



Built in 1883, the Swing Bridge was the first movable bridge established in Victoria. Image courtesy of the Wellington Visitor Information Centre, Sale.

Story: Sheryl Allen

**LOCATION:** Sale  
2 hours east of Melbourne

**POPULATION:** 14,000

**INDUSTRIES:** Agriculture, defence and aviation, oil and gas, tourism

**CLIMATE:** Temperate  
Summer: 12.8°C – 25.9°C  
Winter: 3.6°C – 13.8°C  
Rainfall: 607mm

Sale is a thriving, well-serviced city at the heart of Victoria's abundant Gippsland region.

Sustained by four major industry sectors, Sale is a very liveable place of opportunity and confidence where the full measure of available resources – on the ground, below the surface and in the skies above – is optimised.

Gippsland's renowned fertile soils, mild climate and rainfall made dairying the main source of income here in the 1880s. It is still the primary agricultural industry with more than a dozen dairy factories and close to 500 dairy farms, many located in the abundant Macalister Irrigation District where over 30,000 hectares are under irrigated pasture.

"Beef cattle grazing is also popular," adds Landmark's John Walker. "Weekly fat cattle sales are a Tuesday feature at the Livestock Exchange with store cattle sales held each month. Fruit and vegetable growing is also in the mix along with some niche enterprises such as alpacas, walnuts and winegrapes."

Plant your feet firmly in the fertile ground, look

skywards and you might glimpse the Roulettes, the RAAF's elite aerobatic display team, practising their craft and flaunting their skills.

The Roulettes are based at the East Sale RAAF Base, the main post-graduate flight training base. With some 800 civilian and defence personnel, most of whom live in Sale, the base is a huge contributor to the local and regional economy.

"Defence Housing Australia operates on a buy, build, sell and lease-back system so they are always looking for new property in the area," explains John.

Local business leaders are currently lobbying for the relocation of the RAAF's Interim Basic Flying Training School from Tamworth to the West Sale Aerodrome for six years from 2012. If successful, the move is forecast to inject \$90 million into the Gippsland economy.

The underground riches of the Bass Strait oil and gas fields are another economic mainstay. The ExxonMobil facility at Longford (20 kilometres from Sale) processes piped natural gas and oil. It also houses the heliport serving the company's 21 offshore platforms and installations. ExxonMobil is celebrating 40 years success in Bass Strait – and the provision of some 14,000 jobs to the Gippsland region during that time.

"It all makes for a very transient population," explains John. "It's estimated that properties in Sale turnover on average every five years to accommodate the various comings and goings. Even with a slight levelling off since the First Home Buyers Grant, things just keep ticking along on the back of our diverse economic base. We've

had a very strong rental market for over 30 years with great returns."

A well-established tourism sector caters for comings and goings of a more temporary nature. "Being just an hour from the snow, two hours from Melbourne, and twenty minutes from the world-famous Ninety Mile Beach puts Sale in a very desirable position. The beautiful Gippsland Lakes and all they have to offer are within easy access as are several national parks and tall-tree forest areas."

This dynamic regional centre on the nation's number one highway is most definitely open for business, open for tourists and open for living.

#### CONTACT:

Landmark Sale (03) 5144 2466

John Walker 0417 391 965

#### PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: four bedroom, two bathroom home \$400,000

Lifestyle: 50-100 acre dryland property with home \$450,000 – \$550,000

Rural: dairy property on irrigation \$6,000 – \$6,500 per acre