

# Heat Smart Showgrounds Project

**COUNCIL NAME**

Goulburn Mulwaree  
Council

**WEB ADDRESS**

[goulburn.nsw.gov.au](http://goulburn.nsw.gov.au)

**SIZE**

3,223 square  
kilometres

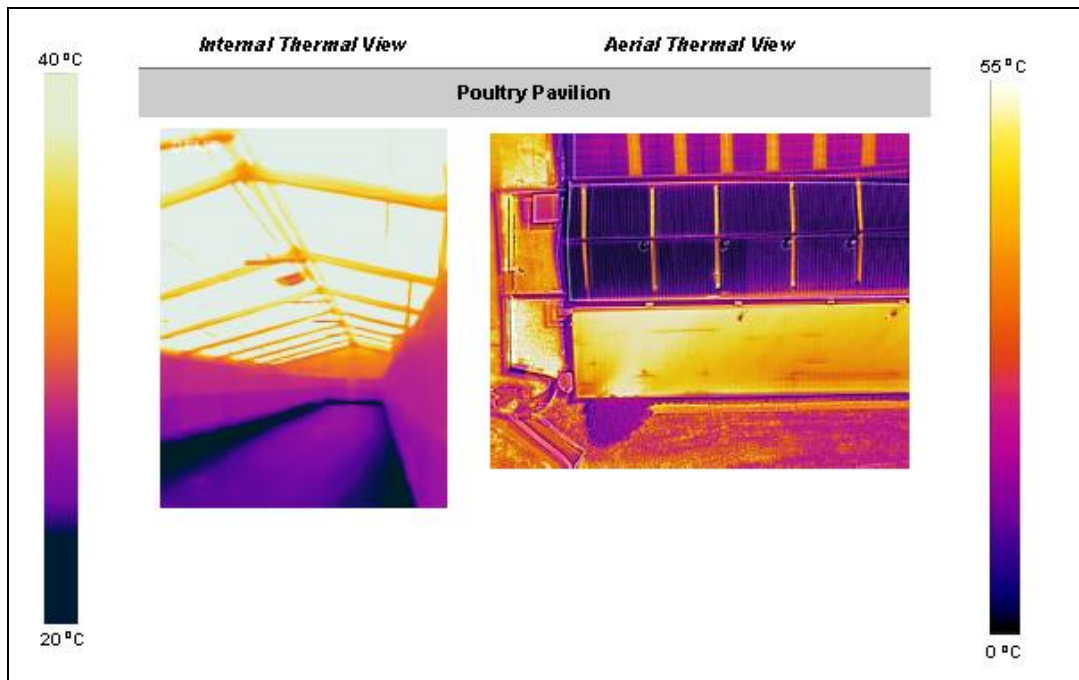
**POPULATION**

32,168

## Overview of the project

Goulburn Recreation Area (GRA) is a 45-hectare multi-use site encompassing a showground, racecourse, and athletic and public recreation facilities. Events that occur in at least eight months of the year include greyhound and harness racing; basketball, netball and badminton; dog/show training and poultry; dressage events; and private events and functions. To ensure the long-term safety and amenity of this community asset, Council's management plan sought to address climate change impacts on the GRA, particularly the projected increase in periods of very hot weather.

The Heat Smart Showgrounds project identified the areas of the GRA adversely impacted by 'hot days' (above 35<sup>o</sup> Celsius) with the primary concern being for older infrastructure and their use for animal keeping and community events. Adaptive infrastructure improvements and process modifications were implemented where most needed. These improvements will help to protect event organisers, volunteers, patrons and animals from heat stress and dehydration.



## How the project was carried out

The Climate Change Resilience Study developed for the Goulburn Recreation Area included an assessment of heat-related climate change impacts at the site. The assessment was based on data from seventeen temperature and humidity data loggers placed across the site, priority concerns of key stakeholders and research on best practice guidelines for the welfare of animals. High resolution infrared thermal imaging was undertaken inside buildings, and drone technology was used externally, to identify hot spots across the site during a period of hot weather. The Council project team then developed and implemented priority actions based on the short and term site improvements recommended in the Study.

## Outcomes now and in the future

The Climate Change Resilience Study is a key appendix to the updated Goulburn Recreation Area Plan of Management, completed in 2021. This Study is a keystone document for the future management and development of the site and provides a blueprint for ongoing infrastructure improvements to mitigate climate change impacts. Procedural recommendations from the study, such as event timing, the trialling of night events, and the use of site signage warning against heat stress in humans and animals, form a critical resource for progressive, flexible and sustainable management practices.

The project successfully delivered the following infrastructure improvements:

- tree plantings to increase shade for high-patronage areas identified as being significant heat islands
- installation of side air vents, fans and mechanised whirly birds to improve air flow and reduce residual air temperature for the poultry pavilion
- installation of fans to improve air flow and reduce residual air temperature for the Peden pavilion
- installation of a misting device in the stables area to keep horses cool during periods of hot weather.

## Benefits and lessons learned

The scope and delivery of the project presented several challenges, including:

- site complexity – the GRA has a range of interconnecting environments, supporting a multitude of users with varying activities
- infrastructure condition – there is considerable variation in the age and functionality of the site's structures
- Covid-19 impacts – travel restrictions and lockdowns had an unanticipated impact on the delivery of various components of the project
- varying stakeholder opinion – user input often addressed specific activities rather than offering a whole-of-site perspective.

The Heat Smart Showgrounds project delivers several opportunities, including:

- informing ongoing event management and scheduling during periods of hot weather (above 35 degrees) on how to improve onsite safety for participants, patrons and animals
- providing an evidence base for future funding opportunities to further improve facilities at the Recreation Area
- improving the comfort of volunteers and visitors with a flow-on effect to increasing numbers for future events
- providing solutions for infrastructure modification and improvements which can be adopted for other Council-owned community facilities to mitigate hot weather impacts
- providing a 'model project' to guide similar upgrades at showgrounds across NSW.



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## More information

To view the project video visit the IRCC video pages.

## Contact

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