Strategic Business Plan
2018-2023

Prepared by

Maling Road Business Association

October, 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this plan is to outline a five-year Strategic Business Plan for the Maling Road Business Association (MRBA).

The Plan provides a vision for the centre, Goals for the next five years and strategies to achieve them. The Plan has been prepared by the MRBA.

The Maling Road Business Association is an incorporated body representing business operators and owners of approximately 80 properties in the centre.

The Purposes of the Association, as stated in the 2017 MRBA Rules are as follows:

- *To generate and manage the collective marketing, promotion, advertising and business development activities for the Maling Road Traders;*
- *To manage the affairs of the Association;*
- *To engage with the business owners and operators, represent their interests and work with them for the collective benefit of the Maling Road Shopping Centre;*
- *To develop positive relationships with our key stakeholders who impact and influence the role and function of the Maling Road Shopping Centre.*
- *To engage in such other activities as may benefit the Maling Road/Canterbury community.*

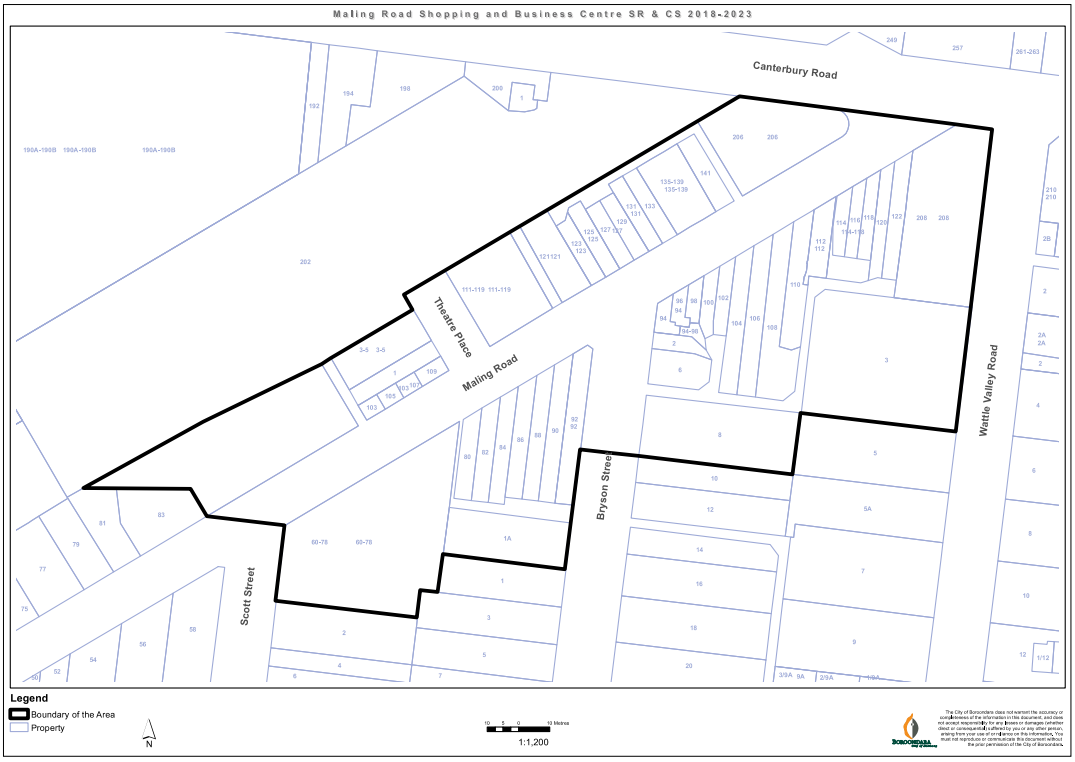
The Business Association operates through a Committee of Management and a Marketing Coordinator (Team). The Association is funded by a special charge rate levied by the City of Boroondara on advice from MRBA, which amounted to approximately $67,000 in 2016-17. In addition, Council has further committed to provide funding for the annual the KristKindl Christmas Festival between 2017 and 2020 for approximately $15,000 per annum.

Details of the current MRBA Committee and Marketing Coordinator Team as well as the special rate are provided in the Appendix.

2. PROFILE OF THE CENTRE

Maling Road is a small specialist-shopping village of about 80 business premises, located in Canterbury in the central-eastern part of the City of Boroondara. A plan of the centre is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Plan Area of Maling Road Neighbourhood Activity Centre



Maling Road serves as both a convenience centre for local residents (with basic items provided by the small supermarket, fresh food outlets, the newsagency/post office, chemist, bank, and hairdressers) as well as a specialist destination centre in areas such as fashion and home wares. Details of the centre's business mix are outlined in the Appendix.

The current special charge expires on 30 June 2018. Over the last four plus years, some key activities have been the annual Christmas Kristkindl event, Auto Classico Car Show Event, VIP Shopping events, development of a new website, Social Media Posts and advertising (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) and other events.

Major achievements of the program have included:

- Development of new website, with traders portal
- Increased presence online via social media in paid and non-paid mediums
- Continuation of Kristkindl and other events, as well as trying new events

- Introduction and development of Auto Classica Car Show Event
- Development of an email database to use as targeted effective marketing
- Continued lobbying of Council to achieve other accomplishments
- Maintenance of a low vacancy rate in the centre
- Inclusion of new quality businesses into the street
- Increased number of business education programs
- Cutting of costs

The report "Who is your Customer Canterbury" conducted by the City of Boroondara (2014), highlights where Maling Road's customers come from and what they love about Maling Road. The main points are –

- The personlised service
- The friendliness of the shop owners and staff
- The village/community feel
- The attractive heritage/aesthetic charm
- Quality stores
- Small retailers who try harder

This is consistent with feedback received via the Maling Road social media accounts and Trip Advisor profile. On Trip Advisor it's currently at #1 of things to do in Canterbury (#7 in Boroondara and #169 out of 915 in Mlebourne) and has a rating of 4.5 out of 5.

In 2016, a workshop was held with Traders to ascertain their feedback and vision for Maling Road. There were some clear themes, and some suggestions have been executed already – rebranding, new website and professional development programs. Traders wanted to see relationships built and strengthened not only amongst themselves, but also with the landlords, community groups and Council. Some of the terms Traders used to describe their vision for Maling Road, Great local community; Iconic, Charm heritage/historic but dynamic; Friendly traders; Unique experience; Tourist & go to destination; Quality shopping; Quality Eating Outlets; and Personal service.

In October 2017, Traders were asked to complete an online survey. The questions were discussing Maling Road's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. There were 11 respondents, who gave some thoughtful insights about Maling Road.

Recommendations from the trader workshop and the trader survey have been included throughout this strategic plan in the Key Issues & Opportunities and in the Strategies and Actions Plan.

Boroondara City Council has several policies and strategies that impact on Maling Road. The main policy influencing Maling Road is the Economic Development & Tourism Strategy (2016). A summary of the key points of the Strategy as it relates to Maling Road is outlined in the Appendix.

The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy aims to enhance the vibrancy and sustainability of the local economy and its influence on the liveability of Boroondara. It is made up of the following five objectives -

1. Best-In-Class Neighbourhood Shopping Centres
2. Boroondara as a Tourism Destination
3. Ready for Business
4. Helping Business Establish and Grow
5. Civic Leadership and Partnerships

Subject to Budget approval by Council under the Shopping Centre Improvement Plan the Maling Road Shopping Centre (Canterbury) will commence in financial year 2018/19 with Consultation and Design and then with implementation of Works in 2019/20.

3. KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

These key issues and opportunities are taken from research, feedback from the traders and from the centre coordinators. Not all will be actioned, but they provide an insight into the passion that many have for Maling Road. The biggest inhibitor for Maling Road is the lack of funds to be able to promote the centre to its maximum value.

Strengths

The strengths of the centre are considered to be -

- Compact nature with a village atmosphere
- Great range of both food product shops, food services, and professional services
- Specialist niche in fashion and home wares
- Long established quality businesses
- Professional presentation in some shops
- Friendly traders providing exceptional customer service
- Leisurely pace and tranquil
- Strong local community support with a strong sense of belonging
- Charming Heritage infrastructure but dynamic
- An 'experience' destination. Unique and go to destination.
- Unique stores
- Iconic
- Loyal customers
- Well known throughout the community
- Tourist destination
- Low vacancy rate

Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the centre are considered to be

- Limited funding sources to execute coordinated marketing programs
- Complacency among some traders
- Poor presentation in a few shops
- Poor participation and response for street beautification from landlords. Makes appearance of some shops look poor and shabby
- Perception of old world
- Some poor quality shops
- Lack of maintenance by Boroondara City Council to the Infrastructure
- A gap in local community not shopping at Maling Road.
- Limited Car Parking for the centre and staff and the Railway car park
- Too many cafes
- Poorly maintained public toilet
- Poor and non-atmospheric lighting

- High rents
- Foot traffic down
- Lack of Parking
- Lack of afterhours trade especially in dining.

Opportunities

The opportunities of the centre are considered to be –

- More streamlined promotional calendar
- Strengthening relationships with community, community groups, Council, landlords and traders
- Strengthen relationship with Metlink
- Continuing professional development programs and investigate one on one opportunities
- Welcome pack for new businesses
- Business profile to give to real estate agents and potential new businesses
- Maximising the use of Theatre Place, possibly to local schools and clubs
- Maximising marketing value for dollar
- New signage opportunities
- New electronic gift card
- Investigate marketing to tourism mediums
- Investigate new funding opportunities (sponsorships, grants)
- Become a more hip street and attract businesses such as Laurent
- Late night dining/trade
- More street events like Auto Classico – investigate e.g. food and wine event, musical jazz event
- More engagement with local community groups
- Bradshaws development
- Investigate a buddy system for groups of businesses to share knowledge and tips
- Investigate targeting younger market
- Investigate opportunities to tie in with school events
- Investigate opportunities to tie in with events at the gardens
- Investigate further winter events
- Tie in with food and wine festival
- Investigate on-going marketing – not just for events/promotions
- Investigate the use of a local ambassador
- Investigate Heritage week opportunities
- Leverage Bendigo Bank more
- Investigate Movies night, live entertainment
- Major promotions every 3 months
- Investigate the possibility of tourist bus visits or local retirement homes/RSL
- Music in the street
- Maintain the uniqueness of the street – let people know it will be a unique experience
- More VIP events

- Increase in people with liquor license
- Continue with letterbox drops
- VIP evenings by invitation not days to make the customer feel special
- Maling Road VIP card
- Happy hour in the morning to bring people to the street after school drop off
- Street art and handicraft shows
- More trader involvement
- A boutique deli

Threats

The threats to the centre are considered to be

- Increasing competition from Chadstone and Camberwell, customers wanting big brands
- Deteriorating physical appearance
- Super stores and Online Shopping
- Increasingly high rents for properties in the centre
- Changing consumer preferences
- Downturn in worldwide retail
- Lack of maintenance in businesses and shop fronts
- New Coles on Riversdale Road
- City of Boroondara lack of maintenance
- Lack of diversity in shops
- Parking limitations
- Too many cafes/trader mix
- Inactive traders

4. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Vision

Maling Road will continue to distinguish itself as the iconic shopping village offering an extraordinary experience making all customers feel like a local.

The character of the centre will be maintained and enhanced by providing development opportunities that respect the heritage value of the area.

The role of the centre will not undergo significant change. Physically, there is currently a development occurring at 101 Maling Road (previous Bradshaw Auto Service). This development will include 30 luxury apartments and two commercial premises.

The centre will continue to strengthen its metropolitan wide reputation as a village of distinction. This will be enhanced by the marketing vision.

Goals

- To promote the centre as a special shopping environment with a range of interesting events and activities throughout the year
- To help maintain an attractive mix of businesses in the centre
- To maintain a productive partnership with Council to improve infrastructure and precinct presentation
- To work towards increasing customer traffic and retail turnover to assist improvements to business performance
- To potentially develop more interest and enthusiasm by all the businesses to promote the centre and become involved in the work of the Association
- To maintain regular two-way communication with members and with community groups
- To identify and deliver business development programs of value to the members.

Principles and Values

The values that are important to MRBA are innovation, creativity, thinking big, community connection, sustainability, and accountability.

5. STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The following set of strategies and actions aims to realise the vision for Maling Road. The recommended priorities over the next five years are:

5.1 Marketing and Public Relations

Branding

- Continue to promote the brand through media (digital & print) advertising as well as the Association's website and newsletter(s).
- Promote and protect the Maling Road image and brand by ensuring all marketing activities are of high value

Strategic Marketing

- Maintain the new website and look at updating it every few years.
- Maintain the social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram & Twitter) and continue to build paid and unpaid campaigns and advertising.
- Maintain Trip Advisor account
- Maintain and build the email database.
- Maintain analytics relating to website traffic and social media engagement
- Continue to use the advertising Realtor boards provided to advertise key promotional events particularly Christmas Kristkindl
- Continue to market the centre through media releases to the Local Media. Highlight good news and business success stories in the centre
- Utilise the City of Boroondara's resources to best market Maling Road
- Investigate marketing opportunities in different tourism mediums. Ensure the Maling Road profile on Trip advisor is maintained.
- Develop and maintain an ATDW profile for Maling Road
- Highlight the experience of shopping in Maling Road.
- Re-examine the target market and ensure marketing activities are relevant
- Implement a new electronic gift card program
- Investigate ways to maximise the use of theatre place

- Assess on-going marketing campaigns that are cost effective
- Investigate the use of a local Maling Road Ambassador
- Leverage Bendigo Bank more
- Investigate a Maling Road VIP card
- Ensure letter box drops remain part of the promotional mix
- Investigate the use of bloggers, vloggers, concrete playground, urban list and broadsheet.

Special Promotional Events

- Continue to run the very successful 30+ year running Christmas Kristkindl event as the centre's major promotional event each year
- Investigate the opportunity of running the Auto Classico event yearly
- Continue to obtain prestige, marquee sponsors for this and other high profile events
- Continue to organise an annual VIP Shopping event in November. Re-assess the shopping event mid year.
- Continue to organise smaller special promotional events each year for Easter and Mother's Day
- Investigate the opportunity of electronic gift cards
- Investigate adding a jazz music event or food and wine event to the promotional calendar
- Investigate teaming with CCAG (Canterbury Community Action Group) or another group to participate in heritage week
- Investigate other events such as movie nights or live entertainment
- Investigate bus tours from local retirement villages
- Investigate on-going music in the street
- Early morning happy hour to encourage people to come after school drop off (would require all shops to open from 9, not 10 as is currently)

- Investigate a promotional event where by it can be measured as to where people are coming from. E.g. Shop and Win.

5.2 Community Development

Community connection and development are important spin-offs of the current marketing and promotional strategies being undertaken by the Business Association. The recommended strategies for the future are:

- Continue to involve schools, charities and the Canterbury Historical Society in the centre's promotional activities. In particular, maintain the links with Rotary for Kristkindl. Investigate adding another charity partner

- Develop a relationship with Metlink and Metro so as to connect the centre's activities more strongly with the Canterbury Railway Station (including the possibility of signage on the station platform) and to facilitate sponsorship of the Maling Road program from these organisations

- Maintain connections with retirement villages and nursing homes near the centre

- Consider the use of local retired people/Famous local celebrity as centre ambassadors

5.3 Business Development

This is a key part of the Maling Road program.

Retaining and Improving Existing Businesses

It is important to have continuous upgrading, development, and renewal of products/services, shopfronts and service. The recommended strategies over the long term are:

- Continue to inform and encourage businesses to participate in training programs (such as those offered by the Traders Association and City of Boroondara) to build up their skills and make improvements to individual shops and offices. In particular, encourage businesses to embrace electronic marketing and appreciate the significance of the online component of their business

- Consider the organisation of group discount packages for advertising and other items of value to individual businesses in the centre. Promote the direct financial benefits of these packages to individual businesses

- Continue to organise a Christmas Party for all businesses in the centre as a social and business networking opportunity
- Strengthen the relationships between community, community groups, Council, landlords and traders.
- Investigate a buddy system for groups of businesses to share knowledge and tips
- Encourage more traders to be involved
- Potentially attract new businesses with a business profile
- Welcome new businesses to the Maling Road with a Welcome Letter

Improving The Business Mix by Attracting Appropriate New Businesses

Although both currently and historically there have been very few vacancies in the centre, in this turbulent economic environment it is important to be pro-active about the future and consider possible businesses that would assist in achieving the recommended vision for the centre.

It is important to know that the MRBA has zero control over the business mix in Maling Road, as they do not own any property. However they do have the ability to perform some duties that can help businesses make an informed decision about moving their business into the street.

- Undertake a regular retail audit and identify any missing industries, new businesses to improve the retail mix
- Develop a brief prospectus outlining the case for establishing new businesses in the centre, indicating the centre's primary catchment area, changing socio-demographic profile, record of positive experiences in the centre, and new developments.
- Give the prospectus to relevant real estate agents so they can pass onto interested businesses.
- Give the prospectus to relevant/interested businesses who maybe are interested in the area.
- Give the prospectus to relevant landlords so they can pass onto interested businesses.

5.4 Car Parking, Streetscape and Infrastructure Improvements

The recommended strategies are:

- Continue to work with Council to ensure that there is adequate car parking in the centre
- Continue to lobby Council to update the painting of assets to be in line with the updated brand of Maling Road
- Continue to lobby Council to provide funding as a priority for streetscape improvements identified in the Shopping Centre Improvement Plan
- Encourage landowners to make improvements to buildings in the centre particularly to the exterior facades
- Investigate new signage opportunities
- Assess the maintenance of the public toilet and amend schedule if need be
- Assess the lighting in the car parks and around the centre to ensure it is adequate and also adds to the atmosphere of Maling Road
- Ensure the Traders Association works with Council in regards to any changes to the traffic flow in Maling Road (e.g. making Maling Road one-way)
- Ensure the Traders Association is a part of the consultation for the new improvement scheduled for 2019/2020.

6. MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

6.1 Business Association and Coordinator

Business Association

The recommended strategies to improve and sustain the management and communication processes are:

- Develop a plan for the Business Association to ensure that its management committee continues to have a quorum and is effective in each of the five years of this plan. Organise a succession plan to ensure that there continues to be the full complement of four executive members each year

- Work to elect an active Committee each year at the AGM. Ideally, there is an appropriate representation on the Committee from different types of businesses in different parts of the centre who are both positive and proactive.

- Continue to organise regular meetings of the Committee to direct and monitor the agreed program of activities

- Continue to develop and implement a unique marketing program for the centre

- Continue to take a very pro-active role with the City of Boroondara and other Government agencies in facilitating improvements in the centre.

- Maintain strong links with Mainstreet Australia

- Facilitate stronger business buy-in to the program by communicating with businesses regularly and selling the achievements and benefits of the program. Continue to prepare and distribute periodic newsletter and to make regular visits to keep businesses up to date with proposed new events and marketing approaches

- Continue to organise good business networking nights (such as the AGM, Christmas Party and other Trader nights).

- Encourage Trader Participation

- Undertake discussions with property owners and managers to encourage improvements to the appearance of buildings in the centre as well as to encourage appropriate new businesses to be interested in establishing in the centre as vacancies arise

Marketing Coordinator

The Business Association is committed to continuing to employ a part-time coordinator with a continued strong focus on the marketing of Maling Road. The key strategies for the coordinator to achieve are:

- Expand the branding, strategic marketing and promotional initiatives, as outlined above

- Continue to communicate the marketing agenda with all businesses in the centre through newsletters, emails and personal visits to business premises

- Continue to maintain strong relationships with local community groups and residents so as to continue to foster ongoing connections with the centre during the centre promotions (particularly Kristkindl) and develop stronger loyalty from these groups towards the centre

- Inform businesses about external training programs to motivate and educate them to make improvements to their businesses

- Continue to lobby, with the Committee executive, Council and other Government agencies to achieve the recommended car parking and streetscape improvement priorities outlined above

- Investigate new funding opportunities (sponsorships, grants)

6.2 Financial Strategy

The current marketing program for Maling Road has a budget of approximately $100,000 for 2017-18. Approximately $67,000 raised via the Special Charge, $15,000 granted by Council for KristKindl, $8,000 in external raised sponsorship and $10,000 carried over from the last financial year. This excludes the costs of undertaking major infrastructure or other physical improvement projects in the centre, which are typically funded via Council's Infrastructure budget/programs.

The MRBA proposes the next five-year plan is funded through the special rate and charge scheme on the basis of the following:

- A rate of 0.08 422 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value (CIV) will be levied on each rateable property in the proposed Scheme.
- Ground level properties will be subject to a minimum charge of $736 and maximum of $1,021.
- All upper level properties will be subject to a minimum charge of $446 and maximum of $578.
- Consumer Price Index (All Groups Melbourne) (CPI) will be applied each year to the rate in the dollar and the minimum and maximum charges

The special rate is to be renewed coming into effect on 1 July 2018. A general breakdown of a $100,000 program is as follows:

Marketing and Promotions	
KristKindl	$ 30,000
Christmas decorations	$ 1,000
Bin Wraps Mother/Father's Day	$ 500
Easter Promo	$ 2,000
VIP Shopping Event(s)	$ 9,000
Auto Classica Car Show	$ 6,000
Maling Road Gift Cards	$ 5,000
Trader Workshops	$ 500
Graphic Design Costs	$ 2,000
Digital Marketing	$ 1,000
Streetscape Improvements	
Graffiti removal & other maintenance	$ 500
Management and Communication	
Part time centre co-ordinator	$ 32,400
Business newsletters, meetings & other communication	$ 3,000
Administration, insurance, accountancy & audit fees, communication, Storage, Membership Fees, Catering, Website Hosting etc,	$ 5,500
Total	**$100,000**

Funding of an expanded marketing program is expected from several sources.

Festival Income and grants of $30,000 per annum are expected for Kristkindl. A major effort will be put into increasing sponsorship for the program from other organisations.

Subject to Budget approval by Council under the Shopping Centre Improvement Plan the Maling Road Shopping Centre (Canterbury) will commence in financial year 2018/19 with Consultation and Design and then with implementation of Works in 2019/20.

The Traders Association is to continue to have a financial accountability system in place. This is to meet the reporting requirements of both Consumer Affairs Victoria and the City of Boroondara's contract with the Association relating to its special rate. A financial report, outlining expenditure against a designated budget for each project area of the Association's program, is to continue to be organised and provided regularly to Committee meetings. An audit of the Association's annual income and expenditure is to continue to be prepared at the end of the Association's financial year and presented to the Association's AGM as well as to the City of Boroondara.

6.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

The degree of achievement of the actions outlined in the Business Plan is to be evaluated at regular intervals throughout each financial year.

Key performance indicators (KPI's) to be considered as part of the evaluation are:

- Extent of completion of projects specified in the Business Plan
- High level of business participation in activities and promotions
- Positive business and customer perceptions about individual promotions and advertising campaigns
- High level of financial accountability

A simple chart is to be developed and regularly updated during each financial year of the five-year program. The chart is to indicate, for each strategy in the Business Plan, the progress in achievement and the overall outcomes after completion

Appendix

The Appendix provides further background information on the Maling Road centre, its Management Committee, centre/marketing coordinator and special rate details, demographic details and key policies and strategies approved by Boroondara City Council that are relevant to Maling Road.

Management Committee

The Committee of the Business Association and Marketing Coordinator for 2017-18 are:

- President — Nicola Bergelin (Maling Road Toy Shop)
- Vice President — Peter Barclay (Tenant)
- Secretary — Athena Katopodis (Canterbury Eyecare)
- Treasurer — TBC
- Ordinary Member — Andrew Scawen (Mitchell McCabe)
- Ordinary Member — Chris Henry (Good Food Collective)
- Ordinary Member — Shurojit Shome (Bendigo Bank)
- Marketing Co-ordinator Team — Marketa

Special Charge Details

The Traders Association is funded primarily by a special levy covering 80 rateable properties in the centre. In 2013, Council declared a special charge for the centre to raise approximately $64,000 in 2013-14 with a CPI increment in each of the following four years. The special charge expires on 30 June 2018.

Demographics

Data highlighted from the latest census (2016) shows the following information about people who live within a 1.5km radius of Maling Road.

- There are over 30,000 residents
- There are more 10-19 year olds (4480) than any other 10 year bracket
- 18% of the population is aged 5-17 years
- 29% were born overseas
- The top three birthplaces were China/Hong Kong (2479), England (1061) and Malaysia (524)
- 88% of households were connected to the internet

Maling Road Activity Mix

The following is the Maling Road Activity Mix as of October 2017.

Category	Count
Café/Restaurants/Takeway	14
Fashion/Jewellery/Shoes	15
Homewares/Giftware	6
Everyday Services	4
Hair and Beauty	7
Fresh Food	8
Health Professionals	6
Professional Services	3
Specialist Retail	5
Specialist Services	6
Total	74

The number of businesses do not directly correlate with number of rateable properties as some businesses lease two or three rateable properties.

Boroondara City Council Strategies and Policies

There are many City of Boroondara Strategies and Policies. This appendix is only focusing on the main Policy that has the greatest impact on Maling Road.

Boroondara Economic Development & Tourism Strategy (2016-2021)

"The City of Boroondara Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2016 - 2021 provides a blueprint for enhancing the vibrancy and sustainability of the local economy and its influence on the liveability of Boroondara as a whole." (Economic Development & Tourism Strategy, 2016) Council will strive to achieve the following five objectives over the next five years.

1. Best-In-Class Neighbourhood Shopping Centres
2. Boroondara as a Tourism Destination
3. Ready for Business
4. Helping Business Establish and Grow
5. Civic Leadership and Partnerships

1. Best-In-Class Neighbourhood Shopping Centres

Boroondara's network of shopping centres are a highly valued part of life in Boroondara. They provide opportunities for social interaction, access to commercial and community services and employment. Council will facilitate the development of best-in-class neighbourhood shopping centres in the City.

To achieve this vision, some related strategies are -

- Continue with the special rate and charge scheme program and associated support and liaison with trader associations and groups to optimise business development and marketing in key shopping centres.
- Continue with the Christmas in Boroondara program.
- Consider opportunities to support cultural celebrations within shopping centres.
- Develop a shopping centre positioning and marketing strategy.
- Investigate the establishment of a 'one-stop-shop' service for businesses (incorporating permit, fee and advice services) to facilitate appropriate business outcomes, as part of the implementation of the Customer Experience Improvement Plan.
- Continue to deliver the Council's Shopping Centre Improvement Plan to continue to progressively implement streetscape and public space amenity enhancements at Boroondara's 42 small to mid-sized neighbourhood centres.
- Strategy for Shopping Centres 2015.
- Promote and support a 'Buy Local' culture.
- Identify priority shopping centres, and pilot a cross Council Place Making Model incorporating urban planning, infrastructure, community services, heritage, arts and owner and tenant actions focused on activation, safety and revitalisation initiatives to stimulate neighbourhood shopping centres.
- Pilot a landlords' incentive program providing seed grants for initiatives which address heritage preservation, shop front upgrades and innovative re-purposing of commercial spaces in relevant neighbourhood shopping centres.
- Support neighbourhood shopping centres with tools to undertake consumer research to understand the diversity of customer needs including requirements for delivery services and opening hours, and encourage dissemination of the data back to business owners.
- Provide online information to encourage the development of pop-ups to combat vacant commercial premises.
- Encourage trader associations and business groups to educate business owners to maximise customer parking availability.

2. Boroondara as a Tourism Destination

Council will identify, showcase and promote the City's tourism assets to facilitate growth in tourist visitation and spending.

To achieve this vision, some related strategies are -

- Develop an action plan that defines Boroondara's visitor attractions as part of the wider 'Destination Melbourne' offer. Recommend development of a bookable product (retail, trails, parks, heritage, local markets etc.), packaging opportunities and support to the short-stay accommodation sector.
- Continue to deliver www.boroondaralife.com.au or a similar online presence in line with the Boroondara Customer First Digital Services Transformation project.
- Investigate and deliver marketing initiatives which support the promotion of Boroondara to visitor markets e.g. The Boroondara Pocket Book - Your Insider's Guide to Melbourne's East.

3. Ready for Business

Council will facilitate the provision of quality economic enablers in the City.

To achieve this vision, some related strategies are -

- Pilot a regular (every two years) 'Business Needs and Issues' report to Council and relevant stakeholders, that summarises concerns and needs identified by business, and report back to business on Council's response. Undertake supplementary investigations on verified issues.
- Investigate a pilot Wi-Fi project in partnership with two neighbourhood shopping centres with a special rate and charge scheme which supports marketing and business development initiatives. This project will include benchmarking and discussions with Swinburne University and consider security and risk management measures
- Collaborate with Swinburne and relevant stakeholders to support the establishment of business incubators and accelerators (for micro and small business).
- Develop improved online resources for business including the ability to transact with Council.

4. Helping Business Establish and Grow

Council will facilitate business establishment and growth, investment attraction and industry development.

To achieve this vision, some related strategies are -

- Continue to deliver the Business Boroondara program providing access to resources, information, training, networking and 'business to business' opportunities for the local business community.
- Support and promote activities that advance the transition of businesses to optimise use of technology.
- Investigate the establishment of a 'locally purchased' certification scheme.
- Investigate the support from local businesses for a reward scheme for retailers in Boroondara's shopping centres to provide discounts to customers

5. Civic Leadership and Partnerships

Council will continue to provide leadership and foster partnerships which contribute to economic and tourism development within the City.

To achieve this vision, some related strategies are –

- Evaluate the structure and objectives of the Business Boroondara Network Steering Committee and investigate the establishment of a broader advisory committee including commercial property owners and key stakeholders.
- Continue to collaborate with Regional Development Australia - Melbourne East and other relevant state and federal agencies on a regular basis to gain support for and help deliver the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- Collaborate with Swinburne University to create a vision for attracting businesses into Boroondara, which align with the University's expertise and new technology and innovation capability to leverage investment outcomes and business growth opportunities for local business and the community.