



Nillumbik

The Green Wedge Shire

Early Years Infrastructure Plan
2020 – 2026



Nillumbik Shire Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people who are the Traditional Custodians of this Land. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.



We embrace equality, diversity and difference in our community. We believe that everyone has a right to live a full life the way they want to live it and that a diverse community enriches us all.



We would like to acknowledge all participants who have provided constructive feedback and ideas and have been willing to contribute to the Early Years Infrastructure discussion. We recognise the broad range of skill and knowledge that contributed to this work.

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Executive Summary

The provision of Early Years services in Nillumbik Shire is achieved through a collaborative approach between Council and Early Years Service Providers. Nillumbik Shire Council provides infrastructure to accommodate a range of early years education, care and support services and works alongside services to provide a variety of opportunities for young children and families to access. With ageing building stock, changes in early years service provision legislation and a shift in the way that families live and access a range of services, it was identified that Council needed a strategic planning document to guide the prioritisation and the resource allocation of improvements to Early Years Infrastructure over the next six years

This Early Years Infrastructure Plan is the final part of a volume of work to review and consider current building stock, utilisation, current and predicted demand, stakeholder input and current best practice in the Early Years sector to develop a focus for the next six years. The final part of developing this plan was to understand and review the current challenges, forecast who may be using these buildings into the future and how the utilisation will change. We invited stakeholder engagement, sharing what we know about the population and listening to their observations and ideas regarding future infrastructure investment that would support the continued delivery of services to the area.

In light of the Department of Education and Training's 3 year old funding developments, we commenced meeting with some services and key stakeholders in October 2019 to discuss the early years infrastructure needs of each township group and the discussions were completed in March 2020. The discussions have been based on the current and predicted population and service data that we have for 3 and 4 year old kindergarten, community need, programming, contemporary practice and opportunities for partnership. We have had a range of stakeholders participate in the Township discussions. The Early Years Infrastructure Plan is being presented to Council in May 2020.

The final plan attached recognises Council's important role, with strategic recommendations and priority projects to support high quality early years services and encourage community engagement in early years services. Council recognises that health and education are crucial influencers for positive long term outcomes. The plan includes renewal, extension and some consolidation of complimentary early years services into the one facility to enable a more integrated service experience for families in the Shire. It recognises the value of both standalone services and the benefit of integrated facilities to enable further collaboration of early years services and professionals in higher demand areas.

State and National perspectives have been considered in the development of this plan to support future programs and to attract funding for Nillumbik infrastructure. Federal and State Government policy recognises the critical role that Local Governments play in supporting early years programs and service provision. Changes in legislation and Government will directly influence how Local Governments can support the improvement of infrastructure for Early Years Service Providers. In recent years there has been a shift towards funding infrastructure that encourages an integrated service approach to early years learning and health. Additionally there is also a shift in thinking which has led to Government viewing opportunities for preschool services to be located within Primary School grounds as a favourable outcome for families and early years development. These are just two examples of some changes in the sector that Council must consider when planning for the future. Additional to this, contemporary theory and best practice have guided recent changes to the Maternal Child Health(MCH) framework and guidelines. The framework, policy and legislation has influenced change in service delivery.

Nillumbik Maternal Child Services are recognising that there is a rising complexity to their role, this is consistent across the profession. With changes in family life and increased knowledge

in mental health and family violence, families are benefitting from earlier diagnosis and prevention supports. Maternal Child Health practitioners in Nillumbik have also noted an increase in isolation and the need for different services which encourage connecting parents and children to the community. As part of future improvements there is benefit in reducing solo practitioners in the community due to both safety issues as well as opportunities for peer learning and support. Predicted reduction in birth rates within Nillumbik Shire and a shift in where the babies will be born within the Shire is important information to consider when developing a plan which will support families into the future. It has also been observed by educators that it is more regular for families to consider returning for a second year of kindergarten where it may be of benefit to school readiness. This impacts on demand but it also highlights the benefit of early years providers working with parents and professionals to get the best outcomes for children early in life.

The Early Years Infrastructure Plan is intended to guide Council's provision and management of Council's early years facilities. Council has 26 early years facilities that have been reviewed during the development of this plan. The plan supports our commitment to children and families within our Shire to have a range of services available to them to support health and development. Nillumbik Shire Council works with a range of providers to ensure that the needs of the community are understood and considered in its planning for the future.

The development of the plan supports the continued provision of a range of early years programs to the residents of Nillumbik Shire. This report represents a thorough overview of the investment required to respond to the ageing infrastructure and the future needs of the community. Infrastructure priorities identified include a combination of:

- New and improvement works at current facilities
- extension and expansion of some facilities to improve integration of early years services, provide some flexible spaces and to address unmet demand
- locations that would benefit from a Community hub to accommodate a number of Early Years functions. This contemporary approach would increase community connection, cross collaboration of education and health professionals to benefit the children and families in the Nillumbik Shire.

Vision for Early Years in Nillumbik

Nillumbik Shire Council has a vision to be Australia's most liveable Shire. In line with this vision, Council highly values the high quality and diverse early years education and care programs available to Nillumbik residents. The diversity of service offered is made possible by the provision of Council facilities to Early Years Service Providers.

Nillumbik has a strong history of high quality early years education and care programs being available to residents and with the introduction of funded 3yo kindergarten, the need for upgraded and improved facilities is critical to ensure the continuation of this high standard to the community. This strategic plan aligns particularly with Nillumbik Council's goals of **engaged and connected communities** – where communities and ideas thrive, underpinned by trust, confidence and continuous learning and **responsible leadership** – making the best use of available resources to the benefit of all in the pursuit of excellence. Council recognises the importance of high quality early years services and programs in lifelong outcomes for people and their quality of life.

Objectives of Plan

The development of a Nillumbik Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2020-2026 is intended to provide Council with a strategic direction for investment. Internal and external investment sources are required to ensure the future provision of Council owned facilities to support early years service provision within the municipality. Infrastructure planning includes the

refurbishment, extension and redevelopment of existing Nillumbik building stock. There are 26 facilities across the Shire with 23 Council owned and 3 managed by Council.

The Shire of Nillumbik covers an area of 432 square kilometres with just over 6% of the Shire's population being aged between 0 – 4 years. Nillumbik is known as the Green Wedge Shire. The composition of Nillumbik Shire's urban and rural areas create unique challenges in terms of service provision, and when referring to early years services, unique needs for those accessing these services. A high portion of families consist of two working parents and over 60% of workers in Nillumbik travel to work by car. Nillumbik comprises of a collection of townships, all with different population and demographic features.

To ensure the plan was inclusive and represented the diversity of needs within Nillumbik it was vital to engage with the key stakeholders and community in the development of this plan. A small level of engagement with children was carried out by the service providers themselves to contribute to the development of the plans principles, but unfortunately this was not as successful as Council had hoped with few services engaging in this process and the omission of a consistent approach with children and the objectives of the engagement. Nevertheless, through working with other stakeholders and community, the development of a set of Principles to guide the plan was achieved with a strong sense that the community values of protecting the bushland environment, the open spaces and it's heritage resounded loud and clear. Additionally it was clear that the needs of families are changing and that a variety of services and supports need to be available to families with children aged 0 – 8 years of age.

Nillumbik Council plan 2017 – 21 includes 5 key goals for the municipality, these are:

- Engaged, connected communities
- Active and creative people
- Safe and healthy environments
- A prosperous economy
- Responsible leadership

The review of current infrastructure and planning for the current and future population of young families in the area is in line with key Council goals, particularly in relation to community need, continuous learning, participation, enjoying our iconic environment, supporting the opportunity for a prosperous economy and making the most of the available resources to benefit all in the pursuit of excellence. This document will be referenced when Council reviews and develops the Strategic resource plan, longer term plans and strategies.

Councils Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 – 2021 includes the public health principles of evidence based decision making, primary prevention and capacity building. The plan also recognises that health promotion activities are central to reducing differences in health status and outcomes of individuals. Additionally the Health and Wellbeing Plan identifies the importance of collaboration between Government, industry, business, community and individuals. This has been considered in the infrastructure planning for early years services in recognition of the partnership role that families, professionals and Council plays in gaining the best outcomes for children. Infrastructure can create more opportunities for collaboration, it can also create barriers to collaboration. Many of the priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Plan are supported by early education programs – elements such as supporting healthy food consumption, active living, increasing social connection, gender equity and safety and inclusion.

Through the gathering of knowledge and research for this plan it was evident that the needs of the community and education have dramatically changed since the infrastructure was first built. Often both parents work and seek preschool or childcare that can support this activity. We also know more about mental health, family violence, vulnerability and the complexity of

families than we did 40 – 50 years ago and this knowledge needs to be factored in to both Council and early years Providers' planning. Early years services are recognised as a key contributor to the social determinants of health.

The facilities need to meet compliance with legislation and building codes, functionality, convenience of location, promote optimal use and best practice, promote service integration where possible, accessible and compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), and sustainable in terms of maintenance and usability.

The key objectives of the Plan are to:

- Review the suitability of the current facilities by considering the current demand, contemporary practice in early years services and the anticipated future need
- Activate a planned approach which allows Council to
 - responsibly allocate council resources
 - identify solutions that are likely to gain external funding in line with Government policy and direction
- Consider the pending introduction of subsidised 3 year old kindergarten including the projected implementation timeline and the additional demand that this State wide change places on Nillumbik infrastructure
- Consider infrastructure introduced in other municipalities which has enabled contemporary best practice models to be successfully introduced in other municipalities across the Maternal Child Health and Early Years education and health sphere. Look at opportunities to enhance support to the community by adapting some of the learnings from emerging infrastructure projects that have facilitated professional best practice by design.
- Identify any opportunities for renewal, enhancement, rebuild, shared use, flexibility in utilisation or repurpose depending on usage data and predicted population.
- Develop a sustainable strategy that includes short term, medium term and longer term works to be embarked on by Council to improve the serviceability of current facilities and to explore potential for infrastructure that supports service integration.
- Identify site constraints, challenges and key stakeholder concerns in relation to proposed infrastructure strategy.

The plan has been developed to outline and guide the direction of Council in supporting the provision of early years services for children and families. It has been developed as a high level document, identifying the key pieces of work that Nillumbik Shire Council will focus on over the next six years. Most of the items on the plan will require further project planning and development of the final scope of work.

Scope of Plan

The infrastructure included for discussion includes building stock that houses kindergartens (preschools), long day care, occasional care and maternal child health services. There are two services that were included in this plan which are located on Department of Education and Training land, including Ness Reserve in Diamond Creek and Kangaroo Ground Preschool in Kangaroo Ground. As part of the development of this plan we also considered the education and care programs being delivered by private organisations and primary schools in the area, recognising that they are also accessed by local families.

The six year plan identifies facilities with current or predicted increased utilisation, articulating enhancement and expansion of current facilities to accommodate this need. It also considers contemporary service delivery which includes an extensive range of support programs such as baby settling and breastfeeding support, parent education sessions and playgroups. There is an increased need for multipurpose spaces which have flexibility to run a variety of activities.

Terminology

Early Years Infrastructure – refers to Council owned/managed facilities that house services and programs which are accessed for children 0 – 8 years of age.

Kindergarten/Preschool – these two terms are used interchangeably and refer to programs for licenced educational programs.

4 year old kindergarten – refers to government funded kindergarten programs for children delivered by licensed early education providers. Nillumbik facilities host 20 licensed education and care providers delivering this program.

3 year old kindergarten – refers to unfunded kindergarten programs for 3 year old children operated by licensed early years education and care providers. This program is currently a fee-for-service program paid for by families whose children attend the program. In 2019 the State Government announced that they will subsidise 3 year old kindergarten to, all eligible Victorian children from 2022, commencing with five hours of funded program increasing to 15 hours per child by 2029.

Long Day Care – refers to centre based childcare delivered by licensed education and care providers. Babies through to school age children attend, delivered by qualified professionals. Many services offer funded 4 year old kindergarten within their program which is delivered by a qualified kindergarten teacher.

Maternal Child Health (MCH) – refers to the Council operated service which works with families to care for babies and young children. This service is a free service to all families delivered by qualified Maternal and Child Health nurses.

Integrated Early Years Service – The intention of an integrated early years service is that it is a 'one stop' centre for families where they can access multiple services and referrals to specialist services. Integrated services can include literacy and learning programs, playgroups, maternal and child health services, parenting support and education. It is designed to strengthen community engagement with families and to strengthen health and educational outcomes by creating connection, reducing isolation and increasing social skills and learning.

Facility – for the purposes of this report we are referring to Council owned assets which accommodate one or more early years education or support service. This includes the building, the carpark and yard for the site.

Methodology

The three - phased project has included:

- Review of the condition and functionality of the council building including utilisation, building codes, design guidelines for early years buildings
- Demand and capacity for early years services in the municipality
- Financial investment by Council and State Government in Nillumbik's early years building stock over the past seven years
- Information provision and consultation with Committees of Management, Early Years Managers, Council staff, parents and members of the community through
 - Consultation with families who use the services and the community about what they value, why they do or do not access preschool from Council facilities and what they would like to see in terms of early years facilities in their local area.
 - Meeting with services onsite to understand their challenges first hand

- Regular engagement with educators and Committee of Management members
- Working with a diverse reference group to develop a set of Principles to guide future Council infrastructure work for facilities that host early years services
- Township group meetings with each area about their infrastructure needs
- Some individual meetings to gain further information about their facility
- Review of geographical location and future population data
- Looking at current trends and State and Federal Government policy direction in Australia

Considerations

Throughout the development of the plan, considerations included:

- Current Government policy and funding context
- Current legislative context
- Current and emerging trends in facility design
- Current and emerging trends in service modelling
- Demand and population including anticipated growth
- General demographics and socioeconomic characteristics
- Proximity to other services and supports, including Primary Schools, health services and community transport
- Building condition and cost to maintain/improve/rebuild
- Families, educators and the general community
- Future developments in early years knowledge and theory changes; evidence based knowledge that is different to current thinking should be considered during the life of this plan
- Accessibility to site, this includes walkability and safety issues
- Land size and capability to adequately host extension works, including additional traffic to the site
- Community involvement and attachment to the site
- Committee members, Early Years Management, staff and other stakeholders input regarding the location, condition and serviceability of the early years facilities.
- Introduction of subsidised 3 year old program commencing with five hours in 2022 and increasing to 15 hours by 2029
- Utilisation rate of the facility
- Grants and opportunities available to the community
- Government direction could change in the life of this plan and this plan should be able to adapt to such changes as new information and opportunities become available

Cost estimates per project and funding sources need to be sought additional to this plan. Nillumbik Shire Council will work with early years providers and seek opportunities for Federal and State grant funding to assist with improvements to early years infrastructure in the Shire. It is expected that services may co contribute to planned works and this will be negotiated with providers as the plan is implemented. This plan will assist Council to advocate for particular community needs and for particular funding opportunities which will benefit the Nillumbik community.

Early Years Services within Council facilities

Kindergartens

There are 15 standalone Preschools operating from Council buildings in the Shire of Nillumbik. Council manages the centralised waiting list for 4 year old kindergarten and it is intended that

the subsidised 3 year old kindergarten enrolments will also be managed by Council. Three year old subsidised kindergarten is due to commence in the Nillumbik Shire in 2022.

Licence capacity and 4 year old enrolments for standalone Kindergarten 2019/2020

| Service | Total Enrolments for 2019 | Total Enrolments for 2020 | Preferred capacity per group and number of groups 2020 | Licensed capacity per group |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten | 52 | 27 | 30 1 group | 30 |
| Diamond Hills Preschool | 51 | 52 | 26 2 groups | 30 |
| Eltham North Preschool | 38 | 32 | 22 1.5 rotating groups | 30 |
| Eltham Preschool | 25 | 22 | 22 1 group | 25 |
| Eltham South Preschool | 35 | 31 | 22 1.5 rotating groups | 30 |
| Eltham Woods Preschool | 43 | 48 | 25 2 groups | 30 |
| Ferguson Park Preschool | 41 | 37 | 22 2 groups | 27 |
| Hurstbridge Preschool | 14 | 12 | 30 1 group (combined 3&4 year old) | 30 |
| Kangaroo Ground Preschool | 39 | 24 | 27 1 group | 27 |
| Ness Reserve Preschool | 31 | 50 | 25 2 groups | 25 |
| Panton Hill Preschool | 22 | 18 | 30 1 group (combined 3&4 year old) | 30 |
| Research Preschool | 25 | 20 | 29 1 group | 29 |
| Woodridge Preschool | 57 | 54 | 27 2 groups | 33 |
| Yarra Warra Preschool | 44 | 44 | 22 2 groups | 30 |
| Yarrambat Preschool | 66 | 65 | 22 3 groups | 30 |

Data current in February 2020 at the commencement of the preschool year.

Waiting lists for standalone Preschools are managed centrally by Nillumbik Shire Council. There is higher demand for some preschools and this is generally due to the hours offered; these are the preschools who offer longer sessions with the option of after kinder care to accommodate families that are working, studying or have carer responsibilities. A modest decrease in birth rates and a noticeable increase in families accessing services which can offer longer days due to other family commitments has influenced enrolment numbers over the past 10 years at standalone preschools.

Centre based child care

Long Day Care

There are four Long Day Care services operating from Council buildings in Nillumbik, these include Eltham Child Care Cooperative, Eltham Woods Childcare Cooperative, Meruka Child

Care Co-operative and Hurstbridge Hub Children’s Centre. Enrolments and waiting lists for these services are managed by the provider, with a reported demand that cannot be met particularly for babies.

Occasional Care

There is one occasional care service, Diamond Creek Occasional and Long Day Care Inc. This service is unique in that families are able to book in for occasional care, only paying when they need it and are not disadvantaged if they cancel their booking. This service provides for more flexible working/studying commitments and prioritises vulnerable families. Waiting list for this service is managed by the provider, with a reported demand that cannot be met particularly for babies.

Playhouses

There are two standalone Playhouses and one Playgroup operating from Council buildings in the Shire of Nillumbik. Eltham and Panton Hill Playhouses are operated by Council whilst Hohnes Road Playhouse is managed by a volunteer Committee of Management. The two Council playhouses offer shorter sessions of care daily (five hours per day) and are able to offer occasional and emergency respite care. Hohnes Road Playhouse reviewed its program model at the end of 2019 and only provides playgroups sessions for families.

Licence capacity and average daily enrolments for Centre based Childcare Care 2020

| Service | Average daily enrolments for 2019 | Average daily enrolments for 2020 | Preferred daily capacity | Daily licenced Capacity |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Diamond Creek Occasional Care | 56 | 54 | 56 | 56 |
| Eltham Childcare Cooperative | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |
| Eltham Playhouse | 11 | 10 | 20 | 21 |
| Eltham Woods Childcare Cooperative | 47 | 47 | 47 | 47 |
| Hurstbridge Hub Childcare | 52 | 50 | 50 | 65 |
| Meruka Childcare Cooperative | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Panton Hill Playhouse | 13 | 11 | 20 | 21 |

Data current in February 2020 at the commencement of the year.

Maternal Child Health

There are seven MCH centres across the Nillumbik Shire. Most services are collocated next to other early years services such as preschools and/or long day care centres. The centres are located in Diamond Creek, Eltham, Eltham North, Eltham Woods, Hurstbridge, Research and Warrandyte North. Families are allocated to an MCH service according to their postcode.

The overall birth rate for the shire is not increasing however there is predicted increases in Diamond Creek, Plenty/Yarrambat and the most significant increase for MCH services is predicted to be Eltham Central. Diamond Creek has been identified as a vulnerable area and needing enhanced nurse support. Hours are being increased to be responsive to this need. Council continues to monitor and review this changing need.

To align with Best Practice service delivery, the plan proposes to remove single MCH nurse centres and plan for dual nurse locations.

Over time, MCH nurses in the Nillumbik Shire have observed an increase in the vulnerability of new parents in the area. They report that the identification and diagnosis of mental health has increased and that many people in the community are isolated as new parents. These challenges and others that are emerging mean that service and infrastructure planning needs to be reviewed to respond to these changing needs. One of the key things that MCH nurses have identified is the need for additional spaces within Nillumbik that enable more opportunities to provide programs that enable people to connect and a chance to do more information sharing/education programs. The opportunity to build a pathway from birth through to primary school has been identified to strengthen the services and supports available to families in the Shire and contribute to children having the best start in life.

Strengths and Challenges of current Infrastructure

Strengths

The current early years building stock strengths include:

- the characteristics of the building and layout is in keeping with the history and incorporate the environmental aspects of the area which are highly valued by the community
- attractive natural playgrounds and outlooks connecting to the natural environment
- Some of the facilities are placed on land that can accommodate expansion
- Outdoor educational spaces that exceed the licensing requirements in terms of size
- Some currently accommodate a co-location of early years services such as a Preschool service next to an MCH service or a childcare service
- Most have adequate heating and cooling systems
- Most have car parking and good access to the service
- Good sized undercover outdoor areas and shaded play areas
- Most have reasonable indoor and outdoor storage areas

Challenges

The range of challenges that the current early years building stock include:

- Fit for purpose challenges that affects program transitions, staff amenities and administration spaces
- Irregular shaped buildings or indoor outdoor areas that make supervision challenging
- Ageing and requiring high frequency maintenance to maintain the building at a useable standard
- Many not compliant with Disability Discrimination Act
- MCH locations are limited in size and cannot support the current best practice of dual nurse practices
- Office/administration spaces are inadequate. This is due to increased demand on these space since the buildings were constructed
- Availability of a space to have private conversations with parents is limited
- Some do not have adequate parking access or have some safety concerns about the parking flow due to design
- Not all buildings have staff/meeting room available
- Some services have indicated the need for more indoor and outdoor storage
- Toilet access being problematic for teachers at some centres during program time
- Toilet areas need modification to provide the option of privacy for children

Many of the positive features and the limitations of the current buildings are common in other municipalities. Early years education has changed since the design of the buildings, programs

are run differently and there are more regulations to comply with which has influenced change in the way buildings are used to deliver programs.

Community Consultation and Engagement/Methodology

Community Reference Group

A community reference group (CRG) was established in 2019 to develop a set of principles that would guide the early years infrastructure plan. (Refer to table below) The CRG included 31 members of the community with an interest in early years education and care and included providers and educators from Nillumbik services as well as community members and other program representatives. The CRG met weekly for five weeks

| Principle | Features/assessment criteria |
|---|--|
| <p>LOCATION The location of early years infrastructure enriches connection to our community, neighbourhood and environment.</p> | <p>New and renovated early years infrastructure will incorporate spaces specifically designed to enable a gathering place for children and their families.</p> <p>The location of facilities supports the co-location and collaboration between other services that families access. This will include the location of Maternal Child Health services, Primary Schools and other health and education services accessed by families with children aged 0 – 8.</p> <p>The location of early years infrastructure will promote walkability both for families accessing the service and for children participating in early years programs by being located close to community opportunities which can be incorporated in the education program.</p> <p>Early years infrastructure will be located close to parks and other open spaces to promote outdoor opportunities for families to meet up near early years services.</p> <p>The location will consider accessibility including DDA compliance, safe car parking and location to public transport</p> |
| <p>CHOICE, DIVERSITY & HISTORY Infrastructure improvements and future builds will consider the diversity of programs offered and reflect the different communities within Nillumbik.</p> | <p>The unique character and heritage features of Nillumbik Shire will be reflected in the design of renovated and newly built infrastructure.</p> <p>Infrastructure will be designed flexibility to accommodate changing needs and promote choice across the Shire.</p> |
| <p>FUNCTIONAL SPACES Early years infrastructure will provide fit for purpose spaces that are functional and flexible to meet the needs of key stakeholders. Functional and flexible design will include the building structure, the indoor and outdoor spaces and access to the building, including car parking.</p> | <p>The infrastructure will be designed to maximise utilisation by early years services and other groups in the community.</p> <p>Nillumbik will work to maximise utilisation of the early years infrastructure by using what we currently have as well as considering new fit for purpose infrastructure gaining a mix of infrastructure that meets current and emerging children and family needs.</p> <p>Facilities are designed to maximise capacity and accessibility to programs.</p> <p>Where the infrastructure hosts integrated services, facilities consider universal access design principles that enable people from across the life course to access and utilise the building.</p> |
| <p>ENVIRONMENTAL Early years infrastructure will optimise environmental sustainability and efficiency.</p> | <p>Building materials, placement of building on site, design elements such as solar, water tanks, tinting and acoustics will reflect Nillumbik’s commitment to the natural environment.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| Council's Sustainability plan, along with it's experience in using natural and eco friendly materials will be applied to building design. | Infrastructure will support social and physical engagement with our natural environment, strengthening the opportunity for programming which educates and encourages children to engage in sustainable and environmentally responsible activity. |
| CENTRE OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY Early years infrastructure will identify some centres for families and community, which support partnership and integrated services. | <p>Where there is opportunity identified to create an integrated building, the design will allow all services under one roof incorporating dedicated and multipurpose spaces to support partnership.</p> <p>Accessibility for all age groups will be considered and welcoming common spaces will be included to nurture social inclusion and increase social capital.</p> <p>Designs will consider acoustics and other challenges faced by an integrated building hosting multiple services.</p> |

Predicted Nillumbik population data

The predicted population data provides Council with a good snapshot of where the population and demand for access to Council infrastructure is likely to be across the Shire. Additional to the number of people predicted to live in each area of the Shire, the population of Nillumbik is ageing, with only two areas of Nillumbik indicating a substantial increase in children under 8 years of age.

| | 2016 population | Estimated population 2021 | Predicted population 2036 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| NILLUMBIK | 64, 276 | 65, 125 | 70, 390 |
| Diamond Creek | 12, 236 | 12, 976 | 14, 930 |
| Eltham (Central) | 8, 735 | 8, 840 | 11, 544 |
| Eltham (East) | 3, 859 | 3, 696 | 3, 535 |
| Eltham (Edendale) | 3, 473 | 3, 305 | 3, 196 |
| Eltham (South) | 3, 353 | 3, 263 | 3, 486 |
| Eltham North | 4, 891 | 4, 784 | 4, 769 |
| Greensborough | 5, 743 | 5, 710 | 5, 425 |
| Hurstbridge | 3, 612 | 3, 582 | 3, 549 |
| Kangaroo Ground – Wattle Glen | 3, 226 | 3, 101 | 3, 199 |
| North Warrandyte | 3, 111 | 3, 003 | 2, 956 |
| Plenty - Yarrambat | 4, 198 | 4, 763 | 5, 513 |
| Research | 2, 763 | 2, 761 | 2, 843 |
| Rural East | 3, 518 | 3, 462 | 3, 413 |
| Rural North West | 1, 890 | 1, 880 | 2, 032 |

The Nillumbik population and household forecast data, 2016 to 2036, prepared by .id. 2017

Township Group

For the purposes of working through the individual infrastructure needs of the communities that exist within Nillumbik Shire, services were divided into Township groups. Township meetings were undertaken with the purpose of understanding the local community and service needs. Seven township meetings took place at the end of 2019 and early 2020 which included Hurstbridge, Panton Hill & Kangaroo Ground, Warrandyte North, Yarrambat, Greensborough, Diamond Creek and Eltham. Participants in these discussions included more than 30 people consisting of representatives of Committees of Management, Early Years Managers, educators, primary school and special development school senior staff. Not all early years services or Primary Schools contacted attended the discussions. Some services and groups had more than one meeting to follow up the detail that had emerged in the Township discussions.

Diamond Creek

The population forecast for Diamond Creek predicts that there will be an increase in the over 65 year old cohort, with a relatively stable population of 0 - 4 (5.9% increase) and 5 – 11 year olds (8.9%) in the area. Our current data tells us that children attending the early years services are predominantly from Diamond Creek, with a smaller number of children attending from other parts of the municipality. A small number of non-residents were enrolled in these services for 2020. Maternal and Child Health observations and associated data indicates that there has been a reasonable increase in vulnerable families requiring enhanced nurse support and the hours of service for this are being increased as needed.

The plan includes site works to renew and refresh the current buildings used by Ness Reserve Preschool, Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten and Diamond Creek Occasional and Long Day Care in the shorter term.

The plan also includes re-opening and an extension of the Coniston Street Family Centre facility to accommodate the future need for preschool places in Diamond Creek when funded 3 year old kindergarten commences. It would also enable the provision of co-located children and family services such as Maternal and Child Health

There is appetite from stakeholders across Early Years, MCH and Primary schools in the Diamond Creek township for an integrated Family and Children's Hub. Recognising that such a design could enable further collaboration and provide more integrated support to children and families.

Coniston Street Family Centre

This facility was built in 1971. It is on Council land and is in overall good condition. The building underwent an extension in 2014 where a second room was added with an outdoor area.

This facility houses Diamond Creek East Preschool which is currently not operating and a range of Council and community run playgroups.

The building is DDA compliant and there is room for site expansion. There may be some challenges to accessing this location for people on foot and public transport is limited.

The plan recommends further investigation to determine whether this site would be suitable for significant infrastructure investment to relocate the Diamond Creek Maternal and Child Health service to.

Diamond Creek East Preschool

This preschool ceased operating at the end of 2019. Expressions of interest for a new preschool provider at this facility are currently being assessed.

It is the intention to have this service operating again by the time 15 hours of funding 3 year old kindergarten commences to ensure the demand for preschool in Diamond Creek is met.

Diamond Creek Maternal and Child Health

There are currently two MCH nurses and a graduate nurse that service the Diamond Creek area. The location of the current service is in the main shopping area of Diamond Creek however the facility itself is not a viable long term prospect as it does not adequately accommodate the three staff located at this service. It has been identified that there is a need for a short term and a longer term plan to meet the service needs in the Diamond Creek area.

The current facility's central location is ideal however it cannot adequately accommodate two MCH nurses and a graduate, therefore an extension of the Coniston Street centre has been recommended to accommodate the MCH for the Diamond Creek township.

Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten

The facility was built in 1973. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition with some deterioration and serviceability issues.

There are challenges with supervision at this site due to the building and the access to the yard not being integrated.

Current enrolments indicate that Diamond Creek Memorial will be able to accommodate 15 hours of kindergarten when it commences however there has been unmet demand for this preschool in recent years.

The challenges of expanding this building to address the unmet demand include the land topography and the parking access and as a result, it is likely that major works would be cost prohibitive at this site and an increase of users to the building would increase the current parking challenges.

The key challenges include safe access to the yard, verandah weather proofing and some internal reconfiguration to assist with program delivery.

It has been recommended that an upgrade be included in the infrastructure plan which includes works to improve access to the yard and improvements to the verandah, office, entrance space and storage.

Diamond Creek Occasional Care

The facility was built in 2003. It is on Council land and is in good overall condition with some obvious deterioration. One of the rooms is a covered deck rather than a fully enclosed room.

Current enrolments indicate the service is at capacity. It has limited land expansion capacity due to its location between a road, an oval and a sporting facility. There are challenges with compliance to DDA due to the land topography.

The service operates 53 hours a week, approximately 48 weeks a year; accommodating 3 year old funded program will be dependent on enrolments.

It is recommended that an extension or relocation is considered for Diamond Creek Occasional Care in the longer term.

Ness Reserve Preschool

The facility was built in 1960. It is on Department of Education and Training land. The facility is a demountable in satisfactory condition with some obvious deterioration and some maintenance requirements. There is no opportunity for expansion of site. It is located next to Diamond Creek Primary school where enrolments continue to increase and next to Diamond Creek Living and Learning centre.

Two groups of 4 year old kindergarten currently run from this service. The facility will not be able to meet the demand when 15 hours of funded 3 year old kindergarten commences.

The facility is not DDA compliant and there are also safety issues associated with the existing car and pedestrian access to this facility which is shared with Diamond Creek Living and Learning Centre.

The improvements to this site are limited by land space therefore investment in this facility to address the safety issues associated with the shared carpark have been recommended in the infrastructure plan.

Greensborough

It is predicted that there will be an overall population decrease of 25.6% in the Greensborough area allocated to Nillumbik Shire by 2036. ABS data predictions for 2016 - 2036 indicate there will be a 38.83% decrease of children aged between 0 - 4 in this area of Greensborough and a 39.12% decrease in children aged between 5 -11. Given the low population of this catchment area however, the actual numbers of change are quite low. Maternal Child Health services are not located in this location.

Diamond Hills Preschool

The facility was built in 1986. It is on Council land and is in good working condition. The facility has had recent improvement works which included the improvement of the staff area. It is located next to Diamond Valley Special Development School (DVSDS) and a tertiary education service. It is within walking distance of a Primary School.

The service has maintained a high level of enrolments over many years and currently runs two groups of 4 year old kindergarten. The preschool will not be able to meet this demand when 15 hours of funded 3 year old kindergarten commences.

Currently DVSDS holds a lease with Council for a separate building on this site. Discussions with DVSDS confirm their need for continued use and willingness to explore expansion opportunities. There is potential for expansion on site.

The six year infrastructure plan recommends an extension of this facility to accommodate the future needs of both the preschool, DVSDS and other possible early years programs.

Eltham

It is predicted that there will be an overall population increase of 13% in the Eltham area by 2036. The largest population growth for this area has been identified as Eltham Central. ABS data predictions for 2016 - 2036 indicate that we need to plan for areas of Eltham in which preschool age children will reside will change with 37.4% increase of children aged between 0 - 4 in Eltham Central and a 26.5% decrease in Eltham North. The predicted shift of preschool population to central Eltham is a vital factor in determining early years infrastructure investment.

As part of the considerations for Eltham, the delivery of contemporary best practice support for new parents and babies may be best delivered by the creation of an Early Years Hub that enables an integrated service offering to children and families. It is estimated that due to the predicted growth approximately 1.5 MCH nurse EFT will be needed for the Eltham area. This needs to be accommodated in infrastructure planning.

Eltham Maternal and Child Health Centre

Maternal and Child Health services are provided by a single nurse service operating from the Eltham War Memorial site and adjoining Eltham Preschool. The building is in a deteriorating condition and Council regularly receives complaints about the musty smell, particularly from parents of newborns. Contemporary Maternal and Child Health services are moving away from single nurse centres and with the predicted demand in service the current site will not meet future demand.

This centre is no longer a desired facility to be operating MCH however the proximity to Eltham Central is desirable. The infrastructure plan recommends that the MCH service in Eltham Central be re located via a facility extension to the Eltham Child Care Cooperative site.

Eltham Preschool

The facility was built in 1969. It is on Council land, and the facility is in good condition with some deterioration and serviceability issues however it is not fit for current purpose.

One group of 4 year old kindergarten is currently offered from the service. Enrolment numbers have been declining steadily over the last few years therefore the service will be able to accommodate 3 year old kindergarten when it commences.

There are challenges with program transitions and supervision due to the design with no integration of the indoor and back yard outdoor education space. It has been determined that investment in this facility would be cost prohibitive. There is declining demand for the program and limited capacity to expand this facility.

Improvements to the facility have been identified as dependent on future enrolment numbers, a new provider taking on the service and the overall sustainability of the service.

Eltham North Maternal and Child Health Centre

The MCH service is co-located with the Eltham North Preschool, it is a single nurse location with a multipurpose space and a small kitchenette. Additionally there is an outdoor play space which is in reasonable working order and used by families. Small group sessions could continue to be delivered here for parents or for other community groups.

Current birth rates have reduced the demand for the service in this area. With a decreased demand for the service in the area and a move to dual nurse locations, it is recommended that the service is moved to meet dual nursing best practice. This location could continue to be offered to playgroups and other community groups.

Eltham North Preschool

The facility was built in 1974. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition with some deterioration and serviceability issues. This service is co-located with an MCH site which accommodates one MCH nurse.

Two groups of 4 year olds currently are running. Current enrolments and population data indicate that Eltham North Preschool will not be able to accommodate 15 hours of kindergarten when it commences but the current provider is looking at options, potentially offering an integrated program. The kitchen is small and limits the programs ability to include children in cooking and food education. It is not DDA compliant.

This service will be able to accommodate 3 and 4 year old program of one group of each age group. The facility requires minimal change to ensure that the facility is fit for purpose, it is recommended that the kitchen renewed and redesigned to enhance program delivery.

Eltham South Preschool

The facility was built in 1964. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition with some deterioration and serviceability issues.

There is a rotational 4 year old groups currently running. Current enrolments indicate that Eltham South Preschool will not be able to accommodate 15 hours of kindergarten when it commences.

To ensure that the facility is fit for purpose into the future, it requires investment to address the lack of an internal waiting/entry point and the safety and maintenance concerns related to the carpark. These issues have been recommended as part of the six year plan.

Eltham Woods Family Centre

The facility was built in 1988. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition. The facility co-locates Eltham Woods Preschool, MCH and Eltham Woods Childcare. The current facility design does not encourage maximising the professional/peer integration opportunities.

The plan recommends the installation of solar panels and an expansion of this facility which will include additional program rooms to meet the unmet demand in both the preschool and the child care services , staff amenities, increased MCH capacity and a flexible multipurpose space for groups to meet. Additional to the building works is the expansion of the parking area to safely accommodate the increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic to the centre.

Eltham Wood Maternal and Child Health Centre

It is currently a one MCH consulting room location. There is no flexible space to host parent support and education groups or playgroup, ideally an expansion of this facility would enable MCH staff to deliver more groups to provide support and social connection to parents with young children. Groups could be hosted at this location with the addition of a multipurpose room and a small kitchenette. Determination on whether an expanded site would require one or two consulting rooms is dependent on the confirmed location of other MCH staff in the Eltham, Research and Warrandyte areas. If two consulting rooms were included in the plan, it could be accessed by Allied Health supports when not being used by MCH staff.

Eltham Woods Preschool

This building is in good overall working condition. The layout is not fit for purpose, with the staff toilet located external to the preschool space.

Current demand for this preschool means the service will not be able to accommodate 15 hours of kindergarten when it commences therefore it is recommended in the plan that the service is provided with an additional program room as part of the Eltham Woods Family Centres expansion.

Eltham Woods Child Care Centre

Is in good overall condition. The service currently operates with three program rooms.

The service operates 57.5 hours a week, 50 weeks per year providing long day care and funded kindergarten. It operates at full capacity with a significant waiting list.

The service operates out of three rooms and will not be able to accommodate 15 hours of three year old kindergarten. Therefore it is recommended that the service is provided with an additional program room, an expansion of the kitchen, staff and toilet amenities to accommodate the additional children and staff as part of the Eltham Wood Family Centres expansion.

Eltham Childcare Cooperative

The facility was built in 1985 and was extended in 2015. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition with some deterioration and serviceability issues.

The service operates 57.5 hours a week, 48 weeks of the year providing long day care and funded kindergarten. It operates at full capacity with a significant waiting list.

Although tucked away from central Eltham, it is surrounded by park land which could accommodate an extension if the need was identified. If expanded, accessibility needs to be considered which would include the review of safe pedestrian access to the site. The facility is DDA compliant however the outdoor educational space is not.

It is within walking distance to the Eltham Library and has been recommended for an extension within the six year plan to accommodate additional childcare places, MCH and multipurpose space.

Meruka Childcare

The facility was built in 1991 and was extended in 2012. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition. The service is surrounded by parkland, with land capacity for an extension.

The service operates 57.5 hours a week, 49.5 weeks of the year providing long day care and funded kindergarten and operates at full capacity with a significant waiting list.

The current facility will not be able to accommodate the introduction of 15 hours of kindergarten. It is for this reason that it has been recommended for an extension in the six year infrastructure plan.

Research Maternal and Child Health

Currently a one consulting room location, with an additional room used occasionally by the Enhanced Nurse when needed. There is no flexible space to host parent support and education groups or playgroup. The MCH nurse at this location covers a large geographical area.

It is proposed that this service is relocated in line with best practice dual nurse stations, Eltham Woods could include this service when the facility is expanded.

Research Preschool

The facility was built in 1960 and is located on Council land. The facility is in good overall condition and is located within walking distance of Research Primary School and a privately operated long day care centre.

The current enrolment numbers suggest that this service will be able to accommodate 15 hours of funded preschool when it commences.

Investment in this facility has not be recommended as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Woodridge Preschool

The facility was built in 1975 and expanded in 2015. The facility is on Council land. The facility is in very good overall condition and is compliant with DDA however the outdoor educational space is not.

Two groups of 4 year old kindergarten currently run. There are safety concerns about the pathway leading to the facility and the acoustics provide challenges for program delivery when all children are inside the facility at once.

Minor investment recommended which includes lighting, solar panels and sound proofing has been identified as an infrastructure need for this facility and has been recommended in the six year infrastructure plan.

Hurstbridge

The estimated population for Hurstbridge in 2019 is 3,612. It is predicted that by 2036 the population will be 3,549, which is a -1.75% decline. This is consistent with ABS data from 2011 to 2016 which evidenced a decline in babies and pre-schoolers. There are two preschools, a Maternal and Child Health program and a long day care service in Hurstbridge. The Preschools operate from Council facilities and are located side by side. The current enrolments do not justify two services in the same geographical location. Historically the consolidation of the two services or collaborative approach to a solution has been met with opposition.

The local Primary school is experiencing a decrease in demand; they are currently losing a grade of students per year (approx.) and have a total enrolment number of 200 students. The enrolment numbers at the Primary School were close to 500 students 10 years ago. In 2020, there were 20 enrolments for prep. As a result, the Primary School currently has 4 - 5 rooms not being used which were built within the last 15 years and are in good condition. The option of converting these to an early years education and care space is supported by the school management. The Primary School has 45 licences for their afterschool program and are currently working collaboratively with the preschools to offer some afterschool services to preschool families who need longer hours to meet their other commitments.

Hurstbridge Children's Centre

The facility was built in 2014 and is 6 years old. It is on Council land and is located in the Hurstbridge Hub.

The service operates 56.5 hours a week, 49.5 weeks of the year providing long day care and funded kindergarten. This service is progressing to operate at full capacity.

Due to its age and current levels of serviceability, no investment has been identified as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Hurstbridge Maternal and Child Health Centre

The facility is new and provides one MCH consulting space and a quiet waiting area for families. Due to its age and current levels of serviceability, no investment has been identified as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Ferguson Park Preschool

The facility was built in 1974. It is on Council land and is in overall good working condition with some deterioration and serviceability issues. The service is adjacent to Hurstbridge Preschool and closely located to the Hurstbridge Hub.

Two groups of 4 year old groups are currently running. Current enrolments indicate that Ferguson Park will not be able to accommodate 15 hours of kindergarten when it commences.

The current demand for service is currently lower than the availability of services. Based on current numbers the facility will not be able to accommodate 3 year old however being next door to Hurstbridge Preschool enables the need to be met by a neighbouring service.

Exploration of preschool facilities being developed at the neighbouring primary school has been recommended as an opportunity to explore particularly given the current Government policy looking favourably at preschool and primary school co location.

Investment in this facility has not be recommended as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Hurstbridge Preschool

The facility was built in 1982. The facility is in good overall condition with come obvious deterioration. It is not DDA compliant.

Exploration of preschool facilities being developed at the neighbouring primary school has been recommended as an opportunity to explore particularly given the current Government policy looking favourably at preschool and primary school co location.

Through the township consultation process, the service providers identified the desire to expand the facility to accommodate a larger number of children however declining and current enrolment numbers do not support investment in an extension and therefore has not been recommended as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Panton Hill and Kangaroo Ground

The estimated population for Kangaroo Ground - Wattle Glen in 2016 was 3,226. It is predicted that by 2036 the population will be 3,111 which is a -1.75% decline. A slight increase in children 0-4 years old is predicted, with a slight decrease in 5- 9 year olds. The Rural East area estimated population was 3,518 in 2016 and is predicted to decrease slightly to 3,413 by 2036. With stable data for 0-4 and a slight decrease in 5 – 11 year olds. Maternal Health services for this are accessed from the Research and Hurstbridge service.

Kangaroo Ground Preschool

The facility was built in 2007. It is on Department of Education and Training land which houses Kangaroo Ground Primary School. The preschool is collocated with the school's before and after school care. The facility is in very good condition.

One group of 4 year olds are currently running at this service. Current enrolments indicate that 15 hours of kindergarten could be accommodated.

The location on a school site with shared carparking has been identified as a capacity and safety issue. As a result, investment in parking and facility access has been recommended as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Panton Hill Preschool

The facility was built in 1970 and is in overall good condition.

One group of 4 year olds are currently running at this service. Current enrolments indicate that 15 hours of kindergarten could be accommodated.

There has been no investment recommended for Panton Hill Preschool as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Warrandyte North

The population forecast for Warrandyte North predicts that there will be an overall decrease in population over the next 16 years. It is predicted that there will be a 68.7% increase in population of retirement age and a decrease in 0 - 4 year olds (20.7%) and 5 – 11 year olds (17.25%) in the area. Our current data tells us that children attending the early years services

are predominantly from the Nillumbik Shire with a small number of non-residents from neighbouring Manningham Shire. Maternal and Child Health demand in this area has declined.

Warrandyte North Maternal and Child Health Centre

There has been a decline in birth rates in this area which is evidenced by the reduction in demand for the MCH service in the area. The facility can accommodate one MCH nurse, this has been occupied on a part time basis and it is proposed that this service will relocate inline with Nillumbik's preference for dual occupied MCH locations. No services are currently being provided at this location due to COVID 19.

A relocation of the MCH nurse to a dual nurse location is preferred and has been included as part of the six year infrastructure plan.

Yarra Warra Preschool

The facility was built in 2004 and is in very good overall condition. It is co-located with a multipurpose hall and Warrandyte North Maternal and Child Health.

Two groups of 4 year old kindergarten currently run. The Preschool currently hires the multipurpose hall to accommodate the existing kindergarten enrolments and will require this continued use to accommodate 15 hours of 3 year old kindergarten when it commences.

The facility does not meet disability access requirements in terms of parking, access path and gradient.

It has been recommended as part of the six year infrastructure plan that investment to improve the acoustics within the community hall be carried out and improve accessibility to childrens toilets. This would improve the quality of education program being delivered to the children as well as having an overall benefit to other groups that hire the facility.

Yarrambat

The population forecast for Plenty – Yarrambat predicts that there will be an overall increase in population over the next 16 years. It is predicted that there will be a significant increase in 0 – 4 year olds (127%) and 5 – 11 year olds increasing by just over 25%. Although the growth seems significant there are a number of early years education and care services in the area to access.

Nillumbik Shire Council owns one facility in Yarrambat. Families attend the Preschool and Primary School services from Nillumbik and Whittlesea Shire. There are new Early Years services opening in Yarrambat, also near the primary school which are likely to influence demand.

Yarrambat Preschool

The facility was built in 2005 and was extended to become a two-room preschool in 2014. The facility is on Council land and the building is in very good overall condition.

Three groups of 4 year preschool is offered. Commonly this service has a high number of Whittlesea residents as well as Nillumbik residents enrolled at the Preschool due to it's geographical location.

Through the township consultations, the service expressed a desire to extend the facility including the car park to enable them to increase enrolments and cater for increased traffic from the school and the new child care centre.

Investment in the Yarrambat Preschool has not been recommended as part of the six year infrastructure plan as existing numbers in relation to licensed capacity does not suggest a need for expansion. Council is confident that the existing priority of access policy ensures that Yarrambat Preschool can accommodate Nillumbik residents when 15 hours of funded 3 year old kindergarten commences.

Expanding this facility to meet increased demand driven by development and/or access to Whittlesea residents would require a collaborative approach between Whittlesea Council and Nillumbik Shire Council.

Car parking needs will need to be explored if/when traffic to the local area increases.

Appendix 1

Nillumbik Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2020-2026

This plan has been developed to identify the Early Years infrastructure work to be achieved over the next six years. The timeline is based on categorising the works into three priority categories; identifying work that is required in the short term, medium and longer term.

The rationale outlines what the proposed works would address including:

- compliance with relevant Acts and Regulations,
- capacity to accommodate 15 hours of 3 year old kindergarten
- Supply and demand considerations
- achieving contemporary standards ('Fit for purpose').
- environment/sustainability

Nillumbik Early Years Infrastructure Plan 2020 - 2026

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| 2020/2021 | | | | |
| Diamond Creek Memorial Preschool | OHS, health & hygiene | Staff amenity sink | Staff amenity sink | Council |
| Eltham South Preschool | Ongoing maintenance and flooding issues Safety concerns | Carpark development | Carpark development | Council |
| Kangaroo Ground Preschool | Program enhancement | Indoor program sink | Indoor program sink | Council |
| Woodridge Preschool | OHS Enviro and financial sustainability Enhanced learning environment | Outdoor security lighting Solar panels Sound proofing | Outdoor security lighting Solar panels Sound proofing | External grant/Council/Service contribution |
| Meruka Child Care Centre | Enviro and financial sustainability | Solar panels | Solar panels | External grant/Council |
| Other identified facilities | Enviro and financial sustainability | Solar panels | Solar panels | External grant/Council |
| Yarra Warra Preschool | OHS Enhanced learning environment Compliance | Sound proofing Access to children's toilets | Sound proofing Access to children's toilets | Grant/Service |
| Hurstbridge Preschool | Disability and accessibility | Reconstruction of internal steps | Reconstruction of internal steps | Grant/Council |
| Eltham Woods Family Centre | Delivery of funded three year old kindergarten at both Preschool and Child Care | Overall expansion of facility including - Additional child care room - Additional preschool room | | External grant/Council/Service contribution |

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--------------|---|
| | Multi nurse MCH facility - best practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion of PS adult toilet - New building entrance with foyer - Solar panels - Additional MCH consulting room - Multipurpose MCH space - Child care kitchen upgrade - Extended carpark - Extension of outdoor children's spaces | | |
| Diamond Hills Preschool | Delivery of funded three year old kindergarten Address unmet demand for Child Care Provision of fit for purpose space for Diamond Valley Special Development School and other community groups | Overall expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional preschool room - Administration space - New entrance with foyer - Multipurpose room - Accessible path connecting preschool to special development school and primary school | | External grant/Council/Service contribution |
| 2021/2022 | | | | |
| Coniston Street Family Centre | Best practice for MCH delivery: Integrated children's service -Two nurse facility -Relocation of MCH service from existing site in Diamond Creek | Extension of facility to including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dual nurse MCH service - Multipurpose space for MCH - Extended car parking | | Grant/Council |

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Eltham Child Care Cooperative | Address unmet demand for Child Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Best practice for MCH delivery: Integrated children's service - Two nurse facility - Relocation of MCH service from existing site in Main Road Eltham | Overall expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional Child Care room - Dual nurse MCH facility - Multipurpose MCH space - Expansion of outdoor play spaces - Preschool program space | | External grant/Council/Service contribution |
| Kangaroo Ground Preschool | Increase car parking capacity | Carpark development including access to building | Carpark development including access to building | Council |
| Eltham Woods Family Centre | Delivery of funded three year old kindergarten at both Preschool and Child Care Multi nurse MCH facility - best practice | | Overall expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional child care room - Additional preschool room - Inclusion of PS adult toilet - New building entrance with foyer - Additional MCH consulting room - Multipurpose MCH space - Child care kitchen upgrade - Extended carpark - Extension of outdoor childrens spaces | External grant/Council/Service contribution |
| Diamond Hills Preschool | Delivery of funded three year old kindergarten Provision of fit for purpose space for | | Overall expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional child care room - Additional preschool room - Inclusion of PS adult toilet | External grant/Council/Service contribution |

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | Diamond Valley Special Development School and other community groups | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New building entrance with foyer - Additional MCH consulting room - Multipurpose MCH space - Child care kitchen upgrade - Extended carpark - Extension of outdoor childrens spaces | |
| 2022/2023 | | | | |
| Eltham Child Care Cooperative | Address unmet demand for Child Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Best practice for MCH delivery: Integrated children's service - Two nurse facility - Relocation of MCH service from existing site in Main Road Eltham | | Overall expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional Child Care room - Dual nurse MCH facility - Multipurpose MCH space - Expansion of outdoor play spaces - Preschool program space | External grant/Council/Service contribution |
| Coniston Street Family Centre | Best practice for MCH delivery: Integrated children's service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two nurse facility - Relocation of MCH service from existing site in Diamond Creek | | Extension of facility to including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dual nurse MCH service - Multipurpose space for MCH Extended car parking | Grant/Council |
| Meruka Child Care Centre | Address unmet demand for Child Care | Expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional licenced room | | Grant/Council/Service |

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| | Delivery of funded three year old kindergarten | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased kitchen capacity - Increased staff room capacity Additional toilets - Increased carpark capacity | | |
| Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten | Building compliance and accessibility Enhanced program delivery | Upgrades including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stairs leading to outdoor space - Weather conducive verandah - Office size and privacy - Entry space - Indoor and Outdoor storage - Lift | | Council/Service/External grant |
| Eltham South Preschool | Ongoing maintenance and flooding issues Safety concerns Enhanced program transition | Construction of foyer | | Council |
| 2023/2024 | | | | |
| Meruka Child Care Centre | Address unmet demand for Child Care Delivery of funded three year old kindergarten | | Expansion of facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional licenced room - Increased kitchen capacity - Increased staff room capacity - Additional toilets - Increased carpark capacity | Grant/Council/Service |

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|--|---|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten | Building compliance and accessibility Enhanced program delivery | | Upgrades including: - Stairs leading to outdoor space - Weather conducive verandah - Office size and privacy - Entry space - Indoor and outdoor storage - Lift | Council/Service/External grant |
| Eltham South Preschool | Ongoing maintenance and flooding issues Safety concerns Enhanced program transition | | Construction of foyer | Council |
| Ness Reserve Preschool | Safety concerns | Carpark development Upgrades including: - Deck storage - Office fit out | | Council |
| (TBC) Yarrambat Preschool | Based on needs analysis at planning stage | Carpark development | | Council |
| Eltham North Preschool | Enhanced program delivery | Redesign of kitchen | | Council/Service |
| 2024/2025 | | | | |
| Ness Reserve Preschool | Safety concerns | | Carpark development Upgrades including: - Deck storage - Office fit out | Council |

| FACILITY | RATIONALE | PLANNING | CONSTRUCTION | FUNDING SOURCE |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| (TBC) Yarrambat Preschool | Based on needs analysis at planning stage | | Carpark development | Council |
| Eltham North Preschool | Enhanced program delivery | | Redesign of kitchen | Council/Service |
| Kangaroo Ground Preschool | Enhanced program delivery | Outdoor space expansion | | Council/Service |
| 2025/2026 | | | | |
| Kangaroo Ground Preschool | Enhanced program delivery | | Outdoor space expansion | Council/Service |
| Woodridge Preschool | Enviro sustainability | Water tank | Water tank | Service/External grant |

Additional projects that require further demand and viability research

| Location | Upgrade or Infrastructure | Rationale/background |
|--|---|---|
| Eltham Preschool | Upgrades include access to staff amenities, increased indoor storage and construction of a foyer. | This is dependent on enrolment numbers, new provider taking over the service and sustainability of the service. There is an opportunity to co locate this service within an Eltham community Hub with other preschool services and supports, the initial conversations about his possibility have been met with resistance. |
| Diamond Creek Occasional and Long Day Care | Extension or relocation. | Masterplan for Diamond Creek infrastructure needs to consider the needs of the longer term needs of Early Years in the township. Should the Community Hub be considered in the Diamond Creek Infrastructure plan, the Diamond Creek Occasional Care needs to be considered as part of this infrastructure facility. If it is determined that a Hub is not progressed or that the DC Occasional and LDC service will not be part of the new facility, an extension of the current facility needs to be considered. Consultation undertaken with the service operator has indicated strong support for a relocation and/or expansion. |
| Yarrambat Preschool | Additional room and carpark enhancement. | Carpark improvement was identified by providers. There is no evidence to suggest that there is a need at this time. |
| Ferguson Park | Additional room | This is contingent upon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enrolment numbers demonstrating whether there is demand for Hurstbridge to operate two sustainable kindergartens located geographically next to each other further exploration of the possibility of preschool services at Hurstbridge primary school |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Hurstbridge Preschool | Additional room | This is contingent upon <ul style="list-style-type: none">enrolment numbers demonstrating whether there is demand for Hurstbridge to operate two sustainable kindergartens located geographically next to each other |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|