

Hotspotting

by Ryder



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Location Report



CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Regional Victoria

Wadawurrung Country

August to November 2023



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IMPORTANT CHANGES TO PROPERTY TAX DEPRECIATION!

What you need to know about the investment property legislation changes and how they affect a property investor's ability to make depreciation claims.

Most investors are now aware that in the 2017 Federal Budget Address, the government announced dramatic changes to the way depreciation is claimed on residential properties. In short, the government has limited Plant and Equipment (Division 40) deductions by denying income tax deductions for the decline in value of "previously used" assets.

Essentially, if the item was not brand new when you purchased the property, you can no longer claim depreciation deductions on that item.

The Good News

The new rules don't affect brand new property, commercial property or properties purchased through a corporate tax entity (Note SMSF do not apply here). The existing laws have also been grandfathered.

The Great News

Approximately 85% of depreciation claims are still available to investors. These deductions are on the structure of the property - and can even include renovations by previous owners!

To find out exactly how the laws have affected you, visit the link to the right (in red) for a free Preliminary Depreciation Assessment - or call 1300 990 612

WRITTEN BY TYRON HYDE
CEO, WASHINGTON BROWN



CAN YOU STILL CLAIM?

Find out how / if your investment property is affected!

The total depreciation amount that your property is eligible for can still equate to hundreds of thousands of dollars in deductions. Knowing how much you can claim and/or if you are able to claim has become more complex since the May 2017 legislation change.

As a member of Ryder Property Research, I want to ensure you're claiming every deduction that you're entitled to. That's why we're offering subscribers a free Preliminary Depreciation Assessment. Whether your property is new or old, residential or commercial - we'll review your specific situation and assess your eligibility.

To claim your free Preliminary Depreciation Assessment, visit: washingtonbrown.com.au/prelim



Washington Brown
THE PROPERTY DEPRECIATION EXPERTS



CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Regional Victoria

Wadawurrung Country

Highlights

- Strong population growth
- Economic diversification
- \$1 billion Defence Force contract
- Port of Geelong expansion
- \$4 billion Geelong Fast Rail
- \$294 million Convention Centre
- \$2 billion Armstrong Creek project
- Avalon Airport upgrade

Suburb - houses	Typical prices	Suburb - houses	Typical prices	Suburb - units	Typical prices
Barwon Heads	\$1,800,000	Newtown	\$1,220,000	Belmont	\$550,000
Belmont	\$710,000	Portarlinton	\$920,000	Geelong	\$730,000
Geelong West	\$950,000	Waurm Ponds	\$820,000	Geelong West	\$530,000
Leopold	\$700,000	Whittington	\$530,000	Ocean Grove	\$830,000

Geelong's economy is thriving on the back of infrastructure expenditure, which has totalled around \$5.5 billion in recent years, coupled with numerous improvements to road and rail networks - and there is a lot more to come.

The City of Greater Geelong announced a \$205 million capital works program in its 2022-23 Budget and is working to complete \$14.5 billion of major developments in 2023 alone.

Vacant land availability also means some areas have become first-home buyer (FHB) hotspots with the city's popularity assisted by a major exodus from Melbourne to Geelong and other regional areas.

This activity is creating jobs and driving the \$15 billion economy further while leading to rapid population growth. Such changes have been the catalyst for the *Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas Framework Plan* in 2020, where precincts are expected to cater for 110,000 new residents and create 35,000 jobs by 2050. A similar Central Geelong Framework Plan (CFGF) is also in its planning stages.

And, while the State Government cancelled the 2026 Commonwealth Games in July 2023, Geelong will still receive planned sporting infrastructure projects, as will the other three major regional hubs in the state which committed to a 16-sport program.

The property market has remained strong throughout and beyond the pandemic, with double-digit annual price growth common across the city in recent years, although prices moderated somewhat in the latter part of 2022 and into 2023.

Economy and Amenities

Geelong has evolved from its industrial roots into a diversified city, capable of handling the overflow of an ever-growing Melbourne.

While the manufacturing and processing industries - once major employers in Geelong - are shrinking, other industries are emerging strongly, with Geelong featuring the fastest employment growth of all the nation's large regional cities, according to *id.* in 2023.

While industries such as health, education, technology and tourism operations are replacing heavy industry, this sector still remains relevant.

Geelong Refinery employs 700 people and in early 2022, refinery owner, Viva Energy announced \$300 million would be spent on upgrades to the plant in the next three years.

Geelong offers a prosperous economy and an attractive natural environment, with its water-based lifestyle particularly appealing for city dwellers.

Geelong was the third most popular destination for relocating city dwellers (after the Gold and Sunshine coasts), according to the 2021 *Regional Movers Index*.

Census 2021 data reveals the greater Geelong region grew by 37,000 people between 2016-2021 and is now home to 270,000 residents. The City of Greater Geelong is now preparing to have 12,000 people living in the CBD alone by 2030.

Population forecast estimates by *id.* show the total population could increase 40% to 396,000 by 2041 - or even higher to 400,000, according to ABS data released in May 2023. In 2021-22, Geelong experienced the second highest population increase in Victoria.

The State Government has earmarked Geelong as a regional growth centre, touted to take some of the overflow from Melbourne's population expansion.

One outcome of this policy is greater government spending on infrastructure in the region and a redirection of resources to Geelong.

Current construction activity and projects across the city are testimony to this.

Large-scale redevelopment of the city centre and gentrification of inner suburbs has also heralded growth with a number of new shopping precincts.

- Health and Education

State Government body, Barwon Health is Geelong's biggest employer, engaging around 7,000 people. Private medical services are operated by the \$227 million Epworth Geelong Private Hospital, which opened in Waurin Ponds in 2016.



Location

- On Bellarine Peninsula, 75km south-west of Melbourne CBD
- Connected to Melbourne by Princes Freeway and railway network
- LGA: City of Greater Geelong

We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people as the traditional owners of lands within the City of Greater Geelong



Population

Victoria's fastest growing region

- Population 2016 Census: 233,400
- Population 2021 Census: 270,000
- Projected population 2026: 300,000
- Projected population 2036: 360,000
- Projected population 2050: 500,000

Source: ABS and City of Greater Geelong



Home to 270,000 people, Greater Geelong supports 125,000 jobs and has an annual economic output of \$36.14 million

REMPPLAN 2021

Construction started in May 2023 on a \$20 million children's emergency department at Barwon Health's public University Hospital.

A \$500 million, multi-level women and children's hospital is also being planned for the University Hospital precinct.

Deakin University is another large employer, with more than 1,500 people working at its Waterfront and Waurin Ponds campuses.

Ranked in the top 400 universities in the world,

these campuses are worth \$425 million annually to the region's economy, according to Deloitte Access Economics, and cater for around 9,530 students.

Private school, The Gordon, caters for 16,000 students and 500 teachers and manages around 3,000 apprenticeships Australia-wide.

Prestigious boarding and day school, Geelong Grammar School features a TimberTop adventure campus near Mount Buller. In March 2022, the announced it would expand its main Corio campus to include a new primary school and will sell its early learning and primary school campus, Bostock House, at Newtown.

- Tourism

Located en route to Apollo Bay and the Great Ocean Road, Geelong has always been a hotspot for tourism.

Tourism Geelong and Bellarine data shows that while the regional visitor economy decreased due to COVID restrictions, it was still worth \$765 million in the year ending September 2021.

The tourism industry gained further traction in 2022, with AirB&B data revealing Geelong ranked as the number one location for the most popular long-term stays outside Australia's major cities.

Another diversification factor is the region's developing reputation for local events and festivals. These include the Festival of Sails, which has been held annually since 1844.

The event is considered the largest annual keel boat regatta in the Southern Hemisphere and regularly attracts 110,000-strong crowds.

Geelong also biennially hosts the Australian International Air Show for military aircraft at Avalon Airport. The 2019 event attracted 200,000 spectators and generated \$150 million with participants from 37 countries. The Geelong Cats AFL club also has a \$280 million stadium capable of seating 34,000 spectators.

- Transport and Logistics

Geelong's transport infrastructure ensures it is a strong freight and logistics hub with the city's port being the second largest regional port in Victoria.

The port generates \$400 million of economic activity annually and manages \$7 billion of trade while providing 1,800 jobs. It also handles around 11 million tonnes of cargo every year.

Crude oil and petroleum products account for the majority of trade with grain, wood chips and fertiliser also making a significant contribution.

In 2018, Avalon Airport was also expanded to handle overseas flights to and from Bali and Kuala Lumpur.

Property Profile

Geelong's property market powered through the pandemic, proving itself to be one of the most popular regional areas in Victoria for re-locaters.

The revival of its waterfront played a big part in its allure, as did the city's affordability relative to Melbourne.

In July 2023, the Regional Australia Institute noted Greater Geelong was one of the top five LGAs in regional Australia for attracting newcomers.

The many Melbourne people re-locating to Geelong have put pressure on housing stock and prices, threatening one of Geelong's key attractions, its relative affordability.

In May 2022, the Urban Development Institute of Australia commented that the lack of land supply in Geelong was approaching crisis point and putting affordability at risk.

House prices in some suburbs rose 30% in the year to March 2022, creating new million-dollar markets.

The Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV) noted that for the third consecutive year, Geelong's median house price (\$795,000) reached an all-time high as at September 2022.

Prices in several suburbs have risen sharply since the pandemic. PropTrack data shows Connewarre's median house price rose from \$1.28 million in late 2019 to \$2.57 million in June 2023 - the highest increase in the Greater Geelong region.

Nearby Anglesea also experienced high growth, with the median house price rising from \$878,000 four years ago to \$1.77 million in June 2023.

Geelong's median house price in February 2023 was 34% higher than pre-pandemic levels, says PropTrack. This was a \$213,000 increase on the city's 2020 median house price of \$580,000.

- Solid Demand Continues

The Autumn and Winter 2023 editions of *The Price Predictor Index*, published by *Hotspotting*, found that Geelong has continued to attract significant buyer demand.

Hotspotting attributed this to the LGA's strong economy and its affordable prices, relative to Melbourne.

Recovery was the underlying theme in the Winter 2023 edition, with previously declining suburbs now showing stronger sales activity.

Armstrong Creek, Charlemont and the suburb of Geelong were all rising markets.

Both Armstrong Creek and Geelong were included

on the National Top 75 Supercharged Suburbs list for their strong growth patterns.

Greater Geelong was named on the National Top 10 Municipalities list in the Winter 2023 report.

This data shows that Greater Geelong is a steady, highly consistent market that continues to see solid demand in 2023.

- Market Activity

In the 12 months to May 2023, median house prices fell in some suburbs, according to CoreLogic data.

Drysdale (down 14%) and East Geelong (down 10%) saw the biggest falls.

Other locations, including Barwon Heads, Grovedale, Highton, Lara, Portarlington, St Albans Park and the suburb of Geelong saw barely any change, up or down, in their median house prices.

On the other hand, Manifold Heights and Queenscliff, both million-dollar suburbs, lifted their median house prices 15% in the year to May 2023.

Indented Head, Waurn Ponds and Corio saw more moderate increases in their median prices.

Many suburbs continued to have busy markets, with Lara, Highton, Ocean Grove, Corio, Armstrong Creek and Grovedale all recording more than 200 annual house sales.

Barwon Heads has the region's highest median price of \$1.8 million, based on 64 sales over 12 months.

At the other end of the scale, Newcomb, Corio, Norlane and Whittington offer the area's lowest prices, with Norlane recording a median house price of \$460,000 and Corio \$510,000.

Many Geelong suburbs have **capital growth rates** averaging around 10% per year for the past decade - while Barwon Heads, Indented Head and Queenscliff averaged 13-14% per year.

- Unit Market

After strong price growth in recent years, unit sales activity and values dropped in the latter months of



2022, according to CoreLogic's quarterly *Regional Market Update* in February 2023.

This trend has largely continued into 2023 and in the 12 months to May 2023, Geelong West units experienced one of the biggest annual drops (-24%).

This brought the suburb's median unit price to \$530,000, although this figure is based on a lower sales sample.

Geelong, however, recorded a 13% rise in its median unit price to \$730,000.

Similar to the house market, suburbs with significant unit markets have long-term capital growth rates of around 8-10% per year.

- Vacancy Rates and Rents

Most postcodes in Greater Geelong have vacancy rates between 1% and 2%.

New development areas like Armstrong Creek, and Ocean Grove, however, have higher vacancies.

The best rental returns for houses are found in Corio, Norlane, St Albans Park and Whittington, which all have median yields in the 4.0% to 4.2% range.

Geelong West and Belmont have median yields a little higher for units.



Areas identified for the biggest growth in dwellings are listed in the table below:

Suburb	New dwellings by 2041	Suburb	New dwellings by 2036
Armstrong Creek	9,084	Marshall – Charlemont	6,059
Geelong – South Geelong – Drumcondra	4,256	Mount Duneed	5,756
Lovely Banks – Batesford – Moorabool	4,888	Ocean Grove	3,783

Source: ABS

GEELONG VACANCY RATES

P/code	Suburbs	Vacancy rate
3212	Lara	1.8%
3214	Corio	0.9%
3216	Belmont, Grovedale, Highton	1.7%
3217	Armstrong Creek	3.2%
3218	Geelong West, Herne Hill, Manifold Heights	1.5%
3219	East Geelong, Breakwater, Thomson, Newcomb, St Albans Park, Whittington	1.0%
3220	Geelong, Newtown, South Geelong	2.6%
3226	Ocean Grove	5.5%

Source: SQM Research

The Geelong unit market can be summarised as follows:-

Suburb	No. of sales	Median price	1yr growth	Growth ave.	Median yield
Belmont	93	\$550,000	-6%	9%	4.2%
Geelong	86	\$730,000	13%	7%	3.9%
Geelong West	34	\$530,000	-24%	5%	4.3%
Newtown	56	\$600,000	-7%	8%	3.6%
Ocean Grove	44	\$835,000	-10%	10%	3.2%

Source: CoreLogic – “no. of sales” is unit sales in past 12mths. “Growth ave.” is average annual growth in median unit prices over 10yrs. “snr” is statistically not reliable.

The Geelong housing market can be summarised as follows:-

Suburb	No. of sales	Median price	1yr growth	Growth ave.	Median yield
Armstrong Creek	252	\$700,000	-1%	8%	3.7%
Barwon Heads	64	\$1,800,000	0%	14%	2.1%
Bell Park	78	\$620,000	-5%	8%	3.7%
Belmont	237	\$710,000	-6%	7%	3.4%
Clifton Springs	138	\$690,000	-2%	9%	3.4%
Corio	234	\$510,000	4%	9%	4.2%
Drysdale	57	\$710,000	-14%	10%	3.1%
East Geelong	39	\$835,000	-10%	7%	3.1%
Geelong	57	\$950,000	0%	6%	3.1%
Geelong West	115	\$950,000	2%	7%	3.0%
Grovedale	220	\$680,000	-1%	8%	3.8%
Herne Hill	53	\$740,000	-2%	7%	3.0%
Highton	250	\$920,000	1%	7%	2.9%
Indented Head	30	\$860,000	5%	13%	2.6%
Jan Juc	33	\$1,330,000	-3%	9%	2.3%
Lara	234	\$700,000	0%	9%	3.8%
Leopold	171	\$700,000	1%	9%	3.6%
Manifold Heights	28	\$1,110,000	15%	10%	2.7%
Newcomb	88	\$590,000	-1%	8%	3.7%
Newtown	137	\$1,220,000	-4%	9%	2.4%
Norlane	124	\$460,000	-1%	8%	4.1%
Ocean Grove	259	\$1,125,000	2%	11%	2.7%
Portarlington	61	\$920,000	0%	10%	2.7%
Queenscliff	23	\$1,575,000	15%	14%	2.1%
St Albans Park	61	\$625,000	1%	10%	4.1%
St Leonards	90	\$790,000	2%	10%	2.9%
Thomson	32	\$560,000	-7%	8%	3.2%
Waurm Ponds	36	\$820,000	5%	8%	3.6%
Whittington	54	\$530,000	-1%	10%	4.0%

Source: CoreLogic and realestate.com.au – “no. of sales” is unit sales in past 12mths. “Growth ave.” is average annual growth in median unit prices over 10yrs. “snr” is statistically not reliable.

Future Prospects

Geelong has three main factors in its favour: a relaxed water-based lifestyle within commuting distance of the Melbourne CBD; a vibrant local economy; and a major focus on extensive development.

Since 2016, Geelong suburbs have experienced strong capital growth with improvements to rail and health infrastructure inspiring renewed interest in the city. Commuting to Melbourne has become easier while Greater Geelong's growth economy provides plenty of local jobs.

City of Greater Geelong data in January 2023 reveals \$14.5 billion worth of major developments across 147 projects were either on the planning tables, under construction or had recently been completed.

Of these developments, 34 of them worth \$10 million had been approved while construction had recently begun on 42 others.

The most notable developments included:

- \$4 billion Geelong to Melbourne fast rail;
- \$689 million new prison at Lara; and
- \$750m Waurin Ponds rail duplication

In the three financial years ending FY2022, \$5.5 billion had been spent on residential and non-residential construction as well, says ABS data.

The projects included supermarkets, schools, sporting facilities, community projects, hotels, tourism projects, residential and commercial buildings.

An example is the \$500 million redevelopment of Geelong's former Ford site, later utilised as a mass vaccination hub during COVID. Renamed Fortek, the site is set to become a manufacturing, technology and heavy industrial operations hub and will house 1,200 to 1,500 workers within a few years.

One section is now manufacturing wind turbines while another will soon manufacture timber for construction sites.

Geelong has other major strengths, notably in research, health, defence, advanced manufacturing, tourism, information technology and horticulture, says the Regional Development Victoria.

Another driving force behind the city's growth is the G21 Regional Growth Plan - a formal alliance of government, business and community organisations working within the Geelong region.

A key project identified by the alliance is a \$1 billion freight transport hub beside Avalon Airport, that could become Victoria's largest interstate seaport, road and rail terminal.

CORE INFLUENCES

Transport Infrastructure

Government Policy

Urban Renewal

These developments are now seeing the city become a major metropolis that will attract half of all new regional Victorians by 2050.

Already Victoria's second largest city, Geelong's economic and population growth is intensifying, with predicted population numbers expected to reach 400,000 by 2041, according to ABS data in May 2023.

Greater Geelong's 2% population growth in 2021-22 was the second highest increase in Victoria, with an extra 5,340 people now living in the LGA.

Council's Settlement Strategy is predicting a 2.5% population growth rate which could see the city grow from 500,000 residents in 2047 to one million in 2075.

This prompted the City of Greater Geelong to initiate the **Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas Framework Plan** in 2020.

Including central Geelong and sub-regional centres at Corio, Belmont, Leopold, Waurin Ponds, Lovely Banks, Batesford and Armstrong Creek, this plan is the largest greenfield planning project in regional Victoria. Encompassing 5,500ha, it will eventually comprise 40,000 homes for 110,000 new residents, with the proposed growth areas to be west of the M1 (Geelong Ring Road) and bordered by the Hamilton Highway and Bacchus Marsh Road.

Council is working towards the above areas being rolled out in nine precincts, with each having a structure plan for community facilities, infrastructure and similar.

A \$500 million **Central Geelong Framework Plan** which will assist infrastructure and development projects over the next 30 years, is also in the pipeline.

An **Urban Geelong Long Term Settlement Boundary Review** released in March 2022 notes boundaries in the above suburbs may be expanded, and land unlocked, for residential development.

Council also submitted a plan to the State Government in October 2022 to allow high-density residential development in South Geelong.

Other possibilities under the Urban Design Framework could see developments of up to six storeys built on the former Barwon Water depot

site. South Geelong train station - which will soon be redeveloped - and nearby streets could open to developments of up to seven storeys.

The State Government has already approved the construction of 240 homes on former farmland in Leopold. Another parcel of land in this suburb, as well as one in Lovely Banks, was rezoned for residential development in 2022.

These parcels will become part of the **Northern Geelong Growth Area** which is expected to house 48,000 people in 17,000 homes by 2050.

Another 2,600ha of farming land in Armstrong Creek is planned to become a \$2 billion master-planned community.

Touted as being the largest contiguous growth area in Victoria and one of the largest growth fronts in the country, the **Armstrong Creek development corridor** will eventually comprise seven precincts. A \$1 billion town centre has already opened.

The mixed-use project will be built in stages over 15 years with the first stage to service about 58,000 people and provide 1,100 jobs, with the suburb set to rapidly increase to 10,000 residents by 2036.

Council also plans to transform North Geelong's former salesyards into a major mixed-use precinct, housing 1,300 residents.

First adopted in June 2021, the precinct will include high-density residential up to 10 storeys, parks and community facilities.

Employment numbers are already growing in line with high population figures, with Greater Geelong beating all of the nation's large regional cities when it came to the fastest job growth, *id.* data found in July 2023.

In FY2023, 12,000 new jobs were created in Greater Geelong.

The fastest growing sectors in FY2023 were health care & social assistance (up 3,931 jobs), construction (up 1,603) and professional, scientific & technical services (up 1,423).

The Northern Geelong Growth Area is expected to create 14,000 jobs with a broader workforce of 20,000 residents, with that of the Western Geelong Growth Area creating 21,500 local jobs with a broader workforce of 25,000 residents.

Many of these jobs will be in health, education, retail, business and office-based sectors, including that of a planned \$600 million health and education precinct in Waurn Ponds.

Northern & Western Geelong Growth Areas - at a glance

- 40,000 homes across 5,500 hectares
- 110,000 new residents
- 14,000 jobs - Northern Geelong
- 21,500 jobs - Western Geelong

Regional centres at:

- Corio
- Belmont
- Leopold
- Waurn Ponds
- Lovely Banks
- Batesford

Part of a 10-year master-plan, this facility will be co-located with Deakin University, Northwest Healthcare Properties and Epworth Healthcare.

- Government Policies

Several government agencies have been established in Geelong, creating 5,685 direct and indirect jobs.

In March 2019, the Federal Government announced a \$355 million **City Deal** for Geelong which will unite three levels of government and private enterprise to stimulate urban renewal and create jobs.

The 30-year City Deal is expected to create 1,000 jobs every year and generate an extra \$1.1 billion into the economy.

The first project to benefit from the City Deal is the \$300 million **Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre**, with major works expected to begin later in 2023, after a preferred builder was announced along with design plans in July 2023.

A \$200 million civic precinct, which includes council headquarters and a separate commercial building opened in September 2022.

Longer term, the suburb of Point Henry is to be redeveloped under the draft Moolap plan. The \$4 billion Point Henry 575 project will convert the former smelter site owned by Alcoa into a residential area.

New hotels, resorts, major tourism attractions, a working pier, boating marinas and foreshore paths are also encouraged under the 30-year vision.

While not part of the City Deal, the \$200 million Geelong Quarter is expected to transform the city after officially opening in July 2023.

Its anchor tenant, the Holiday Inn, is Geelong's first new hotel in 20 years.

Franzé Developments purchased the former bus depot site in the CBD in 2017 with plans to create a lifestyle precinct featuring dining, hospitality, arts, accommodation and retail options.

- Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is now another key driver of Greater Geelong's economy. One of the world's largest battery projects was completed in December 2021 at a cost of \$200 million.

Construction was to begin in late 2023 on a \$300 million battery gigafactory at Avalon Airport with the 30GWh facility to employ between 1,500 and 2,000 workers.

However, in April 2023, developer Recharge Industries announced delays of this build while it pushed ahead with its Britishvolt project in England.

The first half of Australia's largest wind farm at Rokewood also began construction in 2023. A State Significant project valued at \$2 billion, Golden Plains Wind Farm's west and east sectors will have the capacity to satisfy 9% of the state's power demand, with the first stage to begin production from 2024.

- Health & Medical Plans

In February 2023, construction began on a \$20 million children's emergency department at Barwon Health's University Hospital, in partnership with the Victorian Health Building Authority.

A \$500 million women's and children's hospital was also promised for the city in the 2022-23 Victorian Budget, with construction to start in 2025.

The eight-storey hospital will feature birthing suites, operating theatres, outpatient clinic rooms, a neonatal and parent care unit, and a pharmacy.

- Defence Force

The Federal Government has awarded Hanwha Defense Australia a \$1 billion contract, part of which will be used to build a \$170 million Armoured Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Avalon Airport.

The facility will be used to construct 30 self-propelled howitzers and 15 armoured ammunition resupply vehicles for the Australian Defence Force. Creating 350 jobs, Hanwha started work on the facility in 2022 with howitzer construction beginning in 2024.

In July 2023, Hanwha was also awarded a \$10 billion contract to build 129 Redbank infantry vehicles at its Centre of Excellence, as part of the Federal Government's Land 400 Phase 3 project. It's expected the first vehicle will be delivered in 2027.

- Ocean Grove-Barwon Heads

Along with Armstrong Creek, the Ocean Grove-Barwon Heads area is the focus of strong population growth and substantial development with extensive new commercial, retail and recreational facilities now in place.

The \$60 million Kingston Shopping Village, which opened in December 2019, was the third shopping centre to be built in the area.

About 3,500 new homes are planned for the region - including Ocean Grove's first major retirement village, covering 7.5ha - while a light industrial precinct will enhance employment opportunities.

- Transport Infrastructure: Rail

In September 2022, the Federal Government announced the possibility of a high-speed rail line which could connect Geelong to Brisbane, as part of an interstate east coast link.

A High Speed Rail Authority would create a new rail network connecting Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane, and major regional centres, with trains travelling at speeds of up to 250kmh.

Construction on the **Geelong Fast Rail** was expected to begin in 2023; however, in April, the State Government announced the project would be delayed.

When it is completed, the fast rail will enable passengers to travel to the CBD via Werribee, rather than Sunshine, and allow express trains from Melbourne to Geelong.

And, plans for the \$4 billion first stage have begun, with the Federal and State Governments each funding \$2 billion towards the project. The first stage will create a dedicated regional passenger track from Werribee to Laverton, which will decrease travel time to Melbourne CBD by 15 minutes.

The completion of the \$5 billion **Regional Rail Link** completed in 2015 has already made commuting from Geelong to Melbourne easier. Regional trains are now separated from metropolitan trains, giving Geelong trains dedicated tracks and alleviating bottlenecks.

The rail link follows the \$160 million upgrade of the Waurin Ponds station in May 2022, as part of a \$1 billion State and Federal Government investment in the staged upgrade of Geelong's railway line.

Along with a train stabling yard in the suburb completed a year later, the two projects give commuters 31 extended services.

Construction has also begun on the South Geelong to

Waurm Ponds duplication plan, with the \$900 million project to give even more services to travellers.

Longer term, there are plans for a new spur line to Torquay, via Armstrong Creek.

- Transport Infrastructure: Airport

An expansion at Avalon Airport - including a new international terminal - was completed in 2018 with a rail link to be built in the long term.

There is also a proposal to move the main terminals to the opposite side of the Princes Freeway and link them to the new train station.

The airport's industrial precinct will eventually create 750 jobs, with two adjacent similar hubs proposed.

MAB Corporation has lodged a proposal for a \$3.3 billion business park, to be known as Greater Avalon. However, it would need rezoning first.

Universal Corporation is proposing a \$4 billion logistics and commercial hub on the west side of the airport, which would also need rezoning.

- Transport Infrastructure: Roads

With the completion of the \$117 million Drysdale Bypass in mid-2020, heavy trucks and vehicles have been removed from High Street, Drysdale.

The \$695 million Geelong Ring Road has also had a major impact, providing a 23km freeway link between Corio and Waurm Ponds and enabling commuters to avoid 31 sets of traffic lights.

Another project is the \$10 billion West Gate Tunnel project (formerly the Western Distributor). Due for completion in 2025, the toll road linking Geelong and Melbourne is forecast to save commuters 10 minutes each way between Geelong and the Melbourne CBD. The project features twin underground tunnels and a new second river crossing.

The Great Ocean Road, which attracts around three million tourists a year, is undergoing a \$255 million upgrade to improve inland routes to the Princes Highway West. Stage 1 was completed in May 2022 and Stage 2 has been approved.

- Transport Infrastructure: Port

Geelong Port is the largest regional port in Victoria and its most important bulk cargo facility, handling more than 12.6 million tonnes of imports and exports annually, with an estimated value of \$6.6 billion.

The port is also expected to handle a larger share of

the car import industry as it grows and trade is set to triple by 2030 and generate 4,320 jobs, according to the Victorian Regional Channels Authority.

As well, the port is set to benefit from another passenger and freight terminal, with North Geelong now the new home of the *Spirit of Tasmania* ferries after the first ferry docked at the hub in late 2022.

The \$135 million, 12ha passenger and freight terminal includes an access ramp for cars, caravans, and trucks and upgraded berthing, boarding and mooring facilities.

In other plans for the port, Viva Energy has proposed a \$250 million Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import terminal while a \$160 million investment in the agribusiness sector is expected to create 775 jobs and generate \$516 million in revenue over 10 years..

- 2026 Commonwealth Games

A surprise announcement from the State Government in July 2023 means that Victoria will no longer host the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

In a first for the event, four regional hubs including Geelong were to have played a major role in hosting the Games.

Each hub was to feature an athlete's village and together, deliver a 16-sport program from world-class, regional sporting venues, thus providing such regions with community infrastructure, housing and sporting facilities.

Geelong received confirmation in October 2022 that its \$650 million athlete's village, including a 44-unit apartment building, would be built at the Waurm Ponds Station precinct.

The city was also to have hosted nine sports, including two first-time Commonwealth Games sports - golf and coastal rowing - while Kardinia Park would have hosted the Games' closing ceremony.

However, the State Government says regional areas will still receive \$2 billion of funding with all Commonwealth sports infrastructure projects to go ahead as planned.

While plans for the athlete's village are uncertain, Geelong will still see an indoor sporting centre at Waurm Ponds; an aquatic centre with four indoor sports courts at Armstrong Creek; upgrades to Stead Park at Corio; and a training pitch and seating at Banyul-Warri Fields at nearby Torquay.

Projects likely to impact the Geelong region in the near future:

INFRASTRUCTURE – HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Healthcare, innovation & education precinct, Waurin Ponds Northwest & Epworth Healthcare (50:50)	\$600 million	Proposed October 2021 To be developed in multiple stages over 10 year-plus period	4ha site to have medical research, aged care & childcare facilities
Women's and children's hospital, University Hospital, Geelong State Government	\$500 million	Builder appointment expected late 2023 Major works to begin 2025 for completion in late 2029	Multi-level facility with 23,000m ² of floor space & 4,000m ² revamp of current buildings

DEFENCE CONTRACTS

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Armoured Vehicle Centre of Excellence, Avalon Airport Hanwha Defence Australia (HDA)	\$170 million (part of \$1.3 billion Land 8116 - Phase 1 contract)	Approved Construction of facility began April 2022 Construction of howitzers to begin 2024	Jobs: 350 32,000m ² facility with assembly lines, 1500m test track & deep water testing area for construction of 30 self-propelled howitzers & 15 armoured vehicles
Vehicle manufacturing hub, Geelong Hanwha Defence Australia (HDA)	\$10 billion (part of Land 400 - Phase 3 project)	Hanwha awarded contract in July 2023 First vehicle to be delivered in early 2027	Construction of 129 Redback infantry fighting vehicles at Vehicle Centre of Excellence
Waterside Infrastructure Remediation project, Point Wilson Federal Government	\$193 million	Under construction Completion was due late 2022	2.4km jetty & 168m wharf at explosives storage facility for loading & unloading weapons

COMMERCIAL & GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Chocolate factory, Portarlington Bellarine Chocolate Co	TBA	DA lodged August 2022	Chocolaterie, restaurant & accommodation at site of Lincoln's Dairy Farm

COMMERCIAL & GENERAL DEVELOPMENT ... contd.

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Clinker grinding & storage facility, Geelong Port Boral	\$130 million	Stage 1 completed 2021 Stage 2 completion was expected in 2022	Capacity to grind 1.3m tonnes of cement products annually
Golden Plains Food Production precinct, Lethbridge Golden Plains Shire	\$160 million	Under construction	Jobs: 45 construction State's first designated precinct for intensive food production, with 20 agribusinesses on 4,000ha site
Geelong Arts Centre (part of Little Malop St project) - redevelopment State Government	\$140 million project	Under construction Completion planned for August 2023	Jobs: 600 construction Will be Australia's largest regional arts centre, with 500-seat and 250-seat theatres, outdoor atrium & dining
Mixed-use precinct, Avalon Airport (west side) Universal Corporation	\$4.5 billion	Sold to Universal Corp for \$95m in June 2022 Planning scheme being prepared for industrial/commercial utilities	141ha greenfield site to feature manufacturing, transport, logistics, wholesale & airport-related businesses
Mixed-use precinct, Avalon Airport (south side) MAB Corporation	\$3.3 billion	Proposed in 2020 Rezoning process now not expected till 2025	780ha site to include industrial, commercial, retail, entertainment & accommodation services
Cunningham Place, Geelong Amber Property Group with ACTS Global Churches	\$280 million	Approved April 2023 Construction due to begin late 2023 for completion in 2026	20-storey building with 168-room hotel, 40 units & 5,000m ² conference centre with 650-seat auditorium
Yale Place, Geelong CBD Livv Developments	\$150 million	Approved May 2023	13-storey, 12,000m ² commercial & office tower to include ground floor café, rooftop bar & wellness facilities
10-14, 16-18 Brougham St, Geelong CBD Nan Xin Property	TBA	Proposed March 2022 after site sold for \$9m	13-storey office tower on 3453m ² amalgamated site to include 3-storey car park podium

INFRASTRUCTURE - TRANSPORT

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Train maintenance & stabling facility, Waurm Ponds State and Federal Govts	\$115 million	Completed May 2023	Jobs: 200 6 stabling train tracks with connections to main train line
Waurm Ponds Station - upgrade State and Federal Govts	\$160 million	Completed May 2022	Extra services, track duplication, station forecourt & new pedestrian overpass
South Geelong & Waurm Ponds - track duplication project State and Federal Govts	\$900 million	Under construction Completion expected late 2024	8km of duplicated tracks, new stations at South Geelong & Marshall & level crossing removals
West Gate Tunnel project State Government	\$10 billion	Under construction Due for completion 2025	Will feature twin underground tunnels, second river crossing & widened West Gate Freeway
Geelong Fast Rail project State and Federal Govts (50:50)	\$4 billion	Construction expected to start in 2023 but delays announced April 2023	New dedicated train line from Werribee to Laverton will decrease travel time to CBD to 50 minutes
Bellarine Link-Barwon Head Road - upgrade State Government	\$350 million Final section of Geelong Ring Road Extension (Bellarine Link)	Under construction	Jobs: 500 New east-west connection from Geelong to Bellarine Peninsula
New freight & passenger terminal, Corio Quay GeelongPort	\$135 million	Completed in 2022 with Tasmania ferries docked for first time at new hub	12ha site houses <i>Spirit of Tasmania</i> ferries & has 3-level car access ramp & cargo freight yards
Great Ocean Road - upgrade State and Federal Govts	\$255 million	Stage 1 - completed in May 2022 Stage 2 - approved Stage 3 - now funded	Connections to Princes Highway improved with safety upgrades, bridges & new drainage

INFRASTRUCTURE – SPORT & ENTERTAINMENT

Project	Value	Status	Impact
GMHBA Stadium - upgrade Kardinia Park State Government	\$142 million	Under construction Completion expected in mid-2023	Jobs:120 construction; 2-tier, 14,000 seat stand to increase capacity to 40,000 people plus new cricket hub & sports museum
North Bellarine Aquatic Centre, Drysdale State & Federal Govts & City of Greater Geelong Council	\$55 million (Stage 1 - \$15.5m & Stage 2 - \$40.5m)	Stage 1 (outdoor pool) nearly completed with Stage 2 plans released in July 2023	50m outdoor pool. 2 indoor pools, gym, fitness studios & kiosk
Northern Aquatic and Community Hub, Norlane State & Federal Govts & City of Greater Geelong Council	\$65.6 million	Under construction Completion expected in early 2024	3 pools, community hall, consulting areas & kids water play area
Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCEC) State & Federal Govts & City of Greater Geelong Council	\$300 million	Builder announced & design plans revealed in July 2023 Major work begins 2023 Due for completion 2026	Jobs: 600 construction 1.6ha precinct with hotel, theatre, venue space, commercial & retail areas

RESOURCES AND ENERGY

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Victorian Big Battery, adjacent to Moorabool Terminal Station Neoen with Tesla & AusNet Services	\$200 million	Completed 2021	300mW grid-scale battery one of largest in the world can power 100,000 homes
Golden Plains Wind Farm - East & West, Rokewood East section - TagEnergy, Ingka Group West section - WestWind Energy	\$2 billion State Significant project	Construction began on East section in Q12023 Construction on West section to begin early 2024 Stage 1 to start production in 2024 & be completed late 2025	Jobs: 700 direct Largest wind farm in Australia will comprise 228 6MW turbines with 1,330MW capacity to power 765,000 homes

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Project	Value	Status	Impact
Armstrong Creek Precinct Development City of Greater Geelong Council	\$2 billion Geelong Region Alliance (G21) priority project	Under construction \$1 billion Armstrong Town Centre opened in 2020	Jobs: 22,000 7 precincts comprising 2,580ha to be developed into residential communities
Charlemont Rise, Charlemont Lillrose Developments	TBA	Under construction	Master-planned community with 1,400 lots planned
Coridale, Lara West Villawood	TBA	Under construction	1,100 homes to be built on 89ha site including luxury residents' club
Balmoral Quay, Rippleside Consortium led by BMA Property	\$100 million	Under construction in several stages Completion due October 2023	Jobs: 1,360 over 4 years Waterfront project to comprise 61 townhouses & apartments plus 200 marina berths
Stella Maris, Rippleside Monno (formerly CostaFox)	\$125 million	Construction expected to start 2023 To be completed by mid-2025	1.2ha waterfront site with 50 luxury apartments & 3 townhouses in 4 buildings, centred around historic St Helen's Convent
Austin Lara, Lara Austin Land	TBA	Under construction	1,100 lots planned
Banksia Estate, Armstrong Creek Stockland	TBA	Early civil works began June 2022 Buyers expected to start building from August, 2023	500-home master-planned community on 30ha to potentially include childcare centre
529-549 Horseshoe Bend Rd, Armstrong Creek Stockland	TBA	Proposed Works to start 2023	250 homes, clubhouse and recreational facilities on 12ha site for over-50s

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS ... contd.

Project	Value	Status	Impact
20-28 Brougham St, Geelong CBD (replaces Dennys Lascelles Tower project) Tim Gurner & Dean Montgomery	\$300 million	Proposed March 2022 Developers seeking approval to raise tower height to 77m	18-level, 60m hotel & apartment project on 2,100m ² waterfront site with historic wool store
26-34 Sharland Rd, Corio Edenville Corio	\$50 million	DA lodged June 2023	Affordable housing project on site of Rosewall Primary School to feature 108 dwellings, including dual tenancy units
Zest Living Retirement Village, Fyansford MNL Operations	\$65 million	DA lodged Sept 2022	153 dwellings on vacant site plus community centre, bowling green & communal gardens
Social housing site - redevelopment, Marshall St, Newtown Unison Community Housing	\$31.5 million (\$22.57m contribution from State Government)	Proposed in Sept 2022	Current 20 dwellings to be replaced by 77 units across multiple levels



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