

# Nick McBride MP

MEMBER FOR MACKILLOP



## Strategic Roadmap

MACKILLOP ELECTORATE MAJOR  
PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS

**2025-2028**



**Our electorate of MacKillop spans around 34,000 square kilometres and includes 27,000 voters. It is rich in opportunity, encompassing high quality agriculture, aquaculture and viticulture.**

**This document outlines key priorities that will enhance the quality of life, drive economic growth, and ensure a sustainable future for all who call MacKillop home.**



# A vision for MacKillop

Representing MacKillop is the greatest privilege of my life. This diverse, hardworking region punches above its weight, and I'm committed to ensuring it receives the recognition and investment it deserves. My focus is on real advocacy – not lip service – to drive meaningful outcomes for our communities.

**Our agriculture sector is the backbone of our region. Despite drought, rising costs, and growing regulation, our farmers keep leading with innovation and sustainable practices. The pressures they face ripple through more than 30 towns and hundreds of local businesses that depend on a strong farming sector.**

They are the best stewards of our land and water, **and they deserve certainty, particularly around mining exploration, water policy, and protection of aquifers and prime agricultural land.**

**We also need serious investment in coastal protection, drainage networks, and infrastructure that supports both industry and our environment.** These systems underpin not just productivity but the long-term resilience of our region.

I know many people say they're "not into politics," but government decisions affect us all—whether it's the cost of living, doing business, or accessing services. It's essential that we over-communicate how and why decisions are made, how every dollar of taxpayer money is being spent. We also have a right to continuously question if the spend is always warranted.

**"This diverse, hard-working region punches above its weight, and I'm committed to ensuring it receives the recognition and investment it deserves."**

We can't afford to just highlight problems—we must offer solutions.

I'm concerned about the tone of the current review into water use in the Lower Limestone Coast. We must recognise that most irrigators are managing their water responsibly and with the future in mind. **The water allocation amendments currently underway across the MacKillop electorate must be resolved quickly so industries and communities can focus on growth with certainty.**

Local councils are expected to do more with less. **I will continue to support our seven councils to push for fairer funding and clearer responsibilities.** At the same time, I'm working collaboratively with our federal counterparts to unlock the large-scale investment we need to deliver transformative projects.

Regional housing remains a major challenge. **Grants and incentives must reflect the higher cost of building in rural areas.** We need funding models that factor in these realities and additional necessary **investment in essential service infrastructure - water, power, sewerage, telecommunications that provides construction confidence.**



I'm a strong advocate for better health outcomes. Access to services in MacKillop should be on par with the metro areas. **We need greater Patient Assistance Transport Scheme (PATs) support, upgrades to our hospitals, better access to services like radiation treatment and increased support for palliative and aged care services.**

Preventative health and wellness—especially among our young people—must be a priority, and I support **extending dental concessions to age 25** as so many other illnesses are linked to poor dental health.

One in four Australians face alcohol or drug issues often alongside mental health struggles — **in MacKillop, we need one service that treats the whole person.** A dual diagnosis service would mean faster, simpler support in one place.

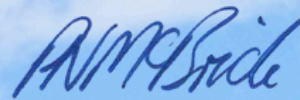
Roads are the lifelines of our region. Intelligent Pavement Assessment Vehicles (IPAVe) have been used in MacKillop to gather data on road conditions. Once this data is made public, **it can help build a transparent, prioritised maintenance plan.** People understand things take time—but they also deserve to know where they are in the queue.

With over 350 sporting clubs across the electorate, we must support the volunteers who keep them going. One idea **I'm pushing is a grant program specifically aimed at making clubs "grant ready"**—providing funding for things like floorplans and quotes that are essential to successful applications.

**Finally, childcare access is holding back our growth. With over 1,000 children under five on waitlists, families are struggling to work and businesses are struggling to grow.** We need urgent investment in childcare infrastructure and workforce development, and I'll keep pushing for support at the federal level.

**This is a collaborative vision. It's about working with all levels of government to deliver the projects and services we need to grow.**

**I'm always here for MacKillop.**



**Nick McBride MP - Member for MacKillop**



# Our Region

OUR ELECTORATE EMBODIES THE ESSENCE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S RICH DIVERSITY



**38,777**  
Population



**34,138KM<sup>2</sup>**  
Area Covered



**10,241**  
Families



**46**  
Median Age

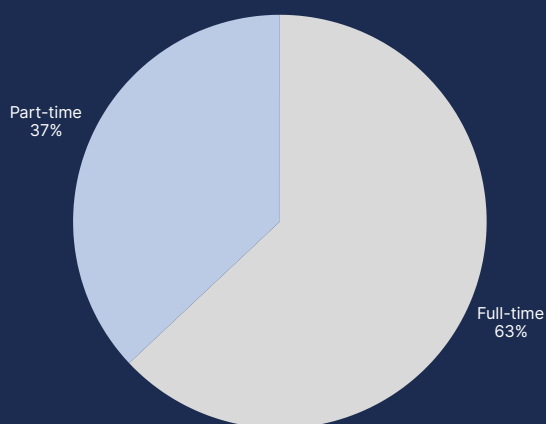


**20,876**  
Private Dwellings



**1,470,000**  
Overnight Visits

## Employment Working Hours



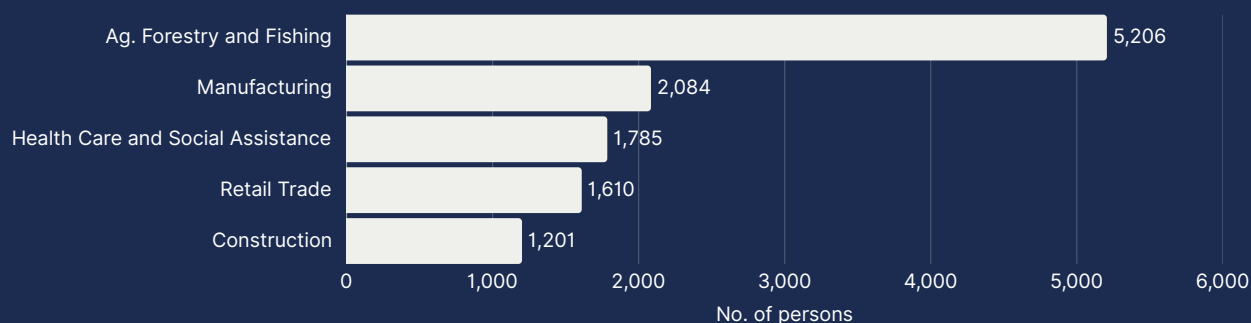
## Number of Councils in Electorate

**7**

## Employed

**17,610**

## Top 5 Industries by Persons Employed



Sources: 2021 Census Mackillop State Electoral Division, Parliament of South Australia.  
Tourism Visitation Figures - All 7 Councils 2019.

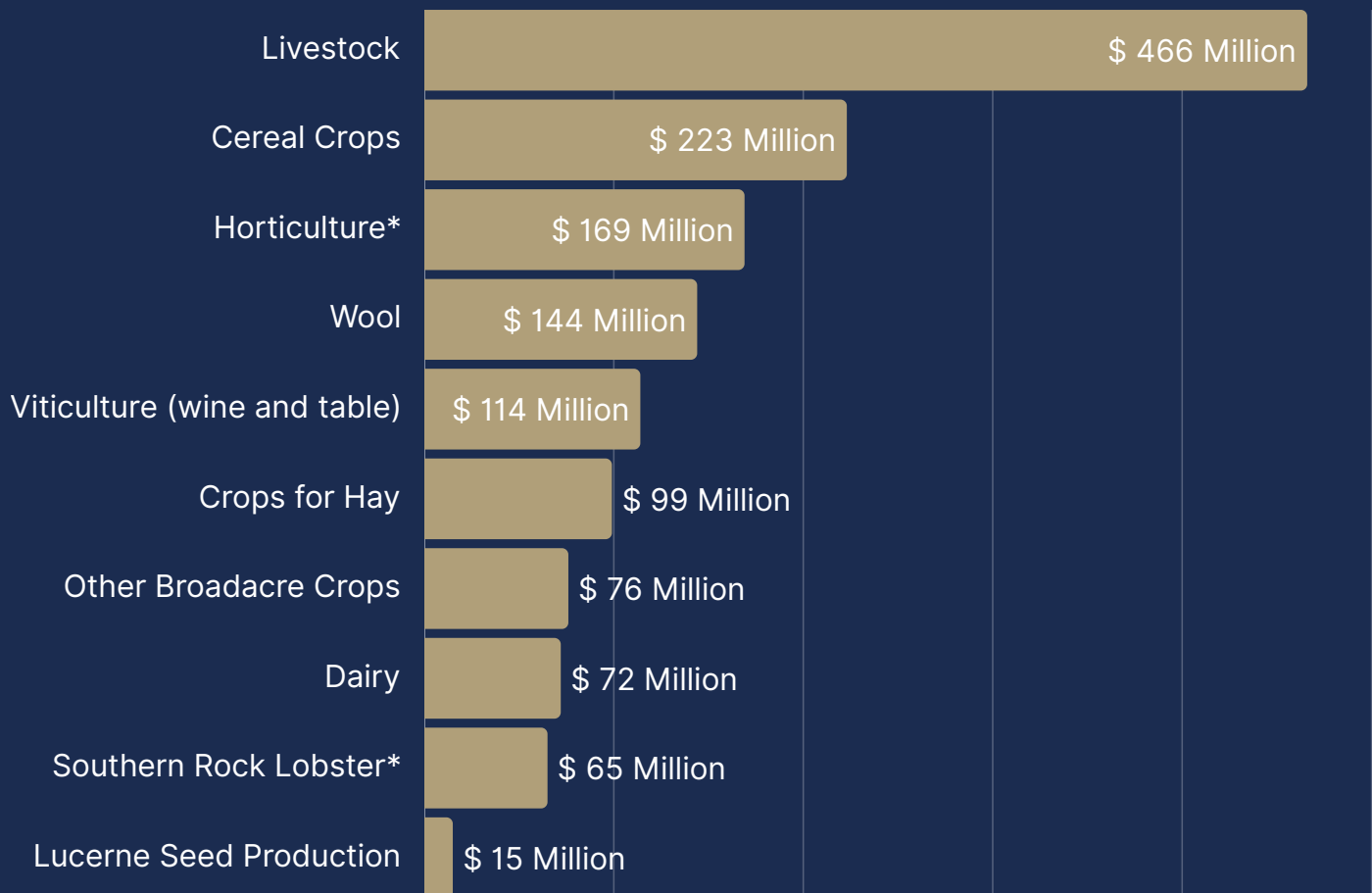
## REGIONAL PRODUCTION

# \$1.925 Billion

Total Gross Regional Product - Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing for MacKillop

## Gross Regional Product of most Agricultural Industries

(Values in \$ million)



*\*Horticulture includes potatoes and onions.*

*\*Southern Rock Lobster - Annual Gross Value of Production from MacKillop ports is approximate (assuming 725 tonnes at an average beach price of \$90/kg).*

*The enormous economic and employment contribution of our scale fish, wild catch, abalone and other fishing industries has not been accurately captured in this document, but must be acknowledged as a significant contributor, requiring further investigation.*

*Forestry - It has been difficult to ascertain the exact contribution of Forestry to MacKillop. However, it's contribution is significant with approximately 63,000ha of land under softwood and hardwood plantation area.*

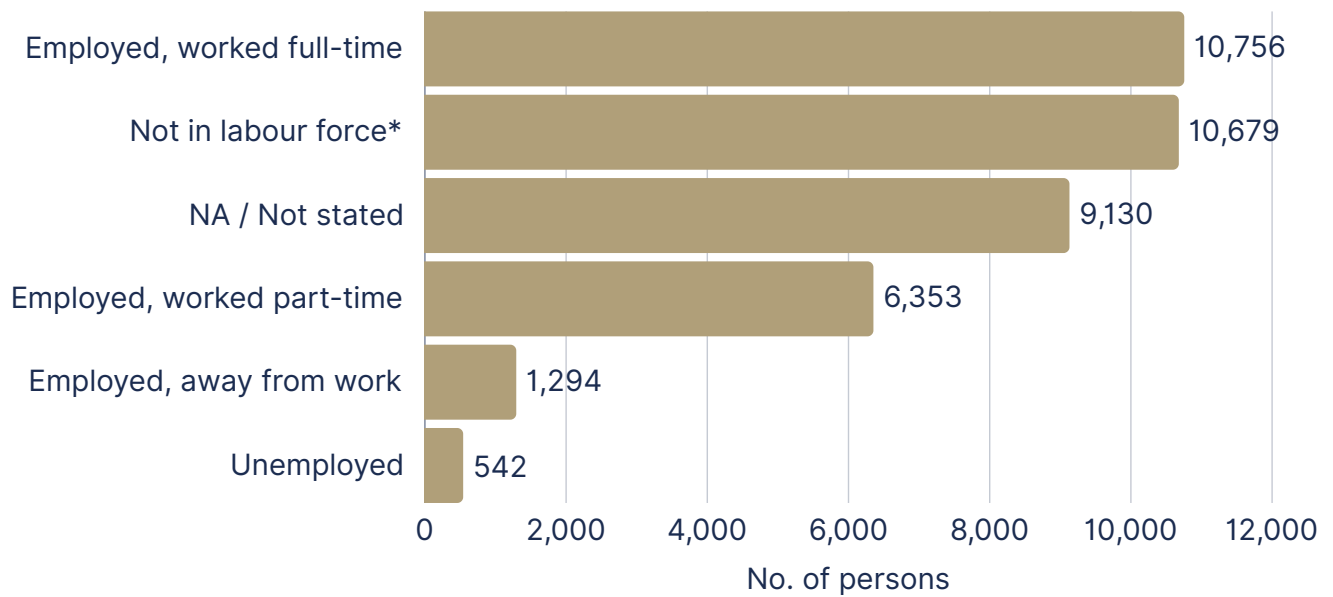
*An April 2024 report by Synergies Economic Consulting confirmed that Kimberly-Clark's (KCA) Millicent Mill is a major economic driver, contributing \$216million to SA Gross Product, employing 462 people locally and is one of SA's largest non-mining manufacturers providing 12% of the full-time manufacturing roles in the Limestone Coast region.*

*Just outside of MacKillop electorate, Timberlink Tarpeena employs approximately 242 staff and is a key component of the broader South Australian (hardwood) forestry industry, which contributed \$2.95 billion to the state's Gross State Product (GSP) as of June 2022.*

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) © 2025. Compiled and presented in economy .id by .id (informed decisions). Note: All \$ values are expressed in 2022/23 base year dollar terms.

## OUR REGION

### Distribution of Population by Employment Status



\*Persons not in the labour force - are those people who during the week prior to the census were neither employed or unemployed. They include people who were performing unpaid home duties, caring for children, retired, voluntarily inactive, permanently unable to work, and in jail.

Source: 2021 Census MacKillop State Electoral Division, Parliament of South Australia.

## Top Issues in the MacKillop Electorate

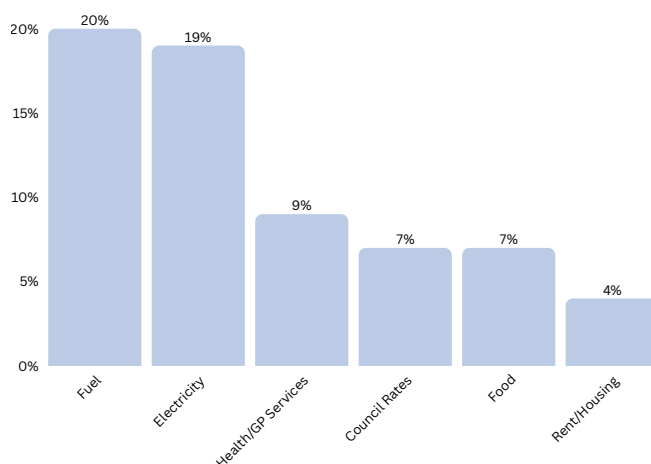
### Our People

- Hospitals & GP Services
- Road Infrastructure
- Environmental Sustainability
- Cost of Living
- Regional Housing Investment

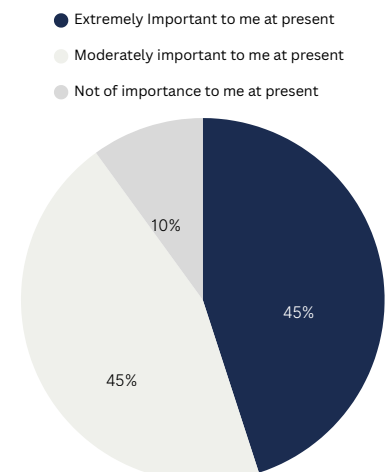
### Our Youth

- Cost of Living
- Environmental Sustainability
- Access to Safe Housing
- Education Skills & Training

Q: Can you list any specific affordability challenges you or your neighbours are facing that your local Member might be able to assist with by advocating for change?



Q: How important is the environment and environmental sustainability to you?



Source: MacKillop Community Survey, Nov 2023, Total Responses: 369, MacKillop Electorate Office.



# MACKILLOP ELECTORATE / MAJOR PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS

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# ROAD FUNDING

**A transparent, long-term road maintenance plan for MacKillop is required. We must push for full upgrades and permanent fixes. Safe, reliable roads are essential for our communities, industries, and economic growth.**

The MacKillop electorate is experiencing a serious road-maintenance shortfall. Statewide assessments show a multi-billion-dollar maintenance backlog (estimated around \$1.9–\$2.0 billion in recent departmental and industry reporting), and regional communities, including MacKillop, have reported recurring poor-quality repairs since major maintenance contracts were outsourced in 2019–2020.

We need fewer temporary patch jobs and more durable works delivered to a consistent standard.

## **Key Road Priorities**

- Southern Ports Highway (Kingston–Millicent via Robe & Beachport, 119km): Full upgrade needed due to base failure and heavy freight use.
- Mallee Highway (Tailem Bend–SA/VIC Border, 145km): Urgent repairs required for this key freight route.
- Naracoorte–Bordertown & Frances Road: Address worsening conditions for safety.
- Naracoorte–Lucindale Road.

## **Investing in our Vital Freight Routes**

- Riddoch Highway (Keith–Mount Gambier, 210km): Upgrades needed to support freight demand and reduce accidents.
- Princes Highway: Safety and freight improvements critical.
- Dukes Highway (Tailem Bend–SA/VIC Border, 192km): Support the Federal government for duplication to improve safety and efficiency.

## **Plan Forward**

- Roads are the lifelines of our region. Intelligent Pavement Assessment Vehicles (IPAVE) have been used in MacKillop to gather data on road conditions. Once this data is made public, it can help build a transparent, prioritised maintenance plan. People understand things take time—but they also deserve to know where they are in the queue.
- Less patching and ensuring roads are built to a common standard.
- Advocate for clear upgrade timelines and funding aligned with local needs.
- Ensure timely, cost-effective roadside vegetation management.
- Fix dangerous intersections and add turning lanes for safety.



# REGIONAL HOUSING

MacKillop is facing a serious housing shortage that's affecting population growth, economic development, and community wellbeing. Solving the housing crisis requires policy reform, strategic partnerships and active community engagement. With a coordinated approach, we can create housing options that meet the needs of all residents.

## Supporting Infrastructure for Growth

- Ensure support for necessary services and amenities such as water, power, sewerage and connectivity are at the standard required for towns to be able to expand.

## Current Situation

There's a major lack of affordable, available housing due to limited residential development, infrastructure gaps (like water and sewer), zoning and bushfire constraints, and native vegetation regulations. Building costs are also higher in the regions, and there's a shortage of tradespeople.

This shortage is driving up prices and rents, making it difficult for families, key workers, and vulnerable groups—including women, young people, and people with disabilities—to find secure housing. These groups often feel overlooked in housing policy discussions.

## Leverage State Initiatives

Tap into programs like the \$10M Regional Housing Initiatives Program to fund local projects and create development-ready land.

## Streamline Development Approvals

- Cut red tape and revise land use and vegetation policies to speed up housing development.

## Housing and Environmental Offsets

Housing growth is constrained by complex native vegetation offset rules. A fairer, more flexible system is needed.

## Partner with Local Councils

Work with councils to unlock land and support new developments. For example, Wattle Range's rezoning efforts in Millicent and Penola.

## Engage Community Housing Providers

Collaborate with groups like UnitingSA and Adelaide Benevolent Society to deliver affordable housing for low-income residents.

## Key Worker Accommodation

Build rental housing tailored for essential workers to help retain staff and support local services.



# HEALTH CARE

**Delivering care as close to home as possible is a priority for our community. We are committed to supporting people to live well in their own homes, with access to high-quality care that promotes dignity, respect, independence, and social connection.**

**Retaining existing health and support services—especially in our smaller towns—is essential. When local facilities close, it’s not just a service lost, it’s a part of the community’s heart.**

**Improving access to services is equally important. Innovative transport solutions, including public transport and the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme (PATs), are vital to ensure all residents in MacKillop can reach the healthcare they need.**

## **Aged Care and Palliative Services**

- **Expand Palliative Care:** Increase capacity and quality of palliative care services across all sites to ensure compassionate, accessible end-of-life care.
- **Support Older Residents:** Enhance services that allow older people to remain in their homes longer, with dignity and independence. This includes better access to transport through PATs and other community-based supports.
- **Radiation Treatment Support:** Regional patients should not face financial hardship or long travel to access essential care. Investment in local services and targeted support is needed to ensure fair, timely treatment close to home.

## **Drug, Alcohol, and Mental Health Support Services**

- **Integrated Dual Diagnosis Services:** One in four Australians face alcohol or drug issues, often alongside mental health challenges. A dual diagnosis service in MacKillop would provide faster, simpler support in one location.
- **Support SMLC Initiatives:** Strengthen partnerships with South East Mental Health and Wellbeing services to improve access and outcomes.

**Regional patients should not face financial hardship or long travel to access essential care.**



## HEALTH CARE

### Priorities

- Collaborate with health providers to secure more GPs, nurses, allied health professionals, and aged care workers.
- Increase the number and scope of practice for nurse practitioners and mental health nurse practitioners to help address GP shortages.
- Provide local training and upskilling opportunities, including fully funded Mental Health First Aid training for community members and Certificate IV training for mental health practitioners.
- Permanently fund Community Paramedics to ensure consistent, local access to urgent and preventative care.
- Establish Millicent and Naracoorte as surgical hubs; implement nurse-led X-ray services at Bordertown, Keith, and Kingston.
- Expand renal dialysis and chemotherapy services at Naracoorte Hospital.
- Ensure draft Clinical Services Plans for Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network (RMCLHN) and Limestone Coast Local Health Network (LCLHN) are implemented as proposed, followed by a comprehensive infrastructure and workforce plan.

### Infrastructure and Funding

- Major upgrade required for Naracoorte Hospital, including the community health building.
- Continue maintenance and upgrades at Millicent Hospital, including a carpark upgrade.
- Establish specialised roadside trauma units with appropriate X-ray equipment at Bordertown and Kingston.
- Expand and upgrade palliative care wings across all regional health sites.



# EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE

MacKillop faces serious childcare challenges, including long waitlists (up to 1,000 children), funding shortfalls, workforce shortages, and inflexible models of care. Despite this, there are strong opportunities to improve access and quality of care across the region.

- **Build New Centres:** Invest in childcare centres, especially in rural and remote areas, through public-private partnerships and government incentives to reduce waitlists and improve access. Including Bordertown, Tailem Bend, Keith, Millicent, Kingston and Naracoorte.
- **Tailored Options of Care:** Make options like Family Daycare easy for people to establish.
- **Funded Models for smaller communities** including Lameroo, Pinnaroo, Padthaway and Penola.
- **Workforce Support:** Advocate for better pay, job security, and conditions to retain skilled childcare workers.
- **Training & Career Pathways:** Create accessible career pathways and subsidised training for early childhood educators—particularly in regional areas—through partnerships with training providers.
- **Transport Solutions:** Collaborate with councils or community groups to provide transport for families in remote areas.

Improving childcare in MacKillop requires **targeted investment in infrastructure, workforce, and accessibility—backed by collaboration between all levels of government.** These steps will help meet the diverse needs of local families and support better early learning outcomes.







# EDUCATION

**To keep schools thriving in MacKillop, we must invest in both infrastructure and educators. Adopting innovative recruitment strategies, expanding regional teacher housing, and early-career support can help attract and retain staff.**

## **Infrastructure Crisis**

In the electorate many of the 32 publicly funded schools are dealing with outdated, deteriorating buildings and toilet facilities, with significant maintenance backlogs.

**On top of limited funding, schools are held back by the Across Government Facilities Management Arrangement (AGFMA),** which forces them to use government-approved contractors. With most of these contractors based in Adelaide, costs are pushed even higher.

We need a practical approach that gives regional schools the ability to manage their own routine maintenance, secure the best value for students, and back local trades in the process. No business would accept an overpriced quote padded with travel and accommodation when skilled local options are available.

My proposal is to let schools spend up to \$100,000 at their own discretion for such projects. They would need to obtain three quotes and have their governing council approve the decision.

This would give our regional schools the freedom to deliver better value and service for students, families, and taxpayers alike.

## **Supporting Teachers**

Teacher morale is affected by increasing student needs and poor working conditions.

**To address shortages, the electorate needs innovative recruitment strategies**—like Victoria's Teach for Australia or NSW's Mid-Career Transition program—that attract professionals from other industries.

A local pilot could offer scholarships, part-time study, and guaranteed placements for career changers already in the region.

Expanding regional teacher housing, mentoring, and early-career support would also help attract and retain staff.

**Upgrading school facilities and strengthening teacher support will improve student outcomes and secure the future of education in MacKillop.**





# JOB CREATION & SKILLS

**MacKillop is ready to lead in regionally based job creation by expanding training access, investing in infrastructure, strengthening transport, and building inclusive education systems. Industry-driven training pathways can create 300+ new apprenticeships and traineeships.**

## **The Challenge**

The region faces critical skills shortages across agriculture, health, education, trades, ICT, and engineering. Limited public transport, youth outmigration, and low tertiary access further threaten MacKillop's future as South Australia's economy evolves.

Yet demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers is growing—now is the time to reshape training and employment across the region.

## **Skills Shortages Snapshot**

- **Professional:** ICT managers, engineers, pharmacists, planners, software developers.
- **Health & Care:** GPs, psychologists, aged care and disability workers.
- **Trades & Tech:** Metal/wood trades, chefs, landscapers, auto electricians.
- **Education:** Early childhood and pre-primary teachers.
- **Regional Industries:** Ag-techs, aquaculture workers, bakers, horticulturalists.

## **Key Strategic Priorities**

- Regional Skills and Jobs Hubs - Support Bordertown's bid for a Federal Regional University Study Hub; create a MacKillop centre for excellence for Agriculture.
- VET and TAFE Expansion for courses to be taught in MacKillop.
- Community Shuttle Bus Access to training
- Industry- Driven Training Pathways.
- Inclusion and Equity Programs - expand driver mentor programs, digital literacy training and soft skills initiatives for First Nations, mature workers and long term unemployed.
- Infrastructure Investment - upgrade buildings to allow for group training with high speed internet and collaborative learning spaces.

**The Vision:** A skilled, inclusive, and thriving MacKillop—where people can learn, work, and build their future close to home. With better transport, local training hubs, and a facility that expands the agricultural training already happening in our schools, we can continue supporting major employers like Kimberly-Clark, Teys, and JBS (together employing around 1,400 people), along with the many small and medium businesses that drive our towns. Let's back our people, cut red tape, and make it easier to grow local opportunities.

## JOB CREATION AND SKILLS

Priority Area	Strategic Action	Outcomes by 2028
<b>Regional Skills &amp; Jobs Hubs</b>	Support Bordertown's bid for a Federal Regional University Study Hub; create a MacKillop Centre of Excellence for Agriculture, emerging industries and trades located in MacKillop (Mount Gambier Technical College expansion).	Increase VET and tertiary enrolments by 30%; reduce youth migration.
<b>VET &amp; TAFE Expansion</b>	Deliver Fee-Free courses aligned with demand (aged care, ICT, construction, early education); add specialist equipment and trainers for agri-tech, aquaculture, and health.	Lift VET completion rate from <50% to 65% in MacKillop.
<b>Community Shuttle Bus Access to Training Facilities</b>	Introduce subsidised student transport links to Mount Gambier and Murray Bridge education facilities.	Improved access for rural and remote students; higher attendance rates.
<b>Industry-Driven Training Pathways</b>	Work with Regional Development Australia, Local Jobs Taskforce and industry to co-design local qualifications and pre-employment programs.	Create 300+ new apprenticeships and traineeships over 3 years.
<b>Inclusion &amp; Equity Programs</b>	Expand driver mentor programs, digital literacy training, and soft skills initiatives for First Nations people, mature workers, and long-term unemployed.	+40% participation from underrepresented groups; increase local job placements.
<b>Infrastructure Investment</b>	Upgrade buildings to allow for group training with high speed internet and collaborative learning spaces.	Safer learning environments increased enrolments and participation.

Sources: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) ©2025. Compiled and presented in *economy.id by.id (informed decisions)*. The Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, Australian Bureau of Statistics (21 June 2021), [How ANZSCO works](#), ABS Website, accessed 29 July 2025.



# PROTECTING COASTAL COMMUNITIES

The recent storms that hit areas of the Limestone Coast have again laid bare the urgent threat of coastal erosion in the region. With every storm, we lose more of our coastline—along with the infrastructure, tourism, and the natural environment it supports. We must move beyond reactive strategies and start investing in long-term, sustainable solutions.

## **Current Situation**

In Robe, dune systems have been torn apart, key foreshore areas damaged and the integrity of houses and infrastructure put at risk. This is the same at Southend - and in Kingston and Beachport, where the already fragile shoreline continues to recede. These are no longer one-off events.

We must move beyond reactive strategies and start investing in long-term, sustainable solutions. I urge decision-makers at both the state and federal level to consider innovative and environmentally sensitive erosion mitigation strategies.

A multi-faceted approach needs to occur and be funded that protects assets immediately i.e. rock walls and revetments in conjunction with longer term measures with proven success including artificial reefs.

## **Artificial Reefs**

Artificial reefs can dissipate wave energy before it reaches the shore, reducing erosion while at the same time supporting marine biodiversity and local fisheries. Unlike hard seawalls, reefs work with the environment rather than against it.

They provide a more sustainable and effective buffer against storm impacts and can be tailored to the unique conditions of our South East coastline.

## **The Coorong Trust & Research Station**

Build a fully funded research station with laboratory services ensuring quick turnaround place based results, and training facilities that allow for university collaboration in research domestically and internationally.

## **Robe Obelisk & Kingston Beacon Project**

Seek funding for the replacement of the Robe Obelisk and Kingston Beacon project.

## **Cape Jaffa Restoration and Resilience Project**

Restoring usability, confidence and new growth of the anchorage area. Enough seed funding for a "Cape Jaffa Cooperative Community Group of Management" .

## **Funding to Address Coastal Erosion at Southend**

This includes a project that allows for water diversion of drain M (South East drainage network) to reduce water flows towards Southend from Furner.





# ENVIRONMENT & WATER

**MacKillop can lead in both environmental protection and regional growth through collaboration, investment, and balanced planning. Spanning 34,000 km<sup>2</sup>, the region's natural assets—wetlands, forests, and biodiversity—coexist with thriving agriculture and tourism industries.**

## **South East Drainage Network**

The South East Drainage Network includes 2,589 kilometres of drains and floodways, along with approximately **2,000 associated structures**, such as bridges, culverts, and regulators. This extensive network serves as critical infrastructure for flood protection, agricultural support, and environmental management in the region. A proposed \$25 million investment in addition to the annual nominal government expenditure would be transformative for the region.

## **Balancing Sustainability and Growth**

Protecting the environment while supporting agriculture, housing, and industry is essential. If we strike the right balance, everyone benefits—farmers, businesses, families, and ecosystems.

## **Parks and Public Lands**

State and national parks should be accessible for recreation and managed use. Responsible access fosters stewardship and boosts tourism.

## **Mining**

Constituent concerns around rare earth mining must be taken seriously. I support development that is sustainable, transparent, and protects community wellbeing, our highly productive farmland and unique aquifer systems.

## **Water Allocation**

Water supports key sectors including viticulture, cropping and horticulture to name a few stakeholders. Consistent across the electorate is the frustration that Water Allocation Plan (WAP) proposed amendments continue to be deferred. A swift decision on potential proposed changes, with consideration to compensation, will give local industries and communities the clarity they need to plan and grow.

**Our future in MacKillop is about balance — caring for the environment we treasure, while creating opportunities in farming, housing, tourism and new industries. With practical investment and smart planning, we can set the standard for thriving regional communities.**



# SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Sport is deeply woven into the fabric of our electorate. Today, over 350 sporting groups call our region home, most relying on community fundraising and government support to keep facilities equipped and in good condition. We need improved sporting facilities and better support for our volunteers.

## **Better Sporting Facilities**

According to Sport Australia, nearly 60% of Australians engage in regular physical activity, and our region is no exception. However, many existing sporting facilities in the area are outdated and not equipped to accommodate the range of sports and activities that local communities want to pursue.

Many towns struggle with limited access to quality facilities, which can hinder both community participation and the region's ability to host competitive events.

Improved sporting infrastructure is essential to fostering active lifestyles, providing safe and accessible spaces for children and adults alike, and encouraging physical and mental wellbeing. They are often a town's community hub and place of meeting and social connection, beyond sport.

## **Empowering Volunteers**

Clubs are run by volunteers and applying for grants is not always easy. We need a sporting fund that empowers volunteers and puts clubs in a position where they are 'grant ready'.

**The most common barrier is not having the startup funds to complete the initial steps to even apply for a grant.** For example, a floor-plan that can be costed locally and provides clubs with better knowledge of how much to apply for.

## **Sustainable Funding Allocation**

We must ensure that a sustainable level of funding is extended for the Limestone Coast Academy of Sport (LCAS), and that its funding and affiliation with Regional Academies of Sport (RAS) continues and is expanded across the electorate to benefit the Coorong and Mallee regions.





# MOBILE CONNECTIVITY

**The MacKillop electorate faces significant telecommunications challenges, with mobile coverage and internet connectivity now ranking equally with health and roads in terms of constituent concerns. Connectivity is no longer a ‘nice to have’ — it’s a fundamental service. We must lead Australia’s next connectivity rollout.**

Business, farming, tourism, and emergency services have been left exposed, as poor connectivity cripples daily life and economic productivity across the region.

Over 50% of MacKillop voters aged 35 years and over identify telecommunications as their number one priority.

A 27 tower expansion is promised by Telstra for completion by the end of 2026. However, we know that there are many more areas in the electorate that need further mobile investment.

Key coastal towns like Robe, Kingston and Beachport experience communication collapse during peak holiday seasons, while major freight corridors continue to suffer dangerous coverage gaps.

## **Real World Example**

A notable example of how mobile connectivity issues can disrupt everyday activities in the MacKillop electorate occurred during the summer of 2024/2025 in Robe. Ambulance officers in the area experienced significant communication challenges due to malfunctioning pagers. These devices, essential for receiving emergency alerts, failed to operate correctly,

hindering the timely response to critical situations. This incident underscores the vital role of reliable communication tools in emergency services and the potential consequences of their failure.

## **Solutions**

The Federal Government’s Better Connectivity Plan is a welcome start, investing over \$1.1 billion in rural and regional networks. However, MacKillop must now be first in line for the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO) and Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite rollout. LEO satellite technology will soon allow standard mobile phones to connect directly to satellites, offering critical coverage in black spot areas where towers are not viable.

## **Immediate Action Required**

- Ensure 27-tower rollout is executed.
- Advocate for MacKillop’s priority status for the Federal Government’s initial LEO and Uomo rollout.
- Accelerate construction of approved mobile towers and publicly release the construction timeline.
- Commit to closing remaining black spots through future co-investment programs.





# TOURISM

**MacKillop, stretching from Tailem Bend to Millicent and the coast to the Victorian border, holds iconic yet under-promoted tourism assets. With coordinated investment, destination development, and smart promotion, the region can become a leader in South Australia’s visitor economy.**

## Tourism Priorities

- **Naracoorte Caves Enhancement**

**Transformative Project:** At the geographical centre of the electorate is the Naracoorte Caves. South Australia’s only World Heritage Site. With an average of 90,000 visitors, it requires a collaborative funding approach across government, business and community.

- A few potential opportunities include a development that could potentially incorporate the following:
  - luxury and eco-friendly accommodation
  - an education research facility for school and tertiary students
  - an art gallery highlighting the uncaptured indigenous history
  - food and wine providore showcasing the regions wine and produce
  - restaurant and health and wellness spa.
- With strong co-funding and alignment with state and national goals, this project could become a flagship of regional tourism in Australia.
- **Coastal & Nature-Based Tourism:** Robe, Beachport, and Kingston SE offer major opportunities for growth. Projects like the “Coast to Caves” trail can boost international appeal and multi-day visits.

- **Motorsport & Events:** The Bend Motorsport Park and Tolmer Speedway can anchor major motorsport tourism, supported by local events and cross-border partnerships.
- **Regional Trail Networks:** Linking Murray River, the Coorong, and Limestone Coast through eco and cycling trails can capture fast-growing tourism markets.
- **Marketing:** Need an aggressive marketing strategy to cater for interstate (border tourism) and intrastate travellers - market the wide-open countryside, vineyards, world-class produce e.g. crayfish, wine and events that occur, such as Tolmer Speedway, that have global appeal.
- **Improved Infrastructure and Amenities:** Develop a consistent and recognisable style of signage, information, and other infrastructure to help with wayfinding and enhance the visitor experience across the region.

The foundations for tourism-led renewal are in place. Government action and investment are now needed to unlock MacKillop’s full potential.

# Additional Projects

There have been many reports, feasibility studies and ideas that have been circulated as great opportunities. These are just a few I would like to leave you with.



## High Speed Rail for MacKillop

High speed rail from Adelaide to Melbourne. Previous projected routes go through Victor Harbour, across Goolwa, across the barrages and on through MacKillop, across to Melbourne. This is some of the flattest topography that will facilitate this travel.

A Federal project that could have a tremendous impact on the transport of freight and the public, that's been supported by feasibility studies.



## Community Bus Services Expansion

Ensuring more services for towns within MacKillop. More subsidised travel in line with metropolitan subsidies; an introduction of a program similar to the 'regional fare cap' applied in Victoria. Our school students should be entitled to the same subsidies as our metropolitan students in Adelaide.



## Virtual Power Plants (VPP) for Regional Communities

VPPs offer a powerful solution to increasing energy demand and the challenges posed by severe weather and old grid networks. These systems allow smarter energy management, helping communities stabilize their energy use and reduce their reliance on costly fossil fuels like coal and gas.



## Student Exchange Program between Rural and Metro Students

MacKillop students receive funding for visiting Flinders Maths/Science School, Lot Fourteen, Tonsley. In addition, our schools host; e.g. Lameroo provides resources to host metro students utilising local infrastructure, including the now closed Geranium Primary School.

# Additional Projects cont.



## **Vouchers for Defensive Driving Training**

Age 16 - 24. Extend Junior Development Program Driver Training, utilising The Bend Motorsport Park, Taliem Bend.



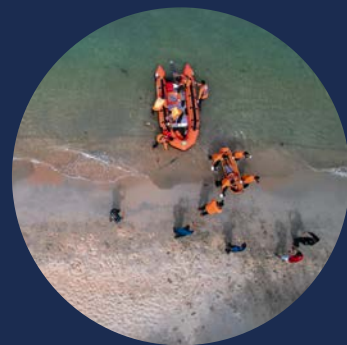
## **Gather Round Activation Along Dukes Highway**

Government support for community events along Dukes, Riddoch and Princess Highway during the AFL's Gather Round. For example, Don Moseley Park - Keith.



## **Streamline Working with Children Checks - One Card For All**

Many of our volunteers are retirees who find the application process overwhelming. By making it simpler, we can ease stress, keep our current volunteers, and attract new ones to support the community.



## **Marine Rescue**

Support of a volunteer SES Marine Unit, with an accompanying vessel, an essential requirement for the safety of our coastal community. In addition, provide compensation to fishers who assist with sea search and rescue.



## MACKILLOP FOCUS AREAS AND PROJECTS



Electoral District of  
**MACKILLOP**  
34,138 sqkm

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Aussie Camino Trail - Walk the Limestone Coast  
The Obelisk - Robe District Council  
Eastern Viterro Silo, Lamerloo - Lamerloo Silo Art Project  
Sheep in paddock, Wrattenbully  
Lucerne Australia  
Lamerloo Parents and Friends Group  
Tatiara Trucks and Trailers  
Naracoorte Caves, by Matthew Fleischer for Department of Environment and Water  
Don Moseley Park - Keith, by Sarah Cunningham

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