

## REVIEW OF DERRINALLUM COMMUNITY PLAN

Priorities for the Derrinallum community plan were settled at a public meeting on 22 February 2012, following a survey of town and district residents. In all, some 45 people (about 20 per cent of the town's population) participated in the formulation of the plan. A Plan for Derrinallum was completed in close conjunction with the Derrinallum Progress Association, which has been one of the most well-organised and efficient community organisations of Corangamite Shire's 12 township-based associations.



Derrinallum Mechanics Institute Hall: 22 February 2012

The community of Derrinallum embraced the community planning endeavour with great enthusiasm, and did not take the lengthy, cumbersome and often frustrating grant-seeking path to finance projects, but instead jumped in with local resources and funds provided by the Shire to advance its priorities.



This was the main factor which enabled the speedy construction of new Town Entry Signage, a long-held ambition of the Derrinallum community. It was also the reason why the Trail from town to the base of Mount Elephant proceeded so quickly and efficiently.

On several occasions the Derrinallum Progress Association expressed its gratitude for the help it received from the Shire and its staff across a range of major and minor initiatives, from extra bins and seats in the Avenue, repairs to the Settler's Shelter, the conduct of the Town Walk Meeting, supporting the Town and Country Markets and promotion of the inaugural Market to Mount Fun Run.

The completion of the Deep Lake BBQs project was another case where the Shire was able to provide practical advice and assistance to support an outstanding partnership of local community organisations. The same could be said for the work the Shire put in to help the local community secure a large State government grant for the long-held aspiration for the Mount Elephant Visitor Centre project (and the planning grant secured to develop the business case). Derrinallum made such urgent progress on its list of 15 township priorities that its Community Plan was in need of a review to re-examine some of its broader objectives and cast them into some practical new project plans for action.

The explosion at Derrinallum on the night of 11 April 2014 was a major blow to the Derrinallum community beyond the personal tragedy and hurt involved. The month-long closure of the Hamilton Highway and diversion of traffic around the town provided a stark realisation of just how much local businesses depend upon passing trade. Even though Derrinallum's community cohesion and resilience was celebrated through these difficult days, the quarantining of the town reportedly resulted in significant losses for local businesses which relied upon the busy Easter and May Racing Carnival period to tide them over the winter months. Having been forced to make other plans, the concern lingered as to whether and when visitors might resume their established patterns.

In June there came another blow, with the ANZ bank announcing its impending withdrawal from Derrinallum. At the time it was observed that the closure of the town's only bank would hold



serious consequences as local people would need to travel 30 minutes to nearby towns for essential banking services. Not only would this bring about a considerable leakage of local spending, the departure of the ANZ tenant would also jeopardise the functioning of the Derrinallum DISC Centre with its Centrelink and information centre services. The prospect arose that the DISC building (owned by the Derrinallum Progress

Association) might have to be put up for sale (in a depressed market) unless a new tenant can be found. With its major income stream about to turn into a financial drain, the Progress Association faces the prospect of its community initiatives falling away like a house of cards.

A month out from the State election, the mood in Derrinallum was depressed. Even the announcement of the Mount Elephant Visitor Information Centre funding on 6 November 2014 could only raise it temporarily. 'We are tired from the events of this year' – so it was confided. In the end only nine people attended the public meeting held on 30 October 2014, with written commentary provided by another four people. This is not only a timely reminder of the need to cultivate the resilience to deal with such setbacks, but also that practice of depending upon the Derrinallum Progress Association to do so much with so few needs to be revisited, and soon.

P	Completed projects	S	V	G	Th	V2	Category of project
2	Walking track from town centre to base of Mount Elephant	7	11		6		1 BSSC Project
5	Improve town entrance signage from all entrances (Use local rocks – Matt Savage)	4	5	4	4		1 BSSC Project
11	Walking path/ A curved path through the Elm avenue	2	4		6		1 BSSC Project
14	Gas BBQs at Deep Lake		4		2		1 BSSC Project
15	More chairs and tables in the avenue	3	2		2		3 Council Works
Also	Cleaning up of extraneous signage along Highway						3 Community/ Council partnership
Also	Town Walk – attention to maintenance and minor repairs						3 Council Works

## SUMMARY OF REVISED DERRINALLUM COMMUNITY PLAN PROJECTS

P	Project	S	V	G	Th	V2	Category of project
1	Upgrade/ Replace the toilet block under the Elms, including installation of showers (to attract truckies and campers to stay and spend), Painting/tiling of public toilets outside	12	7	6	2	G (8)	3 Council Works
2	There must be some amazing producers locally and if there was a place or shop available to the sell them it would make a name for the town, Local crafts, Local fruit and vegetable shop, Local produce	2	10	-	5	-	5 Private commercial interests (with local producers)
3	Information board – what’s available - camp, shops, bank, RTC	1	4	-	4	8	1 Community project
4	Develop a Northern food trail					8	1 Community project
5	Develop a small retirement village, so that people do not have to leave town	1	2	7	1	-	5 Private commercial interests
6	Painting the shop fronts make them look inviting, Shops/ Avenue to look inviting, Improve shops we have, Encourage verandas on shop fronts	4	6	2	5	3	3 Private commercial interests, possibly with support through Council project
7	Walking track from town to Deep Lake	4	-	-	6	5	2 Community/ Council partnership
8	Construct footpath on south side of the Highway					5	3 Council Works
9	Install lighting on eastern town entry sign					5	1 Community project
10	Encourage trades people to the town - plenty of opportunities for electricians, plumbers, builders, hairdressers etc	1	5	-	1	1	?
11	Continue to develop and preserve the heritage and history of the area	1	4	2	7	1	1 Community project
12	Develop playground at Recreation Reserve					4	2 Community/ Council partnership
13	Make Hotel, veranda, beer-garden more attractive Local hotel needs upgrade and entertainment for all ages	-	4	1	3	1	5 Private commercial interests
14	Encourage camping at the recreation reserve – provide clear signs with rules and obligations	2	4	-	1	-	2 Community/ Council partnership
15	Needs after hours get-together meeting venues – pub, restaurant	-	4	-	1	-	5 Private commercial interests

The initial Derrinallum Plan was developed based on advice from the twenty-five (25) people who responded to the survey and thirty-two (32) people who attended the public meeting held at the Derrinallum Hall on 22 February 2012. Forty-five (45) people participated in all, representing 20 % of Derrinallum’s population of 223 (ABS Census 2006). In addition to written submission by four authors (including the Secretary, Derrinallum Park Incorporated), nine people attended the public meeting on 30 October 2014, adding four new projects and recalibrating priorities.

## ACTION GROUPS

PRIORITY	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	CONVENOR	COST EST.
1	UPGRADE/ REPLACE PUBLIC TOILETS	The Derrinallum community's clear and unambiguous top priority for the township – in 2012 and again in 2014	Council	\$150 to \$200K
2	LOCAL PRODUCE STORE	Local produce supply and sales through new local café outlet	Cheyenne Ainsworth	Nil
3	INFORMATION BOARD MAP/ DIRECTORY	Design and content and manufacture and installation of large format display sign pointing out local landmarks and destinations and providing directional information	Kate Deppeler	\$3,000
4	DEVELOP NORTHERN FOOD TRAIL	Establishment and promotion of northern Shire towns Food Trail incorporating local district food outlets	Cheyenne Ainsworth	\$5,000
5	DEVELOP SMALL RETIREMENT VILLAGE		-	
6	PAINTING SHOPFRONTS	Possible Façade Improvement Scheme project to be developed by Council, for subsidising the cost of repairs/ improvements	Council/ Private Enterprise partnership	
7	WALKING TRACK FROM TOWN TO DEEP LAKE		-	
8	FOOTPATH ON SOUTHERN SIDE OF HIGHWAY	Residents contributions scheme proposal to be developed by Shire and offered to local residents/ businesses, (as initially proposed before Avenue walk proposal replaced it)	Council	
9	LIGHTING OF EASTERN TOWN ENTRY SIGN	Investigation of supply and installation of lighting	Chris Ainsworth	To be determined
10	ENCOURAGE TRADESPEOPLE TO THE TOWN		-	
11	DEVELOP AND PRESERVE HERITAGE AND HISTORY OF THE AREA		-	
12	DEVELOP PLAYGROUND AT RECREATION RESERVE	Provision of play equipment at the Recreation Reserve and possibly new bench seating	Council with Derrinallum Park Inc.	
13	UPGRADE LOCAL HOTEL		-	
14	ENCOURAGE CAMPING AT THE RECREATION RESERVE		-	
15	VENUES FOR AFTER HOURS GET-TOGETHERS		-	

## COMMENTARY ON PRIORITIES

1 UPGRADE/ REPLACE TOILETS	2 LOCAL PRODUCE STORE	3 INFORMATION BOARD MAP/ DIRECTORY
<p>The most important thing Council could do for the township of Derrinallum is to replace the old 1950's toilets. The community believes they are inadequate and are an embarrassment to the town in this twenty-first century.</p>	<p>This priority remains from the 2012 Plan. It did not receive any support in the 2014 review. The realisation of this priority may occur with a new food outlet in Derrinallum, which aims to include/ showcase local produce.</p>	<p>This priority jumped from 12 to three. It involves the design of content and the manufacture and installation of a large format display sign pointing out local landmarks and destinations, including directional information.</p>
4 DEVELOP NORTHERN FOOD TRAIL	5 DEVELOP SMALL RETIREMENT VILLAGE	6 PAINTING SHOPFRONTS
<p>This is one of four new priorities added through the 2014 review. It received strong support to be listed as priority four. The project will involve bringing together a number of potential local contributors to the proposed Northern Food Trail, and may link to other interest groups such as the Hamilton Highway Alliance and businesses operating in nearby towns.</p>	<p>Although it remains on the list, commentary through the 2014 review argued that this is not a practical idea and it has no prospect of ever being realised. There are a couple of priorities from 2012 which are seen to be in this category, but more people need to be present and voting if they are to be actively removed from the list.</p>	<p>The meeting was informed of work the Shire is undertaking to develop a possible Façade Improvement Scheme to support local retailers. Some attendees were supportive of this idea but others were aggressively opposed to it. This priority might be able to be addressed through the potential scheme outlined, which may be considered as part of the Council's 2015-16 budget.</p>
7 WALKING TRACK FROM TOWN TO DEEP LAKE	8 FOOTPATH ON SOUTHERN SIDE OF HIGHWAY	9 LIGHTING OF EASTERN TOWN ENTRY SIGN
<p>This priority was formerly part of other 2012 proposals regarding the construction of walking tracks. It received strong support in the 2014 review, but some argued that this trail would be impractical based on its length (and therefore cost) and that there were safety issues which would prove difficult to resolve.</p>	<p>This priority is both an old and a new one. The project was proposed by the Shire prior to the time of the 2012 Plan formulation, and postponed in favour of the Avenue Walk which (it was then argued) would partly address the issue of pedestrian access along the main street. This project would resurrect the idea of a Council initiated footpath scheme partly funded through residents contributions.</p>	<p>It was agreed to investigate ways and means of lighting the Town Entry Sign on the eastern approach to town and to obtain estimates of the cost of doing this. This might become a community-initiated project if it is feasible and cost-effective. This is one of the four priorities added through the 2014 review, but could also be regarded as an extension of the completed Priority 5.</p>

10 ENCOURAGE TRADESPEOPLE TO THE TOWN	11 DEVELOP AND PRESERVE HERITAGE AND HISTORY OF THE AREA	12 DEVELOP PLAYGROUND AT RECREATION RESERVE
<p>This was another idea which received little support in the 2014 review. Discussion turned on the practicality of implementing this idea, or of effectively influencing it. Commentary centred on travel costs to jobs, the trading profile of individual firms and the supply and profitability of local work viz-a-viz work available in nearby towns. Some work is required on the part of interested community members to develop this idea if it is to become a project capable of implementation.</p>	<p>This idea received little support in the 2014 review, but remains on the list due to the 2012 voting. The project is not defined at present and requires some interested people to take it up and give it shape. It is another priority that will simply sit on the list unless there are people with an interest who step forward to scope and implement it as a project.</p>	<p>This was the fourth new idea to be added to the priority list though the 2014 review. It calls for the Shire to work with the community to develop a playground at the Recreation Reserve. A letter from the Derrinallum Park Incorporated asked for new tables and bench seats to be installed at the Recreation Reserve for the benefit of various user categories across the year. Progress on this priority might be effected through a dialogue between Shire representatives and the Committee of Management of the Reserve.</p>
13 UPGRADE LOCAL HOTEL	14 ENCOURAGE CAMPING AT THE RECREATION RESERVE	15 VENUES FOR AFTER HOURS GET-TOGETHERS
<p>This was another priority which received little support through the 2014 review. Commentary on this idea revolved around this being a business decision for current or future operators of the hotel, related to trading conditions, further investment and profitability. Some people commented that this was not a matter which the community could effectively influence.</p>	<p>This priority did not find any support through the 2014 review. Statements were made that there is already enough advisory signage and that no action is needed. Unless interested people come forward, from the Recreation Reserve or elsewhere, this is another priority which will simply round out the priority list.</p>	<p>This priority also did not find any support through the 2014 review. Like priority 13, it was not regarded as an issue which the community could directly influence. The consensus was that this issue is a matter for business operators to determine.</p>