



the Proprietor

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A WORLD

FIRST

New 1.4 Million Dollar Play Space Coming to Lucas

Page 3 [➔](#)



SALES UPDATE

Introducing Brett Simpson, the newest addition to the Integra Land Sales team...

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I've been in Ballarat all my life, I was born here. I lived on a farm out at Springbank which is about 20km on the Melbourne side of Ballarat. We farmed beef cattle and potatoes, which we supplied to McCain Foods. I travelled into town on a school bus.

Then I did an apprenticeship, I was a refrigeration mechanic back in the day. I ended up in sales for PRD, new home sales for Hotondo Homes, and now I'm here at Integra.

I've got a wife, Siobhan, and three boys, Aidan, Callum, and Henry. Most of my time was spent running around after the kids. We love our football, I'm one of the coaches out at the Springbank Footy Club, in the juniors. The kids play out there so it's really good.

I like to travel. In 2019, we experienced our first overseas family trip to America, visiting LA, Disneyland, New York, Toronto, Las Vegas and San Francisco.

How long have you been working in the real estate industry?

I've been in the real estate industry for about 15 years. I spent 4 years at PRD Real Estate selling new homes in Ballarat and surrounds. I moved to Hotondo Homes selling

for planned builds. I spent 10 years there. And now I'm into Land Sales.

What is your favourite thing about real estate?

I like being on top of the market trends. It's a good conversation starter. When you say you're in real estate, people have always got questions, so it's good to be able to give them answers about what sold for what, how much, what the price of land is now, things like that. That's the best part.

What do you love about Ballarat?

Ballarat's a great place, I love Ballarat. The town itself, the buildings - they're just amazing. But it's the people, the Ballarat people. It's got a country feel about it, everyone knows everyone in Ballarat. You can't walk down the street without running into someone you know. That's what I love about Ballarat.

If you could give one tip to someone looking to buy a block of land right now, what would it be?

I would say, just do it! Don't be like me, looking back and saying I wish I had bought that block then. They're not going to get any cheaper, that's for sure!

For any enquiries related to Land Sales,
email brett@integragroup.com.au or call 0475 111 162



1.4 MILLION DOLLAR PLAY SPACE

This week, the Integra landscape team will start work preparing a community space located adjacent to the future Loreto Campus on Cuthberts Road. The site is just a stone's throw from the Skipton Rail Trail and well connected to Lucas Town Centre. We thought we would give you a sneak peek into this amazing new space!

The 2.5 acre park will be surrounded by a mixture of native and exotic plantings overlooking the Sanctuary wetlands. 261 trees including a range of Oaks, Elms, Gums, Maples, and a special Monkey Puzzle tree will feature in this park, and an additional 2,675 plants including Flax, Callistemon, Correas, Grasses, Coastal Rosemary, and Woolly Tea-Tree will provide natural texture and movement, bringing the space to life.

If you have a youngster in the house, here is the important information! A new adventure playground that we believe could rival the popular Central Park Playground has been designed and engineered especially for this space. The materials and equipment selected for this playground give a nod to the natural landscape and we think the little explorers out there are going to love what is planned.

The main feature is an impressive 7-meter-tall Olive Tree birds nest tower. The tower has four large olives that act as climbing destinations or cool little chill areas. You can get to these hanging olives via ropes, ladders, and net crossings. This will be the first time this piece of playground equipment has ever been used in the world – so Lucas kids, you can be playground testers!

In the center of the playground, you will find the Bellevue play tower which has two main rooms joined with a rope bridge and

covered in timber cladding. It has a genuine rustic appearance – perfect for this natural location in Sanctuary. One cluster of the play unit caters for older children with a large tunnel slide and challenging access, and the other cluster includes a staircase and smaller slide which is perfect for juniors.

For those of you who love to swing, this playground has fun swinging options including the Gyro swing, Timba swing, and the Dancing Snake. The Gyro is a multidirectional single point suspended nest swing, and the Dancing Snake could be a swing or a spinner because it does both! The Timba swing is your classic swing with two separate seats – and sometimes classic can be the most loved.

Our first Sand Digger will feature in Sanctuary playground, surrounded by a giant sand pit, again a first for our parks! The digger rotates 360 degrees and is designed for little users. It will keep kids occupied for hours in the sand pit and is perfect for building arm muscles and hand-eye coordination.

The playground will also include the Wobbly Wood Bamboo Hut, a delightful playhouse perfect for role-playing and crawling for younger ones. It features two different ascents and numerous play elements, enhancing kids' gross motor skills and creativity under one roof.

A Kick and Play space will ensure there is not only a great playground to explore, but space to kick a footy, do cartwheels, fly a kite, or run. Scattered throughout the space will be park furniture including picnic tables, bench seating, rubbish

Continued on page 4 →

bins, concrete ottomans, curved benches, drinking fountain and shelters.

This incredible space will be connected to the rest of Lucas via walking and riding trails that will take you all the way from the Town Centre shopping precinct through Central Park and past the Messenger Parade and McLeod Crescent wetlands, into Lucas Sanctuary. It also links via a short walk to the Skipton Rail Trail.

What is incredibly exciting is that there are still two more parks with playgrounds in planning for Lucas which will make a total of seven playgrounds for the community. More information about the next park will be made available in coming months.

To stay up to date with community news, visit the Integra News page.

Images are for illustrative purposes only and were prepared with thanks to Playground Centre.



P A R E N T I N G

C E N T R E

For parents in our community who have struggled with maintaining a sleep routine for their little ones, we have good news! Work has begun on a new Early Parenting Centre here in Lucas, just off Dyson Drive.

The new centre, which will be located at 10 Fawcett Rd, will provide support and advice for parents around feeding, settling and sleeping, as well as overnight stays for those who may be struggling with new parenting.

It's important to establish sleeping patterns early on in a child's life to maximise their growth and development and also to give parents time to rest.

The parenting centre will be available to families with children up to four years of age, with ten residential family units and



four day-stay places, offering both short-term and long-term stay options.

Caring for our young ones was extra difficult during Covid lockdowns, with other family members at home and changes to routines. The Alfredton/Lucas community welcomed 220 babies in 2021, so the centre is arriving at the perfect time for many local families.

And, having maternal and child health experts close by will save countless parents and caregivers the time of travelling to Melbourne for specialist support.

Construction is expected to be completed in late 2023.



SAVVY HOMES FOR SAVVY INVESTORS

Story by Joel Spence, New Homes Sales
Consultant, BCM Homes

There is no shortage of opportunities for investors in the local Ballarat area. Despite the rise in interest rates and the costs associated with construction, there are still savvy investors who are actively looking within the local market.

Our team are working closely with Kym Squire from Integra Property Management to satisfy the needs of a strong rental market. Kym currently has a 0% vacancy rate, meaning more investment opportunity exists as more properties are required.

The presence of Titled Land and smaller lot sizes, available through developers such as Integra, still offer investment opportunities. Investors can benefit from BCM Homes' more than 17 years of investment experience in the local community, providing and sourcing suitable options for clients.

Across the local market we are seeing strong trends that can assist investors to make decisions about what kind of investment properties to build. In response to these trends our team at BCM Homes are constantly adapting and growing our offerings to investors and all buyer types; including families, retirees and first home buyers.

What types of trends are we seeing? Are these trends new or is the demand consistent?
We've broken down a few of these trends for you to consider:

Consistent Trends:

Quality – the demand for quality new homes that entice renters is clearly visible. Major growth areas such as Lucas, Lucas Grange, DTC Edge and the new Providence Estate are all examples of quality driven investment opportunities.

Renter Expectations – Renters also see and understand that quality directly transfers into their own comfort, and thus value for the amount of rent they are prepared to pay. Filling the rental demand for properties with stone benchtops, higher ceilings, two living areas and modern colour selections and finishes, to name just a few, can allow people to live in a comfortable sanctuary, enjoying the lifestyle they desire.



Location – Location, Location, Location! This is definitely not a new requirement for investment or any type of housing, however, it is a very important one. Renters and Buyers are constantly looking for properties within close distances to local shops, amenities and support services.

Newer Trends:

Compact & Spacious – The lifestyles desired by many can often dictate the requirement for a low maintenance property that doesn't feel 'small' or 'confined'. Cleverly designed floor plans increase the useable space within any type of dwelling, minimising wasted space.

Efficiency – The push towards 7-star homes as well as the increases to the costs of living have proved to be catalysts driving greater demand for energy efficient options. Anyone who is paying the household bills is open to ways of reducing their costs without sacrificing too many comforts. An energy efficient design option allows for cheaper heating and cooling costs and in many cases reduces the need for artificial lighting, having a direct and positive impact on the household budget.

In an effort to provide quality products for savvy investors, BCM Homes have partnered with local Real Estate and Rental Management Professionals, such as Kym Squire at Integra Property Management, to offer easily accessible investment options that meet market demands and are delivered efficiently.

When contemplating your next investment steps, we suggest considering some of these trends which may add value to your property portfolio.

Joel Spence
New Homes Sales Consultant
BCM Homes



LIFE SAVING LAWS

Story by Jimmy Rushton, Pool Safe Fence Inspections

New requirements for pool and spa owners explained.

If you are the owner of a home or business with a pool or spa, this information could be helpful and could potentially save a life. That's why new laws to improve swimming pool and spa safety came into effect in Victoria on the 1st December 2019, to help reduce the incidence of child drownings in pools and spas. While the requirements may seem daunting, they are in place for good reason. Many people who call Pool Safe first find out about these new laws when they receive a letter from their local council, but understanding the laws can help to make your pool or spa safer now, not just when you need an inspection.

If you are the owner of land on which a pool or spa is located, you must register your pool and spa with the relevant council by 1st November 2020. If you haven't done this, you still can. You can contact your local council or check their website for more information on how to register your pool or spa, including the fees payable. You will be asked to have it inspected, and at this point Pool Safe can complete an inspection for you.

All pool and spa owners are required to arrange an inspection of its safety barrier to determine if the barrier is compliant with the applicable barrier standard, every four years. The deadlines for inspection and lodgement of Certificate of Barrier Compliance are staggered based on the date your pool or spa was installed. We can also help you determine when your pool is due for its inspection.

All pool and spa barriers experience wear and tear over time (including rust, missing bolts or screws and damage), which is why it is important to ensure your barrier is regularly checked and maintained, even when it isn't due for an inspection.

Checking the safety of your pool barrier might seem like an overwhelming task, but it doesn't have to be. Here are a few pool and spa safety barrier maintenance checks that you can do at home.

1. Check for a self-closing and self-latching gate or door.

The first thing to look at is your pool or spa gate/door. You will need to check that it self-closes and self-latches from all positions from being fully open to resting on the latching mechanism. To do this, simply open the pool or spa gate - let it go to check that it self-closes. To test that it self-latches simply pull on the gate to see if it can be opened.

If it doesn't self-close or self-latch, the gate might need some maintenance or repair.



Continued on page 7 →

2. Are there any gaps over 10cm under or around your safety barrier?

We need to check for gaps under and around the safety barrier. Gaps can be caused by ground movement so it is good to check this regularly. All gaps need to be less than 100mm so you will need to get your tape measure out and check this around various points of your pool or spa safety barrier. If there are any gaps more than 10cm these will need to be reduced.

3. Climbable Objects

Objects like chairs, pot plants, BBQs and tables may allow children access to the pool or spa, so remove any of these objects from around your pool or spa safety barrier. And remember to never leave your gate propped open.

These are a few simple checks you can regularly do yourself to keep your pool and spa area safe. As well as having a compliant pool and safety barrier, it is important for children to always be actively supervised by an adult when in and around pools and spas.

If you need some help or advice on a barrier inspection or if you are considering adding a pool to your property, contact Jimmy from Pool Safe, who can help out with an inspection or advice on pool and safety barrier positioning before you get too far into your project.

Jimmy Rushton
Pool Safe Fence Inspections
poolsafevic.com.au
email jimmy@poolsafevic.com.au or call 0493 362 410

PROPERTY UPDATE

Firstly, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our readers a happy holiday season! We hope you are able to take some time out to spend with family and friends to enjoy yourself.

The residential rental market in Ballarat continues to perform strongly, with the November data released from the REIV showing Ballarat vacancy rates dropping again to 1.3% - under the regional rate of 1.9% and metro at 2.8%. Median rental prices in Ballarat also remain strong, with a 3 bedroom home sitting at \$370 per week and a 4 bedroom home at \$440 per week.

Stock levels of good quality rental properties is one of the reasons behind the low vacancy rate currently facing the rental market. There has been a number of landlords sell their investment property to realise the equity achieved over the past few years and to avoid having to pay the increase in interest costs with a number of rises to the cash rate over the past number of months.

Affordability will continue to be a major issue within the rental market, with the low supply of available homes causing the increase in rental prices and coinciding with all the other cost of living pressures that everyone is currently experiencing.

At Integra Property Management, we like to ensure that we get a good outcome for both the tenant and landlord. While we are currently running at a 0% vacancy rate, we have a number of tenants looking for the right rental property. If you have a property nearing construction completion, or would like to transfer from another agency, we would love to chat with you.

For any enquiries related to Property Management,
email kym@integragroup.com.au or call 0412 715 922





Situated in the flourishing suburb of Alfredton, this limited land release brings contemporary urban living to Ballarat. Providence Alfredton provides a blend of traditional and future living spaces with homesites ranging from 244m² to 630m² ensuring options for all budgets and lifestyles.

LAND NOW SELLING FROM \$255,000

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