KING ISLAND COUNCIL

Strategic Plan 2022-2032

(REVISED 2025)

Adopted

29 April 2025

KING ISLAND COUNCIL

King Island Council – Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (Revised 2025)

Mayor's Welcome

King Island Council shares a unique distinction with Flinders Council, the other Bass Strait Island municipality, of being amongst the smallest and most remote Tasmanian local government authorities, additionally challenged by low rate bases respectively.

Since 1907, King Island Council has proudly served, represented, governed, and delivered essential community infrastructure and services for all our residents. As an isolated jurisdiction King Island Council has also - through historic necessity - developed considerable autonomy and self-sufficiency that allow us to punch above our weight, positively influencing regional development and economic growth.

Over its history, King Island Council has remained financially viable in providing not only the same local government roles and functions as larger councils but moreover, additional functions unique to our small island, such as responsibility for the airport, broadcast television, radio, and two-way radio facilities, quarries, civil construction services, a lighthouse, museum, and jetty assets.

The purpose of this King Island Council Strategic Plan 2022 - 2032 (revised in 2025) is to inform and guide the development and implementation of each specific Council annual plan & budget that falls within this ten-year timeframe. Importantly, this remains a living document to be reviewed as generational developments and unforeseen existential circumstances may require, as well as updated in consultation with our community and other stakeholders.

Planning Overview

The Strategic Plan presents the vision, mission, goals, values and strategies for Council to continue the proud tradition of local community governance and our delivery of services for our Island and our community. This is a 10-year plan which was revised in 2025.

Our Strategic Plan builds on previous plans developed with our community, and considers the strategic challenges and practical realities of living, working, and implementing 'one-size-fits-all' government legislation on a small Bass Strait Island.

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* with the intention to integrate into Council's long-term strategic asset management and financial management plans and policies.

About Us

King Island is a place of outstanding natural beauty and resources located at the western entrance to Bass Strait, halfway between the northwest coast of Tasmania and Victoria, in the roaring forties.

Compared to mainland Tasmanian communities, King Island is unique. These differences are embraced in this Strategic Plan to ensure the roles and functions of the King Island Council are closely aligned and integrated with the values, identity and sustainability of King Island and our community, environment, and economy.

As an Island off mainland Tasmania and mainland Australia, King Island is very small with a total area of 1,098 square kilometres and a population of 1617 (as at the last census in 2021). Our population has again grown since, and we hold the broad aspiration to grow to over 3000 permanent residents.

70% of our Island has been converted to lush pasture for agriculture, firstly by free settlers in the late 1800s and then through government soldier settler schemes after World War 1 and World War 2. The remaining 30% retains its natural vegetation, which is recognised for its ecological values and as habitat for our Island's unique and, in some cases, endangered wildlife.

The vision, enterprise and hard work of past and current generations have built a diversified economy and brand renowned for premium beef, cheese, crayfish, king crab, harvested kelp, and as a destination for world class golf, surfing and a unique island holiday escape.

This success continues to require the community to deal with the practical realities and high costs of working and living on a remote Bass Strait Island. The principal challenge is the critical reliance on air and sea transport to access services, goods, and markets. Whereas other Tasmanians rely on road transport, the logistics of air and sea transport adds some 20% to 30% or higher to the cost of living and doing business.

A major strategic priority for this Plan is to continue to improve long-term sustainability.

The practical challenges of island life have also created a strong, independent, and resilient community. King Island is proud of its identity, remarkably beautiful and wild environment, unique history, and way of life. A universal right and basic necessity for all communities is to have access to adequate resources in order to keep their family and community healthy and secure.

Residents enjoy an unmatched level of personal safety, freedom and friendliness that is only possible in small close-knit communities. They also welcome visitors to experience the island, its hospitality and share stories of what makes it so special.

Residents also take immense pride in the community's long history of voluntary service and supporting a broad range of sporting, recreational, cultural, heritage, environmental and social groups, activities, and events.

This commitment to service is most notably demonstrated by the considerable number of men and women who served in the nation's armed services, especially during times of war, and those who continue to enlist. It is also demonstrated by those dedicated residents who

provide essential government services such as ambulance, fire, emergency management and social support volunteers.

A major priority for this Plan is for Council to continue to commemorate, celebrate and support the volunteers who do so much to protect and enhance the quality of life and community wellbeing on the Island.

Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision, mission and values outline how we work, as a team and with our community.

Our Vision:

A thriving island community, characterised by economic vitality and which is inclusive, connected and committed to preserving King Island's unique identity and natural resources.

Our Mission (Purpose):

To build a sustainable community through the provision of exceptional services and where King Island is recognised as:

Unique: A destination celebrated for its distinct culture, natural beauty, and local products.
Iconic: A community proud of its rich history and heritage that attracts both residents and visitors.
Authentic: A champion of local business and industry, underpinned by sustainable practices.

Our Values:

Boldness: Approach challenges with courage and innovation, encouraging creative solutions.
Respect: Foster mutual understanding among residents by acknowledging diverse perspectives.
Inclusivity: Embrace diversity and ensure all community voices are heard and valued.
Community Focus: Prioritise equitable access to opportunities and resources for all.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Local governments play a significant leadership role in supporting community development and wellbeing through the provision of essential infrastructure, programs and projects, advocacy and supporting the facilitation of community outcomes. Council's role is articulated in the Local Government Act and various regulations.

The following five key focus areas will guide decision making.

GOAL 1: SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

- **1.1 Local Roads and Pedestrian Networks**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Ensure Council's local road and pedestrian networks and associated assets are fit-for-purpose and provide a safe and efficient standard for users and the community.

- **1.2 Implementation of effective waste management strategies**
  Our ten-year goal is:

Continue improvements in environmental management of waste by minimising the volume and type of waste going to landfill and increasing resource recovery through sustainable, community-based recycling and reuse on-island.

- **1.3 Council Facilities, Amenities and Structures**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Continue provision of buildings, amenities and structures that are needed for Council operations and community use.

GOAL 2: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

- **2.1 Climate change planned for and managed**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Ongoing advocacy for targeted social, environmental, and economic strategies in response to a changing climate, to support and protect the wellbeing of the community, land use planning, and the Island's economy.

- **2.2 Preserve and protect our natural environment**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Continue to support the environmental values that are important to the people of King Island. This includes but is not limited to weed control, preservation of endangered species, and eliminating environmental threats. The council will partner with government and other agencies including Landcare, Biosecurity etc to achieve these goals.

- **2.3 Environmental Resource Management**
  Our ten-year goals are:
  Continue collaboration with stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of King Island's environment and natural resources.

  Continue to meet all Environmental Protection requirements, including the maintenance and development of Council's quarries and landfill.

GOAL 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **3.1 Population growth.**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Continue to support and facilitate population growth that is demand generated from sustainable economic development, that sustains business and community activities with a view to put downward pressure on cost of living, improve logistic capacity and increase access to lifestyle opportunities.

- **3.2 Encourage investment on King Island,**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Continue advocacy for and facilitation of both new investments, and support for our existing local industries, to ensure the long-term viability of the King Island community.

- **3.3 Employment, education and training**
  Our ten-year goals are:

Encourage and foster employment growth, and job creation initiatives and opportunities in various sectors to facilitate a diverse range of industries.

Continue advocacy for the provision of education and training opportunities to develop a skilled workforce.

- **3.4 Freight infrastructure and programs**
  Our ten-year goals are:
  Continue advocacy for development and efficient operations of the Grassy Port to increase economic activity, reduce costs on the Island and enhance off island access.

  Continue advocacy for the implementation of the recommendations from the 2024 federal Select Committee on the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme, and other freight improvements.

- **3.5 King Island Airport**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Continue maintenance and development of the Airport as a safe, secure, and strategic gateway for King Island, supporting growth through affordable resident, air freight, business, and visitor travel.

- **3.6 Tourism and increased visitation**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Facilitate the promotion of King Island's unique brand as a destination for visitors and residents.

- **3.7 Increased housing and visitor accommodation**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Encourage a proactive and supportive approach for housing developments and accommodation options for residents, workforce, and visitors.

- **3.8 Brand management**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  To manage, grow, protect and enhance King Island's brand.

GOAL 4: KING ISLAND LIFESTYLE

- **4.1 Healthy communities through accessible services and recreation.**
  Our ten-year goals are:
  Continue promotion of community development outcomes that enable the community to come together to participate, engage, and to be supportive and sustainable.

  Actively support initiatives that enhance social wellbeing, strengthen local capacity and facilitate access to essential services and opportunities, fostering a strong, connected and resilient community.

Encourage and support active participation by residents of all ages, abilities, and demographics, including youth*.

Ongoing maintenance and development of Council's recreation and sporting facilities, including facilitating the goals and strategic investment priorities of the King Island Recreation Plan 2019, collaborating with user groups, community groups and other recreation providers to support community needs.

Continue advocacy for improvements in infrastructure and services provided by other tiers of government, the private sector, and not-for-profit organisations, to support participation by residents of all ages in safe and healthy physical activities.

- **4.2 Heritage, Arts and Culture and Events**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Celebrate King Island's iconic and distinctive character by facilitating, supporting and showcasing events, arts, festivals and heritage activities.

- **4.3 Townships and settlements**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Facilitate and guide the development of townships and settlements across King Island which embrace the principles of sustainability, diversity, liveability and integration.

- **4.4 Youth development**
  Our ten-year goal is:
  Support the youth by developing programs and opportunities that promote civic engagement, activity, learning and leadership.

GOAL 5: RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE

- **5.1 Statutory, Regulatory and Compliance Services**
  Our ten-year goals are:
  Ensure the efficient and effective delivery of councils statutory, regulatory and compliance services including:
  - Statutory Land Use Planning and Development
  - Building and Plumbing
  - Public Health and Environmental Management
  - Animal Management and Control

- **5.2. Emergency Management**
  Our ten-year goals are:
  Advocate for and support emergency service authorities, professionals, and community volunteers in delivering appropriate emergency management facilities, activities, and response.

  Remain aware of potential risks, and plan, prepare for, respond and recover from, emergencies, meeting Council's legislated role as Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator.

- **5.3 Council Governance, Management and Operations**
  Our ten-year goals are:
  Ensure Council meets statutory, compliance, and legislative requirements Develop a staff team that is skilled, innovative, and multi-disciplined.

  Continue strategic management of all the regulatory and planning frameworks.

  Continue implementation of strategies to ensure that Councillors and staff are informed of current local government practice and issues.

  Ensure ongoing transparency and public accountability through appropriate participation and engagement with our community.

  Continue implementation of evidence-based policy and budget development, which is grounded in data and research and reflects community needs.

HOW WE PLAN TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS

Council produces an Annual Plan that documents the methods that will be implemented to achieve the 10 years goals. It is a commitment to the community that details specific strategies and measurable outcomes.

The Annual Plan is developed each year considering complete and incomplete projects, budgetary and human resource availability and any reviews of strategic direction. Projects and programs that have been completed are removed, those in progress are subject to regular monitoring to meet objectives, and those items that have not been commenced due to operational or budgetary reasons are retained in future plans.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

The sustainability of King Island depends on the provision of essential physical infrastructure that enables movement of people and goods on and off-island and access to water, food, health, environmental, education, police and emergency services, telecommunications, and other basic community and commercial services.

Provision and funding of this infrastructure is shared between the three tiers of government, the private sector and not-for-profit community organisations.

This section provides information in relation to the provision of Council infrastructure, including:

1.1 Local Roads and Pedestrian Networks
1.2 Implementation of Effective Waste Management Strategies
1.3 Council Facilities, Amenities and Structures

1.1 Local Roads, and Pedestrian Networks

Background

Council owns and manages the island's local road network that connects all properties to the sealed State-owned main road North Road, Main Street, Grassy Road and Grassy Harbour Road, which is the major route for heavy vehicle traffic.

Council has 87km of sealed roads and 344kms of gravel roads, including thirty-five bridges, major culverts, road verges and drainage channels. Council is also responsible for road signage, footpaths/walking tracks, public car parks, street furniture and maintains some kelp tracks on Crown land.

The major sealed roads are Old Grassy Road, sections of South Road, the Cape Wickham Road connecting North Road with Cape Wickham, Fraser Road, Pegarah Road which enables heavy vehicles to bypass Currie, and Don Kendall Drive to the King Island Airport.

The most heavily used gravel roads are those connecting the major beef and dairy farming areas to the State Road, the King Island Dairy and Grassy Port. These gravel roads are vital to the safe and efficient operation and economic sustainability of the Island's farms.

Council conducts regular assessments of roads, bridges, and footpaths, identifying the need for better drainage, resurfacing of key gravel roads, and footpath upgrades. Expanding footpaths in priority areas will enhance safety and well-being, ensuring accessible routes near schools, healthcare facilities, and recreational spaces.

Evidence shows that sealed roads have remained in serviceable condition for many decades. This is attributed to the very low traffic volumes on the Island, including low numbers of heavy vehicles, and the use of a comparatively large sealing aggregate that allows for high bitumen spray rates. Provided there is effective roadside drainage, these roads have required only very

little maintenance compared to gravel roads. Given this, a priority is to have an ongoing program to progressively seal important gravel roads.

While gravel roads were found to be in very good condition, given the island's relatively high rainfall and flat topography, they can deteriorate quickly from water damage even with low traffic volumes.

A high priority is to continue to improve roadside drainage, as well mow, and clear roadside vegetation to maximise drying from sunlight and improve sight distances. This is in addition to regular grading, potholing, and re-sheeting, as needed.

To enable these priorities to be adequately funded, it is important for Council to:

- maximise the allocation of Commonwealth and State Government grant programs and Council's other revenue sources to local road works.
- pursue additional sources of funding, including negotiations with the State Government for heavy vehicle registration fee collections to be transferred to Council and allocated to local roads used by heavy vehicles (replicating the current transfer of light vehicle registration fees to Council).

There is also an opportunity to review and update the island's State and local road network to ensure it accurately reflects the distinction between State and local roads.

The final priority is to continue to maintain and, where necessary, upgrade footpaths/walking tracks and accesses to coastal areas.

1.2 Implementation of effective waste management strategies

Background

Council provides weekly residential and commercial waste collection services and operates landfill waste disposal sites at Charles Street and Parenna. Council, together with the King Island District School's Green Team, promotes, collects and recycles glass, tyres, oil and cardboard at Charles Street for reuse on the island. The King Island Lions Club also collects and recycles a range of materials which is segregated away from the active tip head at Charles Street.

The landfill sites are licensed Level 2 Activities issued under the *Environment Management and Pollution Control Act 1993* (EMPCA).

The highest priority for the Plan is to ensure Council meets and maintains its compliance obligations under both licenses and achieves the environmental management standards set for waste disposal. This priority has required Council to make major investments to cap used waste disposal cells at Parenna, improve leachate management and stormwater drainage and regularly cover waste deposited in current operational cells. The next investment is to cap the discontinued landfill area at Charles Street, while continuing to operate the current inert landfill in accordance with license conditions.

The next priority is to continue to review the findings and recommendations in the King Island

Waste Management Strategy 2019-2029 and consult with the State Government on its Waste Action Plan to progressively develop island-based, sustainable recycling, reuse and processing solutions to minimise waste to landfill.

This is a challenging issue as much of the Waste Action Plan is based on statewide and regional waste management solutions which do not take account of the small scale, low revenue base, logistics and high cost of participating in off-island solutions.

The focus for the Plan is to continue to work with residents, farmers, businesses, industry,the Lions Club and the Green Team to promote and improve on-island recycling and waste minimisation. Investigations will include further improvement for Charles Street, specifically a fit-for-purpose waste transfer, recycling and reuse facility, improving waste compaction, and prevention of litter.

1.3 Council Facilities, Amenities and Structures

Background

Council owns and leases the following buildings, amenities, and structures:

Community facilities

- Town Hall and Supper Room (Designated emergency management and recovery centre)
- King Island Airport – Terminal building
- King Island Airport ‑ Light aircraft hanger (Leased to King Island Aeroclub)
- Senior Citizens Op Shop (Leased to King Island Senior Citizens Club)
- Snodgrass Park (Leased by Snodgrass Park Incorporated for Older Adults accommodation)
- King Island Gallery (Leased from TasPorts)
- Currie Harbour Boathouse (Leased to a Community Member)
- 5 George Street (Leased to King Island Regional Development Organisation – KIRDO and Landcare)
- King Island Racecourse Buildings (Seasonal Lease to King Island Racing Club)
- King Island Stable holders Areas (Individual Licence Agreements)
- King Island Show Grounds Buildings (Seasonal Lease to King Island Show Society)
- Currie Oval and Grassy Oval Changerooms and Kiosk (Seasonal Lease to King Island Football Association)
- Wilf Stellmaker Building at Currie sports courts
- Currie Communications Tower
- Council Waste Management Building – Charles Street
- Public toilets at Currie, Currie Harbour, Grassy, Grassy Port and Naracoopa
- RSL and Library Building (Located in Memorial Park)
- Currie Cemetery

Heritage facilities

- Currie Lighthouse (licence to private business)
- Currie Lens Room (Operated by the King Island Historical Society)
- Naracoopa Jetty
- King Island Museum (Owned by the State Government, leased by Council and operated

by the King Island Historical Society, a Special Committee of Council)

Commercial buildings

- King Island Airport – Freight Shed (Leased to Airport User Groups)
- King Island Airport – Hire car offices (Leased to hire car company)
- King Island Airport – Café (Leased to private business)
- King Island Hub and Annexe (Leased to Study King Island, KIRDO and ad hoc users)

Council buildings and houses

- Council Offices – 10 George Street
- Council Depot – 99 Main Road
- King Island Airport Workshop and Storage Buildings
- Shaw Street - House
- Beach Road - House
- Morrison Avenue – House
- Albert Street – House
- Edward St – Units

Most Council buildings are available for public use or leased to community-based organisations that provide services and/or activities for residents and visitors. For leased facilities, the aim is to ensure there is a clear, consistent, and fair delineation of the lessee's maintenance and operational responsibilities as well compliance with WHS standards/legislation and Council's role as the lessor.

The communications tower north of Currie provides local two-radio communications for Council operations and local emergency management services. It also provides broadcast radio and television services for the community at no cost to the broadcasters. While very few other Tasmanian councils perform this function, it is currently the only means by which residents and visitors can access these services.

The priority is to maintain the asset in a serviceable condition and to source funding from broadcasters and other users to offset Council's financial costs.

The Naracoopa Jetty and the Currie Lighthouse were transferred to Council at the end of their operational and economic life. Both structures are highly valued by the community but represent a significant financial challenge for Council to maintain and repair, especially given the harsh environmental conditions on both ageing structures. Similarly, Council needs to resolve its long-term position in relation to its lease of the King Island Museum.

The priority for the Council Chambers, offices and works depot is to ensure they are maintained and, as required, upgraded to be fit-for-purpose, to comply with health and safety standards and to be operationally efficient. Council's residences are leased to senior staff as part of employment contracts and used to accommodate visiting consultants, contractors and artists in residence where required.

The King Island Hub includes visitor information and community lounge with free WiFi, co-working space, small meeting/training rooms, a business services area, online access centre, and multi-purpose space for meetings and events, with public toilet and shower facilities on site. The Hub will also be home to Study King Island, a regional university study hub, and King Island Regional Development Organisation.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

2.1 Climate change planned for and managed

Background

King Island Council recognises the need to address climate change and its impacts on our community, environment, and economy. Council is committed to implementing sustainable practices and policies that will reduce our carbon footprint, enhance resilience, and promote environmental stewardship.

Council aims to protect our natural resources, support our local economy, and ensure the well-being of our residents through proactive and innovative climate action.

Council will work with residents, businesses, and stakeholders to:

- Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Implement measures to reduce emissions from council operations and community activities.
- Enhance Renewable Energy: Promote and invest in renewable energy sources to transition away from fossil fuels.
- Improve Energy Efficiency: Encourage energy-efficient practices and technologies in homes, businesses, and council facilities.
- Protect Natural Resources: Preserve and restore natural habitats, biodiversity, and water resources.
- Increase Climate Resilience: Develop infrastructure and community programs that enhance resilience to climate-related impacts such as extreme weather events and sea-level rise.
- Promote Sustainable Development: Ensure that future development aligns with sustainability principles and minimises environmental impact.
- Engage and Educate: Foster community awareness and involvement in climate action through education and engagement initiatives.

2.2 Preserve and protect our natural environment

Background

Council currently support King Island Landcare (KILC) formerly King Island Natural Resource Management (KINRM), who deliver a wide range of environmental activities and agricultural projects and are instrumental in assisting land managers and the community to manage King Island's natural resources.

We also have strong connections with Biosecurity Tasmania who undertake biosecurity barrier inspections and manage a host of other risks/threats to the Island including invasive weeds, pests and diseases.

Council will continue to work with the Forest Practices Authority, by educating and encouraging landholders to comply with its regulations, including the Forest Practices Act 1985.

2.3 Environment and Resource Management

Background
Council owns and maintains one quarry at Reekara, known as North Pit, for extraction of rock, and currently holds a lease on a stockpile of overburden at the Grassy Scheelite mine for crushing to aggregates and gravel. These assets have historically performed an essential resource for Council, state government agencies, and the community in the provision of rock and aggregates used in construction, particularly for roads, and continue to do so today.

Reekara quarry (and the now closed South Pit) fall under Mineral Resources Tasmania and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). The Reekara and Grassy sites also operate under mining leases managed by Mineral Resources Tasmania with environmental management in accordance with Environmental Protection Notices issued by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Population Growth
3.2 Encourage investment on King Island
3.3 Employment, education and training
3.4 Freight infrastructure and programs
3.5 King Island Airport
3.6 Tourism and increased visitation
3.7 Increased housing and visitor accommodation

Background
Local government plays a key role in facilitating economic development by attracting businesses and residents to municipalities. In an economy the size of King Island's, changes in one industry or even one business can have a marked impact on the Island community. As such, Council sees its part in driving economic development as a key element in ensuring the long-term viability of the King Island community. This department of Council includes tourism industry support and brand management as integral elements of the Island's economic sustainability.

The King Island economy is built on the agricultural and fishing sectors, with related manufacturing bringing these sectors' total contribution in FY2022/23 to 42% of the Island's FTE employment and 54.6% of the total value added by industry, equating to $78.6M. Mining provides the next highest proportion of the Island's total value added by industry at 11.4%, being $16.4M, but offering just 6.7% of FTE employment.
Anecdotally, the tourism industry is increasing its contribution to both GRP and employment, with the development of two world-class golf courses in 2015-16 and subsequent investment in visitor accommodation. Since 2015 the Island's headline GRP has been on an upwards trend and in June 2023 sat at $165m.

3.1 Population Growth

Being able to make a home in a place of such natural beauty and be part of this strong, vibrant community is a privilege, but this can come at a cost. The only passenger route on or off the island is by air, and high sea-freight costs impact the price of almost everything sold on the Island. The cost of employment is also high, and the impact of losing new staff, having invested in attracting and training them, often a devastating blow to local business.

King Island's resident population had been tracking slowly upwards from 2016 to 2022, increasing from 1594 to 1675, This trend was interrupted with a drop to 1648 in the 12 months to 30 June 2023, although this could be attributed to increased costs of living or a normalisation post-COVID.

With an unemployment rate of just 1.9% in the 2021 Census, increasing our Island's working population is necessary to realise our growth opportunities. Attracting and retaining a larger population is, however, contingent on addressing barriers such as lack of affordable, quality housing, cost of living, and cost of access.

3.2 Encourage Investment on King Island

King Island and its community have a strong reliance on the economic contribution and employment offered by the agriculture industry, including subsequent processing and retail of that produce. This is predominantly attributed to beef, dairy and seafood produce, but also includes smaller operations producing spirits, beer, drinking water, honey, salt, herbs and vegetables.

In recent years, the Island has enjoyed significant investment in tourism-related businesses, including the development and operation of two large golf courses, new self-contained and hotel visitor accommodation, and the creation of new tour operations.

Council has a role in promoting the investment opportunities available on King Island. Part of this is achieved through the activities of the King Island Brand Management Group, a special committee of Council, promoting the strength of the King Island brand. It is also achieved through fostering relationships with state and federal government agencies which facilitate large scale investment, such as the Tasmanian Office of the Coordinator General, and advocating against barriers to trade, such as the high cost of freight and access to and from the Island.

The uncertainty that large-scale lenders perceive in the King Island economy makes it increasingly difficult for businesses and individuals to obtain the finance they need to make significant investment in King Island. Council also has a role in raising awareness of this issue with state and federal government and advocating for changes which will improve this situation.

3.3 Employment, Education and Training

King Island enjoys high levels of employment, with unemployment reported at 1.9% at the last Census in 2021, compared to 5.9% across Tasmania. Of the estimated resident population of 1,648, there were an estimated 919 workers on the Island in 2023 filling 771 FTE positions.

This represents a 9% increase in FTE since FY2018/19 vs a workforce increase of just 5%, indicating a higher proportion of full time workers on the Island than seen in 2018/19.

The King Island District High School offers public education from kinder to year 12 on the Island and supports students in securing school based apprenticeships if desired. The Island has strong links with public and private schools in mainland Tasmania, with many high school students transferring to Hellyer College on the North West Coast for the last years of high school.

Access to post-secondary education and skills training on the Island is limited and travelling off-Island to access services in Tasmania or mainland Australia is often expensive. The establishment of Study King Island in 2023, a subsidiary of the Study Hub West Coast regional university study hub, will service tertiary students living on the island, and a partnership with TasTAFE to create a virtual classroom at the King Island Hub will facilitate improved virtual group learning. Advocating for delivery of courses and qualifications which target the employment opportunities on the Island will help underpin the Island's economic growth and assist in retention and growth of our Island's population.

3.4 Freight infrastructure and programs

The cost of doing business on King Island is higher than across Tasmania, largely due to the additional cost incurred moving inputs and outputs across the Bass Strait. Longer lead times for accessing goods and services required to effectively do business on King Island also impact and the ability of businesses to compete with off-Island counterparts.

The cost of freight has a significant impact across our Island's economy and community. Any business operating on the Island is impacted by the cost of freight on their general cost of doing business, and the amount they need to pay their staff will be impacted by the cost of living. The Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme (TFES) was introduced to alleviate the impact of these additional costs, but the scheme has not kept pace with the real cost of freight. Further, the TFES is limited to certain industries and category of goods, which means businesses operating on King Island remain more disadvantaged than their Tasmanian and mainland Australian peers due to the impacts of freight.

The limited freight options for the Island can have a dramatic effect on our economy and particular industries' ability to survive. For example, during a period of drought over 2023 and 2024, the impact of reduced feed available for beef and dairy farmers was exacerbated by issues with transporting fertiliser, cattle trailers and feed to the Island, and the transfer of cattle off the Island for processing. A study commissioned by Council calculated that the shipping limitations alone represented a $12m loss to the Island's beef industry in one financial year. Council has an important role to play in advocating to state and federal government so that similar situations can be mitigated or ideally avoided in the future.

The limited frequency of sea freight services and the time each crossing takes means that air freight is an unavoidable expense for almost every business and household on the Island.

Council has advocated for the TFES to be extended to include freight by air where a sea-based option is not practicable and will continue to lobby for this addition to the scheme.

There are limited telecommunications services, with large portions of the Island having little or no telephone service and only able to access the internet via satellite or 4G services. Council is uniquely placed to lobby for improvement to sea and air logistics and for the further provision of telecommunications services to the Island. The cost of access to the Island means that virtual meetings and communication play a more essential role in our economy and community, for everything from business transactions to health consultations. While improvements have been made in recent years, such as the introduction of Starlink's low earth orbit satellite network and the Telstra-led improvement to 4G telephone and data services, there remains a need for further improvement in this area.

3.5 King Island Airport

Background
Council has operated the King Island Airport on behalf of the King Island community since ownership was transferred from the Commonwealth Government on 2 December 1992.

The Airport is the island's primary gateway facilitating the movement of passengers and freight between King Island, Tasmania and mainland Australia. This includes people travelling for medical, business and pleasure purposes, as well as perishable and time-critical cargo.

The airport is arguably Councils single most critical asset strategically servicing the health and wellbeing requirements of the community and underpinning the Island's economy through supporting tourism, agriculture and most other local industries. It also provides important first and last impressions of the island, and its brand.

The overriding strategic priority is to ensure the airports continuity of operations.
To achieve this Council will:

- Operate the airport in full compliance with all applicable local, state and commonwealth legislation and aviation requirements.
- Ensure the Airport's infrastructure is maintained and upgraded as necessary to remain always fit for purpose.
- Ensure the airport is adequately funded and resourced.

The airport has historically been a financial loss leader for Council. In response, council are currently reviewing the airport fees and charges with a view to working towards achieving operational cost neutrality, on a user pays basis.

Critical works looming at the airport include the need to address the deteriorating runway, taxiway and apron pavements. In this regard a scope of works is being prepared to engage a pavement consultant to determine how best to extend the pavements economic life. The scope of works also requires the consultant prepare and cost estimate a pavement upgrade design to strengthen and possibly lengthening the runway. The timing of any proposed upgrade works is dependent on the proffered pavement maintenance schedule and the resulting extension (if any) of the pavement's life.

Alternatively, the need to introduce an alternative aircraft type and or airline, for instance, - if Rex suddenly ceased operations, may also trigger the need to upgrade the pavements.
Given Councils limited ability to drive aviation revenues, and the high costs associated with any proposed pavement works, it is likely that Council will need to apply for external funding from state and/or federal grant funds.

Other upcoming works at the airport include reviewing the apron bay configuration with a view towards providing more aircraft parking, investigating the works required if aviation screening is ever to be introduced; and investigating future car parking capacity requirements. Most of these items will be fully explored as part of a proposed airport master plan review, currently budgeted for the 2025/26 FY.

3.6 Tourism and increased visitation
Tourism has had a growing impact on our Island's economy in recent years, as demonstrated through the increase in passengers and aircraft travelling through the King Island Airport and the investment seen in new hotel style and self-contained accommodation. The businesses that service the tourism are spread across a number of industry sectors, which makes it difficult to accurately quantify the value of tourism to the Island. However, it is broadly accepted that an investment in our Island as a destination for visitors will improve economic outcomes for the Island.

Visitors are estimated to make up between 56% and 60% of total passengers arriving at our airport on scheduled commercial flights. In the 2024 calendar year, this totalled approximately 15,800 visitors to our Island. On top of this, more than 500 charter flights landed at the airport, most of which carried passengers travelling specifically to play golf at Cape Wickham or Ocean Dunes. The development of 64 visitor accommodation rooms at Ocean Dunes in FY2025/26 is forecast to create a significant increase in the number of visitors coming to the Island, not only for golf but also for general travel. It is therefore essential for Council to include this forecast growth in its strategic planning across all local government services and advocacy.

3.7 Increased housing and visitor accommodation
Housing is both a state and national issue and King Island is not immune to this. Obtaining a balance of accommodation supply for both visitors and residents on King Island is the key challenge to ensuring the successful growth of the visitor and tourist market, and securing the workforce required for the broader King Island economy.

The small size of the King Island community, the increased cost of construction and maintenance compared to mainland Tasmania and the rest of Australia, and the higher thresholds set by lenders for individuals and families trying to secure finance to purchase homes, are all barriers which need to be overcome if we are to overcome the current shortage of accommodation.

Council directly assists in mitigating some of these impacts through its lease of land to Snodgrass Park Inc., offering low-cost rental accommodation to long-term resident pensioners. However, the bulk of Council's input to the housing challenge on King Island must

be through advocacy and, where appropriate, supporting private organisations in their efforts to secure funding to construct new accommodation in our community.

4. KING ISLAND LIFESTYLE

Council plays a key role in facilitating, advocating, and supporting particular social, environmental, and economic issues of importance to the wellbeing of the community and the Island's economy. The focus areas are:

4.1 Healthy communities through accessible services and recreation
4.2 Heritage, Arts, Culture and Events
4.3 Townships and settlements

4.1 Healthy communities through accessible services and recreation

Background

King Island Council is committed to fostering a strong, connected, and resilient community where all members have the opportunity to participate, contribute, and thrive.

Beyond providing essential infrastructure, Council actively supports community development initiatives that enhance social wellbeing, strengthen local capacity, and facilitate access to essential services and opportunities.

Key priorities include:

- Participation & Empowerment – Encouraging active involvement in community life and decision-making to ensure all voices are heard and valued.
- Inclusivity & Social Justice – Embedding principles of access, equity, fairness, diversity, and human rights in all initiatives.
- Resilience & Sustainability – Strengthening the community's ability to adapt, grow, and sustain itself for future generations.
- Collaboration & Capacity Building – Building partnerships and support networks to maximize opportunities and services for the community and empowering community members to drive positive change.
- Cultural Identity & Connection – Celebrating and preserving the unique heritage, traditions, and identity of the island's community.
- Wellbeing & Access – Advocating for healthcare, education, and essential services that support the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of all residents.

Through this approach, Council aims to enhance the quality of life for all community members.

Council, community organisations, the King Island District High School, private businesses and the Parks and Wildlife Service manage a wide and diverse range of recreation areas and sporting facilities across the island. Collectively, these facilities cater for all age groups and benefit the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents and visitors.

Council provides:

- an Australian Rules football oval, changerooms, multi sport courts, bbq facilities, public toilets and playground facilities (Lighthouse Street Park) at the Currie Oval.
- an Australian Rules football oval, cricket pitch, playground, picnic facilities and public toilets at Grassy.
- a skatepark and playground facilities at the King Island Memorial Park in Currie.
- several walking tracks around Currie
- horse racing, pony, dressage and show jumping infrastructure, changerooms, stables and public toilets at the Recreation Complex.
- public open space adjoining Currie Harbour and the Currie Lighthouse, including a walking track network, playground facilities, bbq facilities and public toilets.
- coastal public open space, a coastal walking path and playground and bbq/picnic facilities at Naracoopa

Incorporated organisations, voluntarily managed and maintained by members provide important facilities with minimal support from Council, such as the King Island Golf and Bowling Club, which includes a 9-hole golf course, bowling green and squash courts, the King Island Boat Club, the Swimming Association of King Island who own and operate the Grassy swimming pool, the King Island Gun Club and the King Island Pistol Club. Private land is also accessed for hunting and nature-based activities.

There are also two international golf courses at Cape Wickham and Ocean Dunes and major sporting events that attract both locals and visitors, such as the annual King Island Imperial 20 and King Island Golf Open.

A key feature of sport and recreation on King Island is the very significant and positive role performed by community volunteers and groups. Council recognises the importance of volunteers and is committed to work with them to sustain the competitions and activities that encourage community participation and promote health and wellbeing.

A high priority is to use specific purpose Commonwealth and State Government grant programs to implement recommendations in the Recreation Plan and upgrade Council's existing facilities to a contemporary standard.

4.2 Heritage, Arts, Culture and Events

Background

Heritage, arts, and culture are at the heart of King Island's identity - strengthening social connections and sense of belonging, enriching community and cultural life, and preserving the island's unique history and identity.

Council actively supports arts and cultural engagement through initiatives such as the Artist-in-Residence program, exhibitions, and community arts workshops at the King Island Gallery. In collaboration with stakeholders, Council also works to deliver broader heritage, arts, and cultural events and activities on the island.

These initiatives play a vital role in individual and community wellbeing, tourism, and community development, while expanding creative, learning, and entertainment opportunities for all ages.

To further support and strengthen King Island's heritage, arts and cultural space, Council is committed to:

- Facilitating partnerships to broaden and enhance arts and cultural opportunities for the island.
- Nurturing the island's creative community and building the capacity of artists through creative learning opportunities
- Strengthening inclusivity by providing creative and cultural opportunities for all abilities and age groups.
- Supporting community-driven heritage, arts and cultural initiatives that foster creativity and connection.
- Facilitating the use of arts, culture, and heritage engagement to enhance individual and community wellbeing.

Council will continue to ensure heritage, arts and cultural initiatives remain a valued and celebrated part of King Island's dynamic community now and into the future.

4.3 Townships & Settlements

Background

King Island comprises three major townships, Currie, Grassy and Naracoopa.

Currie, on the west coast, is the main town and hosts most services, including the hospital and health centre, school, childcare centre, local and state government offices, and a large portion of shops and restaurants. With a population of approximately 770 in the 2021 Census, it has the largest concentration of residents and is the administrative centre of the Island.

Grassy is the second most populous locality with approximately 120 residents at the 2021 census. The township of Grassy is home to a playing field with playground, barbecue area and cricket pitch, and is serviced by the Grassy CPA post office and general store, the licenced Grassy Club, and Wild Harvest restaurant. The TasPorts owned and operated Port of Grassy is critical infrastructure for King Island. The Port facilitates the safe docking of vessels for freight, livestock and expedition cruise ships and is the main shipping port for our remote island. Group6 Metals operates the reopened historic Grassy tungsten mine as the Dolphin Tungsten mine.

The village of Naracoopa is located on the eastern coastline of King Island and has an approximate population of 40, which increases dramatically during holiday periods. Naracoopa has historic significance as being the location where Tasmania (van Diemen's Land) was claimed by the British in 1802. The site is identified by a cairn on Naracoopa Esplanade. Naracoopa is a family friendly, engaged community and hosts a playground and barbecue area, public toilets, Baudins Restaurant and multiple visitor accommodation facilities. Naracoopa Mineral Sands operates a mining enterprise on the edge of Fraser River. Naracoopa is home to the historic Naracoopa Jetty, which is now used as a recreational fishing jetty and is much loved by the community.

Outside of the main townships, King Islanders reside and spend their time across the length and breadth of the Island on large properties, and in small settlements and localities. There are many well-known locations used by families, friends and individuals to meet, or to find solitude. Beaches, walking tracks, golf courses, and a multitude of magnificent places to explore are integral to the King Island lifestyle.

Consideration of amenities and services is required to meet the brief of how our community and visitors gather and experience the Island. The King Island Council Townships Master Plan 2017 was developed through a comprehensive community consultation process and continues to provide critical information on the vision of the community for specific areas.

In determining allocation of resources for planning of projects and initiatives, the Townships Master Plan provides that Council be guided by the principles of:

- Sustainability – balancing the economic, social and environmental consequences of growth to ensure that benefits are sustained in the long-term;
- Diversity – promoting a varied mix of economic and social opportunities that delivers a prosperous and equitable community;
- Liveability – promoting high-quality urban and abutting rural environments that support healthy lifestyles and protect the unique and prosperous agricultural landscape of King Island
- Integration – maximising opportunities for linkages and synergies between the undeveloped growth areas and the existing community and business areas. The aim is also to ensure integration at a holistic level between the three dispersed townships, as well as develop and identify the unique assets and attributes of each township.

5. RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE

Council is assigned responsibility to administer the respective processes and requirements in a broad range of government legislation including:

Statutory Land Use Planning and Development
Building and Plumbing
Public Health and Environmental Management
Animal Management and Control
Emergency Management
Council Governance, Management and Operations

5.1 Statutory, Regulatory and Compliance Services

Statutory Land Use Planning and Development

Applications for new development, changes of land use and subdivision of land are assessed and decided in accordance with planning zones, codes and other statutory requirements in the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – King Island and legal processes in the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and the *Local Government (Building and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*.

In 2015, the Tasmanian Government commenced a process to replace all existing council planning schemes with a single Tasmanian Planning Scheme containing statewide, one-size-fits-all standardised zones, codes and other requirements, called State Planning Provisions (SPPs).

This process required Council to prepare a King Island Local Provisions Schedule (LPS) to align existing planning scheme zones and codes with the SPPs and submit it to the Tasmanian Planning Commission for assessment, community consultation and approval. The draft LPS must be consistent with legislated LPS criteria, including consistency, as far as practicable, with the Cradle Coast Regional Land Use Strategy.

The Tasmanian Planning Commission approved the King Island draft Local Provision Schedule (draft LPS). The Tasmnainian Planning Scheme – King Island will be applied to all new planning applications received from Monday, 28 October 2024. As the Tasmanian Planning Scheme is a statutory reform to establish statewide, standardised scheme provisions, the LPS process does not enable Council to make strategic changes to the zone and code provisions, however amendments to rezone land can be submitted the Tasmanian Planning Commission for consideration.

The priority is to continue to monitor and update Council's King Island Land Use Strategy to justify future amendments for further investment in existing developments and new sustainable development. These updates will need to assess and manage potential implications arising from further State Government plans to introduce Tasmanian Planning Policies and review and update regional land use strategies.

Building and Plumbing
Council as an entity of a municipal area is a licenced entity and is the permit authority for the municipal area.

The role of a permit authority is to accept and consider applications and other required documents relating to building and plumbing activities within the municipal area. The priority is to administer and comply with these processes and requirements. To protect our environment Council will continue to comply with its obligations under legislation to ensure development has minimal impact on our natural environment.

Public Health and Environmental Management
To protect the wellbeing of our community, its residents and visitors, the Council provides a range of public and environmental health programs and services. These include school age immunisations, food safety, education, emergency management and infectious disease investigations.

Animal Management and Control
Council recognises that companion animals play an important role in people's lives and that working dogs are an essential part of a farming operation. Council's priority is to inform and encourage owners to manage pets and other animals responsibly to minimise nuisance and harm to members of the community, other animals and the environment.

Council administers responsibilities assigned under the *Dog Control Act 2000* through its Dog Management Policy. The Policy promotes responsible dog ownership through public information and education and the designation of areas suitable for exercising dogs. Council also responds to public complaints about stray and dangerous dogs and, if necessary, initiates enforcement action. Council maintains a fit-for-purpose pound at its Works Depot.

Council has additional responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1993* to ensure stock do not stray onto roads or to secure domestic animals. This is largely administered on the basis of public complaints.

State Government cat management legislation sets out the responsibility of cat owners and the rights of people impacted by stray and domestic cats. The Cradle Coast Authority has developed a regional cat management plan to guide implementation of the legislation. However, the legislation and the regional plan do not provide workable solutions for King Island. They also do not address feral cats which are a major problem on the island and a significant threat to threatened and endangered species.

A priority is to facilitate and encourage responsible dog, and animal ownership in accordance with state legislation, regulations, and Council's policies.

5.2 Emergency Management

Background

State, regional and local emergency management responsibilities are set out in the *Emergency Management Act 2006* and the Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements (TEMA). It provides a high level of collaboration, coordination and interoperability within and across all levels of government and non-government stakeholders.

King Island, as a small, remote Bass Strait Island, presents unique logistical challenges in relation to emergency services. The island is heavily dependent on dedicated and trained community volunteers and a small number of police, health and biosecurity professionals to respond to, and recover from, emergencies. Fire, state emergency service (SES), ambulance and social, economic and environment recovery services are provided by volunteers with fly-in support from mainland Tasmania depending on the nature and extent of the emergency.

Council employees undertake the roles of Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator and Municipal Recovery Coordinator and Deputy Recovery Coordinator, and maintains an up-to-date Municipal Emergency Management Plan and Municipal Social Recovery Plan that addresses a range of risks and hazards. It also has an Airport Emergency Plan.

Council convenes the King Island Municipal Emergency Management Committee, comprising representatives of the island's police, fire, SES, health, ambulance, biosecurity, ports, electricity and water providers and community organisations (such as King Island Red Cross, Emergency Management Chaplaincy, and coordinates regular practical field and desk-top exercises to test the plans and assist in developing emergency workers skills and experience, alongside risk assessments, North-West Regional Emergency Management Committee and

State Government.

Council and the Municipal Emergency Management Committee work closely with state and regional emergency authorities to coordinate planning, training and responses. Council also has interagency community networks, including Red Cross,- G6 Metals and TasPorts.

Council provides the island's major evacuation centre at the Town Hall and acts to reduce potential risks within its direct control, including clearing fire buffers on Council land. Councils also plays an important role in communicating government emergency information to the community.

5.3 Council Governance, Management and Operations

Background

The other main function of Council is to administer its affairs in accordance with legislative requirements and its own policies and procedures. Council comprises the elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor and seven other Councillors who together represent the community and govern the organisation.

Council is responsible and accountable to the King Island community (s.20.1 of the Act) and is required to consult and involve the community (s.20.2 of the Act). For an increasing number of functions assigned under the Act and other legislation, Council is also responsible and accountable to State and Commonwealth Government officials and statutory authorities for statutory compliance.

Council appoints and delegates authority to the General Manager to manage day-to-day operations performed by professional, administrative, and financial staff based at the Council Chambers and works staff based at Council's Depot. Council also engages contractors and consultants to perform some tasks.

Council has adopted a structured integrated approach to planning and implementing strategies and operational priorities. It involved formation of a series of Councillor Working Groups to review Council's performance and policies for: waste management; roads, bridges, walking tracks and drainage; recreation facilities; budget and financial management; and a major proposed development project. These are not decision making groups but ensure Council is aware of issues in these areas.

The model provides a more effective process for Councillors to input their knowledge and expertise to policy formulation and for staff to inform and advise Councillors.
Council communicates with the community, residents and visitors through various mediums, including the King Island Council website, Council Facebook and Instagram as well utilising and engaging with traditional media forms, such as the local/state paper, and radio.