

# Media Release

**The Hon Ros Spence MP**  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Community Sport  
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Friday, 21 June 2024

## FUNDING BOOST FOR NOOJEE TO EXPLORE NEW COMMUNITY HUB

The Allan Labor Government is supporting the Noojee community to take the next steps in diversifying the town's economy as part of the Forestry Transition Program.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today announced \$510,000 for Baw Baw Shire Council that will help the town transition away from native timber harvesting, improve energy reliability in the region and investigate opportunities for a community hub and education center.

As part of this investment, \$20,000 will go towards exploring ways to improve power reliability and connectivity. The Shire will partner with Baw Baw Sustainability Network to capture data on energy usage, power sources, household waste and firewood collection to help understand the current and future needs for Noojee's power.

A working group will then use the data to explore a range of renewable energy technologies to provide greater energy reliability and security for the district.

The audit will be launched Sunday evening at an event held by the Shaping the Future of Noojee Local Development Strategy team and aims to engage with 100 households in Noojee and surrounding area.

A further \$80,000 will be used to fund a feasibility study for a multipurpose community hub and education center. The proposed hub could be used for a variety of functions including recreation, education and a place of safety during emergencies, with the intention of increasing the number of visitors to Noojee.

This investment also includes \$410,000 to continue the work on Noojee's Local Development Strategy (LDS) until 2026. The LDS program is designed to be community led and reflect local priorities and ambitions as communities transition away from native timber harvesting.

Noojee is one of 11 Victorian towns and communities receiving support to transition from the Government's Forestry Transition Program Community Development Fund. For more information visit [vic.gov.au/forestry](https://vic.gov.au/forestry).

### Quotes attributable to Ros Spence Minister for Agriculture

*"This funding will ensure that Baw Baw Shire can progress their work through the Local Development Strategy, alongside the residents of Noojee, to successfully pursue new economic opportunities."*

### Quotes attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

*"This funding will deliver projects that the Noojee community has identified as important for future planning and growth and will enable them to address their energy needs as part of supported transition."*

### Quote attributable to Baw Baw Shire Mayor Cr Annemarie McCabe

*"This latest funding announcement is a major milestone for Council's Shaping the Future of Noojee project, as it will really help to propel the work being undertaken and continue to support the region to transition away from native timber harvesting."*