

Khancoban & Surrounds

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and pay respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise Aboriginal people as the original custodians of the lands that comprise the Snowy Valleys Council area and pay our respects to the leaders of the traditional custodians of this land.

Together we acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal Australians to this country we all live in and share together.

Snowy Valleys Council is committed to enhancing the knowledge and understanding of our communities about the history, heritage and cultures of Aboriginal Australians.



Report title: Khancoban and Surrounds - Our Connected Communities Roadmap

Client: Snowy Valleys Council

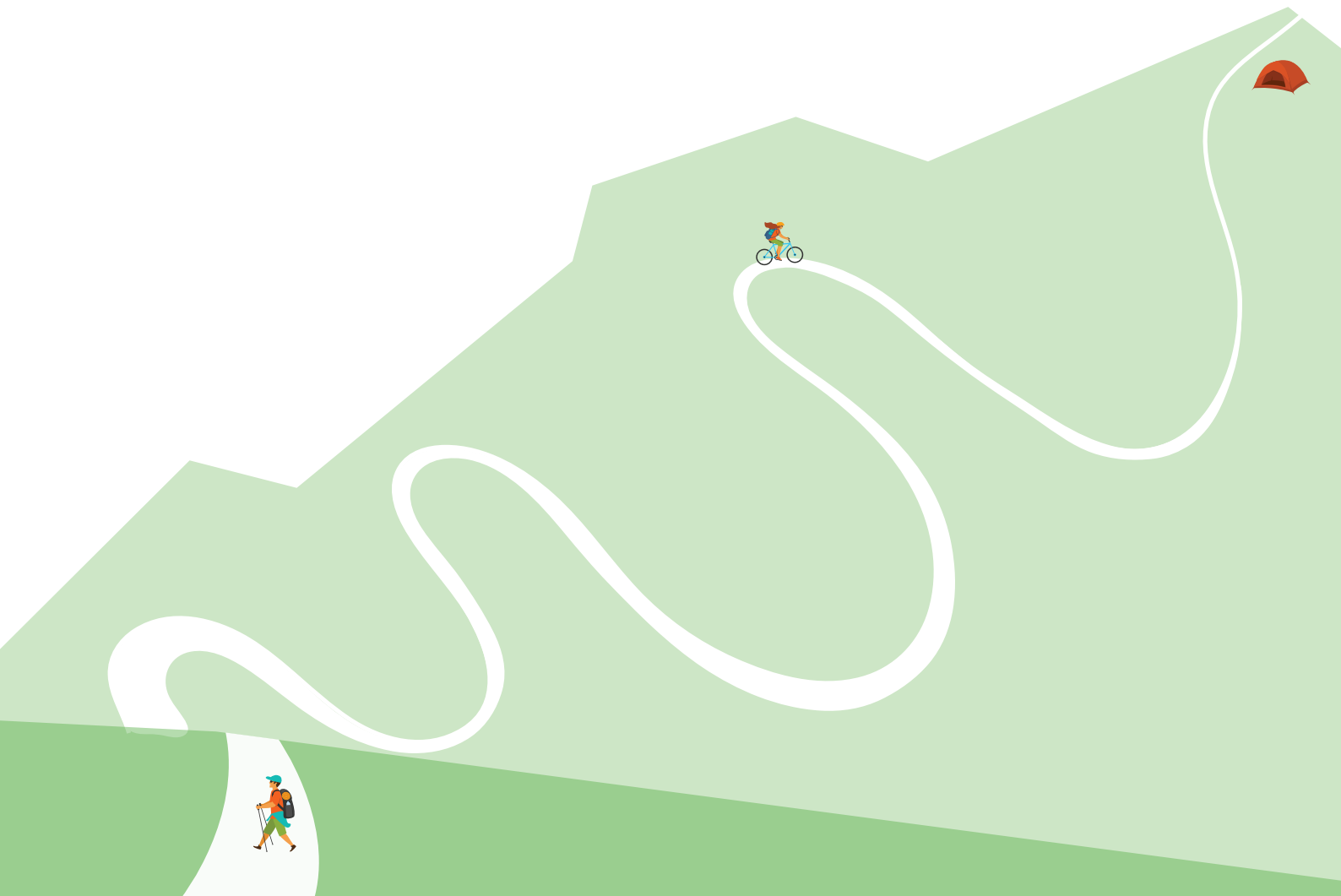
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1. Introduction

Background

The past few years have been difficult for our community, with the impacts of the 2019-2020 Black Summer Bushfires and COVID-19 lockdowns.

Snowy Valleys Council (Council), through partial funding from the NSW Community Recovery and Resilience Fund, has been working with our local community to prepare community-led plans aimed at understanding our places, spaces and networks that connect us to build stronger more socially cohesive and resilient communities.

Research from Resilient NSW and NCOSS tells us that for communities to be resilient in the face of emergencies, they need to be connected with each other, their places, and local services and institutions. Knowing our neighbours, having good relationships with friends and family, and being part of a connected community means someone will notice if we're missing, help if we are in trouble and get us back on our feet after the crisis has passed.

Building stronger communities

Resilience NSW has identified a number of ways that we can build stronger communities and be prepared for emergencies, respond as a community, and recover together. This includes:

- Understanding our local community including the people and place context - including our history, values and aspirations
- Recognising the complexity of different and unique places, because successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and a community
- Using community-led approaches - being community centred, responsive and flexible, and engaging with communities to move forward
- Coordinating activities - successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach between community and partner agencies and requires a range of social connectors, and community assets, for this to occur effectively
- Recognising and building capacity - successful recovery is built on effective communication, networking and partnership between communities, services, and government agencies/institutions.

The importance of planning for social cohesion

The Scanlon Foundation (2021) defines social cohesion as being concerned with: "the extent of shared values, mutual respect and acceptance of difference, as well as trust between people and trust in institutions".

Social cohesion is about having strong bonds between individuals and institutions within a society, resulting in positive quality of relationships that are rooted in equal and just treatment, respect and care for one another. Social cohesion is an important foundation for cooperation towards shared outcomes.

Research shows that connected communities, with strong networks, trust, social spaces to connect, and bonds recover more quickly from adversity like the ones we've recently experienced in Khancoban and Surrounds.

The Resilient Cities Network's "Measuring Social Cohesion Guide" notes that:

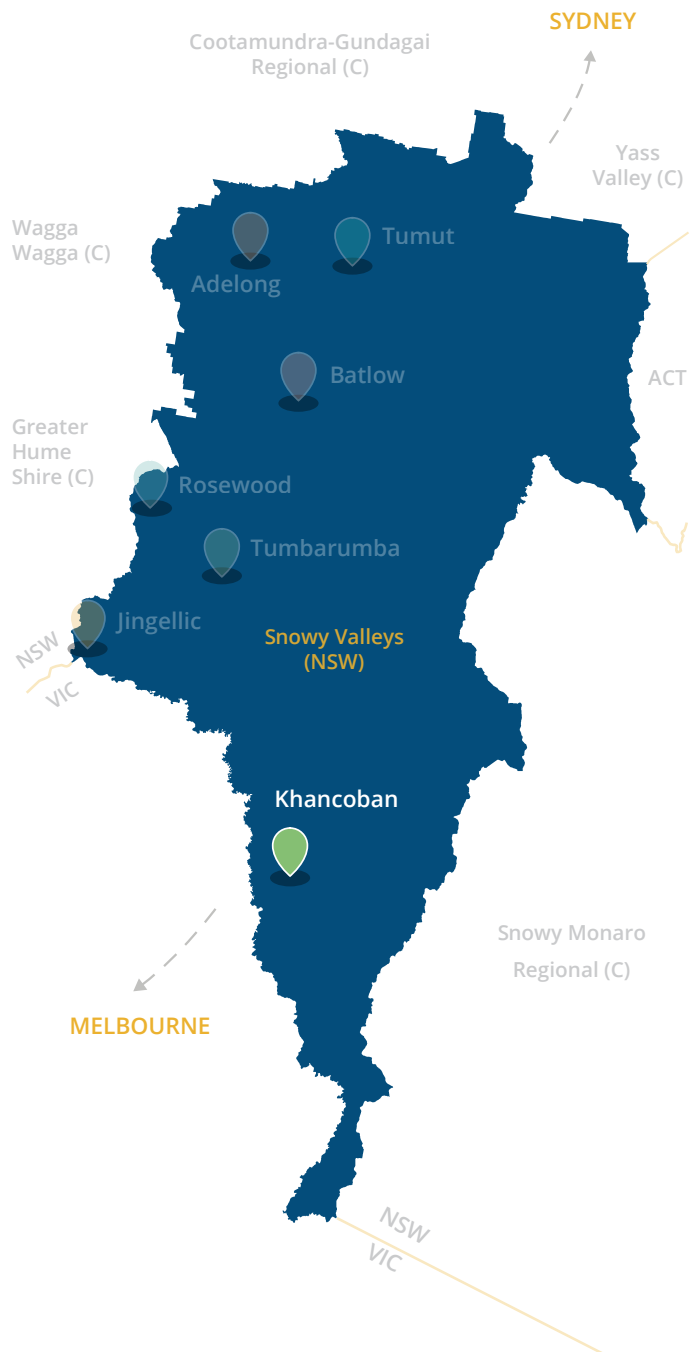
"Higher levels of social cohesion and positive social interactions serve to strengthen the overall fabric of the city, allowing communities to bounce back faster and rebuilt more efficiently after experiencing major shocks and stresses."

Our plan for a connected place

This *Our Connected Communities Roadmap for Khancoban and Surrounds* is a community-led plan to build a socially connected, resilient place supported by the community assets needed to plan for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. Khancoban and Surrounds includes the localities of Khancoban, Bringenbrong, Towong (not in Snowy Valleys LGA) and Corryong (not in Snowy Valleys LGA).

This Roadmap sets a vision and values as identified by our local community to strengthen community connections and our resilience locally, and identifies ideas and actions to improve access to the community assets we need to better withstand future challenges and emergency events. It provides our resident and business community, Council and other institutions with the information needed to work in partnership with us.

It acknowledges that our social connectors - the community groups and events; services and institutions; places and spaces; and information sources - play a central role in how socially cohesive we are and focuses on identifying community-led initiatives and priorities for the improvement of our place and community.



Our Community Road Map Locations

What's in this Roadmap?

This Roadmap includes:

- Our community demographic and place profile
- Our community's vision and values
- What we love and what we'd change about our place
- A map of our community assets, or "social connectors" which bring our community together
- Assessment of our social connectors, our social capital, and identification of strengths and challenges
- Our ideas for how to make our place stronger and more socially connected, and
- An Action Plan for how our community and other institutions can work together to build a strong, socially connected and resilient place.

“

I love spending time with the kids kayaking and swimming in the Khancoban Dam. It's safe and peaceful.”

- Community member

How was this Roadmap developed?

This Roadmap was developed in partnership with the Khancoban and Surrounds community and Snowy Valleys Council acknowledging that the creation of strong socially cohesive communities must be community-led. Our local people and community groups and services have a critical role to play in community building, emergency preparedness and recovery. Engagement with the community included:

- Love Letters to Local Places postcards
- Places We Connect Boards, built by the Batlow Men's Shed
- Pop-up stalls in main streets
- Community meet ups in local community spaces
- Interviews with service providers, businesses, Council, and community groups, and
- Submissions via Council's Have My Say Page.

How can we use this Roadmap?

How can Council use this Roadmap?

Council can use this Roadmap for forward planning and resource allocation for infrastructure, strategic city planning and social development activities within the annual Operational Plan process.

How can Councillors use this Roadmap?

Councillors can use this Roadmap for advocacy, lobbying and promotion of community successes and challenges to government agencies, industry and all levels of government for funding support or program delivery.

How can community members and groups use this Roadmap?

Community members and groups can use this Roadmap for galvanising community group and volunteer action around identified activities for improvement of social cohesion and sourcing grant funding.



2. Our community

Our place

Khancoban and Surrounds includes the localities of Khancoban, Bringenbrong, Towong (*not in Snowy Valleys LGA*) and Corryong (*not in Snowy Valleys LGA*). We are located in the south of the Snowy Valleys Council LGA, only 14km to the NSW-Victoria border. An hour drive from Khancoban, our main service centre in the Snowy Valleys is Tumbarumba. Our town is located on the traditional lands of the Ngarigo People.

Khancoban was built to house the workers of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme, which commenced in 1949. Our town continues to be a headquarter for Snowy Hydro's Murray Region, overseeing the nearby Murray 1 and Murray 2 power stations and Khancoban Pondage, a popular meeting place for our residents and lovers of water recreation.

We lie at the south western edge of Kosciuszko National Park and our towns are ideal bases for day trips to the snow fields in winter. Khancoban is a short drive from Scammells Ridge Lookout, with breathtaking views over Western Fall wilderness and Main Range.

Our area is also renowned for some of Australia's best trout fishing waterways and walking tracks, complete with historic huts and birdwatching opportunities.

Since the completion of Alpine Way in the 1990s, our residents have become well-connected to other towns for shopping and health services.

The community assets and those social connectors that make our place special are detailed in Section 4, Mapping our Community Assets.



Alpine environment

We love the beauty of the natural surrounds and the ability to enjoy these destinations for active sport, kayaking and swimming.



Community-minded

We are a lovely community that all talk to each other and look out for one another, making Khancoban feel friendly and safe.



Good services

Great schools, good public spaces, like the dam, and well-connected to other towns for shopping and health services.



Our people

We have an ageing population.

Khancoban and Surrounds is home to approximately 298 people. Our median age is 54, which is higher compared to our LGA (45 years) and Regional NSW (43 years). We also have less people aged 18 years and under (15% compared to 22% in our LGA) and a higher proportion of people aged 65 years and over (28%).

One in eight people speak a language other than English.

More than 12% of our residents speak a language other than English at home, which is higher compared to our LGA (3.5%). This is most likely due to itinerant workers in local industries.

We earn more than \$200 less per week than our neighbouring communities.

Our residents experience more disadvantage compared to the average across our LGA, with a lower average household income (\$914) and a slightly higher SEIFA score (939).

We are community-minded and volunteer our time to help one another and bring our town to life.

One in three residents (or 32%) in Khancoban & Surrounds volunteer their time, which is higher than the average in our LGA and across Regional NSW. Community groups include the Khancoban United Volunteer Association

We have fewer families and are less likely to own our homes.

We have a similar proportion of homeowners (40%) compared to our LGA (39%) and Regional NSW (36%), however this is much lower in relation to other places in the Snowy Valleys, including Tumbarumba (55%) and Batlow (58%).

We also have fewer family households (33%).



I picked Khancoban off the map, and then I came and I just felt it."

- Community member

Table 1 - Our people and household characteristics

(Based on 2021 ABS Census for the areas of Khancoban, Bringenbrong, Towong (not in Snowy Valleys LGA) and Corryong (not in Snowy Valleys LGA))

	Khancoban & Surrounds	Snowy Valley Council 2021	Regional NSW
Total population	298	14,891	-
Median age	54	45	43
Median household income	\$914	\$1,122	\$1,166
Under 18	15%	22%	22%
18-64	55%	56%	57%
65+	28%	22%	21%
Language other than English	12.8%	3.5%	5.7%
First Nations	0%	4.4%	5.5%
Renting	13%	19%	22%
Homeowners	40%	39%	36%
Lone households	19%	27%	26%
Family households	33%	62%	63%
Volunteering	32%	25%	21%
No internet access	18%	34%	27%
SEIFA	939	951	971

* The ABS provide estimates for localities with small populations for privacy purposes, and therefore not all percentages will add up to 100%.

3. Our Vision and Values

Our place vision

The Khancoban community are cohesive and resourceful. They are passionate about seeing their town thrive into the future. The community value the natural beauty of their unique part of the state and see untapped potential in outdoor activities.

The community want to welcome new ideas, community participation, industries and tourists to their town in the future. In order to do this they want to see improved amenities, more accommodation and better support from Council to help their town grow.

Our values

The Khancoban and Surrounds community shared what they value about their town, and what makes it special:

Country life

- Peaceful
- Scenery
- Safety
- Clean

Community

- Small and caring
- Resourceful
- Family

History

- History of our towns

Nature and the outdoors

- Camping, fishing, hiking, mountain biking
- Fresh air
- Alpine environment

Security

- Job security from Snowy Hydro
- Safe



Image source: Visit NSW



What you told us

Khancoban and surrounds

LOVE

Lifestyle

Love playing
tennis at the
courts

Love the café

Khancoban
dam. Spending
time with kids
kayaking &
swimming

The beautiful
scenery

The natural
environment

Great schools

Love being
out of the
city - peaceful
country air

Nice community

Close-knit
community. We
all talk to each
other & look out
for one another

Love the boat
ramp

A very safe
town

Close to Conyorg
and Albury for
shopping &
medical services

CHANGE

No change -
love it the way
it is!

Need better/
more signage
directing people
to Khancoban &
promoting it

Need better
carpark
signage

Street entering
the town
needs to be
cleaned up &
maintained

There's no
accommodation
in town &
nowhere to get
a meal at night

Need more
people to
volunteer &
advocate for our
local community

Improvements
to local
facilities to
bring them
back to life

More places for
workers to live
& visitors to
stay

So much
potential but we
need help

Make it
easier for
new emerging
businesses to
establish



4. Mapping our community assets

This section maps the community assets that connect us socially and that create networks in our community. It provides:

- A map of our social connectors and assessment of how they impact on the social capital in our local area, and
- An assessment of our social connectors, including our strengths and challenges.

Understanding our community assets that connect us socially, is a foundation of building social cohesion and emergency preparedness and recovery.

What are our social connectors?

Our social connectors in Khancoban and Surrounds have been assessed and mapped overpage and include:

- **Community groups & Events** - groups led by volunteers and our community events
- **Services & Institutions** - funded services, Council, and other government agencies
- **Places & spaces** - including the parks, sport, spaces, community buildings, cafes, pubs and other places where we meet, attend programs, and connect formally and informally
- **Information sources** - including the local papers, newsletters, and community noticeboards where we receive and share local information.

What is social capital?

Social cohesion is a broad concept that includes the concept of social capital. Social capital refers to the many benefits that arise from having strong social connections and networks within communities.

Social capital has three elements:

“Bonding” social capital characterises social groups where people share many experiences and values associated with their ethnicity, religion or locality and other interests.

“Bridging” social capital focuses on extending interaction between different social groups, which draw people into many different opportunities for pursuing and achieving their aspirations and meeting their needs.

“Linking” social capital connects groups to institutions and organisations that open up opportunities and resolve problems that might otherwise be missed.

Our social connectors

Khancoban and Surrounds is home to a close-knit community with a large volunteer base and community groups that span the arts, sports and recreation, including the Khancoban Angling Club. The Khancoban United Volunteers Association (KUVA) is the heart of the community and their office functions as an informal community hub. KUVA distribute grants to local clubs, including the preschool, tennis and golf club, and manages the op shop.

Khancoban residents connect at the Pub and the Pickled Parrot Providore, and travel to Corryong for their Men’s Shed and Rotary Club. Considering the activeness of the community, there are limited places for the community to meet and gather. There is also desire for more essential services, including a bank branch.

Other than a skate park and Khancoban Swimming Pool, there are limited facilities for children and young people in Khancoban to recreate. There is community interest in a toy library, basketball court and upgrades to the preschool and playground.

Council’s Spendmapp data indicates that residents spend their money within Khancoban, with a smaller proportion of people travelling to other centres in the LGA such as Tumbarumba to purchase goods and services. This indicates there are ‘staying places’ in Khancoban for the local community.

Local assets rely on hard-working volunteers and staff from modestly-funded small community sector organisations, community service groups and faith-based groups. Volunteers are called upon to help external recovery specialists to connect and work successfully with local residents, often without being provided resources to do so. This can lead to excessive workloads, stress and burn-out. This reliance on local assets may not be sustainable if the frequency of disasters continues to intensify. Like other centres in our LGA, Khancoban could benefit from a local hub to enable the community to come together, prepare and respond in the event of future disasters.

As a small village located on the NSW-Victoria border and 55 minutes drive from Tumbarumba, Khancoban residents can feel disconnected to the rest of the Snowy Valleys LGA.

A map of the community assets that connect us is provided overpage on pages 14 and 15. This includes how they support the creation and sharing of social capital in our communities.

Assessment by social connector type

Type	Strengths	Challenges
Community groups & Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Khancoban United Volunteers Association (KUVA) act as an informal community hub and manage the op shop, as well as distribute grants to local clubs, including the tennis and golf clubs and preschool. There are many community groups, including for quilting, writing, pottery and sewing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers are ageing and wanting to pull back from their activities, and there is a need for new people to help the community connect.
Services & Institutions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents feel disconnected to Snowy Valley Council. Council can improve its relationship, including with better information, communication and community consultation. There are limited essential services in Khancoban, including a bank branch.
Places & Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Khancoban is a beautiful area linked to natural areas for recreation. The local village has upgrades shops, a community centre, and rose garden. The Pickled Parrot is a popular providore with strong community links. There are a range of community facilities including a preschool and community hall, but these need upgrading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entrance to the town and general maintenance is needed to ensure a tidy and welcoming town where visitors want to stay. There is not enough housing for itinerant workers and families or accommodation to attract more visitors. Many shop fronts are empty and there are limited retail options. The pub is the only place to meet which makes it hard to attract new people to Khancoban. The Community Hall renovation has taken a long time reducing the spaces available for community, and particularly children to use The Country Club is a place for community to meet but needs upgrades and currently is a registered club so is not eligible for grants
Information sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jottings is Khancoban's monthly newsletter (printed in the KUVA office) and is a valuable information source for local residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The signage to and around Khancoban promoting and directing people to town can be improved, along with the carpark signage. There is a need for improved internet connection and NBN

Our social connectors in Khancoban

1

BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

“Bonding” social capital characterises social groups where people share many experiences and values associated with their ethnicity, religion or locality and other interests.

KUVA is the community heart, operating out of a Snow Hydro space in town. However, the volunteers who drive KUVA are ready to pass on to other leaders in the community. They run the op shop and bring people together.

However, the preschool is run by locals building strong local bonds, and the Pickled Parrot Providore is where people meet and catchup. The community hall and other spaces have been closed making it difficult for the community to meet and participate in community programs. Council operates Does running the preschool, a fortnightly mobile playgroup and the swimming pool

2

BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

“Bridging” social capital focuses on extending interaction between different social groups, which draw people into many different opportunities for pursuing and achieving their aspirations and meeting their needs.

Khancoban is disconnected geographically, and the community have aspirations to encourage visitors into the town to stay, but need improved community space and accommodations.

3

LINKING SOCIAL CAPITAL

“Linking” social capital connects groups to institutions and organisations that open up opportunities and resolve problems that might otherwise be missed.

There are no linking Council/Government services in Khancoban and residents have to travel 76km to Tumbarumba for some Council services or more than 143km to Tumut to meet with Council officers. There is a desire for mobile services and institutions to come to Khancoban to improve social outcomes.

COMMUNITY GROUPS & EVENTS

- Khancoban Uniting Volunteers Association Inc. (KUVA)

SERVICES & INSTITUTIONS

- Khancoban Visitors Centre

PLACES & SPACES

- Khancoban Community Hall
- Khancoban Country Club
- Khancoban Skate Park
- Khancoban Lakeside Caravan Park
- Khancoban Dam
- Khancoban Caravan Park
- Corryong Bakery
- Khancoban Preschool
- Khancoban Public School
- Khancoban Community Hall
- Tennis courts
- Pickled Parrot Providore (local café)
- Catholic Church
- Snowy Hydro
- Khancoban Swimming Pool

INFORMATION SOURCES

- Jottings Khancoban Monthly Newsletter
- 1 Community Noticeboard (Outside KUVA Office)



WALK SCORE

Khancoban is a compact centre, but with a Walk Score of 9, most people need to drive to access services which particularly impacts transport disadvantaged residents including children, young people and seniors.



Community asset improvements and projects underway

Ongoing and planned major projects within a village influences the quality of places and its liveability. Recently completed and currently ongoing projects in Khancoban include:

Council led projects:

- Khancoban Pool Shade Sail
- Khancoban General Store
- Khancoban Streetscape
- Khancoban Wi-Fi Upgrade

Currently ongoing:

- Khancoban Pool Upgrade Stage 2



Image source: Khancoban Alpine Inn

5. Our roadmap

We attended consultation and came up with the following small, medium and big ideas:

SMALL

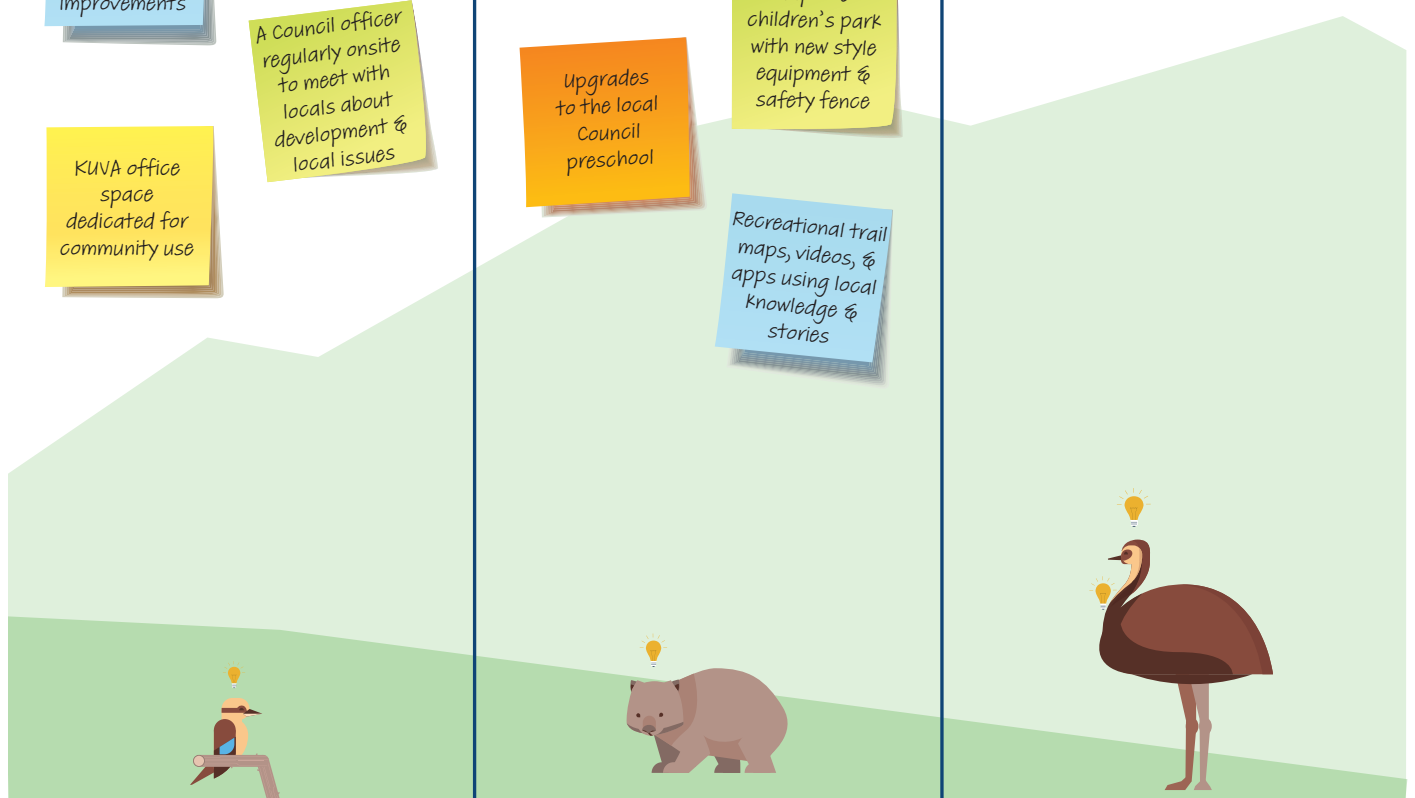
- Need more promotion of Khancoban on social media
- Would be nice to have a tennis coach
- Need more activities for kids
- Need a track to walk safely between the caravan park and the dam
- More events in the community hall eg youth group & live music
- Experts to guide conversations between locals about local improvements
- A Council officer regularly onsite to meet with locals about development & local issues
- KUVA office space dedicated for community use

MEDIUM

- Need nice accommodation
- More consistent footpaths that continue and connect (don't just stop)
- A local hub & 'Community Champions' for future disasters
- Town hall upgrades - keen for these to keep going
- Community recreation/ toy library. Borrow sports equipment etc
- Free wifi in town centre
- Improve children's park with new style equipment & safety fence
- Upgrades to the local Council preschool
- Recreational trail maps, videos, & apps using local knowledge & stories

BIG

- Support from national parks for hikes, mountain bikes, & trails
- Boardwalk loop from boat ramp to caravan park around the lake
- Need more tourism opportunities
- Pop-up/ temporary community use of vacant shops



Our Roadmap

Action	Who
Community Groups & Events	
Seek grant funding for support to build the capacity of local community members to volunteer at KUVA and other community groups.	Community groups
Advocate to Snowy Hydro for the ongoing use of the KUVA office space as a dedicated space for community use/services.	Community groups Council
Services & Institutions	
Advocate for mobile Council services to visit Khancoban regularly to meet with local residents and business regarding planning, information, or other local matters.	Community Council
Places & Spaces	
Advocate for improvements to the local Council owned preschool.	Community Council
Advocate for improvements to the local community hall for the delivery of community programs including events and programs for young people and arts and culture.	Community Council
Advocate for the creation of a local “information/emergency hub” to access information and resources during any future emergencies. This could be the KUVA office.	Community Council
Advocate to Detination NSW and National Parks to further promote the hiking, mountain biking and trail opportunities in the area.	Community Council
Advocate for building a basketball court for young people	Community Council
Work collaboratively to support the Country Club to become a community club so it can be eligible to receive grants to help with the upgrades needed	Community Council
Information Source	
Collaborate with tourist groups and Council to inform the preparation of recreational trail videos and information using local knowledge and stories.	Community Destination NSW
Advocate for a digital map of the local trails	Council NPWS