



DELIVERING OUR VALLEY



INFRASTRUCTURE

Derwent Valley
COUNCIL

This document details Council's immediate and urgent infrastructure advocacy priorities.

The Derwent Valley is changing rapidly with significant growth and development placing pressure on infrastructure and services, with growing community expectations.

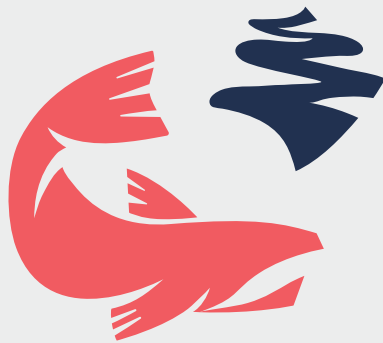
This document describes the work Council has identified and needs to complete to meet the changing needs of our community and deliver better services for current and future residents of the Derwent Valley.

These initiatives, plans and projects will better enable the community to transform from a regional municipality to one that is on the urban fringe with all the associated service levels and infrastructure required to meet its growing needs.

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Introduction



The Derwent Valley is one of the larger, sparsely populated municipality in Tasmania, with a land mass of 410,345 ha and an average population density of 0.03 persons per hectare. Over 60% of the land area is held in reserve or other parks, which constrains Council's ability to draw rates from this area. More than half of the total population (2022) exceeding 10,942 people, live in the main township of New Norfolk.

Our community has traditionally faced several challenges; a higher percentage of people aged over sixty, than the Greater Hobart area, yet a significant number of young families moving to the area with children aged between zero to eleven coming into the system, significantly lower educational attainment, a higher unemployment rate and generally lower individual weekly incomes 1.¹

The 2016 SEIFA Index of Disadvantage ranks the Derwent Valley as the 5th most disadvantaged community in Tasmania with an index score of 893.² The 2019 Brotherhood of St Laurence youth unemployment report, *Smashing the Avocado Debate*, notes that the southeast region of Tasmania, which excludes Hobart, but includes the Derwent Valley has a youth unemployment rate of 17.8%, nearly 2% higher than the state average, and the 6th highest in the Nation.

While these are no doubt challenges, there is also much to celebrate in the Derwent Valley.

Total investment over the next 10 years in the 'The Mills' Residential Subdivision and Central Precinct projects will be approximately \$500M and is already changing the look and feel of New Norfolk. The redevelopment of the remainder of the old Royal Derwent site includes the provision of a retirement village, hotel, private hospital complex, early learning centre and marketplace to help showcase Derwent Valley produce, attract visitors, and cater to local demand. In addition to this, the residential subdivision will add an additional 545 homes to the land already developed.

Complimenting this is the existing residential subdivision near Kensington Street, with almost 100 lots yet to be released, and applications for the development of over 270 new lots currently being considered by Council.

Over 75 multiple dwellings have been approved this year, including units being built by community housing providers. Other residential subdivisions are likely in the next few years, as demand for affordable land/housing in commutable proximity to Hobart continues to escalate. This demand will drive other commercial and health service requirements in New Norfolk and the valley.

Growth in the municipality is evidenced through the increase in planning applications and building approvals for the 2021/22 financial year. Planning approval numbers increased by 15% in comparison to the 2020/21 financial year (which were up 15% on the year before) with a total value of \$67.96M. 194 new lots were approved through subdivision applications with an additional 170 lots proposed in current applications. Ongoing release of staged subdivisions, as well as new residential subdivisions are likely in the next few years, as demand for affordable land/housing in commutable proximity to Hobart continues to escalate. This demand will drive other commercial and health service requirements in New Norfolk and the valley. This activity has led to building approvals being issued for over 120 new homes (including multiple dwellings) in 2021/22 which represents an increase of 44% on last year. Given the time lag between the planning process and building approvals, these heightened levels are expected to continue.

The reimagining and activation of the Willow Court Precinct will be a game changer for New Norfolk and the Derwent Valley. The partnerships between the Derwent Valley Council, private and community investors such as the New Norfolk Distillery, The Agrarian Kitchen Eatery, Corumbene Care, Salamanca Arts and Derwent Valley Arts will further transform the site, making it a destination for tourists and locals alike.

Our infrastructure also needs to keep pace with our growing community. We urgently need sporting infrastructure such as new ovals, lighting and change rooms to support the rapid expansion of sporting clubs and in particular, the growth in women's sport.

We have a changing landscape with constrained spaces for community groups across the municipality. Council currently has no community hub for any community groups to meet and gather.

Ultimately the road network, highways and public transport all require strong investment to enable movement to and from the Derwent Valley, particularly into New Norfolk.

Such improvements are essential if the livability we are becoming known for is to be realized to its full potential.

1. Information taken from 2016 Census Data available through Profile ID Department of State Growth subscription.

2. Ibid

Planning for the future

Civic Precinct Feasibility

The Circle at the top end of High Street New Norfolk could be re-imagined into a thriving community epicentre, incorporating a range of commercial and community activations.

This could incorporate multi-use community meeting rooms and space/s, a community garden, a business and innovation co-working hub, business offices and presentations spaces, a heritage centre, as well as transformation of the currently under-utilised and aged New Norfolk War Memorial Hall, into a Regional Performing Arts Centre.

With the growth of the visitor economy and the increase in new residents, there is a fundamental change in the Derwent Valley's economic drivers. There is increased growth in the arts community in the region, including the occupation of The Barracks at Willow Court to Salamanca Arts and Derwent Valley Arts, the ever-growing popularity of MONA, just 20 minutes' drive from New Norfolk.

This concept is supported by the 'Our Valley 2030' Strategic Plan. During consultations for the development of The Plan, it was clear that the community placed a high priority on developing the arts and heritage in the Derwent Valley.

The right level of investment will transform the centre and the Circle precinct into a showpiece for the region, adding to the vibrancy, livability and well-being of the community.

Council seeks a contribution towards developing detailed scoping and feasibility for the re-imagining of the precinct at an estimated cost \$100K

Estimated cost **\$100K**

Esplanade Refresh Master Plan

Within New Norfolk, the Esplanade is an important public recreational precinct, providing the main access to the river frontage along the Derwent River.

The Esplanade is a hub for activities and events including the rowing club, walking, playground, picnic, sightseeing, angling, dog exercise and training, informal games and sport such as lawn bowls. The precinct also contains a campground, facilities for youth and community groups and the town swimming pool.

Many events and gatherings are held here including the Derwent Valley Autumn Festival which utilises the whole of the Esplanade precinct attracting around 15,000 people to the site for the annual festivities.

A well-constructed walking track connects the Esplanade downstream to Millbrook Rise where there is a high-quality boat launching ramp and toilet facilities. The foreshore track also links to a track along the Lachlan River. Together these tracks and the footpaths in the town, creates multiple loop walking opportunities for visitors and residents.

A study to prepare and identify needs for improved infrastructure in this location is now required to meet the demands of this ever-increasing popular community active recreation precinct.

The Esplanade will soon have a new stage for events and Council is undertaking an Events Strategy to activate and unlock new events that will benefit the community in this prime location. The revitalisation study will assist with this complementary project.

Estimated cost **\$50K**



Heritage Tourism Rail

Council supports the Derwent Valley Rail Preservation Society (DVR) to regain access to the Derwent Valley Line. Working in partnership with the DVR, Council can see the economic and community benefits of heritage tourism rail in the Derwent Valley. To this end in 2019, the Council commissioned Pitt and Sherry to produce a thorough engineering assessment of the line.

The evaluation drew upon existing engineering data, observations, current condition reports, and DVR knowledge to deliver a comprehensive document with short, long and medium-term recommendations for the remedial works required.

The report estimated that the total line refurbishment required to allow a heritage diesel locomotive is in the vicinity of \$20M and provides staged refurbishment options. This would offer a unique and game-changing tourism experience through scenic landscapes of the Valley to the popular tourist attractions of Russell Falls and Mt Field and could be promoted in conjunction with the West Coast Wilderness Railway already in operation.

Council understands that the issue of access to the line to undertake upgrades has been tabled discussed in the Tasmanian parliament in October 2021.

What we need

\$20M

Council is supportive of DVR seeking funding of up to \$20M for the refurbishment of the Derwent Valley Line. In addition, following Public Liability Insurance cover being provided by the State Government, Council is now seeking to support the endeavors of the DVR to receive a lease over the line between Third Avenue and Back River Rd New Norfolk (a distance of around 500 metres) as the first tangible stage of development (subject to a State Growth survey of the line).

This lease will then allow DVR to undertake Variation of Rail Safety Accreditation. Once this has occurred DVR plans that over the following four years it will then seek extension of the leased area to Plenty and then National Park as further stages of the overall plan to reactivate the line.

Kensington Park

The Derwent Valley, and New Norfolk in particular has many sporting facilities at various stages of their lifecycle. In order to think ahead and plan for the future needs of the municipality Council intends to explore the feasibility of a high quality, multi-sport facility.

As part the review of the Derwent Valley Recreation Play and Open Space Strategy, Council requires support to undertake a needs analysis and feasibility study for the best use of the Kensington park trotting track. This work will connect with our structure plan and long term land use planning.

Future options may include a mix of recreation, open space housing options for Kensington Park. Council is seeking \$100K to undertake a feasibility study for this important piece of work.

Estimated cost **\$100K**

Structure Plan Review

Following the completion of the regional residential supply/demand analysis for the outer Hobart Councils and the baseline of the adoption of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme, Council needs to review its New Norfolk Structure Plan 2016 to enable position its settlement structure to cope with future growth scenarios and consequential impacts and demands upon other functions and services.

Such a body of work would need to consider a number of issues arising from the residential scenarios (transport and access, infrastructure and industry, commercial drivers and parking, open space and recreation, community and civic needs) as well as environmental constraints and would be in the order of \$150 to 200k

Estimated cost **\$200K**

Car Parking Future Needs

A portion of the above work which could be separated could be a parking audit and needs

analysis to consider the current and future implications of development within it commercial precincts – leading to a policy position on the provision of carparking as park of planning applications and the need for levying carparking contributions.

Estimated cost **\$30K**

PARK'n'RIDE

As part of this study, a 'park 'n' ride public transport solution could also be considered, along with a bicycle path which would further reduce traffic congestion, increase health and wellbeing and unlock tourism opportunities with interpretation of this stretch of river which is famous for its black swans and other native species.

Estimated cost **\$100K**

Heritage and Community Hub

Council has a critical need for spaces for community groups to meet. At present there is no council owned community hub with flexible meeting rooms. Council also has an extensive collection of heritage artefacts that would benefit from being on display in a suitable location.

Presently Frascati House lays dormant and is need of urgent works to preserve one of the most precious pieces of our heritage.

Council would be seeking government support for urgent works to secure the house and funds for a heritage management plan and feasibility study to bring the building back online as a community and heritage hub for the Derwent Valley.

What we need **\$230K**

Urgent works to Frascati House

Estimated cost **\$80K**

Heritage management plan and feasibility study

Estimated cost **\$150K**

Investment Opportunities - Our 'Game Changers'



The 'Our Valley 2030' Strategic Plan is Council's roadmap for the future.

The Plan details what we want to achieve in the next 10 years and how we plan to get there.

Some of the key 'Game Changers' we see as making a huge difference to the community and the valley as a whole are as follows.

We will be pursuing these infrastructure priorities in earnest to make sure our community has what it has asked for through the development of Our Valley 2030.



Priority Road Projects

Lyell Highway upgrade (New Norfolk to Bridgewater Bridge)

A feasibility and traffic movement study is urgently needed to assess a significant upgrade of this important major access road.

Tasmania's 10 Year Infrastructure Pipeline announced earlier in 2021, brings together details of planned public investment across all economic and social infrastructure classes covering the period 2020-21 to 2029-30. The pipeline does not currently include a study to investigate and plan for the growing and urgent need for upgrading of the Lyell Highway section between the planned new Bridgewater Bridge at Granton and New Norfolk.

Lyell Highway is a State Government owned road. It is approximately 14.25 kilometres from Granton to New Norfolk. The highway is a Category 2 – Regional Freight Route in the Tasmanian State Road Hierarchy. Category 2 Roads facilitate: heavy inter-regional and sub-regional freight movement, passenger vehicle movement, commercial interaction and tourist movement.

An upgrade project would need to encompass feasibility for dual lanes, improved safety barriers and the inclusion of walking tracks and cycleways. The project to upgrade the Lyell Highway could be undertaken in four main phases: concept development; preliminary design; detailed design; and construction.

The concept development phase assessed the road against the Austroads guidelines for road design.

The ever-increasing traffic volumes to and from New Norfolk warrant turning this section of the Lyell Highway into a dual carriageway in both directions. With forecast growth of population, investment and tourism attraction for the Derwent Valley, the existing road will be inadequate, inefficient and dangerous for growing traffic movements.

Traffic movements measured in 2020 revealed more than 10,000 vehicle movements per day (including approximately 10% heavy vehicle such as trucks).

In each of 2018, 2019 and 2020 three serious accidents were reported while multiple other first aid and/or property damage incidents occurred.

There is a serious risk of road accidents if this project is not evaluated and a planned upgrade then instigated. Derwent Valley Council urge the State and Commonwealth Governments to include planning for this section of Lyell Highway to be included in the Tasmania's 10 Year Infrastructure Pipeline.

Estimated cost **\$100K**

Glenora Road Transfer

This is a significant tourism road and gateway to the Derwent Valley. Glenora Road sees significant traffic volumes annually and is currently managed and maintained by Council from New Norfolk to Bushy Park, a distance of 17 kilometres. In 2019 Council spent \$2.5M upgrading Glenora Road and in 2021 the Tasmania Government committed \$1M to be matched by Council to undertake further works.

With Council's long term financial management plan constantly evolving recent calculations indicate that it may be some years before this work can be done and Council has the funds to match the government commitment. Given the state significance of Glenora Road Council requests that the Tasmanian Government consider taking full responsibility for Glenora Road to ease the financial burden on Council.

Estimated cost **\$2.5M**

General Road Upgrade Fund

Council has a number of roads that require upgrades that at present are cost prohibitive. There is regular communication from residents to seal or upgrade their roads and Council has very little discretion with our limited budget to be responsive to these requests. Council requests support from the Tasmanian Government for a one off grant to enable this work.

Estimated cost **\$1M**

Major Projects

These projects are strategies and plans which will be implemented immediately upon funding becoming available. These projects provide the infrastructure to support livability in our growing community.

Implementation of the New Norfolk Town Centre and Precincts Urban Design Strategy

Council has developed an Urban Design Strategy, providing Council with a cohesive approach to creating a more contemporary streetscape that responds to modern community needs and desires. The Urban Design Strategy responds directly to one of the outcomes from the 'Our Valley 2030' Strategic Plan and contributes to numerous other actions within the plan.

Council is aware that developing a more cosmopolitan environment will be essential for New Norfolk's future prosperity and the region. The effect of improved amenity cannot be underestimated in the transition toward a more prosperous future for the community.

What we need \$3.5M

Capital investment to deliver the improvements to Circle Street and Council Administration Building forecourt.

Estimated cost **\$800K**

Upgrade to Arthur Square including footpaths, drainage, car park and public toilet

Estimated cost **\$1.5M**

Continuation of Stages 2 and 3 of the High Street Master Plan revitalisation.

Estimated cost **\$1.2M**

Derwent Valley Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy (WRRS)

This strategy develops and supports many of the desired environmental outcomes included in Our Valley 2030. The WRRS reflects the community's voice and aims to foster a collaborative attitude between stakeholders to waste, and create a more livable community with better long-term outcomes. The strategy draws on past work and links to National and State waste policy targets. The WRRS outlines achievable actions to position the Council and the community to become leaders in sustainable waste management and reclamation.

What we need \$3.1M

Council seeks funding to implement a green waste collection service with associated organic diversion plant to create large-scale composting opportunities.

Estimated cost **\$1.5M**

The installation of a weighbridge at Peppermint Hill Refuse site is required within the next 3 years. This ensures accuracy of landfill volumes.

Estimated cost **\$1.5M**

Council also seeks funds to undertake a detailed study regarding the future capacity, management model and commercial potential of the Peppermint Hill site.

Estimated cost **\$100K**

New Norfolk Bridge – Lyell Highway Intersection

The northern intersection of the New Norfolk bridge on to Boyer Road requires State Growth assessment for an upgraded traffic management solution due to increased volumes of traffic. This busy intersection would benefit motorists with either the installation of traffic lights or a roundabout similar to the one at the Southern end of the bridge.

Council urge the State and Commonwealth Governments to undertake feasibility studies into the upgrade of this intersection that caters for the increased heavy vehicle traffic and other road users. The planning to upgrade this intersection should be included in the Tasmania's 10 Year Infrastructure Pipeline.

Boyer

The Boyer Oval project was identified as the first stage of the Boyer Oval Sports and Community Precinct Master Plan. Key areas of focus are the upgrade to change rooms, bench seating, standing viewing areas widening and provision of dedicated space for wheelchair access and spectator viewing, renovated club/bar access with viewing platform.

Estimated cost

\$5M

Maydena Community Park

Create one consolidated public site for social/family recreation including picnic play, wayside stop, space for kick-to-kick and a hard court in Kallista Road and connecting to the railway, Tyenna River, a town trail circuit and the Junee River. This may require a combination of acquisition and disposal of sites to create one large lot.

Estimated cost

\$200K





Willow Court

These are transformative developments that will require significant collaboration and investment from strategic partners. These projects provide the opportunity for both long and short term economic stimulus and offer community-building initiatives that will engage a wide range of stakeholders.

Council is working with a number of private and community partners to reimagine the future of Willow Court with a focus on:

Interpretation: to the community and place making activities to encourage new patterns of use and connect the site to the town centre;

Activation: delivering a range of activities at the site will support future growth and opportunity, and the ongoing economic development of the town and region more broadly, and;

Investment: by supporting investment in this historically and culturally important precinct, Council will assist in the transition to a visitor-focused economy

To support investment in the site, Council has produced the Willow Court Partnership Prospectus, which provides a more detailed overview of the investment opportunities. The prospectus details a range of costs to realise the potential of the New Norfolk Distillery, the Agrarian Kitchen Eatery and the Barracks Arts Centre run by Salamanca Arts and Derwent Valley Arts.

Council is currently seeking to undertake a subdivision of sections of the Willow Court precinct to support future private and community investment and activation of the site.

Final costs and plans for the provision of infrastructure will be a significant cost to Council. Initial estimates indicate that provision of essential services including power, water, sewer, telephony, storm water, will be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, putting an unviable strain on Council resources. A grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund has been achieved and will deliver new toilets to the Barracks precinct.

These services allow the subdivision to proceed and the Council owned portion of the site to be separated into 3 individual titles. This work enables progression of Council's Willow Court Prospectus.

What we need

\$6.5M

Council is actively seeking funding to support infrastructure provision and assist its partners to develop their businesses in Willow Court. Together the overall partnership requires game changing investment from all levels of government.

- New Norfolk Distillery \$2M
- Agrarian Kitchen and Eatery \$700K
- Barracks Arts Centre upgrade \$3M
- Subdivision Infrastructure \$800K

Council has applied for grant funding to install the necessary civil infrastructure to enable the subdivision permit to be satisfied. Through this, the servicing of three individual lots will be achieved allowing the proponents to further their individual ventures. Council will retain ownership of the road parcel and the Barracks building.



Conclusion



Our strategic priorities provide a strong foundation to move our community forward.

This document identifies a range of infrastructure and community development projects to develop the Derwent Valley into an investment-ready, contemporary and livable community.

The challenges of COVID have also brought opportunities to re-shape the way we do business and support our community into the future.

We look forward to discussing our strategic priorities and how we can collaborate in more detail.



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