



# Sale and District Feasibility Study

Addressing ageing infrastructure for early years and community services

Final Version 1.3

Prepared for Wellington Shire Council

21 October 2022

Updated 16 June 2023

## DISCLAIMER

In accordance with standard professional practice, it is stated that Planning for Communities Pty Ltd is not responsible in any way whatsoever to any person or organisation other than the Wellington Shire Council in respect of the information provided in this report, including any errors or omissions therein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.

The reproduction of this report for internal purposes by Wellington Shire Council is automatically permitted. However, for professional indemnity reasons, reproduction or distribution of the report or parts thereof for other purposes is prohibited unless prior permission has been specifically obtained in writing from Planning for Communities Pty Ltd.

The findings presented in this report are based on the sources indicated and on the best possible estimates. As the study involves market forecasts which can be influenced by a number of unforeseen variables and as Planning for Communities Pty Ltd cannot in any way influence Council decisions, future events or management decisions affecting the operation of the facilities, programs and services which are recommended, no warranty can be given that the forecasts contained in the report will be achieved.

## VERSION CONTROL

Version	Issued By	Date
Version 1	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	21 July 2022
Version 2	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	23 July 2022
Version 3	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	1 August 2022
Version 4	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	2 August 2022
Version 5	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	7 August 2022
Draft	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	9 August 2022
Final	Michelle Read – Planning for Communities	12 August 2022
Final 1.1	Mark Benfield – Wellington Shire Council	21 October 2022
Final 1.2	Mark Benfield – Wellington Shire Council	13 February 2023
Final 1.3	Mark Benfield – Wellington Shire Council	16 June 2023

Definitions	1
Executive Summary	2
1.0 Introduction	8
2.0 Strategic and policy context	9
3.0 Early years and community facilities in Sale and District	11
3.1 Infrastructure condition and capacity	13
4.0 Childcare and kindergarten service capacity and demand	19
4.1 Findings from previous research	21
4.2 Existing service demand and operating capacity	22
4.3 Current and forecast demographic data	26
4.4 Assessing service demand	31
5.0 Key findings from engagement with stakeholders	33
6.0 Estimated spatial requirements	38
6.1 Estimated spatial requirements for a 66-place kindergarten	38
6.2 Estimated spatial requirements for neighbourhood house and multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces	39
6.3 Estimated spatial requirements for 122-place childcare centre	40
6.4 Estimated spatial requirements for multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces, and early years / family support spaces	41
7.0 Possible sites for establishing community hubs	42
8.0 Options and criteria	46
8.1 Options	47
8.2 Criteria	48
9.0 Analysis of options	50
9.1 Increase use of existing community facilities	50
9.2 Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities	53
9.3 Establishing a community hub/s in key locations to support early years services and broader community activity	55
10.0 Recommended priority actions	57
10.1 Map of Gibsons Road, Market Street and Gumnuts ELC sites	60
11.0 Funding options and capital costs	62
11.1 Funding options	62
11.2 Capital costs	63

## Contents

## Page No.

12.0 Management models	64
13.0 Outstanding issues requiring further consideration	67
13.1 Responding to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten	67
13.2 Single room kindergartens	68
13.3 The impact of interventions	69
14.0 Next steps	72
Appendix A: Strategic and policy context – detailed information	73
Appendix B: Detailed analysis of each option	82

## Definitions

<b>Sale and District</b>	<p>Sale and District includes Sale, Longford, Wurruk, Fulham, Kilmany, Myrtlebank, Bundalaguah, Montgomery, Airly, Clydebank, Cobains, The Heart, Dutson, Dutson Downs, Stradbroke, Pearsondale.</p> <p>Early years services are however concentrated in Sale, Longford and Wurruk.</p>
<b>Kath Foley Children’s Centre and Kindergarten</b>	Will be referred to throughout this report as the <b>Kath Foley Centre</b> .
<b>Gumnuts Early Learning Centre</b>	Will be referred to throughout this report as <b>Gumnuts ELC</b> .
<b>Maternal and Child Health</b>	Will be referred to throughout this report as <b>MCH</b> .
<b>Sale Combined Kindergartens Inc</b>	<p>Will be referred to throughout this report as Sale Combined Kindergartens</p> <p>Manage Hyland Community Kindergarten and Sale North Kindergarten. Both sites are owned by Council.</p> <p>They also own and manage Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten.</p>
<b>Uniting VicTas</b>	Manager St Columba’s Kindergarten, East Sale Kindergarten and Longford Kindergarten.
<b>Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc.</b>	Will be referred to throughout this report as <b>Sale Memorial Hall</b> .

## Executive Summary

This Feasibility Study has been prompted by the increasing demand for early years services, particularly childcare, and the aging and poor condition of community infrastructure supporting early years services and broader community activity, in Sale and District. The focus of the study has been to identify options:

- to respond to the increasing demand for early years services
- to address the age and poor condition of community infrastructure
- to address the needs of particular community groups who do not have a permanent location or meet in facilities which are not fit for purpose
- to consolidate services and infrastructure through the development of community hubs.

### Key findings of this Feasibility Study are:

**Multiple early years and community facilities are aging, and have significant accessibility, functionality, and condition constraints** with key ones including Hyland Community Kindergarten, Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten, Kath Foley Centre, Sale Neighbourhood House, Sale Memorial Hall (the wings), Sale Guide Hall, and Gwen Webb Centre.

The Market Street site (Hyland Community Kindergarten, the Gwen Webb Centre and the Sale Guide Hall) is a fill site which is sinking and consequently the condition, accessibility and functionality of facilities is deteriorating.

**All standalone kindergartens in Sale and District have only the one program room**, with all (except Wurruk Kindergarten) having a licensed capacity that is not consistent with staff child ratio requirements i.e. 1 staff member for every 11 children. This impacts upon the viability of services and their ability to respond to increasing demand.

**Most sites with early years or community facilities have limited or no capacity to accommodate additional infrastructure.** A key exception to this is the Market Street site.

**Community facilities receive low to moderate levels of use and many could accommodate additional activity** including Stead Street Reserve Hall, Sale Scout Hall, Sale Senior Citizens and Sale Memorial Hall. Others could also support more use, but their age and poor condition constrains this e.g. Gwen Webb Centre, Sale Guides and parts of the Sale Memorial Hall facilities.

**Demand for childcare is high.** Three of the 5 childcare services in Sale have extensive waiting lists reflecting the higher-than-expected population growth between 2016 and 2021.

**Demand for kindergarten services is consistent and increasing** as services move towards offering 15 hours of funded 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten. Most standalone sessional kindergartens have capacity to accommodate the increased demand by making changes to their service model and operating at or closer to their licensed capacity. However, services offering kindergarten integrated with childcare have less capacity to respond to the increased demand, because of the requirements to balance the competing demand for kindergarten and childcare.

The recent announcement by the Victorian State Government to increase kindergarten for 4-year-old children from 15 – 30 hours by 2032, will further increase demand.

Service provision benchmarks (1 licensed place for every 2 children aged 0 – 5 years) indicates **there is both a current and future shortfall in the number of licensed places for kindergarten and childcare.** The estimated gap is 98 places in 2022 increasing to 278 places by 2041.

**The addition of 66 licensed places at Gumnuts ELC from 2023** will help address some of the unmet demand for childcare, but places will largely be directed towards funded 3-year-old kindergarten and the impact will be short term.

**Several community organisations who are the primary tenant or key user of community facilities are supportive of increasing use of these facilities** including St Johns Ambulance (Stead Street Reserve Hall), Sale Scouts, and Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc.

**Community and early years organisations are very supportive of being part of community hubs.** There is also strong interest in being a part of a Community Hub/s from the MCH team and Paediatric Health team from Central Gippsland Health but this needs to be confirmed at the executive level.

## Options Analysis

The Feasibility Study has identified and assessed a range of options for addressing aging early years and community infrastructure and for consolidating services and infrastructure in Sale and District. Overall, the options fall into three categories:

1. **Increasing use of existing community facilities.** Note: this excludes early years facilities.
2. **Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities.**
3. **Establishing community hubs on key sites to support early years services and broader community activity.**

The specific options considered include:

<b>Option 1</b> Increasing use of existing community use facilities	<b>Option 1a.</b>	Stead Street Reserve Hall (St Johns Ambulance Hall)
	<b>Option 1b.</b>	Sale Scout Hall
	<b>Option 1c.</b>	Sale Memorial Hall
	<b>Option 1d.</b>	Sale Senior Citizens Centre
<b>Option 2</b> Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities	<b>Option 2a.</b>	Hyland Community Kindergarten
	<b>Option 2b.</b>	Kath Foley Centre
	<b>Option 2c.</b>	Sale Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre
	<b>Option 2d.</b>	Sale Neighbourhood House
<b>Option 3</b> Establishing community hubs on key sites to support	<b>Option 3a.</b>	Market Street site where Hyland Community Kindergarten Gwen Webb Centre and Sale Guide Hall are located
	<b>Option 3b.</b>	Gibsons Road site behind Gippsland Regional Sports Complex

early years services and broader community activity	<b>Option 3c.</b>	North Sale Precinct opposite Gippsland Regional Sports Complex – site to be determined
	<b>Option 3d.</b>	Sale Memorial Hall precinct
	<b>Option 3e.</b>	Sale College – Macalister Campus
	<b>Option 3f.</b>	Sale College – Guthridge Campus
	<b>Option 3g.</b>	Dawson Street site

The options analysis identified:

- **The Stead Street Reserve Hall (option 1a), Sale Scout Hall (option 1b) and Sale Senior Citizens (1d)** offer the most feasible opportunities to accommodate increased community use or activity, with possible uses including Sale Guides, users of the Gwen Webb Centre, Gumnuts ELC Outside School Hours Care program, and Sale U3A). The primary reasons these sites are the most feasible options are:
  - The sites are owned by Council.
  - The facilities have the capacity to accommodate additional use and the existing users are supportive of increasing use of the facilities. It is acknowledged Sale Seniors Group is reluctant to share the management of the Senior Citizens building, but the location and condition of the building, and the moderate level of use means this building could accommodate a much higher level of activity than it currently does.
  - Complementary activities and uses have been identified.
  - The extent of changes to the infrastructure is likely to be reasonable / moderate and any changes to management or tenancy arrangement are manageable.
- **There is little to no evidence to support refurbishment of council owned buildings that house Hyland Community Kindergarten (Option 2a), Sale Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre (Option 2c), and Sale Neighbourhood House (Option 2d).** Extensive refurbishment would be required because of their age, poor condition and accessibility, and in all instances, core functionality constraints cannot be overcome. The council building that houses **Kath Foley Centre has the same issues but there may be value in considering refurbishment of this building in the medium to long term to help address future demand for kindergarten.** This would need to occur after and / or in addition to the development of community / early years facilities in other locations.
- **The Market Street site (Option 3a) and Gibsons Road site (Option 3b) offer the most feasible opportunities in the short to medium term** to establish community hubs which will help address the increasing demand for kindergarten and childcare and support broader community activity. The primary reasons these sites are the most feasible options are:
  - The sites are both owned by Council and the planning controls will support development of a Community Hub on this site.
  - The site either has no facilities located on it (Gibsons Road) or the facilities need to be replaced (Market Street).
  - The location supports a network approach to the provision of early years services and community facilities and has good and / or improving public transport connections (Gibsons Road) and it is a visible location.



- The site has capacity to accommodate the proposed infrastructure and services and complexities associated with developing a Community Hub on this site are minimal.
- It will increase the capacity of licensed places in response to the high and increasing demand for childcare and kindergarten.
- Several other sites may offer reasonable options for the long term e.g. North Sale Precinct (Option 3c), and the two Sale College campuses (Options 3e and 3f), but there is so much uncertainty about the timing and availability of these sites, it is difficult to consider them to be feasible options now.
- The Dawson Street site (Option 3g) is considered to be the least feasible option because of its close proximity to Gumnut ELC, the poor public transport connections, it abuts farming and industrial land, the uncertainty about acquisition of the site, and the requirement to rezone the land from farming to community use.

### Recommended priority actions

It should be noted, before proceeding with each priority action, consideration must be given to any changes that have occurred in the service system. This is particularly important in relation to the early years space, where additional service providers or changes in government policy can have a significant impact in a short space of time.

#### Priority Action 1:

Develop a community hub supporting early years services and broader community activity at the **Gibsons Road site (Option 3b)**.

The service and facility mix recommended for the site is:

- 122 place childcare and kindergarten service with 56 places for children aged under 3 years and 66 places for 3 – 5-year-olds.
- The proposed mix of program spaces is 3 rooms x 12 children aged 0 – 2 years, 1 room x 20 children aged 2 – 3 years and 3 rooms x 22 children aged 3 – 5 years.
- Multiple consulting suites which could accommodate early childhood support services (e.g. MCH and early intervention programs) and family support programs either through an outreach model or by being permanently based in the centre.
- Multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces with connected outdoor space to support playgroups, parent education programs, the activities of the early childhood services and general community use.

**Priority Action 2:** Actively support and encourage St Johns Ambulance, Sale Scouts, and Sale Senior Citizens to increase use of the buildings they lease from Council (the Stead Street Reserve Hall, Sale Scout Hall and Sale Senior Citizens Centre) with a focus upon exploring opportunities for shared use by:

- Sale Guides
- Users of the Gwen Webb Centre
- Gumnuts ELC Outside School Hours program
- Sale U3A.

As part of this, identify and invest in facility improvements to support the increased use.

In addition, opportunities to support increased use of Sale Memorial Hall (the main hall) should be considered. Specifically, it may be a suitable location for some of the activities which currently occur in the Gwen Webb Centre or for U3A programs.

**Priority Action 3:** Develop a Community Hub supporting activities such as early years services, neighbourhood house, and broader community activity at the Market Street site (Option 3a). The development of this hub is based upon the premise there is a consolidation of community facilities.

The service and facility mix recommended for the site is:

- 58 – 68 licensed places for kindergarten, long day childcare or occasional care. The number and mix of program spaces will depend upon the services offered from the site. If kindergarten is offered and / or childcare for children aged 3 – 5 years, rooms need to be configured to support a child staff ratio of 1 to 4. If childcare is offered for children aged under 3 years, rooms need to be configured to support a child staff ratio of 1 to 4. This could for example look like:
  - 2 rooms x 22 children (for over 3s) and 2 rooms x 12 children (for under 3s)
  - 1 room x 33 children (for over 3s) and 3 rooms x 12 children (for under 3's).
- Programming, office, and storage space to support the community activities such as the Sale Neighbourhood House
- Multipurpose consulting suits, meeting, and activity rooms with connected outdoor space to support general community use as well as the activities of the Kindergarten and Neighbourhood House.

**Priority Action 4:** Consider the need to retain the site housing the Kath Foley Centre and refurbish the facilities to support the long-term need for additional kindergarten capacity in response to the proposed introduction of 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten. This priority action should be reviewed following Council's decision about the development of community hubs incorporating early years services, and as further information becomes available from the Victorian State Government.

### Outstanding issues requiring further consideration

Several issues remain outstanding from this Study including:

- Responding to the recent Victorian State Government announcement to increase 4-year-old kindergarten from 15 to 30 hours through a staged approach between 2025 and 2032. Potential responses include expanding existing single room kindergartens, implementing a campus approach where 3-year-old operates from one location and 4-year-old from another location, developing facilities on school sites, developing new kindergarten facilities, or repurposing existing community infrastructure.
- The future role and viability of single room kindergarten facilities in Sale and District. The issues and a potential response for each site has been outlined in section 13.2 of this report.
- How various interventions can help to address the current and future shortfall in licensed places for childcare and kindergarten. An example of the impact of various interventions is

provided in section 13.3 of this report to demonstrate how larger or smaller, quicker, or slower interventions will help address the provision gap.

## 1.0 Introduction

This Report presents the findings from a study to assess the feasibility of options to address increasing demand for early years services, and aging infrastructure supporting early years and community services in Sale and District.

The study has been prompted by an increasing demand for childcare and kindergarten and the findings from 2 studies by Council about early years and community infrastructure. These studies identified:

- There is a need to move away from single room kindergarten facilities to support the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten.
- The North Sale Development Plan will drive population growth and increased demand for community services, activities and buildings in Sale and District (Sale, Longford, Wurruk and surrounding communities).
- A number of early years and community buildings in Sale are in poor condition and have accessibility and functionality constraints.
- The value and benefits to communities, services, and Council, by co-locating and integrating services and facilities.

The purpose of this study is to provide an evidence-based assessment of relevant options and identify the option/s it will be possible to implement most effectively.

The Study has consisted of the following:

- Visits to key sites to understand the location, condition and functionality of existing infrastructure and to commence the process of engaging with service providers and community organisations.
- Identifying the strategic and policy context underpinning planning for early years and community services in Sale and District.
- Understanding the current provision of community and early years services and infrastructure in Sale and District.
- Assessing the extent of current and future unmet demand for kindergarten and childcare services in Sale and District, and identifying the additional service capacity required.
- A program of engagement with key stakeholders including the Kath Foley, Sale Combined Kindergartens, Gumnuts ELC, Uniting VicTas, Sale Neighbourhood House, Marley Street Hub, Sale Memorial Hall., Central Gippsland Health – MCH team and Pediatric Health team, Scouts (both local and head office), Guides (both local and head office), and Council Officers.
- Identifying possible options assessing their feasibility against an agreed set of criteria.

## 2.0 Strategic and policy context

Council has undertaken significant planning and policy development work over recent years which seeks to understand the community's need for responsive services and facilities. Key Council strategies and plans providing important guidance in developing this Feasibility Study are:

- Wellington 2031 Community Vision
- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 – 2025 (Healthy wellington 2021 – 2025)
- Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2021
- Community Infrastructure Plan 2021
- Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2022
- Community Facilities Framework 2016
- Community Managed Facilities Strategy 2020-2025
- Wellington Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP).

Overall, there is a high level of consistency in the themes and priorities in Council's strategic documents. Key priorities relevant to this Feasibility Study are:

- Council strategies reflect an approach which involves a high level of community and stakeholder engagement.
- A broad commitment to enhancing community life, through the provision of services and facilities that respond to community needs.
- A focus upon shared and integrated services and facilities. Wellington 2031 discusses the notion of community hubs as an approach to enhance accessibility of community services, and this is also emphasised in the Community Infrastructure Plan and Early Years Infrastructure Plan.
- A focus upon prioritising infrastructure, program and service improvements which will
  - increase the inclusiveness and accessibility of community places and spaces.
  - deliver contemporary and integrated early years services and facility outcomes, and actively pursuing initiatives which will remove barriers to accessing early years services and supports.
  - improve the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of community infrastructure and communities.
  - support diverse activities, services and experiences and responds to the needs of local communities and catchments.
- Many Council strategies use a hierarchy to structure different levels of facility provision and to reinforce communities of interest.
- Several Council documents make reference to the size of the municipality and the resulting travel distances and potential isolation. The issue of isolation and community resilience in

small towns and communities experiencing change is raised, and the role of community facilities in providing places for community activity and celebrations is recognised.

- A focus upon Council taking an active role in advocating for and partnering with others to deliver initiatives and changes which will improve access to community infrastructure and strengthen communities

State Government policies also provide important guidance for this Feasibility Study, particularly in relation to 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten. The policy initiatives with the greatest influence upon this Study are:

- the introduction of **universal access to funded 3-year-old kindergarten from 2022**. Under this policy, all children in Victoria will be eligible to access 5 hours of funded 3-year-old kindergarten each week from 2022, and by 2029 this will increase to 15 hours per week. Services can elect to commence offering 15 hours of kindergarten any time between 2022 and 2029.
- The very recent announcement to **increase kindergarten hours from 15 to 30 hours for 4-year-old children**, through a staged approach between 2025 and 2032. The implications of this policy are significant including:
  - doubling the demand for 4-year-old kindergarten
  - program rooms which would typically be able to accommodate 2 groups of children over a week, will only be able to accommodate 1 group, thus requiring significant investment in additional infrastructure
  - a substantial increase in the staffing resources required.

These policy initiatives, along with Council's priorities underpin the need for increased investment in early years and community infrastructure in Sale and District.

### 3.0 Early years and community facilities in Sale and District

It is acknowledged there is a wide range of community and early years infrastructure in Sale and District, some of which is owned by Council and some by community or private organisations. While this study has concentrated upon Council owned facilities / sites, where relevant, it has also considered the impact of facilities / sites owned by others. Key facilities / sites considered through this Study including ownership and tenancy arrangements, are outlined below, with a map provided on the following page showing the location of each facility / site.

Facility type	No.	Facility / Site	Ownership	Tenants
Early years	1	Hyland Community Kindergarten	Council	Sale Combined Kindergartens
	2	Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten	Sale Combined Kindergarten Inc.	
	3	Sale North Kindergarten	Council	Sale Combined Kindergartens
	4	East Sale Kindergarten	Defence Force	Uniting VicTas
	5	St Columba's Community Kindergarten	Uniting Church	Uniting VicTas
	6	Longford Kindergarten	Crown land	Uniting VicTas
	7	Wurruk Kindergarten	Department of Education and Training	Wurruk Primary School
	8	Kath Foley Centre	Council	Incorporated community committee of management
	9	Gumnuts ELC	Partly owned by Council, partly by Gumnuts ELC Inc.	Incorporated community committee of management
Community	10	Sale Neighbourhood House	Council	Incorporated community committee of management
	11	Sale Memorial Hall	Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc. Car park owned by Council.	Incorporated community committee of management
	12	Marley Street Hub	Crown land – Department of Housing	Incorporated community committee of management
	13	Sale Guide Hall	Council owned land, Hall built by the Guides	Guides Australia
	14	Sale Scout Hall	Council	Scouts Australia
	15	Gwen Webb Centre	Council	Various users
	16	Sale Senior Citizens Centre	Council	Incorporated community committee of management
	17	Stead Street Reserve Hall	Council	St Johns Ambulance Australia

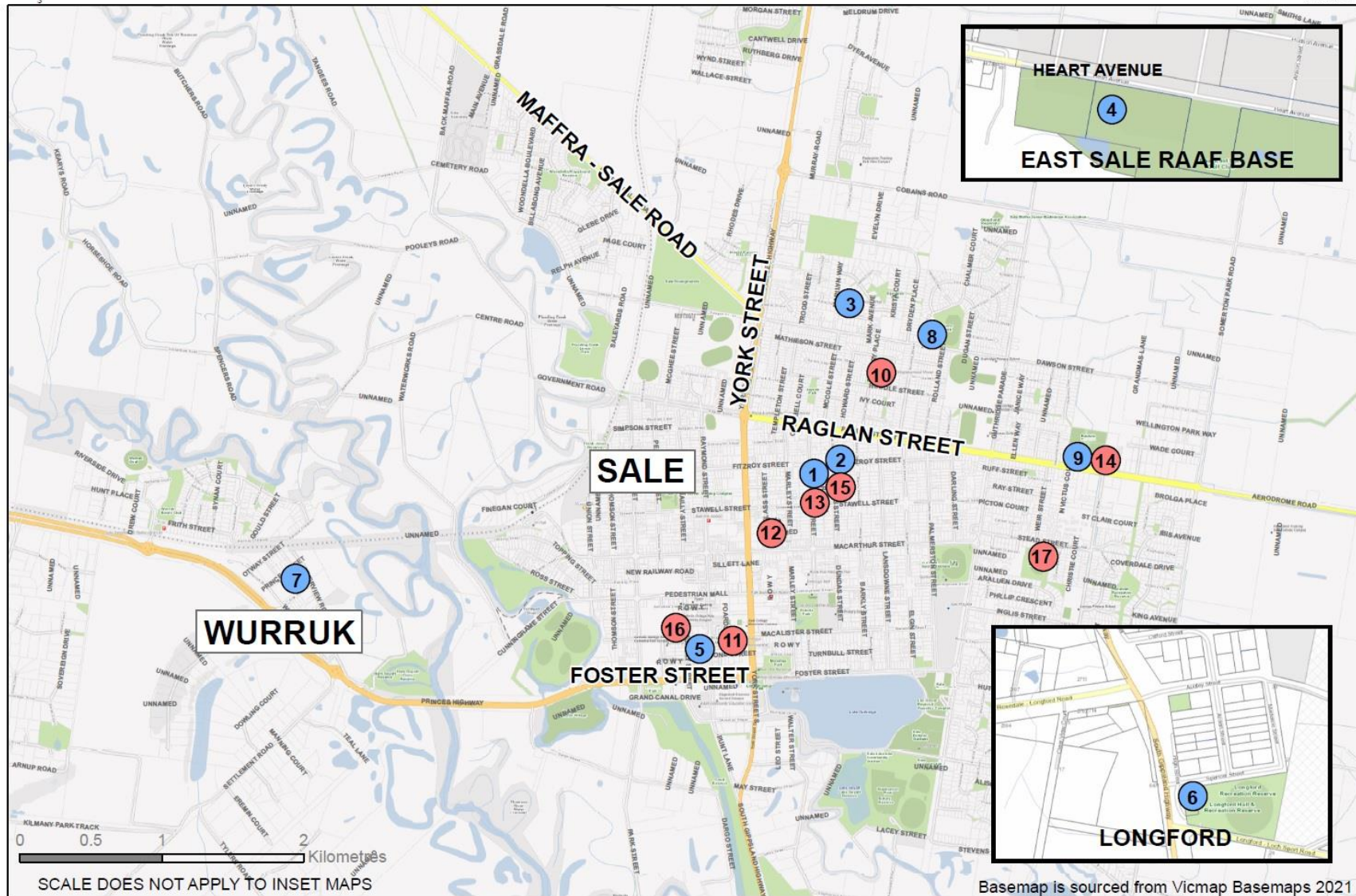
Table 3.1 Community and early years facilities considered through the Sale and District Feasibility Study

**Note:** There are 4 other early years services which are discussed in the demand section of this report (section 4), Gippsland Grammar ELC, Roseberry House, Reeve Street Children's Centre and One Tree Defence Childcare Unit.





## COMMUNITY FACILITIES SALE





### 3.1 Infrastructure condition and capacity

Table 3.2 on the following pages provides more detailed information about each of the facilities / sites considered as part of this Study including:

- The location / proximity to other community facilities
- The number of program / activity rooms
- The licensed capacity (for early years services) and whether they are operating at capacity
- The services / activities supported
- A high-level indication of the condition and functionality of the facility
- The capacity of the site to accommodate additional infrastructure.

The condition and capacity of early years and community facilities is variable.

- **Multiple buildings are aging, and have significant accessibility, functionality, and condition constraints.** While they continue to support early year services and community activity, fundamentality, they need to be replaced, completely refurbished and / or relocated.
  - Early years facilities in this circumstance are Hyland Community Kindergarten, Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten, Kath Foley Centre.
  - Community facilities in this circumstance are Sale Neighbourhood House, Sale Memorial Hall (the wings), Sale Guide Hall, and the Gwen Webb Centre.

Of note is the poor condition, accessibility and functionality of facilities located on the Market Street site (Hyland Community Kindergarten, the Gwen Webb Centre and the Sale Guide Hall). This is a fill site and it is sinking which is impacting significantly upon the condition of these buildings.

- **All standalone kindergartens in Sale and District have only the one program room,** with all (except Wurruk Kindergarten) having a licensed capacity that is not consistent with staff child ratio requirements i.e. 1 staff member for every 11 children. This impacts upon the viability of services and means they often operate below their licensed capacity. It also impacts upon the ability of the services to respond to increasing demand, particularly the most recent State Government proposal to provide 30 hours of funded 4-year-old kindergarten. It is noted, some services elect to operate below their licensed capacity due to a preference for smaller groups.
- **Most sites have limited or no capacity to accommodate additional infrastructure.** Exceptions are:
  - the Market Street site which includes Hyland Community Kindergarten, the Gwen Webb Centre and the Sale Guide Hall.
  - Gumnuts ELC, through the purchase of surrounding properties. Gumnuts ELC is actively pursuing this.
  - Sale Scout Hall.
- There are **some opportunities to support additional use**, if facilities are upgraded or improved with the most notable being the:

- Stead Street Reserve Hall
- Sale Memorial Hall
- Sale Scout Hall
- Sale Senior Citizens Centre.
- **A number of the early year’s facilities are in close proximity to each other** including:
  - Hyland Community Kindergarten and Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten which are located only 300m from each other. Note: both services are operated by Sale Combined Kindergartens, one site is owned by Council (Hyland) and one by Sale Combined Kindergartens (Gwenfa Hampton).
  - Sale North Kindergarten and Kath Foley Centre are located 600m from each other.
  - Kath Foley Centre and Roseberry Early Learning Centre are located 750m from each other.

Other early years facilities are spread across Sale and District.

- **A number of community facilities are located close to other community or early years facilities** including:
  - Sale Memorial Hall and Sale Senior Citizens Centre are 300m from each other
  - Marley Street Hub is 850m from Sale Memorial Hall
  - The Sale Scout Hall and Gumnuts ELC are located alongside each other.
- While the issue of demand is discussed more fully in section 4 of this report, in summary:
  - Early years facilities experiencing high demand are East Sale Kindergarten, St Columba’s Kindergarten, Kath Foley Centre, and Gumnuts ELC. These facilities have little or no capacity to accommodate additional use without an expansion to infrastructure. **Services offering childcare (Kath Foley Centre and Gumnuts ELC) have extensive waiting lists.**

**Note:** the consulting team was unable to access information about the demand for childcare and kindergarten services at the Reeve Street Children’s Centre.
  - Other early years facilities are mostly experiencing consistent but not high demand. They are also generally operating at or close to capacity with the exception of Hyland Community Kindergarten and Wurruk Kindergarten.
  - Community facilities generally receive low to moderate levels of use and consequently all have capacity to accommodate additional activity. In some instances, this is constrained by the condition of the facilities, particularly Sale Memorial Hall, Sale Guide Hall, and the Gwen Webb Centre.

Facility Name	Land / site ownership	Location / proximity to other facilities	Rooms	Licensed capacity	Services / activities supported	Demand	Condition and functionality	Capacity for other infrastructure
<b>Hyland Community Kindergarten</b>	Council	Same site as Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre.  300m from Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten	1 program room	28 Operating at 22	Sessional kindergarten	Experiencing consistent but not high demand for kindergarten.	The building is aging, accessibility is poor and has major maintenance issues because the land is unstable (old fill site) and the building is sinking.  Condition audit estimates \$40,000 of work required, but this does not address the roof alignment or footing issues prompted by the instability of the site.	<b>YES</b> The wider precinct has capacity.
<b>Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten</b>	Sale Combined Kindergarten Inc.	300m from Hyland Community Kindergarten	1 program room	24 Operating at 22 - 24	Sessional kindergarten	Experiencing consistent but not high demand for kindergarten.	The oldest building of the 3 services operated by Sale Combined Kindergartens. Constraints include poor accessibility, no gathering space / foyer, no meeting or consultation room, inadequate storage, and the bathrooms need to be upgraded.	<b>NO</b>
<b>Sale North Kindergarten</b>	Sale Combined Kindergarten Inc.	600m from Kath Foley Centre 600m from Sale N'House	1 program room	24 Operating at 22	Sessional kindergarten	Experiencing consistent but not high demand for kindergarten.	Generally in good condition and welcoming. Some facilities are limited e.g. no meeting room, additional storage would be helpful, no change facilities.  Condition audit estimates around \$3,000 worth of work required.	<b>LIMITED</b> Possibly capacity for minor additions to the building
<b>East Sale Kindergarten</b>	Defence Force	Located beside One Tree Defence Childcare Centre 3.1km from Gumnuts ELC	1 program room	28 Operating at 22 - 28		Experiencing high and consistent demand operates at full capacity 4 days a week.	The facility is in good condition and well maintained and accessible, despite being nearly 70 years old	<b>POSSIBLY</b> Will depend on the level of interest from the Defence Force.

Facility Name	Land / site ownership	Location / proximity to other facilities	Rooms	Licensed capacity	Services / activities supported	Demand	Condition and functionality	Capacity for other infrastructure
<b>Longford Preschool</b>	Crown land	St Columba's Kindergarten 6.2km (closest kinder)	1 program room	23 Operating at 22	Sessional kindergarten	Experiencing consistent demand.	Facility is generally in good condition and is welcoming, but it has limitations including accessibility constraints because of its age and size.	<b>Possibly</b> Tennis Club expansion may create some constraints but other options could be considered.
<b>Wurruk Kindergarten</b>	Dept. of Education and Training	Located at Wurruk Primary School. St Columba's Kindergarten 2.8km (closest kinder)	1 program room	33 Operating at 10 -15	Sessional kindergarten	Low demand for the service.	In good condition as newly built in 2018.	<b>NO</b>
<b>Kath Foley Centre</b>	Council	600m from Sale North Kindergarten 500m from Sale N'hood House 650m from Sale College Guthridge campus	4 program rooms	63 Operating at 63	Childcare and kindergarten	Service demand has increased significantly. Extensive waiting list for childcare (73 children).	Building accessibility, functionality and condition is poor. Acknowledged as being an old building not fit for purpose to support contemporary service delivery.  Condition audit estimates around \$18,000 worth of work required.	<b>NO</b>  Site has no capacity for expansion but other options could be considered.
<b>Gumnuts ELC</b>	Council and Gumnuts ELC Inc.	1.4km from Kath Foley Centre 2.2km from Hyland Community Kindergarten	5 program rooms, 2 addit. being built	96 will increase to 156  Operating at 85	Childcare and kindergarten	Service demand has increased significantly. Extensive waiting list for childcare (130 children).	Facility is contemporary, accessible and fit for purpose.  Condition audit estimates around \$58,000 worth of work required to address maintenance issues.	<b>YES</b>  Through the purchase of surrounding properties. Gumnuts is actively pursuing this.

Facility Name	Land / site ownership	Location / proximity to other facilities	Rooms	Licensed capacity	Services / activities supported	Demand	Condition and functionality	Capacity for other infrastructure
<b>Sale Neighbourhood House</b>	Council	500m from Kath Foley Centre 1.1km from Hyland Community Kindergarten	3 program rooms	N/A	Recreational learning and social support programs	Moderate demand but has been reduced by COVID. Previously, 600 participants per month now 300 per month, but increasing.	Very poor accessibility and the building worn and aged with much of the building fabric, fit out and services needing to be updated, repaired or replaced.  Condition audit estimates around \$60,000 worth of work required.	<b>NO</b>  The site is poorly located in a residential street with no capacity to expand.
<b>Sale Memorial Hall</b>	Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc. Car park owned by Council.	Opposite Sale College Macalister Street campus 300m from Sale Memorial Hall 1.2km from Gwen Webb Centre 2.6km from Sale Neighbourhood House	Main Hall  Multiple addit. rooms in both wings	N/A	Community meetings and functions in the main Hall. The wings are tenanted to various community orgs.	Main hall receives very low use. One wing has multiple tenants, the other has only 2 and there is extensive space which is not being used.	The Hall itself is well maintained and in reasonable condition with upgraded amenities and a new roof installed recently. But, the wings are in very poor condition and there are serious OHS concerns.  Condition audit estimates around \$105,000 worth of work to the Main Hall is required. This does NOT address the east wing	<b>NO</b>  But the existing facilities with upgrade works could accommodate much greater use.
<b>Marley Street Hub</b>	Crown land – Dept. of Housing	850m from Sale Memorial Hall 1.1km from Sale Seniors Centre 1.7km from Sake Neighbourhood House	1 program room	N/A	Largely focused upon emergency relief	Consistent and growing demand, particularly for emergency relief support during COVID	The building is relatively new (2018) and in good condition, but accessibility and functionality is poor / limited because it is an apartment.	<b>NO</b>  Located in an apartment
<b>Sale Guide Hall</b>	Council owned land, Hall built by the Guides	Same site as Hyland Community Kindergarten and Gwen Webb Centre. 1.7km from Sale Guide Hall	1 large hall	N/A	Guides and other community orgs.	Moderate demand. Used by Guides 2 nights per week and hired to other community organisations.	The building has accessibility constraints, is in poor condition, and needs maintenance because the land is unstable (old fill site) and the building is sinking.  Condition audit estimates \$55,000 of work required.	<b>YES</b>  The wider precinct has capacity.

Facility Name	Land / site ownership	Location / proximity to other facilities	Rooms	Licensed capacity	Services / activities supported	Demand	Condition and functionality	Capacity for other infrastructure
<b>Sale Scout Hall</b>	Council	Located beside Gumnuts ELC 1.7km from Sale Guide Hall	2 program rooms	N/A	Scouting activities other community orgs.	Moderate demand. Used by Scouts 4 nights per week and hired to other community organisations.	The building has accessibility constraints, but overall is in good condition.  Condition audit estimates \$3,000 of work required.	<b>YES</b>  There is extensive land around the Scout Hall
<b>Gwen Webb Centre</b>	Council	Same site as Hyland Community Kindergarten and Sale Guide Hall	1 program room	N/A	Primarily arts and cultural activities	Well utilised by a range of different community groups, especially arts and cultural groups.	The building is in very poor condition. The amenities, kitchen facilities and access into the building are poor. The land is unstable (old fill site) and the building is sinking.  Condition audit estimates around \$65,000 worth of work is required	<b>YES</b>  The wider precinct has capacity.
<b>Sale Senior Citizens Centre</b>	Council	Located in Sale CBD 300m from Wellington Shire office and 300m from Sale Memorial Hall.	3	N/A	Senior citizens group and hire to other community orgs.	Moderate demand. Used by Seniors two days per week and hired to other community organisations under weekly/monthly and ad hoc arrangements.	Accessibility is poor because of the building's age and condition. The acoustics in the main hall are poor.  Condition audit estimates around \$3,000 worth of work required	<b>LIMITED</b>  Some capacity to accommodate more facilities. Bigger opportunity to increase use of existing facilities.
<b>Stead Street Reserve Hall</b>	Council	Located in Stead Street Recreation Reserve. 1.6km from Gwenn Webb Centre	1 with operable wall	N/A	St Johns Ambulance	Receives limited use by St Johns Ambulance. Usually access on Saturday and weekly meetings on Tues and Thurs evening (not in winter). Along with ad hoc casual hire.	Building aging, has poor natural light and everything is dated. Amenities are dated and require upgrading and improved accessibility.  Condition audit estimates around \$13,000 worth of work required in the short to medium term.	<b>YES</b>  Bigger opportunity to increase use of existing facilities.

Table 3.2: Key early years and community facilities in Sale and District

## 4.0 Childcare and kindergarten service capacity and demand

This section provides key information about:

- the existing childcare and kindergarten services available in Sale and District
- relevant supply and demand findings from previous research undertaken by Council and the Victorian State Government
- the demand services are currently experiencing for kindergarten and childcare and how they are responding to this demand
- current and forecast demographic data and the application of early years provision benchmarks for Sale and District using this data.

In total there are:

- Eight standalone kindergarten services Sale and District delivering 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten.
  - Three deliver kindergarten as an integrated program for 3- and 4-year-olds and the remainder deliver separate programs for 3- and 4-year-olds.
  - Six are operated by not-for-profit organisations and two by schools including one by a private school.
- Five services offer childcare and 4 of these deliver 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten as part of the service.
  - Two deliver kindergarten as an integrated program with childcare and 2 deliver both kindergarten integrated with childcare and kindergarten as a sessional model.
  - Three of the services are managed by parent lead committees and / or not for profit organisations. The remaining 2 are for profit organisations.

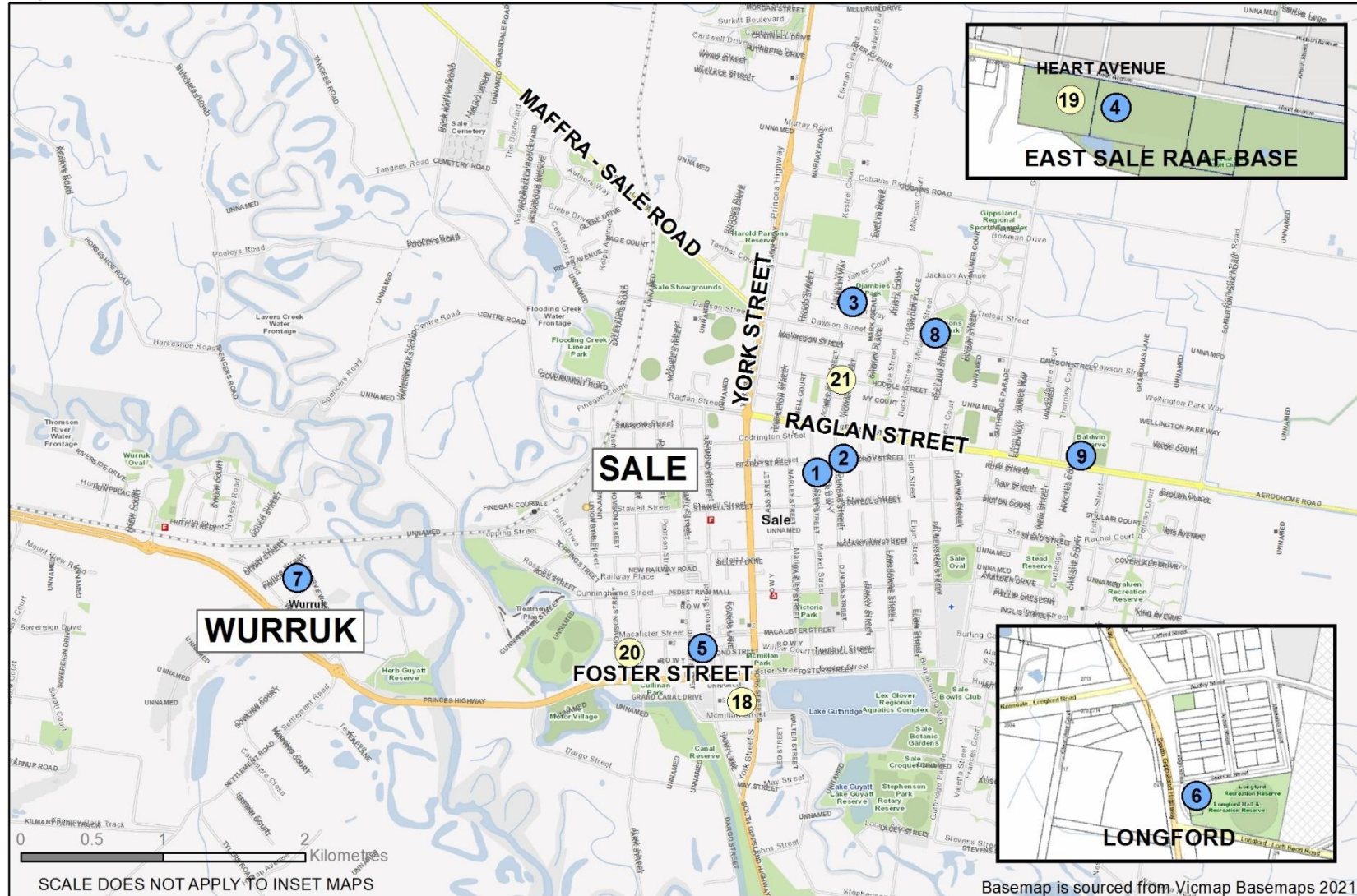
Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provides further information about each of the services, and a map is provided on the following page showing their location in Sale and District. The table below is the map index.

No.	Facility / Site
1	Hyland Community Kindergarten
2	Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten
3	Sale North Kindergarten
4	East Sale Kindergarten
5	St Columba's Community Kindergarten
6	Longford Kindergarten
7	Wurruk Kindergarten
8	Kath Foley Centre
9	Gumnuts ELC
10	Sale Neighbourhood House
18	Gippsland Grammar Early Learning Centre
19	One Tree Defence Childcare Unit
20	Reeve Street Children's Centre
21	Roseberry House





## COMMUNITY FACILITIES SALE





#### 4.1 Findings from previous research

Research undertaken by Wellington Shire Council and the Victorian State Government identifies different findings about the demand for **kindergarten and childcare services** in Sale and district.

- **Wellington’s Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2021 – 2031** identifies higher population growth, amongst children aged 0 – 8 years is expected in Sale and District, and this combined with the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten will result in a notable increase in demand for early years services. While there is sufficient capacity in the service system to cope with the increased demand for kindergarten, there may not be capacity to accommodate the increased demand for childcare. The demand services are currently experiencing in Sale affirms this assessment.

A key step identified to respond to both demand issues and the condition of early years infrastructure in Sale and District is to explore opportunities to establish early years hubs in Sale.

- The data analysis in the **Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP)** prepared by the Victorian State Government in response to the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten, indicates there will be no unmet demand for 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten between 2022 and 2029. However, the recent announcement by the State Government about increasing 4-year-old kindergarten to 30 hours per week is likely to change this significantly.

Key findings from the consultation with community members and agencies when developing the Early Years Infrastructure Plan include:

- The two services families are most likely to have trouble accessing are childcare and kindergarten because of the limited availability of care and long waiting lists, no or limited family daycarers and difficulty accessing places for multiple children. Other difficulties include limited hours of operation for centre-based care, difficulty accessing quality services, a lack of before and after school care, the cost of accessing centre based childcare and the lack of information about family daycare.
- Key difficulties families experience in relation to kindergarten include the short hours of operation for kindergarten programs and /or the lack of wrap around care programs to supporting working parents. A lack of information, and cost and the availability of kindergarten programs were also identified as challenges.

#### 4.2 Existing service demand and operating capacity

Table 4.1 and 4.2 provide a summary of key information about each of the early year’s services (kindergarten and childcare) operating in Sale and District outlining:

- The number of program rooms
- Licensed and operating capacity (i.e. the capacity the service actually operates at)
- The service model
- The demand the services are experiencing.

##### ***Demand being experienced by existing services***

The demand standalone **kindergartens are experiencing is variable:**

- Overall, the demand has grown as funded 3-year-old kindergarten rolls out, but some services have experienced higher demand including St Columba’s Kindergarten, East Sale Kindergarten

and Gippsland Grammar ELC. Each of these services is operating at licensed capacity in 2022 and expect to continue doing so in 2023. Gippsland Grammar ELC also has a small waiting list for 2022. Note: East Sale Kindergarten operates at a lower capacity for 3-year-old kindergarten (22 instead of the licensed capacity of 28).

- In contrast, the services operated by Sale Combined Kindergartens, Longford Preschool and Wurruk Kindergarten are all operating below service capacity. For Sale Combined Kindergartens, the number of children attending 4-year-old kindergarten is at or close to capacity, but is below capacity for 3-year-old kindergarten at each of its 3 sites.

#### **Childcare services are experiencing high demand.**

- Four of the 5 services have a waiting list, and 3 having extensive waiting lists of between 50 and over 100 children (Gumnuts ELC, Kath Foley Centre and Roseberry House Early Learning Centre). There is particular demand for childcare for children aged 0 – 2/3 years. This is the age cohort with higher staff child ratio requirements i.e. 1 staff member for every 4 children as opposed to 1 staff member for every 11 children aged 3 – 5 years.
- It is important to acknowledge children are likely to be on multiple waiting lists and families from other communities outside Sale and District are likely to be seeking access to childcare in Sale because it is either not available in their community or it suits their family circumstance e.g. parents working in Sale. Regardless of this, the extent of the waiting lists indicates that fundamentally there is insufficient childcare available to support the needs of the community.
- It is also important to acknowledge, 3 of the 5 childcare services in Sale offer funded kindergarten as well as childcare (Gumnuts ELC, Kath Foley Centre, and Reeve Street).

#### ***How services are responding to existing demand***

Many services are taking steps to help manage the increasing demand they are experiencing. **For services offering kindergarten** this includes:

- Sale Combined Kindergartens will change the service model at Hyland Community Kindergarten and Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten for 4-year-old kindergarten in 2023 providing 2 sessions x 7.5 hours, allowing the single room kindergartens to accommodate 3 sessions x 5 hours of 3-year-old kindergarten.
- Uniting VicTas will change the service models at both St Columba's Kindergarten and East Sale Kindergarten in 2023. St Columba's and East Sale will move to a rotational model offering combined 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten. Currently St Columba's offers a combined program, but not rotational and East Sale offers a rotational model but not combined.
- Gumnuts ELC has secured a site and funding to add 66 places to the service to support 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten. These places will be available from early 2023.

**For services offering childcare** this includes:

- Kath Foley operating at licensed capacity, despite all program rooms not being configured appropriately to support relevant staff child ratios.
- The increase in space for kindergarten at Gumnuts ELC will also allow the service to free up other program rooms to address some of the demand for childcare services.

#### ***Services operating below capacity***

There are several examples where services are operating below their licensed capacity. This occurs for several reason including:

- A preference for smaller groups. This occurs at Hyland Community Kindergarten and Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten (Sale Combined Kindergartens). It also occurs at East Sale Kindergarten (Uniting VicTas) but only for 3-year-old, and this will change in 2023.
- Difficulty securing staff. This is occurring at Gumnuts ELC and One Tree Defence.
- A licensed capacity that does not support service viability. This occurs at Sale North Kindergarten and Longford Preschool.

The overall impact of this is:

- For standalone kindergartens between 19 and 27 places are not currently being used.
- For childcare services 19 licensed places are not being used.

Kindergarten Service	Rooms	Licensed Capacity	Operating Capacity	Service model	Service capacity	Service demand
<b>Hyland Community Kindergarten</b>	1 program room	28	22	Sessional kindergarten In 2022 4-year-olds 3 x 5 hrs, 3-year-olds 1 x 5 hrs In 2023 4-year-olds 2 x 7.5hrs, 3-year-olds 3 x 5hrs	Operating below service capacity because of a preference for smaller groups.	Experiencing consistent but not high demand for kindergarten.  In 2022 there are 22 children attending 4-year-old kinder and 16 attending 3-year-old.
<b>Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten</b>	1 program room	24	22	Sessional kindergarten In 2022 4-year-olds 3 x 5 hrs, 3-year-olds 1 x 5 hrs In 2023 4-year-olds 2 x 7.5hrs, 3-year-olds 3 x 5hrs	Operating below service capacity because of a preference for smaller groups.	Experiencing consistent but not high demand for kindergarten.  In 2022 there are 21 children attending 4-year-old kinder and 18 attending 3-year-old.
<b>Sale North Kindergarten</b>	1 program room	24	22 - 24	Sessional kindergarten 2022 4-year-olds 3 x 6 hrs, 3-year-olds 1 x 6 hrs In 2023 4-year-olds 3 x 6 hrs, 3-year-olds 2 x 6 hrs	Operates below service capacity because it is not financially viable for the service to operate at 24 places. Also prefers smaller groups	Experiencing consistent but not high demand for kindergarten.  In 2022 there are 24 children attending 4-year-old kinder and 19 attending 3-year-old.
<b>St Columba's Kindergarten</b>	1 program room	30	30	Sessional kindergarten In 2022 there are 2 groups of integrated 3- and 4-year-old each operation 3 x 5hrs. In 2023, likely to be a rotational model	Operates at full capacity each weekday (30 children).	Experiencing high demand. It is a popular service because of its location and outdoor space.
<b>East Sale Kindergarten</b>	1 program room	28	28 for 4 yr olds  22 for 3 yr olds	Sessional kindergarten (rotational model) In 2022 4-year-olds 4 x 5 hrs, 3-year-olds 1 x 5 hrs In 2023 integrated 3- and 4-year-old program 5 x 5hrs	Operates at licensed capacity 4 days a week (4 yr old kinder).  Operates at lower capacity (22 places) 1 day a week (3 yr old)	Experiencing consistent and generally high demand for kindergarten. There are no vacancies in either 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten in 2022.
<b>Longford Preschool</b>	1 program room	23	22	Sessional kindergarten (rotational model) In 2022 there are 4 groups of integrated 3- and 4-year-old, each operating 3 days x 5 hrs	Operates below capacity because it is not financially viable for the service to operate at 24 places	Experiencing consistent demand but insufficient demand to operate separate 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten programs.  In 2022 there are 14 children attending 4-year-old and 13 attending 3-year-old.
<b>Wurruk Kindergarten</b>	1 program room	33	33	Sessional kindergarten In 2022 there is 1 group of integrated 3- and 4-year-old, operating 3 days x 6 hrs	Could operate at capacity if there was demand for the service.	Low demand for the service. Typically has 10 – 15 children for 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten
<b>Gippsland Grammar Early Learning Centre</b>	2 program rooms	40	40	Sessional kindergarten In 2022 there 2 groups of 3-year-old operating 3 days x 5.5hrs and 2 groups of 4-year-olds operating 3 days x 5 hrs. Expected to remain the same for 2023.	Operates at capacity.	Experiencing consistent and growing demand and the service operates at licensed capacity every day.  Has a small waiting list for 4 year old (4 children) and 3 year old (1 child).
<b>Total</b>		<b>240</b>	<b>213 - 221</b>	<b>19 – 27 Licensed places are not being used.</b>		

Table 4.1: Summary of service capacity and demand, Standalone Kindergarten Services in Sale and District, July 2022

Childcare Service	Rooms	Licensed Capacity	Operating Capacity	Service model	Service capacity	Service demand
<b>Kath Foley Centre</b>	4 program rooms	63	63	Offers childcare 5 days a week and kinder integrated with childcare 5 days a week but allows some families to access kindergarten through a sessional arrangement. Places available by age group are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 under 3 years of age</li> <li>• 17 for 3-year-old children</li> <li>• 17 for 4-year-old children.</li> </ul>	Operates at capacity.	Service demand has increased significantly. The waiting list for under 3 years is large (67 children), 3-year-old children / kindergarten is small (6) and there is no waiting list for 4-year-old kindergarten.
<b>Gumnuts ELC</b>	5 program rooms with 2 addit. rooms currently being developed	96 will increase to 156 with new modular building	85	Offers childcare and sessional kindergarten 5 days a week (rotational model). In 2022 kinder operates 5 days x 5 hrs with wrap around care. Places available by age group if operating at capacity are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 places for 0 -18 mths- operating at 8</li> <li>• 12 places 18 month to 2.5 yrs</li> <li>• 20 places 2.5 – 3 years</li> <li>• 33 places kinder – operating at 26</li> <li>• 22 places childcare (3 – 5 yrs)</li> </ul>	Operating below licensed capacity because unable to secure staff to run rooms at capacity	Service experiencing unprecedented demand for childcare. 130 children on the waiting list. The majority are under 3 years of age, and most are under 2 years of age.
<b>One Tree Defence Childcare Unit East Sale</b>	3	62	58	Offers childcare only 5 days a week. Priority is to support defence families. Places available by age group are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 places for 0 – 2 years - operating at 8</li> <li>• 16 places 18 month to 2.5 yrs</li> <li>• 26 places 3 – 5 years</li> </ul>	Not able to secure staff to run rooms at capacity.	Consistent demand over the past 2 years. Small number of defence families on the waiting list, because the centre is not operating at capacity.
<b>Reeve Street Children's Centre</b>	4 program rooms	70	70	Kinder integrated with childcare operating 5 days a week. Places available by age group are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 places 6 weeks to 2 years</li> <li>• 16 places 2 – 3 years</li> <li>• 16 places 2.5 – 4 years</li> <li>• 22 places Kinder room</li> </ul>	Unable to secure information.	Unable to secure information.
<b>Roseberry House</b>	3 program rooms	98	98	Offers a combination of sessional kindergarten and kinder integrated with childcare.	Operates at capacity.	Service demand has increased significantly in the last 2 years. The waiting list for under 3 years is large (50 families), most are aged 0 – 2 years.
<b>Total</b>		<b>389</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>15 licensed places are not being used.</b>		

Table 4.2: Summary of service capacity and demand, Childcare Service in Sale and District, July 2022

### 4.3 Current and forecast demographic data<sup>1</sup>

#### ***Review of demographic data***

To further develop understanding about whether the demand for kindergarten and childcare services identified in the Early Years Infrastructure Plan and KISP continues to be a reasonable reflection of current and future service demand, the newly released Census data has been examined, alongside the i.d. Forecast data for Wellington Shire, and Sale and District.

Table 4.3 provides a summary of the data which shows:

- The total population growth across Wellington Shire between 2016 and 2021 is very consistent with the projected growth (6.5% both actual and projected growth), but there is some difference between actual and projected growth for the 0 – 4 and 5 – 9-year-old age cohorts.
  - The number of children aged 0 – 4 years declined slightly by 1.9%, whereas the forecast data projected growth of 5.8%. This translates into almost 200 fewer children aged 0 – 4 years than was projected.
  - The number of children aged 5 – 9 years essentially remained stable, whereas the forecast data projected growth of 4.9%. This translates into around 130 fewer children aged 0 – 9 years than was projected.
  - Overall, for Wellington Shire, this indicates population projections for the 0 – 9 cohort are higher than that being experienced, however this is not the case in Sale and district.
- In Sale and District population growth was higher than projected (13.1% actual growth compared with 2.1% forecast).
  - The number of children aged 0 – 4 years increased by 3.6%, whereas the forecast data projected a decline of 3.5%. This translates into over 80 additional children aged 0 – 4 years than was projected. This is consistent with the demand services are experiencing, especially for childcare.
  - The number of children aged 5 – 9 years declined very slightly (1.1%), and this was very consistent with forecast projections. It also represents a very small number of children (around 10).

---

<sup>1</sup> ABS, Census All Persons QuickStats 2021 and 2016. Available online: [2021 Sale, Census All persons QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/2021-sale-census-all-persons-quickstats)

i.d. community, Wellington Shire Population Forecast. Available online: [Population, households and dwellings | Wellington Shire | Population forecast \(id.com.au\)](https://www.id.com.au/population-forecast)

Location	Cohort	Census Data				i.d. Profile Data			
		2016	2021	Difference 2016 - 2021		2016	2021	Difference 2016 - 2021	
Wellington Shire	Total population	42,983	45,639	2,656	6.2%	43,532	46,232	2,700	6.2%
	0 – 4 population	2,443	2,397	-46	-1.9%	2,616	2,768	152	5.8%
	5 – 9 population	2,623	2,617	-6	-0.2%	2,718	2,851	133	4.9%
Sale and District	Total population	18,168	20,526	2,358	13.0%	18,845	19,232	387	2.1%
	0 – 4 population	1,149	1,190	41	3.6%	1,230	1,187	-43	-3.5%
	5 – 9 population	1,231	1,217	-14	-1.1%	1,239	1,228	-11	-0.9%

Table 4.3: Census and i.d Profile forecast data, Wellington Shire and Sale and District, total population, 0 – 4 and 5 – 9-year-olds, 2016 - 2021

**Green** = Population growth is consistent with forecast data

**Orange** = Population growth differs from forecast data.

### Forecast Population Data

Table 4.4 below provides forecast population data for children aged between 0 and 5 years in Sale and District between 2022 and 2041. Overall, the population is projected to increase by 33.6% during this time, and this will drive increased demand for both kindergarten and childcare. Over the 20-year period:

- The number of 3- and 4-year-old children who will require access to kindergarten is projected to increase by 169 children. If there is no capacity within the existing service system, this equates to 5 – 6 additional 33 place rooms, based upon 15 hours of kindergarten for both 3- and 4-year-old children. With the proposed move to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten, the infrastructure requirement would be higher than this.
- The number of children aged 0 – 5 years will increase by nearly 500 children, substantially increasing the demand for childcare, although it is acknowledged, some of this demand will be absorbed through kindergarten. The impact of this will be discussed in the following section about the application of service provision benchmarks.

Year and age	0–4 yrs	0-5 yrs	0-3 yrs	0 years	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	Total 3 and 4
<b>2021 Actual</b>	1,190									
<b>2022</b>	1,211	1454	246	246	242	242	241	240	243	481
<b>2023</b>	1,232	1477	250	250	248	245	245	243	246	488
<b>2024</b>	1,258	1508	255	255	253	252	250	248	250	498
<b>2025</b>	1,283	1538	259	259	258	257	256	253	255	509
<b>2026</b>	1,307	1568	263	263	263	262	261	259	260	520
<b>2027</b>	1,331	1596	267	267	267	266	266	264	266	530
<b>2028</b>	1,350	1621	271	271	271	270	270	268	271	538
<b>2029</b>	1,366	1640	273	273	274	273	273	272	275	545
<b>2031</b>	1,404	1686	280	280	281	281	281	280	283	561
<b>2036</b>	1,513	1820	301	301	302	303	304	303	307	607
<b>2041</b>	1,618	1947	321	321	323	324	325	325	329	650
<b>Change 2022 - 29</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Change 2022 – 31</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Change 2022 - 36</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Change 2022 - 41</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>169</b>

Table 4.4: Actual and forecast population data, Sale and District, 2021 – 2041

### Early years provision benchmarks

Population based service provision benchmarks are a tool commonly used to provide an indication of the extent of early years services and infrastructure required within a community. They are a valuable tool that combined with a clear understanding of existing demand and provision for early years services, can support Council, service providers and the State Government to understand where there may be



gaps in provision. For the purpose of this study, **3 different benchmarks** have been considered.

- One benchmark commonly used is 1 licensed place for every 2 children aged between 0 – 5 years, inclusive of childcare and kindergarten.
- A variation on this is 1 place for every 2 children aged 0 – 4 years. This approach has a stronger connection to the planning undertaken for the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten, which has looked at the capacity of the existing service system to support 15 hours of funded kindergarten for both 3- and 4-year-old children. But it also does not account for children aged 5 years who are attending childcare or kindergarten.
- The third benchmark is built around the proposed roll out of 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten, which will have a significant impact upon the demand for kindergarten. The proposed model is that children will attend 4-year-old kindergarten 5 days per week, 6 hours per day which means 1 licensed place must be provided for every child aged 4 years. A benchmark assessment has been applied where 1 licensed place is provided for every 2 children aged 0 – 3 years and 1 licensed place for every 4-year-old child from 2025 onwards.

Table 4.5 below demonstrates the application of these benchmark for the forecast population aged 0 – 4 years and 0 – 5 years in Sale and District. It shows:

- Based upon the application of 1 licensed place for every 2 children aged 0 – 4 years, there is no gap in the provision of licensed places for kindergarten and childcare between 2022 and 2029. From 2031, the gap in provision starts at 7 and increases to 114 places by 2041. This is the equivalent of 1 additional medium to large childcare centre.
- Based upon the application of 1 licensed place for every 2 children aged 0 – 5 years, there is a gap in the provision of licensed places for kindergarten and childcare from 2022 onwards. In 2022, the gap in provision starts at 98, decreases for several years once the Gumnuts ELC addition of 66 places occurs, but then increases to 278 places by 2041. This is the equivalent of 2 - 3 additional medium to large childcare centres. The gap in provision identified through applying this benchmark is very consistent with extensive waiting list 3 of the 5 childcare services in Sale currently have.
- Based upon the application of 1 licensed place for every 2 children aged 0 – 3 years and 1 place for every 4-year-old child (from 2025 onwards), there is no gap in in the provision of licensed places for kindergarten and childcare between 2022 and 2024, but from 2025 the gap in provision starts at 73 and increases to 276 children by 2041. This is the equivalent of 2 - 3 additional medium to large childcare centres. Note: This assumes 4-year-old kindergarten moves to 30 hours per child from 2025 onwards. It is however acknowledged, the Victorian State Government has indicated it will commence rolling out the new policy initiative through a staged approach with all 4-year-old children to have access to 30 hours of kindergarten by 2032, at which point the gap in provision is estimated to be around 150 licensed places.

It is important to acknowledge the application of these benchmarks is based upon forecast data that does not reflect the higher-than-expected population increase between 2016 and 2021. This may mean the projection data is conservative or low, and therefore underestimates future demand.

Year	Existing provision licensed places Inc. addit 66 places at Gumnuts	Impact of implementing 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten						Retaining 15 hours of 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten					
		0 – 3-year-old population		4-year-old population (1 place per child)	Total licensed placed required	Benchmark 1 place for every 2 children aged 4 yrs 2022 - 2024	Provision gap 0 – 3 and 4 yr old kinder	0 – 4-year-old population			0 – 5-year-old population		
		Population forecast	Benchmark 1 place for every 2 children					Population forecast	Benchmark 1 place for every 2 children	Provision gap	Population forecast	Benchmark 1 place for every 2 children	Provision gap
2022	629	971	485.5	240	725.5	120	23.5	1,211	605.5	+23.5	1,211	605.5	-98
2023	629	988	494	243	737	121.5	79.5	1,232	616	+79	1,232	616	-43.5
2024	629	1,010	505	248	753	124	66	1,258	629	+66	1,258	629	-59
2025	629	1,030	515	253	768		-73	1,283	641.5	+53.5	1,283	641.5	-74
2026	629	1,049	524.5	259	783.5		-88.5	1,307	653.5	+41.5	1,307	653.5	-89
2027	629	1,066	533	264	797		-102	1,331	665.5	+29.5	1,331	665.5	-103
2028	629	1,082	541	268	809		-114	1,350	675	+20	1,350	675	-115.5
2029	629	1,093	546.5	272	818.5		-123.5	1,366	683	+12	1,366	683	-125
2031	629	1,123	561.5	280	841.5		-146.5	1,404	702	-7	1,404	702	-148
2036	629	1,210	605	303	908		-213	1,513	756.5	-61.5	1,513	756.5	-215
2041	629	1,293	646.5	325	971.5		-276.5	1,618	809	-114	1,618	809	-278.5

Table 4.5: Early years' service provision benchmarks and gap analysis for licensed kindergarten and childcare places

#### 4.4 Assessing service demand

Overall, the assessment of service demand and capacity shows:

- Population growth combined with changes to the provision of kindergarten services are key drivers of increased demand for kindergarten and childcare services.
- Demand for kindergarten services is increasing, particularly as services move towards offering 15 hours of funded 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten. Most of the existing standalone sessional kindergartens have capacity to accommodate this increased demand, by making changes to their service model and operating at or closer to their licensed capacity, and this is confirmed by Wellington's Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP). However, services offering kindergarten integrated with childcare have less capacity to respond to the increased demand, because they need to balance the demand for kindergarten with the demand for childcare.
- Childcare services in Sale and District are experiencing high demand, and 3 of the 5 services have extensive waiting lists. This most likely reflects the higher-than-expected population increase which occurred in Sale and District between 2016 and 2021, including an increase in the number of children aged 0 – 4 years, compared with a forecast decline in this age cohort. The higher-than-expected population growth has occurred in many regional areas across Victoria and Australia during the Covid-19 pandemic, as large numbers of people have chosen to relocate from urban to regional areas. This is placing unprecedented demand on services like childcare and kindergarten.
- It is also important to acknowledge Sale is the regional centre for Wellington Shire which means this is where many people from surrounding towns and communities access work, school, and key services such as kindergarten and childcare. As a consequence, population growth in the surrounding communities is also impacting the demand for childcare and kindergarten services in Sale.
- The addition of 66 licensed places at Gumnuts ELC from 2023 will help to address some of the unmet demand for childcare, but these places will largely be directed towards supporting the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten.
- There is a proposal to develop a 114 place privately operated childcare centre in Sale at 43 Princes Highway. A planning permit has been issued for the development, but it has not progressed any further due to several factors including:
  - Amended plans to be issued to address Vic Roads requirements for entry and egress to the site
  - The land needs to be consolidated before any works can commence.

While the development of this facility would help significantly in addressing unmet demand, it remains unclear whether the development will proceed and consequently there is some difficulty in relying upon this to address unmet demand.

- The proposed introduction of 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten will further increase demand for kindergarten and creates a significant challenge for the future provision of infrastructure for 4-year-old kindergarten. The model proposed by the Victorian State Government of 4-year-old kindergarten operating 6 hours per day, 5 days per week means that 1 licensed place will be required for every 4-year-old child, whereas currently, 1 licensed place will support 2 children to attend 4-year-old kindergarten. This means, the number of licensed places for 4-

year-old kindergarten will need to at a minimum double, and most likely increase beyond this in response to population growth.

- The application of service provision benchmarks indicates there will be a gap in the provision of licensed places for kindergarten and childcare:
  - From 2031, where the provision benchmark of 1 place for every 2 children aged 0 – 4 is applied. This does not however account for children aged 5 years who are attending childcare or kindergarten and consequently is not considered to be an appropriate benchmark to apply. The high and unmet demand for childcare currently being experienced in Sale reinforces that this benchmark is NOT the right one to rely upon.
  - From 2022 onwards, where the provision benchmark of 1 place for every 2 children aged 0 – 5 is applied. The gap in provision commences at 98 in 2022, decreases for several years once the Gumnuts ELC addition of 66 places occurs, but then increases to 278 places by 2041. The 2022 gap is very consistent with extensive waiting lists childcare services in Sale currently have and indicates this benchmark is likely to be a reasonable indication of future demand. Further consideration will need to be given to the appropriateness of this benchmark as more information becomes available from the Victorian State Government about the roll out of 30 hours of funded 4-year-old kindergarten.
  - From 2025, where the provision benchmark of 1 licensed place for every 2 children aged 0 – 3 years and 1 licensed place for every 4-year-old child from 2025 onwards is applied. The gap commences at 73 and increases to 276. This does not, however account for children aged 5 years who are attending childcare or kindergarten. Further consideration will need to be given to the appropriateness of this benchmark as more information becomes available from the Victorian State Government about the roll out of 30 hours of funded 4-year-old kindergarten.

## 5.0 Key findings from engagement with stakeholders

A range of key stakeholders were engaged with through a series of in person, telephone, and video conference discussions. Stakeholders included:

<b>Early years</b>	Uniting VicTas
	Sale Combined Kindergartens Manager and Committee of Management
	Kath Foley Centre Manager and Committee of Management
	Gumnuts ELC Manager
	Gippsland Grammar Early Learning Centre
	Roseberry House Centre Director
	One Tree Defence Childcare Unit Centre Director East Sale
<b>Community facilities / organisations</b>	Sale Neighbourhood House Manager and Committee of Management
	Marley Street Hub Manager
	Scouts Australia Local Group Leader
	Scouts Australia Property Manager
	Guides Australia Property Manager
	Sale Guides Local Group Leader
	Sale Memorial Hall President
	St Johns Ambulance Pathway Recruitment Manager and Volunteer Development
<b>Government / health</b>	Central Gippsland Health – Pediatric Health Team and MCH Team
	Department of Families Fairness and Housing – Neighbourhood House arm
	Wellington Shire Council Officers

Key findings from these discussions are outlined below, with more detailed information about service capacity and demand, infrastructure condition and functionality, and opportunities for expansion, co-location or redevelopment captured in other parts of this report.

- **Uniting VicTas (St Columba's, East Sale and Longford Kindergartens)**
  - St Columba's Kindergarten is in high demand and Uniting VicTas would welcome any opportunity to increase the capacity to 33 children or more (currently 30) but believes additional land would be required from the Uniting Church to achieve this. Is Interested in the idea of relocating St Columba's to the Sale College site in Macalister Street, with expanded service capacity e.g. 2 program rooms.
  - Longford Kindergarten experiences consistent demand but not sufficient to operate separate 3- and 4-year-old groups. The licensed capacity of the site is also a key constraint and there

is no opportunity to expand because the neighbouring Tennis Club is being expanded.

Uniting VicTas believes relocating the Kindergarten to the Longford Primary School site should be considered with a single program room for 33 children. This model would allow kinder to operate 2- 3 days a week and then have childcare or supported playgroup available on the other days. Wrap around care, could also be offered if the kindergarten operates 5-hour days. But a campus approach may be required with the proposed introduction of 30 hours of 4 year old kindergarten.

- In relation to East Sale Kindergarten, Uniting VicTas is not aware of any plans the Department of Defence has to upgrade or expand the Kindergarten, and anticipates any change or improvements would be a lengthy process. Ideally would like to see the facility expanded so it could accommodate 33 rather than the existing children.
- **Sale Combined Kindergartens (Hyland Community Kindergarten, Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten and Sale Combined Kindergarten)**
  - The committee is concerned about the age and poor condition of both Hyland and Gwenfa Hampton Kinders, but also understand how valued they are by the community as small single room services.
  - There are mixed views in the committee about consolidating Hyland and Gwenfa Hampton to one site, with a key concern being the loss of organisation's Early Years Manager status if it reduced from 3 to 2 services. Plus, the decision to sell the Gwenfa Hampton site (owned by the SCK) would be significant.
  - If an early years / community hub was established on the Market Street site, SCK would like to make sure car parking is addressed to ensure the safety of families and children.
- **Kath Foley Centre**
  - Is experiencing significant and unprecedented demand and has an extensive waiting list, especially for children aged under 3 years. Also do not have capacity to respond to the move to 15 hours of 3-year-old kindergarten, nor the more recent announcement of 30 hours of kindergarten for 4 year old children.
  - Have significant concerns about the condition, accessibility and functionality of the existing Kath Foley Centre and actively looking to Council to support the relocation of the service to another site and with new facilities.
  - A key aspiration is to be a part of a Community Hub. Want to ensure the service is not isolated and is co-located with complementary services or activities e.g. library, toy library, family support services, connection with aged care facilities etc.
  - Would like to see early years facilities include program spaces with capacity for 88 children and opportunity for expansion. Suggested program space configuration is 2 rooms of 20 children for under 3's and 2 rooms of 22 children for over 3's. Other components include nature based kinder, a productive garden, kitchen, interactive play spaces, sustainability features, appropriate staff, meeting, storage, and foyer spaces.
  - In relation to possible locations, they have a strong preference for the Gibsons Road site, alongside Gippsland Regional Sports Complex.

- **Gumnuts ELC**
  - Is experiencing significant and unprecedented demand and has an extensive waiting list, especially for children aged under 3 years. Is currently adding 2 program rooms with 66 places to the service to support the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten. This will come online from the beginning of 2023.
  - The facilities are generally in good condition, accessible and fit for purpose.
  - Very self-sufficient service having purchased the neighbouring block to accommodate the new program rooms. Also proposing to purchase other neighbouring properties to expand the service. Currently talking with the Scouts (located in a building next door to the service), about using their facilities to support their Outside School Hours Care programs.
- **Private Early Years Providers**
  - All services are experiencing high demand. Roseberry House has an extensive waiting list, Gippsland Grammar and One Tree Defence both have small waiting lists.
  - A shortage of staff is having some impact upon their ability to operate at full capacity.
- **Sale Neighbourhood House**
  - Has significant concerns about the condition, accessibility, visibility and functionality of the existing facility and is very keen to be considered for inclusion in a new Community Hub.
  - Key aspirations are a vibrant neighbourhood house that is more centrally / visibly located, improved access to public transport, contemporary, fit for purpose facilities supporting a wide range of programs, establishment of a social enterprise café.
  - Interested in being located at the Market Street site. They like the idea of the Sale College campuses but are concerned about how long it will take to realise this. Also not sure about the Sale North precinct because it is too far removed from their current location and they are concerned about public transport access.
  - While happy to consider co-location with Marley Street Hub, Sale Neighbourhood House believes they offer a very different service and do not see the organisations operating as one.  
Note: Sale Neighbourhood House previously auspiced Marley Street Community Hub.
- **Marley Street Community Hub**
  - Acknowledged the benefit of being in their current location because it is close to community members who most need access to the services, and to the CBD, but the facilities are constrained because the Hub is located in a one-bedroom apartment. This creates security issues and makes it difficult to deliver programs onsite.
  - Key aspirations are to be in a purpose-built space. Very happy to be part of a co-location / Community Hub model. Would like the emergency relief component separately accessible from programming space.
- **Dept. of Families, Fairness and Housing**
  - Actively looking for Council to provide access to a new / improved facilities for Sale Neighbourhood House. Raised several suggestions which Council has previously confirmed are not viable options. These have been reaffirmed as being unviable.

- Not supportive of Sale Neighbourhood House and Marley Street Community Hub coming together as one organisation.
- **Scouts and Guides:**
  - Scouts and Guides Australia (head office) have a preference to retain their own facilities but also understand the focus local government has upon maximising the use and activation of community facilities.
    - They prefer to look for opportunities to share facilities with other groups / activities that occur outside their usual hours of operation e.g. U3A.
    - They encourage local Scout and Guide Groups to pursue opportunities for shared use of facilities.
  - Guides Australia acknowledge much of their building stock is 50 or more years old, has received very little maintenance and now receives very little use. Sale Guides with 32 members is one of the larger groups in Australia. A key challenge for Guides is the low membership and consequently low income which makes it difficult to pay to use spaces.
  - The Sale Guide Group understands the existing building will need to be replaced and have an aspiration to retain a space that is solely for Guides, is universally accessible and has space for outdoor activities. They are prepared to look at an alternate site and are not opposed to co-location and integration, but are not sure the Scouts and Guides could be co-located because of how active both groups are.
  - The Sale Scout Group is currently considering an option to share their facilities with Gumnuts ELC to support the operation of Outside School Hours Care. There is some uncertainty about whether this is achievable because of the crossover in time when both Gumnuts and the Scouts require access to the building.
  - The Sale Scout Group is willing to look at shared use of facilities with the Guides, acknowledging there are some constraints to be resolved including the potential overlap in time both organisations will operate programs, the availability of storage facilities and the ability of Guides to contribute to the operation of the buildings / site. The Scout Group believes there is opportunity to look at shared use of the site with some investment in facilities e.g. a new storage shed with attached activity / meeting space which could be used by the Guides, but the site cannot accommodate both Gumnuts and the Guides.
- **Sale Memorial Hall**
  - Very keen to see the Memorial Hall and associated facilities more extensively used and is supportive of the idea of relocating activity from the Gwen Webb Centre or others to the Hall for the short, medium, or long term.
  - The infrastructure condition is a key constraint, along with the tenancy and ownership arrangements.
    - The west wing is owned by the RSL. It is in poor condition and requires significant investment. It is understood the RSL does not have the capacity to fund improvement works. There is a good relationship between the Sale Memorial Hall committee and the RSL.



- The east wing is leased to a charity organisation and 9 years remain on the lease. This means it is very difficult to make changes to the building or to encourage a different / broader range of uses.
- **St Johns Ambulance**
  - St Johns has a long-term lease on the community Hall located in Stead Reserve. They are keen to look at opportunities for the hall to be shared by other community organisations, particularly those that are complementary to their activities and may provide an avenue for recruiting volunteers for St Johns.
  - Key considerations in relation to shared use of the hall will be:
    - The provision of storage facilities for the St Johns vehicle, equipment, and medication. Secure storage is essential for the medications.
    - Ensuring St Johns can continue to access the building at times required to support their activities including Saturday, and Tuesday and Thursday evenings.
  - Ideas discussed for shared use were a local football club because of the sports oval located in the reserve, Sale Guides, users of the Gwen Webb Centre and U3A.
- **Central Gippsland Health (CGH)**
  - Identified existing MCH facilities work well but will most likely not support the long terms MCH needs of the community.
  - The Paediatric Health team has an aspiration to have a wellbeing hub for families which focuses upon early intervention and provides all services under one roof, but this is not currently endorsed by the executive.
  - Very interested in looking at the opportunity for CGH services which support families being a part of a Community Hub/s. This could take the form of outreach services operating from shared / multiuse consulting and programming spaces, or dedicated spaces to support CGH services and programs.

## 6.0 Estimated spatial requirements

Outlined in this section is the estimated spatial requirements for various services and facility components where new infrastructure is being developed. This information will support the options assessment outlined later in this report.

### 6.1 Estimated spatial requirements for a 66-place kindergarten

Table 6.1 below provides an estimate of the facility components and spatial requirements for developing a 66-place kindergarten facility. The minimum floorspace reflects the regulatory requirements for indoor and outdoor programming space. The recommended floorspace allows for a more generous provision of indoor and outdoor programming space, and other spaces within the building. This reflects a best practice approach to service delivery and facility planning which recognises a quality service offers more than the minimum.

Facility component	Minimum m2	Recommended m2
Program rooms to accommodate 66 children – could be 2 x 33 places or 3 x 22 places	214.5 (3.25m2 per child)	264 (4m2 per child)
Quiet room (quiet space to support children with addition needs)	20.0	30.0
Children's toilet	30.0	40.0
Change room	8.0	12.0
Kitchen (domestic scale)	6.0	10.0
Office	6.0	10.0
Staff toilets	12.0	12.0
Staffroom	12.0	12.0
Program planning room	6.0	10.0
Storage	30.0	50.0
Circulation (20% of floor space)	70.0	100.0
<b>Estimated indoor spatial requirements</b>	<b>414.5</b>	<b>550.0</b>
Outdoor play space (66 children x 7.0m2)	462.0 (7m2 per child)	660 (10m2 per child)
<b>Estimated spatial requirements EXCLUDING car parking</b>	<b>876.5</b>	<b>1,210</b>
Car parking - 0.22 car spaces per child – 66 x 0.22 = 14.5 car spaces. 30m2 per car park – 30 x 15 = 450	450.0	450.0
<b>Estimated spatial requirements INCLUDING car parking</b>	<b>1,326.5</b>	<b>1,660</b>

Table 6.1: Estimated spatial requirements for a 66-place childcare / kindergarten facility

## 6.2 Estimated spatial requirements for neighbourhood house and multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces

Table 6.2 below provides an estimate of the facility components and spatial requirements for developing a neighbourhood house combined with multipurpose community and activity spaces that can support the activities of the neighbourhood house and wider community use.

Facility component	No. spaces	m2 per space	Total m2
Office space	1	20.0	20.0
Staff room	1	12.0	12.0
Staff amenities	1	12.0	12.0
General & accessible toilet facilities	1	20.0	20.0
Consulting suites / interview rooms	2	12.0	24.0
Interconnected multipurpose activity rooms	3	50.0	150.0
Computer learning space	1	30.0	30.0
Meeting rooms of varying sizes	2	20.0	40.0
Community kitchen and lounge	1	50.0	50.0
Storage	1	50.0	50.0
Maintenance store	1	20.0	20.0
Foyer, entry, reception, circulation 20% of indoor space			85.0
<b>Estimated indoor spatial requirements</b>			<b>513.0</b>
<b>Estimated outdoor space</b>			<b>400.0</b>
<b>Estimated spatial requirements EXCLUDING car parking</b>			<b>913.0</b>
Car parking	30.0	30.0	900.0
<b>Estimated spatial requirements INCLUDING car parking</b>			<b>1,813.0</b>

Table 6.2: Estimated spatial requirements for a neighbourhood house and multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces

### 6.3 Estimated spatial requirements for 122-place childcare centre

Table 6.3 below provides an estimate of the facility components and spatial requirements for developing a 122-place childcare centre incorporating kindergarten. The minimum floorspace reflects the regulatory requirements for indoor and outdoor programming space. The recommended floorspace allows for a more generous provision of indoor and outdoor programming space, and other spaces within the building. This reflects a best practice approach to service delivery and facility planning which recognises a quality service offers more than the minimum.

Facility component	Minimum m2	Recommended m2
Program rooms for children aged 0 – 2 years (3 rooms x 36 children)	117.0 (3.25m2 per child)	144.0 (4m2 per child)
Program room for children aged 2 – 3 years (1 room x 20 children)	65.0	80.0
Program rooms for children aged 3 – 5 years (66 children – 2 rooms x 33 places or 3 rooms x 22 places)	214.5	265.0
Cot room	117.0	117.0
Quiet room/s (quiet space to support children with addition needs)	30.0	40.0
Children's toilet	60.0	80.0
Children's change rooms	40.0	52.0
Change room	12.0	20.0
Kitchen (meals provision)	25.0	30.0
Office	20.0	30.0
Staff toilets	24.0	36.0
Staffroom	24.0	36.0
Program planning rooms	24.0	36.0
Family meeting space	20.0	20.0
Storage	60.0	100.0
Circulation (20% of floor space)	170.5	217.0
<b>Estimated indoor spatial requirements</b>	<b>1,023.0</b>	<b>1,302.0</b>
Outdoor play space	854.0 (7m2 per child)	1,220.0 (10m2 per child)
Productive garden area	50.0	50.0
<b>Estimated spatial requirements EXCLUDING car parking</b>	<b>1,927.0</b>	<b>2,572.0</b>
Car parking - 0.22 car spaces per child – $122 \times 0.22 = 26.8$ car spaces. 30m2 per car park – $30 \times 27 = 810$	810.0	810.0
<b>Estimated spatial requirements INCLUDING car parking</b>	<b>2,737.0</b>	<b>3,382.0</b>

Table 6.3: Estimated spatial requirements for a 122-place childcare centre including kindergarten

#### 6.4 Estimated spatial requirements for multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces, and early years / family support spaces

Table 6.4 below provides an estimate of the facility components and spatial requirements for developing a facility with multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces, along with consulting suites and support facilities that could accommodate early years / family support services such as MCH, social support programs, and early intervention services etc.

Facility component	No. spaces	m2 per space	Total m2
General & accessible toilet facilities	1	20.0	20.0
Consulting suites	3	12.0	36.0
Waiting areas	2	20.0	40.0
Interview rooms	2	12.0	24.0
Interconnected multipurpose activity rooms	2	50.0	100.0
Meeting rooms of varying sizes	2	20.0	40.0
Community kitchen and lounge	1	50.0	50.0
Storage	1	50.0	50.0
Foyer, entry, reception, circulation 20% of indoor space			72.0
<b>Estimated indoor spatial requirements</b>			<b>432.0</b>
<b>Estimated outdoor space</b>			<b>200.0</b>
<b>Estimated spatial requirements EXCLUDING car parking</b>			<b>632.0</b>
Car parking	30.0	30.0	900.0
<b>Estimated spatial requirements INCLUDING car parking</b>			<b>1,532.0</b>

Table 8: Estimated spatial requirements for a multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces, and early years / family support services

## 7.0 Possible sites for establishing community hubs

As part of considering the options available for establishing a community hub/s in response to

- increasing demand for childcare and kindergarten services,
- the poor condition, functionality and accessibility of key early years and community infrastructure
- the benefits to community of delivering co-located and integrated services and facilities,

a number of sites and their size have been identified to assist in understanding their capability to accommodate the spatial requirements outlined in the previous section.

### **Market Street site (Hyland Community Kindergarten, Gwen Webb Centre and Sale Guide Hall, estimated size 3,851m<sup>2</sup>)**





### Gibsons Road site, estimated size: 7,429m<sup>2</sup>



### North Sale Precinct, estimated size: 271,253m<sup>2</sup>

**Note:** any community facility would likely be co-located with infrastructure servicing the sporting facilities in the Western section





**Sale Memorial Hall – East Wing, estimated size: building footprint is 333m<sup>2</sup>, but with 2 levels the floorspace is close to double this e.g. 600m<sup>2</sup>**



**Sale College Macalister Campus, estimated size: 14,742m<sup>2</sup>**



**Sale College Guthridge Campus, estimated size: 69,601m<sup>2</sup>**



**Dawson Street site, estimated size: 23,676m<sup>2</sup>**





## 8.0 Options and criteria

The options for addressing aging early years and community infrastructure and for consolidating services and infrastructure in Sale and District have been identified in consultation with Council officers, and key stakeholder agencies and individuals. They reflect a wide range of considerations including:

<b>Demand</b>	<p>The high and increasing demand for childcare and kindergarten, and the capacity of the service system and individual sites to respond to this demand. The evidence shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is unmet demand for childcare, and this will grow.</li> <li>• There will be future unmet demand for kindergarten, particularly with the introduction of 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten.</li> </ul>
<b>Condition, functionality, accessibility</b>	<p>The poor condition, functionality and accessibility of various infrastructure and the impact this has upon the delivery of services and responding to demand for early years services. Council owned facilities of concern are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hyland community Kindergarten / Gwen Webb Centre / Guides (Market Street). These facilities are located together on a fill site. They are aging, in poor condition and the buildings are sinking.</li> <li>• Kath Foley Centre. The facility is old, in poor condition, has significant functionality constraints and is not able to meet service demand.</li> <li>• Sale Neighbourhood House. The facility is aging, in poor condition, has significant functionality and accessibility constraints, and is poorly located.</li> </ul>
<b>Urgency</b>	How urgently the demand for early years services, and the poor condition, functionality and accessibility of both early years and community facilities needs to be addressed.
<b>Location</b>	The spread of services and facilities across Sale and District, both now and in the future as the population grows and residential development occurs in areas such as North Sale, Wurruk, and Longford.
<b>Expanding use of existing facilities</b>	The opportunity to increase use of existing infrastructure and the willingness of organisations to share facilities.
<b>Co-location and integration</b>	The clear focus upon looking for opportunities to co-locate and integrate community and / or early years facilities.
<b>Availability of land</b>	The location of available public land and the complexity of accessing this land. Locations considered include the Market Street, North Sale precinct (2 possible sites), Sale College (2 sites) and Dawson Street.
<b>Capacity of existing sites</b>	The capacity of existing community or early years sites to accommodate additional or reconfigured infrastructure.
<b>Strategic context</b>	The strategic and policy context underpinning service and infrastructure provision.

## 8.1 Options

Overall, the options considered fall into three categories:

1. **Increasing use of existing community facilities.** Note: this excludes early years facilities.
2. **Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities.**
3. **Establishing community hubs on key sites to support early years services and broader community activity.**

The expansion of existing single room early years facilities has also been considered, but uncertainty about the newly announced State Government policy to expand 4-year-old kindergarten to 30 hours per week, means it is difficult to assess options related to expansion at this time. This is discussed later in this report.

The specific options considered include:

<b>Option 1</b> Increasing use of existing community use facilities	<b>Option 1a.</b>	Stead Street Reserve Hall (St Johns Ambulance Hall)
	<b>Option 1b.</b>	Sale Scout Hall
	<b>Option 1c.</b>	Sale Memorial Hall
	<b>Option 1d.</b>	Sale Senior Citizens Centre
<b>Option 2</b> Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities	<b>Option 2a.</b>	Hyland Community Kindergarten
	<b>Option 2b.</b>	Kath Foley Centre
	<b>Option 2c.</b>	Sale Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre
	<b>Option 2d.</b>	Sale Neighbourhood House
<b>Option 3</b> Establishing community hubs on key sites to support early years services and broader community activity	<b>Option 3a.</b>	Market Street site where Hyland Community Kindergarten Gwen Webb Centre and Sale Guide Hall are located
	<b>Option 3d.</b>	Gibsons Road site behind Gippsland Regional Sports Complex
	<b>Option 3c.</b>	North Sale Precinct opposite Gippsland Regional Sports Complex – site to be determined
	<b>Option 3d.</b>	Sale Memorial Hall precinct
	<b>Option 3e.</b>	Sale College – Macalister Campus
	<b>Option 3f.</b>	Sale College – Guthridge Campus
	<b>Option 3g.</b>	Dawson Street site

## 8.2 Criteria

Separate criteria have been identified for the three broad options i.e. Option 1a – 1d, Option 2a – 2d, Option 3a – 3g. This approach has been taken because there are different considerations or factors in assessing the feasibility of the various options.

### Option 1. The criteria for assessing the feasibility of increasing use of existing community use facilities is as follows:

- **Ownership and tenancy arrangements:** Council owns and / or controls use of the facility.
- **Extent of existing use the facility receives:** There is clear capacity for the facility to be used more extensively.
- **Willingness to share / increase use:** The existing owner / tenant is willing to share the facility and / or increase how much the facility is used.
- **Complementary uses:** Organisations or activities are identified which are complementary to the existing use the facility receives.
- **Extent of changes or improvements to the facilities:** The changes or improvements needed to the facilities to accommodate shared and increased use are moderate / reasonable.
- **tenancy impacts:** The extent of change required to the current management or tenancy arrangements to accommodate additional use.

### Option 2. The criteria for assessing the feasibility of refurbishing existing early years and community facilities is as follows:

- **Ownership and tenancy arrangements:** Council owns and / or controls use of the facility.
- **Condition and configuration:** The age, condition and configuration of the existing facilities will support effective long-term use and service delivery.
- **Extent of changes or improvements to the facilities:** The extent of work required to address issues related to age and condition is not prohibitive to refurbishment. The changes or improvements needed to the facilities are moderate / reasonable.
- **Location:** The location supports a network approach to community services and infrastructure i.e. services are spread across Sale to ensure different parts of the community are able to access services close to where they live or work. The site is in an appropriate location with good visibility and access to public transport.
- **Complexity:** Complexities associated with refurbishing the facilities on this site are minimal or manageable. Complexities could include access to funding, reliance upon other projects or initiatives, and the length of time it will take to deliver refurbished facilities on this site.
- **Support for refurbishment and this site:** There is support from community organisations and service providers to refurbish the building and continue operating services or programs from this site.

- **Responsive to early years’ service demand:** The refurbishment of facilities on this site will respond to the demand for increased childcare and kindergarten services in the short to medium term.

**Option 3. The criteria for assessing the feasibility of establishing a community hub/s in key locations:**

- **Ownership and tenancy arrangements:** Council owns and / or controls use of the site.
- **Planning controls:** Planning controls will not inhibit developing a community hub on the site.
- **Existing facilities and use:** Existing facilities and use of the site will not inhibit developing a community hub on the site.
- **Location:** The location supports a network approach to community services and infrastructure i.e. services are spread across Sale to ensure different parts of the community are able to access services close to where they live or work. The site is in an appropriate location with good visibility and access to public transport.
- **Site capacity:** The site has the capacity to accommodate a community hub that will support a mix of co-located and integrated services, program and activities.
- **Complexity:** Complexities associated with delivering a community hub on this site are minimal or manageable. Complexities could include land ownership or tenancy arrangements, planning controls, reliance upon other projects or initiatives, and the length of time it will take to deliver a community hub on this site.
- **Support for this site:** There is support from community organisations and service providers to be a part of a community hub on this site.
- **Responsive to early years’ service demand:** This site and the scale of the community hub will respond to the demand for increased childcare and kindergarten services in the short to medium term.

A detailed analysis of each option has been undertaken against each criteria, and a high level summary is provided in section 9. The high-level summary provides a colour coded indication of the outcomes from the analysis, as well as a written summary. The colour coding system has been applied as follows:

Green	This option will fully or almost fully address the criteria.
Orange	This option will partially address the criteria.
Red	This option will not or is unlikely to address the criteria.

## 9.0 Analysis of options

This section provides an analysis of each option against the criteria:

- It firstly looks at options 1a – 1d to assess the relative capacity and feasibility of increasing the use of existing community facilities at 4 sites.
- Secondly it looks at options 2a – 2d to assess the relative capacity and feasibility of refurbishing existing early years and community facilities at 4 sites.
- Thirdly it looks at option 3a – 3g to assess which of the 7 identified sites are best positioned to support the establishment of a community hub/s to accommodate early years services and broader community activity.

A written summary of the key findings and a colour coded table indicating the high-level outcomes from the analysis is provided below, with the detailed analysis of each option outlined in **Appendix B**.

### 9.1 Increasing use of existing community facilities

Opportunities to increase the use of existing facilities have been identified for:

- Stead Street Reserve Hall (Option 1a)
- Sale Scout Hall (Option 1b)
- Sale Memorial Hall (Option 1c)
- Sale Senior Citizens Centre (Option 1d).

Key findings about the opportunity to increase use of these facilities are:

- With the exception of the Sale Memorial Hall, all sites are owned by Council and are managed by tenant organisations through long term lease agreements. The long-term tenancy agreements potentially add some complexity to changing use of the facilities, but this can be reduced by the willingness of tenants to share and / or increase use of the facilities.
- All facilities receive low to moderate levels of use and can easily accommodate increased use.
- Building owners or tenants are willing to and supportive of increasing use of the facilities, but with an emphasis upon ensuring the use is complementary to existing activities. Key complementary uses are Sale Guides, users of the Gwen Webb Centre, Sale U3A and Gumnuts ELC Outside School Hours program (OSH). Each of these organisations or users are actively looking for or in need of alternate accommodation to support their activities.
- Each facility will require some additions, upgrade, or refurbishment with the most significant investment likely to be the Sale Memorial Hall (east wing).
- Some changes to the management or tenancy arrangements may be required, particularly for the Stead Street Reserve Hall, Sale Memorial Hall (east wing) and Sale Senior Citizens Centre.



Overall, the options analysis indicates:

- **the Stead Street Reserve Hall (Option 1a), Sale Scout Hall (Option 1b) and Sale Senior Citizens Centre (1d)** offer the most feasible opportunities to accommodate increased community use or activity, with possibilities including Sale Guides, users of the Gwen Webb Centre, Gumnuts ELC Outside School Hours Care program and Sale U3A.
- While the Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc. is very keen to accommodate increased use both in the main hall and the east wing, the key constraints are the condition of the facilities (especially the east wing) and the existing lease agreement for the east wing.
- Sale Senior Citizens Centre offers significant opportunity for increased use. The location and condition of the building, and the moderate levels of use means this building could accommodate a higher level of activity than it currently does. To facilitate this, there is a recommendation to alter the management model.

Options		Criteria					
		Ownership / tenancy	Extent of existing use	share / increase use	Complementary uses	Facility changes or improvements required	Management / tenancy impacts
<b>1a.</b>	Stead Street Reserve Hall (St Johns Ambulance Hall)						
<b>1b.</b>	Sale Scout Hall						
<b>1c.</b>	Sale Memorial Hall						
<b>1d.</b>	Sale Senior Citizens Centre						

Table 9.1: High level summary of the options analysis for options 1a – 1d

## 9.2 Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities

Opportunities to refurbish existing facilities have been identified for:

- Hyland Community Kindergarten (Option 2a)
- Kath Foley Centre (Option 2b)
- Sale Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre (Option 2c)
- Sale Neighbourhood House (Option 2d).

Key findings about the opportunity to refurbish existing facilities are:

- All of the facilities are aging, in poor condition, and have significant accessibility and/or functionality constraints and consequently, the refurbishments required are extensive, and overall there is very little to suggest they should be refurbished, with the exception of the Kath Foley Centre.
  - **For Hyland Community Kindergarten**, the age and poor condition of the facilities, the complexity of the ground conditions (the site is sinking), the need to relocate the service during refurbishment, and that the licensed capacity of the service will not be increased by refurbishing the building, all indicate refurbishment is not the right solution.
  - **For the Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre**, the very poor condition of these facilities, the complexity of the ground conditions (the site and buildings are sinking), and that refurbishment of the buildings will not in any way respond to early years' service demand, indicate refurbishment is not the right solution.
  - **For the Sale Neighbourhood House**, the poor condition, location, and accessibility of this site means refurbishment should not be considered. It is located in a small residential street, and it has little to no visibility, poor car parking and limited access to public transport.
  - **For the Kath Foley Centre**, any refurbishment will also need to incorporate reconfiguration to deliver a contemporary, fit for purpose early years site and this will reduce the licensed capacity of the service. The facility is in a busy precinct with significant traffic, safety and parking issues, and the service would need to be relocated away from the site or potentially closed during the refurbishment, exacerbating the shortage of childcare places in Sale and District. These factors all suggest refurbishment is not the right solution in the short term, but it could be considered for the medium to long term i.e. in addition to community / early years hub facilities in other locations.

Options		Criteria						
		Ownership / tenancy	Condition and configuration	Extent of changes	Location	Complexity	Support for the site	Responsive to early years' service demand
<b>2a.</b>	Hyland Community Kindergarten							
<b>2b.</b>	Kath Foley Centre							Short term
								Medium – long term
<b>2c.</b>	Sale Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre							
<b>2d.</b>	Sale Neighbourhood House							

Table 9.2: High level summary of the options analysis for options 2a – 2d

### 9.3 Establishing a community hub/s in key locations to support early years services and broader community activity

Key findings of the options analysis for establishing a community hub/s in key locations to support early years services and broader community activity are:

- **The Market Street site (Option 3a) and Gibsons Road site (Option 3b) offer the most feasible opportunities in the short to medium term** to establish community hubs which will help address the increasing demand for kindergarten and childcare and support broader community activity. Key factors which mean these sites present the most feasible options are:
  - They are both owned by Council and are either unencumbered (Gibsons Road) or the condition of the existing infrastructure means it must be replaced (Market Street)
  - They both have good capacity to accommodate medium to large scale facilities, with the extensive footprint of the Gibsons Road site providing scope for future expansion if required.
  - The sites are both well positioned to support different catchments across Sale and combined with Gumnut ELC, the 3 sites will support different parts of the community. They also have good visibility and connectivity to public transport, although it is acknowledged this connectivity will need to be improved to the Gibsons Road site.
  - There are minimal complexities with developing facilities on these sites and consequently the facilities could be delivered in the short to medium term (subject to funding and Council decisions). This is critical to responding to the increasing demand for childcare and kindergarten services.
  - Key services and community organisations are supportive of being a part of community hubs on these sites including Sale Neighbourhood House, Sale Combined Kindergartens, Kath Foley Childrens Centre and Kindergarten, and Central Gippsland Health.
- Several other sites may offer reasonable options for the long term e.g. North Sale Precinct (Option 3c), and the two Sale College campuses (Options 3e and 3f), but there is so much uncertainty about the timing and availability of these sites, it is difficult to consider them to be feasible options now.
- The Dawson Street site (Option 3g) is considered to be the least feasible option because of its close proximity to Gumnut ELC, the poor public transport connections, because it abuts farming and industrial land, because of the uncertainty about acquisition of the site and the requirement to rezone the land from farming to community use. This site would cluster two large scale early years services very close to each other and effectively put them in competition with each other. It is much more effective to locate services so they can support different geographic catchments across Sale.
- Sale Memorial Hall, especially the east wing offers excellent opportunity to deliver facilities which could support community activity such as Sale Neighbourhood House or U3A, but the condition of the building, the current leasing arrangements, and that Council does not own the building, means it is likely to be a medium to long term option. The site also could not support early years services which is critical to any future community hub development in the short to medium term.

Options		Criteria							
		Ownership / tenancy	Planning controls	Existing facilities and use	Location	Site capacity	Complexity	Support for the site	Responsive to early years' service demand
<b>3a.</b>	Market Street site where Hyland Community Kindergarten Gwen Webb Centre and Sale Guide Hall are located								
<b>3b.</b>	Gibsons Road site behind Gippsland Regional Sports Complex								
<b>3c.</b>	North Sale Precinct opposite Gippsland Regional Sports Complex								
<b>3d.</b>	Sale Memorial Hall precinct								
<b>3e.</b>	Sale College – Macalister Campus								
<b>3f.</b>	Sale College – Guthridge Campus								
<b>3g.</b>	Dawson Street site								

Table 9.2: High level summary of the options analysis for options 3a – 3g

## 10.0 Recommended priority actions

The actions outlined below are in priority order.

### **Priority Action 1:**

Develop a community hub supporting early years services and broader community activity at the **Gibsons Road site (Option 3b)**.

The service and facility mix recommended for the site is:

- 122 place childcare and kindergarten service with 56 places for children aged under 3 years and 66 places for 3 – 5-year-olds.
- The proposed mix of program spaces is 3 rooms x 12 children aged 0 – 2 years, 1 room x 20 children aged 2 – 3 years and 3 rooms x 22 children aged 3 – 5 years.
- Multiple consulting suites which could accommodate early childhood support services (e.g. MCH and early intervention programs) and family support programs either through an outreach model or by being permanently based in the centre.
- Multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces with connected outdoor space to support playgroups, parent education programs, the activities of the early childhood services and general community use.

### **Key rationale**

- Sale and District is experiencing high and unprecedented demand for childcare which cannot be met within the existing service system. The provision of 122 licensed places will increase the number of licensed places for children aged under 3 years by 56 places and over 3 by 66 places, helping to address both the high demand for childcare places for children aged under 3 years and responding to the growing demand for kindergarten driven by State Government policy changes.
- By providing consulting suites and multipurpose community activity spaces, families will have improved access to early intervention and family support services. This will also support broader community activity as the North Sale population grows. These elements along with the kindergarten and childcare services help to position the project to be eligible to apply for funding of up to \$2 million through the Building Blocks Grants for an Integrated Children’s Centre. There may also be opportunity through other State Government funding programs such as the Regional Infrastructure Fund.
- The site is owned by Council, is unencumbered, has good capacity to accommodate a medium to large scale facility, and has scope for future expansion if required.
- The site is visible, has reasonable and likely improving access to public transport, and is well positioned to support families living north of Dawsons Street and in the North Sale precinct where significant residential development will occur over the next 10 years.
- There are minimal complexities with developing facilities on this site and consequently the facilities could be delivered in the short to medium term. This is key to responding to the increasing demand for childcare and kindergarten services.



**Priority Action 2:** Actively support and encourage St Johns Ambulance, Sale Scouts and Sale Senior Citizens to increase use of the buildings they lease from Council (the Stead Street Reserve Hall, Sale Scout Hall and Sale Senior Citizens Centre) with a focus upon exploring opportunities for shared use by:

- Sale Guides
- Users of the Gwen Webb Centre
- Gumnuts ELC Outside School Hours program
- Sale U3A.

As part of this, identify and invest in facility improvements to support the increased use.

In addition, opportunities to support increased use of Sale Memorial Hall (the main hall) should be considered. Specifically, it may be a suitable location for some of the activities which currently occur in the Gwen Webb Centre or for U3A programs.

### ***Key rationale***

- The facilities have good capacity to accommodate additional use.
- Both St Johns Ambulance and Sale Scouts are supportive of encouraging increased use of the facilities, and the proposed additional activities are complementary to the existing activities occurring in the facilities. It is acknowledged Sale Seniors Group is reluctant to share the management of the Senior Citizens building, but the location and condition of the building, and the moderate level of use means this building could accommodate a higher level of activity than it currently does.
- Each of these organisations are either looking for a new space to deliver their activities (Sale U3A and Gumnuts ELC) or will need to find alternate accommodation because of the deteriorating condition of the buildings they currently use (Sale Guides and users of the Gwen Webb Centre). In addition, if a community hub is developed on the Market Street site, Sale Guides and users of the Gwen Webb Centre will need an alternate location.
- Working proactively to provide alternate accommodation for the Sale Guides and users of the Gwen Webb Centre, will be beneficial to the process of developing a community hub on the Market Street site, as proposed in priority action 3.
- While the specific infrastructure changes that may be required to the Stead Street Reserve Hall and Scout Hall to support the additional use will need further investigation, the investment required will be moderate compared with developing additional facilities. It is noted, Council has been investigating the infrastructure changes required to the Sale Senior Citizens Centre to support use by Sale U3A.
- Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc. are very supportive of encouraging increased use of the main hall and would welcome the opportunity to support activities which need alternate accommodation.

**Priority Action 3:** Develop a Community Hub supporting activities such as early years services (kindergarten), neighbourhood house, and broader community activity at the Market Street site (Option 3a). The development of this hub is based upon the premise there is a consolidation of community facilities.

The service and facility mix recommended for the site is:

- 58 – 68 licensed places for kindergarten, long day childcare or occasional care. The number and mix of program spaces will depend upon the services offered from the site. If kindergarten is offered and / or childcare for children aged 3 – 5 years, rooms need to be configured to support a child staff ratio of 1 to 4. If childcare is offered for children aged under 3 years, rooms need to be configured to support a child staff ratio of 1 to 4. This could for example look like:
  - 2 rooms x 22 children (for over 3s) and 2 rooms x 12 children (for under 3s)
  - 1 room x 33 children (for over 3s) and 3 rooms x 12 children (for under 3's).
- Programming, office, and storage space to support the activities of the Sale Neighbourhood House
- Multipurpose consulting suits, meeting and activity rooms with connected outdoor space to support general community use as well as the activities of the Kindergarten and Neighbourhood House.

### **Key rationale**

- This option will increase the capacity of the early years' service system by between 30 and 40 licensed places and depending upon the service configuration will help respond to the increasing demand for childcare, and / or the growing demand for kindergarten driven by State Government policy changes.
- Sale Neighbourhood House is located in a facility which is aging and in poor condition, has very poor accessibility and is poorly located. The relocation of the Neighbourhood House to more appropriate facilities is acknowledged as being a priority.
- The provision of multipurpose community activity spaces will support the activities of the neighbourhood house and kindergarten, along with providing space for broader community use.
- The site is owned by Council and has good capacity to accommodate a medium to large scale facility. While there is some complexity with developing facilities on this site i.e. it is a fill site, Council has experience in managing developments on sites of this nature.
- The site is visible, has reasonable access to public transport, and is well positioned to support families living in the surrounding residential area.
- The poor and deteriorating condition of the existing community infrastructure on the site is well known and documented and Council will need to address this in the medium term.
- As a new building, with increased licensed capacity will help to position this project to be eligible to apply for funding of up to \$1.5 million through the Building Blocks Grants for a new Early Learning Facility. There may also be opportunity through other State Government funding programs such as the Regional Infrastructure Fund.

**Priority Action 4:** Consider the need to retain the site housing the Kath Foley Centre and refurbish the facilities to support the long-term need for additional kindergarten capacity in response to the proposed introduction of 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten. This priority action should be reviewed following Council’s decision about the development of community hubs incorporating early years services, and as further information becomes available from the Victorian State Government.

**Key rationale**

- This option will increase the capacity of the early years’ service system to respond to the growing demand for kindergarten, driven by State Government policy changes.
- By refurbishing and reconfiguring the building, there is opportunity to have spaces aligned better with staff child ratios and to provide a facility which is fit for purpose to support contemporary service delivery.
- The site is owned by Council and already operates as an early year’s site.
- While there is some traffic congestion associated with the site, this is likely to improve over time if Sale College is relocated to the North Sale precinct.

**It should be noted,** before proceeding with each priority action, consideration must be given to any changes that have occurred in the service system. This is particularly important in relation to the early years space, where additional service providers or changes in government policy can have a significant impact in a short space of time.

### 10.1 Map of Gibsons Road, Market Street and Gumnuts ELC sites

On the following page a map is provided showing the location of:

- The Gibsons Road site (No. 22)
- The Market Street site (No. 1)
- Gumnuts ELC (No. 9).

The sites are all located within a 2-kilometer radius of each other. A 1km radius is shown for each site to provide an indication of the immediate geographic catchment the community hubs proposed at Gibsons Road and Market Street, are likely to serve. It should be noted the catchment for both hubs will be larger than this.



## COMMUNITY FACILITIES SALE



## 11.0 Funding options and capital costs

### 11.1 Funding options

The following funding opportunities to support the priority actions have been identified:

Priority Action	Potential funding Source	Potential funding available	Requirements
<b>Priority Action 1:</b> Gibsons Road Community Hub	Victorian State Govt. Building Blocks Grants – Capacity Building Stream – Integrated Children’s Centre	Up to \$2 million with possible opportunity for additional funding	<p>Must demonstrate additional capacity will be provided for 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten.</p> <p>The facility must be new and must accommodate funded 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten, long daycare, MCH, early years allied health and family support services.</p> <p>Must provide flexible multipurpose spaces to support early years activities and wider community use.</p>
	Victorian State Govt. Regional Infrastructure Fund	\$20,000 to \$3 million (based upon the last round)	<p>Focused upon projects that stimulate economic and regional activity, recovery from Covid-19 and other economic challenges.</p> <p>Provide multi-purpose infrastructure, suitable and accessible for a wide range of business and community groups.</p>
<b>Priority Action 3:</b> Market Street Community Hub	Victorian State Govt. Building Blocks Grants – Capacity Building Stream – New Early Learning Centre	Up to \$1.5 million with possible opportunity for additional funding	<p>The facility must be new and must accommodate funded 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten.</p> <p>May also include the delivery of other services e.g. long daycare, MCH or playgroups.</p>
	Victorian State Govt. Regional Infrastructure Fund	\$20,000 to \$3 million (based upon the last round)	<p>Focused upon projects that stimulate economic and regional activity, recovery from Covid-19 and other economic challenges.</p> <p>Provide multi-purpose infrastructure, suitable and accessible for a wide range of business and community groups.</p>



## 11.2 Capital costs

While it is outside the scope of this Study to provide capital costs for the priority actions, a high-level indication of likely costs is outlined below, based upon other like projects.

<b>Priority Action 1:</b> Gibsons Road Community Hub	Between \$4 and \$7 million  The cost will depend upon a number of factors including the scale of the facility, whether the building is modular, the cost involved with bringing services and access to the site, and how rapidly building costs escalate.
<b>Priority Action 2:</b> Increased use of Stead Street Reserve Hall and Sale Scout Hall	This is unknown and will depend upon the scale / extent of changes required to support additional use of these facilities. As a guide, it is estimated between \$200,000 and \$500,000 may be needed per building.
<b>Priority Action 3:</b> Market Street Community Hub	Between \$3 and \$5 million  The cost will depend upon a number of factors including the scale of the facility, whether the building is modular, the cost to address the fill conditions of the site, and how rapidly building costs escalate.

## 12.0 Management models

### Priority Action 1: Gibsons Road Community Hub

There are several options Council could consider for management of a Community Hub at the Gibsons Road site. Broadly these are:

- A decentralised approach where different parts of the building are managed by different organisations through lease or license arrangements.
- A centralised approach where a lead tenant has overall responsibility for managing the building.
- A centralised approach where Council is responsible for managing the building.

Note: It is important to acknowledge Council will need to conduct a transparent process in making spaces available to services and organisations permanently located in the hub.

Approach	Description	Considerations
Decentralised approach	<p>Under this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each organisation with a permanent presence in the building would have a lease or license agreement for the use and management of the defined space e.g. the early years provider, Central Gippsland Health and / or other early years support services.</li> <li>• Council would be responsible for managing the booking and use of the multipurpose activity and meeting spaces.</li> </ul>	<p>Co-operation between services and activities would be limited to adhoc interactions.</p> <p>Council may be able to manage bookings and use within existing resources, but this would need to be confirmed.</p> <p>This model lacks a co-ordinated approach to activating the building and supporting and encouraging services and organisations to work together.</p>
Centralised approach with a lead tenant responsible managing the building	<p>Under this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council would appoint a lead tenant who would be responsible for managing and activating the building e.g. the early years provider.</li> </ul>	<p>Whether an organisation has the capacity or interest to be the lead tenant and assume responsibility for co-ordinating activation and use of the building.</p> <p>A lead tenant would need to understand their responsibility is wider than the service they deliver and be clear about Council's expectations and aspirations for the facility to be used for a wide range of activities and supports.</p>



Centralised approach with Council responsible for managing the building	<p>Under this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council would take a co-ordinating role in managing the use and activation of the building.</li> </ul>	<p>It is likely a facility / building co-ordination role many be required, and this would have resourcing impacts for Council.</p> <p>This approach would allow Council to drive a co-ordinated approach to the use and activation of the Hub, supporting the different services and users to work together, facilitating activities and programs and maximizing use of the spaces.</p>
---	---	---

### **Priority Action 2:** Increased use of Stead Street Reserve Hall and Sale Scout Hall

Both facilities are currently managed by the tenant organisations who have long-term lease agreements with Council for use of the buildings. i.e. St Johns Ambulance (Stead Street) and Scouts Australia (Scout Hall). The proposal to increase use of these buildings:

- Is unlikely to trigger a need for any change to the lease agreement with the Scouts, as the organisation is active and strong and has the capacity to manage additional or increased use.
- May trigger a need to review the current lease arrangement for the Stead Street Reserve Hall with St Johns Ambulance. The capacity of the local group to manage increased use of the building is not strong, as membership numbers are small, and many members are aging. It may be preferable for another organisation who has good capacity to be the lead tenant, or for Council to support bookings and use of the facility outside the times it is required by Saint Johns Ambulance.

### **Priority Action 3:** Market Street Community Hub

There are two key options Council could consider for management of a Community Hub at the Market site. Broadly these are:

- A decentralised approach where different parts of the building are managed by different organisations through lease or license arrangements.
- A centralised approach where a lead tenant has overall responsibility for managing the building.

Note: It is important to acknowledge Council will need to conduct a transparent process in making spaces available to services and organisations permanently located in the hub.

Approach	Description	Considerations
Decentralised approach	<p>Under this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each organisation with a permanent presence in the building would have a lease or license agreement for the use and management of the defined space e.g. the early years provider.</li> </ul>	<p>Co-operation between services and activities would be limited to adhoc interactions.</p> <p>Council may be able to manage bookings and use within existing resources, but this would need to be confirmed.</p> <p>This model lacks a co-ordinated approach to activating the building and supporting and encouraging services and organisations to work together.</p>
Centralised approach with a lead tenant responsible managing the building	<p>Under this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council would appoint a lead tenant who would be responsible for managing and activating the building.</li> </ul>	<p>Whether an organisation has the capacity or interest to be the lead tenant and assume responsibility for co-ordinating activation and use of the building.</p> <p>A lead tenant would need to understand their responsibility is wider than the service they deliver and be clear about Council's expectations and aspirations for the facility to be used for a wide range of activities and supports.</p>

## 13.0 Outstanding issues requiring further consideration

Several issues remain outstanding from this Study and this section seeks to outline these, as well as indicate a likely future pathway for undertaking further work or resolving them. In broad terms they are:

- Responding to the recent Victorian State Government announcement to increase 4-year-old kindergarten from 15 to 30 hours through a staged approach between 2025 and 2032.
- The future role and viability of single room kindergarten facilities in Sale and District.
- The impact of interventions in addressing the current and future shortfall in licensed places to support childcare and kindergarten.

### 13.1 Responding to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten

Information from the State Government about the proposed introduction of 30 hours of funded 4-year-old kindergarten is currently very limited. Key existing information is:

- It will be based upon a model of children attending kindergarten 5 days per week, 6 hours per day, essentially aligned with school hours (9am – 3pm).
- It is proposed to roll out through a staged approach from 2025 with all 4-year-old children accessing 30 hours of kindergarten (or pre-prep) from 2032.

Under this model, a kindergarten room which can currently support 2 groups of 4-year-old kindergarten, will in future, only be able to support 1 group. This will likely require a range of different responses unique to the circumstances of each community, to reach a position where there is enough capacity in the service system for all 4-year-old children in Sale and District to access 30 hours of kindergarten. Potential options are likely to include:

- Expanding existing single room kindergartens to dual or triple room services. There is minimal opportunity for this approach in Sale and District.
- Implementing a campus approach to delivering kindergarten where 3-year-old operates from one location and 4-year-old from another location.
- Developing facilities on school sites where 4-year-old kindergarten can operate from. This approach is one the State Government has already identified as being a priority.
- Developing new kindergarten facilities to support specific geographic catchments e.g. the North Sale precinct.
- Repurposing community infrastructure to support the delivery of kindergarten. One such option could be to retain the site where the Kath Foley Childrens Centre and Kindergarten operates from, completely refurbishing the building and operating kindergarten services only. A key consideration of this option is whether this would contribute effectively to providing a network of early years services catering for different geographic catchments.

Once more information becomes available from the State Government, further planning work will be required to determine the best approach in Wellington Shire.

### 13.2 Single room kindergartens

Sale and District has a number of single room kindergarten facilities including:

- Gwenfa Hampton - owned by Sale Combined Kindergarten
- East Sale - on Department of Defence land
- St Columba's - on Uniting VicTas land
- Sale North - on Council land
- Longford - on Crown land
- Wurruk – on Crown land (Department of Education and Training).

Future considerations for each of these sites are as follows:

<b>Gwenfa Hampton</b>	<p>The site is owned by Sale Combined Kindergartens who have confirmed they do not wish to sell the site. The building is aging and not fit for purpose.</p> <p>Its proximity to Hyland Community Kindergarten (the Market Street site) means there may be opportunity for a campus approach with 3-year-old kindergarten offered at Gwenfa Hampton and a combination of 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten offered at Market Street.</p> <p>Further discussions between Sale Combined Kindergartens and Council are needed to explore the future role of the kinder and addressing the age and condition of the building.</p>
<b>East Sale</b>	<p>This site has space for either a small expansion to align service capacity with staff child ratios (i.e. increase from 30 to 33 licensed places) or possibly a larger expansion to include a second program room.</p> <p>Discussions are needed between Uniting VicTas (the service provider), and the Department of Defence to ascertain their interest and / or support for expanding the service.</p>
<b>St Columba's</b>	<p>This site may have capacity for a small expansion to align service capacity with staff child ratios (i.e. increase from 30 to 33 licensed places) but will likely require access to additional land surrounding the Uniting Church.</p> <p>The move to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten means Uniting VicTas will need to look for opportunities to develop an additional program room or implement a campus model with East Sale. Practically, a campus approach is likely to be difficult because of the distance between the 2 services.</p> <p>The potential vacation of the Sale College Macalister Street site in the future, may provide an opportunity for either relocating St Columba's Kindergarten or having an additional 1 or 2 program rooms on this site.</p>
<b>Sale North</b>	<p>This site may have capacity for a small expansion to increase service capacity (i.e. from 24 to 27/28), but there is insufficient land available to align service capacity with staff child ratios (i.e. 33 places).</p>

	Future considerations for this site could include selling the site and relocating the service elsewhere with increased capacity i.e. 2 program rooms. Operating a campus approach with a new additional kindergarten provided in the North sale development precinct.
<b>Longford</b>	<p>The kindergarten is located in Longford Recreation Reserve where the tennis facilities are currently being expanded. This means there is no opportunity for the kindergarten to be expanded on the site.</p> <p>The service has a licensed capacity of 23 children and typically has 13 to 14 children 3- and 4-year-old children each year (26 – 28 children in total).</p> <p>The move to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten, is likely to mean an additional program room is needed. Locating this with the Primary School and taking a campus approach to 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten is the most likely solution in Longford.</p>
<b>Wurruk</b>	Wurruk Kindergarten operates well below its licensed capacity i.e. 10 – 15 children whereas the licensed capacity of the service is 33 children. This means it is likely the service will have sufficient capacity to respond to the move to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten, by continuing to operate an integrated 3- and 4-year-old program.

### 13.3 The impact of interventions

The demand analysis has identified there is a current and future gap in the provision of licensed places to support childcare and kindergarten, with data from service providers showing the current gap lies in the childcare space. While further analysis of future demand will be required to understand the impact of moving to 30 hours of 4-year-old kindergarten,

- there is estimated to be a current gap of 98 licensed places, which will decrease to 43 in 2023 as 66 additional places come online at Gumnuts ELC. The provision gap will then increase again reaching 148 by 2031 and 278 by 2041. This estimate is based upon the provision of 1 licensed place for every 2 children aged 0 – 5 years and means that for every licensed place **not available**, 2 children are missing out on access to services.

#### **Potential interventions**

There are a number of potential interventions which may help to address the provision gap. Some of which involve Council e.g. Gibsons Road and Market Street Community Hubs, and some of which involve not for profit providers such as Uniting VicTas or private childcare providers. Potential interventions include:

- The implementation of Priority Action 1: Gibsons Road Community Hub and Priority Action 2: Market Street Community Hub will provide an additional 160 licensed places – 122 at Gibsons Road and 38 at Market Street.
- The development of a privately operated childcare service. It is understood a planning permit has been issued for a 114-place private childcare centre in Sale however, this has not progressed any further due to VicRoads requirements and the need to consolidate 2 or more

parcels of land. While the private sector can be a key early year's provider, the conditions need to be right for a new service to be established.

- The addition of a second program room at East Sale Kindergarten providing 33 licensed places.
- The establishment of kindergarten services from Longford Primary School with capacity for 22 places. This assumes the existing kindergarten is retained at Longford Recreation Reserve.
- Small expansions to the existing program rooms at East Sale, St Columba's, and North Sale, providing an additional 10 licensed places.

Combined, these interventions could deliver up to 339 additional licensed places. Table 13.1 below demonstrates the potential impact of these interventions. Note: the data is based upon the assumption of 114 additional places with the private childcare operator.

This is an example only and is intended to demonstrate how larger or smaller, quicker, or slower interventions will help address the provision gap. Based on this example:

- The existing gap in provision will be addressed through the establishment of the Gibsons Road site and subsequently by the continued interventions of the Market Street site, the private childcare operator and further interventions with the standalone kindergartens.

		Impact if no intervention			Impact with intervention			
Year	Pop. forecast 0 – 5 yrs	Places required	Total existing licensed places	Est. gap in licensed places	Additional places	Total licensed places with intervention	Revised est. gap in licensed places	Intervention description
2022	1,454	727	629	-98		629	-98	
2023	1,477	738	629	-109	66	695	-43.5	Additional places come online at Gumnuts ELC
2024	1,508	754	629	-125		695	-59	
2025	1,538	769	629	-140	122	817	48	Gibsons Road Community Hub opens
2026	1,568	784	629	-155		817	33	
2027	1,596	798	629	-169	38	855	57	Market Street Community Hub opens
2028	1,621	810	629	-181		855	44.5	
2029	1,640	820	629	-191	114	969	149	Private childcare centre opens
2031	1,686	843	629	-214		969	126	
2032	1,713	856	629	-227	33	1,002	145.5	Additional program room at East Sale
2036	1,820	910	629	-281	32	1,034	124	Small additions to single room kinders and 4-year-old kindergarten at Longford Primary School
2041	1947	973	629	-344		1,034	60.5	
<b>Total</b>					<b>405</b>			

Table 13.1: Impact of potential interventions upon provision gaps



## 14.0 Next steps

The recommended next steps for progressing the findings of this Feasibility Study are:

1. For Council to consider the findings of the Feasibility Study and determine their preferred approach to addressing increasing demand for early years services, and aging infrastructure supporting early years and community services in Sale and District.
2. Engage with relevant stakeholder organisations to share the findings of the Feasibility Study, outline Council's preferred approach, and the next steps to be taken.
3. Engage with the community to share the findings of the Feasibility Study, outline Council's preferred approach, and share information about the steps and timelines involved with delivering the proposed Community Hubs including kindergarten and childcare infrastructure.
4. Develop a clear strategy for funding the Community Hubs including but not limited to the State Government Building Blocks program and Regional Infrastructure Fund, potential land sales and Council's capital program. Advocate to the State Government for funding to support the development of Community Hubs.
5. Consider the implications of the State Government proposal to increase 4-year-old kindergarten from 15 to 30 hours by 2032.

## Appendix A: Strategic and policy context – detailed information

### State and Federal Policy Context

There are numerous policies, plans, discussion papers, and charters that underpin international, Federal and State government approaches to supporting children, young people and their families. Internationally, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)* sets out the basic human rights of a child no matter where they live, setting standards in health care, education, legal, civil and social services. These principles are consistent with the direction and policy frameworks accepted by the Federal and State Governments in Australia.

Over the past decade State and Federal governments have shown an understanding of the importance of investing in children and families through:

- The establishment of national standards for the provision of early years services.
- A commitment to universal access to 15 hours of kindergarten for four-year-old children.
- A focus upon supporting vulnerable children and families.<sup>2</sup>

In Victoria, additional relevant State Government policy initiatives include:

- Improving access to kindergarten for children and families including the establishment of kindergarten central registration and enrolment systems (CRES), the introduction of School Readiness Funding, the continued investment in fee subsidies, Early Start Kindergarten and Kindergarten Inclusion Support funding for children and families with additional needs or experiencing disadvantage.
- Providing universal access to funded 3-year-old kindergarten from 2022. Under this policy all children in Victoria will be able to access 5 hours of funded 3-year-old kindergarten each week from 2022 and by 2029 this will have increased to 15 hours per week. This policy initiative along with continued population growth, will significantly increase the demand for kindergarten services and infrastructure in Wellington over the next 7 years.

### Key Council Plans and Strategies

There are several relevant plans and documents to inform this project. There are a number of key Council plans and strategies that guide and support Council's overall role and program and other specific plans and documents that inform community infrastructure planning and provision and in particular, infrastructure that support early years services.

### Wellington 2031 Community Vision

Wellington Shire Council has facilitated the development of a long-term **Community Vision** for the municipality. The original Community Vision was developed in 2008 and has been subsequently reviewed to reflect current challenges and aspirations. The Wellington 2031 Community Vision is: *Happy people, healthy environment and thriving communities.*

---

<sup>2</sup> Victorian State Government, Education State,  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/vision.aspx>

The Community Vision has five themes which capture the community's aspiration for the future. They are:

1. Communities.
2. Services and infrastructure.
3. Natural environment.
4. Lifelong learning.
5. Economy.

The themes of most relevance to this project are 1. Communities and 2. Services and Infrastructure. These themes confirm priorities to promote a strong sense of community belonging and ensure the built environment and services support the community. Council's strategic response to the Vision is outlined in the Council Plan every four years.

Key issues raised by community members, State Government, local organisations and data sources support the themes.

Theme	Key issues and community aspiration
1 Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a friendly, inclusive and welcoming Shire where people feel safe at home and in their community.</li> <li>• Provide infrastructure that enables and encourages healthy and active lifestyles.</li> </ul>
2 Services and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further develop networks and community hubs for people to find out more about the services available. Ensure access to a broad range of Healthcare services, community events and services for young people and waste recycling.</li> <li>• Improve diversity of retail outlets, an array of sporting clubs, varied leisure and entertainment options and a range of cultural pursuits that make Wellington attractive for people of all ages to visit, work and or live.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate services, facilities and infrastructure in seasonal towns.</li> <li>• Improve infrastructure to enable services and initiatives to support Wellington's increasing ageing population including striving to be an "Age Friendly" Shire.</li> </ul>
3 Natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage Natural Environment assets recognising their impact on health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
4 Lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve people's access to opportunities to challenge and extend their thinking, promote independence, stimulate ideas, further develop leadership skills and lead meaningful lives.</li> <li>• Provide formal and informal lifelong learning opportunities for personal development and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
5 Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve public transport links to ensure businesses have easy access to markets whilst enhancing the livability / attractiveness of the region for current and new residents.</li> </ul>

### **Council Plan 2021-25**

The **Council Plan 2021-2025** sets out Council's strategic direction including how it will deliver on its actions to achieve the Community Vision. The Council Plan responds to five priority areas which reflect priorities and emerging opportunities facing the municipality:

- Climate change.
- Economy in transition.
- Partnering with Gunaikurnai.
- Sustainable population growth and housing choice.
- Better access to key services.

The Plan is structured around four strategic directions to inform strategies and actions. The strategic directions and outcomes relevant to this project are shown below:

1. **Environment and Climate Change** - We are a climate resilient community with sustainable practices and places.
2. **Economy and Sustainable Growth** - We are a growing, sustainable and prosperous community.
3. **Liveability and Wellbeing** - We are a liveable, engaged, and supported community.

#### Outcomes

- 3.1 An inclusive, diverse, and resilient community.
- 3.2 An actively engaged community.
- 3.3 Opportunities for everyone to work, learn, create, play, and share.
- 3.4 Improved access to and participation in support services focusing on those who are vulnerable including: young children, youth, people living with a disability and seniors.
- 3.5 Services and Infrastructure - We are a connected community with access to the services and infrastructure we require.

#### Outcomes

- 4.2 Services deliver operating efficiencies and best value.
- 4.3 Well planned and sustainable towns, facilities, and infrastructure that service community need.

Projects and initiatives identified in the Council Plan, and which are relevant to this project include:

- Develop Early Learning Facilities with a focus on multi-use spaces.
- Yarram and Sale Early Years Feasibility Study.
- Respond to future Early Years' service gaps, particularly in childcare and kindergarten in major towns.
- Investigate opportunities for alternative cost-effective models for delivery of quality cultural, leisure and recreation facilities and programs that encourage access and participation across our community.

- Investigate gaps in service provision for vulnerable community members, review options and determine Council's future role.
- Provide services that are easy to use, valued by the community and give best overall worth back to Council and the community.
- Plan for the key growth communities across the shire from a 'place-based' approach holistically considering the built environment, community, and economic directions concurrently.
- Support volunteer facility managers whose work contributes to improved community mental and physical health by activating, upgrading, and repurposing existing multi-use sporting, cultural and social facilities in preference to establishing new.

### ***Healthy Wellington 2017-21 – Building Wellbeing Together***

**Healthy Wellington 2017-21** is Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Plan was developed in partnership by Council, health promotion funded agencies and Wellington Primary Care Partnership. It was developed through a highly consultative process and is a broad strategic plan aimed to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for the Wellington community.

The Plan identified key health priorities for the Shire and these are listed below:

Priority Area 1. Improve mental wellbeing

Priority Area 2. Gender equality

Priority Area 3. Improve healthy living

Priority Area 3. Address climate change.

The Plan has a number of elements relevant to reviewing ageing community infrastructure in Sale and District. A key element of the Plan is, it is acknowledged that only through collaboration and partnerships will meaningful improvements be achieved. The Plan has a strong emphasis on improving social connections and inclusion with community infrastructure identified as being a key element of that. Specifically this means striving to make changes to the physical environment to remove barriers, promote and support the health of the community.

### ***Wellington Community Early Years Plan 2017-2021***

The Wellington Community Early Years Plan guides the planning and provision of services, programs and facilities for families with children aged from birth to eight years of age. It aims to facilitate the coordination of early years services that respond to local new and emerging issues, and ensure the health, learning and developmental needs of children are met.

Local government plays an important role in the development, implementation and review of Early Years Plans as part of their planning and service provision requirements. However, the Plan also guides and supports all child and family services providers across the municipality. It is through this shared vision and coordination, all service providers, working together, can achieve sustainable outcomes for families and children.

The Wellington Community Early Years Plan was developed through a highly engaging process. An

extensive program of consultation was undertaken to capture the views and opinions of all stakeholders. Consultations were facilitated with children, families and child and family service providers including policy makers.

The Plan has four key goals to guide future action.

1. Collaborative partnerships
2. Friendly environments
3. Strong connected communities
4. Ongoing monitor and review.

### ***Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2021***

The Early Years Infrastructure Plan was prepared to assess the capacity of existing early years infrastructure in Wellington Shire to support the delivery of early years services that are responsive to the needs of children and families.

Early years infrastructure is acknowledged as playing a critical role in supporting the delivery of services, programs and resources for children and families in the Shire. Typically, services and programs delivered from these facilities and spaces include:

- Kindergarten
- Childcare (occasional, long daycare, outside school hours care)
- MCH services
- Immunisation
- Community and supported playgroups
- Toy libraries
- Parent or family support.

There are also many facilities and spaces which are universally accessible to the whole community and are highly valued by children and families. They are often also some of the places they use the most.

The Early Years Infrastructure Plan explores the current and future early years needs of children and families across seven planning districts. A total of 33 different buildings were identified as hosting early years services and supports in Wellington Shire.

The demand analysis examined the need for early years infrastructure for each of the seven planning districts with key findings relevant to this Study being:

- A lack of access to childcare is a key constraint particularly in Heyfield, Maffra, Stratford, Rosedale, Sale and Yarram. A range of strategies can be explored to respond to this such as providing wrap around care with kindergarten, establishing outside school hours care programs, working in partnership with private providers to establish childcare services, or facilitating the development of childcare facilities and services.
- Communities where the co-location and integration of early years infrastructure should be actively pursued are Heyfield, Maffra and Sale. The integration of MCH services with other early years services is a key priority.

The strategic framework will support future decision making in relation to the provision, management, activation, and investment in early years infrastructure. This is to be guided by:

- Guiding Principles
- Priority Areas
- Project Prioritisation Model.

Detailed recommendations are set out in five priority areas:

- Child and family friendly communities
- Contemporary and integrated services and facilities
- Flexible responses to meet community need
- Advocacy and partnerships
- Equitable access.

### ***Wellington Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan (KISP), DET 2020***

The Wellington Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan (KISP) was prepared in 2020. The KISP estimates the growth in demand for kindergarten having regard for the introduction of funded 3-year-old kindergarten. The KISP contains estimates of future kindergarten supply of, and demand for, three- and 4-year-old kindergarten places against existing enrolment capacity.

The KISP notes that continued residential growth is expected in the Shire with a substantial portion occurring in Sale and District. Demographic data reveals there are communities within Sale experiencing disadvantage, and that significant population growth in the 0 to 8 years range is anticipated. Combined with the roll out of funded 3-year-old kindergarten this will increase the demand for early years services.

### ***Community Infrastructure Plan 2021***

The Community Infrastructure Plan was prepared to identify the current and future community infrastructure needs across the Shire. The Plan is structured around seven planning districts which generally reflect communities of interest.

The Community Infrastructure Plan considered 179 community infrastructure buildings and facilities. While public halls and sporting clubrooms make up the vast majority of community infrastructure as defined by this Plan, a number of other facilities have been considered because they have been identified by the community as places where key community activities and programs occur. This includes stadiums, visitor information centres and other facilities such as former Council depot sites, historic buildings, surf clubs, heated swimming pools etc.

Wellington Shire has an extensive array of community infrastructure and, in some cases, provides more infrastructure than the community may need. There are many opportunities to change or improve infrastructure to respond more effectively to community needs and increase the use and activation of community places and spaces. Key opportunities involve:



- Improving the functionality and accessibility of buildings to ensure they are fit for purpose and are inclusive for all members of the community.
- Consolidating community infrastructure to central locations.
- Talking with local communities about the future use and management of community infrastructure, particularly where communities no longer have the capacity and interest to support it.

Community infrastructure is mostly managed by community-based committees of management in Wellington Shire and consequently there is significant variability in the way they are managed and activated. Volunteer resourcing capacity, the extent of linkages to local communities, and the size and capacity of communities are all key influences. The ability of committees of management to understand and respond to community needs and to plan for the future is highly variable.

The strategic framework will support future decision making in relation to the provision, management, activation, and investment in community infrastructure. This is to be guided by:

- Guiding Principles
- Priority Areas
- Facility Hierarchy
- Risk and Maintenance Subsidy Model
- Project Prioritisation Model.

Detailed recommendations are set out in five priority areas:

- Inclusive community places
- Sustainable communities
- Community capacity and engagement
- Advocacy and partnerships
- Diverse settings and experiences.

### ***Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-22***

The Access and Inclusion Plan was developed as a whole of community approach to eliminating discrimination in Council and achieving ongoing improvement in facilitating access and equitable participation in community life by community members.

The Plan sets out priorities described in six outcomes and a detailed action plan supports the outcomes.

The Plan outlines actions to increase the accessibility of services, programs and facilities to ensure equitable use and social inclusion. Advocacy is also planned around public transport within and connecting to the Shire including timetabling and infrastructure. Accessible and inclusive information is also identified as being important to addressing barriers to access. Ensuring appropriate signage and displays in Council buildings is seen as being important.

Council's commitment to access and inclusion will need to be reflected in the Feasibility Study with factors such as location, access and functionality having to be considered.

### ***Community Facilities Framework 2016***

The Community Facilities Framework sets out guiding principles, objectives and a facilities hierarchy to provide clarity in relation to Council's role and priorities for community facilities. The Framework is intended to support Council decision making regarding investment in infrastructure, maintenance funding and the ongoing sustainability of facilities.

The Framework sets out a number of guiding principles to support consistent decision making. The guiding principles provide direction for planning activities in relation to community facilities and are listed below:

- Community engagement;
- Community benefit and wellbeing;
- Access, inclusion and equity;
- Planning and development; and
- Heritage.

The document provides further detail to support the principles to explain the dimensions of the proposed approach to the provision of community facilities. The Framework emphasises the commitment to community involvement in planning for, designing, operating and managing community facilities. It also emphasises the role community facilities play in supporting community wellbeing, and foreshadows co-location and integrated service provision as objectives.

A commitment to the provision of facilities that meet community needs reflects an awareness that community needs and use of community facilities changes over time.

The Framework also outlines the support provided by Council to community facilities and a broad facility hierarchy model which reflects the location of existing infrastructure, surrounding population and extent of use envisaged.

### ***Community Managed Facilities Strategy 2020-25***

Council developed the Community Managed Facilities Strategy to guide Council in supporting its volunteers, and the facilities they operate to meet community needs.

The Strategy has four themes:

1. Social Management
2. Responsible Management
3. Sustainable Management
4. Economic Management

The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Provide facilities that meet the needs of current and future populations.
- Ensure facilities help support positive health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Maximise the ability for volunteer committees of management to manage, maintain and govern community facilities to agreed standards and feel supported by Council in fulfilling this role.

The Strategy recognises the importance of community managed facilities to community life and places emphasis on the twin challenges of investing in built infrastructure and also community capacity building so that the community has the necessary leadership and skills to confidently manage community facilities on Council's behalf.

The Strategy seek to harness community energy and make best use of scarce Council resources. This will be achieved by continuing Council's strong planning focus, prioritised capital programs, skill development, information provision, volunteer recognition and support.

## Appendix B: Detailed analysis of each option

### Detailed Options Analysis: Increasing use of existing community use facilities

Option 1a: Stead Street Reserve Hall	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	The site is owned by Council and leased to St Johns Ambulance through a long-term lease arrangement.
<b>Extent of existing use</b>	Receives low levels of use. The building is accessed by St Johns on a Saturday usually to obtain equipment for an event or activity, along with Tuesday and Thursday evenings for training (less so in Winter). St Johns also hire out the facility, but this occurs infrequently.
<b>Willingness to share / increase use</b>	St Johns Ambulance (head office) have confirmed they are very supportive of the building being used more actively. They would welcome opportunities for the hall to be shared by one or more community organisations, particularly ones complementary to St Johns' activities and may provide an avenue for recruiting volunteers for St Johns Ambulance.
<b>Complementary uses</b>	<p><b>Sale Guides</b> who will need to re-locate from their existing facility due to the age, and deteriorating condition of the building they are located in (Market Street site). The Guides operate 2 nights per week, require access to both indoor and outdoor space and may be able to act as a facility manager.</p> <p><b>Gwen Webb Centre users</b> who will need to re-locate from their existing facility due to the age, and deteriorating condition of the building they are located in (Market Street site). Most use occurs during the day and has a light touch or impact on the building i.e. not loud or messy activities and with a small to moderate number of participants.</p> <p><b>U3A</b> who are actively seeking a new home for their activities. Council has been working with U3A and Sale Senior Citizens to facilitate shared use of the Sale Senior Citizens building and this remains the preference. U3A are an active group, who usually require access to multiple spaces to facilitate different activities. This hall could provide for much, but possibly not all their requirements.</p>
<b>Facility changes or improvements required</b>	<p>The building is sound and generally in good condition, but the fit out is dated and will require refurbishment works including updated amenities.</p> <p>St Johns Ambulance has very specific requirements for the secure storage of medications, equipment, and vehicles. These must be provided for and be accessible to St Johns at all times. Additional storage facilities may be required to support St Johns Ambulance and other building users.</p>
<b>Management / tenancy impacts</b>	<p>The local St Johns Ambulance group is aging and may not have the ability to manage a wide range of uses occurring in the building. Options available to respond to this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate shared use by only one or two other complementary organisations, minimising the need for co-ordination of building use, and encouraging the users to work together.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change the tenancy agreement for the building, with bookings and management of the space to become Council's responsibility or the responsibility of another complementary user e.g. Guides.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 1b: Sale Scout Hall</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Council owned and leased to Sale Scouts who have a long-term lease on the building / site - estimated 20 years remaining.
<b>Extent of existing use</b>	Receives moderate use. The building / site is used by the Scouts 4 evenings per week. They also hire out the building to other community organisations and for private functions.
<b>Willingness to share / increase use</b>	<p>Both the local Scout Group and property area of Scouts Australia have confirmed they are supportive of the building / site being more actively used, provided the Scouting activities are not compromised.</p> <p>The Scout Group is currently in discussions with Gumnuts ELC about the potential for Gumnuts to operate their Outside School Hours program (OSH) from the Scouts building. The most recent discussions are based upon a 12 month trial period, but this is yet to be confirmed.</p>
<b>Complementary uses</b>	<p><b>Gumnuts ELC</b> is currently seeking an alternate location for their OSH program as the school they are located at has indicated the tenancy agreement will conclude at the end of 2022. A key challenge of Gumnuts operating the program from the Scouts facility is the OSH program operating until 6pm each weekday when scouting activities start as early as 5.30pm.</p> <p><b>Sale Guides</b> who will need to re-locate from their existing facility due to the age, and deteriorating condition of the building they are located in (Market Street site). The Guides operate 2 nights per week and require access to both indoor and outdoor space. Key challenges of the Guides operating from the Scouts facility is the timetabling of Scouting and Guide activities, and the ability of the Guides to pay for access to the building.</p> <p><b>Gwen Webb Centre users</b> who will need to re-locate from their existing facility due to the age, and deteriorating condition of the building they are located in (Market Street site). Most use occurs during the day and has a light touch or impact on the building i.e. not loud or messy activities and with a small to moderate number of participants.</p>
<b>Facility changes or improvements required</b>	The Scouts have indicated additional storage facilities will be required to support shared use, particularly if the Guides were to share use of the site. This could incorporate a smaller program or activity space to support Guide activities, but there is limited evidence to support the need for additional space and the focus should be upon looking at ways to timetable programs to be complementary.
<b>Management / tenancy impacts</b>	It is expected Scouts would remain as the lead tenant and sublet or license use of the facilities to Gumnuts ELC or Sale Guides.

<b>Option 1c: Sale Memorial Hall</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	<p>Main Hall – owned and managed by Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc.</p> <p>East wing – owned by Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc and leased to a local charity organisation for 15 years (9 years remaining).</p> <p>West wing – owned by the RSL and leased to various organisations.</p>
<b>Extent of existing use</b>	Main hall receives very low use. East wing is largely used for storage by the charity organisation who leases the space. Extent of use the west wing receives is unknown.
<b>Willingness to share / increase use</b>	Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc. is very keen to increase use of the facilities and is very supportive of having more casual, regular-, short-, medium- or long-term use by community organisations. The current lease arrangements for the east wing means additional use is likely to be concentrated in the main hall, but the committee is very open to looking at options for increasing use of the east wing.
<b>Complementary uses</b>	<p><b>Gwen Webb Centre users</b> who will need to re-locate from their existing facility due to the age, and deteriorating condition of the building they are located in (Market Street site). Most use occurs during the day and has a light touch or impact on the building i.e. not loud or messy activities and with a small to moderate number of participants.</p> <p><b>U3A</b> who are actively seeking a new home for their activities. Council has been working with U3A and Sale Senior Citizens to facilitate shared use of the Sale Senior Citizens building and this remains the preference. U3A are an active group, who usually require access to multiple spaces to facilitate different activities. The main hall could provide for some, but possibly not all of their requirements. If access to the east or west wing could be facilitated, this could be a suitable location for U3A activities.</p>
<b>Facility changes or improvements required</b>	<p>Storage facilities or lockers would be required to support users of the Gwen Webb Centre to use the main hall. These users currently have storage lockers at the Gwen Webb Centre.</p> <p>Significant repair and upgrade works are required to the east and west wings of the precinct. The spaces available in these wings are in poor condition, but their size and configuration could support a wide range of activities and uses. Works are also required to the main hall, and these are being progressively undertaken with support from Council.</p>
<b>Management / tenancy impacts</b>	The primary change required to management of the facilities is related to the lease agreement for the east wing. The current lease agreement with the charity organisation means it is difficult to facilitate improvement works and additional use of the building.

<b>Option 1d: Sale Senior Citizens</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Owned by Council and leased to Sale Senior Citizens Group.
<b>Extent of existing use</b>	Receives moderate use twice weekly with a large attendance on Mondays and Fridays. On other days community organisations hire the rooms regularly with ad hoc function hires from time to time.
<b>Willingness to share / increase use</b>	Sale Seniors Centre are supportive of having increased use of their premises and would welcome more casual, regular-, short-, medium- or long-term use by community organisations provided the Seniors activities are not compromised. It is acknowledged that Sale Senior Citizens Group are reluctant to share the management of the facility.
<b>Complementary uses</b>	<p><b>U3A</b> who are actively seeking a new home for their activities. As noted previously, Council has been working with U3A and Sale Senior Citizens to facilitate shared use of the Sale Senior Citizens building, and this remains the preference, it is well positioned in the central business area, and it has excellent capacity to accommodate complementary activities like U3A.</p> <p><b>Gwen Webb Centre users</b> who will need to re-locate from their existing facility due to the age, and deteriorating condition of the building they are located in (Market Street site). Most use occurs during the day and has a light touch or impact on the building i.e. not loud or messy activities and with a small to moderate number of participants.</p>
<b>Facility changes or improvements required</b>	<p>Council has been working with the Seniors Group and U3A to identify changes or additions required to the facilities to support use by U3A.</p> <p>The only likely change needed to facilitate use of the Senior Citizens Centre by users of the Gwen Webb Centre are storage units or lockers.</p>
<b>Management / tenancy impacts</b>	It would be beneficial to change the tenancy agreement for the building, with bookings and management of the space to become Council's responsibility or the responsibility of another complementary user. It is acknowledged there may be some difficulty achieving given the current lease arrangement with the Seniors group and their resistance to change.



**Detailed Options Analysis: Refurbishing existing early years and community facilities**

<b>Option 2a: Hyland Community Kindergarten</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	The site is owned by Council and leased to Sale Combined Kindergartens.
<b>Condition and configuration</b>	<p>The building is aging, accessibility is poor, and it has major maintenance issues because the land is unstable (old fill site) and the building is sinking. Condition audit estimates \$40,000 of work required but this does not address the roof alignment or footing issues prompted by the instability of the site.</p> <p>The licensed capacity of the building does not effectively support staff child ratios.</p>
<b>Extent of changes or improvement to facilities</b>	The refurbishment this building will require is extensive and the fundamental instability of the site must be addressed before any works to the building can be considered. It is difficult to see how refurbishment of the building will provide an effective long-term solution.
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located South of Raglan Street and East of Princes Highway. While it is in a residential area, Market Street is reasonably busy and the site has a pre-existing history supporting community activity increasing its visibility in the community. It is also a short distance from public transport on Raglan Street MacArthur Street and Princes Highway.</p> <p>The site is located 300m from Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten (a single room facility owned by Sale Combined Kindergartens), 1.3km south of Sale Neighbourhood House, 1.5km from Kath Foley Children's Centre, and 2km from Gumnuts ELC and the Sale Scout Hall.</p> <p>The proximity to the Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten raises the opportunity of consolidating the two single room kindergartens to the one site, but this could not be achieved with only a refurbishment of the building.</p>
<b>Complexity</b>	In addition to the ground conditions for this site, the primary complexity the need to relocate the service to another site while refurbishment works are undertaken.
<b>Support for refurbishment and this site</b>	Sale Combined Kindergartens is supportive of continuing to operate a service from this site but is very concerned about the age and poor condition of the building. They are supportive of a community hub being developed on this site.
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	Refurbishing this facility will not provide any additional licensed places and therefore will not help to address the unmet demand for childcare and growing demand for kindergarten.

<b>Option 2b: Kath Foley Centre</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Council owned land / building which is leased to Kath Foley Children’s Centre and Kindergarten Inc.
<b>Condition and configuration</b>	<p>The building is old, in poor condition and has poor accessibility and functionality. It is not fit for purpose to support contemporary service delivery. Condition audit estimates around \$18,000 worth of work in the short term is required.</p> <p>The licensed capacity of the service does not support child staff ratios and significant reconfiguration of both internal and external spaces would be required to deliver an effective long-term solution. It is very likely the licensed capacity of the service would need to be reduced to deliver contemporary fit for purpose spaces.</p>
<b>Extent of changes or improvement to facilities</b>	The extent of refurbishment and reconfiguration works required both indoors and outdoors is extensive. Reconfiguration will include reducing the licensed capacity of the building to deliver a contemporary fit for purpose early years site.
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located in a very busy precinct close to close to Guthridge Primary School, Sale College Guthridge Campus and St Thomas Primary School, the site experiences significant traffic congestion, safety and parking issues.</p> <p>It is 600m from Sale North Kindergarten, 750m from Roseberry House Early Learning Centre, 1.4km from Gumnuts ELC, 1.5km from Hyland Community Kindergarten.</p> <p>The close proximity to other early years services suggests there may be benefit in the service being located elsewhere to support a different catchment in Sale.</p>
<b>Complexity</b>	The primary complexity of refurbishing this site is the need to relocate the service to another site while refurbishment works take place. Alternatively, the service could be closed during the refurbishment which will mean 63 licensed places are not available to the community during this time. Because a large portion of these places are used for childcare, this would further exacerbate the shortage of childcare places in Sale and District.
<b>Support for this site</b>	The Committee of Management for Kath Foley Children’s Centre and Kindergarten Inc. have indicated a preference to relocate away from this site.
<b>Responsive to early years’ service demand</b>	<p>It is very likely the licensed capacity of the service would need to be reduced to deliver contemporary fit for purpose spaces. In addition, the potential closure of the service while refurbishment works occur would exacerbate the already significant shortage of childcare places in Sale and District.</p> <p>While refurbishment of this buildings will not respond to early years’ service demand in the short term, it could be considered for the medium to long term i.e. in addition to community / early years hub facilities in other locations.</p>

<b>Option 2c: Sale Guide Hall and Gwen Webb Centre</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	The site is owned by Council and use of the Gwen Webb Centre is managed by Council. Sale Guides own their building, but not the land.
<b>Condition and configuration</b>	<p>The Guide building has accessibility constraints, is in poor condition, and needs maintenance because the land is unstable (old fill site) and the building is sinking. A condition audit estimates \$55,000 of work required, but this does not address the roof alignment or footing issues prompted by the instability of the site.</p> <p>The Gwen Webb Centre is old and in very poor condition. The amenities, kitchen facilities and access into the building are poor. The land is unstable (old fill site) and the building is sinking. A condition audit estimates around \$65,000 worth of work is required but this does not address the roof alignment or footing issues prompted by the instability of the site.</p>
<b>Extent of changes or improvement to facilities</b>	The refurbishment these buildings will require is extensive and the fundamental instability of the site must be addressed before any works to the buildings can be considered. It is difficult to see how refurbishment of these buildings will provide an effective long-term solution.
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located South of Raglan Street and East of Princes Highway. While it is in a residential area, Market Street is reasonably busy, and the site has a pre-existing history supporting community activity increasing its visibility in the community. It is also a short distance from public transport on Raglan Street MacArthur Street and Princes Highway.</p> <p>The site is located 300m from Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten (a single room facility owned by Sale Combined Kindergartens), 1.3km south of Sale Neighbourhood House, 1.5km from Kath Foley Centre, and 2km from Gumnuts ELC and the Sale Scout Hall.</p>
<b>Complexity</b>	The primary complexity of these buildings are the existing ground conditions and age of the buildings. The activities occurring in the buildings will need to be relocated to another site while refurbishment works are undertaken, but there are good options and alternatives for this.
<b>Support for this site</b>	The Guides would like to remain on the site but understand significant works are required to the building. The users of the Gwen Webb Centre are primarily focused upon having access to a space which supports their activities and are happy to be located elsewhere.
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	Refurbishment of these buildings will not respond to early years' service demand in any way.

<b>Option 2d: Sale Neighbourhood House</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Council owned and leased to Sale Neighbourhood House Inc.
<b>Condition and configuration</b>	<p>The building has very poor accessibility and is worn and aged with much of the building fabric, fit out and services needing to be updated, repaired, or replaced.</p> <p>Condition audit estimates around \$60,000 worth of work required.</p>
<b>Extent of changes or improvement to facilities</b>	The refurbishment these buildings will require is extensive. Given the accessibility constraints of the building and the site, it is difficult to see how refurbishment of these buildings will provide an effective long-term solution.
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located in a small residential street, the accessibility of this site is poor. It has little to no visibility, poor car parking and limited access to public transport.</p> <p>The site is 500m from Kath Foley Centre and 1.1km from Hyland Community Kindergarten.</p>
<b>Complexity</b>	The primary complexity of refurbishing this site is the need to relocate the service to another site while refurbishment works take place, but there are some options and alternatives for this. Alternatively, the service could be closed during the refurbishment, but this would be very detrimental to the ongoing viability of the Neighbourhood House.
<b>Support for this site</b>	There is no support for the Neighbourhood House to remain on this site.
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	Refurbishment of these buildings will not in any way respond to early years' service demand.

## Detailed Options Analysis: Establishing a community hub/s in key locations to support early years services and broader community activity

<b>Option 2a: Market Street Site – 114 to 118 Market Street</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	The site is owned by Council and use of the Gwen Webb Centre is managed by Council. Sale Combined Kindergartens has a lease for Hyland Community Kindergarten and Sale Guides own their building.
<b>Planning controls</b>	General residential zone (GRZ) and Design and development overlay (DDO) The planning controls support development of a community hub on this site, particularly as it is currently used for community activity.
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	3 buildings are currently located on the site including Hyland Community Kindergarten (single program room), Gwen Webb Centre (community hall) and Sale Guides (community hall).  Services and activities supported from the site are 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten, arts and cultural activities, community meetings, private functions and the Sale Guide Group.  Users accessing facilities on the site understand significant upgrade or change is required because of the poor condition of facilities and the site conditions.
<b>Location</b>	Located South of Raglan Street and East of Princes Highway. While it is in a residential area, Market Street is reasonably busy, and the site has a pre-existing history supporting community activity increasing its visibility in the community. It is also a short distance from public transport on Raglan Street, MacArthur Street and Princes Highway.  The site is located 300m from Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten (a single room facility owned by Sale Combined Kindergartens), 1.3km south of Sale Neighbourhood House, 1.5km from Kath Foley Children's Centre, and 2km from Gumnuts ELC and the Sale Scout Hall.  The proximity to the Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten raises the opportunity of consolidating the two single room kindergartens to the one site.
<b>Site capacity</b>	<b>3,850m<sup>2</sup></b>  There may also be capacity to access land at the rear of the site (facing Dundas Street), perhaps for car parking. There is estimated to be 800m <sup>2</sup> of land that could support car parking.  The site can accommodate a multi-room kindergarten, Sale Neighbourhood House and multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces. The suggested mix of services / facilities is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 58 - 66 licensed places for kindergarten, long day childcare or occasional care. The number and mix of program spaces will depend upon the services offered from the site. If kindergarten is offered and / or childcare for children aged 3 – 5 years, rooms need to be configured to support a child staff ratio of 1 to 4. If childcare is offered for children aged under 3 years, rooms need to be configured</li> </ul>

	<p>to support a child staff ratio of 1 to 4. This could for example look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 2 rooms x 22 children (for over 3s) and 2 rooms x 12 children (for under 3s)</li> <li>– 1 room x 33 children (for over 3s) and 3 rooms x 12 children (for under 3's).</li> <li>• Programming, office, and storage space to support the activities of the Sale Neighbourhood House</li> <li>• Multipurpose consulting suits, meeting and activity rooms with connected outdoor space to support general community use as well as the activities of the Kindergarten and Neighbourhood House.</li> </ul> <p>It is estimated the early years facilities requires between 880 and 1,200m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and a further 450m for car parking. 810m<sup>2</sup> will provide the minimum indoor and outdoor space required, while 1,200m<sup>2</sup> allows for a more generous provision of indoor and outdoor programming space, and other spaces within the building.</p> <p>It is estimated the Sale Neighbourhood House and multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces will require around 900m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and 900m<sup>2</sup> for car parking.</p> <p>In total, it is estimated the spatial requirements are:</p> <p>1,050m<sup>2</sup> indoor space  1,050m<sup>2</sup> outdoor space  1,350m<sup>2</sup> car parking  <b>3,450m<sup>2</sup> Total</b></p>
<b>Complexity</b>	<p>There are no or minimal complexities in relation to land ownership or tenure for this site. Council owns the parcel of land, directly manages use of the Gwen Webb Centre and has a lease agreement with Sale Combined Kindergartens who operate Hyland Community Kindergarten. The Sale Guides own the building they operate from, and while they would prefer to remain on the current site, two alternate locations where they could be accommodated have been identified (see section 6.1).</p> <p>The main complexity of this site is that it is a fill site and stablisation works will be required for any building works. An engineering report for the site indicates footings need to be a minimum of 3.6m deep. Council has experience in managing developments on sites of this nature. While it will increase the cost of the project, it remains a site on which community facilities can be accommodated.</p>
<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	<p>Sale Combined Kindergartens (SKC) who operate both Hyland Community Kindergarten and Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten is supportive of redeveloping the kindergarten facility on the site. One proposal discussed with SCK was for them to sell the Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten site, investing the funds into the development of a dual room facility on the</p>

	<p>Market Street site. SCK have advised they do not wish to sell the Gwenfa Hampton Kindergarten site.</p> <p>Sale Neighbourhood House has indicated they are supportive of the Market Street site as a possible future location for the Neighbourhood House.</p>
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	<p>This option will increase the capacity of the early years' service system by 30 - 40 licensed places for kindergarten, long day childcare or occasional care.</p>



<b>Option 2b: Gibsons Road site – behind Gippsland Regional Sports Complex</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Owned by Council
<b>Planning controls</b>	<p>Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ), and Airport Environs Overlay (AEO), Design and Development Overlay (DDO). Partially impacted by Designated Bushfire Prone Area.</p> <p>The planning controls support development of a community hub on this site.</p>
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	The site has no facilities located on it nor is it used for any other purpose.
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located behind the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex on the highly visible Gibsons Road. It is close to existing residential areas north of Dawsons Road and will also be close to the North Sale residential development, proposed to occur over the next 10 years.</p> <p>It is 3.2km northeast of from Gumnuts ELC and 2.8km northwest of the Market Street site which means collectively, the 3 sites are in different catchments and can support different parts of the community.</p> <p>Public transport connections are limited in the North Sale area but will increase as the North Sale residential development occurs, and if Sale College moves to the North Sale precinct.</p>
<b>Site capacity</b>	<p><b>7,430m<sup>2</sup></b></p> <p>The site has capacity to accommodate an early year's hub incorporating childcare, kindergarten and family support services, along with multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces.</p> <p>The suggest mix of early years services and community facilities is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 122 place childcare and kindergarten service with 56 places for children aged under 3 years and 66 places for 3 – 5-year-olds.</li> <li>• Multiple consulting suites which could accommodate early intervention and family support programs either through an outreach model or by being based in the centre.</li> <li>• Multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces with connected outdoor space to support general community use as well as the activities of the early childhood services.</li> </ul> <p>It is estimated the childcare and kindergarten service requires between 1,900 and 2,600m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and a further 800m for car parking. 1,950m<sup>2</sup> will provide the minimum indoor and outdoor space required, while 2,600m<sup>2</sup> allows for a more generous provision of indoor and outdoor programming space, and other spaces within the building.</p> <p>It is estimated the multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces and connected outdoor space will require around 630m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and 900m<sup>2</sup> for car parking.</p>

	<p>In total, it is estimated the spatial requirements are:</p> <p>1,750m<sup>2</sup> indoor space</p> <p>1,500m<sup>2</sup> outdoor space</p> <p>1,400m<sup>2</sup> car parking</p> <p><b>4,600m<sup>2</sup> Total</b></p>
<b>Complexity</b>	<p>There are no complexities in relation to land ownership or tenure for this site. Council owns the parcel of land, and it is currently not in use and is not developed.</p> <p>The main complexity of this site is potential additional costs associated with bringing services to the site. There may also be road access issues to be considered because of the proximity to Cobains Road and as Gibsons Road becomes busier.</p>
<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	<p>The Kath Foley Centre committee has provided written confirmation this is their preferred site for relocation of the service. They are attracted to the site because it is Council owned and unencumbered. It is also a short distance from their current location and while it is further away from the centre of Sale, the location will support families who move into the North Sale development precinct.</p> <p>The Central Gippsland Health MCH team and the pediatric team have both expressed interest in being a part of an early year's hub, whether through an outreach model or being permanently based in the hub. Their interest is strong because of the benefits which come from co-locating services and supports for families in easy to access community locations.</p>
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	<p>This option will increase the capacity of the early years' service system by 122 licensed places. Specifically, it will increase the number of licensed places for children aged under 3 years by 56 places and over 3 by 66 places.</p> <p>This will help to address both the high demand for childcare places for children aged under 3 years and respond to the growing demand for kindergarten driven by State Government policy changes.</p>

<b>Option 2c: North Sale Precinct – opposite Gippsland Regional Sports Complex</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Owned by Council
<b>Planning controls</b>	Public Use Zone (PUZ6), Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and Designated Bushfire Prone Area  The planning controls support development of a community hub on this site.
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	The site has no facilities located on it nor is it used for any other purpose.
<b>Location</b>	Located opposite the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex on Cobains Road. It be close to / part of the North Sale residential development, proposed to occur over the next 10 years. If Sale College is relocated to the North Sale precinct, it will be located alongside / close to the school.  It is estimated to be around 3.5km northeast of from Gumnuts ELC and 3km northwest of the Market Street site which means collectively, the 3 sites are in different catchments and can support different parts of the community.  Public transport connections are limited in the North Sale area but will increase as the North Sale residential development occurs, and if Sale College moves to the North Sale precinct.
<b>Site capacity</b>	<p>The total size of the site is 271,253m<sup>2</sup>. The specific location (and consequently the size of the parcel of land) of a community hub within the North Sale Precinct will be subject to the decision about Sale College moving to the precinct. any community facility would likely be co-located with infrastructure servicing the sporting facilities in the Western section.</p> <p>Broadly, the precinct has capacity to accommodate an early year's hub incorporating childcare, kindergarten and family support services, along with multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces.</p> <p>The suggest mix of early years services and community facilities is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 122 place childcare and kindergarten service with 56 places for children aged under 3 years and 66 places for 3 – 5-year-olds.</li> <li>• Multiple consulting suites which could accommodate early intervention and family support programs either through an outreach model or by being based in the centre.</li> <li>• Multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces with connected outdoor space to support general community use as well as the activities of the early childhood services.</li> </ul> <p>It is estimated the childcare and kindergarten service requires between 1,900 and 2,600m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and a further 800m for car parking. 1,900m<sup>2</sup> will provide the minimum indoor and outdoor space required, while 2,600m<sup>2</sup> allows for a more generous provision of indoor and outdoor programming space, and other spaces within the building.</p>

	<p>It is estimated the multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces and connected outdoor space will require around 600m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and 600m<sup>2</sup> for car parking.</p> <p>In total, it is estimated the spatial requirements are:</p> <p>1,750m<sup>2</sup> indoor space  1,500m<sup>2</sup> outdoor space  1,400m<sup>2</sup> car parking  <b>4,600m<sup>2</sup> Total</b></p>
<b>Complexity</b>	<p>There are no complexities for land ownership or tenure for this site. Council owns the land, and it is currently not in use / developed. However, there are a number of other complexities which means it will take some years for development of a community hub to occur in this precinct. Key factors are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant planning work still needs to be completed about the release of land for the North Sale development.</li> <li>• Whether Sale College will relocate to the precinct. While a feasibility study has been undertaken to assess whether to relocate to the site or consolidate the Macalister campus to the Guthridge Campus, a decision has not yet been made by the State Government about a preferred option. Also the timing of the decision and the allocation of funding to pursue the preferred option remains unclear. In the meantime, Council is not able progress planning for other community facilities in the precinct until this decision is clear.</li> <li>• Services are not currently provided to the site and will be a significant additional cost to the project.</li> </ul>
<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	<p>The Kath Foley Centre committee has provided written confirmation they would prefer to be located on the Gibsons Road site. They have two concerns about the North Sale precinct with the key one being how long it will take to develop community facilities in the precinct. Their second concern is about the site lacking visibility and the distance from established residential areas.</p> <p>Central Gippsland Health MCH team and the pediatric team have both expressed interest in being a part of an early years hub, whether through an outreach model or being permanently based in the hub. Their interest is strong because of the benefits which come from co-locating services and supports for families in easy to access community locations.</p>
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	<p>This option will increase the capacity of the early years' service system by 122 licensed places. Specifically, it will increase the number of licensed places for children aged under 3 years by 56 places and over 66 by 32 places.</p> <p>While this will help to address both the high demand for childcare places for children aged under 3 years and respond to the growing demand for kindergarten driven by State Government policy changes, the length of time it is likely to take to deliver a community hub on this site, is a drawback given current issues about the demand for childcare.</p>

<b>Option 2d: Sale Memorial Hall</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	<p>Main Hall – owned and managed by Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc.</p> <p>East wing – owned by Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc and leased to a local charity organisation for 15 years (9 years remaining).</p> <p>West wing – owned by the RSL and leased to various organisations.</p>
<b>Planning controls</b>	<p>Public Use Zone (PUZ6), Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and Heritage Overlay (HO).</p> <p>The planning controls support development of a community hub on this site, particularly as it is currently used for community activity.</p>
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	<p>The site consists of the main hall, an east wing building and a west wing building. The main hall receives very low use, the east wing is largely used for storage by the charity organisation who leases the space, and the extent of use the west wing receives is unknown.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located in the centre of the Sale CBD, it is located opposite Sale College Macalister Campus, 300m from Sale Senior Citizens building, 500m from the Port of Sale and library, 850m from the Marley Street Community Hub, 1.2km from the Market Street site and 2.6km southwest of Sale Neighbourhood House. It has excellent access to public transport.</p>
<b>Site capacity</b>	<p>The total size of the site is unclear, but the east wing which presents the most significant opportunity to establish a community hub type function has a footprint of 333m<sup>2</sup>, but the available space is close to double this as the building is over 2 levels.</p> <p>The main hall also provides complementary space which supports community activities and meetings.</p> <p>The east wing site could accommodate activities from the Sale Neighbourhood House and multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces; however, the site cannot provide outdoor space which forms an important part of the Neighbourhood House.</p> <p>The suggested mix of services / facilities is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programming, office, and storage space to support the activities of the Sale Neighbourhood House</li> <li>• Multipurpose consulting suits, meeting and activity rooms (without connected outdoor space) to support general community use as well as the activities of the Neighbourhood House.</li> </ul> <p>It is estimated the Sale Neighbourhood House and multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces will require around <b>500m<sup>2</sup></b> of indoor space and it is assumed car parking can be accommodated in the surrounding streets.</p>

<b>Complexity</b>	<p>There are several complexities with accommodating a community hub on this site including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of outdoor space to support the activities of the Neighbourhood House and general community use.</li> <li>• The east wing is currently leased to a charity organisation for 15 years and there are 9 years remaining on the lease. This means the opportunity to establish the east wing as a community hub has a very lengthy timeframe.</li> <li>• The building condition is very poor and deteriorating, and the committee has limited financial resources to address these issues. A key concern is how significantly the building condition will deteriorate during the remainder of the lease, and the extent of work required to the building at the conclusion of the lease.</li> </ul>
<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	<p>Sale Memorial Hall and Civic Centre Inc. is very keen to increase use of the facilities and is very supportive of having more casual, regular-, short-, medium- or long-term use by community organisations. The current lease arrangements for the east wing means additional use is likely to be concentrated in the main hall, but the committee is very open to looking at options for increasing use of the east wing.</p> <p>Sale Neighbourhood House has indicated they are attracted to idea of being located more centrally in Sale, but acknowledge the constraints of the Sale Memorial Hall site, particularly the lack of outdoor space and the lengthy timeframe likely to be involved in securing access to the site.</p>
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	<p>This option will not address the increasing demand for early years services.</p>

<b>Option 2e: Sale College Macalister Campus</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Crown land managed by the Department of Education and Training i.e. it is currently the senior campus for Sale College.
<b>Planning controls</b>	<p>Public Use Zone Education (PUZ2), Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and Heritage Overlay (HO).</p> <p>The planning controls support development of a community hub on this site, although it may need to be rezoned to another form of public use.</p>
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	The site is currently the senior campus for Sale College. There are extensive buildings on the site which could be repurposed.
<b>Location</b>	Located in the centre of the Sale CBD, it is located opposite Sale Memorial Hall, 300m from Sale Senior Citizens building, 500m from the Port of Sale and library, 850m from the Marley Street Community Hub, 1.2km from the Market Street site and 2.6km southwest of Sale Neighbourhood House. It has excellent access to public transport.
<b>Site capacity</b>	<p>14,742m<sup>2</sup></p> <p>The site has extensive capacity to accommodate early years services and broader community activity by repurposing existing infrastructure. Services, uses and spaces it could accommodate are kindergarten and childcare, early childhood and family support services, Sale Neighbourhood House, multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces, space to support Sale U3A, Sale Guides, and users of the Gwen Webb Centre.</p> <p>A recommended mix of services and facilities has not been identified for this site because the complexities of accessing the site are extensive, and it could only be considered as a viable option for the long term.</p>
<b>Complexity</b>	<p>The complexities associated with this site centre upon whether Sale College will be consolidated to one site either at the Guthridge Campus or the North Sale precinct.</p> <p>While a feasibility study has been undertaken to assess whether to relocate to the North Sale Precinct or consolidate the Macalister Street campus to the Guthridge Campus, a decision has not yet been made by the State Government about which option to pursue. Further, the timing of the decision and the allocation of funding to pursue the preferred option remains unclear, and is likely to take several years to resolve.</p> <p>It is also unclear whether the State Government would consider making all or part of the Macalister Campus available for community use or would instead seek to sell the site for commercial or residential development to provide funding to support the development of a new Sale College campus.</p> <p>It is likely to be 5 – 10 years before these issues can be resolved and clarity provided about the availability of the site for community use.</p>



<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	<p>Sale Neighbourhood House has indicated they are attracted to idea of being located more centrally in Sale, but have a strong preference to move to a new location in the short term because of the facility and accessibility constraints of their current site.</p> <p>Uniting VicTas have indicated very preliminary interest in relocating and expanding St Columba’s Kindergarten to the site, but they also acknowledge the lengthy timeframe and uncertainty about future access to the site.</p>
<b>Responsive to early years’ service demand</b>	<p>This option may in the long term increase the capacity of the early years’ service system, but the long lead time for this site means it is not able to address the immediate and growing demand for childcare and kindergarten.</p>

<b>Option 2f: Sale College Guthridge Campus</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Crown land managed by the Department of Education and Training i.e. it is currently the senior campus for Sale College.
<b>Planning controls</b>	Public Use Zone Education (PUZ2), Design and Development Overlay (DDO).  The planning controls support development of a community hub on this site, although it may need to be rezoned to another form of public use.
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	The site is currently the junior campus for Sale College. There are extensive buildings on the site which could be repurposed.
<b>Location</b>	Located alongside St Thomas and Guthridge primary schools, 650m from Kath Foley Centre, 800m northwest of Gumnuts ELC, just over 1km east of Sale Neighbourhood House, 1.4km southeast of Gwenfa Hampton Kinder and 2km southwest of Hyland Kinder, Gwen Webb Centre and Guides.  Locating kindergarten and / or childcare facilities at this site would place 3 early years services within very close proximity of each other.  The site has good access to public transport.
<b>Site capacity</b>	69,601m <sup>2</sup>  The site has extensive capacity to accommodate early years services and broader community activity by repurposing existing infrastructure. Services, uses and spaces it could accommodate kindergarten and childcare facilities, early childhood and family support services, Sale Neighbourhood House, multipurpose community meeting and activity spaces, space to support Sale U3A, Sale Guides, and users of the Gwen Webb Centre.  A recommended mix of services and facilities has not been identified for this site because the complexities of accessing the site are extensive, and it could only be considered as a viable option for the long term.
<b>Complexity</b>	The complexities associated with this site centre upon whether Sale College will be consolidated to one site either at the Guthridge Campus or the North Sale precinct.  While a feasibility study has been undertaken to assess whether to relocate to the North Sale Precinct or consolidate the Macalister Street campus to the Guthridge Campus, a decision has not yet been made by the State Government about which option to pursue. Further, the timing of the decision and the allocation of funding to pursue the preferred option remains unclear, and is likely to take several years to resolve.  It is also unclear whether the State Government would consider making all or part of the Guthridge Campus available for community use or would instead seek to sell the site for residential development to provide funding to support the development of a new Sale College campus.  It is likely to be 5 – 10 years before these issues can be resolved and clarity provided about the availability of the site for community use.

<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	None of the community organisations or service providers consulted with as part of developing this Feasibility Study indicated a preference for or strong interest in this site, largely because of the lengthy timeframes involved and concerns about existing traffic congestion in the precinct.
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	This option may in the long term increase the capacity of the early years' service system, but the long lead time for this site means it is not able to address the immediate and growing demand for childcare and kindergarten.

<b>Option 2g: Dawson Street site</b>	
<b>Ownership / tenancy</b>	Privately owned. Council would need to acquire the land.
<b>Planning controls</b>	<p>Farming Zone (FZ), Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and Public Acquisition Overlay (PAQ3).</p> <p>Changes to the planning controls would be required to support development of a community hub on this site.</p>
<b>Existing facilities / use</b>	The site has no facilities located on it nor is it used for any other purpose.
<b>Location</b>	<p>Located directly behind Gumnuts ELC and the Sale Scouts. It is 950m from Kath Foley Centre, 1.4km from Sale Neighbourhood House and 2.4km from Gwen Webb Centre. It abuts farming and industrial land and is on the edge of the established residential area.</p> <p>Its close proximity to Gumnut ELC means that it is not ideally placed to support early years services. It is much more effective to locate services so they can support different geographic catchments across Sale. This site would cluster two large scale early years services very close to each other and effectively in competition with each other.</p> <p>Public transport connections are poor and this means the site is poorly located to support the activities of the Sale Neighbourhood House, as many participants rely upon public transport.</p>
<b>Site capacity</b>	<p>23,676m<sup>2</sup> although it remains unclear how much of the site is likely to be acquired by Council through the public acquisition overlay. Council has been considering reducing the overlay to one third of the site, but this remains unclear.</p> <p>The site has the capacity to accommodate an early years and community hub, incorporating childcare, kindergarten and family support services, Sale Neighbourhood House and multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces.</p> <p>The possible mix of services / facilities could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 122 place childcare and kindergarten service) with 56 places for children aged under 3 years and 66 places for 3 – 5-year-olds.</li> <li>• Multiple consulting suites which could accommodate early intervention and family support programs either through an outreach model or by being based in the centre.</li> <li>• Programming, office, and storage space to support the activities of the Sale Neighbourhood House</li> <li>• Multipurpose meeting and activity rooms with connected outdoor space to support general community use as well as the activities of early childhood services and Sale Neighbourhood House.</li> </ul>

	<p>It is estimated the childcare and kindergarten service requires between 1,900 and 2,600m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and a further 800m for car parking. 1,900m<sup>2</sup> will provide the minimum indoor and outdoor space required, while 2,600m<sup>2</sup> allows for a more generous provision of indoor and outdoor programming space, and other spaces within the building.</p> <p>It is estimated the Sale Neighbourhood House and multipurpose community activity and meeting spaces will require around 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor space and 900m<sup>2</sup> for car parking.</p> <p>In total, it is estimated the spatial requirements are:</p> <p>1,900m<sup>2</sup> indoor space  1,700m<sup>2</sup> outdoor space  1,700m<sup>2</sup> car parking  <b>5,300m<sup>2</sup> Total</b></p>
<b>Complexity</b>	<p>The primary complexity of this site is uncertainty about the future public acquisition overlay for the site and the need to rezone the land in order to accommodate community facilities or activity. Both issues mean the development of facilities can only be realized in the medium to long term.</p> <p>Services are not currently provided to the site and will be an additional cost to the project.</p>
<b>Support from community organisations or service providers</b>	<p>None of the community organisations or service providers consulted with as part of developing this Feasibility Study indicated any interest in this site, largely because of the location and lengthy timeframes involved.</p>
<b>Responsive to early years' service demand</b>	<p>This option will increase the capacity of the early years' service system by 122 licensed places. Specifically, it will increase the number of licensed places for children aged under 3 years by 56 places and over 3 by 66 places.</p> <p>While this will help to address both the high demand for childcare places for children aged under 3 years and respond to the growing demand for kindergarten driven by State Government policy changes, the length of time it is likely to take to deliver a community hub on this site, is a drawback given current issues about the demand for childcare.</p>