

# Event and Exhibition Centre Feasibility

South Gippsland Shire Council

2019





## About this document

This document is a draft of the Equestrian and Centre Feasibility Study for the South Gippsland Shire.

The views expressed in the consultation section of this document are those provided by the South Gippsland community. They do not necessarily reflect the views held by @leisure or Council.

## Acknowledgements

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## 1. Summary

### Benefits

This feasibility assessment found there would be considerable benefits for the equine industry and clubs to have a local all-weather indoor equestrian arena and a hub for equestrian competition in a central location in South Gippsland.

Such as centre that meets local demand would support local clubs and riders, increase local participation and provide pathways to other levels of competition, however it is unlikely to make a profit, as affordability is likely to be the major driver of use and the range of events and exhibitions is limited by the need for a sand floor.

### Nature of facility

Previous and current engagement with stakeholders confirmed the most feasible form of equestrian facility would include the following components:

- Indoor or covered arena
- Competition dressage ring
- Show jumping course
- A cross country course
- Exercise and competition warm up areas
- Powered camping sites
- Wash down facilities and necessary services and support facilities.

The nature of the facilities and potential locations do not lend themselves to a wide range of other events or exhibitions other than horse and livestock shows, expos and sales, possible car shows and markets.

### Site selection

Five sites were proposed as having potential to develop as a regional equestrian facility. These sites were assessed against the following criteria.

1. Central to the population it needs to serve
2. The adequate size with car parking, float access with an opportunity to expand
3. Land is relatively flat with suitable configuration for a building
4. The site visually prominent, on main road, can be seen for some distance
5. No flood, heritage, environmental, zoning, drainage, geotechnical, easement, trunk sewer etc constraints

6. Land ownership by Council/Crown means no purchase required
7. Building can be placed away from immediate residences (impact of noise, traffic etc.)
8. Competing indoor facilities within 20 kms
9. Close to existing trails, footpaths for ease of access
10. Support services available locally e.g. accommodation and meals
11. Ability to include camping
12. Access to affordable water supply
13. Close proximity to power source
14. Other existing equestrian activities on site
15. Possible local events that would use it
16. Access to infrastructure that could be added to
17. Support from local equestrian clubs
18. Existing club on the site (as would keep them more viable)
19. Not on a site that might prevent growth of another sport

Criteria were weighted using a paired comparison technique and each site was scored against each criteria.

Stony Creek was identified as the preferred site. It was ranked the highest and had the greatest advantages due to location and existing infrastructure.

Based on the proposed fees, estimated usage by local clubs and potential event bookings, it is estimated that the centre could generate annual income of between \$60,000 and \$89,000, with costs of between \$70,440 and \$89,000, leaving a potential annual deficit of \$10,000 to a breakeven result, (excluding depreciation) depending on the fee and usage scenario.

Ensuring the effective operation of the facility will require Council to have an active and ongoing role in the management of the site.

Ongoing stakeholder engagement through a board or advisory committee, for example could encourage participation by the industry in decisions that affect the centre.

Management would require some further discussions including a partnership with the existing committee of management, race club, pony club and relevant occupancy agreements involving the Crown.



## 2. Introduction and background

### 2.1 The project

#### Purpose

The project aims to provide a clear direction on the feasibility and key success factors for the delivery of a multipurpose equestrian and exhibition centre in South Gippsland.

#### Scope

The tasks undertaken as part of this project included the following:

- Review of existing policies and plans relevant to this project
- Consultation with key stakeholder groups
- Identify location options. Evaluate these options having regard to full capital development and recurrent costs and life cycle costs etc, using agreed evaluation criteria and success factors.
- Identification of the most feasible nature and scale of facility for equestrian and other events
  - Consider earning potential and operating costs and expenses from both equestrian and non-equestrian activities
  - Consider and advise on the most suitable governance model arrangements for the preferred facilities
  - Advise on the viability of the proposal and the risk exposure to Council
  - Identify key factors that could potentially impact the viability of the Centre.
- A feasibility study draft and final report
- Presentation of the business assessment findings and plan to the stakeholder group, staff and Council.

### 2.2 Background

#### Equestrian Facility Feasibility Study (2008)

In 2008 South Gippsland Shire funded a study by Land Use Management, to investigate the feasibility of the Berry's Creek Pony Club, Leongatha & District Equestrian Club and Leongatha and District Centre Riding for the Disabled developing a facility that could be used by all clubs. It was also anticipated that the proposed facility would evolve to attract visiting Equestrian clubs from a variety of age groups and regions and would also be open to multiple users that may wish to use the site.

The proposed facility would have the following infrastructure:

- Competition dressage ring x 2 (70m x 40m)
- Show jumping course (for juniors & seniors) -100m x 100m
- A cross country course (2.3 hectares)
- Stalls and yards
- Exercise facilities, competition warm up area
- Indoor or covered area (a high priority for the RDA club)
- Storage facilities, toilets, meeting rooms including showers (most currently available on site)
- Services, power, water etc.
- Adequate car parking (40 spaces min.)
- Paths
- Total area required is 6.7 plus hectares

Five sites were assessed using criteria identified from several consultation meetings with the clubs' representatives. A Shire owned site was considered at the time to be the most feasible.

The potential sites were selected due to their proximity to Leongatha and the immediate surrounds as most of the clubs' members were from this area.

The 2008 feasibility study found the equine industry was significant for the South Gippsland region and therefore worthy of support.

The feasibility study suggested that 15 hectares of Council land on Rougheads Road, Leongatha South may provide the best opportunity to develop such facilities. This was due to having support from Council, no adverse planning requirements, the lowest estimated costs and the ease of potential implementation. The main catchment area for the facility in 2008 was seen as the Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire.

### South Gippsland Regional Equestrian and Exhibition Strategy – Business Plan (June 2016)

In 2016, a business case was prepared for a regional equestrian and exhibition centre. Only one site was proposed: the Stony Creek Racecourse Reserve.

The Exhibition Centre Building proposed was 4,000m<sup>2</sup> in area (81.5m x 51m) with a configuration allowing for two full size dressage areas. A new stable / stalls building of 50m x 32m with 88 undercover stalls to be included which could be converted into 44 stables.

The all-weather indoor centre proposed was to be suitable for a wide range of equestrian and other events and activities, including:

- Dressage
- Show jumping
- Eventing
- Western pursuits
- Cattle shows
- Working dog displays and events
- Trade shows
- Farmers markets
- Field days
- Sales and judging clinics, and
- School tours/education programs.

Suggested usage requirements included:

- Casual hire for individuals or groups for horse riding
- Hire for teachers and trainers to hold clinics/training days
- Hire for riding clubs to hold major events, incorporating the indoor facility, outdoor areas, cross country course, yards
- Hire to riding clubs for the indoor facility only
- Hire for the outdoor facility only
- Hire for the yards/stalls/stables only
- Hire of the indoor facility for groups/retailers/businesses to hold events
- On-site camping.

The last study found that there are 13 riding clubs located in South Gippsland Shire and Bass Coast Shire. Their principal need was a suitable facility in the region to accommodate events of between 100-400 participants.

Not all of those clubs currently operate.



### South Gippsland Regional Equestrian And Exhibition Centre – Economic Impact Assessment (July 2016)

In 2016 Essential Economics were engaged by South Gippsland Shire Council to undertake an Economic Impact Assessment of the proposed South Gippsland Regional Equestrian and Exhibition Centre (SGREEC) development.

A summary of the Assessment was:

- Project investment of \$1.5 million (2016 dollars)
- Construction employment of 26 FTE jobs (directly and indirectly)
- Attraction of 16,820 visitors (Year 1) – including 7,835 visitors from outside the municipality; rising to 25,000 visitors (Year 25) – including 11,640 visitors from outside the municipality
- Net annual visitor spending stimulus of approximately \$465,000 rising to \$685,000 by Year 25 (2016 dollars)
- Net annual economic value of volunteerism of approximately \$105,000
- Net annual health and welfare dividend of approximately \$30,000
- Ongoing employment of 8.5 FTE jobs (direct and indirect) rising to 11.0 FTE jobs by Year 25, including jobs associated with supporting the SGREEC’s operations and employment supported in tourism-related businesses through induced visitor spending.

- Crown Land Committees of Management (DELWP)
- Incorporated Committee of Management
- Lease/s
- Partnerships – Joint Management
- Special Committee of Management – Section 86 Committee
- Trust
- User Representative Group

A recommendation for the management model of the proposed Equestrian and Exhibition Strategy was not provided.



### Proposed Equestrian and Exhibition Centre at Stony Creek. Management Models Advantages and Disadvantages (June 2016)

In 2016 Sportwise were engaged by South Gippsland Shire Council to undertake a review of the identified Management Models and the advantages and disadvantages of each model currently available to South Gippsland Shire Council for the management and operation of the proposed Equestrian and Exhibition Centre at Stony Creek. Some nine management models were reviewed. They were:

- Contract Management
- Council Management

## 2.3 Planning and Policy Framework

### South Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2017-2021

The South Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 provides a Council Vision, along with four key objectives, each with a number of strategies to achieve the objective.

Objective One is to 'Strengthen economic growth and prosperity' with 10 strategies one of which is to 'Progress the development of a business case to support the establishment of a multipurpose undercover 'Equestrian / Expo Centre' at Stony Creek'.

### Equestrian Victoria 2018-2022 Strategic Plan

Equestrian Victoria. 2018-2022 Strategic Plan sets out four strategic pillars that will enable them to leverage the sports strengths while taking advantage of partnerships and new opportunities.

The four pillars are Industry, Leadership, Sport Development, Facility Oversight and Organisational Excellence.

Each Pillar has an overarching objective and a set of strategic initiatives and actions.

Actions For Equestrian Victoria from the Plan that are relevant to the development of facilities in South Gippsland include:

- Advocate on behalf of equestrian community for industry and government support and funding of the sport
- Advocate to governments and councils on the need for provision and improvement of facilities
- Continue to develop and promote a range of value-adding initiatives including:
  - Education and training opportunities
  - Squads and clinics
  - Regional training days
- Ongoing development of partnership with Racing Victoria to advance the welfare, re-training and future careers of "off the track" thoroughbreds
- Develop a state-wide hierarchy of major and regional equestrian facilities meeting the needs across all equestrian disciplines and groups across Victoria

- Continue to work with industry stakeholders to understand facility requirements
- Support community needs and access to equestrian facilities by advocating and supporting their development and maintenance of key facilities, particularly in growth areas.





### 3. Demand for equestrian facilities

The South Gippsland Shire population forecast for 2019 is 29,780 and is forecast to grow to 35,982 by 2036, a forecast increase of 20.83%.<sup>1</sup>

Key population centres in South Gippsland include Korumburra, Leongatha, Mirboo North and Nyora. Each town is forecast for positive annual growth with Nyora, the closest town to Melbourne expected to have annual growth of some 2.54%.

**Table 1. Key towns in South Gippsland Shire and forecast population growth**

Town	2016	2036	Total Change
Korumburra	4,510	6,563	+2,053
Leongatha	5,741	8,038	+2,297
Mirboo North - Baromi	2,347	2,476	+129
Nyora – Poowong & District	2,790	4,608	+1,818
South Gippsland Shire	28,934	35,982	+7,049

There are an estimated 53,246 participants in equestrian sport in Victoria. Of these, the vast majority (79%) are females. The three largest equestrian groups in Victoria are Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria (HRC AV), Pony Club Association of Victoria (PCAV), and Equestrian Victoria (EV), which conduct similar activities but cater to different market segments. The disciplines with the highest organised participation are dressage, followed by show jumping, eventing and show horse.<sup>3</sup>

Although specific membership data was not available from Equestrian Victoria, both Pony Club Victoria and Dressage Victoria said clubs are generally experiencing a decline in memberships.

<sup>1</sup> Forecast.id.com

<sup>2</sup> Forecast.id.com

<sup>3</sup> Equestrian Victoria. State Facility Plan Report. Sept 2017

However, Equestrian Victoria reported a 3% increase in their membership numbers from 2015/16 to 2016/17 with a total of 4500 members.<sup>4</sup>

Within South Gippsland Shire there are 8 Pony/ Equestrian Clubs:

- Corner Inlet Pony Club
- Korumburra Pony Club
- Leongatha and District Equestrian Club
- Loch/Nyora Pony Club
- Meeniyah/Stony Creek Pony Club
- Stony Creek Riding Club
- Tarwin Lower Pony Club
- Mirboo North Pony Club

Berry's Creek Pony Club is no longer active.

Stony Creek Riding Club has 26 members, mostly from the Foster, Korumburra and the local area.

Leongatha and District Equestrian Club have about 40 members with some members from Nyora while others travel up to 50 km to attend.

Loch/Nyora Pony Club has some 20 members. Approximately 60% of members are 5 to 11 year of age. Members are mostly drawn from the local area.

Meeniyah/Stony Creek Pony Club and Mirboo North each have about 30 members.

Wonthaggi Pony Club in the neighbouring municipality of Bass Coast have approximately 40 members.

Although membership numbers at the clubs are relatively small, equestrian events can attract large numbers of participants and spectators who are prepared to travel 2- 3 hours to attend major events. Members of the above Clubs regularly travel to Werribee (Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre) for events as well as venues as far as Albury (NSW).

The Tonimbuk Equestrian Centre, in Bunyip North, can attract up to 1,000 spectators, 350 riders plus support people on event days.

<sup>4</sup> Equestrian Australia Annual Report 2016/17

The following table provides a summary of local equestrian and pony club annual events and membership.

Table 2. Local equestrian and pony club annual events and membership<sup>5</sup>

Club/User group	Current events per year	Average attendance per event	Casual use/club use of facility	Notes
<b>Stony Creek Riding Club</b>	10 rallies per year (not large scale)	60 attend events on average per year. Average of 10-12 people attend clinics.	10-12 hrs per week through the year	Potentially more if in Stony Creek 26 registered members (approx.)
<b>Meenyan/Stony Creek Pony Club</b>	Rallies 11 times a year, 2 training days a year and at least 2-3 competitions	200-300, including participants	1 use per week for 4 months (winter)	30 registered members (approx.)
<b>Leongatha and District Equestrian</b>	1 event per month (not large scale) 15 rallies a year	20 in attendance including participants	1 use per week for 4 months (winter)	40 registered members (approx.)
<b>Corner Inlet Pony Club</b>	12 rallies a year, plus an additional two events	250 for horse trials 100 for gymkhana		25 registered members (approx.)
<b>Korumburra Pony Club</b>	1 event per month			
<b>Loch/Nyora Pony Club</b>	Total of 14 events including 11 rallies, one show jumping and two clinics	30-40 on average for show jumping and clinics		15 registered members (approx.)
<b>Tarwin Lower Pony Club</b>	12 rallies per year which are held monthly and one show.	15 on average in attendance including participants		6 registered members (approx.)
<b>Mirboo North Pony Club</b>	12 rallies per year plus 2 day Christmas camp			
<b>Berry's Creek Pony Club</b>	No longer operating			About 30 members

<sup>5</sup>

### Benefits of developing a centre

The stakeholder engagement process highlighted the demand for an indoor equestrian centre in South Gippsland and the desire by stakeholders to have an all-weather, central venue where clubs could host regional events, participate in competitions close to home and for local riders to hire.

Such as centre that meets local demand would support local clubs and riders, increase local participation and provide pathways to other levels of competition, as well as provide a focal point for equestrian activities in the Shire.

However affordability is a major issue and such as centre it is unlikely to make a profit unless considerable time is invested in marketing and event development.



## 4. The most feasible nature and scale of facility

Previous studies have suggested the following components and scale for a proposed equestrian venue in South Gippsland:

- Competition dressage ring x 2 (70m x 40m)
- Show jumping course (for juniors & seniors) - 100m x 100m
- A cross country course (2.3 hectares)
- Stalls and yards
- Exercise facilities, competition warm up area
- Indoor or covered area
- Storage facilities, toilets, meeting rooms including showers
- Services, power, water etc.
- Adequate car parking (40 spaces min.)
- Paths
- Total area required is 6.7 plus hectares

Following more recent consultation, those that were interviewed confirmed the above facilities and size of components.

In addition, powered camping sites, wash down facilities and fencing were also strongly suggested.





## 5. The preferred site for a regional equestrian facility in South Gippsland

Following a review of previous reports, recommended sites and their advantages and disadvantages, some five sites were reviewed for their potential to accommodate a regional equestrian and exhibition facility, including an indoor stadium. The sites reviewed included:

- Nyora Recreation Reserve
- Nyora Railway Station
- Korumburra Showgrounds
- Stony Creek Racecourse
- Loch Nyora Pony Club

A quantity surveyor has prepared high level probable order of cost for an indoor equestrian facility, of approximately \$2.5 million. This includes a sand floor facility of 75m by 45m enclosed on three sides. Associated facilities include wash bays, office, meeting room, canteen, kitchen, toilets and change facilities spectator seating and storage. In addition there may be costs associated with parking, fencing, site demolition and clearance, services and design and construction contingencies.

The following table outlines advantages, disadvantages and estimated development costs of the sites considered for the Centre

**Table 3. Advantages, disadvantages and estimated development costs of the sites considered for the Centre**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Nyora Recreation Reserve. Estimated Development Cost* - \$3.5- 4.5m</b>	
Space available for an indoor centre	If car racing was not to continue, reserve would be better suited to include soccer
Closest site to Melbourne (101km)	Mix of horses, football and speedway not ideal
Future housing development of 720 residents proposed for Nyora. (Currently 1,527)	No accommodation in area
Close to existing rail trail	Lacks space and Football Club would not want horses on oval
Existing infrastructure includes clubrooms, toilets and parking	No other horse facilities at Reserve
Existing Pony Club nearby	Some site levelling required
	Not likely to include camping – to support horse events
<b>Nyora Railway Station. Estimated Development Cost* - \$5.5-\$6.5</b>	
Centre of town	Wet land
Close to rail trail	No other infrastructure nearby
Industrial area on one side of site	No street appeal
Space for an indoor	No accommodation in area
Close to Melbourne (101km)	
Future housing development of 720 residents proposed for Nyora. (Currently 1,527)	
<b>Korumburra Showgrounds. Estimated Development Cost* - \$4.5-\$5.5</b>	
Space available for an indoor centre	Would require support of Showground Committee of Management
Site includes social rooms and other infrastructure	More land required for additional equestrian events

Advantages	Disadvantages
Korumburra - 2 <sup>nd</sup> largest town in South Gippsland Shire (4,469) <sup>6</sup>	No regular horse events at site
Car parking space	Lacks space for other horse events
Accommodation nearby	Football Club based at Showgrounds would not want horses on oval
Allows on site vans	
Pony club nearby but out of town – 40 members	
Existing sand area	
Stony Creek Racecourse. Estimated Development Cost* - \$3-\$4m	
Publicly owned land managed by a Crown Land Committee of management	Football ground inside course
Central to South Gippsland Shire	Nearest major town - 26km Leongatha. Meeniyan (7km away) smaller population area
Recycled water available	Furthest site from Melbourne than other potential options (161km)
Race track holds 6 race meetings a year	
Available parking nearby	
Infrastructure such as stables, toilets, parking, kitchen/canteen areas within existing facilities	
Less than 20 mins from Leongatha and only minutes to Meeniyan where there are shops and services	
Room for camping space and the potential for new or different locations (inside the track)	
Other facilities/clubs at the site such as Football/Netball Club, Meeniyan Pony Club and Riding Club, Race Club	
Main road location / prominence	
Existing outdoor sand dressage area	
Loch Nyora Pony Club, Yannathan Road, Nyora Racecourse. Estimated Development Cost* - \$5.5-6.5	
Existing active club on site	Extension of other horse activities more difficult due lack of space
Crown Land	Significant tree clearing required
Closer to Melbourne (99km) than other options	Not central to Shire
Greenfield Site. Estimated Development Cost* - \$7-\$8m	
	No existing active club
	Land purchase required
	No existing infrastructure

\*High-level estimates based on existing site infrastructure. Subject to detailed design and investigation for a more accurate assessment of cost.

Site selection criteria and a paired comparison table were used to rate the most suitable site.

<sup>6</sup> Shire and Community Statistics. South Gippsland Shire Council

## Site selection criteria

The site criteria that were developed to assess the appropriateness of each site as a location for an Equestrian and Exhibition Centre is listed below.

Nineteen criteria were identified as determining the best site. These are listed in the following table.

**Table 4. South Gippsland Equestrian Centre Selection criteria**

1. Central to the population it needs to serve
2. The site can accommodate required components and have adequate car parking, float access with an opportunity to expand
3. Land is relatively flat with suitable configuration for a building
4. The site visually prominent, on main road, can be seen for some distance
5. No flood, heritage, environmental, zoning, drainage, geotechnical, easement, trunk sewer etc constraints
6. Land ownership by Council/Crown means no purchase required
7. Building can be placed away from immediate residences (impact of noise, traffic etc.)
8. Competing indoor facilities within 20 kms
9. Close to existing trails, footpaths for ease of access
10. Support services available locally e.g. accommodation and meals
11. Ability to include camping
12. Access to affordable water supply
13. Close proximity to power source
14. Other existing equestrian activities on site
15. Possible local events that would use it
16. Access to infrastructure that could be added to
17. Existing equestrian club support
18. Existing club on the site (as would keep them more viable)
19. Not on a site that might prevent growth of another sport

The ranking of sites is shown in the following table.

Table 5. South Gippsland equestrian feasibility site comparison

No.	Criteria	Weighting	POTENTIAL SITES / OPTIONS											
			Stony Creek Racecourse		Nyora Recreation Reserve		Kurumburra Showgrounds		Nyora Railway Station		Loch Nyora Pony Club		Greenfields Site	
			Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
A	Central to the population it needs to serve	0.02	2	0.05	3	0.07	4	0.093567	3	0.07	3	0.07	1	0.02
B	The site can accommodate required components and have adequate car parking, float access with an opportunity to expand	0.06	5	0.29	2	0.12	2	0.12	1	0.06	1	0.06	4	0.23
C	Land is relatively flat with suitable configuration for a building	0.02	5	0.09	4	0.07	4	0.07	3	0.05	4	0.07	4	0.07
D	The site visually prominent, on main road, can be seen for some distance	0.01	4	0.02	3	0.02	4	0.02	3	0.02	1	0.01	3	0.02
E	No flood, heritage, environmental, zoning, drainage, geotechnical, easement, trunk sewer etc constraints	0.09	4	0.35	4	0.35	4	0.35	3	0.26	3	0.26	3	0.26
F	Land ownership by Council/Crown means no purchase required	0.08	3	0.25	3	0.25	3	0.25	3	0.25	4	0.33	2	0.16
G	Building can be placed away from immediate residences (impact of noise, traffic etc)	0.03	4	0.12	2	0.06	3	0.09	2	0.06	4	0.12	4	0.12
H	Competing indoor facilities within 20 kms	0.05	5	0.26	5	0.26	5	0.26	5	0.263	4	0.21	5	0.26
I	Close to existing trails, footpaths for ease of access	0.01	4	0.05	4	0.05	3	0.04	4	0.047	2	0.02	2	0.02
J	Support services available locally eg accommodation and meals	0.01	3	0.02	4	0.02	4	0.02	4	0.023	3	0.02	4	0.02
K	Ability to include camping	0.04	4	0.14	2	0.07	5	0.18	2	0.07	4	0.14	4	0.14
L	Access to affordable water supply	0.08	5	0.41	4	0.33	4	0.33	4	0.33	3	0.25	3	0.25
M	Close proximity to power source	0.07	5	0.35	4	0.28	4	0.28	4	0.28	3	0.21	3	0.21
N	Other existing equestrian activities on site	0.08	2	0.16	1	0.08	2	0.16	1	0.08	3	0.25	1	0.08
O	Possible local events that would use it	0.08	3	0.25	3	0.25	4	0.33	3	0.25	3	0.25	2	0.16
P	Access to infrastructure that could be added to	0.08	5	0.41	3	0.25	4	0.33	1	0.08	3	0.25	1	0.08
Q	Existing equestrian club support	0.07	5	0.35	1	0.07	1	0.07	1	0.07	4	0.28	1	0.07
R	Would help keep an existing club on the site more viable	0.06	4	0.23	1	0.06	1	0.06	1	0.06	4	0.23	1	0.06
S	Not on a site that might prevent growth of another sport	0.08	5	0.38	1	0.08	1	0.08	4	0.30	5	0.38	3	0.23
	TOTAL SCORE		77	4.18	54	2.72	62	3.12	52	2.62	64	3.39	51	2.48
	RANK			1		4		3		5		2		6

Following an assessment of the site options above, the number 1 ranked site for an Equestrian and Exhibition Centre was the current site of the Stony Creek Racecourse.

The site is central to the South Gippsland Shire, has an existing range of infrastructure including horse related building assets, an active Pony Club and has relatively few constraints.



## 6. Potential competing facilities

There are some 33 equestrian facilities across Gippsland (including those in Bass Coast, Baw Baw, La Trobe, East Gippsland, South Gippsland, Wellington Council areas), offering facilities for a range of recreational horse events.

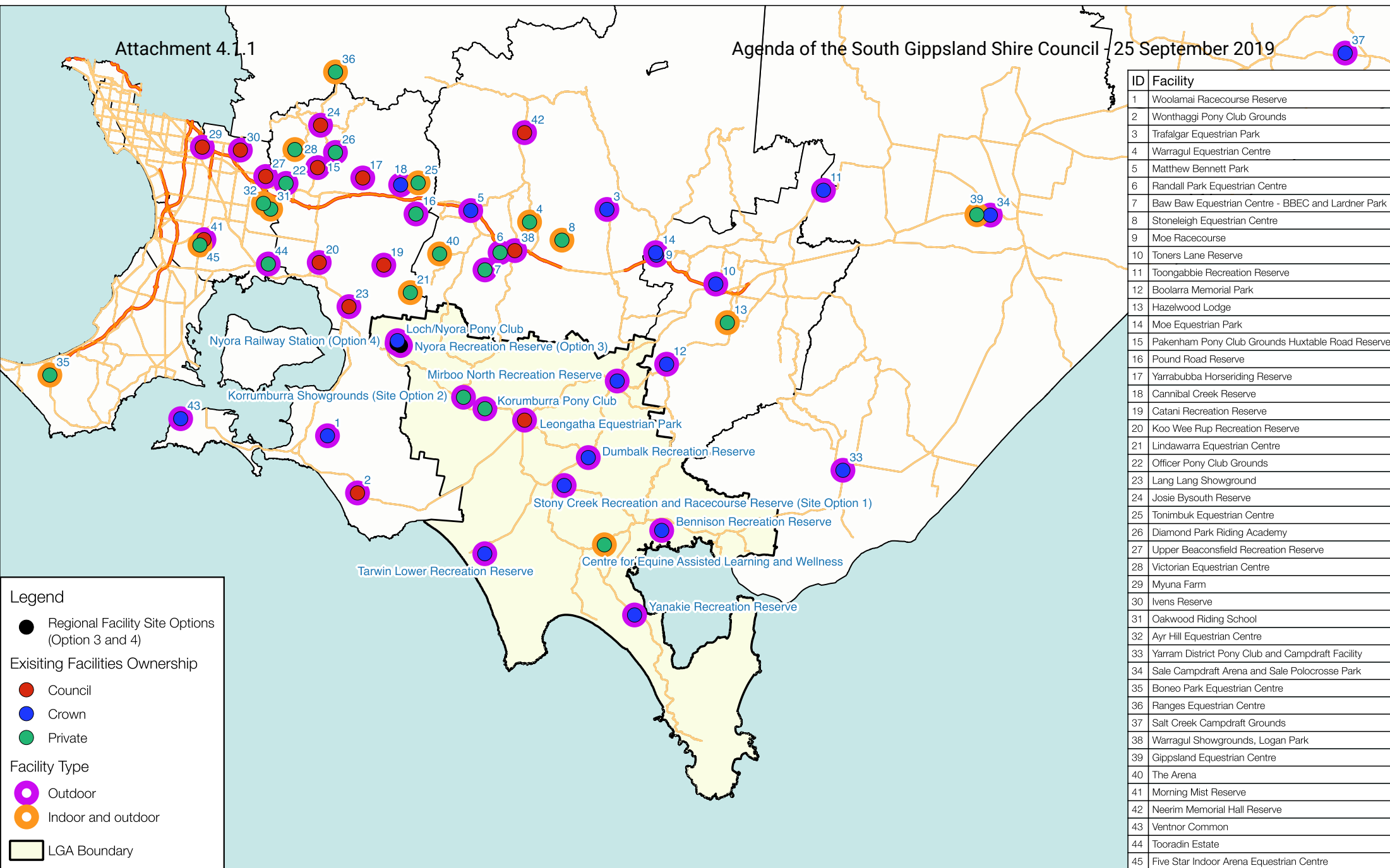
A further 22 facilities are located in Cardinia Shire and the City of Casey.

There are eight indoor equestrian venues in Gippsland. See Map 2 following. All are privately owned.

In South Gippsland, there are eleven equestrian venues. These cater for camp drafting, cross country, show jumping, dressage events, rallies and pony club events. Only one equestrian venue has an indoor component – The Centre for Equine Assisted Learning and Wellness, at Fish Creek. Other facilities are located on either Council owned land or Crown land.

The following Maps 1 and 2 illustrate the location of these equestrian facilities, ownership and whether those have indoor facilities.





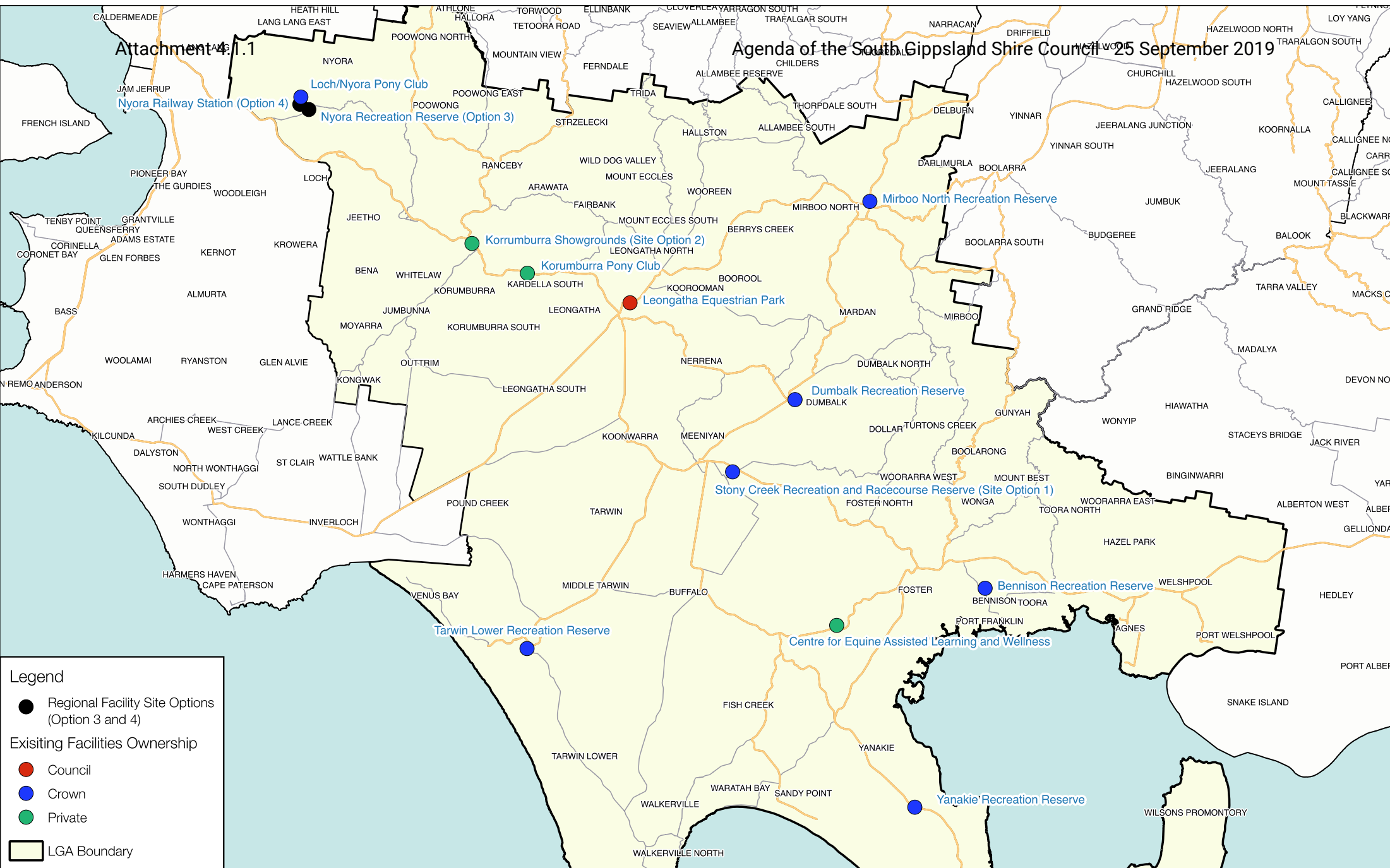
ID	Facility
1	Woolamai Racecourse Reserve
2	Wonthaggi Pony Club Grounds
3	Trafalgar Equestrian Park
4	Warragul Equestrian Centre
5	Matthew Bennett Park
6	Randall Park Equestrian Centre
7	Baw Baw Equestrian Centre - BBEC and Lardner Park
8	Stoneleigh Equestrian Centre
9	Moe Racecourse
10	Toners Lane Reserve
11	Toongabbie Recreation Reserve
12	Boolarra Memorial Park
13	Hazelwood Lodge
14	Moe Equestrian Park
15	Pakenham Pony Club Grounds Huxtable Road Reserve
16	Pound Road Reserve
17	Yarrabubba Horseriding Reserve
18	Cannibal Creek Reserve
19	Catani Recreation Reserve
20	Koo Wee Rup Recreation Reserve
21	Lindawarra Equestrian Centre
22	Officer Pony Club Grounds
23	Lang Lang Showground
24	Josie Bysouth Reserve
25	Tonimbuk Equestrian Centre
26	Diamond Park Riding Academy
27	Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve
28	Victorian Equestrian Centre
29	Myuna Farm
30	Ivens Reserve
31	Oakwood Riding School
32	Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre
33	Yarram District Pony Club and Campdraft Facility
34	Sale Campdraft Arena and Sale Polocrosse Park
35	Boneo Park Equestrian Centre
36	Ranges Equestrian Centre
37	Salt Creek Campdraft Grounds
38	Warragul Showgrounds, Logan Park
39	Gippsland Equestrian Centre
40	The Arena
41	Morning Mist Reserve
42	Neerim Memorial Hall Reserve
43	Ventnor Common
44	Tooradin Estate
45	Five Star Indoor Arena Equestrian Centre

**Legend**

- Regional Facility Site Options (Option 3 and 4)
- Existing Facilities Ownership**
  - Council
  - Crown
  - Private
- Facility Type**
  - Outdoor
  - Indoor and outdoor
- LGA Boundary

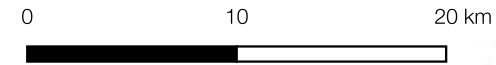


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**Legend**

- Regional Facility Site Options (Option 3 and 4)
- Existing Facilities Ownership
  - Council
  - Crown
  - Private
- LGA Boundary



Date 14/05/19  
Prepared by NR



**Equestrian and Exhibition Centre Site Evaluation and Feasibility**  
 Ordinary Meeting of Council No. 438 - 25 September 2019  
**Map 1: South Gippsland Existing Equestrian Facilities**

DISCLAIMER: While care has been taken with the production of this map, the publishers do not accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.



## 7. Earning potential and operating costs

As part of the stakeholder consultation some 22 interviews were completed, in addition to calls to existing facilities.

Information was sought in relation to current use of local equestrian facilities, the type of events, event attendance and pricing.

See Appendix 2 for a summary of interviews.

A summary of benchmarking conducted on other regional equestrian centres that informed the assumptions of this feasibility, is provided in the following table.





Table 6 Benchmarking of other relevant equestrian centres

Name and Suburb	Municipality	Land ownership	Management type	Staff	Key facilities/description	Disciplines provided	Major events held
<b>Albury Wodonga Equestrian Centre, Thurgoona (NSW)</b>	Albury City Council	Albury City Council	Centre leased to AWEC– Incorporated association.	Part time manager, 2 groundsman (casual)	6 polocrosse fields, one sand arena, 2 Pony club facilities, agistment for 30 horses, cross country course, stables, yards, powered camping sites, clubhouse	Polocrosse, dressage, pony club, cross country course. Show jumping	Polocrosse Nationals, Border District Show Jumping Championships, North East Show Horse Council, Albury Wodonga International Horse Trials, School (Scots, Hume, Albury North and zone) cross country running, Albury Show Horse Event, Murray Valley Dog Show
<b>Elmore Park Equestrian Centre (Elmore Events Centre) (Vic)</b>	Campaspe Shire	Elmore and District Machinery Fields Day Inc	Incorporated association	4 full time staff (includes Event Centre, Equestrian Park and Field day)	6 sand arenas, 66m x 88m indoor arena, 7ha grassed arena, 112 outdoor horse yards, 108 horse stables	Dressage, Barrel racing, Polocrosse, Carriage Driving, Show jumping, Western, Showing, Cutting, Training clinics	Elmore Field day, Australian Scout Jamboree, Australian Stock Horse Society Victorian State Championships, Independent Miniature Horse Registry State Show
<b>Kendall Equestrian Centre (Under construction) (NSW)</b>	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	Camden Haven Show Society	Camden Haven Show Society	NA	Indoor equestrian centre, stables, warm up arena	Pony club, adult riding, riding for the disabled	NA
<b>Gatton/Lockyer Indoor Equestrian Centre (QLD)</b>	Lockyer Valley Regional Council	Lockyer Valley Regional Council	Incorporated association	0	Stables, Indoor Arena	Dressage, Show jumping, Pony club	Show Jumping World Cup qualifier, Pony Club State Show Jumping, Equitation championships
<b>Murray Regional Equestrian Centre (WA)</b>	Shire of Murray	Shire of Murray	Incorporated association	0	4 Polocrosse fields, dressage arena, horse stalls, cross country course, undercover multi purpose arena	Polocrosse, dressage, cross country, camp drafting, cutting	West Coast Zone Challenge Cup, Murray Riding Cup, West Coastal Zone Novelty Run Offs, Coolup Cutting Show, Piniarra HPC Show Jumping
<b>The Riverina Equestrian Centre Charles Sturt University (NSW)</b>	Wagga Wagga City	Charles Sturt University	University	2 FT, 1 PT shared across Equine Centre, teaching and other Uni commitments	Indoor arena, 60m x 25m. Warm up arena, 2 competition arenas, (90m x 70m and 60m x 20m), covered day yards, horse wash bays	Veterinary science, animal science, equine science, reining, equestrian, dressage, show jumping	Riverina Dressage Festival, REA Show Jumping Festival, Wagga Horse Trials, Riverina Reining

Name and Suburb	Municipality	Land ownership	Management type	Staff	Key facilities/ description	Disciplines provided	Major events held
<b>The Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre, Tamworth</b>	Tamworth Regional Council	Tamworth Regional Council	Board made up of Council, local business and community leaders	Full time manager	Indoor arena, concourse, mezzanine, 2 show jumping and dressage areas.	Show jumping, dressage, camp drafting, rodeos, pony club	ABCRA National Finals Rodeo & Campdraft, Tamworth Dressage Club Championships, Australian Stockhorse National Championships, NNWSJC Show Jumping Championships, Independent Miniature Horse Registry National Show
<b>Tatura Park Exhibition and Equestrian Complex</b>	Greater Shepparton Council	Greater Shepparton Council	Council managed	1 plus additional council staff when required	Indoor arena, outdoor sand arena, stables, meeting room, conference room	Dressage, show jumping	Victorian Equestrian Championships, 2017 Victorian Dilute Championships, 2018 Andalusian Horse Association State Show and National Championships, International Dairy Week, National Alpaca Show. 2018 Welsh Nationals Horse Show

Table 7. Price benchmarking of other regional venues by key facility, per day and per night

Venue/Component	Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre, Clyde North	Albury Wodonga Equestrian Centre	Tatura Park	Elmore Equestrian Park
Membership	NA	\$140	N/A	N/A
Indoor arena	\$300 pd	N/A	\$475 pd	\$350 pd
Kitchen	\$150 pd			
Outdoor sand arena	\$200 pd	\$210 pd	\$385 pd	\$90 pd
Turf arena	\$200 pd	\$210 pd	\$370 pd (oval)	Price pd
Cross country course	N/A	\$380 pd	N/A	N/A
Stables	NA	\$25pd	\$22.50 pn	\$25 pd
Camping-powered	NA	\$25 pn	\$21.50 pn	\$20 pn
Camping-unpowered	\$10 p/d	\$15 pn	\$16.50 pn	\$15 pn
Oval	N/A	N/A	\$370 pd	N/A

Based on interviews and the benchmarking exercise, a recommended schedule of fees has been proposed with options for a low rate or higher rate for venue hire.

There are a limited range of events and exhibitions that are compatible with a sand floored equestrian facility. These include:

- Dairy expos
- Stud stock sales
- Car shows
- Additional horse or livestock shows

Table 8. Suggested low / high rates for the hire of the centre

Pricing category	Low fee,	High fee
Membership	\$140 pa	\$230 pa
Indoor arena	\$200 half day	\$250 half day
Commercial	\$400 full day	\$500 full day
	\$50 per hour	\$60 per hour
Indoor arena- Club	\$100 half day	\$150 half day
	\$200 full day	\$300 full day
	\$25 per hour	\$30 per hour
Stables	\$20 per night	\$25 per night
Camping - unpowered	\$10 per night	\$15 per night
Kitchen	Half day \$120 Full day \$240 \$30 per hour	Half day \$120 Full day \$240 \$80 per hour

Based on the above suggested fees, estimated usage by local clubs and potential event bookings, it is estimated that the centre could generate annual income of between \$60,000 and \$89,000 with costs of between \$70,440 and \$89,000, leaving a potential annual deficit of \$10,000 to breakeven.

See assumptions following.

It is assumed that some 34 annual events days would be held by existing Clubs including:

- Meeniyan Pony Club
- Stony Creek Adults Riders Club
- Leongatha Equestrian Club

A further 10 event days would potentially consist of:

- Dairy Expos
- Stud stock sales
- Car shows
- Additional horse or livestock shows
- Race day usage

If there was further investment in temporary flooring and other infrastructure an additional range of events and exhibitions may be possible.

The following tables outline probable operating results for Year 1 for an equestrian centre at Stony Creek, based on conservative pricing and usage and higher pricing, with high usage.

Table 9. Probable operating result for Year 1 for an equestrian centre at Stony Creek based on low fee scale and conservative usage

Item	Conservative budget Year 1
<b>Income</b>	
Indoor Arena - Commercial	\$7,650
Indoor Arena - Club	\$8,550
Kitchen	\$3,120
Outdoor Arena	\$1,400
Coaching Lease	\$22,000
Stable Hire	\$9,000
Camping	\$3,000
Membership	\$5,600
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$60,320</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Marketing	\$1,000
Accounting	\$1,000
Building Maintenance	\$2,600
Fuel	\$1,000
Electricity	\$5,000
Water	\$1,000
Phone	\$2,600
Repairs and Maintenance	\$4,000
Event Coordinator P/T	\$43,680
Waste Disposal	\$1,560
Insurance	\$5,000
Consumables	\$2,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$70,440</b>
<b>Profit/Loss</b>	<b>-\$10,120</b>
Depreciation	\$64,355

Table 10. Probable operating result for Year 1 for an equestrian centre at Stony Creek based on higher fee scale and high usage

Item	High fee/high use scenario - Year 1
<b>Income</b>	
Indoor Arena - Commercial	\$12,300
Indoor Arena - Club	\$15,000
Kitchen	\$5,040
Outdoor Arena	\$3,930
Coaching Lease	\$22,000
Stable Hire	\$18,750
Camping	\$5,250
Membership	\$6,900
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$89,170</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Marketing	\$5,000
Accounting	\$1,000
Building Maintenance	\$3,000
Fuel	\$2,000
Electricity	\$8,000
Water	\$1,000
Phone	\$2,600
Repairs and Maintenance	\$4,000
Event Coordinator P/T	\$50,000
Waste Disposal	\$1,560
Insurance	\$5,000
Consumables	\$2,000
Contractors	\$4,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$89,160</b>
<b>Profit/Loss</b>	<b>\$10</b>
Depreciation	\$64,355



## Assumptions

The following assumptions have been applied to the figures above.

- That the centre is based at Stony Creek racecourse
- Income from stables for events is collected by Equestrian and Exhibition Centre
- Outdoor equestrian areas hired as part of indoor events when required
- Local equestrian and pony clubs annual usage estimated at 34 days per year
- Events and exhibitions 10 days per year as minimum
- Centre is leased to a Coach who has exclusive access and pays an annual fee
- Annual centre membership to provide lower hire costs
- Council employ a part time Coordinator who markets centre and provides administration support
- Users have their own insurance via affiliated associations and event insurance



## 8. Management and governance

### 8.1 Governance structure

There is a range of governance models for equestrian centres in operation around Australia. Typically, the landowner and the development history of the site influence the governance model.

Major equestrian facilities are most commonly operated by state government or local Councils and employ staff to operate the venues e.g. Sydney International Equestrian Centre, Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre and Tamworth (Australian Equine and Events Centre).

A number of regional equestrian facilities are partnership arrangements with local government and incorporated associations or other entities (which include a university, for example).

Private centres are typically ran on a commercial basis and developed with facilities and activities that are likely to be financially viable or owned by individuals who are passionate about equestrian and other horse activities. Examples include Willinga Park at Bawley Point, NSW, Kilmore Equestrian Centre, Victoria, Wallington Park Equestrian Centre, Victoria.

Community based equestrian centres are likely to be developed by local horse clubs or associations with similar goals and interests and are typically based on Council or crown land and operated under a lease or licence.

Such venues are usually managed by the community as Incorporated Associations with some directly managed by Council.

The Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre, Tamworth and Werribee Park Equestrian Centre are both operated by a Board of Management.

Council ran venues such as Tatura Park Exhibition and Equestrian Centre (City of Greater Shepparton) employ a venue manager and receive support from various Council departments for ground maintenance and asset management.

Those run by the community or incorporated associations rely heavily on volunteers for administration and event management.

### 8.2 Management Options

High level management entities common in equestrian centres and they may influence operations are discussed below.

#### Council Management

##### Advantages

- Range of resources available including both staff and equipment, to assist with operations
- Staff expertise in areas such as ground maintenance, asset maintenance, event management, risk management, marketing
- Greater financial resources to support operations and asset renewal than an incorporated association
- Maybe perceived as a competent venue manager
- Successful operations are less reliant on volunteers

##### Disadvantages

- Clubs and members may feel they have less of a say in future directions of venue and day to day management
- Council's limited resources to support an additional recreational venue.

#### Incorporated Association

##### Advantages

- Members are able to become directly involved in operations and make decisions on future direction
- Individuals cannot be held personally responsible for debts or liabilities.

##### Disadvantages

- Committee members may lack experience and expertise in all matters required to operate a large multi-purpose venue
- Limited financial resources-dependent on membership fees, events and agistment
- Decision making can be influenced by members from one discipline, while ignoring other parts of the venue
- A standard constitution provides limited guidance for a large association

- Often reliant on a small group of volunteers who may suffer burnout from the number of hours spent operating venue.

### Board of Management

#### Advantages

- Individuals less involved in day to day operations and can bring expertise to key areas such as finance, marketing, risk management, planning
- Likely to provide more structured processes, systems and reporting
- Would be able to provide longer term vision and direction
- A board of management would represent a broader range of equestrian disciplines as well as areas of expertise, than the current committee of management that primarily reflects specific equestrian disciplines.

#### Disadvantages

- Recruitment of interested individuals with appropriate skills may be difficult.

### Lease or Contract Management

Two less common options for equestrian centre management is leasing and contract management.

A key advantage of this option is that decisions regarding the operations of the centre are based on commercial viability.

Council can use their contract with the operator to meet community service obligations.

However the low or no-profit margins in operating equestrian and exhibition centres mean they would be less likely to attract interest from commercial operators and not an option worth pursuing.

Ensuring the effective operation of the facility will require Council to have an active and ongoing role in the management of the site.

Ongoing stakeholder engagement through a board or advisory committee for example could encourage participation by the industry in decisions that affect the centre.

Management issues would require some further discussion, including a partnership with the existing committee of management, race club, pony club and relevant occupancy agreements involving the Crown.



## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Existing equestrian facilities in Gippsland

The following table provides a list of known equestrian facilities located in Gippsland. A more detailed inventory of information informs this project.

Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Ventnor Common	105-115 Lyall Street	Ventnor	3922	Bass Coast Shire	No	Crown	A facility club grounds are open to the public 24/7. Facilities are designed for combined training with a clubhouse. Adult riders club members have access to the show jumping arena, ménage and open area of the grounds for general riding and training.
Woolamai Racecourse Reserve	54 Trew Road	Woolamai	3995	Bass Coast Shire	No	Crown	Woolamai Racecourse includes an outdoor pony club area.
Wonthaggi Pony Club Grounds	South Dudley Road	Wonthaggi	3995	Bass Coast Shire	No	Council	Pony club facilities and clubhouse.
Warragul Showgrounds, Logan Park	Warragul -Korumburra Road	Warragul	3820	Baw Baw Shire	No - has an exhibition centre	Council	Warragul Showgrounds, Gippsland Harness Training Centre and function rooms on-course. The track is one of the fastest half-mile circuits in Australia. A greyhound-racing track is also inside the harness track.
Warragul Equestrian Centre	572 Copelands Road	Warragul	3820	Baw Baw Shire	Yes	Private	The site has a fully covered indoor arena, a sand based 70m x 110m outdoor arena, outdoor yards and holding yards, 18 private paddocks, two large stallion paddocks and a stable complex. WEC is an accredited Australian Horse Riding Centre.
Matthew Bennett Park	17 McGlone Road	Drouin	3818	Baw Baw Shire	No	Crown	A racecourse that is 1500m in circumference, with a sweeping entrance to the home straight. Drouin Men's Shed located on site
Trafalgar Equestrian Park	2020 Old Sale Road	Trafalgar	3824	Baw Baw Shire	No	Crown	The Trafalgar Equestrian Park and Reserve include a polocrosse ground, pony club facilities Campdraft and camping.



Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Stoneleigh Equestrian Centre	606 Darnum-Shady Creek Road	Darnum	3822	Baw Baw Shire	Yes	Private	Indoor arena hire and agistment services. Post and rail (electrified) paddocks with timber lined shelters. Has automatic water troughs, an outdoor flood lit arena, a round yard, private locker/track room, shower and toilet, stables, an undercover tie up area, professional horse care. A feeding and rugging service also provided.
Randall Park Equestrian Centre	272 Warragul-Lardner Road	Warragul	3820	Baw Baw Shire	Yes	Private	The indoor arena is an Olympic sized 60m x 20m, incorporating imported surface soiltex. Other options include a private paddock agistment, veterinary services, rehabilitation/pre-training, casual treadmill hire, table complex houses, 7 indoor stables, 2 track rooms, feed room, rug room and wash bay. Agistment paddocks are divided in to 10 individual acre paddocks with hardwood post and rail fencing. Automatic water station, shade trees and improved pastures.
Neerim Memorial Hall Reserve	21 Hamono Road	Neerim	3831	Baw Baw Shire	No	Council	A club that contains a club house, combined training, dressage, show jumping and showing.
The Arena	280 Lye and Dixon Road	Ripplebrook	3818	Baw Baw Shire	Yes	Private	An indoor arena used for dressage activities. It has hosted the World Arabian Horse Organisation Convention.
Baw Baw Equestrian Centre- BBEC and Lardner Park	119/155 Burnt Store Road	Lardner	3821	Baw Baw Shire	Yes	Private	BBEC provides for West Gippsland Adult Riding Club, Drouin Pony Club and Warragul Pony Club. Adjacent to Lardner Park includes FarmWorld and exhibition and conference centre, two pavilions (Baw Baw and North Pavilion), a boardroom and an outdoor area.
Moe Racecourse	Waterloo Road	Newborough	3825	City of Latrobe	No	Crown	The facility has the largest capacity racecourse in Gippsland (track circumference of 1732 metres and a home straight being 300 metres long).
Toners Lane Reserve	Toners Lane	Morwell	3840	City of Latrobe	No	Crown	Venue is able to hold horse masterships, show jumping, equitation, dressage, flat games, active riding and team riding.

Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Toongabbie Recreation Reserve	Heywood Street	Toongabbie	3856	City of Latrobe	No	Crown	The facilities include a 60m X 40m metre sand arena.
Boolarra Memorial Park	20 Park Road	Boolarra	3870	City of Latrobe	No	Crown	Home to Boolarra Pony Club who offer show jumping, cross country, dressage and grooming. Also has barbecues and outdoor event spaces that can hold up to 2000 people. Social rooms can also be hired.
Hazelwood Lodge	720 Monash Way	Churchill	3842	City of Latrobe	Yes	Private	Fully enclosed 65m x 25m sand arena, an 800m sand track, an undercover brick round yard, numerous fully lined stables and covered day yards and horse wash.
Moe Equestrian Park	Saviges Road	Moe	3825	City of Latrobe	No	Crown	Cross country facilities, show jumping equipment and clubrooms are being progressively developed. A new shed has been built to cater for all tenants.
Salt Creek Campdraft Grounds	75 Harmans Road	Johnsonville	3902	East Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	Salt Creek Campdraft Grounds are used once a year for drafts.
Leongatha Equestrian Park	4 Tilson Court	Leongatha	3953	South Gippsland Shire	No	Council	Sand Arenas (30m x 65m), a cross country course, wash bays, clubrooms, canteen and parking.
Bennison Recreation Reserve	5 O'Sullivan's Road/311 Port Franklin Road	Bennison	3960	South Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	A clubhouse with a canteen, a 30m x 65m fenced sand arena, a cross country course and a water jump.
Korumburra Pony Club	990 Old Leongatha Road	Kardella South	3950	South Gippsland Shire	No	Private	Has a facility for a club house, combined training, dressage, one day events, showing and show jumping.
Loch/Nyora Pony Club	27-41 McDonalds Track/Yannathan Road	Nyora	3987	South Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	Has a clubhouse and offers dressage, combined training, hickstead, eventing, and showing. Has a 60m x 20m arena, 40m x 20m arena and a grass arena for show jumping.
Stony Creek Recreation and Racecourse	23 Stony Creek Dollar Road	Stony Creek	3957	South Gippsland	No	Crown	Racetrack has a circumference of 1690 metres and is fully irrigated. The Club host 5 race meetings per year. The site is

Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Reserve				Shire			also home to the Stony Creek Football and Netball club. There is an existing dressage area, with stables and toilets along with race club and football/netball facilities.
Tarwin Lower Recreation Reserve	Walkerville Road	Tarwin Lower	3956	South Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	Caters for AFL, bowls, cricket, equestrian and netball.
Centre for Equine Assisted Learning and Wellness	15 Lowrys Road	Fish Creek	3959	South Gippsland Shire	Yes	Private	Has two stables, eleven undercover yards, six day paddocks, 60m x 20m covered arena with lighting, a 16m round yard, and group space—including lounge, dining, cooking facilities and accommodation.
Korumburra Showground	South Gippsland Highway	Korumburra	3950	South Gippsland Shire	No	Private	Showgrounds with football and netball clubs based there. RV camping permitted. Sand arena for horse events.
Mirboo North Recreation Reserve	Thorpdale Road	Mirboo North	3871	South Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	Pony club facilities with a small sand arena adjacent to the oval and netball facility. The reserve is served by the Grand Ridge Rail Trail.
Yanakie Recreation Reserve	Millar Road	Yanakie	3960	South Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	Campdraft arena
Dumbalk Recreation Reserve	Dollar Road	Dumbalk	3956	South Gippsland Shire	No	Crown	Campdraft arena on the recreation reserve which also includes an oval and former tennis courts
Yarram District Pony Club and Campdraft	25 Buckley Street	Yarram	3971	Wellington Shire	No	Council	Pony club and camp draft facilities
Sale Campdraft Arena and Sale Polocrosse Park	Polocrosse Lane	Fulham	3851	Wellington Shire	No	Crown	Campdraft arena and Sale Polocrosse Park with associated area for camping.

Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Gippsland Equestrian Centre	26 Hopkins Road	Fulham	3851	Wellington Shire	Yes	Private	Facilities include an indoor round yard, indoor arena, seating over 600 people - with kitchenette. Overnight accommodation, yarding, paddocks, stables and agistment.
Pakenham Pony Club Grounds	95 Huxtable Road	Pakenham	3810	Cardinia Shire	No	Crown	The pony grounds contain club rooms, a large sand arena, separate dressage, show jumping arena's, a course with catering onsite.
Pound Road Reserve	Pound Road	Bunyip	3815	Cardinia Shire	No	Private	60m x 90m all-weather arena, 2 show jumping areas, 40 acres of an extensive cross country course covering all grades and an enclosed secure area for younger riders.
Yarrabubba Horse Riding Reserve	130 Yarrabubba Road	Nar Nar Goon	3812	Cardinia Shire	No	Council	Utilized for combined training, dressage and show jumping as well as one day events. A pavilion is also present on site.
Cannibal Creek Reserve	Garfield North Road	Garfield	3814	Cardinia Shire	No	Crown	Two all-weather arenas, day and round yards with a horse wash facility. Western show and cutting arena also present.
Catani Recreation Reserve	130 McInnes Road	Catani	3981	Cardinia Shire	No	Council	Consists of an oval for football and cricket, has tennis and netball courts with playgrounds, pavilions and shelters also present. Has an Equestrian grass area (100m x 40m) with pony club obstacles.
Koo Wee Rup Recreation Reserve	30 Denham's Road	Koo Wee Rup	3981	Cardinia Shire	No	Crown - DWELP Committee of Management	The recreation reserve has three horse arenas, a cross country horse riding area as well as football, netball and cricket facilities.
Lindawarra Equestrian Centre	1455 Westernport Road	Heath Hill	3981	Cardinia Shire	Yes	Private	The facilities include a 41m x 21m indoor arena plus a 60m x 20m outdoor sand arena. They have stable facilities and wash areas, with facilities available for hire by instructors and clubs, plus trails and jumps on the property.



Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Officer Pony Club Grounds	460 Brown Road	Officer	3809	Cardinia Shire	No	Private	The large pony club grounds encompass two fully enclosed grass arenas and a 64m x 30m sand arena. Two cross country areas including horse and ski jumps plus water jumps.
Lang Lang Showground	120 Westernport Road	Lang Lang	3984	Cardinia Shire	No		The showground is home to the Lang Lang Agricultural Show (held on the 3rd Saturday in January) and the Lang Lang Rodeo (held on Easter Monday.) The showground also has an oval used for both football and cricket, with a pavilion and shelter.
Josie Bysouth Reserve	2 Hillside Road	Cockatoo	3781	Cardinia Shire	No	Council	This reserve has pony club facilities, pavilion and playground.
Tonimbuk Equestrian Centre	410 Sanders Road	Bunyip North	3815	Cardinia Shire	Yes	Private	Equestrian centre with 2 x indoor arenas, 2 x outdoor areas, cross country course, stables, yards and powered camping. Major event centre only.
Diamond Park Riding Academy	620 Gembrook Road	Pakenham Upper	3810	Cardinia Shire	No	Private	The facilities includes large yards, sand arena, stables, trails, and large grassed fields.
Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve	100 Beaconsfield-Emerald Road	Beaconsfield	3807	Cardinia Shire	No	Council	The Reserve is used for pony club facilities and has combined training area and clubhouse.
Victorian Equestrian Centre	76 Beaconsfield-Emerald Road	Beaconsfield Upper	3808	Cardinia Shire	Yes	Private	Has an indoor arena with 300 seats, two outdoor ménages, stables, covered stalls, agistment paddocks, tie ups and a local outdoor arena.
Five Star Indoor Arena Equestrian Centre	1390 Dandenong-Hastings Road	Cranbourne South	3977	City of Casey	Yes	Private	Indoor sand arena and trails.
Myuna Farm	182 Kidds Road	Doveton	3177	City of Casey	Yes	Council	Myuna Farm is a public community farm with an indoor arena.
Ivens Reserve	506 Narre Warren North Road	Narre Warren North	3804	City of Casey	No	Council	Includes a sand area and grass fields, a club house and facilities for combined training, dressage, hickstead, one day events, showing and show jumping

Facility/Reserve Name	Street Address	Town	Postcode	LGA	Indoor Equestrian Facility?	Owner	Description of Facility
Oakwood Riding School	10 Smiths Lane	Clyde North	3978	City of Casey	Yes	Private	Has an indoor arena (75m x 35m), two outdoor arenas - one 70m x 30m, the other 60mx20m, 15 undercover stables, 2 hot wash bays, a large clubroom with a licensed bar, a cross country course and agistment.
Morning Mist Reserve	Corner of Browns and Langley roads	Cranbourne South	3977	City of Casey	No	Council	Clubhouse facilities with combined training, dressage and show jumping
Tooradin Estate	300 Lynes Road	Tooradin	3980	City of Casey	No	Private	A 400 acre property situated in the City of Casey. There are two pony clubs, two adult riding clubs, AEFL and RDA activities. Facilities include two outdoor sand arenas, a round yard and a 2 star national level cross country course. Show jumps and a variety of other obstacles.
Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre	Gate 4/500 Soldiers Road	Clyde North	3978	City of Casey	Yes	Private	The facility has a covered sand arena (72m x 36m), multiple sand arenas including a west sand warm up arena, east sand arena (83m x 72m), north sand arena (100m x 30m), a grass polo field of 10 acres which is suitable for show jumping, dressage, mounted games, judges boxes, 10 stables with 2 wash bays, undercover yards, outdoor day yards, administration/classrooms with kitchen facilities.
Ranges Equestrian Centre	2425 Healesville-Koo Wee Rup Road	Yellingbo	3139	Yarra Ranges Shire	Yes	Private	Has an indoor arena, an outdoor arena, jumps paddock, seven indoor stables, agistments, and areas for storage.
Boneo Park Equestrian Centre	312 Boneo Road	Boneo	3939	Mornington Peninsula Shire	Yes	Private	Agistments, an indoor arena (66m x 30m), 160 stables, a fully licensed café, 120 yards for jumping, 4 round yards, a multipurpose grass arena, 2 sets of show jumps, powered camp sites, a toilet/shower block, outdoor arenas including outdoor arena A (85m x 75m), outdoor arena A warm up (75m x 65m), outdoor arena B (75m x 65m) and a outdoor arena B warm up.

## Appendix 2. Stakeholders consulted and summary of interviews

### Stakeholders consulted

- Stony Creek Riding Club
- Stony Creek Racing Club
- Leongatha and District Equestrian Club
- Past member Berry's Creek Pony Club
- Leongatha Equestrian Park
- Nyora Pony Club
- GippSport
- Stony Creek Recreation Committee
- Informant 1 - previously involved in the project planning
- Informant 2 - previously involved in the project planning
- Informant 3 - previously involved in the project planning
- Meeniyan Pony Club
- Equestrian Victoria
- Pony Club Victoria
- South Gippsland Campdraft Association
- Victorian Working Sheep Dog Association
- Lindawarra Equestrian Centre
- Boneo Equestrian Centre
- Baw Baw Shire
- Bass Coast Shire
- Dressage Victoria
- Riding Develops Abilities (RDA) Victoria
- Victorian Livestock Exchange
- Destination Gippsland

Country Racing Victoria, Show Jumping Victoria, Eventing, Polocrosse, and the Victorian Agricultural Shows were unable to be contacted.

## Summary notes from interviews with key stakeholders

### Uses of indoor equestrian centre

- Members of the Leongatha and District Equestrian Club would use an indoor in the region, especially in Winter. They would use an indoor for multiple types of equestrian activities.
- Use of an indoor would depend on the cost according to Nyora Pony Club. They are only a small club and try to keep the cost to a minimum. Some club members may use an indoor during winter but the club itself doesn't really use indoor facilities as part of the club activities.
- Equestrian Victoria clubs would use indoor facilities if they were available. Dressage and Show Jumping would be the main activities that would use an indoor arena. The main events include State level events (4 major state level events per year). This facility potentially could stage one or two events per year. A facility would need to have supporting outdoor areas for warm up etc.
- Equestrian Victoria size requirements for indoor facilities and the indoor size requirements of Pony Club Victoria are the same.
- Some equestrian coaches are starting to hire indoor facilities for lessons. Weekends are reasonably full most of the year.
- Campdraft is too big to use an indoor facility.
- Most people use indoor centre when they are learning, starting in a group class then as they get better tend to learn in a 1 on 1 class.
- Meeniyon Pony Club would potentially use an indoor at Stony Creek for at least 5 rallies per year plus about 10-12 hrs per week through the winter.
- Dressage Victoria believes that there is a gap in public facilities in the region but not in smaller private facilities. Local clubs are declining in numbers but improved facilities may help increase memberships.
- There may be a chance in the near future that Dressage might hold their regional championships across the regions in the build up to State Championships. Improved facilities in the Gippsland area would potentially be a location for these types of events.
- RDA Victoria stated there is no current demand in the South Gippsland or surrounding area for their programs. They only support operations if there is proven demand and a coordinator who can run the program. RDA said that it may be possible to get something up and running after a facility is built.

### Sites used for equestrian activities (Public and Private)

- Some members of the Stony Creek Riding Club go to a private indoor centre at Fish Creek - (Equine Assisted Learning and Wellness.) The club goes indoor 4-5 times per year. Many members would use indoor more often. \$15 per rider (1 hour lesson). Not sure on the day cost.
- Members of the Leongatha and District Equestrian Club currently use a private facility in Pakenham, especially in winter.
- Stony Creek Riding Club currently share the facility with the pony club. They have a sand arena and a grass arena. They tend to use the sand arena for most events and training.
- The Racing Club would not use an indoor facility as they already have everything, they need to operate their events. They are awaiting the result of a grant application to build new stalls from Victorian Racing scheme funding. They are hoping to build 110 new stalls before next winter,

plus wash down facilities. The Racing Club has supported the concept of an indoor arena on site.

- Leongatha Equestrian Club use a couple of small private indoor spaces within the Gippsland region. They also use Boneo Park and Werribee for events several times per year.
- There is a commercial centre in Heath Hill with agistment, riding school and private and group lessons.
- Equestrian Victoria currently utilise Werribee for numerous events and squads across the year. They have an ongoing relationship with them but would also like to run squads across the regions if good quality facilities were available.
- Campdraft events are held across South Gippsland. Dumbalk is used for most events. Also, Sale, Yarram, Trafalgar, Powlett River, Salt Creek. There are 13 drafts per year, and 400 members in Gippsland.

### Facilities currently used for equestrian activities by clubs and associations

- Nyora Pony Club has a 60m x 20m arena, 40m x 20m arena and a grass arena for show jumping.
- The Werribee arenas use a type of particular sand for their surface. This is a European standard sand and it needs to be on any future arenas.
- Pony Club Victoria have their own indoor facility and property in the Yarra Valley- used by Adult riders as well as visiting Pony Clubs throughout the year.
- The area needed is quite large for campdrafting - half the size of football field! Horses don't like the sand (typically used at an indoor arena) in this event. Large arena campdraft would not be able to use an indoor facility but there is a chance that small arena campdraft could use an indoor facility. The minimum width for small arena campdraft is 40m and the minimum length is 70m.
- Lindawarra Equestrian Centre has a 41m x 21m indoor arena plus a 60m x 20m outdoor sand arena. This is currently available to agistees except on Saturday and Sunday when the riding school operates between 10am and 4pm. They have stable facilities and wash down areas. Facilities are available for hire by instructors and clubs.
- Equestrian facilities in neighbouring council include Wonthaggi, Grantville, Woolamai, Trafalgar and Lardner. Bass Coast have no plans to further develop its equestrian centres to a regional standard and believe that a facility in South Gippsland would be well used by residents from Bass Coast areas. Baw Baw owns and operate an equestrian facility but not to a regional level. Baw Baw are currently looking to improve their equestrian facilities through a review of facility masterplans but no indication that they are intending to construct a regional facility.
- Meeniyan Pony Club uses the cross country course, sand and grass arena within Stony Creek.

### Elements required in or with a new indoor equestrian facility

- Stony Creek Riding Club believes that an indoor facility has to have some viewing, storage, office for admin at events and canteen/kitchen. The minimum size should be 60 x 20m plus and extra 5m around the perimeter. However, a wider area would be better (at least 30m wide for show jumping).
- Leongatha Equestrian could use an indoor for show jumping. The arena would need to be 30m x 70m at least. The bigger the better. They would like a gallery area for viewing and spectators.



- Nyora Pony Club believes that an indoor facility would need plenty of parking, good management and horse allocated areas, two entrances (a horse entrance and a pedestrian entrance). Outside yards are always used for pony club events.
- Equestrian Victoria believe that a new facility would need to have water and washdown facilities, good stabling, camping sites with power and fencing to reduce horses getting away if spooked.
- Pony Club Victoria believes a new facility would ideally have a canteen, admin area, seating, plus camping facilities nearby. Pony Club users often camp over at events.
- Campdraft would need a really large centre to even consider using an indoor. Would consider using an indoor for basic horse skills. Once cattle are involved, indoor facilities would not work well. Most drafts tend to be on rider's own properties or at club arenas.
- Lindawarra Equestrian Centre feels that it will be important to have a café/bar for the non-riders and to provide a gathering point and social element.
- One former committee member believes that a facility close to a highway or major road is important. Other smaller indoor facilities in the region do not often have enough parking and cannot handle larger groups.
- Stony Creek Recreation Committee believes that there is a need for an administration office plus a scorer's room that needs to be more private, a location for a tea and coffee area or potential for canteen (if the other facilities at Stony Creek were not available.) Such a facility is likely to be well used by other clubs within the Pony Club zone throughout the year.
- Dressage Victoria believe that elements required in a regional indoor centre include: stabling, appropriate sand surfacing and irrigation system, ease of cleaning for the stables, good access to the building for machinery, multifunctional rooms x 4 with tech connectivity for events, disability friendly facilities. Accredited mounting point for disability riders, commercial kitchen, showers/change rooms, separate unloading area near the stables then drive to the car park, storage for the arena areas close to the surface itself.

#### Hours per week clubs would use an indoor equestrian

- Stony Creek Riding Club would use an indoor, but it would depend on the cost as to how often. They would use it over the winter months, and potentially 10 times per year for rally's and competitions. If the facility was close to the where people within their club live, they would use it more often.
- Leongatha and District Equestrian Club would use a facility in the winter months; at least 3 - 4 months per year, plus a monthly booking, for their clubs.
- Pony Club Victoria say that a new facility would complement what they do already. If you build something that is big enough, clubs will use it. They would not use it on a weekly basis, however, as clubs are generally comfortable using their own facilities.
- Stony Creek riders would potentially use the indoor for 10-12 hrs per week.
- Meeniyon Pony Club would have the potential to double their current annual events if there was an indoor nearby by being able to operate in winter months when wet.

#### How much do clubs currently pay to use equestrian facilities in the region

- Hire fees of indoor centres in Gippsland range between \$850 per day for two indoor arenas, between \$300 and \$500 for an indoor arena or \$500 for indoor and outdoor arenas, per day. The Werribee State Equestrian Centre charges approximately \$600 a day for use of their indoor arena.

- Where available casual use / hire of equestrian facilities is commonly by membership only, or on an hourly rate such as \$20 per hour without lights.
- Stony Creek Riding Club have paid as much as \$200 per day for indoor facilities in the past. They run competitions to raise money for their club and therefore an indoor space may attract more people. The club would pay more than \$500 per day if the facilities were excellent and there were good stables and areas to park.
- Pony Club Victoria charge \$25 per hour for each rider and a non - member \$35 for their own facility in Yarra Valley.
- Lessons at other indoor centres are generally about \$70 per hr plus \$15 facility hire per rider.

**Criteria for selecting a site including a new indoor equestrian facility. (Flat, visually prominent, central to larger population, benefit from existing facilities on site, space surrounding potential site, access to trail connections, stabling etc.)**

- Stony Creek Riding Club believe criteria should include ease of access, on a highway, with access to a cross country course and parking needs to be good. Accommodation and availability of shopping close to the venue is important. Camping spots with access to power.
- The Stony Creek Racecourse and a future indoor would work well together. Already have a dining room, toilets, canteen and the rail trail is nearby where people can ride.
- Leongatha Equestrian believes that an indoor facility would have one indoor arena and multiple sand arenas outside. Outdoor arenas make a facility more feasible for multiple events at the same time. The availability of a cross country course is also needed.
- Nyora Pony Club believe an important element would be to be close to population centres. Around Pakenham would get lots of city type people. Traralgon or Sale are also really horsey areas. Flat land is important.
- Pony Club Victoria believe it would need to be close to transport routes as people complain if the venue is difficulty to get to. Freeway access is important. Close to a population centre.
- Campdraft requires a really large area for parking and stock holding. Lots of cattle involved as well as horses, trucks, trailers etc. An indoor facility is unlikely to be big enough for their event/activity.
- Lindawarra Equestrian Centre believe that people are usually willing to travel from Gippsland region to Werribee which can be up to 3 hrs. Good freeway access and a good quality road is important to most horse people when travelling to events and venues.
- A committee member believes that an equestrian facility requires water, power, sewerage, good road access, camping facilities and a central location for residents of South Gippsland. A connection to a trail network is good but not essential. She believes that Stony Creek has all of these elements. There needs to be space enough for 2 x dressage arenas within the facility, close to a highway and have sufficient parking for an event.
- Dressage Victoria says that road access, flat land, shade (trees etc) is important. Existing facilities need to ensure disability access.

**Other types of events that could also use a new indoor equestrian facility (Livestock sales, markets, shows, field days, others?)**

- Could be used for stock. For example a Dairy expo could be run inside (2-3 day events).
- Meeniyar Garlic Festival - 8000 people each year (could use if washed out).
- Cattle sales would be popular.

- Different types of arenas: performance horse arenas are the biggest market. Show people - world cup show jump events. Would need a good amount of spectator facilities, café/bar. Race horse sales.
- Car clubs - show and shine events.
- Sheep dog events - but only short course as the long course requires a much larger space outdoor. Short course working dog events are very popular in New Zealand.
- Dairy events such as the event run at the Korumburra Showgrounds (which has been rained out, often).
- Disability horse training.
- At least one private centre in Gippsland is used for night markets.

