

BINDOON TOWN AND TOURISM PRECINCT PROJECT

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this planning important?

It is hard to imagine what Bindoon will look like in 50 years. If we only focus on today's needs, we risk missing the opportunity to plan properly for future generations. This project brings together specialist planners and designers to help the community think long term. The goal is to create a town where people can live, work and stay connected at every stage of life.

By planning now, we can make sure Bindoon grows in a way that supports people of all ages, strengthens community connections and creates a town future generations will be proud to call home.

What is the project, and who is funding it?

The Bindoon Town and Tourism Precinct Project is a master planning project funded under Stream One (Precinct Development and Planning) of the Australian Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (rPPP). Although the project is titled "precinct", it is actually a whole of townsite plan, identifying smaller projects which add to existing infrastructure, and contribute to a larger scope which will better support the community going forward. Stream One rPPP grants fund the planning, design, consultation and partnership work needed to turn a precinct concept into an investment-ready plan - they do not fund construction

What can the funding be used for?

As a Stream One (Precinct Development and Planning) grant, the funding is intended to take the precinct from a concept to an investment-ready plan. Eligible activities include:

- Master planning and precinct design
- Community and stakeholder consultation and engagement
- Feasibility studies, business cases and cost estimation
- Technical studies (e.g. traffic, environmental, servicing)
- Establishing and formalising partnership arrangements with government, community and private partners

Who is our partner, and how were they selected?

Our project partner was identified through a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process. The partner has shown interest in delivering a tourism accommodation facility at the bottom of the Mountain Bike Park, complementing the trail network and drawing overnight visitation to the town.

Separately, and prior to this project, the operators of the Bindoon bakery approached the Shire independently, seeking a suitable site to build a new facility locally rather than invest in premises elsewhere. This was a business-driven approach from the bakery, not something initiated by the precinct project.

Why does the bakery want to move?

The bakery's plans to relocate began before the Bindoon Town and Tourism Precinct Project. The owners approached the Shire looking for land to build a purpose-built facility in Bindoon after becoming aware that their current premises would be sold.

In November 2024, Council gave in-principal support for leasing land on Woolah Rise to assist with the proposed relocation. This allowed the owners to begin investigating and designing a new facility, with any future lease still requiring further Council approval.

Keeping the Bakehaus in Bindoon helps retain a popular local business, supports local jobs, attracts visitors and encourages investment in the town. The proposed location would also be within easy walking distance of both existing and future residential areas.

Why do we need more retail space?

Bindoon's current retail offering was built for a much smaller population. As the town continues to grow, additional and more diverse retail space is needed to meet everyday demand, reduce the need for residents to travel elsewhere for basic goods and services, and support new jobs. Additional retail floor space also helps the town centre feel active and vibrant, which in turn supports tourism visitation.

Why aren't we using the plan that was designed in 2021?

The 2021 plan was a valuable starting point, but a number of things have changed since it was prepared — including updated population and growth projections, the emergence of a funded delivery partner and accommodation proposal, the bakery's approach to the Shire, and the requirements attached to this specific funding stream. This project revisits and updates that earlier work, so the plan reflects current conditions, funding opportunities and partner interest, adding opportunities rather than starting again from scratch.

What is a co-design process?

Co-design means the community, the Shire, project partners and other stakeholders work together throughout the planning process, rather than the Shire preparing a plan and simply presenting it to the community for comment afterwards. It involves sharing ideas, options and trade-offs early, and genuinely shaping the precinct design based on that input before decisions are locked in.

For the Bindoon Town and Tourism Precinct Project, this means residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders will have real and multiple opportunities to help shape what the precinct looks like and how it functions, alongside the Shire and its partners, as the masterplan is developed.

Why has aged care not been included as one of the proposed planning elements?

Aged care hasn't been left out of consideration — but it isn't listed as its own separate planning element, for a practical reason. Current Federal and State government housing priorities are focused on worker and social housing, rather than aged care specifically, and funding and planning frameworks are aligned to those priorities.

To maximise the potential for this project to proceed and obtain full funding, the precinct plan uses the broader term "multi-purpose housing" rather than nominating a single demographic such as aged care. This approach still allows for a small number of houses on smaller lot sizes to be planned as part of the precinct but designed and zoned in a way that can flexibly suit a range of demographics, rather than being tied to one category that current funding settings do not prioritise.

Will the Shire be selling its land of part of this project?

The Shire's intention is to retain ownership of its land. Instead of selling land, the Shire may enter into long-term lease arrangements that generate ongoing income while allowing investment in community, tourism and retail facilities.

Why has recreation not been included as one of the proposed planning elements?

Recreation has not been included as a standalone planning element because the rPPP Stream One program focuses on creating integrated, multi-purpose precincts that deliver broad benefits for the community. Recreational facilities and spaces will still play an important role within the overall precinct vision, particularly where they complement other community, economic and infrastructure outcomes.

Rather than planning for recreation in isolation, the project is taking a holistic approach that considers how community spaces, infrastructure, services, economic opportunities and recreational amenities can work together to create a more connected, liveable and vibrant place. This approach supports the program's objective of delivering long-term benefits for residents, strengthening community wellbeing, and positioning the region for sustainable growth into the future.

Is the Chinkabee Complex included in the project?

No. The Chinkabee Complex is out of scope for this project. While the planning will look at land close to the Chinkabee Complex and consider recreational spaces as part of the larger plan, this project's precinct planning is focused on the town centre, retail and tourism elements, and does not extend to the Chinkabee Complex.

Is the Town Oval going to move?

No. The Town Oval is not proposed to move as part of this project. Relocating the oval was one of many ideas discussed during previous master planning work. However, the cost of replacing the oval and its associated infrastructure would be extremely high and is unlikely to ever be justified.

The focus of this project is on improving the use of existing Shire-owned land and creating better connections between community, tourism, retail and recreation facilities.

Will a designated events space be included in the precinct plan?

Traditionally events have been held on the Bindoon Oval, the vacant land behind the Chinkabee Complex (currently used for Rodeo Grounds) and at the base of the Mountain Bike Park. The precinct planning will evaluate a range of options for the use of these areas to determining the optimal use of the space and any viable alternatives. The Shire remains committed to supporting the ongoing delivery of events in Bindoon, valuing their significance as a major annual highlight for both tourism and the local community.

Why has the community not been consulted up until now?

The initial partner arrangement was considered by Council as a confidential item. This is standard local government practice during an Expression of Interest and early negotiation process, where commercially sensitive information, needs to be protected until agreements are far enough advanced to be discussed publicly.

Now that the funding has been secured and the project partner confirmed, the Shire is moving into the community engagement phase of the project. Broader community consultation on the precinct design will occur as the master planning progresses, and residents will have genuine opportunities to have their say before final decisions are made.

Where will we get the money for construction?

Construction funding does not form part of this grant and will need to be secured separately once the masterplan and business case are complete. Potential sources being considered include a future application to state and federal grant programs, private investment from project partners (including the tourism accommodation and bakery proponents), and Shire capital works funding where appropriate. Having an investment-ready plan, which is the purpose of this current funding, is what positions Bindoon to competitively pursue that construction funding.

Should you have any additional questions relating to this funding and the Bindoon Town and Tourism Precinct planning, please do not hesitate to contact:

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