

Short Stay Budget Accommodation in Mildura

Mildura Rural City Council is developing a Short Stay Budget Accommodation Strategy. We aim to better understand and plan for the growing need for affordable, well-located accommodation for visitors and workers.

Budget accommodation underpins Mildura’s two largest industries — agriculture and tourism.

WHAT IS SSBA?

Short stay budget accommodation (SSBA) covers two overlapping markets: budget accommodation for transient rural workers, and budget accommodation for tourists.



Budget Workers Accommodation

On-farm accommodation & cabins, rooming houses, hostels, group accommodation and labour-hire housing for seasonal / transient rural workers.



Budget Tourist Accommodation

Camping & caravan parks, backpacker hostels, budget motels, and some short-stay use of housing (e.g. Airbnb), generally under \$150/night.

HERE’S WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS:

THE VALUE OF THE SSBA SECTOR

\$53.9M

spent per year by tourists staying in SSBA

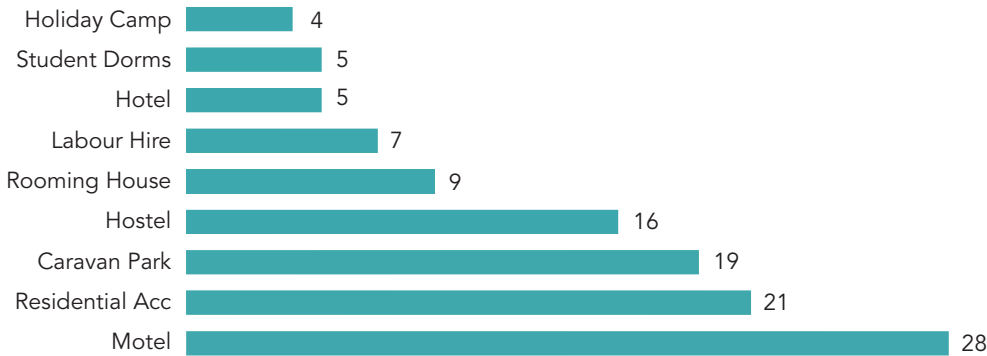
\$80M

flows into the wider local economy each year from SSBA visitors

\$21.4M

gross value added yearly to Mildura by PALM seasonal workers

CURRENT SSBA STOCK



Source: Mildura Rural City Council, Public Health & Wellbeing Act registrations

THE BIGGER PICTURE



\$998M

value of agriculture economic output (2025)

~15,000

seasonal workers in Sunraysia during peak harvest (2022)



\$390M

value of tourism economic output (2025)

753,000

visitors to Mildura annually (2024)

Where SSBA goes, and what's changing

Three current formats, six demand drivers, and the pressures shaping future demand

THREE WAYS SSBA IS PROVIDED IN MILDURA



1. On-Farm

Accommodation on the farm itself. Best for access to work but must not occur at the expense of workers' welfare or fragmenting productive agricultural land.

Key question: In what circumstances should it be supported and how will worker wellbeing be managed?



2. In-Community

Rooming houses, hostels & budget motels within townships. Policy directs these to the traditional centre of townships ensuring good access to services and limit the impacts on the amenity of neighbours.

Key question: Should more residential-area locations be allowed, with measures to preserve neighbourhood amenity?



3. Large-Format

Camping & caravan parks, group accommodation, residential villages. Challenging to identify suitable locations for new camping and caravan parks given current planning rules and the size of land required.

Key question: Where could additional large-format accommodation such as camping and caravan parks be located?

SIX FORCES SHAPING FUTURE DEMAND



Caravan & camping boom

Grey nomad travellers cohort is forecast to remain a strong, durable source of caravan park demand as the population ages.



Farm labour needs

Citrus & table grapes resist mechanisation so seasonal labour stays essential.



Population growth

More residents in Victoria/Australia results in rising domestic tourism, even as trip growth lags population.



Major projects

Short-to-medium term spikes in demand caused by the establishment phase of major projects.



Cost of living

Squeezed budgets push travellers toward domestic travel, of which Mildura is a top destination.



Local housing affordability crisis

Low rental vacancies and unaffordable rent means more people are turning to SSBA for emergency or transitional housing.



Scan the QR code to find out more and complete the survey before 18 October 2026

T: Strategic Planning 03 5018 8100

W: yoursay.mildura.vic.gov.au/budgetaccommodation

E: strategic.planning@mildura.vic.gov.au



Mildura Rural City Council