

Macedon Ranges Community Equestrian Facilities Plan



Draft Report
June 2023

About this document

This document is the draft Community Equestrian Facilities Plan. Other documents prepared for this plan are the Consultation Findings June 2023.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Project

The purpose of the Macedon Ranges Community Equestrian Facilities Plan is to:

- Ensure that equestrian facilities provided by Council are financially and environmentally sustainable.
- Review and audit the existing facilities and identify future improvement needs.
- Provide clarity about facility maintenance and development responsibilities.
- Identify key risk management issues and develop a plan to address these issues.
- Investigate public access and inclusion arrangements for members and non-members.
- Investigate opportunities to grow and promote participation and prepare an equestrian-specific participation plan to encourage a greater diversity in participation.
- Consider opportunities to establish safe trail riding locations in collaboration with other agencies.
- Work with peak equestrian bodies to facilitate equestrian club planning and sustainability.

Previous research and studies undertaken by Council have been reviewed in developing this Plan.

This Plan identifies responsibilities for the Council and Clubs and establishes actions over ten years to 2034. Delivery of the Plan is a shared responsibility, any required Council funding is subject to consideration during annual budget processes.

1.2 Key Directions

Research and information gathered through community consultation and user group meetings have informed the development of this plan and provided details for the actions by site, identified in Section 4 of this plan. Framing the actions by sites are the key directions outlined below.

Facility Management

Investigations identified the need for more clarity regarding facility maintenance and development responsibilities, mainly as some facilities are on Crown Land and may have different access to Council services than others. Historically, equestrian venues have grown in an ad hoc manner, often with little input and or knowledge from Council with routine maintenance of facilities seen as a high priority by equestrian clubs.

Developing a uniform license agreement for equestrian clubs outlining management and maintenance responsibilities is identified to clarify responsibilities.

Risk Management/Multi-use venues

The consultation process highlights a critical risk issue in using equestrian venues for non-compatible activities. Clubs are particularly concerned about dog off-leash areas at equestrian venues. To mitigate this risk, it is appropriate to review the co-location of these activities.

The plan also identifies further work is needed on the scheduling of motorsports occurring at the same venue as equestrian activities.

Due to multi-site use complexities and/or low club membership numbers, there may be some equestrian venues that operate with a reduced suite of equestrian activities or cease activities and relocate to other venues.

Environmental & Cultural Management

Some equestrian venues have areas of land that are environmentally and/or culturally sensitive. To manage equestrian activities within sensitive landscapes, a careful balance is required. This may require limiting activities at some sites to protect environmental and cultural values.

Facility Hierarchy

The plan recommends a two-level hierarchy of equestrian facilities, local and shire wide. The proposed direction is that the standard of one or a maximum of two facilities be elevated to include facilities suitable for events, including cross-country, whilst the others are maintained at a more local level with a reduced offering of activities and lease and licence agreements identifying limitations.

Many of the actions identified in the draft equestrian facilities plan relate to the need for improved or upgraded facilities and infrastructure (e.g. the condition of buildings, arenas, fencing, jumps, and internal roadways, as well as improved access to water). Therefore, having a facility hierarchy and a uniform and specific license agreement in place will assist with clarifying responsibilities and prioritising identified actions.

Covered Arenas

The initial consultation identified an interest from clubs in the development of covered arenas. Despite this interest, the draft Macedon Ranges Community Equestrian Plan outlines that Council will not provide these facilities and that private/commercial providers in the Shire should serve this requirement.

Trail Riding

The draft plan identifies strong community demand for equestrian trail riding in the Macedon Ranges. It is intended that the provision of trail riding opportunities within the Shire, occurs on Parks Victoria and DEECA land and not on Council-owned and managed land. The council will advocate with these agencies for improved trail riding promotion and opportunities.

1.3 Equestrian participation

Equestrian is one of the top 10 sport related activities in Australia for participation by women (15 years +) in regional and rural areas in 2022/23 estimated at 118,000 participants. More than Golf (89,000) and Football/soccer (85,000), it is estimated that some 195,500 women (15 years +) and 39,600 men participated in equestrian in 2022/23¹.

In the Macedon Ranges there were 21 equestrian clubs with just over 1,000 active members in 2023 based at 12 public and private venues.

Participation data for Macedon Ranges Shire shows it has one of the highest participation rates in equestrian recreation activities in Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Victoria. Participation in equestrian activities ranks in the top 10 sport and physical exercise activities participated in, whereas it does not rank in the top 15 for Victoria or Australia overall.

Only four Victorian LGAs have equestrian activities in the top ten sport and physical activities, for females:

- Golden Plains (9.5%)
- South Gippsland (8.5%)
- Macedon Ranges (6.3%) and
- East Gippsland (5.6%).

The peak bodies say that the Macedon Ranges is the second strongest region in Victoria for equestrian sports participation, after the Mornington Peninsula.

¹ National Sport and Physical Activity Participation Report. AusPlay. October 2023
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1.4 Current facilities

There are seven existing community equestrian facilities in the Macedon Ranges on public land:

- Bullengarook Recreation Reserve, Bullengarook
- IR Robertson Reserve, Gisborne South
- Barringo Recreation Reserve, Macedon
- Rollinson Reserve, Kyneton
- Woodend Racecourse Reserve, Woodend
- Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve, Lancefield
- Candlebark Riddells Creek Pony Club, Clarkefield.

There are a number of other private equestrian facilities in the Shire that clubs use. These include:

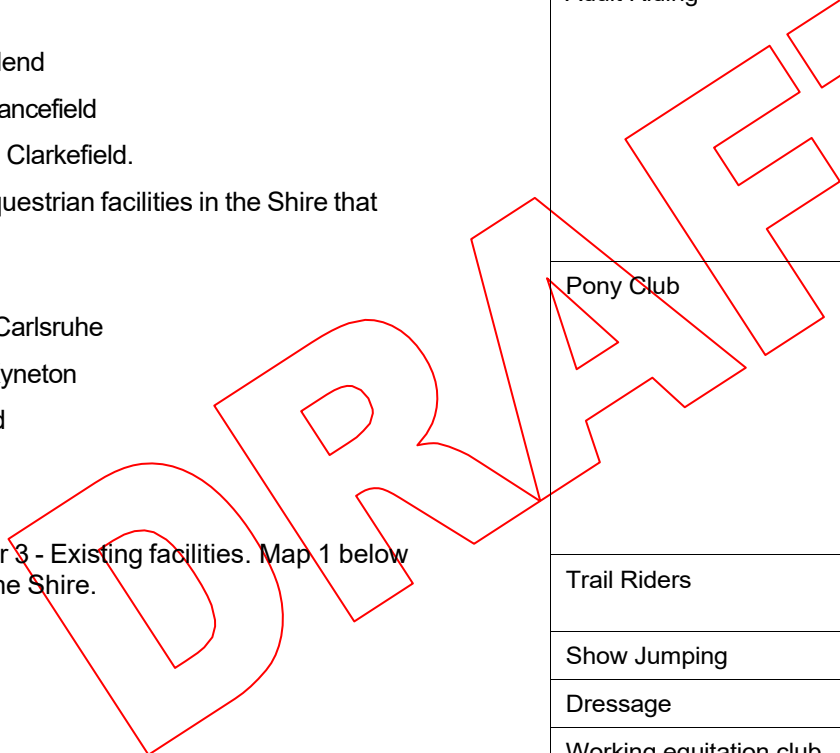
- Venus Equestrian Centre, Gisborne
- Macedon Ranges Equestrian Centre, Carlsruhe
- Kookaburra Park Equestrian Facility, Kyneton
- Springfield Equestrian Park, Springfield
- Harney Park, McIntyre Lane Bolinda.

Details of each site are provided in Chapter 3 - Existing facilities. Map 1 below shows the distribution of facilities across the Shire.

1.5 Equestrian Clubs in the Shire

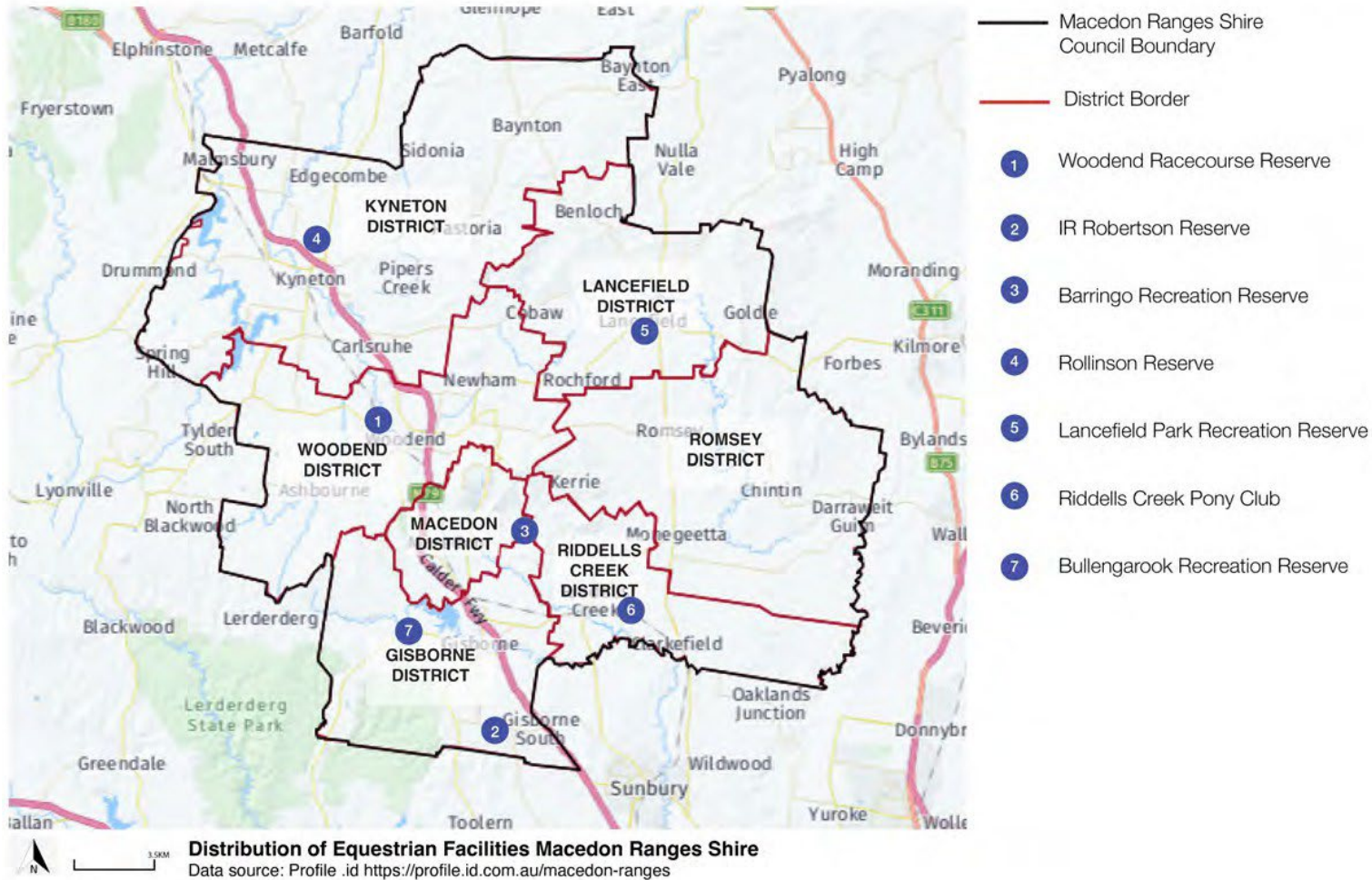
There are at least 21 known equestrian clubs based in the Macedon Ranges Shire on public and private land with a total membership exceeding 1000 members.

Discipline	Club name
Adult Riding	Kyneton and District Adult Riding Club Bullengarook Adult Riding Club Gisborne and District Adult Riding Club Riddells Creek Adult Riding Club ² Bolinda Riding Club Aurum Club Equestrian Inc. Black Hill Riding Club, Gisborne South Five Mile Equestrian Club
Pony Club	Kyneton Pony Club Bullengarook Pony Club Gisborne Pony Club Macedon Pony Club Woodend Pony Club Riddells Creek Pony Club Lancefield Equestrian Group Lancefield Pony Club
Trail Riders	Kyneton District Trail Riders Club Riddells Creek Trail Horse Riding Club
Show Jumping	Melbourne Show Jumping Club
Dressage	Macedon Ranges Dressage Club
Working equitation club	Working Equitation Lancefield Districts



² In 2020 the Gisborne and District Adult Riding Club merged with the Macedon Ranges Working Equitation and continued operating as the Gisborne and District Adult Riding Club

Map 1. Distribution of public equestrian facilities in the Macedon Ranges Shire



2. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1 Council's role in facilities

There is a need for clarity about facility maintenance and development responsibilities at each site.

Council has historically provided limited maintenance activities to equestrian sites.

It appears that not all clubs have current occupancy (license) agreements. These agreements are essential in establishing legal responsibilities and the responsibility for the costs of development, maintenance, and renewal of facilities, some of which may be provided by Council while clubs may bear ongoing responsibility. Any recommendations contained within this report for Council expenditure is subject to annual budget consideration. Any development of facilities must be consistent with the Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy.

One of the main areas that clubs would like the Council's assistance with is routine maintenance. Additional roles are detailed in section 4.1.

Preliminary Directions

Some ongoing maintenance issues should be addressed at Council equestrian facilities.

The establishment of maintenance responsibilities for Council and Clubs is essential and should be finalised through License Agreements. It is considered that the following elements require clear understanding:

- Undertake a building audit on all the clubhouse buildings on equestrian reserves to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward – regardless of who does the work.
- Provide a uniform service on equestrian facilities, which includes:
 - Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies).
 - A suitable gate/keyed entry.
 - Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
- Essential asset management of the pavilion, major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen,
- Essential Safety Measures (ESM)/ fire services
- Bushfire management.
- Access to power and drinking water.
- Fencing or repairing the perimeter of the site with appropriate materials – for example, remove barbed wire.
- Provide a uniform license agreement for users of each site (see Appendix 4 - Risk and maintenance responsibilities).

2.2 Opportunities to grow and promote participation

Demand for equestrian facilities is outlined in Appendix 2 – Demand for Equestrian Activities in Macedon Ranges Shire Council. This has informed the growth and promotion opportunities and preliminary directions.

A high proportion of females participate in equestrian activities and equestrian sports.

There appears to be growth in a wide range of equestrian activities, including equitation, carriage driving etc., that could be facilitated in the existing facilities.

There is a high demand for trail riding in the Shire but limited information for residents about facilities currently designed for this purpose.

With an increase in mountain biking in the Shire, there is an increasing demand for tracks and trails and potential conflicts between activities.

Currently, there are limited or no opportunities for people with disability to ride with others in the Shire, although there is high demand. One or more of the existing sites can become an Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) venue, supported by RDA to deliver equestrian opportunities for people with a disability. Surprisingly, no RDA services the Shire.

There is interest in school equestrian activities, and one school with a strong equine focus but no facilities.

There are potential sports participation benefits of fostering a greater connection with clubs and schools, contributing to economic development benefits.

The Shire has a large number of equestrian clubs (especially riding and pony clubs) – more than any other known Council in Victoria.

This number of clubs allows for multiple disciplines to be accommodated and a wider range of residents' interests to be supported.

Clubs in the Shire have slightly different focuses that encourage riders with different aspirations, abilities, and motivations. Some are more competitive than others and have more competitive sports activities.

There are two trail riding clubs in the Shire and increasing demand for more riding routes for casual riding.

Previously published information about sites in the regional park with float parking and yards is no longer accessible, and clubs report more information is required about routes, support facilities available, and time taken to ride these.

The main threats to equestrian participation are:

- The potential loss of suitable and safe public or private equestrian facilities for recreation and sport.
- The need for support and facilities to assist people with a disability to ride.
- It is increasingly difficult for urban residents to learn to ride, keep a horse and participate in equestrian recreation and sports.

Council's Recreation team supports clubs and facilities to grow participation, and equestrian clubs have also typically been very self-sufficient and self-effacing.

There is limited information and maps for trail riding. This activity primarily takes place on land that Council is not the owner or manager of. However, improved information and/or links on Council's website could benefit users to match the demand for equestrian facilities with available opportunities.

Preliminary Directions

- Support partnerships between clubs, schools, health promotion groups and other stakeholders to support opportunities for more people to ride.
- Work with RDA to investigate South Gisborne and/or Bullengarook as an RDA facility and with RDA and other potential partners to establish and promote this opportunity.
- Advocate with Parks Victoria and Department Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) regarding trail riding opportunities and prepare an update of information about trails in the Shire.
- Provide information about equestrian clubs, facilities to hire, and trails in the Shire for Council web page which links to third party websites.
- Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details.
- Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.



2.3 Covered/indoor arena

A covered/indoor arena was a common request from the community survey and from interviews with user groups.

However, from a financial sustainability perspective, provision of covered arenas will not be considered by Council.

It is considered that the benefits of covered arenas can be well catered for through private equestrian providers within Macedon Ranges Shire and adjacent Local Government Areas. Noting that users of these facilities will need to travel further than a local club to access a covered arena.

Preliminary Directions

Although covered arenas were commonly requested during consultation, Council does not provide these facilities. It is expected that provision of covered arenas is through private equestrian providers.

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2.4 Equestrian trails and shared paths

Initial consultation identified that there is demand for casual and club trail riding in the Macedon Ranges Shire.

There are declining opportunities for horses to ride safely on the road (even though they are classified as a vehicle) or road verges because of increased vehicle volume and the difficulty in managing roadside vegetation growth that is significant for conservation purposes.

Council has limited off-road trail routes. Those provided are focused on walking and cycling, such as the rail trail projects.

Council considers that the most appropriate land for trail riding within the Shire is crown land, managed by Parks Victoria and DEECA. Council can play an advocacy role with clubs for further trail riding opportunities within the Shire.

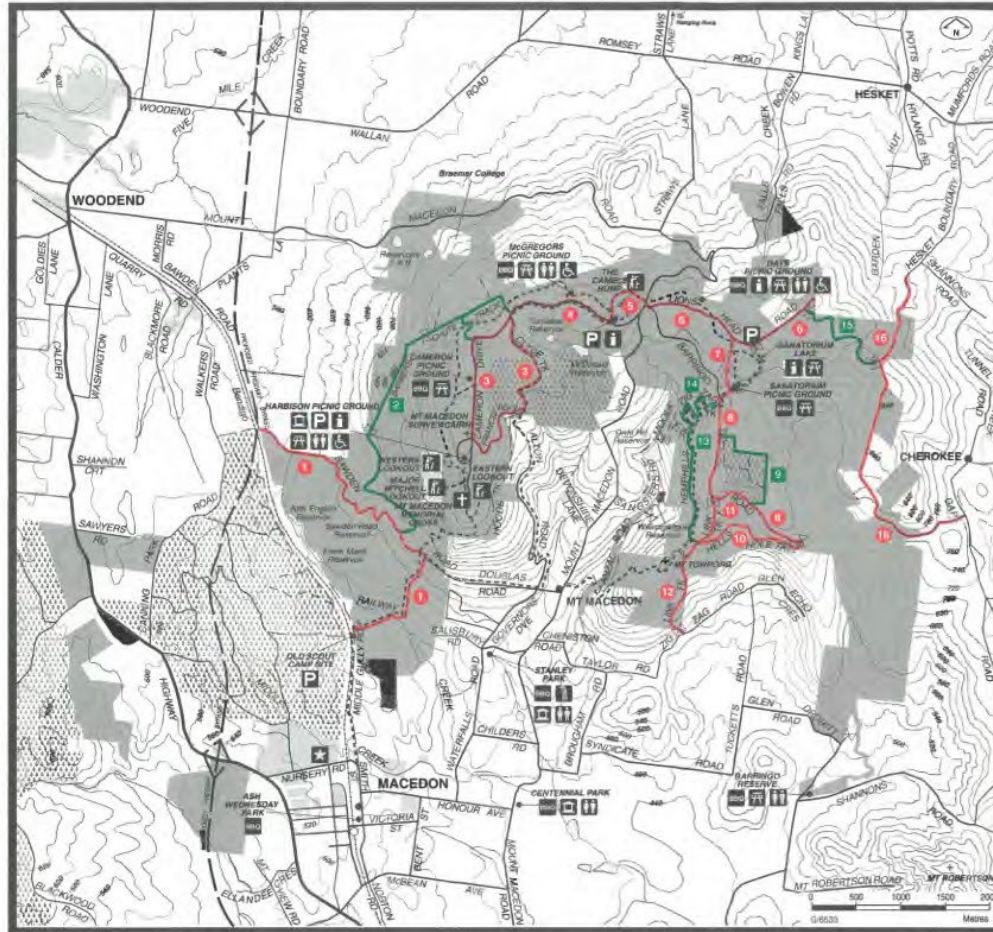
There are a number of regional trail locations promoted on crown land. These include:

- Macedon Regional Park: The Ridge Track and Major Mitchell Plateau Track providing stunning views of the surrounding countryside, while the Sanatorium Lake Loop offers a picturesque ride.
 - Woodend to Hanging Rock Reserve: The ride offers beautiful landscapes, including rolling hills and open fields.
 - Cobaw State Forest: Located near Kyneton, it provides an extensive horse-riding trail network. The forest offers open areas, bushland, and creek crossings, providing a diverse riding experience.
 - Wombat State Forest, near Woodend and Daylesford, offers a vast network of trails for horse riding, e.g. the Firth Park Campground. The forest includes open areas, eucalyptus forests, and fern gullies.
 - The Old Scout Camp, in Macedon Regional Park which has designated horse yards and space for float parking with suitable camping and riding locations.
- Mount Disappointment State Forest.
 - Advocate with other agencies for the establishment of safe trail riding locations.

Note: Further details have been sought from Parks Victoria and DEECA on such sites.

The following image shows a map from an old information sheet published by Parks Victoria.

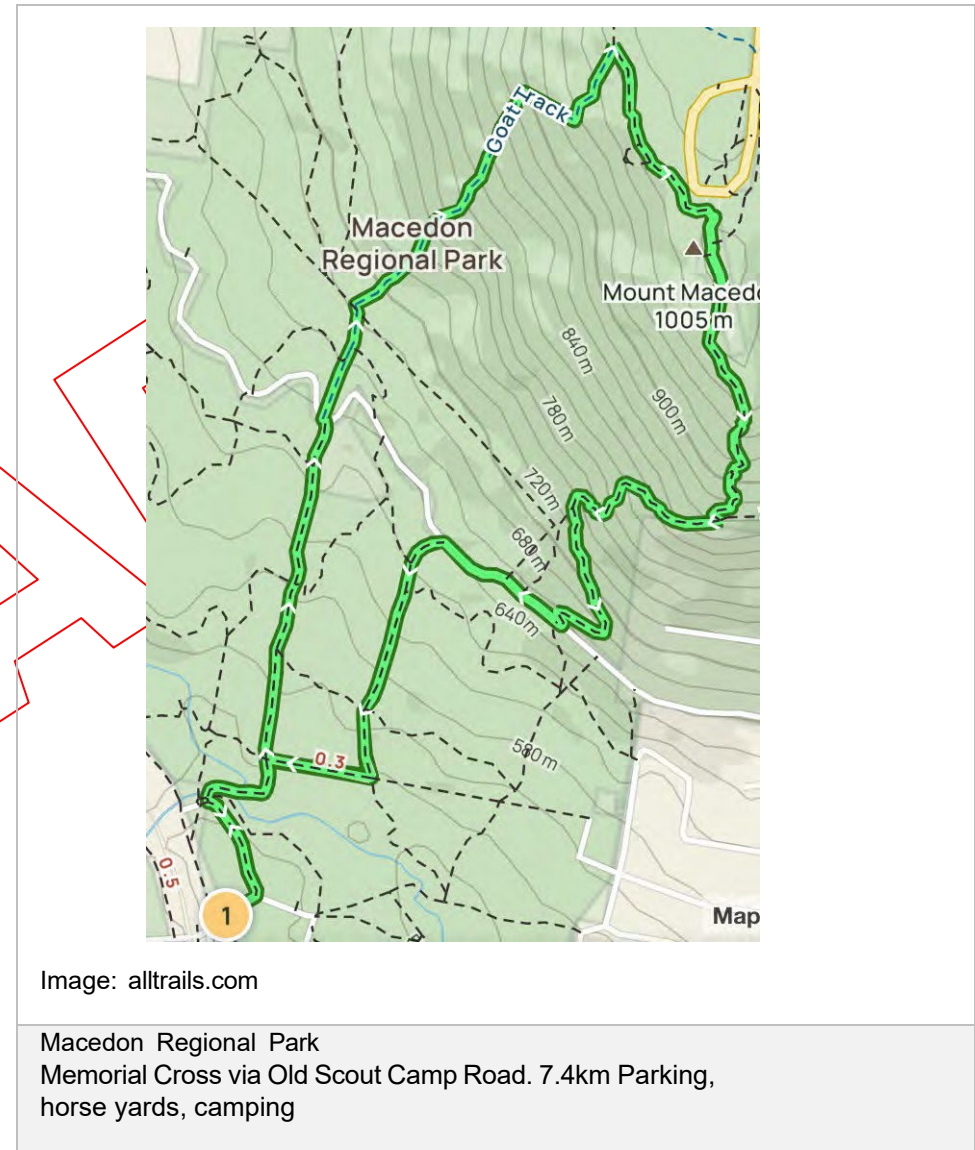
Trail riders would benefit from Parks Victoria updating resources such as this.



Preliminary Directions

- Advocate for increased trail access on crown land with Parks Victoria and DEECA
- Advocate for an updated trail riding location and information map in conjunction with Parks Victoria, and DEECA, and the trail riding clubs.
- Advocate for safe trail riding in the following locations:
 - Macedon Regional Park:
 - The Old Scout Camp
 - The Ridge Track
 - Major Mitchell Plateau Track
 - Sanatorium Lake Loop
 - Cobaw State Forest
 - Wombat State Forest from Firth Park Campground
 - Bullengarook Reserve – Walsh Road to Pyrites No. 1 and 2 Track.
- The following maps show five horse trails (not council assets) that could be promoted and developed with improved parking, tie ups and water.

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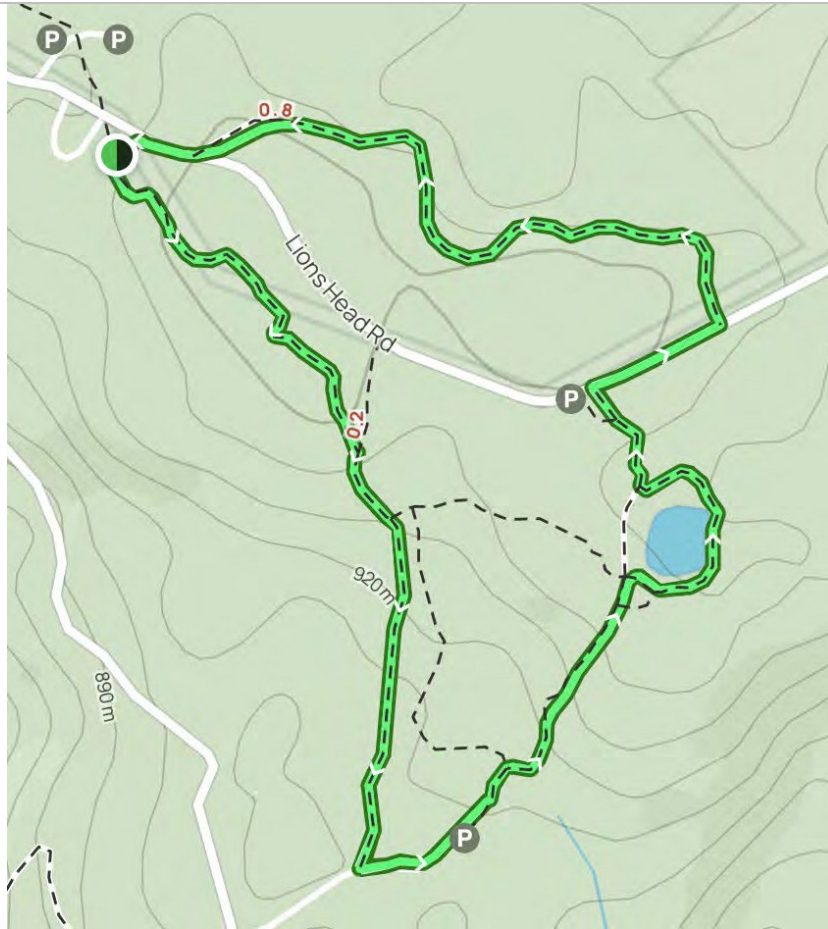


Image: alltrails.com

Macedon Regional Park
Sanatorium lake Loop. 3.1km. Parking, toilets and picnic tables

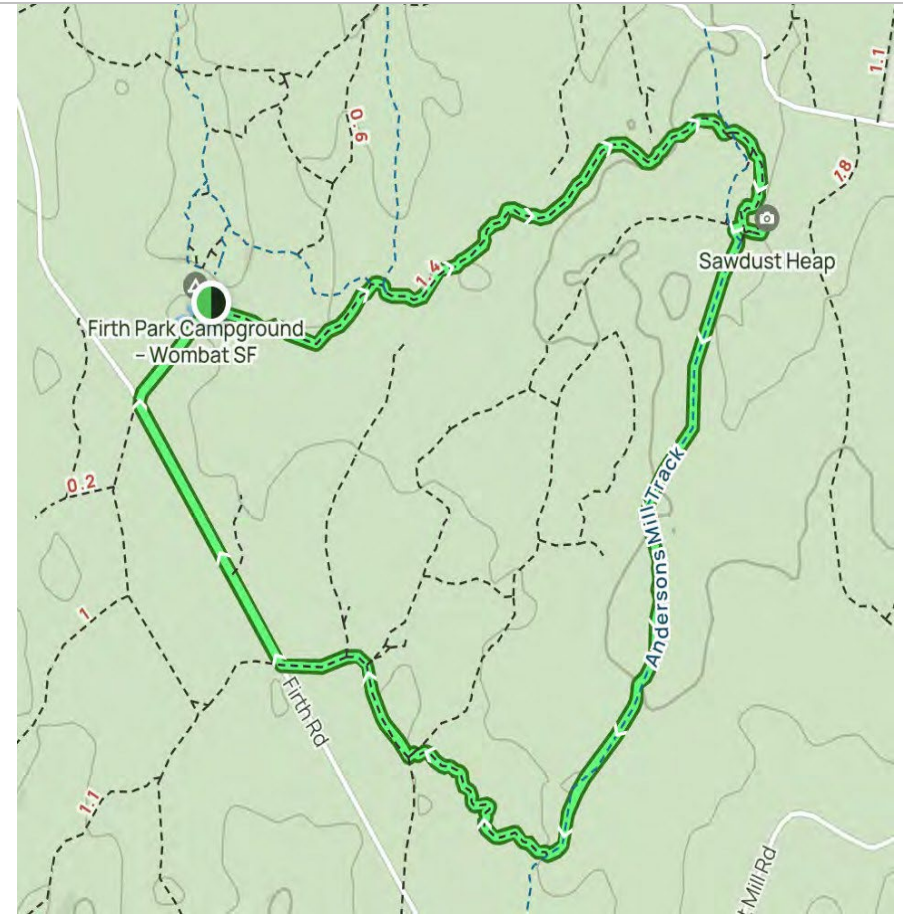


Image: alltrails.com

Wombat State Forest.
Start and Finish at Firth Park Campground. Approx. 8 km Parking, toilets, water, picnic tables, horse corral, camping

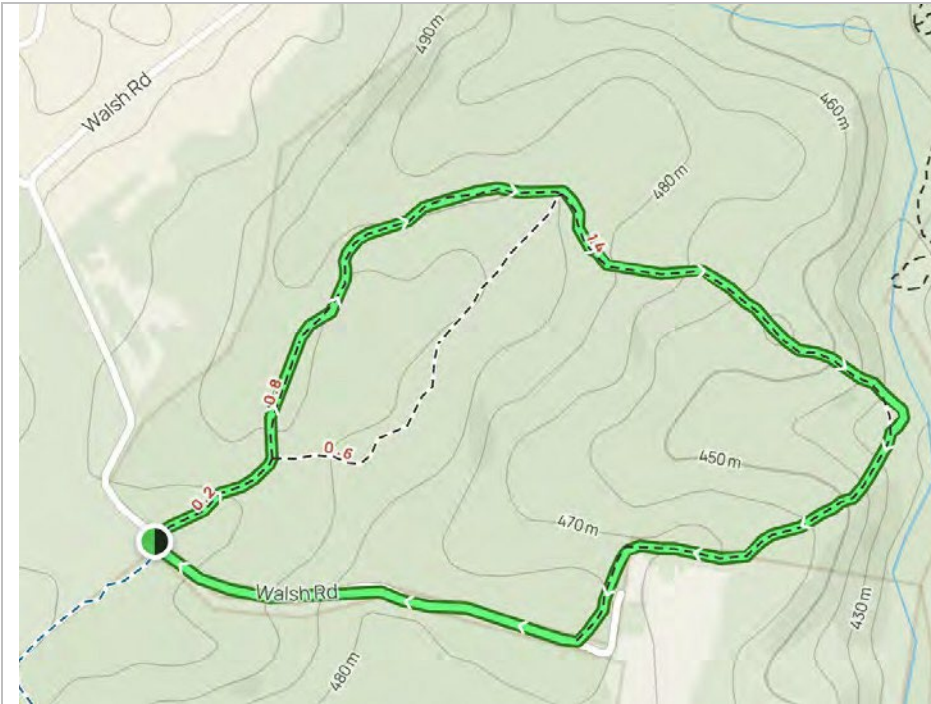


Image: alltrails.com

Lerderberg State Park.
 Start and Finish at Bullengarook Pony Club, Walsh Road, Bullengarook. 4.1km from Pony Club or 3.2km loop as shown above. Parking and tie ups at Reserve.

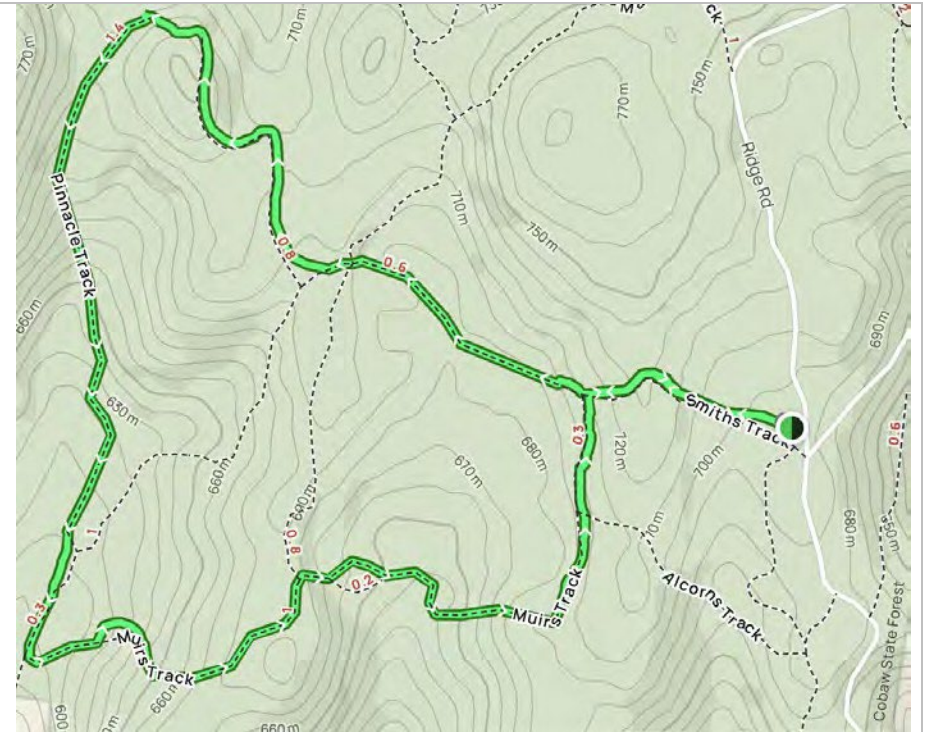


Image: alltrails.com

Cobaw State Forest.
 Pinnacle Track Loop. Start and finish at Smiths Track off Ridge Road. Parking. Popular trail bike area

2.5 Accommodating casual use of arenas

There is demand for casual use of existing equestrian facilities.

There are opportunities through offering casual use to increase the income for clubs.

To ensure their safety, casual users should be members of a peak body that oversees the discipline for which they are using the facility.

It would be beneficial for clubs to establish a user agreement or code of conduct for use; for example, requiring users to pick up manure, put equipment away, use designated car parks, lock the gates etc., and use a facility with an accompanying person or when the facility is being used by others.

It is not uncommon for clubs elsewhere to have an online booking system that requires the participant to sign a waiver, provide information about themselves and their insurances etc. and pay a one off or yearly fee for access.

Some clubs may offer the opportunity as an extension of their membership, for an additional fee or provide a separate booking process as a key holder.

Before casual use is encouraged, the condition of facilities should be assessed as being appropriate for that use.

The nature of the existing facilities may lend themselves to establishment of Community Asset Committee's (CAC's). This would formally establish management, maintenance and funding arrangements and could be investigated.

Bookings for casual use of facilities should be authorised by the relevant committee under formalised arrangements.

A Club is required to have in place rules relating to use of the grounds which mitigate risk to the Club/venue owners and riders.

Where grounds are open to the public, Club equipment must be stored in a locked facility and signage clearly displayed to address identified risks related to use of the grounds.

Club activities are only covered under the Horse Riding Clubs Association Victoria (HRCAV) Policies, Management Liability or Public Liability Insurance on land owned and/or managed by Council or the club. Activities undertaken on private land are not covered. for casual use of facilities by members.

The major risks identified by HRVAC risk management policy related to sites, horse welfare or infrastructure include:

- Falls of horse or rider.
- Loose dogs causing horse to misbehave/accident.

- Cars and floats using venue causing accident.
- Disruptive horses causing chain reaction/fall.
- Being knocked over by an undisciplined or loose horse.
- Damage to vehicles.
- Horse escaping from venue and causing damage to people or property.
- Extreme heat.

Preliminary Directions

- Clubs and peak bodies to collaborate to alleviate risks that prevent casual use, including condition of facilities.
- Clubs and peak bodies to establish an online booking system for casual use for appropriate facilities.
- Investigate suitable gate/ entry design to facilitate casual use.
- Pilot the booking system at one site before full implementation.
- Once the system is in place, promote the opportunities for casual use of suitable equestrian facilities across the Shire.

2.6 Club development and sustainability

Some clubs have low membership, which limits the opportunities to manage equestrian facilities that are used and rely on income.

Typically, small clubs rely on being able to hire private or public facilities to conduct regular activities and to conduct one or more yearly events to cover basic costs. The availability of private facilities for public hire is not assured.

Some clubs are based at facilities with site capability and planning issues limiting expansion access, functional use, and development.

The peak body for each club should be the principal conduit for issues associated with club development and technical aspects such as insurance, related to each of the equestrian disciplines.

Council could assist clubs as follows:

- Promote equestrian opportunities and information on Council's website that may lead to increases in club membership.
- Develop clear maintenance responsibilities between Council and clubs.

- Assist clubs with developing partnering opportunities or accessing grants.
- Advise clubs of appropriate Council contact to raise and report issues.
- Assist clubs in understanding a network approach to equestrian provision as some clubs will provide activities that other do not.

Preliminary Directions

- Prepare new occupancy agreements for clubs with reasonable roles and responsibilities.
- Promote participation in equestrian activities, and the existing facilities and clubs to grow membership.
- Promote a network approach to equestrian provision across the Shire.

2.7 Need for a facility hierarchy

Some facilities that are highly used have a more competition focus and stage events. Other facilities provide for more local and casual use.

Whilst it's beneficial that most clubs have opportunities to train in all disciplines it is difficult for smaller clubs to provide for all riding disciplines and ensure appropriate standards and well maintained and compliant facilities for any competitions.

At present, most regional events occur at the Werribee National Equestrian Facility or at private facilities in other regions such as Boneo Park in Mornington and Juravon in Melton.

Currently, many clubs hire private covered or enclosed arenas for some activities. Council does not see a role in the provision of these facilities.

A hierarchy of facilities, supporting one or more facilities to become a Shire wide facility more able to sustain events, is an appropriate approach.

Key site selection criteria for Shire wide municipal equestrian facility could include:

- Safe all weather road access for floats and float access from the freeway and/or suitable wide roads with good sight lines for floats to pass.
- Two access points for events and emergencies.
- Adequate size: preferably 8+ ha of relatively flat land, stables, paddocks, parking areas, and support buildings. Where possible, the site should also have room for potential future expansions.
- Location: close to a main centre of population or with good access to primary road networks and suppliers.
- Availability of existing infrastructure, as well as services such as electricity, water supply, sewage systems, and internet connectivity.
- Suitable planning zones, with no major constraints associated with planning overlays, cultural heritage, or land capability.
- No major issues such as poor drainage, slope, bush fire prone, or sites of high environmental significance.
- Land in Council or public ownership or management and cost effective to develop.
- A prominent, easy to find site.
- No conflicting land use adjacent that may impact on regular use or events without public nuisance.
- Site large enough for access in and around by emergency and maintenance vehicles, large rigs/ floats, trucks, and where possible, camping (either at the site or adjacent.)

Preliminary Directions

- Consider introducing a two-level hierarchy of facilities: local and Shire-wide. (See Table 2 below)
- Consider elevating the standard of one or more facilities in the Shire that are suitable for events including cross-country.
- Investigate options to enable camping on, or in the vicinity of, the Shire-wide facilities.

The following table shows the recommended venues within the equestrian hierarchy of facilities.

Shire wide venues are those that have a combination of large existing land footprint, service a large town population or growing population within the Shire, well developed existing facilities and higher usage.

Local facilities have small clubs on smaller land footprints and with facilities that cater for entry level participation.

Lancefield Park, home to the Lancefield Equestrian Group and Pony Club is based on Crown land and managed by a volunteer Committee of Management that reports to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. Council does not have any involvement in management, maintenance, or facility development at the Reserve. It is therefore not listed on the hierarchy.

Table 2. Macedon Ranges Equestrian venue hierarchy.

Hierarchy level	Venues
Shire wide	Rollinson Reserve IR Robertson Reserve
Local	Bullengarook Recreation Reserve Macedon Equestrian Facility Barringo Recreation Reserve Woodend Racecourse Reserve Candlebark/Riddells Creek Pony Club*

* Candlebark/Riddells Creek Pony Club is based on land part owned by Council with a large portion on private land. Council responsibilities only include assets on the Council owned portion of land.

2.8 Risk and condition issues

Equestrian activities present a moderate to high level of risk either through riding or events. The potential risks at community equestrian recreation facilities include:

- Cross-country activities and the condition of courses.
- The inconsistent state of sand arenas (bases).
- Areas of poor drainage.
- Absence of permanent water supply for horse welfare and human consumption.
- Non-secure fencing.
- The size of some clubs limits the degree of maintenance they can undertake, and their viability.
- Potential impact on participation, especially for females, if a reduced range and the number of equestrian sites and places to ride are available.
- Access and egress at equestrian sites.
- Bush fire management.
- Dogs (especially off-leash) using the same reserve.

One site has significant cultural heritage values that are further impacted by the use and provide substantial costs for Council to manage.

Condition of facilities

Kellett Cross-country, an accredited level 4 cross-country course designer and equestrian facilities expert, inspected all community equestrian facilities in Macedon Ranges Shire in May-June 2023.

A number of specific issues concerning the condition of arenas and facilities were identified.

In relation to risk management issues, a complete and thorough safety and compliance audit of all cross-country venues in the Shire is required.

Many of the courses require significant work to meet current safety standards. This may lead to the ceasing of some activities and/ or closure of facilities.

Lack of water at some venues is also a major horse welfare issue. This may be dealt with by clubs either providing additional supplies from a water truck or by asking participants to bring their own.

This becomes a greater issue during the warmer months and on venues that have a higher fire risk.

An outline of key risks and potential actions for each venue is attached in Appendix 3.

Preliminary Directions

- Work with the clubs to complete a thorough safety and compliance audit of all cross-country courses.
- In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, for each venue and design accordingly, or remove jumps.
- Ensure Emergency Management Plans are provided by clubs for each venue.
- Review the dog off-leash areas on the reserves with equestrian facilities and ensure that there are no off-leash areas on the same reserve as equestrian facilities.
- Review water supply at equestrian sites to ensure appropriate access.

3. EXISTING FACILITIES

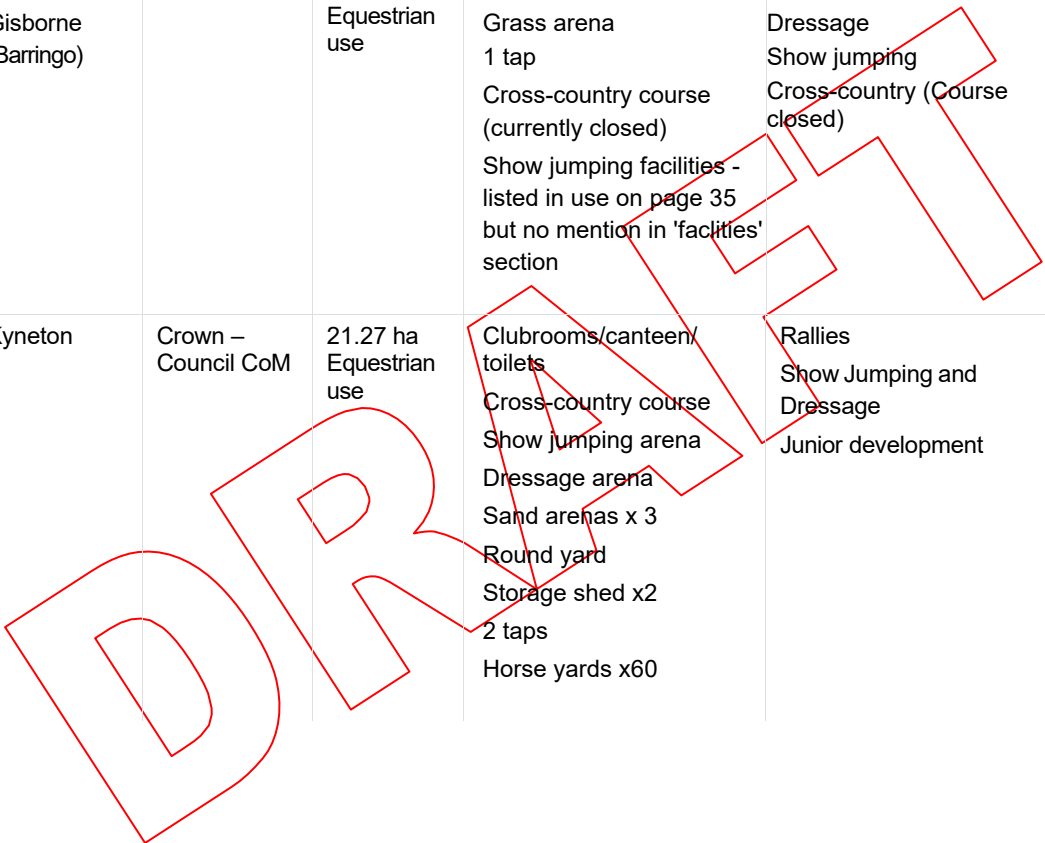
3.1 Overview

The following table summarises the nature and location of equestrian facilities in Macedon Ranges Shire on public land.

Table 3. Nature and location of equestrian facilities in Macedon Ranges Shire

Facility /Reserve Name Property No.	Street Address	Suburb	Land Ownership	Size	Description of Equestrian Facilities	Disciplines/ Activities provided for	Access arrangements	User groups
Bullengarook Recreation Reserve Council property number: 1169305 Part Crown description: Lot 1 - LP90243 Lot 1 - TP550318	683 Bacchus Marsh Road	Bullengarook	Council	Approx. 6.81 ha Equestrian use	Dressage arena Cross- country course Jumps area Grass arena Sand arena x2 Loading ramp 34 yards 1 water tap Rodney Harrison Pavilion: Toilet facility Picnic tables Yards Water tank	Rallies (flat events and jumping) Show Jumping Dressage Clinics Cross Country	Reserve open to public. Arenas locked by Clubs	Bullengarook Adult Riding Club Bullengarook Pony Club
IR Robertson Reserve Council property number: 1169086 Crown description: Lot 12, 13, 14 - LP994030 Lot 1 - TP739198	340 Couangalt Road	Gisborne South	Council	Approx. 12.80 ha Equestrian use	Sand arenas x3 Grass arena x2 Horse yards x50 Round yard Cross-country course Club room / office / canteen Accessible toilet Storage and equipment shed Water tanks (rainwater only) x2 Wash-bays x3 Taps	Rallies: Dressage Poles Show jumping Cross-country Working equitation lesson	Reserve open to public. Arenas locked by Clubs	Gisborne & District Adult Riding Club Gisborne Pony Club Melbourne Show Jumping Club

Facility /Reserve Name Property No.	Street Address	Suburb	Land Ownership	Size	Description of Equestrian Facilities	Disciplines/ Activities provided for	Access arrangements	User groups
Macedon Equestrian Facility - Barringo Recreation Reserve Council property number: 1167437 Crown description: Lot 1 TP169619	18 Shannons Road	New Gisborne (Barringo)	Council	34.26 ha Equestrian use	Sand arenas x 2 Grass arena 1 tap Cross-country course (currently closed) Show jumping facilities - listed in use on page 35 but no mention in 'facilities' section	Games Dressage Show jumping Cross-country (Course closed)	Gate to reserve and arenas locked	Macedon Pony Club
Rollinson Reserve Council property number: 1166525 Crown description: 24B/PP2979 25/PP2979 PARISH OF LAURISTON	180 Redesdale Road	Kyneton	Crown – Council CoM	21.27 ha Equestrian use	Clubrooms/canteen/ toilets Cross-country course Show jumping arena Dressage arena Sand arenas x 3 Round yard Storage shed x2 2 taps Horse yards x60	Rallies Show Jumping and Dressage Junior development	Pony Club members have code for gate lock on arenas. Cross- country course open to public use	Kyneton and District Adult Riding Club Kyneton Pony Club Kyneton Car Club



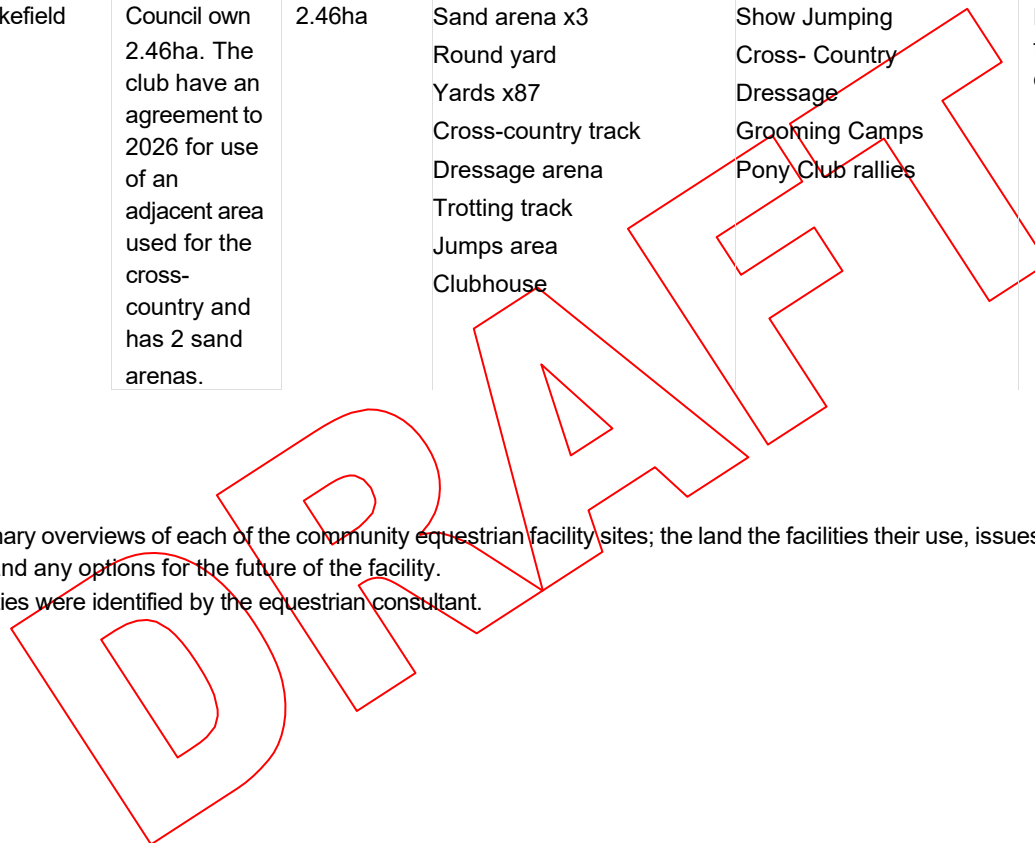
Facility /Reserve Name Property No.	Street Address	Suburb	Land Ownership	Size	Description of Facilities	Disciplines/ Activities provided for	Access arrangements	User groups
Woodend Racecourse Reserve Council property number: 1166833 Crown description: Allot. 2001 Allot. 1 Sec 47 Allot. 2 Sec 47 Allot. 3 Sec. 47 Allot. 5 Sec 47 TOWNSHIP OF WOODEND	1-27 Forest Street	Woodend	Crown – Council CoM	Approx. 3.44 ha Equestrian use excluding trail	Sand arenas x 3 Grandstand arena Yards x 70 Taps x 2 Storage shed Small cross- country area with jumps	Rallies - dressage, trails and show jumping, Dressage. Riders Without Horses Program	Reserve open to public. Arenas locked by Clubs	Riddells Creek Adult Riding Club Woodend Pony Club
Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve Council property number:1182663 Crown description: Allot. 20B Sec. C PARISH OF LANCEFIELD	45 Millers Lane Lancefield Main Reserve entry - Chauncey Street. Equestrian entry off Millers Lane	Lancefield	Crown – Lancefield Park Recreations Reserves CoM	Approx. 7.27 ha Equestrian use	Sand Arena x2 Dressage arena Jumps area Yards Clubhouse including change facilities Cross-country area Changerooms / Pavilion	Dressage arena x4 Sand arenas x3 Show jumping Cross country (rally use only) Eventing Tie ups x6 Heated horse wash x2 Shed Meeting room Toilets including accessible toilet, and change rooms	Reserve open to public. Equestrian and Arenas locked for Clubs	Lancefield Equestrian Group Lancefield Pony Club Hired by numerous equestrian clubs

Facility /Reserve Name Property No.	Street Address	Suburb	Land Ownership	Size	Description of Facilities	Disciplines/ Activities provided for	Access arrangements	User groups
Candlebark /Riddells Creek Pony Club Council property number: 1186452 Parcel number: Lot 3 PS415315	282 Sutherlands Road	Clarkefield	Council own 2.46ha. The club have an agreement to 2026 for use of an adjacent area used for the cross-country and has 2 sand arenas.	2.46ha	Sand arena x3 Round yard Yards x87 Cross-country track Dressage arena Trotting track Jumps area Clubhouse	Show Jumping Cross- Country Dressage Grooming Camps Pony Club rallies	Locked by club for club use only.	Riddells Creek Pony Club Braemar College Hired by other clubs

Site overview by facility

The following chapters provide summary overviews of each of the community equestrian facility sites; the land the facilities their use, issues raised in engagement, specific condition issues and priority works and any options for the future of the facility.

The major condition issues and priorities were identified by the equestrian consultant.



3.2 Bullengarook Recreation Reserve, Bullengarook

The facility is located just out of Gisborne, at the Bullengarook Recreation Reserve, Bacchus Marsh Road, Bullengarook, Victoria, (60 kilometres north west of Melbourne). The reserve has an oval, tennis courts and several community buildings.

The 11.59ha reserve is two parcels of crown land, approximately 6.81ha is used for equestrian activities. A small watercourse runs across the centre of the land.

The site is zoned Public Park and Recreation, surrounded by Rural Conversation Zone.

The equestrian facilities are maintained by the equestrian user groups.

Recently, as a joint project between the Bullengarook Recreation Reserve and the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the Adult Riding Club & Bullengarook Pony Club installed a large sand arena.

This site is a highly scenic and largely forested reserve with recreation and community facilities scattered throughout.

Use

The reserve is used for dressage, show jumping, cross-country, eventing and education.

Bullengarook Adult Riding Club (Bullengarook ARC) is the key user group at this facility. It is affiliated with HRCAV. Facilities are shared with the pony club, but each has their own shed.

The riding club has a membership of around 45 riders. In 2010, Bullengarook ARC celebrated with Champion Riders Level 2, 3 & 4, taking out three of the five main awards in the HRCAV. The Pony Club has approximately 25 members.

Rallies are held on the second Saturday of the month. Rallies consist of flat events and jumping.

Show Jumping events were held in May and planned for August. These will have over 100 participants. Events are important to raise money for clubs.

Environmental considerations

There are Bushfire Management and Environmental Significance overlays over the site.

There is good natural shade cover at the site, however, dead trees and limbs cause concern for users.

The availability of fresh water is limited.

Facilities

The equestrian facilities at Bullengarook Recreation Reserve include:

- A grass arena 40 x 60m
- A sand arena 65 x 55m (Top)
- A sand arena 60 x 50m (Bottom)
- A cross-country course
- A loading ramp
- 34 yards
- 1 water tap
- A large pavilion (the Rodney Harrison Pavilion). A corrugated iron building with a roller door entry, plus an extension with a roller door and a separate toilet facility associated picnic tables yards and a water tank.

Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Cross-country course improvements/ more cross-country jumps
- Public access/ pony club access/arrangement for casual use
- Arena improvements/surface of dressage arena/surface maintenance/ and jumping equipment/weed management and facility maintenance
- Parking
- Clubrooms/ fix kitchen/canteen, replace sheds
- Wash down facilities
- Removal of dangerous trees
- Covered or indoor arena for western riding
- Yards/yard maintenance
- Safe trail riding paths/safer horse-riding trails through Cobaw, Macedon, Riddells Creek and Bullengarook
- Perimeter fencing safety
- Lighting
- We would love some assistance through funding and hands-on work to bring the club rooms from a shed to a safer space for food preparation and a comfortable usage place for rallies, events & meetings
- On the driveway to the Bullengarook Reserve there are a number of trees leaning over the road, and potholes in the driveway. Put some rock down to fix up holes and the clay slipperiness
- Bullengarook is too small for a good size competition.
- The clubrooms are very poor
- Horse day yards need to be next to car parking and club rooms if any redevelopment
- The power trips, tank water only
- The gate at the south entry needs to be fixed
- Need to replace the barbed wire on the perimeter fence
- Cross-country course has been assessed to make safe
- Priority is sand arenas
- Cross-country next priority, to be suitable for competition
- Opportunity to have Trail Riders based out of there as the Reserve is linked to great trails. No Trail Club at Bullengarook
- Opportunity for RDA but limited by number of helpers/volunteers and potential costs. Special School neighbours' property. They use the venue for walks.



Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

- The 40m x 60m grass arena is unsuitable for use when wet due to safety concerns with slippery footing.
- Eucalyptus tree saplings grow up every year that need to be appropriately removed.
- The Top Arena has very thick sand at the southern end yet almost none at the northern end. This arena needs to be laser levelled so that the sand coverage is even across the arena. Drainage is also an issue.
- The Bottom Arena has a drainage issue with large puddles forming at the bottom of the arena.
- The cross-country course has numerous safety concerns that need to be addressed due to a lack of maintenance and age of the course.
- A number of portable fences are not secured in line with Equestrian Australia and Pony Club Victoria rules.
- The loading ramp is in poor condition and should either be removed or repaired.
- The horse yards are either very boggy or have been damaged by fallen tree limbs. Both aspects require attention
- The venue is inadequately serviced with water. There is no provision for horse wash facilities.

Equestrian facility priorities

- Level both sand arenas so they have a consistent coverage of sand and also hopefully drain better.
- Conduct a safety audit of the cross-country fences.
- Provide a main source of water.

The internal condition of the pavilion was not observed however from the survey and interview comments it would suggest that this facility needs some basic improvements.

Future options

- Retain as is, but upgrade and maintain existing facilities.
- Develop this site as a base for trail riding to Lerderderg State Park.
- Consider this site and its potential for including some RDA activities.

Preliminary recommendations

- Undertake a cross-country course safety audit, consider ongoing provision of cross country at this site. Should it remain, implement audit recommendations.
- Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.
- Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.
- Upgrade surface on each arena to improve drainage.
- Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
- Upgrade perimeter fencing where required.
- Upgrade horse yards.
- Improve water supply for drinking, washing and dust suppression.
- Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.
- Update access and gating arrangement to allow casual key holder use, as appropriate.



01

Cross Country Course

- Undertake a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course and implement recommendations.
- In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, and design accordingly, or remove jumps.

02

Arenas

- Upgrade surface on each arena to improve drainage and remove sapling stumps.

03

Entries and Parking

- Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
- Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies).
- Develop a suitable gate/keyed entry.
- Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.

04

Horse yards

- Upgrade horse yards.

05

Utilities

- Provide access to power and drinking water.
- Improve water supply for drinking, washing and dust suppression.

06

Loading Ramp

- Remove or repair loading ramp.

07

Safety and Maintenance

- Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.
- Include the clubhouse in Council asset management plan if other sports clubrooms are included.
- Undertake a building audit on the clubhouse building to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward.
- Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.
- Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services.
- Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program
- Implement Emergency Management Plans for each venue
- Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
- Fencing or repairing the perimeter of the site with appropriate materials – for example remove barbed wire.
- Review the dog off-leash areas on the reserves and ensure that there are no off-leash areas on the same reserve as equestrian facilities.
- Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.

08

Management

- Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.
- Consider providing a relatively uniform license agreement for users.
- Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible.

09

Programs

- Consider Bullengarook as a site/s for an RDA facility
- Consider opportunities to establish safe trail riding from Bullengarook Reserve in collaboration with other agencies.
- Consider options to enable camping on, or in the vicinity of the Shire wide facilities.



Bullengarook Recreation Reserve

Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

LEGEND

- Property Parcels
- 1m Contour
- MRSC Sportsground

- Waterbodies**
- Lake-Dam
- MRSC Footpath
- MRSC Fenceline

- Roads**
- Freeway
- Highway
- Local

- Watercourses**
- High
- Medium
- Low



Date: 22.12.2023
Spatial data: Vicmap
Maps: MRSC GIS

3.3 IR Robertson Reserve, Gisborne South

The 12.8 ha reserve is situated at 340 Couangalt Road in Gisborne South. It is four parcels of crown land, dedicated to equestrian activities. A small waterway runs across the northwest corner of the land. The site is zoned Public Park and Recreation, surrounded by private properties in a Rural Living zone. There are no planning overlays over the site.

The pavilion has associated tanks, but there is a desire to access recycled water.

Use

The grounds are used by the Gisborne Pony Club, Gisborne and District Adult Riding Club and Melbourne Show Jumping Club. Club members make up the IR Robertson Advisory Committee.

Gisborne Pony Club was established in 1979. The Gisborne & District Adult Riding Club was formed in 1991 and was originally called the Couangalt Riding Club. In 2020 the club merged with the Macedon Ranges Working Equitation and continued operating under the name of Gisborne & District Adult Riding Club.

The Show Jumping Club have 70 members. The Pony Club have 40-50 members, Riding Club, 70-80.

Pony Club rallies are held on the first Sunday of the month. Adult Riding Rallies are held on the 2nd Saturday of the month and often a second rally is held on the 4th Saturday also.

Dressage, poles, show jumping, cross-country and working equitation lessons are held at the grounds. Occasionally winter rallies are held at a private indoor arena.

Show jumping, dressage, cross-country, camp drafting, obstacles, theory, games activities are conducted by the Pony Club. Riding Club participates in show jumping, cross-country, dressage, and 3 phase equitation.

Bookings for the reserve can be done online through the Reserve Advisory Committee.

Bookings for the cross-country course are available online via Try Bookings.

Environmental considerations

One of the land parcels on the road frontage is planted with mature pine trees. There is a wind break along the northern boundary. These trees are not protected but are highly valued for shade and shelter.

The rest of the site has an absence of shade, and most trees are exotic.

The pavilion has associated tanks, but there is a desire to access recycled water for dust suppression on the arenas and use on the cross-country course.

Facilities

The equestrian facilities at IR Robertson Reserve, Gisborne South, include the following:

- Sand arena 65 x 40m with some open grandstand seating.
- Sand arena 65 x 80m with some open grandstand seating
- A 100 x 100m sand arena
- Two grass arenas (30 x 60m and 20 x 60m)
- Horse yards (50)
- A 30m diameter round yard
- Wash down area (3 bays) and taps around the venue

- Cross-country course. (see image below configured for a grade two pony club event 2023)
- There is no manure management system. Manure was observed piled up at the base of pine trees.
- The open grass area on the east and the treed area is used for parking.

The grounds are served by a centrally located and relatively new corrugated iron clubrooms/ office and canteen with a small internal veranda, overlooking the sand arenas from the west.

There is an accessible toilet. There is large storage and equipment shed also with a veranda and two water tanks.



The image above shows the outline of a grade 2 pony club cross-country layout.



Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Covered or Indoor arena/Indoor arena for western riding
- With new arena being built there will be less parking
- Arena improvements
- Public access arrangement for casual use
- Grass maintenance – safety, fill holes, more cross-country jumps/improvements
- Yards / yards maintenance
- Camping facilities e.g., showers toilets wash bays
- Drainage
- More/ Steel yards
- Recycled water access to water arenas
- Lights
- Safe trail riding locations without motorbikes/ away from traffic to get to South Gisborne
- A riding track to get to grounds
- Track maintenance
- Public / Clubhouse/ clubrooms
- Parking - Last event had over 200 competitors
- Electricity upgrade/Solar arena to cope with the usage required for members
- Manure collection facilities.
- Stabling
- Better perimeter fencing
- More accessible facilities
- IR Robertson Reserve has the potential to be an amazing equestrian facility. It currently attracts riders from all over Victoria to the events that are offered by the clubs that use our grounds
- Water supply. There is no supply at all to the Reserve or Clubhouse for drinking. Recycle water would be ok for arena and grounds
- Signage on road
- Snakes
- Turning area into reserve with floats from Couangalt Rd can be dangerous with increasing traffic
- Mowing by Council is pivotal
- Better maintenance or have permission to do it. E.g. Tree removal
- Tree planting along fence line - better maintenance partnership - can't do work unauthorised
- All weather entry road and parking. Need tractor to pull cars out. Remove trees with roots on road
- Fencing around the arena still to be funded
- More yards - for competitions
- Recycled water in from the road. Pay 3-4k per year to have water bought in. Bought 2 tanks new. Buy water every summer
- Maintain basic infrastructure
- The venue is muddy in winter, so we need to maintain the road for access to the clubhouse
- Gisborne do not have the 4 arenas required to host a dressage event.



Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

The facilities are generally in very good condition.

The larger sand arena, however, has no base and is unusable in wet conditions with it becoming slippery and soft spots constantly appearing.

Key improvements recommended include:

- The fencing around the grass arenas needs repair due to tree damage.
- Investigate opportunities to establish a second access point as all weather access is only from Couangalt Road to the clubrooms.
- More all-weather tracks would be beneficial to allow access to parking.
- Ensure provision of appropriate water supply for event activities.
- The manure is likely to impact on the health of the mature trees. A manure management system is required.
- The condition of the pines should be monitored as the senescing pines can lose their large laterals.
- Consideration of more dedicated parking, access to power and water should be considered.

Equestrian facility priorities

- Upgrade the base on the 65x80m arena.
- Construction of more yards to reduce parking pressures on what is becoming a popular venue in the Shire.
- All weather access to service parking areas or additional permanent yards.
- Consider traffic management improvements (turning lane) for entry and egress to/from the site.

Future options

- Cross-country course needs to be maintained and developed to competition standard.

Preliminary recommendations

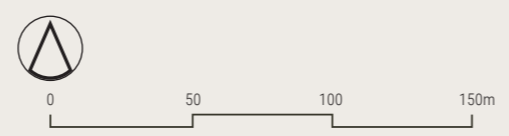
- Improve water supply via recycled water for cross-country jumps, dust suppression and toilets.
- Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
- Construct additional yards to reduce parking requirements.
- Upgrade the base for 65 x 80m arena.
- Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council and clarify roles through Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/ license agreement including clarification of environmental responsibilities and actions.
- Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.
- Address the management and collection of manure.
- Consider the safety of the pine trees as they senesce – as the area is used for yards and parking.
- Update the access and gating arrangement to allow casual key holders to use as appropriate. (Booking of Cross-country course available via TRY Booking)
- Additional tree planting for windbreaks and shade.





- 01 Cross-Country Course**
 - a. Undertake a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course and Implement recommendations
 - b. In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, and design accordingly, or remove jumps
- 02 Arenas**
 - a. Upgrade the base for 65x80m arena.
 - b. Consult user groups regarding location, size and design of a covered arena on this site following Council's agreement in principle.
- 03 Entries and Parking**
 - a. Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
 - b. Upgrade second entry/exit for emergency access off McGeorge Road.
 - c. Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies).
 - d. Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.
- 04 Trees and Shade**
 - a. Consider the safety of the pine trees as they senesce – as the area is used for yards and parking.
 - b. Additional tree planting for windbreaks and shade.
- 05 Yards**
 - a. Construct additional yards to reduce parking requirements.
- 06 Utilities**
 - a. Provide access to power and drinking water.
 - b. Improve water supply via recycled water for cross country jumps, dust suppression and toilets.
- 07 Safety and Maintenance**
 - a. Consider undertaking a building audit on the clubhouse building to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward.
 - b. Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.
 - c. Address the manure collection and management.
 - d. Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services.
 - e. Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program.
 - f. Ensure Emergency Management Plans and are provided for each venue.

- 08 Management**
 - a. Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use
 - b. Consider including the clubhouses in Council asset management plan if other sports clubrooms are included
 - c. Update access and gating arrangement to allow casual key holder to use as appropriate. (Booking of Cross-Country course available via TRY Booking)
 - d. Consider providing a relatively uniform license agreement for users
 - e. Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible.
 - f. Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.
- 09 Programs**
 - a. Consider South Gisborne as a site/s for an RDA facility
 - b. Consider options to enable camping on, or in the vicinity of the Shire wide facilities



Date: 22.12.2023
 Spatial data: Vicmap
 Maps: MRSC GIS

IR Robertson Reserve, Gisborne South
 Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

- LEGEND**
- Property Parcels
 - 1m Contour
 - MRSC Sportsground
 - MRSC Fenceline

- | | |
|--|--|
| — Watercourses | Roads |
| — High | Freeway |
| — Medium | Highway |
| — Low | Local |



3.4 Barringo Recreation Reserve, Macedon /New Gisborne

The 34.26ha reserve is situated at 18 Shannons Road in New Gisborne. It is one parcel of Council land. Equestrian activities take place across the site, though there are limitations due to cultural and environmental significance. The Macedon Pony club has an agreement to use a neighbour's land for part of the cross-country course. It is an awkward shape and largely covers forest and one grass area.

The site is zoned Public Conservation and Resource zone and is surrounded by a Rural Conservation zone.

Use

Council have closed the cross-country track which is in an area of environmental and cultural significance.

The site is also used for games, dressage, and show jumping. Use is limited to 20 days per year.

The Macedon Pony Club is the only club that uses the venue.

The Pony Club has a membership of about 40. The club takes younger children than the neighbouring Riddell club which is considered a more competitive club.

There is no casual use allowed.

Environmental considerations

There are Bushfire Management, Environmental Significance and Significant Landscape overlays for the site.

A Vegetation Protection overlay applies to the area surrounding the reserve but not the reserve itself.

A small watercourse runs north south through the site.

A part of this site is proximate to the Barringo Creek. It is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity.

There is good natural shade covering the site, however, dead trees and limbs cause concern for users, and impact on safety and functionality of the site for equestrian activities.

The availability of fresh water is limited.

Facilities

The equestrian facilities at Barringo Reserve, include the following:

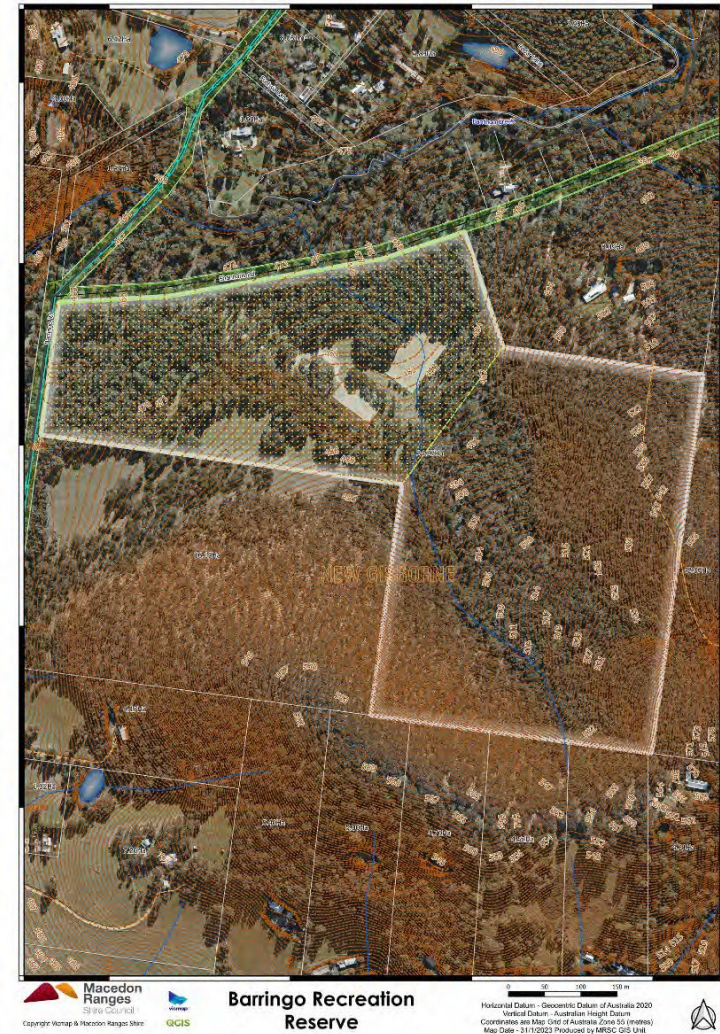
- Sand Arena 100 x 60m
- Sand Arena 60 x 40
- Grass Arena 40 x 40
- Tap x1
- Cross-country course.

Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Public access arrangement for casual
- Arena improvements
- Parking
- Yards / yards maintenance
- Public / Clubhouse/ clubrooms
- Cross-country course improvements
- Toilets
- Access to trail ridings
- Track maintenance.
- Junior riders area
- Dangerous tree removal
- Pony club access to dressage arena
- Seating areas
- Allowing more ground usage throughout the year.
- Toilets are in poor condition.
- Can't cut trees off fence line of arenas or remove branches over solar panels.
- No whipper snipper use
- no ambulance access is allowed to the cross-country.
- Perimeter fencing in poor condition - Club props it up with sticks. Trees fall over the fence and the club is not allowed to remove. (Note. Fence along Shannons Road and part Barringo Road replaced 2023).
- No power in clubrooms, other than solar panels which are impacted by overhanging branches
- Club meetings all off-site due to poor club facilities - Gisborne Police station, McDonalds or via Zoom.

DRAFT



Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

- Both sand arenas seem to be up to standard.
- The grass arena appears to be ok, but quite likely gets slippery in wet conditions.
- The cross-country course needs further repair and upgrading to be compliant and safe.
- There are also some tree branches hanging in treetops that require removal. There is also an amount of fallen trees, branches and debris on the tracks that needs to be cleaned up. There are low hanging branches that are across the entry and access to the property which makes it difficult or impossible for trucks to safely enter the venue.
- Only one tap by the club rooms was evident. This did not appear to be attached to a sufficient water supply for having numerous horses on site for competition days.
- There appears to be a complete reliance on being able to tie horses to trucks and floats for all activities held at the venue.
- This venue seems to have significant issues with the environmental impact of having horses on site, which makes it very difficult to recommend future improvements to the equestrian facilities.

Equestrian facility priorities

Unless these environmental issues can be resolved it is recommended that an alternative location for the Pony Club is found.

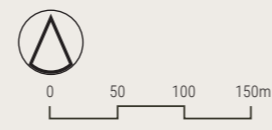
Future options

Investigate options for relocating club activities away from environmentally sensitive land.





- 01 Cross-Country Course**
 - a. Undertake a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course and implement recommendations.
 - b. In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, and design accordingly, or remove jumps.
- 02 Entries and Parking**
 - a. Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies).
 - b. Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.
 - c. Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.
 - d. Develop a suitable gate/keyed entry.
- 03 Utilities**
 - a. Provide access to power and drinking water.
- 04 Safety and Maintenance**
 - a. Ensure Emergency Management Plans and are provided for each venue.
 - b. Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services.
 - c. Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
 - d. Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program.
- 05 Management**
 - a. Provide a relatively uniform license agreement for users
 - b. Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible.
 - c. Include the clubhouses in Council asset management plan if other sports clubrooms are included.
 - d. Investigate options for relocating club activities away from environmentally sensitive land, e.g., to adjacent cleared land with cross country.
- 06 Programs**
 - a. Consider opportunities to establish safe trail riding from Barringo Reserve in collaboration with other agencies.



Date: 22.12.2023
 Spatial data: Vicmap
 Maps: MRSC GIS

Barringo Recreation Reserve Macedon / New Gisborne

Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|--------|
| 1m Contour | Local | High |
| Property Parcels | Waterbodies | Medium |
| MRSC Sportsground | Lake-Dam | Low |
| MRSC Fenceline | | |



3.5 Rollison Reserve, Kyneton

The large 42.15ha reserve, of which approximately 21.27ha is used for equestrian activities, is situated off Redesdale Road to the north of the Kyneton township. The site abuts Edgecombe Rd, but there is no access to it from this road. The entry is via a very narrow road off Redesdale Rd.

It is two parcels of Council land, including part of an old tip site. Two main watercourses run through the property which is serviced by a dam, with this site being the only serviced by its own water source of the Macedon Ranges facilities.

The site is zoned Public Park and Recreation, and is surrounded by Farming Zone to the north, Public Use Zone - (Service and Utility) to the west, Public Use - (Local Government) and Industrial Zone to the south, and Rural Living Zone to the east.

Use

The equestrian facility at Rollinson Reserve is home to the Kyneton Pony Club, and the Kyneton and District Adult Riding Club. The clubs have a memorandum of understanding of who uses what. There are also two car clubs based at the reserve. Use for equestrian activities is constrained by the noise and dust from the motor sports clubs, so they tend to alternate use over two weekends. This constrains equestrian use at the reserve.

Equestrian clubs work with car clubs when events are on. Membership of the resident clubs is currently low.

There is shared use of the clubrooms, toilets, shed, show jumping arena, and dressage arena.

Riders have a code for arena access.

Environmental considerations

The first watercourse commences in the northwest corner which splits into two, one runs north south and the other runs northeast.

There are Bushfire Management and Environmental Significance overlays for the site.

There is a dam on the site.

There is some natural shade cover at the site. Additional plantings would provide further sun and wind protection. Additional plantings between the equestrian precinct and car clubs may help reduce dust and noise to provide a better environment for participants and horses.

The clubhouse provides some sun protection for those viewing the large arena.

Facilities

The equestrian facilities at Rollinson Reserve, include the following:

- Sand Arena 80 x 80m
- 2 sand arenas 60 x 20m
- Round yard, approximately 18m diameter
- Cross-country course
- 2 taps
- Approximately 60 horse yards
- The sand arenas, round yard and horse yards appear to be up to acceptable standards.

This site has the best size for a cross-country course, and the site is served by a dam.



Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Covered or Indoor arena/Indoor arena for western riding
- Cross-country course/ /improvements
- Arena improvements/surface of dressage etc.
- Conflict of use at the site between cars, horses and dog walkers
- Fenced section for dog walkers/ remove dog area from the reserve, due to safety concerns
- Parking/driveway access
- Public access arrangement for casual use /
- The dressage arena is not available to the public
- Camping facilities e.g. showers toilets wash bays
- Better maintenance
- Trail rides
- Yards / yards maintenance
- Would love safe marked trails with parking available
- Clubrooms
- Education for cyclists
- Keep horses out of an environmentally sensitive land
- Entrance
- Fencing along Edgecombe Road and Rollinson Reserve

- Open access means people can ride without paying and then Clubs must repair/ replace and clean up. Security is a problem - received grant from Council for equipment and it was stolen last week.
- More arenas would be good to attract more clubs.
- There is no power in Adult Riders shed. Another gate access would assist.
- Riding for the Disabled is an opportunity to consider.
- Online booking system for use of the Cross-country Course. Some damage occurring. Solution is charge public for use of horse areas.
- Maintenance (Grants for the club and then the club is happy to continue with ongoing maintenance)
- Scheduled slashing of Rollinson Reserve, rather than the current ad hoc process. This would greatly improve maintenance planning.
- Cross-country course is in a state of disrepair. Club money required. Course open to public therefore issues with jumps
- Kyneton District Trail Riders Club not based at the reserve —must ride from Glenlyon Reserve in Hepburn. Use Glenlyon Reserve and Trentham for annual camping/riding event. Need easy access to a trail.
- The facilities are incredibly important for the public, not just for Pony Club or Adult Riders Club
- There is a lack of reserves/arenas/ in area. Lack of trail riding spaces – Currently use Metcalf State Forest. Use to ride at Bald Hill until kicked out. Use to ride in Cobaw Range but too many motor bikes now.
- Playground for non-riders.
- Skip bin.
- Kitchen.
- Water and electricity upgrades.
- Stalls.

Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

The sand arenas, round yard and horse yards appear to be up to acceptable standard.

- The cross-country course needs significant maintenance. An upgrade is required to be of a safe and compliant standard with Equestrian Australia and Pony Club Victoria rules.
- The water jump needs serious and urgent work and should not be used until it has been rectified.
- The venue appears to be inadequately supplied with water for the number of yards and size of the facility.
- There are no permanent wash-down bays at the venue that are used for full-length cross-country competitions.
- All-weather vehicle access to parking areas is required.

Future options

- Although large, the future of the site is constrained by poor access for floats and the presence of the car clubs.
- Options to improve access and to use the site on all weekends and reduce the conflict with car clubs should be immediately investigated, to ascertain the long-term viability of investing at the site.
- Investigate the option to upgrade and maintain the cross-country course to a competition level in the longer term if use and access arrangements can be addressed.
- As dogs and horses are not compatible, review current dog off-leash arrangements to cease this activity at the reserve or provide a dedicated area.

Preliminary recommendations

- Investigate alternative access to the site.
- Investigate current site use and relationship between user group activities to ascertain long term viability of the activities on site before any major upgrades.
- Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.
- Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
- Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.
- Assist in the design and implementation of an online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.
- Increase water access for drinking, dust suppression and wash down area.
- Construct washdown bays.
- Consider the future of the current off leash area. If venue remains as a 'timed dog off leash area', consider a fenced enclosure for a portion of the reserve, away from equestrian activities or relocate the dog area.
- Upgrade external fencing where required, particularly along Edgecombe Road.
- Plant a screen and windbreak between car clubs and equestrian areas to minimize conflict and sightlines.





- 01 Cross-Country Course**
- Work with the clubs to complete a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course.
 - Upgrade and maintain the cross-country course to a competition level, in the longer term if use and access arrangements can be addressed.
- 02 Entries and Parking**
- Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
 - Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies)
 - Develop a suitable gate/keyed entry.
 - Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.
- 03 Trees and Shade**
- Planting a screen and windbreak between car clubs and equestrian areas to minimise conflict and sightlines.
 - Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
- 04 Utilities**
- Increase water access for drinking, dust suppression and wash down areas.
 - Provide access to power and drinking water
- 05 Washdown bays**
- Construct washdown bays
- 06 Safety and Maintenance**
- Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.
 - Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.
 - If venue remains as a 'timed dog off leash area', consider a fenced enclosure for a portion of the reserve, away from equestrian activities.
 - Upgrade external fencing where required, particularly along Edgecombe Road.
 - Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services.
 - Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program
 - Fencing or repairing the perimeter of the site with appropriate materials – for example remove barbed wire.
 - Consider undertaking a building audit on the clubhouse building to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward.

- 07 Management**
- Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.
 - Consider including the clubhouses in Council asset management plan if other sports clubrooms are included.
 - Consider providing a relatively uniform license agreement for users.
 - Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible
 - Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.
 - Ensure Emergency Management Plans and are provided for each venue.
- 08 Programs**
- Consider options to enable camping on, or in the vicinity of the facilities.



Date: 22.12.2023
 Spatial data: Vicmap
 Maps: MRSC GIS

Rollinson Reserve, Kyneton
 Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

LEGEND

1m Contour	Roads	Watercourses
Property Parcels	Local	High
MRSC Sportsground	Waterbodies	Medium
MRSC Fenceline	Lake-Dam	Low



3.6 Woodend Racecourse Reserve, Woodend

The 25.66ha reserve is located on Forest Street in Woodend, of which approximately 3.44ha is used for equestrian activities (excluding trail riding). It is made up of five parcels of crown land. There is a small watercourse in the northwest quadrant.

The site is zoned Public Conservation and Resource and surrounded by Public Conservation and Resource to the north, Farming to the west and Neighbourhood Residential to the east.

Use

Woodend Pony Club is located at Racecourse Reserve. Equestrian activities provided include general horsemanship, jumping, dressage, games through to competition. It is a very small club that encourages members to be supportive of each other and creates a fun and safe environment for all to learn and enjoy equestrian. Pre covid the club had 50 members with 18 currently. The club is running a 'Riders Without Horses' program.

Riddells Creek Adult Riding Club is also based at Forest St. The Club was established in March 2001. The Club is operated by a Committee of Management and has approximately 20 members, ranging from beginners to Level One, competing in everything from dressage, combined training, horse trials and navigation rides. The club provides for riders of all levels to socialise and participate in a variety of activities and events.

Facilities

The equestrian facilities at the Reserve, include the following:

- Sand Arena 60 x 20m
- 2 sand Arenas 60 x 80m
- Grandstand arena 35 x 15m
- 70 yards – 47 around arena and 23 yards in car park.

- There are 2 taps on site.
- Cross-country course

Environmental considerations

There is an Environmental Significance overlay, Protected Settlement Boundary and Vegetation Protection overlay.

All or part of this site is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, due to the proximity to the creek.

The cross-country area adjacent to the creek is a low-lying area and often unusable in wet weather.

The equestrian precinct has no shade for participants or horses.

Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Arena improvements/ maintenance
- Covered or Indoor arena/Indoor arena for western riding
- Cross-country course/ more cross-country jumps
- Public access arrangements for casual use
- Yards / yards maintenance
- Safe - trail riding tracks
- Equipment sheds (Old equipment sheds need replacing and moving closer to arenas)
- Public /clubhouse female toilets
- Pony club access to dressage arena
- Better ground drainage
- Shade/Shade trees, very exposed site on hot days
- Seating at arenas
- Needs a horse wash.
- Less dogs off leash wandering through.
- Arena surfaces and horse yards - maintenance. Need to spray and turn over sand.
- Shared storage - location unsuitable and leaks following rain. Not secure, expensive equipment inside. Council have told them they won't maintain shed.
- Toilets - breach child safe requirements. Door faces away from Reserve.
- Clubrooms - kitchen outdated, storage.
- Vandalism of Cross-Country jumps – ropes
- Consider an alternate site for equestrian activities, this would require an 8-hectare site within 5km of town if possible. As a club member I have had initial discussions with Braemar College and Davies Hill developers
- Existing infrastructure adequate but presentation lacks across Reserve.
- Issues over years with neighbours - damage, conflict with dogs
- Club logs days of event use with Council so no use outside those times.
- Members need keys to access. People would love easier access to arenas but not available.
- Use yards but dilapidated and not safe. Rails splitting, white wire sagging. Council said work on hold for Master Plan.
- Yards a priority
- It's unique having an equestrian ground in the middle of town in Woodend.
- Build an arena for the good of equestrian and the townships a large money-making project Woodend or Kyneton central to in all interstate visitors.
- I grew up riding my pony around Woodend. I think it should be encouraged and 'allowed' for us to ride our horses around.
- With a shift in demographics seeing parents with very young children being able to provide safe areas for teaching small children to ride would be a priority for Woodend Pony Club.

Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

- The facilities at Woodend need a considerable amount of maintenance.
- The facility would appear to be underutilized, possibly due to it not being maintained.
- The 60 x 20m arena is lower than the ground surrounding it and does not drain.
- The larger 60 x 80m arenas are also poorly drained, and only half of one arena is used with any regularity.
- The lower yards are unused and need some repairs.
- If the grandstand arena is a designated equestrian area, it requires additional sand topping.
- The cross-country course requires significant maintenance, with most jumps in very poor condition. During the wet periods, it is recommended that the cross-country area is closed for use due to ground damage. The water jump has been well built but is falling into disrepair and shouldn't be used until it has been refurbished.
- This venue also would appear to have issues with non-complimentary multi-uses with members of the public walking dogs both on and off lead in the same area as equestrian pursuits.

Equestrian facility priorities

- Given the constraints at the current venue, an alternative venue for equestrian pursuits should be investigated and/or merging with nearby clubs.
- Close cross-country course in the short term.
- Upgrading of sand arenas in the short term.
- Better separation of public and equestrian areas.



Future options

Investigate a partnership with other landowners to provide an equestrian facility for the use of Woodend clubs.

Preliminary recommendations

- Consider the future of equestrian activities at this site.
- Close the cross-country course in the short term, until alternative site options are considered, and the Racecourse Reserve Master Plan is developed.
- Turn over the sand in the arena to address weed growth and continue to allow use in the short term.





- 01 Location**
 - a. Investigate a partnership with Braemar College to provide an equestrian facility for the use of the school and the Woodend equestrian clubs.
 - b. Work with Braemar College to support the development of an RTO in equine studies
- 02 Cross-Country Course**
 - a. Close the cross-country course in the short term, until alternative site options are considered, and the master plan is prepared.
 - b. In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, and design accordingly, or remove jumps.
 - c. Work with the clubs to complete a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course.
- 03 Entries**
 - a. Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies)
 - b. Develop a suitable gate/keyed entry.
 - c. Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.
- 04 Arenas**
 - a. Turn over the sand in the arena to address weed growth and continue to allow use in the short term.
- 05 Safety and Maintenance**
 - a. Ensure Emergency Management Plans and are provided for each venue.
 - b. Review the dog off-leash areas on the reserves with equestrian facilities and ensure that there are no off-leash areas on the same reserve as equestrian facilities.
 - c. Consider undertaking a building audit on the clubhouse building to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward regardless of who does the work.
 - d. Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
- 06 Management**
 - a. Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.
 - b. Include the clubhouses in Council asset management plan if other sports clubrooms are included.
 - c. Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services.
 - d. Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program
 - e. Consider providing a relatively uniform license agreement for users.
 - f. Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible.
 - g. Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.



Date: 22.12.2023
 Spatial data: Vicmap
 Maps: MRSC GIS

Woodend Racecourse Reserve Woodend

Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

LEGEND

- Rail line
- 1m Contour
- Property Parcels
- MRSC Playground Sites
- MRSC Sportsground

- Roads**
- Freeway
- Highway
- Local
- Waterbodies**
- Lake-Dam

- Watercourses**
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Easement

- MRSC Drainage Pit
- MRSC Drainage
- MRSC Kerbs
- MRSC Footpath
- MRSC Fenceline



3.7 Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve, Lancefield

Located within Lancefield Park, the facilities on this reserve are managed by a volunteer Committee of Management of a wider Recreation Reserve.

The 18.35ha reserve is situated off Chauncey Street in Lancefield, approximately 7.27ha is used for equestrian activities. It is a single parcel of crown land. An additional parcel of Council land accommodates Lancefield Harness Club further south.

The site is zoned Public Park and Recreation with Farming to the west and General Residential to the east.

The site includes a dressage arena, cross-country track and jumps area. The facility is used by residents and hosts regional events.

This reserve has many different facilities scattered across it. The equestrian facilities are in a beautiful setting with long avenues of large mature exotic trees. The site is nicely presented and change facilities are very clean and tidy.

Use

Lancefield Equestrian Group (LEG) and Lancefield Pony Club use the facilities.

Lancefield Equestrian Group has nearly 100 members. It has rallies every 2nd Sunday and 4th Monday. Competitions generate over 100 participants.

The Pony Club has approximately 30 members. The clubhouse is shared between both groups.

Disciplines catered for include dressage, show jumping, cross-country - (rally use only) and eventing. Four dressage arenas are required for competitions which this site has.

Clubs use grassed area for floats, cars, show jumping, 6 tie ups, and heated horse wash.

Venue hired by Gisborne, Kyneton, Bolinda, Macedon, Bullengarook and Seymour clubs. They pay LEG to set up arenas.

Environmental considerations

A small watercourse runs east west through the site. A water area is located on the south boundary. The entire site has a Heritage overlay.

The site is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity.

The southern portion of Lancefield Park is referred to as Lancefield Swamp. The site contains one of the richest deposits of megafauna fossils in Australia with the bones of thousands of animals preserved in the clay.³ (Refer Appendix 4). Any activities in this area of the reserve must not be detrimental to the site's significance.

³ The timing and cause of megafauna mass deaths at Lancefield Swamp, south-eastern Australia. Quaternary Science Reviews. August 2016

Facilities

The equestrian facilities at Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve include the following:

- Sand arena 60 x 20m fenced
- Sand arena 100 x 70m unfenced
- Sand arena 60 x 40m unfenced
- 44 yards
- Two horse wash bays
- Cross-country course.

The facilities are served by a large, well organised shed, meeting room and toilet and change including an accessible toilet.

The yards on the west are nicely shaded from the sun.

Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Arena improvements/surface of arenas /surface maintenance/ jumping equipment
- Cross-country course/ improvements
- Covered or Indoor arena/Indoor arena for western riding
- Public access arrangement for casual uses
- Parking/driveway access
- Trail rides
- More yards / better yards maintenance
- Fenced section for dog walkers
- Camping facilities with showers and wash bays
- Safety/signage
- More water points.

- Better care of nature
- Separated from bikes and cars.
- More space
- There is some conflict with users on the wider grounds; parking, dog use and the footy siren etc that spooks horses.
- Parking is a problem on event days. Had an agreement with trotters and put money into developing a central area- but conflict in use times.
- Lancefield is a prime location to develop an Equestrian hub. Close enough to the Hume and Calder, it would service a great deal of local and riders from further afield
- Yards are plenty for rallies but not enough for Competitions, so they split between morning and afternoon
- MRSC do not directly contribute to Lancefield ground upkeep, like at other grounds. (Note: MRSC is not the Committee of Management for the site). MRSC provides \$20,000 per annum to the Lancefield Park Reserves Committee of Management to contribute to maintenance costs
- Other clubs have identified Lancefield has no room for a cross-country course
- Issues with the management of the reserve by the committee management
- Our club hires Lancefield once a year and it can be a nightmare getting answers out of the committee of management (especially re the trotting track and paying to keep the trotters away for the day)
- Lancefield needs a larger area so that the Pony Club can grow (would like 6 arenas)
- An agreement some years ago with the harness club that the 1st and 2nd Sunday of the month between 10 am and 1.00 pm there would be no harness horses on track is no longer adhered to by harness club.

Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

- Except for the cross-country course, the facilities at this venue appear to be up to standard.
- The cross-country course requires some work to be compliant and safe.
- Some portable fences are not secured, some are no longer compliant with current standards.
- The sunken road/water complex needs serious repair to the retaining walls.

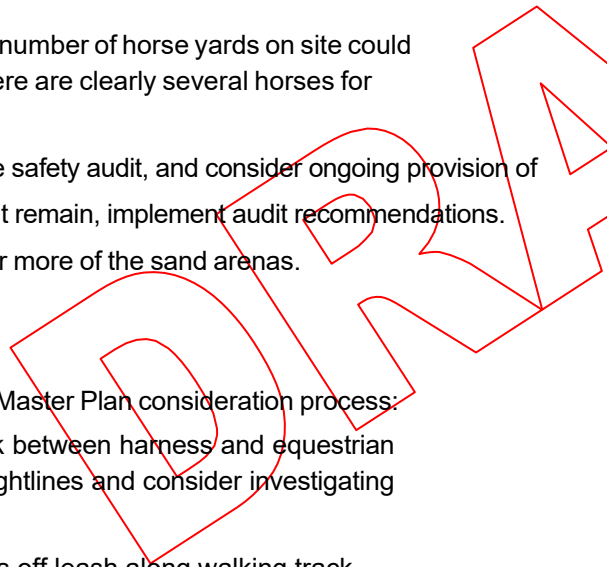
Equestrian facility priorities

- Another set of wash bays for the number of horse yards on site could be a consideration also given there are clearly several horses for competition days.
- Undertake a cross-country course safety audit, and consider ongoing provision of cross-country at this site. Should it remain, implement audit recommendations.
- Permanent fencing around one or more of the sand arenas.

Future options

As part of the current Lancefield Park Master Plan consideration process:

- Planting a screen and windbreak between harness and equestrian areas to minimise conflict and sightlines and consider investigating parking arrangements.
- Addressing the conflict with dogs off leash along walking track adjacent to equestrian facilities via signage or rerouting the walking track.
- Formalising relationship with the harness precinct and parking access.



Preliminary recommendations

- Support upgrade of surface of arenas.
- Update access and gating arrangement to allow casual use.
- Improve parking to allow all weather access for large vehicles.
- Improve water supply for drinking, washing and dust suppression.
- Construct additional wash down bays.

Ensure that activities within the megafauna site are not detrimental to the importance of this area.

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- 01 Cross-Country Course**
 - a. Work with the clubs to complete a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course.
 - b. In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, and design accordingly, or remove jumps.
 - c. Protect megafauna area in cross country precinct from development
- 02 Arenas**
 - a. Support upgrade of surface arenas
- 03 Entries and Parking**
 - a. Improve parking to allow all weather access for large vehicles and access to trotting track on event days through a formal agreement.
 - b. Maintain two road access points in case of events or emergencies.
 - c. Develop a suitable gate/keyed entry.
 - d. Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.
- 04 Trees and Shade**
 - a. Plant a screen and windbreak between harness and equestrian areas to minimize horse distraction during dressage.
 - b. Protect existing tree plantations and plan for replacement in the long term
- 05 Washdown Bays**
 - a. Construct additional wash down bays x 2
- 06 Safety and Maintenance**
 - a. Address the conflict with dogs off leash along walking track adjacent to equestrian facilities via signage or rerouting walking track.
 - b. Consider undertaking a building audit on the clubhouse building to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward.
 - c. Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program.
 - d. Fencing or repairing the perimeter of the site with appropriate materials – for example remove barbed wire.
 - e. Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
 - f. Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services.
 - g. Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible.
 - h. Ensure Emergency Management Plans and are provided for each venue.
 - i. Review the dog off-leash areas on the reserves and ensure that there are no off-leash areas on the same reserve as equestrian facilities.

- 07 Management**
 - a. Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.
 - b. Consider including the clubhouses in Council asset management plan if other sports clubrooms are included.
 - c. Consider providing a relatively uniform license agreement for users.
 - d. Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.
 - e. Consider options to enable camping on, or in the vicinity of the shire-wide facilities.

Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve Lancefield

Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

LEGEND

	1m Contour
	Property Parcels
	MRSC Playground Sites
	MRSC Sportsground
	Megafauna Area

Roads	Waterbodies		MRSC Drainage Pit
			MRSC Drainage
	Watercourses		MRSC Kerbs
			MRSC Footpath
			MRSC Fenceline



Date: 22.12.2023
Spatial data: Vicmap
Maps: MRSC GIS

3.8 Riddells Creek Pony Club, Riddells Creek/ Clarkefield

This facility is located at 282 Sutherland Rd Clarkefield, approximately 50 kilometres northwest of Melbourne.

The site consists of two parcels of land. One is a Council Reserve of 2.46ha situated off Sutherlands Road in Clarkefield. One of the arenas is located on this land. The site is zoned as Farming.

Adjacent to the Council Reserve is private land (approximately 40ha) also used by the Riddells Creek Pony Club with an arrangement from a local family for equestrian use. This larger lot contains the small club house, several fenced grass areas, a larger sand arena and a cross-country course.

Large lots surround the small parcel of land leased to the Pony Club. The site is also zoned as Farming.

There is a Low-Density Residential zone to the north of the site in Riddells Creek which is separated by Sutherlands Road.

Use

The Riddells Creek Pony Club is based at this facility. The club was awarded Club of the year in 2023 and top 3 in Australia. The club has 99 members.

Disciplines catered for include dressage, show jumping, cross-country, grooming and pony club rallies. The 2021 Pony Club Victoria Horse Trials Festival was hosted at Riddells Creek Pony Clubs grounds (280 entries).

The facilities are also leased to other groups including the Riddells Creek Trail Horse Riding Club. The trail club do not use any existing pony club facilities or venues.

Environmental considerations

There is an Environmental Significance overlay on the entire site.

The equestrian precinct has no shade for participants or horses, except one large, protected tree in amongst the arenas.

The site would benefit from a detailed planting plan to provide shade and wind protection.

Facilities

- Sand arena 150 x 75m unfenced
- Sand arena 130 x 74m fenced
- Sand arena 58 x 28m unfenced
- Round yard
- 87 yards
- Cross-country course
- Clubhouse.

Issues raised

The following issues were raised in the community survey and in interviews with user group representatives:

- Better arena surfaces at Riddells Creek Pony Club
- Improve cross-country course including more jumps
- Covered or Indoor arena/Indoor arena for western riding
- Parking/driveway access
- Garbage collection
- More shade trees planted
- Funding for coaches
- Overflow car parking not accessible in wet weather
- Upgrade sand arena
- Club rooms
- Better/ Parking/ access in winter that you don't get bogged
- General maintenance
- Show jumping equipment
- Expansion of grounds to cater for Equestrian Australia (EA) Events.
- Club must pay for rubbish removal. 20 bins last week after an event.
- Need to upgrade yards - replace timber with steel
- Grounds generally ok in wet - overflow car park could do with some gravel
- More sand for arena
- Maintenance on cross-country is big - 15 tonne of rock on holes after members used course on wet day
- Arena improvements/ dressage arena/ maintenance.

- There are no official EA dressage event locations near or in the Macedon Ranges. The Riddells Creek Pony Club could be better adapted with improved dressage surfaces to conduct EA official dressage competitions, alongside pony club and open competitions.

Current Condition of facilities, key areas of improvement and priorities

- All facilities at this venue appear to be up to standard.
- The venue and facilities appear to be well maintained.
- The cross-country area is on private land that is leased to the pony club to use.
- There is no all-weather vehicle access around the horse yards and parking area.

Equestrian facility priorities

- All weather access tracks established around the yards and parking areas.
- An additional designated wash down area for major competition days.

Future options

- Club to investigate options with the neighbouring landowner to secure long-term tenure of venue, which may enable further public investment on the site.

Preliminary recommendations

- Update yards to improve security and safety.
- Provide an all-weather access track around the yards and parking areas.
- Provide an additional designated wash down area for major competition days.
- Complete a detailed tree planting plan to provide shade and wind protection.
- Club to investigate options with the neighbouring landowner to secure long term tenure of venue, which may enable further public investment on the site.

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- 01 Cross-Country Course**
 - a. Work with the clubs to complete a thorough safety and compliance audit of cross-country course.
 - b. In consultation with clubs, agree on the level of cross-country competition, if any, and design accordingly, or remove jumps.
- 02 Yards**
 - a. Update yards to improve security and safety.
 - b. Provide an all-weather access track around the yards and parking areas.
- 03 Washdown bays**
 - a. Provide an additional designated wash down area for major competition day.
- 04 Tree Planting and Shade**
 - a. Complete a detailed tree planting plan to provide shade and wind protection.
- 05 Entries and Parking**
 - a. Safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies).
 - b. Develop a suitable gate/keyed entry.
 - c. Update signage at each equestrian site with a facility name and contact details for information.
- 06 Safety and Maintenance**
 - a. Undertake a building audit on the clubhouse building to ascertain the noncompliant and most urgent works required, and preventative maintenance going forward.
 - b. Regular mowing and tree management on the site, where these are required.
 - c. Essential asset management of the buildings: major preventative maintenance, accessible toilet, compliant kitchen, Essential Safety Measures/fire services
 - d. Implement a Bushfire Prevention Management program.
 - e. Fencing or repairing the perimeter of the site with appropriate materials – for example remove barbed wire.
 - f. Ensure Emergency Management Plans and are provided for each venue.
- 07 Management**
 - a. Investigate options with the club and other landowner to secure long term tenure of venue, then enable further public investment on the site.
 - b. Consider providing a relatively uniform license agreement for users.
 - c. Prepare a detailed table of asset management tasks and for each task, identify who is responsible.
 - d. Work with clubs to establish a casual use system for relevant sites.
 - e. Consider options to enable camping on, or in the vicinity of the shire-wide facilities.



Date: 22.12.2023
 Spatial data: Vicmap
 Maps: MRSC GIS

Riddells Creek Pony Club Riddells Creek / Clarkefield

Community Equestrian Facilities Plan
 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Victoria

LEGEND	
	Property Parcels
	1m Contour
	Roads
	Local
	Watercourses
	High
	Medium
	Low



4. ACTION PLAN

4.1 Actions by site

Table 4. Action by site included in Development Plan following each facility in Chapter 3 - Existing Facilities.

Action	Lead	Timing / Priority
Bullengarook Recreation Reserve		
Undertake a cross-country course safety audit and Implement recommendations.	Club	High
Upgrade surface on each arena to improve drainage and remove sapling stumps.	Club	High
Improve water supply for drinking, washing and dust suppression.	Council/Club	Medium
Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.	Council	High
Review maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.	Council/Club	Medium
Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas	Club/Council	Medium
Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access.	Council	Medium
Upgrade perimeter fencing where required.	Council	Medium
Upgrade horse yards.	Club	Medium
Remove or repair loading ramp.	Club	Low

Action	Lead	Timing / Priority
IR Robertson Reserve, Gisborne South		
Improve water supply (if appropriate via recycled water) for cross-country jumps, dust suppression and toilets.	Council/Club	High
Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles at Shire wide venues.	Council	Medium
Construct additional yards to reduce parking requirements.	Club	Medium
Investigate possible second entry/exit for emergency access off McGeorge Road.	Council	Medium
Review and upgrade maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.	Council	Medium
Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.	Council	Medium
Monitor the safety of the pine trees as they senesce – as the area is used for yards and parking.	Council	Medium
Update access and gating arrangement to allow casual key holder to use as appropriate. (Booking of Cross-country course available via TRY Booking).	Club	Medium
Additional tree planting for windbreaks and shade.	Council/Club	Medium
Address the manure collection and management.	Club	Medium
Barrigo Recreation Reserve, Macedon /New Gisborne		
Investigate options for relocating club activities away from environmentally sensitive land.	Council/Club	Medium
Undertake a cross-country course safety audit, consider appropriateness of ongoing provision of cross country at this site. Should it remain, implement audit recommendations.	Club	High

Action	Lead	Timing / Priority
Rollinson Reserve, Kyneton		
Increase water access for drinking, dust suppression and wash down areas.	Council/Club	High
Construct washdown bays.	Council/Club	High
Consider appropriateness of dog off leash areas at equestrian facilities. If venue remains as a 'timed dog off leash area', consider a fenced enclosure for a portion of the reserve, away from equestrian activities.	Council	High
Upgrade external fencing where required, particularly along Edgcombe Road.	Council	High
Review and update maintenance arrangements between clubs and Council. Clarify roles through an occupancy agreement and clear conditions of use.	Council	Medium
Improve parking and road entry to allow all weather access for large vehicles.	Council	Medium
Upgrade and maintain the cross-country course, in the longer term if use and access arrangements can be addressed.	Club	Medium
Planting a screen and windbreak between car clubs and equestrian areas to minimize conflict and sightlines.	Club	Medium
Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.	Club/Council	Medium
Ensure building assets meet current requirements for access, fire and electrical safety.	Council	Medium
Woodend Racecourse Reserve, Woodend		
Investigate opportunities to provide equestrian facilities for the Woodend clubs at an alternate location.	Council/Club/Third Parties	High
Close the cross-country course in the short term, until alternative site options are considered, and the master plan is prepared.	Club/Council	High
Turn over the sand in the arena to address weed growth and continue to allow use in the short term.	Club	Medium
Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.	Club/Council	Medium

Action	Lead	Timing / Priority
Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve, Lancefield		
Planting a screen and windbreak between harness and equestrian areas to minimize horse distraction during dressage.	Club/Council	High
Resolve the conflict with dogs off leash along walking track adjacent to equestrian facilities via signage or rerouting walking track.	Council	High
Protect the megafauna area in the cross-country precinct from building development.	Committee of Management/Club	High
Upgrade the arena surfaces.	Committee of Management/Club	Medium
Improve parking to allow all weather access for large vehicles and access to trotting track on event days through a formal agreement.	Council	Medium
Assist in the design and implementation of online booking and payment system that allows casual access to arenas.	Council	Medium
Construct additional wash down bay x 2	Club	Low
Riddells Creek Pony Club, Riddells Creek/ Clarkefield		
Update yards to improve security and safety.	Club	High
Investigate options with the club and other landowner to secure long term tenure of venue, then enable further public investment on the site.	Club	High
Improve the access track around the yards and parking areas.	Council	Medium
Provide appropriate wash down areas for competition days.	Club	Medium
Complete a detailed tree planting plan to provide shade and wind protection.	Council/Club	Medium

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Macedon Ranges equestrian clubs and membership

Table 5a. Macedon Ranges Equestrian Clubs using private land or land outside Macedon Ranges Shire, approximate memberships and the primary facility used.

Club Name	Membership	Primary Facility Used
Kyneton District Trail Riders Club	44	Glenlyon Reserve, Hepburn
Riddells Creek Trail Horse Riding Club	110	No fixed venue
Bolinda Riding Club	50	Private (Hamey Park Equestrian Centre)
Working Equitation Lancefield Districts	Not known	Cemetery Road, Lancefield
Macedon Ranges Dressage Club	65	Juravon Park Equestrian Centre
Black Hill Riding Club	Not known	South Gisborne
Aurum Equestrian Club	Not known	Aurum Equestrian Centre
Five Mile Equestrian Club	Not known	Romsey

Table 5b. Macedon Ranges Equestrian Clubs on Council or Crown land, approximate memberships, and the primary facility they use.

Club Name	Membership	Primary Facility Used
Gisborne Pony Club	46	IR Robertson Reserve
Gisborne and District Adult Riding Club	108	IR Robertson Reserve
Melbourne Show Jumping Club	70	IR Robertson Reserve
Bullengarook Pony Club	25	Bullengarook Recreation Reserve
Bullengarook Adult Riding Club	45	Bullengarook Recreation Reserve
Kyneton and District Adult Riding Club	50	Rollinson Reserve
Kyneton Pony Club	13	Rollinson Reserve
Lancefield Equestrian Group	100	Lancefield Recreation Reserve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equestrian • Pony Club 	30	
Macedon Pony Club	43	Barringo Reserve
Woodend Pony Club	18	Woodend Racecourse Reserve
Riddell's Creek Adult Riders	20	Woodend Racecourse Reserve
Riddells Creek Pony Club	99	Candelbark/Riddells Creek Pony Club



Appendix 2

Demand for equestrian activities in Macedon Shire

Australia and New Zealand are major global centres of equestrian sports and culture, with significant popularity of the sport due to the weather, geographical, natural, and historical factors of the region. The country with the highest proportion of horse riders among the nations is Australia ([almost 400,000 Australians own horses](#), which means that horse owners comprise nearly 2% of the Australian population).⁴

Demographic Influences

An internet survey of almost 4,000 horse owners found most were female and aged between 31 and 60 years; most lived in rural areas of Queensland, New South Wales or Victoria; had at least a secondary education, but no formal horse industry qualification; had a higher weekly income if based in a capital city; earned less than 10% of weekly income from horse-related activities; were a member of more than one horse industry organisation; reported an affiliation with one of more than 300 different horse industry organisations; spent 10–30% of their daily time with horses; and preferred to receive information by email.⁵

⁴ The Popularity of Equestrian Sports in Australia and New Zealand. Everything about horses

Macedon Ranges demographic profile

The population estimate for Macedon Ranges Shire in 2021 is 51,576. Since the previous year, the population has grown by 1.52%. Population growth in Regional VIC was 1.33%.

The Macedon Ranges Shire population is forecast to grow to 65,771 by 2036.

Age, income, gender, ethnicity, disability and education are primary determinants of participation in sport and physical activity. Based on these indicators and the likely availability of land in the Shire there is high propensity for residents of Macedon Ranges to participate in equestrian activities.

Compared to regional Victoria, Macedon Ranges has:

- A higher proportion of children under 14 years and people over 60 than for regional Victoria. It has a smaller proportion of 20 – 50 years olds.

The following table identifies each equestrian facility in the Shire, the district that it's located in according to .id demographics, the estimated population from the 2021 census as well as the growth in population in that district since the last census and forecast growth.

⁵ Demographics of Australian horse owners: results from an internet-based survey GB Smyth, K Dagley 25 November 2015

Table 6. Estimated population 2021 in the district around each equestrian facility in Macedon Ranges, known membership and projected future population growth

District	Name of Equestrian Facility	Population of surrounding district 2021 ⁶	Known club membership	Population growth since last census	Est. Population 2036 ⁷	Growth projected to 2036	% growth projected 2021-2036
Gisborne District	IR Robertson Reserve	14,335	354	0.79%	20,170	5,835	40.7
	Bullengarook Recreation Reserve		70				
Kyneton District	Rollinson Reserve	9,805	63	1.38%	11,707	1,902	19.4
Lancefield District	Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve	3,336	130	2.64%	4,465	1,129	33.8
Macedon District	Barringo Recreation Reserve	3,554	43	0.25%	3,481	-73	-2
Riddells Creek District	Candlebark/Riddells Creek Pony Club	4,792	43	1.09%	7,389	2,597	54.2
Romsey District	No facility	7,009	NA	2.30%	9,203	2,194	31.3
Woodend District	Woodend Racecourse Reserve	8,745	29	2.58%	9,357	612	7

⁶ forecast.id.com.au/macedon-ranges. Population summary

⁷ forecast.id.com.au/macedon-ranges. Population forecast

Likely participation and profile of equestrian participants

The participation data for Macedon Ranges Shire shows it has one of the highest participation rates in equestrian recreation activities in LGAs in Victoria. A high proportion of participants are older females. Many riders who may live in the suburbs of Melbourne can agist a horse in the Macedon Ranges to add to local participation.

Studies have shown that the Macedon ranges equine industry are viewed highly due to the high volume of equine industry in the area.

The engagement process showed that other than the traditional pony club, HRCAV and Equestrian Australia (EA) disciplines and trail riding, other equestrian sports such as working equitation are present and active in the Macedon Ranges.

The survey also showed that Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) is not present in Macedon Ranges and there is a demand for opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate in equestrian activities.

Equestrian sport context

Endurance riding, dressage, jumping, and horse-riding are popular equestrian sports. There is an estimate of two hundred fifty thousand people in Australia that are involved in the equestrian industry. Moreover, there are around 85,000 people employed in the industry, which equates to about \$1.7 billion in income.

There are around 350 equestrian sporting events in Australia every year. Following the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984, the success of Australia in equestrian events changed the national attitude about the sport. As such, it was viewed by many to be a landmark moment in the development of equestrian sports in Australia and internationally.

In the last ten years, the Australian sport and recreation industry has grown by approximately \$1.3 billion per annum. Equestrian competition accounts for over \$70 million, or 5.8% of this figure.⁸

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⁸ The Popularity of Equestrian Sports in Australia and New Zealand. Everything Horse Magazine. June 2022

Participation rates in equestrian sports and recreation activities

In the Macedon Ranges, participation in equestrian activities ranks in the top 10 sport and physical exercise activities participated in, whereas it does not rank in the top 15 for Victoria or Australia overall.

Only four Victorian LGAs have equestrian activities in the top ten sport and physical activities, for females:

- Golden Plains (9.5%)
- South Gippsland (8.5%)
- Macedon Ranges (6.3%) and
- East Gippsland (5.6%).

None of these have equestrian sport and physical activities in the top ten when male and female participants are combined.

Applying the participation rate of 2.5% for the regional Victorian population in equestrian facilities to the population of Macedon Ranges, it is projected that Macedon Ranges may have 1,300 participants in recreation equestrian activities currently and that this figure may increase to 1,600 by 2036.



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Figure 1 AusPlay participation rates: Macedon Ranges, female

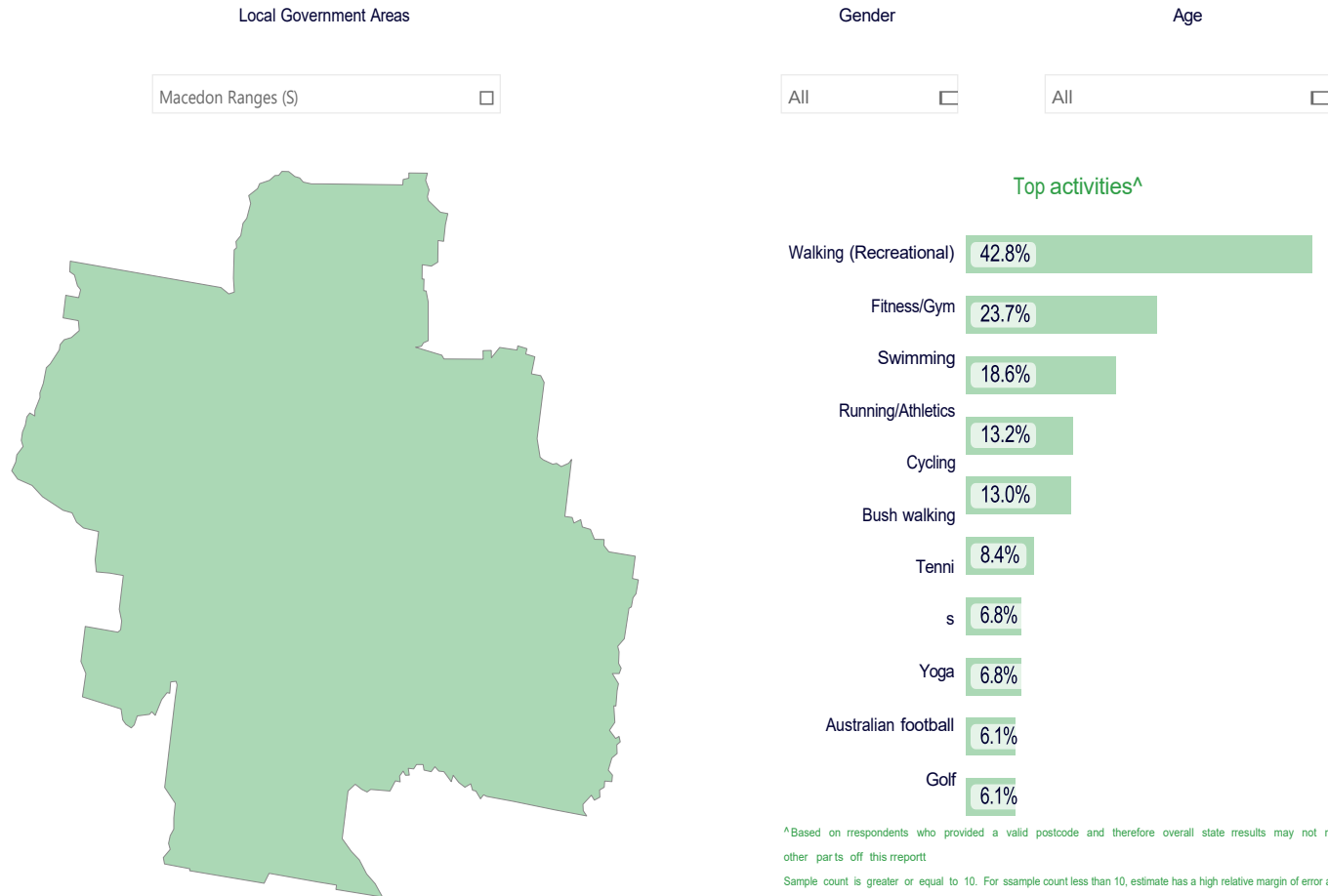
AUSPLAY™



^ Based on respondents who provided a valid postcode and therefore overall state results may not match other parts of this report
Sample count is greater or equal to 10. For sample count less than 10, estimate has a high relative margin of error and is

Figure 2 AusPlay participation rates: Macedon Ranges, all genders

AUSPLAY™



Profile of participation in equestrian activities in Australia

Gender and age

Participation data from AusPlay indicates that equestrian sport is predominantly female, with only 15% of participation being adult males. Children make up 23% of organised (out of school) participants.

The highest proportion of participants in any age group by gender are females in the 45 to 54 age bracket (18%), followed by females in the 25 to 34 year age group (18%), females 15 to 24 years, (17%), females 35 to 44 years (16%) and finally females 55 to 64 years (12%). Participation peaks at around 12 to 14 years of age.

A surprising number of people over 60 years of age still participate, the majority of whom are female.

Nationally the total participation rate is 1%.

Most participants have an income of between \$70,000 to \$200,000.

Some 45% of participants over 15 years participate in equestrian activities via either an equestrian centre, program or organisation (outside of school).

Some 25% of people over 15 years of age participate through a club.

All abilities

People with disability have a participation rate in equestrian facility activities at 0.8%.

How equestrian participation compares with other sports and physical activities

In Victoria, the top sports, based on participation rates, in order of percentage are: swimming, Australian football, basketball, gymnastics, dance, soccer-football, tennis, netball, cricket and karate.

The top 10 activities participated in Macedon Ranges for all genders are walking, fitness, swimming, running, cycling, bushwalking, tennis, yoga Australian rules football and golf.

The top activities participated in by females include in descending order: walking, fitness/ gym, swimming, running, yoga, netball, cycling, bushwalking, Pilates and equestrian activities.

Equestrian does not rank in the top ten activities for males and females combined.

Patterns of participation in equestrian activities

Of those people who participate in equestrian activities (Australia-wide) 65% of participants participate once a week. The most common participation frequency (83%) is once a month.

Females who participate more regularly and for the longest duration tend to be 18 to 24-year-olds. 71% of riders ride for a minimum of 1.5 hours on each occasion.

AusPlay only categorises equestrian activities as show jumping, horse riding, other equestrian activities, dressage and carriage driving. The data shows that the proportion of activities is horse riding (79%) other equestrian activities (13%) dressage, (3.5%) show jumping (2.9%) and carriage driving (1.1%).

Common sporting activities that equestrian participants also participate in include walking, running, swimming and fitness.

The main motivations to participate in equestrian activities are fun and enjoyment, as a hobby, physical health and fitness and social reasons.

The main reasons for dropping out include affordability, not enough time, too many other commitments, poor health or injury and increasing age.

AusPlay shows that since 2016 there has been a rise in the overall number of organised and club participants in equestrian activities in total in Australia from 194,000 to 254,000. This is likely to reflect an increasing population however, there has been a slight increase of 0.2% in the participation rate.

Participation in equestrian activities is highest in remote areas at 2.4%, followed by regional areas at 2.2% and finally in major cities at 0.6%.

Key implications of demand in relation to Council's role

Equestrian activities and clubs are important to support being active, in conjunction with a range of other competition sports and recreation activities.

Equestrian clubs provide support and encouragement to people to own, ride and enjoy horses.

A key state government policy is to encourage more females to participate in sport and recreation. Supporting those activities already popular with females such as equestrian activities align with this policy.

Residents in the Macedon Ranges are dependent on the equestrian facilities for:

- Providing a suite of community equestrian activities
- For the growth and development of basic equine skills and opportunities
- Enabling clubs to provide a supportive and enjoyable environment so people of all ages can share their interests and continue to benefit from riding a horse.
- Participation in pony and riding clubs and any EV clubs should be supported by Council as these provide pathways to lifelong activities and higher levels of sport in the same way as other community sports facilities do. Facilities need to be available and suitable to accommodate these activities.
- Pony clubs provide opportunities for young people to learn and develop equine skills and enter a pathway to equestrian sports if desired. Riding clubs provide support and encouragement for people from a wide range of age and ability groups, who own a horse, and enjoy the activity.
- Council and clubs can influence participation in these activities by ensuring facilities: are fit for purpose and target a wide range of ages and abilities. Clubs are encouraged to include programs focused on the development of foundation skills.
- When assessing the range of activities evident on the equestrian reserves, it is important to emphasise that organised equestrian participation is dependent on these facilities. Other recreational activities, such as walking and dog walking do not rely on dedicated facilities and grounds.
- Another consideration for Council is that horse riding is the second most expensive organized sport or physical activity behind motor sport, with an average annual expenditure per person of approximately \$1,400. (ABS 2016). This is partly due to the high cost of participation including the cost of private services and facilities, as well as cost of looking after and transporting a horse.
- Retaining local community-level facilities close to residences and schools is likely to increase the chances of local residents participating in equestrian activities, as compared to moving these facilities further out of the Shire or consolidating facilities. However, this needs to be managed sustainably and may necessitate limiting activities at sites or the closure of venues.
- One key issue raised in the community survey and by clubs was the need to have access to trails for general pleasure riding, rather than just competitions and club activities, as without trails all other activities come with a cost and rely on floating horses. Trails in MRSC are provided on Parks Victoria and DEECA land.

Benefits of equestrian facilities

Equestrian activities provide a high degree of personal health and well-being, as well as community benefits. They encourage people (especially females) to be outdoors, be physically active and connect with animals and other people.

Riding a horse requires the use of a wide range of muscle groups and builds strength, stamina as well as coordination and promotes the development of resilience and strategic decision making.

The bond that develops between the horse and the rider has been shown to provide considerable psychological and stress release benefits and horse riding is commonly used as a therapeutic tool to promote these benefits.

*Noella says her horses can even just look at her sideways in a way that makes her feel better. "They can complete a whole human," she said. For Noella and many people with disabilities who ride, horses provide a kind of therapy that cannot be understated. "My horse is my reason to get up, he makes me feel normal."*⁹

Like many other sport and recreation activities, the development of horse-riding skills and competition can enhance self-confidence, social skills, the sense of belonging and responsibility that comes with owning and caring for a pet. These benefits including discipline, compassion and empathy are amplified for equestrian activities due the size of a horse and opportunities to compete with a horse, in events.

Australia is very fortunate that it is quite practical to own a horse, due to our climate (which means they don't need to be stabled over winter) and we have the space. However, the ability to keep and ride a horse in peri urban and metropolitan areas is becoming more difficult and being able to retain equestrian reserves close to where people live is a great strength of living in localities such as the Macedon Ranges. Horses can be agisted in this area and there is a strong equine industry present.

Peak bodies say that the Macedon Ranges is the second strongest region in Victoria for equestrian sports participation, after the Mornington Peninsula. There is a significant industry presence that supports recreational as well as thoroughbred breeding and training and other commercial equestrian activities.

⁹<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-20/para-equestrian-challenge-disability->

Notes from peak bodies about demand

The main peak bodies relevant to the equestrian facilities in Macedon Ranges are:

- Equestrian Victoria
- Pony Club Victoria
- Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria (HRCAV)
- Riding Develops Abilities (RDA), and
- Australian Trail Horse Riders Association
- Additional various breed and equestrian activity associations.

@leisure interviewed staff members from Equestrian Victoria, Pony Clubs Victoria, Horse Riding Clubs of Victoria, and RDA Riding Develops Abilities.

Key points from these interviews follow.

Pony Clubs Victoria

- Decline in memberships from 2015/16, mainly due the pressures of land development.
- People likely to be still riding (horse sales have not increased in that time frame) but not as club members.
- Drop out of clubs is common from 14 years of age.
- Lack of volunteers is a common club issue.
- Quality of facilities is also an issue.
- Dogs off lead is a common problem for clubs.
- The Ready to Ride program has been successful.

Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria

Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria (HRCAV) has a club membership of around 200 clubs and over 5,000 members, including members in southern New South Wales.

The HRCAV hold annual Top Teams Trophy (TTT) Events (equivalent to State Championships) in each discipline of Showing, Dressage, Show Jumping, Horse Trials, Combined Training and Navigation Rides. Clubs compete in teams of four. TTT events are prestigious within the HRCAV with the Horse Trials being one of the largest.

The Oaklands, Sunbury and Tullamarine Clubs have recently merged and now meet at the Greenvale Equestrian Reserve, next to Woodlands Park in Greenvale, and have taken the name Woodlands Pony Club. They are now the biggest club in this Zone.

- Attracting volunteers are an issue for all clubs particularly since COVID.
- Lack of places to ride for pleasure is a key issue i.e. off road trails close to home.
- A new discipline for riding clubs is 3 phase equitation which has its origins relating to working horses.
- Club sizes vary from 20 to 100 members.
- The role of Councils is taking on the larger maintenance issues including mowing of access roads, providing support facilities like toilets and showers; and providing a network of trails where horses can ride along with other user groups.
- Dog areas should be fenced if horse riders are nearby.
- Casual use of facilities can be managed via a key system that provides a source of income to clubs.
- Only to be used when others are present.

RDA Victoria

There are some 36 clubs in Victoria.

- RDA do not have a presence in Macedon Ranges and there is significant demand.
- It is common to co-locate with other equestrian clubs.
- RDA would facilitate agreement for a particular centre and recruit volunteers to seek funds etc.
- RDA have strong partnerships with major racecourses and the ability to use ex-racehorses.
- Would strongly support and assist in the development of a venue and programs in the Macedon Ranges.

Australian Trail Horse Riders Association

The Riddell Trail Riders Club is one of the largest in Victoria with over 80 adult riders and 17 riders under 18 years. It was once the largest in Australia with over 200 members. It is now the second-largest club in the state. The largest club in the state is Ballarat with 92 members.

- Club membership is predominately women and girls.
- Use public and private land.
- Trails are mostly not maintained.
- The role of Councils is to
 - help educate car drivers to give them an understanding of horses and riders.
 - provide a link between public landowners and riding groups to access trails.
 - provide basic signage in parking areas if trails are shared with mountain bike riders and trail bike riders.
- Misconception that horses are bad for the environment with regards to weed distribution and erosion.

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Membership of clubs Pony Clubs Victoria

Macedon Ranges fall into the Central Zone for Pony Clubs Victoria.

The graph below shows stable membership at Bullengarook, Lancefield, and Riddells Creek, a trend for growth in Gisborne and the

highest but declining numbers in Macedon. Woodend shows declining membership to 2021.

It appears that Macedon Ranges has more clubs than any other LGA in the Central Zone.

The graph below from 2021 shows membership comparisons over the years for each pony club in the Central Zone, which covers Macedon Ranges Shire.



Schools

Braemar College, Woodend use Candlebark/Riddells Creek Pony Club. Braemar have finished in the top five schools in the Interschool State Equestrian Championships for the past 10 years.

The school won the State Championship in 2015 and 2016 and won the Victorian Equestrian Interschools Dressage Series Championships every year from 2011 to 2016.

Schools are an important part of the pathway from foundation skills into competition and active lifestyles in the long term. Connections with schools and clubs will be important in growing participation, and in economic development due to connections with the equine industry.

Braemar College for example has several extracurricular programs involving equestrian activities and it wishes to develop a registered training organisation to further equine studies at the College, in a similar way to Hillcrest College in Clyde.

Demand and preferences of the community and stakeholders

As part of this project, a community survey was conducted, with residents and clubs invited to make comments or send submissions.

The notes from these engagement processes are provided in the consultation finding document which is a separate volume to this plan.

A total of 313 people responded to the community survey. Detailed responses are provided in the consultation findings document and key themes arising are shown below.

Key themes arising from responses

Some of the main themes from the responses received in the community were:

- The need for facilities to be upgraded (mostly) and maintained.
- The importance of trails and opportunities for trail riders to ride through the municipality.
- The need for an indoor or covered arena.
- The high demand for casual use of these public facilities/ frustration that gates are locked.
- The significant benefits of horse riding and having public facilities for equestrian use.
- Conflicts with dogs, and
- The need for better parking /access to facilities

Peak Bodies-objectives and responsibilities

Equestrian Victoria

Equestrian Victoria (EV) is responsible for a number of sports competitions and pathways:

Olympic Disciplines

- Dressage
- Eventing
- Jumping and
- Para-Equestrian (EA)

National Disciplines

- Show horse
- Interschool

FEI Disciplines

- Driving
- Endurance (EA)
- Vaulting (EA)
- Reining (EA)

Squads

- Dressage Victoria squads
- Eventing Victoria Squads and
- Jumping Victoria Squads

Sports Programs

- High Performance Pathways
- Equestrian Victoria Young Ambassador Program
- Young Rider Dressage Squads and Development Program

The primary objectives of Equestrian Victoria are to:

- Encourage, develop, promote, and control horse sports throughout the State of Victoria
- Establish and maintain, throughout Victoria, a uniform code of rules and regulations to govern horse sports under its jurisdiction.
- Provide services and support to members, clubs, coaches, judges, and administrators, which is second to none.

Membership of Equestrian Victoria now exceeds 200 affiliated clubs, and 5,000 registered athletes. The Association provides a broad range of services and benefits to its membership and has a major focus on servicing member clubs, to ensure they are well equipped to professionally deliver quality horse sport programs to the community.

Equestrian Victoria relies on two private facilities Boneo (now sold) and Yering Equestrian Centre for competitions, in addition to the Werribee Equestrian Centre.

Some Equestrian Victoria events are held at IR Robertson Reserve, Gisborne and at Candlebark Riddells Creek Pony Club.

Activities provided at the community level are an important conduit for riders that may wish to learn the sports and ultimately compete in Equestrian Victoria Sports disciplines, at other locations.

Equestrian Victoria provides a number of facility guidelines related to facilities in line with national and international equestrian sports.

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Pony Club Victoria (PCV)

Pony Club Victoria typically provides for younger riders, up to 16 years of age, learning basic skills.

Their mission is:

“To provide education in rider safety and horse welfare while developing horsemanship skills through participation and competition. “Pony Club is the first choice for a fun, inclusive experience for young people and families in a safe, educational environment that teaches horsemanship skills and equestrian opportunities “

Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria (HRCAV)

Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria cater for adults who own a horse, are riding for the first time or most commonly, or are an entry point for those returning to the activity after having a family. Some adult riding clubs also cater for riders who don't have horses. Members need to be able to ride independently. HRCAV provide a community of likeminded people to support and encourage people to own or ride a horse. These clubs are unique to Victoria. Most clubs have their own grounds - but they might hire other facilities.

Competition disciplines include:

- Navigation Rides
- Showing
- Horse Trials
- Dressage
- Show Jumping
- Combined Training
- 3 Phase Equitation (new discipline)

Trail Riders Association

The objectives of the club are to enjoy, promote and publicise the recreational values of horse riding along nature trails, and in furtherance of this objective.

- To organize trail rides in this or other districts
- To encourage family participation in non-competitive horse riding
- To foster awareness of the usefulness and abilities of the horse
- To encourage horse riders in the protection and conservation of the native Australian flora and fauna
- To co-operate with others in the setting up and maintenance of trails
- To foster in horse riders and Australians generally an awareness of road and other safety rules with regard to horse riding and To affiliate with the Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA)

RDA -Riding Develops Abilities

RDA -Riding Develops Abilities specialise in providing support and coaching for people with a disability (particularly physical disabilities) who want to ride a horse or ride for therapy purposes. In most cases riders don't have their own horses and they are provided on site.

Breed Associations

There are a wide range of equestrian breed associations, for example Arabian, Miniature Horse, Clydesdale, Show Horse etc. However, there are no known such groups active in the shire.

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Appendix 3

Risk and maintenance responsibilities

Pony Club Australia have detailed Policies and Risk Management procedures available to member Pony Clubs on their website to support Club events and manage risk - <https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au/about-us/resources/>.

The Horse-Riding Clubs Association of Victoria also have Policies and Guidelines that are available to support Club events and manage risk - <https://hrcav.com.au/rules-guidelines/>

Following is a draft of Clubs, Council Advisory Committees and Council responsibilities for equestrian reserves. (Note: Reserves with equestrian activities have a range of management structures. Clubs either report direct to Council, an Advisory Committee (Robertson Reserve), a DEECA Committee of Management (Lancefield) or private owner (Portion of Riddells Creek).

Table 8. Draft Club, Advisory Committees and Council responsibilities for equestrian reserves

Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
Communication	Inform Council of name/s of current Club contact, phone number/s and email address/s.	Council to communicate via Club contact supplied by Club.
Internal Roads and Carparks	Report issues to Council/Committee.	Maintenance as required, annual grade of internal roads negotiated with committee and Councils Operations Department.
Ground Level Drainage	Report issues to Council/Committee.	Site Drainage – Keep drains clear of obstructions and vegetation growth. Modifications and capital upgrade as determined.
Trees	Club to notify Council/Committee of all tree management issues and are prohibited from undertaking any works. Clubs may clean up fallen limbs and debris.	Tree management as required.
Mowing	Competition area – Club is responsible for mowing of all competition arenas outside of Councils 2 per year.	Council to mow twice per year. Fire prevention works may be required.
Damage to property by misuse	Report all damage caused through misuse by the Club to the Council/Committee. Club is responsible for cost of repairs.	Council to arrange repairs and invoice Club for cost of repairs.
Structural Integrity	Visual inspection to determine any obvious defects and report to Council/Committee.	Building inspection, repair or renewal.

Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
Signage	<p>User groups are required to discuss requirements with Council's Open Space and Recreation department before the erection of any new signage, including on fences and buildings.</p> <p>Sponsorship and Club signage – inspect, repair and replace to ensure they are clear, legible, structurally sound and compliant with all relevant planning and building requirements, permission from the committee is required. Care should be taken to ensure that appropriate signage is erected to warn of any hazards. Any non-compliant signage will be subject to planning legislation.</p>	<p>Regulatory and Emergency Signage - Renewal as prioritised by Council. All signage must be approved by Council and adhere to Councils planning regulations.</p>
Building alterations	<p>Building alterations not to be undertaken without written support from the Council/Committee and written approval from Council.</p> <p>Council has a responsibility to ensure the reserve is safe for all users. Any user group proposing such works must formally apply to Council for consideration of works using the "Ground/Pavilion Alterations Maintenance Request" form.</p> <p>All works that are classified as a regulated trade- i.e. plumber, electrician, gasfitter, roofer- must be carried out by a suitably qualified tradesperson who will have all relevant qualifications, licences and insurances including Workcover.</p>	<p>Assess all requests received for building alterations, provide approval in writing, ensure compliance and satisfactory completion. And/or Council undertakes repairs with Council contractors under a cost agreement between Council and the Club.</p>
Roof, Eaves Guttering and downpipes	<p>Report visual defects to Council/Committee. Climbable fixed items must not allow access to the roof.</p>	<p>Inspect, clean, repair or renewal as prioritised by Council.</p>
Painting	<p>During user period, painting repairs if damaged through general use or in the event of damage caused by inappropriate behaviour.</p>	<p>Renewal as prioritised by Council. Internal & external painting as part of the building's programmed maintenance schedule.</p>
Plumbing and fixtures	<p>Report issues to Council/Committee. Repairs to internal fittings and fixtures using licensed plumber from Council's panel of providers.</p>	<p>Drainage repairs or works, including sewerage, drains, water pipes and pits. Replacement of gas pipes. Structural repairs or capital works.</p>

Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
Fixture and Chattel (Fixture - any physical property that is attached in such a manner that it becomes a part of the property; Chattel - property that is not affixed to real property and can be easily removed without damage to the property)	Report issues to Council's Facility Management Department. Ensure all equipment used during Club activity is in a safe and effective working order. Repairs using contractor from Council's panel of providers.	Nil.
Building Lighting (Internal and External) Security Lighting	Report issues to Council/Committee. Replace globes, repairs to lighting using contractor from Council's panel of providers.	Renewal as prioritised by Council.
Electrical Fittings Light Switches Power points	Report issues to Council/Committee. All additional works must be approved by Council prior to works commencing. All works must be undertaken by contractor from Council's panel of providers.	Approval for additional installation works.
Electrical Panel Switchboards Wiring	Report issues to Council/Committee.	Electrical switchboard inspections, maintenance and upgrades.
Hot Water System	Report issues to Council/Committee. Contribution towards renewal	Repair or renewal as prioritised by Council.
Air Conditioning/ Heating	Report issues to Council/Committee. Contribution towards renewal	Repair or renewal as prioritised by Council.
Floor surfaces and coverings	Carpets - Regular cleaning and maintenance, including 6 monthly steam cleaning; Timber Floors – Regular cleaning with recommended cleaning product.	Renewal as prioritised by Council, Contribution required from Committee / user groups; Timber Floors – Inspected and resealed as required.
Doors (Internal and External, including cupboard doors and door fittings) Windows and Glass, Skylights, Fly Screens, Curtains and Blinds Walls (Internal and External) and Ceiling (Internal)	Regular cleaning.	Renewal as prioritised by Council.

Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
Exit Doors Signs Emergency lighting, Fire Services Emergency Power and Lighting	Notify Council/Committee immediately of any damage or defects.	Essential Safety Measures maintenance requirements conducted by Council to comply with emergency management obligations under the Building Code of Australia.
Testing and Tagging	Clubs must ensure any electrical items and cables used by user group have been appropriately tested and tagged.	Testing and Tagging of any Council owned electrical items and appliances.
Keys and Locks	No pavilion key(s) may be cut/duplicated. User groups are responsible for keeping a record of who holds keys. User groups are not permitted to change locks on Council-owned facilities and will be charged for repairs and new keys if they do so. Keys are provided to user groups as per Council's Key Policy. If additional keys are required, please complete and return the "Key Request Form" to arrange extra keys at a cost to the user group.	Maintain a Secure Key System, coordinate key allocation, cost of initial two keys provided to user groups, invoice user groups and committees for cost of all other keys, upgrade facilities to Council Secure Key System when budget allows.
Security system	Support from Council/Committee and approval from Council required for installation of security system. Cost of installation, repairs and maintenance if required by Club. Security code to be provided to Council.	Installation of Security System must be directly wired to switchboard. Approval for installation of security system.
Vandalism	Immediately notify Committee of vandalism, glass breakage, any immediate risk to safety or emergency maintenance. Clear away loose material/objects, such as rubbish bins to avoid or minimise vandalism. Loose combustible materials must be stored at least 10 metres from any buildings. LPG gas bottles must be stored securely and away from combustibles and chemicals.	Council to determine if the reported vandalism is to be referred to the insurer. Council's Insurer to determine whether an insurance claim is lodged. Council to determine scope of works. If an insurance claim is not lodged, Council to determine who is responsible for cost of repairs or replacement.
Pest Control	Pest control such as ant and spider spraying. Submit Pest Controller Certification that works have been undertaken to Council.	Termites - Annual inspection and condition report to Council, treat as required. Repair of any damage caused by termites will be subject to available Council funds.
Services - Electricity, Gas, Water Communications - Telephone and Internet	All user groups shall pay for utility charges, including electricity, gas and water rates and consumption. Shared pavilions in most cases will have electricity accounts in the name of one of the allocated user groups. The onus is on the joint user groups to negotiate their respective percentage contribution towards any utility charges.	Nil.

Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
Septic	During user period, pumping out of septic tanks must be undertaken by a certified provider.	Maintenance and renewal as prioritised and inspection.
First Aid	During user period, ensure appropriate First Aid facilities and equipment are available for Club activities.	Nil.
Evacuation Plan	During user period, ensure Evacuation Plan is clearly displayed and evacuation routes are always clear. Develop, print and display laminated Evacuation Plan at facility.	Provide safe access from the main road (and, where possible, two road access points in case of events or emergencies).
Fire restrictions and Code Red days	All fire restrictions are to be adhered to and user groups are responsible for making themselves aware of these. For more information on Councils emergency management policies and procedures please see http://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Fire-Emergencies	Update website information when required.
Kitchen	During user period, regular cleaning, maintenance and repairs.	Renewal as prioritised by Council.
Food handling and storage areas	During user period, comply with Food Act 1984 and Food Standards Code.	Annual inspection (as a minimum) as per the Food Act 1984.
Appliances and Whitegoods	Repairs and renewal of Club appliances.	Nil.
Storage	Shipping containers are prohibited on sporting reserves, other than those instances where containers may be required to temporarily store equipment when council/user groups undertake major works. Council approval is required.	Nil.
Waste	During user period, disposal of Club generated waste at Clubs cost. Portable waste bins must be securely stored and these and fixed waste management stations must be located at least 10 metres away from structures.	Nil.
Bins	Clubs are responsible for their own skip bins, rubbish and recycle bins. All user groups shall ensure that rubbish throughout the entire reserve generated by participants and spectators has been placed in the provided rubbish bins, immediately after each event. User groups will be required to pay costs incurred by Council where further cleaning of rubbish generated by user groups is required. If extra bins are required, please contact the Open Space and Recreation department	Nil.
Cleaning	During hire period, ensure that appropriate standards of general cleanliness within the facility are maintained.	As required, ensure that appropriate standards of general cleanliness within the facility are maintained. If no user group on site, engage a commercial cleaner to conduct an annual clean.

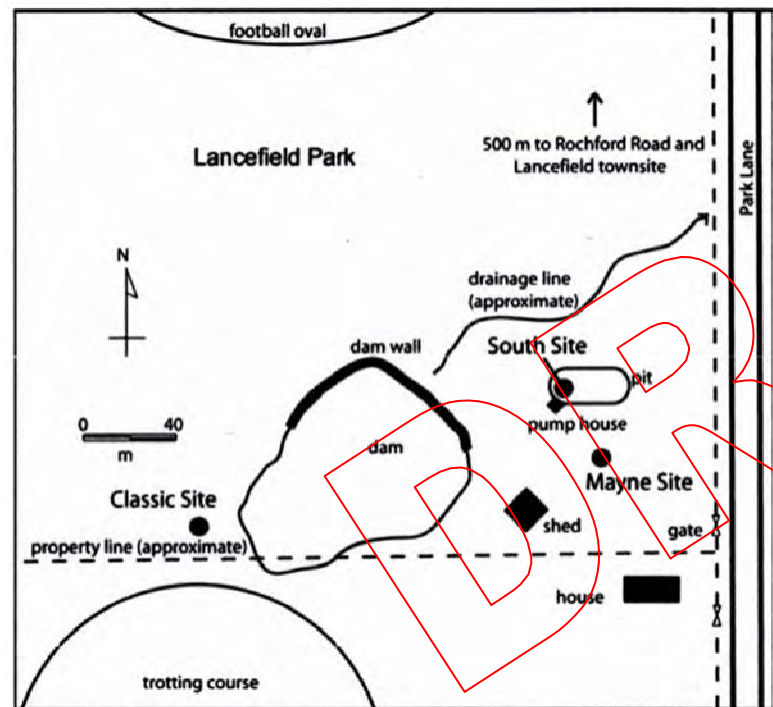
Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
Toilet	During user period, clean before and after each day of use.	Outside user period, regular cleaning, maintenance and repairs. Renewal as prioritised by Council.
Chemicals	Store chemicals in a safe and secure area with appropriate safety information to minimise the likelihood of misuse or pollution occurring and that MSDS are available	Nil.
Fencing	Internal fence repair and maintenance – arenas and yards.	Arrange shared cost for internal fences repair between user groups. Fencing or repairing the perimeter of the site with appropriate materials – for example remove barbed wire.
Ground/turf maintenance	All user groups are strictly responsible for ensuring that reasonable care is taken of the equestrian facilities and its surrounds including fences, buildings, toilets, trees, competition surface, playground equipment and sprinklers. Any damage caused must be reported to Council immediately	Nil.
Insurance	<p>The Club should be aware that they may be held responsible and liable for any damage or injury caused by their activities. The Club must take out and keep current during the period of hire, a public liability insurance policy, for a minimum sum of 20 million dollars (or a sum deemed appropriate by the sport's governing body, indemnifying the Council and the Club against all actions, costs claims, charges, expenses and damages whatsoever which may be brought or made or claimed against the Council or the Club or both arising out of or in relation to (the said contract).</p> <p>No booking is valid, and no ground usage may occur unless Council has been provided with a current Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency.</p> <p>Further to this, it is recommended that the Club should develop a Risk Management Plan/Policy to be implemented when using the facility to ensure that any potential risks are always minimised.</p> <p>Council holds insurance on the pavilion facilities, and it is highly recommended that Clubs organise contents insurance for non-structural items such as sporting equipment, furniture, electrical goods etc.</p>	Nil.

Item	Club/Advisory responsibilities	Council responsibilities
User contributions	<p>Regular users will be required to pay a contribution towards maintenance for the use of equestrian facilities within 30 days upon receiving the invoice.</p> <p>Regular users will be invoiced annually. Users of equestrian facilities will be invoiced at the commencement of each financial year.</p> <p>Applications for use of Council properties will NOT be considered where user contributions remain unpaid from a previous allocation usage, or the conditions of use have NOT been adhered to.</p>	Nil.
Maintenance requests	Clubs to make maintenance requests via Council supplied maintenance request form.	Log and action as prioritised by Council.
Other	Anything not specified should be raised with the committee to determine responsibility before any action is taken.	Determine responsibility for anything not mentioned in these guidelines.

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Appendix 4 Megafauna site

Lancefield Swamp is a highly significant archaeological site located at the south end of Lancefield Park. It was discovered in 1843 when James Mayne, a well-digger, found giant bones from very large extinct animals now known as megafauna.



Map of Lancefield Swamp, after a plan by Matt Peel 2001.
Source: researchgate.net - Archaeology at Lancefield Swamp

Excavations in the 1970's uncovered thousands of bones of giant kangaroos and other animals. Radiocarbon dates on charcoal found underneath the bones suggested that the bones were less than 26,000 years old.

In the 1990s, two other bone deposits were excavated, both some east of the 1970s excavations.

Further excavations were made in 2004.

The estimated ages of a larger sample of teeth found during this study yielded a wide range of dates, between approximately 40,000 – 80,000 years ago. Taken together, the evidence has been interpreted to suggest that Lancefield Swamp may have provided an important waterhole over many millennia, perhaps particularly in times of drought and as the climate became dryer.

Source: lancefield.org.au – Lancefield Megafauna