



## HAY SHOWGROUNDS MASTER PLAN

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Version 3 (Final)

July 2025



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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The Hay Showgrounds Master Plan provides a structured approach to the management, maintenance, and future development of the Hay Showgrounds. It outlines strategies to ensure that the site remains a valuable community asset, supports various activities and events, and is managed in an environmentally and financially sustainable manner, in accordance with the gazetted purpose of the area.

## 1.2 Scope and Objectives

The scope of this plan includes all aspects of showground operations, from governance and maintenance to community engagement and environmental sustainability.

## 1.3 Strategic Vision

The Hay Showgrounds is a vital community asset, serving as a hub for agricultural events, equestrian activities, exhibitions, and social gatherings. The Strategic Vision for the Hay Showgrounds Master Plan is to create a safe, accessible, and sustainable multi-purpose venue that meets the evolving needs of the community while preserving the site's heritage and rural character. This vision aims to ensure the Showgrounds remain a high-quality facility for local, regional, and state-wide events, fostering economic growth, tourism, and community engagement. The Showgrounds is Crown Land, gazetted for Recreation and Community Use.

By implementing a structured approach to development, the Master Plan will enhance the functionality, sustainability, and appeal of the Showgrounds, making it a welcoming and inclusive venue for all users, including exhibitors, spectators, and recreational visitors.

## 1.4 Legislative Framework

The management of the Hay Showgrounds must align with:

- The Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).
- The Crown Land Management Act 2016 (NSW).
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).
- Environmental Protection Regulations.

## 1.5 Stakeholders and Consultation

Key stakeholders include:

- Hay Shire Council
- Showground user groups (e.g., agricultural societies, sports clubs, event organizers)
- Local businesses and residents
- Emergency services

Consultation will be done as per the following:

- The draft Showground Master Plan will be presented to the Showgrounds Management Committee (completed).
- The plan will then be amended and then taken to Council for preliminary comments (completed).
- The plan will be amended and taken to the Showgrounds Management Committee (completed).
- Last amendments will follow, and then it will be taken to Council for adoption.

## 2. Site Description

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### Location and Land Tenure

The Hay Showgrounds are located between Rye Lane and Showground Way in Hay, comprising the following land parcels:

- Lot 184 DP 756755
- Lot 128 DP 756755
- Lot 159 DP 756755
- Lot 7042 DP 1019896



### 2.1 Historical Context

The Hay Showgrounds have been a key community asset for over a century, hosting agricultural shows, rodeos, and local events that celebrate regional culture and traditions. The Hay Showground and Racecourse (D550006) is categorised as Sportsground and General Community Use.

### Establishment and Agricultural Significance

The Hay Show, first held in 1868, has been a cornerstone of the local community, celebrating agricultural practices and fostering community spirit. Despite interruptions due to adverse conditions, such as the cancellation in 1883 owing to drought, the event has persisted, marking its 150th show recently. In 1936 the Hay Jockey Club and the Hay Pastoral Association were merged to form the Hay Showground and Racecourse Trust, with the joining of the 25 acres of Showground with 50 acres of Hay PP Board controlled TSR (for the racecourse), to form what is now the Hay Showgrounds

### World War II: Internment and POW Camps

During World War II, the Hay Showgrounds and adjacent areas, including the racecourse and recreation reserve, were repurposed to establish high-security internment and prisoner-of-war camps. In July 1940, three compounds—Camps 6, 7, and 8—were constructed. The first internees, arriving in

September 1940, were over 2,000 refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria, many of them Jewish, transported aboard the HMT Dunera. These individuals, later known as the "Dunera Boys," were housed in Camps 7 and 8 near the showgrounds.



Dunera Boys (Australian War Memorial Museum)



Italian POWs at Hay 1941 (Australian War Memorial Museum)

In November 1940, Italian civilian internees occupied Camp 6, located near the Hay Hospital. After the departure of the Dunera internees in May 1941, Italian prisoners of war were placed in Camps 7 and 8. December 1941 saw the arrival of Japanese internees, some from Broome and islands north of Australia, who were accommodated in Camp 6. Following the Cowra POW breakout in August 1944, approximately 600 Japanese POWs were transferred to Hay and placed in the high-security compounds.





Camp 7 (Australian War Memorial Museum)



Camp 8 (Australian War Memorial Museum)

## Post-War Period and Legacy

The internment camps were dismantled in 1946, and the materials were sold off by June 1947. The Hay Showgrounds reverted to their original purpose, continuing to serve as a venue for agricultural shows and community events. The legacy of the wartime period remains significant, with annual commemorations like 'Dunera Day' honouring the internees and their contributions to Australia's cultural and intellectual life.





Figure 1: Post Second World War aerial photo, showing footprint of camps still visible to the left of the racetrack

## 2.2 Existing Infrastructure and Facilities

Key facilities include:

- Pavilion and exhibition spaces
- Livestock yards
- Grandstands and seating areas
- Toilets and shower facilities
- Parking areas
- Equestrian arenas
- Racetrack (including running rail)
- Secretaries Offices (Jockey Club and Showground committees)
- Bars and catering facilities (racecourse and rodeo)
- Horse Racing Track
- Gun Club

### Camping and Accommodation Facilities

- Powered Sites: Approximately 40 powered sites are available, suitable for tents, caravans, motorhomes, and larger rigs.
- Unpowered Sites: An unlimited number of unpowered sites cater to various camping preferences.
- Amenities:
  - Toilets and Showers: The showground boasts both new and refurbished restroom facilities, ensuring cleanliness and accessibility.
  - Hot Showers: Hot shower facilities are available for campers.
- Water Access:
  - Drinking Water: Town water taps are available for drinking and general use.
  - Non-Potable Water: Some taps provide river water, suitable for non-drinking purposes; it's advisable to verify water sources before use.
- Waste Management:
  - Dump Point: A nearby dump point is available for waste disposal.
  - Rubbish Bins: A three-bin system is implemented for waste segregation—red lids for general waste, yellow for recyclables, and green for organic waste.
- Picnic Facilities: Picnic tables are available for visitor use.
- Pet-Friendly: Dogs are permitted on the grounds, making it convenient for pet owners.
- Horse Yards: Facilities are available for stabling horses, accommodating travellers with equine companions.

## Event and Community Facilities

- Garry May Canteen: Located at the Rodeo arena, this canteen recently received a new awning, enhancing its functionality for events.
- Rodeo Arena: A dedicated space for rodeo events, equipped with necessary facilities to host such activities.
- Showground Pavilion: A multi-purpose building used for various events, exhibitions, and community gatherings.
- Equestrian Facilities: In addition to horse yards, the showground offers arenas and tracks suitable for equestrian events and training.
- Livestock Facilities: Designated areas and pens to accommodate livestock during agricultural shows and related events.
- Exhibition Spaces: Indoor and outdoor areas suitable for trade shows, exhibitions, and local markets.
- Bar and Catering facilities
- Horse racetrack including grandstand and mounting yard.

## Additional Amenities

- Caretaker Services: An on-site caretaker is available for assistance; contact can be made via phone.
- Fee Collection: An honesty box system is in place for fee collection, located opposite the middle gate.

## 2.3 Natural Features and Environmental Considerations

The Hay Showgrounds are located in a flat, semi-arid landscape characteristic of the western Riverina region. Below are the natural features and environmental considerations relevant to the site:

### Natural Features

- Topography & Soil
  - The showgrounds sit on flat terrain, typical of the Hay Plains.
  - The soil is primarily clay-loam, which can become compacted and prone to dust during dry periods or muddy in wet conditions.
- Climate & Weather
  - Hot summers, mild winters (semi-arid climate).
  - Low annual rainfall (~350mm per year), with irregular heavy downpours.

- Strong westerly winds can increase dust issues.
- Hydrology & Drainage
  - Close to the Murrumbidgee River, but the showgrounds themselves are not flood-prone due to distance from major waterways.
  - Drainage considerations are important due to occasional heavy rains leading to temporary water pooling.
- Flora & Fauna
  - Native vegetation is limited but includes River Red Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) along waterways.
  - Local fauna may access the sites, and will mostly be bird species such as galahs and cockatoos.
  - There are areas with native vegetation on site, located to the west of the site.

#### Environmental Considerations

- Dust & Erosion Control
  - The dry climate and high winds can cause dust issues, especially in unpaved areas.
  - Mitigation: Use of gravel surfaces, tree planting, and watering during events.
- Water Use & Management
  - Limited local water supply means efficient use is necessary.
  - Rainwater harvesting or bore water may be options for non-potable use (e.g., irrigation, dust suppression).
- Waste Management
  - Event-related waste (food, plastics) needs proper disposal and recycling facilities.
  - Manure management from horse and livestock events is important to avoid contamination and odours.
- Wildlife & Pest Management
  - Native wildlife such as kangaroos can enter the grounds, requiring fencing considerations.
  - Pests (flies, mosquitoes, rodents) need management, especially during warmer months.
- Vegetation & Shade
  - Limited natural tree cover, so planting shade trees could improve visitor comfort.
  - Native species should be prioritised for low water use.
- Biosecurity
  - Bio Security issues as a result of stock movements (cross contamination)

## 2.4 Zoning and Planning

The Hay Showgrounds is zoned largely as RE1 Public Recreation, with the shooting range being zoned RU1 Primary Production.

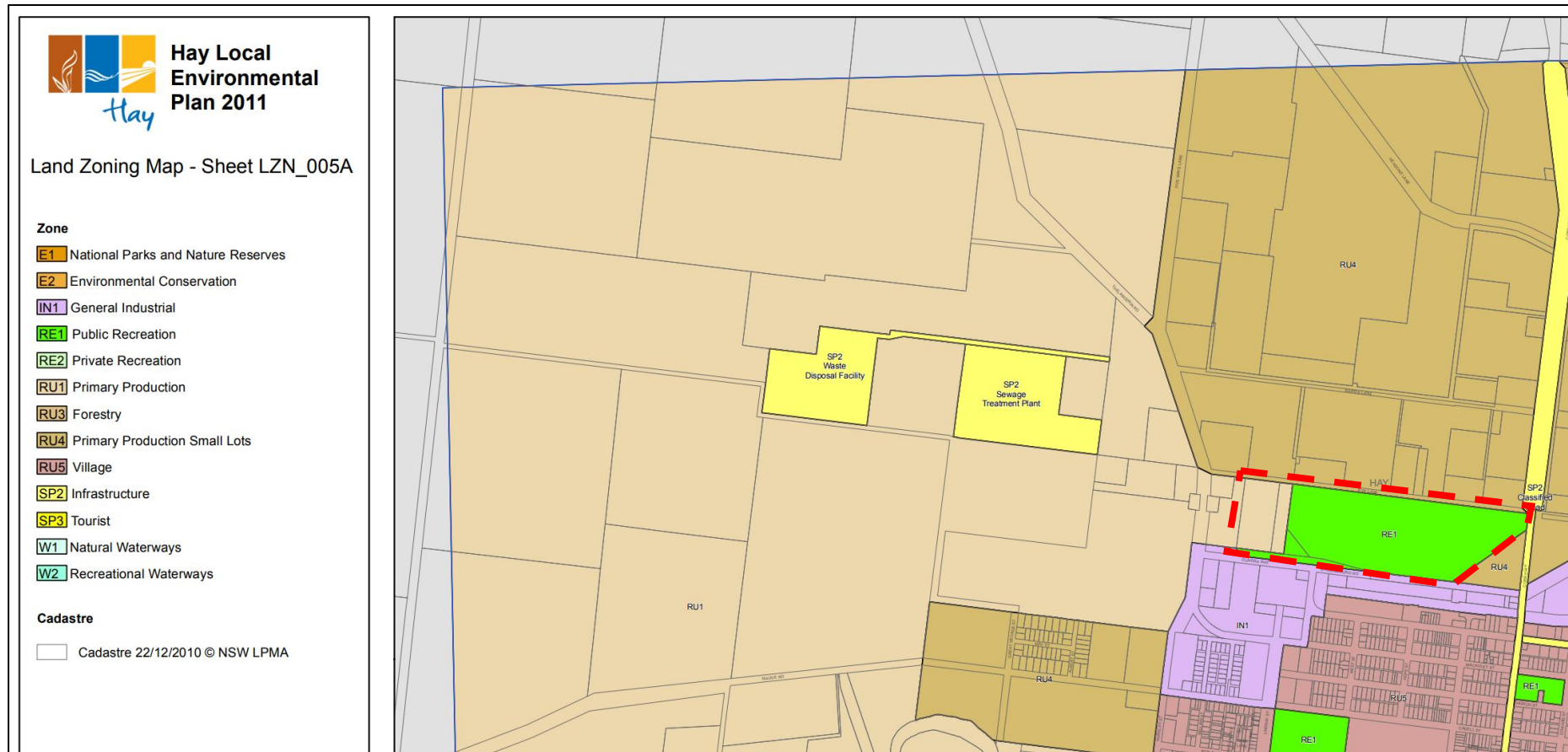


Figure 2: Extract of Hay LEP, with showgrounds marked in red

Zone RE1 Public Recreation is described as follows in the Hay LEP:

**1 Objectives of zone**

- *To enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes.*
- *To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses.*
- *To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.*

**2 Permitted without consent**

*Environmental protection works; Water reticulation systems*

**3 Permitted with consent**

*Aquaculture; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Camping grounds; Community facilities; Environmental facilities; Heliports; Information and education facilities; Jetties; Kiosks; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Roads; Water recreation structures; Water recycling facilities; Water storage facilities*

**4 Prohibited**

*Any development not specified in item 2 or 3*

The RE1 – Public Recreation under the Hay Local Environmental Plan (LEP) is suitable for the Showground use, as it allows for community events, agricultural shows, sporting and recreational activities, camping, and ancillary facilities. Permitted developments typically include pavilions, animal enclosures, stables, parking areas, and amenities buildings for this zoning.

The shooting club area is zoned Zone RU1 Primary Production, which is described as follows in the Hay LEP as the following:

**1 Objectives of zone**

- *To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.*



- *To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.*
- *To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.*
- *To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*

## **2 Permitted without consent**

*Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Home-based child care; Home occupations; Roads; Water reticulation systems*

## **3 Permitted with consent**

*Agritourism; Air transport facilities; Airstrips; Animal boarding or training establishments; Aquaculture; Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Cellar door premises; Cemeteries; Community facilities; Correctional centres; Depots; Dual occupancies (attached); Dwelling houses; Eco-tourist facilities; Environmental facilities; Extractive industries; Farm buildings; Farm stay accommodation; Forestry; Freight transport facilities; Helipads; Home businesses; Home industries; Home occupations (sex services); Industrial training facilities; Information and education facilities; Intensive livestock agriculture; Intensive plant agriculture; Jetties; Landscaping material supplies; Open cut mining; Plant nurseries; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Roadside stalls; Rural industries; Rural workers' dwellings; Veterinary hospitals; Water recreation structures; Water supply systems*

## **4 Prohibited**

*Any development not specified in item 2 or 3*

This zoning is not an accurate description of the current use of the site, and it is recommended that the Zoning be changed to RE1 – Public Recreation.

Any significant upgrades (e.g., new buildings, major renovations) may require a Development Application (DA) to Hay Shire Council. Some minor works (e.g., maintenance, minor refurbishments) may be considered Exempt or Complying Development under the NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) – Exempt & Complying Development Codes. All new structures must comply with the National Construction Code (NCC). Apart from the above, fire safety upgrades may be needed for existing buildings, including:

- Fire extinguishers, hydrants, and exit signage.
- Emergency lighting and safe egress routes.

There are no Heritage listed items on site, although there is heritage significance to some buildings and specific sites.

The Hay Showground is listed as the “Hay Showground and Racecourse (D550006)” in Council’s Plan of Management (PoM) for Crown Reserves. The plan makes the following relevant statements:

- The Crown land was reserved in 1937 as the Hay Showground for the purposes of public recreation, a racecourse and showground.
- The development and use of land shall be consistent with the purpose of the reserve.
- This PoM expressly authorises the issue of leases, licences and other estates over this reserve provided it complies with the requirements of Section 3.4 of the PoM.

The detailed provisions are attached in Appendix A.

## 2.5 Access

Access to the Hay Showground is from Showgrounds Road / Dunera Way to the south and Rye Lane from the north. Although these accessways are currently functional but has several limitations affecting efficiency, safety, and inclusivity.

The main vehicle entrances are suitable for general use but can become congested during large events, especially for trucks, trailers, and livestock transport. Internal roads and parking areas are mostly unsealed, which can lead to dust issues in dry weather and muddy conditions after rain. Signage and wayfinding are limited, making navigation difficult for visitors unfamiliar with the site. Pedestrian access is also a concern, with inconsistent pathways and limited lighting, which poses safety risks, especially during evening events.

Additionally, disability access is limited, with few designated accessible parking spaces and pathways that may not meet full accessibility standards.



Figure 3: Hay Showground Access

## 3. Strategic Objectives

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### 3.1 Objectives

To achieve this vision, the following key objectives have been identified:

#### **Infrastructure and Facility Improvements**

- Upgrade and expand pavilions, amenities, and exhibition spaces to cater to a broader range of events.
- Improve livestock and equestrian facilities, including stables, wash bays, and secure fencing.
- Modernise public amenities (toilets, showers, and seating areas) to ensure accessibility and comfort.
- Enhance event infrastructure, such as power supply, lighting, and spectator seating.

#### **Accessibility and Safety Enhancements**

- Upgrade entry and exit points to improve traffic flow for vehicles, livestock transport, and pedestrians.
- Seal and improve internal roads and parking areas to reduce dust and ensure all-weather usability.
- Develop clear signage and wayfinding systems for improved navigation.
- Improve pedestrian pathways and disability access to make the site inclusive for all visitors.
- Strengthen emergency preparedness and response plans, including fire safety measures and first aid stations.

#### **Environmental Sustainability and Land Management**

- Implement water conservation measures, including rainwater harvesting and improved irrigation.
- Introduce dust and erosion control measures, such as tree planting and soil stabilisation.
- Increase shaded areas and landscaping with native vegetation to improve visitor comfort.
- Develop a waste management and recycling program to reduce environmental impact.
- Landscape under-utilised spaces.

#### **Community Engagement and Economic Development**

- Foster partnerships with local businesses, schools, and community groups to maximize the use of the Showgrounds.
- Attract regional and state-level events to boost local tourism and economic activity.

- Support multi-use functionality by enabling diverse activities, including markets, concerts, and sporting events.
- Develop a brand to promote the Showgrounds as a destination.
- Include income generating facilities in the site.

#### **Financial Sustainability and Governance**

- Secure funding through grants, sponsorships, and partnerships to support infrastructure upgrades.
- Establish a long-term asset management and maintenance plan to ensure ongoing upkeep.
- Implement transparent governance structures to oversee operations and strategic planning.



The Strategic Vision and Objectives outlined in this chapter will guide the staged development of the Hay Showgrounds, ensuring it remains a modern, sustainable, and community-focused venue.


## 4. Actions



The above Objectives, are broken up into detailed actions below:

Infrastructure and Facility Improvements				
Action	Description	Estimated Cost (\$)	Importance (High, Med, Low)	Implementation (Short Term – 0-2 years; Medium Term – 3-5 years; Long Term – 6+ years)
Gun Club enhancements	<p>New traps; replacement of building extension; replacement of fencing between gun club and racetrack, adding seating.</p> 	500,000	Med	LT
New Caretakers Cottage	Small Caretakers cottage/tiny house	180,000	High	ST




Rodeo Club enhancements	Bar area upgrade, veranda upgrade, rodeo ring upgrade 	150,000	Med	MT
Jockey Rooms	Refurbishments	50,000	Med	LT
Secretary Rooms	Refurbishments	50,000	Med	LT
Grandstand	Seating refurbishment and more seating	100,000	Low	LT
Pavillion enhancements	Movable dividers for smaller functions, and internal and external painting	100,000	Med	MT
Pony Club rooms	Refurbishment needed 	70,000	Med	LT
Access points	Upgrade main access points with signage and a gateway statement for heritage access points. Signpost other access points with suitable	70,000	Med	MT

	<p>information and risk signage and incorporate into the wayfinding system.</p> 			
Main bar and function area	<p>Addition of cool room to support functions, such as races, sheep show, BnS, rodeo and show. It would also allow for use of the area for private functions</p>	150,000	High	ST
Concrete floor of Poultry Shed	<p>Allows building to be used for multiple purposes</p>	18,000	Med	ST

Accessibility and Safety Enhancements				
Action	Description	Estimated Cost (\$)	Importance (High, Med, Low)	Implementation (Short Term – 0-2 years; Medium Term – 3-5 years; Long Term – 6+ years)
Toilet refurbishment at pigeon club	<p>Install fully accessible unisex showers and toilets. Alternatively, it must be demolished.</p> 	150,000	High	ST
More seating around grounds	<p>Install more fully accessible seating around grounds</p>	75,000	High	ST
Screen off tanks	<p>Screen off tanks at pavilion side</p> 	20,000	Med	MT

Day yards	Upgrade day yards to current safety standards	100,000	Low	LT
Arena fence	Replace wire mesh	60,000	High	MT
Signage and Wayfinding system	Install clear signage and wayfinding systems across the Showgrounds, using heritage branding.	20,000	High	ST
Audit all pedestrian pathways	Improve pedestrian pathways and safety measures, including accessibility, lighting and surfaces. Also investigate pedestrian connections to town.	10,000	High	ST
Audit vehicular paths	Investigate the sealing of internal roads and parking areas to enhance accessibility.	5,000	High	ST

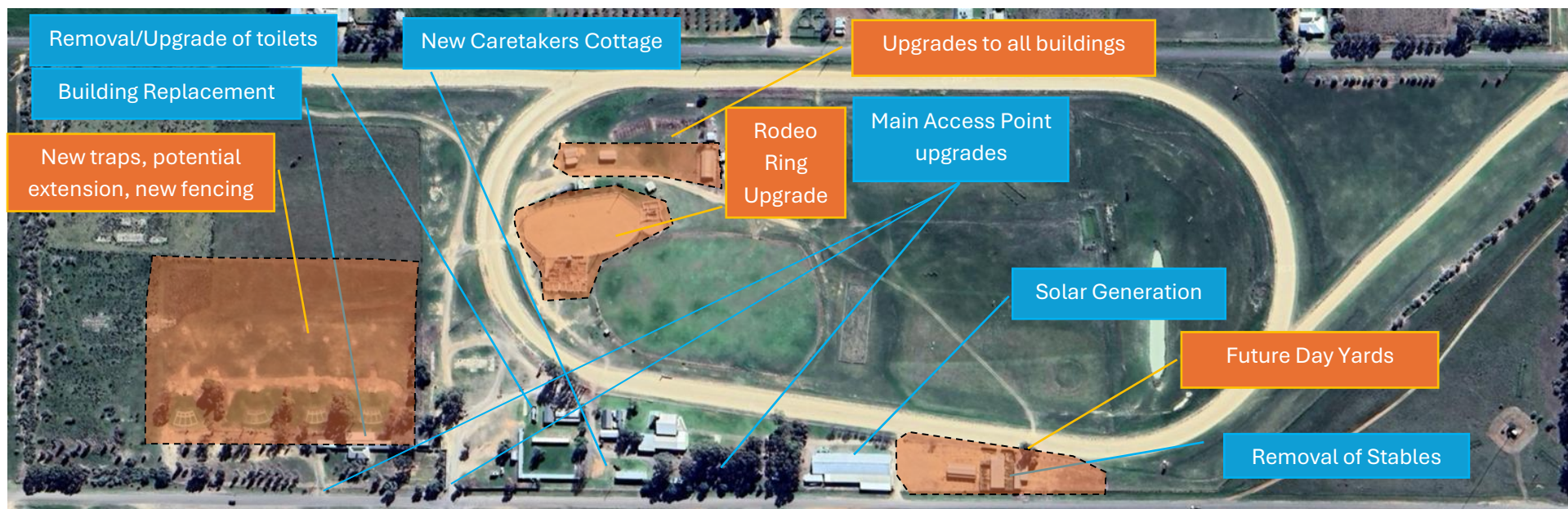
Environmental Sustainability and Land Management				
Action	Description	Estimated Cost (\$)	Importance (High, Med, Low)	Implementation (Short Term – 0-2 years; Medium Term – 3-5 years; Long Term – 6+ years)
Extensive Tree Planting	Tree planting in camping areas and perimeter, and watering systems	50,000	Med	MT
Automatic Water Troughs	Add more automatic water troughs throughout the site	15,000	Med	MT
Conduct Energy Audit	Investigate options for solar generation, batteries, and LED lighting upgrades throughout the whole site, with additional ad better lighting in the Pavillion	15,000	Med	ST
Rehabilitation and native plantings at area west of Gun Club	There can be limited revegetation done around the vacant paddock to the west of the Gun Club, with potential collaboration with Landcare.	10,000	High	MT
Waste Management	Collaborate with Hay Shire Council Waste team to investigate moving to carbon neutral waste handling	0	High	ST
Event Parking	Extensive tree planting to south of Showground Road, to provide shade for event parking, with potential collaboration with Landcare.	10,000	Med	MT

Community Engagement and Economic Development				
Action	Description	Estimated Cost (\$)	Importance (High, Med, Low)	Implementation (Short Term – 0-2 years; Medium Term – 3-5 years; Long Term – 6+ years)
Camping Area upgrade	Install coin operated laundry	150,000	Med	MT
Camping Area upgrade	Communal camp kitchen and fire pit	100,000	Med	ST
Add murals	Add murals to site in conjunction with First Nations and School groups.	30,000	Low	MT
Electronic Payment System	Receipt system required	5,000	High	ST
Furniture Hire	Purchase tables and chairs for hire for events and functions	20,000	Med	ST
Incorporate Heritage branding into the site	<p>Create new heritage brand for the site, with heritage signage, upgrading of the existing two monuments, connecting the showgrounds to the Dunera Museum.</p> 	30,000	Med	MT



Emergency preparedness audit	Strengthen emergency preparedness plans, including fire safety improvements. This should include the coordination with emergency services, flood and fire response procedures, evacuation plans for large events, and backup power connection points.	35,000	Med	MT
Cultural Heritage	Recognition and preservation of the historical significance of the site. Integration of indigenous heritage and storytelling into site usage.	0	Med	MT

Financial Sustainability and Governance				
Action	Description	Estimated Cost (\$)	Importance (High, Med, Low)	Implementation (Short Term – 0-2 years; Medium Term – 3-5 years; Long Term – 6+ years)
Event & Noise Management Guideline development	Large events can generate noise, waste, and increased traffic, which must be managed to comply with council and EPA guidelines. Consider operating hours, noise mitigation, and waste disposal plans.	0	High	ST
Long Term Financial Strategy	Drafting a Long Term Financial Strategy for the Showgrounds, including all future developments and funding streams (Council budget allocations, Grants and sponsorships, Venue hire fees, Community fundraising initiatives). Investigate alternative funding streams, such as opportunities for technology-driven events, such as drone races and virtual reality expos.	10,000	High	ST
Annual Inspections	Annual inspections to be done for buildings, weeds, pests.	0	High	Ongoing



**Figure 4: Key Actions**

The above actions add up to a total of \$2,348,000. It is envisaged that these projects will be completed over a significant period of time, with largely external funding, with the Showgrounds income as a secondary source.

## 5. Key Projects

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There are two key projects that stand out for the Hay Showgrounds, which can have a long-lasting impact on the facility, capitalising on the heritage of the site, and enhancing the natural resources of the site.

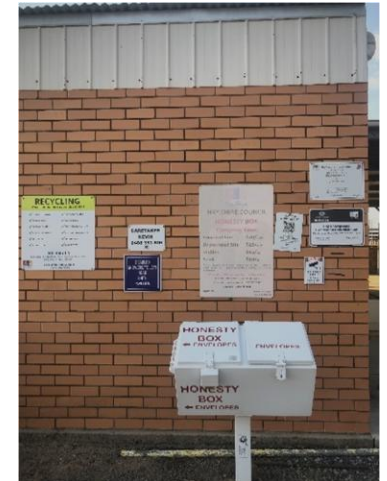
### 5.1 Heritage Project

The Hay Showgrounds has a long history, but what sets it apart from other showgrounds is its Second World War history. The Hay Showgrounds' World War II heritage as a former internment and POW site is a unique historical asset that can be leveraged to enhance tourism, education, and community engagement.

The following strategies are proposed to capitalise on this heritage:

#### Heritage Interpretation & Storytelling

- Permanent Historical Display: Install interpretive panels with photos, maps, and stories about the Dunera Boys and POWs who were held at the site.
- Guided Tours: Develop walking tours with guides explaining the history of the internment camps. QR codes can link to online resources.
- Virtual & Augmented Reality: Create an interactive digital experience, allowing visitors to “see” how the site looked during WWII.
- Create a heritage branding for the Showgrounds camping area, and carry this branding through all signage in the Showgrounds. Audit and limit signage, as there is an litany of signs, as can be seen in the picture on the right.

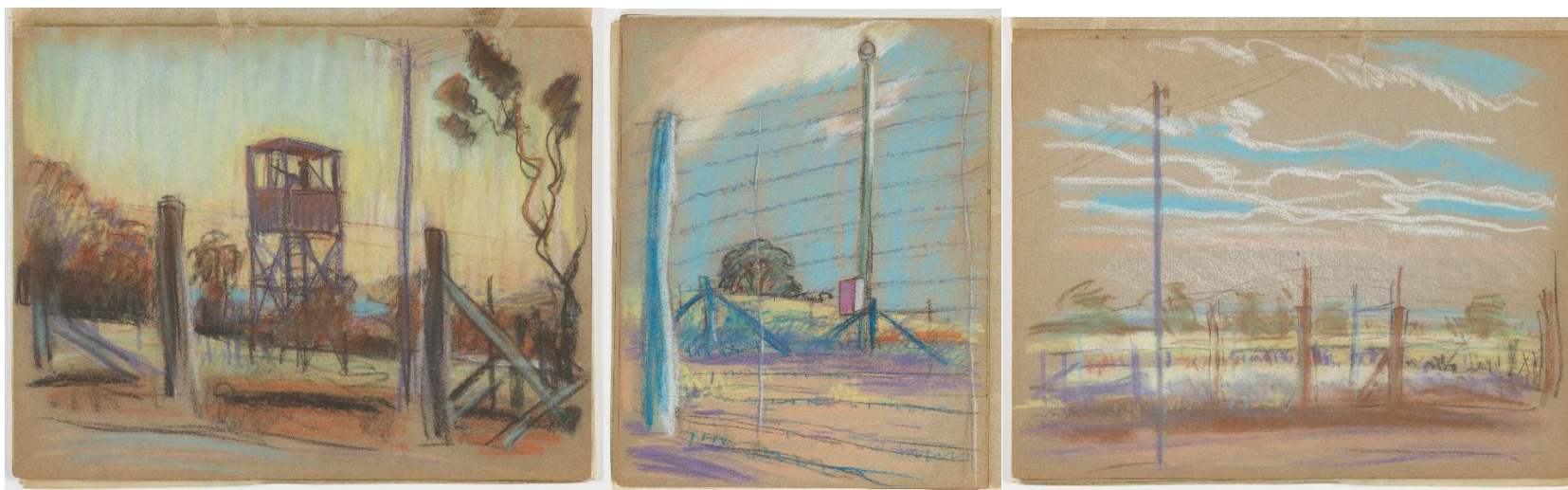




**Figure 5: Examples of branding for the Hay Showgrounds, incorporating the heritage aspects of the site.**

## Events & Commemorations

- Dunera Commemoration: Work with descendants of the Dunera Boys and historical societies to mark significant anniversaries, and incorporate the Showgrounds in the celebrations.
- School & Community Programs: Develop educational workshops in collaboration with local schools.



**Figure 6: Internment camp art at Hay / Robert Hofmann (Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)**



## Partnerships & Promotion

- Collaboration with Museums & Universities: Partner with institutions like the Australian War Memorial or historians researching WWII internment in Australia.
- Heritage Trail Connection: Integrate the Showgrounds into the heritage trail in Hay.
- Tourism Marketing: Promote the Showgrounds' history in travel brochures and online platforms targeting heritage tourism.

## Infrastructure & Development

- Heritage Centre or Museum: Establish a small exhibition space dedicated to the site's wartime history.
- Signposted Walking Paths: Create a heritage trail around the Showgrounds with key locations marked, and link this with the Railway Station and the Dunera Museum. .
- Restoration of WWII Relics: If any structures from the period remain, restore and preserve them for public viewing.
- Restoration of all existing monuments and plaques: Both monuments are looking in bad repair, and both needs to be restored and repaired.





**Figure 7 : Monument in the Hay Showgrounds**



**Figure 8 : Monument in the Showgrounds Road / Dunera Way frontage**

By integrating these elements, the Hay Showgrounds can create a compelling and respectful heritage attraction that enriches the community while drawing in history enthusiasts and tourists



Figure 9: Heritage Projects

## 5.2 Environmental Sustainability Project

To ensure the Hay Showground's long-term viability and reduce its environmental impact, a comprehensive Environmental Sustainability Project is proposed. This initiative aims to implement eco-friendly infrastructure, resource conservation, and land management strategies while preserving the Showgrounds' natural heritage. This approach will link into Hay Shire Council's Circular Economy Strategy, which is based on three principles:

1. Design out waste and pollution.
2. Keep products and materials in use.
3. Regenerate natural systems

Hay Shire's Circular Economy Strategy notes the following principles for recreational facilities in the Hay Shire:

- Creating recreational spaces that is more attractive to use, that feels safe and communal in the use thereof, and will have longer periods/seasons to use.
- Create Third Places in the recreational sphere. Ray Oldenburg's Third Places refers to the social surroundings that are separate from the two usual social environments of home ("first place") and the workplace ("second place"). Examples of Third Places include churches, cafes, clubs, public libraries, bookstores or parks. Third Places, then, are "anchors" of community life and facilitate and foster broader, more creative interaction. In other words, "your third place is where you relax in public, where you encounter familiar faces and make new acquaintances."
- Reuse materials and repair equipment where feasible, rather than replacing equipment.
- Have items locally manufactured where possible.
- Create as much green cover as possible.
- Use renewable energy as much as possible.

The key objectives of the Environmental Sustainability Project would include:

- Water Conservation: Implementing efficient water management strategies to reduce consumption and improve sustainability.



- Energy Efficiency: Reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources through sustainable alternatives.
- Waste Reduction & Recycling: Establishing a structured waste management program to minimize landfill waste.
- Biodiversity & Land Management: Enhancing green spaces and reducing environmental degradation.

The expected benefits could include:

- Lower operational costs through energy and water savings.
- Improved environmental impact by reducing waste, conserving resources, and promoting biodiversity.
- Enhanced visitor experience through better shade, cleaner spaces, and improved amenities. In the photo on the right it can be seen that there are ample opportunity for landscaping around the camping area.
- Stronger community engagement in sustainability initiatives.

Key initiatives are expanded on below.



## Water Conservation & Management

- Install rainwater harvesting systems on pavilions and sheds for irrigation and non-potable uses.
- Upgrade to water-efficient fixtures in public amenities, including toilets and showers.
- Implement drip irrigation and mulching techniques to reduce water wastage in landscaped areas.
- Explore opportunities for stormwater management solutions to mitigate erosion and flooding.
- Investigate the reuse of water from the neighbouring Sewer Treatment Plant.

## Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy

- Install solar panels on key buildings to reduce reliance on grid electricity.
- Upgrade lighting systems to LED fixtures to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs.
- Implement timers and motion sensors in facilities to minimize unnecessary power consumption.
- Investigate feasibility for solar-powered water heating for public showers and amenities.
- Install solar lights for all footpaths and include it into the proposed wayfinding system. This has already been started in a limited scale, as can be seen in the picture on the right.



## Waste Management & Recycling

- Establish waste separation stations across the Showgrounds for general, recyclable, and organic waste.

- Partner with the Hay Shire recycling initiatives to ensure responsible disposal of materials, including recycling at events.
- Develop an education campaign for users and visitors to promote sustainable waste practices.

## Biodiversity & Land Management

- Increase tree planting and green spaces using native species to provide shade and improve air quality.
- Develop a sustainable grazing and land use policy for the areas north of the gun club. If grazing is not a long term use of these parcels of land, work with Landcare to establish a Revegetation Zone.



Figure 10: Environmental Projects



## 6. Conclusion

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The Hay Showgrounds Master Plan presents a clear and achievable vision for the future of this important community asset. Rooted in local values and informed by stakeholder input, the plan balances heritage preservation with the need for modern, flexible infrastructure that meets the evolving needs of the Hay community and its visitors. By guiding staged improvements to accessibility, amenities, safety, and event functionality, the plan ensures the Showgrounds remain a vibrant space for recreation, celebration, and connection.

Implementation of the Master Plan will require ongoing collaboration between Council, user groups, and the broader community, supported by strategic investment and adaptive management. With a shared commitment to the long-term sustainability and success of the site, the Hay Showgrounds can continue to thrive as a key regional destination for generations to come.



(Picture Credit: Margie McClelland)

# Appendix A: Extract - Hay Shire Council Plan of Management for Crown Lands (2022)

## 5.8 Hay Showground (D550006)

The Hay Showground and Racecourse (D550006) is located on the northern fringe of the town between Rye Lane and Showground Road on the western side of the Cobb Highway. The principal vehicle access to the showground and racecourse is from Showground Road.

The area to which this PoM relates covers an area of 36.7 hectares and includes a racecourse and showground with a number of buildings associated with these activities. There are also facilities for camping, including a 'dump point' nearby in Dunera Way. The site and improvements are well maintained and in good condition.

The Hay Show is held at the showground on the second week in September of each year. Horse racing is undertaken in November and the Hay Rodeo in February.

The 2017 *Hay Shire Council Open Spaces Strategy* recommends that the current amenities at the showground be upgraded. This action has largely now been achieved.

For the purposes of the PoM, the showground and racecourse are categorised as *Sportsground* and *General Community Use*. The areas to which these categories apply is shown in **Figure 11**.

The Crown land was reserved in 1937 as the Hay Showground for the purposes of public recreation, a racecourse and showground.

Further details relating to Hay Park are available in the Land Inventory at **Appendix A**.



**Figure 11:** Hay Showground  
General Community Use (Red) and Sportsground (Blue)

### 5.8.1 Development & Use

The development and use of land shall be consistent with the purpose of the reserve.

Any further development of this land shall comply with the Land Use Table of the LEP, which outlines those activities that are permissible or prohibited within each zone.

The land is zoned part RU1 Primary Production (western end) and part RE1 Public Recreation under the LEP. *Recreation facilities (major)*, which includes showgrounds and racecourses, are permissible with consent in both zones. There are other controls applicable to the land within the LEP that relate to terrestrial biodiversity.

Other permissible uses/ future uses of those portions of the site categorised as a Sportsground and General Community Use and Park are expressed in **Table 1** of the generic PoM for Sportsgrounds and **Table 7** of the generic PoM for General Community Uses.

### 5.8.2 Express authorisation of leases, licences and other estates

This PoM **expressly authorises** the issue of leases, licences and other estates over this reserve provided it complies with the requirements of Section 3.4 of this Plan.

**Table 2** of the generic PoM for Sportsgrounds and **Table 8** of the generic PoM for General Community Uses further identifies the purposes for which leases and licences may be issued over this reserve.

### 5.8.3 Management framework

The management framework for the reserve is detailed in **Table 23** below. The objectives, implementation and performance measures in the table are in addition to those expressed in **Table 3** of the generic PoM for Sportsgrounds and **Table 9** of the generic PoM for General Community Uses.

**Table 23:** Management framework for Hay Showground (D550006)

Objectives & performance targets	Implementation	Performance measuring
<b>Provision</b>		
To maintain the presence of the showground and racecourse for the benefit of Hay residents and visitors.	Prevent any reduction in area of the showground and racecourse.	Ongoing presence of the showground and racecourse in Hay.
To continue usage of the showground and racecourse as much as possible.	Prevent any reduction in area available for shows and racing.	Usage of the various facilities within the showground and racecourse.
To encourage usage of the showground and racecourse for other compatible activities.	Prioritise usage of the showground and racecourse for the purposes in which it was intended.  Support the continuation of current uses undertaken within the showground and racecourse.  Respond to changing community needs if necessary, in relation to the provision of activities within the showground and racecourse.	



Objectives & performance targets	Implementation	Performance measuring
<b>Access</b>		
To ensure all vehicular and pedestrian access points to the showground and racecourse are fit for purpose.	Maintain existing access points to the showground and racecourse.	Incident reports relating to access at the showground and racecourse.
To ensure the public have access to the showground and racecourse.	Embellish access points to the showground and racecourse as required.  Provide for separation of vehicles and pedestrians at the Showground Road entrance, driveway and parking areas. Manage vehicle movement within the showground and racecourse for the safety of users.	
<b>Environmental impact</b>		
To retain as much mature vegetation as possible within the showground and racecourse.	Avoid activities at the showground and racecourse that may have a detrimental impact on the environment.	Achieve funding for improvement and maintenance of the showground and racecourse.
To avoid any detrimental environmental impacts within the showground and racecourse.	Assess trees within the site for health and public safety risk.	Monitor water usage.
To enhance the natural environment within the showground and racecourse.	Maintain vegetation within the site both for aesthetic and practical reasons, such as shade.	Monitor electricity consumption.
To be efficient with water usage.	Remove and replace unhealthy or dead vegetation.	
To be efficient with energy consumption.	Provide protection for vegetation where required.  Utilise drought resistant native vegetation in landscaping.  Implement watering systems that make efficient use of water.  Implement operational systems that reduce current electricity consumption.  Seek funding for undertaking environmental works at the showground and racecourse.	

Objectives & performance targets	Implementation	Performance measuring
<b>Management</b>		
To ensure the showground and racecourse is responsive to the needs of the local community.	Encourage and facilitate common usage of facilities at the showground and racecourse.	Agreements relating to the use of the showground and racecourse.
To avoid conflicts between users of the showground and racecourse.	Work with the management committees for the common good of the showground and racecourse.	Record of works undertaken at the showground and racecourse.
To be efficient and effective in the usage of facilities.	Maintain the facilities at the showground and racecourse with the resources available.	
To maintain the showground and racecourse to a standard that is fit-for-purpose.	Resolve any conflicts relating to management of the showground and racecourse.	
<b>Community involvement</b>		
For the local community to be actively involved in the management of the showground and racecourse.	Promote the activities at the showground and racecourse to the local community and further afield.	Usage of facilities at the showground and racecourse.
To encourage members of the community to get involved with activities at the showground and racecourse.	Engage the community in major decisions or expenditure at the showground and racecourse.	Effectiveness of management committees.
To encourage the local community to take pride in its showground and racecourse.	Council to support as they can, all groups using the showground and racecourse.	
<b>Agreements</b>		
To ensure all agreements relating to usage of the showground and racecourse by the local community are fair and reasonable.	Review agreements on a regular basis.  Arbitrate any disputes relating to agreements.  Consider agreements without prejudice.	Maintain a register of agreements and make available for public viewing.  A record of disputes and their outcome relating to agreements.