MOUNT BARKER
DISTRICT COUNCIL







Invest Mount Barker South Australia

INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS





WELCOME

Creating unique conditions for businesses and community to prosper.

Mount Barker District Council is a dynamic and rapidly growing region, strategically positioned in the picturesque Adelaide Hills, just 30 minutes from the heart of Adelaide. Home to over 45,000 people, this community will continue to consistently grow with an additional 18,000 residents expected over the next 20 years.

Population growth is only one component of the story, with an increasingly diverse economy set to take the opportunities of being within a nationally significant tourism region, well positioned adjacent national freight routes and the luxury of offering a lifestyle that combines urban convenience within a rural landscape.

This sustained long-term population growth presents both opportunities and challenges, emphasising the need for visionary planning to ensure our community remains vibrant, inclusive, and economically prosperous. At the heart of our strategy is a bold commitment: to make **Mount Barker the most liveable region in South Australia**.

The Mount Barker region offers an impressive array of investment opportunities within diverse rural, tourism, light industrial, education, health and retail precincts. It also boasts some of the State's most vibrant and varied main streets with each offering great investment potential, driving significant economic and community value.

In parallel with the private sector investment, Council has demonstrated its willingness to support private public partnerships, with a major Civic/Commercial Hub, integrated Tourism/Leisure Precinct and Nationally Significant Art Gallery all about to enter their delivery phases.

Mount Barker is primed to remain a **vibrant, resilient, and highly sought-after** destination, seamlessly blending growth and liveability to deliver unmatched opportunities for investors, businesses, and residents alike.





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands of the Mount Barker District. We respect the First Nations people and their spiritual relationship with their country and their cultural and heritage beliefs.

All data and insights contained within this document are based on information current as of 2026.



STRATEGIC POSITIONING



The opportunities are endless…

Strategically positioned with consistent population growth, a diverse economy, a track record in partnering and an enviable lifestyle, Mount Barker District presents a unique investment opportunity.

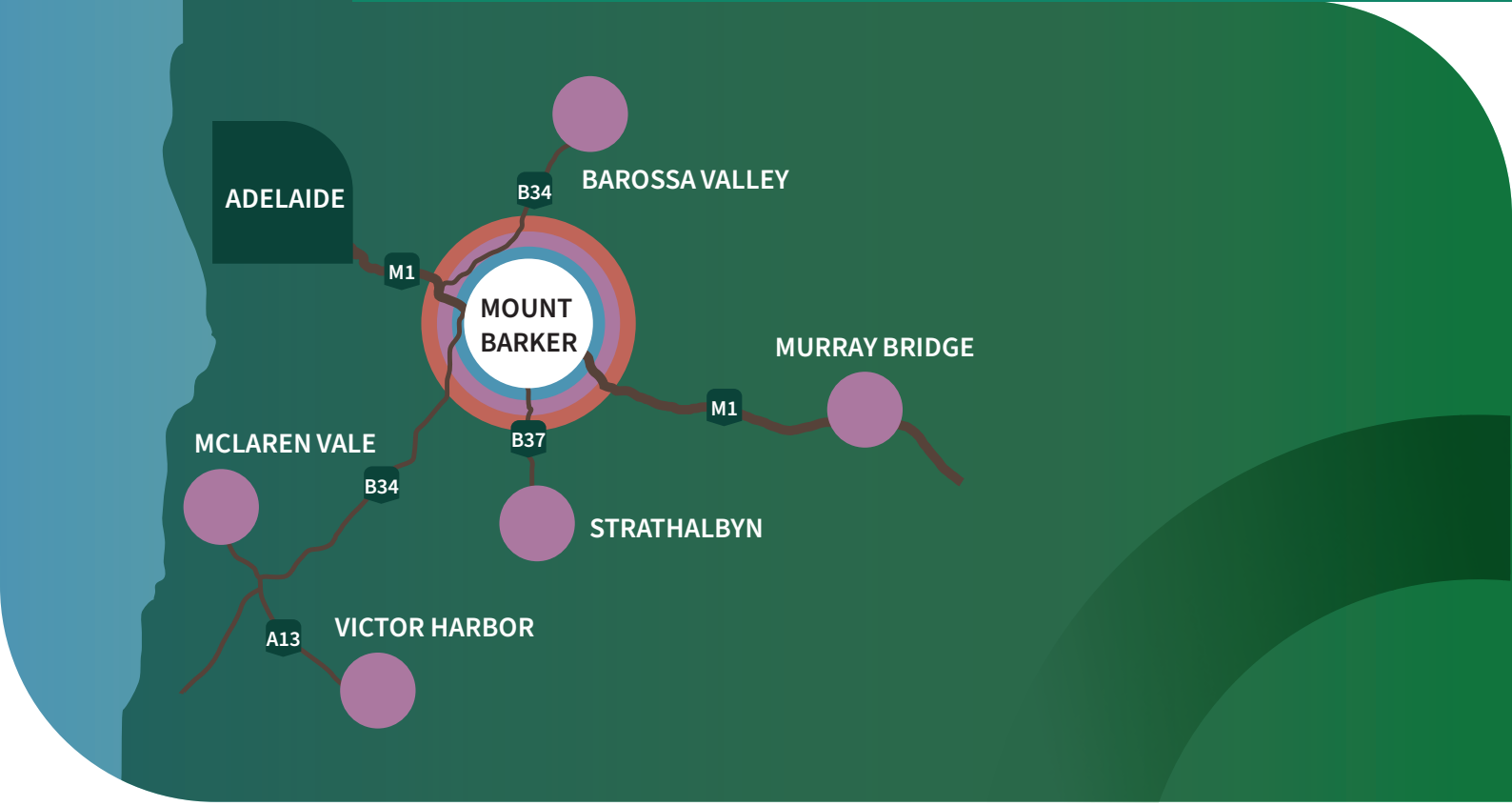
Mount Barker is positioned as the regional centre for a catchment of well-over 100,000 people and growing, extending to Murray Bridge, Strathalbyn, Stirling and Woodside.

It benefits from its proximity and accessibility to Adelaide Airport, major freight routes, Adelaide CBD, major tourism attractions and world-renowned wine regions.

As a tourism region within the Adelaide Hills, Mount Barker is centrally located (just 30 minutes from Adelaide) and adjacent to complementary tourism regions like McLaren Vale, Fleurieu Peninsula, Langhorne Creek, and Murray Lands.

The South-Eastern Freeway dissects the district, carrying 50,000 vehicles per day and providing multiple interchanges for convenient local intra-state passenger and freight connections.





The proximity of Adelaide provides Mount Barker the opportunity to provide a hybrid employment and economic landscape. Whilst close enough to enjoy the benefits of the State's capital city, Mount Barker is large enough to have its own local economy.

Mount Barker is strategically positioned within commuting distance of Osborne to host defence-adjacent teams and suppliers seeking high-amenity workplaces, competitive property costs, and access to a growing local talent pool.

Mount Barker provides an ideal climate for both residents and businesses alike. For example, its climate is well suited for grape growing and high value vegetable production, stone fruits, and speciality crops.

Mount Barker also has an extensive recycled water scheme, operated by the Council. It supplies treated water for agriculture, industry, and public parks. This approach not only conserves natural water resources but also supports the resilience of the agricultural sector in the face of evolving climatic conditions.



STRATEGIC POSITIONING

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE

Mount Barker offers exceptional value in one of South Australia's tightest industrial land markets, with strategically zoned employment precincts positioned to capture overflow from Adelaide's constrained industrial sectors.

The district's 13,513+ active workforce reflects a robust labour market, while lower operational costs, streamlined development approvals, and proximity to freight corridors create compelling advantages for small and large businesses seeking competitive alternatives to metropolitan locations.

Population Growth

Mount Barker's consistent population growth and housing supply provides one of its greatest competitive advantages. Since 2016, the city of Mount Barker's population has grown by over 40%, with annual growth of almost 5%, which equates to more than four times the State average.

Our high-growth rate, backed by a 25 year zoned housing supply, is projected to continue, with Mount Barker on track to become the State's second-largest city in under 20 years.

The potential for business is clear – more customers for local businesses and a greater pool of talent for workforce recruitment.

Diverse Economy

Mount Barker's economy offers a diverse range of opportunities with key established industry sectors including tourism, retail, health, construction, manufacturing and agriculture. In addition, there are emerging sectors such as the digital and creative arts, education, leisure, accommodation and professional services.

Liveability

Open spaces are expansive, with walking trails and native bushland providing opportunities to explore Mount Barker's unique natural environment, whilst over $80 million of new sporting fields and aquatic facilities have also been developed.

The arts are also well supported, with SA's second busiest art gallery, Hahndorf Academy, whilst the co-funded Heysen Gallery has commenced construction.



Enviable Lifestyle

Residents of Mount Barker district are fortunate to enjoy one of the most picturesque and community rich areas in Australia.
As an emerging tourism hotspot, the region attracts 100's of events a year, including Tour Down Under, AFL Gather Round, wine and produce festivals, national car rallies, trade shows, Adelaide Festival and much more.


FOODLAND



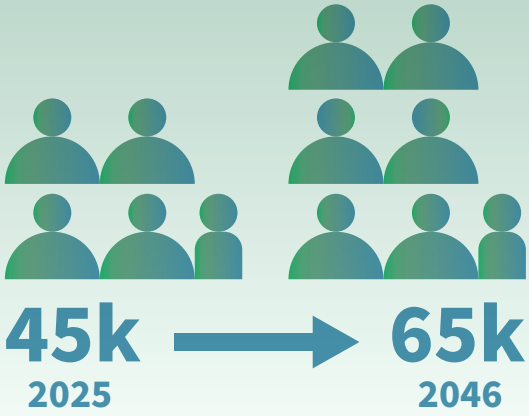


INVESTMENT SNAPSHOT

Business, Economic and Population growth are some of many reasons to invest in the Mount Barker region

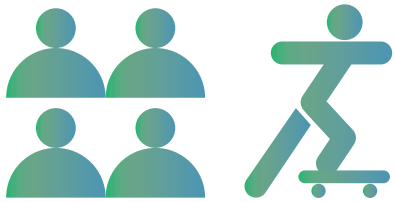
POPULATION & WORKFORCE

- Population **46,277** increasing to **64,810** in 2046
- Higher annual population growth than Adelaide CBD
- **24,245** employed residents with only 3.9% unemployment
- **Top employing sectors:** Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail, Construction, Education and Training, Accommodation and Food Services
- **Creative/digital** roles are expanding faster than the general workforce – leveraging high speed connectivity and lifestyle
- Higher median household income than the State average









20% OF PERSONS AGED UNDER 15



29 IS THE MEDIAN AGE

ECONOMIC & BUSINESS

- **$2.17 billion** GRP with sustained growth since 2016
- **3,444** registered businesses
- **$4 billion** major investment projects

$4b
MAJOR INVESTMENT PROJECTS

$2.1b
GRP
GROWING AT 6% ACROSS PREVIOUS 10 YEARS

3,400
REGISTERED BUSINESSES

THE LARGEST INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance **15%**
- Retail Trade **10.5%**
- Construction **8.4%**



>386
BUSINESSES

>650
JOBS

MORE THAN
$200m
SALES

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

- **> $200m** sales
- **> 386** businesses
- **> 650** jobs

8.4%
CONSTRUCTION

15%
HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

10.5%
RETAIL TRADE

HOUSING

- **8 new homes** constructed each week
- Mount Barker's median house price **($825,000)** compared to Adelaide ($950,000)
- Over **$220m** in residential development approved per year
- **35mins** to Adelaide CBD

$825k
MOUNT BARKER MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE

$950k
ADELAIDE MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE



8
NEW HOMES CONSTRUCTED EACH WEEK

$220M
IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT APPROVED PER YEAR



DIVERSE ECONOMY



Mount Barker District, is an increasingly diverse, high-growth economy offering a range of investment opportunities.

Commercial rents, land values, and operational expenses are significantly lower than in Adelaide, enabling higher profit margins, faster scaling, and more investment in core business activities.

Mount Barker's values and environment support green business models. There's growing momentum for clean energy, regenerative agriculture, recycled waste-water and circular economy businesses.

PRIORITY INDUSTRIES

Key industries recognised as being competitively positioned in Mount Barker include:

1 AGRIBUSINESS

- A significant economic contributor with $198m sales, $79m exports and 386 businesses.
- 650 direct jobs and an additional 520 jobs are related to processing local agriculture products.

Opportunity: maintain and diversify primary production lands through value-add, tourism and farm gate offerings.

2 TOURISM & EVENTS

- Annual visitor expenditure has grown to $351.9 million, reinforcing destination appeal with diverse tourism offerings.
- Competitively positioned near Adelaide, with strong access to interstate drive markets.
- A new 2,000sqm town square will enable year-round events, activations, and community experiences.
- Growth in accommodation will boost visitation, overnight stays, and visitor expenditure.

Opportunity: Population growth and destination investment create strong potential to expand tourism experiences, event attraction, and overnight visitation.

3 SMALL BUSINESS AND PROPERTY

- Well-connected business associations provide supported growth.
- Retail trade and hospitality – a key driver of the economy.

Opportunity: Key infrastructure projects and rising local demand support investment in new retail and commercial property.

4 CREATIVE & DIGITAL INDUSTRIES

- High speed telecommunications and digital connectivity.
- Growing significantly faster than general workforce, outpacing average job growth by around 24%.

Opportunity: High speed connectivity and above average jobs growth create strong opportunities in creative, digital, and software-based industries.

5 EDUCATION

- Significant private sector investment from childcare through primary and secondary schools.
- 14 schools across the region and growing.

Opportunity: Tertiary education partnerships aligned to local industry creates investable opportunities in skills, training, and workforce development.

6 HEALTH

- $365.8 million new construction to Mount Barker Hospital.
- Parallel investment to come within private medical industries.
- Wellness opportunities, include alignment with medical tourism.
- Retirement living, health support services requiring local workforce.

Opportunity: Significant hospital investment and demographic growth are driving demand for aged care, allied health, and private medical services.

7 CONSTRUCTION

- Major employer, with over 2,000 locals engaged in the industry.
- Major pipeline of private and public investment ($4 billion).
- 25 years of zoned residential land creating confidence to invest.
- Strong local TAFE campus providing future local workforce.

Opportunity: The need for construction, development and building related services will exist over a sustained period.

8 DEFENCE-ADJACENT

- Proximity to Osborne and Adelaide supports satellite defence teams and Tier 2/3 suppliers.
- Competitive property, strong connectivity and liveability attract skilled defence workforce.

Opportunity: An attractive satellite location for defence teams and Tier 2/3 suppliers.

9 MANUFACTURING & ADVANCED INDUSTRY

- Direct access to freeway and interstate freight corridors supports efficient distribution.
- Opportunities in light, advanced and agrifood manufacturing supported by long-term land and infrastructure.

Opportunity: Strong freight access and land supply support manufacturing investment.









ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Why it matters: *Mount Barker's growth is underpinned by future-proofing digital connectivity, reliable utilities, and nationally significant transport links lowering investor risk and accelerating time to market.*

Freight and market access

Mount Barker's proximity and population size make it an ideal location as a growing transportation hub. The South-Eastern Freeway (M1) dissects the district with multiple interchanges (including Verdun, Mount Barker and Nairne). The South Australian Government has funded upgrades at the Mount Barker and Verdun interchanges to improve traffic movement through the region and promote township gateways; more than 50,000 vehicles use the corridor daily.

The Melbourne–Adelaide freight corridor runs through the Adelaide Hills (nearby to Nairne/Balhannah/Mount Barker Junction), providing competitive intermodal access for long haul consignments to Melbourne/Perth. This gives access to some of Australia's most important national freight routes.



Proximity to Adelaide Airport

Mount Barker district is located approximately 40 kms to Adelaide Airport via the South-Eastern Freeway/South Road corridors; approximately a 45-minute drive.

Public transport

On-demand Keoride is now a regular public transport service for Mount Barker, making accessibility in and around the region more convenient to the user.

Recycled water and water security

Council's waste utility Greater Mount Barker Water (GMB Water) is currently constructing the Laratinga Water Recovery Plant (LWRP) which will provide an increase in treated water to supply agriculture, industry, and public open space.

Wastewater

GMB Water operates the largest wastewater service in South Australia outside SA Water services, with trunk mains and treatment upgrades configured to service the region and new growth areas.

Digital connectivity

NBN coverage is established across the district's major townships with fibre to the premises creating fast and reliable connectivity across most urban areas.







Mount Barker is where growth meets liveability — a place businesses choose not just to invest, but to stay.



ENVIABLE LIFESTYLE

Liveability has a competitive edge: with clean air, scenic landscapes, and strong community spirit — giving businesses a distinct advantage in attracting and retaining talent.

Council is building on this competitive strength, boldly pursuing the title of the most liveable region in South Australia.

The district boasts expansive open spaces, with scenic walking trails and native bushland inviting exploration. Significant investments have been made in community infrastructure, including over $80 million dedicated to new sporting fields and aquatic facilities.

The arts scene thrives here, highlighted by South Australia's second busiest art gallery, the Hahndorf Academy. Additionally, the much-anticipated Heysen Gallery at The Cedars in Hahndorf is currently under construction, promising to further enrich the cultural landscape.

As part of being one of Australia's most desirable places to live, it boasts an expansive events calendar having featured the Tour Down Under, AFL Gather Round and Adelaide Festival, whilst wine, wellness and produce-based festivals are a plenty.

A median house price below that of Adelaide means Mount Barker has a competitive advantage to not only provide a superior lifestyle, but at a price point that leaves enough left over so you can enjoy it.





There are several major infrastructure projects that have and are being delivered that will strengthen the liveability index of Mount Barker. These include:

Summit Sport and Recreation Park

Summit Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Summit Recreation Precinct

Mount Barker City Centre Project

Mount Barker Interchange Upgrade







Mount Barker's economy offers a diverse range of opportunities with key established industry sectors

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Mount Barker District Council has a proven record of forging strong partnerships across the private and public sectors to deliver transformational outcomes.

With the private sector, Council has collaborated on major tourism, commercial, civic, leisure, and arts projects totalling $300 million, demonstrating its ability to enable investment, generate local employment, and catalyse sustainable economic growth.

Flagship partnerships such as the Mount Barker City Centre, Summit Leisure and Entertainment Precinct and Heysen Gallery are examples of collaborative new investment, services, and liveability outcomes for the district. Council also works closely with regional and sector organisations including Adelaide Hills Tourism and Regional Development Australia, to strengthen the district's visitor economy and business development.

Mount Barker's business networks are another distinctive strength, with progressive associations in Mount Barker and Hahndorf providing leadership, collaboration, and advocacy across key employment precincts.

Council works proactively with State and Federal Governments to secure timely investment in enabling infrastructure, instilling confidence for private sector decision-making and unlocking future growth.

Council's advocacy has led to the $365.8 million redevelopment of the Mount Barker Hospital and $190 million Mount Barker Interchange and roundabout upgrade.



OUR 2044 VISION: TO BE THE MOST LIVEABLE REGION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Council's Economic Development Strategy 2022–2027 is a forward-looking framework designed to harness the region's growth potential, foster innovation, and enhance liveability. Endorsed in September 2022, the strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to economic prosperity, working closely with government, industry and community to provide a prosperous business ecosystem.

THE STRATEGY IS STRUCTURED AROUND FOUR KEY OBJECTIVES:

INCREASE TOURISM VISITATION AND SPEND
Develop and promote attractions to boost local tourism.

CREATE AND ATTRACT HIGH-VALUE JOBS
Foster employment opportunities in emerging sectors.

INCREASE INNOVATION
Encourage entrepreneurial activities and technological advancements.

BUILD CITY CENTRE AND TOWNSHIP VIBRANCY
Support and enable investment to create vibrant, employment dense main streets and urban precincts.



MORE SUPPORT

Mount Barker boasts a thriving business ecosystem, supported by strong entrepreneurial networks and economic development. Supporting local businesses will create opportunities for growth and innovation, whilst producing quality local products and services.

Working in partnership with government and the private sector, Mount Barker District Council aim to attract investment that strengthens a resilient local circular economy and delivers diverse, sustainable local employment.

Mount Barker District Council's Economic Development team offers streamlined support for businesses investing in the region. We act as a single point of contact, delivering expert advice, business case support, data insights, and direct connections to planning, approvals and industry networks to fast track investment outcomes.

From acting as your dedicated contact to providing expert business advice, we streamline your journey with business case support, and connections to key resources and networks.

Start with a free, confidential conversation. Meet with our Economic Development team to explore investment opportunities, access local insights and networks, and understand the practical steps to establish or grow your business in the Mount Barker district.



Contact the Economic Development team at Mount Barker District Council for a confidential discussion about the opportunities available.

Email: connect@mountbarker.sa.gov.au
Phone: 08 8391 7200
Website: www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au/invest



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