

Cardinia Shire

Investment Attraction Report

REMP LAN



Cardinia Shire Investment Attraction Economic Report

This project has been conducted by REMPLAN on behalf of Cardinia Shire Council.

November 2024

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A photograph of four young adults walking on a paved path next to a lake. In the background, there is a fountain with several water jets and residential buildings. The scene is captured in bright, natural light, likely during the day. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'Introduction'.

Introduction

Introduction

Cardinia Shire

Cardinia Shire is one of Melbourne's most rapidly changing municipalities located on Melbourne's southeast fringe, approximately 55 kilometres from the CBD. Cardinia Shire encompasses a blend of urban, periurban and rural landscapes. Cardinia Shire is currently home to 126,960 residents and is expected to reach 178,611¹ residents by 2036.

Traditionally Cardinia Shire is the home of the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. Following World War II, Pakenham emerged as the major township in the region, and by the 1970s became a commuter suburb of Melbourne while also servicing the needs of the local farming community. Over the last five years, permanent population growth has been primarily driven by skilled migration, and the largest inflows of international migrants have been from India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. While historically most migration has been from internal migration, international migration is comprising a growing proportion of Cardinia's population growth.

Cardinia Shire stands as an interface between Melbourne's South East and Gippsland, acting as a key population centre that offers retail, commercial, educational and health services. The region is wellpositioned to experience positive growth, increased investment, and expanded employment opportunities in the future following rapid population growth. Cardinia Shire forms part of the broader Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) region, which incorporates 7 other Local Government Areas of Mornington Peninsula Shire, Knox City Council, City of Casey, Frankston City, Greater Dandenong, City of Kingston and City of Monash. The GSEM region is recognised as one of Australia's fastest growing regions and one of the country's most important economic centres.

¹ Victoria in Future (VIF) Population Projections

Introduction

Figure 1. Cardinia Shire's location within Greater Melbourne region



Figure 2. Cardinia Shire Strategic Framework Plan



Investment Attraction

Purpose

Cardinia Shire boasts unique, desirable attributes for attracting investment, such as state significant industrial land, proximity to productive agricultural land in Gippsland, and ample development opportunities for spaceconstrained industries. Cardinia Shire Council is now positioning itself to attract the right investments, enabling residents to live and work locally.

This Investment Attraction Plan outlines Cardinia Shire’s economic investment aspirations for the next 15 years, addressing the growing residential and commercial activity in this critical growth area of Greater South East Melbourne. Cardinia Shire has experienced rapid urban growth, presenting an opportunity to establish its economic identity and necessitating strategic direction supported by an economic evidence base to attract desirable investment in Cardinia Shire.

These insights have been informed by engagement with Cardinia Shire Council (CSC) staff and key stakeholders, as well as economic research. This plan aims to align with existing strategic plans.

What is Investment Attraction?

Investment attraction involves the facilitation of strategies and actions to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and enhance the economic prosperity of Cardinia Shire. These initiatives aim to encourage the expansion of existing businesses within the Shire and attract new businesses to the region that might otherwise trade elsewhere. Attracting investment is a crucial component of economic development in Cardinia Shire. Investment directly leads to new employment opportunities for local workers, the utilisation of local resources and the strengthening of the local economy. Investment attraction also seeks to address a range of local economic and community needs.



Economic Growth

attracting investment to stimulate economic growth, through targeting and securing businesses across various sectors.



Job Creation

attracting businesses that will provide local employment opportunities for residents.



Diversification of the Economy

diversifying the local economic base to reduce reliance on specific industries or sectors. With more than 70% of locals leaving the Shire for work each day, this will enable more residents to work locally – enhancing local economies.



Infrastructure Development

investment attraction is linked to infrastructure development goals, such as transportation networks, expanding utilities (recycled water use) or developing commercial precincts.



Enhanced Liveability

attracting investment that enhances the overall liveability of the local community including active transport, cultural amenities, recreation, green spaces and higher education training opportunities linked to employment.



Promotion of Innovation

attracting investment that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship including support of startups, incubators and research institutions to support knowledge sharing.



Community Development

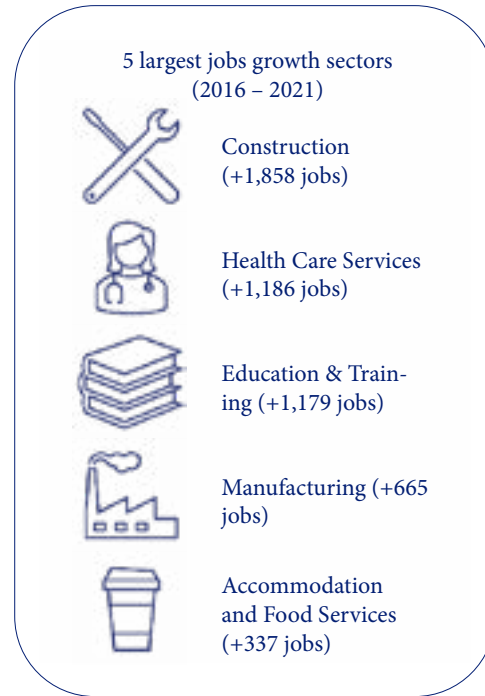
investment attraction is linked to broader community development objectives including increasing equality, improving health and wellbeing, and addressing environmental sustainability challenges.

Introduction

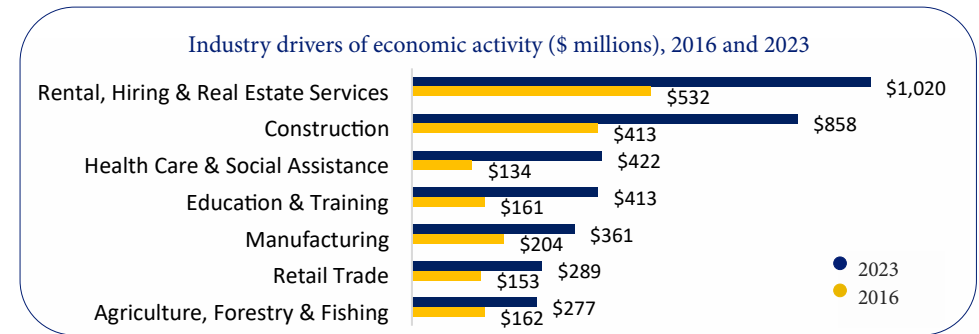
Local Economic Context

Cardinia Shire's gross regional product (GRP) is estimated at \$5.9 billion, supporting a workforce of over 33,000. More than half of the workforce is employed in the five largest employing sectors which predominantly deliver population-focused services.

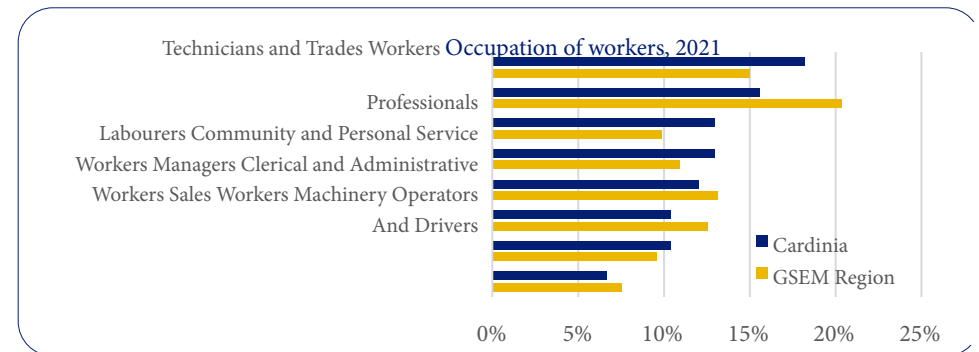
Jobs growth between 2016 and 2021 was concentrated in construction, health care and social assistance services and education, largely reflective of the rapid growth in population experienced over the same period.



In 2023, local industry in Cardinia Shire generated \$5.3 billion in value added, which is the marginal economic value added by industries and the greatest contributor to Gross Regional Product. The top five contributing sectors are real estate services², construction, health care, education and manufacturing. These key industries contribute \$3.1 billion (or 58.0% of total value added in Cardinia Shire).



Technicians and trades workers and professionals are the most common occupation in Cardinia Shire and are similar in concentration to the GSEM region.



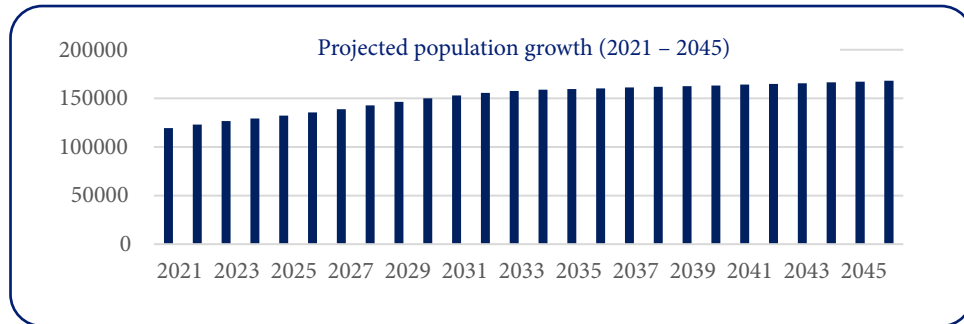
² Real Estate Services accounts mainly for Ownership of Dwellings. Ownership of dwellings consists of landlords and owner occupiers of dwellings. Owner occupiers are regarded as operating a business that generates a gross operating surplus. The imputation of a rent to owner occupied dwellings enables the services provided by dwellings to their

owner occupiers to be treated consistently with the marketed services provided by rented dwellings to their tenants. Owner occupiers are regarded as receiving rents (from themselves as consumers), paying expenses, and making a net contribution to the value of production which accrues to them as owners.

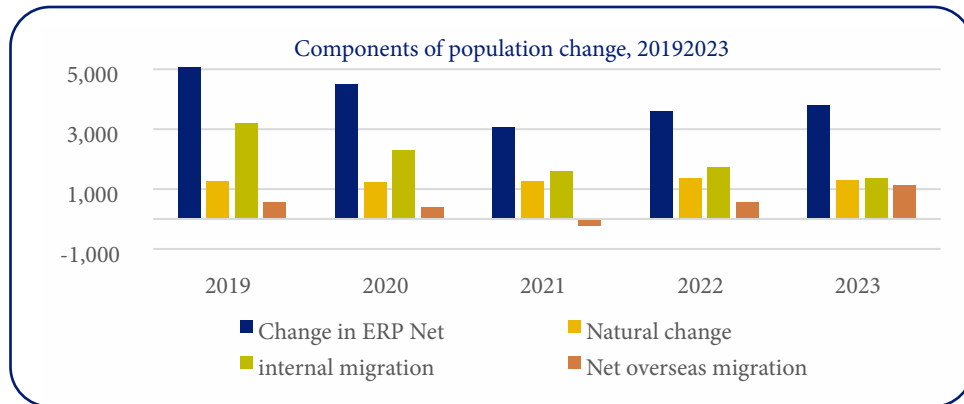
Introduction

Population Context

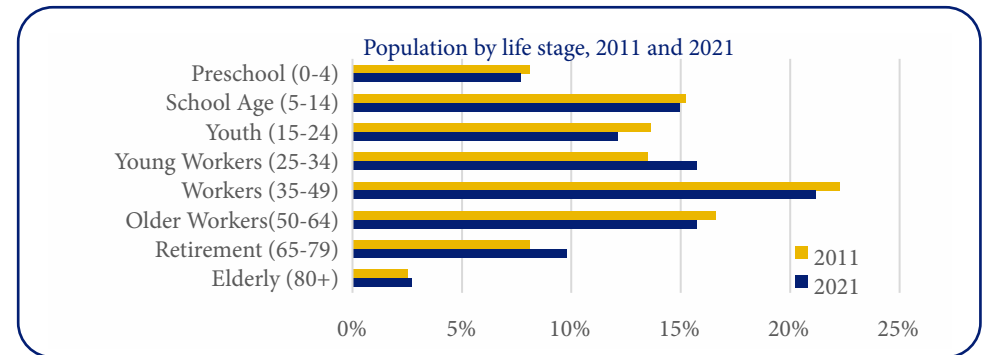
The population of Cardinia Shire has experienced rapid growth, increasing from 84,591 residents in 2013 to 126,960 in 2023. This level of growth represents a 24.2% increase which is notably strong relative to the GSEM region which grew by 8.0% respectively. The annual rate of growth in Cardinia Shire has experienced fluctuations over the last ten years, reaching a peak of 5.7% in 2016 and a low of 2.6% during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.



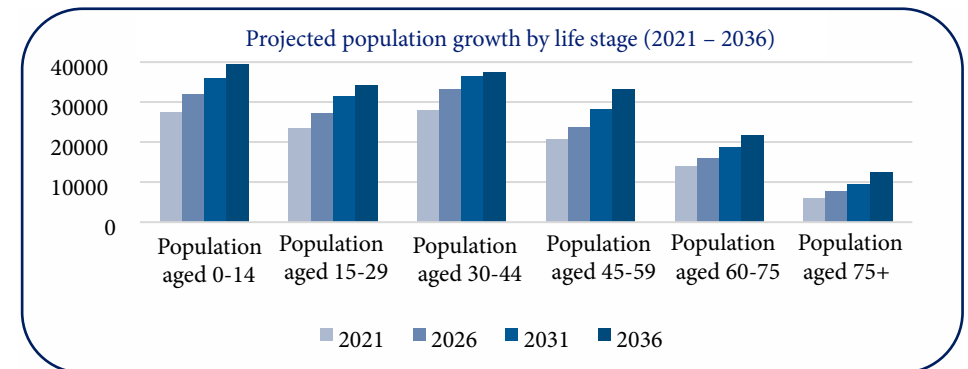
Over the last five years, population growth in Cardinia Shire has been driven by natural change (more births than deaths) and internal migration (movement from residents within Australia).

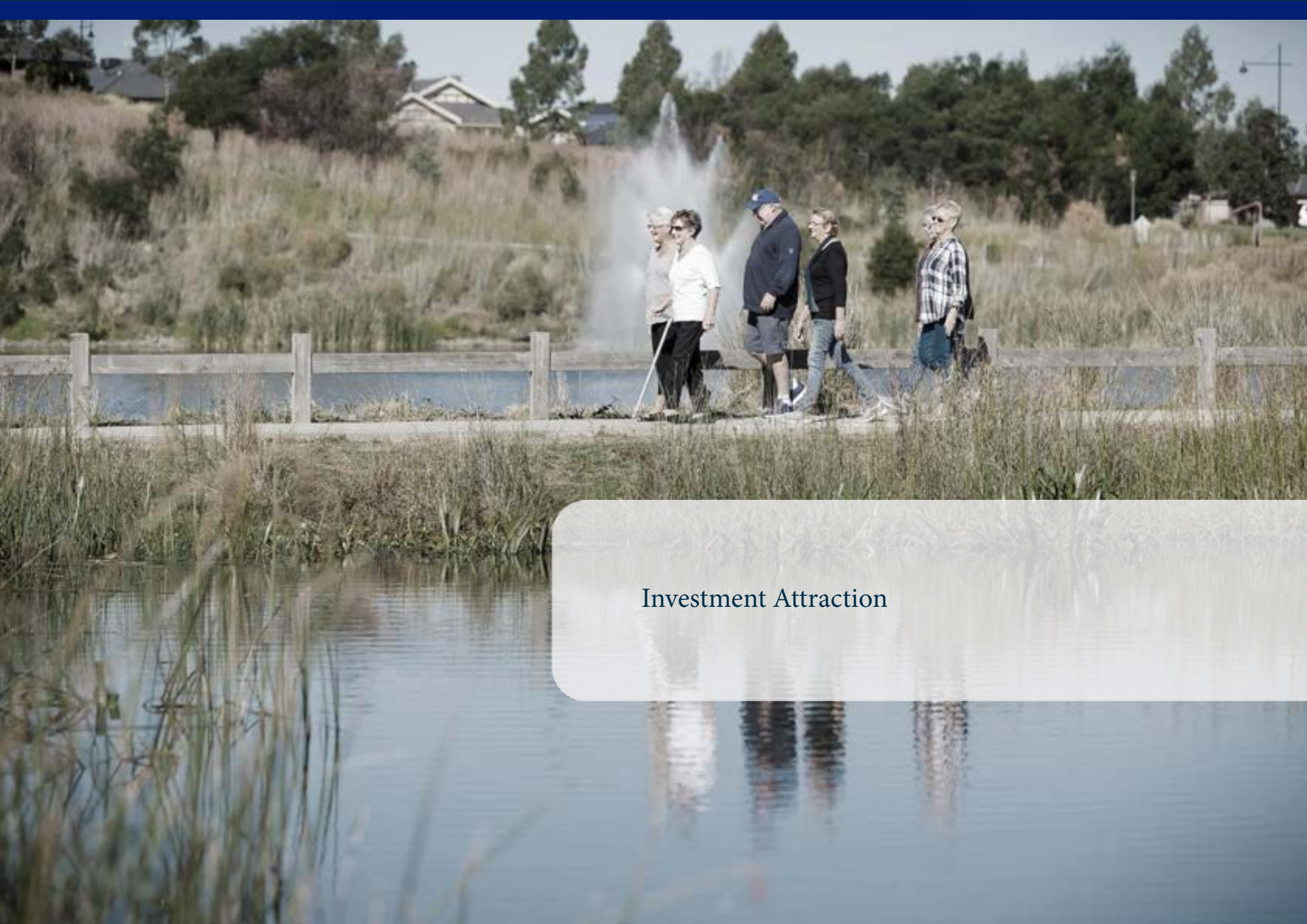


Cardinia Shire has seen the largest increase in residents aged 25-34 years, growing by 8,590 residents from 10,009 in 2011 to 18,599 in 2021. The next largest growth was among residents aged 35-49 years, increasing by 8,523 residents over the same period. The median age of residents in Cardinia is 34 years which is lower than the broader GSEM region and Victoria (both with a median age of 38 years).



Victoria in Future (VIF) projects Cardinia Shire’s population to grow considerably to 2036, with projected growth across all age groups. The growth in younger age groups (0-14 and 15-29) is a strength of Cardinia’s, as many other parts of Victoria are experiencing ageing populations.





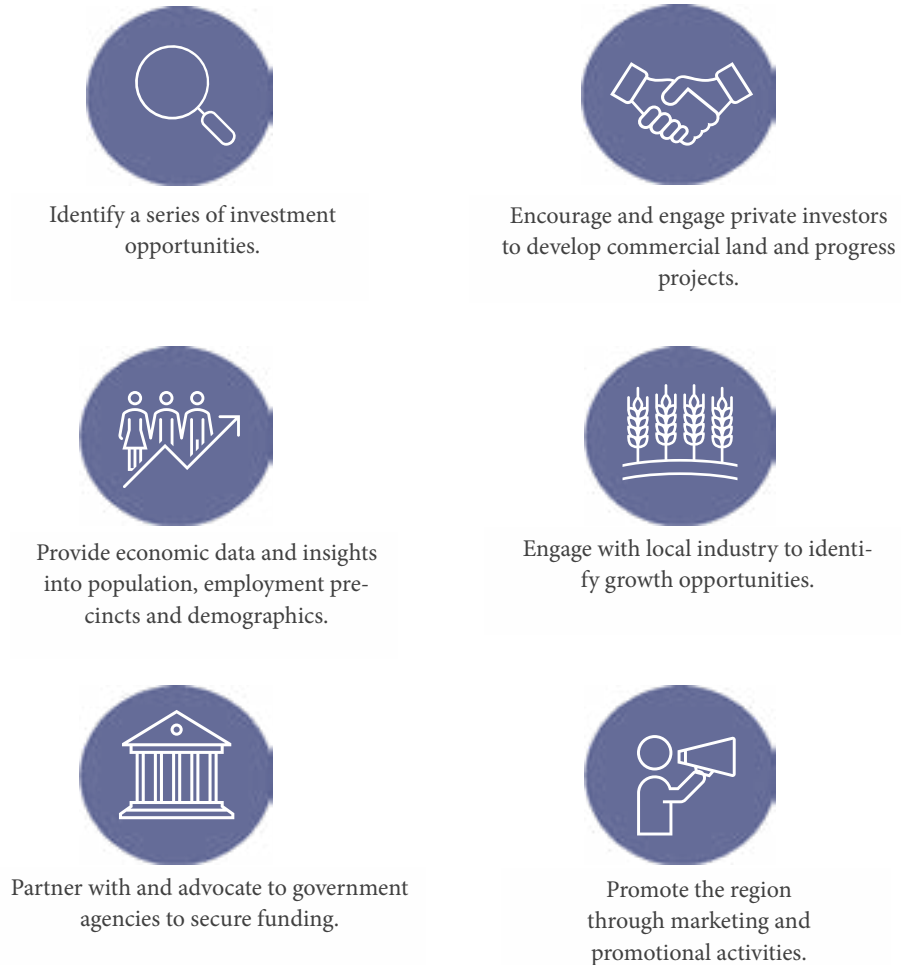
Investment Attraction

Introduction

Cardinia Shire Council's role in investment attraction

Investment attraction as a core function of Economic development

Figure 3. Council's role in investment attraction as a core function of economic development



Investment attraction is a core function of economic development as it fosters new employment opportunities, increases utilisation of local resources, creates a stronger local economy, and improves the quality of life of residents.

Economic growth in Cardinia Shire is driven by private sector investment, which promotes business expansion and local employment opportunities.

Additionally, Federal and State Governments play a role in progressing economic development by setting broad policy frameworks, providing funding, and implementing initiatives. They typically develop and oversee infrastructure projects and offer incentives to attract investment.

Local government often collaborates with initiatives driven by other levels of government to enhance investment attraction locally. Part of the role of local government is to implement initiatives to enhance economic prosperity. Activities include the creation of a businessfriendly environments, identifying opportunities for investment, promoting the region, providing information, facilitating connections and driving private sector investment. Work within the control of Council comprises investment attraction as a core function of economic development, infrastructure projects, land development, strategic planning, localised data provision, marketing and advocacy.

Cardinia Shire Council plays an important role in economic development by implementing initiatives which create optimal conditions for investment and sustainable economic growth.

Introduction

Why invest in Cardinia Shire?

Population driven demand: The Shire's current population of over 118,000 is forecast to grow rapidly. This significant population growth creates a strong market for new businesses and services and shows the expected significant development of residential land. Cardinia Shire is one Victoria's fastest growing municipalities, with a rapidly expanding population driving demand for goods, services, and housing, unlocking investment.

Land supply: Cardinia Shire has abundant land zoned and ready for residential, industrial and commercial development. This presents excellent opportunities for businesses looking to start, expand, or relocate.

Lifestyle: Cardinia boasts a desirable lifestyle for residents who benefit from excellent access to nature, recreation spaces and a vibrant community with a strong sense of identity. Future residential development is aligned with Precinct Structure Plans, that will deliver high standard amenity and community infrastructure outcomes. Cardinia also benefits from more affordable housing choices for residents, with a median weekly rental payment of \$373 compared to the Melbourne average of \$560 per week.

Transport: Located approximately 55 kilometres southeast of Melbourne's CBD, Cardinia Shire benefits from its strategic position. The Princes Highway, Princes Freeway and Gippsland railway corridors runs through the centre of the Shire, providing key road and rail links between Melbourne and West Gippsland. This connectivity is crucial for both residents and businesses. At present 62% of residents travel outside Cardinia Shire for work, highlighting the area's connectivity to job markets across Melbourne. Nearly 40% of Cardinia's residents travel between 30 and 100km for work – suggesting strong transport links and demand for local employment opportunities.

Additional transport links including the South Gippsland Highway, Pakenham Bypass, Kooweerup Bypass, Cardinia Road, V/Line rail services and numerous bus routes ensure connectivity and ease of access to and from the region.

Figure 4. Pakenham Revitalisation Project Render (Source: Cardinia Shire Council)



Introduction

Cardinia Shire's Key Employment Precincts

Cardinia Shire's Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) and Structure Plans (SP) play a pivotal role in shaping key employment precincts, driving economic growth and job creation. These precincts are strategically designed to support diverse industries, providing vital infrastructure and streamlined planning processes to attract businesses and investors. By supporting a business-friendly environment, Cardinia Shire's employment precincts enhance regional competitiveness and sustainability. This section identifies the key employment precincts – including two Major Activity Centres (MACs) - within the municipality, highlighting their potential, development plans and development status.

The Cardinia Employment Corridor covers an area of approximately 2,500 hectares which is divided into five key employment precincts.

Precinct	Description	Business Type	Development Status
Officer Town Centre Officer PSP (MAC)	The future town centre will be spread out over seven hectares with a mix of commercial and retail uses. The future town centre is located near Officer Train Station, a future bus interchange, and the Princes Highway.	When complete, it will be a Major Activity Centre that features a mix of retail outlets such as supermarkets and specialty stores, mixeduse office spaces and commercial uses and new homes	While most work todate has focused on large transport infrastructure projects, both the Officer Town Centre Park and the Cardinia Civic Centre have been delivered. The Civic Centre is a welllocated, sustainable, accessible hub for the Shire which will encourage more investment
Pakenham SP(MAC)	Pakenham Central is a vibrant shopping and community centre anchored by the Pakenham Central Marketplace.	This precinct is suited for a range of retail uses and community services such as shops, supermarkets, cafes, and medical services.	Pakenham Central is already welldeveloped. Major works have recently been completed to redevelop the train station and further works are planned as part of the Pakenham Revitalisation project.
Officer South Employment PSP	The Officer South Employment Precinct is a future major employment precinct covering 1,050 hectares. It is located west of Gum Scrub Creek and extends across to Cardinia Creek	This precinct has the potential to become home to integrated and innovative industries like health, research, and distribution with key connectivity to the future port and airport.	The PSP has been referred to the Minister and council are awaiting to outcome of the Amendment.
Cardinia Road Employment PSP	The Cardinia Road Employment Precinct is planned as a mixeduse precinct with a focus on creating diverse employment opportunities	The precinct is designed to accommodate a variety of businesses, including campusstyle office park development and transitoriented development.	Residential land in the north west of the precinct is partially developed. Some parts of the commercial and industrial land have been tenanted.
Pakenham South Employment PSP	This precinct is located east of McGregor Road on the eastern edge of the UGB. The nearby South East Business Park abuts the PSP area.	This precinct will deliver a significant employment opportunities with the capacity to provide for larger industrial uses such as local manufacturing, service industries, warehousing and distribution away from sensitive uses.	The first industrial tenants have moved to the area abutting Greenhills Road and major earthworks are underway.

Introduction

A close-up photograph of a barista's hands pouring milk from a metal pitcher into several coffee cups on a counter. The background is blurred, showing a cafe setting with other cups and equipment. A semi-transparent white box with rounded corners is overlaid on the image, containing the text 'Target investment sectors'.

Target investment sectors

Introduction

Overview

The future of investment in Cardinia Shire should serve two key initiatives:

1. Expanding on Cardinia Shire's existing high value 'Advanced' sectors which will continue to contribute significantly to local economic output and employment. These sectors are already thriving in Cardinia Shire and there are opportunities for further investment in these sectors which can be considered immediately. These sectors will continue to shape and strengthen the core identity of Cardinia Shire's commercial and industrial areas over the next 15 years.
2. Exploring and selectively investing in high potential 'Opportunity' sectors that will have significantly increased economic output and employment in the medium to long term contingent on major investment or the delivery of major infrastructure projects. These sectors require catalytic investment to kickstart the sector, but have high economic potential once established. Over the next 15 years, investment in these sectors should be selectively sought and encouraged in Cardinia Shire as the local economy develops and matures.

Council should be ready to respond to investment opportunities in these key sectors as they are presented. These target investment sectors should serve as a guide for the prioritisation, coordination and support for both public and private investment in Cardinia Shire. Investment in other sectors should also be considered and supported, but these sectors are likely to provide the most opportunity for investment and agglomeration benefits for Cardinia Shire. Four 'Advanced' and four 'Opportunity' sectors have been identified through policy analysis, economic analysis, and stakeholder engagement. Each of these sectors has also been identified with one or more of Cardinia Shire's subregions.

Advanced sectors

- Construction, manufacturing and automotives
- Agriculture
- Food technology, manufacturing and distribution
- Tourism and recreation

Opportunity sectors

- Healthcare and life sciences
- Renewable energy
- Biosecurity research, development and processing
- Veterinary and agricultural sciences

Introduction

Advanced: Construction, Manufacturing and Automotives

Local Strengths

- Cardinia has strong employment and industry representation across major construction and manufacturing sectors including:
 - o Housing and residential construction and construction services
 - o Commercial and industrial construction and construction services
 - o Food manufacturing
 - o Meat and meat product manufacturing
 - o Motor vehicle and part manufacturing
- Cardinia has one of the state's strongest concentrations of State Significant Industrial Precincts
- Significant opportunities for greenfield industrial development
- Construction sector well supported by active greenfield residential developments which are occurring across Cardinia Shire
- Cardinia Shire already has regional specialisations in several key sectors including automotives and food manufacturing. This encourages specialisation and the development of ancillary and supporting industries.

Case Study: HCMT Manufacturing

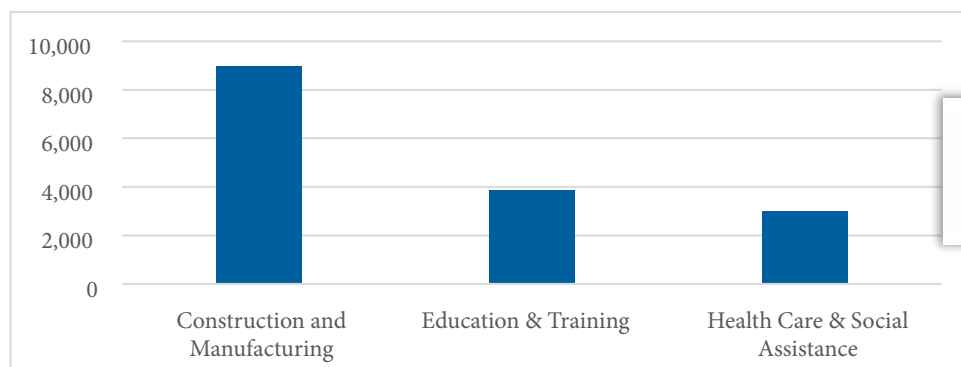
The High Capacity Metro Trains (HCMT) project includes the construction of a state-of-the-art Pakenham East maintenance depot. This facility is a critical component of the \$2.3 billion project aimed at enhancing Victoria's public transport infrastructure. The depot will support the maintenance of the new HCMT fleet, which consists of 65 next-generation trains.

The Pakenham East depot features advanced facilities such as a train maintenance centre, stabling yards for 30 trains, a driver training simulator, an underfloor wheel lathe, bio and graffiti cleaning systems, a test track, and a train washing facility.

The construction of the depot is a significant boost to local manufacturing and employment, with 400 jobs created at the peak of construction and 100 long-term rail maintenance jobs. The project emphasizes local content, with 87% of the depot's construction materials sourced locally, contributing to the broader goal of revitalising Victoria's rail manufacturing industry.

Additionally, the HCMT project includes partnerships with educational institutions like Chisholm TAFE and Swinburne University, providing specialized training and career pathways for workers transitioning from other industries, including the automotive sector.

Figure 5 Construction & Manufacturing FTE Employment, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Construction and Manufacturing accounts for more than half of all local FTE employment (52%), with Education & Training and Health Care & Social Assistance representing the 2nd and 3rd highest employers.

Introduction

Risks and opportunities

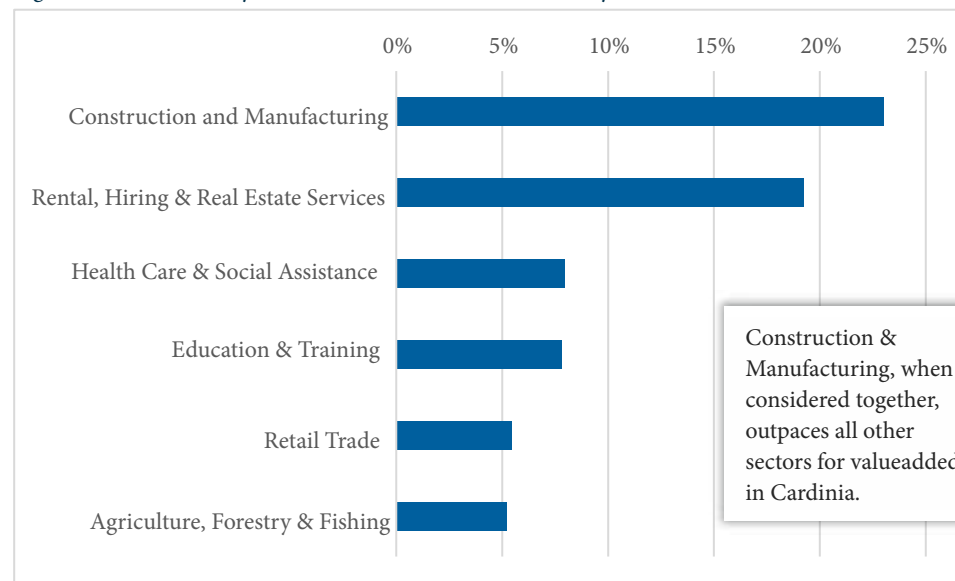
Risks

- The persistence and growth of construction and manufacturing relies on addressing skills shortages
- There is strong competition for manufacturing locations within Victoria, interstate and internationally
- Innovations in advanced manufacturing require and industry coordination and can benefit from dedicated precincts which are yet to be established

Opportunities

- Cardinia holds significant greenfield industrial land, and many other industrial areas are increasingly landconstrained
- Alignment with the Victorian government's "Made in Victoria" initiative, which includes the Energy Technologies Manufacturing Program, offers opportunities for local manufacturers to supply inputs for renewable energy generation, transmission, storage, and related technologies.
- Manufacturing businesses in Cardinia Shire can benefit from industry groups like [South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance](#) (SEMMA), which provide networking, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problemsolving opportunities. Manufacturing, along with construction and agriculture, forms a crucial part of Cardinia Shire's economic base, contributing to its diverse industrial landscape.

Figure 6 Value Added By Sector, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

Manufacturing is – and will remain- a foundational industry in Cardinia Shire’s Western Region primarily south of the Princes Freeway. Major opportunities for largescale industrial development exist in Pakenham South and Cardinia Road Employment and Officer South.

Introduction

Advanced: Agriculture

Local Strengths

- Agriculture is one of the main industries in Cardinia Shire, contributing significantly to the local economy and employment. In 2021, 2.3% of Cardinia Shire's employed residents worked in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, which is higher than the Victorian average. Cardinia Shire's agricultural land is highly productive and exports to markets across Australia.
- Cardinia Shire's agricultural industry includes several key sectors:
 - o Vegetable growing
 - o Livestock farming (particularly beef and dairy cattle)
 - o Horticulture (including fruit orchards and nurseries)
- In rural areas of Cardinia Shire, agriculture plays a crucial role in the local economy and employment. The industry is particularly important in areas like Koo Wee Rup, known for its asparagus production, and the Gembrook region, known for production of potatoes and fruits.

Case Study: Koo Wee Rup Asparagus Industry

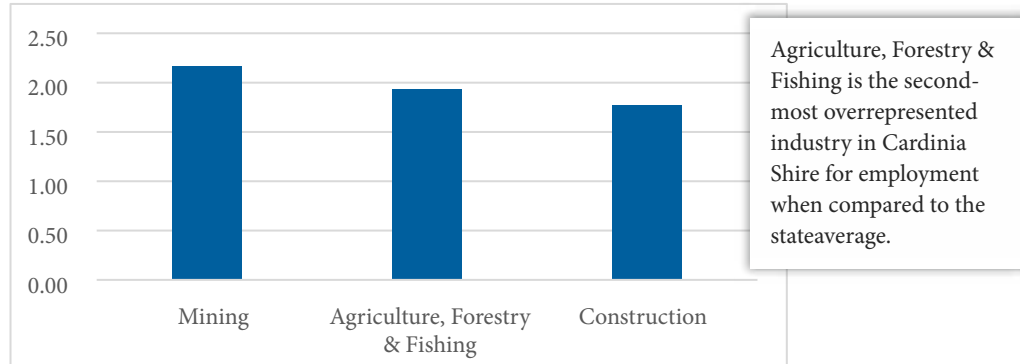
The Koo Wee Rup region in Cardinia Shire is renowned for its asparagus production, which has become a significant agricultural industry for the area. The region's unique soil composition and climate make it ideal for growing high-quality asparagus.

The asparagus industry in Koo Wee Rup has a rich history dating back to the early 20th century. Today, it is one of the largest asparagus-growing regions in the Southern Hemisphere, producing approximately 90% of Australia's fresh asparagus.

The industry provides significant employment opportunities, particularly during the harvest season from September to December.

It employs hundreds of local workers and seasonal labourers, contributing to the region's economy. Koo Wee Rup asparagus is not only sold domestically but is also exported to various countries, including Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, showcasing the international demand for this local product.

Figure 7 Regional specialisations by location quotient, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Introduction

Risks and opportunities

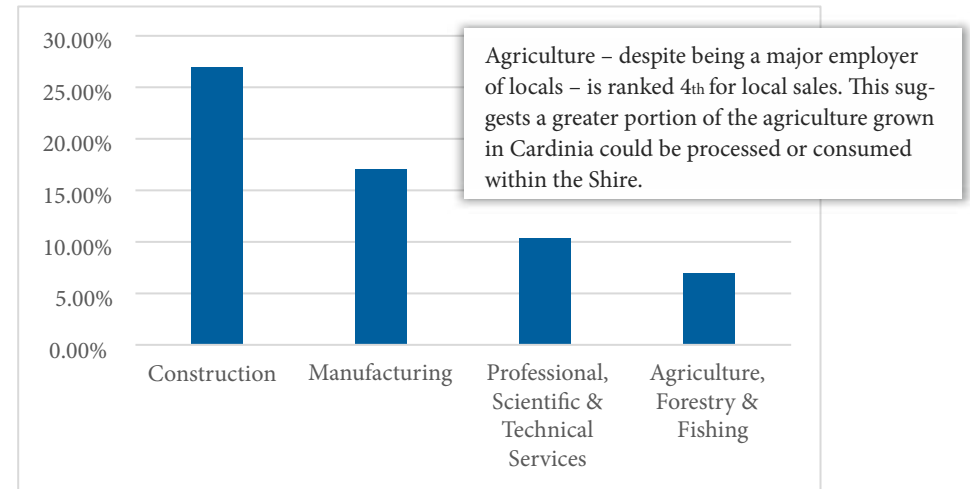
Risks

- There is a large agricultural workforce in Cardinia Shire, but it is one of the few sectors that is shrinking in employment in the region. This is likely due to an absolute reduction in agricultural land limiting the total employment opportunities. This presents an opportunity to utilise more intense forms of agriculture and maintain the strong skills base that exists in Cardinia Shire.
- The reduction in agricultural workforce is also due to ageing in the traditional demographic of fulltime agricultural workers, increasing reliance on seasonal worker programs.

Opportunities

- Cardinia Shire's agricultural sector has opportunities for growth in areas such as agritourism, valueadded food production, and sustainable farming practices. The shire's location in the periurban fringe of Melbourne provides unique opportunities for farmtotable initiatives and direct marketing to urban consumers.
- Agricultural businesses in Cardinia Shire can benefit from industry groups and local government initiatives that provide networking, knowledge sharing, and support. The Cardinia Shire Council actively promotes the local agricultural sector and supports farmers through various programs and initiatives. Agriculture, along with construction and manufacturing, forms a crucial part of Cardinia Shire's economic base, contributing to its diverse industrial landscape.
- There are growing opportunities in alternative and higher value agricultural subsectors, including in urban agriculture, controlled environment agriculture (CEA), and fresh produce storage and processing.

Figure 8 Local Sales By Sector, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

Agriculture is a well-established industry in Cardinia Shire's Northern, Eastern and Southern Regions. While total employment has not recently grown in the agriculture sector, there are significant opportunities for investment in enhancing agricultural productivity and encouraging higher value agricultural uses which synergise with the growing food manufacturing sector in the Western Region.

There are significant opportunities for enhancing agricultural productivity and transitioning to higher value agricultural uses throughout the Shire's agricultural lands. The Westernport Recycled Water Scheme presents a significant opportunity for Cardinia Shire's agricultural land by ensuring a reliable water source, essential for crop resilience and productivity. This access to recycled water supports sustainable farming practices, potentially increasing local food security and economic growth.

Introduction

Advanced: Food technology, manufacturing and distribution

Local Strengths

- Agriculture and food manufacturing are key industries in Cardinia Shire, with significant opportunities for growth in food technology and advanced food manufacturing.
- The food manufacturing sector in Cardinia Shire is a major employer, offering various roles in food technology, production, and related fields. This indicates a strong demand for skilled professionals in the industry.
- Cardinia Shire’s unique position at the junction of urban Melbourne and regional Victoria’s agriculture land creates unique opportunities for further development.
- Cardinia Shire's food technology and advanced manufacturing industry includes:
 - o Beverage production
 - o Food manufacturing
 - o Valueadded food processing
 - o Specialty food products

Case Study: Arkadia Beverages in Pakenham

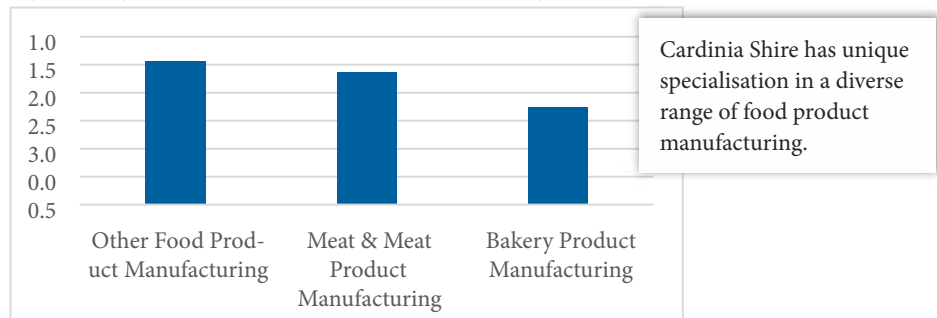
Arkadia Beverages, a proudly Australianowned business, exemplifies the growth and innovation in Cardinia Shire's food technology and advanced manufacturing sector. The company, which has been manufacturing products in Australia since 1997, is embarking on an exciting expansion in Pakenham with a new stateoftheart facility.

The company produces a wide range of beverages, including drinking chocolates, chai teas, frappes, and syrups, catering to both cafes and home consumers. Arkadia is known for its continuous innovation and development of new products, keeping it at the forefront of modern café culture.

The company emphasises its Australian roots and manufacturing, which aligns with Cardinia Shire's focus on supporting local industries. The new facility in Pakenham represents significant growth for Arkadia, expanding its production capabilities and potentially creating new job opportunities in the region.

Arkadia's success in the Australian market positions it well for potential expansion into international markets, further boosting the local economy.

Figure 9 Regional specialisation for food manufacturing subsectors, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Introduction

Risks and opportunities

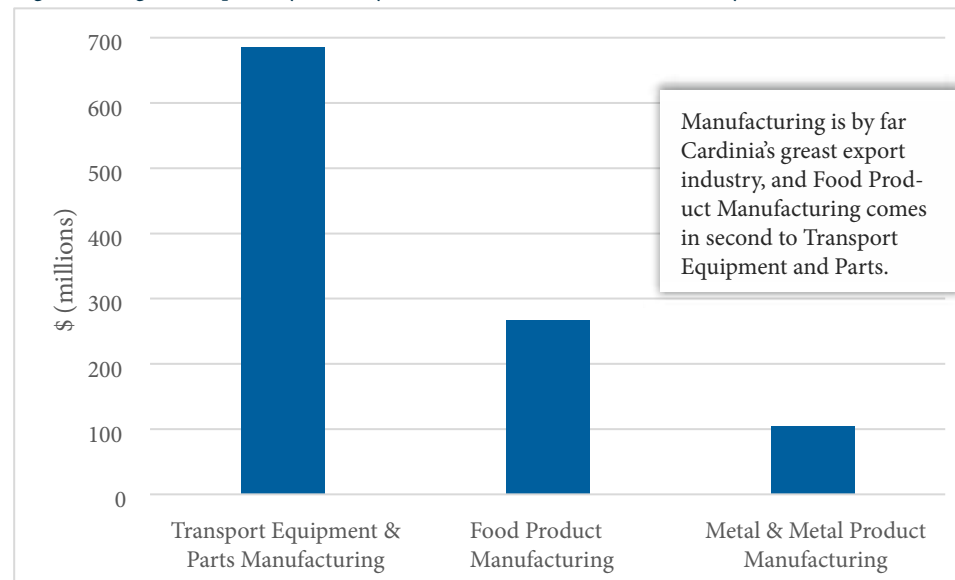
Risks

- Manufacturing is highly subject to the cost of energy and materials, and recent supply chain challenges have revealed this as a vulnerability.
- Food manufacturing is subject to consumer preferences, and in many cases consumers are seeking minimally processed foods which can affect the demand for manufactured food products.
- Interstate and international suppliers create strong competition for locally manufactured food products.
- Contamination and disease can threaten the supply chain for the agricultural inputs for food manufacturing.

Opportunities

- As one of Cardinia Shire's main industries, food manufacturing is wellpositioned for future growth. The region's proximity to Melbourne and its established agricultural base provides a solid foundation for expansion in advanced food manufacturing.
- The sector offers emerging opportunities in technology, business, and employment within the food and beverage manufacturing industries. This includes roles in product development, quality assurance, and sustainable manufacturing practices.
- There are opportunities for collaboration between food manufacturing businesses and educational institutions to develop specialised training programs and career pathways for workers in the industry.

Figure 10 Regional exports by industry sector, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

Food technology will benefit from intersections with the well-established manufacturing industry in Cardinia Shire’s Western Region. There are major opportunities for larger operations in Pakenham South, Cardinia Road Employment and Officer South Employment and– areas which benefit from close proximity to highly productive agricultural land further away from urban centres.

Introduction

Advanced: Tourism and recreation

Local Strengths

- Tourism is a significant sector in Cardinia Shire, offering diverse attractions and experiences for visitors.
- Cardinia Shire boasts a variety of tourist destinations, including:
 - o Puffing Billy Railway
 - o Emerald Lake Park
 - o Cardinia Reservoir Park
 - o Bunyip State Park
 - o Gumbuya World Theme Park
- Cardinia Shire is conveniently located just a 45minute drive from Melbourne's CBD along the Monash Freeway, making it an attractive destination for day trips and short stays. Cardinia Shire's diverse landscape, including rolling hills, forests, and waterways, provides a picturesque backdrop which attracts a wide range of nature enthusiasts. The region is known for its local produce, wineries, and gourmet experiences, offering visitors opportunities to indulge in food and wine tours.

Case Study: Puffing Billy Railway

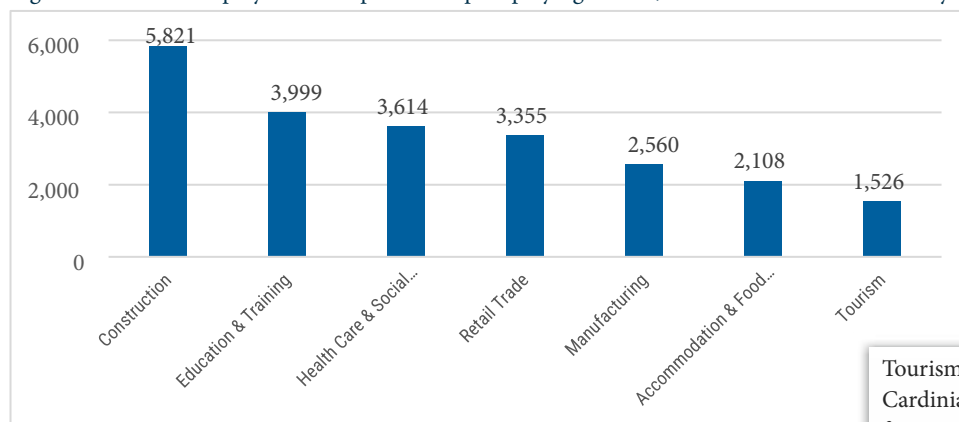
Puffing Billy, a historic steam railway in the Dandenong Ranges, is a major tourist attraction in Cardinia Shire. Built in 1900 and reopened as a tourist railway in 1962, it offers a unique journey through lush forests, attracting over 500,000 visitors annually. Key success factors include:

- Authentic steam train experience
- Scenic route through picturesque landscapes
- Proximity to Melbourne
- Strong community involvement through volunteers
- Diverse offerings including themed events and dining experiences
- Commitment to historical preservation
- Effective marketing and tourism partnerships

Puffing Billy contributes significantly to the local economy and has received numerous tourism awards. Its appeal lies in combining nostalgia with natural beauty, offering an experience that resonates with various age groups and interests. Challenges include maintaining aging infrastructure and balancing growth with conservation.

Future plans focus on expanding facilities and enhancing visitor experiences while preserving historical integrity. Puffing Billy's enduring popularity demonstrates the potential of heritage tourism when coupled with effective management and community engagement, making it a cornerstone of Cardinia Shire's tourism sector.

Figure 11 Tourism employment compared to top employing sectors, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Tourism is a major employer in Cardinia, diversifying the region from its traditional sectors.

Introduction

Risks and opportunities

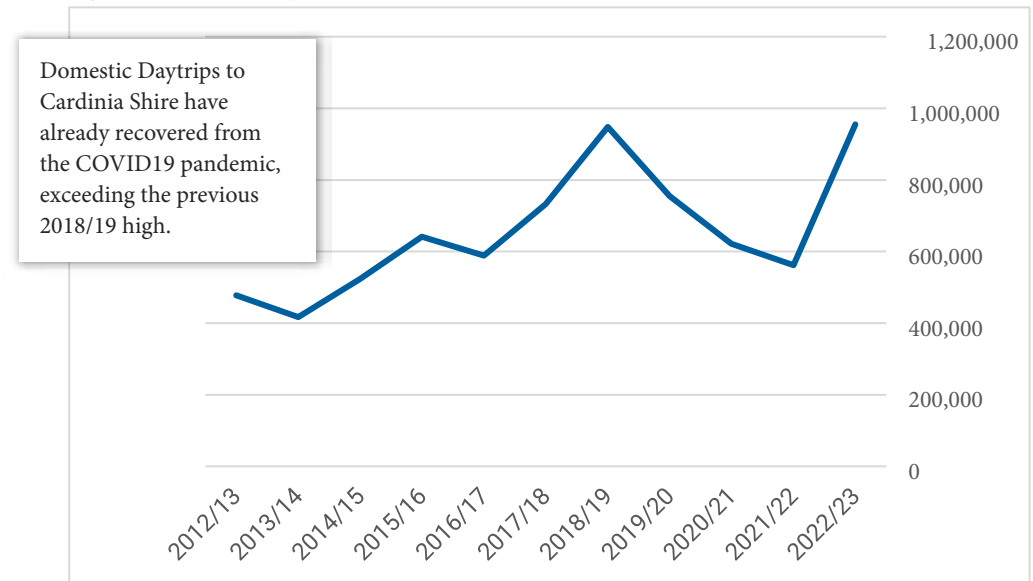
Risks

- Cardinia’s tourism identity is not as developed as some neighbouring LGAs such as Yarra Ranges Shire, and day trippers from Melbourne may be more likely to visit the Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula, or Daylesford as they have a stronger tourism identity.
- Tourism infrastructure in Cardinia is not as developed as other nearby regions, and the current offering for visitors is more limited than in these nearby regions.

Opportunities

- Cardinia Shire is committed to developing its ecotourism, adventure tourism, and agritourism offerings. Cardinia Shire collaborates with regional tourism bodies to market its attractions and experiences to domestic and international visitors. The region's proximity to Melbourne, combined with its natural assets and ongoing development initiatives, positions it well for continued growth in the tourism sector.
- The development of the South East Airport would be a major enabler of growing tourism and recreation in Cardinia Shire.
- Developing visitor accommodation is a key opportunity for tourism in Cardinia Shire. Accommodation businesses benefit from proximity to Cardinia’s iconic townships, tourist attractions and urban centres.

Figure 12 Domestic Daytrippers to Cardinia Shire, Source: Tourism Research Australia



Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

Tourism and recreation opportunities are available throughout Cardinia Shire, though the strongest opportunities are in Cardinia Shire’s mountainous and rural village areas in the Northern and Eastern Regions.

Introduction

Opportunity: Healthcare and life sciences

Reasons to invest

- Healthcare is a vital and expanding sector in Cardinia Shire, providing essential services to the local community. It is a significant employer of Cardinia Shire residents. This local demand and existing workforce provide confidence for further investment in healthcare in Cardinia.
- Currently, the Monash Health Centre in Pakenham is the major provider of healthcare services in Pakenham, and the planned Pakenham Community Hospital will provide additional services in a location near to Pakenham Central Marketplace.

Risks and opportunities

Risks

- While this sector is a major employer of local residents, these residents have a high propensity to leave Cardinia Shire for work as Cardinia Shire lacks major healthcare and life sciences institutions or facilities.

Opportunities

- Further development of this sector will create local employment opportunities while safeguarding the region for future growth with strong social infrastructure.
- Cardinia Shire's location at Melbourne's urban fringe creates strong locational benefits as a healthcare facility would be able to service urban, periurban and regional populations. Strong access to a local workforce is also a major strength of the location. Major healthcare and life sciences precincts also require large, unconstrained landholdings for development which have strong utilities and transport connectivity, and Cardinia Shire has large, undeveloped lots which would have strong access to major transport corridors – particularly with the delivery of the Thompsons Rd extension.

Case Study: Berwick Health and Education Precinct (BHEP)

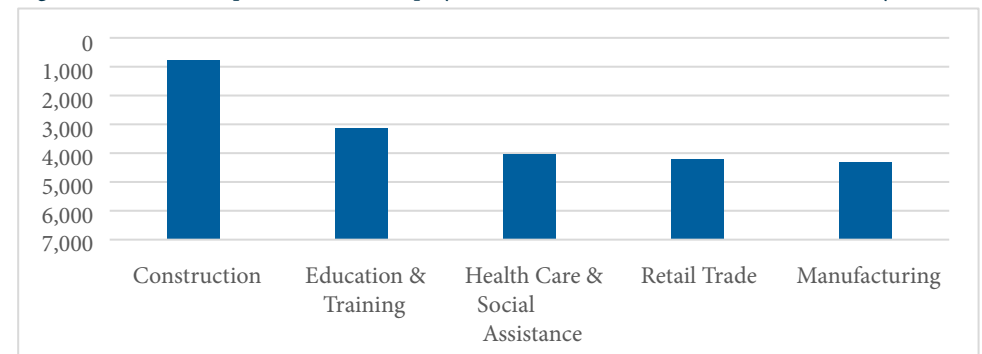
The BHEP is a significant development project in Melbourne's southeast that showcases the economic potential of integrated health and education hubs. The Victorian Planning Authority's plan for the BHEP outlines a vision that will ultimately result in up to 8,452 jobs, up to 700 hospital beds, and over 1000 new homes. The precinct builds upon and supports recent expansions of major institutions in the area, including:

- Casey Hospital
- Chisholm Institute
- Federation University
- St. John of God Private Hospital
- Insight Education Centre for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

A new Healthcare and Life Sciences precinct would be best located near population centres in Cardinia Shire's Western Region, benefitting from its strong transport connectivity and land availability. Locating the hospital near large population centres provides short commutes for the region's healthcare workers.

Figure 13 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees in Cardinia, Source: REMPLAN Economy



Introduction

Opportunity: Renewable energy

Reasons to invest

- Cardinia has a strong existing logistics and manufacturing base, positioning the workforce well to adapt to renewable energy projects.
- Cardinia has strong access to Gippsland which will be a key part of the energy transition.
- The region's existing strengths in eco-tourism and sustainable food production lend themselves to the holistic development of renewable energy which will provide synergies with these sectors. This will be particularly strengthened if renewable energy can be provided onsite.

Risks and opportunities

Risks

- There is not a well-established existing energy manufacturing base in Cardinia, and significant investment may be required to kickstart it.
- Australia generally does not produce commercially viable renewable energy components at scale, and the "Made in Victoria" initiative is recent and may be highly competitive.

Opportunities

- As part of Victoria's growth corridors, Cardinia Shire is well-positioned to capitalise on the expanding renewable energy sector. The region's existing manufacturing base and strategic location near population centres at the edge of Gippsland provide a solid foundation.
- The Victorian government's "Made in Victoria" initiative, particularly the Energy Technologies Manufacturing Program, offers significant opportunities for local manufacturers to supply inputs for renewable energy generation, transmission, storage, and related technologies.

As of June 2023, there were 17 major renewable energy projects under construction or commissioning in Victoria

Case Study: Tindo Solar in Adelaide

While not located in Cardinia, Tindo Solar in Adelaide provides an excellent example of the potential for renewable energy manufacturing in outer urban areas. Tindo Solar is Australia's only manufacturer of solar panels, producing high-quality panels in its Adelaide factory. The company focuses on producing technologically advanced solar panels, including their Karra series which uses half-cut cell technology for improved efficiency. The company emphasises sustainable manufacturing practices and produces panels designed for Australian conditions.

Tindo Solar has experienced significant growth, expanding its production capacity to meet increasing demand for Australian-made solar panels. Tindo has recently stated they are seeking to establish a larger facility on the east coast. While primarily serving the Australian market, Tindo Solar is exploring export opportunities, showcasing the potential for Australian renewable energy manufacturing on the global stage. Tindo Solar serves as an inspiring model for what could be achieved in Cardinia Shire. By attracting and nurturing similar innovative businesses, Cardinia Shire could develop a robust renewable energy manufacturing sector, creating skilled job opportunities and contributing to Australia's transition towards a sustainable energy future.

Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

Renewable energy technology and logistics will benefit from intersections with the well-established manufacturing industry in Cardinia Shire's Western Region. Developments in the Southern Region will benefit from close proximity to the future South East Airport and the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal in Hastings.

Introduction

Opportunity: Biosecurity research, development and processing

Reasons to invest

- A postharvest biosecurity facility research, development and processing capacity could serve local agricultural producers and those in neighbouring regions, enhancing the area's agricultural value chain.
- This facility would also enable strong synergies with logistics, veterinary sciences, agriculture, manufacturing and healthcare.
- Cardinia's location on periurban Melbourne is ideal for biosecurity operations, with strong access to skills and agricultural products.

Risks and opportunities

Risks

- The need and business case for a biosecurity facility has not been established yet.
- The success of the facility would likely require much greater connectivity to ports, airports and major roads to ensure a high volume of produce can be transported in and out of the facility.

Opportunities

- The proposed third major airport between Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang could provide additional logistical advantages for a postharvest biosecurity facility, especially for handling international agricultural imports and exports.
- The presence of established agricultural businesses and infrastructure in the region provides a foundation for the integration of a postharvest biosecurity facility into the agricultural ecosystem. Proximity to Melbourne offers opportunities for collaboration with research institutions like Box Hill Institute's Biosecurity Centre of Excellence, enhancing the facility's capabilities and contributing to innovation.

Case Study: South Australia PostHarvest Biosecurity

The South Australian postharvest biosecurity facility represents a significant advancement in the state's agricultural sector. The \$50 million state-of-the-art biosecurity facility is a collaborative effort between the Australian federal government, South Australian state government, and the South Australian Produce Market.

This industry-led initiative aims to address critical challenges in the state's horticultural export industry. The facility is located in Pooraka, on the site of the SA Produce Market. The facility was funded through \$9.8 million from the federal government, \$4.2 million from the state government, and \$36 million from industry.

The facility is expected to add an additional \$100 million in fresh produce exports over a 5-year period, create up to 172 direct and indirect ongoing jobs, lower transport costs, improve profitability for SA producers, and reduce produce costs at supermarkets due to decreased wastage and improved efficiency.

Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

This facility would benefit from colocation with existing manufacturing and logistics capabilities in Cardinia Shire's Western Region, though the space requirements and nearby sensitive uses could necessitate its development closer to the future airport and away from population centres in the Southern Region.

Introduction

Opportunity: Veterinary and agricultural sciences

Local Strengths

- Veterinary and agricultural sciences are underdeveloped sectors across Victoria, and Cardinia Shire offers a unique opportunity to establish a Veterinary and Agricultural Science Innovation Centre or a similar research and development facility.
- The region's diverse agricultural activities and existing food manufacturing capacity provide ample opportunities for applied research and community engagement.

Risks and opportunities

Risks

- Veterinary science is a largely unexplored industry in Victoria, and significant investment would be required to establish a research and development facility.

Opportunities

- This initiative would aim to address the needs of the region's livestock health sector, bolster local agricultural productivity, and contribute to veterinary education and research.
- Australian Research Council's Centres of Excellence are university-led initiatives which develop Australia's international standing in research areas of national priority. A new Innovation Centre would be primarily aligned with the Environmental Change, Health, and Food priorities and would be able to address several key objectives including:
- This facility could engage with the local community through animal health clinics, educational programs, and partnerships with local farms and businesses.

Case Study: National Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Precinct (NAESP)

The National Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Precinct (NAESP) in Canberra is a collaborative initiative between CSIRO and the Australian National University (ANU), aimed at revolutionising agricultural and environmental research. This globally significant precinct integrates advanced research facilities and fosters innovation through collaboration. Key initiatives of the NAESP include:

- **Centre for Genomics, Metabolomics, and Bioinformatics:** This facility focuses on converting gene discovery into practical applications for crop improvement and environmental management. It integrates existing and new infrastructure to streamline the research-to-impact workflow, enhancing bioinformatics capabilities.
- **Environomics Future Science Platform and Oz Mammals Project:** These initiatives focus on genetic studies of ecosystems and conservation strategies, leveraging partnerships with national and international organisations.
- **Centre for Entrepreneurial AgriTechnology (CEAT) and Biological Data Science Institute (BDSI):** These centres facilitate the translation of data into knowledge and practical applications, supporting innovation in agricultural technology.

Australia was home to 551 agri tech startups in 2023, attracting more than \$800m in investment each year (Source: Austrade)

Where to invest in Cardinia Shire

This veterinary and agricultural sciences development will benefit from Cardinia Shire's unique proximity to major population centres and agricultural activities, and may be best located in Cardinia Shire's Western, Southern or Eastern Region.

Investment Decision Making Framework

To assess investment initiatives, an Investment Decision Making Framework has been developed which supports Council and investors to understand the priorities and benefits of each of these investment initiatives. This framework considers the following metrics which may support investment initiatives:

- Job creation: Attracting investment leads to job creation, which reduces unemployment and stimulates local economies. A robust job market attracts skilled professionals, enhancing the overall talent pool of the region.
- Infrastructure development: Investment in infrastructure improves connectivity and efficiency, making regions more attractive to businesses. Quality infrastructure supports sustainable growth and enhances the quality of life for residents.
- Enhanced liveability: Investment that enhances liveability makes areas more attractive to both residents and businesses, fostering community wellbeing. Improved amenities and services can lead to increased property values and community satisfaction. This metric is based on Cardinia Shire Council's Liveability Plan 2017/2029, incorporating improved mental health & wellbeing, improved social cohesion, improved safety, improved healthy eating & active living, reduced family violence, improved financial wellbeing & resilience, and reduced harm from tobacco, drugs and gambling.
- Economic growth: Investment drives economic growth by increasing productivity, fostering innovation, and expanding markets. A growing economy creates a positive cycle of reinvestment, further boosting development.
- Community development: Investments in community development strengthen social cohesion and improve local amenities, making areas more desirable. Strong communities support local businesses and contribute to a stable, engaged workforce.
- Economic diversification: Attracting investment in diverse sectors reduces dependency on a single industry, enhancing economic resilience. Diversified economies are better equipped to handle market fluctuations and global economic shifts.
- Promotion of innovation: Investments that promote innovation foster a culture of creativity and progress, leading to new industries and technologies. An innovative environment attracts cutting-edge companies and top talent, driving long-term economic success.

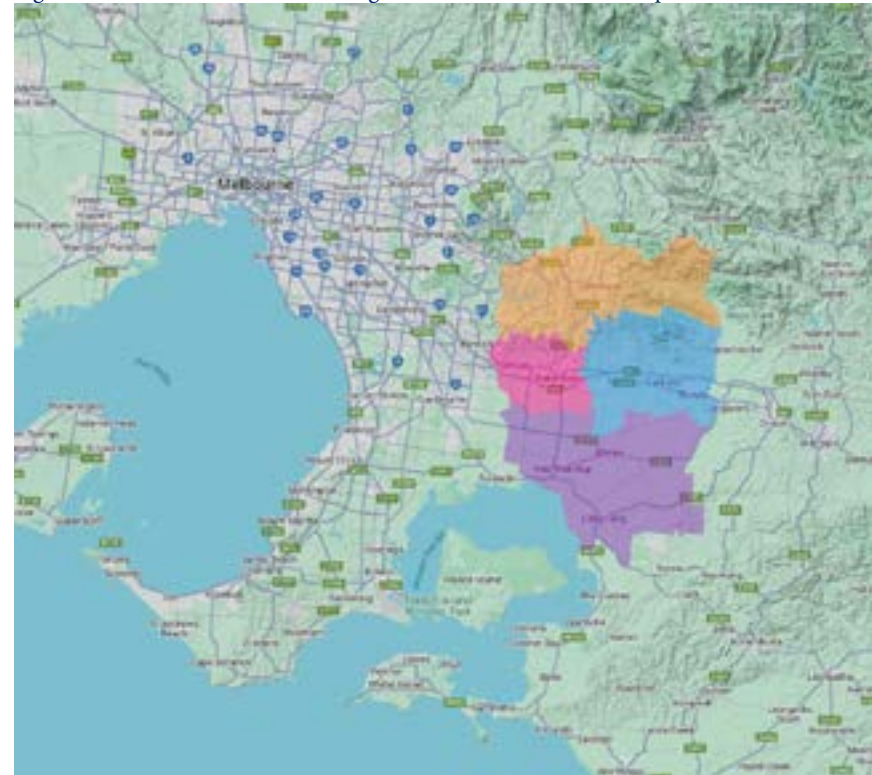
Placebased approach to Investment Attraction

Cardinia Shire is comprised of four regions which segment the municipality for place-based planning according to its distinct socioeconomic and cultural features.

These subregions – Northern, Western, Eastern and Southern – should inform place-based investment opportunities in Cardinia Shire.

Details regarding each region’s demographics and forecasted population growth can be found here: [Home | Cardinia Shire | Community profile](#).

Figure 14. Cardinia Shire’s four subregions, Source: REMPLAN MapBuilder



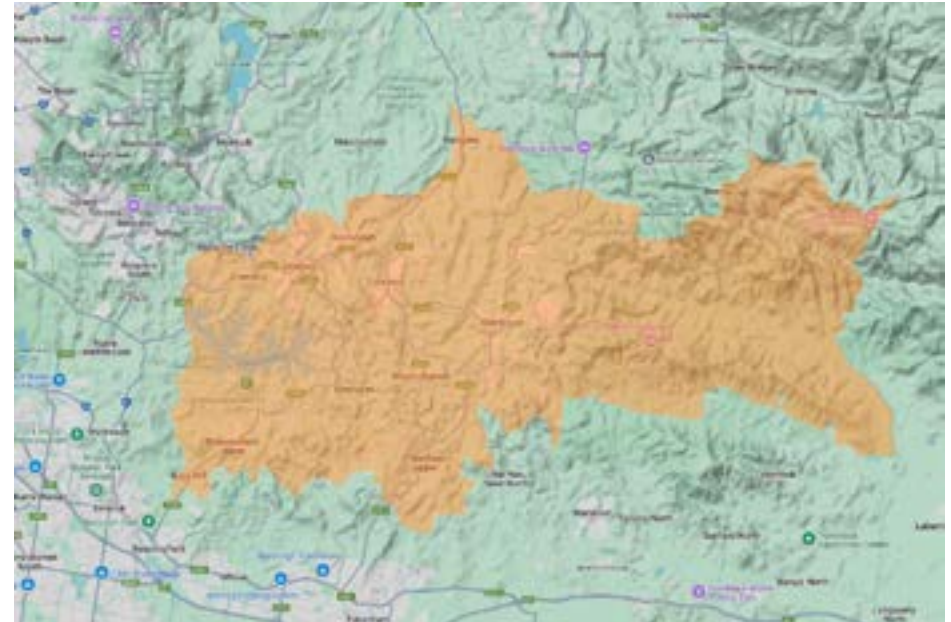
Northern Region

Overview

Cardinia Shire's Northern Region is characterised by the eastern Dandenong Ranges. It is primarily a rural living and agricultural region with broad tourism appeal and a wealth of agritourism and naturebased tourism opportunities. The Northern Region is home to some of Melbourne's most iconic tourism attractions including Puffing Billy Railway and Emerald Lake Park. Puffing Billy's new Lakeside Centre was developed in 2023 in partnership with State Government – demonstrating longterm commitment to the tourism sector in the region.

The Northern Region is also home to some of Victoria's most iconic periurban towns – like Gembrook, Cockatoo and Emerald – providing accessible getaways for Victorian, interstate and international visitors. The proximity of these towns to Melbourne enables easy day trips – with most towns being accessible within an hour of the CBD.

Figure 15. Cardinia Shire's Northern Region, Source: REMPLAN MapBuilder



Eastern Region

Overview

Cardinia Shire's Eastern Region is characterised by rural townships along the railway line which are bordered by the Bunyip State Park in the north and surrounded by highly productive agricultural land. These rural townships include Nar Nar Goon, Tynong, Garfield and Bunyip and benefit from regional rail infrastructure that enables better access to Melbourne and Gippsland, including the nearby towns of Longwarry, Drouin and Warragul. Its primary industries are agriculture and tourism. Sitting outside of Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary, it acts as a gateway to Gippsland.

Gumbuya World, located in Tynong, is a premier amusement park and wildlife sanctuary that offers a unique blend of adventure and nature experiences. Emphasising education and conservation, the park provides informative exhibits and programs on wildlife preservation. Just an hour from Melbourne, Gumbuya World has become a major regional attraction, drawing both local and international visitors and continuously investing in new attractions to maintain its leading position in Australian tourism.

West Gippsland Progress Association, formed following the 2019 bushfires, has developed strategic plans for regenerative agriculture and agritourism in the region.

Figure 16. Cardinia Shire's Eastern Region, Source: REMPLAN MapBuilder



Southern Region

Overview

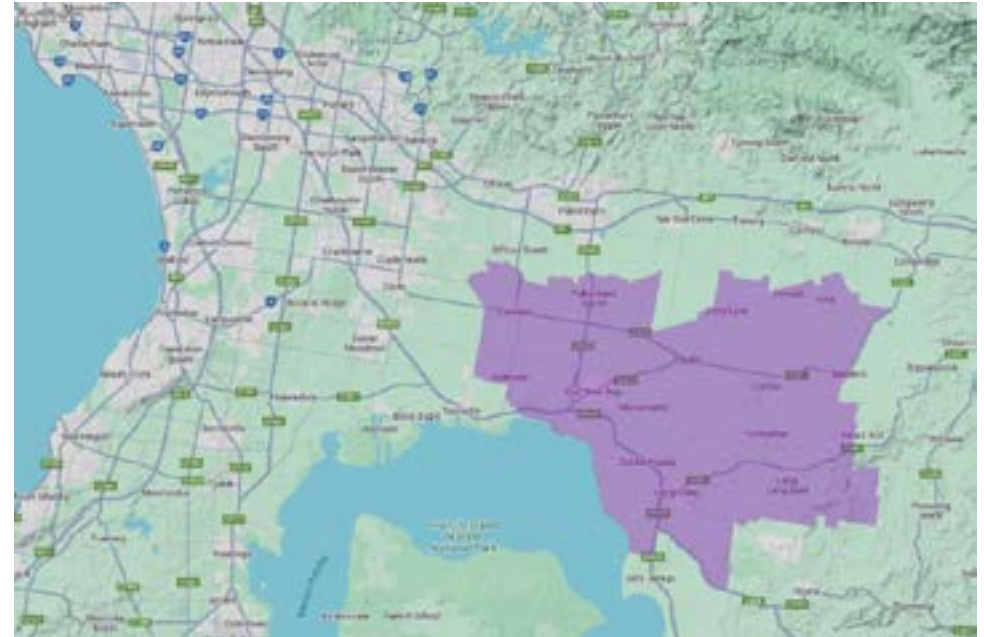
Cardinia Shire's Southern Region is the most sparsely populated region in Cardinia Shire, with small towns such as Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang being the largest population centres. Agriculture is the primary industry, with a growing sand extraction industry predominantly in Lang Lang. It is bordered in the south by Western Port Bay, home to some of Victoria's protected Ramsar wetlands. While the region provides relative accessibility to Phillip Island for tourism experiences, it does not host many tourism experiences itself.

Koo Wee Rup is the centre of Australia's largest asparagus growing district, growing approximately 95% of Australia's asparagus. Grazing, vegetable crops, dairy farming are common in the region – as well as some specialist produce like cranberries.

The Southern Region may also benefit from closer proximity to the Port of Hastings where the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal (VRET) is slated to be developed only 37km from Koo Wee Rup. The Southern Region presents a population and skills base to service elements of the VRET operation.

The prospective South East Melbourne Airport is slated to be located between Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang, with the potential to transform the area with new industries, development, and employment opportunities.

Figure 17. Cardinia Shire's Southern Region, Source: REMPLAN MapBuilder



Western Region

Overview

Cardinia Shire's Western Region is the most developed of Cardinia Shire's Regions, comprising major population and employment centres in Officer and Pakenham which account for a significant portion of Melbourne's overall growth in recent years. These areas are projected to grow significantly in coming decades, and much of the undeveloped land is slated for major residential and industrial development. These developments are currently broadly outlined in the Precinct Structure Plans which cover Officer, Officer South, Cardinia Road, Pakenham, Pakenham East, and Pakenham South precincts. This region benefits from access to Melbourne's regular metro rail services, with stations in Beaconsfield, Officer, Cardinia Road, Pakenham and East Pakenham.

Pakenham and Officer are also designated Major Activity Centres (MACs). The Pakenham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan is in place to guide Pakenham's expected transformative development through to 2035. This MAC sits at the end of the South East Melbourne corridor, with nearby MACs in Fountain Gate, Narre Warren and Dandenong. The Western Region will see the vast majority of Cardinia Shire's investment in the near future due to its growing population base, state significant industrial and commercial land, and strong infrastructure support to facilitate a growing population and economy.

Figure 18. Cardinia Shire's Western Region, Source: REMPLAN MapBuilder



Investment Initiatives

The following investment initiatives have been identified to guide Cardinia Shire Council's investment attraction efforts. These initiatives have been identified through stakeholder engagement with industry and government experts throughout Cardinia and the broader Greater South East Melbourne community. The potential for these initiatives to support investment in Cardinia is supported by data and thematic analysis. These initiatives aim to unlock new economic and employment opportunities across Cardinia Shire.

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
Develop an investment identity to market and promote Cardinia Shire	Develop a cohesive and distinctive brand identity that represents Cardinia Shire's unique characteristics, values, and economic opportunities. This identity should highlight the region's strengths, such as its strategic location within the South East Economic Corridor (SEEC), diverse industries, local workforce and quality of life. The brand may need to consider regionbased identities to fully realise the region's potential. An investment identity can significantly enhance Cardinia Shire's ability to attract investment and foster economic growth. A wellcrafted business identity can differentiate Cardinia Shire from other regions, making it more memorable and appealing to target audiences. By leveraging its unique attributes and positioning within the SEEC, Cardinia Shire can use this identity to showcase its potential for business development, particularly in sectors like construction, food manufacturing, and agriculture.	Short-term (1- 2 year)	Economic Development	Within existing operational budget
Develop dedicated investment facilitation and business networking capabilities	Build organisational capacity and secure funding to establish a dedicated investment facilitation service, ensuring streamlined support for prospective investors in Cardinia Shire. Enhance data collection and analysis capabilities to deliver comprehensive insights on employment precincts, detailing available land, infrastructure, transport connectivity, and specific investment prospects across commercial and industrial zones. Develop an integrated online platform that provides accessible, upto-date information on developable land and business opportunities in Cardinia	Short-term (1- 2 year)	Planning Services Economic Development	Secure external funding (i.e. Business Acceleration Fund)

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
	Shire, catering to both public and private sector stakeholders and reinforcing the Shire's investment readiness.			
Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
Build relationships / partnership with state gov agencies	Reach out to key agencies (Invest Vic, DJSIR, AusTrade, Breakthrough Vic etc) to establish regular touch points and mechanisms to promote investment opportunities in Cardinia Shire.	Short-term (1- 2 year)	Economic Development	Within existing operational budget
Join a Visitor Economy Partnership (VEP)	Partner with the Victorian Government, Yarra Ranges Shire and Nillumbik Shire in the formation of a VEP for Eastern Melbourne. Joining an VEP would help to secure funding for tourism across Cardinia Shire that is currently available for the rest of the state. It would also allow Cardinia Shire to connect with improved marketing and branding capabilities and capacity which will encourage increased tourism visitation.	Short-term (1- 2 year)	Economic Development	Within existing operational budget
Undertake a human services gap analysis	Identify key gaps in provision of health and social services within Cardinia Shire and develop plan to strategically attract both government and private services.	Short-term (1- 2 year)	Economic Development Social Planning Community and Family Services	Identify external funding sources
Promote vacant or underutilised Councilowned land / facilities available for sale or lease	Identify Councilowned land or facilities which are vacant or underutilised and available to support investment attraction	Short-term (1- 2 year)	Property Economic Development	Within existing operational budget
Coworking / business incubator site colocated with Officer Library	Continue to explore opportunities for establishment of a coworking / business incubator site in Officer colocated with the Officer Community Hub / Library.	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Parks and Social Infrastructure Planning Property Economic Development	Identify external funding sources
Green Wedge Management Plans	Proactively engage with residents and businesses to yield the most productivity out of Green Wedges without compromising natural values and ecological sustainability. Develop Southern Ranges and Yarra Valley Green Wedge Management Plan Develop Yarra and Dandenong Ranges Green Wedge Management Plan	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Planning Services Economic Development Environment and Heritage Advocacy	Identify external funding sources

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
	Review the Westernport Green Wedge Management Plan and update if required			
Integrated Water Infrastructure / Support implementation of the Westernport Irrigation Scheme	Develop integrated water infrastructure which can sustainably provide for agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial uses throughout Cardinia Shire. Fragmented land holdings and challenges in water infrastructure delivery have created high costs and delays for some developers in Cardinia. Cardinia's abundant water supply would synergise well with integrated water infrastructure.	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Planning Services Economic Development Environment and Heritage	Identify external funding sources
Collocation and relocation of established businesses	Grow Cardinia Shire's competitive advantage within the GSEM region and identify relevant manufacturing, processing and professional services businesses to target for collocation to Cardinia. Identify businesses that are being priced out of existing major industrial precincts like Dandenong and Cranbourne. Provide a facilitated relocation service which assists them in reestablishing their operations in Cardinia Shire.	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Economic Development Planning Services	Secure external funding (i.e. Business Acceleration Fund)
Pakenham Activity Centre Employment Precinct Activation	Supporting the maturation of the Pakenham Activity Centre will be an important element of investment attraction to Cardinia Shire as it will improve amenity and viability of the area to service the local community. Activity centres provide important synergies for nearby employment and residential land, providing a central hub for residents and workers alike. Establish a governance model for the precinct involving all levels of government, businesses and residents. Develop a placemaking action plan for the precinct including a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investment and development that addresses gaps in local services - business development (accessibility, façade improvements, visual merchandising, promotions) - activation through facilitation of community markets and events and support for community driven projects. 	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Major Projects Economic Development Planning Services Community Infrastructure Delivery Social Planning Advocacy	Secure external funding (i.e. Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program)
Officer Town Centre Employment Precinct Activation	Officer Town Centre is a Major Activity Centre and will be a critical social and economic asset for Cardinia Shire's residents and business community but has so far not seen the level of investment and development it requires. A welldeveloped town centre creates significant opportunities for local employment and better connections and supply chains for local industries. Officer Town Centre will be critical for the full activation of the Officer South Employment Precinct.	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Major Projects Economic Development Planning Services Community Infrastructure Delivery	Combination of existing and external funding to be secured

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
	<p>Officer Town Centre would benefit from establishment of a dedicated internal working group tasked with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertaking research and engagement to understand the barriers to investment in Officer Town Centre e.g. land holders, infrastructure, surrounding land use. Identify what Council can mitigate or influence, including through developing partnerships with key State Government planning and development agencies such as the VPA, Development Victoria, and DJSIR. - Initiating a social and economic impact assessment to explore the impacts of delaying development of Officer Town Centre that can be used in advocacy with other levels of government. - Engaging with Development Victoria (partial landowners of Officer Town Centre) to sell or develop the land in line with the objectives identified in the Officer Town Centre Urban Design Framework (Officer PSP). - Progress feasibility study for the Officer Community Centre & Library, demonstrating to community and investors that Council is committed to fulfilling our obligations within the PSP. - Working with Invest Victoria to promote Officer Town Centre as an investment opportunity for technology and health sectors. - Facilitating and streamlining investment applications and decrease red tape to attract investors to the town centre, and work with State Government agencies to enhance the opportunity for developers to utilise State approvals. - Engaging with private developers to market the potential, capacity and competitive advantage of investing in Officer Town Centre. 		<p>Parks and Social Infrastructure Planning Social Planning Advocacy</p>	
Township Strategies	Update and develop township strategies across Cardinia Shire with a focus on opportunities for investment in local jobs and services close to home.	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Planning Services Economic Development Social Planning	Within existing resources
Southeast Employment Corridor (SEEC) Activation	The South East Economic Corridor (SEEC) is a significant region in Melbourne's southern metropolitan area, stretching from Monash to Pakenham. It encompasses over 2,500 hectares of land designated for employment and economic development. The SEEC is envisioned to become one of Australia's most economically significant and diverse	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Economic Development Planning Services	Within existing resources

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
	regions, with the potential to support over 1 million residents and provide more than 500,000 jobs by 2060. This corridor is strategically important for Melbourne's future growth, offering diverse local employment options within a 20minute commute for residents. By actively participating in the activation of the South East Employment Corridor, Cardinia Shire can position itself to attract substantial investment and foster economic growth. The Shire's strategic location within the corridor, combined with its available workforce and ample land supply zoned for industrial and commercial use, makes it an attractive destination for businesses looking to establish or expand their operations. By leveraging these advantages and aligning with the broader SEEC strategy, Cardinia Shire can potentially attract a diverse range of industries, particularly in sectors such as construction, food manufacturing, and agriculture, which are already prominent in the area.			
Develop naturebased tourism offerings	Develop naturebased tourism offerings in the mountainous northern region of Cardinia Shire through grants and investment facilitation. Cardinia Shire has highly accessible natural amenity within a short drive from Melbourne, and naturebased tourism is a key focus of Experience Victoria 2033 which is guiding the future of the visitor economy in Victoria.	Medium-term (2 - 4 years)	Economic Development Parks and Social Infrastructure Planning Services	Identify external funding sources
Circular Economy Initiatives	Explore how Cardinia Shire can utilise circular economy initiatives among the growing number of heavy industrial operations to improve sustainability, reduce waste, and improve wellbeing for workers and residents.	Long-term (5+ years)	Economic Development Planning Services Environment and Heritage	Identify external funding sources
South East Melbourne Airport	The South East Melbourne Airport (SEMA) is a proposed aviation hub designed to serve Gippsland and the southeastern suburbs of Melbourne. The SEMA has potential to create a unique opportunity to harness the existing strengths of the region such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture and tourism. Strategically located in proximity to significant agricultural land in Cardinia Shire, Mornington Peninsula and Gippsland the SEMA provides an opportunity to collocate a food distribution centre in Officer South, increasing potential for local producers to access domestic and international food export markets. SEMA will stimulate economic activity in Cardinia Shire and surrounding areas by improving connectivity and access – this enhanced connectivity	Long-term (5+ years)	Economic Development Advocacy Planning Services	Identify external funding sources

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
	<p>can assist in developing the nearby Employment Precincts in Officer South and Pak-enham South into attractive destinations for industrial development and investment with excellent transport and logistics infrastructure.</p> <p>Continue advocating to the state and federal government for the feasibility study and allocation of land and planning controls. Cardinia Shire can also provide leadership and support to the GSEM Airport Project Control Group to help identify a well-defined pathway forward with government, community and private stakeholders.</p>			
Renewable energy support	Cardinia Shire is one of the closest population centres to the future Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal at the Port of Hastings and the wind farms in Gippsland, creating unique opportunities to support the delivery of onshore and offshore wind projects. Cardinia Shire can support the renewable energy transition in Victoria through logistics, installation and manufacturing.	Long-term (5+ years)	Economic Development	Identify external funding sources
Healthcare and Life Sciences Precinct	Investigate the potential to attract major investment in a healthcare and life sciences precinct in Officer South. Cardinia Shire has a significant healthcare workforce, most of whom are forced to leave Cardinia Shire for work. These workers are often subject to long commutes, limiting their ability to participate locally in Cardinia Shire.	Long-term (5+ years)	Economic Development	Identify external funding sources
Biosecurity and postharvest processing facility	Cardinia Shire is at the junction of highly productive agricultural land, major logistics capabilities and population centres – strong preconditions for the development of a post-harvest processing facility. Biosecurity is an increasing concern for agriculture operations across Australia, and better biosecurity capabilities in Cardinia Shire will help secure food security and economic continuity for agriculture in Victoria.	Long-term (5+ years)	Economic Development	Identify external funding sources
Collaborate with State and local governments to attract investment and secure anchor businesses in the industrial/ commercial land unlocked through the Officer South Employment PSP	<p>The Officer South Employment PSP is earmarked to deliver various benefits for Melbourne's southeast, and Cardinia Shire Council can coordinate with State and Local governments to attract the right investment to the corridor. The Thompsons Road upgrade and extension project will unlock land for residential and commercial development along the SEEC, supporting connection of manufacturing hubs in Dandenong through to industry and employment in Cardinia Shire.</p> <p>Cardinia Shire can partner with neighbouring councils in the Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) region to champion funding efforts from all levels</p>	Long-term (5+ years)	Economic Development Planning Services	Within existing resources

Initiative	Description	Timing	Who	Budget
	<p>of government to drive key infrastructure projects for the Officer South Employment Precinct.</p> <p>Council can continue to partnership with City of Casey and GSEM to utilise the Thompsons Road Extension business case to advocate for state and federal government support, positioning Officer South as a vital economic hub within the region.</p> <p>Implement a cohesive investment campaign, engaging stakeholders and council partners to enhance Officer South's brand visibility and attract sustained investment.</p>			

Introduction

Appendix B - Investment Attraction, Support, and Facilitation in Victoria

There are a range of agencies to support investment in Victoria and Australia, and these agencies have strategic focus that are highly suited to development in Cardinia Shire.

Invest Victoria

Invest Victoria is the state government's lead investment promotion agency, dedicated to attracting and facilitating investments into Victoria from both domestic and international sources.

Role and Functions

- Investment Promotion: Markets Victoria as an attractive investment destination through global campaigns and outreach activities.
- Investment Facilitation: Provides a single point of contact for potential investors, offering tailored advice and support throughout the investment process.
- Incentives and Grants: Offers financial incentives, grants, and funding programs to support new investments.
- Sector Focus: Targets key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, technology, health, and professional services.

Support and Services:

- Site Selection: Assists investors in finding suitable locations and facilities.
- Regulatory Guidance: Helps navigate local regulations and approval processes.
- Networking: Connects investors with local businesses, government agencies, and industry bodies.
- Aftercare: Provides ongoing support to businesses postinvestment to ensure their growth and success.

Global Victoria

Global Victoria is the state government agency responsible for promoting Victoria's exports and connecting local businesses with international markets.

Role and Functions

- Export Promotion: Assists Victorian businesses in expanding their reach into global markets through trade missions, expos, and events.
- Market Intelligence: Provides market research, insights, and advice to help businesses identify and capitalize on international opportunities.
- Trade Programs: Runs programs such as the Global Gateway Program to support businesses in their export journey.

Support and Services:

- Trade Missions: Organizes and leads trade missions to key international markets.
- Market Access: Assists with understanding and meeting the requirements of international markets.
- Networking and Partnerships: Facilitates connections with international buyers, distributors, and partners.
- Capacity Building: Offers training and development programs to enhance export capabilities.

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Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR)

DJSIR focuses on fostering economic growth, job creation, industry development, and regional prosperity in Victoria.

Role and Functions

- **Economic Development:** Develops and implements policies to drive economic growth across various sectors.
- **Investment Facilitation:** Supports investment projects by providing information, advice, and facilitation services.
- **Regional Development:** Focuses on the development and growth of regional areas in Victoria.
- **Business Support:** Offers programs and resources to support businesses of all sizes, including startups and SMEs.

Support and Services:

- **Funding and Grants:** Provides access to financial support for business development and expansion.
- **Advisory Services:** Offers expert advice and consultancy services to businesses.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Supports the development of key infrastructure to enhance economic growth.
- **Workforce Development:** Focuses on skills development and training to meet industry needs.

Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) State Project Facilitation

The State Project Facilitation team in DTP oversees the facilitation of major state projects, ensuring efficient planning and development processes.

Role and Functions

- **Project Facilitation:** Coordinates and expedites the planning and approval processes for major projects.
- **Regulatory Assistance:** Provides guidance on navigating complex regulatory environments.
- **Stakeholder Coordination:** Ensures effective collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, developers, and communities.

Support and Services:

- **Streamlined Approvals:** Works to streamline the approval process for significant projects.
- **Planning Advice:** Offers expert planning advice to support project development.
- **Infrastructure Coordination:** Coordinates infrastructure development to support major projects.

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National Reconstruction Fund Corporation (NRFC)

The NRFC is a federal government initiative aimed at supporting the reconstruction and modernisation of Australia's industrial capabilities.

Role and Functions

- **Investment in Manufacturing:** Focuses on investing in critical manufacturing sectors to enhance national resilience and capabilities.
- **Economic Diversification:** Aims to diversify the economy by supporting a wide range of industries.
- **Job Creation:** Supports projects that create highquality jobs and stimulate economic growth.

Support and Services:

- **Financial Support:** Provides funding for projects that align with national priorities, such as advanced manufacturing and renewable energy.
- **Capacity Building:** Supports initiatives that enhance the skills and capabilities of the workforce.
- **Innovation Support:** Invests in research and development to drive innovation and technological advancements.

Regional Development Victoria (RDV)

RDV is the Victorian Government's lead agency in developing rural and regional Victoria.

Role and Functions

- **Regional Economic Development:** Focuses on driving economic growth in regional areas.
- **Investment Attraction:** Works to attract investment into regional Victoria to support job creation and economic diversification.
- **Infrastructure and Development:** Supports the development of infrastructure projects that enhance regional connectivity and liveability.

Support and Services:

- **Grants and Funding:** Provides financial assistance for regional projects and initiatives.
- **Advisory Services:** Offers expert advice and support to businesses and local governments in regional areas.
- **Community Development:** Works on projects that improve the quality of life in regional communities.

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Austrade (Australian Trade and Investment Commission)

Austrade is the Australian Government agency responsible for promoting international trade, investment, and tourism.

Role and Functions

- **Trade Promotion:** Assists Australian businesses in exporting their goods and services.
- **Investment Attraction:** Attracts foreign direct investment (FDI) into Australia.
- **Tourism Promotion:** Promotes Australia as a tourism destination.

Support and Services:

- **Market Intelligence:** Provides insights and research on global markets.
- **Business Matching:** Connects Australian businesses with international partners.
- **Investment Facilitation:** Assists foreign investors with information and services to invest in Australia.

Integration and Collaboration

These agencies often work together to ensure a coordinated approach to investment attraction and support. For example, Invest Victoria and DJSIR might collaborate on attracting a large multinational corporation, with Global Victoria assisting the same company in export activities once established.

These agencies share market intelligence and insights to provide a comprehensive support system for investors, and it is important for investors to know which agency to reach out to for assistance in facilitating their investment.

Initiatives such as trade missions and investment facilitation programs are often jointly organised to leverage the strengths of each agency.

By working together, these agencies create a robust ecosystem that supports both domestic and international investments, driving economic growth and development across Victoria.

