key data is sourced from: *Gisborne Population Projections 2006 – 2036*, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, 2009.

Gisborne's population is expected to increase from 6,398 residents in 2006 to 13,309 residents in 2036: an increase of 6,911 individuals (108%).

Between 2006 and 2036:

- The number of children aged 0-4 years was projected to increase by 442 individuals, a growth of 87%.
- The number of children aged 5-14 years was projected to increase by 876 individuals, a growth of 73%.
- The total number of families with children in Gisborne was expected to increase from 1,141 families in 2006 to 2,099 families by 2036, an increase of 958 families, or 84%. Of the 2,099 families with children in 2036, 1,746 were expected to be couples with children and 353 one parent families.

The following table includes the Census 2011 population for the statistical area of Gisborne SA2 which is **larger** than the **gazetted locality that the Gisborne Population Projections utilised**.

**Table 6 MRSC Projected Population of Young Children in Gisborne, 2006 to 2026 at 5-year intervals at 2009**

| Age groups | Year | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2006 | 2011 | Census 2011 | 2016 | Projections | 2021 | Projections | 2026 | New Projections |
| 0-4 years | 506 | 574 | **786** | 632 | **803** | 700 | **820** | 781 | **834** |
| 5-9 years | 572 | 638 | **871** | 697 | **884** | 764 | **896** | 848 | **909** |
| Total 0-9 years | 1,078 | 1,210 | **1,657** | 1,329 | **1,687** | 1,464 | **1,716** | 1,629 | **1,742** |

**Early Childhood Services Needs**

The key planning document, **Children's and young People's Services Needs in the Macedon Ranges Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, July 2009**, provided estimates of need across a range of early years services.

The ABS Census 2011 data indicates that the above projections will be realised and that they appear to be an underestimation of the projected demand in the areas within the scope of this study. Although the census statistical geographical areas have changed it is reasonable to utilise the SA2 Gisborne which is larger than the urban centre/locality data utilised by MRSC to undertake the projections in 2009. The SA2 Gisborne Census 2011 provides a time series which may be used to project the needs for early childhood services.

The following table applies the growth trend experienced in the last Census interval. Again the growth trend will be impacted by urban boundaries.

**Table 7 Projected Population of 3 year old and 4 year old children, 2006 to 2026 based on Census 2011 Time Series Profile for Macedon Ranges (S), Macedon Ranges (S) – Balance, and Gisborne SA2**

| Area | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Macedon Ranges (S) | 1,095 | 1,149 | 1,206 | 1,265 | 1,328 |
| Macedon Ranges (S)-Balance | 554 | 602 | 654 | 711 | 772 |
| Gisborne (SA2) | 280 | 335 | 396 | 468 | 553 |

Considerations also included:

- The ABS Census 2011 recorded 1,157 children aged 3-4years indicating an underestimation of the number of families in the Shire, by MRSC and DPCD.
- The largest population growth in the Shire, including that of children, is expected to continue to be in township of Gisborne and the southern part of the Shire. The growth in enrolments and the increase in hours will have implications for Council kindergarten infrastructure and on the ability of Council to provide or expand the pre-kinder (3 year old) program.

The MRSC applied the 2009 utilisation rates of services to the projected population to provide the forecast service requirements in Table 8. The data at the locality level has not yet been released to project service needs outlined in Table 8 to this detail. [Refer to consultation with service providers Table 14].

However, by using Gisborne SA2 Census 2011 Profiles, licensed places for Kindergarten and pre-Kinder places have been estimated and compared to the current provision in Table 9.

**Table 8 Early Childhood Services Needs as projected by MRSC 2009**

| Area | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Maternal and Child Health Nursing Equivalent Full Time (EFT)** | | | | | |
| Macedon Ranges Shire | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.4 |
| Gisborne/Macedon Mount Macedon/ Riddells Creek Cluster | 1.4 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 2.0 |
| **Kindergarten Places** | | | | | |
| Macedon Ranges Shire | 327 | 344 | 360 | 382 | 407 |
| Gisborne | 64 | 72 | 80 | 88 | 99 |
| **Pre-Kinder Places** | | | | | |
| Macedon Ranges Shire | 130 | 136 | 142 | 151 | 161 |
| Gisborne | 25 | 29 | 32 | 33 | 39 |
| **Family Day Care Places** | | | | | |
| Macedon Ranges Shire | 240 | 252 | 264 | 280 | 299 |
| Gisborne | 44 | 53 | 59 | 65 | 72 |
| **Centre-based Child Care Places** | | | | | |
| Macedon Ranges Shire | 660 | 693 | 726 | 771 | 822 |
| Gisborne | 129 | 146 | 161 | 178 | 199 |

The introduction of universal access and the utilisation of pre-Kinder places have been applied to update the projections. The table assumes that Kindergarten places will be utilised for two groups per week (30 hours universal access) and that 63% of 3 year-olds will attend Pre-Kindergarten.

**Table 9 Updated Projections for Kindergarten and Pre-Kinder Places Required as at July 2012**

| | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Kindergarten Places** | | | | |
| Gisborne SA2 | 89 | 105 | 124 | 147 |
| **Pre-Kinder Places** | | | | |
| Gisborne SA2 | 99 | 117 | 138 | 164 |
| **Total** | 188 | 222 | 262 | 311 |

In July 2012, MRSC Kindergartens in Gisborne SA2 provided 84 licenced places.

Gisborne Montessori provided 75 licenced places and Twin Oaks provided with long day care 131 licenced places. There is a need for MRSC to create more capacity for Kindergarten services for universal access and Pre-Kinder places.

## 2.2 Health

The following key indicators substantiate the need for integrated services to address demand.

### Burden of Disease

The *Burden of Disease Study 2001* identified that for the 0 to 4 year age group, the highest burdens of disease in the Shire were:[xvii]

- Non communicable diseases (Cancer)
- Congenital Abnormalities
- Infectious diseases
- Chronic respiratory diseases (Asthma)
- Injuries

In the 5-14 year age group, the highest burdens of disease in the Shire were:[xviii]

- Non communicable diseases (Cancer)
- Mental Disorders
- Injuries
- Chronic respiratory diseases (Asthma
- Infectious diseases
- Other

According to the 2011 Census, across the Shire:

- There were 27 children aged 0-4 and 138 children aged 5-14 who had a need for assistance with a core activity.
- 495 couples with children or one parent families with children (4.4%) earned less than $600 per week.
- 28.9% (4,102) of dwellings had either 0 or 1 motor vehicle

The following key data is sourced from the Central Victorian Health Alliance Community Profile[xix]

### Low Birth Weight Babies

Between 2006 and 2008, 5.4% of babies born in Macedon Ranges were low birth weight (<2,500 gms). This figure was lower than the Victorian proportion (6.5%)[xx]

### Maternal and Child Health Centre Visits

In 2010-11, compared to Victoria, Macedon Ranges had a lower participation rate for the 8 months key stage visits.

**Table 10 Maternal and Child Health Centres - Participation rates (%) for key stage visits (2010/11)**[xxi]

| Area | Home consult | Weeks | | | Months | | | | Years | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 18 | 2 | 3.5 |
| M. Ranges (%) | 97.4 | 96.7 | 93.9 | 93.5 | 89.4 | 82.5 | 82.5 | 77.2 | 73.2 | 68.8 |
| **Victoria (%)** | **100.1** | **97.6** | **96.8** | **96.3** | **93.7** | **85** | **81.9** | **71.5** | **68.9** | **62.8** |

**Maternal and Child Health – Reasons for Referral**

In 2010-11, compared to the Victorian average:

- Macedon Ranges had a higher proportion of mother or family referrals for emotional reasons and for impaired social interaction reasons.
- Macedon Ranges had a higher proportion of child health and wellbeing referrals for visual, auditory, communication, DDH, and growth reasons

**Table 11 Maternal and Child Health: Reason for Referral – Mother or Family**

| Area | Emotional | Physical | Social Interaction Impaired | Domestic Violence | Family Planning | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M. Ranges | 52.6% | 33.1% | 11.3% | 3.0% | 0.0% | **133** |
| Victoria | **47.9%** | **37.1%** | **10.7%** | **2.5%** | **1.8%** | **14,135** |

**Table 12 Comparative Percentages: Reason for Referral to MCH– Child Health and Wellbeing**

| Area | Visual | Auditory | Communication | DDH | Congenital Anomaly | Growth | Development | Potentially Disabling Condition | Accident | Illness | Nutrition Altered | Dental/ Oral | Protective notification |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MRS | 6.60% | 17.40% | 20.90% | 17.70% | 0.60% | 8.20% | 11.40% | 3.50% | 0.60% | 5.70% | 4.10% | 2.20% | 0.90% |
| Vic | **6.30%** | **14.60%** | **13.40%** | **14.20%** | **2.10%** | **6.00%** | **14.60%** | **10.10%** | **0.60%** | **7.00%** | **4.70%** | **5.80%** | **0.50%** |

## Australian Early Development Index

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of children's development as they enter school. Based on the scores from a teacher-completed checklist, the AEDI measure five areas, or domains, of early childhood development:

- Communications skills and general knowledge
- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills (school based)

The proportions of developmentally vulnerable children on one or more domains, or two or more domains from Gisborne and surrounds (Bullengarook, Gisborne, Gisborne South) were

below Victorian figures. However, for New Gisborne, the proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains was above the Victorian proportion[xxii].

**Table 13 Proportions of developmentally vulnerable children**

| Area | Proportion (%) developmentally vulnerable | |
|---|---|---|
| | One or more domains | Two or more domains |
| Gisborne and surrounds | 11.4 | 5.6 |
| New Gisborne | 20.9 | 14.0 |
| Macedon Ranges Shire | 14.6 | 8.5 |
| Victoria | 20.3 | 10.0 |

**Transport**

At 2009, 1,632 (54 per cent) workers who resided in Gisborne commuted to Melbourne for work.[xxiii]In 2011, 24.1 per cent of Gisborne households only had one motor vehicle.[xxiv]

**Findings**

- The 2011 Census data confirms continuing population growth in Macedon Ranges Shire and growth in the number of children aged 0 to 9 years
- MRSC and Victorian Government population projections indicate continuing growth in the Shire's early years' population which will continue to place demand on services
- The growth in the early years' populations between 2006 and 2011 in smaller areas inclusive of Gisborne indicates a need to reconsider projected growth and associated demand on services in the Gisborne catchment area
- The projected growth in the total population and in the number of children aged 0-9 years in Gisborne needs to be supported by services and infrastructure.
- Access to early years services will be important for young families
- The large number of Gisborne residents working outside of the Shire indicates a growing need for child care
- The partnership development in children's services would increase access for children and families and promote integrated planning
- An integrated children's service needs to be easily accessible for families without a motor vehicle
- An integrated children's services facility would provide an opportunity to increase access to early intervention and preventative health services.

The Centre will:

- Increase the contact that children have with health professionals
- Enable service providers to make earlier identification of sense disorders, conduct disorders and other conditions
- Help address chronic conditions in young children
- Help improve early childhood development across the AEDI domains
- Create community development and positive outcomes

# 3. Service needs consultation and assessment

Macedon Ranges Shire Council has undertaken extensive consultation across the Shire to inform the development of policy and planning documentation detailed in Section 1. These documents identify and support the need for the redevelopment of Kindergarten services in Gisborne.

The Gisborne Early Years Feasibility consultation has been undertaken with key stakeholders to identify local early years' service gaps, opportunities to co-locate early year's services in the area, and community needs that could be met through a children's services hub.

Consultation was undertaken with the following groups and organisations:

- Macedon Ranges Shire Council Planning Department
- Gisborne Kindergarten, Staff and Committee
- Gisborne Maternal and Child Health Service
- Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten
- Cobaw Community Health Services Ltd (Cobaw)
- Gisborne Church of Christ Playgroup
- Gisborne Montessori School
- Gisborne Primary School
- Gisborne Toy Library
- Goodstart Early Learning Centre (New Gisborne)
- Macedon Ranges Health Services
- New Gisborne Play Group
- Noah's Ark (Bendigo)
- St Paul's Playgroup
- St Luke's (Anglicare)
- Tweddle Child and Family Health Services
- The Ranges/Twin Oaks Childcare

**Victorian Government Departments - Loddon Mallee Region**

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)
- Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Regional Development Victoria (RDV)

## 3.1 Early Years Planning

The **Macedon Ranges Early Parenting/Childhood Service Mapping Project** commenced in early 2012, bringing together early years' services providers to collaboratively plan to deliver high quality services to families and children across the Shire. At the February meeting, the following aims were agreed:

- To function as a network of services with no wrong door
- To have a good shared knowledge of services available
- To have good connections between our services

- To be able to pick up problems early
- To be able to provide a quick initial response
- To be able to provide a range of services that meet the needs of families that are 'below threshold' of specialist services to prevent those issues becoming more serious
- To be flexible
- To be able to provide a range of support options that families can view as discrete

This demonstrates the commitment to move to a collaborative, and if facilities are provided, integrated model of service delivery in the Shire.

Early years services in Gisborne include those that are located in the township as well as those provided by shire-wide, sub-regional, regional and state-wide service providers. For the purpose of this study, services located in surrounding communities have also been considered.

The following table shows centre based children's services in Gisborne and surrounding communities.

**Table 14 Capacity Assessment Report Funded Licensed Children's services in Gisborne and surrounding communities**[xxv]

| Service Name | Suburb | Licensed Capacity | 4-yr | 3-yr | Long Day Hours Care | Out of School | Vacation Care | Teacher Hours Current | Teacher Hours After Universal Access |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Ranges /Twin Oaks CCC | Gisborne | 131 | In LDC | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 40 | |
| Gisborne Kindergarten | Gisborne | 28 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | |
| Swinburne Avenue Children's Centre | Gisborne | 56 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | 94.25 | 127.25 |
| Gisborne Montessori School | New Gisborne | 75 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | 96.5 | |
| GoodStart Early Learning Centre | New Gisborne | 112 | Unfunded | | ✓ | | | | |
| Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool | Riddells Creek | 40 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | 74 | 74 |
| Riddells Creek Kindergarten | Riddells Creek | 28 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | 38 | 38 |
| Good Start ELC | Riddells Creek | 25 | | | | | | 32 | |
| Good Start ELC | Woodend | 60 | | | | | | 30 | |
| Romsey Kindergarten | Romsey | 58 | | | | | | 63 | 77 |
| Woodend Kindergarten | Woodend | 50 | | | | | | 125 | 167.5 |
| Lancefield Kindergarten | Lancefield | 25 | | | | | | 63.5 | 84.5 |
| Bruce Street Kindergarten | Macedon | 30 | | | | | | 61.75 | 83.75 |
| Lady Brooks Kindergarten | Kyneton | 46 | | | | | | 126 | 168.25 |
| **Total Licensed Places** | | **746** | | | | | | **844** | **820.25** |

**Table 15 All unfunded services in the Municipality**

| Service Name | Suburb | Total Teacher Hours After UA |
|---|---|---|
| Lancefield Early Education Centre | Lancefield | 20 |
| Macedon Child Care Centre | Macedon | 24 |
| Good Start Centre New Gisborne | New Gisborne | 38 |
| Romsey Early Education Centre | Romsey | 30 |
| GoodStart Learning Centre Kyneton | Kyneton | 0 |
| Woodend Care for Kids | Woodend | 0 |

There is a need to continue to create spaces for the 3 year olds programs into the future. In 2011 there were 605 usual resident 4 year old children in the Shire. Based on growth from 2006-2011 there will be demand for 12.3% more places for Universal Access (~75 places). This leaves approximately 66 places for 3-year old preschool on the current provision.

There is evidenced based need for a dual Kindergarten and additional children's spaces in Gisborne.

### Playgroups

Playgroup programs in Gisborne and surrounds include:

- St Paul's Playgroup
- Gisborne Church of Christ Play Group
- New Gisborne Play Group

## 3.2 Gisborne Kindergarten

Gisborne Kindergarten (Grant Avenue) has been the local kindergarten for Gisborne families for many years. It would be reasonable to expect that a new facility would continue to be well supported by families from Gisborne and surrounds.

The Gisborne Kindergarten is currently at maximum capacity providing two sessions per week of 10 hours of 4 year old Kindergarten and one session of three year old Preschool. Due to its landlocked location, it is unable to extend its facility or services and therefore cannot meet the projected future needs of the Shire's families or implement Universal Access.

Universal Access to early childhood education and care is one of the recent COAG reforms. Universal Access will mean that by 2013 every child has access to 15 hours of kindergarten per week for 40 weeks (600 hours) in the year before schooling.

The Municipal Planning Assessment Report for Universal Access to 15 Hours of Kindergarten, 24 February 2010, rated the Gisborne Kindergarten in Category D: *Services where the implementation of Universal Access would require significant change that would require external / additional support.*

Challenges to implementing Universal Access and the anticipated impact of Universal Access on other early childhood programs, included:

- The Centre does not meet the contemporary facility standards. The location of the centre and the size of the site are not conducive to re-development or expansion to accommodate kindergarten programs.
- Further consideration of the site for preschool programs is warranted.

The significant changes required to implement Universal Access included:

- Undertake a feasibility study to address the limitation of the facilities at the Centre to meet the growing local service demand and contemporary service standards
- Reschedule timetable to expand to 15 hours per week
- Attract additional operational funding
- Recruit additional qualified staff
- Relocate the pre-kinder program to another suitable community facility. It should be noted that limited facility options are presently available in the Township of Gisborne to support this program

## Enrolments

Over the past four years (2009 – 2012), enrolments at the kindergarten have ranged between a low of 86 in 2011 to a high of 90 in 2010. Across all four years the majority of the children have come from Gisborne (around 80 per cent). Enrolments from New Gisborne have ranged between 10 (12 per cent) in 2009 and 5 (six per cent) in 2012. There has been a consistent enrolment of children across the four years from Bullengarook.

**Table 16 Gisborne Kindergarten Enrolments 2009-2012 for 3 and 4 year olds**

| | Year | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Suburb | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| Bullengarook | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Gisborne | 66 | 72 | 68 | 71 |
| Gisborne South | 6 | 2 | | 3 |
| Melton West | | | 1 | |
| Mount Macedon | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| New Gisborne | 10 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| Riddells Creek | | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Romsey | | 1 | | |
| Sunbury | | | | 1 |
| Taylors Hill | | | | 1 |
| Toolern Vale | | 1 | | |
| **Total** | **89** | **90** | **86** | **89** |

## Features

Consultation with Gisborne Kindergarten staff and Committee members identified positive and negative features of the current facility. These features have been considered in the area

schedule and concept development of the new facility and should be further considered in the development and design stage of the capital project.

Positive features:

- Low ceilings which give a sense of an enclosed space
- Roof beams which you can hang things from
- The Oak Tree out the front – trees and the outdoor environment/ plants/ arbour
- The outdoor/ open space/ garden area – children can interact with the environment. The areas provide a range of stimuli
- High fences mean that people cannot "look in". This increases security and safety
- The use of natural wood and glass in the building.
- The dimensions of the doors and windows and their glass sections enable observation of the children whilst maintaining their privacy, as well as allowing natural light into the indoor learning/ play area
- The way the room is set out

Negative features:

- Absence of car parking on-site means that families have to park in the street which can be a hindrance to neighbouring residents. This also impacts on the safety of children and parents.
- Lack of space and privacy - including no changing area for the children and insufficient privacy in the toilet area
- Dysfunctional kitchen
- Insufficient storage areas and those provided are poorly located
- Insufficient office space
- Entrance area is too small
- Only one adult toilet

**Findings**

- Gisborne Kindergarten is currently at capacity
- A new site is required to redevelop the Gisborne Kindergarten to ensure it is able to implement Universal Access and to cater for population growth
- The identified positive and negative features of the current kindergarten should be considered in the development and design of a new facility
- The enrolment data indicates that an integrated children's centre to service Gisborne and the south of Gisborne would be utilised by families from the Gisborne and wider communities
- Given the number of enrolments and the population growth, planning should consider the need for larger children's rooms and additional children's rooms in a new/redeveloped centre

### Gisborne Toy Library

- Gisborne Primary School

### Gisborne Primary Schools

- New Gisborne Primary School

- St Brigid's Primary School
- Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

## 3.4 Shire-wide Services

### Macedon Ranges Shire Council

#### Maternal and Child Health

Macedon Ranges Shire Council provides the shire-wide Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service and the immunisation program. Maternal and Child Health appointments are arranged through the central intake service at the Macedon Ranges Shire Offices in Kyneton. Immunisation is also arranged through the central intake service.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council's Maternal and Child Health Service provide free support and information services to all families living in the Macedon Ranges Shire. The schedule of minimum visits is as follows: home visit, 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, 4 months, 8 months, 12 months, 18 months, 2 years and 3.5 years. Council's Environmental Health Officers provide infant and child immunisations on a monthly basis. Community Immunisation sessions are conducted in Gisborne and include limited night sessions.

The MCH Centre currently operates from a rented property on the Macedon Ranges Heath site, which is close to the Gisborne central business district.

An overview of the current services identified the need for two MCH consulting rooms, counselling room, access to a larger and smaller meeting place utilised for a range of groups including PEP Program, mothers' breast feeding room and a confidential waiting room, and access to dedicated car parking for outreach and home visits.

The MCH service links to the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, DEECD, St Luke's in Bendigo, Macedon Ranges Health Speech Therapy, Cobaw Health Services, Hospitals (Kyneton, Sunshine, Bacchus Marsh, others), Audiology at Sunbury Community Health, Playgroups, new parent families in the Shire, Noah's Ark, CareWorks SunRanges in Sunbury, Tweddle, Mercy Health- O'Connell's Family Centre- The Bub Hub, Masada Babies Unit –St Kilda, North Park, and Connecting Care.

#### Shire Kindergarten Services

The Shire also operates two kindergartens in Gisborne. Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten has the capacity to accommodate the moderate population growth projected for Gisborne. Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten can also meet the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Universal Access requirement to provide every child with access to 15 hours of kindergarten per week by 2013.

Gisborne Kindergarten is currently at maximum capacity and due to its landlocked location, is unable to extend its facility or services and therefore cannot meet the projected future needs of the Shire or Universal Access. Gisborne Kindergarten is discussed in more detail in Section5.

### Cobaw Community Health Services Ltd (Cobaw)

Cobaw is located in the Macedon Ranges Shire with service sites in Kyneton, Woodend and Romsey, and works in partnership with Macedon Ranges Health Service in the Gisborne area.

The Early Years' Service is provided by two teams- the Intervention Team and the Children's Clinic, across the Shire. The Cobaw Early Childhood Intervention Program (ECIP) provides a range of key worker and discipline specific intervention services to children and families living in the Macedon Ranges Shire. Children between birth and 6 years of age who have delays or disabilities in two or more developmental areas are eligible.

Cobaw Early Childhood Intervention Program is staffed on a part time basis by a multidisciplinary team including a Coordinator, Speech Pathologist, Paediatric Physiotherapy, Early Years Educational Advisor, Occupational Therapist and Program Assistant. Approximately 51% of the clients for Paediatric Physiotherapy are from the Gisborne and southern area.

Referrals are received from the Royal Children's Hospital for children born prematurely, or with impairments, and from MRSC MCH using the red flags program, and Kyneton District Health Midwifery services. Referrals are also made by General Practitioners through the Enhanced Primary Care – Medicare funded program. Assistance and support is provided to families with children with delayed development. Approximately, 65 families are serviced per annum. The team continues to provide unfunded support to children when they attend the first term of schooling.

Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) provides funding assistance for twelve families with autistic children. Play Connect is a program that is provided at the Romsey Hub which provides for 10 families but is only funded to December 2012.

Children aged 0-6 years assessed and registered under the Better Start program are also eligible for services if they have the following needs:

- Cerebral palsy
- Deaf blindness
- Down syndrome, including mosaic Down syndrome
- Fragile X syndrome with full mutation
- Hearing impairment
- Sight impairment

The Children's Therapy and Assessment Clinic provides services for children 0-12 years, with developmental needs. A Playgroup 'My Time' is provided for families across the Shire.

The Family Services program aims to provide a range of services and supports to families that are focused on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people (Child First 0-17 years).

Home and Community Care (HACC) funding provides community speech therapy services in the North of the Shire, Occupational Therapy for the whole of the Shire and Physiotherapy for the 0-18 year olds in the north of the Shire. The Physiotherapist has seen 24 clients from the

southern part of the Shire in 2011-12.The Paediatric Occupation Therapist (0.5 FTE) has provided services to 20 families from the south ward in 2011-2012.

Home respite is provided for carers of children with developmental needs for up to two hours per week subject to a comprehensive assessment.

Programs such as Carer's Support Castlemaine may also utilise the Integrated Child and Family Centre.

### Kyneton District Health Service

Kyneton District Health Service (KDHS) provides a wide range of services including a number of services specific to families and young children:

**Midwifery Services**

- Antenatal Clinic
- Childbirth Education Service
- Breast Care and Breast Feeding Consultancy
- Paediatric Services

### Macedon Ranges Health Services

Macedon Ranges Health Services provides co-location spaces for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Maternal and Child Health service and for the Gisborne Toy Library in the building which was part of the original hospital and nurse's quarters.

Macedon Ranges Health Services provides paediatric speech therapy for children serviced by Castlemaine Health to the Macedon Ranges (S) – Balance area.

## 3.5 Regional and State-wide Services

**Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – Loddon Mallee Region**

*Early Childhood Intervention Services*

Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) have a regional central point of entry. Central Intake gathers information and determines whether the child meets eligibility criteria for ECIS and works with the family to identify concerns, to plan next steps and to make a referral to an ECIS agency.

Team members include occupational therapists, speech pathologists, physiotherapists, psychologists, teachers and inclusion support specialists.

Services may include:

- Better Start
- Family service coordination
- Goal setting
- Individual therapy sessions
- Consultation
- Group programs (including, communication, sensory-motor, swimming/hydrotherapy and gym groups)

- Equipment advice and assistance
- Supporting inclusion in the community
- Referral to other specialists
- Transition Support

The ECIS team will provide visiting services to the Integrated Child and Family Centre.

**St Luke's Anglicare (St Luke's)**

St Luke's provides a region-wide service:

- Acts as a resource for Kindergarten staff and families across a range of areas – readiness, assessment and gifted children
- Working with families to work through strategies in the home

Preschool Field workers work closely with Early Childhood staff and families to support children with additional needs in Preschool groups. Workers spend time with children at Preschool and at home observing and assessing their strengths and needs. They also assist Early Childhood staff to plan and develop positive learning experiences for individual children. Workers provide support and information for families of children with additional needs. Workers are based at Echuca, Bendigo and Kyneton.

St Luke's may provide visiting services to the new Integrated Child and Family Centre if required.

**Noah's Ark**

Noah's Ark is a not-for-profit state-wide organisation assisting children with additional needs and their families. Early Childhood Intervention Services support families who have a child aged from 0 to 6 years with a significant disability or delay. Services are accessed via the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Central Intake system.

Inclusion Support Agencies are part of the Child Care Inclusion and Professional Support Program. The aim of the Inclusion Support Agencies is to promote and maintain high quality care and inclusion for all children in eligible child care services.

The target groups for inclusion support are:

- Children with a disability, including children with a high support needs
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- Children with a refugee or humanitarian intervention background who have been subjected to torture or trauma, either in their country of origin or during their refugee experience

Noah's Ark may provide visiting services to the new Integrated Child and Family Centre.

**Indigenous children**

Noah's Ark Bendigo provides services to residents of the Macedon Ranges Shire, with staff based in Bendigo travelling to Gisborne.

**Scope**

Scope is one of the largest providers of services to people with a disability in Victoria. Scope's mission is to support people with a disability to achieve their potential in welcoming and inclusive communities.

Scope provides therapy and educational services to children and their families who are eligible for the Federal Government's Helping Children with Autism package (HCWA).

HCWA provides support and services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). HCWA initiatives include support for parents, families, carers and children from Indigenous backgrounds, culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and those living in rural and remote areas.

The need for closer links with Scope has been identified.

**Tweddle Child and Family Health Services**

Tweddle offer a range of evidence based, accredited programs and services that aim to strengthen the family unit and build parenting skills and confidence.

Tweddle Hospital is located in Footscray. Partnerships have been developed with other providers across Melbourne and with Kyneton District Health Services.

Programs and services include:

- Residential and day stay programs to support parents with guidance and problem solving skills from experienced health professionals
- The psychology service provides support in adjusting to parenting as well as coping with many other of life's challenges.
- A Parental Leave Support Program for employers wanting to provide a supported return to work from parental leave.
- My time - a program for parents of children with a disability or chronic illness.

Tweddle also provides breastfeeding support in some regions of Melbourne's west. In partnership with Western Health, Tweddle run a comprehensive range of Childbirth and Parenting Preparation Programs.

Tweddle has over 200 client families from the Macedon Ranges Shire. An Integrated Child and Family Centre would enable Tweddle to provide parent and baby attachment programs in groups up to eight clients. Tweddle would require access to a group activity area that would provide for parents and significant others, babies and siblings with two to three facilitators. Access to a sleeping area for eight babies and individual counselling rooms for visiting psychologists is required.

**Findings**

Expressed Issues and Service Gaps identified through the consultation:

- The Gisborne Kindergarten has outgrown its locality and is landlocked in a residential area with limited vehicular access and walkability. It does not provide a visual profile for new residents and is unable to provide integrated services whilst providing kindergarten services. The stand alone and single service venue will not provide for future growth.
- There is only one session of three-year old kindergarten available per week (New Gisborne). Families expressed a need to access up to two sessions per week.
- Council's occasional care program is no longer available. This used to run Tuesdays and Thursdays for three hours and provided a valued service
- The Shire has introduced an enrolment fee for kindergarten
- There is no access to a Paediatrician within the Shire and families have long waiting lists to access a Paediatrician in either Bendigo or Melbourne
- Need for increased access to Early Intervention services locally with a centralised intake for improved coordination of services for families receiving multiple services
- Community Speech Therapy has a long wait list
- Autism Assessment Service are not available in the Shire and visiting services are quite costly; families are travelling to Sunbury and Moonee Ponds for assessments
- There is limited infrastructure available to provide Paediatric Podiatry and orthotics, Parenting programs, and ECIS in Gisborne
- There is a need to provide spaces for a Vision Clinic, Audio Screening and support groups for parents of children with a disability
- There is a need for sibling support for families with children with disabilities
- A maxi taxi service for people with disabilities is required
- Accessing 'hidden' families with high needs
- Early parenting education and coordination linked with schools
- Access to specialised playgroups such as 'My little Treasures'
- There is a need for Dad's groups
- Post natal depression support
- Support for children of parents with a mental illness
- Breast feeding support

# 4. Service plan and functional brief

Kyneton District Health Service has been granted Australian Government funding of $6.8 Million to construct an Ambulatory Centre. This will include co-located services from Cobaw Community Health, expanding the capacity to build a Paediatric team and ECIS services in the west and east of the Shire.

Gisborne & District Community Health & Hospital Board Inc. (trading as Macedon Ranges Health) has been granted $4.950 Million for Integrated Primary Health Care expansion with funding provided through the Health and Hospitals Fund (Australian Government).

In addition to Council's Maternal and Child Health Service, Gisborne Toy Library has expressed interest in moving to the new centre.

Cobaw Community Health Services and Tweddle have expressed an interest in providing visiting services in a new facility.

Tweddle has indicated an interest in providing visiting services in the Shire using the Kyneton District Health Service facility in the north and a children's service's hub in Gisborne.

Other potential users on an 'as needs' basis, include Noah's Ark for family meetings.

## 4.1 Gisborne Kindergarten

A dual Kindergarten has been planned to provide for the growth, Universal Access requirements, and to provide three year old sessions.

Kindergarten helps children to learn and develop through specially designed programs that aim to enhance all areas of their development including physical, social and emotional, language and cognitive. Early childhood educators create an environment for ongoing learning and develop programs based on the child's needs and interest. [Refer to 4.6 Functional Brief for a detailed list of specific features to be included in an integrated Child and Family Centre].

Pre-kinder is a valuable opportunity for children who are 3 years and over to learn and socialise before attending kindergarten.

## 4.2 Macedon Ranges Shire Council Maternal and Child Health

*Maternal and Child Health*

Recommendations for Maternal and Child Health Centre design include a minimum of two offices of at least 4m$^2$ and a waiting room of at least 18m$^2$ to accommodate parent groups. All doors must accommodate entry of twin prams.

Consultation with Macedon Ranges Shire Council Maternal and Child Health Staff included the following design requirements:

- Two Offices with one room able to accommodate approximately 4-5 people for case conferencing

- A multipurpose room with a concertina divide to allow for multiple uses and a waiting room large enough to cater for parents and children
- Central access and family friendly (breast feeding room with chair/s)
- Heating/Cooling utilising fresh air, see through blinds, sky lights and making use of any views surrounding the facility
- Kitchen
- Doorways and rooms able to cater for 'twin prams'
- Sound Proofing
- Entrances need to be safe - ramps can ice up
- Change Table close to hand washing facilities
- Need to have an 'L' shaped bench to include measuring table
- TV with DVD player for Health Promotion
- Wheelchair access for parents
- Visiting midwifery services
- Bendigo CAMHS for postnatal needs

## 4.3 Gisborne Toy Library

Gisborne Toy Library currently utilises five rooms and reception, at the Macedon Ranges Health Service medical centre facility on a peppercorn lease basis under the shire's leasing arrangements.

The Toy Library has around 40 registered family members and an average of 20 active family members. The majority of the members come from Gisborne and surrounding areas, with others coming from Riddells Creek, and as far away as Woodend. Woodend and Riddells Creek have their own Toy Libraries.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that approximately half of the member families have come from outside the Shire.

The Toy Library is open for one hour on Wednesdays and for two hours on Saturdays, with around eight to ten families accessing each session.

Reception is shared with the Medical Centre.

The Toy Library has around 55 $m^2$of space at the current facility which is used for storage. In a new facility, the Toy Library would require sufficient space for storage and access to a multi-purpose space during opening hours.

Inclusion of the Toy Library in the integrated Child and Family Centre would create improved access for families to all services and promote connectedness for current and new families.

## 4.4 Cobaw Community Health Services

Cobaw has expressed interest in providing visiting Early Childhood Intervention Services and their Family Services/ Parent Buddies program in an integrated children's centre in Gisborne.

Cobaw will require access to office space, consulting room(s) and multi-purpose space.

## 4.5 Tweddle

Tweddle has expressed interest in providing Community Nursing through the Centre, working in collaboration with the M&CH Service.

Tweddle will need access to consulting room(s) for visiting counselling services, access to multipurpose space and a baby's sleep area. Group sessions will include 8 families, babies and siblings plus 2 or 3 facilitators depending on the needs of the group. Multipurpose room 2 has allocated space for a baby's room for this purpose or for day care needs.

**Findings**

- There is an agreed commitment by local early years' services to co-locate. This should continue to be fostered through the ongoing planning process
- Planning should consider attracting additional visiting services to build the local service profile
- Spaces for visiting services should be included in any redevelopment
- Collocating services should be involved in cooperative integrated service planning through the Early Years, Service Mapping Project

## 4.6 Functional brief

The children's Kindergarten (4 year olds) and Preschool (3 year olds), and future long day care zones are to comply with the National Quality Framework, the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The Zones are to be constructed to area schedules for 1:11 staff/child ratios for children aged 3 years and over in multipurpose rooms of 33m$^2$. The area in *Zone 2* is to be adaptable for baby sleep area on the ratio of 1:4 staff/child ratios providing for eight babies. [Refer to Appendices]

The Multipurpose Room 2 has space for sleepover within the 136sqm. Verandas will be included around the children's areas.

The Centre will comply with relevant OH&S Acts and Regulations, achieve 'Best Practice' access for people with disabilities in accordance with new Standards as at 1 May 2011 and design will incorporate Environment Sustainable Design principles.

The Design Phase of the Capital Program should also consider the National Quality Standard Quality Area 3 – Physical Environment

**Objective**

The physical environment is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences which promote children's learning and development.

The Standards and Elements of Quality Area 3 – Physical Environment include:

**The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.**

- Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.
- Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
- Outdoor spaces include natural elements and materials which allow for multiple uses.
- Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space.

**The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.**

- Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
- Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses

Through consultations, the following Key Design Considerations and Features for a new children's centre were expressed.

- Promote the philosophy of an inclusive family environment that links people into the community. Many new parents are from Melbourne and have no previous connections to a rural environment or local support networks
- Provide a very tactile and accessible environment for all children
- Outdoor and indoor spaces providing a natural and open space environment enabling children and staff to move around to address individual needs, provide creative spaces, special areas, such as a vegie garden
- Outdoor/indoor environment with trees and plants that encourage children, families and staff to interact with the environment
- Spaces must be flexible; i.e. they can be rearranged to create different environments for a diverse range of functions
- Limit hallways and corridors to create an inclusive environment
- Large windows and glass panels in doors for natural light.
- Provide wide verandah's with large play space and to enable outdoor activity to be accessible regardless of the weather
- Safety: Internal and External Traffic flows (vehicular)
- Parent, visitor and staff parking
- Safe external play area at the entrance to the Hub for waiting siblings and children exiting the centre, preventing unsafe access to the car parking area with a high fences and child proof gate.
- Access for Fire Truck and Police vehicles to enter the children's outdoor play spaces safely
- Relocation of the Gisborne Kindergarten Wooden cubby to be a bright and happy outdoor feature

- Separate Entrance/Welcoming area for the Kindergarten of sufficient size to provide a gathering space and some shelter with access to adult toilets
- Specific entrance into the Kindergarten area would provide for privacy of information; e.g. notices, lists with parent contacts and so on
- Separate Reception for entering the MCH and consulting areas
- The viewing into the Kindergarten and Children's rooms should not be expansive to prevent a 'fish bowl' effect for the children from waiting adults
- Features recommended by parents included low ceilings in children's rooms and beams for children to hang things from
- Appropriate office space for kindergarten staff with access to children's rooms
- Integrated staff room that can be utilised for meetings with a separate kitchenette with staff amenities
- Kinder and children's rooms should not have 'L' shapes and must include a sink and a separate area for children to eat
- Dedicated play space for the kindergarten children (needs to be accessible at all times).
- Appropriate storage space within the kinder and children's room, with no overhead cupboards
- Children's lockers need to be close to the children's toilets and accessible from the Kinder rooms so they may access food from their bags when they wish to
- Children's Kitchen that allows children to do some cooking
- Thermal safety valves for children's areas
- Internal traffic flows and accessibility within the building, e.g. location of areas (change room) and functions. Doors must wide enough to accommodate 'twin prams'
- Need to cater for parents with 'twin prams' providing appropriate doorway widths and space in consulting rooms.
- Disability access
- Acoustic treatment for confidentiality
- Accessibility should take into account the 'icing' of ramps at entrances, provision for wheelchair access and other DDS requirements
- Change tables need to have associated hand basins for hygiene
- Information Technology for Health Promotion

**Sustainable Design**

- Large windows to allow light and views out of facility
- Temperature control on hot water for safety and energy controls
- Wood features that provide sustainability and a creative effect
- Thermal mass, air flow, water harvesting features
- Plenty of natural light

## Assumptions for Service Planning

The following outlines the assumptions underpinning the service profile for the Integrated Child and Family Centre.

**Table 17 Service Profile Assumptions**

| Service | Ratio | Requirement |
|---|---|---|
| Maternal and Child Health | MRSC applies 1 MCH: 120 babies | The Gisborne SA2 area requires 1.25 MCH nurses. It is recommended 2 MCH be based at the Centre to accommodate the municipal role with visiting midwives from Kyneton Health Services. Require 2 consulting rooms and multipurpose room, breast feeding and designated waiting area for services. |
| Kindergarten Places (4 year old) | 2 sessions per place for 15 hours per session: 30 hours per week per place for 4 year old groups. | Zone 1 will provide 4 x 15 hour sessions of Kindergarten |
| Preschool (3 year old) | 1 session per 3 year old with approximately 63% enrollment as a target | 3 sessions of 3 year old Preschool per week in Zone 1. |
| Centre based Child Care and Gisborne Toy Library | Past utilisation and journey to work for families is the guide for planning. 1 in 4 children aged 0-4 years | 414 children are estimated to utilise a place in a form of centre based care – current 225 places will be at capacity by 2016 requiring access to services. Zone 2 will provide for a diverse range of options for 33 children per session. Storage space. |
| Paediatric and Family Services | Paediatric OT, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy will provide sessional and multidisciplinary services | Cobaw Health Services will utilise the Consulting Room 3 and multipurpose room. It is assumed Audiology screening and Vision Clinics will be conducted at the new Macedon Ranges Health Service Primary Care Clinic. |
| Tweddle, St Luke's, Noah's Ark, DHS, and other services | Visiting Services | These services will utilise the multipurpose and meeting areas and consulting rooms as required |

[Refer to Appendices for further details]

**Sustainable design and future Universal Access capacity**

The sustainable design and landscaping will ensure that the exotic trees and native vegetation are retained and that if vegetation is required to be removed sensitive replanting of five trees for the loss of one will be implemented. The aim is to provide a natural setting located near the orchard. At the detail design stage the Gisborne Child and Family Centre will provide an asset for all members of the community.

Car parking is to be according to the Clause 52.06 of the planning scheme[xxvi].

The concept design is to be prepared in accordance with NQF service and facility requisites for both indoor delivery and external play area use.

There will be a single entrance that promotes children's engagement with the integrated centre. The shared reception, an integrated centre staff room and amenities, integrated kindergarten office, are designed to enhance the integrated service model by promoting team work. Children's kitchens, toilets and lockers are to be located in the appropriate. The multipurpose capacity is aimed to provide flexibility, maximum utilisation and compliance with Australian and Victorian standards.

Key service delivery areas are required to with the requirements of Universal Access and the National Partnership for Early Childhood Education and include four zones:

Zone 1: Dual Kindergarten for 4 year old Universal Access and 3 year old preschool compliant with the NQF and Standards

Zone 2: A multipurpose zone that is designed to cater for future growth in child care services as required and integrated Kindergarten and Long Day Care. It is designed to be utilised by community groups, Tweddle attachment programs, Gisborne Toy Library, Noah's Ark visiting play group service, Play groups, occasional care and other community purposes. The multipurpose zone includes a baby sleep area if required and can be divided into smaller and larger spaces as needed. Construction of this zone can be staged to match the capital funding capacity of the key stakeholders.

Zone 3: This is designed for integrated early years services including 2 maternal child health consulting rooms and a shared consulting room for visiting and integrated services, forming the paediatric service for the southern part of the Shire, including Cobaw Health Services Paediatric Team, Macedon Ranges Health Service Speech Therapy, and Kyneton Health Services Midwifery Services.

Zone 4: This zone provides a multipurpose space for early intervention group activity-MRSC MCH Parenting Programs, Health Promotion, meetings and community meeting space.

The facility provides 503 m² of flexible space across zones two and three for a wide array of early years' service delivery and community meeting spaces.

# 5. Site Analysis

## 5.1 Sites for Consideration

Macedon Ranges Shire Council identified six sites for consideration. Vivien Clark (Clark Phillips Pty Ltd) and Michael Harbour (Baade Harbour Australia Pty Ltd) visited the identified sites on 9 March 2012 to undertake a preliminary site assessment and identify plans and further information required.

**Figure 10 Shortlisted Sites – Annotated map (Gisborne ODP)**

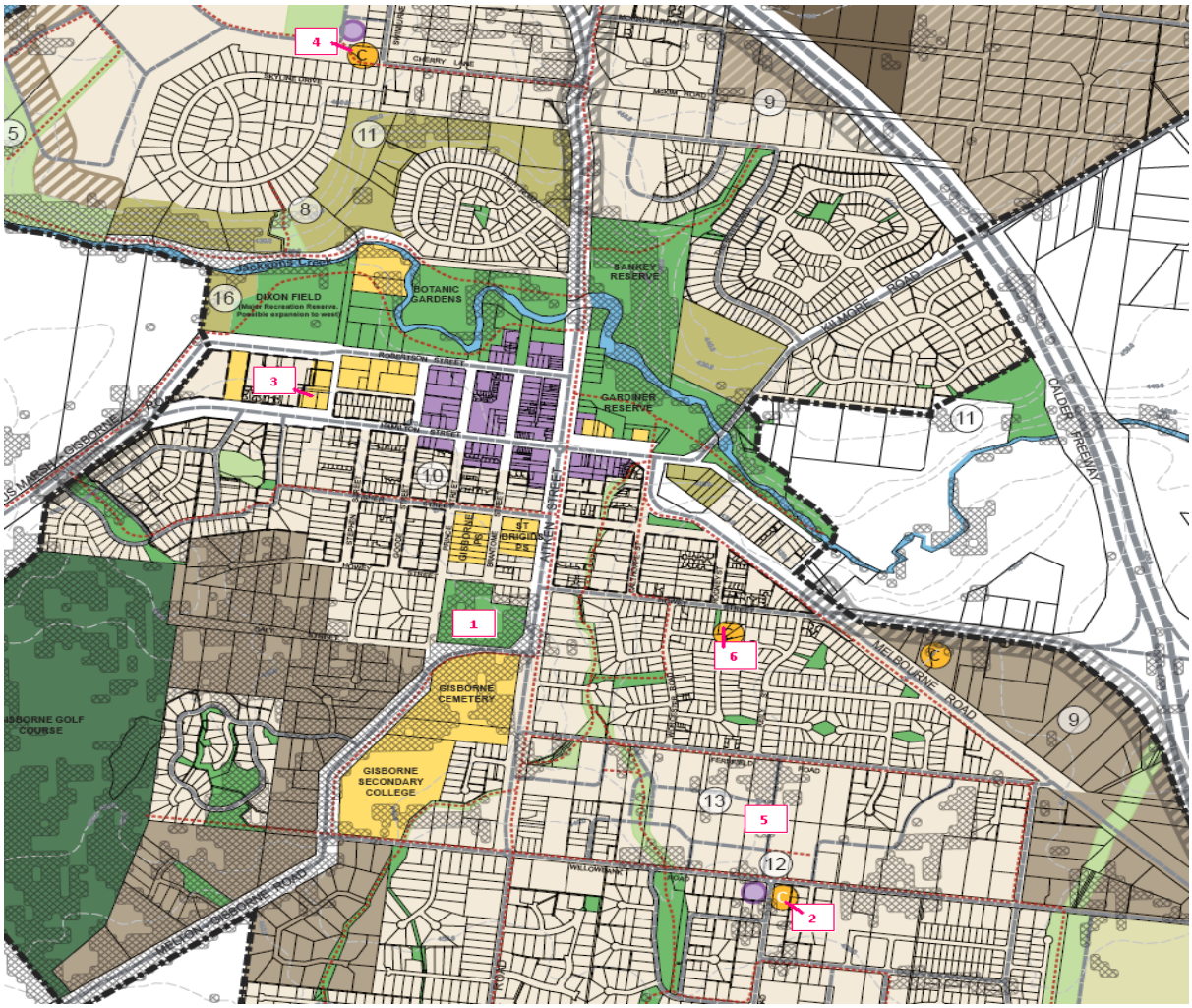


**Table 18 Identified sites for consideration**

| Key | Name | Address | Legal description | Zone | Overlay | Area | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Daly Reserve | 63 Howey St | PT LOT 2 LP 128055 P/GISBORNE PT V9290 F651 DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL PARTS ON TITLE | Public Use Zone 6 (PUZ6) | None | 4.02 ha[1] (9.93 ac) | Purpose of public land use PUZ6 = Local government |
| 2 | Vacant land | 97-99 Willowbank Rd | LOT 1 PS 603944E P/Gisborne | Residential 1 (R1Z) | Development Plan Overlay | 0.49 ha (1.2 ac) | Part of subdivision site<br>Nominated in Gisborne ODP as potential community centre<br>Currently up for sale with planning permit for medical/health/childcare centre |
| 3 | Macedon Ranges Health Service | 10 Neal St | PT CAS 4 4A SEC E P/GISBORNE (PT TP 561612X) (TP 236007G) V8329 F223 PT V8192 F988 DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL PARTS ON TITLE | Special Use Zone (SUZ4) | None | 0.42 ha[2] (1.03 ac) | Current location of Gisborne Maternal and Child Health (space leased from Macedon Ranges Health Service)<br>Purpose of special use SUZ4 = Private hospital and associated use |
| 4 | Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten | 8 Swinburne Ave | RES 1 PS 318022T P/GISBORNE V10099 F541 KINDERGARTEN | Residential 1 (R1Z) | None | 0.42 ha[3] (1.03 ac) | Included because other Council managed kindergarten in Gisborne<br>Surrounded by greenfield land with no immediate plans for development |
| 5 | Fersfield Road Development Plan | Fersfield Rd | Various | Residential 1 (R1Z) | Development Plan Overlay (all) Heritage Overlay (part) | Various | Development Plan covers area bounded by Fersfield Road, Bloomfield Road, Willowbank Road and Aitken Street<br>Public acquisition (if that is required) can be a slow process |
| **6** | Gisborne Kindergarten | 13 Grant Ave | LOT 40 RES LP 93810 P/GISBORNE V8917 F245 | Residential 1 (R1Z) | None | 0.08 ha[4] (0.2 ac) | Current site<br>Landlocked<br>Included for completeness |

[1] Includes scout hall and treed areas
[2] Includes existing buildings and car park
[3] Includes car park, kindergarten building and outside areas
[4] Includes kindergarten building and outside area

| Key | Name | Address | Legal description | Zone | Overlay | Area | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **7** | Macedon Ranges Health Community Health Site | Neal Street | | | | | This site has not been investigated |
| **8** | MRSC Council Offices | Robertson's Road | | | | | Subject to inundation and is located in a flood zone. Restricted to current footprint. |

Council is currently reviewing the existing **Open Space Strategy**.

Council notes that "open space makes an important contribution to the outdoor lifestyle of residents, attracts visitors, protects important natural values and is a major component of the attractive rural landscapes and topography in the Shire".

The Open Space Strategy is a vision for the Shire over the next ten years. The key goals of the Strategy are:

- Use the Strategy as the basis for management and resource allocation.
- Focus on key open space areas.
- Enhance open space provision in towns.
- Protect natural values, improve waterways and undertake revegetation.
- Ensure quality open space and access in new subdivisions.
- Promote community involvement and use of open space.

## 5.2 Site Analysis

The area requirement for the Integrated Children's Centre is in the order of 4,000 m2 (0.4Ha).

**Daly Reserve (Preferred Site)**

The position of this site is an ideal location being situated opposite Gisborne Primary School, close to the Secondary School and within walking distance of Gisborne Village leading to increased visibility and potential access and usage of an integrated children's services hub. Parents will find the proximity of an integrated children's services hub, Primary School and Secondary School convenient for dropping off and collecting children.

The site provides a unique opportunity to create an early years' hub within a rural and natural environment. It will help to create an ambiance similar to that at Grant Avenue, which families have appreciated and wish to retain at the new centre

Whilst the location is suitable, construction in the reserve would reduce the amount of reserve land which is limited south of Bacchus Marsh Road. The Gisborne 1st Scout Group Hall is located on the Reserve. The development would complement and create a collaborative usage of the reserve.

The development would need any removal of native vegetation to be replanted to prevent any loss according to the Council planning scheme requirements. This is a key consideration of the Outline Development Plan as open spaces and native vegetation are key attractions to the township.

*Heritage*

Daly Reserve was originally part of Eblana House (82 Aitken Street, Gisborne). Council's Heritage Consultant has advised that the most significant part of Daly Reserve is the original Eblana Orchid to the south of that dwelling. This would need to be considered in any development on the site.

**Vacant Land in new Subdivision on Willowbank Rd**

This lot is currently vacant and for sale with a planning permit for a medical/health/childcare centre so there would be no zoning change required. Council would be required to purchase this site.

**The Shire's Outline Development Plan (ODP) September 2009** identifies the need for "a new community facility in the south Gisborne local neighbourhood centre to provide a focal point/destination for the local community (with a floor space of 500 m²)." The Centre is envisaged to locate centrally in south Gisborne at the corner of Willowbank and Brady Roads.

However, the site is considered to be too constrictive and will not allow for a 4th multi-purpose space and future expansion due to the need to provide car parking space. There will be limited capacity to create an appropriate indoor/ outdoor environment.

The site is outside the education precinct and the location is not close to the main road or to Gisborne Village which may affect potential usage and access to an integrated children's hub.

**Macedon Ranges Health Service**

The Gisborne Maternal and Child Health Service operate from this site in premises leased from Macedon Ranges Health Service. The site is zoned for the purpose of special use SUZ4 - Private hospital and associated use. This would require rezoning to enable an integrated children's services hub to be developed on the site.

As mentioned previously, Macedon Ranges Health Service is undertaking development of a Primary Care Centre

**Swinburne Avenue Kindergarten**

Although this site has the capacity to expand, it would mean a reduction in the number of Kindergartens in Gisborne (choice) and a concentration of services in one area of the town. This may affect the potential growth of the town.

**Fersfield Road Development**

This site has been earmarked as a community facility under the proposed structure plan in the ODP and would be located next to a proposed neighbourhood retail (local shop).Whilst the location would attract potential users from those moving to the new development, the site is not situated close to the main road or to Gisborne Village which may affect the potential usage and access of the wider community to an integrated children's hub if located here.

The site would not address the car parking issues associated with Grant Avenue.

Use of this site would require the purchase of two adjoining blocks which would add to the cost of the project.

**Gisborne Kindergarten (Grant Avenue)**

The Municipal Planning Assessment Report for Universal Access to 15 Hours of Kindergarten, 24 February 2010, advised that "the location of the centre and the size of the site are not conducive to re-development or expansion to accommodate kindergarten programs".

# 6. Feasibility

## 6.1 Area Schedule

Baade Harbour Australia (architects) has developed an area schedule for the proposed elements of the Centre with a total of 971m$^2$ of internal space, and 2,043 m$^2$ of external space.

The Area Schedule and Concept Plan have been informed by the Education and Care Services National Regulations Part 4.3 – Physical Environment (Centre based services), which include:

- A minimum of 3.25 m$^2$ of unencumbered floor space is provided for each child. This may include verandahs in some services (approval of regulator required).
- A minimum of 7 m$^2$of useable outdoor play space to be provided for each child. This may include verandahs in some services (approval of regulator required)
- Adequate developmentally and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities
- The location of toilet, washing and drying facilities enable safe use and convenient access by the children
- Indoor spaces are well ventilated, have adequate natural light and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children
- An adequate area or areas are available for administrative functions, private conversations and consultation with parents.
- Separate indoor space is provided for children under the age of two years.
- Outdoor space is designed to afford children opportunities to explore and experience the natural environment.
- Each child has access to furniture, materials and equipment suitable for the educational program.

*In quality centre based services, group sizes do not exceed three times the ratio that pertains to the relevant age group.*

Changes to the staffing requirements will come into force in 2016. A significant change is a staff to child ratio of 1 to 11 (currently 1 to 15) which has implication for facility design.

The concept accommodates the service model for Gisborne Kindergarten inclusive of:

- Dual Kindergarten
- Maternal and Child Health service and midwifery services (Kyneton District Health Services)
- Visiting services Cobaw Health Services, Macedon Ranges Health Services, Tweddle
- Gisborne Toy Library
- Community meeting spaces and parents groups
- Capacity to provide additional day care, including long day care, occasional care and in venue family care depending on the needs of the community.

In addition, through services and flexible spaces, the Centre promotes linkages to broader health promotion and community health services and activities.

**Figure 11 Area Schedule Subject to final site selection, Schematic Design Consultation and Design Documentation**

| GROSS FLOOR AREA SUMMARY | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Functional Zone** | | **Existing** | **Comments** |
| **A** | **Total Floor Areas** | | |
| **1** | Kindergarten Rooms 1 & 2 | 468 | |
| **2** | Multipurpose Spaces | 503 | Large Multipurpose Room (136m2) includes space for long day care or baby sleep area |
| **3** | Support Spaces | 76 | Laundry, staff lounge/meeting room, office to MP Room (Child Care), additional store and CR 3 |
| **Total Floor Area (m2)** | | **1047** | |
| | | | |
| **B** | **External Spaces** | | |
| **1** | Functional Zone 1 Playground: 66 places | 472 | |
| | x 7.0m$^2$ per place | | |
| | plus 30m$^2$ for 2 store sheds | 30 | |
| **2** | Functional Zone 2: External foyer area and | 80 | |
| | external seating | | |
| **3** | Multipurpose Room 33 places | | |
| | x 7.0m$^2$ per place | 231 | |
| **4** | Car Park (on site) 40 car spaces | 1,200 | To be confirmed by Council |
| **5** | Bin Enclosure | 30 | |
| **Total External Spaces (m2)** | | **2,043** | |
| | | | |
| **TOTAL SITE AREA REQUIRED M$^2$ (A & B)** | | **3090** | |
| | | | |
| **C** | **Allowance** | | |
| | Allowance for building set-backs, site constraints (30%) | 927 | |
| | Allowance for future expansion (0%) | 0 | |
| **TOTAL GROSS SITE AREA REQUIRED M2** | | **4,017** | Say 4,020m2 |

| Functional Zone 1: Kindergarten Room 1 & 2; 33 places each room 3 - 5 years | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Proposed | | | | |
| ROOM/SPACE | No. | AREA | No. | TOTAL | COMMENTS |
| | People | m2 | ROOMS | AREA (m2) | |
| Children's Room | 66 | 116 | 2 | 232 | 3.5m2 per child - Note Regulations State 3.25m2 |
| Children's Toilet | | 12 | 2 | 24 | |
| Children's Storage | | 12 | 2 | 24 | Lockers |
| Foyer | | 20 | 1 | 20 | |
| Internal Store | | 20 | 2 | 40 | |
| Kitchen | | 20 | 1 | 20 | Shared between 2 Kinder Rooms |
| Office | | 20 | 1 | 20 | Shared by Educators & Assistants |
| Quiet/Interview Space | | 12 | 1 | 12 | |
| Staff Toilet | | 3 | 1 | 3 | |
| Trough Area | | 6 | 2 | 12 | |
| **Sub Total (Nett Floor Area)** | | | | **407** | |
| **Circulation/Plant (15%) TOTAL (Gross Floor Area)** | | | | **61** | |
| **Total (Gross Floor Area)** | | | | **468** | |

| Functional Zone 2: Multipurpose Spaces | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Proposed | | | | |
| ROOM/SPACE | No. | AREA | No. | TOTAL | COMMENTS |
| | People | $m^2$ | ROOMS | AREA ($m^2$) | |
| Cleaners Room | | 8 | 1 | 8 | |
| Consulting Rooms | | 20 | 3 | 60 | 2xMCH, + 1 for Cobaw HS & Visiting |
| Entry Lobby | | 12 | 1 | 12 | |
| IT Room | | 10 | 1 | 10 | |
| Kitchen - General | | 12 | 1 | 12 | |
| Main Foyer/Waiting | | 30 | 1 | 30 | Includes Parent meet and greet space |
| Multipurpose Room 1 | | 136 | 1 | 136 | Accommodate Occasional Care (33 places), Sleep area and Play Groups – **optional space for future use** |
| Multipurpose Room 2 | | 60 | 1 | 60 | Large Meeting room (can be divided into 2 smaller spaces) |
| Store Room | | 20 | 2 | 40 | |
| Toilets – Public | | 18 | 1 | 18 | 1 x Unisex Disabled; 2 x Male; 2 x Female |
| Toilets - Children | | 16 | 1 | 16 | Includes Nappy Change |
| **Sub Total (Nett Floor Area)** | | | | **402** | |
| **Circulation/Plant (25%)** | | | | **101** | |
| **TOTAL (Gross Floor Area)** | | | | **503** | |

| Functional Zone 1: Kindergarten Room 1 & 2; 33 places each room 3 - 5 years | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Proposed | | | | |
| ROOM/SPACE | No. | AREA | No. | TOTAL | COMMENTS |
| | People | m2 | ROOMS | AREA (m2) | |
| **PLUS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AREAS (GROSS FLOOR AREA)** | | | | **1047** | |

## 6.3 Capital Funding Strategy

The Capital Project is costed at$4,401,000 as of December 2013, with the project going out to Tender at March 2013.

As Council does not have the capacity to totally fund the project, funding partners will need to be sought to deliver the outcome. Potential partners and opportunities are discussed below.

Running the project over two financial years may increase Council's capacity to contribute.

**Australian Government - Regional Development Australia Fund**

The Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF) is a national program designed to support Australia's regions and enhance economic development and liveability within communities[xxvii] Administered by the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, the RDAF program will operate from 1 July 2011. Up to $100 million will be invested in the first funding round by the Commonwealth, with funding of between $500,000 and $25 million available per project.[xxviii xxix]

Predominantly, funding will be allocated to capital projects such as new infrastructure and upgrades to existing infrastructure. Child care centres have been recognised as projects that can receive this funding. Projects must be "investment ready", meaning they are ready to proceed within six months of signing the Funding Agreement. To be investment ready, all planning, rezoning, environmental and native title approvals should be in place.

**Regional Development Victoria**

Regional Development Victoria is a potential source of funding.

**Victorian Government - Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**

As part of the 2011-12 Victorian Budget, small rural kindergartens will be able to apply for operational grants of up to $20,000 over the next four years under a $6 million Victorian Coalition Government plan through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)

This is part of a $94.9 million package for kindergartens in the 2011-12 Budget including a $15 million program for grants for capital upgrades or extensions to existing children's services facilities and grants towards the building of new children's services.

In April 2012 the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development announced a commitment of $50 million for the 2012-13 Children's Facilities Capital Program with specific details to be released later this year.

**Victorian Government – Department of Planning and community Development**

The Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) provides funding for community facilities supporting community participation and facilitating increased community connectedness in areas of high need, through the Community Support Fund. Council is in discussions with the Department to provide $200,000.

**Grants Link**

The Australian Government's Grants Link site provides details of the full range of capital funding and assistance grants available from all Australian Government departments.

**Philanthropic organisations**

There are a range of philanthropic organisations which may be able to contribute capital funding. Philanthropy Australia Inc. has details of philanthropic trusts to which applications could be made.

**Table 19 Capital funding strategy**

| Funding source | Contribution |
|---|---|
| Macedon Ranges Shire Council (including proceeds from sale of Grant Avenue) | 2,502,600 |
| Grant Funding | |
| Victorian Government, Children's Facilities Program | 1,668,400 |
| **Total** | **$4, 171,000** |

If partner funding is not sourced, Council may need to look at ways to increase its contribution. A staged construction plan has also been considered. Zone 2 at a cost of $2,300 per square metre could be constructed at a later stage reducing the cost of Stage one may be reduced to approximately $3,800,000.

## 6.4 Project Plan

The capital development of the Gisborne Integrated Children's Centre is scheduled to be completed within 36 weeks from the confirmation of capital funding for the project.

**Table 20 Project Plan**

| Task | Timeline |
|---|---|
| **Detailed Design - building, landscaping and civil works** | |
| Finalise Concept plan | X |
| Preparation of final construction drawings | X +10 weeks |
| **Funding** | |
| Confirmation of funding from Australian Government and Funding Agreement | X + 5 months |
| **Planning Permit** | |
| Submission for Planning Permit | X |
| Approval of Planning Permit Application | X + 6 weeks |
| **Construction** | |

| Task | Timeline |
|---|---|
| **Detailed Design - building, landscaping and civil works** | |
| Preparation of construction tender documents | X + 10 weeks |
| Preparation of specifications on the engagement of contractor | X + 2 months |
| Calling of tender for construction services | X + 3 months |
| Tenders close for construction services | X + 4 months |
| Tender evaluation/interviews | X + 4 months |
| Tender Evaluation Report | X + 5 months |
| Council Meeting approval | X + 5 |
| Award Construction Contract | X + 5 |
| Construction commences | X + 5 |
| Construction complete | X + 14 Months |
| **Loose Furniture and Equipment Fitout** | |
| Prepare brief for fitout tender | X + 12 Months |
| Call tenders for fitout | X = 12 Months |
| Tenders close for fitout services | X + 13 Months |
| Tender evaluation and report | X + 13 |
| Award fitout contract | X + 13 |
| Fit out of building | X + 14 |
| Certification of facility | X + 15 |
| **Tenancy Arrangements** | |
| Report to Ordinary Council - seek approval for fee schedule for new building | X + 1 |
| Enter into agreements with User Groups | X + 14 |
| **External Works** | |
| Landscaping | X + 14 |
| **External Works** | |
| Occupancy and post occupancy audit | X + 15 |
| Launch | X + 16 |

## Gisborne Early Years Centre

## Cost Estimate (REV 01)

| Building Works | | | $ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kindergarten Rooms 468 x $2,200/m2 | | | 1,030,000.00 |
| Multipurpose Spaces 579 x $2,300/m2 | | | 1,332,000.00 |
| External Storage Sheds | | | 30,000.00 |
| | *sub total* | *$* | *2,392,000.00* |
| **Site Works** | | | |
| Car Parks/Road Works | | | 260,000.00 |
| Front Canopy | | | 20,000.00 |
| Site Excavation | | | 30,000.00 |
| Pergolas/Verandahs | | | 70,000.00 |
| Landscaping | | | 120,000.00 |
| Play Ground Equipment | | | 50,000.00 |
| | *sub total* | *$* | *550,000.00* |
| **Site Services** | | | |
| Pole Transformer | | | 25,000.00 |
| External Services (water, sewer etc) | | | 160,000.00 |
| | *sub total* | | *185,000.00* |
| | | | |
| | ***Net Total*** | ***$*** | ***3,127,000.00*** |
| Design Contingency (5%) | | | 156,000.00 |
| Locality Allowance (0%) | | | - |
| Construction Contingency (6%) | | | 197,000.00 |
| ESD Initiatives (2.5%) | | | 87,000.00 |
| | *Sub Total* | | *440,000.00* |
| | | | |
| | **Total Building Cost (July 2012)** | **$** | ***3,567,000.00*** |
| Cost Escalation to Tender (March 2013 - 4%) | | | 142,000.00 |
| Cost Escalation during Construction (December 2013 - 1.0%) | | | 37,000.00 |
| | *Sub Total* | | *179,000.00* |
| | | | |
| | **Total Building Cost (December 2013)** | **$** | **3,746,000.00** |
| Agency Costs (0%) | | | 0.00 |
| Fees (11%) | | | 412,000.00 |
| Authority Charges (1.0%) | | | 37,000.00 |
| IT & C (1.5%) | | | 56,000.00 |
| FF&E (4%) | | | 150,000.00 |
| | *Sub Total* | | *655,000.00* |
| | | | |
| | **TOTAL PROJECT COST AS OF DECEMBER 2013** | **$** | **4,401,000.00** |

*Note:*

1. *The Building Works cost includes all building, air conditioning, communications, floor coverings, joinery, plumbing and electrical fixtures/fittings.*

2. *All figures exclude GST.*

3. *This Cost Estimate is based on the Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook (Edition 30-2012) and BHA's recent experience on many similar completed projects*

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**Prepared by**
**Michael Harbour**
**Director, Baade Harbour Australia Pty. Ltd.**

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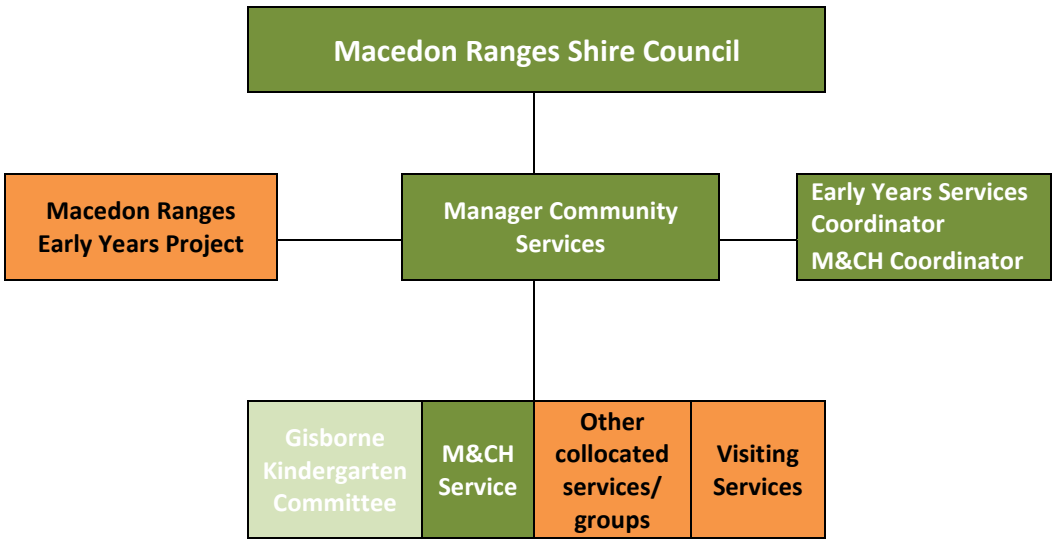
## 6.5 Centre Management

An integrated service is characterised by the following:

- Unified management system
- Pooled funds – this may also be translated into full cost recovery and leasing arrangements
- Common governance
- Whole systems approach to training, information and finance
- Single assessment
- Shared targets




**Ownership**

The facility will be owned by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

**Tenancy arrangements**

In the Gisborne Integrated Children's Centre:

- Tenants and visiting services should have use of the Centre according to individual agreements with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Agreements should detail individual arrangements and common code of facility utilisation.

**Occupational Health & Safety**

The building will be designed for disability access and occupational health and safety compliance for all visitors and occupants:

- Emergency Evacuation plans will be developed
- Accident and Injury Registers will be maintained

- First Aid Kits will be available

**Insurance**

- Macedon Ranges Shire Council to be responsible for general insurance

**Maintenance**

- General maintenance of the Centre to be the responsibility of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council with contributions from users

**Program and service development**

The Macedon Ranges Early Parenting/Childhood Project provides a timely opportunity to promote cooperative program and service planning for the Integrated Children's Centre. Council should continue to foster this through Council's Community Services Department.

## 6.6 Concept Plan

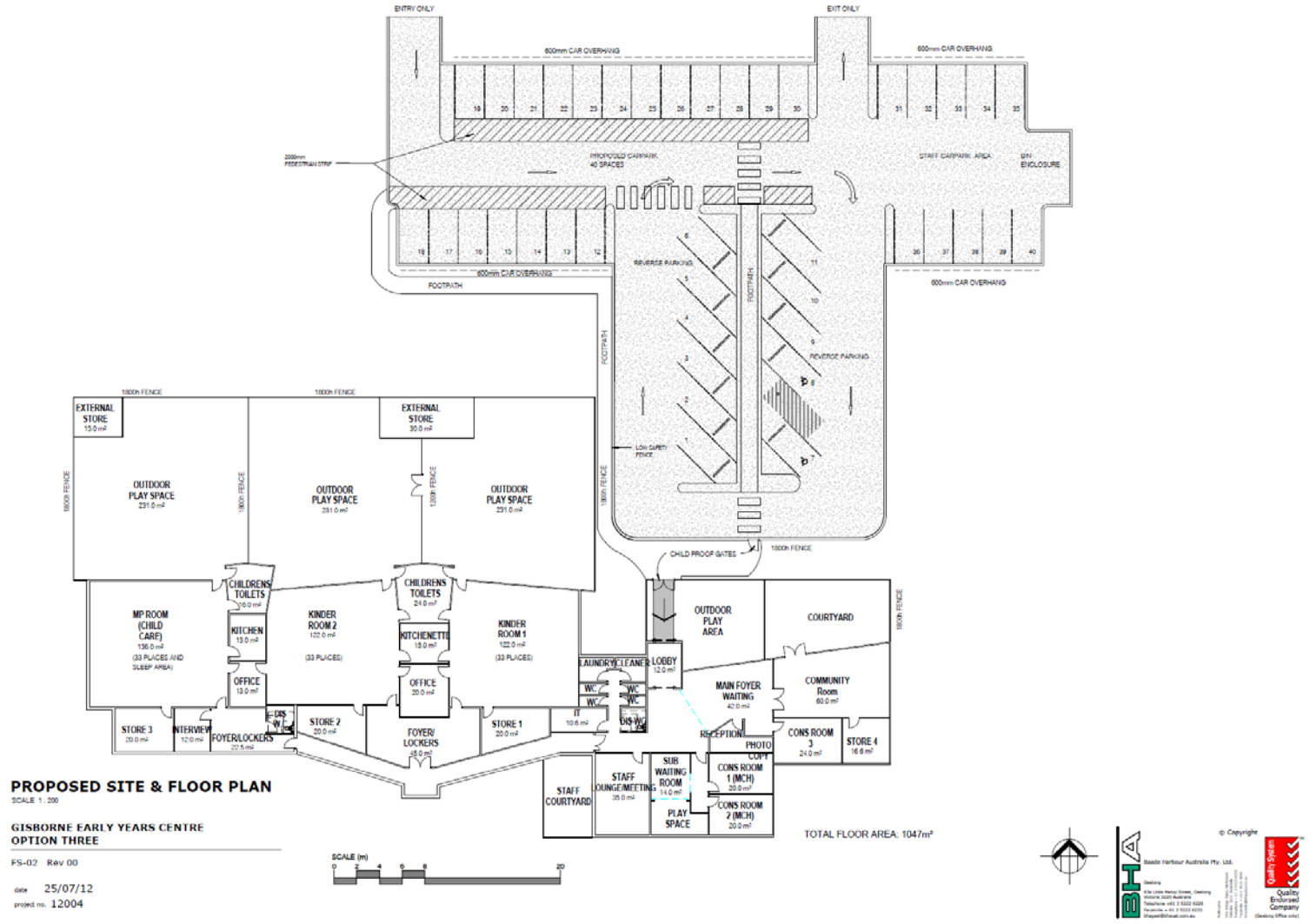


**Figure 12 Existing Site**

**LOCALITY PLAN**
SCALE 1 : 1000

**GISBORNE EARLY YEARS CENTRE**
**OPTION THREE**

FS 01 Rev 01

date 06/08/12
project no. 12004

**LEGEND**

- PROPOSED EARLY YEARS CENTRE
- OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE
- CARPARK

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Macedon Ranges Shire Council
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# 7. Conclusion

The **Gisborne Population Projections 2006 to 2036 (2009**) indicates that the overall Gisborne population will have risen by 108 per cent in the period 2006 to 2036. The 2011 Census has demonstrated that this has been underestimated.

This major resident increase requires timely provision of appropriate social infrastructure so that Gisborne retains its atmosphere of quality rural living within commuter access of Greater Melbourne.

Over the same time period the Shire is expected to see an 87 per cent in the 0-4 years' age group and a 73 per cent growth the 5-14 years' age group populations. This will significantly impact on the core array of children's services including Immunisation, Maternal & Child Health, Kindergarten, Long Day Care, Kindergarten-Within-Care, Early Childhood Intervention Service, Occasional Care, Playgroup and Toy Library. As core services for young parents will be challenged so too will existing service and facility capacity to assist such families with programs such as Family Support Services, Occasional Care and Out of School Hours Care/Vacation Programs.

The Shire's report **Children & Young People's Future Service Needs in the Macedon Ranges Shire July 2009** advises that population growth will bring a steady increase in the number of family households which, to some extent, will be balanced by a growing presence of older persons. The report identified additional service resources which would be required due to the population growth. The south Gisborne Centre can be planned to ramp up progressively to meet these needs whilst retaining flexibility in capacity to take on future, as yet unknown, programming options that may emerge in children's and community services.

**Findings**

- Macedon Ranges Shire Council will need to ensure that facilities have the appropriate spaces and functions to transition to Universal Access by 2013
- Analysis of the planning documents for the Gisborne/south Gisborne areas have identified that Gisborne will retain and expand in its focal point role within the Shire therefore requiring community facilities and services that respond both at a neighbourhood level and potentially at a Shire level
- Local planning has identified additional service resources required including 2.5 x Maternal & Child Health nurses, additional kindergarten teachers for up to 99 kinder places and the likely need to resource further 3 year old kindergarten as such provision becomes more popular with the need for options for family day care "in venue" and increased centre-based child care options. As Gisborne increases in popularity due to its proximity to Melbourne and rural lifestyle these additional services will be necessary to continue growth
- Collocation and service integration should be considered in facility development

The Gisborne Integrated Children's Centre is a feasible, viable and sustainable opportunity for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council to enrich the community the Gisborne community.

The Daly Reserve was selected as the preferred site based on the agreed criteria, research and consultation. Council owns the land. The concept provides an opportunity to better utilise and involve the community in the revitalisation of the reserve, whilst maintaining vegetation and open space.

There are opportunities through Australian and Victorian Government grants to secure the additional capital funding required. The sale of the Gisborne Kindergarten site may contribute to the project.

Ongoing viability will be ensured through state government recurrent funding for the kindergarten program, local and state government funding for the Maternal and Child Health and service, and Macedon Ranges Shire Council support with building maintenance and other recurrent expenditure.

The integrated Child and Family Centre will provide a focal point for the development of ECIS for the south of the Shire.

There are many potential long term benefits for the community and local economy through the creation of this valuable asset.

**Benefits:**

- Building a stronger integrated early years' service system
- Improving access to services
- Attracting settlement through multi-purpose, high quality social infrastructure

**Recommendation 1**

An integrated children's centre be developed on the Daly Reserve site to meet the current and future demand for early years' services in Gisborne.

**Recommendation 2**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council actively encourages early years' service providers (current and new) to utilise the Centre.

**Recommendation 3**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council actively promotes collaborative early year's program and service development through the Centre.

# 8. APPENDICES

## National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care

### Staffing arrangements

**Table 21 Educator-to-child ratios – preschool and long day care services**

| Age group | Educator-to-child ratio | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|---|
| Birth to 24 months | 1:4 | 1 January 2012 |
| 25 to 35 months | 1:4 | 1 January 2016 |
| 36 months to school age | 1:11 | 1 January 2016 |
| Mixed age groups | Proportional formula based on the above ratios. | 1 January 2012 |

**Table 22Educator qualification requirements – preschool and long day care services**

| Number of children in attendance (at any one time) | Qualified educator requirements | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 25 | 50% of educators have (or are actively working towards) a Diploma level ECEC qualification or above (the teacher may be included) * | 1 January 2014 |
| | Other educators have (or are actively working towards) a Certificate III level ECEC qualification (or equivalent) | |
| | An early childhood teacher is in attendance for some of the time that the service is being provided to children. | |
| 25 to 59 children | 50% of educators have (or are actively working towards) a Diploma level ECEC qualification or above (the teacher may be included) * | 1 January 2014 |
| | Other educators have (or are actively working towards) a Certificate III level ECEC qualification (or equivalent) | |
| | An early childhood teacher is in attendance at the service whenever the service is being provided to 26 children or more. | |
| 60 to 80 children | 50% of educators have (or are actively working towards) a Diploma level ECEC qualification or above (the teacher may be included) * | 1 January 2014 |
| | Other educators have (or are actively working towards) a Certificate III level ECEC qualification (or equivalent) | 1 January 2014 |
| | An early childhood teacher is in attendance at the service whenever the service is being provided to 26 children or more. | 1 January 2014 |
| | A second early childhood teacher or another suitably qualified leader is in attendance at the service for at least half the time the service is being provided to 60 children or more. | 1 January 2020 |
| Over 80 children | 50% of educators have (or are actively working towards) a Diploma level ECEC qualification or above (the teacher may be included) | 1 January 2014 |

| Number of children in attendance (at any one time) | Qualified educator requirements | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|---|
| | Other educators have (or are actively working towards) a Certificate III level ECEC qualification (or equivalent) | 1 January 2014 |
| | An early childhood teacher is in attendance at the service whenever the service is being provided to 26 children or more. | 1 January 2014 |
| | A second early childhood teacher or another suitably qualified leader is in attendance at the service for at least half the time the service is being provided to 60 to 80 children, and once there are more than 80 children, the teacher needs to be there whenever the service is being provided. | 1 January 2020 |

- For the purposes of clarity, in relation to 50% of Educators have a Diploma, for every 2 educators (or part thereof) at least one must have (or be enrolled in and studying) a Diploma level ECEC qualification, that is if there are 15 carers in the service 8 must hold a Diploma level ECEC qualification.
- For the purposes of clarity, an early childhood teacher is in attendance at the service whenever the service is being provided to 26 children or more, would require the teacher to be at the service at least 6 hours per day.
- A staff-to-child ratio of 1:4 for children 25 – 35 months will be retained in Victoria where this ratio currently applies, instead of 1:5 under the National Quality Standard.
- The current requirements for a second teacher in New South Wales for centres with greater than 40 children, and a further teacher for every 20 children thereafter will be retained.

**Table 23 Educator-to-child ratios – family day care services**

| Age group | Educator- to-child ratio | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|---|
| Mixed age groups of children | 1:7 with a maximum of four children not yet attending school (including the educator's own children). | 1 January 2014 |

**Table 24 Educator and coordinator qualification requirements – family day care services**

| Qualified educator and coordinators requirements | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|
| All carers have a minimum Certificate III level qualification (or actively working towards).<br>All coordinators have a Diploma qualification. | 1 January 2014 |

**Table 25 Educator-to-child ratios requirements – OSHC services**

The National Quality Standard applies to OSHC services but at this stage no changes to educator-to-child ratios is proposed

| State/Territory | Educator-to-child ratio | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|---|
| VIC | 1:15 | Immediately |

**Table 26 Educator qualifications requirement – OSHC services**

The National Quality Standard applies to OSHC services but at this stage no changes to educator qualification requirements is proposed

| State/Territory | Educator qualifications requirements | Timeframe for compliance |
|---|---|---|
| VIC | 50% of educators must hold at least a 2 year post-secondary early childhood qualification or a 2 year post-secondary childcare or youth recreation qualification | 31 Dec 2010 |
| | Other educators must hold at least a Certificate III in Children's Services or equivalent or commence obtaining a qualification within 6 months of commencing to care for children | |

**Other requirements**

*Minimum age of educators:*

- Educators (except family day carers) under the age of 18:
  - may be counted in the educator-to-child ratios;
  - are not permitted to work alone in a service; and
  - must be supervised by an adult with a Diploma qualification or above (or actively engaged and working towards the qualification).
- For purposes of clarity educators under the age of 18 holding a Diploma qualification would still need to be supervised as above.
- Family day carers must be 18 years of age or above.

*Staffing arrangements support children undertaking activities as part of a group that is of appropriate age and composition and promotes relationships with peers and educators.*

*At least one educator with a prescribed first aid competency/qualification is present while children are at the service.*

*All family day carers have a prescribed first aid qualification.*

*Professional development plans are documented and implemented.*

*Information on activities that are not considered to be working with children.*

*In quality services, educators and coordinators:*

- hold or are supported to work towards qualifications that are higher than the minimum; and
- regularly participate in professional development opportunities.
- In quality services, groups of children do not exceed three times the ratio that pertains to the relevant age group.

**The following assumptions have guided the Service Plan**

| Service Mix | |
|---|---|
| | Services provided through the centre will be Kindergarten, Maternal and Child Health, Toy Library, Cobaw Early Intervention Services and Family Services/ Parent Buddies Program<br>Additional programs that may operate out of the facility in the future include:<br>• Tweddle<br>• Noah's Ark |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Kindergarten** | |
| Programs | The kindergarten will run a three year old program in addition to the four year old program. |
| Kindergarten fees policy | The purpose of the Kindergarten fees policy (for four year old kindergarten) is to make kindergarten fees affordable for eligible families to promote participation.<br>The service must provide a *Kindergarten fee subsidy- fees policy* that is responsive to the community. Fees must be set at an amount that balances:<br>• the capacity of parents to pay, keeping fees affordable for all families as possible<br>• the provision of a high quality service<br>• the financial viability of the service<br>The three year old program is totally reliant on family capacity to pay. |
| Eligible families | Eligible families include families with: Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Temporary Protection/ humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785 or 786; Asylum Seekers on Bridging Visas A - F and Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visas holders 200- 217; Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card; and Parents with triplets or quadruplets attending kindergarten in the same year are eligible for the subsidy for each child. |
| Victorian Government fee Subsidy | Indexed each year at 3% per annum. |
| Per capita grant | The kindergarten currently receives capital funding at the rural per capita rate. It is assumed that they will continue to be funded at this rate.<br>The average rate for 2011 is $2,465.00. This has been indexed at 3.1% per annum to 2013. |

**Table 27 Gisborne Kindergarten Profile**

| 2010 Service Profile | | | | | | Workforce Arrangements | | | Anticipated impact arising from Universal Access | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Licensed capacity | 2010 Enrolment Numbers | Spare capacity 2010 | Service Hours | 2010 Services [5] | 2010 Waiting List | 2010 Teacher | 2010 Assistant | Growth | Service | Staff | Infrastructure |
| 56 | 53 | 3 | 10 hrs per groups | 2 x kinder groups. 2 x pre-kinder groups. | Nil | 0.86EFT 2 x part-time teachers | 0. 64EFT 2 x part-time | x | Depending on the timetable – highly probable that the pre-kinder program will need to be relocated. | Additional staffing hrs required. | This facility has been identified in earlier studies[6] for closure and replacement. in the event that an alternative facility is not available by 2013, Grant Avenue Kindergarten could introduce Universal Access accommodating two kindergarten groups. |

[5] Gisborne has two private long daycare facilities (unfunded) with capacity of up to 70 (4 – 5 year old) children who could be offered a structured early-years education program subject to future funding, recruitment of qualified staff and program development.

[6] Refer to the MRSC –'Early Years Infrastructure Plan (2009-2019)' and MRSC – 'Planning for Early Years Services Infrastructure' – March 2007.

**Table 28 Cobaw - Estimate of Current and Projected Needs for Rooms**

| Service | Office Space | | Consulting/ Interview Rooms | | Multi-Purpose/ Group/ Meeting Rooms | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Days/ week | Hours/ day | Days/ week | Hours/ day | Days/ week | Hours/ day |
| **Early Childhood Intervention Service** | Over all teams 1 office space shared initially by 3-4 people/hot desks. | Shared across teams where required | Yr 1: **1-2** | Yr 1: **4-8** | Yr 1: **1** | Yr 1: **4** |
| | In 3 yrs 2 offices | | Yr 3: **2** | Yr 3: **8** | Yr 3: **1-2** | Yr 3: **4** |
| | | | Yr5: **2** | Yr5: **8** | Yr5: **2** Potential Evening group | Yr5: **4** |
| **Family Services/ Parent Buddies** | Share as above | | Yr 1 **: 1** Yr 3: **1-2** Yr5: **2** | Yr 1: **3-4** Yr 3: **4-8** Yr5: **8** | Yr1: **1.0** Yr 3: **1.0** Yr 5: **2.0** | Yr1: **4** Yr 3: **4-8** Yr 5: **4-8** |

## Increase workforce capacity by accessing employment incentives

The Employment Incentives for Early Childhood Educators enable licensed children's services to advertise the availability of a financial incentive of up to $12,000 to early childhood teachers and up to $6,000 for diploma-qualified staff to take up work in hard-to-staff positions. Service providers are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these incentives on offer. For more information visit:

www.education.vic.gov.au/careers/earlychildhood/default.htm

Infrastructure

Most services should be able to move to a 15 hour program after considering a number of options including the programming, venue, transport and workforce considerations listed above, however small number of services may need more assistance. The Children's Facilities Capital Program invests in a range of infrastructure initiatives for children's services infrastructure, including new facilities, upgrades, renovation and refurbishments, and minor grants for equipment to eligible services.

**Gisborne Montessori School**

There are currently 23 in the 4-yr old kindergarten; 6 in the 3-year old program with up to 9 extra children filtering into the 3-year old program from the 'early starters' program. Kindergarten program runs from 9:00am to 12:20pm five days per week. Some of the local child care providers collect kindergarten children after the end of the program. The school has a wide catchment area, including Bacchus Marsh and Kyneton. The majority of the children at the school come from Gisborne, New Gisborne, and Sunbury (currently 10 children).

**St Pauls Playgroup**

St Pauls offers playgroups on three mornings each week from 10:00 am to 12 noon at the Parish Hall in Gisborne and also the St John's Hall in Riddells Creek. There is also a play group for three to four year olds on Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

**Gisborne Church of Christ Playgroup**

The Playgroup uses church facilities. Two weekly playgroups operate (excluding school holidays) with up to 16 children (from 10 to 13 families) attending each session.

**New Gisborne Playgroup**

The New Gisborne Playgroup runs out of the Ross Watt Children's Hall in New Gisborne. Playgroup has been running in the venue since the early 1970s and currently 20 sessions are offered each week. Sessions are run Monday to Friday. The Hall is run by Trustees and the Playgroup is managed by a Parent Committee.

Currently, 105 families are members and around 148 children participate each week with similar numbers of children coming from New Gisborne and Gisborne. The program is close to capacity.

Council runs an eight week session with first time mothers, including information about the playgroup.

The Committee applies for grants from the Shire, through the annual grants process.

**Good Start Early Learning Centre– New Gisborne**

GoodStart (New Gisborne) provides Long Day Care and also provides a preschool program within the LDC program. There are no vacancies in the under 3 year old program. Some places are available in the 3 year and over program.

## Issues/Gaps

The following provides issues raised through the consultation process:

- Council's occasional care program is no longer available. This used to run Tuesdays and Thursdays for three hours.
- There is only one session of three-year old kindergarten available per week. Some metropolitan families have access to two sessions per week
- Shire has introduced an enrolment fee for kindergarten
- Long wait list for Community Speech Pathology
- No Paediatrician locally
- Acts as a resource for kindergarten staff and families across a range of areas – readiness, assessment, gifted children
- Need for early intervention services. Have to go through Bendigo (central Intake) for SIRT
- Community Speech Therapy has a long wait list. Have very good private Speech Therapist in the area.
- Autism Assessment Service in the area but quite costly
- Not a lot of Children's OT/Physio in the area
- The impact of transition to 15 hours kindergarten may have an impact on St. Luke's staff
- Coordination of care – particularly for families receiving many services is needed
- Accessing 'hidden' families is a gap

- Early parenting education – some more education programs plus some structured coordination of a calendar that enables it to be timelier (make links to the good parenting programs being run by schools)
- Facilitated playgroups for families that need a professional to build comfort into the relationships
- Specialised playgroups e.g. my little treasures
- Access to Community health dentistry
- Dads groups
- Post natal depression support
- Community and general practice understanding of state-wide maternity system
- Sibling support where a child has a disability
- Local and affordable comprehensive learning assessments
- Support for children of parents with a mental illness
- Pre -birth parenting – especially for very young parents
- Orthotics/podiatry
- Knowledge of what is available in the Medicare system
- Breast feeding support
- Services and case managers for complex needs /conditions
- Access to paediatric Audiology
- Affordable child care
- Shared understanding of our services – those in attendance and St Luke's and Centacare
- Transport
- Centralised intake for Early Intervention
- Relationships with other birthing services

[i] Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Planning for the Introduction of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, Grant Avenue Kindergarten- Gisborne, Site and Change Management Plan, Prepared by C. Marshall and M. Caddick, March 2010.

[ii] MRSC, Early Years Infrastructure Plan, 2009-2019, 2009, C. Marshall and M. Caddick; MRSC Council Plan 2009-2013; Family and Children's Strategy, 2009-2012; MRSC Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013; MRSC Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2009-2019; MRSC Settlement Strategy; MRSC Gisborne Outline Development Plan

[iii] Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, Summary of strategic issues for The Loddon Mallee region, May 2010, Report to the Loddon Mallee Local Government Areas

[iv] Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme, June 2012, Department of Planning and Community Development

[v] COAG, National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care, Dec 2009

[vi] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Experimental Estimates of Pre School Education, April 2012

[vii] Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

[viii] Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] Indigenous Profile Macedon Ranges Shire, 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

[ix] Victorian Government, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, National Quality Framework fact sheet, updated March 2011

[x] COAG, National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care, Dec 2009

[xi] DEECD Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development, 2008

[xii] DEECD Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, 2009 and Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2010-2012, 2010; DEECD Municipal Planning Capacity / Assessment Reporting for Universal Access to 15 hours of Kindergarten, 2012 MRSC

[xiii] DEECD, Maternal and Child Health Services Guidelines February 2011

[xiv] Macedon ranges Early Parenting/Childhood Project Services Mapping, Meeting Notes, February 2012, Lisa Delaney Consulting

[xv] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Basic Community Profile 2011, Macedon Ranges Shire (LGA)

[xvi] Macedon Ranges Shire Council Gisborne Demographic Profile 2009

[xvii] Victorian Government Department of Human Services, *Burden of Disease Study – Regions and LGA 2001*, June 2005

[xviii] Ibid

[xix] Central Victorian Health Alliance Community Profile, Primary Care Partnership, Author Nancy Vaughn, 2012

[xx] Public Health Information Development Unit – 2011

[xxi] Maternal & Child Health Services Annual Report, 2010/11 Loddon Mallee Region and Victoria, DEECD 2011

[xxii] AEDI Community Profile – March 2011, Macedon Ranges, VIC

[xxiii] Macedon Ranges Shire Council Social Planning News, City In-movers and Commuters, September 2009

[xxiv] Australian Bureau of Statistics, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, 2012

[xxv] DEECD Municipal Planning Capacity / Assessment Reporting for Universal Access to 15 hours of Kindergarten, 2012 MRSC

[xxvi] Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme, June 2012, Department of Planning and Community Development

[xxviii] Australia Government Regional Development Fund Australia Guidelines 2011