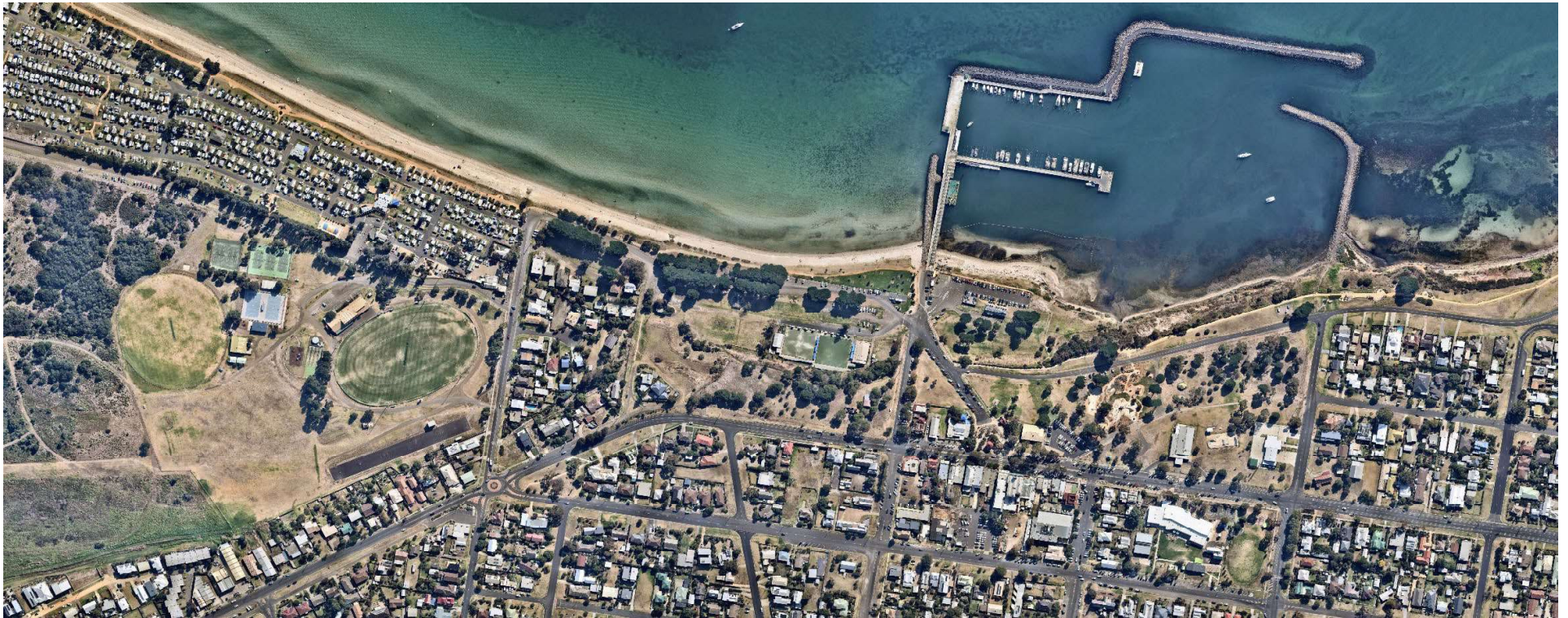


Portarlington Community Infrastructure  
Scoping Study  
Draft Final Report



Version: DRAFT November 2022

## 4. DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMMUNITY DEMAND

### 4.1 Portarlington demographic snapshot

The following infographs provide an overview of the population of Portarlington (Suburbs and Localities category – see image below for area covered), using 2021 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and data from forecast id.

Portarlington is situated in the Bellarine Peninsula, within the City of Greater Geelong, bordered by Port Philip Bay to its north, St Leonards-Indented Head to its east and south and Drysdale-Bellarine to its west. With an estimated population of 4,436 in 2022, it is expected to grow to 5,853 by 2041<sup>1</sup>. This equates to an increase of 1,639 people over the next 19 years (a growth of 38.9%) or the equivalent of an average of 86.3 new residents every year. Note that this forecast was prepared prior to COVID-19, and updated forecasting data from the 2021 census is yet to be released. Since the 2016 Census, Portarlington's population increased by 817 people, or the equivalent of 163 people per year.

The period of greatest growth over the next 19 years is expected to be between 2027 and 2031 when the population is anticipated to increase by 627 people. This will primarily be facilitated by residential housing developments planned in Arlington Rise, Olive Grove and Portarlington Village during that time.

Based on the 2021 Census, the weekly household income of residents in Portarlington was significantly below the Victorian average. This is partly due to the number of older adults living in the town who have reached retirement age and may be living on superannuation funds or the pension. For those who are renting, almost half are experiencing rental stress, i.e. paying more than 30% of their household income in rent. Both rental stress and mortgage stress have increased considerably. Consideration

needs to be given to keeping fees to attend activities at community facilities at an affordable rate.

In 2016, the median age was 59 and in 2021 it was 62. In Victoria the median age is 38 years of age. This demonstrates that Portarlington has been, and continues to be, very much a community of older people. The biggest age cohort increase was the 70-84 age grouping (an increase of 384 people), followed by 50-69 year olds (an increase of 332 people). There was some anecdotal evidence that the 'sea change' that followed COVID-19 may have provided impetus for some younger families to move to the area, however, that has not been reflected in the 2021 Census data to any great extent. This type of demographic shift is most likely to occur if there is adequate community and social infrastructure available to support the needs of this group, as well as housing. However, it is possible that the recent developments in Portarlington, i.e. extensive investment in the hotel and the passenger ferry, may have created increased confidence in the town and may therefore entice more younger families to move to the area.

The largest age cohorts in Portarlington now and in 19 years' time are people aged 60 – 79 years of age. Given the high percentage of older adults living in the community, most of whom are either nearing the end of their working life or already retired, there is likely to be demand for suitable services to meet their needs as well as activities to enrich their lives, e.g. artistic pursuits, volunteering, exercise classes, social group activities, etc.

As people age, their health tends to decline. In Portarlington, more than 2 people out of every 5 experience long term health issues. Further, almost 1 in 10 residents needs assistance due to a profound or severe core limitation. To ensure that everyone, regardless of their abilities or health has access to community infrastructure, consideration needs to be given to ensuring that facilities are accessible as possible and able to provide for a diversity of programming needs.

Almost one third of Portarlington residents (32.4%) live alone. Whilst aloneness does not equate with loneliness, there may be a portion of the community who need opportunities

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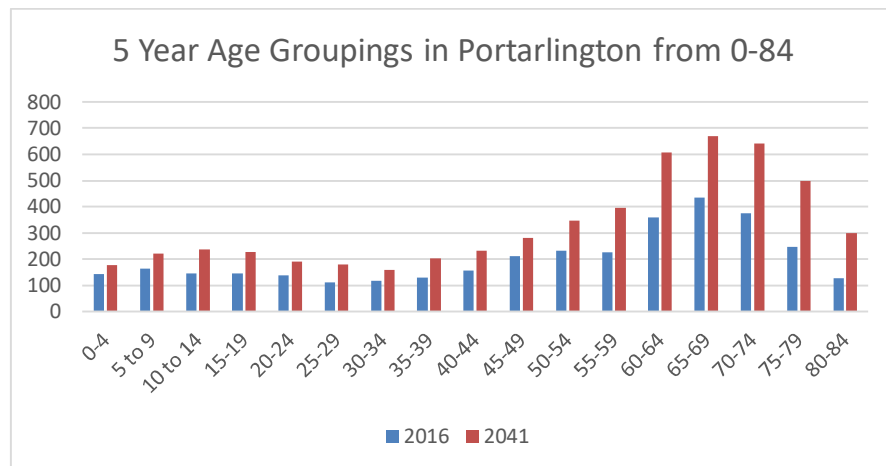
<sup>1</sup> Forecast.id: <https://forecast.id.com.au/geelong/population-age-structure-map?WebID=360&thetype=ChangeY1Y3&CustomAgeFrom=80&CustomAgeTo=85>

to engage with others, either formally or informally for their health and wellbeing. Locations such as the foreshore, library services, parks and community facilities can provide such opportunities.

From a culturally and linguistically diverse perspective, Portarlington has a higher percentage of local residents born in Australia, compared with Victoria. However, from a non-English speaking background, consideration may need to be given to providing information in other languages that are spoken in the community, i.e. Maltese, Greek, Italian, Croatian and German, and to providing programming that supports the needs of these communities.

It is important to note that the population of Portarlington increases over the summer months and on weekends due to its position as a seaside town. This seasonal increase in population may impact usage of existing facilities and potentially increase demand for certain services. On the night that the 2021 Census was conducted, there were 198 visitors in Portarlington, representing 4.8% of people included in the Census data for Portarlington. The number of local residents who were absent at that time is not known.

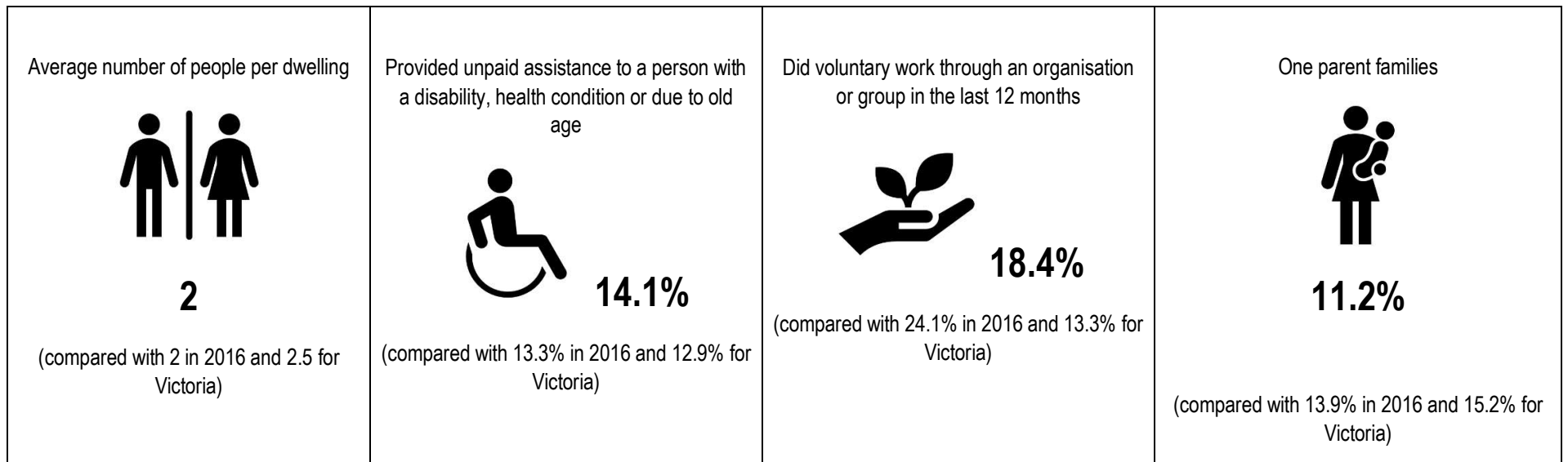
The following graph shows the actual and estimated number of people in each five-year age grouping up until 84 years of age between 2016 and 2041 (note that projections are not available beyond this age):











The following infographs provide an overview of the population of Portarlington (Suburbs and Localities category – see image below for area covered), using 2021 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and data from forecast id.











Figure 1: Portarlington Census Area





<p>Lone person in a household</p>  <p><b>32.4%</b></p> <p>(compared with 35.2% in 2016 and 25.9% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Home owners (owned outright or with a mortgage)</p>  <p><b>74.8%</b></p> <p>(compared with 69.7% in 2016 and 68.3% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Rent a house / unit</p>  <p><b>20.7%</b></p> <p>(compared with 26.1% in 2016 and 28.5% of Victorians)</p>	<p>Households with rent payments greater than or equal to 30% of household income</p>  <p><b>44.4%</b></p> <p>(compared with 11.0% in 2016 and 30.9% of Victorians)</p>
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<p>Households with mortgage repayments greater than or equal to 30% of household income</p>  <p><b>15.4%</b></p> <p>(compared with 4.2% in 2016 and 15.5% of Victorians)</p>	<p>Households that earn less than \$650 gross per week</p>  <p><b>28.6%</b></p> <p>(compared with 33% in 2016 and 16.4% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Households that earn more than \$3000 gross weekly income</p>  <p><b>11.7%</b></p> <p>(compared with 5.1% in 2016 and 24.2% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Internet accessed from dwelling</p>  <p><b>75.3%</b></p> <p>(compared with 83.7% for Victoria) *2016</p>
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<p>Babies, pre-schoolers and lower primary school students: 0- 9 years of age</p>  <p><b>5.8% (257)</b></p> <p>(compared with 7.9% (284) in 2016 and 12.0% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Upper primary and secondary school students: 10-19 years of age</p>  <p><b>6.9% (306)</b></p> <p>(compared with 7.7% (276) in 2016 and 11.6% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Tertiary education, independents and young workforce: 20-34 year olds years of age</p>  <p><b>8.0% (356)</b></p> <p>(compared with 8.2% (294) in 2016 and 21.3% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Parents and homebuilders: 35 to 49 years of age</p>  <p><b>11.5% (512)</b></p> <p>(compared with 13.5% (487) in 2016 and 20.5% for Victoria)</p>
<p>Older workers, empty nesters and retirees: 50-69 year olds</p>  <p><b>36.8% (1,631)</b></p> <p>(compared with 35.9% (1,299) in 2016 and 22.7% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Seniors: 70-84 years of age</p>  <p><b>26.1% (1,158)</b></p> <p>(compared with 21.5% (774) in 2016 and 9.7% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Elderly people: 85 years of age and older</p>  <p><b>4.6% (204)</b></p> <p>(compared with 5.5% (197) in 2016 and 2.2% for Victoria)</p>	<p>Median weekly household income</p>  <p><b>\$1,064</b></p> <p>(compared with \$892 in 2016 and \$1,759 for Victoria)</p>

<p>Those who completed Year 12</p>  <p><b>40.4%</b></p> <p>(compared with 61.8% of Victorians)</p> <p>In 2016 13.1% achieved a Bachelor's Degree or above compared with 24.3% of Victorians. Data not available for 2021.</p>	<p>Top 5 occupations</p>  <p>Professionals; technicians and trades workers; community and personal service workers; managers; and clerical and administrative workers</p> <p>*2016</p>	<p>Top 5 industries of employment</p>  <p>Supermarket and grocery stores; aged care residential services; hospitals (except psychiatric); accommodation; and other social assistance services</p> <p>*2016</p>	<p>Average number of motor vehicles per dwelling</p>  <p><b>1.8%</b></p> <p>(compared with 1.7% in 2016 and 1.8% for Victoria)</p>
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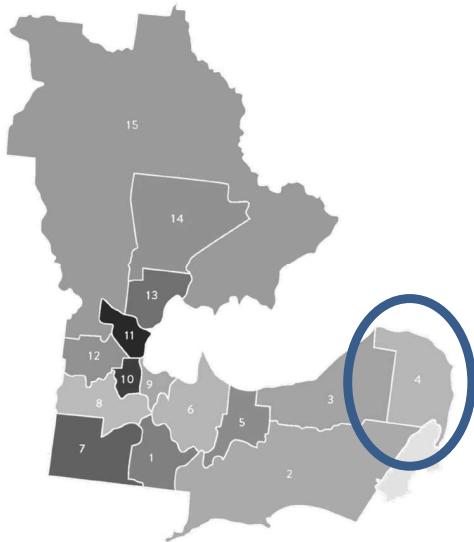
<p>Persons in need of assistance who have profound or severe core activity limitation</p>  <p><b>9.4%</b></p> <p>(compared with 8.8% in 2016 and 5.9% for Victoria)</p>	<p>People with long term health issues</p>  <p><b>43.6%</b></p> <p>(compared with 31.4% for Victoria). This is a new measure in 2021 Census.</p>		
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## 4.2 Community Infrastructure Benchmarks

### Benchmarking

According to the Social Infrastructure Plan 2020-2023, the City of Greater Geelong is moving towards adaptive and intergenerational community facility designs or hubs where a range of community programs, activities and services are delivered, ideally managed by a dedicated place manager / team. Provision is based on principles of equity (distribution / condition); accessibility (travel) and sustainability (usage / occupancy / felt need).

The relevant planning area of the Social Infrastructure Plan (Area 4 Portarlington – St Leonards – Indented Head), has a combined population of 9,369<sup>2</sup> and includes the following community facilities:



Portarlington	St Leonards	Indented Head
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parks Hall</li> <li>▪ Portarlington Rotunda</li> <li>▪ Portarlington Senior Citizens Centre</li> <li>▪ Portarlington Pre-school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ St Leonards Community Centre</li> <li>▪ St Leonards Men's Shed</li> <li>▪ St Leonards Recreation Reserve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indented Head Community Hall</li> </ul>

Portarlington itself is also serviced by the Maternal and Child Health Service (operating until recently from Bellarine Health in Portarlington), the Mobile Library, the Mobile Youth Hub, as well as community support programmes out of the Masonic Hall and St Andrews Uniting Church.

The Social Infrastructure Plan 2020-2023, notes that based on the current population, the Portarlington – St Leonards – Indented Head area has:

- an oversupply of senior citizen's centres
- an oversupply of men's / community sheds
- an appropriate level of provision of neighbourhood houses/ community learning centres.

The benchmarks indicate that the following services / spaces may be warranted:

- a one day per week branch library service (although this could be met through the mobile library service, which is on site one day per week in Portarlington and one day per week in St Leonards) or other mini library services operating at Parks Hall in Portarlington, Portarlington Senior Citizens Centre and Portarlington Primary School)
- a 2.5 day per week youth service, particularly as it is recognised that youth poverty and subsequent health inequality is an issue in this area, however consideration of the demographics in the planning area does not indicate this to be a priority. The Mobile Youth Hub is available if demand exists and this can be considered by CoGG Youth Services.
- some form of gallery / exhibition space.

The following table demonstrates current supply, provision standards and benchmarking:

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census – State Suburbs and Localities category for Portarlington, St Leonards and Indented Head

Portarlington – St Leonards – Indented Heads area (population approx. 10,000)	Current amount	Current provision standards	Benchmark	Difference (+ = oversupply and - = undersupply)
Community halls (does not include rotunda or senior citizens hall)	1	No parameters, but assume 1 per 10,000	1	0
Neighbourhood house / community learning centre	2	1 per 10,000	1	+1
Senior citizens centre	1	1 per 20,000	0.5	+0.5
Men's / community shed	1	1 per 20,000	0.5	+0.5
Gallery / exhibition space	0	No parameters	-	Could be warranted
Branch library	0	1 per 10,000 – 25,000	0.4 - 1	-0.4 – 1.0
Mobile Library Service	1	No parameters	-	Mobile library service exists and operates twice weekly in planning area Portarlington Wednesdays 11am-5pm St Leonards - Monday 9am-11am
Youth space	0	1 per 20,000	0.5	-0.5

The benchmarks contained within the Social Infrastructure Plan indicate that there may be a shortage in library facilities, youth spaces and gallery exhibition space. However, these benchmarks do not take into consideration the role of mobile services, mini services and technology in delivering library and youth services.

The benchmarks indicate that a one day per week branch library service may be required in Portarlinton. However, library services are currently offered through a mobile library service, as well as mini library services operating at Parks Hall in Portarlinton, Portarlinton Senior Citizens Centre and Portarlinton Primary School. There is potential that a once per week bus from Portarlinton to the new regional library in Drysdale may help to meet library services needs of local residents. Therefore, no new library facilities are recommended. Instead, improvements to and increased promotion of existing library opportunities should be considered.

The benchmarks indicate that a 2.5 day per week youth service may be required in Portarlinton, particularly as it is recognised that youth poverty and subsequent health inequality is an issue in the area. However, the community consultation did not identify a need for additional youth service infrastructure. Therefore, no new youth facilities are recommended at this point in time. Consideration should be given to developing youth programs in existing facilities such as Parks Hall and increasing the frequency of visits by the City of Greater Geelong's Mobile Youth Hub. Greater promotion of existing programs, services and facilities for young people would also be beneficial, along with greater promotion of online resources and services. It is noted that, aligned with the Social Infrastructure Plan and based on demonstrated demand, Council's strategic planning is suggesting youth dedicated spaces in Brownbill and Kardinia wards ahead of a space in the Bellarine ward.

Whilst there are no benchmarks around gallery / exhibition space, feedback from the community indicates that such a space is required, particularly given the strong arts scene in the area and the number of retirees living in the community who take part in arts

activities. Therefore, it is recommended that some form of gallery / exhibition space is developed in Portarlinton.

Given that a significant population increase would need to occur to require new facilities based on the current provision standards and benchmarking developed by the City of Greater Geelong, the level of provision above is likely to be adequate until at least 2041, based on an estimated population of 11,975 across the area by 2041<sup>3</sup>.

It is important to note that benchmarks should only be used as a guide, as the actual needs of communities may vary according to what services / facilities are available nearby, demographics of the community, culture / history of certain services being provided in a local area, etc.

### **Management and operations**

A clear message from the community engagement undertaken as part of this project indicates that there are opportunities to improve management and operations of community facilities in Portarlinton. At present, bookings for Parks Hall are undertaken through Council. Feedback from community groups was that this process can be onerous and expensive. It is recommended that the City review how bookings are made, to ensure ease of access to the facility and to optimise facility management. It is suggested also that an opportunity is identified to further explore alternate management models for Parks Hall.

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<sup>3</sup> City of Greater Geelong – forecast.id: <https://forecast.id.com.au/geelong/population-age-structure-map?WebID=360&thetype=Year3&CustomAgeFrom=0&CustomAgeTo=85>

## Social Infrastructure Planning Objectives

The City of Greater Geelong's Social Infrastructure Policy has identified five objectives to guide its planning, provision and investment in social infrastructure, as follows:

Objective	Description	Aims	Considerations for Social Infrastructure in Portarlinton
<b>Equitable</b>	Fair access to facilities and services that are needed across the municipality including healthy, safe and inclusive places, spaces and services.	Social equity, based on need, for all in the community.	Ensure that additional service needs of local residents from Portarlinton, e.g. gallery space are catered for through facility upgrades or developments.
<b>Accessible</b>	Accessible for all abilities, affordable and easy for people to get to.	Fair distribution, universally designed and affordable for all.	<p>Ensure access for people of all abilities at existing facilities or new facilities in Portarlinton, e.g. ramps, disabled toilets, disabled parking, Braille, quiet spaces, etc.</p> <p>Ensure that services and programs operating within Portarlinton, along with community room hire, are affordable.</p> <p>Ensure that community facilities are located centrally in Portarlinton (preferably in the Foreshore area) so that they are easy to access for people, including those without vehicles.</p>
<b>Adaptable</b>	Flexible to meet the changing needs of the community and can be used for more than one purpose.	Responsive to changing needs and a range of uses.	Ensure that any upgrades to facilities in Portarlinton are multipurpose in design so that they can adapt to the changing needs of the community, and not only meet the needs of a single user group.
<b>Integrated</b>	Integrated with other services where possible and a place for people to come together.	A seamless and positive experience of our services.	<p>Ensure that multiple services are co-located together in facilities in Portarlinton wherever possible.</p> <p>Ensure that informal social spaces are provided so that local residents can connect with one another.</p>
<b>Sustainable</b>	Environmentally, fiscally, socially and culturally responsible, well designed, effectively managed and usage is optimised, now and into the future.	Meet our Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) obligations, as part of our commitment to the UNESCO City of Design designation, value managed places, spaces and services and ensure efficiency of operation.	Ensure that any facility upgrades / developments in Portarlinton are designed to be environmentally sustainable through the use of recycled materials, solar energy, passive heating and cooling, etc.

Objective	Description	Aims	Considerations for Social Infrastructure in Portarlington
			<p>Ensure staff / volunteers from local organisations in Portarlington are supported to understand the social and cultural environment in which they operate, e.g. understanding cultural needs of newly arrived people.</p> <p>Ensure staff / volunteers from local organisations in Portarlington are supported to develop management and governance skills to enable them to effectively carry out their work.</p>

**Demographics and Community Demand: Issues and Opportunities**

- Since 2016, the population of Portarlington has grown by 817 people, or an increase of 267 people per year.
- The population of Portarlington is forecast to continue to grow by 39% over the next 19 years – an increase of around 86 residents per year indicating an increasing demand for community spaces and programmes. Peak growth is anticipated between 2027 and 2031.
- The weekly household income of Portarlington residents is significantly lower than the Victorian average, indicating a demand for local, low cost community services and programmes
- The population of Portarlington is significantly older than the Victorian population as a whole, further indicating both a demand and a capacity to engage with community programmes and facilities. Further this suggests a demand for local rather than remote facilities.
- Along with advanced age, the Portarlington community exhibits a range of health support needs, with 40% of residents experiencing long term health issues. This suggests a demand for not only health services, but recreational programmes which respond to health conditions.
- Almost 33% of Portarlington residents live in single person households, suggesting a need for local social interaction.
- The current provision of community infrastructure in Portarlington is generally in line with provision benchmarks, with the exception of a youth service and an exhibition/ arts space
- While spatial provision is adequate access to community spaces through booking etc. can be problematic and would benefit from some streamlining.

## 5. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### 5.1 Stage 1 Community Engagement

As part of a review of community facilities in Portarlington, the local community was invited to provide information about their need for community facilities. Three key tools were utilised to gather this information. These tools included a survey in March and April 2022, key stakeholder meetings and written submissions. An overview of each of the tools is provided below, followed by a brief summary of implications arising out of the engagement.

The full engagement report is included as Appendix A.

#### Survey

167 surveys were completed by local residents in an attempt to better understand the types and location of community facilities, programs and services used by local residents and the types and location of community facilities, programs and services desired by local residents. Survey respondents were also asked to identify any improvements required to facilities in Portarlington. The survey was available on the City of Greater Geelong's website from 9 March to 11 April 2022.

Survey respondents regularly attend local events such as markets and festivals and tend to use a variety of places and spaces such as the foreshore, the recreation reserve, the park, Parks Hall and WG Little Reserve. Outside the town, local residents tend to access services that may not be available locally or are of a higher standard such as aquatic centre, leisure / recreation facilities, health services, library, shops and entertainment. A high percentage of survey respondents stated that they would like to have all of these activities / services available locally.

Although some survey respondents spoke about the need to demolish existing buildings and replace with a designated community hub, many spoke about the way in which existing facilities could be improved, especially Parks Hall, the foreshore, Portarlington Recreation Reserve, Portarlington Park and the Senior Citizens Hall.

#### Key stakeholder meetings

19 meetings were held with key stakeholders to discuss their particular needs regarding facilities. The majority of these meetings were held face to face, although some were held online. Whilst some groups spoke of the need for a new community hub, others spoke about improvements required to existing facilities so that they could be more effectively used by local residents and for events such as the Mussel Festival and the Celtic Festival.

#### Written submissions

30 written submissions were received from community members. These submissions focussed on a variety of topics related to facilities and infrastructure in Portarlington. The most frequent comments related to the need for a static library service.

#### Implications

Through the various engagement activities undertaken, the consultant team heard from some members of the community that a new purpose-built **community hub** providing a 'one stop shop' where a multitude of programs and services are delivered is required, but also heard from others that they preferred a diversity of '**satellite**' facilities available throughout the town, especially in the foreshore area, but that these facilities may need to be upgraded slightly to better meet the existing and future needs of the community.

As there is no clear preference from the community regarding a new community hub as opposed to a satellite option, the project team has undertaken preliminary planning work to explore the characteristics feasibility of each of these options, as a basis for further engagement with stakeholders and the community. A summary of the consolidated hub and satellite hub options are included in Section 8 of this report

## 5.2 Stakeholder Engagement – Project Reference Group

A Project Reference Group (PRG) was convened in September 2022. The PRG comprised representatives from local clubs and facilities, and residents who expressed an interest in the being part of the PRG during Stage 1 consultation.

The groups involved in the PRG included: Portarlington Neighborhood House, Portarlington Seniors Club, Portarlington Community Association, Portarlington Football and Netball Club, Portarlington Cricket Club, St Andrews Uniting Church, Port Arts and Portarlington Primary School.

The PRG met three times throughout September and November 2022, and provided feedback on the "Issues and Opportunities" identified via the analysis of Stage 1 engagement, the community profile and the facilities review.

### **Community Engagement: Issues and Opportunities**

- Community facilities that are local, accessible and multi-purpose in design are very important to the Portarlington community.
- Community facilities are used for a diversity of events and activities ranging from community meetings, festivals, art activities, music performances, sport, active recreation, early years learning and welfare programs. This suggest not only that the values its existing facilities, but that the demand for enhanced facilities is high.
- The Portarlington community as a whole did not express a clear preference for either a single consolidated community hub or a network of satellite facilities
- Some key considerations emerging from the community and stakeholder engagement, regardless of which option is selected, include:
  - improved accessibility for people of all abilities
  - appropriate layout of buildings to ensure access to toilets and kitchens
  - art activity and exhibition spaces
  - a model for delivering library services
  - meeting / activity spaces of differing sizes
  - good acoustics
  - taking advantage of the views over the foreshore
  - storage space for community groups
  - heating / cooling
  - provision of tourist information
  - affordable hiring fees
  - easy booking system.