

A close-up photograph of an olive branch. The branch is light brown and has several green, elongated leaves. A cluster of olives is attached to the branch, showing various stages of ripening from green to yellow, red, and dark purple. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

**Invest.
Live.
Visit.
Play.**

**Strathbogie
Shire Council
Advocacy Ask**

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we strive, the peoples of the rivers and the hills of the Strathbogie Shire region who walked these lands for generations.

We pay our respects to the elders of the past, and the speakers of the first words, who lived in harmony with this country.

We acknowledge the elders of the present, who seek to regain their culture, and to teach the elders of the future their law, their history and their language.

We pay our respects to them and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We honour their spirit – and the memory, culture, art and science of the world’s oldest living culture through 60,000 years.

Strathbogie Shire: Invest. Live. Visit. Play

Our region is fast becoming the destination for people to invest, live, visit and play.

We are seeing strong development in Nagambie and Euroa, and this is matched by demand as people look to relocate to our beautiful region.

For those who are lucky to live in Strathbogie Shire we know how special our region is.

However, what was once our secret is now well-and-truly out.

To ensure we can support this growth – both business and residential – Strathbogie Shire Council will advocate to State and Federal governments for funding support.

Strathbogie Shire embraces more than 1,550 businesses over 20 industry sectors who support over 10,000 residents who call the area their home.

Our people together with the natural attractions of the region sustain over \$56.1 million in tourism income each year.

For more than 150 years, the agricultural sector and the businesses that support and depend on those farms, form the backbone of our local economy.



Advocacy Projects:

One.

Equitable digital and telecommunications infrastructure

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Two.

Reliable power supply

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2026 Commonwealth Games: Lake Nagambie rowing bid

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Greening Euroa Project

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Nature Base Play Space

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Council Plan 2021-2025, Section 2.1.4 Lobby State and Federal governments to fund improved digital and telecommunications infrastructure.

Equitable digital and telecommunications infrastructure





The opportunity:

The struggle for internet speed, reliability and phone coverage in Strathbogie Shire's municipality is unacceptable.

Slow speeds, dropouts, congestion at peak usage times and no mobile signal are causing dissatisfaction and disparity.

In Strathbogie Shire, the expectations of the NBN have not been met. Service in some locations is better on the mobile network, but 3G is intermittent and 4G is missing in many places.

Businesses and farms are not served well by fixed wireless internet connections and often face restraints from satellite services. The need to meet the policy objectives of a universally available NBN in our rural community is urgent.

More than 20 per cent of our population works in Agriculture, which heavily relies on mandated online platforms, such as livestock management system record keeping, auctions to buy and sell stock as well as more innovative practices of remote security monitoring, farm mapping, security cameras, emergency communications and equipment research.

As the result of a collaboration with NBNCO, Strathbogie Shire Council seeks further rollouts of fixed broadband and fibre to the node connections.

We believe telecommunications infrastructure is just as important as road, waste and utility services and the lack of this infrastructure and service providers makes rural districts uncompetitive in attracting commercial and residential investment, and at a disadvantage.

For local retailers, the EFTPOS machine internet reception wavers and peak internet usage times by school students cause slow and unreliable service.

Major event organisers of GoFish Nagambie Tournament, the Violet Town Market and the Euroa Music Festival face phone and internet congestion challenges which reduce participant satisfaction and the likelihood of them returning or providing positive feedback.

We need to ensure Strathbogie Shire residents, businesses and visitors receive the same level of connectivity capacity and service reliability as those in metropolitan Melbourne and our larger regional centres.

Without this, we will be left out of the digital race and miss out on economic development opportunities.

We know from lived experience that emergency resilience of rural communities is severely compromised during emergency events such as storm and fire events.

This is not a situation we accept.

The ask:

Improved infrastructure and service delivery through secured funding to meet community service expectations and needs that metropolitan-based residents enjoy as a right. Specifically:

One.

Build a mobile phone tower in Mitchelton

Two.

Provide NBN Co fibre connections to the towns of Avenel, Violet Town and Nagambie as a Stage 1 response of a comprehensive roll out across the Shire.

Three.

The continuation of the Telecommunications Blackspot Program or similar

Four.

The elimination of Blackspots in Strathbogie Shire

Cover image.
Hayley Purbrick,
Tahbilk Winery,
Nagambie

2. Sheep grazing in
prime lamb country,
Longwood

3. NBNCO Road Muster
truck demonstrating
the Sky Muster satellite
service

4. Mt Wombat
Telecommunications
Tower



Profile:

Rob Jamieson is a Ruffy resident who has experienced poor telecommunications first-hand in personal life as well as business.

“In the agriculture industry the National Livestock Identification System is now entirely online. This means that rural farmers and business owners need reliable and efficient internet coverage to fulfill regulatory requirements such as biosecurity recording and online audits which are now mandated.

We need telecommunications infrastructure and services to support this reliance to:

- buy and sell stock online
- input agricultural requirements
- provide remote monitoring of irrigation, feed, water tanks and lightning trackers
- equipment research and maintenance
- security monitoring
- data analytics to track yields for spraying and fertiliser
- drones to monitor fencing and livestock
- emergency communications in fires, storms, floods and more.

None of this can be achieved with the current telecommunications infrastructure in Strathbogie Shire. We need accessible and reliable phone and internet service coverage.”

Rob and the community experience slow internet speeds and intermittent coverage in the Ruffy Tablelands.

Rob Jamieson

Ruffy Community Action Group



Ruffy community members from left: Edward Sprunt, Theo Lagarde, Rob Jamieson, Gerry Ginnivan, Darryl Otzen and Bill Eddy

“I use the internet to receive and pay my bills, access My Gov and other online services, for news updates and for connection to family and friends.

In business, as a farmer I need coverage in order to stay updated with industry standards and to access online banking, ATO portals, payroll systems and more...”

Council Plan 2021–2025, Section 3.1.8 Advocate to Federal and State governments for investment in reliable power supply infrastructure with a focus on renewable energy.

Reliable power supply infrastructure





The opportunity:

Power failures during peak demand periods is a common occurrence throughout Strathbogie Shire.

In January 2019, Nagambie, Avenel, Longwood, Euroa and surrounds experienced an extended power outage lasting up to three days.

During the height of summer the heat was consistently reaching 40 degrees Celsius (Koob and Latimer, 2019, theage.com.au) and our power supply did not cope.

Outages occurred again in January and February 2020 at intermittent periods.

These repeated outages result in economic loss to retail and local industry providers and cause severe inconvenience and hardship for our residents and vulnerable citizens.

The reason: A single Ausnet electricity supply connecting Benalla to Euroa via Violet Town is the only infrastructure to service the surrounding localities.

The electricity source connecting Nagambie from Seymour is also struggling. Growing tourism, residential and commercial investment use will continue to place severe strain on the power supply along with other utilities into the future.

The lack of energy security is one of the most significant barriers to attracting new small to medium businesses to Strathbogie Shire.

1. From left: Glen Burnside (local business owner), Shirley Saywell (EEG chairperson and local business owner) and David Mawson (Mawsons Bakery owner).



The benefits:

With a moderate climate and proximity to Melbourne and major regional areas, Strathbogie Shire is well located to provide renewable energy generation import into the grid.

However, the lack of a secure and stable grid system prevents investment in large scale renewable energy in the region.

Council is keen to work with our communities with the view to implementing micro-grids (with battery storage and generator backup) as a sustainable means for energy security.

Council seeks funding to develop the feasibility and business case to work towards building a net zero renewable and resilient energy future over a three-stage project.

2. BD North East Electrics install solar panels on the Brady & Kibble truck wash as part of the Euroa Business Microgrid Demonstration Initiative.

3. Euroa Energy and Mondo sponsored truck trailer curtain promoting the Euroa Microgrid project

4. Microgrid stakeholders: Bruce Thompson, Shirley Saywell, The Hon. Jaclyn Symes MP, Rob Morphet, Matt Charles-Jones (Mondo Power), Charlie Brydon, Luke Scott (Globird), Tom Brown (DELWP).

This will ensure residents and businesses have independence and island-able capacity for townships on the Benalla AusNet line and the Seymour AusNet line.

This project provides for future renewables integration for the town and as AusNet advises, increases the potential for new small-medium businesses to connect to the grid that have previously been restricted due to this micro grid providing additional band width.



The ask:

One.

We ask the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) takes into consideration rural community populations and land mass in an equitable measure to densely populated areas, when applying the Regulatory Investment Test for Distribution (RIT-D) process to determine upgrade approvals.

Two.

That the Victorian Government continues to support renewable energy programs to deliver microgrids and stand-alone power systems in the regions that will ensure energy security and emergency resilience.

Three.

That the Australian Government supports renewable energy programs for our rural communities along the Seymour to Nagambie line and Benalla to Euroa line to support sustainable solutions such as microgrids and stand-alone energy systems.

Four.

We urge that the Australian Energy Regulator reviews an Ausnet line upgrade from Seymour to Benalla in the vicinity of \$20 Million, in line with current development increases in Nagambie and Avenel, particularly if renewable funding is not provided.

Profile:

“On a sunny day in Euroa the six tenanted apartments above the bakery are now making their own clean energy.

Euroa Connect, with partner Mondo Power, has installed large arrays on six business premises and linked the energy production of five of them with batteries.

These businesses are now enjoying the co-benefits of cheaper power, better energy management, sharing knowledge and being part of the change.”

“Blue sky thinking delivered this possibility.

A good bit of lateral thinking about contract renegotiation and smart sparkies did the structural orchestration.

But beyond all of that it was the commitment AND imagination of dedicated community members which made it happen!

Change is not just possible but do-able.”

Charlie Brydon
Euroa Connect



Cover image and 1.
Community renewable
energy advocate,
Charlie Brydon

2. The rear of the Euroa
Microgrid building
that houses residential
apartments and
Mawson's Bakery

Council Plan 2021-2025, Aligns to the Community Vision themes:
2) Live. Access. Connect. Focusing on economic and financial gains, and
5) Strong. Health. Safe. Health & Wellbeing through sport and recreation.

2026 Commonwealth Games: Lake Nagambie Rowing venue bid





1

The opportunity:



2

3

The 2026 Commonwealth Games in regional Victoria provides a huge opportunity for the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre to enhance its potential to be the only Victorian international venue of choice for Commonwealth Games 2026 rowing and for future regattas for years to follow.

Strathbogie Shire Council has been strongly advocating to Government to restore rowing to the games and Lake Nagambie.

Lake Nagambie is home to National, State and local flatwater rowing. The Regatta Centre precinct offers capacity for inland coastal rowing including a large beach, open water, plus exceptional spectator services and athlete facilities.

It's the perfect place to host flatwater or inland coastal rowing at the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

While our 2km long flatwater rowing course facilities are undisputed, we also have the capacity to host two inland coastal rowing events:

- 4-6km endurance event, and
- beach sprints.

Coastal rowing and beach sprints are confirmed 2022 Youth Olympic Games event and under consideration for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Council has shown we can deliver events of this capacity by hosting the Australian Rowing Nationals.

This opportunity would not simply draw international tourists to our region, it would enhance social, economic, and environmental outcomes across North East Victoria, which has so far missed out in the Regional Games.

This once in a lifetime investment in the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre will provide a legacy that allows our venue and region to host international rowing, festivals and community events into the future.

Cover: Aerial view of Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre from the starting pontoon

1. and 4. Australian Olympic Rowing team training at Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre in 2021.

2. Victorian State Rowing team racing on Lake Nagambie

3. Member of the Australian Olympic Rowing team - with WIN News



4



The benefits:

This idyllic location is favoured by competitors and spectators alike for the course layout, water quality and reliability. **Lake Nagambie was proud to host the Australian Olympic Rowing Team in 2021 to train and prepare for the Tokyo Olympics** and boasts many local connections to rowing champions including Lucy Stephan, Pat McNamara Neville Howell OAM and Neil Lodding.

Lake Nagambie is the Victorian choice rowing course that inhabits infrastructure excellence like no other location across the State. The Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre is a professional rowing facility providing:

- 2km rowing course;
- Eight buoyed lanes;
- Fully fenced secure venue;
- Starting pontoon system;
- Rowing compliant safe practices and first aid rooms;
- Ample vehicle parking;
- Boat and rack provision;
- Competitor preparation space;
- Tent and marshalling areas;
- Ramp access to the water;
- Judges box, commentator room and administration amenities;
- Conference room and kitchenette;
- Toilet facilities;
- Waste collection services;
- Trees for shade and windbreak;
- Inspiring natural surroundings;
- Foreshore walk along southern bank of the lake and rowing course.
- Commercial Canteen Facilities
- Ticket boxes
- NBN and Wifi services

1. Australian Olympic Rowing team training at Lake Nagambie in 2021

2. Michelton Hotel

3. Aspect of Lake Nagambie from Nagambie township

4. Goulburn River.

5. Mangalore Airport

Climate

Located north of the Great Dividing Range, the temperature and weather in and around Nagambie is reliable and ideal for water sports and professional athletes to compete.

Location

Lake Nagambie lies adjacent to the Nagambie township that is less than 90-minutes north of Melbourne. It is central to the entire state and is easily accessible by car or train.

To reiterate, the idyllic location is inspiring and favoured by competitors and spectators alike for the course layout, water quality and reliability.

Nagambie's location makes it a seasonal visitor destination for professional athletes, leisure seekers and tourists and proudly hosts *GoFish Nagambie* the largest fresh-water fishing tournament in Australia annually, attracting 16,000 competitors in 2019.

Infrastructure

Lake Nagambie is the Victorian choice rowing course that inhabits infrastructure excellence like no other location across the State.

Lake Nagambie is a unique 170-hectare man-made reservoir, which was formed by the construction of the Goulburn Weir dam from the Goulburn River in 1890. As the result, Lake Nagambie's water levels remain stable and constant year-round, and the water quality is clear and clean as managed by Goulburn Murray Water.

2026 Commonwealth Games:
Lake Nagambie Rowing venue bid



Currently, Strathbogie Shire Council together with the Victorian Government and Australian Government are delivering a \$3.8 million foreshore walk project which will provide valuable connectivity and lakeside access along the rowing course to benefit coaches, spectators and visitors alike; providing a number of viewing sites along the water bank.



Water quality

The Goulburn River is a major source of irrigation water in northern Victoria and the waters impounded by the weir provide recreation boating opportunities on the river, Lake Nagambie and the Goulburn Weir. Boating is a valued recreation activity in the area, attracting thousands of visitors from within Victoria, interstate and overseas.

Lake Nagambie's blue water, rich natural surroundings and rural setting is an optimal location to hold the 2026 Commonwealth Games Rowing events.

Athlete transport access

For Commonwealth Games participants, car and bus access to Nagambie is straight forward and accessible from Melbourne Airport, via the M80 Ring Road followed by the M31 Hume Freeway exit and a straight drive for 70 kilometers until the Goulburn Valley Freeway exit ramp, and the Nagambie township exit.

Alternatively, Nagambie can be accessed South-bound via the Hume Freeway from Albury Airport or Sydney too.

Athlete accommodation

Nagambie and surrounds boast premium accommodation options for competitors, teams, event staff, and spectators alike.

Providers include:

- Mitchelton Hotel
- Nagambie Waterfront Motel
- Nagambie Motor Inn and Conference Centre
- Nagambie Caravan Park and Motel
- Centretown Motel
- The Jetty
- Discovery Parks - Nagambie Lakes and more.

Media access points

For air coverage of the event, Mangalore Airport is only 18 km away for helicopter and aircraft facilities and access to oversee the rowing course and regatta racing. Alternatively, Essendon Fields, Melbourne Airport and Moorabbin Airports are also accessible distances to the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre.

Further to this, the picturesque Visitor Information Centre managed by Strathbogie Shire Council and located in High Street, Nagambie provides an amazing outlook to the Lake near the rowing course starting pontoon for presentations, televised coverage and more.

Media spaces within the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre will be provided, with many satellite locations available along the banks.

Hospitality outlets

One of the competitive advantages that the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre offers over other venues is the ample space along the lake that can be sectioned and allocated to provide food and beverage outlets, merchandise trailers and entertainment attractions to complement the rowing event.



The ask:

Strathbogie Shire Council is seeking to progress the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre state-of-the-art facility into a National and International Rowing destination via:

One.

A Victorian Government commitment for the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre to be the host rowing venue for the 2026 Commonwealth Games

Two.

Funding investments of:

- \$4.1 million for the Rowing course deepening
- \$1.7 million to upgrade the Regatta Centre (including competitor amenities, IT, toilets and storage)
- \$1.6 million for the Regatta Centre Peninsula Extension
- \$250,000 to seal access roads and car park facilities
- \$250,000 to upgrade the peninsula toilet block

1. Australian Olympic Rowing team training at Lake Nagambie in 2021.

2. Artist's impression of Nagambie Boardwalk project

3. Lucy Stephan, Rosemary Popa, Jessica Morrison and Annabelle McIntyre, Tokyo Olympics - gold medal champions

4. Olympian Lucy Stephan holding her 2021 Tokyo Olympic gold medal and The 2021 Melbourne Cup



Profile:

"I have competed and trained at the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre throughout my rowing career. Lake Nagambie is an inspiring 2 km course and location which helped me to prepare for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and to reach my crew's goal for gold!"

I absolutely support Strathbogie Shire Council's proposal to host the Commonwealth Games 2026 rowing event."

Lucy Stephan
Australian Rowing Gold Medallist



Council Plan 2021–2025, Section 3.1.3 Finalise the detailed design for the Greening Euroa project in partnership with Goulburn Valley Water.

Greening Euroa Project



The opportunity:

The Greening Euroa Project is an innovative community driven project taking place in Strathbogie Shire.

It is being driven by a committee of passionate locals who came together to find a way to lessen the impacts of chronic water shortages in a rapidly warming climate.

Adaptation to drought is important to provide a sustainable future for rural townships, communities and facilities.

This plan taps into the available excess water from the Euroa Wastewater Treatment Plant.

More than this, this proposal is the first of its kind in Victoria.



1

The benefits:

With the support of our local water authority, Goulburn Murray Water, this wastewater would be safely upgraded from Class C to Class B, before being piped underground to storage tanks throughout the Euroa Township.

Once the pipe is laid, water will be available to irrigate the many public ovals and sports grounds, that pride this community.

More than ever, community health and wellbeing are a priority for our region and by maintaining our green open spaces during prolonged dry periods, members of the public opportunities to get out and participate in community life through exercise and sporting activities.



2



The ask:

One.

To secure \$3.8 million from State and or Federal Government grants in water infrastructure and innovation sectors, or the equivalent in a co-contribution agreement.

Two.

To obtain representative support and raise awareness of this leading innovation and stakeholder collaboration.

Three.

To enable the standpipe and pipeline to provide recycled water to service several parks and recreation reserves across the Euroa township.

This infrastructure will make our Shire a more climate resilient region, attractive to visitors and keep our open spaces green during years of climate variability and increasing water insecurity.

More than this, the purple standpipe and pipeline presents a clever solution to a growing concern for many rural communities about how to sustainably manage outdoor spaces in the scorching summer months.

The Greening Euroa project is climate smart, cost efficient and community inspired. It demonstrates a smart use of a valuable resource while taking pressure off our potable water supply and our waterways heavily relied upon by farm dams and groundwater bores.



Cover image.
Friendlies Oval, Euroa, one of the sites to benefit from this project

1. Euroa Memorial Oval, one of the sites to benefit from this project
2. New trees planted along the Sevens Creek, one of the sites to benefit from this project
3. Euroa Arboretum one of the sites to benefit from this project
4. Purple standpipe connected to water cartage truck with contractors.

Profile:

“We know having green spaces in times of drought is increasingly important to our community. It is essential to community health and wellbeing.

The proposal would initially service the schools, their ovals and gardens, sporting fields and other community locations.

It would ensure that during times of drought our prized community spaces stay green, meeting a critical public health need.

The current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has left us in no doubt about the positive benefits of increased physical activity and relaxation for mental and social health.”



“The plan will hugely benefit the use and aesthetics of outdoor facilities at local schools and sports clubs, many of which are still struggling to recover from years of prolonged drought and water restrictions.

This project can change that.”

Shirley Saywell
Greening Euroa Project member

Council Plan 2021–2025, Aligns to Community Vision Theme 2. Live. Access. Connect Section 2.6 Prepare and implement a playground strategy following the adoption of the Open Space Strategy, and Theme 5. Strong. Health. Safe, Section 5.1.1 Seek external funding for the preparation and implementation of an Open Space Strategy

Nature Based Play Space



The opportunity:

Strathbogrie Shire Council and the Euroa community has a vision. We want to develop an intergenerational destination nature-based play space in our town that is suitable for all ages and abilities.

Modern life has removed the traditional nature play many of today's adults experienced as children.

This project will help re-engage children's relationship with nature by bringing it back to the play and learning places of everyday life.

Euroa is the perfect place located two hours from Melbourne. With a Tesla Electric Charge station, this proposal will not only support residents of the Shire with an exciting place to meet, but also those arriving at our Traveller's Rest and others who stop to charge their vehicle.



Nature Based Play Space

The benefits:

A destination playground would create a place for families wanting a genuine child and youth friendly place to stop with a unique offering.

This community supported project will offer improved liveability and help strengthen Euroa and our Shire's reputation as a destination.

Increasing economic development with an estimated linger time of about 20 to 60 minutes providing local cafes and businesses with greater visitation and tourism expenditure.



Research indicates that, when children play and learn in nature, they do so with more energy, engagement, imagination, and cooperation than in wholly artificial environments.

Sensory stimulation derived from interacting with natural environments allows children to learn with sight, smell, touch and sound.

Creating natural environments supports children to become environmentally engaged and show respect for the environment, and it is well known that physical activity is greatly beneficial for children's cognitive development, health and wellbeing.

From a sensory garden to explore, rocks to clamber over, to logs to balance on, the possibilities to interact with nature and the environment are endless.

It is proposed the all-abilities play space will be designed with the people who will use it most. This means extensive consultation with children, young people, families, grandparents and carers.

Cover image.
Wangaratta Children's Garden

2 and 3. Mansfield Botanic Park Playground

1, 4 and 5. Wangaratta Children's Garden



The ask:

One.

Council invites the Victorian Government to commit \$1.5 million to design and deliver a nature-based playground in Euroa.



Profile:

“As Mothers with young children we know and understand the importance of encouraging playtime in the natural environment of where we live.

Euroa and neighbouring areas are experiencing a baby boom at present and population growth in children aged 6 years and under.

It is important that we meet the developmental needs and demands of this generation and build the infrastructure to provide this active and inclusive space for everyone to enjoy.

We have observed visitors to the township pull-up at the current playgrounds which are restrictive in age, size and sensory applications, and our community wants us to address this.”

1. Mansfield Botanic Park Playground



“There is great need and support for a nature-based playground in Euroa and we know the perfect setting among the green grass and leafy trees of Seven Creeks Park.”

Cr Kristy Hourigan and Cr Sally Hayes-Burke
Strathbogie Shire Council

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