

Whitlands Community

Plan 2010/2011

What does the Whitlands community hope to achieve?

The community hopes to gain recognition of Whitlands as a district with significant heritage. By working together we hope to build a sense of community and neighbourliness.

Whitlands Profile

The Whitlands Plateau, above the King Valley, is a sub-alpine area that stretches for 10 kilometres at a height above sea level of, on average, 750 metres. This contrasts with Whitfield which has a height of 400 metres above sea level. Whitlands boasts a very high rainfall and receives one or two snowfalls each year. The Whitlands Plateau was heavily impacted by the 2006 / 2007 bushfires, the first significant fire in the area since 1939. The properties and farms are surrounded by State Forest which covers a significantly greater area than the private land. During the bushfires this was a cause of isolation for the community as fires closed the Mansfield Whitfield Road which traverses the plateau. The Boggy Creek runs through the Whitlands area to the Myrree Valley. Powers Lookout, overlooking the King Valley and across the Victorian Alps, is a well known feature of the Plateau and is named after the bushranger, Harry Power. Whitlands also has a scenic lookout that offers views of the Myrree Valley and at night the lights of Wangaratta and Benalla.

The Whitlands community mainly live along the Mansfield Whitfield Road, and off that road, on Burders Lane. There are



approximately 25 houses in the locality with 11 of these being on Burders Lane. It is estimated that about 50 people live or own property at Whitlands. Of these 50 people, about 70% reside permanently at Whitlands. The Whitlands community come together each year for the annual Easter party. Held on Easter Saturday this tradition has been going for over 40 years and is hosted in turn by different members of the community.

The Whitlands locality has several vineyards that grow grape varieties suitable for high altitudes. It is considered to have the highest vineyard in Victoria (850 metres above sea level). Other produce grown at Whitlands include blueberries, raspberries, walnuts and chestnuts.

The nearest community facilities are based in Whitfield, a 20 minute drive to the King Valley. There are no community buildings currently remaining at Whitlands.

The wooden Catholic Chapel in Burders Lane is what remains of the Catholic community that was established in the 1940's at Whitlands. In days gone by the Whitlands community had a Progress Association, a primary school (at two distinct time periods), a post office and several operating sawmills that provided local employment.

Prepared by Jenny Ashby, 24 February 2011.

Background

The Whitlands community participated in a community planning meeting, facilitated by the Rural City of Wangaratta on Sunday 3 October 2010 at the Brown Bros. Vineyard Staffroom. A follow up workshop was held on Thursday 28 October 2010, to develop the aims and goals for each project identified on the plan. Information generated from these gatherings has provided the basis for the Whitlands Community Plan.

What Community Groups exist?

Whitlands' residents participate in community groups in neighbouring towns.

How do locals communicate?

Limited access to Grapevine
Phone Tree for fires
Personal contact

Community facilities...

At present there are no community facilities.

What Community Events are held?

Whitlands Easter Party

What Memorials or icons exist in your community?

Whitlands Catholic Chapel
Old School Site
Old Post Office Site
Powers Lookout –interpretive boards

Local Businesses

Whitlands Engineering
Laurevin blueberries & Vineyard
J. Ashby & Associates
Brown Bros. Vineyard
M & C Doring PL
Stella Matutina Vineyard
Howard Gibbs Nursery
Whitlands Plateau Vineyard & Archive Software
Roadside Waratah Sales (Oct-Nov)



Daviesia latifolia (Hop Bitter Pea) Whitlands Lookout

What attracts tourists to your area?

Powers Lookout
Wangaratta-Mansfield tourist route
Views to Mount Buffalo

What are the key features of your area?

Powers Lookout
Scenic Lookout
Scenic Drive (Whitfield-Mansfield)



Links to other communities –

Schooling

Primary School – Myrree
Secondary – Wangaratta

Shopping

Mansfield, Benalla & Wangaratta

Themes from the first community meeting held on Sunday 3 October 2010.

This is a list of identified needs generated from a brainstorming session:

Table One

Refurbish scenic lookout, signage, local history, beautification, road grading, Rachel Croucher's history – finalise, edit, publish & distribute across the community, photo collection of local history, improved maintenance under local power lines- reduce/cease outages, seal road from Whitlands to Myrree, confirm continuation of mail run, Council to lobby for slip on (water pump) for Whitfield CFA to reduce response times, better attention to road maintenance – for businesses, primary producers & individuals.

Table Two

Promote redevelopment of scenic lookout with local guide and/or Burders Lane corner, restriction on motor bike speed, history marker at Whitlands School site, history of district – refer Rachel & Rob, update fire phone tree, designated fire safety zone – where? Fire bunker?

Table Three

Sealing road to Myrree, helipad, safe refuge area, refurbish/improve scenic lookout, flexibility of land usage/subdivision, mark old school site, school bus turning point on Mansfield-Whitfield Road, underground 3-phase power, more reliable phone line service, community hall/meeting place, emergency communications plan – local phone tree and clear line of communication.

Table Four

Knowledge of geology of area, recording history of the area, continue as 'Bureau of Meteorology site for rainfall statistics, road signage – Whitfield sign facing entering and exiting traffic, concern-don't lose mail route – an asset to maintain, postcode change confusion re lack of notification is 3733 still recognised, sealing Myrree Road, CFA community fireguard meeting, promote scenic lookout-site signage and accessible toilet, Old School Site - Rec Reserve status? Safety for bushfires – fuel reduction along roadside & improving mobile phone reception.

The attendees on each table prioritised their top five needs which were then collated and scored. The attendees were then asked 'who would like to champion' each priority. This information has been represented on the following pages as the Whitlands Community Action Plan.

\$5,000 Community Planning Grant *Towards the end of the meeting, the community discussed how best to allocate a \$5,000 Community Planning Grant.*

The following options have been put forward for the community to consider and a decision will be made once more information and a budget is brought to the next gathering:

History Book & Launch **Scenic Lookout – Seating** **Locality Guide**

WHITLANDS Community Action Plan 2010/2011

Infrastructure

Priority Need	Who will champion?	Aim	Goal	Stakeholder
Myrrhee Road Seal	Gavin Delaney Margaret Nichols Scott Smith	For comfort and safety of travellers and school bus on the only route to Benalla.	Myrrhee Road sealed.	RCoW
Whitfield Road -noise restriction -motor bike speed	Gavin Margaret Nichols Scott Smith	To improve motorbike safety and noise reduction on the Mansfield-Whitfield Road.	Motorbike compliance with safety and noise standards	VicRoads RCoW
Power -underground-3 phase -improve/maintain local powerlines	David Burder	To improve power service and reduce fire risk.	Improved & safer power service.	SPAusNet RCoW
Phone coverage -land & mobile	Carl Dowling	To improve telecommunications in the Whitlands District.	Telecommunications upgraded service.	Optus Telstra RCoW

Community – Young, Senior, Families, New residents

Priority Need	Who will champion?	Aim	Goal	Stakeholder
Mail Run -maintain mail run -post code confusion	Gladys MacLean	To obtain written guarantee of mail service in the Whitlands district.	Written guarantee obtained.	Australia Post Local MPs
Community Hall	Jill Shiller	To investigate a venue for locals to meet and socialise.	A meeting place identified.	Brown Bros Vineyards RCoW

Economy – how can we develop business opportunities?

Priority Need	Who will champion?	Aim	Goal	Stakeholder
Scenic Lookout -refurbish -locality guide -Burders Lane Corner (locality guide board)	Gavin Michael Ashby Kevin Croucher	Revitalise scenic lookout as a community project to increase tourism visitation. To reduce rubbish being dumped.	Upgrade lookout. Reduction in rubbish dumping.	RCoW Parks Victoria

Pet Grooming Business	Kelly Croucher	Access to regularly pet grooming service.	Pet grooming service established.	
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Safety & Accessibility

Priority Need	Who will champion?	Aim	Goal	Stakeholder
Fire Plan -safety zone/refuge -phone tree -bunker -fuel reduction Emergency Plan Slip On	Jenny Ashby Carl Dowling	To make Whitlands fire ready.	Achieve resources such as: refuge, reviewed phone tree, bunker, emergency plan and slip on (water pump). Fuel reduction burns in the Whitlands district.	RCoW-Emergency Manager CFA SES
High School bus with heating & cooling	Jill Shiller (Emma, Emily & Kelly)	Improve passenger comfort in hot and cold weather on school buses.	School buses to have heating and cooling.	School Bus lines

Arts, Culture & Heritage – events, preservation group, projects

Priority Need	Who will champion?	Aim	Goal	Stakeholder
Local History -book -Markers -school site cleanup -geneology	Rachel Croucher Jenny Ashby Christine Delany David Burder	To record the local history for future generations.	A book published on local history.	RCoW – Cultural Development Officer Wangaratta Historical Society



If you would like to know more about the Rural City of Wangaratta's Community Planning Program, please contact the Community Planning Officer on 5722 0824.

WHITLANDS- COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

A Vibrant and Healthy Community

COMMUNITY ISSUE	2030 COMMUNITY VISION LINK	COUNCIL PLAN LINK	STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	STAKEHOLDER
To obtain written guarantee of mail service in the Whitlands district. Goal - Written guarantee obtained.				Australia Post Local MPs
To investigate a venue for locals to meet and socialise. Goal - A meeting place identified.	Support activities that engage people with shared special interests (e.g. sport, cultural, heritage, gardening/ environment) and promote these to the community. Celebrate important community milestones.	Continue to upgrade facilities to ensure communities have access to a place to meet for social, recreational and learning opportunities.		Brown Bros Vineyards RCoW

A Thriving Economy

COMMUNITY ISSUE	2030 COMMUNITY VISION LINK	COUNCIL PLAN LINK	STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	STAKEHOLDER
Revitalise scenic lookout as a community project to increase tourism visitation. Goal - Updgrade lookout		Implement the 2010-2013 Rural City of Wangaratta Tourism Industry Strategic Plan.	Tourism Strategic Plan	RCoW Parks Victoria

Safety & Accessibility

COMMUNITY ISSUE	2030 COMMUNITY VISION LINK	COUNCIL PLAN LINK	STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	STAKEHOLDER
<p>To make Whitlands fire ready.</p> <p>Goal - Achieve resources such as: refuge, reviewed phone tree, bunker, emergency plan and slip on (water pump). Fuel reduction burns in the Whitlands district.</p>		<p>Identify and enhance the core elements which contribute to community safety and liveability in the Rural City of Wangaratta.</p> <p>Work with emergency services and other agencies to develop a proactive approach to planning for crisis situations.</p>	Municipal Emergency Management Plan	<p>RCoW-Emergency Manager CFA SES</p>
<p>Improve passenger comfort in hot and cold weather on school buses. Goal - School buses to have heating and cooling</p>	Work with other levels of government and community agencies to identify and address transport issues.	Continue to work with the Transport Connections Project to develop a Transport Action Plan and address identified public and community transport gaps.		School Bus lines

Arts, Culture & Heritage

COMMUNITY ISSUE	2030 COMMUNITY VISION LINK	COUNCIL PLAN LINK	STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	STAKEHOLDER
To record the local history for future generations. Goal - A book published on local history.	Support cultural groups to develop opportunities to celebrate their heritage.	Support cultural groups to celebrate their heritage.		RCoW – Cultural Development Officer Wangaratta Historical Society

Infrastructure – roads, signs, halls

COMMUNITY ISSUE	2030 COMMUNITY VISION LINK	COUNCIL PLAN LINK	STRATEGIC PLAN LINK	STAKEHOLDER
For comfort and safety of travellers and school bus on the only route to Benalla. Goal - Myrree Road sealed				RCoW
To improve motorbike safety and noise reduction on the Mansfield-Whitfield Road. Goal - Motorbike compliance with safety and noise standards				VicRoads RCoW
To improve power service and reduce fire risk.	Advocate for and identify financial incentives to allow businesses and households			SPAusNet RCoW

Goal - Telecommunications upgraded service.	to develop renewable energy capacity. Facilitate uptake of solar energy by community through partnership programs (e.g. Towong model). Assess the needs and develop renewable energy targets for the community.			
To improve telecommunications in the Whitlands District. Goal - Telecommunications upgraded service.		Investigate opportunities to provide telecommunications into the Rural City of Wangaratta, comparable with metropolitan access.		Optus Telstra RCoW