

## Structure Plan Submission – Educational Facilities Impact

I am opposed to elements of Amendment C87 to the Golden Plains Planning Scheme as it does not demonstrate sustainable development by providing adequate infrastructure and services, specifically in relation to the educational facilities in Inverleigh.

The number of children living in Inverleigh, and therefore the number of children wishing to attend Inverleigh Primary School, will increase by a minimum of 30% but easily up to 60% over the duration of the Structure Plan, yet there are no definitive commitments made to accommodate this growth; nor the demand new families will place on the Kindergarten.

The 2018 Inverleigh Primary School Annual Report states “There are 10 classrooms, accommodating our current school enrolment of 212 students. Most classrooms are grouped in composite grade level communities, with collaboration spaces, and connecting decks. The average class size in Grades 3 to 6 is 23 students. In Grades 1 & 2 the average class size is 21 students. The Prep students are housed in the Mod 5 building with two classes of 15 students. An additional classroom was added this year to accommodate the growing student population and to reduce class sizes across the school, as this had been identified as a priority. Smaller class sizes allow classroom teachers to differentiate effectively to meet the needs of all students.”

Data provided by the Victorian Department of Education and Training for 2018 shows the average All Primary Class size is 22.2 students; the average for Prep is 19.4 students; the average for Years 1 & 2 is 21.2 students and the average for Years 3 to 6 is 23.4 students (Attachment 1).

Pleasingly, Inverleigh Primary School currently has slightly smaller than average class sizes, which the School has specifically identified as important, however I am concerned that this will change for the worse, if the Structure Plan is implemented.

Whilst the Structure Plan outlines that at least 430 houses are required in Inverleigh in the next 15 years, 525 lots are proposed to be built on Future Growth Areas 1, 2 and 3 alone. The additional number of houses proposed for Future Growth Areas 4, 5 and 6 is not quantified and could easily run into the hundreds given the land area of these sites.

The Structure Plan states that in 2016, 45% of household in Inverleigh were couples with children and a further 7% were single parent families with children”; over 50% of houses in Inverleigh currently have children. The Structure Plan states that “...the most common household type moving into the township 2006-2016 was couples with children...”, furthermore “in 2016, the households with children (couple or single parent) were predominately young families: 57% had young children (under 15 years)....”

Based on the above figures, at least 50% of the 430 new households (215) will have children and 57% of these will be “young” children (123). 123 divided by 15 (to account for the age range), multiplied by 8 (children are at primary school between the ages of 5 and 12) equals 66 students. At an absolute minimum (given these calculations assume only a single child per household, and are only based on the number of houses “required” in Inverleigh vs the number of households the Structure Plan proposes to make available for development), there will be an 66 additional children (30% increase) or an additional three classrooms worth of children wanting to attend Inverleigh Primary School, yet there are no definitive provisions made to accommodate them. Should families move to Inverleigh and have two children, numbers of children wishing to attend the Primary School could increase by up to 60%.

The Structure Plan states that even though the school is relatively constrained in terms of enabling growth, there are no plans to relocate the Primary School. The School and Council have been working with the neighbouring Church regarding land for expansion and additional portables but the Structure Plan does not confirm anything from these discussions.

“Additional land would be available with the relocation of the tennis courts to the Inverleigh Recreation Reserve” yet “The relocation is hampered by the cost of providing new tennis courts and a lack of funding opportunities

for tennis facilities.” Further in the Structure Plan it states that “Continued moderate growth of the town will generate a requirement for a wide range of local infrastructure including....potential relocation of the tennis courts...”, yet in the next paragraph under the heading “List of infrastructure upgrades required for the continued growth of the township: ...Relocation of the tennis courts to the recreation reserve”. The Structure Plan is contradictory and needs to be amended to clarify the Council’s position in relation to the tennis courts and thus the availability (or not) of additional space at the current School location.

The Structure Plan states that “The School Woodlot, located on McCallum Road and Railway Street....provides opportunity for expansion of the school, if required”. This option implies that if the school ran out of space at its current location, which it will if the tennis courts are not relocated or the Church does not give up land, the School will “expand” and operate over two campuses; one in the current location, the other on McCallum Road. If the Primary School was to operate over two campuses this would create a multitude of issues to the detriment of the families in Inverleigh.

Assuming campuses would be split by year group, the children would not have the same experience as other children in a Prep to Year 6 primary school; it’s likely they’d be the only government schooled children in regional Victoria in this situation. Younger and older children, including siblings, would not be able to support, learn and play with each other. Children would likely need to move between the campuses meaning they would need to cross the Hamilton Highway and a train line with no barriers. The administration and staffing costs of running two campuses would be higher.

Alternatively “expand” the school could mean relocate completely to the new site; this would come with equally significant concerns, namely the cost of building a new school and the loss of history if the current school building was no longer our school.

A further pressure compounding the schools’ limited space is that should the Kindergarten run out of space, the long-term option is to co-locate with the Primary School.

The community survey from March 2017 identified that at least 72% of Inverleigh residents work in Geelong or Melbourne. Inverleigh currently offers 4 year old kinder, 9am – 2pm, three days a week; Teesdale offer this program as well as a condensed version over 2 days, 8:30am – 4:00pm. The shorter day program is not a practical option for many families if having to travel to and from Geelong or Melbourne for work. I am confident the demand for 4 year old Kinder services in Inverleigh would increase if there was a longer day option; parents at present do not have this option in Inverleigh, have to find services elsewhere and thus the demand from *current* Inverleigh families for services in Inverleigh are not accurately captured, let alone the demand *future* families will generate. If the right services are offered I am confident that they will be utilised, and with the amount of development proposed it’s not a question of if the Kinder will run out of space, but when, and “when” will now be sooner than first thought...

In addition to the demand current and future families will place on the Kinder for four-year old services, is the recent announcement by the Victorian Government that it will be investing \$5 million over ten years to introduce kindergarten for three-year old children (Attachment 2). The three-year old funded kindergarten will become available in stages and in 2022 families in the Golden Plains Shire will have access to up to 5 hours, increasing to 15 hours per week by 2029.

If the Kinder did not co-locate with the school and used the Public Hall instead, as has been proposed as an option in the Structure Plan, this would also raise major concerns. The Hall would need significant financial investment to build anything resembling a Kindergarten to make it a safe, comfortable and engaging place of learning for our youngest residents.

The concerns identified in relation to the educational facilities can be resolved, and their detrimental impact to Inverleigh avoided, yet the Structure Plan fails to do so.

One option is to reduce the volume of development proposed, to lessen the growth and burden on Inverleigh’s resources. The Structure Plan states “...State Planning Policy requires Council to ensure a sufficient supply of urban land is available.....to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15 year period....” The

Structure Plan fails to explain, as per Clause 11.02-1S of the Victorian Planning Scheme, that the “residential land supply will be considered on a municipal basis, rather than a town-by-town basis”. As the requirement for residential land is across the whole of the Golden Plains Shire there is no *requirement* for Inverleigh specifically to have 430 lots available, much less: the 525 proposed through Potential Growth Areas 1, 2 and 3; the unquantified but potential for hundreds of lots through Potential Growth Areas 4, 5 and 6; and the potential for many more lots should current land owners subdivide given the Structure Plan proposes to decrease the minimum lot size to 0.4ha.

The volume of development could be reduced by mandating a variety in the lot sizes; 0.4ha – 4ha. The Structure Plan does include the following strategy “Plan for new residential developments to provide a diverse range of lot sizes which reflects the country lifestyle character of Inverleigh and responds to site conditions”, which is excellent, however nothing in the Plan reflects that there will actually be any variety in lot size and I have no confidence the Council will enforce this given one of the reasons for the review of the Structure Plan 2005 is the “...increasing pressure from developers for rezoning...”.

If the volume of development is not reduced significantly by having a variety of lot sizes mandated in greenfield sites, the Structure Plan must be amended to detail an absolute commitment to:

- 1a) fund the relocation of the tennis courts and building of new tennis facilities or,
- 1b) fund the building of a new Primary School, Prep to Grade 6, at McCallum Road site; and
- 2a) fund the physical expansion of the Kindergarten at the current site to offer desired (long sessions over two days as well as short day sessions over three days) and required (three year old and four-year old kinder) services or,
- 2b) fund the building of a new Kindergarten at the Public Hall grounds or co-located with the Primary School.

Furthermore, the Structure Plan must be amended to detail where the funding is coming from; Developer or Council.

The current Developer Responsibility “Contributing community and development infrastructure, either by a Section 173 agreement at rezoning, or through a Development Contribution Plan” is the only Developer Responsibility that *might* require a developer to contribute *some* funds towards Inverleigh’s educational facilities. However, under Section 5.11 Developer Responsibilities, there is a “list of infrastructure upgrades required for the continued growth of the township”; all these infrastructure upgrades are then specifically listed as a developer responsibility applicable to a specific Potential Growth Area, except one, “relocation of tennis courts to recreation reserve” (Table 1).

**Table 1**

<b>“List of infrastructure upgrades required for the continued growth of the township:”</b>	<b>Specifically listed as a Developer Responsibility under Potential Growth Area</b>
Intersection upgrades and street lighting upgrades at: Hopes Plains Road/Hamilton Highway, Common Road/Hamilton Highway	1 (Hopes Plain), 3 (Common Road)
Upgrade or replacement of twin bridges to a 15 tonne capacity bridge	3
Access Management Plan for the Future Investigation Area to the satisfaction of VicRoads	5
Pedestrian link along the Hamilton Highway linking Hopes Plains Road to the town centre	1
Bridle paths	4, 5, 6
Green links and pedestrian links	1&2, 3, 6 (Green links), 1&2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (pedestrian)
Bio-link from Flora Reserve to Leigh River	3
Relocation of tennis courts to recreation reserve	None Listed
Gateway treatments	5
Bush approaches to entrances	1&2, 4, 6
Bushfire management as per the Strategic Bushfire Risk Assessment for Inverleigh	1&2, 3, 4, 5, 6

If no developer is being held accountable to provide funding, the cost will fall back to Council, yet Council have already stated cost has been an issue in relocating and providing new tennis courts (let alone the building of a new Primary School or Kinder). Failure to address this issue ultimately means the children of Inverleigh suffer.

Strategy 5.1 of Amendment C87GPLA is “Support development that includes the provision of infrastructure and services”, as outlined, I feel strongly that the Structure Plan does not adequately include the provision of infrastructure and services in relation to the educational facilities in Inverleigh.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Attachment 1**

“Class sizes July 2019” is included as an attachment and can also be found via this link:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/factsandfigures.aspx#link31>

### **Attachment 2**

The State Government announcement re three-year old Kindergarten is included as an attachment and can also be found via this link:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/three-year-old-kinder.aspx#link35>