



# Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy

Final Report

**Client:**  
Mount Barker District Council

**Date:**  
16 March 2017

**Contact:**

**Steve Rossiter**

steve@elton.com.au

9387 2600

**Sydney**

**02 9387 2600**

Level 6

332 – 342 Oxford Street

Bondi Junction NSW 2022

**www.elton.com.au**

consulting@elton.com.au

Sydney | Canberra | Darwin

ABN 56 003 853 101

---

Prepared by	Steve Rossiter, Jessica Noyes, Nadine Wagstaff
Reviewed by	Steve Rossiter
Date	16 March 2017
Document name	Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy
Version	6

---

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1	Purpose of this report	9
1.2	What are community facilities?	10
1.2.1	Why are community facilities important?	13
1.2.2	Community facilities and sense of place	15
1.3	Council's role	16
1.4	Project methodology	17
1.4.1	Engagement	18
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1	State Government policy	20
2.2	Council studies	22
2.2.1	Previously identified community facility needs	22
2.2.2	Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Nairne Strategic Infrastructure Plan (2014)	23
2.2.3	Regional Recreation Precinct Study (2015)	23
2.2.4	Community Facility Needs Analysis and Recreation Needs Analysis (2012)	24
2.2.5	Recreation, Sport and Community Infrastructure (RSCI) Separate Rates (2015)	25
<b>3</b>	<b>EXISTING SITUATION</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1	Mount Barker context	27
3.2	The existing community	29
3.3	Existing facility provision	30
3.3.1	Quality of existing community facilities	34
3.4	Consultation feedback on existing community facility provision	37
3.4.1	Valued aspects of the existing network of community facilities	37
3.4.2	Existing gaps	37
<b>4</b>	<b>GROWTH AND CHANGE</b>	<b>39</b>
4.1	Growth Map	40
4.2	Consultation suggestions on future planning of community facilities	43
<b>5</b>	<b>APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>45</b>
5.1	Trends	45
5.2	Consultation feedback on future provision	48
5.3	Guiding principles	49
5.4	Community facility hierarchy	53
5.5	An integrated, coordinated network of community facilities	53
5.6	Standards of provision	54
5.7	Levels of intervention	58

5.8	Applying lessons to future community facilities planning	60
<b>6</b>	<b>FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE PROVISION</b>	<b>61</b>
6.1	Ad hoc approach	61
6.2	Recommended approach	63
6.2.1	Short term recommended model (up to 2021) – key sites and interim uses	64
6.2.2	Medium term recommended model (up to 2036) – consolidation of growth area sites	65
6.3	2036 future provision - existing communities and growth areas	68
6.3.1	Long term (post 2036) – Concentration of growth area and strengthen community hub	69
<b>7</b>	<b>DISTRICT COMMUNITY HUB</b>	<b>72</b>
7.1	The need for district level community space	72
7.1.1	Library	72
7.1.2	Multipurpose community centre	73
7.2	Community hub model	74
7.2.1	The Mount Barker District Community Hub	75
7.3	Community hub floor area	77
7.4	Staging / Timing	77
7.5	Regional provision	78
<b>8</b>	<b>FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>79</b>
8.8.1	Separate rates	79
8.8.2	Grants	79
8.8.3	10 Year Financial Plan	80
8.8.4	Asset rationalisation	80
8.8.5	Partnership opportunities	80
8.8.6	Cost recovery	80
<b>9</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>81</b>
9.1	Recommendations	81
9.2	Implementation Plan	81

## TABLES

Table 1	Key trends in community facilities planning	45
Table 2	Guiding principles for community facility provision	49
Table 3	Proposed facility hierarchy	53
Table 4	Existing social infrastructure in MBDC	87

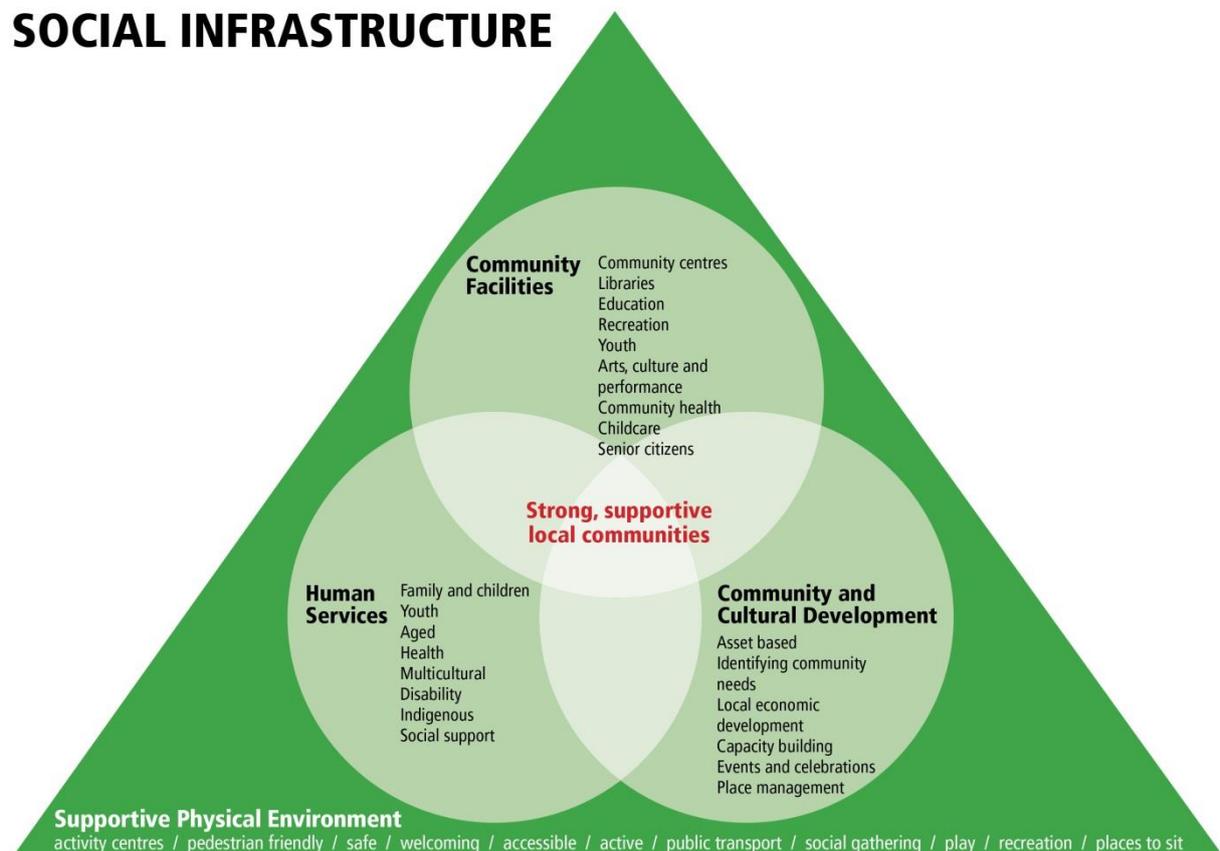
## Executive Summary

The development of this strategy recognises the need for a strategic approach to community facilities provision in Mount Barker District Council (MBDC). It is also acknowledged that for a strategy to be practical and deliverable, a degree of flexibility and pragmatism is required to enable long term goals to be met in a variety of ways. As such this strategy sets a framework for a long term and strategic approach but its implementation acknowledges the need for flexibility and a degree of opportunism to ensure that Council is able to continue to respond to viable opportunities (that address long term community needs) as and when they arise. This strategy provides a framework that future proposals for community facility provision can be assessed against to help determine whether they are likely to meet both Council's and the Mount Barker community's long term needs.

This *Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy* identifies what community facilities are required and when. It examines future models of community facility provision that balance both community expectations and benefits with Council costs and ongoing operational and asset management responsibilities. The study will provide a framework for the future provision of community facilities in both existing townships and new growth areas. It will focus both on sustainable models for new facilities as well as the better use of existing spaces.

Planning for community facilities recognises that community facilities or buildings are one part of a larger picture of social infrastructure provision. The programs, activities, and services that are provided at the community facility and a community development approach that is focused on building capacity within the local community complement the provision of physical spaces for community use. All of this occurs within a physical environment and factors like accessibility, sense of place, safety etc. All of these factors are interdependent and all play a role in promoting strong and resilient communities. The following diagram represents this holistic and integrated view of social infrastructure including the place of community facilities.

## SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE



## **Community Facilities as a Network**

Planning for individual community facilities in isolation is undesirable and can easily lead to duplication, inefficiencies, and a failure to maximise existing resources. Community facilities should be seen as part of a network. Each facility in that network should not only have its own role and function but that specific role and function should be viewed as part of a broader district-wide network. Any individual community facility cannot be reasonably expected to meet every conceivable community need. However, the network of community facilities (made up of district, neighbourhood or local facilities) should be planned to address the majority of community needs and have the capacity to adapt and change as those needs evolve.

In the Mount Barker context, although new facilities will be required to service the growth area population, those residents will still be required to come into Mount Barker Town Centre for higher order community facilities such as the Central Library. Although not all local needs can be met locally, most community needs will be able to be addressed through some aspect of the network of community facilities provided across the Mount Barker district.

### **Existing situation**

Detailed information on existing facilities is critical to making sound decisions about the provision of new or enhancing community facilities. Efficiency is essential in any form of infrastructure planning and a fundamental premise with community facilities planning is maximising the use of existing assets.

This study has found that

- On the whole the townships of Littlehampton, Nairne and Hahndorf are well served by the existing level of provision of community facilities. There are opportunities to improve the existing facilities to achieve greater levels of use and broader community benefits from existing assets
- Mount Barker township has quite a low rate of provision of community facility space that is available and accessible for the current residents. This is not surprising given the considerable population growth that has occurred in recent years
- There is also a low level of available space that serves the whole Mount Barker District, and few 'higher order' civic and cultural facilities

### **Levels of intervention**

This report proposes that strategic community facilities planning should be based ideally on a sequential series of steps. The key principle is the scale of least intervention which proposes that in environments of significant cost constraint the least intensive and most cost-effective intervention necessary should be pursued initially. If that least intensive intervention were to prove unsuccessful then the next intensive level of intervention would be introduced and so on.

In the context of this study, while building new community facilities will be required in Mount Barker, and in some cases may be the most effective and efficient long term solution, other less cost intensive options should be considered first before the considerable capital expenditure of a new build is decided upon. In practice, this ideal model needs to be considered alongside the opportunities which may arise from time to time eg through processes of urban development or a significant grant funding opportunity.

The approach to levels of intervention is summarised below.

## Better utilise existing facilities

Active management, programming, marketing and promotion

## Better utilise existing non-council facilities

Council as space broker – schools, churches, clubs

## Expand or enhance existing council facilities

Build on and improve to provide greater flexibility, more useable space

## Create a new facility

Multipurpose, flexible. May involve consolidation/rationalisation

### Principles for the creation of a new community facility

New facilities should be:

- Larger, multipurpose district level facilities with flexible spaces that can cater for a wide variety of community needs
- Located in accessible activity centre locations that are central to catchment populations and have reasonable access to transport
- Clustered with other activity generating uses, including shops and other community facilities, where people want to spend time
- Designed to maximise visibility and be in locations that have good ground floor street frontage
- Positioned to have a strong connection to good quality public open space and be designed to contribute to the public domain
- Located on sites that enable possible expansion in the future and also allow the facility to be developed in stages
- Designed to consider cost recovery with the inclusion of leasable space such as office space (permanent and sessional), meeting and activity rooms, function spaces, compatible commercial space (cafes, allied health professionals, legal professionals, etc.) and opportunities for social enterprises to support the facility

### Facility programming and management

While a key focus of this strategy is the physical asset dimension of community facilities, community benefit from community facilities is also strongly influenced by how a space is programmed and managed. The most modern, well-designed community facility can deliver less than optimal

community benefits if it is not programmed and managed in a way that understands and responds to community needs and interests. Conversely, community buildings that are quite basic and in some cases not well-designed can deliver significant benefits with the right programming and management approach. This Strategy recommends that Council supports a more active approach to facility management and programming.

### **Key facility directions**

The key features of a future community facilities network recommended here are:

- Continued improvements and enhancements to community facilities in existing townships
- Strategies to maximise community benefits obtained through existing assets, (both Council and non-council owned assets), such as coordinated booking systems, resourcing a brokerage role, partnership agreements etc
- The creation of a District Community Hub in the Mount Barker Town Centre in the medium term
- The creation of a network of local and neighbourhood level multipurpose, flexible community centres in each of the Western, Central and Eastern Sectors of the Mount Barker Growth Area. These to be established early, and then expanded upon as the population increases.

### **Recommendations**

That Council:

- Endorses this strategy as a guide for future community facility provision for the Mount Barker District
- Communicates the strategic direction and proposals in this report to partners, stakeholders and the broader community
- Undertakes future planning of community facilities guided by the 'levels of intervention' approach that includes:
  - Better utilising existing facilities
  - Better utilising existing non-Council facilities
  - Expand or enhance existing Council facilities
  - Create a new facility
- Allocates resources for implementing this strategy including through its budget processes, Long Term Financial Plan, staff resources and through seeking grant funding and partnerships
- Reviews its policies to ensure consistency with the direction set out in this strategy
- Undertakes future facility provision and existing facility enhancement consistent with the guiding principles identified in this strategy
- Adopts the proposed network and hierarchy approach to community facilities (including district, neighbourhood and local facilities)
- Works through existing networks including State Member to ensure State Government involvement in the coordinated planning of social infrastructure for the Mount Barker Growth Area including the provision of Government schools
- Works with regional local government partners, State Government, Federal Member, Regional Development organisations and others to identify regional social infrastructure needs and funding opportunities for regional facilities to be located in Mount Barker
- Reports annually on progress against the Action Plan and review the Recommendations and Implementation Plan no later than 5 years from the date of adoption by Council.

# 1 Introduction

The development of this strategy recognises the need for a strategic approach to community facilities provision in Mount Barker District Council (MBDC). It is also acknowledged that for a strategy to be practical and deliverable, a degree of flexibility and pragmatism is required to enable long term goals to be met in a variety of ways. As such this strategy sets a framework for a long term and strategic approach but its implementation acknowledges the need for flexibility and a degree of opportunism to ensure that Council is able to continue to respond to viable opportunities (that address long term community needs) as and when they arise. This strategy provides a framework that future proposals for community facility provision can be assessed against to help determine whether they are likely to meet both Council's and the Mount Barker community's long term needs.

## 1.1 Purpose of this report

Mount Barker has been identified in the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* as a regional centre. In line with this status, the population of the Mount Barker District is projected to increase substantially in both existing townships and new growth areas. Established townships (Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Nairne) are expected to experience population increases from 23,000 in 2016 to approximately 40,000 in the next 20 years. Mount Barker township will transition from a small town into a regional centre. The township's existing population is expected to triple to 42,000 people over the next 30 years. As a regional centre, Mount Barker will potentially serve a regional population of 180,000 by 2036. The level of change is significant and the management of that growth and change is critical to the successful transition of Mount Barker from a small town into a regional centre.

As part of managing that growth and change, MBDC is preparing a number of studies to identify how it can best identify the infrastructure and associated funding sources required to support this level of growth. This study, examining social infrastructure typically provided by Local Government, is one of those. Council is aware that consideration of the full range of social infrastructure that includes not only sport and recreation facilities but also community facilities including community halls, community centres and other forms of public meeting or activity spaces will be essential to establishment of a strong, resilient communities within the Mount Barker District of the future.

This *Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy* identifies what community facilities are required and when. It examines future models of community facility provision that balance both community expectations and benefits with Council costs and ongoing operational and asset management responsibilities. The study will provide a framework for the future provision of community facilities in both existing townships and new growth areas. It will focus both on sustainable models for new facilities as well as the better use of existing spaces. This framework can be used to assess proposals and opportunities for community facility provision and help Council to make a decision as to their value (and cost) to both the community and to Council.

A key focus of this study is the practical delivery of facilities. It includes a strategy for resourcing and delivering viable and sustainable facilities, including the application of Council's Separate Rates for Recreation, Sport and Community Facilities. It also considers in-kind contributions in growth areas and in Nairne and rationale for the redevelopment of existing assets and spatial distribution and facilities hierarchy. Also considered are service efficiencies such as co-location, grant funding opportunities, social enterprise and other income generation, partnerships and joint use (e.g. with schools) and priorities and thresholds for facility provision (particularly regarding population growth, service standards, needs / demand).

In summary, this report addresses the questions of 'where' and 'how' the facilities will be developed, with reference to practical experience (case studies), principles of sustainable facility planning and the funding / financing opportunities available to Council.

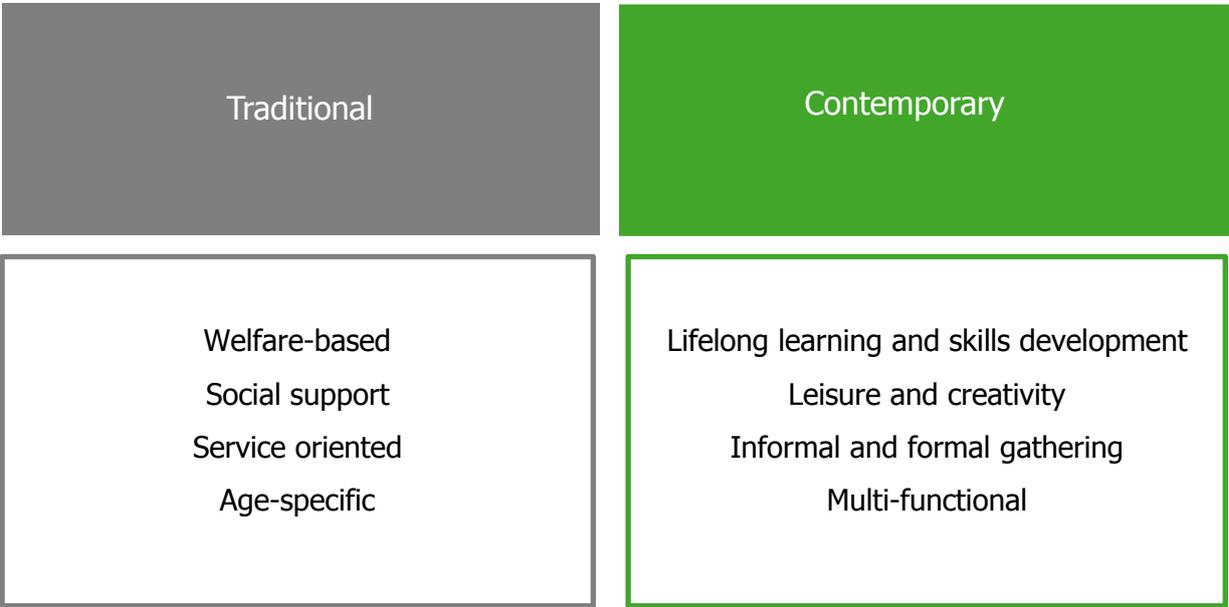
## 1.2 What are community facilities?

Community facilities are generally understood to be public buildings that provide space for a range of community activities, programs and services. Community facilities can be staffed or unstaffed, generalist or specialist (e.g. catering for a particular group or activity – youth, older people, training, arts), and can be single purpose or cater for multiple uses.

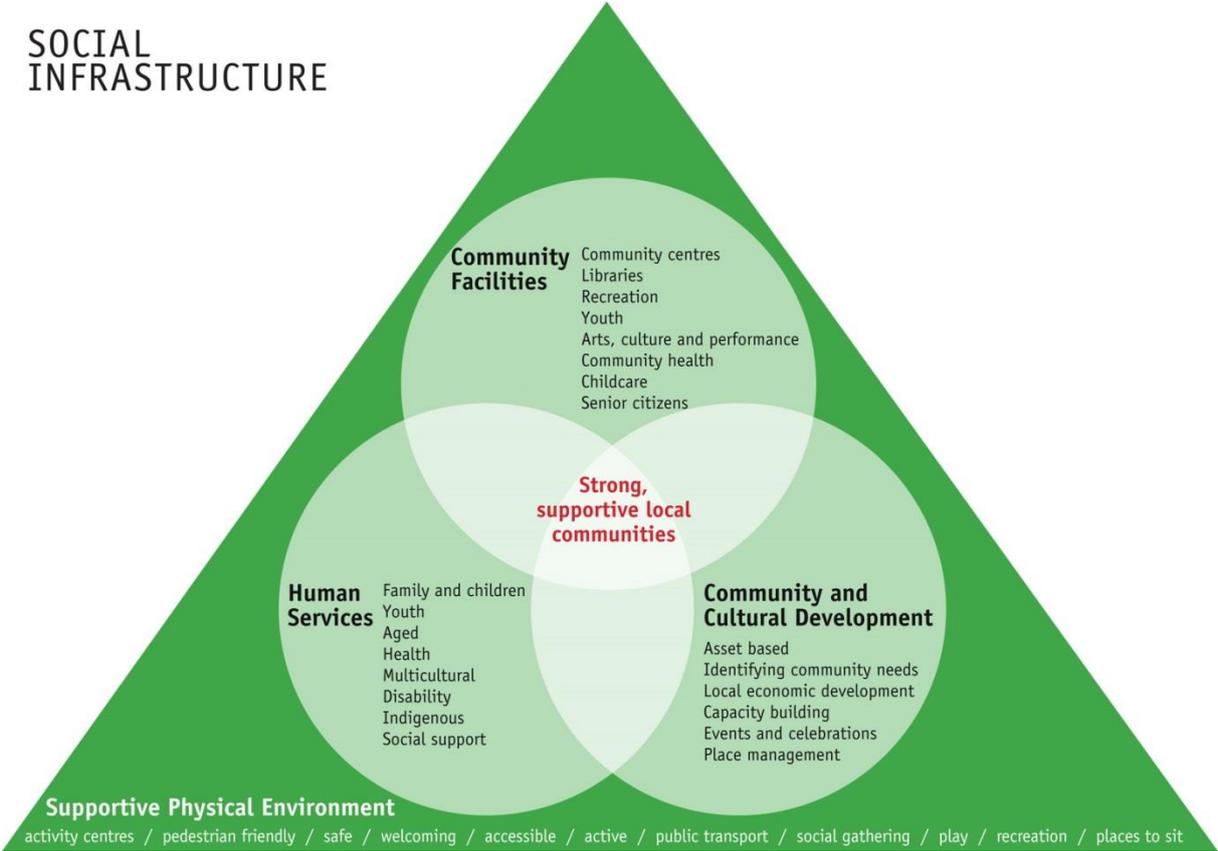
For the purposes of this study, community facilities include:

- Multipurpose community venues and 'rooms for hire': Institutes, halls, meeting rooms, clubrooms, and function centres associated with recreation facilities
- Staffed facilities such as library and community centres, that are for general community use
- Specialist facilities e.g. men's shed, youth centre, business incubator/enterprise centre, positive ageing centre, arts and cultural facilities.

While traditionally the focus of community facilities has been on welfare assistance and service delivery, more recently they have expanded their role and become more focussed on community building, lifelong learning and wellbeing. Community facilities, depending on the needs of their local community, may continue to play a role in service delivery and referral. However, the focus on education, celebration, leisure and recreation is an increasing trend in contemporary community facility provision.

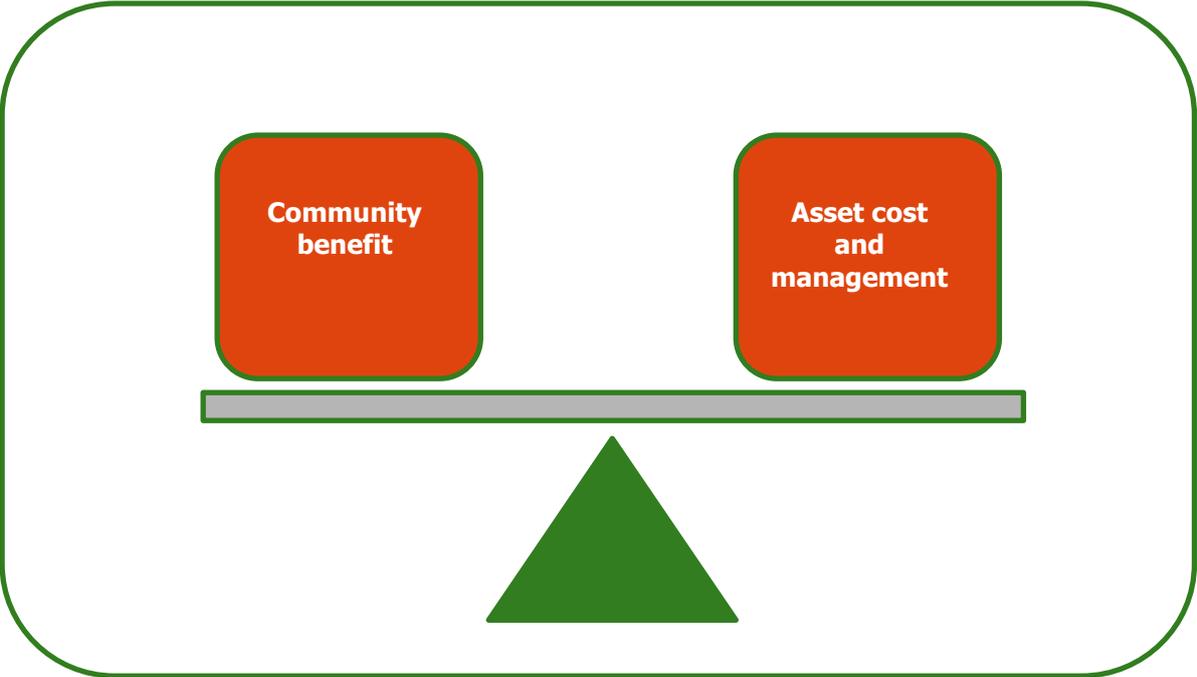


Planning for community facilities recognises that community facilities or buildings are one part of a larger picture of social infrastructure provision. Community facilities work with service deliverers, the programs, activities, and services that are provided at the community facility and a community development approach that is focused on building capacity within the local community. All of this occurs within a physical environment and factors like accessibility, sense of place, safety etc. All of these factors are interdependent and all play a role in promoting strong and resilient communities. The following diagram represents this holistic and integrated view of social infrastructure including the place of community facilities.



A critical issue in planning for community facilities, and a key consideration in this study, is the need to find an appropriate balance between community benefits derived from community facilities and the ongoing asset management implications and operational costs for Council. If facilities are planned with an over-emphasis on community benefits (a high number of facilities and a large rate of provision), then the long term costs to Council may be unsustainable and have long term impacts on Council’s capacity to deliver community infrastructure and services. On the other hand, if asset cost and management were to be over-emphasised (low number of facilities and a low rate of provision) then community benefits may be detrimentally affected and the long term social costs to the community and community levels of satisfaction, connection and resilience may be compromised. Many growth areas are confronted with various ‘offers’ of community facility space from individual developers. These can assist with addressing immediate community needs but the long term asset management implications of these decisions need to be carefully considered. A particular risk for local government is the inheritance of a wide range of usually small spaces designed primarily to meet the needs of that individual host community for a short period of time. Councils could easily find themselves with a disparate and similar stock of small, poorly located facilities that are an increasing burden to manage and maintain.

The focus of this study is on finding, in the context of Mount Barker, a workable and practical balance between community benefits and asset cost and management. It is important to note that this does not mean that either should be compromised. For Mount Barker a key issue is that the current community facilities portfolio includes multiple ageing facilities that are costly to run and renew and are designed in a way that does not address contemporary community needs for multipurpose, flexible, quality space. With consideration of leading practice trends and sound social infrastructure planning principles a desired approach seeks to maximise positive community outcomes from a well-managed and efficient network of community facilities.



Another area of balance required in future planning for areas like Mount Barker, is ensuring appropriate focus on existing area provision as well as planning for new demand from growth areas. Good information on existing facilities and how well they are performing to meet community is essential. Efficiency is a key driver of future social infrastructure planning and fundamental goal is to first understand how well existing community facilities are meeting the current community's needs. It is possible that there may be some existing capacity or redundancy that can be addressed and resources used for greater benefit. In most areas it is usually the case that lessons from existing provision (both good and bad) can be used to inform future planning.

Following from this, a comprehensive strategy for future community facilities planning should consider various types of actions, many of which may focus on existing communities and their assets. As will be explained in more detail in the later section on a future approach to community facilities planning (section 5 of this report), a comprehensive approach to community facilities planning should consider the following fundamental questions:

- How existing community facilities be better utilised?
- Is there a greater role that non-Council facilities can play?
- What relatively cost effective improvements or enhancements to existing community facilities be made to maximise community benefits?
- If a new facility needs to be created how can this be done in a way that best addresses leading practice principles as well as balances community benefit and asset management?

## 1.2.1 Why are community facilities important?

Community facilities fulfil a range of critical functions in local communities. Community facilities are places where people can go for both formal and informal support and activities. They are venues where people come together for group activities, training and learning, celebrations, recreation, leisure and social and cultural events. They cater for formal, structured activities as well as informal gatherings and social interaction. They are one of the places in a community that help to form the links, networks, relationships and connections between people that together form a common sense of community.

### Early provision of community infrastructure

It is increasingly being recognised across the world that the failure to provide adequate community infrastructure early in the establishment of a new community can result in long term social disadvantage and productivity decline. There is a growing body of evidence that the economic benefits of providing community infrastructure far outweighed the costs of provision and result in a net return on investment. Economic studies demonstrate that social capital, which is directly influenced by community infrastructure, makes individuals less prone to depression, firms more competitive and nations more prosperous. Sociology studies suggest that social capital reduces crime, juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancy, child abuse, welfare dependency, drug abuse and increases student test scores and graduation.

National Growth Areas Alliance (2012), *Tomorrow's Healthy and Productive Communities: The case for community infrastructure in outer metropolitan growth areas*, Elton Consulting

Community facilities also provide places from which services are delivered and accessed. Community services, whether delivered directly by councils or through the community sector, are an important part of the support network that all communities need to grow and flourish and are key to enhancing quality of life.

The relationship between facilities and services is an interdependent one. Good facility design and location can influence the use and effectiveness of community services; well used and needed services can produce important community benefits in their own right and can also add significantly to the vibrancy and effectiveness of community facilities.

Community facilities, and the programs and services that operate from them, are important to creating and reinforcing a sense of place and community and building the stocks of social capital within a community. Well designed and managed facilities can host a diversity of activities, provide a range of services and cater to a wide demographic in way that is flexible and adaptable to changing community needs.

MBDC recognises the importance of a strategic approach to the planning and provision of community facilities. Facilities and services need to be planned in response to clearly identified and substantiated community needs. The *Mount Barker 2035 District Strategic Plan* identifies 'community wellbeing' as a key goal and states that:

Providing additional community, recreational and sporting facilities needs to be at the forefront of future planning for the district.

While Council has historically been proactive in the provision of recreational and sporting facilities, this strategy represents a step towards showing the same commitment to the planning and provision of community facilities.

Under the 'community wellbeing' goal, the *Mount Barker 2035 District Strategic Plan* also includes an objective titled 'Quality community facilities and infrastructure' which states as its aim 'To facilitate the provision of community facilities and infrastructure to meet current and future needs'. The strategies listed under this objective that are highly relevant to this study are shown below.

## Mount Barker 2035 District Strategic Plan

### Goal: Community Wellbeing

**Objective CW3: Quality community facilities and infrastructure:** To facilitate the provision of community facilities and infrastructure to meet current and future needs

### Strategies

**CW3.1** Support a long term approach to the development, upgrade and improvements to community facilities and infrastructure such as the library, sports grounds, community halls and venues and play spaces

**CW3.2** Employ facility planning and design principles that will provide longevity, diversity and inclusiveness, and where appropriate, support decentralising and/or outsourcing the delivery of services

**CW3.3** Facilitate increased use of existing facilities including encouraging a joint community/school use model where appropriate

A critical element of planning for future community facilities is a clear understanding of Council's role. The effective and sustainable provision of facilities involves the collaborative efforts of a range of stakeholders, with Council being one of those. It is recognised that Council alone cannot meet the full range of community needs and expectations for community facility space. This project will clarify MBDC's role and also work to identify the roles and contributions of others including the community sector, the private sector including developers, independent schools and State Government.

Planning for community facilities and services must respond to the broader plans for Adelaide's growth and development. The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* provides the overall planning framework for future development. Mount Barker's classification as a regional centre is defined in the *30 Year Plan 2016 Draft Review* as:

The primary focus for business and commercial services for the region providing a full range of shopping, administrative, cultural, community, entertainment, education, religious and recreational facilities, as well as public and private office development.

Council's population forecasts suggest an increase in population in the area of around 30,000 people beyond 2036. This level of growth would double the existing population of the MBDC.

It is in this context that planning for future community facilities occurs.

### 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, 2016 Review

Community infrastructure is the network of essential services and facilities that underpin population growth and support productive social and economic capacity in the neighbourhoods and townships of the Greater Adelaide region. It plays an important role in bringing people together, developing social capital and maintaining quality of life. (p.89)

Community infrastructure brings people together, strengthens community capacity, builds community resilience and enhances community cohesion. When developed appropriately, community infrastructure can cater for intergenerational needs and provide a great legacy for all to enjoy. (p.91)

## 1.2.2 Community facilities and sense of place

Community facilities act as critical meeting and gathering places that contribute to the development of healthy and sustainable communities by ensuring that population growth is supported by a network of facilities and services that are accessible, affordable and responsive to local community needs.

Community facilities can provide focal points for community activity and places for people to meet and connect. They act as one of the forms of social infrastructure (along with schools and sports clubs) that play an important role in bringing people together and providing a place for the networks and relationships that form a community to occur.

Local community facilities as focal points are particularly important in new communities where links between neighbours have not yet been forged. A range of research shows that community facilities play a key role in promoting social cohesion, bringing different groups together, and creating a true sense of community belongingness<sup>1</sup>. While research suggests that it is very difficult to manufacture a sense of community, it seems that an important catalyst in enabling community to develop is to provide some of the places where friendships and neighbourhood networks can be formed.

Importantly, in the Mount Barker context, community facilities can also be a mechanism (along with a range of physical planning, design and policy approaches) that can help to create links between not only new communities, but between new and existing communities. Planning for social infrastructure should give consideration to what the area's wider needs are and provision should attempt to address existing as well as projected needs. New facilities can encourage existing, surrounding residents into a new area (and new residents into established townships) to assist with integration and the breaking down of physical and social barriers.

In new developments, it can take some time for social networks to develop and for community activities and organisations to be established. Leading practice recognises the need to stimulate and support 'community building' in new neighbourhoods, by providing resources for community development workers and community development programs, in addition to providing facilities and public spaces for social interaction and community activities.

---

<sup>1</sup> NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (2006), *The Case for Social Infrastructure Planning*, London Thames Gateway Social Infrastructure Framework, London, [http://www.healthyurbandevelopment.nhs.uk/documents/int\\_social\\_infrastructure/The\\_Case\\_For\\_Social\\_Infrastructure\\_02\\_06\\_06.pdf](http://www.healthyurbandevelopment.nhs.uk/documents/int_social_infrastructure/The_Case_For_Social_Infrastructure_02_06_06.pdf)

## 1.3 Council's role

While it is no longer viable for local government to be considered as the sole provider of community facility space, councils do have a range of roles to play in community facility planning and provision. The various roles of MBDC in community facilities planning and provision include:

- Planning – undertaking community needs assessment to identify and document the current and future needs for community facilities in the council area
- Provider/owner – providing and maintaining community facility space for use by community organisations, groups and others to meet community needs
- Advocacy – advocating to State Government, developers and others regarding the need for community facility provision in MBDC
- Support – providing grants and community development support to assist community organisations based on community facilities deliver services
- Information/referral – providing information to community members and groups about available community facility space.



Signage to promote Reynella Neighbourhood Centre, City of Onkaparinga. Photo: Elton Consulting

## 1.4 Project methodology

The key elements of the project methodology are summarised in the table below.

Phase	Key tasks
<b>1. Establishment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception meeting</li> <li>• Site visits</li> <li>• Internal stakeholder workshop</li> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Engagement strategy</li> </ul>
<b>2. Current situation analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing provision analysis including spatial mapping</li> <li>• Existing community profile</li> </ul>
<b>3. Research and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future population growth analysis</li> <li>• Identification of key trends</li> <li>• Leading practice research including cost studies and expert interviews</li> <li>• Guiding principles</li> <li>• Developer interviews</li> <li>• Progress / research report</li> <li>• Elected Members briefing/presentation</li> <li>• Adelaide site visits/tour</li> <li>• External stakeholder engagement</li> </ul>
<b>4. Planning framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of community facilities hierarchy</li> <li>• Identification of proposed standards</li> <li>• External stakeholders workshop (Adelaide councils)</li> </ul>
<b>5. Strategy development and reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy development</li> <li>• Draft report</li> <li>• Presentation to Senior Management and Elected Members</li> <li>• Staff and Senior Management review</li> <li>• Final report</li> </ul>

## 1.4.1 Engagement

To support this methodology a range of community and stakeholder engagement activities were undertaken as shown by project phase below.

Project Phase	Engagement Activity	Purpose	Timing
Inception and background	Internal stakeholders workshop	To discuss key issues, internal staff perspectives, share experience/history, understand current related projects, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of facility provision	August 2016
	Senior Management Team briefing	To discuss general approach, to understand Council's strategic objectives, to discuss key issues and desired outcomes	August 2016
Research and engagement	Key external stakeholder interviews	Interviews with selected key stakeholders in Mount Barker to gain deeper understanding of existing provision and opportunities for future provision	September 2016
	Internal stakeholders workshop	Focus on planning for future growth; trends and principles, and characteristics of a future community facilities network	September 2016
	Service providers workshop	Focus on what works well and not well now; planning for future growth; trends and principles, and characteristics of a future community facilities network	September 2016
	Elected Member Briefing	Briefing of Elected Members on findings to date and discussion of a framework for future planning – trends, principles, hierarchy	September 2016
	Resident, Community Association and Management Committee workshop	Focus on what works well and not well now; planning for future growth; trends and principles, and characteristics of a future community facilities network	September 2016
	Senior Management Team briefing	Report on key findings to date and presentation/discussion of preliminary directions	September 2016

Project Phase	Engagement Activity	Purpose	Timing
Planning framework	Developer interviews	Interviews with three developers active in Mount Barker to understand developer perspective	October 2016
	Growth area council interviews	Interviews with three growth area councils from around Australia to understand their experience and identify key lessons from their experience	November 2016
Strategy development	Community facilities tour for Senior staff and Elected Members	A tour of a number of community facilities across metropolitan Adelaide including sports and recreation hubs, libraries, community centres	December 2016
	South Australian Councils workshop	Workshop with SA councils to discuss and identify leading practice funding and delivery strategies	December 2016
	Senior Management team briefing	To discuss draft findings of study and strategy	December 2016
	Elected Members briefing	To discuss draft findings of study and strategy	December 2016
	Service providers workshop/presentation	To discuss draft findings of study and strategy after review and feedback from Senior Management and Elected Members	December 2016

## 2 Background and context

The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*, and the growth assumptions contained within it, constitute the key policy context and driver for this project. Since the release of the original *30 Year Plan* in 2010, MBDC has undertaken a range of studies to examine the implications of this projected growth, including the demand created for community facilities. Council's response has recognised the need for a whole of Mount Barker District community planning strategy that includes community facilities. This study is a key part of addressing that need.

### 2.1 State Government policy

#### **30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide 2010**

The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*, and the resultant Ministerial Development Plan Amendment, identified the rezoning of land capable of accommodating population growth that effectively doubles the existing population of MBDC.

Council's formal response expressed significant concern about the demands this level of growth would place on all forms of infrastructure and services. Of particular relevance to this study were identified needs for a major community activity centre or hub, additional health facilities and the need to essentially double the existing provision of social infrastructure. Council has also recognised the need for a strategic planning document to identify future community facility needs.

State Government planning has identified significant growth in the MBDC area. However, it appears that there has been little accompanying involvement from the SA Government since in relation to planning or infrastructure coordination. MBDC is undertaking a series of studies to better inform an integrated approach to planning for the designated growth areas. While this work, of which this report is a part, is important, a truly coordinated government response will require State Government involvement to ensure that essential community infrastructure is incorporated.

#### **30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide – Draft for Consultation 2016 Review**

At the time of preparing this document, the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* was in the process of review. A review document was released for comment in 2016. In relation to Mount Barker that review is largely consistent with the 2010 version of the plan. Mount Barker is classified as Outer Metro, identified as a regional centre and documented as the location of a significant future urban growth area.

Some of the policies that are relevant to community facilities planning in Mount Barker in the 2016 Review are:

### **30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, 2016 Review Policies**

**P82.** Ensure that new urban infill and fringe and township development is aligned with the provision of appropriate community and green infrastructure, including:

- Walking and cycling paths and facilities
- Local stormwater and flood management provisions
- Public open space
- Sports facilities
- Street trees
- Community facilities, such as child care centres, schools, community hubs and libraries.

**P83.** Encourage early provision of community infrastructure in fringe and township growth areas to assist in creating a sense of belonging and building community well-being.

**P84.** Locate community infrastructure to ensure safe, inclusive and convenient access for communities and individuals of all demographic groups and levels of ability.

**P85.** Integrate and co-locate different community infrastructure and services in community hubs to maximise their use and enhance their economic feasibility.

### **Social Infrastructure Study for Ministerial DPA - Connor Holmes 2009**

As part of the investigations into the growth areas Connor Holmes conducted a study that identified the social infrastructure requirements for a projected growth area increase of 6,677 dwellings. Of most relevance to this study were the recommendations for:

- Three primary schools and one secondary school
- Three to four additional pre-schools
- Four to five child care centres
- A community centre or hall.

Although the study does make reference to libraries and other facilities it identifies these as serving the wider community and, therefore, not required within the growth areas.

## 2.2 Council studies

Numerous studies relevant to the Mount Barker *Community Facilities Study and Delivery Strategy* have previously been conducted, and have been built upon and used to inform the recommendations made in this report. Relevant studies that were reviewed for this report include:

- *Social Infrastructure Impacts of the Mount Barker Urban Growth Development Plan Amendment (2010)*
- *Community Facilities Needs Analysis for Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Nairne (2012)*
- Reviews of population forecasts and modelling (2015)
- Workshop report on Arts Workshop (2011)
- District Council of Mount Barker Community Plan Summary of Service Providers' Surveys
- Community and stakeholder engagement outcomes.

### 2.2.1 Previously identified community facility needs

Common community facility and services needs identified for the Mount Barker District in the consultation undertaken for the studies listed above include:

- Government services (e.g. Services SA, Medicare)
- Community centres such as Men's Shed, Carer Centre, Senior's Centre
- Youth Centre
- Arts Facilities
- Meeting spaces- low or no cost
- Information services.

Key social infrastructure findings for existing townships included:

- The most acute shortage identified was for youth centre/services based on the higher percentage of younger people in the district now and the projected increase of this age group with the development of the growth areas
- The need for a new local community centre in the existing township area based on existing population levels and the small size of the Mount Barker Community Centre
- More gallery and community arts space in the major population areas as the Hahndorf Academy provides limited gallery space
- The provision of additional interpretive history museum space.

Social infrastructure findings for growth areas included:

- Two local community centres in the form of multipurpose community hubs
- A local youth centre, or the provision of a regional youth facility in Mount Barker township
- Two to three child care centres
- Four primary schools
- One secondary school (with expansion of one existing).

Specific findings from key studies are outlined below.

## 2.2.2 Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Nairne Strategic Infrastructure Plan (2014)

This plan was prepared by State Government with significant input from MBDC. Existing gaps identified included:

- No facilities dedicated to specific population groups such as youth or older people
- No facilities dedicated to arts in existing townships other than Hahndorf
- The majority of existing facilities are older buildings that, while highly valued as community assets, are limited in use, relatively inflexible and many have poor access
- The library is centrally located but has not been expanded since its construction in 1997
- Mount Barker Community Centre is the only district community centre in the area. It is small, not fit for purpose and not in a central, accessible location.

The Strategic Infrastructure Plan also identifies the following recommendations:

- Adapt and extend existing community facilities where possible to address short to medium term demand
- Develop shared and joint use facility models and flexible and integrated facilities, rather than single purpose stand-alone facilities
- Establish community infrastructure hubs in growth areas to ensure adequate space and service provision and to promote the integration of new and existing communities
- Develop temporary community spaces to service new growth areas until more permanent community facilities can be provided
- Pursue agreements with schools to ensure community access to any new school facilities.

## 2.2.3 Regional Recreation Precinct Study (2015)

The Regional Recreation Precinct Study identifies guiding themes for recreation infrastructure and service provision for Mount Barker District into the future, and identifies key sites / opportunities to realise desired outcomes. While focussing on recreation, many of the themes and principles of the study are relevant to community facilities planning. These include:

- Improved access for all
- Quality of assets over quantity
- Joint ventures / partnerships
- Facilities that meet the needs of families with young children, youth and the ageing population.

The study also acknowledges demand for flexible indoor recreation space for recreation and leisure activities such as yoga and dance, which, the study observes, often compete for space with more recognised 'sporting' activities such as futsal and basketball.

The study builds on Council's Community Strategic Plan 2004-2007, which provides overarching objectives recreation and sports facilities. These objectives include those relating to community assets, lifestyle, governance, economic development and leisure, recreation, arts and sport. Further objectives include Council advocating for the provision of affordable facilities and encouraging a 'diversity of experience' through supporting leisure and recreation activities and the arts.

While a more in-depth analysis of potential funding sources will occur at a later stage to the Regional Recreation Precinct Study, identified funding sources for the high-level community facility requirements outlined in the Study include:

- Those identified / obtained through partnerships or joint ventures
- External funding for specific projects
- Innovative financial models
- Consolidated assets
- Shared assets and funding, e.g. with schools.

## 2.2.4 Community Facility Needs Analysis and Recreation Needs Analysis (2012)

The Community Facility Needs Analysis and Recreation Needs Analysis report outlines facilities deemed as required for the Mount Barker area in future, in particular in relation to:

- Existing and projected population characteristics
- The context of development (e.g. peri-urban area, rural township expansion, Regional Centre function)
- Existing facilities and services and previously identified deficits
- Current utilisation trends
- Council's desired standards of service, based on best practice benchmarks
- Stakeholder consultations for the preparation of a draft 'Community Plan'.

Required community facilities identified for the area include:

- A 2,000 square metre library / community learning centre
- Civic Centre expansion
- Arts and cultural facilities, including art gallery, museum and performing arts venue
- Youth Centre
- Indoor recreation spaces that can be used for aerobics, martial arts, yoga and dance
- Up to three new community centres, a district level community centre and function room and upgrades to existing centres and halls.

In addition to the above community facilities, significant provision gaps in child care, primary and secondary schools, tertiary education facilities and health and emergency services were identified. This will require new childcare centres, schools and health facilities to both rectify existing deficits in the area and cater for the significant increase in population in the future.

The report also identified existing issues and deficits in housing and care options in Mount Barker area. These issues included insufficient respite care facilities, no emergency accommodation or homeless facilities, poor diversity of housing stock, worsening housing affordability and a lack of adaptable housing for older people or those with disabilities.

The Recreational Needs Analysis report identified significant demand for flexible indoor spaces which can be used for aerobics, martial arts, yoga and dance.

### Key Directions from Previous Studies

The *Strategic Infrastructure Plan* (SA Government, 2014) summarises the key recommendations from Council's social infrastructure investigations as:

- Adapting and extending existing community facilities (where possible to meet short to medium term demand)
- Developing shared and joint use facility models, and developing flexible integrated facilities, rather than stand alone or single purpose facilities
- Establishing community infrastructure hubs to enable new communities in growth areas to be efficiently served
- Designing and locating new community and recreational facilities and community hubs to facilitate integration of next and existing neighbourhoods and communities
- Developing temporary community spaces to service new growth areas until more permanent facilities can be provided
- Pursuing agreements for community access to venues in any new school facilities developed for population growth.

## 2.2.5 Recreation, Sport and Community Infrastructure (RSCI) Separate Rates (2015)

MBDC has adopted two separate rates under the Local Government Act (1999) that will support the provision of new community infrastructure in Mount Barker's growth areas. The two rates are:

- The Mount Barker Separate Rate for Recreation, Sport and Community Facilities Infrastructure, provides for a once only rate per new allotment created in the Mount Barker urban growth area.
- The Nairne Separate Rate for Recreation, Sport and Community Infrastructure provides for a once only rate per new allotment created in the Nairne urban growth area.

Council has also made provision for separate rate credits which provides an opportunity for a developer and Council to make a voluntary agreement on the provision of an 'in kind' proposal in lieu of a contribution (or part of a contribution).

The 'in kind' contribution enables a flexible response and allows for:

- Provision of community infrastructure within an existing structure that can be adapted for community use
- Provision of land (with some exclusions) in an appropriate location for the future construction of community infrastructure
- Provision of innovative community infrastructure that responds to an emerging community need.

Importantly the application of funds collected through the RSCI is restricted to the growth areas (as declared by the 2010 Mount Barker Urban Growth DPA). The intention is to ensure adequate local provision. This may be a constraint in any future plans which contemplate the meeting of district level demand created by the growth areas in a more centralised location such as the existing Mount Barker Town Centre.

These study findings and previous policy development highlight the work that Council has already undertaken to understand both current provision and projected future need. However, without a Council-wide long term strategy it is difficult to understand how recommendations from previous studies fit with a long term framework for community facilities provision. The findings of previous studies are valuable and this study will build on those findings, the consultation and analysis undertaken to develop a strategic approach to community facilities planning and delivery for the Mount Barker District.

### **Implications for future community facilities planning**

The extent of planned population growth is significant and will require a wide range of social infrastructure to support the growing Mount Barker community.

State Government policy (the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*) not only mandates the level of population growth for Mount Barker but also sets direction for social infrastructure provision with a focus on early provision, accessibility for a range of population groups, and co-location models that maximise efficiency.

Previous Council studies have identified community facility requirements for existing townships as including youth facilities, additional community centre space in Mount Barker township, and arts facilities. For growth areas, needs identified have included community centres, a youth centre and child care centre.

Future provision strategies and funding models will need to consider the role of the RSCI separate rate in funding new facilities generated by demand in the growth area.

## 3 Existing situation

An initial step in developing a strategic approach to community facilities provision is to understand what community facilities currently exist, what population they serve, and how well the existing community facilities meet current community needs. It is also important, as part of the existing situation analysis, to understand what is working well and what is unique about Mount Barker District that needs to be considered in future community facilities planning.



### 3.1 Mount Barker context

While there are some established practices and well recognised principles in community facilities planning, their blanket application is not considered good practice. Leading practice supports ensuring that any practices, principles, and approaches are adapted to each different community context and are applied in a critical way to respect and respond to local circumstances. There are a number of unique qualities of Mount Barker District that need to be considered when planning for the future provision of community facilities. These qualities include:

- Mount Barker is a significant distance from metropolitan Adelaide and, therefore, requires a higher degree of self-sufficiency than traditional suburban areas and areas contiguous with established urban areas where facility sharing across local government boundaries is more possible

- The identification of Mount Barker township as a regional centre has implications for role of the town centre beyond the immediate district. This may have implications for community facility provision and requires the investigation of the opportunity for the provision of regional level facilities in Mount Barker
- Mount Barker district has a traditional urban structure with a main town centre (Mount Barker) surrounded by a number of smaller townships and villages scattered throughout the district
- The primacy of the Mount Barker Town Centre is important and is the main strategic focus for future economic development. New development, including the location of community facilities, should be planned to reinforce Mount Barker as the key centre in the district
- Mount Barker has a tradition of locating community facilities (hall and institute buildings) in prominent, main street locations
- TAFE is adopting a new model of delivery and has downgraded its on-campus vocational education with impact on the existing Library adjacent to the Mount Barker Town Centre
- While MBDC has a history of strategic planning for sport and recreation facilities, the planning of community facilities is not as advanced.

### **The Mount Barker Community**

#### **Mount Barker Strategic Plan 2035**

- The District has a highly-connected community with above-average volunteering levels
- There are a large number of community-based organisations' active in the volunteer community
- There is a good diversity of primary and secondary public and private education with shortfalls in the tertiary sector
- The community places high value on safety
- Social infrastructure plays a key role in quality of life by facilitating non-commercial encounters between people and building social cohesion. It also enables resources to be fairly accessed by people of different incomes and abilities
- The ability to access arts, recreational, sporting and general community participation opportunities has a strong bearing on residents' wellbeing and connection with their local community
- There is currently good access to passive recreation opportunities through reserves and trails with shortfalls in sporting and recreation facilities
- The Mount Barker Library is well-used and there is a need for improved opportunities including employment and further education.

## 3.2 The existing community

The estimated resident population for the District Council of Mount Barker for 2015 was 32,558 people. In 2011, 4% of residents came from countries where English was not their first language. Of those speaking a language other than English at home, the largest percentage (0.7% of the total population) spoke German, followed by Italian (0.5%) and Dutch (0.3%).

In 2011, MBDC had a higher proportion of babies and pre-schoolers, primary schoolers and secondary schoolers than Greater Adelaide. Additionally, the proportion of those aged 35-49 is also higher. However, there is a lower proportion of those 18-34 years old and those over 70 years old. The proportion of those aged 50-59 is comparable to Greater Adelaide.

The proportion of those with no qualifications and is slightly lower in MBDC than Greater Adelaide, as is the proportion of those with a Bachelor degree or higher. The proportion of those with vocational or diploma-level qualifications is slightly higher than Greater Adelaide. Unemployment rates are also slightly lower than Greater Adelaide, however those employed part-time is slightly higher. 11.1% of the population earned a high income and 34.5% earned a low income, compared with 10.2% and 37.3% respectively for Greater Adelaide.

A significantly higher proportion (26%) of those living in Mount Barker did unpaid voluntary work in 2011, compared to Greater Adelaide (17.7%). This may indicate greater levels of community involvement in the area, which has been reinforced through consultation.

A higher proportion of residents in MBDC provided unpaid childcare in 2011, compared to Greater Adelaide. This likely reflects the higher proportion of children in the area.

In terms of households in 2011, a much higher proportion were couples with children (35% compared to 28% in Greater Adelaide) and a slightly higher proportion were couples without children. There were significantly less other families, group households and lone person households than Greater Adelaide. Lower proportions of the population owned their properties outright or were renting than Greater Adelaide, but many more had a mortgage on their home.



Image from Mount Barker Strategic Plan 2035, District Council of Mount Barker

### **Implications of demographics for community facilities planning**

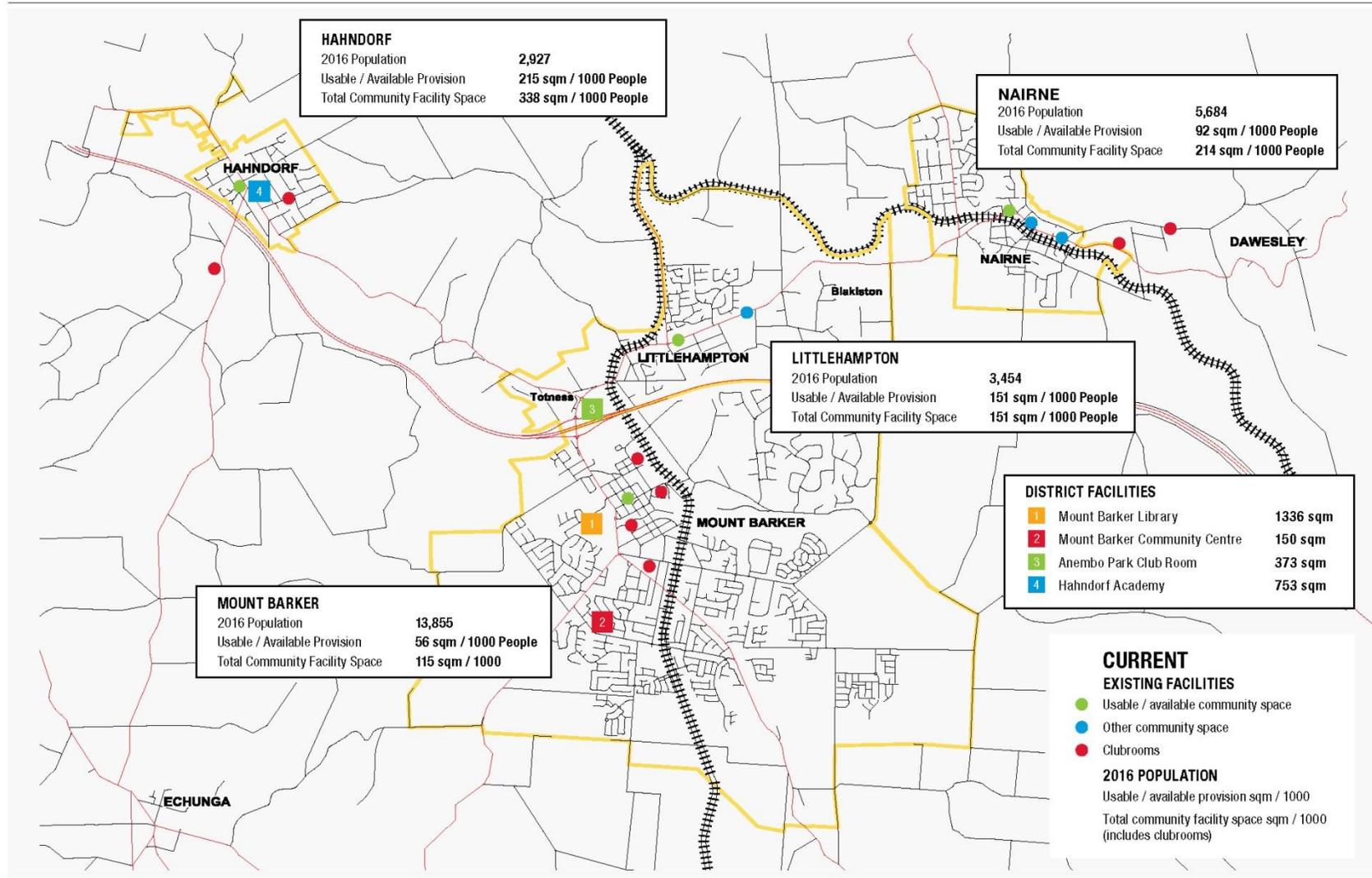
The demographic information for Mount Barker District has a number of implications for community facility provision including:

- Low demand for culturally and linguistically diverse programs and facilities due to low levels of languages other than English spoken at home, and a low proportion of residents born in non-English speaking countries
- High demand for family-oriented activities and facilities due to the high proportion of couples with young children and family households
- Potential high demand for improved opportunities including employment and further education due to lower rates of bachelor degree or higher qualifications in the area, and a higher proportion of people working part-time
- Likely demand for equal access to facilities and activities that can be fairly accessed by people of different incomes and abilities due to an ageing population and a high proportion of the community acting in an unpaid carer role
- Likely high demand for affordable office space and facilities that play a role in enabling 'third place' interactions between members of the community. These places enable community groups and members, such as those run by the high proportion of residents who regularly volunteer their time, to organise programs and services for the wider community to access
- It will be important for MBDC to continue to monitor community demographics and needs. Future funding opportunities will be influenced by particular local issues and characteristics, with Mount Barker essentially 'competing' with areas with notable characteristics like socio-economic disadvantage, cultural diversity, remoteness and others that are not evident in MBDC.

## **3.3 Existing facility provision**

The map on the following page shows existing community facility provision in Mount Barker focussing on the key townships of Nairne, Littlehampton, Hahndorf and Mount Barker township.

# Mount Barker Current Community Facility Provision Mount Barker Townships 2016



ELTON CONSULTING

Community facility provision is usually measured by rate of provision (square metres of community facility floor space) provided per person. This is most often expressed as square metres per 1,000 people. While there are no universally accepted standards of provision for community facilities, understanding the amount of community facility floor space does help to understand relative differences within an area as well as overall provision.

An important distinction, shown on the map, is distinguishing between total community facility space and usable or available space. As shown on the map usable or available space is sometimes significantly lower than total space provision. These figures are also shown in the table below.

**Table 3.1: Total versus usable/available community facility space by township**

Township	Total community facility space (square metres per 1,000 people)	Actual/available community facility space (square metres per 1,000 people)
Nairne	214	92
Littlehampton	151	151
Hahndorf	338	215
Mount Barker	115	56
<b>Average (across four areas)</b>	<b>204.5</b>	<b>128.5</b>

Some of the key reasons why all the provided space is not usable or available include:

- Some of the community facility space is subject to exclusive use arrangements that allow it to be used by one major user group. In effect this often means that space remains unused while the key licence or leaseholder is not using the facility. The most common example of this is the exclusive use rights that sporting clubs have over clubrooms. These facilities are often only used on a seasonal basis and lay idle during off seasons or, for example, during weekday mornings and early afternoons when not being used by the sporting clubs
- Some of the community facility space is used exclusively for uses that only have the capacity to be open for limited hours. As an example, the Nairne Museum occupies a Council building that is only open for four hours a week. Another example is the Von Doussa Clubroom in the Mount Barker Town Centre which is currently used exclusively by the Adelaide Hills Motor Restorers Club and currently has no general community access
- Some facilities are occupied by permanent users that use the space all the time. These uses are often successful community services that provide good community benefits. However, the permanent use of facility space does mean that other community groups or uses are not able to be accommodated. Examples of these uses are the Nairne Market and the Hahndorf Academy
- Facilities that lack appropriate services and infrastructure (e.g. no power and water) and therefore, cannot be practically used as community facility space. An example is the St James Schoolhouse in Littlehampton (which also at around 50 square metres in floor area has limited functionality).

The preceding map and table show that actual/available community facility provision across the four townships varies from 56 square metres per 1000 people in Mount Barker township to 215 square metres per 1000 people in Hahndorf. The average actual/available floor space across the four areas is 128.5 square metres per 1000 people.

Hahndorf and Littlehampton are considered to be relatively well provided with community facility space, although some enhancements and upgrading is likely to be required in the future. Nairne, which is expected to experience some population growth, could reach a reasonable level of provision if more of the currently unavailable community space became more generally accessible. Mount Barker township is relatively under supplied. Future community facilities planning should consider the needs of the Mount Barker township population, as well as Mount Barker's role as a district and regional centre.

Current facility provision within the MBDC area is defined by small-scale local facilities, many of which are ageing, not Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant, are single-use and not purpose built. The location of many of these facilities is not ideal, and some are frequently or completely unavailable for public use.

While a number of halls exist, there is only one community centre (staffed facility) in the Mount Barker District. This facility (Mount Barker Community Centre) is small (150 square metres of useable community activity space) and is located in a primarily residential neighbourhood in the south of the existing Mount Barker township. Council is currently (2016/17) undertaking a project to examine re-location options for this service. The land it occupies is subject to an agreement between Council and the Department of Education where the community centre site will be redeveloped into a children's centre.

As shown on the previous map, Mount Barker also includes a number of district level facilities including:

- Central Library
- Anembo Park Sportsground Clubrooms
- Hahndorf Academy, and
- The previously mentioned Mount Barker Community Centre (which although operating primarily from a small building does provide a district wide service).

As the district population grows the role of these facilities will become increasingly important. Importantly, all of these facilities, with the exception of the Hahndorf Academy, are located in or close to the Mount Barker Town Centre and are likely to have a role to play in the reinforcement of Mount Barker as the primary centre of the district and the wider region.

### 3.3.1 Quality of existing community facilities

Prior to this project commencing, Council staff undertook an audit of all Council-owned community facilities across the LGA. The purpose of the audit was to systematically examine all of the elements that contribute to successful community facilities and understand how Council's community facilities perform next to these.

The audit examined community facilities in relation to 11 key themes with a number of indicators under each. The key themes include: visual prominence, integration with other services, accessibility by public transport, access by pedestrian/bicycle facilities, universal access, parking, multipurpose, quality of outdoor areas, quality of building condition, safety and security and environmentally sustainable design initiatives.

Although the community facility audits have been conducted in a comprehensive and systematic fashion, scores should still be interpreted with some caution. They are intended to act primarily as a guide and indicative comparison.

#### Summary of findings

##### High scoring facilities

The highest scoring facilities (relevant to this study) were the Mount Barker Community Library (85%) and Littlehampton Peace Memorial Hall (84%). These high performing facilities were generally well located, well maintained, multipurpose spaces with universal access that were connected to open space and public transport.

The Mount Barker Library has ample parking but Littlehampton Memorial Hall scored poorly on that measure. However, there is some limited additional parking available in Littlehampton. The hall at Littlehampton is run by an active committee and is well utilised. The Mount Barker Library also scored well on building condition and is staffed so it is open and active for many hours during the week, compared to most other community facilities.

In terms of physical features, the Littlehampton Memorial Hall is adjacent to open space and has a strong visual presence on the main street. Although Mount Barker library is not located on the main street, it is close to the town centre and is part of the recognisable and accessible TAFE precinct, which is on the edge of the town centre and is close to key bus interchanges.

Littlehampton Memorial Hall has a main hall that can seat approximately 140 people, an activity room and a small meeting room that is available for smaller groups. The hall has some limited and quite dated kitchen facilities attached to the supper room. Although these functional spaces are beneficial, their traditional layout and level of amenity could be improved to further enhance community access and greater shared use.

##### Low scoring facilities

Among the lowest scoring facilities was the Mount Barker Community Centre (55%). While the Mount Barker Community Centre scored relatively well on pedestrian and outdoor access, poor access was a key issue for this and other low scoring facilities. This includes universal access, access to open space, pedestrian and cyclist access, access to public transport and adequate parking provision.

Other key areas where these facilities performed poorly included building condition and providing multipurpose spaces.

Common issues with current facility provision include:

- Universal access
- Access to open space
- Pedestrian and cyclist access

- Access to public transport
- Adequate parking
- Provision for information technology.



Mount Barker Community Centre, Photo: Elton Consulting

Facility floor space for existing community facilities range from 56 square metres (the St James School House) to 753 square metres (the Hahndorf Academy). These measures are again crude indicators as, for example, the Hahndorf Academy space is dedicated almost exclusively to retail, gallery and Tourist Information Centre uses, so actual public use for activities is limited. The average facility size of existing facilities (including clubrooms and bowling clubs) is 372 square metres (for context a basketball court is approximately 500 square metres in area).

The largest capacity space currently available is the Hahndorf Memorial Institute which has a seated capacity of 300 people. The next largest is the Nairne Memorial Hall which has a seated capacity of 175 people. Of existing community facilities one third are over 500 square metres (with the largest at 753); one third are between 250 and 500 square metres; and one third are less than 250 square metres.

In terms of year built, about 40% of Mount Barker's existing community facility buildings were constructed in the 1800s. Half were constructed between 1900 and 1980 and two have been constructed since 1980.



Nairne Museum, Photo: Elton Consulting



Hahndorf Memorial Institute, Photo: Cinema Treasures

## 3.4 Consultation feedback on existing community facility provision

As referenced earlier this study included a number of workshop sessions with MBDC staff, Elected Members, local community organisations and service providers, representatives of management committees, and resident groups. Key issues from those consultations will be documented throughout in the relevant sections. Consultation feedback on existing facility provision is included here.

### 3.4.1 Valued aspects of the existing network of community facilities

An important dimension of planning for the future is understanding what currently works well and what people value about current provision. This recognition is important to ensure that future plans do not create unnecessary change. Aspects of current provision that are valued include:

- The sense of ownership and pride that local community members have in their community halls. (There were some concerns expressed about the sustainability of the reliance on volunteer management committees and the ageing demographic of volunteers)
- The tradition of locating community halls and institute building on the main streets of townships, providing them with a prominent, central and important place in the community
- The library as a valued community space that provides a wide variety of activities and programs in a creative setting. The library was recognised as a focal point for community activity especially for families with children. (Views were mixed, however, on the location of the library with some seeing the location with TAFE as advantageous, and others viewing it as too far from the town centre)
- The willingness of existing schools to share space, although cost is identified as a prohibiting factor in some cases.

### 3.4.2 Existing gaps

Some of the current gaps identified in the consultation undertaken for this project (and consideration of issues raised in previous consultation processes) include:

- Training spaces especially those well equipped with modern IT equipment
- Lack of youth space and spaces in general where young people are welcome
- Accessible space especially given the use of heritage buildings as community buildings
- Performing arts space that is accessible to the general community
- Community arts and creative spaces including workshop, studio space, 'maker space', and possibly exhibition space focussed more on community art
- Health services including counselling, sexual and mental health service provision
- Small, sessional spaces that are available for counselling or small group discussions
- Programming and management to ensure a range of programs and services that cater for community needs are delivered from council facilities
- Difficulty for user groups to book space and to understand what space is available for community use
- A lack of investment in buildings and lack of fit for purpose community facilities

- Difficulty in securing funding for community building upgrades for improvements such as accessibility, storage, toilet upgrades, and lighting

### **Implications for future community facilities planning**

Mount Barker's position as a regional centre 30 kilometres from Adelaide creates the need for a greater degree of self-sufficiency in community facility provision. Mount Barker's distance from neighbours means that residents cannot access or 'share' community facilities in neighbouring local government areas as happens in more contiguous suburban areas. This has implications for the levels of community facility provision required to support the Mount Barker community.

An analysis of floor area provision suggests that there is currently some under-utilisation of existing community facility assets. A key example of this is the current arrangements with a number of sporting clubrooms and the relatively exclusive use / lease arrangements that are currently in place.

Before considering the creation of any new facilities in the established townships that have relatively high levels of total community facility floor space, options to enhance broader community access to community spaces should be considered.

Floor area analysis also suggests that there is an under supply of community facility space in Mount Barker township.

Two key aspects of existing provision that are valued are the library (particularly because of its creative programming and range of activities provided) and the traditional main street location of community facility buildings. Future planning should seek to reinforce and enhance these valued features.

Gaps or deficits identified to date in existing provision include both physical spaces (youth centre, training space, performing arts and adaptable spaces) and operational or process issues such as programming, management, booking issues, and funding limitations.

Other existing issues are the physical limitations of the existing community facility portfolio and its lack of flexibility and adaptability. The existing community facility assets are dominated by relatively large hall type spaces.

## 4 Growth and Change

As MBDC undergoes growth and change, community facilities and services will be required to adapt and change to continue to meet community needs. The scale of anticipated growth will require the development of new local community facilities as well as demand for greater provision of district level facilities.

Changing community demographics that may impact on the role of and demand for community facilities include:

- » An ageing population combined with increasing young people may mean that age-specific facilities segregate, rather than integrate, different generations
- » Young median age in the area, with this trend continuing as young families are predicted to make up a significant proportion of new residents
- » An ageing volunteer population means that the volunteers who currently maintain and manage facilities may not find younger generations willing to take on this role
- » Increasing cultural diversity, and a lack of current facilities and spaces that cater to those from culturally diverse backgrounds
- » The possibility of the Mount Barker growth area attracting a different demographic with cultural values and aspirations different from that of the existing Mount Barker residents. One concern is that the growth area will become a collection of largely dormitory suburbs with people commuting to and from the CBD and other major employment areas. A result of this could be that new residents lack the capacity to participate in local community activities and be part of the Mount Barker lifestyle and community spirit
- » With such a significant population increase, demand for a wide range of community services will increase. This will occur at a time when changes to State Government human service delivery is focussing on centralisation with less physical presence in outer metropolitan areas like Mount Barker
- » Increases in the Mount Barker population (as well as that of the surrounding region) will see Mount Barker exceed population thresholds for higher order community facilities including performing arts, civic and cultural spaces, youth services and facilities as well as possibly health and education.

It is important to note that while the growth area is considered separately to existing townships here, it is essentially an extension of the existing Mount Barker urban development area. The growth area is contiguous with Mount Barker township and is essentially an extension of it. While the timing of development and the likely character will be different, there is little or no physical separation between the growth area and the existing town.

This is important from a community facilities planning perspective as it will be both necessary and desirable to ensure that existing and higher order district facilities located in Mount Barker Town Centre or other established areas are available and accessible to new residents. The other implication of this access is that the growth areas will contribute to demand for community facility provision in established centres, particularly district serving facilities, such as the library, located in the Mount Barker Town Centre.

### **Growth area sectors**

For planning purposes MBDC has divided the Mount Barker Growth Area into three sectors: Western, Central and Eastern as defined by the following boundaries:

- Western sector is largely bound by Bollen Road and Flaxely Road, with a small area to the north of Hawthorn Road
- Central Sector is bound by Flaxely Road and Wellington Road
- Eastern Sector is bound by Wellington Road and Springs Road.

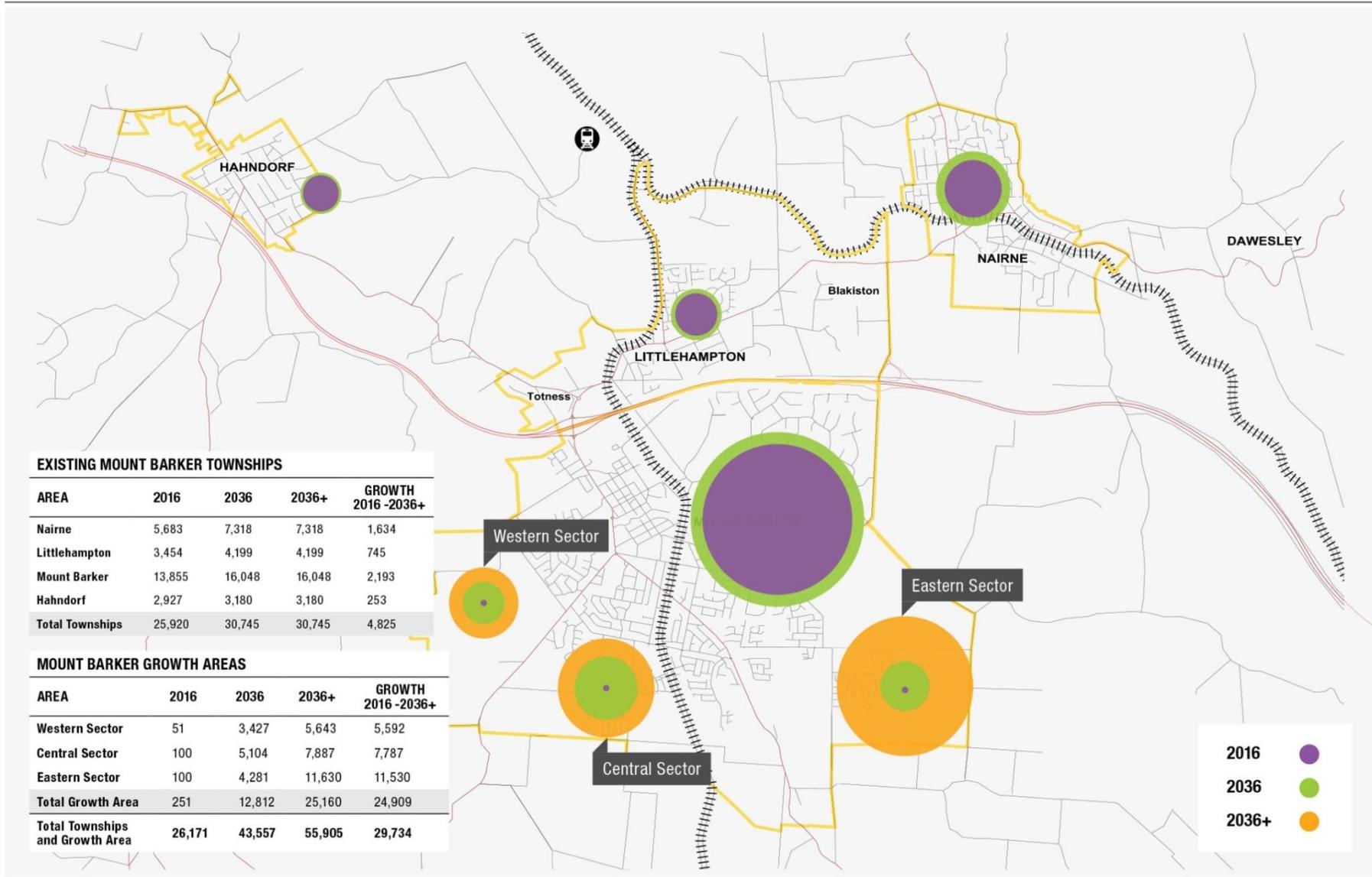
## **4.1 Growth Map**

The map on the following page shows the levels and approximate distribution of population growth that Mount Barker is projected to experience. Three time scales are used:

- Current population (2016 – shown by the purple circle)
- Mid-point growth (2036 – shown by the green ring)
- Ultimate projected growth (post 2036 – shown by the orange ring).

Note that the sizes of the rings on the following maps are indicative and are not to scale.

# Mount Barker Population Growth 2016 to 2036 (beyond)



The map and accompanying table show that:

- Growth in established towns (green ring) occurs up to 2036. There is no projected population growth in Hahndorf, Littlehampton, Nairne or Mount Barker townships after 2036
- Although the overall growth of Mount Barker township is relatively small (2,193 people) compared to growth area population increase, Mount Barker's total or ultimate post 2036 population confirms it as the largest population centre in the district (both currently and in the future)
- Importantly, Nairne is also projected to experience relatively significant growth to 2036 with a population increase of 1,634 people (this represents a population growth of 29% from 2016)
- The growth areas start from a small current population base. The Western and Central sectors experience the majority of their growth to 2036, while the Eastern sector's growth is more concentrated in the post-2036 period. This will have implications for both community facility location and staging
- Overall, the total population of Mount Barker increases from 30,351 in 2011 to 52,215 in 2036 - an increase of over 20,000 people. To put this in context, this is adding the equivalent of another Nairne, Littlehampton and Mount Barker township to the existing 2016 population and an effective doubling of the demand for community facilities and other social infrastructure. Another comparison is that it is like adding a town like Mount Gambier on to the existing Mount Barker population with the commensurate increase in demand for community facilities.

### **Community facilities planning in growth areas**

The characteristics of greenfield areas also influence the provision of social and recreational infrastructure in the growth areas of central towns, particularly the extension of Mount Barker. These characteristics include:

- High numbers of families with younger children
- Poor public transport in new suburbs
- The need to expand services and facilities over time to match population growth
- The need for flexible and multipurpose facilities that can respond to community need over time and provide best use of scarce resources.

Early provision is important in greenfields areas as this assists the community to develop a sense of belonging and responsibility and, in turn, supports wellbeing and public safety.

## 4.2 Consultation suggestions on future planning of community facilities

Some of the ideas for future planning of community facilities in Mount Barker suggested in the consultation undertaken for this project (as well as the consideration of issues raised in previous consultation processes) include:

- The continuing primacy of the Mount Barker Town Centre is important and an appropriate location for anchor community facilities that will draw people into the centre and contribute to the vibrancy of the regional centre
- The lack of a 'heart' in the town centre is seen as a weakness and consideration should be given to what role community facilities can play in creating a community focal point in the town centre
- Future facilities should be planned to be 'scalable' both in terms of being sized appropriately to fit their context (e.g. town centre or small township) but also in the sense of being flexible and adaptable to changing demand. Facilities should be able to grow and adapt as the community grows and evolves
- Age segregated facilities (specific youth centres or seniors' centres) should be reconsidered with the future of community facilities focusing on integration and facilitating intergenerational contact
- Future community facilities should incorporate large amounts of shared space that encourages different people and groups to work together
- Future facilities should consider elements of a 'one stop shop' where residents can access a range of community information including service referral
- While activities, programs and services will continue to be important, future planning should recognise the value of places and spaces for people to meet informally, engage with each spontaneously and have an opportunity to participate in community life
- Given changes in the way that human services are funded and delivered, the provision of 'hot office' or sessional/outreach space within community facilities will be required to enable service providers not based in Mount Barker to have a presence and cater for local community needs
- One of the challenges of growth is the potential differences in values and aspirations between new and existing residents. Future planning should consider what role community facilities (and community services and development) can play in promoting interaction, engagement and a shared identity between new and existing communities within Mount Barker
- Local developers recognised the value in the development of a strategic approach to community facility provision where Council's long term community facility needs were clearly articulated
- Local developers also spoke of the value of flexibility and an interest in working with Council to explore a number of possible avenues to achieve Council's desired community facilities outcomes
- Future planning should consider the role of partnerships as an essential element of any future approach. The growth areas were seen as an opportunity to plan new facilities and spaces (community centres, schools, playing fields, recreation spaces, etc.) in a way that strengthens and encourages partnerships between Council and others.

### **Implications for community facilities**

With the levels of projected growth there will be a need for the provision of a range of new community facilities and a general increase in demand for social infrastructure. Mount Barker District is projected to almost double its current size with essentially a new town's worth of demand being added.

Mount Barker Town Centre is important not only strategically as a district and regional centre but it will also continue to be the centre of the most significant local population in the district with a projected local township population of over 16,000 people. Future facilities planning will need to consider local needs, as well as wider district and regional demand.

Staging of future community facilities will be crucial with the total growth area population growth of approximately 25,000 people including approximately half occurring prior to 2036 and approximately half after 2036.

Community facilities are one mechanism to assist with not only supporting the growth and development of the new Mount Barker growth area communities, but they have the potential to play a role in the integration of the new and existing communities.

# 5 Approach and Framework

This section of the strategy describes a general approach and presents a framework to guide the future planning of community facilities – this includes not only the planning of new facilities but can also assist with decisions about existing facilities. It includes trends and principles for facility provision, identifies a community facilities hierarchy for Mount Barker, provides standards and suggests a levels of intervention approach to community facilities provision.

## 5.1 Trends

The following trends are based on case study research and project experience both across Australia and internationally. These trends have been tested and adapted through the consultation process to suit the Mount Barker context.

**Table 1 Key trends in community facilities planning**

Trend	Description
<p><b>Size and scale</b></p>	<p>While generally trends favour larger, but fewer, better appointed community facilities in central locations, application of this trend to Mount Barker requires some adaptation. Mount Barker’s urban structure, with a central township and a number of smaller villages, means that some ‘scaling’ of community facilities to their local catchment is required. While larger facilities may be located in central, district wide serving locations like the Mount Barker Town Centre, smaller townships will require smaller, locally-scaled facilities to serve local populations. For Mount Barker, ‘scalability’ also means the flexibility to scale up facilities in a staged way to meet changing demand related to the staged and long term timeline of development.</p> <p>Another impetus for this trend is the increasing challenge of asset management and operational costs for asset owners, such as Council. While considering scalability and local catchments, community facility planning in Mount Barker, especially in relation to growth areas, should still focus on identifying a limited number of key central locations in which to concentrate multipurpose community facilities, rather than allowing numerous, smaller and less functional facilities to spread throughout the growth area.</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>There is a move away from building single stand-alone facilities in residential areas, which are often poorly utilised. Leading practice favours the clustering of community buildings in centres to enhance accessibility and connectivity with related uses. Well-used community facilities tend to be located in places that are readily accessible by public transport and where people already tend to congregate, such as shopping centres and schools. These locations increase convenience and decrease car trips by reducing the need for multiple trips. They also enhance visibility, safety and convenient access.</p> <p>In Mount Barker, locating community facilities in a centralised cluster also provides significant place-making opportunities. Mount Barker has a tradition of main street location of many of the traditional community hall and Institute buildings, such as Hahndorf, Nairne and Littlehampton. This highly central, visible location, reinforces civic importance and identity, and should continue in the planning of new community facilities in both established and new areas.</p>

Trend	Description
<b>Co-location</b>	<p>The co-location of community facilities and services, involving shared-use of buildings among a number of facility types as well as service. It can involve accommodating community centre space, libraries and community service providers (in some cases, multiple organisations and services) in a single location or building.</p> <p>Co-location has potential advantages in pooling resources to provide better facilities than may be available if provided separately. An additional motivation is the more efficient use of limited resources, by sharing common facilities rather than each organisation having separate spaces and amenities. Co-location can also enhance synergies between services and encourage greater integration of service delivery, including increased referrals between facilities and services.</p> <p>Planning for new growth areas provides an opportunity to identify community facilities sites that are centrally located within their identified catchments (western, central and eastern sectors), on transport routes, and clustered with shops, schools, child care, sporting fields and other activity generating uses.</p>
<b>Community hubs</b>	<p>An increasingly popular model of community facility provision that incorporates the trend for size, scale and co-location is the 'community hub'. A community hub is a multipurpose public gathering and activity place where a variety of activities occur and where a wide range of community needs can be met in both formal and informal ways. The key to the community hubs concept is integration. This can mean both integration of services, programs and activities within a multipurpose community space or the integration of a range of activity generating uses including civic, community and cultural facilities, shops, transport, parks and plazas.</p>
<b>Multipurpose and multifunction</b>	<p>Particularly in areas experiencing growth and change, community services and facilities have to respond to increasingly complex and diverse social needs. Community buildings designed for a single purpose have been found to lack the flexibility to respond to changing needs or to accommodate more than one type of service, program or activity at a time.</p> <p>To make the best use of limited resources, and ensure that facilities are utilised as much as possible, community facilities need to provide for multiple uses and serve a range of population groups, as well as being capable of adapting as needs change over time. Successful community facilities tend to be those that offer a diversity of well organised and well attended services, programs and activities. This diversity requires a variety of flexible spaces and amenities, capable of being multifunctional and accessible.</p> <p>Council's current community halls are largely single-use, with some space leased as private office space, limiting availability and utilisation.</p>
<b>Community development and social gathering</b>	<p>Community facilities are recognised as providing an important focus for community development activities and enhancing the connections and relationships among people in order to strengthen common values and promote collective goals. These goals may include community cohesion, safer neighbourhoods, support for isolated or disadvantaged people, healthier children and families, more local employment opportunities, greater cultural recognition or more profitable local businesses.</p> <p>Places for the community to gather, both formally and informally, are a key goal for contemporary community facilities. This can include spaces that fit the description of a 'third place'- informal public gathering spaces that enable people to sit, relax, meet, gather and interact. They are places that encourage social connections and are essential to the creation of a sense of community. These facilities address the communal yearning for 'places to spend time, where you don't have to spend money'.</p>

Trend	Description
<b>Placemaking and community identity</b>	<p>Successful community facilities contribute to the creation of vital public spaces that help engender a sense of place and distinctive community identity. A recent focus has been designing community facilities that enhance the physical quality and appearance of public places, helping to reinforce a place’s identity and making it a more attractive environment for people to gather and interact with each other. Local and more intimately scaled facilities can also add significantly to the sense of place in new neighbourhoods.</p> <p>When located with retail and commercial uses, community facilities can help to reinforce the role of those areas as public gathering, meeting and information sharing places. It is important that community facilities have a civic quality, sense of stability and level of amenity that marks them as an important place in the community.</p> <p>A centralised cluster or hub of facilities in Mount Barker provides an opportunity to increase connectivity with open space and provide a sense of place and a quality variety of indoor and outdoor public spaces that cater for a range of interests, needs and abilities.</p>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<p>Community facilities are increasingly being used to showcase sustainable building methods and design. Sustainable initiatives can include rainwater harvesting, solar panels, energy efficient lighting and stormwater treatment. Another example of environmental sustainability is adaptive reuse.</p>
<b>Financial viability</b>	<p>Financial viability has become a core focus area in the provision of community facilities. In an environment of limited resources, local governments are becoming increasingly interested in exploring ways to decrease costs in relation to developing, operating and maintaining community facilities. The incorporation of income generation space into community facilities is increasingly common and seen as fundamental to the financially sustainable operation of community facilities. While cost recovery is an ambitious goal, the generation of income to offset operational costs is seen as a future necessity.</p>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<p>Community facilities are increasingly dependent on the development of partnerships to make them work. While local governments have traditionally been the provider of community facilities, resource and practical constraints have combined to necessitate the use of partnerships in the provision of facilities in order to meet community needs. In the case of facility provision, Council may act as an advocate or may seek to provide facilities via partnerships with community groups, organisations or government agencies.</p> <p>Partners in community facility provision are commonly utilised in the management of facilities and / or the provision of services and programs offered from them. Some caution is required to ensure that the partnership facilitates broad community benefits, rather than creating specific benefits for the partner through potential monopolisation of a public asset.</p> <p>It is also important to acknowledge that Council need not be the only provider of community facilities. Non-council owned facilities can also offer space for broader community use (including schools, clubs, churches and other religious organisations).</p> <p>Many local governments are seeking to better realise the potential of these facilities and incorporate them into their network of facilities. This is best achieved when a council plays an active role in developing connections/partnerships with facility owners. For example, should demand exceed the capacity of a council’s facilities, the council would act as a ‘space broker’ – locating and negotiating the use of other spaces with, for example, school principals, ministers or club owners in the area.</p> <p>The use of school playing fields or meeting spaces in Mount Barker is an example of Council utilising external facilities and partnerships to provide adequate community space.</p>

## 5.2 Consultation feedback on future provision

The image below shows the characteristics and qualities of a future network of community facilities for Mount Barker identified in the consultation process.



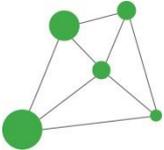
The Denison Centre, City of Salisbury. Photo: Russell and Yelland Architects

# 5.3 Guiding principles

There are a number of factors that have been found to influence the success of community facilities, considered in terms of achieving high levels of utilisation, being well recognised as a source of social support in their community and contributing to the identity and sense of place of the area.

Principles that have influenced and guided contemporary community facility provision are based on factors that lead to successful and well-utilised facilities.

**Table 2 Guiding principles for community facility provision**

 <p><b>A co-ordinated network of facilities</b></p>	<p>Community facilities should not be planned in isolation but be considered as a broader network of facilities that work together to meet a broad range of community needs, across a region or sub-region. Planning and delivering facilities as a network represents an integrated, strategic approach. It allows facilities to provide a different range of offerings, with the option for each facility to include unique, specialist services or amenities.</p> <p>The key to a successful network of facilities is the organisation of facilities within a hierarchy. A facility hierarchy includes larger and specialist, higher order facilities (e.g. central libraries, performing arts facilities, exhibition or conference facilities and galleries) serving a wider sub-regional or LGA-wide populations down to small, local facilities to meet the day to day needs of their immediate, surrounding communities.</p> <p>By considering facilities as part of a network, duplication of services, programs, spaces and amenities can be avoided, therefore, representing a more economically sustainable approach to community facility planning.</p>
 <p><b>Central to catchment and equitable access</b></p>	<p>Community facilities should be central and accessible to the population they are intending to serve. Leading practice favours the location of facilities in urban centres to enhance accessibility and connectivity with related uses. Well used community facilities tend to be located in places that are readily accessible by public transport and where people already congregate, such as in retail and commercial centres and near schools. These locations also enhance visibility, safety and convenient access. Adequate parking nearby also promotes good access to facilities.</p> <p>The facility building should comply with the principles of universal design by facilitating access to and use of the facility and its spaces by all individuals and groups (regardless of age, ability, cultural background or level of social or economic advantage/disadvantage). This relates to providing a high level of physical access, connection and way-finding as well as ensuring services, programs and activities are broadly advertised and promoted and are affordable.</p>
 <p><b>Located to promote visibility and accessibility</b></p>	<p>To be well used and serve identified social needs, community facilities should be highly visible. Ideally, they should be on a main street with ground floor street frontage for optimum visibility and accessibility. Enabling an awareness of what happens inside also promotes usage.</p> <p>Community facilities are an important part of the civic fabric of our centres and suburbs. Accessibility and visibility through main street locations with a ground floor presence can be important to maximising utilisation and enhancing accessibility.</p>

 <p><b>Clustered/co-located</b></p>	<p>Co-locating or clustering community facilities is presented as a key principle to guide the planning of future facilities in Mount Barker. The community hub model, which involves co-locating facilities on neighbouring sites or in a single building, is also proposed as a key approach for consideration. Community hubs provide a range of offerings and can, therefore, become key focal gathering points within a community; attracting a range of users and promoting social connection and cohesion.</p> <p>Co-locating facilities and services can also promote the development of networks and partnerships between different service providers. It can assist referrals between services, ensuring clients are provided with a better, more coordinated and holistic level of care.</p> <p>Co-locating facilities is also a more efficient approach to facility provision as it can enable the shared use of spaces by different groups (including meeting rooms, amenities and activity spaces). The alternative model involves the provision of such spaces in each and every stand-alone facility. Clustering facilities can also contribute to overall sustainability by reducing the need for multiple trips and allowing residents to carry out a number of tasks in a single location through a single trip.</p>
 <p><b>Flexible and multipurpose</b></p>	<p>Community facilities should be designed and built to maximise flexibility in use, so they can respond and adapt as needs change. Where possible, buildings should be capable of delivering a range of programs and services, rather than designated for single uses or specific target groups that may quickly become out-dated. Flexibility is enhanced by providing multi-purpose spaces capable of accommodating a diversity of uses, thereby enabling a range of activities and target groups to use the facility and in doing so, ensure maximum use and optimisation of space. Multi-use facilities are also more dynamic and capable of responding and adapting to the changing needs and preferences of the community. Facilities that are responsive and flexible will be used more intensively over their lifetime.</p>
 <p><b>Serve identified social needs</b></p>	<p>Community facilities should address the social needs of the particular community in which it is located in order to contribute to residents' and workers' health, wellbeing and quality of life. Programs, activities and services offered should respond to the individual needs and interests of the people that live and work around it and foster long term social benefits for the community.</p> <p>The planning and design of a community centre should reflect the potential programs, activities and services envisaged. In addition, there should be a robust monitoring process to ensure Council facilities are successfully serving community needs and providing a high level of community benefit (see principle 'Accountability').</p>
 <p><b>Inclusive and welcoming</b></p>	<p>Facilities should be welcoming and accessible to people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, abilities, income levels and interests. This can be achieved not only through the provision of spaces catering to different groups and a design that provides universal access, but also through effective programming – ensuring activities and services are provided for a broad range of people. In doing so, facilities can also play a role in helping to bring together different groups in the community.</p>

 <p><b>Contribute to public domain and sense of place</b></p>	<p>Community facilities should contribute to urban vitality, local identity and sense of place, and become important focal points and gathering places for the community. A strong connection between the facility and the broader community can be fostered through development of facilities on landmark sites and with distinctive architecture and quality design. Community and cultural facilities should be distinctive civic buildings and welcoming places, and should present as a reflection of local culture. This helps ensure they develop a strong local profile and are well known in the community, thereby promoting high levels of usage.</p>
 <p><b>Near open space for activities and events</b></p>	<p>Locations adjacent to open space including town squares, village centres and parks increase the range of activities that can occur at community facilities. As an example, community centres adjacent to parks and playgrounds are ideal locations for playgroups. Facilities located next to civic squares provide opportunities for markets, festivals and similar events. Locating facilities near open space is another way to ensure that community facilities are integrated into their surrounding physical environment and seen as 'part of the community'.</p>
 <p><b>Connected to public transport, pedestrian and cycling networks</b></p>	<p>Planning community facilities requires a focus on enhancing efficiency and utilisation. Public transport enhances accessibility for all population groups. As a principle, community and cultural facilities should ideally be located within 400 metres walking distance of a regular public transport stop. Linking to pedestrian and cycling networks provides another avenue to promote the accessibility of facilities to all groups in the population and is a further means to encourage sustainable behaviour and a healthy and active lifestyle.</p>
 <p><b>Of sufficient size and design to enable expansion and adaptation</b></p>	<p>It is difficult to precisely predict the absolute requirements for community facilities for a future population. Assumptions about demand are based on current projections regarding future populations. These projections may change and therefore affect requirements for space. Past experience has shown that it is important to provide some flexibility in the provision of community and cultural facility space.</p>
 <p><b>Financially and environmentally sustainable</b></p>	<p>Community should be financially sustainable and provide value for money for their users, owners and operators. While capital costs are a major issue, ongoing operational costs are also important. Key considerations include building design that reduces ongoing operating and maintenance costs as well as design that considers cost recovery including the incorporation of space for lease for either community or compatible commercial uses.</p> <p>Delivering environmentally sustainable buildings is a mandate for many local governments. Community facility buildings offer opportunities for Council's to lead by example, demonstrate new sustainable materials and technologies and become leading practice projects with an educational role. Environmentally sustainable facility buildings typically have lower operating costs and are, therefore, are also a more financially sustainable option.</p>

 <p><b>Safe and secure</b></p>	<p>Community facilities should be designed in accordance with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. They should provide a high degree of personal safety for people entering and leaving the building, especially at night. Locating facilities in activated areas such as urban centres ensures higher levels of passive surveillance and increased security.</p>
 <p><b>Avoid of conflict with neighbouring uses</b></p>	<p>Master planning processes can provide an opportunity to locate community facilities uses in areas where impacts on residential and other uses can be minimised. In greenfield areas siting facilities to incorporate some form of separation and/or buffering from residential areas is often an important consideration in reducing any potential future conflict. Design and building orientation are also important considerations.</p>
 <p><b>Provided through partnerships and collaboration</b></p>	<p>Developing, operating and maintaining community facilities requires significant resources. With significant population growth projected in the Mount Barker district, resulting in a substantial increase in the demand for facilities, it will be important to consider the full range of provision opportunities available including partnering with State Government, other organisations and the private sector. Development in the area can provide opportunities for facility delivery (including through planning agreements with developers). However, it will be important that a strategic approach is undertaken to ensure facilities delivered align with these principles, community needs and consider the role of the facility within the broader network. They must also consider Council's needs in relation to ongoing operations and maintenance and ensure the facility delivered will be viable and sustainable into the future.</p>
 <p><b>Accountable (monitored and evaluated)</b></p>	<p>In a climate of increasingly scarce resources, it is important that Council facilities (and the services and programs provided from them) are providing high levels of community benefit and meeting key community needs. Monitoring and evaluation processes enable local governments to gain a solid understanding of the use of facilities and the social outcomes they provide. They also provide facility managers with the opportunity to demonstrate the work they are undertaken and the outcomes achieved.</p> <p>It is important however that such processes are user-friendly and do not burden facility licensees/lessees (who are typically community organisations with limited resources and other, sometimes onerous, funding reporting requirements).</p>

## 5.4 Community facility hierarchy

In line with the key principles presented, it is proposed that this strategy adopt a hierarchical approach for the planning and delivery of facilities based upon four levels that represent population catchments of different sizes. This recognises that facilities with different types of spaces and amenities are required to meet the range of needs and uses a community will experience.

Population thresholds suggested by this hierarchy should be applied flexibly, bearing in mind that the size of population catchments necessary to sustain different types of facilities will also be influenced by settlement patterns, travel distances and population characteristics.

The proposed hierarchy recognises that geographically isolated towns and centres generally require a higher level of 'self-containment' for services and facilities than would be provided to a similar population located in a metropolitan setting, where cross boundary travel and facility sharing is more commonplace. The proposed hierarchy is outlined in the following table.

**Table 3 Proposed facility hierarchy**

Hierarchy Level	Population served	Typical community facilities
<b>Regional</b>	75,000+	Major cultural, community or civic centres, central libraries, TAFE SA or tertiary facilities, health services, major recreational facilities
<b>District</b>	20,000-40,000	Multipurpose community centres (staffed, anchor tenant), high schools, district libraries, community health
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	5,000-15,000 or more than one township	Community or neighbourhood centre, a primary school, clubroom building, child care or kindergarten
<b>Local</b>	Up to 5,000 or small township	A community hall or clubroom building (not usually staffed; available on a casual basis).

## 5.5 An integrated, coordinated network of community facilities

Planning for individual community facilities in isolation is undesirable and can easily lead to duplication, inefficiencies, and a failure to maximise existing resources. Community facilities should be seen as part of a network. Each facility in that network should not only have its own role and function but that specific role and function should be viewed as part of a broader district-wide network. Any individual community facility cannot be reasonably expected to meet every conceivable community need. However, the network of community facilities (made up of district, neighbourhood or local facilities) should be planned to address the majority of community needs and have the capacity to adapt and change as those needs evolve.

In the Mount Barker context, although new facilities will be required to service the growth area population, those residents will still be required to come into Mount Barker Town Centre for higher order community facilities such as the Central Library. Although not all local needs can be met locally, most community needs will be able to be addressed through some aspect of the network of community facilities provided across the Mount Barker district.

## 5.6 Standards of provision

There are no nationally accepted standards for the provision of community centre space in Australia, although some states do have their own established guidelines for social infrastructure provision. Through a number of projects and considerable case study research across Australia, Elton Consulting has developed an approach to standards of provision that has now been tested throughout Australia. As with any approach to the quantification of requirements, broad standards must carefully consider local context and be able to be appropriately adapted to suit local circumstances.

Some of the key considerations in defining an appropriate level of service are:

- » Community benefit and asset management – both of these are key to community facilities planning. A strategic and sustainable approach finds a balance between the two. Too much emphasis in either direction will diminish the impact of facility provision. It is critical to find an approach that provides an appropriate level of community benefit in a way that does not create an excessive and unsustainable burden on Council
- » Council's role – MBDC has a number of important roles to play in community facilities planning and provision. However, it is impractical to suggest that Council has the sole responsibility to meet the full range of community demand for community facility space. A key role for Council is in working with others (schools, churches, clubs, etc.) to ensure that a network of facilities exist that can be utilised for community purposes
- » Understanding utilisation – sound information on existing facilities is critical. Before any decisions can be made about the provision of new or enhancing community facilities, it is essential to know that existing facilities are being used to their optimum practical level. Efficiency is essential in any form of infrastructure planning and a fundamental premise with community facilities planning is maximising the use of existing assets. An important and complex element of this is gaining an understanding of how the physical condition, design or location of existing assets may inhibit utilisation. In some cases demand for community facility space may exist but the current offering of facility in that area may not be suitable for contemporary community needs. In these cases asset enhancement or replacement needs to be considered
- » Facility programming and management – while a key focus with community facilities planning is the physical asset, community benefit from community facilities is also strongly influenced by how a space is programmed and managed. The most modern, well-designed community facility can deliver less than optimal community benefits if it is not programmed and managed in a way that understands and responds to community needs and interests. Conversely, community buildings that are quite basic and in some cases not well-designed can deliver significant benefits with the right programming and management approach. This means that an assessment approach that focuses purely on floor area provision (and the physical aspects of community facilities) is inadequate to fully understand existing provision and community benefits.

While it can be important to have a target level of service to aim for, it is not always desirable, particularly with social infrastructure, to take too mathematical or rigid an approach in determining what an appropriate level of service is. Going back to the general approach to community facilities provision, the key consideration is the balance between community benefit and asset management. If the right amount of community benefit can be achieved with less floor space, then that should be enabled and actually encouraged by a strategic approach to community facilities. What is important is having the tools and processes in place to assess community needs and benefits, as well as understanding asset management costs over time.

For Mount Barker, some of the key considerations to consider in the application of standards of provision for community facilities include:

- The need for a high degree of self-sufficiency or self-containment with community facility provision as Mount Barker is a distinct and relatively separate district where residents have limited opportunity to use community facilities in other districts (as can be done in more contiguous metropolitan areas)
- The average actual provision of community centre floor space (available/usable space) for the four key established centres of Nairne, Littlehampton, Hahndorf and Mount Barker townships is 128.5 square metres per 1000 people. This rate reflects historical and community factors and is also a response to the relative isolation of some townships and the need for 'self-containment'. The existing rate of provision is considered a strength of existing communities in Mount Barker District
- The current level of provision should be considered in conjunction with an understanding of the current nature of community facility provision with many of the existing facilities being smaller, older hall type facilities with varying degrees of compliance with contemporary standards for accessibility and other issues
- The role of Mount Barker as a key centre with the Mount Barker District but also in the wider regional context is important to consider. It is a strategic objective of Council to reinforce Mount Barker as the key centre for the district and district community facilities are likely to be best located there.

### Rates of local government provision for community halls and centres

Based on project work and research the following rates of provision for community centres are used in various Local Government Areas in Australia, most of which include new growth areas. These rates reflect either existing provision or preferred provision based on policy or disclosed in consultation.

Local Government Area	Rate of provision – sqm/1000 people
Playford (SA)	87
Liverpool (NSW)	85
Onkaparinga (SA)	80
Blacktown (NSW)	80
Hills Shire (NSW)	80
Maitland (NSW)	78
Camden (NSW)	64

Elton Consulting research

Based on comparative rates of provision from a number of local government areas and derived through testing on a number of projects, the proposed rate of provision recommended for Mount Barker for community centres (as a starting point) is 80 square metres per 1,000 people. This assumes a total of approximately 120-130 square metres is required to meet community needs and that Council will aim to provide 80 square metres (or approximately two thirds) of that.

This is recommended to be distributed across the community facilities hierarchy as follows:

- » 60-80 square metres/1000 people for neighbourhood and/or local level facilities (combined)
- » 20-40 square metres/1000 people for district level facilities to address the needs of the Mount Barker district population in this equation (as the catchment for this facility).

This rate is within the range of the current rate of provision (an average of 128.5 square metres per 1000 people across Nairne, Littlehampton, Hahndorf and Mount Barker township), the proposed approach and model of provision is based on greater community benefits being obtained through better quality and better managed community facility space. At present, many community facilities in the area lack, adaptability, are primarily single-use and not particularly accessible, so although the square metre provision may be relatively high, the efficiency and community benefit outcomes of the current portfolio of facilities is relatively limited. An important aspect of this strategy is a focus on quality rather than quantity of provision. Ongoing monitoring of existing communities will be required to ensure the required community benefits are being achieved from the existing community facilities portfolio and also to identify opportunities that may arise for improvement through enhancement and/or consolidation (where appropriate) of existing facilities.

An approach to future provision that focusses on well-located, accessible community facilities that are designed to be multipurpose and flexible and that are actively managed and programmed enable community needs to be met in less floor space, but higher quality, community facilities. Key areas of distinction between new and existing community facility space include:

- New community facilities are recommended to be planned and located in accordance with leading practice principles
- This strategy recommends a focus on maximising use through enhanced booking systems, management and programming
- Partnership opportunities will be maximised and planned and designed for in growth areas including community use of school facilities effectively increasing available space for community use.

The following diagram illustrates this approach to community facility provision based on a desired total level of provision of between 120 and 130 square metres per 1000 people which includes a Council provision of 70-80 square metres per 1000 people.

---

Total Community Floor Space

Floor Space by Provider

Floor Space by Hierarchy

---



The previous graphic shows:

- » 120-130 square metres of community facility floor space is the approximate amount of floor space that is assumed to be required to meet the full range of needs in a community
- » Of a total target provision of 120-130 square metres per 1,000 people, MBDC would aim to provide 70-80 square metres of the total required depending on the needs of the particular area and the availability of space provided by others (non-council provision)
- » Of the Mount Barker provision, 20-30 square metres is allocated towards the development of district level facilities – those that serve the whole of the MBDC population. This reflects the guiding principles which emphasise larger, multipurpose, flexible spaces in central, accessible, activity centre locations with good visibility and good access to transport, shops, etc.
- » The remaining 50-60 square metres of the Mount Barker provision is allocated to neighbourhood and local community facility provision. Once again principles encourage this investment to be in centrally located (to catchment), multipurpose, flexible facilities
- » It is primarily this neighbourhood and local level of provision where partnerships, particularly in the growth areas, with government schools, independent schools and developers is possible
- » Council will need to work with other councils, regional partners, and the SA State Government on the provision of regional facilities.

## 5.7 Levels of intervention

This report proposes that strategic community facilities planning should be based on a sequential series of steps. The key principle is the scale of least intervention which proposes that in environments of significant cost constraint the least intensive and most cost-effective intervention necessary should be pursued initially. If that least intensive intervention were to prove unsuccessful then the next intensive level of intervention would be introduced and so on.

In the context of this study, while building new community facilities will be required in Mount Barker, and in some cases may be the most effective and efficient long term solution, other less cost intensive options should be considered first before the considerable capital expenditure of a new build is decided upon.

The approach to levels of intervention is summarised below.



The basic premise is that these levels provide key issues to consider when addressing identified gaps in community facility provision, as outlined below:

- » Explore opportunities to better utilise existing facilities
- » Identify ways to better work with non-council facility providers like schools and churches to investigate how those facilities could be better utilised by the general community
- » Examine the feasibility of building on to or enhancing existing facilities. This may include expansion of the building footprint of an existing community facility or improving flexibility through introduction of divisible walls, for example
- » Create a new facility based on the identified principles for community facility provision.

This sequence needs to be considered alongside strategic opportunities which may arise, potentially at times not anticipated by Council. However, opportunities should still be considered for their potential to meet known or anticipated demand.

### **Principles for the creation of a new community facility**

New facilities should be:

- Larger, multipurpose district level facilities with flexible spaces that can cater for a wide variety of community needs
- Located in accessible activity centre locations that are central to catchment populations and have reasonable access to transport
- Clustered with other activity generating uses including shops and other community facilities
- Designed to maximise visibility and be in locations that have good ground floor street frontage
- Positioned to have a strong connection to good quality public open space and be designed to contribute to the public domain
- Located on sites that enable possible expansion in the future and also allow the facility to be developed in stages
- Designed to consider cost recovery with the inclusion of leasable space such as office space (permanent and sessional), meeting and activity rooms, function spaces, compatible commercial space (cafes, allied health professionals, legal professionals, etc.).

These principles can also be applied to assess the value of investing in an existing facility to increase utilisation or to inform a decision about rationalisation.

## 5.8 Applying lessons to future community facilities planning

Planning for growth areas provides an opportunity for a new model of, and approach to, community facility provision that builds on existing strengths and also addresses current weaknesses in existing provision in Mount Barker. Examples include:

- Promoting a model of sporting clubhouses/clubrooms that are designed to also function well as community spaces for general community events, activities and programs. Leasing and licensing arrangements should ensure share use of these spaces to ensure maximum community benefit can be gained from these facilities
- Planning to facilitate shared use of facilities with both Government and non-Government schools including playing fields, auditoriums/halls, classrooms/training facilities and potentially other uses such as libraries
- Building on the existing tradition of main street location of community facility buildings which reinforces the existing character of Mount Barker and ensures future community facilities are located for maximum visibility, accessibility and are recognised as key meeting places and focal points for community activity
- Introduction of a coordinated, centralised and easy to use booking system for community facilities to ensure that community groups that need access to space have good information and a user-friendly means to make a booking
- Consideration of promotion of the community benefits that community facilities provide and greater promotion of the wide range of positive and affirmative activities that can occur in community facilities
- Brokering new and improved partnerships and joint use models will have resourcing implications that will need to be considered by Council.



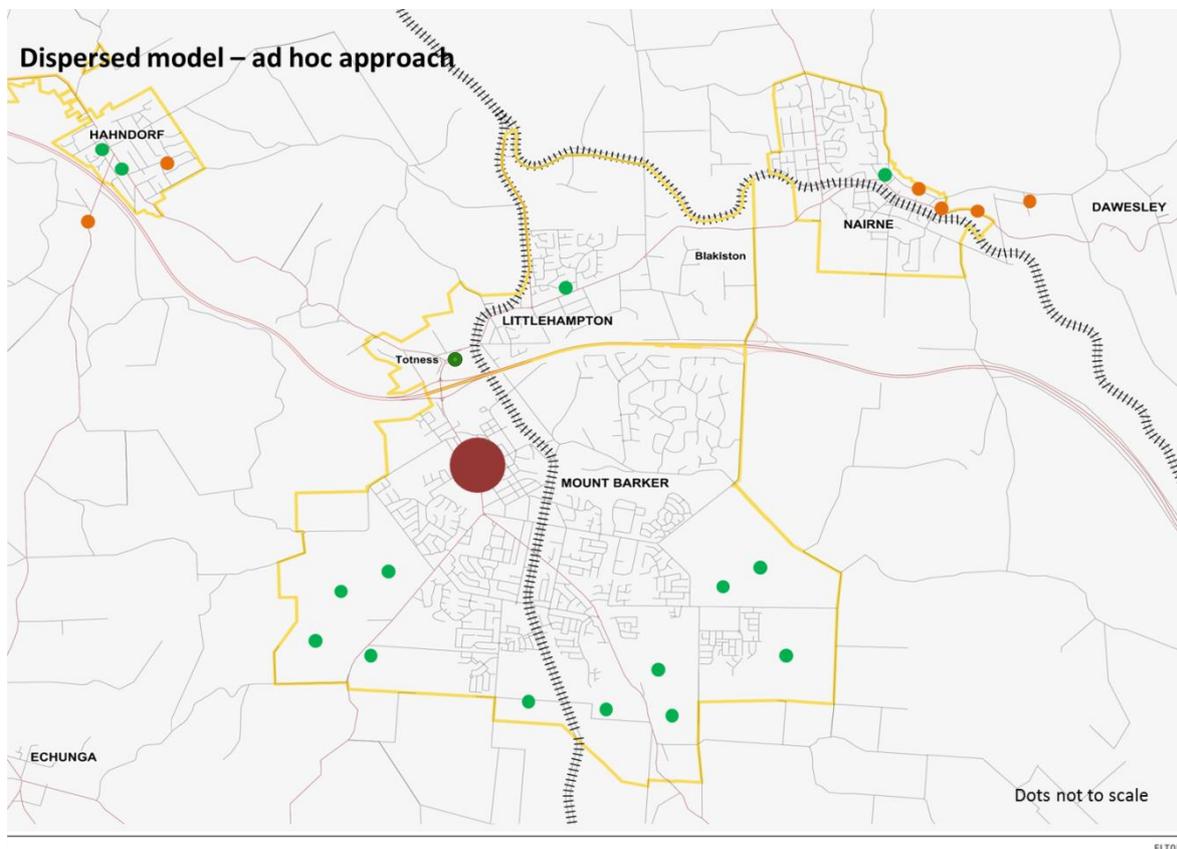
The Rouse Hill Community Centre and Library are located in the heart of the town centre. Photo: Elton Consulting

# 6 Framework for future provision

This section provides an overview of a preferred approach to the strategic future provision of community facilities in Mount Barker District. It builds on the previously documented analysis of the existing situation, the projections of population growth and distribution, trends and principles regarding community facility provision and the hierarchy and standards explained in the previous chapter. This section, however, begins with an overview of the likely outcome of not taking a strategic approach to community facility provision by following an ad hoc, site by site approach.

## 6.1 Ad hoc approach

As is typical of growth areas, MBDC is likely to be confronted with a number of proposals for the provision of community facilities as part of individual master planned areas or individual housing estates. With the in-kind contribution option as part of the Recreation Sport and Community Infrastructure Special Rate, developers are likely to approach Council with proposals for the provision of on-site community facilities to address the needs of their immediate estate population. While developers see this as a good outcome for their community and a sound investment for them, there is the risk that it will create a dispersed, disparate and ad hoc collection of small community spaces that are targeted specifically at very local populations but may not address whole of community and long term needs.



While the ad hoc approach could result in reasonable access for some communities to local community facility space, it is also likely that in this approach community facilities are:

- Provided as a result of series of individual agreements, rather than viewed as part of a strategic approach with a long term view to meeting community needs
- Primarily planned to serve provider's (developer's) immediate community needs
- Likely to result in a disparate collection of small, similar community spaces sized to meet individual community needs
- Likely to create a portfolio of community facilities that lack diversity and flexibility in terms of size and functionality
- Likely to create management, coordination, operational and maintenance issues for Council with many smaller, individual facilities to own, manage or maintain which means costs to operate will be more expensive
- Unlikely to promote integration of new communities with established Mount Barker communities
- Unlikely to address the majority of leading practice principles regarding multipurpose, flexible use, main street location, central to catchment, etc.

## 6.2 Recommended approach

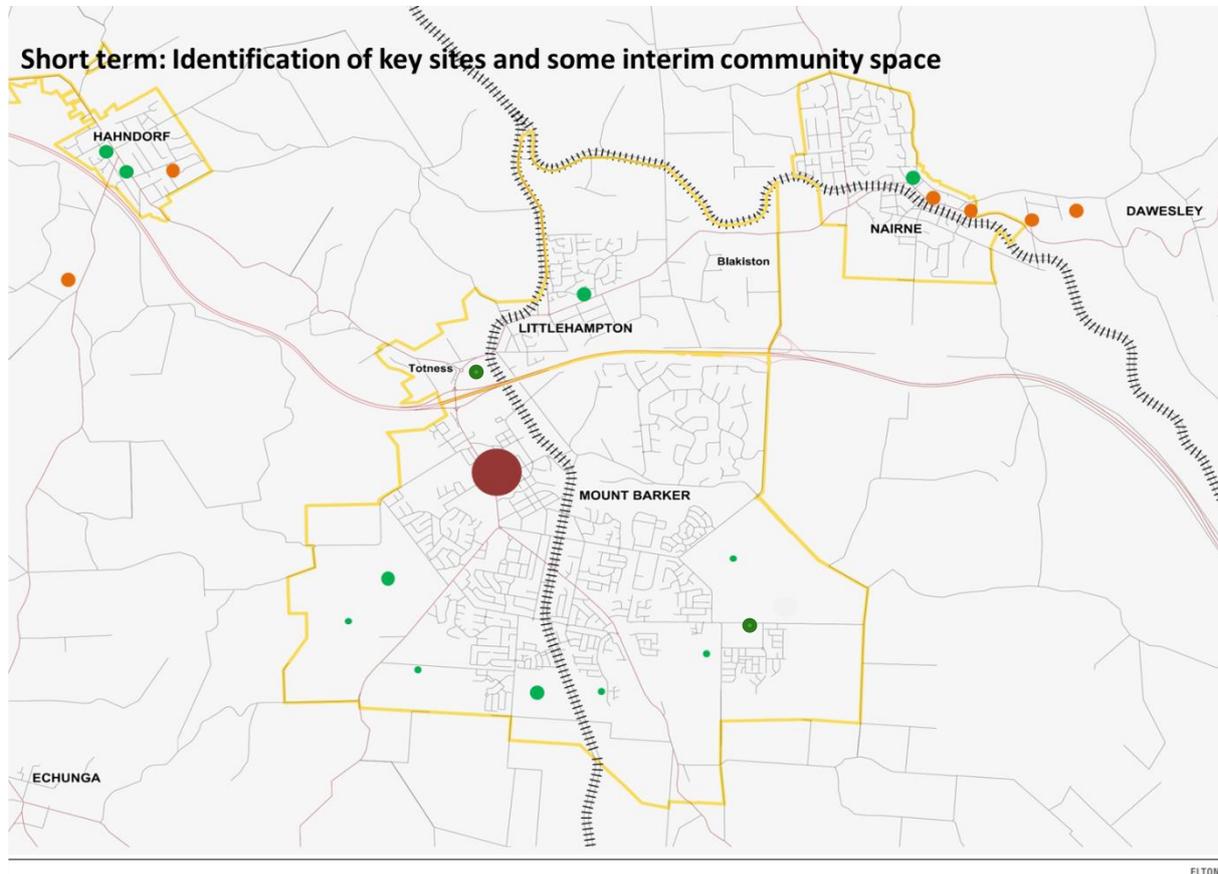
In contrast to the ad hoc approach, the recommended approach is a strategically planned and staged approach to community facility provision. This approach balances the dual needs of providing community meeting and activity space within the growth areas and also reinforcing the Mount Barker Town Centre as the primary centre in the district. In response to the long development timeline for the growth area (20 plus years) the approach recommended is a staged one that identifies key community centre sites early, but provides facilities in a staged way in response to increasing population demand. Facilities can be designed in a 'modular' manner to enable staged expansion as community needs increase and change.

This approach recognises the value of a strategic and planned approach, as well as the need to be flexible and respond to opportunities that may arise.

Time frame	Growth areas	Established townships
<b>Short term (time frame up to 2021)</b>	<p>Introduce a centralised booking system for community facilities</p> <p>Work with partners to incorporate non-Council space into the booking system and establish Council's role as a 'broker' for community space</p>	
	<p>Identification of growth area key future community facility sites and provision of interim facilities based on agreements that allow short term provision with transition to permanent sites post 2021</p>	<p>Identification of initial community hub site and establishment of first stage district community centre. Identification of program for improvements/enhancements to existing halls and facilities in established townships</p>
<b>Medium term (up to 2036)</b>	<p>Consolidation of community facility space into three key sites with each acting initially as a local community space (initially as multipurpose, programmed community halls)</p>	<p>Consolidation of District Community Hub in town centre location. Increases of both library and community centre floor space commensurate with population growth</p>
<b>Long term (post 2036)</b>	<p>Directing post-2036 growth area demand into one neighbourhood level centre with two location options: Eastern sector or Central sector</p>	<p>Further consolidation of District Community Hub with exploration of options for town centre core site.</p>

The following graphics map the preferred approaches according to the timeframes described above.

### 6.2.1 Short term recommended model (up to 2021) – key sites and interim uses



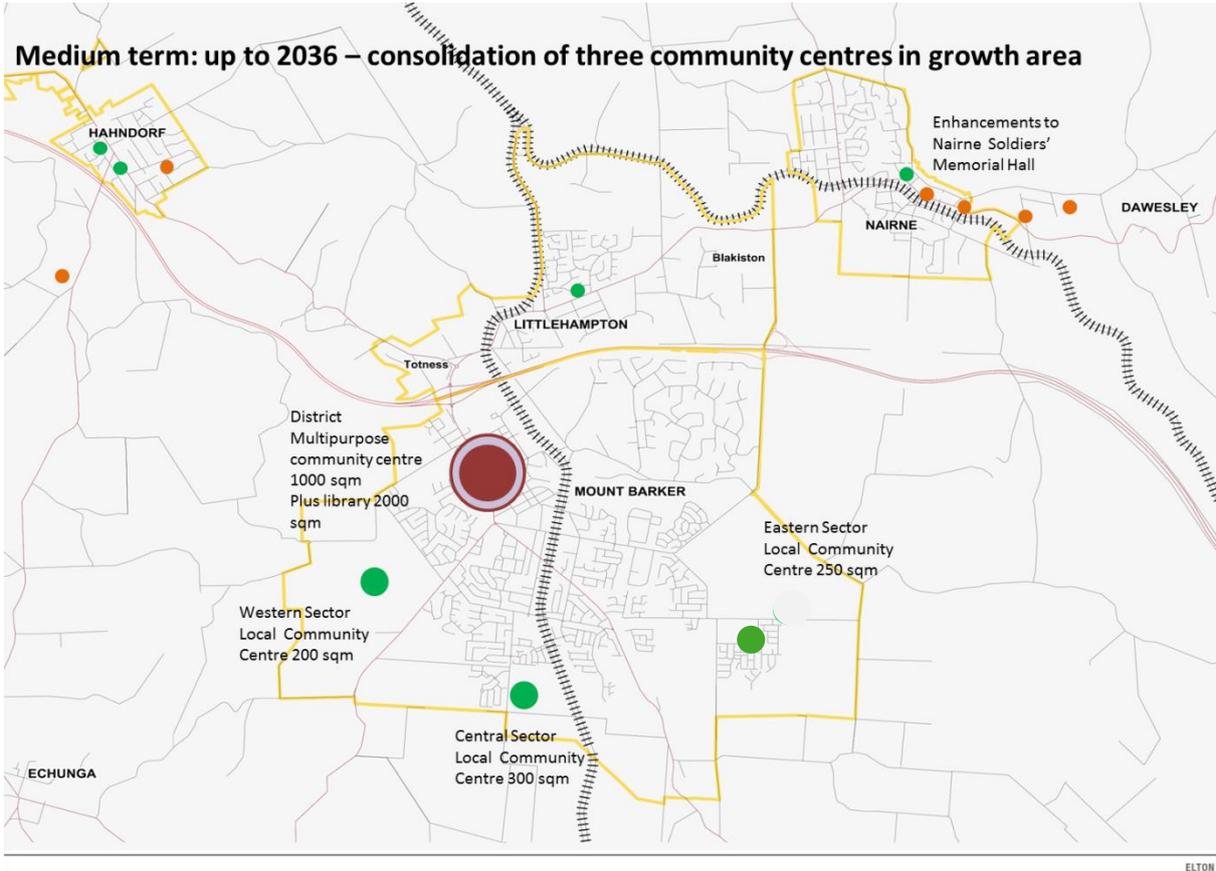
First stage or short term provision shows:

- Identification or ideally establishment of key community facility sites – one in each sector Western, Central and Eastern
- The allowance or flexibility to enable some interim provision of community meeting space as part of developer agreements and other negotiations on a temporary basis
- Interim provision should be for periods of approximately five years with space then consolidated into one of the three sector community centre locations
- In established areas, improvements to the Memorial Halls in Nairne and Littlehampton are undertaken
- Identification of town centre site for Mount Barker District Community Hub with relocation and/or consolidation of library and the Mount Barker Community Centre.

As the next stage of recommended facility provision (described in detail over the page) involves consolidation of growth area community facility space into three preferred locations (one in each of the Western, Central and Eastern sectors), it will be important that any negotiated agreements that Council makes with developers regarding the provision of community facility space be undertaken with the view to achieving the longer term community facility approach recommended here. This will mean that negotiated agreements should be structured around temporary or interim provision which does not preclude the requirement for developers to contribute to the provision of community facility

space in the key locations identified in this report. There are risks associated with temporary provision regarding the closure of 'temporary' facilities. Communications around these facilities need to be carefully managed and there needs to be a permanent replacement facility available in the sector at the time of closure to ensure a coordinated transition from the temporary to the permanent community facility.

### 6.2.2 Medium term recommended model (up to 2036) – consolidation of growth area sites



The medium term stage includes:

- The consolidation of community facility space into the three main growth centre centres – one in Western sector, one in Central and one in Eastern
- Growth in existing townships and growth areas contribute to increasing district community facility space in Mount Barker Town Centre
- Mount Barker consolidated as primary centre in Mount Barker district
- Consolidation of uses and enhancement of space for a multipurpose community centre and library space in Mount Barker Town Centre as part of the Mount Barker District Community Hub.

While some flexibility regarding precise locations may be required in the future, possible sites for these key community facility locations are:

- Western sector – Bollen Road sportsfields
- Central sector – Polo Grounds sportsfields
- Eastern sector – Neighbourhood Centre co-location in the education and sports/recreation facility.

## Growth areas – up to 2036

### Growth area community facility floor space calculations 2036

Growth Areas to 2036		Western Sector	Central Sector	Eastern Sector	Total Growth Area population
2036 total projected population		3427	5104	4281	12812
	Level of provision (sqm/1000 people)				
Local and Neighbourhood community facility space	60	206	306	257	769
District community facility contribution	20	69	102	86	256
Total required community facility provision	80	274	408	342	1025

The table above, which is also represented in the preceding map graphic, shows that:

- Up to 2036 the population of the growth areas is expected to increase to 12812 people
- Based on a standard of 80 square metres per 1000 people, this population will generate demand for a total of 1025 square metres of community facility floor space
- Based on the 60 square metres for local and neighbourhood and 20 square metres for district this population requires a total of 769 square metres of local and/or neighbourhood community centre space (206 for the Western Sector, 306 for the Central, and 257 for the Eastern – on previous map shown as 200, 300 and 250 respectively)
- In addition, 256 square metres of space is allocated to meeting district level demand generated by growth centre residents (to be accommodated in the Mount Barker District Community Hub located in the town centre).

## Existing townships – up to 2036

### Existing townships community facility floor space calculations 2036

As noted earlier, the existing rate of provision of community facility space in existing townships is approximately 128.5 square metres per 1000 people. As was reported in chapter 3 of this report, the key existing floor area deficits in existing provision were for community facility space in Mount Barker township and district level community centre space.

The table below shows the demand created by the existing townships for district community centre space based on 20 square metres per 1000 people.

Existing Townships	Square metres per 1000 people	Nairne	Littlehampton	Mount Barker	Hahndorf	Other	Total Existing Townships
2036 projected population		7318	4199	16048	3180	8555	39300
District community centre contribution	20	146	84	321	64	171	786

The table above, based on 2036 population projections for existing townships, shows demand generated for an additional 786 square metres of district community centre space generated through existing township populations (including forecast growth to 2036). This study recommends that this district provision can also be used to provide local level community meeting space in the Mount Barker township which is identified as an existing deficit.

Importantly, beyond the creation of new community facility space in the Mount Barker Town Centre, there will also be an increasing need over time to enhance some of the existing community hall space in the townships of Nairne, Littlehampton and Hahndorf.

## 6.3 2036 future provision - existing communities and growth areas

In regions experiencing significant growth and increased demand for infrastructure, one of the considerations is relative equity between new and existing areas. New growth areas, with their greater population increases and opportunities to access development related contributions, can sometimes receive a greater infrastructure focus. This strategy attempts to strike a reasonable balance between new and existing areas.

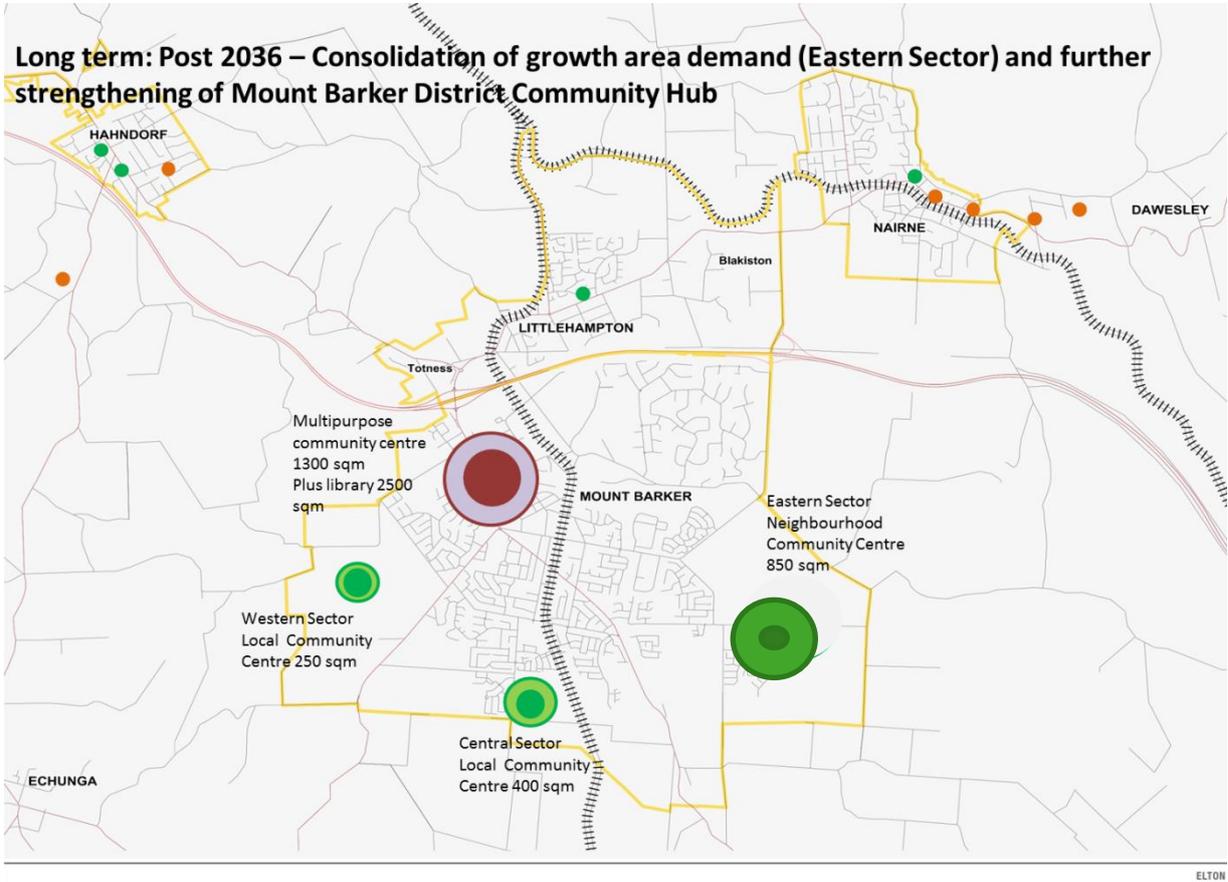
Existing communities	Usable community facility space	Projected population 2036	Rate of provision 2036 (sqm/1000 people)
Nairne	522	7318	71
Littlehampton	520	4199	123
Hahndorf	630	3180	198
Mount Barker township	778	16048	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>2450</b>	<b>30745</b>	<b>80</b>

Growth areas	Proposed community facility space	Projected population 2036	Rate of provision 2036 (sqm/1000 people)
Western Sector	200	3427	58
Central Sector	300	5104	59
Eastern Sector	250	4281	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>12812</b>	<b>59</b>

The table above shows that the proposed provision in the new growth areas provides the same rate of provision as the existing communities, based on 2036 population projections and the provision of facilities as identified in this strategy. 2036 is used as a timeframe as facility planning beyond that time is more uncertain and the outcomes less definable.

It is important to note that only that space that is considered currently (2017) usable in existing areas has been counted in these calculations. If recommendations suggested in this strategy are implemented then more of the actual community space in existing communities will be made available for community use. It is also important to note that the low rate of provision for Mount Barker township is planned to be addressed by the location of a District Community Hub in the Mount Barker Town Centre which will help to provide additional locally accessible community space in this area. And finally, all areas contribute to regional level facilities, proposed to be located within Mount Barker Town Centre, which are central and accessible to both growth areas and established communities.

### 6.3.1 Long term (post 2036) – Concentration of growth area and strengthen community hub



The key features of the post 2036 scenario, above, are:

- Growth area demand (as population increases post 2036) consolidated into a neighbourhood centre located either in the eastern sector (as shown above) or possibly in the central sector
- Mount Barker District Community Hub expands to meet growing district level demand.

The decision on which sector to concentrate post 2036 growth (eastern or central) will depend on a number of factors including future decisions about locations of schools, shops, as well as land availability and negotiations with developers.

## Growth areas – post 2036

### Growth area community facility floor space calculations – post 2036

Growth Areas post 2036		Western Sector	Central Sector	Eastern Sector	Total Growth Area population
2036 total projected population		5643	7887	11630	25160
	Level of provision (sqm/1000 people)				
Local and Neighbourhood community centre space	60	339	473	698	1510
District community centre contribution	20	113	158	233	503
Total required community centre provision	80	451	631	930	2013

The table above shows:

- The total required community facility provision for the post 2036 growth areas forecast population is 2,013 square metres, composed of 1,510 square metres of local and neighbourhood community centre space and 503 square metres of district community centre space contribution
- In accordance with forecast population numbers, the highest space requirement is generated in the Eastern Sector with 698 square metres, followed by Central (473) and Western (339).

The previous post 2036 map showed one option for the provision and allocation of this space across the sectors. This map shows:

- The community centre in the Western Sector increasing from 200 square metres (pre-2036) to 250 square metres
- The community centre in the Central Sector increasing from 300 square metres to 400
- The creation of a neighbourhood level community centre in the Eastern Sector of 850 square metres (an increase from 250 square metres pre-2036).

This option shows the post-2036 growth area demand for community facility space being concentrated in the Eastern Sector facility to create a neighbourhood community centre that has the potential to serve a significant proportion of growth area demand for community facility space. This approach locates the most significant community centre for the growth areas by identifying the most populated Eastern sector with the largest local retail centre and a planned school. Part of this rationale also includes the reasonable proximity and access from the Western and Central sectors into the Mount Barker Town Centre where the proposed community hub will be located.

One of the potential disadvantages of the creation of a neighbourhood level community centre in the Eastern Sector is that the majority of growth (close to two thirds) in the Eastern Sector occurs in the

period after 2036. This means that demand for a larger facility will not be evident until after 2036 but a site for the community facility (that is capable of accommodating its ultimate size) would need to be identified and secured much earlier.

As another option, and for additional flexibility, Council may also want to consider the Central Sector as a possible location for the larger growth areas community centre. The premise that post-2036 demand should be focussed in one central, accessible location still stands but whether that location is in the Central and Eastern Sector will depend on land development timing, and the location of shops, schools etc.

**Existing townships – post 2036**

There is no forecast growth in population within the existing townships after 2036. As such, the demand for community facility space from the existing townships is capped at the 2036 levels and it is assumed there is no demand for increase beyond this.

This assumption will need to be revisited if population projections change, or if reviews show the amount of community facility space available is inadequate.

Given the age of the existing community facilities in Nairne, Littlehampton and Hahndorf it is highly likely that significant refurbishment and enhancement of the existing community halls and other spaces in these townships will need to be undertaken over the next 20 years.



Glenunga Hub is a new shared community and sporting club facility in the City of Burnside. Photo: Elton Consulting

# 7 District Community Hub

Mount Barker Town Centre is identified in Council’s Strategic Plan as the primary centre in the district and the key location for both economic and civic activity. Community facilities can play a role in reinforcing that primacy and providing an important civic and community presence, people attractor and community gathering place in the town centre. This strategy recommends the creation of a community hub in the Mount Barker Town Centre that serves the whole of the Mount Barker district including both established townships and new growth areas. A community hub is a co-located community meeting and activity space that can combine a number of different elements: community centre, library, office space for community organisation, training rooms, compatible retail, business incubation space, and quality public space.

## 7.1 The need for district level community space

The key district level community space requirements for Mount Barker are for library and flexible, multipurpose community centre space that can be adapted and used flexibly to meet a variety of community needs. These will service outlying small townships in the District as well as the four towns in the study area for this report.

### 7.1.1 Library

The existing library has been recognised through the consultation process, as one of the most valued existing community assets in Mount Barker. Based on existing population numbers and nationally recognised library standards, the current floor space provision is seen as adequate and it is proposed that that this level of provision (per head of population) be retained. Due to the forecast increase in population, maintenance of existing levels of provision will require a significant increase in actual floor space, as shown in the table below.

Library provision	Existing Mount Barker Library	Current district population 2016	Current rate of provision sqm/1000	Projected 2036 population	Future reqs at current rate of provision (40sqm/1000)
	1336	33036	40	52216	2112

As shown in the table above, maintaining the existing rate of provision would result in the need for the library to be expanded from its current 1336 square metres floor area to 2112 square metres to meet the forecast 2036 population.

When the forecast population beyond 2036 is considered the library floor space requirement increased to 2240 square metres.

The rate of 40 square metres per 1000 people for library space provision is consistent with accepted library planning standards including the Public Library of New South Wales People Places standards which are widely recognised across Australia.

It is, however, important to note that the role and function of libraries is changing relatively rapidly. With the advent of a wide range of technologies for learning, leisure, as well as library operations and management, the nature of a library post 2036 (and its precise requirements for floor space) is difficult, and probably unwise, to predict. To date, technology has not seen a significant need for less library floor space as other trends in learning such as collaborative learning and group study, as well as the increasing social role of libraries as meeting places, has meant that more space is required for these interactive activities.

Also, as will be expanded on later in this section, the community hub model which combines library and community centre space with other uses, also offers the opportunity for more efficient design and potential floor space savings.

### 7.1.2 Multipurpose community centre

Section 5 of this report, outlined an approach to standards of provision for community centre space. That approach was based on Council provided space at a rate of 80 square metres per 1000 people, with 60 of that being for local and neighbourhood facilities and 20 square metres per 1000 being allocated to district serving uses.

Based on this 20 square metres standard, the table below shows the district community centre space requirements for 2016, 2036 and beyond 2036.

Year	District Population	Rate of provision – square metres per 1000 people	Floor space required (square metres)
2016	33006	20	660
2036	52216	20	1044
2036+	64564	20	1291

The table shows that as the MBDC population increases from 2016 to 2036 and then beyond, the demand for district community centre space will increase from 660 square metres to 1044 in 2036 and then 1291 beyond 2036. It is also important to note that the 2016 floor space requirement of 660 square metres, is significantly higher than the current provision of 150 square metres for the Mount Barker Community Centre (community centre space only), indicating a substantial existing deficit in district level community centre space.

A district multipurpose community centre allows for the provision of larger and higher order spaces in a centrally accessible location that is available to all residents of the Mount Barker district. One characteristic of a robust portfolio of community facilities is variety within the asset portfolio which allows for a wide range of uses and can accommodate multiple, diverse and evolving community needs. A district community centre provides a central and accessible community meeting and activity space that provides for larger scale events and activities that cannot be accommodated in more localised facilities. District level community centres also typically provide space (either permanent or sessional) for community service delivery and can act as a base for community organisations and human service providers.

## 7.2 Community hub model

In the context of a community hub provision model, the library and community centre spaces, described above, should not be seen as necessarily distinct and separate spaces. Co-location of these spaces allows for a more fluid interaction between library and community centre activities to the point where they may at times be indistinguishable. There is a great opportunity for the creation of a vibrant and active shared space with significant efficiencies and great community benefits derived from reducing physical and management barriers between the library and community centre spaces. Activities that occur in contemporary libraries are now much more diverse than books and reading and community centres do, and should be, much more than community services delivery and office space for community organisations.

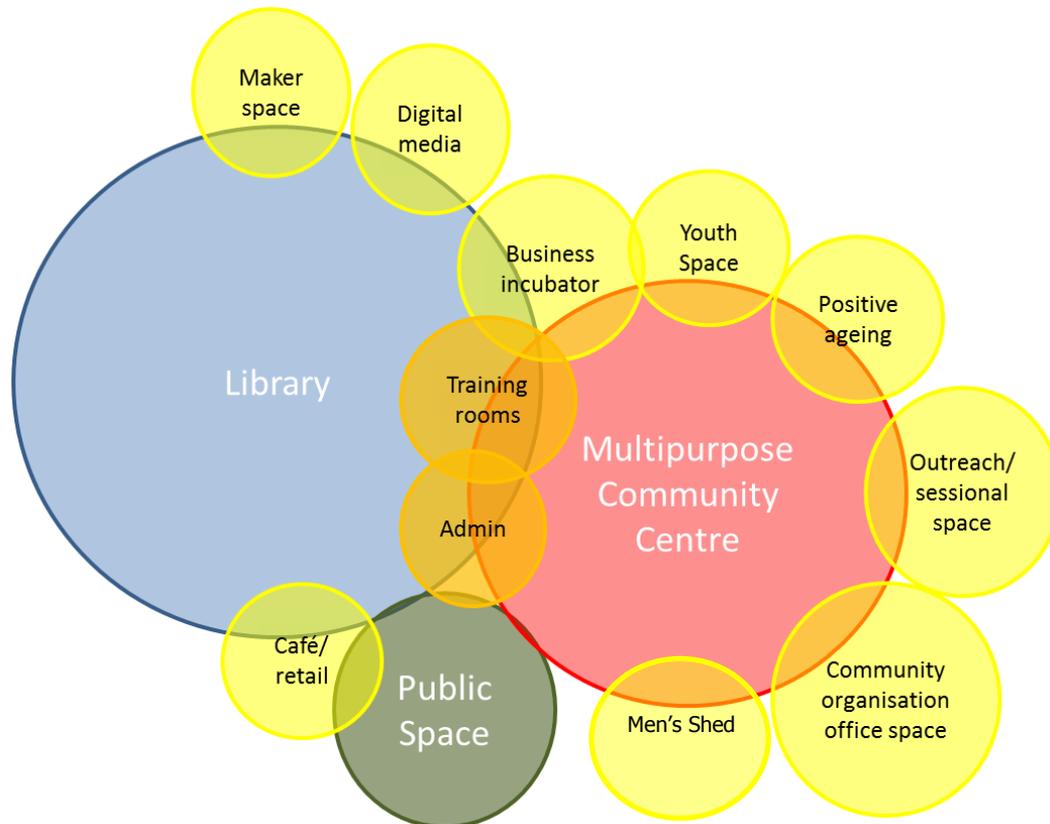
Various definitions of a community hub exist (Sunshine Coast Council, 2011; Parramatta City Council, 2008; Queensland Government, Office of Urban Management, 2007). Although each definition has a slightly different emphasis, a community hub, in essence, is thought of as a multipurpose public gathering and activity place where a variety of activities occur and where a wide range of community needs can be met in both formal and informal ways. The key to the community hubs concept is integration. This can mean both integration of services, programs and activities within a multipurpose community space or the integration of a range of activity generating uses including community and cultural facilities, shops, transport, parks and plazas.

The essential characteristics of a community hub are that they:

- Respond to, and are shaped by, the unique circumstances, needs and assets of their community
- Co-locate or cluster a range of community facilities and human services
- Include a variety of uses (including residential, retail and commercial) that attract different groups of people at different times of the day for a variety of purposes and meet a wide range of community needs and support community strengths
- Attract people and are identified as a focal point and gathering place for the community
- Are readily accessible to ensure all members of the community can use them
- Have a civic quality, sense of stability and level of amenity that mark them as an important place in the community
- Include an inviting public domain that encourages people to interact in the public realm.

## 7.2.1 The Mount Barker District Community Hub

Although the library and multipurpose community centre spaces, as described above, will form the foundation of a Mount Barker District Community Hub, other compatible uses should also be considered.



The community hub diagram above shows possible configurations and options for spaces to be included in the proposed Mount Barker District Community Hub. The diagram shows:

- The key core elements of the community hub as the library, multipurpose community centre and related high quality adjacent public space
- The inclusion of spaces shared between library and community centre that could include administration space (staff offices, staff facilities, administrative support, etc.) and training rooms for both community, council and private organisation use
- A range of options for inclusion within the community centre including community organisation office space, outreach or sessional space for the delivery of services on a casual basis (could include health services, child immunisation, and a range of government services), some age specific space depending on community needs (could be positive ageing, youth or other) and business incubation space to support local businesses and possibly act as a telework space
- Library space could include digital media/technology space, maker space (that could be based on technology or arts/creative uses), as well as a range of formal and informal learning and gathering spaces
- The inclusion of compatible income and activity generation space (shown on diagram as café/retail) could include office space or social enterprise such as a community book shop).

This model envisions the boundaries between the library and the community centre to be relatively blurred with strong integration and cross over between activities and a high degree of shared use between spaces.



Community hubs: Gungahlin, ACT ; Ropes Crossing, Western Sydney; Thirroul, Wollongong. Photos: Elton Consulting

## 7.3 Community hub floor area

Based on the recognised library standards and the 20 square metre per 1000 people district community centre rate of provision, the table below shows the respective space requirements for the library and community centre components of the proposed District Community Hub.

Space	2036 floor area (approximate square metres)	Post 2036
Library	2000	2500
Community centre	1000	1300

It is important to note that these space requirements are calculated based on the provision of separate library and community centre spaces. In the proposed community hub model, with its emphasis on integration and shared spaces, considerable floor space savings can be achieved through co-located design. It is estimated that savings of up to 25% in floor area, and therefore costings, could be achieved through smart design of a community hub model.

## 7.4 Staging / Timing

As with growth area community facility provision, given the development timelines, it is recommended that a staged provision approach be taken to the district community hub. The key steps and broad timeframes involve:

Timeframe	Hub actions	Considerations
<b>Short term (up to 2021)</b>	Identify short to medium term community hub location	Council is currently exploring possible opportunities
	Locate community centre space with library to form basis of community hub	Council is currently working on a relocation project for the Mount Barker Community Centre
<b>Medium term (2021 to 2036)</b>	Consolidation of community hub with progressive increase in space in relation to increasing population demand	Consideration of the incorporation of possible regional community facility uses in the Mount Barker Town Centre
<b>Long term (post 2036)</b>	Continue to examine site/location possibilities including town centre core sites	Any relocation or expansion should consider opportunities for incorporation of regional community facility uses

## 7.5 Regional provision

Mount Barker's identification in the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* as a regional centre means that it is a likely location for future regional community facilities. Regional facilities include civic and cultural centres, performing arts, service hubs for delivery of government services, community health facilities and possibly age specific community facilities such as a regional youth resource centre.

Mount Barker currently regionally focussed arts facilities in the Hahndorf Academy and the Cedars. The proposed expansion of the Cedars to include a major gallery, studios for visiting artists and a function centre could see this facility become an arts facility of state as well as regional significance.

State and Local Government population projections indicate that the regional population (which includes the local government areas of Mount Barker, Adelaide Hills, and Alexandrina) of 98,953 in 2016 is projected to increase to 130,000 in 2036 and 148,000 in 2046.

The following table shows some possible regional level facilities and the indicative population thresholds required to support them.

Regional facility	Description	Approximate standard
Civic centre	Administrative centre, chambers, civic and cultural events	1:Local Government Area
Performing Arts Centre	Performance space, rehearsal studios, exhibition, function rooms	1:100,000-200,000
Multi-agency Service Centre	State Government Service Centre – one stop shop for government services	1:100,000
Youth Resource Centre	Single point of service access for young people, base for both government and non-government services	1:100,000-150,000

It is important to note that the identification of regional community facility uses will require the conduct of a regional community facility needs assessment and detailed consultation with regional partner councils as well as the SA Government.

# 8 Funding opportunities

The lack of a formal developer contributions system in South Australia and the impact this has on local government's capacity to fund community facilities is well documented. MBDC, like other South Australian councils, has explored a number of options to support the funding of community facilities. This section of the report identifies a number of possible funding mechanisms either being used or being considered by MBDC. Also included are suggestions by other Adelaide councils based on their experiences of funding community facilities. If one message is clear it is that there is unlikely to be one single source of funds that can be used to create a new community facility. As has been emphasised throughout this report, partnerships are critical and those partnerships create the opportunity to draw on various funding sources.

## 8.8.1 Separate rates

As highlighted in Section 2 of this report, MBDC has introduced two separate rates (one for the growth areas and one for Nairne) to support the provision of community facilities. While the introduction of the separate rates is in advance and will be an important contributor to community facility provision in growth areas, it will require supplementation if the full range of community facilities required to support the Mount Barker District population are to be delivered.

It is important to note that the separate rates can only be expended within the defined growth areas and cannot be used towards funding of district level facilities such as the Mount Barker District Community Hub located outside the growth areas in Mount Barker Town Centre.

## 8.8.2 Grants

Grants from State and Federal Government may be a possible funding source particularly for those community facilities with a district or regional focus. The proposed Mount Barker District Community Hub is proposed as a district level facility in this strategy but could be expanded to include regional level facilities, such as performing arts or community health.

A regional level social infrastructure assessment that considers needs across Mount Barker, Adelaide Hills, and Alexandrina is likely to be required to understand what, if any, regional social infrastructure is required. Mount Barker, identified in the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide as the key regional centre, is the logical location for regional level facilities. A robust, collaborative and evidence based process will be required to satisfy State or Federal Government grant funding requirements.

Recent rounds of Commonwealth regional grants funding have allocated amounts of between \$1 mil and \$10 mil for various community facility projects including community centres, arts and cultural facilities, men's sheds, youth facilities and Libraries. Hubs, clustered and multipurpose community facility projects have been successful in attracting Federal funding in recent years.

From the tour of community facilities undertaken for this project, we learned that projects such as the Cove Civic Centre in the City of Marion received \$3 million in Federal funding based on the inclusion of business incubation support (and an obvious economic development focus) within their combined library and community centre facility.

Feedback from other councils suggest that strong relationships with Members of Parliament are important in advancing grant applications.

### 8.8.3 10 Year Financial Plan

When adopted by Council, the recommendations of this report will inform the long term financial plan. The facility provision scenarios outlined in Chapter 6 will need further refinement, especially in terms of estimating costs.

Specific community facility projects will need to be considered in Annual Budgets and Council's Asset Management Plan. Feedback from stakeholders has been that Council could increase its asset maintenance and improvements to existing facilities, in order to increase the levels of use and ensure that these facilities meet community expectations and contemporary needs.

### 8.8.4 Asset rationalisation

In the case of Mount Barker although existing provision is relatively high, acceptable opportunities for asset rationalisation are limited. Rationalisation is essentially undertaken for two purposes: to reduce operational and maintenance costs and to realise the value of the rationalised property. Selling property to raise income (perhaps to fund other community facilities) is really only an option where there is a commercial market for the former community facility. Given that the majority of Council's existing community facility portfolio are in older, often heritage listed buildings, their adaptability for viable commercial uses may be limited.

There may be opportunities in the future for some asset rationalisation through consolidation of existing facilities. In places like Nairne, for example, where multiple facilities exist there could be future consolidation opportunities. This would likely be reliant on the capacity to sufficiently expand and enhance an existing facility to create larger but also more multipurpose and flexible space.

### 8.8.5 Partnership opportunities

This strategy recognises that local government is unable to provide the full level of community facilities to meet whole of community needs. Partnerships with schools, religious organisations, sporting groups and developers are required to ensure that community assets are delivered in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

The growth areas provide an opportunity to work from early planning stages with Government and Non-government schools, developers and others to develop plans for how social infrastructure can be located, sized and designed to maximise community use. A key purpose of this strategy is to provide the broad direction to enable MBDC to work with other potential partners to meet future community facility needs across the District.

Particularly, for town centre development, there may be future opportunities to develop Council owned land and enter into an agreement with a developer for the on-site provision of community facility space. There are a number of examples nationally where commercial developers, including large supermarket chains, have partnered with Council to develop sites for commercial purposes and provided on site community facility space.

Other metropolitan Adelaide councils are reporting interest in working with various housing providers including retirement living organisations to partner on sites that include community facility provision.

### 8.8.6 Cost recovery

Although not strictly a funding mechanism, contemporary community facility models are increasingly including some form of income generation space to help to offset the operational costs of the facility. Whether these are in the form of compatible commercial uses such as cafes or social enterprise like a community bookshop or opportunity shop, they can play an important role in providing funds to support facility operation and maintenance.

# 9 Implementation

This section outlines key broad level recommendations as well as more detailed actions that form an implementation plan.

## 9.1 Recommendations

That Council:

- Endorses this strategy as a guide for future community facility provision for the Mount Barker District
- Communicates the strategic direction and proposals in this report to partners, stakeholders and the broader community
- Undertakes future planning of community facilities guided by the 'levels of intervention' approach that includes:
  - Better utilising existing facilities
  - Better utilising existing non-Council facilities
  - Expand or enhance existing Council facilities
  - Create a new facility
- Allocates resources for implementing this strategy including through its budget processes, Long Term Financial Plan, staff resources and through seeking grant funding and partnerships
- Reviews its policies to ensure consistency with the direction set out in this strategy
- Undertakes future facility provision and existing facility enhancement consistent with the guiding principles identified in this strategy
- Adopts the proposed network and hierarchy approach to community facilities (including district, neighbourhood and local facilities)
- Works through existing networks including State Member to ensure State Government involvement in the coordinated planning of social infrastructure for the Mount Barker Growth Area including the provision of Government schools
- Works with regional local government partners, State Government, Federal Member, Regional Development organisations and others to identify regional social infrastructure needs and funding opportunities for regional facilities to be located in Mount Barker
- Reports annually on progress against the Action Plan and review the Recommendations and Implementation Plan no later than 5 years from the date of adoption by Council.

## 9.2 Implementation Plan

This Community Facilities Delivery Strategy report includes recommendations and actions that will together provide a practical and balanced response to the anticipated demands for community facilities in the Mount Barker District Council.

Individual projects may be staged over a number of years, and will be subject to resourcing and funding by Council, State/Commonwealth government, developers and service providers (eg schools). Community organisations will also have a key role to play as partners and service providers.

The following implementation plan will focus attention on priorities. Not all projects can be delivered at once, however, several actions may be commenced together in order to start the implementation phase. The timeframes which are assigned to the Actions and Tasks are defined as follows:

- Short            0 – 4 years
- Medium        4 – 10 years
- Long            10 + years

The timing of actions in this table may be affected by the availability of opportunistic funding and partnerships to deliver the outcomes, and to other Council priorities.

The responsibilities of Council in the table are:

- Advocacy (A) – speak and act in support of the outcome
- Facilitation (F) – actively seek to help others realise the outcome
- Delivery (D) – deliver the outcome

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Role of Council</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>1.1</b>	Communicate the strategic direction and proposals in this report to partners, stakeholders and the broader community	D	Short
<b>1.2</b>	Report annually on progress against the Action Plan and review the Recommendations and Implementation Plan no later than 5 years from the date of adoption by Council	D	Ongoing
<b>1.3</b>	Undertake feasibility studies, concept design, community and stakeholder engagement, detailed design and detailed costings as required for specific Community Facility projects. Each of these stages requires a commitment to leadership, resourcing and coordination	D/F	Ongoing
<b>1.4</b>	Establish processes for coordinated planning of social infrastructure for the Mount Barker Growth Area including the provision of Government schools	A/F	Ongoing
<b>1.5</b>	Work with regional local government partners, State and Commonwealth Government, regional development organisations and others to identify regional social infrastructure needs and funding opportunities for regional facilities to be located in Mount Barker	A	Ongoing
<b>Better utilise existing Council facilities</b>			
<b>2.1</b>	Develop and maintain data collection and reporting framework regarding current use, demand, spare capacity and benefit to the community of existing Council provided facilities	D	Short
<b>2.2</b>	Promote existing facilities through better signage (including corporate branding), Council website and accessible information for community users	D	Short
<b>2.3</b>	Develop and implement an Asset Management Plan for community facilities owned by Council	D	Short

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Role of Council</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
2.4	Investigate existing leases and agreements to identify opportunities for greater community use of Council's community facilities. This will involve resourcing a brokerage role to develop partnerships and new operational models.	D	Short
2.5	Introduce a centralised booking system for the coordinated management of community facility bookings	D	Short
2.6	Investigate opportunities for Council provision of blanket insurance coverage for community organisations/not for profit hirers of community spaces	D	Short
<b>Better utilise existing non-council facilities</b>			
3.1	Investigate including non-Council space in a centralised booking system	D	Short
3.2	Continue to develop partnerships with schools, churches, clubs and other groups to increase community access to existing facilities. This will involve resources for the brokerage role to develop the partnerships	F	Ongoing
3.3	Measure and report on the community use of facilities which are subject to partnership agreements	D	Ongoing
<b>Expand or enhance existing Council facilities</b>			
4.1	Develop a program of works to prioritise enhancements to existing community facilities to improve community use and access	D	Short
4.2	Implement the program of works as per Council priorities and funding availability	D	Ongoing
<b>Create new facilities</b>			
5.1	Confirm key future community facility sites in each of the growth area sectors – western, central and eastern	D	Short
5.2	Confirm future District Community Hub site in Mount Barker Town Centre	D	Medium
5.3	Identify funding and financing opportunities for community facilities including State and Commonwealth grants, separate rates, infrastructure agreements, revenue generation and asset rationalisation	D	Ongoing
5.4	Pursue partnership arrangements with schools (government and non-government), churches, developers and others for the shared provision of community facilities in growth areas	D	Ongoing
5.5	Plan new facilities to reflect key trends and leading practice guiding principles, and that projects reflect lessons from existing provision where relevant e.g. develop new models for sporting clubrooms to ensure greater community access	D F	Ongoing
5.6	Provide outreach/sessional space to enable and encourage more human service delivery in Mount Barker	D	Medium
5.7	Develop, implement and monitor agreements with developers for	D	Ongoing

	Actions	Role of Council	Timeframe
	community facility provision which enable the fulfilment of the recommended approach for community facility provision described in this strategy		
5.8	Use this strategy as a guiding document to inform future provision of community facility space including type, location, timing, size, functionality	D	Ongoing



# Appendices

# A-1 Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Business incubator</b>	A space provided to support local businesses through the provision of office space, computer equipment, training and networking opportunities.
<b>Catchment</b>	The population within a defined area surrounding a community facility which is likely to use that community facility
<b>Clustered</b>	Grouping together of compatible uses such as schools, child care, community centre and library
<b>Co-location</b>	The physical integration of two or more facilities or services into a single space or area. A common community hub model, for example, involves the co-location of a community centre and library
<b>Community centre</b>	Community centres are moderate to larger community facilities that are usually regularly staffed and are actively programmed
<b>Community facility</b>	A public space, usually in the form of a building, where a variety of community activities, programs, services and events can be delivered from
<b>Community hall</b>	Small scale community facility often unstaffed and available for hire by community groups on a regular or casual basis
<b>Community hub</b>	A multipurpose public gathering and activity place where a variety of activities occur and where a wide range of community needs can be met in both formal and informal ways. The key to the community hubs concept is integration. This can mean both integration of services, programs and activities within a multipurpose community space or the integration of a range of activity generating uses including community and cultural facilities, shops, transport, parks and plazas
<b>District level</b>	A level of catchment to serve a population in the range of 20,000 to 40,000 people. District level community facilities are usually located in town centre locations with good access to public transport and reasonable access to the district population they are intended to serve
<b>Existing townships</b>	For the purposes of this study the existing townships are Nairne, Littlehampton, Hahndorf and Mount Barker township
<b>Growth area</b>	Land adjacent to Mount Barker township that has been identified to accommodate future population growth. Lands are defined in the 2010 Mount Barker Growth Area Development Plan Amendment <a href="https://www.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/16493/Mount_Barker_Community_Information_Sheet.pdf">https://www.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/16493/Mount_Barker_Community_Information_Sheet.pdf</a>
<b>Multipurpose</b>	A community facility space that is flexible and adaptable and can be used for a variety of purposes and activities
<b>Placemaking</b>	A multidimensional philosophy that looks at how urban design, community development, engagement, and community and cultural events and activities can combine to activate public spaces
<b>Separate Rate</b>	MBDC has adopted two separate rates under the Local Government Act (1999) that will support the provision of new community infrastructure in Mount Barker's growth areas. One of the rates is focused on the Mount Barker urban growth area and the other on the Nairne urban growth area.

**Standards**

An approach to understanding community facility demand expressed as one community facility space to meet the demand of a population of x people. Although useful as a starting point, standards are not recommended to be used as a solitary or definitive tool for needs assessment

## A-2 Existing Facilities and Needs

### Current facilities

Existing facilities in the area are outlined in Table 4 below.

**Table 4 Existing social infrastructure in MBDC**

Facility type	Current provision	Comment
<b>Local and neighbourhood level</b>		
Community meeting rooms / multipurpose halls	1 Council chambers 7 halls 7 sporting / club rooms 7 church halls 11 meeting rooms / multipurpose halls in schools	High quantity of halls etc., but little information on quality. Availability and accessibility (location and DDA compliance) an issue
Local community centre	1 neighbourhood house	Physical building limitations and poor location in terms of connectivity and centrality
Long day-care centre	5	Some spare capacity described in Social Infrastructure Impacts report
Kindergarten / pre-school	4 public kindergartens	Little existing capacity, likely to decrease further before development of growth areas due to childcare trends of increasing hours per enrolment
Primary schools	4 government (local catchment) 3 non-government (regional catchment)	Government: little capacity and little capacity to expand Non-government: little capacity but potential capacity to expand student numbers in the future
High schools	1 government (district catchment, 9 feeder primary schools) 3 non-government (regional catchment)	Government: 'Reasonable' spare capacity and room for expansion on-site Non-government: Very little spare capacity
<b>District and regional level</b>		
Library	1	Little spare capacity, particularly due to huge increase in people visiting the library and loaning items
Aged care facilities	212 beds	Majority in Mount Barker town centre

Facility type	Current provision	Comment
Senior citizens' centre	1	In Mount barker town centre
Respite / Carer support facility	1	
Civic centre	1	Temporarily used as local government offices with Council Chambers Future of old Council Offices site undecided
Community health service	1	Located in Mount Barker, provides a range of services

### Utilisation

Many community facilities are older buildings, limited by poor adaptability and therefore not fully utilised by community members. However, the buildings are of community and heritage value, and have value to particularly older residents. While older community members currently volunteer to maintain and manage some community facilities such as town halls, there is concern about maintenance and management into the future. This is due to lower utilisation rates and pride in facilities in younger residents, who make up a large proportion of the current and predicted community.

Currently, no age-specific (youth or senior's) facilities exist in the area. This presents an opportunity for intergenerational spaces, or specifically designed spaces within larger facilities. Additionally, no arts-focussed facilities currently exist in the Mount Barker town area, and demand for performing arts and cultural facilities such as museums and galleries is high, potentially due to 'increased urban aspirations and lifestyle'.

While utilisation rates are low, existing community facilities are still insufficient to service the existing community, and will not have the capacity to serve the area's growing population. Temporary community spaces may be required to bridge services to growth areas until more permanent facilities can be provided.

### Location

Most newer, larger community facilities are to be located in Mount Barker town centre, due to the town's role as district hub. Currently, many smaller, single-use spaces with varying accessibility are located around the district's growth towns. While a spatial distribution of facilities will be required into the future to ensure equitable access and decrease traffic congestion in Mount Barker, regional community facility hubs will be located in Mount Barker. Collocating centralised services as a hub in Mount Barker increases efficiencies and opportunities for place making and specialised precincts, along with opportunities for connectivity with public transport and open space.

Existing opportunities for locating key facilities include Hahndorf a potential arts hub, due to its current arts facilities. However, growth areas will require adaptable, accessible spaces that do not detract from Mount Barker town centre as a regional hub.

### Existing deficits and required facilities

#### Existing deficit

Multiple deficits exist in current service and facility provision, due in part to the state, design and accessibility of existing facilities, but also to the lack of availability of facilities to the broader community.

Community spaces unable to be used fully / at all by community are restricted by **issues** such as:

- » use exclusively as e.g. shops, information centres, club headquarters
- » having inadequate / no amenities
- » having some / all space not accessible
- » use as council office space, or offices taking up some room within facility.

**Gaps** in facility provision include a lack of:

- » Age-targeted spaces
  - Youth lack identity with space, and don't feel welcomed in community spaces (need dedicated youth space and effort to welcome in other spaces)
  - Library services not targeted for teens – potential exists to provide dedicated services
- » Sessional / visitor spaces and rooms
- » Gallery and activity (wet use) space
- » Insufficient information on facility use, need and availability
- » Insufficient accessible space (parking, hearing loop and non-commercial spaces)
- » IT / training space
- » Health services, e.g. art studios, counselling, sexual and mental health services

**Consultation feedback on community facilities**

Facility / Service	Positive feedback	Negative feedback
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Has proved to be flexible and adaptable, in terms of both spaces and culture (a strategic shift in 2005 meant portraying the library as a place for ideas and experiences as opposed to just books)</li> <li>» Acts as a communication portal with the community</li> <li>» Has holiday programs that advertise effectively through word-of-mouth, and is a local focal point for families with children</li> <li>» Provides space for community groups and activities</li> <li>» Current access and location is good, and co-location with TAFE could mean that TAFE can provide community facilities on-site</li> <li>» Parking is available on-site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Is located out of the city centre</li> <li>» The partnership with TAFE is dissipating, as the link between libraries and education decreases</li> <li>» The library suffers due to co-location with TAFE</li> </ul>
Community halls and centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Have history within the community, and as such have a sense of ownership and pride associated with them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Generational culture / values shifts create uncertainty over community continuing to maintain halls in time</li> <li>» The community hall in Mount Barker is not actively managed by the</li> </ul>

Facility / Service	Positive feedback	Negative feedback
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Have sufficient people willing to volunteer to maintain them</li> <li>» Mount Barker Community Centre is well used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community, and as such has a different culture to other town halls</li> <li>» Mount Barker Community Centre is currently at capacity</li> <li>» Due to the historic nature of many buildings, many are not accessible and are single-use</li> <li>» Distributed facility network</li> <li>» Complaints of facilities being not maintained and not comfortable were made</li> </ul>
Arts and creative facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Development potential given the success of some creative groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» There needs to be more focus on creative spaces, e.g. 'maker spaces'</li> </ul>
Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Volunteering is high in active groups (e.g. Rotary, RSL) despite council lacking funding / support</li> </ul>	-
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Outreach programs are expanding and are well-received</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Physical space in existing facilities is constrained, and restricts program development</li> </ul>
Sporting clubs and rooms	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Sporting clubs vary in their willingness to share space, with management for each having different networks and approaches (meaning potential underutilisation of community facilities and open / sporting facilities)</li> <li>» Better access to clubrooms for the entire community is needed</li> <li>» The cost of facilities is too high</li> <li>» Sustainability of e.g. power is low</li> <li>» Rooms are left dormant in off-season</li> <li>» People don't realise facilities are available</li> <li>» A lack of young volunteers / members</li> </ul>
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Some schools make facilities available for public use outside school hours, including a gym at Cornerstone and an environmental centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Cost concerns re school facilities</li> <li>» A need still exists for shared after-hours use of school fields and facilities</li> </ul>
Other community facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Local churches want a 200-300 seat facility for local schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Many facilities not fit for use</li> <li>» No central booking resource for facilities</li> <li>» Differing expectations of quality of space can be an issue when hiring out or allowing bookings for facilities</li> </ul>

## Lessons for future facilities

While new trends and key principles are a good guideline for community facility provision, what will work in a particular region or population is specific to community characteristics and a variety of additional factors. In the Mount Barker Region, the follow factors were identified as working well or working poorly for the local population in the area.

### » Commonalities in **good** existing facilities

- Community run / involvement
- Centrally located and accessible, with potential for further adaptation and expansion
- Flexible / adaptable spaces – e.g. spaces that support the library’s strategic shift from ‘books and learning’ to ‘ideas and experiences’
- Run tailored programs (e.g. age, interest). This makes them a hub for target demographics, who often market programs by word of mouth
- Contain available spaces for small community events / meetings
- Act as a ‘neutral ‘middle-man’ between council and the community’ (i.e. passively communicating council information / events)
- Buildings have history in community (have meaning beyond simple function)
- Community has a sense of ownership / pride in facilities and are happy to volunteer to maintain
- Volunteering is high in active groups (e.g. Rotary, RSL) despite Council lacking funding / support for groups

### » Commonalities in **poor** existing facilities

- Located out of town centre / not accessible
- Not DDA compliant
- Leased to community groups at commercial rates
- Not actively managed / utilised by community (Different ‘culture’ in facilities not actively managed by community)
- Weak partnerships between council and site / building owner (e.g. TAFE)
- Weak / changed conceptual links between community and co-located facilities (e.g. library and education link dissipating; TAFE location no longer as ideal)
- Activities constrained by building limitations
- Run by group / club unwilling to share space, with each club management having varying networks and approached
- No central booking resource for facilities, limited options for use of many facilities and differing expectations of quality of space

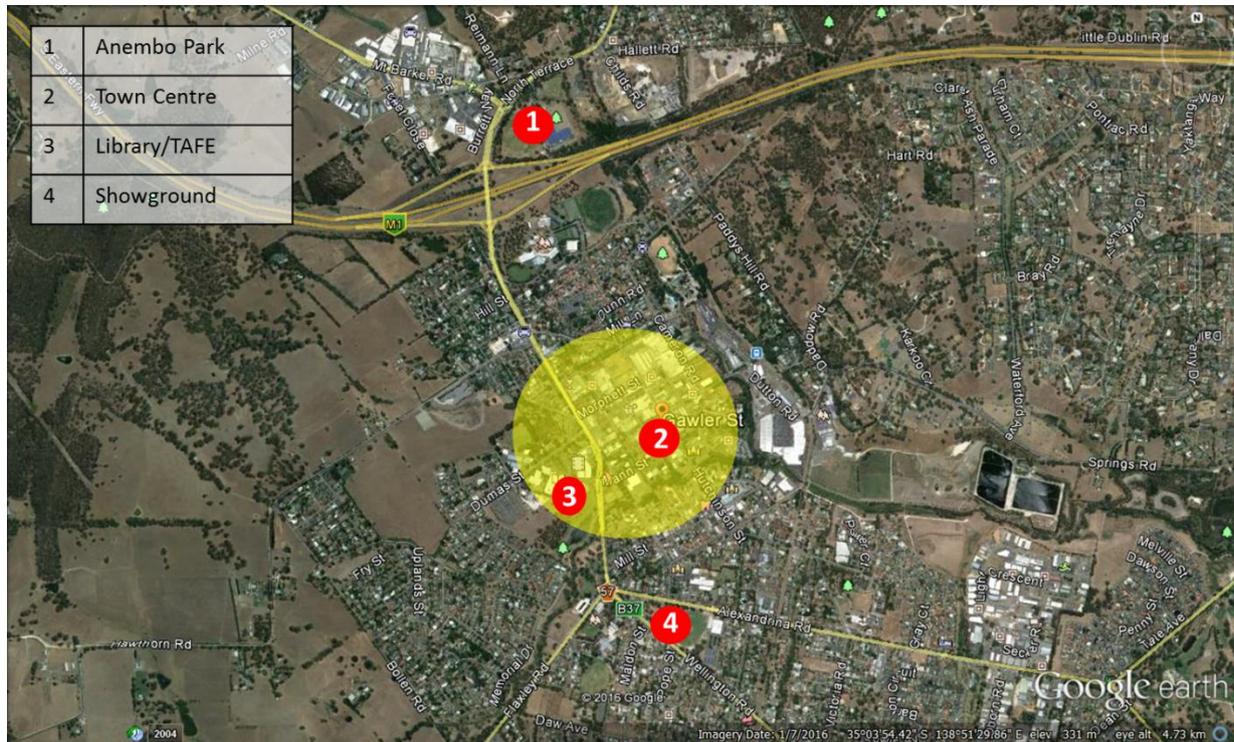
## Further issues

Further issues identified in the documents reviewed include encouraging the measurement / articulation of value beyond the commercial (versus community benefit), and management and governance issues, including:

- » No long-term, strategic vision for investment / community activation
- » No investment in existing crown land facilities.

## A-3 Location Options

The following image shows the locations considered as potential community hub sites.



Note that all four locations were assessed using criteria based on leading practice location principles for community facilities that included: centrality to catchment; visible, accessible location; clustered with other uses; main street location; connected to transport networks, safety and security. Of the four sites identified, both Anembo Park and the Showgrounds site were considered inappropriate as they were assessed as being too distant from the town centre proper and had less potential to form the desired centre of community activity and vibrancy.

The two more appropriate sites are the existing library site at the SA TAFE campus (3 on map above) and a location within the town centre core (2 on map above - no specific site identified at this time). These two sites were seen as:

- Being more central to the town centre
- Part of the town centre fabric and having greater potential to contribute to civic identity and placemaking
- Having good access to key transport networks and interchanges
- Having the potential to include other compatible uses that would add to the vibrancy and activity of the area
- Contributing more to Council's strategic goal of reinforcing the primacy of the town centre proper.



[www.elton.com.au](http://www.elton.com.au)