

Secondary school provision in Yarra and Richmond

Summary of findings

The following report provides headline findings from a review of Government secondary school provision carried out by the Community & Corporate Planning branch between January and August 2013. Findings from relevant studies conducted by the Department of Early Education and Childhood Development (DEECD) have also been incorporated.

Finding 1:

Richmond and Yarra currently have a comparatively small number of secondary school age children.

Reasoning:

The 2011 Census indicated that children of secondary school age (12-17 year olds) represented only 3.4% of Yarra's total population compared with 7.3% for Greater Melbourne (see figure 1). The figure for Richmond is 3.9%.

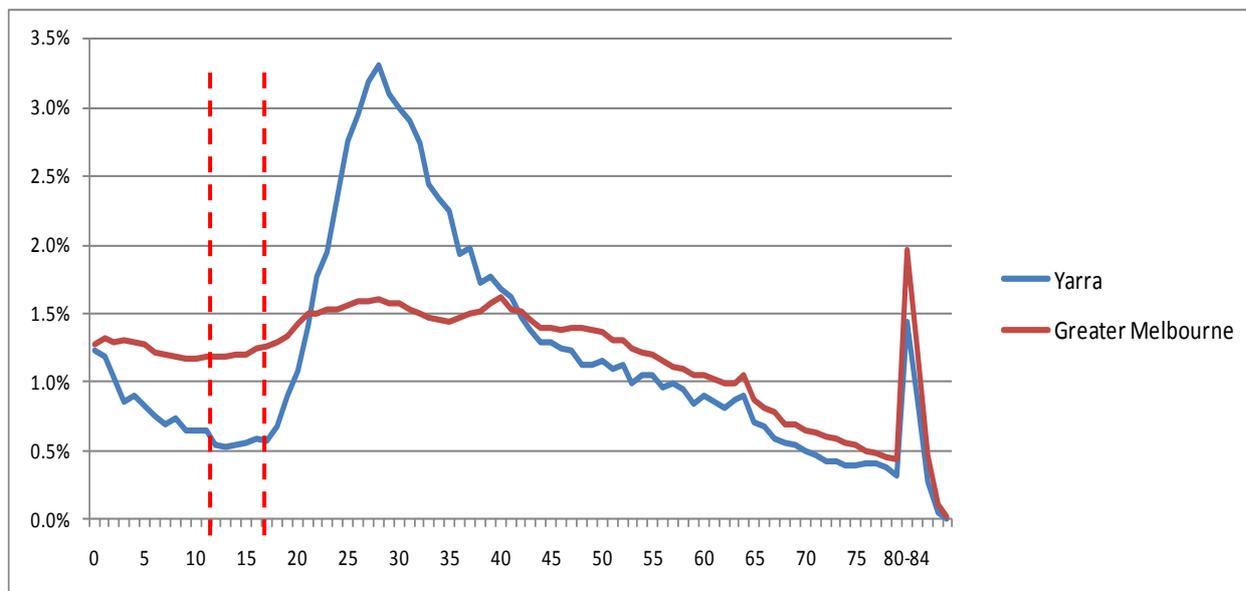


Figure 1: Yarra has proportionately fewer school age people than Greater Melbourne (source: Census 2011)

Finding 2:

For Richmond and Yarra, the rate of growth in the secondary school age population has historically been lower than growth in total population. However, the future rate of growth in the secondary school age population is predicted to be slightly higher than total population growth.

Reasoning:

The number of 12-17 year olds in Yarra increased only 4.1% over the past 5 years which is substantially less than the 7.9% increase in total population (see figure 2). For Richmond the 12-17 year old population actually decreased 0.5% between 2006 and 2011.

Yarra's population forecasts (ID Consulting, 2012) estimate that Yarra's population will increase by 23% between 2011 and 2026 from around 79,000 to 97,000 people. For Richmond the increase will be 25% taking its population to just under 35,000. The predicted increase in 12-17 year olds is slightly greater at 29% for both Yarra and Richmond. See figure 2.

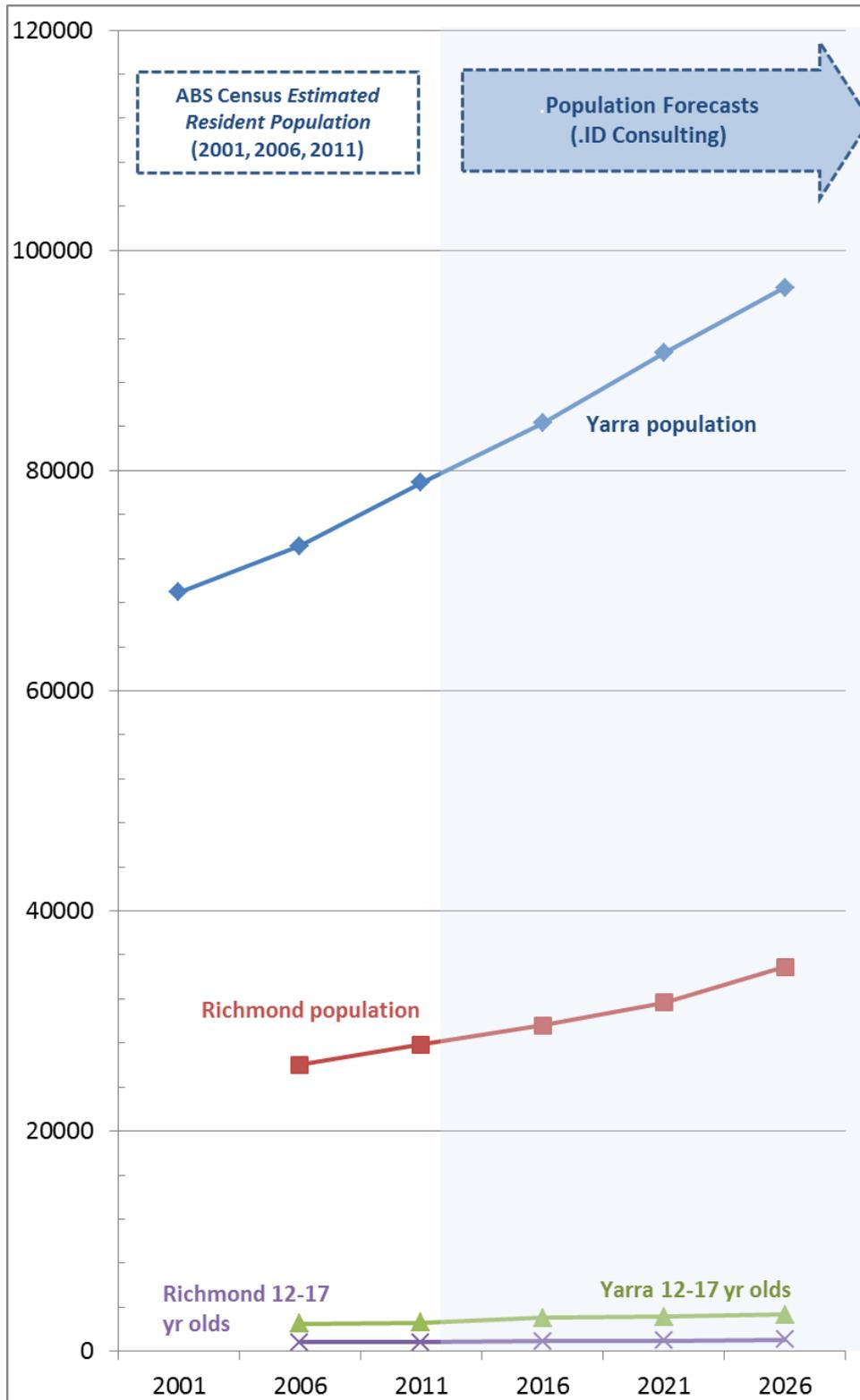


Figure 2: Historical and forecast growth in population (sources: ABS Census and Yarra population forecasts by ID Consulting)

The 29% growth in 12-17 year olds represents an additional 760 secondary school aged children in Yarra, bringing the total to around 3,350 by the year 2026. For Richmond, the increase is 250 children to a total of 1,080 children (which is a third of all Yarra's growth in 12-17 year olds).

Finding 3:

Despite the finding that the rate of growth of secondary school aged persons over the next 15 years will be higher than for overall population growth, existing capacity in Government secondary schools is sufficient to accommodate that growth.

Reasoning:

Note: due to existing capacity at Collingwood College, Fitzroy High School and Lynall Hall it has not been necessary to consider capacity at Government schools outside of Yarra.

Based on 2012 enrolments, three of the five Government secondary schools in Yarra have unfilled capacity (see table 1 and figure 3).

SCHOOL	Capacity (student places)	2012 enrolments	2012 unfilled capacity
Collingwood College (7-12)	1,050	248	802
Melbourne Girls College	1,100	1,255	Fully enrolled
Lynall Hall Community School	160	64	96
Princes Hill	775	820	Fully enrolled
Fitzroy High School	600	453	147
TOTAL	3,685	2,840	1,045

Table 1: Data for Yarra's Government secondary schools shows substantial unfilled capacity in 2012 (source: DEECD)

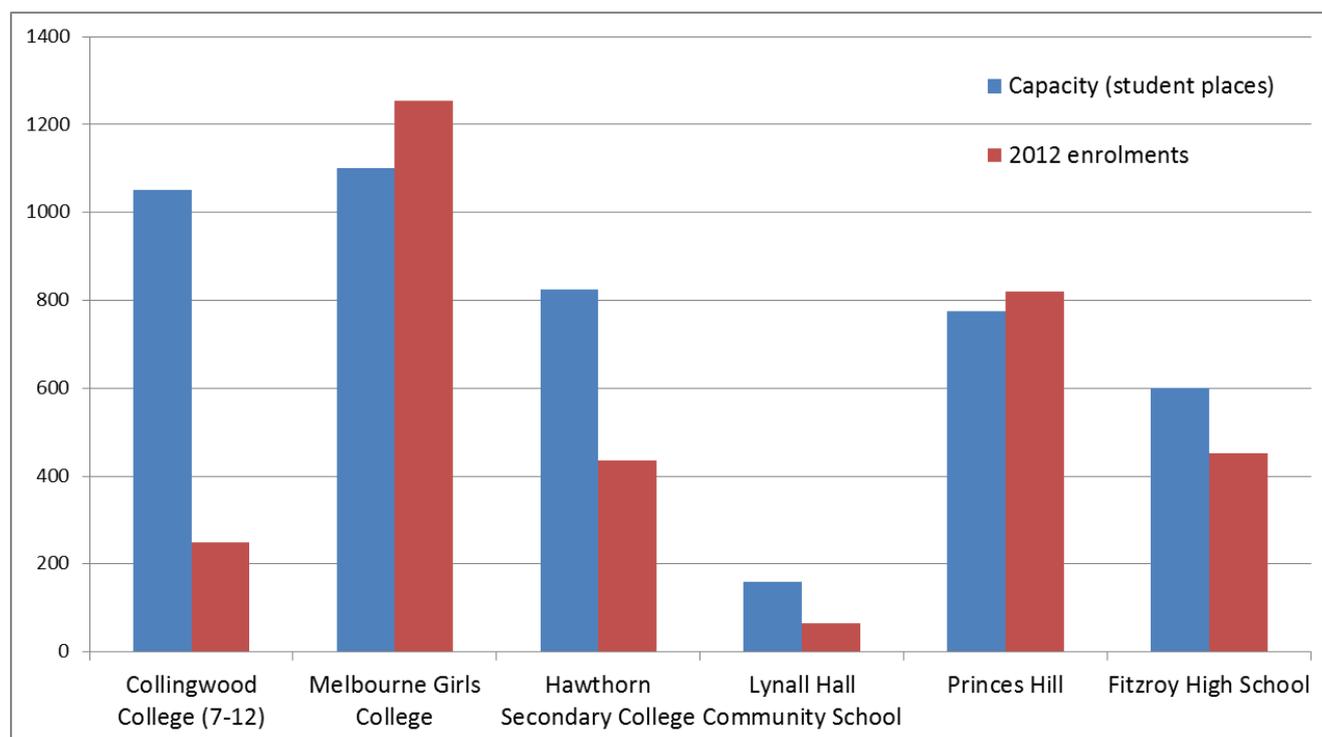


Figure 3: In 2012 Collingwood College had unfilled capacity of over 800 places (source: DEECD)

Report amended December 2013

Population forecasts predict that the secondary school age population of Yarra will increase by 760 to a total of 3,350 by the year 2026. Table 1 above shows that Yarra Government secondary schools currently have capacity for 3,685 students which is sufficient to accommodate the secondary school age population of Yarra in 13 years time (see note on population projections below).

It should be noted that, in addition to the permanent capacity shown in Table 1, there may be opportunities to incorporate extra temporary capacity in the form of relocatable classroom space at some of the schools.

Finding 4:

Existing Government secondary school capacity is sufficient to accommodate growth in population across not only Yarra but also Coburg and Prahran.

Reasoning:

Looking solely at Yarra secondary schools and Yarra population growth, the preceding analysis has concluded that existing Government secondary schools have sufficient permanent capacity up to at least 2026. This capacity may be further expanded through new relocatable classroom space.

The 2013 *School Provision Plan for the Prahran Area Demographic Study (DEECD)* concluded that secondary schools within the Prahran study area have sufficient capacity to accommodate forecast population growth for the next 15 years and that a new school in Prahran is not needed.

In 2012 the *School Provision Review for Coburg (DEECD)* concluded that by 2021 there would be a shortfall in permanent network capacity of 715 places, when relocatable spaces were factored in the shortfall was reversed to show an excess of 468 places in 2021.

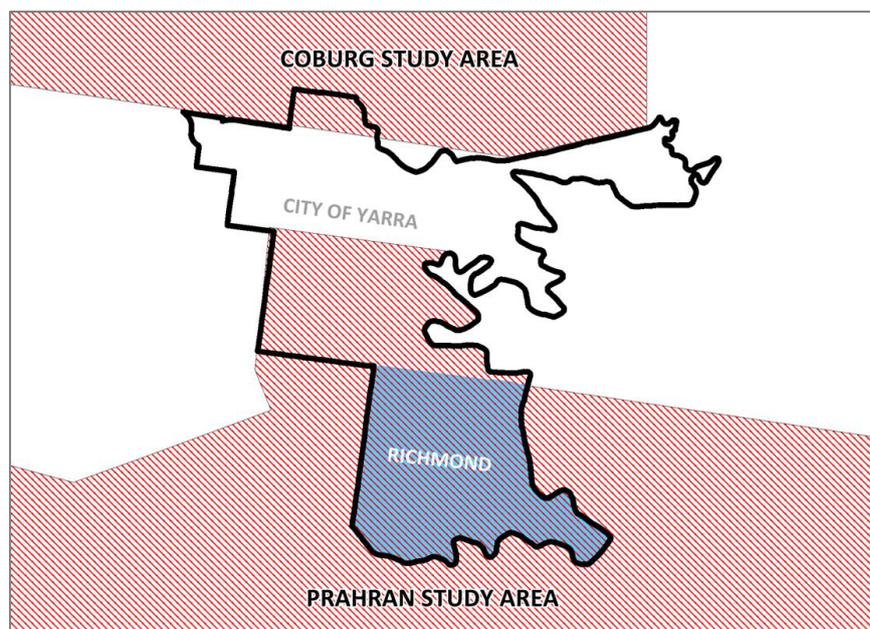


Figure 4: Parts of Yarra and adjoining areas covered by the Coburg and Prahran Provision Plans (DEECD)

Finding 5:

Yarra's unfilled capacity is largely due to the very low enrolment rate at Collingwood College.

Reasoning:

In 2012 there were 248 students enrolled at Collingwood College, only 24% of total capacity. Enrolments have been low across the time horizon analysed (since 2006).

SCHOOL	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change since 2006
Collingwood College (7-12)	289	291	297	310	274	242	248	-41
Melbourne Girls College	1,214	1,215	1,233	1,217	1,252	1,252	1,255	41
Lynall Hall Community School	117	128	135	109	88	83	64	-53
Princes Hill	824	834	833	822	810	845	820	-4
Fitzroy High School	307	379	423	454	460	442	453	+146

Table 2: Annual enrolments at Yarra's secondary schools (source: DEECD)

The number of unfilled places at Collingwood College (802) represents 64% of the total unfilled capacity (1,245) for Yarra schools.

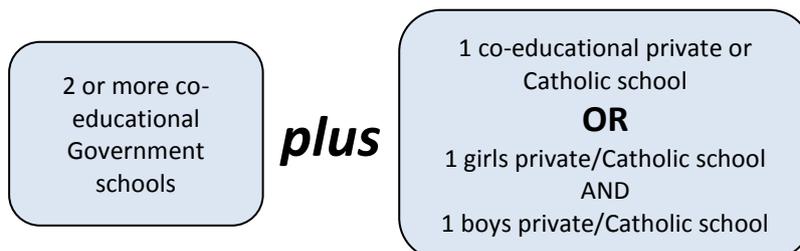
Finding 6:

Yarra residents have access to a large number of secondary schools. However, accessibility to those schools varies across the municipality and students have to travel outside of Yarra in order to access a range of education options.

Reasoning:

The Yarra Primary Secondary School Transition Project's 2012 report *Joining the Dots* identified that Yarra primary school students transition to at least 26 secondary schools outside of Yarra. One reason for this is that parents and children have preferences for types of school or curricula that can only be found outside of Yarra. Also, due to its good transport connections, travel into and out of Yarra is relatively easy. However, the number and range of secondary schools being access by Yarra residents creates difficulties establishing relationships between feeder primary schools and secondaries, and between local agencies and secondaries.

This review initially focused on secondary education options available to Richmond families. An in-house spatial analysis using GIS showed that 84% of the population of Richmond, 100% of Fitzroy, 58% of Collingwood and 44% of Abbotsford has access to the following:



- *A school was deemed 'accessible' if it was within either:*
 - *walking distance of 800m, or*
 - *a journey by tram or train of no more than 30 minutes (with maximum 1 change and inclusive of an allowance for 400m walking distance at the start and end of the journey)*

The analysis has not yet been conducted for Princes Hill and Carlton North, North Fitzroy, Clifton Hill or Fairfield and Alphington. The analysis did not consider access by car or bus but these modes of transport could be expected to increase the range of options available to residents.

At the Richmond parents meeting in March 2013, transport accessibility was cited as one of the problems Richmond families face accessing quality Government secondary schools.

Note on population projections

This review has used population forecasts prepared by ID Consulting in 2012 using underlying data and assumptions endorsed by Council. ID Consulting are currently preparing new forecasts based on updated trends, assumptions and projected development rates but the figures have not yet been endorsed. Although the draft update does suggest a higher rate of growth in 12-17 year olds and a higher secondary school age population in 2026, existing Government school capacity is still sufficient to meet demand in Yarra.

Recommendations

Refer to Council report 17 September 2013.