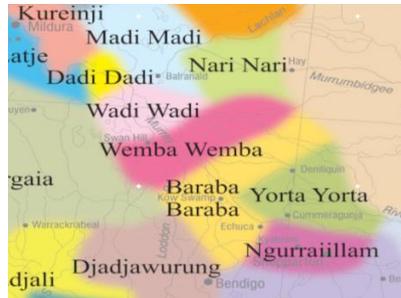


## YARRAWALLA COMMUNITY PLAN 2023-2032

**We acknowledge we are on the land of the Barapa Barapa and Dja Dja Warrung peoples.**



**(Yarravalla – Aboriginal name for the blue parakeet or blue winged parakeet. The distinct markings of the blue winged parakeet are the blue of the wings and yellow of the breast.)**



## **OUR COMMUNITY – OUR PLAN**

*To be an inclusive and supportive community.*

*To maintain and improve our community assets.*

*To improve the community lives of those in Yarrawalla, both mentally and physically.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

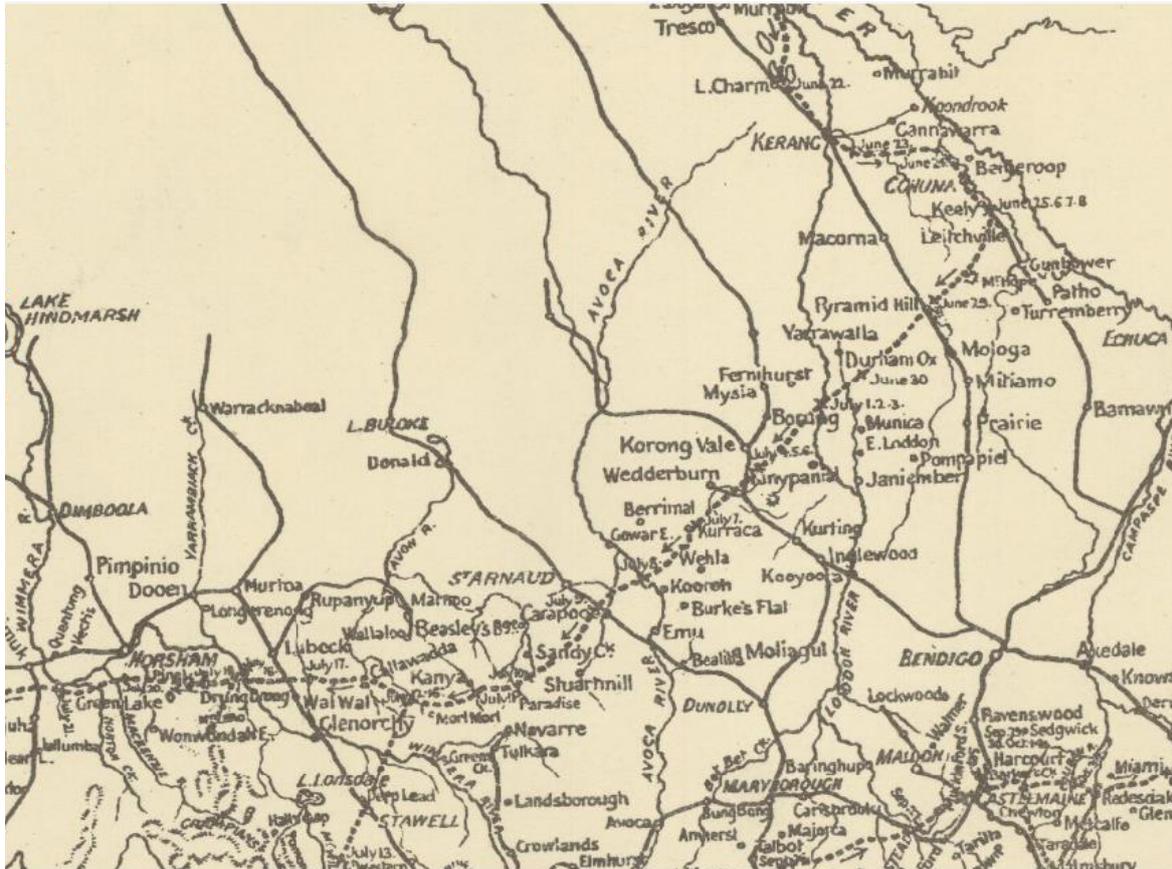
At the time of Yarrawalla's European settlement the district appears to have been the home range of both the Aboriginal Dja-Dja Wrung (south based) and the Barapa-barapa to the north.

Black Box swamps and the grassy plains were valuable sources of kangaroos and possums. Yams, wattle seeds and cumbungi reeds were used and roasted for starch. Their large campfire areas and artifacts can still be found in the Yarrawalla area.

The last tribal people were forced to move by closer settlement around the 1870's. However today their descendants can be found in Bendigo, Kerang and the Melbourne area. They maintain with pride their ancient family connections to the district.

## OUR PAST

Very little is known locally of our indigenous beginnings.



Map showing part of Major Mitchell's track through Victoria : from June 13th. to October 18th. 1836 / H. Hansford, del., Sept. 1928

(The following has been taken from "From Parakeets to People, Past and Present – Celebrating 125 Years of Yarrawalla and District as a Community")

*"According to Aboriginal myth, Yarrawalla was the home of the Blue parakeet, but it is rarely seen today."*

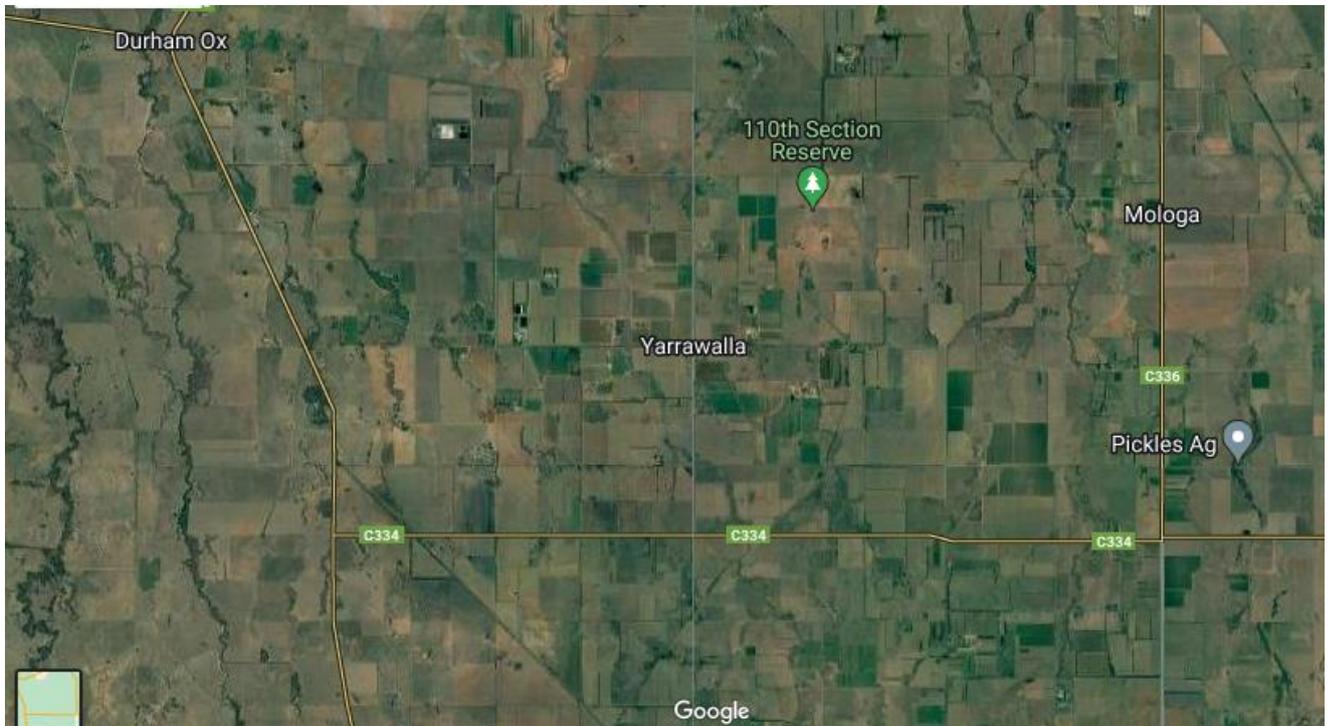
*"Major Thomas Mitchell claimed to be the first white man in the district as an explorer."  
"... if his route is followed from Pyramid Hill to the Loddon River crossing, it is evident the party travelled through the Yarrawalla district."*

*"Squatters arrived at Durham Ox in 1838 and cattle grazed the district until the area was thrown open to settlement in 1870."*

*"As settlers arrived with their families, education facilities became a necessity and Yarrawalla's first school opened in 1875."*

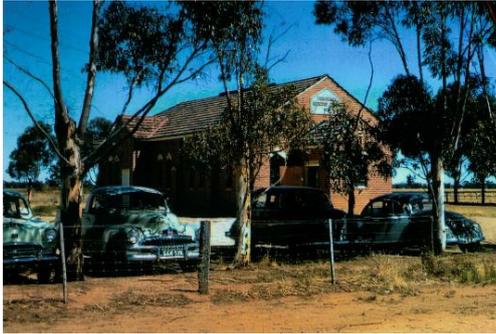
*"The first church, the Bible Christian Church, was built in 1875 and later became the Methodist and later still was moved to Yarrawalla South."*

*“As people settled the district, the rail reached Pyramid Hill in 1884, Gordon Shire was formed in 1885 (and) irrigation began in 1886.”*



Yarrowalla is situated in the Loddon Valley in Victoria, Australia. Its geographical coordinates are 36° 4' 0" South, 144° 2' 0' East

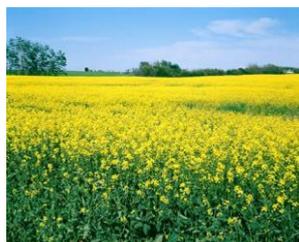
## SIGNIFICANT EUROPEAN EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF YARRAWALLA



- Major Mitchell's arrival in 1836
- School and Church establishment in 1875
- Irrigation began in 1886
- The first organised sporting event (cricket) occurred in 1897
- Telecommunications arrived in 1924
- Electricity arrived in 1958
- Salinity problems began to be noticed in the late 1950's

## YARRAWALLA AS A FARMING DISTRICT

The Yarrawalla district comprises a variety of farming enterprises at present including dairy, crops (dryland and irrigation, summer and winter), prime lambs, wool, beef, pigs and horticulture.



## RECREATION RESERVE

The Yarrowalla Recreation Reserve comprises a Community Hall, playground, fire shed and truck. Across the road stands the Yarrowalla Uniting Church which was decommissioned on November 3, 2013. Currently, the entire area is maintained on a roster system by volunteers from the community and managed by the Recreation Reserve Committee. Under current government regulations this committee is elected from the community to manage the hall and grounds every three years.



The Yarrowalla Community use adjoining towns of Boort and Pyramid Hill as well as the communities of Mitiamo, Jarklin and Calivil for other services including sporting pursuits. Bendigo is the major centre used for larger business transactions. It is important for the Yarrowalla community that these towns are sustained and continue to develop in all areas including businesses, services and social gathering places.

Groups which currently use the facilities include:

- Yoga Group on Monday nights
- Walking Group on Tuesday nights

## COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Yarrawalla Community Centre has facilities which make it an ideal venue in which to hold seminars and various social functions.

Yarrawalla has been severely impacted by floods in 2011 and again in 2022. Surrounding farms were affected to varying degrees but very few houses were inundated.



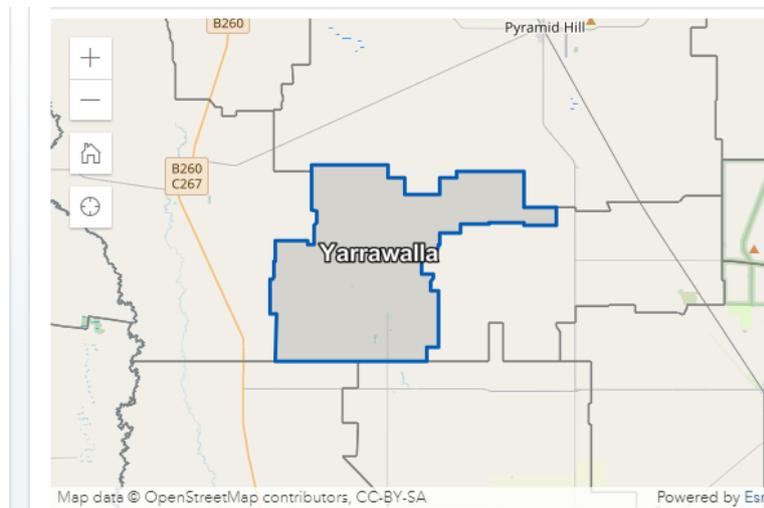
(Floods in 2022)

The oval at the Yarrawalla Community Centre provides a large area of green grass available for community use. The various groups and committees in the Yarrawalla area, recognise the importance of maintaining this facility and keeping it green, especially during droughts. As a committee, the Yarrawalla Community Planning Committee will continue to support the Yarrawalla Community Centre Committee to ensure this oval is maintained for community use.

## YARRAWALLA CFA SHED

The Yarrawalla CFA shed is situated within the precinct of the Yarrawalla Community Centre and is considered a vital part of the community.

## YARRAWALLA



## DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY FOR YARRAWALLA 2021

	<b>People</b>	<b>78</b>
	Male	56.4%
	Female	43.6%
	Median age	45
	<b>Families</b>	<b>24</b>
	Average number of children per family	
	for families with children	2
	for all households (a)	0.6
	<b>All private dwellings</b>	<b>40</b>
	Average number of people per household	2.4
	Median weekly household income	\$1,583
	Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$1,200
	Median weekly rent (b)	\$150
	Average number of motor vehicles per dwelling	2.6

(a) This label has been updated to more accurately reflect the Census concept shown in this data item. The data has not changed.

(b) For 2021, median weekly rent calculations exclude dwellings being occupied rent-free.

**Note 1:** Median and average values may be affected by confidentiality in small areas.

**Note 2:** Due to the small population for this area, limited information has been provided.

**Note 3:** Small random adjustments have been made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality from the table totals.

Please note that there are small random adjustments made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality amounts from table totals.

## **WHERE WE ARE NOW**

### **Economic Development & Tourism**

The Yarrawalla community relies on agricultural pursuits as a major driver of economic activity. With high quality irrigation water available from the Waranga irrigation system, there are opportunities for a diverse range of farming activities. Dairying is strong in the area with some of the largest dairy farms in the Loddon Shire, located at Yarrawalla. Much of the land has been laid out for irrigation and other farming includes cereal cropping, prime lambs and wool production, beef cattle, pigs, horticulture and hay.

#### **Issues raised relating to employment include:**

While employment opportunities exist in the area, it is difficult to attract good, long-term employees. Difficulties are experienced in finding suitable nearby accommodation for workers, and staff often need to travel long distances from nearby towns or regional centres. Employers are providing more and more accommodation to ensure they can attract staff.

In the past, the community suggested that similar government incentives to those provided to first home buyers be provided to people who build in rural areas.

### **Telecommunications**

Poor mobile phone reception is experienced in many areas, although this is patchy and varies considerably. Within Yarrawalla, there are places where it is not possible to use mobile phones from a particular carrier and it varies throughout the area.

Travelling to Bendigo involves passing through large swathes of the area where mobile connection is not possible.

Internet access is often unacceptably slow and can be adversely affected by weather (clouds, rain, fog).

### **Tourism**

Yarrawalla has the opportunity to improve exposure through the Loddon Tourism Directory and web site. Farm visits have previously been discussed as an alternative tourism opportunity in the region, but there has been little interest from the farm owners.

With significant volumes of agricultural product grown locally the opportunity for value adding could be explored by local producers and the shire.

### **Works & Infrastructure**

As is the situation across most of the Loddon Shire, roads are the most important Council responsibility. Farmers rely heavily on a reliable and safe road network for access to properties and for the road transport of their children to schools and produce to markets. The road network around Yarrawalla is made up of a range of road standards from the Loddon Valley Highway to the main roads of the Bendigo-Pyramid Road and Boort Mitiamo

Road, sealed local roads (Jarklin-Yarrawalla Rd, Yarrawalla South Rd and Yarrawalla East and West Rd) and a number of gravel and formed roads.

The following road projects are ones that the community believe need to be considered and addressed with the Shire.

1. Road signage.

There is some local confusion about the names that have been assigned to various roads in the area. An overview of local road names and signs is required. The local community should write to Council seeking clarification of road signage issues, and make suggestions where road name changes might be required.

2. Road Conditions / Maintenance

With a high local emphasis on roads, the Yarrawalla Community feel they need to request regular inspections and maintenance of local and main roads.

3. Dangerous intersections

The intersection of the Yarrawalla East, Yarrawalla West and Yarrawalla South Roads is considered dangerous by locals and requires an inspection by Council to identify safety improvements that could be made. Although Give Way Signs are there, the height of grass on the channel bank often makes it difficult to see oncoming traffic.

## **Environment**

4. Waste Management

The rural garbage collection system is a weekly service while the recycled collection is fortnightly.

5. Salinity

Most farmers in the area are considered environmentally conscious with improved irrigation systems, many laser graded paddocks, tree plantations, whole of farm planning and salinity controls in appropriate locations. These environmental initiatives are encouraged and embraced by the community.

6. Noxious Weeds

A number of noxious weeds need to be controlled locally. These include White Horse Nettle, Box Thorn and Bindii. A local weed control strategy is required that involves the whole the community, and could be managed by the local Loddon Vale Landcare Group, (which has purchased a box-thorn puller for use by members), in conjunction with appropriate authorities.

## **Community Services & Recreation**

Recreation activities are considered an important part of the social fabric of the Yarrawalla Community. The current committee are trying to establish interest within the community for a variety of activities to aid in the feeling of belonging and inclusion of all residents

The Community Centre, built in 1977 remains one of the best community facilities in the municipality. The ongoing development of the Community Centre has been the topic of local debate for some time.

### Recent Achievements

In July 2023, a very successful community bonfire was held at the Community Centre. Entertainment was provided by Sherri Parry and Jan Wositzky.



## OUR GOALS

Following consultation of the community using individual approaches as well as community events and meetings, these issues are seen as the domain of the Community Planning Committee and important for the community.

1. Involve local people and improve the feeling of community within Yarrawalla.
2. Help the community develop resilience by recognising our successes and sharing stories.
3. Help co-ordinate the community to develop desired outcomes.

Priority projects which have been identified include:

1. Build a new external toilet and move the septic system at the Yarrawalla Community Centre.
2. Move the current shed at the Community Centre as it blocks vision of the playground and place it more appropriately when the new toilet block is built.
3. Assist in providing activities the community desires in Yarrawalla.
4. Initiate and involve the community in using the Community Centre for more local activities
5. Remove the current fence around the Community Centre and beautify the area. Install solar bollards and decorative trees, especially on the north of the hall.
6. Build an all-weather court at the Community Centre which could be used for tennis, basketball and other court based activities.
7. Replace the seats in the playground with all-weather seats, probably recycled plastic.
8. Install dual flush toilets in the hall.
9. Re-sand the floor of the Yarrawalla hall.
10. Paint all Yarrawalla hall and replace external door handles.
11. Repair the Yarrawalla hall tables.
12. Purchase new chairs for the Yarrawalla hall.

## PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

GOAL	ACTION	TASK	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	PRIORITY	STATUS
New external toilets at Yarrowalla Recreation Reserve		Draw plans Shire approval required	State govt Shire Plumbers Builders	12 months	High	Funding received
Move shed at Yarrowalla Recreation Reserve		Decide on position	Shire	12 months	Medium	Not started
Provide activities requested by community		Organise activities	All interested people	Ongoing	Medium	Ongoing
Advertise and encourage the local community to use the Yarrowalla Community Centre for social and other activities		Create advertisements	Those interested. EL Community News and Pyramid Press for advertisements	Ongoing	Medium	Ongoing
Remove current fence around the Yarrowalla Community Centre		Remove fence and dispose of the wood.	Volunteers	6 months	Medium	Work has started
Improve the entrance to the Yarrowalla Community Centre.		Purchase and install solar bollards and plant trees on the north of the hall.	Volunteers	6 months	Medium	Work has started.
Renew Yarrowalla hall floor		Re-sand the floors in the Yarrowalla hall	Sanding company	2 years	Low	To be commenced

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TASK</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Playground maintenance at Yarrowalla Recreation Reserve		Replace the broken seats in the playground with new recycled plastic ones.	Find a grant	6 months	High	To be commenced
Improve Yarrowalla hall facilities		Replace current toilets with dual flush toilets		12 months	Medium	To be commenced
Renovate Yarrowalla hall		Paint all the doors in the Yarrowalla hall and replace all external door handles	Locksmith	12 months	Medium	Investigation commenced
Renovate Yarrowalla hall equipment		Repair the rectangular tables in the hall	Volunteers	12 months	Medium	To be commenced
Yarrowalla hall improvement		Replace current hall chairs using a grant if possible	Source funding and use own savings	2 years	Medium	To be commenced
Install all-weather multi-purpose courts – e.g. Tennis, basketball, netball, etc		Find an appropriate product	Source funding and use own savings	5-10 years	Low	To be commenced

## **PLAN REVIEW**

The Yarrawalla Community Plan will be reviewed annually as a desk top review, to be presented to the Planning Committee at the AGM and to any community members present.

This will allow the plan to be discussed, reviewed and for it to remain valid and a living document.

## YARRAWALLA COMMUNITY HALL

The Yarrowalla Hall is a community hall maintained by locals on a roster system. Unfortunately, as the last few years have discouraged the congregation of people, the hall has been used less than is optimal.

Community and social cohesion are an important part of mental well-being, and our wonderful hall can play a role in ensuring we remain as well mentally and physically as possible.

If you feel you would like to participate in any of the following, please indicate on the back.

### 1. GAMES/CARD DAY/NIGHT



Featuring a variety of card games and board games with all contributions welcomed.

### 2. DANCE NIGHT



Featuring a rock 'n' roll trainer or old-time dances or other.

### 3. POOL/8-BALL/KELLY POOL/BILLIARDS/BADMINTON/PICKLE-BALL



Play a choice of the above games for fun or in a competition.



### 4. COOK-OFF or WORLD DAY FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY POT LUCK LUNCH

Take turns to prepare food for whoever wants to come for a get-together on a regular basis using the hall facilities.



### 5. MONTHLY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Come together for a celebration for birthdays that have occurred in the previous month.



### 6. DAILY/WEEKLY/MONTHLY WALKING GROUP

Come to walk around the oval or travel the roads around the hall as a get-together to promote some

shared physical activity.



### 7. YOGA is available every Monday night at the hall. Phone Sharon Lister on 0427 366 244.

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR ROSTERED VOLUNTEERS

<b>Hall lawn mowing and toilet cleaning</b>		<b>Fire Truck Roster</b>
January	Trevor & Merrion Roulston	Brian Smith
February	Jarad & Adelle Smith	Jarad Smith
March	Brian Smith & Sue Bennett	Tim Wagner Peter Smith
April	Colin Roberts & Christine Mulquinney	Laurie Maxted Wayne Maxted
May	Jim & Claire Hercus	Trevor Roulston Doug Leed
June	Tim & Jeannie Wagner	Travis Gilmore Paul Smith
July	Tom Smith	Glen Pickles Simon Smith
August	Joe & Carmen Cauchi	Jim Hercus Tom Smith
September	Peter Smith John & Sue Pickles	Paul Smith Steven Maxted
October	Leigh & Sally Manton	Chris Wagner Nick Marlow
November	Brian Smith & Sue Bennett	Leigh Manton
December	Paul & Gail Smith	Brian Smith