

Laverton

Neighbourhood Profile



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The data profile was updated in 2015 and includes 2011 census data.

Other sections in the profile have not been updated.

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Laverton Neighbourhood Profile

Executive Summary

The Laverton neighbourhood is located at the western boundary of the City of Hobsons Bay. The neighbourhood was named after an original property in the area, owned by Alfred Langhorne in the 1830s. Laverton's borders are formed by the old Geelong Road to the north and the Princes Freeway along the south and east boundaries. To the west, the neighbourhood shares a municipal boundary with City of Wyndham.

(NB: Laverton neighbourhood, as referred to in this profile, is the area that falls within the Hobsons Bay municipality. It *does not include* the section of the Laverton suburb that extends into the City of Wyndham.)

The Laverton neighbourhood is primarily a residential area and construction of the housing began in the 1950s. The main retail area is located around the Aviation Road precinct, on the south side of the Werribee railway line.

Transport infrastructure is a major feature in the neighbourhood. The Werribee railway line runs through the southern end of the neighbourhood and physically divides it from the north, while the Princes Freeway separates Laverton and the rest of Hobsons Bay.

Laverton was described by residents as having a "good atmosphere", that it was a down to earth place, without pretensions. People said it was a place with a lot to offer "but that it has tended to be unrecognised for all that it does have". For some, it was a place where they could afford to buy a home and for those who were born overseas, Laverton offered the opportunity of a new beginning. However, its location on the border of two municipalities had its downside. As one person put it, Laverton "used to be on the edge of Wyndham, now it's on the edge of Hobsons Bay - whatever happens we're used to being the poor sister". Nevertheless, people spoke about the strong connections they have with Laverton; "I've been here all my life...This is my home".

Population numbers

- At the 2011 Census, Laverton had a population of 4,458 people (just over 5% of the municipality's residents). Based on population forecasts for 2015, the neighbourhood's current population is approximately 4,880.
- Population forecasts indicate the current population will increase to just under 4,500 by 2025.

Age structure

- Laverton has a much younger adult profile than most other areas in Hobsons Bay. There was significant growth among 25-34 years, and to a lesser extent among 18-24 year olds, between 2006 and 2011.
- Forecasts for 2015-2025 show that the main population growth will be among 25-34 year olds and those aged 35-49 years.

Overseas born residents

- Almost 46 per cent (2,036) of people living in Laverton were born overseas, which is substantially higher than the municipal figure of 31 per cent. The main countries of birth were India, Burma and the United Kingdom.
- Forty three per cent of residents speak a language other than English compared to around 29 per cent of Hobsons Bay residents.

Residents needing assistance

- Estimates suggest that approximately 760 residents living in Laverton have a disability.
- There are 220 residents who require assistance with core activities involving self care, communication and mobility.

Education

- Laverton has a Prep-Year 12 College, together with a private primary school.
- Twenty four per cent of Laverton residents are enrolled in education, slightly above the Hobsons Bay rate of 22 per cent.
- Forty eight per cent of Laverton residents (aged 15 years and over) have completed Year 12, compared to 50 per cent for Hobsons Bay.

Labour Force

- Fifty seven per cent of Laverton residents (over 15 years) are in the labour force, 3 per cent below the Hobsons Bay rate. Of these, 13 per cent are unemployed, compared to six per cent of Hobsons Bay residents.
- Approximately 52 per cent of people work full time, around 10 per cent below the rate for Hobsons Bay.
- The largest employment sectors for the neighbourhood's workers are manufacturing, accommodation and food services and transport, postal and warehousing (13 per cent, 11 per cent and 11 per cent respectively).
- Laverton has a slightly higher rate of people not in the labour force compared to Hobsons Bay (36 per cent and 33 per cent respectively).

Income

- According to the 2011 Census, approximately 76 per cent of Laverton residents have gross weekly incomes at or below the Australian average of around \$976.
- In addition, 44 per cent of Laverton residents have a gross weekly income below \$400 per week, compared to the Hobsons Bay rate of 37 per cent.
- Approximately 44 per cent of Laverton households have a gross income below \$400 compared to 37 per cent of Hobsons Bay households. At the higher end, 5 per cent of households in the neighbourhood have incomes above \$1,500, compared to the Hobsons Bay of 14 per cent.

Housing

- Eighty-nine per cent of the neighbourhood's dwelling stock is detached housing compared to the municipal figure of 75 per cent. The proportion of home owners and those purchasing have both declined since the 2006 Census.
- The level of households who are renters has risen from 27 per cent to 39 percent since 2006.
- Home ownership is 11 per cent below the level for Hobsons Bay.

Transport & traffic

- Laverton has access to both train and bus services.
- Eighty per cent of Laverton households own one or more vehicles, compared to 85 per cent of households in Hobsons Bay,

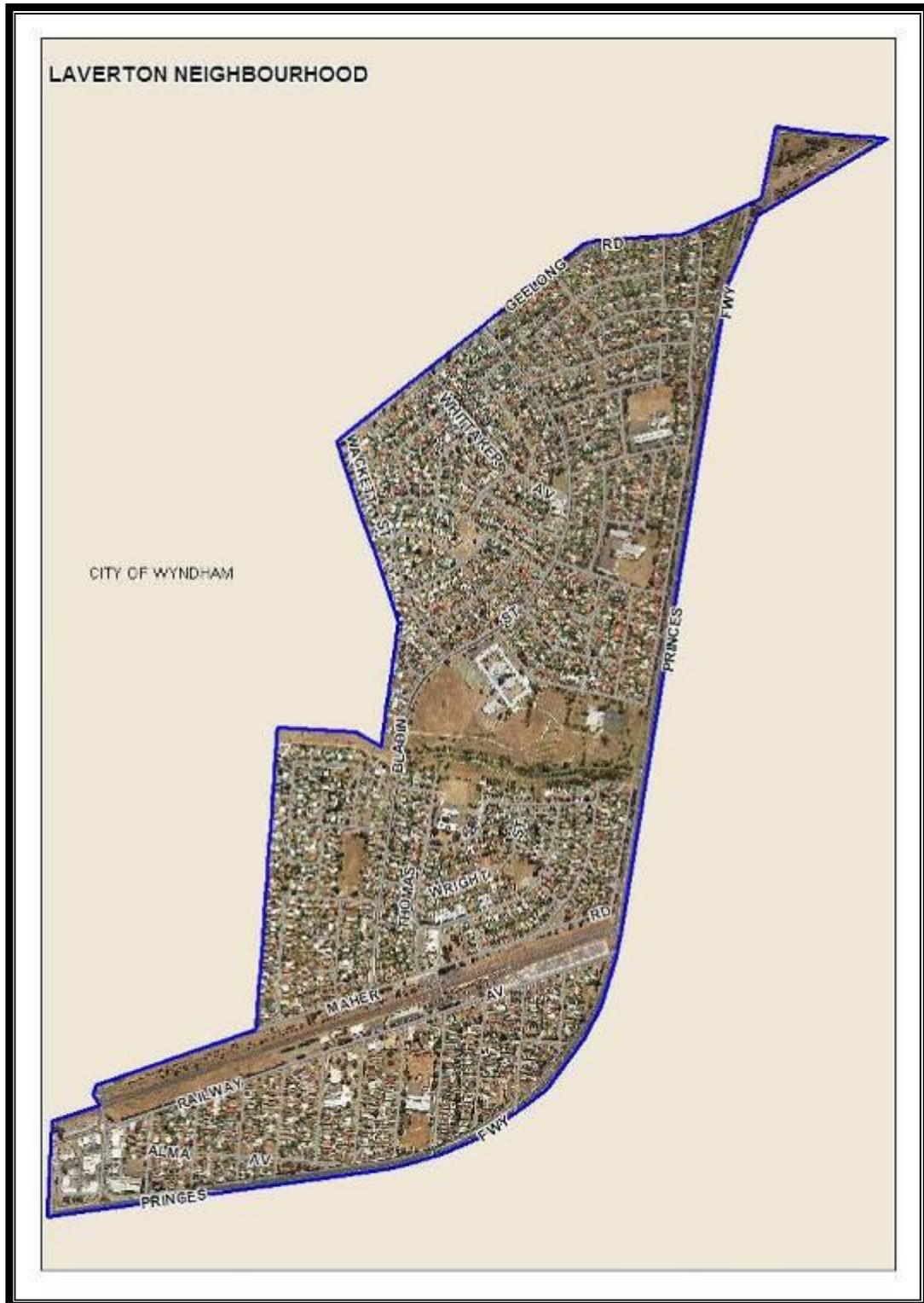


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Laverton Neighbourhood Past, Current and Future Development



A. Introduction

The Laverton neighbourhood is located at the western boundary of the City of Hobsons Bay. The neighbourhood was named after an original property in the area, owned by Alfred Langhorne in the 1830s. Laverton's borders are formed by the old Geelong Road to the north and the Princes Freeway along the south and east boundaries. To the west, the neighbourhood shares a municipal boundary with City of Wyndham. (NB: Laverton neighbourhood, as referred to in this profile, is the area that falls within the Hobsons Bay municipality (Please refer to the map on the previous page.) It does not include the section of the Laverton *suburb* that extends into the City of Wyndham.)

The Laverton neighbourhood is primarily a residential area and construction of the housing began in the 1950s. The main retail area is located around the Aviation Road precinct, on the south side of the Werribee railway line.

Transport infrastructure is a major feature in the neighbourhood. The Werribee railway line runs through the southern end of the neighbourhood and physically divides it from the north, while the Princes Freeway separates Laverton and the rest of Hobsons Bay.

The Laverton neighbourhood has a Prep – Year 12 school campus, formed through the merger of two primary schools and the secondary college in 2009. There is also a Catholic primary school. The site of the former Laverton Plains Primary School will become the Western Autistic School.

Public transport consists of a number of bus services and the train service connects Laverton to Werribee and metropolitan Melbourne.

B. History & Development

The Yalukit-willam Clan

The Aboriginal people who lived in what is now known as the City of Hobsons Bay are the Yalukit-willam, a name meaning 'river camp' or 'river dwellers'. The Yalukit-willam are associated with the coastal land at the head of Port Phillip that extends from the Werribee River, across Williamstown, Port Melbourne, St Kilda and Prahran.

There were several clans in the area, comprising one or two extended families. They were sometimes distinguished by names of their leaders; two Yalukit-willam leaders were Benbow and Derremart. (Derremart was identified in the historical records of the 1830s.) His name has been used to name several streets in the western suburbs and also the Parish of Derrimut.

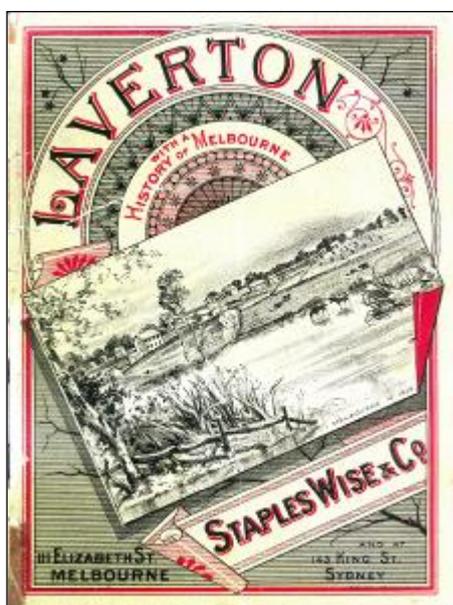
The Yalukit-willam were semi nomadic hunter gatherers who camped close to permanent fresh water streams. Apart from the wildlife they caught, the women collected Murnong, a small plant with a tuber similar to a yam, which grew along the Kororoit Creek and covered the western plain. They caught ducks and swans along the coastal and swamp areas and eels, yabbies and fish in Stony and Kororoit Creeks.

With European settlement, the grasslands that were traditionally used for hunting were fenced off for pastoral use; wildlife declined and the Aboriginal camps were broken up.¹

European settlement

European settlement of the Laverton area dates from the 1840s, with land used mainly for farming. In 1844, a pastoral run was recorded in the Settler's Directory, naming Alfred Langhorne as the occupier of a property named 'Laverton'. Part of Langhorne's Laverton Homestead, now called Altona Homestead, can still be seen in Logan Reserve opposite the Altona Pier.

In 1886, developer and auctioneer C.R. Staples commissioned surveyors Bruford and Brain to design Laverton township and persuaded the railways to build a station there on the Geelong railway line. The planned township was between the railway line and the current route of the Princes Freeway, south of Laverton Station. The marketing brochure (see below) claimed it would be a 'model suburb' with wide streets, land reserved for public buildings and over 25 acres allocated for parks and recreation reserves. Staples argued that, as the township was only ten minutes travel from employment at the proposed Newport railway workshops, land was bound to increase in value. Most lots were sold for ten pounds each. However, the suburb failed to eventuate and by 1901, Laverton had a population of only 125.²



Source: Brochures courtesy of Bob Hawkins (refer to references)

The first school in the Laverton area was opened in a Wesleyan church hall in 1887 and a one room brick school was opened the following year. The school building still exists in Kiora Street (see photo), but as a result of boundary changes it now falls within the Altona Meadows neighbourhood.



Post War development

The area's history is strongly associated with the Royal Australia Air Force (RAAF). The RAAF base was established in the area in the 1920s. The development of the base was followed by the construction of new housing to accommodate RAAF staff and their families. Another site with direct links with the RAAF is

“the Senior Citizens (Golden Age) Club on the corner of Railway Avenue and Donald Street. This building is the former Cadet Officers' Mess from Point Cook, which the RAAF gave to [the former] Werribee Shire Council.”³

In the period after World War II, there was further residential development in the area, including housing constructed by the Victorian Housing Commission. The distinctive layout of the Laverton residential area, with its curving streets, courts and central open spaces, is common to public housing estates of that era. As the number of families living in the area grew, three state primary schools and one Catholic primary school, together with a secondary school, were constructed in the 1960s -70s.^{4 & 5}

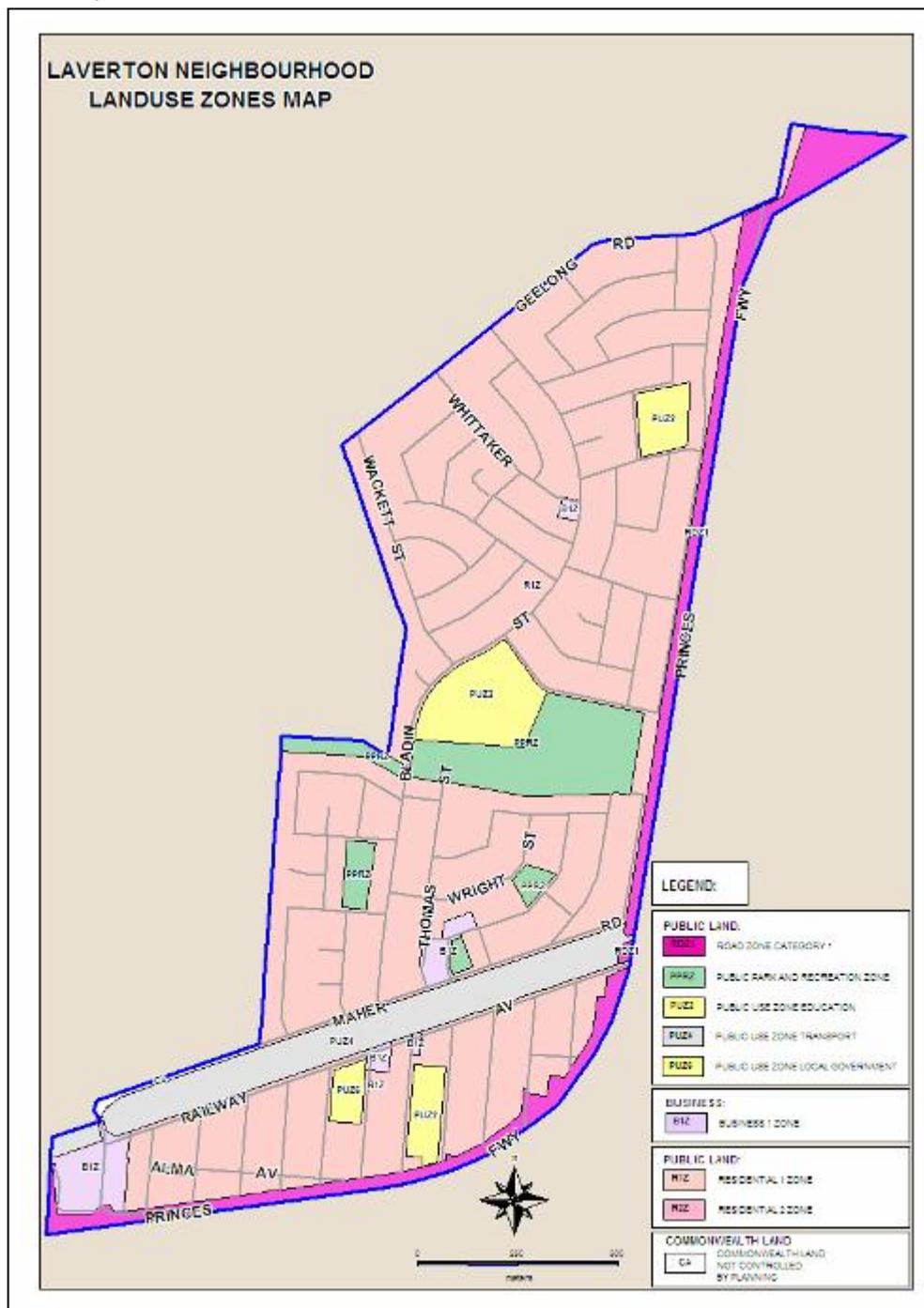
At the beginning of the 1970s, a large area of Laverton North was zoned for use by industry. This new industrial area, along with the RAAF base, provided local employment to a growing population.⁶

C. The Current Environment

Land uses

Laverton neighbourhood has a mix of land uses but is predominantly zoned for residential use. There are a small number of business zones, most of which are located close to the railway line that passes through the neighbourhood, with one other smaller business zone to the north.

In addition, there are several public use zones for education throughout the neighbourhood (refer to *Schools* and *What's ahead for Laverton* later in this document for more information on these sites), together with public use zones for recreational uses.



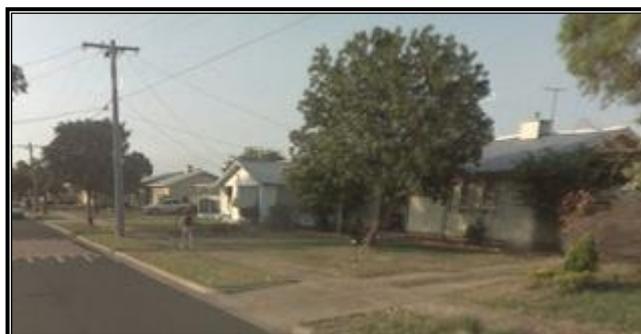
Natural features



The main natural feature in the Laverton neighbourhood is Laverton Creek. It passes through McCormack Park on its way to Port Phillip Bay. Like other creeks that flow through Hobsons Bay, there is a long history of land use pressures which have impacted on Laverton Creek. Nevertheless, it remains an important habitat for the birds and other wildlife that live in and along the creek.

Residential development

Most of Laverton's housing stock is in the architectural styles of the 1950s through to the 1980s, with some examples of housing built in the 1990s and more recently. Predominantly, the housing is freestanding, single storey and constructed using a range of building materials including timber, concrete, fibro and brick. In areas around Wackett Street where the original RAAF houses still exist, the housing style tends to be fairly consistent.



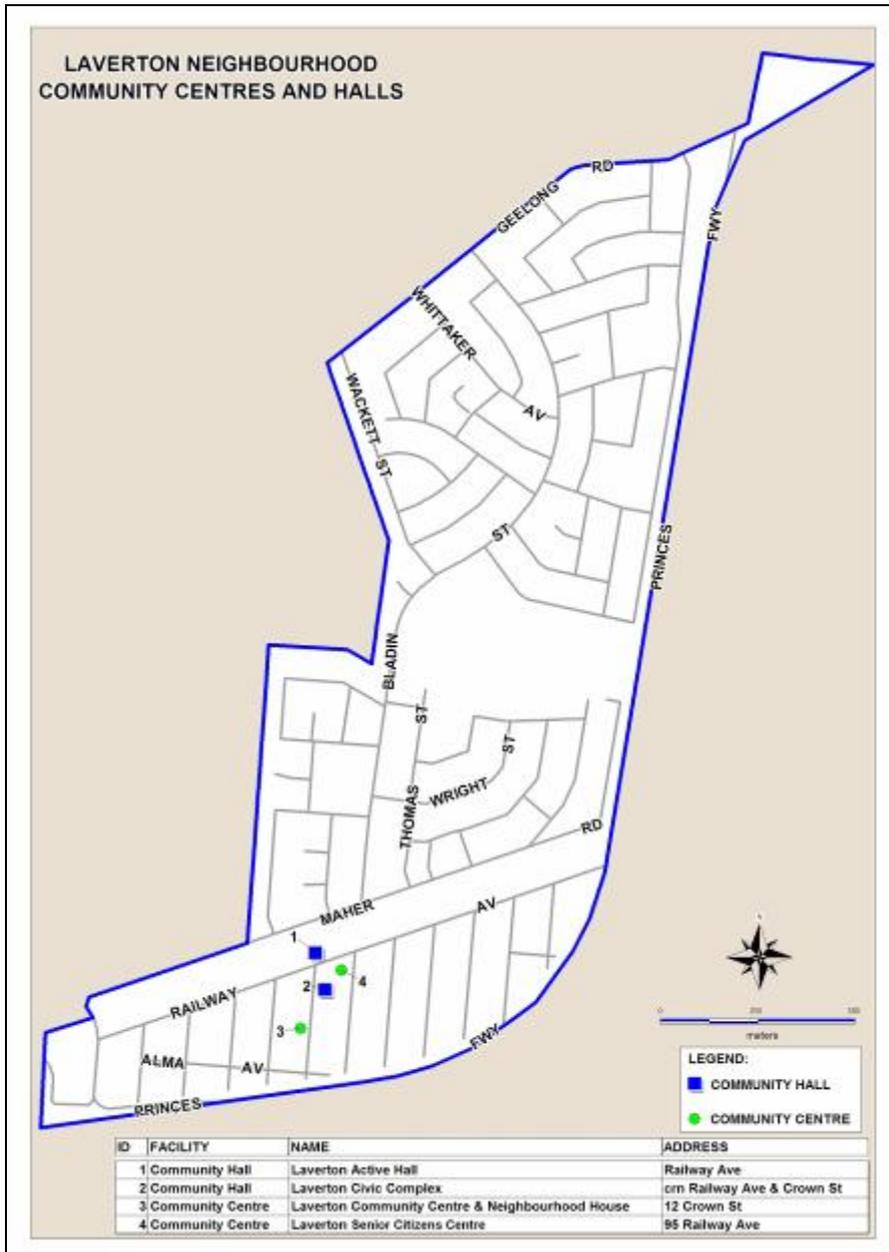
There are a small number of older two storey flats and some more recent infill development. The large size of residential blocks common to the area is attracting an increase in medium density development, with older houses being demolished and replaced with two storey unit developments. Recent building approvals reflect this trend. (Refer to Section 2 of this neighbourhood profile which has data on *building permits*.)

The neighbourhood's housing stock includes public housing owned by the Department of Human Services. While some have been designed for older residents and those with disabilities, there are no specific aged residential care facilities in Laverton.

Community centres and halls

Laverton has a small number of community facilities which operate under the umbrella of Laverton Community Integrated Services Inc. The Laverton Community Centre offers a range of workshops and crisis and support services. Along with *cohealth clinic* health services the centre also includes a community café. The Laverton Community Centre provides training for a range of courses, including accredited courses, and also pre-accredited courses. The Laverton Community Children's Centre is also here. Information is provided under children services.

The Laverton Active Hall is also a Council owned facility with space for hire. Among the classes on offer are taekwondo and dancing. There are also several netball courts located here. (Refer to *Recreational facilities* later in this section for further information.)



Children's services

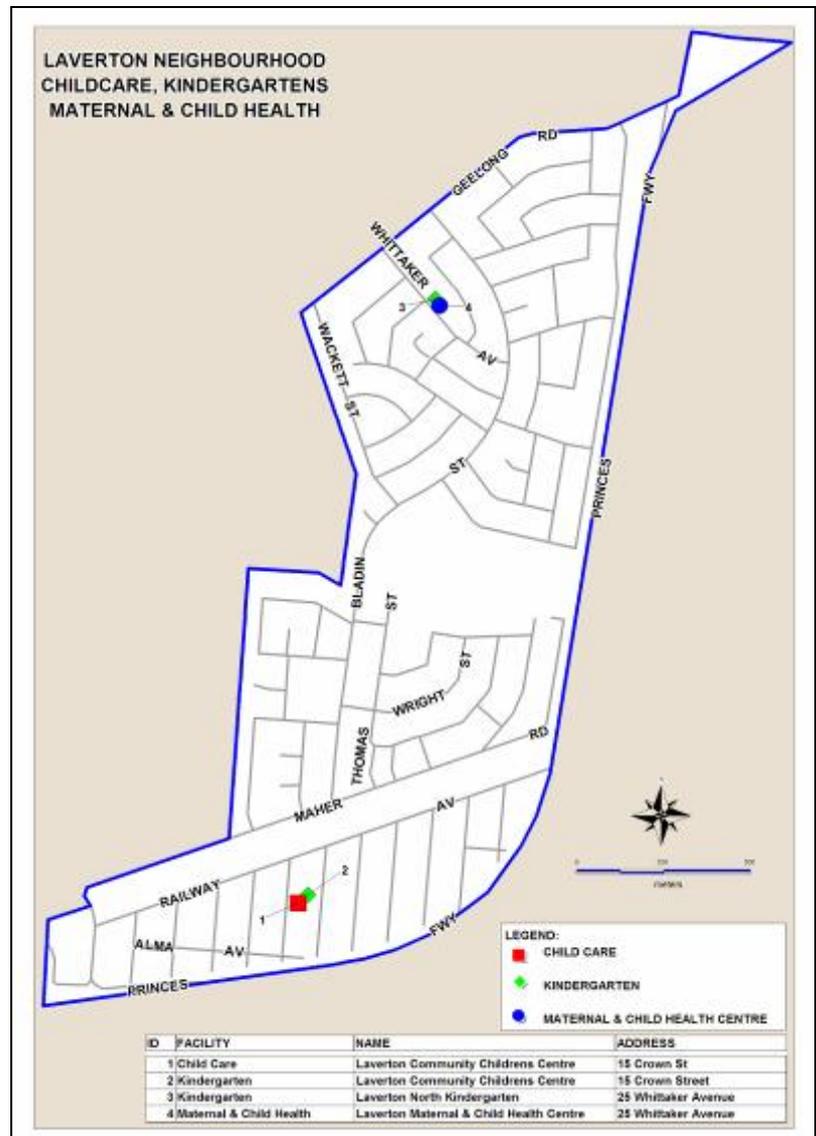
Children's services available in the Laverton neighbourhood include a maternal and child health centre (MCH), long day care services and kindergarten programs.

A MCH centre and kindergarten are co-located in Whittaker Avenue, at the northern end of Laverton. MCH offers health checks for babies and children, advice and referrals and also support for new mother groups. The kindergarten operates programs for 4 year olds.



The Laverton Community Children's Centre in Crown Street, operates in a facility that opened in 2007 (pictured above).

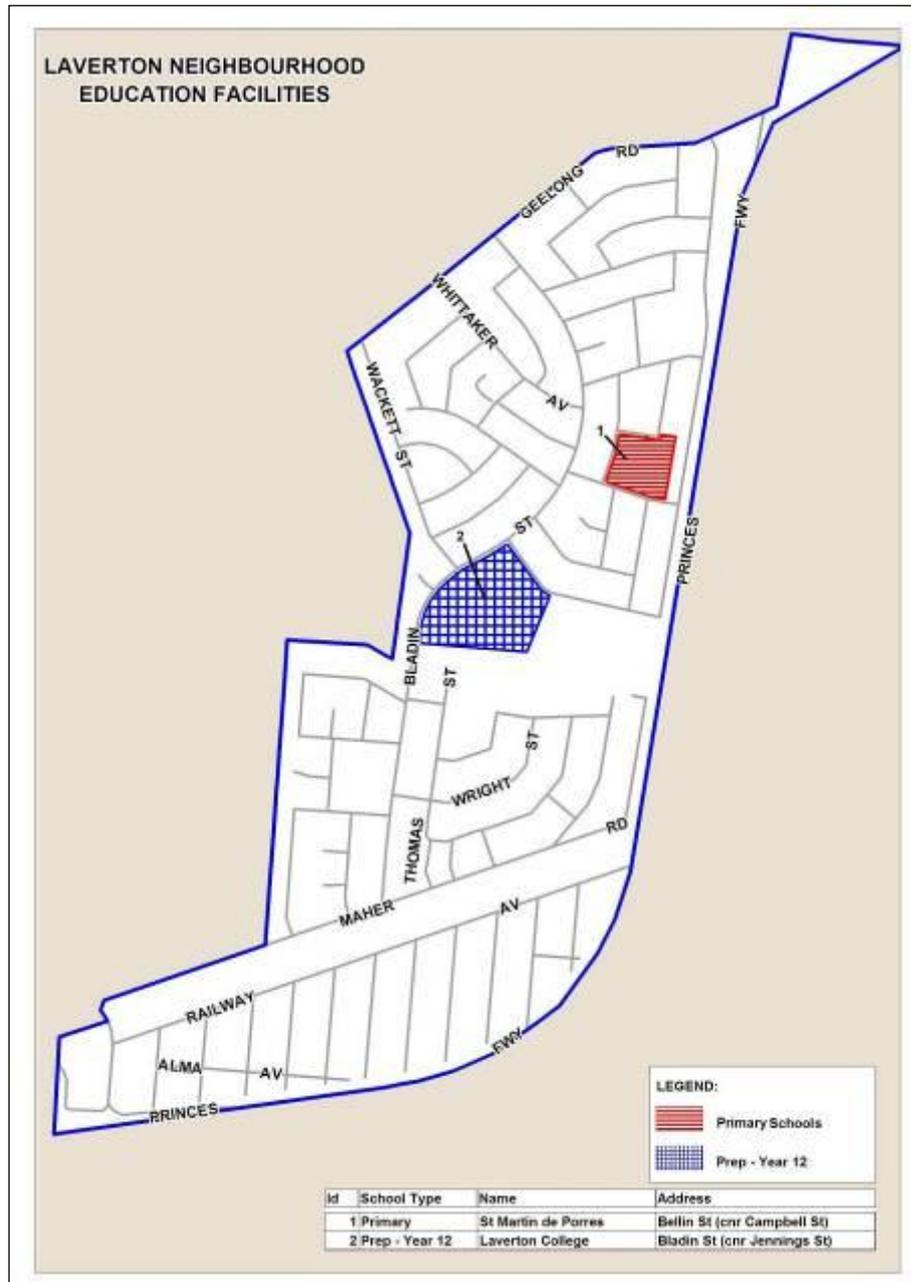
The centre's programs include a 3 year old activity group, a 4 year old kindergarten program, long day care and sessional childcare and playgroups for CALD children and those with autism. Family support services are provided by the Caroline Chisholm Society. The Laverton Toy Library also operates from the centre.



Schools

In 2009, a state government Prep-Year 12 campus was opened on the existing secondary school site. As a result, two primary schools, Laverton and Laverton Plains Primary Schools were relocated to this co-located site. (Refer to *What's Ahead for Laverton* later in this section for information about future uses of these primary school sites.)

The area has one other Catholic primary school, St Martin de Porres Primary School.



Recreational facilities and open space

Laverton has one major area of open space, McCormack Park, and a number of local parks throughout the neighbourhood. Ten of these parks have playground equipment.

McCormack Park follows the course of Laverton Creek. The park contains a skate park which will have new features added in 2009. A community garden that has individual plots for hire, together with communal plots has been established here (see photo). In addition, the park has a children's playground, barbecue facilities and a shared pathway. (Refer to *What's Ahead for Laverton* later in this section for more information about plans for McCormack Park and the skate park.)



Laverton neighbourhood has a limited number of recreational facilities. Adjacent to McCormack Park is a privately operated swim and fitness centre that is by owned by the Council. There are also three netball courts with change rooms at the Active Hall site on Railway Avenue.

Other recreational facilities such as sporting ovals, bowling greens and tennis courts are located outside the Laverton neighbourhood boundary, in neighbouring Altona Meadows.

Whilst not in the Laverton neighbourhood, approval has been given for a large scale residential and commercial development (called Williams Landing) on land formerly used by the RAAF, just over the municipal boundary in Wyndham. There are plans to link the new development and Laverton by extending Triholm Avenue, through the RAAF base.

Laverton neighbourhood has three shopping precincts; the largest is located around Aviation Road (photo below). Among the retail outlets in Laverton are a bank, a chemist, an independently operated supermarket, a number of takeaway food shops and cafes, several hairdressers and real estate agents. There are also a number of specialty grocery shops and delicatessens.



Photo: courtesy of Bob Hawkins

Across the railway line in Lohse and Woods Streets is another small shopping centre. Along with the local police station, there is a butcher, milk bar, takeaway food store and several specialty grocery shops.



Further north, there is a small shopping strip on the corner of Bladin Street and Whittaker Avenue, where there is a small supermarket, chemist, milk bar and takeaway shop.

The closest large shopping centre is Central Square in Altona Meadows.

Doctors and health care providers

There are two medical clinics located in the neighbourhood and both are group practices. Bulk billing is available for under-16s, health care cardholders and pensioners.

Laverton Medical Centre Shop 3/8 Neville Avenue, Laverton
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Total Care Medical Centre, 42 Whittaker Avenue, Laverton

Access to general health services is available through ISIS Primary Care (Hobsons Bay Campus), located in neighbouring Altona Meadows. Among the services provided are nursing; community health; speech therapy; podiatry; physiotherapy; occupational therapy and other health management programs.

<i>ISIS Primary Care – Hobsons Bay Campus</i> <i>330 Queen Street, Altona Meadows</i>
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Dentists

The area has one dental surgery, in Railway Avenue.

Dr Geoffrey Hart 83 Railway Avenue Laverton

Pharmacies

Laverton neighbourhood has two pharmacies.

Laverton Pharmacy Shop 2, 8 Neville Avenue Laverton

Bladin Street Pharmacy 62 Bladin St, Laverton, VIC 3028

Arts and Cultural events

Events on the arts and culture calendar include:

- The Laverton Festival - an annual event held in the Aviation Road precinct and supported by the Laverton Community Centre and the Laverton Traders. In recent years, this has expanded to include a program of events at the Crown Street precinct
- The Laverton Arts and Culture Forum - two art and craft exhibitions a year and associated activities in the Laverton Community Centre
- Cultural activities - Refugee Week and Harmony Day activities are held annually in the Laverton Community Centre
- The Laverton Women's Network - an annual event for local women.

Transport



Public transport in the Laverton neighbourhood includes both train and bus services. The Werribee railway line runs through the neighbourhood and travel time to central Melbourne is approximately 35 minutes. Two stations are located here, including Aviation station (a zone 2 station) on the western boundary and Laverton Station (a zone 1 station). (Photo: Rail Geelong⁶)

The following bus routes operate in the area:

- Route 400 links Laverton to Sunshine via Robinsons Road.
- The 411 route runs to Footscray via Altona Meadows and along Millers Road.
- Route 412 runs to Footscray via Altona Meadows and then along Mills Street and Geelong Road.
- Route 413 connects Laverton to Werribee Plaza shopping centre via Sneydes Road and Hoppers Crossing Station.
- Route 414 runs to Footscray via Old Geelong Road, Grieve Parade and the Princes Highway (Geelong Road),
- Route 415 runs between Laverton and Williamstown, via Central Square shopping centre in Altona Meadows and then through Altona and North Williamstown.
- Route 416 runs from Laverton to the terminus at Hoppers Crossing Railway Station via Point Cook Road and old Geelong Road.





References

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Thanks to Bob Hawkins, a Laverton resident, who provided historical information and materials on the development of Laverton.

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Laverton Neighbourhood Data Profile

A. Population Characteristics

Population: number and age structure

At the 2011 Census, Laverton had a population of 4,458 people (just over 5% of the municipality's residents). Based on population forecasts for 2015, the neighbourhood's current population is approximately 4,880. (NB Laverton, as referred to in this profile, is the neighbourhood area which falls within the Hobsons Bay municipality. It is not Laverton suburb which includes areas within Hobsons Bay and in Wyndham municipality.)

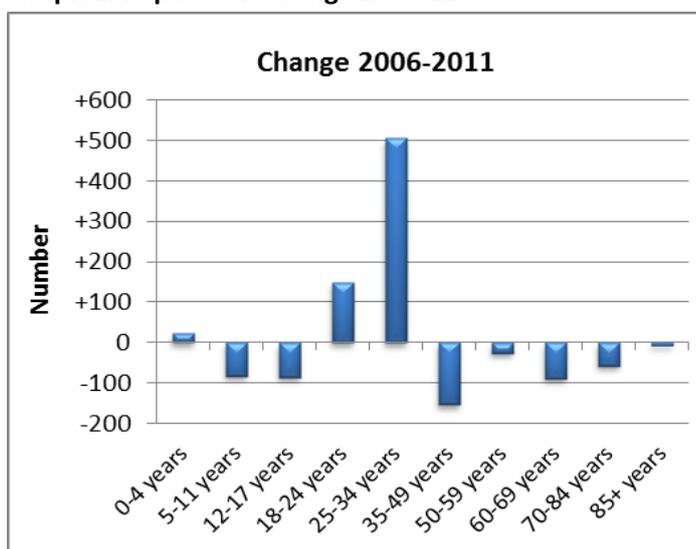
Between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, Laverton's population grew by around 172 residents (4% increase). The table and graph below show the changes that occurred within each age group.

Unlike most other areas in Hobsons Bay where the residents are ageing, Laverton has a much younger adult profile. There was significant growth among 25-34 years, and to a lesser extent among 18-24 year olds, between 2006 and 2011. There was only a small increase in the number of young children, while all other groups including school aged children decreased.

Table 1: Age structure

Laverton	2011	2006	Change 2006-2011
0-4 years	315	291	+24
5-11 years	328	411	-83
12-17 years	274	360	-86
18-24 years	584	435	+149
25-34 years	1,088	582	+506
35-49 years	829	984	-155
50-59 years	475	502	-27
60-69 years	283	373	-90
70-84 years	261	319	-58
85+ years	21	29	-8
Total population	4,458	4,286	+172

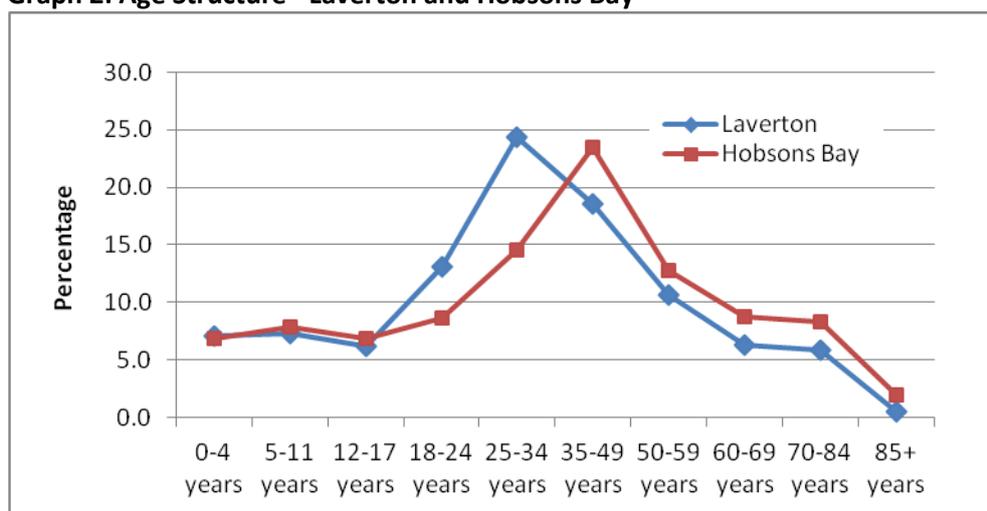
Graph 1: Population Change 2006-11



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

When comparing the age structure of Laverton residents against Hobsons Bay as a whole, graph 2 highlights Laverton's younger adult profile. It has a higher proportion of young adults (18-24 years) and those in the family forming years (25-34 years). Conversely, it has a lower proportion all adult groups aged 35 years and over.

Graph 2: Age Structure - Laverton and Hobsons Bay



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Family and household types

Laverton has a total of 1,633 households. Forty two per cent consist of families with children (both couple and single parent) and 51 per cent are households without children, with the remainder consisting of unclassifiable and visitor only households.

Of the 681 Laverton families with children, those with young children are the largest group and experienced the largest increase between 2006 and 2011. At the same time, the number single parent families decreased, a trend that was apparent across the whole municipality.

Compared to Hobsons Bay, Laverton has a lower percentage of couples with children (5% less), and this is consistent for all categories of couple families. Laverton has around four per cent more single parent families, with all categories above the municipal level. However, there was a decrease in overall numbers and as a percentage of households between 2006-11.

Table 2: Households with children

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Couples with children	420	25.7	31.7	420	25.1	32.2	-0
<i>Couples with young children*</i>	247	15.1	17.4	209	12.5	17.1	+38
<i>Couples with mixed-age children</i>	46	2.8	3.9	74	4.4	4.6	-28
<i>Couples with older children**</i>	127	7.8	10.4	137	8.2	10.5	-10
Single parents with children	262	16.0	11.1	316	18.9	11.7	-54
<i>Single parents with young children</i>	91	5.6	3.5	130	7.8	4.5	-39
<i>Single parents- mixed-age children</i>	36	2.2	1.2	34	2.0	1.2	+2
<i>Single parents with older children</i>	135	8.2	6.4	152	9.1	6.0	-17
Total households with children	681	41.7	42.7	736	43.9	43.9	-55
Total households	1,633	100.0	100.0	1,675	100.0	100.0	-42

*children aged under 15

** children aged 15 and over

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Of the 51 per cent of Laverton households without children, people living alone form the largest group, marginally ahead of couples without children. Compared to the municipality as a whole, Laverton has a lower proportion of households without children, but it has a higher proportion of young couples and their numbers have increased since 2006.

Along with young couples, group households were the only other household to increase since the 2006. While they make up a relatively small percentage of Laverton households, this group increased by 4 per cent in the five years to 2011.

When compared to Hobsons Bay, Laverton has a similar rate of childless households. However, as mentioned it has a higher level young couples who could potentially have children and also a higher level of group households.

Table 3: Households without children

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Couples without children	341	20.9	23.5	307	18.3	22.8	+34
<i>Young couples without children</i>	197	12.1	8.6	101	6.0	7.9	+96
<i>Middle-aged couples without children</i>	54	3.3	7.1	95	5.7	7.1	-41
<i>Older couples without children</i>	90	5.5	7.8	111	6.6	7.7	-21
Lone person households	364	22.3	24.3	409	24.4	24.4	-45
<i>Young lone persons</i>	121	7.4	7.1	143	8.5	8.0	-22
<i>Middle-aged lone persons</i>	146	8.9	8.3	155	9.3	7.6	-9
<i>Older lone persons</i>	98	6.0	8.9	111	6.6	8.8	-13
Group households	131	8.0	3.8	65	3.9	3.2	+66
Total households without children	836	51.2	51.6	781	46.6	50.4	+55
Total households	1,633	100.0	100.0	1,675	100.0	100.0	-42

- young: 15-44 years

- middle aged: 45-64 years

- older: 65+ years

NB Data does not include other not classifiable households visitor only households

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Cultural diversity of residents

Almost 46 per cent (2,036) of people living in Laverton were born overseas, which is substantially higher than the municipal figure of 31 per cent. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of overseas born residents increased by almost 700. While there were over 800 new residents from non-English speaking countries in that period, that number was off-set by a fall in the number who were born in English speaking countries (-142 residents).

In terms of residents from non-English speaking countries, Laverton has a much higher proportion than Hobsons Bay (Laverton 38.9%; Hobsons Bay 23.1%).

Table 4: Overseas born residents

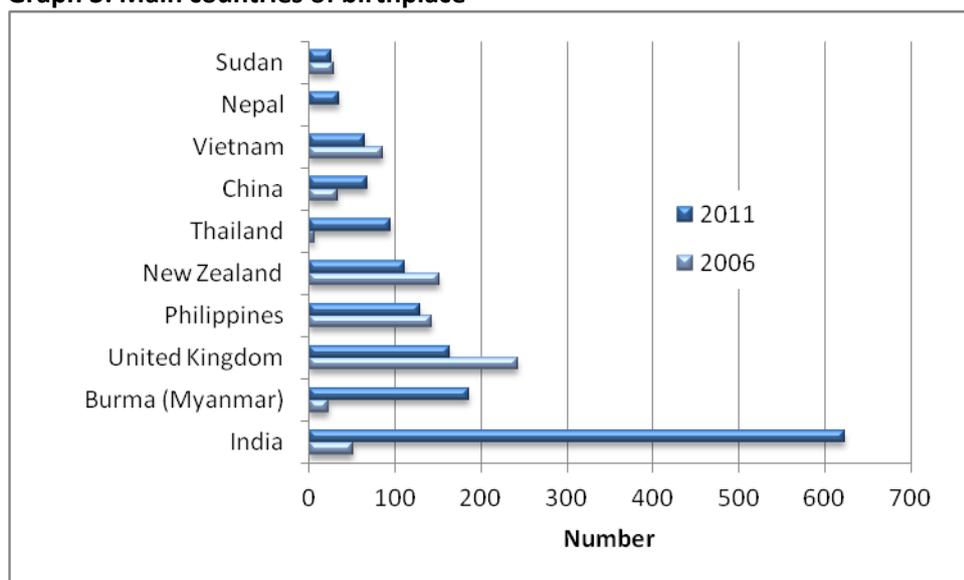
	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Total Overseas born	2,036	45.7	30.8	1,345	31.4	29.0	+691
<i>Non-English speaking backgrounds</i>	1,734	38.9	23.1	901	21.0	21.4	+833
<i>Main English speaking countries</i>	302	6.8	7.7	444	10.4	7.6	-142
Australia	2,115	47.5	63.5	2,451	57.2	63.7	-336
Not Stated	304	6.8	5.6	488	11.4	7.2	-184
Total Population	4,456	100.0	100.0	4,284	100.0	100.0	+172

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

The largest group of overseas born residents are from India. Their number increased from 51 to 624 in the five years to 2011 and they now represent 14 per cent of the Laverton population, significantly higher than the Hobsons Bay figure of 2.8 per cent.

In the same period, residents who were born in Burma overtook those born in the United Kingdom, increasing from 22 to 186 residents. Graph 3 highlights that while still a relatively small group, there was a noticeable increase in residents from Thailand (from 6 to 95 residents). Similarly, Laverton had no Nepalese residents in 2006 but by 2011 there were 34 residents from Nepal.

Graph 3: Main countries of birthplace



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Table 5 highlights the rapid increase in Laverton residents who were born overseas and who are recent arrivals in Australia. Just over half of all overseas born residents arrived in the five years between 2006 and 2011, and 30 per cent above the municipal figure of 21 per cent.

Table 5: Residents year of arrival in Australia

	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %
2006 to 9 Aug 2011	1,031	50.7	20.8
2001 to 2005	237	11.6	9.1
1991 to 2000 (10 year period)	178	8.8	10.9
1981 to 1990 (10 year period)	213	10.5	13.2
1971 to 1980 (10 year period)	82	4.0	10.6
1961 to 1970 (10 year period)	151	7.4	17.0
Arrived in 1960 or earlier	78	3.8	13.9
Not stated	63	3.1	4.4
Total	2,033	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

In line with the high percentage of Indian born residents of Laverton mentioned earlier, the most commonly spoken languages include Punjabi, Hindi, Telugu and Gujarati. The second largest language group is Karen, which is a primarily spoken in parts of Burma and Thailand.

Table 6: Language spoken at home (excluding English)

	2011			2006			Change 2006 to 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Punjabi	343	7.7	1.1	16	0.4	0.2	+327
Karen	280	6.3	0.4	26	0.6	0.1	+254
Hindi	131	2.9	0.7	10	0.2	0.3	+121
Filipino/Tagalog	126	2.8	1.0	120	2.8	1.1	+6
Vietnamese	78	1.7	2.0	94	2.2	2.2	-16
Arabic	75	1.7	3.6	108	2.5	3.7	-33
Mandarin	71	1.6	1.0	28	0.7	0.6	+43
Spanish	55	1.2	0.6	39	0.9	0.6	+16
Telugu	48	1.1	0.2	0	0.0	0.0	+48
Gujarati	47	1.1	0.2	3	0.1	0.0	+44

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

People with a disability

The number of people who have a disability is based on the findings of the national *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in partnership with the Disability Policy and Research working group. Based on the survey findings, disability estimates are produced for each local government area (LGA).

Based on the 2009 survey, it is estimated that 17.1 per cent of the Hobsons Bay population (who live in a private dwelling) has a disability. Applying this figure to Laverton suggests approximately 760 residents may have a disability.

In addition to this 2009 survey data, the past two Censuses have included a question as to whether help or supervision was required with one or more of the core activities involving self-care,

communication and mobility. It is important to note that these results do not reflect the true extent of disability in the community, as people with a disability do not always require assistance or disclose their disability.

The 2011 Census findings show 220 residents of Laverton (4.9%) needing help with a core activity, a little below the rate for Hobsons Bay (5.2%). Since the 2006 Census, that percentage has remained stable with only a marginal increase of 0.2 per cent (17 people) which was slightly below than the 0.8 per cent increase across Hobsons Bay.

Compared to the municipality as a whole, Laverton has a much younger profile of residents who require assistance. For example half of the neighbourhood's residents who need assistance are aged below 60 years, compared to one third of Hobsons Bay residents.

Table 7: Residents with need assistance with a core activity

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	% of total age group	Hobsons Bay %	Number	% of total age group	Hobsons Bay %	
0 to 4	6	1.9	1.0	3	1.1	0.8	+3
5 to 9	15	6.1	2.6	13	4.5	2.1	+2
10 to 19	17	3.8	1.9	17	2.7	1.6	-0
20 to 59	72	2.5	2.2	74	3.1	2.1	-2
60 to 64	8	5.0	7.6	14	8.0	6.8	-6
65 to 69	13	11.4	10.0	12	6.7	8.0	+1
70 to 74	28	24.6	14.4	25	16.6	12.1	+3
75 to 79	33	30.5	22.1	22	20.6	17.8	+11
80 to 84	18	27.6	30.6	11	25.6	30.2	+7
85 and over	10	41.7	51.7	12	37.5	43.8	-2
Total needing assistance	220	4.9	5.2	203	4.7	4.4	+17

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Participation in education

Approximately 24 per cent of the Laverton population is enrolled in some form of education which is slightly higher than the participation rate for Hobsons Bay (22%), but in line with the neighbourhood's slightly younger age profile.

Approximately 11 per cent of the neighbourhood's population attends either primary or secondary school which is lower than the enrolment rate for the municipality (13%).

Looking at changes since 2006, school enrolments in actual numbers and as a percentage of the relevant age cohort have both decreased, reflecting the decrease in 5-17 year olds. However, enrolment in TAFE and 'other' education have both increased which may account for some of the drop in secondary school enrolments.

University enrolment of Laverton residents has also risen since the 2006 Census and is on par with the Hobsons Bay rate.

Two thirds of residents are not enrolled in any form of education which is about four per cent lower than the municipal rate.

NB: Nine per cent of Laverton residents provided no response to this question so the data should be treated with caution.

Table 8: Participation in education (persons aged 15 years and over)

	2011			2006			Change 2006 -2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Pre-school	31	0.7	1.6	47	1.1	1.6	-16
Primary school	255	5.7	7.0	313	7.3	7.8	-58
Secondary school	221	5.0	5.9	276	6.4	6.2	-55
TAFE	194	4.4	1.9	79	1.8	1.7	+115
University	194	4.3	4.2	91	2.1	3.2	+103
Other	172	3.9	1.1	41	1.0	0.9	+131
Not attending	2,984	66.9	71.1	2,839	66.2	70.2	+145
Not stated	407	9.1	7.1	600	14.0	8.3	-193
Total	4,458	100.0	100.0	4,286	100.0	100.0	+172

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Compared to the Hobsons Bay population, a lower proportion of Laverton residents have completed year 12 but there has been a marked rise in that rate over recent years. Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of residents completing year 12 rose by almost 17 per cent (almost 700 residents) and a similar increase was experienced across the municipality.

The rate of early school leaving decreased across all levels through to year 11. This trend was also reflected across the municipality.

NB: Ten per cent of Laverton residents provided no response to this question in 2011 so the data should be treated with caution. However it should also be noted that the non-response rate as dropped from 15 per cent in 2006.

Table 9: Level of schooling completed

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Year 8 or below	291	7.9	8.3	330	9.7	10.2	-39
Year 9 or equivalent	275	7.5	6.2	321	9.4	7.1	-46
Year 10 or equivalent	547	14.9	13.5	652	19.1	15.1	-105
Year 11 or equivalent	385	10.5	11.7	465	13.6	13.1	-80
Year 12 or equivalent	1,760	47.8	50.1	1,063	31.2	42.6	+697
Did not go to school	50	1.4	1.5	72	2.1	1.8	-22
Not stated	373	10.1	8.6	507	14.9	10.2	-134
Total persons aged 15+	3,681	100.0	100.0	3,410	100.0	100.0	+271

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Along with a rise in the school completion rate, the percentage of Laverton residents with a qualification has risen substantially, although the figure is still lower than that for Hobsons Bay

(Laverton 38.4%; Hobsons Bay 44.4%). Between 2006 and 2011, the proportion of residents with qualifications increased by 13 per cent, almost double the municipal increase.

The major share of that increase was among residents with a bachelor or higher degree, up from 7.2 per cent to 15.7 per cent and while still below the municipal level, the gap is closing. Those with diploma qualifications also increased significantly, with the Laverton figure now above the municipal figure.

NB: While the non-response rate was high, the decrease in a 'not stated' between 2006 and 2011 may have impacted on the extent of change in the data.

Table 10: Qualification levels

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	pr%	Hobsons Bay %	
Bachelor or Higher degree	578	15.7	21.1	244	7.2	16.1	+334
Advanced Diploma or Diploma	338	9.2	8.1	147	4.3	6.6	+191
Vocational	497	13.5	15.2	487	14.3	15.0	+10
No qualification	1,763	47.9	44.8	1,906	55.9	49.3	-143
Not stated	504	13.7	10.8	627	18.4	13.0	-123
Total persons aged 15+	3,679	100.0	100.0	3,411	100.0	100.0	+268

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Internet access

Access to the internet, particularly broadband, is an important tool that is now used in all aspects of life and that importance will only increase over time. Lack of access to the internet is considered to be a factor in compounding disadvantage, particularly in relation to education, employment, and social connections.

Sixty eight per cent of Laverton households have an internet connection, four per cent less than Hobsons Bay. Since 2006, the connection rate has jumped by approximately 24 per cent to 68 per cent and while still below the municipal rate, the gap is closing. Between 2006 and 2011 the rate of increase was eight per cent above the municipal increase and the vast majority of these connections are via broadband.

While internet access has increased substantially, just over one in five households (22.4%) in Laverton still have no internet connection which is slightly above the Hobsons Bay figure (21.3%).

NB: Laverton had a relatively high non response rate to this Census question which may have impacted on this data.

Table 11: Internet connection

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Total internet connection	1,108	67.9	71.8	744	44.4	55.7	+364
<i>Broadband connection</i>	940	57.6	65.0	476	28.4	37.9	+464
<i>Dial-up connection</i>	56	3.4	2.8	259	15.5	17.2	-203
<i>Other connection*</i>	112	6.8	3.9	9	0.5	0.6	+103
No internet connection	365	22.4	21.3	742	44.3	36.9	-377
Not stated	159	9.8	6.9	188	11.2	7.3	-29
Total households	1,632	100.0	100.0	1,674	100.0	100.0	-42

* 'Other' includes Internet access through mobile phones, set-top boxes, games machines

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

B. Labour Force Characteristics

Labour force participation

Labour force participation refers to the population (aged 15 years and over) who are employed and also those who are unemployed and are looking for work. Not in the labour force refers to those who are not actively looking for work such as retirees, carers, non-working parents or those with a disability who are unable to work.

Laverton has a total labour force of 57.5 per cent, approximately three per cent below the Hobsons Bay rate. Non participation in Laverton fell a little between 2006 and 2011, although the Laverton rate is slightly above that for Hobsons Bay.

NB: The decline in 'not stated' answers between 2006 and 2011 may have impacted on this data.

Table 12: Labour force participation

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Total labour force (Participation rate)	2,126	57.5	60.9	1,713	50.4	59.1	+413
Not in the labour force	1,332	36.0	33.2	1,338	39.4	34.7	-6
Labour force status not stated	241	6.5	5.9	349	10.3	6.2	-108
Total persons aged 15+	3,699	100.0	100.0	3,400	100.0	100.0	+299

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Of the Laverton residents who are in the labour force, 87 per cent are employed which is approximately seven per cent below the municipal rate. While the number of residents with a job increased between 2006 and 2011, there was a slight decrease in proportion of the population that is employed.

Just over half of those with a job work full time and this figure decreased by five per cent between 2006 and 2011, whereas those in full time work fell only slightly across the municipality. At the same time, there was an increase in part-time work. This was also the case for Hobsons Bay. Essentially, of the extra 344 residents who found employment between 2006 and 2011, almost 60 per cent of that increase was in part-time work.

The unemployment rate (12.9%) has increased a little in the five years to 2011. It is more than double the municipal rate which decreased marginally over the same period. Of those looking for work, the majority want a full-time job.

Table 13: Employment status

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Employed	1,852	87.1	94.4	1,508	88.0	94.1	344
<i>Employed full-time</i>	1,099	51.7	61.3	979	57.2	62.8	120
<i>Employed part-time</i>	685	32.2	31	469	27.4	28.6	216
<i>Hours worked not stated</i>	68	3.2	2.1	60	3.5	2.8	8
Unemployed (Unemployment rate)	275	12.9	5.6	205	12.0	5.9	70
<i>Looking for full-time work</i>	183	8.6	3.6	141	8.2	3.9	42
<i>Looking for part-time work</i>	91	4.3	2	64	3.7	1.9	27
Total Labour Force	2,127	100	100	1,713	100	100	414

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Employment by industry

The key industries* that employ Laverton residents are:

- manufacturing (12.8%)
- accommodation and Food Services (10.8%)
- transport, postal and warehousing (10.8%)
- retail trade (9.3%)
- health care and social assistance (9.2%)

* These jobs include those in Hobsons Bay and outside the municipality

While manufacturing is the largest employing industry of both Laverton and Hobsons Bay residents, the percentage employed in that sector is declining (Laverton, down 6%; Hobsons Bay down 3%). The main industries where employment increased between 2006 and 2011 include Accommodation and Food Services, Administrative and Support Services, Health Care and Social Assistance and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services.

Table 14: Industry sector of employment

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Manufacturing	243	12.8	11.3	283	18.8	14.0	-40
Accommodation and Food Services	205	10.8	5.8	118	7.8	5.4	+87
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	205	10.8	7.5	197	13.1	7.8	+8
Retail Trade	177	9.3	9.1	176	11.7	9.9	+1
Health Care and Social Assistance	174	9.2	9.4	123	8.2	8.7	+51
Public Administration and Safety	116	6.1	6.4	78	5.2	6.4	+38
Administrative and Support Services	111	5.8	3.6	59	3.9	3.9	+52
Construction	104	5.5	7.7	89	5.9	6.7	+15
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	92	4.9	8.2	37	2.5	7.4	+55
Wholesale trade	84	4.4	4.6	84	5.6	5.1	0
Other Services	72	3.8	3.4	41	2.7	3.3	+31
Education and Training	65	3.4	7.8	60	4.0	7.0	+5

Financial and Insurance Services	50	2.6	4.9	51	3.4	4.6	-1
Information Media and Telecommunications	28	1.5	2.4	18	1.2	2.6	+10
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	22	1.2	0.9	9	0.6	0.7	+13
Arts and Recreation Services	15	0.8	2.1	19	1.3	1.9	-4
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	13	0.7	1.5	3	0.2	1.5	+10
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	3	0.2	0.2	3	0.2	0.2	0
Inadequately described or not stated	117	6.2	2.7	56	3.7	2.9	+61
Total employed persons aged 15+	1,896	100.0	100.0	1,504	100.0	100.0	+392

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

The occupation employing the largest number of Laverton workers is labouring, followed by technical and trades and machinery operators. Compared to Hobsons Bay, the percentage of people working as labourers and machinery operators Laverton is approximately double, while the percentage working as managers and professional is half.

That said, among the main changes since 2006 was an increase in the number of people working as professionals and also labourers.

Table 15: Occupation

Occupation	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Managers	113	5.9	12.4	63	4.2	11.8	+50
Professionals	242	12.7	22.8	141	9.4	20.2	+101
Technicians and Trades Workers	279	14.6	13.5	230	15.3	14.1	+49
Community and Personal Service Workers	188	9.9	8.5	141	9.4	7.9	+47
Clerical and Administrative Workers	233	12.2	15.8	227	15.1	16.8	+6
Sales Workers	140	7.3	8.4	121	8.1	9.1	+19
Machinery Operators And Drivers	265	13.9	7.4	261	17.4	8.4	+4
Labourers	362	19.0	8.8	260	17.3	9.5	+102
Inadequately described	86	4.5	2.4	55	3.7	2.1	+31
Total employed persons aged 15+	1,906	100.0	100.0	1,499	100.0	100.0	+407

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Unpaid work and volunteering

Almost 10 per cent (363) of the neighbourhood's residents aged 15 years and over are volunteers, on a par with the 2006 Census figure. Compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole, the rate of volunteering for Laverton is just over four per cent lower.

While the number and proportion of residents who do not volunteer increased between 2006 and 2011, the decrease in those who did not answer this question at the 2006 Census appears to have been a key factor.

Table 16: Volunteer status

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Volunteer	363	9.9	14.3	340	10.0	14.1	+23
Not a volunteer	2,934	79.7	77.2	2,565	75.3	76.4	+369
Volunteer work not stated	383	10.4	8.5	500	14.7	9.5	-117
Total persons aged 15+	3,681	100.0	100.0	3,405	100.0	100.0	+276

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Approximately 22 per cent of Laverton residents aged 15 years and over provide unpaid childcare (27.8% of unpaid child carers are female compared to 16.4% of males). Of this group, almost 80 per cent care for their own children, 19 per cent look after other children and a small group care for their own and other children.

Over two thirds of residents do not provide care and that figure rose by five per cent between 2006 and 2011. Compared to Hobsons Bay, Laverton has a lower proportion of residents providing unpaid child care and.

Table 17: Unpaid child care

Unpaid child care	2011			2006			Change 2006 to 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Provided unpaid child care (all)	799	21.7	26.7	798	23.5	27.1	+1
<i>Cared for own child/ren</i>	632	17.2	19.7	582	17.1	19.5	+50
<i>Cared for other child/ren</i>	151	4.1	6.2	204	6.0	6.6	-53
<i>Cared for own & other child/ren</i>	16	0.4	0.8	12	0.4	0.9	+4
No unpaid child care provided	2,520	68.5	65.4	2,148	63.2	64.2	+372
Not stated	359	9.8	7.9	454	13.4	8.7	-95
Total persons aged 15+	3,678	100.0	100.0	3,400	100.0	100.0	+278

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Approximately 10 per cent Laverton residents provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability or long term illness or to older adults. This represents a marginal increase since 2006 and a contributing factor may be the higher proportion of children and young people in Laverton who have a disability requiring assistance.

NB: While the proportion of Laverton residents who did not respond to this question in 2006 has declined it is still relatively high compared to the Hobsons Bay figure so the data should be treated with some caution.

Table 18: Assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age

	2011			2006			Change 2006 to 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Provided unpaid assistance	354	9.6	11.5	293	8.6	10.2	+61
No unpaid assistance provided	2,898	78.7	79.7	2,599	76.4	79.9	+299
Not stated	430	11.7	8.9	511	15.0	9.9	-81
Total persons aged 15+	3,683	100.0	100.0	3,403	100.0	100.0	+280

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

C. Financial Wellbeing

Individual incomes

According to monthly data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics at August 2011 (the point at which the 2011 Census was collected), the average gross weekly income in Victoria was \$976.10. (ABS, Cat 6302.0, Table 12b). Census data in table 19 below shows that close to 2,800 Laverton residents (76%) have a gross weekly income below \$1000 which is significantly higher than the municipal figure (65%).

Looking at residents living on very low incomes, there are just over 1,600 (44%) with incomes below \$400 per week which is also well below the municipal figure (37%).

(N.B. The poverty line for a single working person in September 2011 was \$459.83).

(Source: http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/downloads/publications/Poverty%20Lines/Poverty_lines_Australia_Sep2011.pdf)

At the upper end of the income scale, there are approximately 190 residents (5%) who have weekly incomes of \$1,500 or more. This figure is well below the Hobsons Bay figure of 13 per cent.

Table 19: Individual weekly income (gross)

	2011		
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %
Negative Income/ Nil income	354	9.6	8.6
\$1-\$199	299	8.1	7.4
\$200-\$299	527	14.3	10.9
\$300-\$399	447	12.2	9.8
\$400-\$599	447	12.2	10.2
\$600-\$799	445	12.1	9.6
\$800-\$999	283	7.7	8.2
\$1000-\$1249	206	5.6	8.0
\$1250-\$1499	153	4.2	5.9
\$1500-\$1999	121	3.3	6.8
\$2000 or more	65	1.8	6.7
Not stated	326	8.9	8.0
Total persons aged 15+	3,673	100.0	100.0

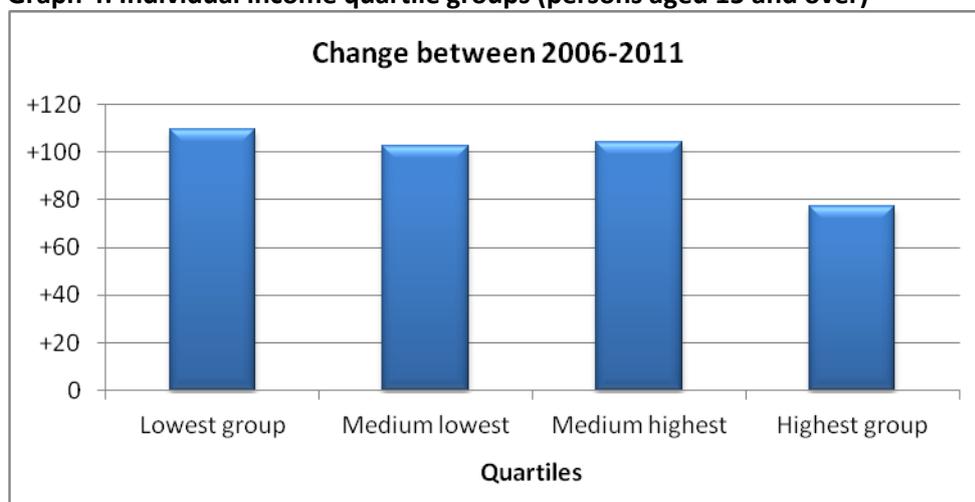
Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Due to the influences of economic change such as wage fluctuations and inflation, it is difficult to compare incomes over time. By using income quartiles (population incomes ranges are ranked from lowest to highest and divided into four equal groups), we are able to compare incomes across different timeframes. These quartiles are calculated by using Melbourne Statistical Division (MSD) individual income data.

Using this method to analyse changes in income in Laverton, the graph below shows there were increases across all quartiles between 2006 and 2011 with the largest being an increase of 109 residents in the lowest quartile.

Compared to the whole of Hobsons Bay, Laverton has a lower proportion of residents in the highest income quartile and a greater proportion in the lowest income quartile.

Graph 4: Individual income quartile groups (persons aged 15 and over)



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Household incomes

At the 2011 Census, the median (midpoint) weekly household income in Australia was \$1,234. The Hobsons Bay median was \$1,286. Data on the household income for the suburb of Laverton (which excludes the area south of Railway Parade and west of Donald Street) shows the median was \$953. (ABS 2011 Census QuickStats – Laverton suburb)

Comparing the distribution pattern of gross weekly incomes of Laverton households with those of Hobsons Bay shows that overall, Laverton has a higher proportion of households with lower incomes. As seen in the table below, Laverton has a higher proportion of residents in most incomes ranges below \$2,000, after which this trend reverses.

(NB: It should be noted that there was a high non response rate of 10 per cent to this Census question so the data should be treated with some caution.)

Table 20: Household weekly income (gross)

	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	% difference between Laverton & Hobsons Bay
Negative Income/Nil Income	37	2.3	1.3	1.0
\$1-\$199	26	1.7	1.7	0.0
\$200-\$299	41	2.6	2.8	-0.2
\$300-\$399	97	6.1	6.3	-0.1
\$400-\$599	150	9.5	8.5	1.0
\$600-\$799	209	13.3	8.1	5.2
\$800-\$999	152	9.7	7.3	2.3
\$1000-\$1249	136	8.6	7.7	0.9
\$1250-\$1499	142	9.0	7.1	2.0
\$1500-\$1999	177	11.3	11.1	0.2

\$2000-\$2499	107	6.8	8.3	-1.5
\$2500-\$2999	70	4.4	8.0	-3.6
\$3000-\$3499	36	2.3	5.2	-2.9
\$3500-\$3999	15	0.9	2.4	-1.4
\$4000-\$4999	8	0.5	1.9	-1.4
\$5000 or more	5	0.3	1.7	-1.4
Not stated	166	10.5	10.5	0.0
Total households	1,574	100.0	100.0	0.0

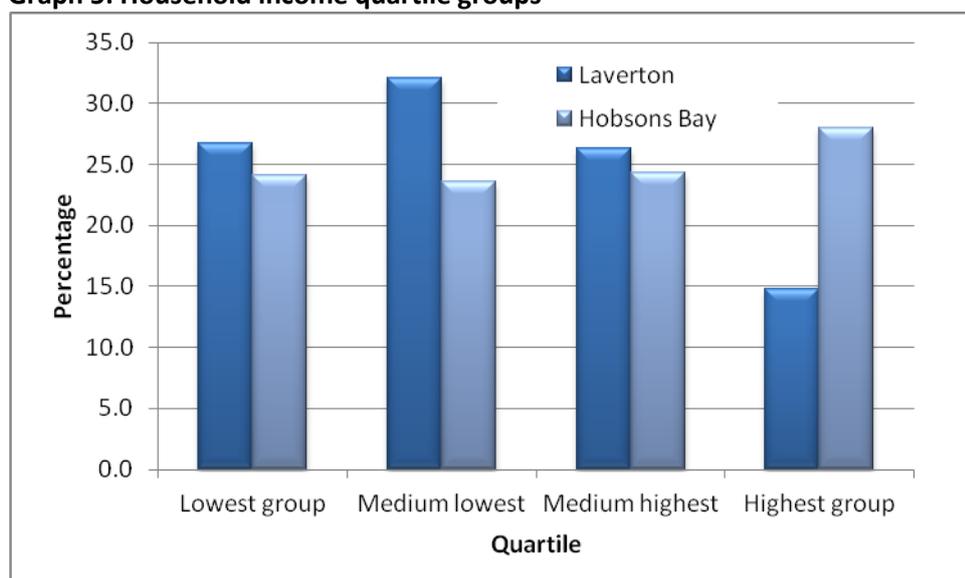
Source: ABS 2011 Census (enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

As with individual incomes, household incomes are also not comparable over different timeframes. As a result, the income quartile method used for individual incomes is applied here to compare changes in distribution of household incomes over time and against the municipal figures.

The most noticeable difference when comparing the Laverton with Hobsons Bay households is in the highest quartile group. The proportion of Hobsons Bay households in this category is almost double the Laverton figure.

In contrast, 59 per cent of Laverton households are in the two lowest income quartiles which is well above the municipal figure of 48 per cent.

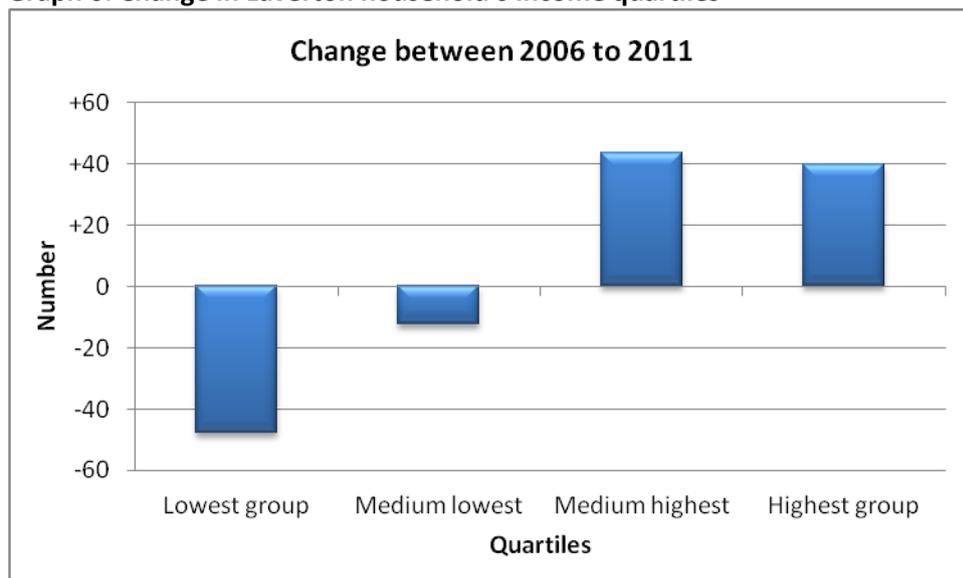
Graph 5: Household income quartile groups



Source: ABS 2011 Census (enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Between 2006 and 2011, as graph 6 indicates, the incomes of Laverton households rose slightly. The number of households in the two lowest income quartiles decreased, particularly the very lowest, while number in the medium highest and highest rose. So, overall there has been a small improvement in the financial wellbeing of Laverton households.

Graph 6: Change in Laverton household's income quartiles



Source: ABS 2011 Census (enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Centrelink payments and allowances

Centrelink data is only available for the 3018 postcode which covers Laverton but also includes Altona Meadows and Seabrook. Residents receiving aged pensions make up the largest portion of Centrelink recipients. A break down of the types of Centrelink payments at the March 2014 Quarter were as follows:

- Aged pension: 1,814
- Disability support: 448
- Newstart: 328
- Single parenting payment: 70
- Youth allowance (other): 44
- Youth Allowance (student/apprentice): 93.

In addition, 685 residents were in receipt of a health care card and 211 held a low income card. (Centrelink March quarter 2014 <http://data.gov.au/dataset/dss-payment-demographic-data>)

SEIFA index of disadvantage

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) disadvantage index is produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and is drawn from Census data. The disadvantage index takes into consideration factors such as low income, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations, low educational attainment. These are weighted to provide a single score.

The Australian average score is set at 1,002. Scores below that figure represent increased disadvantage and conversely those above indicate less disadvantage.

With a SEIFA disadvantage score of 891, Laverton is well below the Australian benchmark figure of 1,002 and also the Hobsons Bay figure of 1001.7. It is ranked as the most disadvantaged neighbourhood in the municipality.

Table 21: SEIFA index of disadvantage ranking (2011)

	Disadvantage Score
Laverton	891
Altona North	910
Brooklyn	947
Altona Meadows	981
Hobsons Bay City	1,002
Altona - Seaholme	1,019
Spotswood - South Kingsville	1,024
Seabrook	1,031
Williamstown North - The Rifle Range	1,058
Williamstown	1,062
Newport East	1,087

Source: ABS 2011 Census <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Gambling losses

Within the municipality, residents have access to ten venues, with a total of 577 Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs/pokies) currently operating; this is almost at the cap of 579 which is the maximum number of machines that can operate in the city. Ranked against other local government areas in Victoria, Hobsons Bay is 16th in terms of the number of gaming machines per adult and 19th in terms of losses per adult.

The financial impact of gambling on EGMs by Hobsons Bay residents in 2014-15 was substantial. A total of \$46million or \$651 per adult was lost in the municipality, although it should be noted that losses have trended down over the last couple of years.

Of the 10 venues, there is one in the Laverton neighbourhood and one which sits just outside the municipal boundary in Laverton North. The Laverton Club has 60 EGMs and 2014-15 a total of \$5,727,567 was lost; the Westside Taverner in Laverton North has 68 EGMs and \$9,292,993.85 was lost (Source: Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation).

In the 2014 Annual Community Survey that was commissioned by Council, residents were asked “Do you believe the number of pokies in the local area is too few, about right or too many?” One hundred and sixty residents of the Laverton, Altona Meadows and Seabrook participated. Thirty seven per cent indicated there were too many poker machines in Hobsons Bay and 23 per cent thought the number was about right. Three per cent felt there were too few and the remainder did not comment.

The survey also asked if residents “What impact do you believe poker machines have on the Hobsons Bay community?” The findings show that 57 per cent of Laverton, Altona Meadows and Seabrook residents described them as either very harmful or harmful. Thirteen per cent did not have a strong view either way and a further 27 per cent had no comment.

D. Housing

Dwelling types

There are 1,826 private dwellings in Laverton and almost 90 per cent are separate houses, the remainder is made up of medium density housing (10%).

When compared to Hobsons Bay, the neighbourhood has substantially higher proportion of separate housing (14% more) and far less medium density stock (12% less). However since 2006, there has been a small drop in separate houses which have been replaced by medium density dwellings.

Table 22: Private dwelling types

Dwelling type	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Separate house	1,632	89.4	75.2	1,644	91.4	75.8	-12
Medium density*	187	10.2	22.7	145	8.1	22.4	+42
High density	7	0.4	1.4	0	0.0	1.1	+7
Caravan, cabin, houseboat	0	0.0	0.4	0	0.0	0.3	0
Other	0	0.0	0.3	9	0.5	0.5	-9
Not stated	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0
Total Private Dwellings	1,826	100.0	100.0	1,798	100.0	100.0	+28

*'Medium density' includes all semi-detached, row, terrace, townhouses and villa units, plus flats and apartments in blocks of 1 or 2 storeys, and flats attached to houses.

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Public housing stock

There is a total of 71 dwellings in Laverton (3.8% of its total housing stock) owned by the State Government and the majority of these provide two or three bedroom accommodation. This is higher when compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole where public housing makes up 2.8 per cent of the housing stock.

Just over 50 per cent of the public housing stock in Laverton consists of medium density housing, 42 per cent is detached/separate and the remainder is made up of moveable units.

Table 23: Public housing stock in Laverton

Moveable Units	1 BR/Bedsit	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	5 Bedroom	Total
5	13	23	23	4	3	71

Source: Dept of Housing (2014) requested data

Residential aged care

There are no residential aged care facilities in Laverton however there are three located in the adjacent neighbourhood of Altona Meadows.

Building permits

In 2013-14, 32 permits covering a total of 70 new dwellings were issued for the neighbourhood. Thirteen were for detached housing, six were for dual occupancy and the remainder (13 permits) were for developments of three or more units or townhouses.

Three commercial permits were also issued for the construction of offices and warehouses.

Housing tenure

Almost 24 per cent of households in Laverton own their own home, 30 per cent have a mortgage and a further 39 per cent are renting. The main changes in tenure since the 2006 Census have been a substantial increase in those who are renting privately (11%) along with this has been a decrease in those with a mortgage (4%) and those who own their home (3%).

The main differences in neighbourhood's tenure patterns, compared to those of Hobsons Bay are a significantly higher proportion of private renters and a lower proportion who own their home.

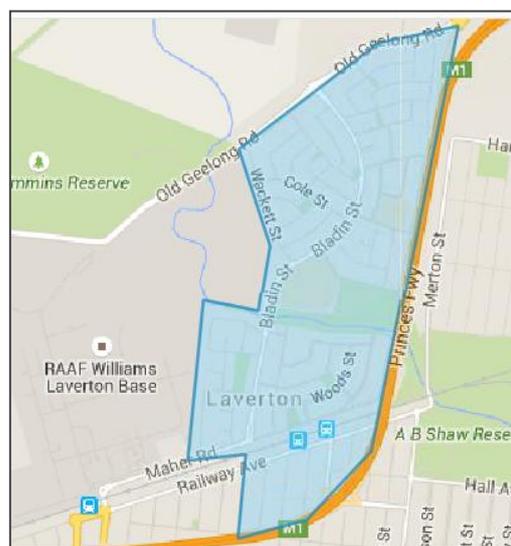
Table 24: Housing tenure

	2011		Hobsons Bay %	2006		Hobsons Bay %	Change 2006 -2011
	Number	%		Number	%		
Fully owned	388	23.8	35.0	452	27.0	36.1	-64
Mortgage	482	29.5	31.4	563	33.7	31.4	-81
Renting	630	38.6	27.0	454	27.1	24.9	+176
<i>Renting - Social housing</i>	47	2.9	3.0	50	3.0	3.2	-3
<i>Renting - Private</i>	567	34.8	23.5	392	23.4	21.2	+175
<i>Renting - Not stated</i>	16	1.0	0.5	12	0.7	0.6	+4
Other tenure type	4	0.2	0.4	9	0.5	0.4	-5
Not stated	128	7.8	6.2	195	11.7	7.1	-67
Total households	1,632	100.0	100.0	1,673	100.0	100.0	-41

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

House sales

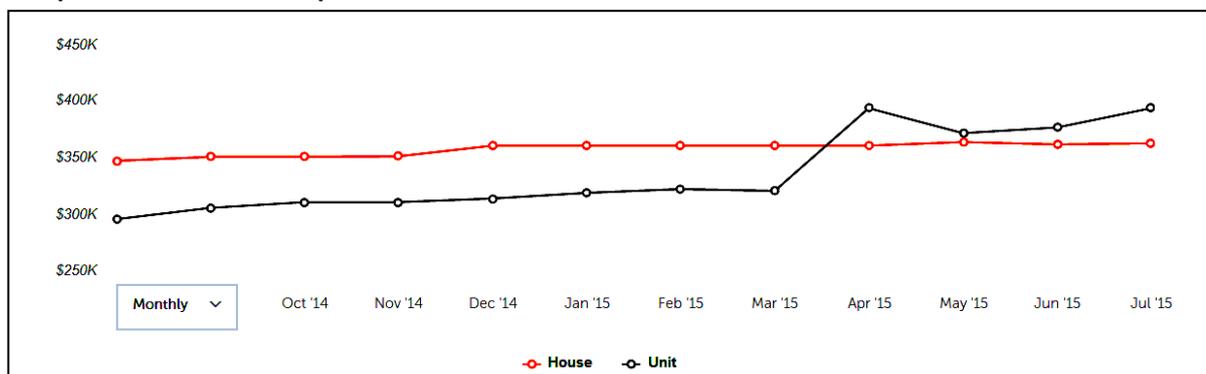
Housing data is not available for the entire Laverton neighbourhood. As the map shows, the data provided does not include the area at the south west corner, below Railway Avenue.



The data in the graph below tracks the median property prices in Laverton from August 2014 to July 2015. (The median price is the midpoint of each month's sales.) Up until March 2015, house prices were consistently around \$350,000 and units approximately \$50,000 less. After March units prices overtook housing and at July 2015 the median was approximately \$30,000 more.

Comparing the median cost of renting houses and units, data from realestate.com.au shows that housing is slightly lower at \$290 per week with unit rentals being \$300.

Graph 7: House and unit prices 2014-2015 for Laverton



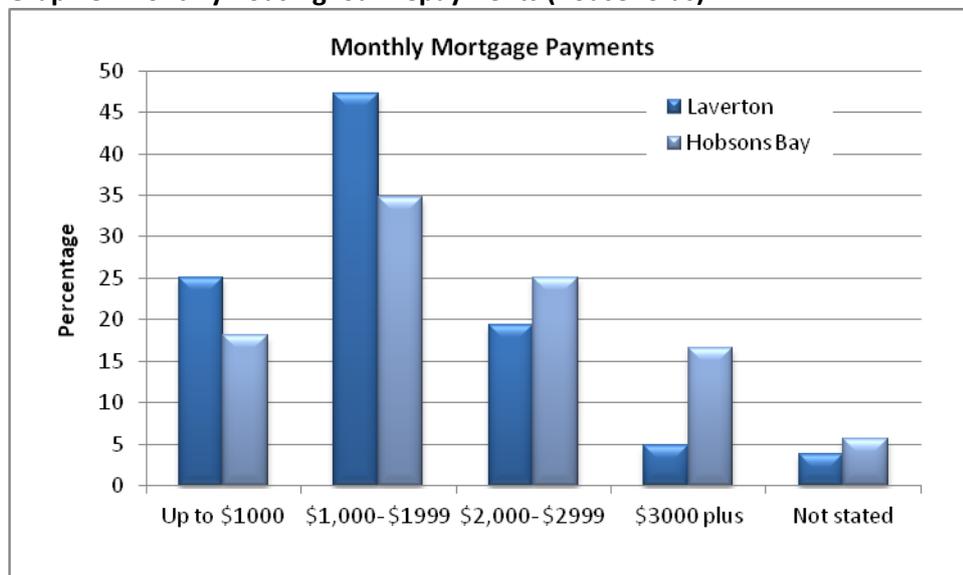
Source: www.realestate.com.au/neighbourhoods/laverton-3028-vic (Web page viewed on 6 August 2015)

Housing mortgages

The monthly mortgage payments of Laverton households are lower than those for Hobsons Bay as a whole. For example, close to three quarters have monthly payments below \$2,000 compared to the municipal figure of slightly more than 50 per cent.

When comparing households paying \$2,000 or more per month, the figure for Laverton is 24 per cent which is well below the Hobsons Bay rate of 41 per cent.

Graph 8: Monthly housing loan repayments (households)

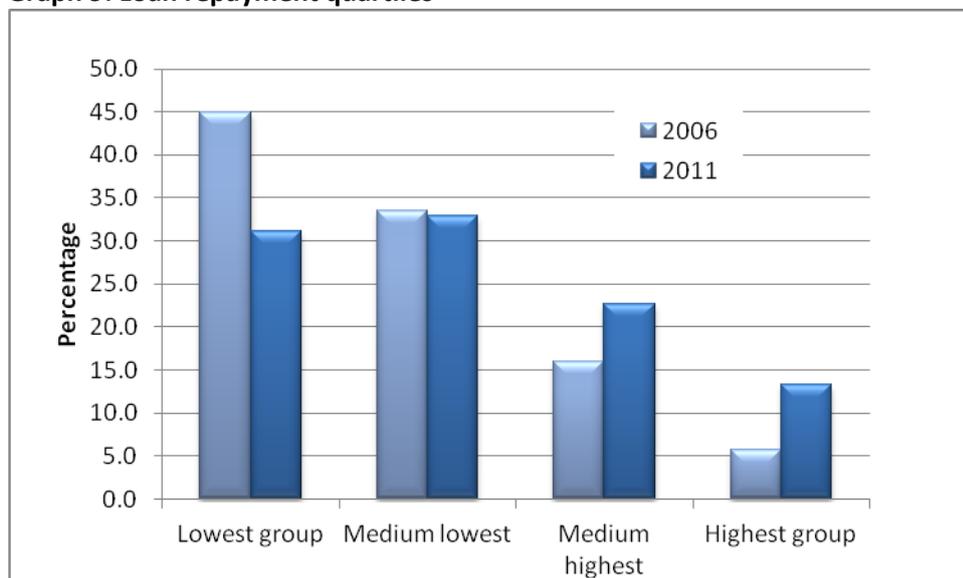


Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Like incomes, comparing changes to housing loan repayments over time is difficult due to the impact of economic changes such as inflation and interest rates. Using quartiles enables the data to be standardised, allowing comparisons to be made across timeframes.

Between 2006 and 2011, there was a marked shift in the mortgages of Laverton households. The percentage of household with mortgages in the lowest quartile fell by close to 15 per cent, with a seven per cent increase in both the medium and highest quartiles.

Graph 9: Loan repayment quartiles



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Availability of rental housing

A review of properties listed online showed that in September 2015 there were 36 rentals in Laverton and overwhelmingly these consisted of detached houses, with very few alternative properties for rent. <http://www.realestate.com.au>

Among the rental properties listed in September 2015, there were 30 houses and six units and townhouses. House rents ranged from \$270 to \$420 per week, with all bar one being three bedrooms. Depending on the number of bedrooms, rents for six units and townhouses were between \$220 and \$340 per week.

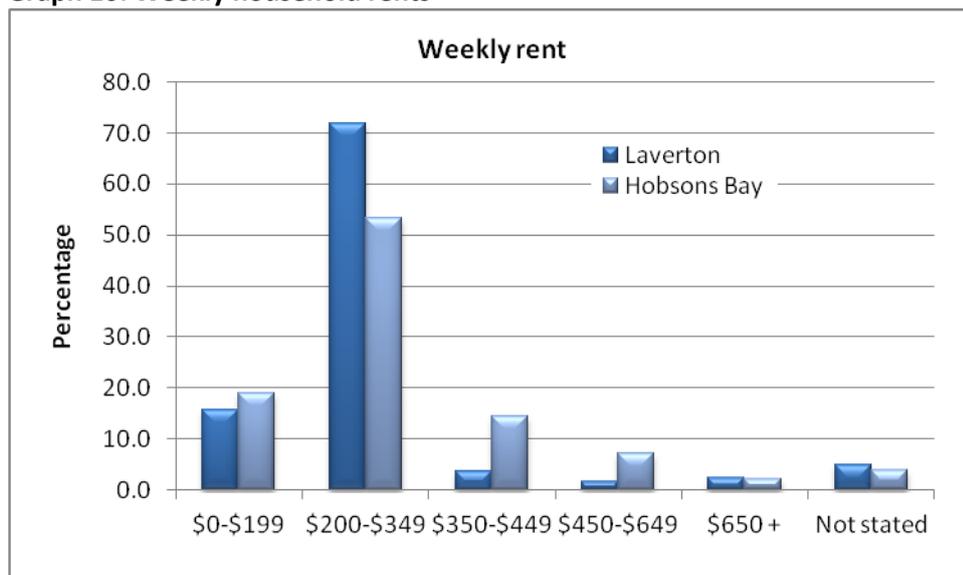
(Source: <http://www.realestateview.com.au/rental-properties> accessed on 17 September 2015).

Rental payments

The data on weekly rental payments in the table below is from the 2011 Census and shows that on the whole, Laverton households are paying rents that are in the lower range.

For example, 87 per cent of Laverton households pay weekly rents below \$350 which is well above the municipal rate of 72 per cent. In contrast eight per cent of the neighbourhood's households pay rents above \$350, compared to 24 per cent of Hobsons Bay households with rents in this range.

Graph 10: Weekly household rents

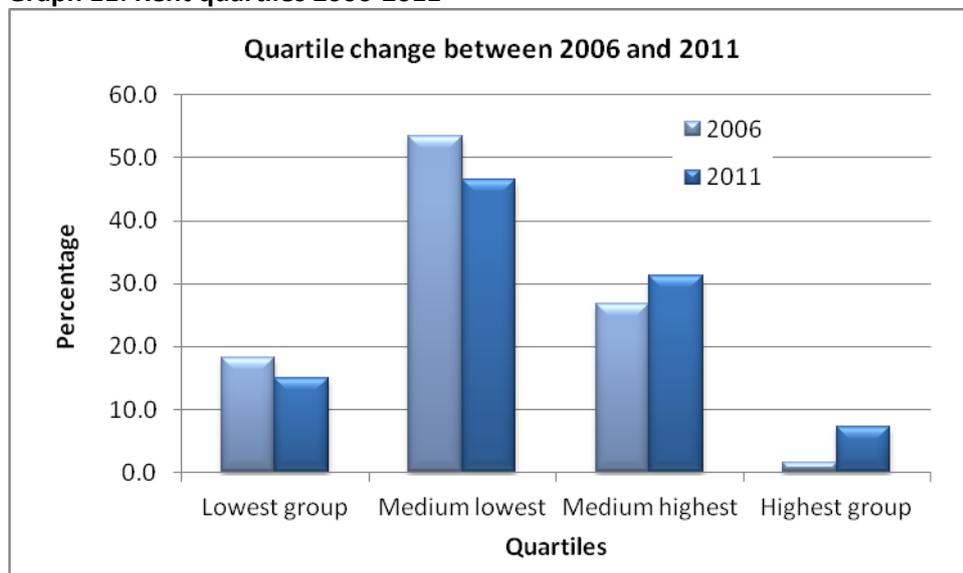


Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

As with mortgage payments, comparing rental payments over time requires a method to standardise the economic influences such as inflation. Using quartiles allows comparison to be made to gauge changes in rental costs (quartiles are calculated from the Melbourne Statistical Division rental payment data).

While Laverton provides some of the cheapest rental housing in Hobsons Bay, the data shows that rents are rising. Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of households in the lowest two quartiles of rent fell by 14 per cent, resulting in a corresponding increase in households in the medium and highest quartiles.

Graph 11: Rent quartiles 2006-2011



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>



Housing stress

Hobsons Bay City Council commissioned *id.consulting* to assess the extent of housing stress across the municipality and its neighbourhoods. Housing stress refers to the percentage of a household's income that is required to cover rental or mortgage payments. A common definition of housing stress is when the household income is in the bottom 40 per cent of the standardised income and they are spending 30 per cent or more on housing.

Households on middle incomes who earn between 40 per cent to 60 per cent of the standardised income and also paying 30 per cent or more on housing are described as being in marginal stress.

id.consulting's analysis found that just over 15.6 per cent of households (243) in Laverton are in housing stress and 3.8 per cent of medium income households (59) are in marginal stress. The rate of those in housing stress is significantly higher than for Hobsons Bay rate of 9.5 per cent and slightly above the 3.3 per cent of households in marginal housing stress).

Breaking this data down further reveals that those who are renting experience much higher levels of housing stress. In Laverton, 28 per cent of households are in rental housing stress; this compares to 6 per cent of middle income households who are in marginal rent stress. For Hobsons Bay as a whole, the comparable rates are 22 per cent and 5 per cent.

Levels of mortgage stress tend to be lower for low income households but higher for those on middle incomes. Fourteen per cent of households are in mortgage stress and 8 per cent of middle income households are in marginal stress; both are above the Hobsons Bay rates (10.1% and 5.6 % respectively).

E. Transport

Car ownership

Based on responses to the 2011 Census, approximately 80 per cent of households in Laverton are car owners, which is slightly below the municipal rate of 84 per cent.

Breaking this down to the number of cars that are owned, households in the neighbourhood tend to own fewer cars. For example, Laverton households are far less likely to own multiple cars. The combined rate of two and three car ownership in Laverton is 37 per cent, while the municipal rate is 47 per cent. As a result, a higher proportion of Laverton households do not own a car (Laverton 11.2%; Hobsons Bay 9%).

Comparing 2011 and 2006 data, the proportion of the neighbourhood households without a car has dropped marginally, while there was a rise in the proportion of households with one car.

Table 25: Car ownership by household

Laverton	2011			2006			Change 2006 to 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay City %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay City %	
No motor vehicles	183	11.2	9.0	210	12.5	9.8	-27
1 motor vehicle	708	43.3	37.5	662	39.5	36.6	+46
2 motor vehicles	441	27.0	34.2	453	27.0	34.1	-12
3 or more motor vehicles	164	10.0	12.8	161	9.6	11.9	+3
Not stated	137	8.4	6.5	189	11.3	7.6	-52
Total households	1,633	100.0	100.0	1,675	100.0	100.0	-42

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Journey to work

The table below provides an overview of how people get to work and shows that the car is the dominant form of transport both in Laverton and across the municipality.

However, there are some significant differences in travel patterns when comparing the two areas. Around 57 per cent of Laverton's households either drive to work or are car passengers, which is almost 10 per cent below the Hobsons Bay figure. The Laverton figure has changed substantially since 2006, down from almost 70 per cent whereas the overall Hobsons Bay figure dropped only slightly.

Laverton workers are far more likely to catch public transport to work. Twenty three per cent of workers catch a train, almost 10 per cent above the municipal rate and more than double the rate at the previous 2006 Census.

Table 26: Main method of travel

	2011			2006			Change 2006- 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Train	454	23.4	14.1	162	10.8	11.2	+292
Bus	41	2.1	1.4	18	1.2	1.1	+23
Tram or Ferry	0	0.0	0.1	0	0.0	0.1	0
Taxi	30	1.5	0.2	6	0.4	0.2	+24
Car - as driver	1,007	52.0	61.2	930	62.2	63.1	+77
Car - as passenger	88	4.6	4.6	111	7.4	5.0	-23
Truck	16	0.8	0.6	19	1.3	0.8	-3
Motorbike	12	0.6	0.5	7	0.5	0.6	+5
Bicycle	1	0.1	1.3	16	1.1	1.1	-15
Walked only	45	2.3	1.7	23	1.5	1.7	+22
Other	27	1.4	0.8	15	1.0	0.7	+12
Worked at home	11	0.6	3.0	23	1.5	2.7	-12
Did not go to work	142	7.3	8.9	142	9.5	9.8	+0
Not stated	61	3.2	1.7	24	1.6	2.0	+37
Total employed persons aged 15+	1,935	100.0	100.0	1,496	100.0	100.0	+439

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

F. Population Forecasts

Population forecasts for Hobsons Bay and its neighbourhoods are benchmarked on the results of the 2011 Census. These figures are then adjusted to incorporate information such as new residential development, together with population trends related to births, deaths and internal and external migration that has occurred since the last Census was taken. The forecasts are developed for Council, by *id.consulting*.

Housing and household forecasts

The population forecasts suggest that approximately 220 new dwellings will be constructed in Laverton over the next 10 years, with around 200 new households.

In recent times, infill development of townhouses and units replacing single dwellings has been the key residential change and this trend is likely to continue as Laverton is still relatively affordable and has good access to a range of services and infrastructure including rail and major roads.

The average household size is expected to increase from 2.79 people to 2.81, reflecting the shift to a younger family profile. This figure is above the Hobsons Bay household size of 2.53 people.

Table 26: Future housing and households

	2015	2020	2025
Average household size	2.79	2.81	2.81
Dwellings	1916	2055	2137
Households	1750	1879	1956

Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/hobsons-bay?WebID=10>

Population numbers

As noted earlier, between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, Laverton's population grew by around 170 residents (+ 4%). The table below provides forecast data for the coming decade and shows the population is expected to increase by 12.9 per cent with the largest part of that increase expected in the next five years. This will result in an increase of 628 residents by 2025.

Table 27: Forecast population

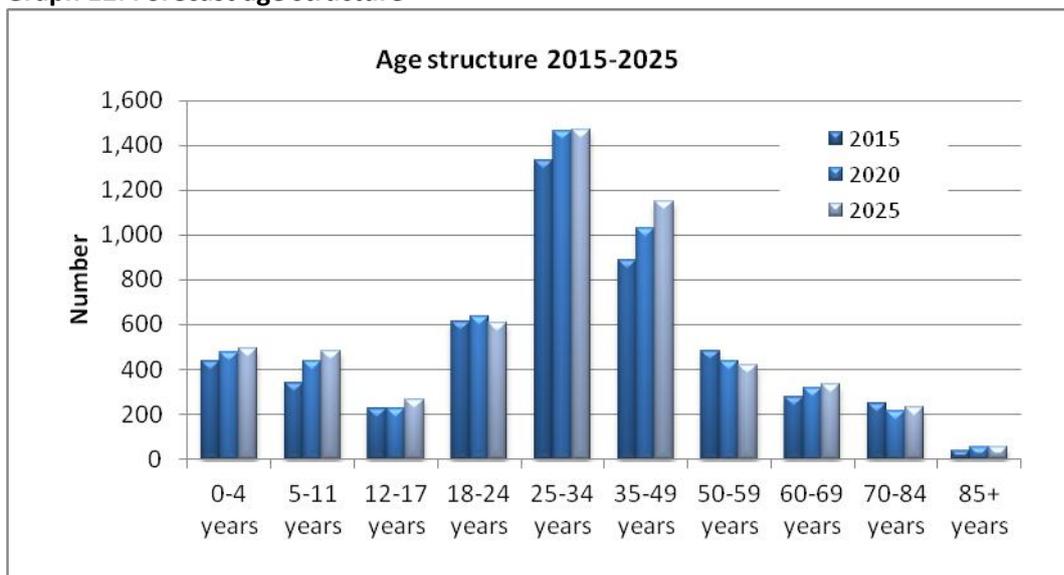
	2015	2020	2025	Change 2015-2025
Total Population	4876	5289	5504	628
% change		↗8.5%	↗4.1%	↗12.9%

Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/hobsons-bay?WebID=10>

Age structure

Population forecasts highlight the likely changes to the age structure in Laverton. As graph 12 shows, these changes will see a continued increase in the number of families with young and school aged children. While there is evidence of some increase in those aged 60 years and over, in general most of the growth is expected among the younger age groups.

Graph 12: Forecast age structure

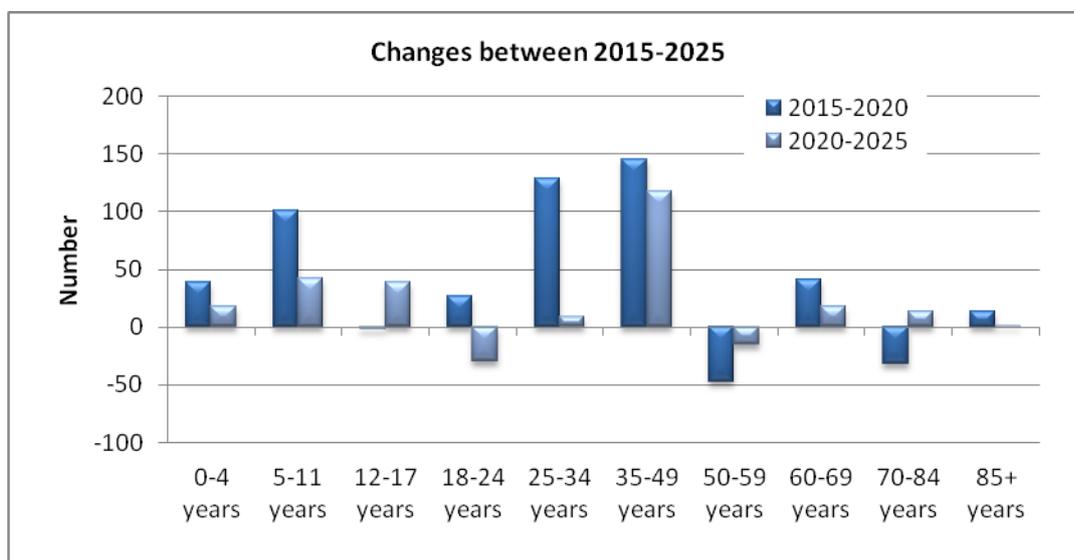


Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/hobsons-bay?WebID=10>

Graph 13 shows the extent of the population gains and losses over the next decade and further highlights the regeneration of the population that is ahead, particularly over the next five years. Most noticeable is a sustained increase among those aged 35-49 years.

A large increase in the 25-34 year age group and primary school aged children is also expected over the next five years. At the other end of the age spectrum, there is no clear trend in the pattern of change, and any changes that are forecast are not significant.

Graph 13: Forecast age structure for Laverton 2015-2025



Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/hobsons-bay?WebID=10>

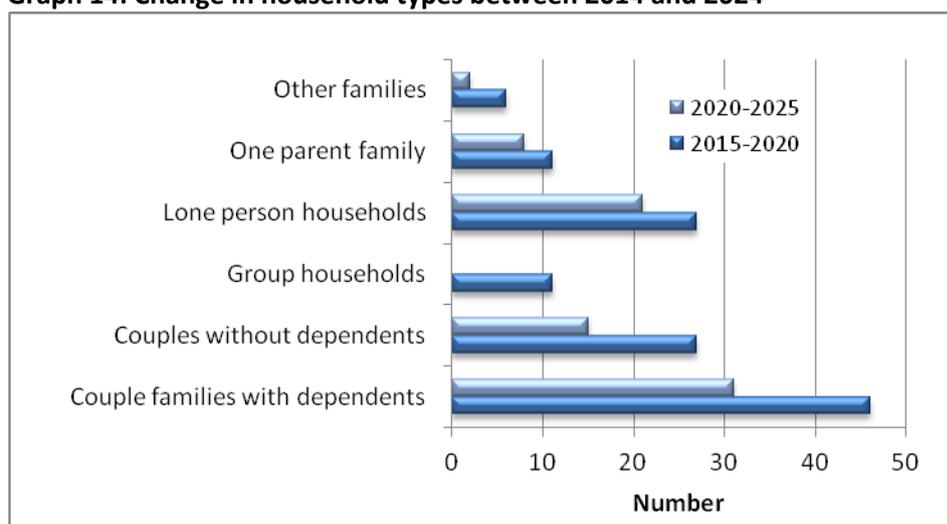
Household types

Graph 14 highlights how the household types in Laverton are forecast to change over the next 10 years and shows all categories are expected to increase, although the extent of growth is uneven.

The data reflects the forecast increase in younger residents mentioned above, with the largest increase expected among households with dependants. This is particularly noticeable in the period to 2020 and to slightly lesser degree in the five years after.

The other main increases are among lone house households and couples without dependants.

Graph 14: Change in household types between 2014 and 2024



Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/hobsons-bay?WebID=10>

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Laverton Neighbourhood Consultations

A. Introduction

The Laverton Neighbourhood Profile provides an overview of the history and development of the area, data about the characteristics of residents and information about the types of services and facilities that are available in the area.

However, none of this information can describe how people feel about living and working in Laverton. In order to gain a better understanding of these perspectives, this section contains a summary of a number of extensive consultations that took place in 2005 and 2008.

The 2005 consultation was part of the Laverton Together: Community Strengths and Needs Study that preceded Laverton becoming part of the Community Renewal initiative in 2006. Another large consultation was conducted in 2008 to inform the Laverton Food Security Report.

Some findings of a 2008 Travel Smart survey of Years 7-12 students at Laverton College and a 2009 Laverton Community Centre Transport Survey are also included. The surveys asked about travel modes to school and the centre and why these options were chosen. The outcomes of the surveys provide information about how people travel around and to other areas outside the Laverton neighbourhood.

In addition, this consultation section includes the recollections and reflections of a number of long term residents who participated in the Laverton Torch Project, in 2007. Using the arts, the Torch Project engaged the community around the themes of history, culture, identity and belonging. It culminated in the release of a DVD “Laverton – It’s My Home” which tells the story of Laverton’s history and development. (It should be noted that the Laverton some residents refer to on the DVD incorporates parts of the ‘old’ Laverton suburb, including Altona Meadows and across to Point Cook.)

B. Methodology

The consultation for the Laverton Together: Community Strengths and Needs Study had input from four key groups with connections with Laverton. They included:

- Residents of Laverton
- The Laverton Together Action Group
- Service providers
- Stakeholder groups

As part of the study, 180 people participated in community workshops and a further 114 people participated in focus groups.

The Laverton Food Security consultation involved 93 people (12 men and 81 women), who were over 20 years of age. They were consulted through surveys and focus groups. While the consultation was primarily about food it also covered transport and other issues around the variety and supply of shopping outlets in Laverton.



The Laverton Community Hub transport survey was conducted in early 2009 and received responses from 83 Laverton residents. While the survey focused on the way they travelled to the hub, the findings provide some general information about how people get about the local area.

In addition, a Travel Smart survey of students and staff at Laverton College was undertaken in October 2008. Travel Smart is a State government initiative and 169 students in Years 7-12 and 35 staff participated in the survey. Just over 50 per cent of students lived outside Laverton in Altona Meadows and the Wyndham municipality. Almost 50 percent of staff lived in other areas of Hobsons Bay and Wyndham.

C. The Findings

The following notes are a summary of the discussions and a range of issues drawn from the consultations, outlined in the methodology.

How would you describe the Laverton area?

In describing Laverton, a long term residents said “There are many, many good people in Laverton. It’s not how much money you have in the bank; it’s what you carry in your heart”.

The strength of people’s connection with Laverton was also revealed through the consultations. The benefit of living in an area that was on the urban fringe was a point that was expressed in different ways. People appreciated that Laverton was a “bit like a country town and not like suburbia”. It was also the place where people had raised their families. For some, it was about emotional connection. “I’ve been here all my life. I went away for a little while, but it’s in here (touches heart). This is my home”. Others felt there was a strong community spirit in the area and that local people were “there for each other”; but also respected one another’s privacy.

Laverton was described as a place that has a lot to offer “but that it has tended to be unrecognised for all that it does have”. Others spoke about Laverton having a “good atmosphere” and that it was a down to earth place, without pretensions. For some, it represented an opportunity to buy a home they could afford. Laverton also offered a new beginning, for those who were born overseas.

However, its location on the border of two municipalities had its downside. As one person put it, Laverton “used to be on the edge of Wyndham, now it’s on the edge of Hobsons Bay - whatever happens we’re used to being the poor sister”. This sense of being somewhat marginalised was also expressed through concerns about the poor appearance of parts of Laverton, sometimes put down to lack of general maintenance or improvements in the area but also linked to a need for greater community pride. One person also spoke about the poor image of Laverton, suggesting that “people perceive it as a dump”.

What things make it a good place to live/ work/ visit?

The recognition of living in a cohesive community was a recurring theme in the consultations. As mentioned earlier, people valued having neighbours and friends who were there if they needed help. They appreciated the general friendliness of the community and that there are “good people in Laverton”.

Laverton was also seen as a welcoming place for new arrivals from overseas. “We’ve had a lot of new arrivals and they’ve blended in. We all mix in. We’re all Australians.”



The quietness of the area and the feeling of safety identified as positives aspects of living in Laverton, with one resident pointing out that “after 2 months overseas [I] came home and the house was untouched”. This perhaps also reflects the benefits of having good neighbours.

Another important feature of Laverton was affordability in terms of buying a home. As a result, people spoke about how fortunate they were to be mortgage free. However, there was also concern about maintaining housing affordability. “Affordable home ownership is one of the best things about Laverton but don’t lose it [affordability] in attracting new investment.”

Laverton’s proximity to the city was highlighted as something people really enjoyed. They enjoyed that “the beach is not far away” with the proviso that “you can get there safely”; this was particularly in relation to cycling or taking public transport. In describing the accessibility of Laverton, another person mentioned that “it’s probably unique in that it’s one of the best situated suburbs in Melbourne – how easy is it to get onto the freeway or get a train, bus anywhere – it’s all here”. Others were not as satisfied with the public transport system and their comments are covered later in this summary.

What sort of things do you do locally and what are some of the facilities you use?

There were a number of facilities in Laverton that people identified as assets for the community. Both the kindergarten and the swim centre were used, particularly by families, but according to one person “[the pool] needs an upgrade”.

McCormack Park, the largest area of open space in Laverton, was also seen as important feature. According to one resident, “McCormack Park is Lavo’s saving grace”. It was suggested that recent upgrades to the park and it’s infrastructure had signalled a “turning point towards a better future for Laverton”. (Section 1 of the complete Laverton profile outlines future improvements for the park.)

The historical importance of having a secondary school in Laverton was highlighted by one long term resident: “The biggest change was when they built the high school. Before, I used to bus it to Werribee. So when they built the school, kids in the area could go to a school that actually belonged to them.” With the redevelopment of Laverton College in 2009, the facility will be available for community use, outside of school hours – a move that was welcomed. This was especially the case for residents on the north side of the railway line who were critical of the lack of services and programs in their area. They spoke about the convenience and shorter walking distances as a result of community programs being offered at the school site.

There were mixed views about the local services. On one hand, a person said “it’s so central, the doctor is just down the road, supermarkets to burn, within striking distance”. Others also commented about the “good collection of shopping and community facilities”. However, the downside was that most were located “south of railway line”. People talked about shopping in Laverton as “convenient for getting a few items” in between their main shopping at places such as the Central Square Shopping Centre in Altona Meadows or Altona Gate Shopping Centre. “I go to Altona Gate. There’s a lot of competition there and things are cheaper.” The difficulty for elderly people getting to the local shops was also mentioned. “It’s easier to go to Footscray on the bus. It goes down Bladin St. and drops them near Footscray station right outside Coles. It’s easier than walking over the train tracks, people don’t like carrying bags back.”



The issue of cost was a major influence on people's shopping behaviours and determining where they shopped. "It's too expensive to shop in Laverton...I go to markets, like Footscray, Victoria, South Melbourne markets". Members of Laverton's Burmese community spoke about catching the train to Footscray to shop at the Asian food stores and markets. Some longer term residents reflected on the impact the decommissioning of the airstrip at the RAAF base has had on local businesses. With the loss of a large number of working families connected to the base, "disposable incomes fell and shops in Lohse and Woods Streets closed" and many remain empty.

Residents spoke about being users of the Laverton Community centre and the programs on offer. Among older residents, the Golden Age Club was a facility that was regularly used and provided a place to meet friends and which encouraged them to get out of their homes and to be involved.

Whilst technically located in the Wyndham municipality, the Laverton Skate Centre, which has been operating for around 25 years, became a "focal point" for the area. A resident, who had been involved in the construction of the centre and who still skates there, described its introduction as "an innovation for the area – one of the only things for the kids" and one which is still popular.

Another activity in Laverton that people enjoyed was the annual Community Festival. Held in November, the festival was described as a "great effort".

Getting about Laverton

Apart from the two travel surveys, the consultations findings that informed this summary (and outlined in the methodology) did not include specific questions about how residents travelled about. Nevertheless, transport options and issues were mentioned in the 'strengths and needs' and 'food security' consultations. Relevant comments have been included below, together with some of the survey findings.

As mentioned in the section above on 'what things make Laverton a good place to live', good access to public transport and proximity to major road networks were seen as positive attributes of living in Laverton. As one person put it "the train's on our doorstep". People responded positively to the current upgrade of the Laverton Railway station and the community benefits it would bring. It "can't happen soon enough, especially regarding disabled access". Laverton Railway station is the last Zone 1 station on the City/Werribee line, after which the cost of tickets increases. While residents benefit from this zoning, they spoke about the increased volume of traffic this created, with large numbers of people from other areas driving to Laverton take advantage of the cheaper train fares.

In the 'strengths and needs' consultation conducted in Laverton in 2005 and in subsequent conversations with residents about transport, a number of people highlighted the inadequacy of the bus service, particularly the two routes that operate along Bladin Street, north of the railway line. People wanted a bus service that ran until 9pm. They raised the poor connectivity with other bus services and the need for a bus route to Laverton North, which is an employment precinct.

Of the 83 residents who participated in the Laverton Community Hub transport survey, half (41) walked to the hub, higher than the number of people who travelled by car, either as a driver or passenger. Their reasons for walking varied but the most common were the convenience, having no other options or for health and fitness. Walking was also the most popular commuting options for students at Laverton College (34%). These findings suggest a high proportion of pedestrians in Laverton, however residents who participated at the consultations commented that the footpaths



were “very bad if you are old, have young children or are pushing a pram”. Others were also concerned about the lack of footpaths and the resulting safety issues for children walking to school. “Sometimes daughter has to walk on road.”

The predominant method for getting to school for teachers at Laverton College was by car. Ninety four per cent travelled by car, with 74 per cent driving alone. The lack of direct public transport services and the difficulty in travelling by public transport from Melbourne’s eastern suburbs to the west were the main reasons they chose to travel by car.

Although only a small number of people who participated in any of the transport surveys cycled around the neighbourhood, the provision of safe bicycling options was raised in the consultations. People suggested that proper bike lanes should be incorporated on the Old Geelong Road and also in Bladin Street which is the main connecting street between the north and south side of Laverton and to the Laverton College. They also identified the potential to create a pathway from McCormack Park to connect up with the Federation Trail. (The trail currently passes to the north of Laverton and outside the Hobsons Bay municipality and links Brooklyn to Werribee.)

While some people highlighted the benefits of living in close proximity to major roads, others expressed frustration about the ramifications for Laverton, particularly in relation to entering and leaving the neighbourhood. As one person commented [it’s] “difficult to get out of Laverton during peak hours” and the volume of traffic is increasing.

What would make the area a better place to live/work/visit?

It is important to reiterate that one of the consultations that is included in this summary took place in 2005. In the period since, much work has been undertaken as part of the Laverton Community Renewal initiative to respond to issues that were raised at the consultations. Among these are upgrades to the parks and play furniture, extensive tree planting, together with upgrading the entrances into the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, other issues are yet to be addressed. The consultations highlighted the strong views of residents about the need to improve both the physical appearance of Laverton and the linkages to adjacent areas and some of these.

The physical barrier of the railway line was viewed as a serious impediment, with people mentioning a general lack of facilities and services on the north side of the railway line. There is “access to everything for those who live south of Railway Ave”. While only part of the solution, the current upgrade of the Laverton Railway Station will provide improved accessibility. (See ‘What’s Ahead’ in the Section 1 of the complete neighbourhood profile for information about the upgrade of Laverton Railway Station.)

The need for better management of traffic and transport linkages were common themes. This was not surprising given Laverton is ‘road locked’ by the Old Geelong Road and the Princes Freeway. The physical barrier of the railway line, creating a north and south divide, was regularly raised. Suggestions included providing safe and accessible pedestrian access to local community and shopping facilities to avoid crossing the railway line. People also described the level crossing at Aviation Road as a “nightmare”, exacerbated by the constant flow of traffic in Aviation Road accessing the freeway on-road. The entry to Old Geelong Rd, at the northern end of the neighbourhood, was described as a “nightmare for both pedestrians and motorists which needed a proper pedestrian crossing”. (See ‘What’s Ahead’ for the upgrade of Aviation Road in Section 1 of the complete profile.)





People spoke about a lack of neighbourhood pride and suggested a couple of ways this could be addressed was through better house maintenance by residents and the removal of rubbish, particularly around bus stops, the high school and along the freeway barrier. In relation to the freeway barrier, people mentioned the need for more attractive surrounds on the residential side of the barrier and of waiting for VicRoads to properly landscape and maintain this area.

Participants in the 'food security' consultation said they would like access to a wider variety of food outlets and food options. Some suggested the use of vacant shops in Lohse and Woods Streets would provide a lift for this rundown area and improve the shopping options for those living north of the railway line.

The provision of more diverse housing stock was identified as a gap. According to one person, "not just poor people should live here". The neighbourhood lacked housing that catered to the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities.

It was suggested that there was a shortage of recreational options in Laverton, particularly for young people. The provision of more playground equipment and "opportunities for kids that don't cost money - youth are bored but can't afford much" were both mentioned.

For those who were at home, including the elderly and those not working, loneliness was an important issue. "There's a lot of people in Laverton who sit indoors everyday...because of low self esteem ... can't afford to go out ... don't feel safe crossing roads."

Memories of living in Laverton

A number of older people who participated in The Torch Project, mentioned earlier, shared their memories of what Laverton was like when they first arrived. In some instances, they had lived in Laverton for more than forty years. As mentioned earlier, when these older residents talked about Laverton they were often referring to when Altona Meadows was part of the suburb, an area that some people described as Laverton South.

People spoke about Laverton as being "paddocks everywhere and no streets as such". They commented that "when I built my house it was all chook farms. It was rural – no streets, no water, drains, nothing".

Historically, the RAAF base had been a major presence in the area, with most of the initial housing built as enlisted men's quarters. People mentioned the RAAF housing had arrived in kit form from England and that many still existed in and around Wackett Street, at the north eastern edge of the neighbourhood. Some felt these pre-war houses "should be preserved because they are historic". Because many of the men who worked at the base had young and growing families, the area became known among the locals as 'the cabbage patch', a euphemism for where babies came from. "RAAF families seemed to breed pretty well, [there were] kids everywhere." The base was also a central part of the social life for employees who regularly attended functions and the cinema. However, reduced activity at the base impacted heavily on Laverton. "It was a really big thing when the RAAF closed. We lost the school. It was really terrible for Laverton because so many people moved out and then the state took it back for private housing." As a result, "we had to learn to live again". *(Editorial: it is incorrect to say that the RAAF base has closed. The base is still operational however the airstrip was decommissioned some years ago).*



Living in Laverton in the future

There was no explicit question in the consultation about whether people intended to continue living in Laverton. However among long term residents, it was clear Laverton was their 'home'. As one person put it, "I love it. When I first came here, it was a nice quiet place and I've always liked it. I think I made a good move when I came down here".

These sentiments were shared by others. Comments in a similar vein included:

"This is really my home. I might have been born somewhere else but I don't feel that way."
It's my home and that's the way it will always be. I'm very proud of Laverton and I'm proud of all the kids here."

"We wouldn't still be here if we didn't like it. My kids have wanted me to leave and buy a small farm but we're quite happy here."