

PRECINCT A. HEALESVILLE AND YARRA GLEN

Description

Healesville and Yarra Glen are rural residential communities within the Yarra Valley wine district in the Yarra Ranges.

Healesville is located at the foothills of Yarra Ranges National Park and is surrounded by rural areas. Its open spaces and recreation areas include Don Road Reserve, Queens Park, Healesville Outdoor Pool, Yarra Ranges National Park and the Healesville Sanctuary.

Yarra Glen is also surrounded by substantial rural land, with bushland located immediately north of the rural areas. Open spaces and recreation areas include Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve, McKenzie Reserve and the Yarra Glen Racecourse.

The Healesville and Yarra Glen region was affected by the 2007 Victorian Bushfires. As a result, some rural areas are rebuilding after the disaster.

What population changes will affect the need for open space and recreation facilities?

Based on 2011 Census data, Healesville has a residential population of 9 635 people – a marginal increase since 2001 and 2011, and 6.5% of the total population of Yarra Ranges. The age group 45 to 49 years was most strongly represented, so the ‘older adults’ age group (60+) is expected to increase in the future. Even so, the number of people under 15 years of age remains fairly steady.

For Yarra Glen, the population is 3 192 people, or 2% of the total population of Yarra Ranges, with an age profile and trend similar to Healesville.

The Healesville and Yarra Glen precinct is a family area with an ageing population. There will be a continuing demand for recreation and open spaces, which are important for these residents, who wish to enjoy mainstream participation sports, a variety of open spaces including social recreation parks, and have access to recreation activities.

What future housing developments are planned?

There is continued demand for residential development within Yarra Ranges, catering both for people moving from Melbourne and also for new households being formed from within the existing population of Yarra Ranges.

Healesville and Yarra Glen are the areas offering the best capability for additional housing in Yarra Ranges.

The current population for the precinct is 13 427 (Yarra Ranges Community Profile 2011). The projected population in 2031 is 14 868. This increase is based on an expected increase of 820 households during this period.

What open space do we have?

The Healesville–Yarra Glen precinct is largely natural bushland, with more than 41 467 ha of open space held as publicly owned land. Parks Victoria manages the natural bushland areas including Yarra Ranges National Park, Maroondah Reservoir and Kinglake National Park, while Council manages the recreation reserves in the local townships.

Key sports reserves and facilities

Don Road Recreation Reserve supports district sport and social recreation with two sports reserves, tennis courts and walking trails.

Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve provides a full-sized sports field with lighting and cricket pitch, practice nets, various sheds and pavilions, a smaller cricket and soccer sports field, walking trails, public toilets and parking.

Yarra Glen Racecourse provides various racing tracks, equestrian facilities, parking and open spaces.

Dixons Creek Reserve is a local reserve providing space for sport and social recreation.

Steels Creek Tennis Facility is a local sports venue, considered the social hub of the small community. The courts and pavilion were recently upgraded and a car park extension is scheduled for the near future.

Healesville Outdoor Pool is a district aquatic facility for the precinct, with an outdoor 50-metre pool and a toddler pool.

Jack Hort Memorial Pool (Healesville High School Indoor Pool) provides indoor aquatic activities for the precinct. There is an indoor 25-metre pool and a toddler pool.

Social recreation parks

Queens Park provides for a wide range of sport and social recreation. Its facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, a sports oval, tennis courts, walking and cycling trails, picnic areas, and skate and BMX facilities.

Coronation Park, classified as a social recreation park, provides barbecue and picnic facilities.

McKenzie Reserve, with a central location in Yarra Glen, provides open space, a playground, walking trails, picnic facilities, seating, skate facilities, an indoor recreation centre, bowling greens, tennis courts, public toilets and car parking.

Other local social recreation parks where there is space to play are JH Petty Reserve, Hubbard Reserve and Rudolph Street Reserve.

Trails

The Bicentennial Trail, 5330 km long, stretches from Healesville to Cooktown in far north Queensland. This is the longest trail of its kind in the world. Following historic coach and stock routes and old packhorse trails along much of its length, it journeys from tropical rainforests to alpine snowfields, from remote dry plains to rugged mountains and steep gorges.

The Eric Tetlow Trail proposed for this precinct is an off-road pedestrian trail that will connect Steels Creek to Yarra Glen.

The proposed Lilydale to Yarra Glen Rail Trail will run along the old railway reserve, offering tourism and recreation benefits, complementing the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail and connecting the Yarra Valley wine district to Lilydale via bike.

Several off-road pedestrian and cycling links are provided throughout Yarra Glen, connecting the Chardonnay Views Park and Yarra Glen Primary School to the Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve. These trails also connect with the JH Petty Reserve, McKenzie Reserve, Yarra Glen Wetlands and Yarra Flats Billabong.

Flora and fauna conservation reserves

Yarra Flats Billabong is located adjacent the Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve. This area provides walking trails within a native flora and fauna reserve. This area was badly damaged during the Black Saturday Bushfires and all existing infrastructure was badly burnt.

Yarra Glen Wetlands links the Yarra Glen Racecourse, McKenzie Reserve, Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve and Yarra Glen Billabong. The site is privately owned and managed. Significant investment into improvement and maintenance of the site is required to realise the recreation potential of the trails and wetlands.

Yarra Valley Parklands, managed by Parks Victoria, is one of the most significant expanses of public open space in metropolitan Melbourne. The area is characterised by diverse landscapes including bushland and floodplains that link to the Yarra River, and includes significant cultural heritage sites. A range of recreational pursuits is offered, including bushwalking.

The Maroondah Reservoir Park, managed by Parks Victoria, offers a variety of recreation experiences from colourful gardens to long and short walks, exotic and native trees, and an abundance of wildlife.

The Kinglake National Park is the largest national park close to Melbourne. It is managed by Parks Victoria and has 22 360 hectares of tall forests, fern gullies and rolling hills, an extensive network of walking tracks and other facilities for visitor.

Is our existing open space sufficient?

Healesville and Yarra Glen areas have enough open space to meet existing demand. Open space takes the form of sporting reserves, outdoor courts and community parks offering social recreation and relaxation opportunities and retarding basins.

Because this is a predominantly rural area, centrally located open spaces that are flexible and offer diversity of recreation is encouraged. In Healesville and Yarra Glen major sports facilities and social recreation parks are large, centrally located, and offer a range of recreation to the community.

Sporting and social recreation needs are met by the Don Road Recreation Reserve and Queens Park in the Healesville district, and by the Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve and McKenzie Reserve in the Yarra Glen district.

Issues

The quality of existing open space in the Healesville and Yarra Glen precinct needs to be improved to offer more varied recreation.

Melba Highway and the Healesville–Yarra Glen Road are considered barriers to accessing open space in Yarra Glen. Connections to open space within this local community (off-road trails and road crossings) are important.

Opportunities

A number of master plans have been prepared for major sports reserves and facilities and social recreation parks in the precinct. There is an opportunity to realise these plans through allocation of open space contributions in priority projects and by seeking funding grants.

The proposed Lilydale to Yarra Glen Rail Trail presents an opportunity to extend the off-road trail network and connect Lilydale to the Yarra Valley in partnership with the Department of Transport (the land owner), if there is departmental support for the development concept.

Partnerships with local sports clubs and schools may be available to manage the use of existing sports facilities and promote the connection of young people to local sport and recreation opportunities.

Nature-based tourism activities can be developed through partnership arrangements with Parks Victoria and other open space managers.

“THE QUALITY OF EXISTING OPEN SPACE IN THE HEALESVILLE AND YARRA GLEN PRECINCT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED TO OFFER MORE VARIED RECREATION.”

PRECINCT A - ACTIONS

Council is acting to realise its planned development projects for the precinct in the following ways.

Implementing the Aquatic Facilities Strategic Review

- Aquatic facilities in Healesville and the Yarra Valley: feasibility study.

Implementing the Hike and Bike Strategy

- Proposed Lilydale to Yarra Glen Rail Trail: advocacy and partnership with the Department of Transport and other key stakeholders in the planned development.

Implementing the Don Road Reserve Master Plan

- Soccer and netball pavilion and visitor change rooms for football: new construction.
- Fitness trail that circumnavigates the reserve: new construction.
- Social recreation areas: improvement by upgrading picnic and playground areas and providing a dog off-lead area.
- 'Third oval' area: development as a multi-purpose alternative training facility.
- Old stables: redevelopment to provide a base for horse riders using the Bicentennial Trail.

Implementing the Queens Park Master Plan

- Existing pavilion: redevelopment.
- Skate park: demolition of existing facility and construction of a new skate park in association with the BMX facility.
- New facilities: construction of a new half-court basketball court, playground and picnic facilities.

Implementing the Yarra Glen Recreation Reserve Master Plan

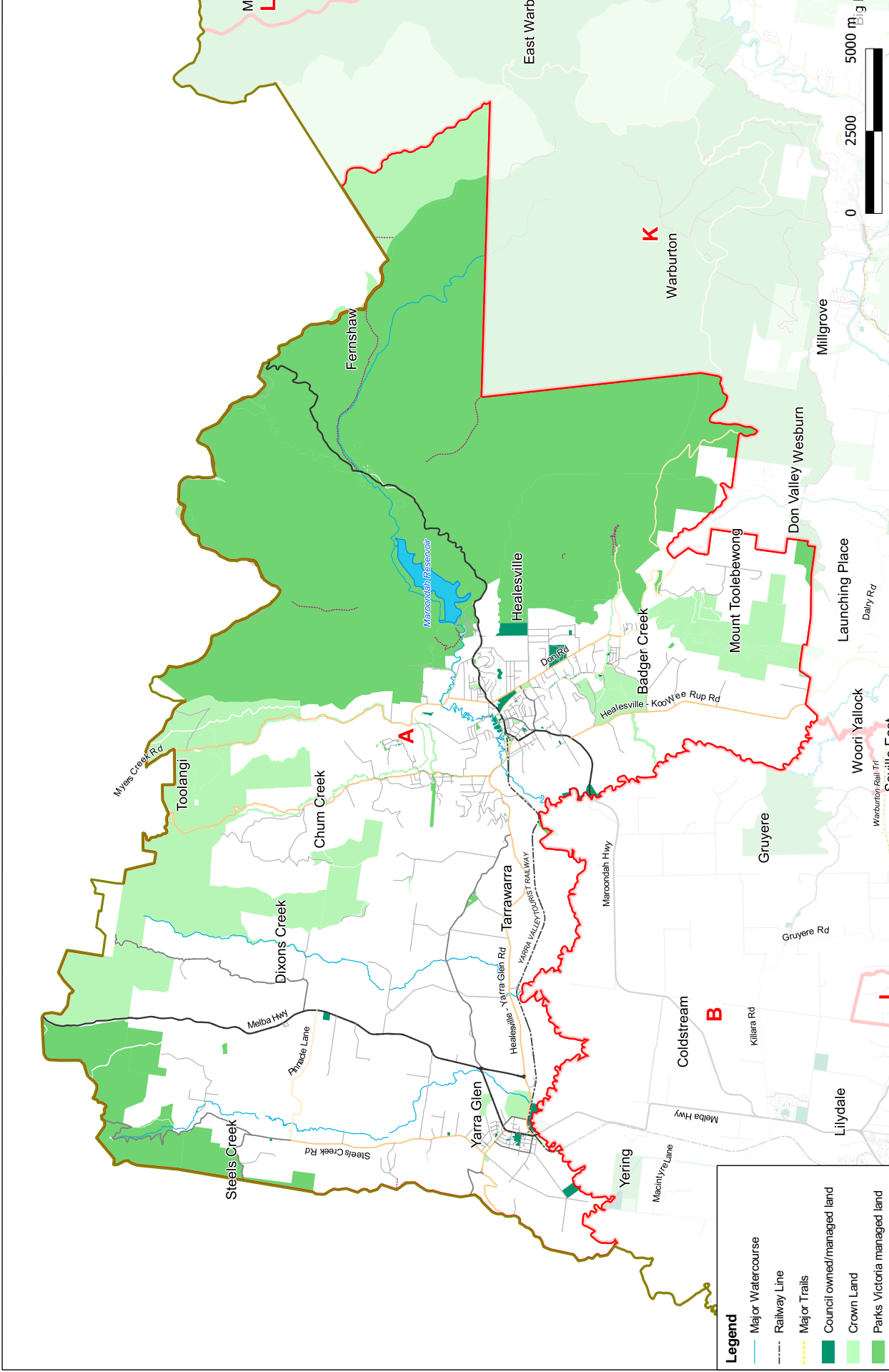
- New car park and access road: Complete construction.
- Vegetation along the adjoining railway reserve: improved management.

Implementing the McKenzie Reserve Master Plan

- Improve landscaping in reserve.

Other planned actions

- Local social recreation parks: improvement of quality and diversity of recreation.
- Yarra Glen Pony Club and Dog Obedience Club: discussions on increased sharing of facilities.
- Yarra Valley Equestrian Alliance: partnerships for exploration and development of a regional equestrian facility in the precinct.
- Yarra Glen Wetlands: long-term consideration of joint management with Melbourne Water to achieve improvements.
- Grace Burn Creek adjacent to an existing Council-owned bushland reserve: possible acquisition of land, as part of a future subdivision, to create a broader riparian corridor and trail connection to Queens Park. Implement fire vegetation landscape plan to improve biodiversity values without impacting NSP.
- School sports reserves and facilities: exploration of partnerships for joint use.
- Parks Victoria and other open space managers: exploration of partnerships to investigate possible nature-based tourism activities in the precinct.



Legend

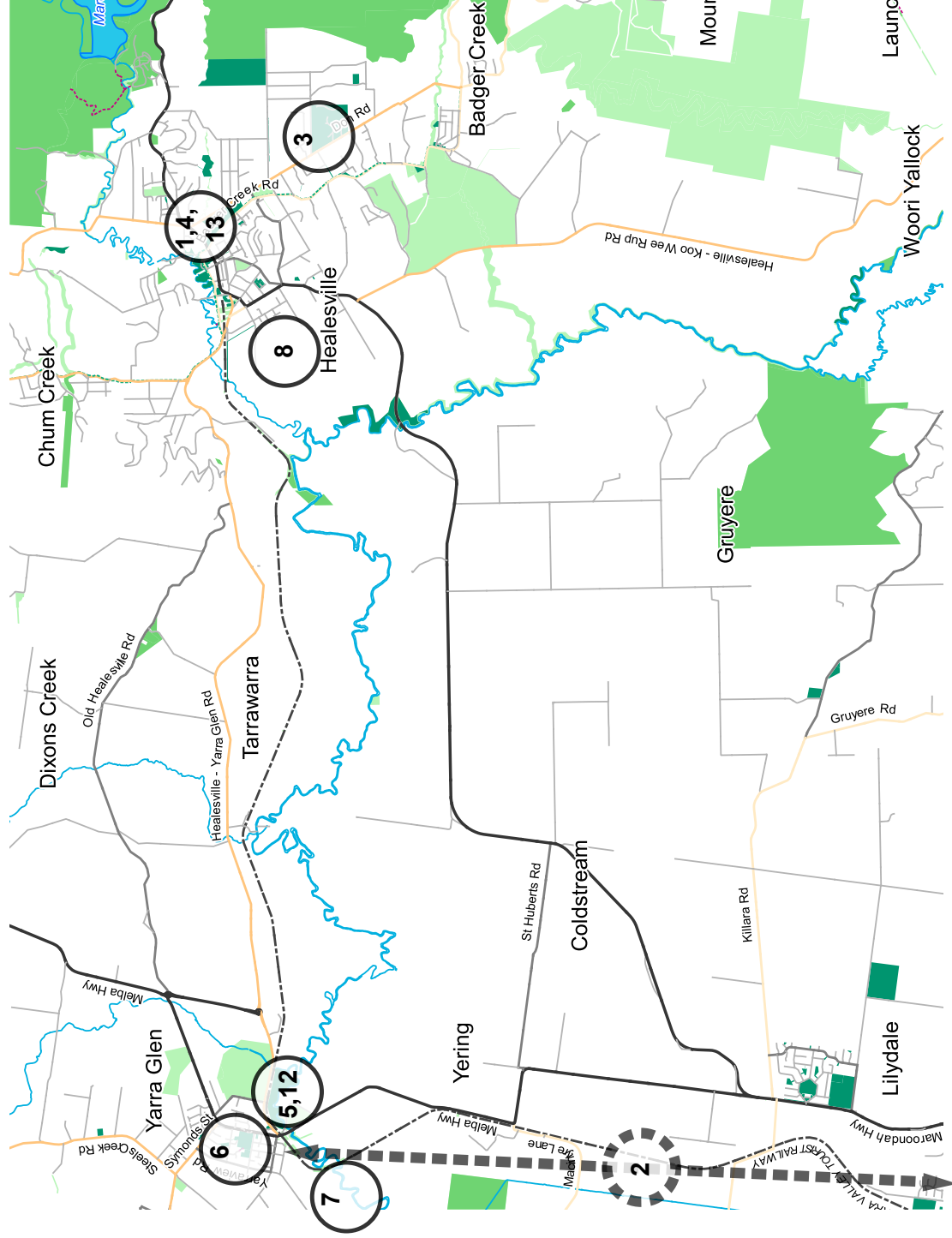
- Major Watercourse
- Railway Line
- Major Trails
- Council owned/managed land
- Crown Land
- Parks Victoria managed land
- Lake/Reservoir
- Precinct Boundary
- Yarra Ranges LGA Boundary

Map scale: 1:100000 @ A3
 Map last updated: 12-09-2013
 Datum: GDA94, MGA Zone 55
 Job reference: HD101781

Yarra Ranges Council

**RECREATION OPEN SPACE STRATEGY
 PRECINCT A**

RECREATION OPEN SPACE STRATEGY



Recommendations

1. Conduct a feasibility study into future provision of aquatic facilities in Healesville and the Yarra Valley.
2. Advocate for the Lilydale to Yarra Glen Rail Trail.
3. Implement the Don Road Reserve master plan.
4. Implement the Queens Park master plan.
5. Implement the Yarra Glen Reserve master plan.
6. Implement the McKenzie Reserve master plan.
7. Facilitate discussions between Yarra Glen Pony Club and Dog Obedience Club regarding shared use of facilities.
8. Partner the Yarra Valley Equestrian Alliance in exploring the development of a regional equestrian facility.
9. Improve the quality and diversity of recreation opportunities at neighbourhood parks.
10. Explore relationships with schools to use school sports reserves and facilities.
11. Explore partnerships with Parks Victoria and other open space managers investigating nature-based recreation and tourism activities.
12. Consider in the long term a joint management opportunity with Melbourne Water to improve and manage the Yarra Glen Wetlands.
13. Consider acquisition of land along Grace Burn Creek. Healesville adjacent to existing Council owned bushland reserve to create a broader riparian corridor and trail connection to Queens Park and implement fire vegetation landscape plan.

Key



Proposed trail



Area under-served by public open space

Precinct A Recommendations Healesville, Yarra Glen and surrounds