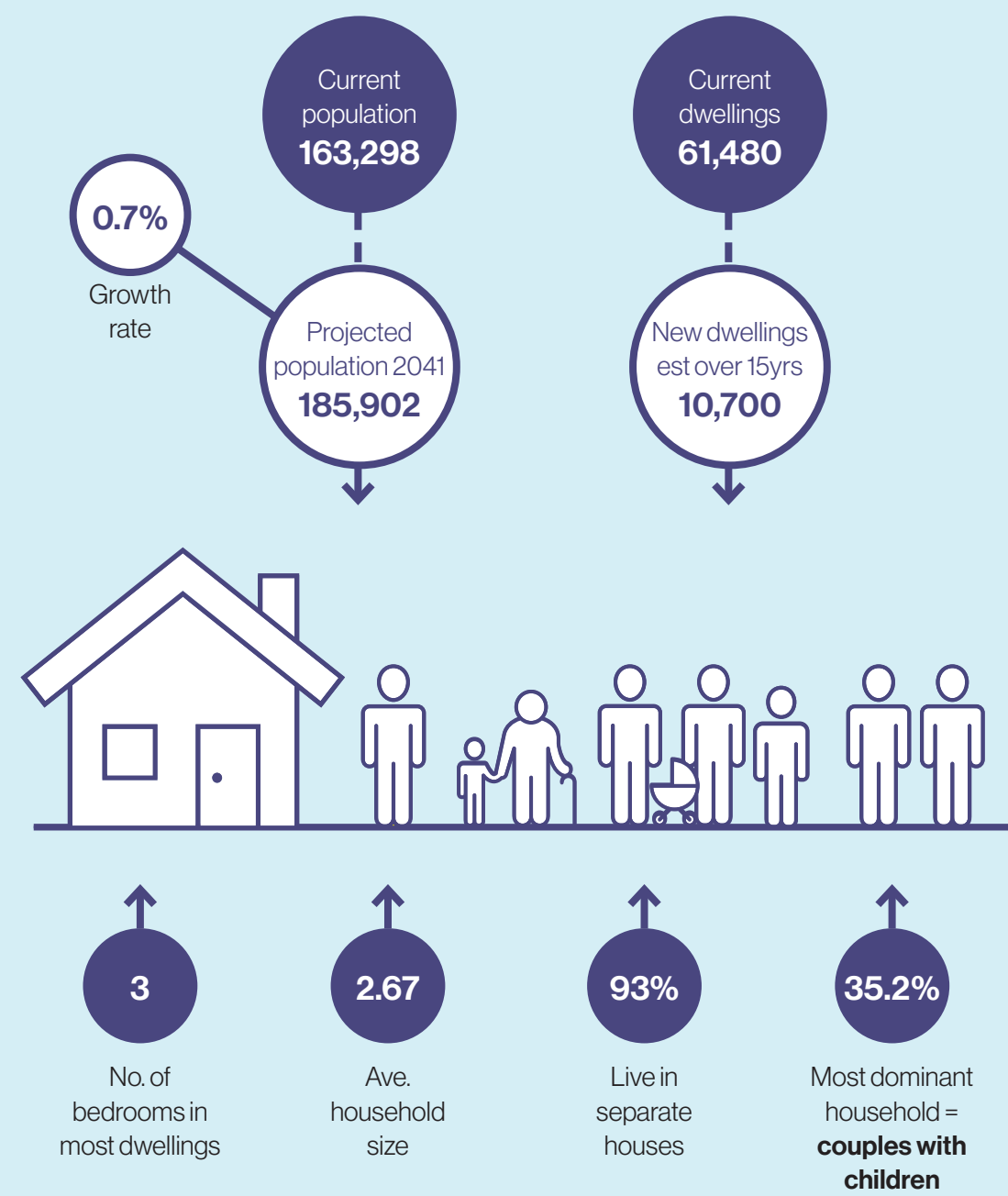


3.0 Who Lives in Yarra Ranges?

To plan effectively for housing, there is a need to understand the population and demographic changes occurring in Yarra Ranges, and their relationship to anticipated housing needs in the future.



3.1 Population Changes

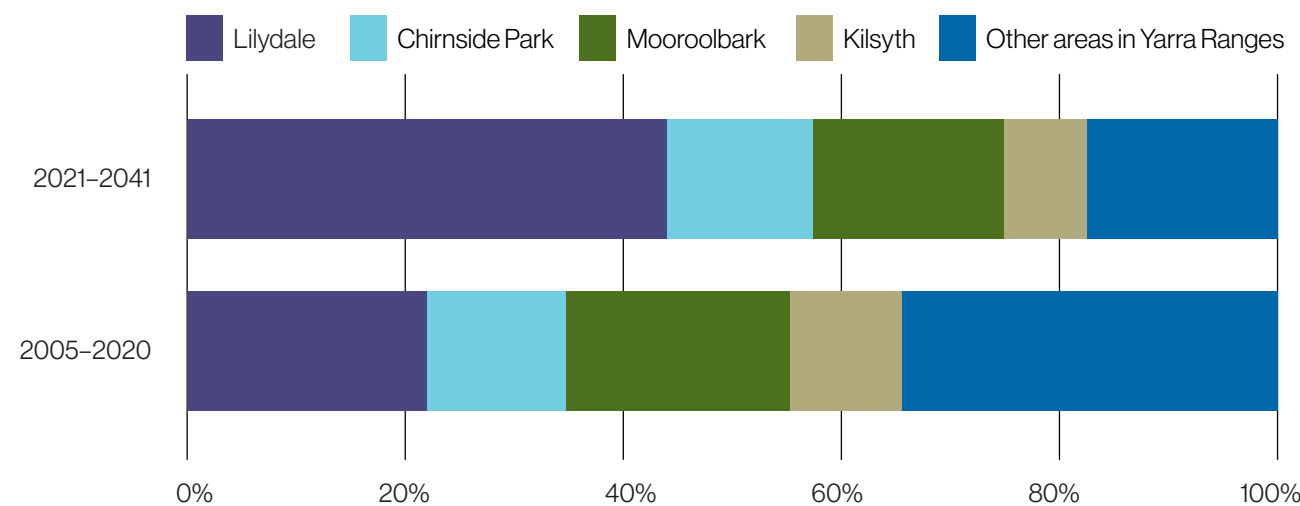
Yarra Ranges is home to a population of **163,298**, and this is expected to grow to **185,902** residents by 2041,¹ representing an average annual growth rate of 0.7%.

This represents less than half the annual growth rate over this period than for Greater Melbourne, at 1.7%.² Nevertheless, the projections for an additional 22,604 people by 2041 are a significant net increase.

Consistent with State Government directions, the Housing Strategy is planning for **10,700** new dwellings over the next 15 years, or approximately 700 dwellings per year. This is higher than the current development rate of 528 dwellings per year.³ On this basis there is a need for Council to think strategically about the type and location of new dwelling development.

This future growth will not occur evenly across Yarra Ranges. Recent trends have shown the highest rates of growth are concentrated in the western, urbanised part of Yarra Ranges comprising Lilydale, Chirnside Park, Mooroolbark and Kilsyth, where the majority of Yarra Ranges' development opportunities and infrastructure are located. This is a development pattern encouraged by planning policy, and projected to increase in the future, as shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7. Percentage of Yarra Ranges new dwellings located in Lilydale, Chirnside Park, Mooroolbark and Kilsyth – 2005-2020, 2021-2041 ^{11 (p.50), 12} (Id, Yarra Ranges Council Dwellings and Development Map, 2021)



3.2 Age Structure

Yarra Ranges is dominated by families. Figure 8 below shows there is a larger proportion of children and older workers in Yarra Ranges than Greater Melbourne. However, there is a relatively small proportion of young adults between 18 and 34 compared to Greater Melbourne.

Future population changes are expected to create a more even distribution across the age groups, with more adults of working age from 30-39, and a reduced share of population between 40-60. The largest age categories for growth are those that are over 70, showing the increasing aging of the population, as shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 8: Age structure, Yarra Ranges and Greater Melbourne, 2021¹³

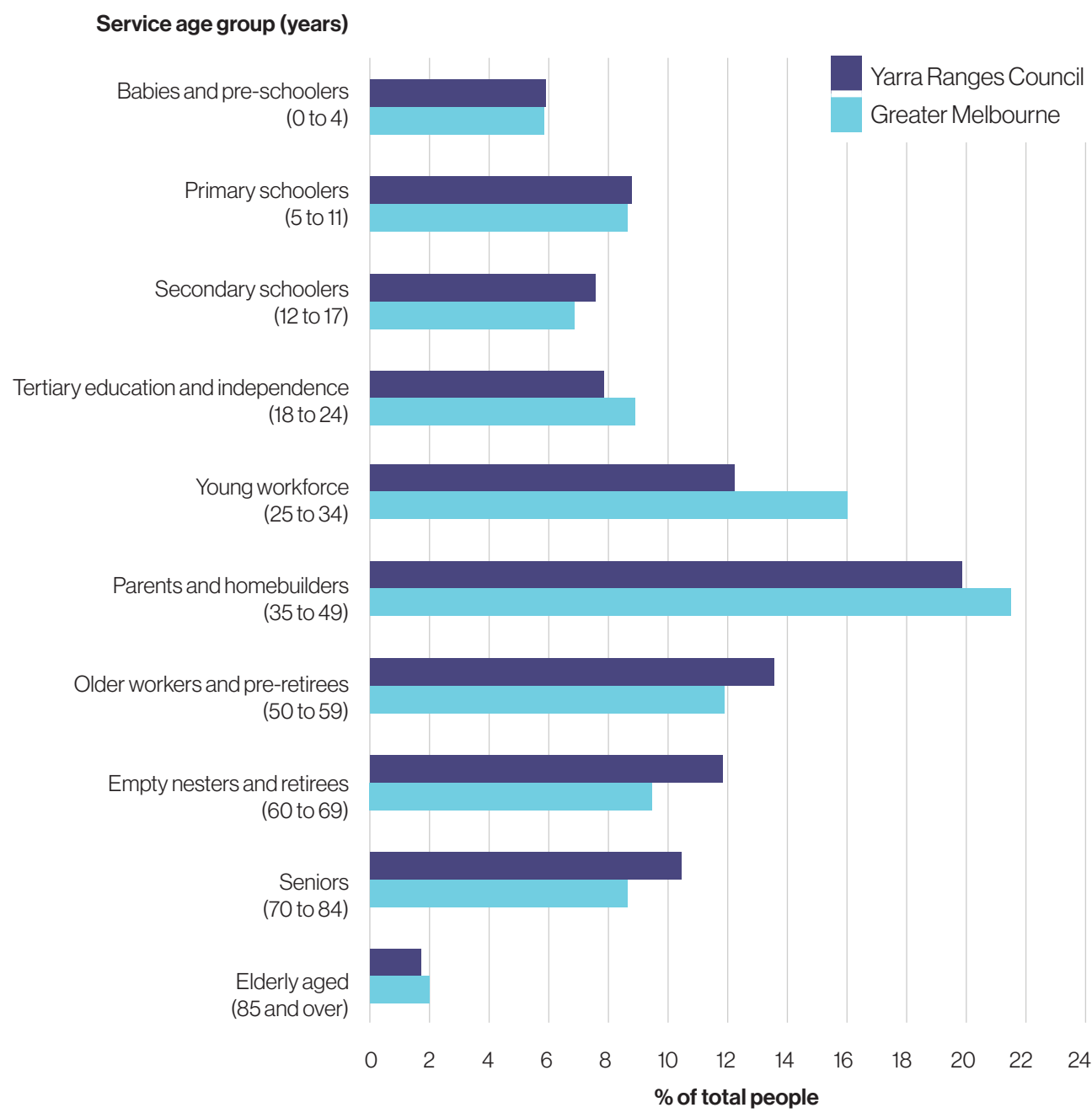
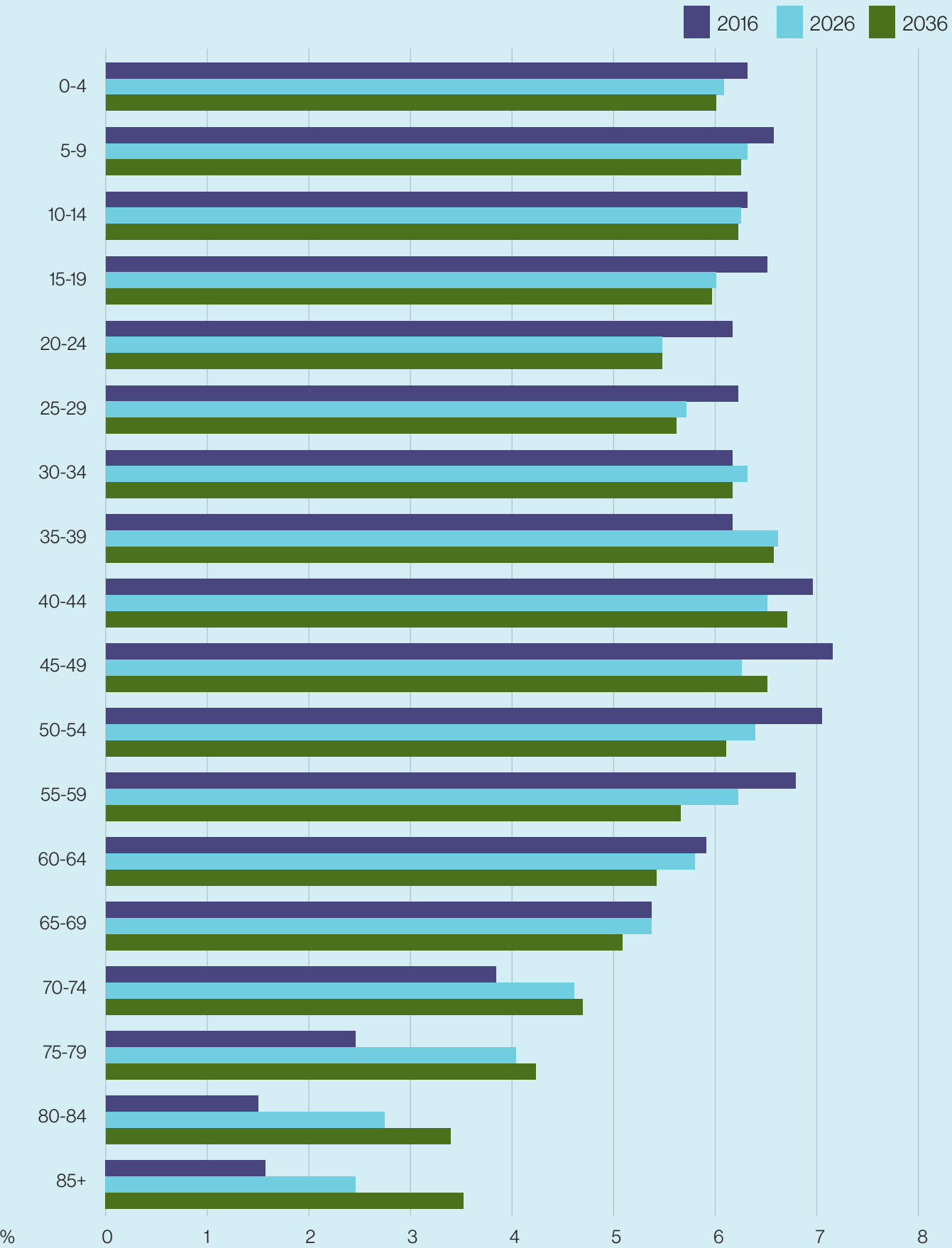


Figure 9: Forecast Age Structure – 2016-2036^{11(p17)}



3.3 Household Changes

To understand the types of housing needed to fit the anticipated requirements of the population, there is a need to understand the types of households that live in the municipality.

In 2021, the dominant household type in Yarra Ranges was couples with children, comprising 35.2% of the total households in Yarra Ranges.

Couples without children were the next most common, comprising 27.1% of households. The relative proportions of household types are shown in Figure 10, contrasted against figures for Greater Melbourne.

Over the next 20 years, all household types in Yarra Ranges will experience growth. The most significant growth from 2021 to 2041 will occur in couples without children, as shown in Figure 11. Many of these households are likely to be elderly empty nesters, a reflection of the aging population in the area.

Figure 11 shows strong growth in lone person households, many of which are likely to be elderly residents staying in their homes as they age, potentially after other family members have either died or moved away.

The faster rate of growth in smaller households, such as couples without dependents and lone person households, compared to larger family households, will mean there is a need for housing diversity to provide adequate housing choices. Without changes in policy to address this issue, Yarra Ranges may see declines in some household groups because people may opt to leave Yarra Ranges for other areas with housing options that better suit their needs. There is some evidence of this already occurring, with decreases in young lone persons and young couples without children categories, which are potentially caused by a lack of diversity in housing options.^{11(p.24)}

3.4 Household Size

Smaller household sizes (less people per house) is a result of an increase in smaller household types. This will generally increase the demand for housing in an area, even if the population is relatively stable.

Yarra Ranges' average household size is projected to fall from 2.67 in 2021 to 2.60 by 2041¹⁶.

Figure 10: Household types, 2021¹⁴

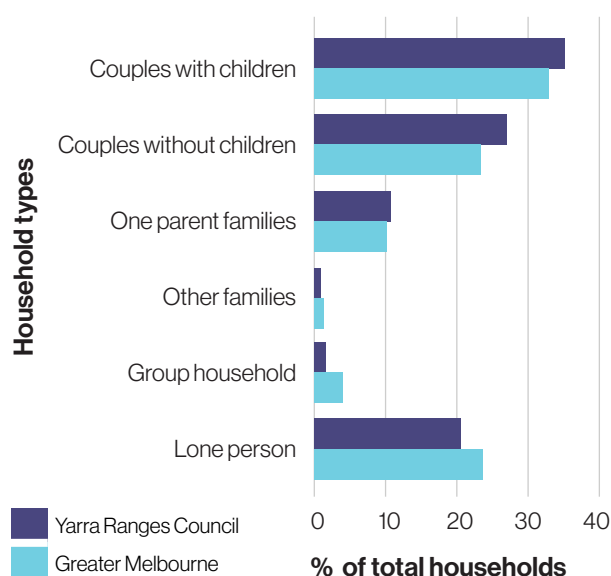


Figure 11: Yarra Ranges forecast change in household types, 2021-2026, 2026-2041¹⁵

